



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation



2022-2023 Snowmobile Season Report

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NYS SNOWMOBILE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The New York State Snowmobile Program exists by mandate from the New York State Legislature. The Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) has been given the responsibility to plan for the development, maintenance, and oversight of a statewide snowmobile program.

The State of New York hereby finds that it is in the public interest to:

- Register snowmobiles as recreational vehicles for the purpose of enforcement of reasonable provisions concerning their use and control;
- Encourage the sport of snowmobiling as a family activity;
- Promote the proper and safe use and operation of snowmobiles;
- Provide an adequate safety educational program for youthful operators;
- Limit the operation of snowmobiles upon public highways and private property without the consent of the owner;
- Protect and preserve the state’s natural resources, including its wildlife, wild forests, waters, and scenic and wilderness character;
- Reduce the effect on the environment of excess noise;
- Ensure privacy of remote areas;
- Afford opportunity for compatible enjoyment of various recreational activities on the state’s lands and open spaces.

It is the purpose of this title to promote the safe and proper use of snowmobiles for recreation and commerce in this state by encouraging their use and development and minimize detrimental effects of such use upon the environment.

Snowmobile Trail Maintenance Entities

Snowmobile trail maintenance entities play an important role in the trail system. As general guidelines, to further promote the proper and safe operation of snowmobiles, trail maintenance entities should strive to:

- clearly mark and delineate state designated snowmobile trails for which they are responsible;
- encourage riders to participate in available snowmobile educational programs to make riders aware of the inherent risks associated with the sport;
- equip trail maintenance vehicles so that they operate with such warning implements or devices as specified by law;
- hold training sessions each season, for operators of trail maintenance equipment concerning the proper operation of such vehicles;
- provide education for all other personnel charged with trail maintenance, inspection, or patrol duties as to methods to be used for summoning aid in emergencies; and
- maintain for public use trail area information showing the following: (a) the location of state designated trails; and (b) the status of each trail as open or closed. Nothing in this section shall create a legal duty or obligation beyond that which may already exist.

There are over 10,500 miles in the Statewide Snowmobile Trail System traversing 46 counties, maintained by over 230 clubs, and is funded through 52 municipal sponsors. This vast trail network is comprised of lands under the jurisdiction of OPRHP, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), NYS Canal Corporation, national forest land, and local governments. Many private landowners have increasingly opened their property to snowmobiling with insurance coverage provided by the state snowmobile program.

OPRHP works closely with the New York State Snowmobile Association (NYSSA). NYSSA represents over 230 snowmobile clubs and acts as an advocacy and advisory organization for the snowmobile clubs it represents. OPRHP is also a member of the International Association of Snowmobile Administrators (IASA).

