

PROTECT YOUR TRAILS!  
**JOIN**  
MINNESOTA UNITED  
SNOWMOBILERS ASSOCIATION

## Club Officer Handbook



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2015-2016



## **Preface**

This handbook has been prepared for snowmobile clubs in Minnesota. With it we will try to provide information to help you with your club as it relates to MnUSA. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the MnUSA office at 763-577-0185, toll free at 866-811-7669, fax us at 763-577-0186 or reach us via our website at [www.mnsnowmobiler.org](http://www.mnsnowmobiler.org).

The officers of your club are instrumental in developing the growth and continuity of the club and that extends to MnUSA and the sport of snowmobiling in our State! Congratulations to the club officers for the important role that they have accepted in promoting and maintaining snowmobiling in your area.

The person in your club that is designated as “club contact” is the individual who will receive all mailings from MnUSA, including membership rosters and MnUSA information. Club contacts are extremely vital to the ongoing communication between MnUSA and your club, as it is their responsibility to bring the information to the club. Your club designates who will act as club contact. MnUSA will provide your club contact information when inquiries are received concerning your club. From time to time MnUSA will send information to other officers or members of your club as well.

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## **Information on MnUSA**

MnUSA stands for Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association. The association was formed in 1978 and its purpose is as follows:

- (a) To encourage and promote recreational snowmobiling;
- (b) To stimulate and advance the education, general welfare and safety of snowmobiling in the State of Minnesota;
- (c) To serve the interests of snowmobile owners in the State of Minnesota;
- (d) To promote favorable State and Federal snowmobile legislation and regulations;
- (e) To further develop a fraternal spirit among local snowmobile clubs and other associations;
- (f) To provide a medium for the exchange of snowmobile information;
- (g) To provide desirable and lawful functions for the successful operation of MnUSA and in the general public interest;
- (h) To promote active youth participation in organized snowmobiling; and
- (i) To promote the creation and protection of snowmobile trails throughout the State of Minnesota.

MnUSA is a non-profit membership association comprised of individuals and families and businesses. Each of its members has a voting privilege at general membership meetings. MnUSA gives members discounts if paid through club rosters. Memberships paid through clubs are \$20 per year. The cost for the individual or family membership paid directly to MnUSA is \$25 per year or \$45 for 2 years or \$65 for 3 years. For \$50 which includes a \$30 donation, an individual or family can upgrade their membership to an "Extra Miler" Membership with additional benefits. Business and trail organization memberships are \$75 per year and business sponsor memberships are \$100 per year.

Presently there are approximately 11,500 members in MnUSA with 250 member clubs.

## **MnUSA Organization**

The State of Minnesota is divided into 9 regions and at least two directors are required on the MnUSA Board of Directors from each region. Presently there are 48 directors representing snowmobilers across the entire state. The management of MnUSA is vested in its Board of Directors. Region vote is based on percentage of MnUSA members in each region. At the October meeting the general membership elects the following officers: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The immediate past president serves as Director at Large. These officers comprise the MnUSA Executive Board which directs the day-to-day business of the Association.

### **Why Join MnUSA?**

1. To **PROTECT YOUR TRAILS** and preserve the sport of snowmobiling in Minnesota and the entire snow belt!
2. Official membership card and decals;
3. Annual trail guide *Destinations*;
4. A subscription to *Minnesota Snowmobiling* magazine, the official publication of MnUSA, published 8 times per year. The publication includes articles of interest to snowmobilers, club news, reports of legislative events and issues, trail maps, events and snowmobile travel information.
6. \$3,500 Accidental Death/Dismemberment Insurance;
7. Legislative voice with a full-time lobbyist;
8. Discounts at participating Business membership businesses;
9. Touring and trails information;
10. Information on MnUSA's web site [www.mnsnowmobiler.org](http://www.mnsnowmobiler.org);
11. Representation at governmental agencies and coalitions - Department of Natural Resources, Explore Minnesota Tourism, Minnesota Recreational Trail Users Association (MRTUA), Minnesota Motorized Trail Coalition (MMTC), Coalition of Recreational Trail Users (CRTU);
12. Representation at national and international snowmobile associations - International Snowmobile Council, American Council of Snowmobile Associations and Midwest Chapter ISC and ACSA.

