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February 2010



NEXT GENERAL MEETING IS ON February 25th
at the American Legion Tillman Post in Akron at 7:30PM

Next Board Meeting: March 11th at Marvin's Bar
and Grill (Corner of Goodrich Rd. and Delaware
Rd.) in Clarence Center. 7:00 PM

NORTHERN ERIE

Sno-Seekers

P.O. Box 167
Akron, NY 14001



Club Officers

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Vice President: Dan Dressel
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Al Wolbert

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Newsletter Committee:

Chairperson: Shannon Landow
Contact #998-7966

Website Committee:

Chairperson: OPEN

Adopt-A-Highway Committee:

Chairperson: Rick Weitz
Contact #713-9018

Club Headlines

- **Next General Meeting: February 25th at 7:30 PM at American Legion Tillman Post, 9 Eckerson Avenue in the Village of Akron.**
- **Other Meetings:**
 - **Board Meeting: March 11th at 7:00PM at Marvin's Bar and Grill (Corner of Goodrich Rd. and Delaware Rd.) in Clarence Center.**
 - **General Meeting: March 25th at 7:30 PM at American Legion Tillman Post, 9 Eckerson Avenue in the Village of Akron.**

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**President's Page****Now it's your turn**

We've had 3 weeks of below freezing temps with an inch or so of snow every few days. While we did not get the base we wanted, it was enough to ride on and in most places was actually pretty good. Our groomer crews have been out after every snowfall and have done an excellent job given what they had to work with. I know the sleds have been out because the high-traffic areas got pounded and it was hard to keep up even though this spots were groomed twice per day!

I hope you joined us for our second annual bonfire last Sat. It was cold and we had good snow to ride in on. We had a lot of sleds and families join us and I hope everyone enjoyed it. We even had the groomer there! Thanks goes to our social committee who arranged all the details and made it happen. We look forward to the next one.

You might wonder what the title of this article means. Actually, it has a double meaning this month and each one is equally important.

You probably have heard about the recent proposal to sweep \$1 million from the NYS trail fund. If you recall, this happened several years ago causing an uproar from snowmobilers across the state. That forced our elected officials to "pay back" the money over a few years. Well...it's time to start screaming again! I won't bore or degrade you with the politics here but simply put I have a problem when someone walks into my house and steals my money. It's really very simple - we all agreed to pay a registration fee (that we asked to have increased) so that we can fund a safe trail system in NYS. For the most part that is (was) working. What doesn't work is when our elected officials (specifically the Governor and the Division of Budget office) decide to take some of that money and, with a creative play on words, redirect it to another use that it was never intended for. I know NYS is broke but we need to fix the problem, not the symptom! I won't share my thoughts on that one here, but it's very simple...*don't steal my money!* We have entrusted them to manage this fund and this action breaks that trust – period. We now need your voice to let them know what you think and will be supporting a campaign over the next few weeks/ months. Look on the NYSSA and NESS websites and forums for names, addresses, and numbers of your elected representatives to contact. Yes, we need *you* and its now your turn! Please join me in sending that message.

Secondly, this month marks another important time in our club. We have elections next month and need candidates who will continue to grow this club and provide the best trail system around. We're looking for anyone who wants to help. Please join us this month so we can get your nomination for next month's elections.

See you on the 25th

Eric



A Few Upcoming Events

NYSSA Super Raffle: Get your tickets now for the NYSSA Super Raffle. Tickets are on sale until April. \$5/ticket will get you a chance to win one of three snowmobiles or one of the other 50 great prizes. We need your help—stop into a meeting and pick up some to sell. Drawing will be in April at the NYSSA Annual Meeting and Forum. You do not need to be present to win.

March Elections: Elections for Club Officers and Board Members will at the March general meeting. Nominations are now being accepted.

2010 Take a Friend Snowmobiling Week: February 12 to 22. See www.gosnowmobiling.org for more details

Adopt-A-Highway: Adopt-A-Highway dates for 2010 are scheduled for April 25th and September 26th. Meet at Niagara Label (corner of Hake Road and Rt. 93 in Akron) at 9am.