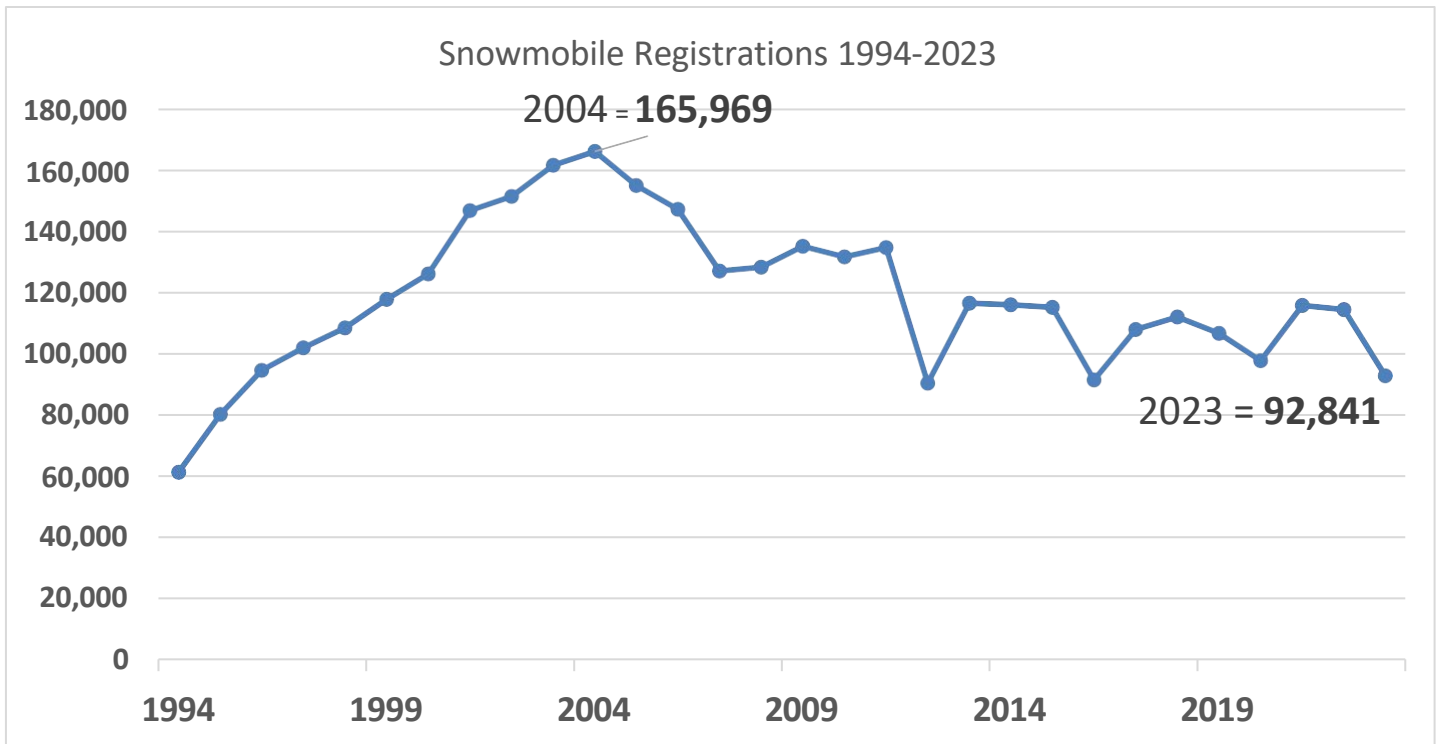
OPRHP has established programs for snowmobile trail grants, premium payments for the statewide trail insurance policy, snowmobile law enforcement grants, a snowmobile law enforcement development school (NYS SLEDS), snowmobile safety education programs, special event permits, incident reporting, snowmobile publications, groomer education, trail signage guidelines, as well as public outreach and general program oversight.

Snowmobile Registrations

The yearly registration fee is \$100, or \$45 with a valid local snowmobile club membership voucher. Five dollars from each registration is allocated to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), the agency responsible for registration administration. The balance of the registration fee is deposited into a State Special Revenue Snowmobile Account for program purposes, creating the Snowmobile Trail Development and Maintenance Fund.

Snowmobile registrations in the 2022-2023 season totaled 92,841. This reflects a 21,644 or 18.9% sled decrease from the 2021-2022 season total of 114,485. From 92,841 registrations, \$4,646,635 was collected in fees, compared to \$5,783,435 in 2021-2022.

The chart below displays total annual registrations since 1994:



The following table provides further breakdowns of the registration data for in state registrations, out of state registrations, club registrations, non-club registrations, renewals, and originals.

In State Registrations vs Out of State Registrations

In State Registrations: Any snowmobile registered by New York state resident

Out of State Registrations: Any snowmobile registered by a resident of a U.S. state other than New York or outside of U.S.

Renewals vs Originals

Renewals: Any snowmobile previously registered within New York state.

Originals: Any snowmobile in registrant’s name for the first time.

Club Registrations vs Non-Club Registrations

Club registration fee: \$5 to DMV; \$40 deposited into the Snowmobile Trail Development and Maintenance Fund.

