

# Meeting Notes

## Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program (N-CGSAP) Working Group

March 20, 2014

**Present:**

Bruce Austin  
Christine Jourdain, ACSA  
Kay Lloyd  
Bart Melton, NPCA  
David McCray, Two Top  
Bert Miller, WY SMA  
Alicia Murphy, NPS  
George Pryich

Kim Raap, Trails Work Consulting

**Not Present:**

Scott Christensen, GYC  
Dave Hodges  
Jeremiah Rieman, WY Gov Office  
Wade Vagias, NPS  
Jack Welch, Blue Ribbon Coalition

**Notes:**

1. Introduction of new member
2. The group accepted meeting notes from the February 2014 meeting.
3. Update on funding progress
  - a. Kim and Alicia are continuing work on the MOU between the State of Wyoming and the NPS to administer the RTP grant, which will fund the Yellowstone Snowmobile Access Program. As soon as the MOU is completed, Alicia and Kim will work on finding a vendor to produce the course.
4. **Discussion Topic: Metrics of success for the N-CGSAP —what do we monitor and how?**
  - a. The group reviewed the document sent out with the agenda, titled “Outline for Monitoring White Paper,” which sets forth a proposal for the specific law enforcement citations and methods the park will use in monitoring the N-CGSAP.
    - i. Alicia chose citations under the 6 general topics formerly identified by this group using these criteria:
      1. Most common in past
      2. Most easily understood and specific (no “other” catch-alls)
      3. Could cause the most impact to resources or visitor safety
    - ii. Several members of the group agreed that “Snowmobile Use in Undesignated Areas” needed to be more specific since this may actually only apply to incursions from the park’s west boundary, which would not apply to this program. **Action: Alicia will check with law enforcement to see if this citation has a specific definition and will report back to the group.**
    - iii. In general, the group thought the breakdown was useful and logical, assuming that law enforcement could document the difference between commercial, administrative, and non-commercial operators in the citations. **Action: Alicia will check with law enforcement to make sure this is still on the table since LE is upgrading their citation system at this time.**

- iv. The group discussed what we could do for wildlife, since there does not seem to be a historic record of wildlife-specific citations other than “snowmobile violations,” which is vague.
  - 1. The Winter Use Adaptive Management Program wildlife working group proposes to continue monitoring of wildlife reactions to oversnow vehicles, so perhaps we could rely on their observations.
    - a. This would require the observers to clearly identify non-commercial versus commercial groups
    - b. There is some concern that this may not be as objective and consistent as law enforcement citations.
    - c. After discussion, Alicia proposed that we discuss this option with the wildlife group and see if this is feasible. Also, see what we think after the pilot year’s data to determine if we want to finalize this as an option.
  - 2. Several members of the group were concerned that some groups may inadvertently cause wildlife harassment due to inexperience rather than malice. For example: accidentally causing bison to run in the road when the group is trying to pass.
    - a. Other members of the group agreed that we should trust law enforcement’s judgment on this and rely on their citations to reflect impacts to wildlife.
- v. Next step: **Action: Alicia will update the white paper to reflect this meeting’s discussions and her talks with law enforcement staff.**

- 5. ***Discussion Topic: What logistical “know before you go” information do we need to provide visitors before they apply for the lottery and afterwards (in addition to information covered in the Yellowstone Snowmobile Education Certification?***
  - a. ***BAT snowmobiles***
  - b. ***Lodging and dining***
  - c. ***Itinerary planning***
    - i. Due to short time, Alicia asked group members to email her any suggestions for what to include on the lottery website for those planning to apply for the lottery and for those who are successful.
      - 1. One group member suggested making sure that there is good training of what to do in severe weather—can groups shelter overnight in the park if there are unsafe conditions? Alicia replied that the NPS is dedicated to people’s safety and would work with groups who felt endangered by weather conditions once they were in the park.

#### **Action Items**

- Alicia will:
  - Create a Doodle poll and email out invites by 3/24/2014.
  - Send meeting notes to the Group by 4/3/2014.
  - By one week before the next meeting, Alicia will;
    - Disseminate an updated white paper with law enforcement information
    - Send an agenda for the next meeting
  - Talk to NPS personnel regarding law enforcement citations and identifying commercial vs. non-commercial vs. administrative travel

- The Group members will:
  - Complete the doodle poll for April's meeting by 3/28/2014
  - Read over the material Alicia sends out before the next meeting

#### **Working Group Operating Principles**

- The National Park Service is the final decision-making body for all aspects of the Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program (the Program)
- The Program will be consistent with the framework contained within Appendix C of the final Plan/SEIS, the Record of Decision, and the Final Rule
- This Group is a portal to encourage creative ideas and insight on how to best develop the Program
- We will be respectful of all ideas and each other and will entertain new possibilities and consider how they might work
- We'll ask tough questions