

# DANE COUNTY SNOWMOBILE TRAIL OPENING AND CLOSING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a system to open and close the Dane County Snowmobile Trail System once signage and required paperwork is turned into the Dane County Parks Office. The intent of this procedure is to protect landowner's property rights, natural resources, and trail users. This procedure will also maximize snowmobiling opportunities through out the county.

## POLICY CRITERIA

1. Dane County Snowmobile Trails will not be opened earlier than December 1st or later than March 31st, no matter what the snow conditions are.
2. Dane County will be divided into five regions. These regions will be used for the purpose of evaluating snow conditions on a region by region basis. Each region will be evaluated independently for opening and closing vs. the entire trail system.
3. To open the trails the following conditions are required: temperature must be steady 32 degrees fahrenheit or below and have a minimum of (six) 6-inches of snow on the ground. If trails are opened, then the entire region(s) must be open.
4. If the entire system is not open, trail closed signs should be installed where an open region meets a closed region.

## PROCEDURE

1. Each year (5) Region Leaders and (16) Executive Trail Representatives will be selected at the Fall Executive Trail Committee meeting. Each Region Leader is responsible for one Region. The Region Leader will gather input from the Executive Trail Representatives. The Executive Trail Representatives will report, to their Region Leader, any change in trail conditions. No contact, will mean, no change in the status of their trail section. Regular communication is encouraged.
2. The Region Leaders report to the President of the Dane County Council of Snowmobile Clubs (or a designee) with recommendations to open or close trails within their Region. The President or (a designee) and the Snowmobile Program Coordinator will determine whether a Region(s) or the entire system will be **opened or closed**. Generally, when opening or closing the trails, a specific time should be given in advance of the action. Preferably decisions are made before 5 PM for an 8 AM open or closure and decide by 8 AM for a 5 PM open or closure. This is to allow for users to react and allows for park staff to complete updates.
3. As soon as a decision is made to open region(s) for the first time in a season, the Parks Director or his/her designee will make contacts with media through a general press release. Only one press release will be sent per season.
4. Park Rangers will update the parks website and Travel Wisconsin website for openings and closings. The Dane County Council of Snowmobile Clubs will update the snowmobile phone line and text alert system for openings and closings.
4. Parks staff will contact the 911 Communication Center through the Duty Supervisor by email and/or call. Contact will also be made by an email to the Supervisor of the Sheriff's Dept. Marine and Trails Enforcement Bureau.