Non-club registration fee: \$5 to DMV; \$95 deposited into the Snowmobile Trail Development and Maintenance Fund.

Registrations exempt from trail fund: Do not provide revenue.

2022-2023 Registration Breakdown		Totals
In State:		78,258
Out of State:		14,583
Originals:		19,157
Renewals:		73,684
Club Member:		75,038
Non Club Member:		17,317
Total Annual Registrations:		92,841

Snowmobile Trail Grant-In-Aid Program

The Snowmobile Trail Grant Program establishes a mechanism for allocating funds to local governmental sponsors who engage in the development and maintenance of snowmobile trails designated as part of the State Snowmobile Trail System. The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, through the Snowmobile Unit, administers this program.

The trail maintenance and development reimbursement grant-in-aid program is administered by the Snowmobile Unit through local government sponsors. There are 52 local municipalities and over 230 TMEs that participate in this program. The maximum award value each municipality is eligible to receive is calculated on a rate per mile formula, based on the trail classification provided.

The 2022-2023 grant funded **\$4,835,334** to TMEs based on **10,517** total miles of approved trails.

Important Dates For the Snowmobile Trail Grant-In-Aid Program

June 1 st	-Submission Deadline for Snowmobile Trail Applications (Phase I)
September 1 st	-Submission Deadline for Applications for Funding (Phase II)
May 31 st	-Deadline for Expenditure submissions (Phase III)

