



November 2019

# FLATHEAD SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION INFORMER

PO BOX 5041 KALISPELL, MT 59903

## President's Corner

Greetings fellow snow enthusiasts! We are on the verge of another season of snowmobiling in Northwest Montana. If the weather we have had this fall is any indication, I'm thinking we are in for an EPIC season!

There are a couple of things to keep in mind as the season gets going.

First, our ability to recreate in the back county with motorized toys is constantly under scrutiny and attack. Please be courteous and obey all boundaries and regulations, Don't give the opponents of over the snow recreation any examples to get our sport banned from public lands. Also, by being involved with the activities of the FSA, your participation speaks volumes to those that are in charge of determining public land access.

Second, be safe as you enjoy the back county. Have you taken an avalanche safety course?

Do you carry all the needed equipment to be safe? Do all your riding buddies carry the proper equipment and do they know how to use it? Remember, your avy beacon doesn't save you – your riding partners do!

So here is looking forward to a great season. Let's be involved and stay safe. See you at the Pray for Snow Party on November 23<sup>rd</sup>!

David Covill  
*FSA President*

## Snow Jobs & Dirt Stuff



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# **It's the Annual Flathead Snowmobile Association**

**Prizes!**

**Auctions**

## **PRAY FOR SNOW PARTY!**

**The public is Welcome!**

**Live Music!**

**When: Saturday Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> 4-11PM**

**Where: Silver Bullet Bar  
1700 MT Hwy 206**

**Tickets: \$25 at the door - Dinner at 5:30**

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# Safety First!

It's now fall, the nights are getting cooler, and leaves starting to change. For most of us who look forward to winter, our minds are dreaming of deep powder, carving, and steep mountain ascents. Preseason maintenance should be a priority for all and with that we should take the time to look over our backcountry gear as well. Below is a list of things we need to look over before our first trip to the trailhead.

## Avalanche gear:

**Beacon check**-If your beacon is more than 5 years old I would strongly suggest upgrading for the sake of your life and the others you ride with (note: original BCA Tracker, Ortovox F1/M1, older Pieps or anything analog are grossly outdated and need to be retired). Hopefully, by now you have purchased a DIGITAL 3 antennae beacon and took the batteries out over the summer to prevent corrosion. Insert fresh alkaline batteries and check both the send and receive modes of the unit. Double check the directional arrow is working properly. The last thing we want is to get to the trail head for the first time of the year and have a broken piece of gear. A brand new beacon can malfunction out of the box, while one drop to the floor can also render a beacon useless.

**Shovel**-A quality metal blade shovel designed for avalanche rescue is a key tool for a successful recovery. Also a necessary piece of equipment to get our machines unstuck, they take a beating throughout the year. Look over your shovel for dents, cracks, broken welds etc. Extend the handle and make sure the spring loaded keepers are working properly. Consider carrying two shovels, one on your back for avalanche rescue and one on your sled/bike for getting unstuck. Taking your pack off in ANY terrain separates you from your life saving gear.

**Avalanche Probe**- Deploy your probe to check the locking function; if your probe uses a string to lock it together, or is less than 240 CM long it is time to upgrade. The likelihood of a successful recovery of a deep burial scenario is becoming more likely with the faster, more accurate beacons. Probes fewer than 240CM are not long enough.

**Avalanche Airbag**-The technology in this quickly growing segment has come a long way in a short amount of time. If you are using one, GREAT! If not, you should be thinking of purchasing one. If you are not familiar with the airbag principle, basically if a person is caught in an Avalanche, they deploy the airbag using a trigger pulled on the shoulder strap.



This inflates an airbag behind your head to increase your displacement and help bring you to the surface of the slide. Used bags are very reasonably priced if you cannot afford a new one. Several companies are offering used bag trade-in programs and typically resell these for minimal profit to allow more people to get into the necessary safety gear.

**Emergency gear**-Go through your packs and restock items you may have used last season; First aid kits, medications, batteries etc. Open up your tool kits (hopefully they are not full of rust) and spray everything down with a light coat of WD40. Check over your survival gear and note anything that may have expired or needs to be replaced. NOW is the time to find out if something is missing or broken.

**Machine**-Proper preseason maintenance will decrease your likelihood of a breakdown or failure in the backcountry. Look over belts, hoses (check hoseclamps), track, hyfax, carbides, etc. to make sure everything is in good shape. Powervalves should be cleaned, chaincase oil changed, and inspect drive bearings. Chains/sprockets on snowbikes should be inspected often and/or replaced annually to ensure no failures. Whatever your ride, put a wrench on all nuts and bolts to make sure nothing has come loose while you were pounding down the South Fork road at the end of the season.

I have compiled a list of Motorized specific avalanche classes being offered this year. If you have not attended any avalanche training or maybe it has been a few years, we are structuring the curriculum to better inform you about motorized specific travel procedures and techniques. Please consider attending one or more of the following to ensure you and your riding group is prepared for a successful rescue if needed.

**Motorized Avalanche Awareness - Thursday, Dec. 19**, at Penco-this is a short program (1.5-2 hrs) designed to bring to light the need for further training. We cover where to find the avalanche forecast, how to read it and what it means, and basic introduction into avalanche terminology.

**Motorized Intro to Avalanches - Thursday, Jan 16 and Saturday, Jan 18**, at FVCC/in Field-this class is designed to dive into what causes avalanches and how to avoid them. We will go through rescue scenarios in the field and teach you how to practice with your equipment.

