



Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs – AWSC

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Make sure snowmobile trails are open and safe before heading out.

In spite of the snowfall across much of Wisconsin in recent days, the Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs (AWSC) wants to remind riders that most snowmobile trails in the state are not yet open. The majority of the snowmobile trails in the state are located on private property and without the generosity of these thousands of landowners, the Wisconsin snowmobile trail system would not be possible. Riding on them when they are not open or off the marked trail is trespassing and dangerous and you can also be fined. To find out what trails are open contact a local club or visit the AWSC website at www.awsc.org and click on WI Trails.

Even though the snow may look inviting, the warm weather we have experienced most of the fall has left many areas not frozen. Before the trails can be open for use, the ground under the snow needs to be frozen to allow for crossing wet areas and adequate snow is necessary to protect the ground under the trail and in some cases crops under the snow. Once trails are opened be aware they will be in early season condition with possible hazards under the snow, so it is recommended to ride with caution. Please stay off lakes until there is enough ice to carry a snowmobile. Snowmobilers should never ride on any lakes or rivers without checking with the locals about whether the ice is safe.

Almost all of the snowmobile trails in the state are maintained by the volunteer members of snowmobile clubs. They are responsible for getting permission from landowners, brushing, signing and preparing the trails for winter use, along with grooming the trails to make them smooth and safe. The snowmobile program which is administered by the DNR provides the funding that reimburses clubs for the expenses incurred. These funds come from the registration and trail pass fees that snowmobilers pay, along with gas tax on some of the gas used by snowmobiles which makes it a user funded program. Before heading out make sure your sled has a current registration and 2017 trail pass. For more information, go to the DNR website at www.dnr.wi.gov.

The AWSC consists of over 600 snowmobile clubs from across Wisconsin. These clubs and their nearly 40,000 volunteer members are responsible for developing and maintaining the over 22,000 miles of snowmobile trails for public use which contributes millions of dollars in economic impact to the state's winter economy. For more information or to find a club to join, go to the AWSC website at www.awsc.org.