

Wyoming Comprehensive
*Snowmobile
Recreation
Report*

Summary of Key Findings



2020-2021

Report by University of Wyoming,
Department of Agricultural and
Applied Economics



\$193.8 MILLION



The University of Wyoming – Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics conducted a study of snowmobiling for the Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources at the conclusion of the 2020-2021 snowmobiling season.

Resident and non-resident snowmobilers were surveyed to determine use and spending patterns along with demographics and priorities for future management of the State Snowmobile Program. While snowmobile outfitter clients were also surveyed, poor participation response required that updated outfitter data from a similar 2011-2012 survey be used as proxy data for this report. The complete study report can be viewed at <http://wyotrails.state.wy.us/Research/Index.aspx>.

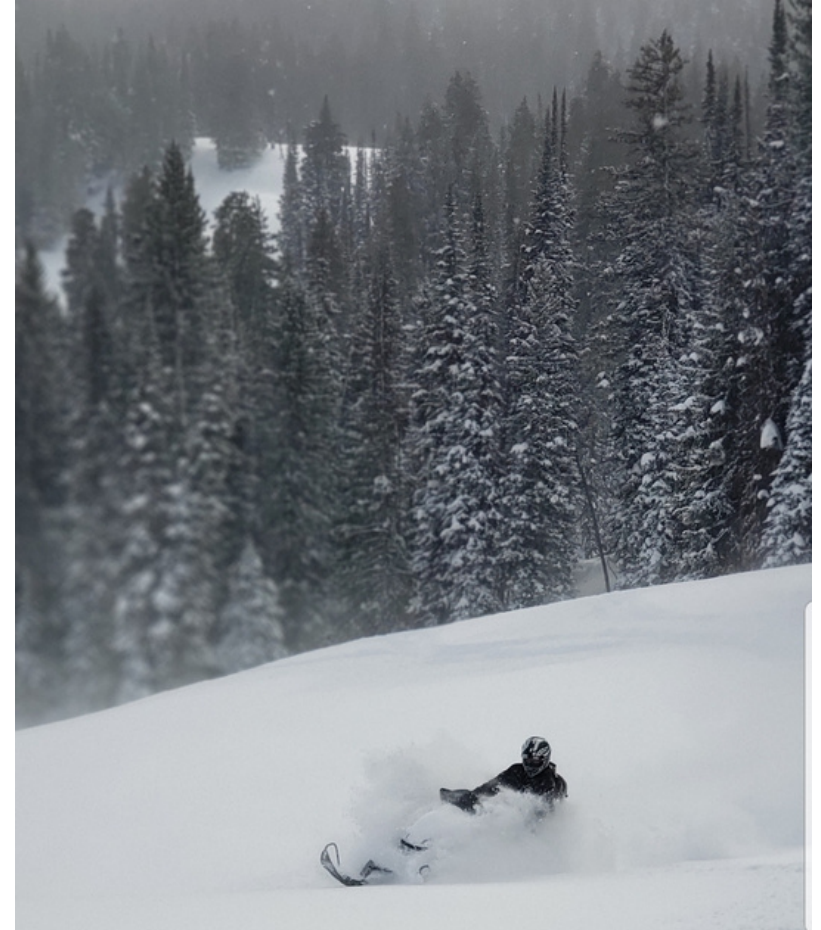
A summary of key findings include:
Total direct snowmobile-related expenditures in Wyoming totals \$193.8 million per year

- Residents: \$37.6 million in trip expenditures and \$50.6 million in annual equipment expenditures in Wyoming; annual expenditures total \$88.2 million
- Non-Residents: \$51.1 million in trip expenditures and \$20.3 million in annual equipment expenditures in Wyoming; annual expenditures total \$71.4 million
- Outfitter Clients: \$34.2 million in trip expenditures while in Wyoming
- Residents: spent an average of \$130.25 per day on their most recent trip; about 34% was for gasoline followed by 27% for food and 27% for lodging. They also spent an average of \$3,698.39 per person per year in Wyoming for equipment
- Non-Residents: spent an average of \$200.91 per day on their most recent trip; about 41% was for lodging followed by 26% for gasoline and 21% for food. They also spent an average of \$846.11 per person per year in Wyoming for equipment
- Outfitter Clients: spent an average of \$920.04 per trip in Wyoming; about 29% was for lodging, followed by 21% for food and 18% for gasoline

The regional modeling system IMPLAN estimates that the \$193.8 million in direct snowmobiler spending results in another \$61.2 million in secondary activity in the Wyoming economy.