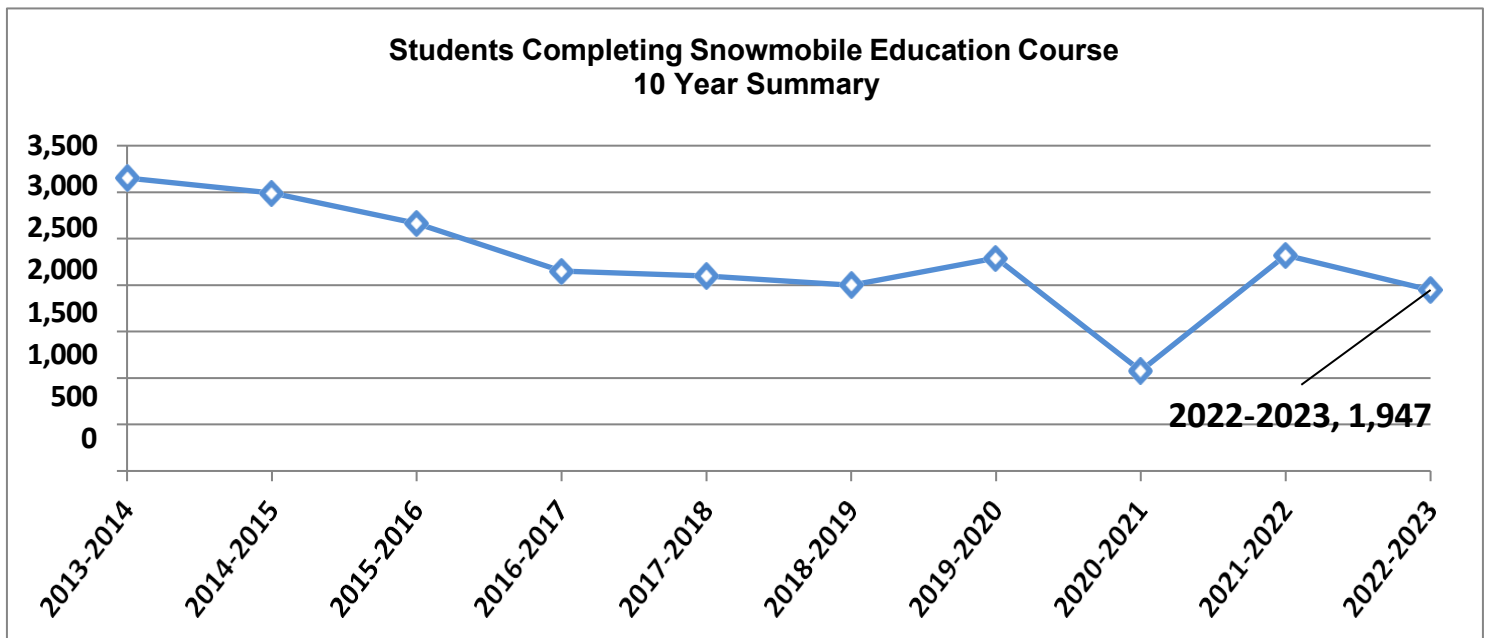
Snowmobile Safety Education

OPRHP has been given the responsibility for the establishment of a comprehensive snowmobile information and safety education and training program, including provision for issuance of snowmobile safety certificates for operation of snowmobiles by youthful operators.

- No person under the age of 14 years shall operate a snowmobile except upon land owned or leased by the parent or guardian. Leased lands as used in this section shall not include lands leased by an organization of which said operator or parent, or guardian is a member.
- Safety course certificates are required for youths, ages 10 through 17, who wish to legally operate a snowmobile on public trails within New York state, with the following stipulations:
 - Youth ages 10-13 must have a certificate and operate within 500 feet of an adult ☐ A person 10 years of age or older, but less than fourteen years of age who holds a valid snowmobile safety certificate may operate a snowmobile if accompanied by a person over eighteen years of age. "Accompanied" shall mean within five hundred feet of the person over eighteen years of age.
 - Youth ages 14-17 without a certificate may operate within 500 feet of an adult, but with a certificate, may operate without supervision ☐ A person fourteen years of age or older but less than eighteen years of age, who either holds a valid snowmobile safety certificate or is accompanied by a person over eighteen years of age, may operate a snowmobile in the same manner as a person over eighteen years of age. "Accompanied" shall mean within five hundred feet of the person over eighteen years of age.
 - While ages 18+ do not require a snowmobile safety certificate to legally operate a snowmobile on public trails in New York State, it is highly recommended.

During the 2022-2023 season, 121 courses were held and approximately 1,947 students received certification.

The following chart shows the historic trend of students certified through these courses:



Snowmobile Law Enforcement Development School (SLEDS)

Law enforcement officers of the state, including Park Police, Sheriffs, local and State Police, Environmental Conservation Officers, and Forest Rangers are authorized to enforce snowmobile laws and regulations.

The Snowmobile Law Enforcement Development School program is designed to present officers with the fundamentals of snowmobile operation and law enforcement, as well as provide an understanding of the knowledge and skills needed by the snowmobile law enforcement officer to function in an effective and professional manner. It is the intent of this program to achieve effective and uniform snowmobile law enforcement practices and policies across the state, while building upon the basic law enforcement and investigative skills of police agency personnel, involved in snowmobile patrol activities which require knowledge of snowmobile-related laws, rules, regulations, and Incident investigation techniques. This is accomplished through a combination of classroom lectures and outdoor field exercises.

The program is held annually and is open to officers from all law enforcement agencies throughout New York State involved in snowmobile patrol and enforcement. In 2023, 32 students representing 15 law enforcement agencies attended the school.

Agencies in attendance: NYS Troopers, Oneida Indian Nation Police, Sheriff's Offices from across the State (Chenango, St. Lawrence, Montgomery, Washington, Livingston, Ontario, Erie, Saratoga, Oneida, Monroe, and Warren Counties), DEC Encon Police, Rome Police Dept., Town of Webb Police Dept., OPRHP and NYS Parks Police.

Snowmobile Law Enforcement Grant-In-Aid Program

Every county, city, town, or village, engaged in snowmobile enforcement activities shall be entitled to receive state aid for costs incurred by municipal police agencies in the enforcement of snowmobile rules, regulations, and safety training. Authorized expenditures shall not exceed \$50,000. The maximum reimbursement value is 75% of approved expenditures with a county maximum award of \$37,500. The total amount of funding allocated cannot exceed the sum of \$200,000. If the

combined statewide post audit submission total exceeds the \$200,000 limit, individual awards shall be prorated equally.

