



CCSO/CCOM
Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations
Conseil Canadien des Organismes Motoneiges

Dedicated to providing leadership and support of safe, organized and environmentally responsible snowmobiling in Canada since 1974



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Standing Committee on Finance
Sixth Floor, 131 Queen Street
House of Commons
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

The Honourable Wayne Easter, PC, M.P. for Malpeque
Chair of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance,

Dear Wayne,

On behalf of the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO), please accept our thanks for taking the time to learn more about the many benefits that snowmobiling brings to communities across Canada.

Today we are celebrating snowmobiling in Canada. There is a rich snowmobiling history in Canada and we know that there can be an even brighter future through collaboration with the Government of Canada. Snowmobiling matters to many communities across Canada. Thousands of volunteers from our not-for-profit network of 729 clubs build, maintain and operate over 121,000 kilometres of the best snowmobile trails in the world. These trails are a powerful economic generator in rural and remote Canada, generating \$8 billion in economic activity in a typical three-month season each year while creating over 41,000 jobs from snowmobiling.

In addition to our dedicated volunteers, the main requirement to build and maintain snowmobile trails are machines called snowmobile trail groomers. Here are two examples of units used to groom a snowmobile trail. On the left is a Pisten Trail Bully with a multi blade drag and, on the right, a Prinoth Husky with a Mogul Master multi-blade snow drag. Both of the snow drags shown are manufactured in Canada.



These snowmobile trail groomers work very similar to a road grader, but instead of making a nice level roadway they work the snow (called processing) and the result is a flat, smooth, level surface known as a groomed snowmobile trail or a snowmobilers' greatest delight. The thousands of hours that these machines put on each year making trails, results in the safest place for snowmobilers to ride and enjoy the great outdoors. With a fleet of close to 1200 of these "snowmobile trail groomers" across the country and a replacement cost of \$250,000 each, they are very critical to the continued success of snowmobiling in Canada.

Question: **What federal measures would help Canadian snowmobilers be more productive?**

Our request for the Government of Canada is to help us fund our groomer replacement program. Environment improvements for maintaining the snowmobile trail network is a key component of the replacement program. The snowmobiling industry wants to do its part to support this government's environmental leadership and actions to reduce climate change. The industry would like to adhere to the new Tier 4 emissions standards to minimize the impact that grooming may have in the environment. We need to replace our grooming machines and would like to incorporate the new technology by updating the fleet – Example - **ten new Prinoth Husky snowmobile trail groomers** are so environmentally friendly that their combined emissions are the equivalent of **one older groomer**.

Snow comes with many challenges from blowing and drifting, different types of snow with varying temperature changes or weather patterns – this keeps both the snowmobile trail groomers very busy as well as the mostly volunteer operators. The best grooming occurs on the trails late at night when it is coldest and the snow has a chance to "set up or harden" before another day of busy snowmobilers go off to explore a piece of our Canadian Winter Paradise – We call our snow "Winter Gold".

Noted improvements to allow snowmobile club volunteers to be more productive during the main snowmobile season of trail operation:

1. Additional reliability of new trail grooming equipment so fewer break downs
2. The newer equipment is even more environmentally friendly at the Tier 4 emission standards plus better kms per hour fuel usage
3. By working with the current fleet, allowing a rebuild and placement in smaller clubs not only in province or territory but also a "Canada wide fleet management" concept. This will increase equipment overall to be more reliable while saving precious operational dollars by placing lower hour older grooming units into the appropriate locations

Question: **What federal measures would help Canadian Snowmobile Businesses to be more productive and competitive?**

The Government of Canada has played a key role in supporting the maintenance and growth of recreational trail infrastructure through its continued partnership with the National Trails Coalition (NTC). As a founding member of the NTC, the CCSO plays a critical role in ensuring that a portion of the federal investment is matched with funds raised by our volunteers and put to work enhancing the winter tourism economy. From 2009 to 2016, the federal government saw its \$35 million investment in snowmobile and recreational trails grow to over \$90 million dollars of trail improvements when matched with the funds raised by our volunteers. The volunteers greatly appreciate the recognition of their hard work which is so clearly illustrated by this continued government partnership.



Snowmobiling by the Numbers in Canada (see attached HCA Economic Impact Summary for Additional Details)

121,297 kms	Total kilometers of organized snowmobile trails in Canada.
\$1.4 Billion	Dollars collected each year in taxes by all levels of government.
41,000	Jobs in Canada from snowmobiling.
\$8+ Billion	The Canadian economic engine of snowmobiling for the 2014/15 season that occurs mostly in rural Canada.
44,431	Total number of new snowmobiles sold in Canada.
\$58+ Million	Individual user pay fees paid by snowmobilers for the rights to membership & trail access in Canada.
729	Snowmobile clubs in Canada managed by Volunteers providing Winter Tourism to rural Canada.
70%/30%	Percentage of men and women actively participating in the recreation of snowmobiling.

Snowmobilers are requesting a \$40 million dollar federal investment over the next 5 years. The volunteers will match this investment of the Federal Government to move snowmobiling to the next level in Canada. Creating an equipment bulk buying program, financial tools to refurbish existing lower hour groomers, to ensure the right equipment is located to smaller clubs. By working with the entire fleet of 1200 groomers, this national program will benefit and add to the efficiencies that produce results by having an overall fleet management approach and long term planning to this volunteer run trails system that employs over 41,000 people and is the largest single operation of organized trails system in the world.

Who are the contributing partners?

Federal Government grant program for a minimum of 5 years – 2017 to 2121

\$8 million per year for 5 years = \$40 million

Prov/Territory Partners, Snowmobile Clubs & Associations matching the Federal program

\$8 million per year for 5 years = \$40 million

The \$16 million dollars invested annually allows the groomer program to be the best planned and overall management of a national fleet of snowmobile trail groomers – with 1200 in the existing fleet this would be based on 55 new groomers per year plus a refurbishment of approximately 30 more.

Noted improvements in productivity and competitiveness

1. Bulk buying ensures major discounts versus the single groomer purchase by successful clubs
2. A process to request minimum standards for new trail grooming equipment
4. Better overall trail quality and consistency on grooming standards
5. Equipment replaced more on need – remove the oldest equipment from the fleet with a vision and long term planning



As we look to the future, CCSO will be focusing on growing our sport from the current \$8 billion a year economic contribution and job creator into an even more powerful \$10 billion economic engine. We believe the single greatest opportunity to do this lies in attracting people from around the world – the U.S., Asia, Europe and beyond – to experience the trails we’ve worked so hard to build.

We look forward to your ongoing support as we continue our work with the Federal Funding offices and the Destination Canada - from partnerships in grant programs designed to improve the trail infrastructure, to assistance in the upgrading of our snowmobile trail grooming fleet, to the creation and implementation of a winter tourism campaign showcasing snowmobiling and the amazing sights, sounds and experiences that tourists from around the world can discover on snowmobiles.

Again, we thank you for taking time to learn more about snowmobiling in Canada and look for your continued support.

There's no business like snow business!

Sincerely,

Dale Hickox

Dale Hickox
President
Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations

