



**VAST Funding Request Summary
November 2021
Updated March 2022**

ONE-TIME MONEY REQUEST

Grooming Equipment Grant-And-Aid Program Request: \$1,000,000.00

VAST runs a very prudent budget and funding process. While we receive funding through trail pass (TMA) sales (average 21,000 per year), VT registrations and small part of the gas tax (not to exceed \$148,000 per year), we also grant out the majority of these funds to snowmobile clubs for trail maintenance, trail and bridge repair, grooming, equipment purchases and equipment repairs. Grooming equipment continues to increase in cost to not only purchase but repair. As our amount of funding remains static, the price of equipment increases between 5% to 7% due to price increases in steel and other materials/parts used to manufacture the equipment. This trickles down into the parts to repair the equipment as well. Below is a glimpse of equipment grant requests and how much funding VAST has been able to grant out to help clubs purchase or fix existing equipment.

About our fleet: We have 145 power units in our fleet. 106 of these are what we call Class One, which means they are the large power units (groomers) like ski areas use.

- 1) 46% of our Class One groomers are ten years and older.
- 2) 34% of our Class One groomers are twenty years and older.
- 3) Class One groomers cost between \$150,000-\$350,000 each.

Year	Amount Requested of VAST by Clubs	Amount Granted to Clubs by VAST	Difference of Request and what VAST Could Grant	% Difference	# Of Requests	# Of Grants	% Of Grant Compared to Requests
2018	\$992,607	\$361,882	\$630,725	36.45%	29	\$22	76%
2019	\$1,019,272	\$232,240	\$787,032	22.70%	\$37	\$20	54%
2020	\$1,156,225	\$206,154	\$950,071	17.82%	\$40	\$24	60%
2021	\$902,090	\$128,751	\$773,339	14.27%	\$18	\$12	67%
2022	\$608,170	\$224,250	\$383,920	36.87%	\$28	\$21	75%
	\$4,678,364	\$1,153,277	\$3,525,087				

We are proud of the percentage of money we raise that go directly into our trail system and keeping the administrative percentage way below the national average for non-profit spending. Currently, we operate our administrative side with 23% of our budget and 77% directly back into trails, trail equipment and grooming. Also, our administrative spending, supports marketing, and other programs.

The State of Vermont relies on VAST grooming millage to use as In-Kind to draw down the federal monies for all Motorized and Mixed-Use trail use portions within the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funding VT receives. This means that the Motorized funding is split between VAST and VASA, but the

Mixed-Use is used for projects and initiatives of VT Forest, Parks and Recreation and other user organizations.

Law Enforcement Increased Financial Support Request: \$50,000.00

VAST contracts with law enforcement agencies to patrol our trail system. This is done with the Department of Fish & Wildlife (Wardens), Department of Public Safety (State Police) and Vermont Sheriffs association. In addition to patrolling our trails and performing safety checks of snowmobiles in the field, the Department of Public Safety also provides the mandatory snowmobile safety classes held during the fall and winter. VAST has a Law Enforcement Committee that works hard to continue to grow this program and set standards and offer changes to legislation. Currently we have a budget for law enforcement of \$120,000 annually. Last year this budget was exceeded by an additional \$50,000 due to an increase of patrolling and coordination efforts. We would like to be able to increase our budget to match our needs so we can continue to grow this program to help make better our trail safety program. We have already grown this program to be quite dynamic with training, communication, partial equipment grants to law enforcement agencies and augmented a relationship with law enforcement and our “boots on the ground” safety ambassadors. In addition, we have built an online system for law enforcement to run safety checks using their smart phones which will increase their ability to investigate infractions and decrease the amount of paperwork they are required to do as wardens, troopers, sheriffs and police officers.

Lamoille Valley Rail Trail

It is important to note that VAST has spent more than 3.5 million dollars of snowmobile membership sales over the past decade to pay for the permitting and building of a state-owned resource, the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail. Without these expenses, we would have had the funds to keep up with equipment needs.

Summary

VAST is a dynamic organization that thrives on the support of volunteers, members and landowners. This essential combination provides the key ingredients that contribute to the success of the program and the continuance of the Statewide Snowmobile Trails System. With a solid base of volunteers, members, landowners, and the continuation of supporting partnerships from public and private entities, snowmobiling will continue to be a traditional, fun and family recreational activity for many generations.

Currently we are asking the administration and legislature to consider additional funding for VAST to help with our equipment funding to help us continue this program and help VAST meet the needs of our equipment requests. In addition, VAST is asking for your consideration to support and grow our law enforcement and safety programs.