### **Why Be a MnUSA Snowmobile Club?**

1. To protect and preserve the sport of snowmobiling statewide and nationwide.
2. Trail liability insurance can be purchased by MnUSA clubs through V&V Insurance. [This is only liability insurance - not worker's comp.]
3. Public relations support to overcome a negative or highlight a positive.
4. Provides Board of Directors to assist clubs within the State.
5. Updates on state, federal and international issues.
6. Stronger legislative voice for snowmobilers. Motorized recreation is held to a higher responsibility of membership than non-motorized recreation.
7. Voice in legislative agenda. The club has representation to MnUSA through its regional directors.
8. Club news articles in *Minnesota Snowmobiling*.
9. Membership incentives. Clubs or individuals who sign up new members to MnUSA are eligible for prizes through the Members Recruiting Members program.
10. Fundraisers available through MnUSA raffle.

11. Representation at government agencies for grooming and trail maintenance funding.
12. Full time office staff working for snowmobilers and clubs.
13. Safety posters, decals, brochures and Snowmobile Fact Books are available through ISMA or through the MnUSA office. Reflective helmet decals for safety training are available to clubs through MnUSA)
14. Club web page on MnUSA's web site - [www.mnsnowmobiler.org](http://www.mnsnowmobiler.org)
15. MnUSA combines snowmobilers' needs with other recreational users through MMTCA, CRTU and MRTUA, as well as other state snowmobile associations, national associations, ACSA, and international organizations, ISC.

## **Club News**

MnUSA clubs may include information on their club and events in the MnUSA publication and on MnUSA's web site. Submit your articles for the publication to *Minnesota Snowmobiling*, Attn: Club News or Attn: Calendar of Events, 7887 Fuller Rd #101, Eden Prairie, MN 55344 (phone: 952-473-7870 or email: [info@sledder.net](mailto:info@sledder.net)). The publication is printed 8 times a year. Deadlines for club information are as follows:

October Issue - September 4, 2015  
November Issue - October 2, 2015  
December Issue - November 6, 2015  
January Issue - December 4, 2015  
February Issue - January 1, 2015  
March Issue - February 5, 2015  
Summer Issue - June 3, 2016

Contact the publisher with questions or advertising requests.

To have your club stories and events included on MnUSA's web site, send your information to MnUSA by mail or email to [mnusaoffice@popp.net](mailto:mnusaoffice@popp.net)

## MnUSA Events and Activities

***Fall Workshop and Convention*** - Held the fourth weekend in October, this workshop offers seminars for all members including topics such as trail grooming, funding and club activities. Social activities are held providing an opportunity to network and exchange ideas. Officers are elected at the annual membership meeting on Saturday. A Board of Directors meeting is held on Sunday. The Fall Workshop is rotated around the state by region. MnUSA Region 8 and its clubs are the hosts for 2015 at the Park Plaza Bloomington, October 23-25, 2015.

***Winter Rendezvous*** - Held on the second weekend in February, this weekend event is to snowmobile and socialize. Recognition awards are given. Membership and Board of Directors meetings are held on Sunday. A Governor's or VIP Ride is generally held during this weekend. The site of this event is determined by bid from clubs or region in conjunction with a host facility. The 2016 Rendezvous will be at Grand Casino Hinckley the weekend of February 11-14 with the 2017 Rendezvous scheduled for Timberlake Lodge, Grand Rapids, the weekend of February 9-12. Bids are due in April 2016 for the 2018 Rendezvous.

***Spring Committee and Quarterly Meetings*** - Held the fourth weekend in April, on Saturday the MnUSA membership meets. The MnUSA committees meet also meet in Saturday to develop their budgets and plan for the upcoming year. The Board of Directors meeting follows on Sunday. The Spring Meeting for 2016 will be held April 22-24 at Craguns Resort & Hotel on Gull Lake, Brainerd.

***Summer Campout*** - Held the second weekend of July, this event includes games, entertainment, fun, food and festivities. Membership and Board of Directors meetings are held on Saturday morning. The Summer Campout is rotated around the state by region. MnUSA Region 1 (Northwest) is the host for 2016.

