

Snowmobile Trail Development and Program Grants

FY2011 Request: \$250,000
Reference No: 33690

AP/AL: Appropriation
Category: Development

Project Type: Parks / Recreation

Location: Statewide

Contact: Leta Simons

House District: Statewide (HD 1-40)

Contact Phone: (907)465-3379

Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2010 - 06/30/2015

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

Snowmobiling is one of Alaska’s fastest growing outdoor recreation activities. Funds are needed to develop and maintain trails and trailheads to provide for safe riding opportunities and to educate riders on safe riding practices. The result is a variety of safe, accessible, well-maintained snowmobile trails. Funds for this program are provided by snowmobile registration fees paid by Alaskans. Funds are distributed in the form of matching grants for activities such as: trail and trailhead development and maintenance, safety education, trail identification and to establish legal trail easements. Grants go to organizations, businesses, agencies, local governments and individuals.

Funding:	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	Total
VehRcpts	\$250,000						\$250,000
Total:	\$250,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$250,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
Totals:	0	0

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

SLA2009/CH15	\$ 250,000	Grants are being awarded
SLA2008CH29	\$ 200,000	Complete
SLA2007/CH30	\$ 200,000	Complete
SLA2006/CH82	\$ 200,000	Complete
SLA2005/CH3	\$ 200,000	Complete

Project Description/Justification:

This program is funded by snowmobile registrations for snowmobile trail and trailhead development and safety education programs. This will be the ninth year of the program, Grant decisions are made with the consultation of a Snowmobile Trails Advisory Committee (SnowTRAC), a citizen committee representing all regions of the state.

Snowmobile users benefit from the registration fees they pay on their snowmobiles by having marked and maintained snowmobile trails. This provides safety benefits to riders. Alaskans die in snowmobile accidents at twice the rate of any other state. This is in part due to the lack of signed and maintained trails. It also has the potential of reducing search and rescue costs by reducing the chances of snowmobilers getting lost. Trespass is also reduced if snowmobilers have marked and maintained

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trails. Because this is a matching grant program, grantees provide cash, labor and equipment to match at least 25 percent of state provided grant funds, effectively stretching state funds. Anchorage Economic Development Corporation estimates that snowmobile sales and activity in Alaska results in approximately \$54 million in annual private sector expenditures.

Due to the increasing cost of grooming snowmobile trails and the growing demand for more trails grooming, efforts will be made by the snowmobile community to increase registration fees. Current levels of funding do not support the demand for snowmobile trail projects. Thus far, it has been proposed that registration fees increase from \$5 to \$20 dollars per year. This will quadruple the amount of funding available for projects and will meet the increased demand for snowmobile trails and safety programs requested by the public.

Why is this Project Needed Now?

Many of Alaska's snowmobile trails need to be groomed on a weekly basis to ensure the safety of riders. The grant program provides an opportunity to groom these trails and reserve existing recreational access throughout the state.

Specific Spending Detail:

<u>LINE ITEM</u>	<u>DOLLAR AMOUNT</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION (text)</u>
Personal Services	\$ 30,000	State Grant Personnel
Travel	\$ 5,000	State Grant Personnel travel
Grants	\$ 215,000	Grants to federal and local governments and non-profit agencies.

Project Support:

Alaska State Snowmobile Association, Alaska Snowmobile Representatives Alliance, Anchorage Economic Development Corporation, Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau, Alaska Travel Industry Alliance, local snowmobile organizations and dealers, and the Division of Motor Vehicles

Project Opposition:

None