

VAST Construction Seminar, April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011

# Managing your Grooming Contract

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# Purpose of Grooming

- Provide the best quality trail for the VAST membership
- Provide a safe riding environment for snowmobilers
- Provide an enjoyable riding experience for all ages and riding abilities

# Grooming Contracts Explained

- Issued to VAST Grooming Clubs/Contractors on annual basis
- VAST reimburses grooming clubs/contractors for grooming the SSTs
- Based on contract mileage, five-year average and equipment class rate
- Grooming cap is based on two-times per week grooming
- Contract changes every year based on several variables

# Contract terms & definitions

- Equipment Class (1-5):
  - Width of equipment used to groom area trails
    - Tucker 2000, 8' wide = Class I
- Equipment Rate:
  - VAST Reimbursement Rate/traveled mile
    - Class I = \$10.00/per mile
- Traveled Mile vs Contract Mile
  - Contract mile only used in contract for determining base, subsidy & grooming cap
  - Mileage logged from point a to point b

# Contract terms & definitions

- Contract Miles:
  - Total one-way mileage within club's jurisdiction
- Base Grooming Contract Weeks:
  - Five-year average of grooming weeks within sixteen week season
- Base Grooming Contract:
  - $\text{Contract Rate/mile} \times \text{Base Grooming Contract weeks} \times \text{contract miles}$
- Grooming Contract Subsidy:
  - = Base Grooming Contract = Green winter subsidy

# Contract terms & definitions

- Start Up Payment
  - 25% of Base Grooming Contract
  - Issued end of November
- Grooming Contract CAP
  - Twice the Base Grooming Contract
  - VAST reimbursement shall not exceed CAP
- Definition of a grooming week
  - 25% of the contract mileage groomed
  - Ex. 50 mile contract = 12.5 miles groomed

# Looking at the Big Picture

- 50 miles of trail (contract mileage)
- 10 week season (5-yr average)
- TOTAL Season Mileage Reimbursement:
  - 2,000 miles = GROOMING CAP
- According to the VAST contract, average weekly mileage allowance = 200 miles
  - This is an average, unused miles may be banked and applied in future weeks within the limits of the CAP.

# Looking at the Big Picture

- Weekly miles groomed in excess of 200 miles are considered third time grooming
- At the end of each payment period, these miles will be considered within limits of contract
- Groom trails as needed
  - Main routes may need 3 x's
  - Feeders and alternates may need 1 x

# Payment Process

- There are a total of 4 grooming payments
  - Start-Up Payment: 25% of the base contract
    - Before the season begins
  - Payment #1: Weeks 1-5
  - Payment #2: Weeks 6-10
  - Payment #3/Final: Weeks 11-16
    - After the season has ended & grooming financial analysis has been submitted

# Payment Process

- In order to receive Payment #1, the club must groom past the start-up amount
  - 50 mile contract = 250 miles or \$2500
- Payment #1 = 1,000 miles
  - Anything over the 1,000 miles is considered third time grooming to be applied towards CAP
    - Ex. Week #1: 50 miles, Week #2: 100 miles, Week #3: 300 miles, Week #4: 0 miles, Week #5: 350 miles
    - Total Mileage: 800 miles = \$8,000 - \$2,500 (Start-Up)
    - Payment #1: \$5,500

# Payment Process

- Payment #2
  - Ex. Week #6: 250, Week #7: 350, Week #8: 350, Week #9: 400, Week #10: 375
  - Total Mileage: 1,725 or \$17,250
  - At this point, this club is over their CAP by 525 miles and has groomed 9 of the 10 weeks
  - Total Reimbursement for Payment #2: \$10,000 for 1,000 miles
  - Start Up + Payment #1 + Payment #2 = \$18,000

# Payment Process

- Payment #3 (Week 11-16)
  - Ex Week #11: 150, Week #12: 50, Week #13: 100, Week #14: 0, Week #15: 0, Week #16: 0
  - In this example, At week #11, the club hit their five-year average of grooming weeks and in week #12, the club groomed to their CAP (2,000 miles)
  - The TOTAL mileage groomed for the season was 2,625 miles
  - The club is over their CAP by 625 miles

# Payment Process

- At the end of the season, the TA & the Board of Directors will determine if these additional miles will be reimbursed
- The reimbursement will be based on available funding in the grooming budget
- Longevity of Season
- Snowfall concentrated in one area/region
- Higher volumes of traffic in the above

# Summarizing the Scenario

- The club groomed beyond the limits of the contract CAP and was reimbursed the CAP amount only.
  - Did this club manage their mileage effectively?
  - What are some of the unknown variables that attributed to the additional grooming?
    - New Snow
    - Holiday Weekend/Week
    - Club Events

# Summarizing the Scenario

- What are some of the unknown variables that attributed to less grooming?
  - Trails didn't need grooming
  - Weather
  - Equipment breakdown
  - Early/Late Season

# Grooming Recommendations

- COMMON SENSE PREVAILS!
- What does the trail need?
- Base decisions on trail quality, not financial need.
- Clubs need to be aware of their traffic patterns, most effective times to groom and weather forecast. Running a regular schedule may not be the answer.
- Trails may be groomed less frequently during early and late season, or when marginal conditions exist
- When grooming in early season and building a base
  - Unused mileage can be saved and applied later in the season
    - Ex: 50 Mile Contract – Week 1: Groom 100 Miles  
Week 8: Groom 300 Miles

# Grooming Recommendations

- Early season grooming builds the best trail base
- Loop Trails vs Out & Back as conditions warrant
  - Grooming loop trails saves on grooming miles applied towards CAP
  - Allows club to groom loop twice and is applied as one full groom (groom loop one way and reverse the direction the next)

# Common Questions

- How many miles can my club groom per week to be in compliance with my contract?
  - Up to 4 Times the Contract Mileage
- What if trail conditions are marginal and snowmobilers are still riding? Should we groom the full contract amount?
  - The decision to groom or not should be made by the club. If heavily travelled trails require more attention they should be groomed.

# Common Questions

- What if trail conditions are excellent and grooming the full contract amount isn't necessary?
  - Groom trails as necessary and bank miles for weeks when we have significant snow accumulation and/or traffic
- Will my 5-yr avg change?
  - Groom above the base grooming contract weeks and not exceed cap (do not groom full weeks)
  - Groom above and beyond cap (VAST may not reimburse club for this)

# Common Questions

- What if I am near my contract cap?
  - Contact VAST Trails Administrator
  - As long as the club has not hit their cap before their 5-yr average of weeks and conditions are good (pending TA Approval), keep grooming.
- What if I have exceeded my cap?
  - Grooming may or may not be reimbursed
  - This is situational! What may be covered one year, may not be the case the next. Talk to TA.