***Veterans Appreciation Ride*** - Held the beginning of January of each year, MnUSA joins with Minnesota Snowmobile Education and Advancement Fund with assistance from the snowmobile manufacturers and donors, to provide a snowmobile day to veterans and active duty military in appreciation of their service to all of us. The 2016 ride will be held January 9th in Hutchinson. [www.mnvetsnowmobileride.org](http://www.mnvetsnowmobileride.org)

***International Snowmobile Safety Week*** - Held in January of each year, this is a week devoted to snowmobile safety throughout the United States, Canada, Sweden and Russia. International Snowmobile Safety Week will be January 16-24, 2016. For suggestions in promoting this week, you can



find information in the Campaign Action Manual on the ISMA website at [www.snowmobile.org](http://www.snowmobile.org) and on MnUSA's club info page at <http://mnsnowmobiler.org/index.php?pageid=525>

***Take a Friend Snowmobiling Week— February 5-15, 2016*** Introduce a friend to snowmobiling during this week. See [gosnowmoiling.org](http://gosnowmoiling.org) and [gosnowmobilingmn.org](http://gosnowmobilingmn.org) for programs and promotions.

### **Statewide Charity Activities:**

***International Snowmobile Charity Survey*** - This survey is provided to the clubs in March of each year. MnUSA encourages its clubs to complete the survey at the end of the season and report the club's charitable activities during season. This information is compiled for Minnesota and internationally. Snowmobilers are caring individuals and very involved in their local communities. The information that is compiled is used to promote the lifestyle and reflect the compassion of snowmobilers when dealing with non-snowmobilers and government officials.

***Charity Ride Endorsements*** - MnUSA endorses statewide snowmobile rides for charity such as ALS Blizzard Tour and the Northland 300 Ride for Special Olympics. Endorsement requests must be made in writing and sent to the MnUSA office.

***Awards*** - MnUSA recognizes individuals, families, youth and dealers for exceptional involvement in the promotion of snowmobiling and maintenance of trails. The Snowmobiler/Snowmobile Family of the Year, Unsung Hero, Young Snowmobiler of the Year and Dealer of the Year information is mailed to the MnUSA clubs in the Fall and can be found on the MnUSA web site. Due date is January 8, 2016. These awards are given at the MnUSA Winter Rendezvous in February.

***Scholarship*** - MnUSA has a scholarship program for high school seniors and individuals enrolled in accredited institutes of higher learning or vocational schools. Applications are due the end of March of each year. Information on the scholarship program is sent to the club contacts and can be found on the MnUSA web site beginning in January each year.

**Fundraising:**

*MnUSA Raffle:* MnUSA has a calendar raffle which benefits the clubs. The calendar raffle gives prizes each day of the year. The calendar sells for \$20 and clubs that sell calendars can receive a portion of the price back for a donation to a charity or snowmobile trail fund as required by Minnesota charitable gaming laws. For the 2016 calendar, clubs may receive \$2 per calendar if they sell 1-25 calendars; \$3 if they sell 26-50 calendars, \$4 if they sell 51-99 calendars and \$5 per calendar for clubs that sell 100 or more calendars. The calendar sales begin in the fall with the drawing held on January 1, 2013. To order calendars for your club to sell, contact the MnUSA office.

**Accidental Death/Dismemberment Insurance:**

MnUSA members are automatically entitled to a complimentary \$3500 accidental death/dismemberment insurance policy through American Income Life. A mailing will be made to the entire MnUSA membership this fall. *MnUSA members are not required to meet with a representative of the insurance company to receive the insurance.* Upon the accidental death of a MnUSA member, including spouse and family members under 18 years of age, the MnUSA office should be contacted for claim information. The insurance may be paid to the decedent's estate unless a beneficiary card has been signed.

American Income Life offers additional discounts on prescriptions, optical, etc. You can either meet with a representative of the insurance company or call American Income Life (800-495-1213) to receive this information. If any of your club members meet with an American Income Life representative, they are under no obligation to purchase additional insurance. The accidental death/dismemberment insurance is a benefit to MnUSA members. MnUSA members are not required to meet with American Income Life representatives to receive the accidental death/dismemberment insurance benefit. The benefit is for death caused by an accident or for a dismemberment injury.

