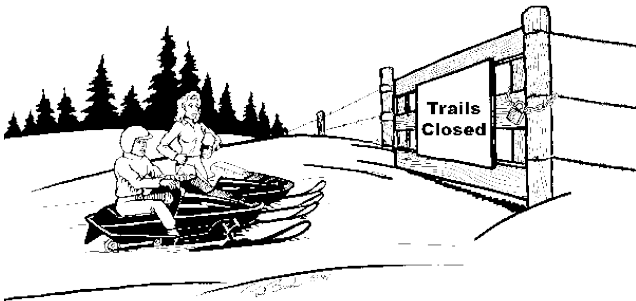


# How is your snowmobile trail fund spent?



## Lewis County Area Snowmobile Association

<http://lcasa.org/funding>

### Purpose of this brochure

We want you to learn all the facts of the Lewis County trail situation in a fair manner, not from an Internet forum.

Note: the following three sections were to be reviewed for accuracy by NYS OPRHP, however they failed to respond. LCASA has confirmed the accuracy of these statements to the best of its ability.

### How much of your registration fee goes into the fund?

You pay \$45 dollars to the State Trail Fund. \$10 of this fee goes to the processing of your registration by the Dept. of Motor Vehicles. Multiply this by the number of snowmobiles in New York State. By law, NY State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (NYS OPRHP) can retain up to 30% of these funds to maintain the trails inside NYS OPRHP and to administer the trail fund. NYS OPRHP has never taken the entire 30% they are allowed. It costs approximately 15%-17% to complete these tasks.

In 2006-2007, this left \$2.8 million to disburse among over 11,000 miles of trails. \$63 per mile is taken out for mandatory trail insurance.

### How much does each club get currently?

Trails are classified into four categories: Corridor A, Corridor B, Secondary A and Secondary B. There is also a special high snow classification based upon an average 130 inches of snow fall for the past 30 years.

During the 2006-07 season, the NYS OPRHP set the following mileage rates: Corridor A trails at \$300 per mile, Corridor B trails at \$200 per mile, Secondary A trails at \$125 per mile, and

Secondary B trails at \$100 per mile. The NYS OPRHP also took money from the fund and designated high snow fall miles to get an additional \$150 per mile.

This means that a club in a high snow area with Corridor A trails would get \$450 per mile for each mile of trail they have. If a club has 100 miles of trails, they would get \$45,000 to maintain the trails for the entire year.

### When do clubs get money?

The Fund is broken into two payments. One payment in the fall of 70% of the estimated yearly grant. The second payment in the spring includes the remainder of the grant monies and the high snow money. For clubs in the high snow area, approximately 40% of the total grant is received in the fall and 60% is received in the spring.

One club in Lewis County had to borrow money to keep their groomers from being repossessed before the spring payment was received.

### How much does it cost to groom Lewis County Trails?

Some clubs' fuel bills for the 2006-07 season were over \$11,000! Another club's total hard costs were over \$50,000, and they only are entitled to \$30,700 in funding.

In Lewis County last year, it cost over \$500,000 to maintain the trails. We received less than \$300,000 from the trail fund. The average cost per mile in 2006-2007 season was \$1,013 per mile.

### How do clubs get reimbursed from the fund?

As with all grant applications, there are allowed

expenses and disallowed expenses. There are usage fees for anything from chainsaws to track hoes. Some of the allowed uses are: groomer usage fees from \$35/hour to \$65/hour, and labor while working on trails at \$7.15/hour per person.

## What are the problems with this method?

There are many problems, ranging from improper claiming of usage rates to usage rates for large grooming equipment having extremely longer payback periods than lighter duty grooming equipment.

Auditing of any multi-million dollar fund is always a problem. Class C groomers (snowmobiles with drags) are being claimed as Class A groomers (like the ones you see on Tug Hill). Last year there was almost \$6,000 of fraud detected by one club alone. There is not enough manpower to conduct thorough audits at the State level for all clubs.

Payback periods are also excessively inaccurate. A Class A groomer can be used at \$65 per hour and a Class C groomer can be used at \$35 per hour. A Class A groomer costs \$150,000, where a Class C groomer costs about \$15,000. If you look at a basic payback period, it takes 5 to 6 times longer, about 2400 hours, to payoff a Class A groomer, without figuring any other expenses. A Class C groomer gets paid off in about only 428 hours.

Another of the many problems is that clubs are getting paid for trails in areas that get little or no snow. It is estimated that 30-40% of the funded trails get less than 14 days of riding each year.

## How can it be changed?

After studying the issues surrounding this problem, LCASA has come up with a few

suggestions.

### NYS OPRHP could:

- Create a high traffic area, which would include approximately 600 miles of trails in Lewis, Oneida, and Oswego Counties, and parts of other counties.
- Reduce the reimbursement rates of Class C groomers so that payback periods are proportional to Class A groomers.
- Put in place an auditing program for groomer hours, or use a GPS tracking system to track each groomer's usage.
- Pay actual expenses spent by the clubs before reimbursing for donated equipment, time and labor.

## Who can change how the funding is spent?

NYS OPRHP can... make a high traffic area to fund 80% of the trail expenses, and adjust the reimbursement rates to be fair and in proportion to the cost of equipment.

NYSSA can...fully support making the trail fund disbursement fair and make that support known to NYS OPRHP.

## What can you do?

Join clubs in Lewis County, support their fundraising efforts, and donate money to the clubs that maintain the trails you ride.

You can call the offices below to express your concern about this situation, and let them know that you support fairly distributing your trail fund money.

### NYS OPRHP (Parks)

Stephen Lewis – 518-474-3827

stephen.lewis@oprhp.state.ny.us

### NYSSA

Jim Jennings – 518-624-3849

[jimjennings@nyssnowassoc.org](mailto:jimjennings@nyssnowassoc.org)

## What we don't need you to do

We do not want you to offend NYS OPRHP or NYSSA. If you write or speak to them, please be considerate and polite.

## Who is LCASA

LCASA is an umbrella organization of the Lewis County snowmobile clubs. LCASA contracts with Lewis County to maintain all the trails inside Lewis County. It works with the individual clubs below to keep the trails as enjoyable and safe as possible.

## Clubs in Lewis County

### Barnes Corners Sno-Pals

<http://www.sno-pals.com/>

### Brantingham Snowmobile Club Inc.

<http://www.brantinghamnomads.org/>

### Club Cedar Pine, Inc.

<http://www.snowmobilingusa.com/>

### Long Pond Sno Sled Club, Inc

<http://www.longpond.freesevers.com/>

### The Lost Trails Snowmobile Club

<http://www.losttrailclub.com/>

### Missing Link Snowmobile Club

<http://www.missinglinksnow.com/>

### Osceola Snowmobile Club

(315) 599-6129

### Plateau Riders Inc.

<http://www.timberview.com/>

### Southern Tug Hill Sno-Riders Inc.

<http://www.southernughillssnowmobileclub.com/>

### Turin Ridgeriders

<http://www.turinridgeriders.com>

### Valley Snow Travelers of Lewis County, Inc.

<http://www.valleysnowtravelers.org/>