

Wright Country Snowmobile Association Trail Grooming Guidelines

Under optimum conditions:

Grooming should begin when snow depth has reached about 12 inches. Begin by compacting the snow with a roller, or a drag with a packer pan. If this option is not available, packing can be accomplished with just the tractor unit by using the tracks to compact the loose, fluffy snow. If the snow is too deep, a snowmobile could be used. An important point is that the snow base should be built up from the bottom. Snow compacting should be considered after any substantial snowfall. The following are items that, as a groomer operator, you should consider:

- During first grooming of the season or after melt down of snow:
 - Generally at least 8 to 12 inches of wet snow on smooth terrain like a road or hay field;
 - If snow is drier, or if terrain is rough or uneven. At least 12 to 18 inches of snow might be required to begin effective grooming operations with minimal risk of damaging grooming equipment;
 - It's best to groom during daytime hours to ensure safety of grooming equipment and operator by avoiding down trees, wet areas or other hazards.
- Grooming shortly after a snowfall:
 - Dry fluffy snow: let it settle or be packed by snowmobile traffic before grooming;
 - Wet or heavy snow can be groomed sooner if the air temperature is below 30 degrees F.
- Grooming, when possible, should be done when traffic is light such as at night or on weekdays.
- Ideal grooming temperatures usually lie between minus 10 degrees F and plus 20 degrees F :
 - It's not advised to groom when the air temperature is greater than plus 30 degrees F;
 - It's not advised to groom when the air temperatures is colder than minus 10 degrees F.
- The type of snow is a major factor in determining at what temperature the trail should be groomed. Dry snow usually grooms best during the day when air is warmer. Wet snow usually grooms best at night when air is usually cooler.
- Cut off moguls at or near the bottom of the dips and place the snow into a uniform layer. Moguls should not be cut halfway down, otherwise an uneven base density will result and the moguls will easily reappear after snowmobiles travel on the trail surface.
- In limited snow conditions, set the drag so that snow can be pulled from the edges toward the center of the trail. A good general guideline for grooming speed is 4 to 10 miles per hour. It should be noted that each groomer/drag combination is different, but grooming too slow or too fast will result in poor trail conditions like wash-boarding and uneven snow compaction, etc.

Fuel purchase and fuel tank maintenance:

- Groomer captain is in charge of ensuring fuel is ready for groomer operators:
 - If purchasing non-bio #1 fuel-oil, make sure additives for lubrication are added;
 - Centra-Sota premium full winter blend is 1.3% to 1.5% bio-diesel during winter months. Centra-Sota Switches to 10% bio on May 1. Prices drop in the spring when they are trying to empty the winter blends.

- During storage of fuel:
 - It's suggested to store with the fuel tank at least half-full to reduce surface area for moisture to collect inside the tank due to hot/cold cycles;
 - Shade the tank to keep out of direct sunlight;
 - Install a moisture-collection sock from Centra-Sota during summer storage.