**Minnesota Snowmobile Education and Advancement Fund**

**(MSEAF):** This organization is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) charity and donations are tax deductible. MnUSA partners with MSEAF on the Veterans Appreciation Ride, safety billboards, educational seminars, trail signs and other projects that meet with the charitable purpose of MSEAF. Donations to MSEAF are welcome to fund the various safety and education projects and the Veterans Appreciation Ride.

**MnUSA Web Site:**

Through the MnUSA web site your club can receive a free web page and include your club events on the Club Events Calendar. Please include an email address to contact your club on your club page on the MnUSA site. Contact the MnUSA office for passwords to update your club information on the site. MnUSA will provide club trail condition reports through a link to your club website or an email update sent to the MnUSA office. Visit the MnUSA web site at [www.mnsnowmobiler.org](http://www.mnsnowmobiler.org) for up to date snowmobile information, links to clubs and links to associate members.

**MnUSA Facebook Page:**

Connect with MnUSA through its Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Minnesota-United-Snowmobilers-Association/86339634328>

**Members Recruiting Members Program (MRM):**

MnUSA's MRM Program has been a very successful program to promote membership growth for many years and rewards those individuals who work to encourage new members to MnUSA. For each new member recruited, the sponsor receives \$1 toward his or her MnUSA membership or toward MnUSA merchandise. Throughout the year, additional award programs are offered for MRM sponsors.

**Extra Miler Membership:**

The annual dues for the MnUSA Extra Miler Membership are \$50, \$20 for the membership and an additional \$30 to go the Extra Mile to support MnUSA and snowmobiling in Minnesota. Extra Miler members will be listed in the MnUSA publication, will receive an XM pin and will have special recognition at MnUSA events.

## **Club Rosters:**

**General Information:** Club rosters are sent out to all clubs every September so that your club has an updated roster to start the season. Rosters are sent to your Club Contact. Whenever your Club Contact changes, please notify the Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association (MnUSA) office.

Your roster will show all members of your club, expired and current. If you want to remove a club member for your roster, draw a single line through the member's first and last name only and return the top copy of your roster to the MnUSA office. Please do not use black ink. After the revisions have been made to your roster, an updated roster will be sent back to your club contact. Always keep the copies of your club's roster for your club records.

When you are paying dues for your club members, mark in the "Sending Payment" box on top of your roster, make check payable to MnUSA, and return the top copy of your roster to the MnUSA office. Dues for individual and family members are \$20 for one year, \$40 for two years and \$60 for 3 years when paid through your club. Dues for Business memberships and trail organizations/clubs are \$75 and business sponsors \$100.

The members' type is listed in the "TYPE" column. Type "C" is a club member, type "A" is a business member, type "S" is a business sponsor and type "T" a trail organization or club. When you are sending in renewal dues, please fill in the box at the top of the roster indicating how many of each type of membership you are paying for and the total amount of dues being sent in with the roster. After the revisions have been made to your roster, an updated roster will be sent back to your club contact. Members indicated with an "\*" are members of more than one club. They only need to pay their MnUSA dues through one club.

**Changes to Roster Information:** Please make any necessary name, address, phone number, #in family, or # of sled changes for your members directly on the roster. Please draw a single line through the incorrect information and print the updated information above the incorrect information. Please do not use black ink.

If you feel that a members' expiration date is incorrect, send the MnUSA office a copy of the original roster showing where you paid renewal dues for that member. Include a note explaining the error and the date the roster was sent to the MnUSA office. Remember that a members' club expiration date and their MnUSA expiration date may not be the same.

If you need to make any revisions to your club information printed on the roster, draw a single line through the incorrect information and print the correct information, including change of the club contact, above the incorrect information. Please do not use black ink.

***New Members:*** When you add new members to your club, please fill out the New Member Form sent to you by the MnUSA office. Please fill in all of the information requested on this form. Complete mailing addresses are required for delivery of the *Minnesota Snowmobiling* publication. If you are adding a member to your club that currently is a MnUSA member, or was a member in the past, please include their Member ID number. You can call the MnUSA office for this information.

***Mailing Labels:*** To receive mailing labels for members of your club, please check the “CHECK HERE FOR MAILING LABELS” box and indicate the number of sets you would like to receive next to “HOW MANY SETS?” field.