A summary of the 2022-2023 Snowmobile Law Enforcement State Aid Grant Awards are provided below:

2022-2023 Snowmobile Law Enforcement State Aid Grant				
Participating Organizations	Statewide Amount Requested	Statewide Amount Approved	Statewide 75% Payment Value	Prorated Payment Value
19	\$522,887.41	\$410,851.43	\$308,138.59	\$200,000

#	Agency	Statewide Amount Requested	Statewide Amount Approved	Statewide 75% Payment	Prorated Payment Value
1	Oneida County	\$42,643.12	\$41,081.76	\$30,811.32	\$19,997.50
2	Tompkins County	\$33,143.99	\$33,143.99	\$24,857.99	\$16,133.79
3	Wayne County	\$6,930.74	\$4,904.45	\$3,678.34	\$2,388.19
4	Herkimer County, Town of Webb	\$88,686.31	\$43,094.42	\$32,320.82	\$20,977.16
5	Cortland County	\$26,955.76	\$26,955.76	\$20,216.82	\$13,121.67
6	Chautauqua County	\$2,010.61	\$1,655.11	\$1,241.33	\$806.58
7	Montgomery County	\$51,834.94	\$50,000.00	\$37,500.00	\$24,338.45
8	Monroe County	\$9,249.76	\$9,249.76	\$6,937.32	\$4,503.27
9	Livingston County	\$3,393.92	\$3,393.92	\$2,545.44	\$1,652.94
10	Fulton County	\$5,952.99	\$5,953.18	\$4,464.89	\$2,898.66
11	St. Lawrence County	\$8,954.21	\$8,954.21	\$6,715.66	\$4,359.41
12	Oswego County	\$53,467.62	\$50,000.00	\$37,500.00	\$24,338.45
13	Erie County	\$37,365.35	\$14,360.77	\$10,770.58	\$6,991.06
14	Lewis County	\$83,083.27	\$50,000.00	\$37,500.00	\$24,338.45
15	Hamilton County, Town of Inlet	\$20,405.73	\$19,645.69	\$14,734.27	\$9,563.49
16	Hamilton County	\$8,241.99	\$8,241.99	\$6,181.49	\$4,012.74
17	Washington County	\$2,726.00	\$2,726.00	\$2,044.50	\$1,327.83
18	Warren County	\$30,077.93	\$30,077.93	\$22,558.45	\$14,641.38
19	Ontario County	\$7,763.17	\$7,412.49	\$5,559.37	\$3,608.98
Totals		\$522,887.41	\$410,851.43	\$308,138.59	\$200,000.00

