

Fellow Snowmobilers,

It was a great honour to be elected as the fourteenth President of the New Brunswick Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (NBFSC), since 1982, the year of our Federation's incorporation. The NBFSC has had a multitude of great volunteer leaders who in thirty-five plus years have worked tirelessly with all the volunteer snowmobile clubs to ensure the NBFSC is a leader not only in the Maritimes and Canada, but also in North America.



First, I would like to recognize and thank all the snowmobile club's volunteers. I never imagined when I began volunteering at my local Snowmobile Club - Woodstock Trailmakers - that I would be eventually so honoured to lead the group of individuals who provide all of us with the trails, season after season. It is one of my objectives to ensure that the NBFSC and our partners 'do more' to recognize the vast unmeasured contribution of all the volunteer hours that are the very core of this Federation.

Our Provincial Government's own stated economic impact numbers as of season end 2015 measured **snowmobile tourism impacts** at **\$32.7 million annually**. We believe this to be much more significant than reported and also believe that snowmobiling's return on investments (ROI) exceeds all other types of trails in New Brunswick and possibly other tourism sectors as well.

With the June 2nd, 2018 release of Government's *Trails Action Plan*, new economic impact numbers (EIS) were adopted for all New Brunswick Greenway (walking, hiking, cycling, running, horseback riding, etc.) trails. Government has acknowledged Greenway Trails in New Brunswick contribute \$15.4 million annually (as of January, 2018). The new Greenway EIS conducted independently by the Sentier Conseil New Brunswick Trails Council, is regarded as the new *template* to measure trails economic impact. We trust the *template* will eventually be utilized for all types of trails in New Brunswick; Greenway, Off Highway and Snowmobile. Thus, snowmobiling and the volunteer's old number of \$32.7 million is now misstated and very possibly greatly understated.

So, in the winter of 2019, the NBFSC will be undertaking a **new Snowmobile Economic Impact Study**. Our goal is to have the snowmobile EIS completed for the autumn of 2019. We will strive to include the volunteer's hours in the EIS as well as all the hard financial data that snowmobiling generates. It will be based on the same *template* as was used to measure the significant impact of Greenway Trails this past year. Our EIS should confirm and establish our leadership position, accurately reflect snowmobiling's ROI, demonstrate that financial investments for trail infrastructure give back more than is spent and strengthen our recent and ongoing recommendations to both the Provincial and Federal Governments. We are confident in our leadership position with credible numbers.

Last, thank you to the Government of New Brunswick and Minister John Ames' team at Tourism, Heritage & Culture. Their recent release of the *Trails Action Plan*, a key component of the province's new Tourism Growth Strategy, is an important tool for the NBFSC. The financial investments being made into all New Brunswick's trails is at an all-time high by the Government. The volunteer hours being given into snowmobile trails is also at an all time high, just as recently as the long winter of 2018.

Our planned snowmobile EIS will seek to reinforce the government's direction to prioritize investments into those trails that provide the highest return on investments. Snowmobile trails and the volunteers contributions should be, can be, and must be a larger part of the *Trails Action Plan*. We have been the vast majority of New Brunswick's trails growth and success for more than 35 years now. And we are still a solution, not a burden for investments.

Thank you for personally supporting the NBFSC and looking ahead to New Brunswick's 2019 winter with you.

Scott Ralston, NBFSC President
"A Volunteer Organization"