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NEWSLETTER ARTICLES WANTED

Do you have an idea for an article for the newsletter? Or would like to write one? Is there something you would like to see in the newsletter? Please send all suggestions, ideas, comments and articles to slandow@rochester.rr.com. If you would like an item posted in the next newsletter—all submissions are requested by the 10th of the month.

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2009-2010 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

Membership applications are now available for the 2009-2010 season. Memberships run from April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010. Applications are available on Page 19 of the newsletter or drop by a meeting to sign up. **DON'T WAIT—SIGN UP NOW.**

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Attention Landowners Let Us Know!!!

Please contact the trail coordinator, any officer, or leave a message at 741-6377 if any area of your property needs attention this year. We greatly appreciate the use of your land for our trails and will do what we can to keep the ATV's and trespassers off.

If you have any concerns or recommendations on how to keep ATV's off your property, let us know. We can address trouble spots while removing the snowmobile trails.

Thanks again for all of your support, without your generosity, we wouldn't have these wonderful trails.



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MESSAGE FROM NIAGARA COUNTY TRAIL COORDINATOR

As of Feb. 10, the trail is finally frooze up and just waiting for mother nature to give us more snow to work with. I did have a complaint from a Wolcottsville land owner but with the help from 2 other members we were able to take care of the problem. We're still looking for a more direct route for the trail out of Gasport going north towards Becker farms. If any body knows of possible land owners or a route to the canal bank please let me know. As for the trail C4H to Orleans Co. it looks like it needs to be trimmed back at a later date. If you're out on the trail riding and you see a sign down or in the need of repair please do what you can to help out. Thanks again for all your help in making these trails possible.

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NYSSA RALLIES AGAINST STATE "RAID" ON SNOWMOBILE TRAIL FUND

February 12, 2010, Albany, NY - Calling Governor David A. Paterson's state budget proposal, "a betrayal of the trust between his administration and our 150,000 members," the New York State Snowmobile Association (NYSSA) vowed to fight a multi-year, multi-million dollar state raid of the snowmobile trail development and maintenance fund.

"The money in the trail fund is critical to support trail maintenance activities," said Michael Fischer, President of NYSSA. "It is money paid exclusively by snowmobilers for costs directly associated with the state and snowmobile club responsibilities for the development and maintenance of the statewide trail system. The state's attempt to take this money for other purposes could threaten the safety of the trail system and certainly the long-term viability of the trail fund," Fischer charged.

This unprecedented sweep is being proposed less than two years after a previous attempt to take \$1 million during the 2008-2009 budget process was avoided with the understanding by NYSSA and its supporters that similar raids would not be attempted in the future. Governor Paterson stated in a press release at the time that the state would "*ensure that money from these registration fees will be spent in a way that specifically benefits snowmobilers... solely on trail maintenance and related program activities.*"

If not amended by the Legislature, the Executive Budget will redirect \$1 million from the Snowmobile Trail Development and Maintenance Fund to the state's General Fund each year, and expand the authorized uses by the state of these funds. This will have a tremendous negative impact on trail maintenance activities as the loss of these funds reduces the reimbursement rate clubs get per mile for the costs of trail maintenance. One million dollars represents over 20% of the total trail fund monies and is far in excess of what the state needs to maintain and develop the minimal trail mileage on state lands.

"NYSSA supports the efforts of the Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation and the Departments of Environmental Conservation in administration, trail development and maintenance, and specific activities that benefit snowmobiling in New York," Fischer said. "We encourage OPRHP to continue to utilize this legitimate use of available funding to advance the sport and help provide a safe riding experience."

However, NYSSA draws the line here and "expects and our members demand the responsible stewardship of the monies that we entrust to the State of New York," Fischer explained.

In a letter to all state legislators alerting them to the issue and seeking assistance, Fischer wrote: "The thousands of snowmobile club members in your district need your help immediately to call the Governor and the Division of the Budget and head off the anticipated snowmobile trail fund raid this year!"