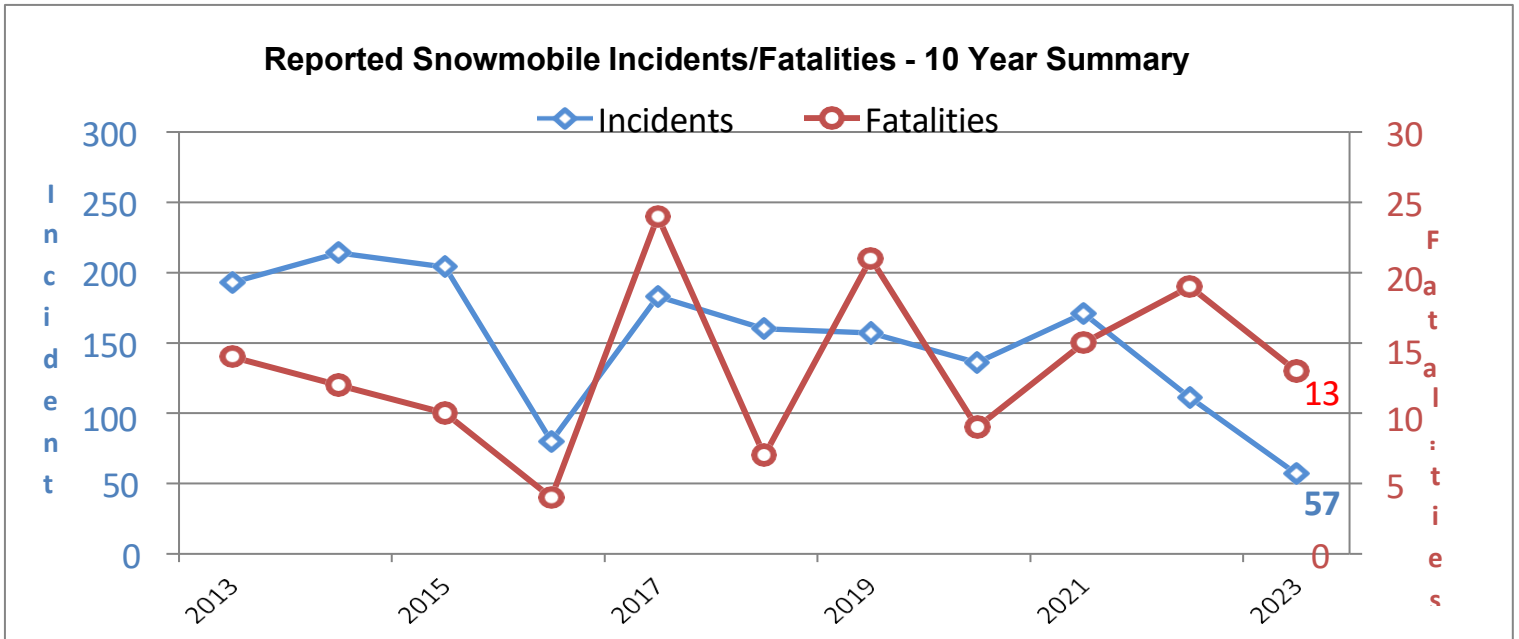
Snowmobile Incident Reports

The operator of any snowmobile involved in any incident resulting in personal injuries or death of any person, or in which property damage in the estimated amount of one thousand (\$1,000) dollars or more is sustained, must report such incident to both an appropriate law enforcement agency and OPRHP. The law enforcement agency will submit an original snowmobile Incident report to OPRHP, who compiles received incident reports into a statistical summary.

Unsafe speed has been the primary cause of snowmobile Incidents. Most incidents continue to involve single-vehicle collisions with fixed objects, such as trees. While OPRHP believes that all fatal Incidents and most personal injury Incidents are reported, it is possible that some, especially those involving property damage only, go unreported. At the time of this publication, there were 57 reported incidents and 13 fatalities during the 2022-23 season; for comparison, there were 113 incidents and 19 fatalities during the 2021-2022 season.

OPRHP is dedicated to working with partners in the snowmobile community and state legislature to take any necessary actions to address these issues.

The following chart displays the annual incidents and fatalities for the last ten years:



The table below summarizes the date, location and context of the 2022-23 season’s snowmobile-related fatalities:

2022-2023 Summary of Snowmobile Related Fatalities				
Date	Time	County	Type	Leading Factor
12/22/2022	3:12am	St. Lawrence	Collision with a Fixed Object	Unsafe Speed/Obstruction/Debris
12/29/2022	6:20pm	Lewis	Collision with a Fixed Object	Unsafe Speed/Alcoholic Involvement
1/26/2023	8:57pm	Fulton	Submersion	Thin Ice
1/26/2023	11:23pm	Lewis	Collision with a Fixed Object	Unsafe Speed/Alcoholic Involvement
1/28/2023	11:35pm	Saratoga	Fall from a Moving Vehicle	N/A
2/6/2023	2:49pm	Franklin	Fall from a Moving Vehicle	Other Human
2/13/2023	6:40pm	Hamilton	Collision with a Fixed Object	Unsafe Speed
2/25/2023	5:27pm	Lewis	Collision with a Fixed Object	Unsafe Speed/Failed to Negotiate a Turn
2/26/2023	1:40pm	Herkimer	Other Fixed Object	Unsafe Speed/Other Environmental
2/26/2023	8:49pm	Lewis	Collision with a Fixed Object	Unsafe Speed/Alcoholic Involvement
3/4/2023	12:11am	Essex	Submersion	Thin Ice/View Obstructed

