

NH Snowmobile Trail Signing



- Best Management Practice (BMP)
- Guidelines

Big Push to simplify!!! Reduce!!!

- Easier for clubs; less options to carry
- Re-train riders to look and slow down
- Reduce liability for volunteers/clubs
- Easier decision making for sign installers
- The “Core” Signage:

Why sign snowmobile trails?

- Signing “guidelines” are used as a process to improve trail development in a safe & cost effective manner, not a rigid policy.
- Riders travel long distances and venture far beyond their local trail systems.
- Few experiences rival that of feeling lost, hungry and low of fuel on poorly signed trail system.
- Uniformity of signage
- Relay information to riders
- Identify possible/known **significant** “hazards”
- Designate legal trail location
- Keep landowners happy

Grant In Aid Component

- \$20k annually on snowmobile/OHRV signs
- Part of GIA contract; expected to have signs up
- 100% of cost paid by GIA (not club created signs)
- Part of consideration for grants
- #1 complaint from riders is generally sign related (this can be dealt with)
- Misdemeanor if someone removes a club/state installed sign

IASA Statement (2014)

- This document provides guidelines for the effective placement of signs on recreational snowmobile trails. It should be seen as a process to improve snowmobile trail development in a safe and cost effective manner as opposed to a rigid policy statement. It is anticipated that as a result of ongoing communication and development, these guidelines will continue to evolve through time.
- The International Association of Snowmobile Administrators (IASA) recognizes that the suggested guidelines contained in this document may not be the best recommendation, or indeed even practical in certain specific situations. This being the case, IASA would recommend that this document be considered general guidelines for the development of your trail signing program. This sign placement guideline should be used as a supplement to the Guidelines for Snowmobile Trail Signing adopted by the IASA in 2000.

Rider Responsibility

- “....the signing recommendations and guidelines provided in this guide should not be construed as minimizing the **operator’s responsibility**. Operating motorized trail vehicles in a reasonable, responsible, and prudent manner is the responsibility of the operator. The principles and guidelines offered here are intended to complement safe riding practices for a safe and enjoyable trail riding experience on all types of motorized trails.” (similar language to NH RSA 215-A:55, II)
- NH has statewide 45 mph trail speed limit. Use that as the template for sign distances from object.

Stopping Distance Studies

- 350-400' for rider to react and bring sled to a stop or avoid a hazard
- This is maximum sign distance from “hazard”
- 250-400' is general appropriate signing distance
- Riders cannot usually operate at 45mph (usually slower). We do not sign for speeders
- 12” signs are recognized by riders & riders recognize sign shapes before verbiage (octagon; yellow diamond, etc)

Sign Orientation

- Face the rider
- Reflectivity only works if facing lights
- Can't see a sign at night it might as well not be there
- NH signs meet reflective standards for trails. Highly reflectorized signs cannot be read

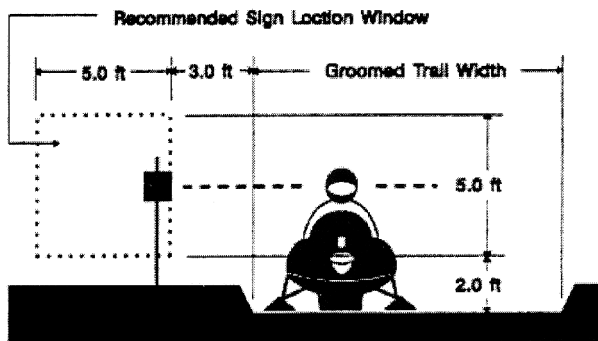


a) Signs facing the trail do not reflect headlight beams back to the rider.



b) Signs placed perpendicular to the trail reflect headlights back to the rider correctly.