IMPLAN estimates this economic activity supports the equivalent of 1,874 annual jobs with labor income of \$66.4 million.

The IMPLAN model also estimates the economic activity associated with snowmobiling generates \$17.6 million in state and local government revenue in Wyoming.



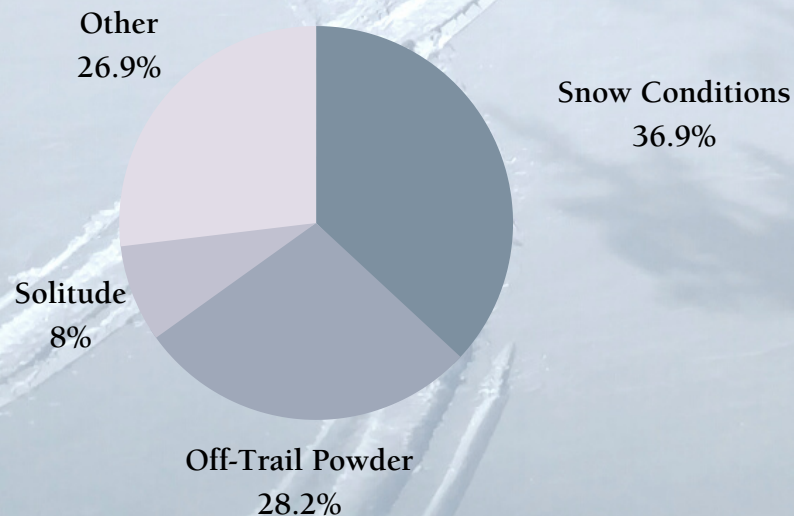
**Snowmobiling
generates a total of
\$255 million per year
of economic
activity for the
Wyoming economy.**

General Characteristics of Wyoming Resident and Non-Resident Snowmobilers



91.2% of residents and 97.4% of non-residents stated they were 'satisfied' or 'extremely satisfied' with their Wyoming snowmobiling experience

- Households own an average of 3 snowmobiles and have an average of 2.3 riders per household
- 25% of residents and 31% of non-residents tried a new snowmobiling area in Wyoming during the 2020-2021 winter season; 80% of both groups stated their reason for trying a new area was simply 'to experience a new area'



- 97% of snowmobile trips taken by Wyoming residents were in Wyoming while 61% of non-resident snowmobilers' trips were taken in Wyoming
- The top three reasons Wyoming is an attractive snowmobiling area include: #1 – its snow conditions (36.9%), #2 – its off-trail powder (28.2%), and at a distant #3 – its solitude (8.0%)
- Snowmobilers spent an average of 6.5 hours on their snowmobile while traveling an average of 48 miles per day
- 45% of residents and 88% of non-residents indicated they did not participate in any other winter recreation activities (besides snowmobiling) in Wyoming
- 75% of both residents and non-residents indicated that the impact of COVID-19 did not change their snowmobile trips in Wyoming, while 10% of residents and 11% of non-residents actually increased their trips due to COVID. Only 15% of residents and 14% of non-residents decreased the number of the number of their snowmobile trips due to COVID.

Characteristics of Wyoming Resident Snowmobilers

- Average 25 years of snowmobiling in Wyoming
- Average 21 days snowmobiling per year in Wyoming; average group size is 3.8 people with 3.5 snowmobiles
- Average travel time to site of most recent snowmobile trip was 2 hours and about 80 miles from home
- Residents spent an average of 1 night away from home on their most recent snowmobiling trip; 69% didn't have an overnight stay and returned home the same day as their trip
- The largest amount of resident snowmobile use typically comes from people who live in (by rank order): Natrona, Fremont, Laramie, Lincoln, Sweetwater, Sheridan, Campbell, Albany, Sublette, Teton and Park Counties
- There were 13,690 resident snowmobiles registered in the 2020-2021 season, which is a 13% decrease from when the last Snowmobile Study was conducted in the 2011-2012 season.