3/4/2023	3:00pm	St. Lawrence	Collision with a Fixed Object	Unsafe Speed/Other Environmental
3/14/2023	9:13pm	Fulton	Collision with a Fixed Object	Alcoholic Involvement

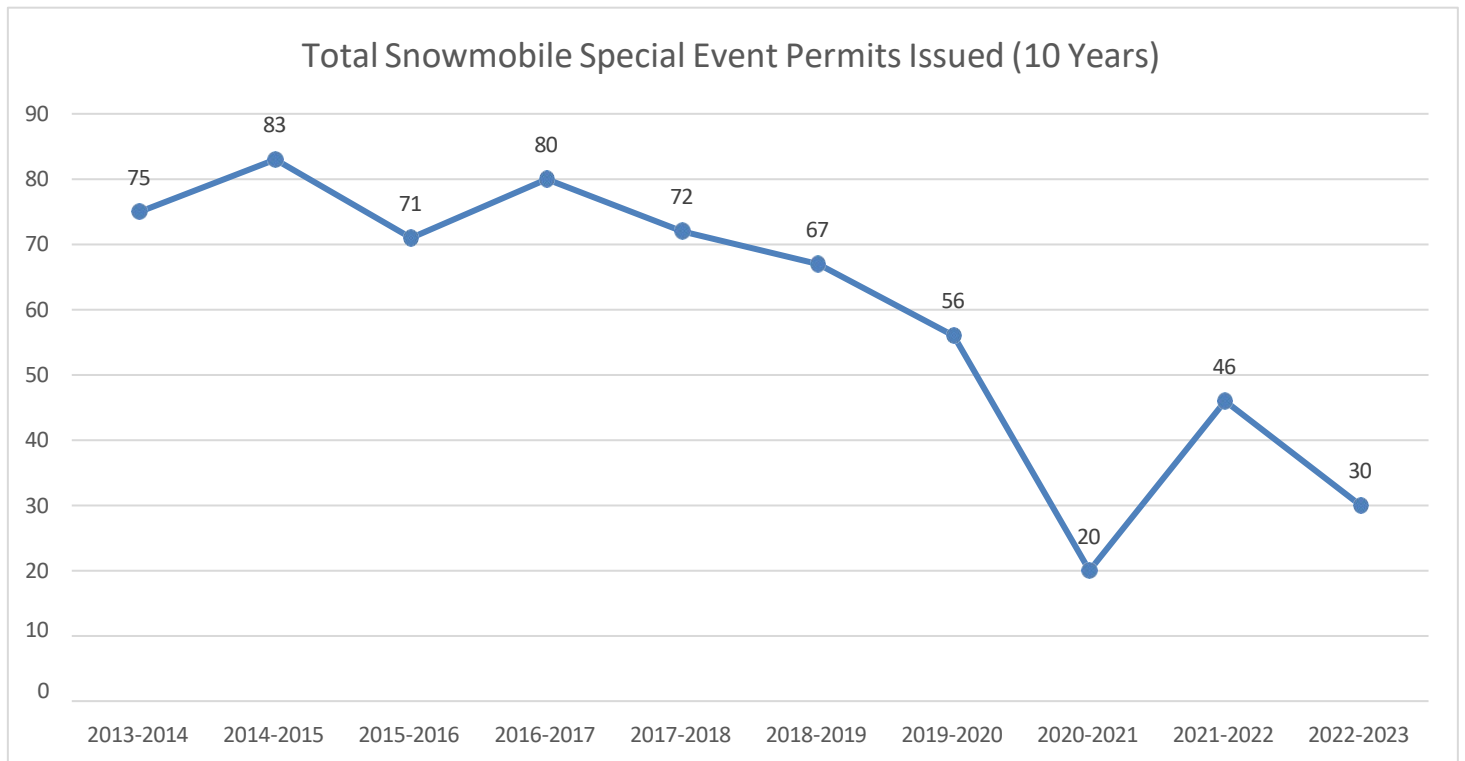
Snowmobile Special Events

A snowmobile "special event" is defined as an organized snowmobile event of limited duration which is conducted according to a prearranged schedule and in which public interest is generated. An OPRHP-issued permit allows participants to operate snowmobiles at special events (including on-site practice) with exemption from provisions concerning speed, mufflers, lights, and registration.

The sponsor of a snowmobile special event must secure a permit from the Snowmobile Unit. Before applying for a permit, written permission from the landowner must be secured and any other potentially impacted parties must be notified. It is the responsibility of the person in charge and the event sponsor to plan and undertake the event with the utmost regard for the safety of the participants and spectators.

The Special Event permit application and instructions are available under "Applications & Forms" on our webpage: <https://parks.ny.gov/recreation/snowmobiles/documents.aspx>

The table below displays Special Event Permits issued over the past 10 years:

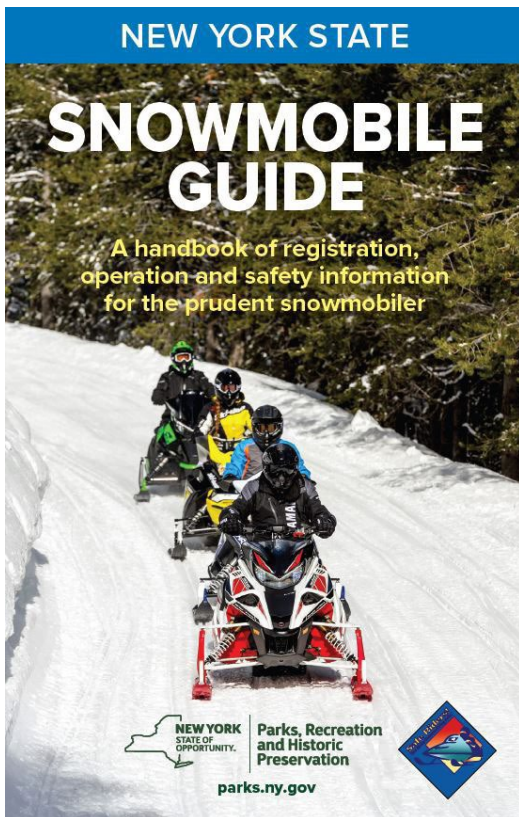


Snowmobile Publications

Publications can be found on our website at <https://parks.ny.gov/recreation/snowmobiles/documents.aspx>. Publication materials can also be requested by sending an email to our unit mailbox at Snowmobile.Unit@parks.ny.gov.

New York State Snowmobile Trail Signing Handbook: outlines a comprehensive and uniform system of trail signing across the state. The objective of trail signing is to enhance the safety of persons, vehicles, and property; improve travel within and between trail systems by maintaining consistent standards; increase comfort and confidence in navigating the statewide trail system; and promote recreational snowmobiling trails.





New York State Snowmobile Guide: Serves as a snowmobile resource guide, with over 50 pages of useful information on snowmobile equipment, rules, regulations and registration. Check out the interactive guide under “Training Manuals & Informational Guides” on our webpage.

Guidelines For Snowmobile Trail Groomer Operator Training

A Resource Guide for Trail Grooming Managers and Equipment Operators

Snowmobile Trail Groomer Operator Training: Serves as a resource guide for trail grooming managers and equipment operators.



Produced By



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