***Club Contact/Officer Update Forms:*** Please complete these forms whenever your club officers change. This year MnUSA is also requesting the contact information for the person in your club who handles the club media and club membership programs. Please provide email addresses when available.

***Summary:*** Receiving insurance benefits, membership cards and the *Minnesota Snowmobiling* publication depend on getting complete and accurate member information from your club to the MnUSA office. Once a member’s MnUSA membership expires, they will no longer receive the *Minnesota Snowmobiling* publication or be eligible to receive the Accidental Death and Dismemberment insurance.

Please fill out your roster and New Member form carefully and double check the number of member renewals and the amount of dues being sent in to the MnUSA office in the box on top of your roster or on the supplemental payment form. These amounts should match. If a roster is received and the amount of dues sent in is incorrect, the roster will not be processed and you will be contacted.

We encourage you to send in your club roster whenever you have renewals or revisions. The MnUSA office will send you an updated roster after receiving your club roster.

Please contact the MnUSA office with any questions regarding your roster or adding new members to your roster.

## Membership Ideas to Help Your Club:

### *Obtaining members*

1. MnUSA receives requests from its new members about local snowmobile clubs. The club names and MnUSA contact person in the geographical area of the new MnUSA members are provided to the person seeking the information. These people are looking to be involved in local clubs. Be sure your MnUSA club contact acts on any request he or she receives. Please include an email address on your club's webpage in MnUSA's site as we receive many inquiries about clubs through the website.
2. Make club membership fun and worthwhile. If members are pleased with the way things are going, they will talk to others about the club.
3. Market your organization as if you were selling a product. Promote your good points.
4. Join a local chamber of commerce. This organization is there to promote business and snowmobiling means business, especially in rural areas.
5. Try suggestions of other clubs, especially things that worked effectively for others. Attend the MnUSA workshop and network with other clubs.
6. Try to be as visible as possible to get those prospective members who may not know you exist. Keep your club actively involved in the community so your name is well known.
7. Advertise on radio, television and community newspapers through free community calendars. Make use of the cable TV network public information channel and/or community newspapers for meeting notices, club events, and new member announcements.
8. Put posters in areas where you will cover the largest number of snowmobilers.
9. Talk to snowmobile dealers in your area and work with them to promote your club members. They may allow you to put up posters, advertise your safety training classes, display handout information for prospective members, or even agree to pay membership for prospective membership into your club for people buying new machines. The more information the dealer knows about your club, the more he/she can communicate to a prospective member.
10. Hold a snowmobile safety course and don't overlook prospective new members. Cover what snowmobile clubs do, because parents are often present. Hand out club membership forms and other pertinent information about your club. MnUSA magazines and reflective helmet decals are available for your classes. Call the MnUSA office to request magazines, safety posters or other safety materials.

11. Everyone knows a snowmobiler who doesn't belong to a club. Draft a letter explaining your club and send a membership application to everyone you can think of. Even if they don't join the club now, at least they may have looked at the things your club does, and you have helped to promote your club. Names of MnUSA members in your area who are not club members are available from the MnUSA office.
12. Have a trail hospitality day. Park on the trail and set up an information booth on your club and MnUSA. You may offer some free hot chocolate or coffee and chat with prospective members. Contact the MnUSA office and let them know you are doing the trail stop.
13. Post signs on the trail that indicate the trail is the courtesy of your club and indicate a phone number or web site.
14. Promote the MnUSA Members Recruiting Members (MRM) membership program and the chances to win prizes for members.
15. Set up a booth in a sport show if you have one in your area. Promote your club. MnUSA can assist with materials.
16. Advertise and/or write a letter to the editor about your club for your local newspaper. MnUSA has templates available to assist you.

***Retaining Members***

1. Keep club meetings interesting. Take care of routine business at board meetings.
2. Keep club members informed by use of regular newsletters/email/facebook.
3. Appoint a membership chairperson. Have the membership chairperson or appointee personally contact all members who have not paid dues by the specified date. Encourage them to rejoin.
4. Send the club membership list to all members.
5. Use ideas in obtaining members to keep members. Don't be afraid to try new things to keep the club from getting stale.
6. Keep an active year-round social calendar with varied activities to build friendships and network.
7. Make sure the newer members are given a chance to serve on a committee or take part in the planning of events. When new members join, ask them what they like to do and incorporate them into the club activities. New, fresh ideas, can be a blessing to your club.
8. Make sure the same few people are not doing all the work or planning. Encouraging participation by many keeps interest up.
9. Make it a point to introduce new members at meetings and make them feel a part of the club. Talk to them after the meeting and

answer any questions they make have. Have a welcome committee to follow-up on new members and bring them to meetings so that they feel as if they have a friend already.

