

# Top 10 Reasons to Join a Club

Without our clubs, there would probably be no snowmobiling infrastructure and the trails that might exist would be ungroomed, unfunded, and basically unridable. Therefore, if you are not a member of a snowmobile club we offer this list. In no particular order are the Top 10 Reasons You Should Join a Snowmobile Club.

10) Snowmobile clubs gain access to create snowmobile trails. Without the clubs securing land leases and paying insurance costs, no trails would cross private property, and that means the sport as we know it would not exist. All this takes time, effort and money.

9) Snowmobile clubs clear and create trails. After the land access is received, somebody has to go out and clear away the brush, cut down interfering branches, haul out trash. They must also build bridges over creeks, rivers, and low spots and that takes a lot of work and money. This is all done by volunteers who truly love the sport. Without these hidden heroes either the trails would not get cleared, bridges would not get built and most trails would close or some other entity (the government) would have to pay a team of workers to do the grunt work. If that happened you could expect to pay several hundred dollars or more to register your snowmobile each year to cover the costs.

8) In most areas members of the snowmobile clubs groom the trails. Sometimes these groomer operators get a token fee for their hard work. These are more of the hidden heroes who spend their time in a slow-moving groomer, tending to the trails and making them as smooth as they are. Remember, if you are not a club member you have no right to complain about the trail conditions.

7) While we're talking about trails, who do you think puts up all of the stop signs, directional arrows, etc.? If you said "the snowmobile clubs" give yourself 10 points and keep reading because we have only just begun.

6) When funding is needed to pay groomers, insurance, or trail development do you know where that money comes from? Sure, the \$40 people spend to join a club helps, but to most states the money comes from snowmobile registrations and gas taxes. Why does our sport get this money from the state? Because our sport is organized. If the state snowmobiling association can talk about its 10,000 members for example, those members could call their local lawmakers and ask for support. The bill would have a much better chance of being funded. Furthermore, it's the snowmobile clubs and state associations that fight the battles to open public land to snowmobilers and there is strength in numbers. Become one of those numbers.

5) With some clubs and state associations membership brings financial benefits. Your state membership includes accidental death and dismemberment insurance. You also

get discounts of sponsoring businesses and you receive the state publications. All of this for a mere \$40 per year.

4) Belonging to a club can make you a better and safer snowmobiler. That's right, surveys and accident statistics have shown that snowmobile club members tend to be more conscientious. They tend to stress safety and they are aware of safe-riding issues.

3) Belonging to a snowmobile club gives you a great social outlet for your favorite hobby. You can attend club rides, help build a deck, go to club meetings and take part in club fund raisers. Belonging to a club gives you a great opportunity to ride with different people, experience different areas and hang out with people who have similar interests.

2) Belonging to a snowmobile club makes you a part of the solution instead of being part of the problem. If you think the snowmobile trails should be groomed more often or a trail should be moved or if you think a trail is poorly marked, get involved. Most clubs are looking for fresh opinions and want feedback from users.

1) And the #1 reason to join a snowmobile club: It's the right thing to do. For all the reasons listed above and many more you should belong to a snowmobile club. The cost is minimal, the benefits are nice, and it is your responsibility to support the sport. It's cheap, it's simple, and it's the right thing to do.

On a personal note: when I began snowmobiling I wanted to know where we could ride, where I could off-load my snowmobiles, and where I could leave my vehicle while we rode. Where to ride begins with where are the trails and which ones are good. How do we find out the trail conditions and find snow depths? Then came the problem of navigating a trail in unfamiliar areas. Where to find accessible gas. What were the hidden issues (rules, routes, techniques, etc.)? Where could we find others interested in riding with us, often group outing tend to be more fun. Who do you ask?