**Motorized L1 with Mike Duffy - Friday, Jan 24 through Sunday, Jan 26, 2020**, location TBD- Mike is a world renowned avalanche instructor with a long list of accolades. His classes are entertaining and very informational. Using previous avalanche incidents, he will go through what each group did right, what they did wrong, and demonstrate ways to mitigate risk while riding. If you are interested or want to learn more about the program check out Avalanche1 on Facebook or <http://avalanche1.com/author/duffy/>

**Motorized L1 with FOFAC at FVCC and in the field.** Date **March 6-8-** This class is similar curriculum to Mike Duffy's class. Local forecasters and myself will teach current material, techniques and train you on avalanche rescue.

\* Everyone who rides in the backcountry should be AT LEAST Level 1 certified. **PLEASE** get your riding buddies together and attend one or all of these great offerings this year. As always, if you have any comments, suggestions, ideas, or concerns don't hesitate to get ahold of myself or one of our board members right away!

Have a safe and awesome season,  
PRAY FOR SNOW!

Brock Bolin

Safety Director

**Been out riding?? Send me your pictures!**

**Have info that you think would be interesting to others?**

**Send it my way!!**

**Jessica**

**[jessicardyer@gmail.com](mailto:jessicardyer@gmail.com)**



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# Flathead Business Members Helping FSA Members



On September 28th, the trail to Kimmerly was fixed (yes, again!) by a number of dedicated members and business sponsors of our club. The hillside had slumped and left a large pile of gravel, mud and debris across a good portion of the trail making it impassable to the groomer. This was serious and it needed some major excavation equipment to get it fixed.

We contacted a local contractor Charles McAllister of SnowBound Enterprises and asked if he could help with a skid steer. Without hesitation, he said yes, offered to haul his equipment and do what he could. He then called Carson Sneed at Big Sky Rents and asked him if he could help. Again, without hesitation, Carson said yes and offered up an excavator for us to use. Rick David hauled it and under the guidance of Jack David (USFS Road Manager, Retired), we moved over **100 yards** of mud and debris making the road cut passable once more.

This would have cost us a fortune to hire a contractor, but members like this stepped up and got-er-done! BRAVO!

We deeply appreciate all the help by Big Sky Rents and SnowBound. You can show your appreciation by giving them your business when you need equipment or excavation services.





All Finished and Graded Out with a ditch to allow water to traverse the trail. Well done!



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# Calendar Of Events

## **November**

12 - 6:00 pm: FSA Board Meeting @ Scotty's\*\*

- 7:00 pm: FSA Member Meeting @ Scotty's

16 - FasToys Open House (2205 US HWY 2, Kalispell)

- Norther Rockies Snow and Avalanche Worskshop (O'Shaughnessy Center, Whitefish)

23 - 4:00 pm: Pray for Snow Party @ The Silver Bullet Bar (1700 MT Hwy. 206)

## **December**

1 - SNOWMOBILE SEASON OPENS!!

6 - 6:30 pm: Night of Lights Parade (Downtown Columbia Falls)

10 - 6:00 pm: FSA Board Meeting @ Penco Power Products (Kalispell)\*\*

- 7:00 pm: FSA Member Meeting @ Penco Power Products (Kalispell)

## **January**

7 - Penco Snow Show, Penco Power Products (2310 US 93 South)

14 - 6:00 pm: FSA Board Meeting @ Scotty's (Kalispell)\*\*

- 7:00 pm: FSA Member Meeting @ Scotty's (Kalispell)

16 & 18 - Motorized Intro. To Avalanches @ FVCC (Time: TBA)

19 - 9:00 am - 4:00 pm: FSA Club Ride (Location: TBA)

24-26 - Avalanche Level 1 Training (Time and Location: TBA)

## **February**

6-11 - TransMT Ride

11 - 6:00 pm: FSA Board Meeting @ Scotty's (Kalispell)\*\*

- 7:00 pm: FSA Member Meeting @ Scotty's (Kalispell)

15 - NVSR & FSA Sweetheart Ride (Canyon Creek)

***\*\*Any and all board meetings are open to the general public. Members are welcome to attend and discuss matters brought before the board but may not vote on board matters.\*\****

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ANY OF THESE EVENTS, VISIT OUR WEBSITE: <http://www.flatheadsnowmobiler.com>**





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Get the trail maps on your phone!

# Trail Treker

All three trail systems the FSA maintains (Canyon Creek, Crane Mountain, and Desert Mountain) will be available for free download to club members. The Trail Treker app is \$2 (one time). The app is available on the Apple and Google stores. The app will show you exactly where you are at all times (with no mobile phone coverage needed!). You will need this code: **FSA18** to download the maps. Just another great benefit coming from your FSA dues!

Trail Treker is a locally owned company doing business with clubs across the country. We have partnered with them to make sure you have the safest and most enjoyable ride possible. Using Trail Treker, the FSA also makes money by showing local businesses on the map as well as from visitors to the area downloading the map! So make sure you tell everyone and especially visitors, to download the app and maps!

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## 2019-2020 Flathead Snowmobile Association Membership Application

F.S.A. Begins a new membership year every JUNE!

This year we are emailing membership cards and coupons...**we need your email!**

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) New ( ) Renewal Member

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

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Number of snowmobilers in your family or business? \_\_\_\_\_

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F.S.A. will forward your application  
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Add \$10 donation for the Grooming Fund and receive an  
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going directly to our grooming fund!

(Stickers available at member meetings--we are no longer mailing stickers or membership cards)



### **Please check any and all that you would like to volunteer for:**

- ( ) Family Day Ride -- January
- ( ) Family Day Ride -- February
- ( ) Family Day Ride -- March
- ( ) Trans-Montana Ride
- ( ) Summer Camp Out -- July

For information or to pay your dues with a credit card, please visit us @ [www.flatheadsnowmobiler.com](http://www.flatheadsnowmobiler.com)

**THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE FSA**

Comments or suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

This year we are emailing membership cards, newsletters and coupons...**we need your email!**

**Remember- T.E.A.M.- Together Everyone Achieves More!**