10. Keep your club members up to date through a digital newsletter, Facebook or other social media.
11. Remember to keep your club meetings fun and worthwhile to attend. If members are pleased with the way things are going, they will rejoin.

### **Public Relations - Positive Things Your Club Can Do for Publicity**

1. Get to know your local newspaper editor and reporters. Take them snowmobiling so they understand what you like to do.
2. Maintain an up-to-date list of your county board members and invite them to club functions. Be sure your local parks department has copies of your trail maps and ask them to consider snowmobile trail corridors when looking at new development plans. Be active at their meetings.
3. Maintain a list of your state senators and representatives and invite them to special club functions.
4. Engage the services of a photographer, either professional or amateur, and send pictures of your club activities to the newspapers with a press release.
5. Plan your publicity in advance and invite the news media to your special events.
6. Choose a spokesperson from your club to handle all public relations.
7. Participate in community projects and fundraisers as a club.
8. Donate practical items to your community.
9. Join other clubs and MnUSA in presenting a united front to answer anti-snowmobile publicity.
10. Announce your club's activities well in advance. Utilize Cable TV's community bulletin board as well as the newspapers' section on upcoming events and press releases to the editor.
11. Submit articles of your club's activities to *Minnesota Snowmobiling* and other snowmobile magazines.
12. Conduct a "Snowmobiler of the Year" contest and publicize the winner.
13. Hold an event for charity and be sure to let the media know.
14. Publicize rescue work done by your club or when you cooperate with law enforcement authorities.
15. Advertise your club on the trails you maintain and groom so trail users recognize the club as the trail provider.
16. Make use of the sample news releases for clubs on MnUSA's website.
17. Use social media to promote your club activities.



### **Trail Liability Insurance for Clubs**

Clubs may purchase trail liability insurance under the MnUSA umbrella policy. 75% of active club members must be members of MnUSA to be eligible for this policy. The policy is sold by V&V Insurance, Dale Vagts, PO Box 159, Cresco, IA 52136, 536-547-2161.

### **MnUSA Region Directors**

A complete list of directors and a map designating the regions can be found in the MnUSA magazine, *Minnesota Snowmobiling*, and on the MnUSA web site at [www.mnsnowmobiler.org](http://www.mnsnowmobiler.org).

## MnUSA Calendar of Events - 2015/2016

### 2015

October 23-25 MnUSA Workshop and Convention, hosted by  
Region 8  
MnUSA Membership Annual Meeting  
MnUSA Board of Directors' Meeting

### 2016

January 9 Veterans Appreciation Ride, International Falls  
February 5-15 Take a Friend Snowmobiling Week  
February 11-14 MnUSA Winter Rendezvous & VIP Ride,  
Grand Casino, Hinkley  
MnUSA Membership & Board of Directors' Meetings  
January 16-24 International Snowmobile Safety Week  
April 22-24 Annual Committee Meetings,  
MnUSA Membership & Board of Directors' Meetings  
June 9-11 International Snowmobile Congress, Rapid City, SD  
July 8-10 MnUSA Summer Campout, hosted by Region 1  
MnUSA Membership & Board of Directors' Meetings  
October 21-23 MnUSA Workshop and Convention, hosted by  
Region 7  
MnUSA Membership Annual Meeting  
MnUSA Board of Directors' Meeting

### *2016 Statewide Charity Events*

January 20-24 Northland 300 25th Anniversary Ride for Special  
Olympics  
Feb. 3-6 Blackwoods Blizzard Tour to Fight ALS (Lou Gehrig's  
Disease)

For more information on MnUSA Events, visit [www.mnsnowmobiler.org](http://www.mnsnowmobiler.org),  
click on About MnUSA and MnUSA Events.

## NOTES

**Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association, Inc.**  
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#### **Magazine - Minnesota Snowmobiling**

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