

By now most of you have heard that the Governor's Snowmobile Recreation Council (SRC) has recommended making the Groomer Tracking Systems (GTS) groomer trackers mandatory in all groomers used on funded trails by November 1, 2021.

There have been some questions about how they work and how to use them from clubs and grooming associations. Here are some answers to those questions from Gary Hilgendorf, SRC Infrastructure Committee Chair.

1. When will it become mandatory? November 1, 2021. They can be ordered for next year after July 1 and it is recommended not to wait until the last minute.
2. What will it cost? \$250 per groomer per year, which includes the GPS unit and the annual data plan. The cost is a reimbursable item under your maintenance grant as non-grooming expense. The GPS units have to be purchased from GTS, because they will enter automatically into SNARS. There is an order form on the SNARS page under the GPS tab.
3. Will it be mandatory in all groomers? All class A, AA, AAA and class B, not class C.
4. Will you still be able to do manual grooming entries in SNARS? Yes, under certain conditions: Such as when using a loaner machine, a new machine bought during season, another club grooms your trails, or if you have problems with your existing tracker.
5. How do you install it? Very easy, it can be mounted anywhere in the groomer with clear view of the sky. A wiring harness is included and will require connecting one ground wire, one battery wire, and one ignition wire. There is never anything to turn on and off.
6. Once installed, how does the administrator see their groomer's tracking history? The administrator has to set up an admin account using the link for the GPS Mapping Administrator Login Page which can be found on the bottom of the GPS page on SNARS. This is separate login from SNARS. Once set up, the administrator can not only see the tracking history, it will allow them to see where the groomer is in real time and whether it is moving or not.

You can't find groomer tracking history on the GTS Trails app, that only shows when the trails were last groomed (green, blue, and orange). This app is available to the public and is for any snowmobiler to use.

7. What is a geo fence and how wide is it? The geo fence is a virtual boundary along the trail and it is 750 feet wide. All funded and non-funded trails have a geo fence. Once the groomer goes outside of the geo fence, it will not record the time for funded purposes. The tracker will also stop recording the time if it hasn't moved for 10 minutes or if it travels at more than 15 miles per hour.

8. What happens when it shows the groomer outside the geo fence, even though it is on the trail? Contact Groomer Tracking Systems through SNARS using the Trail Mapping Issue Reporting Form found on the GPS page on SNARS and tell them the trail on the GPS map is not located in the correct location. For example: tell them that on Dec. 30<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 am you were outside the geo fence and the trail location needs to be corrected. And let them know if that location is going to be short term, long term, or permanent. Once corrected those SNARS entries will need to be edited.

If it is just to go around a bad spot you can't get through. You can go into SNARS and edit the entry, but you will need to justify why you are making the edit. For example: add 1/2 hr, and include the reason, to go around a swamp.

9. Will it work if you don't have good cell towers? It will track and store satellite data for a whole day with no cell tower signal and download the data to SNARS any time it gets a cell signal.

These tracking units will download your grooming entries directly into SNARS eliminating the need to manually enter the data. It will create a separate entry for funded grooming and non-funded grooming, resulting in very accurate records for the club. The club administrator will still have to approve these entries before submitting them to the county.

With the GPS information we now have for the statewide trail system, there is a real need to get trackers in every groomer to get more accurate trail locations and keep the information up to date. This will eliminate the need to GPS the trails in the future. You will now GPS your trails every time you groom. We should never get in a situation again where we had hundreds of miles of trails statewide receiving funding even though they never actually existed on the ground.