Dave Perkins, NYSSA Executive Director stated, "In recent years, NYSSA member clubs have successfully urged the Legislature to raise snowmobile registration fees in order to increase the dedicated trail monies in the snowmobile trail fund. These increases were critically needed to keep pace with ever escalating costs to safely maintain the trail system. Snowmobilers and legislators agreed to these increases because these funds were to be dedicated to reimburse snowmobile clubs to maintain the trails, and support snowmobile trail development and maintenance activities carried out by OPRHP and DEC."

Snowmobiling is an important component of State tourism creating much-needed jobs and generating vital revenue to many Upstate and Western New York businesses and communities. In fact, many out-of-state snowmobilers make it a priority to visit New York for its vast miles of scenic snowmobile trails, generating much needed tourism dollars to the upstate economy. According to a recent NYSSA analysis of previous economic studies, snowmobiling contributes over \$1 billion to the state's economy each year.

Perkins continues, "Trail maintenance is an ongoing process for all snowmobile clubs that make up NYSSA throughout the state. These clubs take on the responsibility and the financial obligation to maintain the trails throughout the year. Snowmobilers who use the trail system are willing to pay for it but they are not willing to have their registration money taken by the Division of the Budget and used for non snowmobile related activities. The law is clear that the fund is for snowmobile trail maintenance. The work that clubs have done on trails over the past 20+ years fully defines trail maintenance."

"We believe that the actions taken during the budget preparation this year violate both the spirit and the intent of the commitments made to snowmobilers in New York in 2008 and NYSSA will continue to vigorously defend the trail development and maintenance program," Fischer vowed.

The New York State Snowmobile Association (NYSSA), the volunteer organization representing 150,000 snowmobile riders, families and clubs throughout the Empire State, is dedicated to preserving and improving snowmobiling in New York by advocating policies that promote the growth of safe snowmobiling, improve trails, facilities and services for participants, and protect the rights of snowmobile riders.

For more information:

Dave Perkins, NYSSA Executive Director
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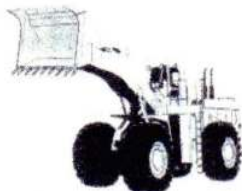
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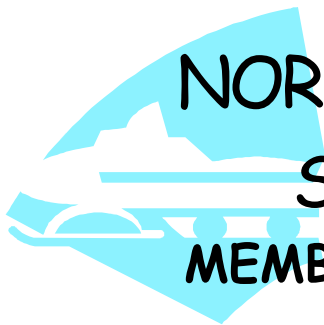
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Please remember, we are a **100% volunteer**, 501(c) 3, not-for-profit organization that relies on member support to make our club a success. Everyone has **something** they can contribute and **any** assistance (no matter how big or small) is greatly appreciated. Please check any area(s) where you can help us say: "The Best Trails in WNY!"

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Signature _____

Date _____

"SNOWMOBILERS RESPECT LANDOWNERS - STAY ON THE TRAIL"



Northern Erie Sno-Seekers, Inc. ® (NESS) was established in 1973 and has been promoting the safe and responsible use of snowmobiles ever since. We are a 100% volunteer, 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit organization serving 3 counties and the communities of: **Clarence, Newstead, Amherst, Akron, Alden, Lancaster, Pembroke, Lockport, Gasport, Royalton and Hartland.**

- Our general **meetings** are held at 7:30 PM on the last Thursday of each month. Please check our website for location but during the season, they're at **American Legion Tillman Post 9** Eckerson Road Akron, New York. It's located right on **C4C trail** (the bike path at Cedar Street) so you can come join us by sled! All ages are welcome! Bring a friend, too!
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- We have over **720 members** of all ages who share the same passion and enjoy making snowmobiling such a wonderful sport!
- We have two groomers; one we purchased in 2005 costing over \$130,000, and another in 2009 costing over \$170,000. These help us maintain over **125 miles of trail** right in your neighborhood!
- Our trail system is possibly only through the generous support of over 200 **private landowners**. We respect them by staying on the marked trails! Follow the signs - not always the tracks!
- We provide Safety Courses for both kids and adults.
- Come join us and visit our website at: www.snoseekers.com