



Rock the Trails

Newfoundland & Labrador Snowmobile Federation Newsletter

October 2020

Sweetland Memorial created for a special man

It could be said that Kevin Sweetland was, in some ways, the father of organized snowmobiling in our province.

From the mid-1990s, when NLSF first became a federation, until Mr. Sweetland passed away in 2016 he was involved in the development and promotion of snowmobiling at the local, club, provincial, national and international levels, donating his personal time and resources as both a volunteer and a business leader.

He was instrumental in the creation and subsequent

operation of the National Trails Coalition. He shared his vast knowledge of the sport to enhance the entire snowmobiling experience for everyone.

As an active member of the Bay St. George Snowmobile Association (BSGSA), he also served as an NLSF board member and as the federation chair.

In honour of his memory and to recognize his legacy, a memorial and map was designed and installed over the summer along the trail at the base of the Lewis Hills.

A specially made replication of the memorial was presented to his partner, Ruth Young, at her home in Stephenville back in September.



Ruth Young (centre) was presented with a personal copy of the memorial created to honour her partner, Kevin Sweetland, last September. Shown with her, from left, are Craig Mason, president of BSGSA; Matt Swain, NLSF groomer/trails co-ordinator; Bob Blundon, NLSF chair; and Tony Sheppard, general manager of NLSF. NLSF photo



Covid-19 precautions extend to snowmobiling

Sadly, this province has had to deal with four fatalities from the pandemic and, at the time of writing, there have been 288 confirmed cases of the virus.

In terms of world statistics, Newfoundland has fared better than most other provinces in Canada and, thankfully, most NL residents continue to work together to keep it that way.

NLSF is in the process of installing precautionary signs in all 38 of its warm-up shelters on the island. We ask that all trail users continue to observe and adhere to the pandemic safety guidelines that apply to the entire globe.

As difficult as it may be to believe, you can still pick up the virus in the most unlikely of places, including on a snowy trail or at a warm-up shack in the middle of a frosty winter. Please protect yourself and everyone around you while you're enjoying the season.

PANDEMIC SAFETY GUIDELINES

- ✿ Maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from each other while inside the shelter.
- ✿ Wear a mask while inside the shelter.
- ✿ Avoid unnecessary contact with surfaces.
- ✿ Use a hand cleaner after leaving the shelter.

Protect Yourself and Others!

COVID-19 Prevention
Newfoundland & Labrador Snowmobile Federation

Roger Beck is Volunteer of the Year

Roger Beck, groomer coordinator for Western Sno-Riders (WSR) was the recipient of the 2019/2020 Sweetland Volunteer of the Year Award. His winning nomination was announced at the NLSF annual general meeting on October 17th during which Roger was presented with a custom metal art piece, handmade by Ontario artist Shiny Spike.

During the presentation, it was noted that Roger has been a dedicated volunteer with WSR since its inception in 1997. When asked how long he's been in organized snowmobiling in general, Bob Blundon, NLSF chair, responded, "Long enough that there is a reference in the bible".

Currently, Roger sits on the WSR board and is the club's groomer co-ordinator. He has headed up and co-directed many projects for trail improvements and repairs in the WSR area. He participates in groomer operator training held every two years by NLSF and is an active member on the federation's groomer committee that reviews grooming operations and equipment for all of the member clubs across the island.

In addition to being either a key participant or foreman for numerous trail re-routing projects and emergency repairs such



as the Goose Arm and the North Shore washouts, Roger also collects donations for the annual WSR auction, has sat on the NLSF Veterans' Snow Ride committee, assists in construction and repair of warm-up shelters and takes part in other community outreach events in the western region as well.

He has been key in safety and trail signage campaigns, trail design, environmental advocacy ("Pack it in, Pack it out") and more. Congratulations, Roger, from everyone at NLSF. ♦

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Trails and grooming update

Trail Maintenance

This has been a challenging year for trail maintenance given the current health pandemic, but as restrictions eased in the late summer and into the fall many clubs took advantage of the opportunity to make some pretty significant upgrades to the trail systems in their areas.

Many clubs raised money to do grading of the trail bed in their area again this year and there are plans for more areas to be done this fall.

We have a second piece of vegetation control equipment that was purchased last fall (shown, at right). It has been mounted to the front of our backhoe and will be working on our trails this fall. This will be a continuation of the brush cutting program that was started last winter, beginning in Come-by-Chance and ending in Gander.

Groomer Fleet

Our mechanic has been busy throughout the



NLSF Photo

summer and to date all groomers have been serviced and are ready for winter operations. We are hoping to have a long, problem-free grooming season this year.

We will also be testing a new piece of grooming equipment this winter. Stay tuned for more information on this pilot project in the near future.

Matt Swain, Trails & Grooming Co-ordinator



Make every ride a safe ride this season

Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro reminds snowmobilers:

- Before hitting the trails, check to make sure your snowmobile is working properly.
- Avoid riding along power lines. If you do find yourself near utility poles or on a power line right-of-way, drive slowly and cautiously. Guy wires and other objects can be difficult to spot.
- Steer clear of high snow banks around overhead power lines and substations.
- If you encounter a downed pole or power line, stay well away. The line and any nearby objects could be energized and dangerous. Report it by calling 911 or your power company.
- For your safety and the safety of others, be aware and keep speed down if you're riding near utility workers, vehicles or equipment.
- Stay off the ice, including reservoirs and rivers near hydroelectric dams and generating plants where changing water levels and currents create unstable ice cover.



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CBPPL plans winter harvesting operation for 2020-21

Corner Brook Pulp and Paper will be operating in a number of areas in the western and central regions this winter season that will have an impact on some of our snowmobile trails.

Camp 38 Trail (Gallants)

Operations in the Camp 38 trail area will be the same as in recent years with wood cutting and hauling ending in late fall.

White River Road (Cormack)

There will be active wood hauling operations on the first 3km on White River Road for the majority of this winter. As such, snowmobilers are encouraged to obey all safety signage and be

mindful of all equipment working in the area.

Riverside (Hampton Junction)

Operations in the Riverside area will be status quo from the past few years. Trail users are asked to use the provided bypass and to use caution in any common areas used by snowmobiles and wood harvesting equipment.

Rambler Road (Baie Vert)

The area of Rambler Road will be opened up by CBPPL early in the spring of 2021 to allow earlier access to that area by wood harvesting equipment. Users are asked to be aware of any activity in the area and to obey all safety

signage.

More information on the affected areas will become available as we get closer to the start of our season.



Stock photo

NLSF would like to thank Corner Brook Pulp and Paper for their continued efforts in supporting safe and enjoyable snowmobiling in our province. ♦

AGM 2020:

A short event, a sad farewell

This year, the NLSF annual general meeting was like no other. It was a masked, socially distanced, low attendance, table-free event compressed from its usual two days into four quick hours.

The board had to bid a sad goodbye to Terry Simms (below, left) who has served as a director on the NLSF board since



being elected in 2005 — one of the longest tenures on record.

Over his past 15 years on the board, Terry served as NLSF's vice-chair, as an instructor for the federation's Safe Snowmobiling seminars, and as the club service director of NLSF. He has also served as president and a director of the Northern Drifters Snowmobile Club.

Terry was also involved in the review of the federation's governance back in the day, when it re-examined and streamlined existing administrative policies and adopted the democratic system still used today.

So long, Terry. We're going to miss you.