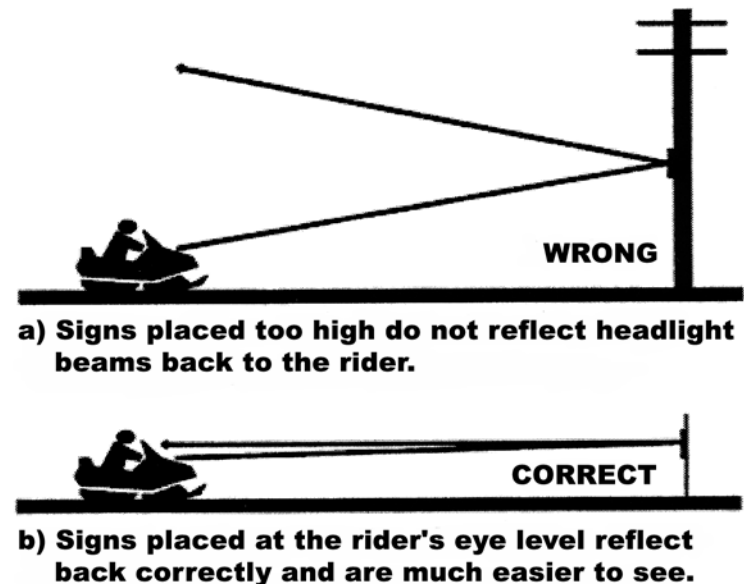
Distance from Groomed Surface



- Within 8' of groomed trail surface
- Account for evergreens and other trees in area
- Maintain annually; yes you have to go back and look now and again

Sign Placement – Rider Height

- 3' minimum/6' max height
- This gives 3' variable for snow depth
- Ideal height is 5' above groomed level
- Use 6' grade stakes to allow for snow depth changes
- Monitor thru winter; raise up if buried by snow



Signs no longer in use:



● Chevron



Winding Trail

STOP



- Informs rider that they must bring their sled to a full stop and then proceed slowly.
- Regulatory sign; enforceable!!
- Riders recognize the shape before they can read it
- Needs to be at road crossings!!

Stop Ahead



- Cautionary Sign
- Warns riders that a STOP sign is ahead
- Usually 200-500' ahead
- Vital sign to have installed anywhere a STOP sign is located
- Tells rider to start slowing down
- Arrow is always pointed UP!!!!!!

Large Arrow



- Informs riders that the trail makes a significant change in direction
- Sign is mounted pointing left or right, not up or down
- Used before corners, not the same as an ORANGE arrow

Object Marker

- Identifies **FIXED** objects at the side of the trail
- Objects (man-made) that narrow the trail width (bridge railings, posts)
- Stripes slope down toward trail surface
- Rider should go **Right** of this sign (as shown)
- Usually used in pairs



Direction Arrow

- “Reassuring Arrow”
- Tells snowmobiler which direction their trail goes; information NOT cautionary sign
- Used when at junctions and sleds should go specific direction
- Not interchangeable with yellow arrow!!!!



SLOW



- Instructs riders to temporarily slow their sled
 - Rider needs to take action; either let off the throttle or apply the brake
 - Notifies rider that something is coming (don't have to tell you what it is)

Other signs in NH inventory



Informational Signs



Blazers should be used on long stretches to signify rider is on a designated trail.
Max speed signs at trailheads, club houses and kiosks. (available in lobby)

Blazers (reassuring markers)



What warning is most important?



- What is this picture telling the rider?
- Go left, or stay right?
- Most important message goes highest
- Only 1 cautionary sign per post (yellow diamond shape means the same thing on every sign)

Object Markers!



- Black lines should be aiming right
- ID's side of the object the riders should pass on
- Need 2 nails/screws per sign

What is the message?



Every corner need a sign?



- What is missing?
- L hand corner
- Need to sign for riders not familiar with your trails
- Not everything needs a sign

Liability Concerns

- Idaho claim discussion
 - STOP sign unmaintained
- RSA 508:14
 - Landowner Liability Limited
 - II. Any individual, corporation, or other nonprofit legal entity, or any individual who performs services for a nonprofit entity, that constructs, maintains, or improves trails for public recreational use shall not be liable for personal injury or property damage in the absence of gross negligence or willful or wanton misconduct.
- RSA 212:34
 - Duty of Care: (b) "Landowner" means an owner, lessee, holder of an easement, occupant of the premises, or person managing, controlling, or overseeing the premises on behalf of such owner, lessee, holder of an easement, or occupant of the premises.



Continued changes:

- Chevrons, Caution & Winding Trail Signs done (no longer ordered in NH)
- Working through SLOW vs separate signs (Gate, Bridge, Logging)
- Developed “trailhead” sign – incorporate Groomer Ahead, Max Speed, Keep Right, etc. Here today!!
- 1 Major sign/post: stop is alone (can use info)
- Jnct Ahead, Stop Ahead not used together (will order Jnct Ahead again next year)

Club Sign Orders

Ready for clubs in November

RSA 215-C:8,III speed limit changes (2014) Speed limits on town roads changed from 10 mph to 20 mph. This is for ALL town road (class V and VI). Signs not part of GIA order, need to ask for them from Bureau separately.

Thank you for all your work over the years. The goal is to make it all easier over time and assist clubs with signing.