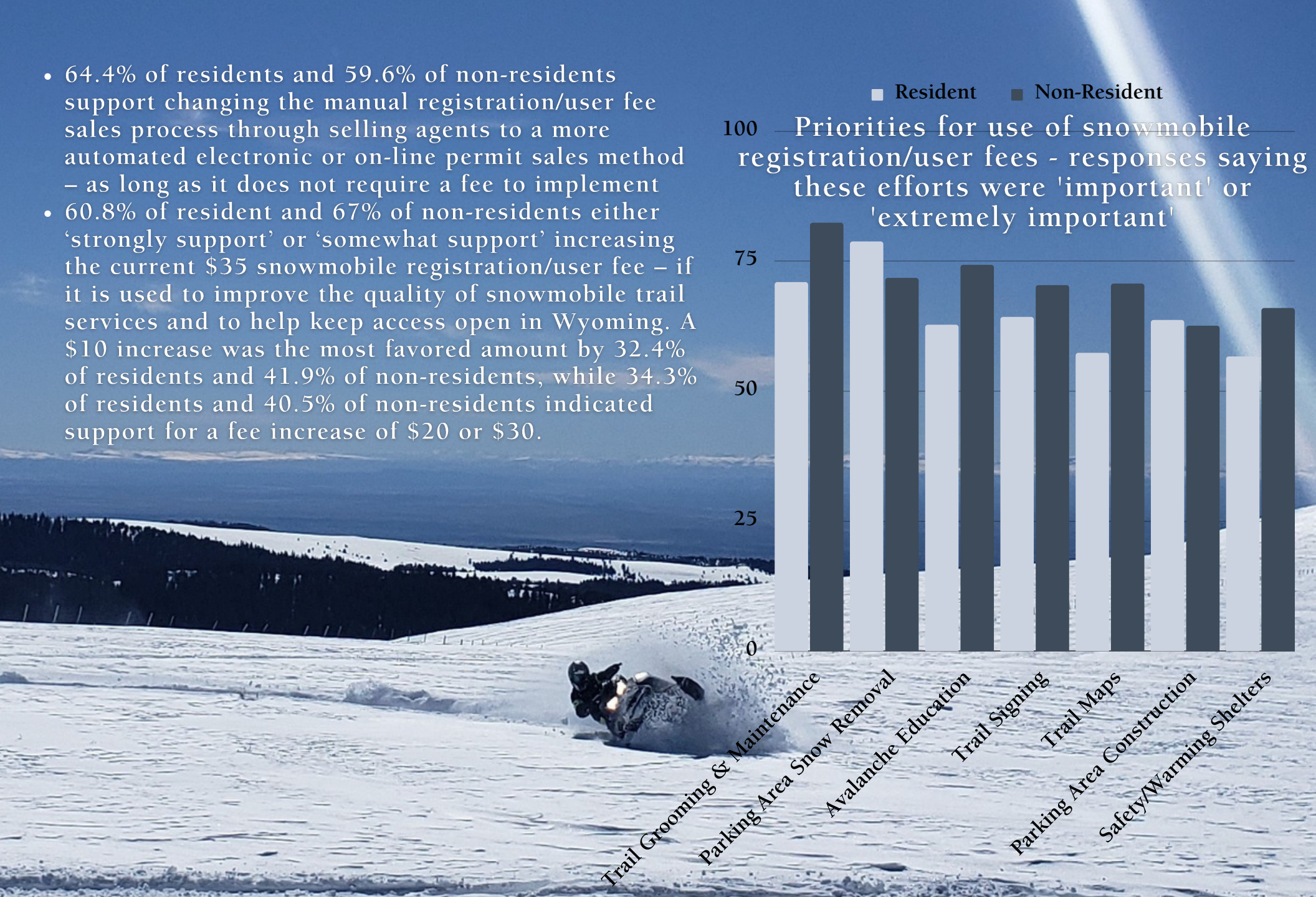
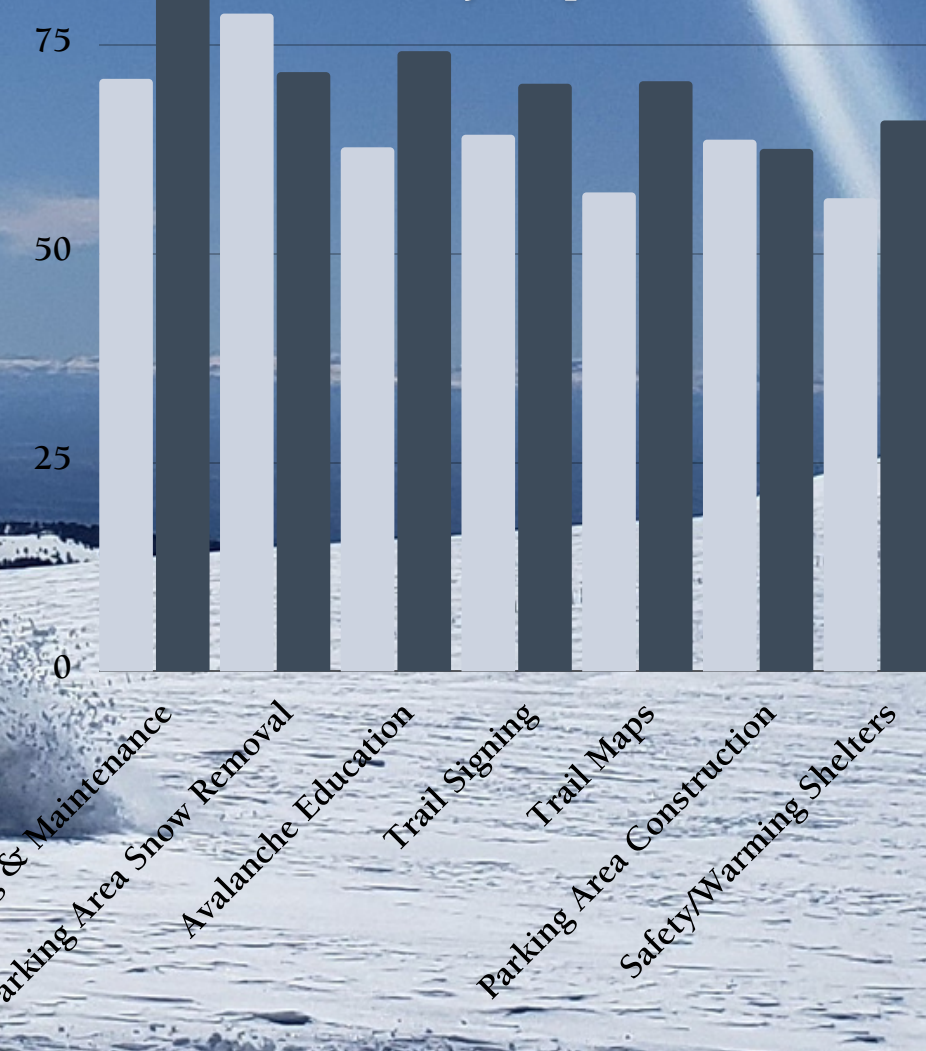


Characteristics of Wyoming Non-Resident Snowmobilers

- Average 12.5 years of snowmobiling in Wyoming;
- Average 11 days snowmobiling in Wyoming; average group size is 6.4 people with 7 snowmobiles
- Average travel time to site of most recent snowmobile trip was 11 hours and about 718 miles from home
- Non-residents spent an average of 4.7 nights away from home on their most recent snowmobiling trip; 8% didn't have an overnight stay and returned home the same day as their trip
- The largest amount of non-resident snowmobile use typically comes from people who live in Minnesota (27.8%) followed by (in rank order but all less than 10% each) Montana, Colorado, South Dakota, North Dakota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Idaho, Utah, Nebraska, Illinois and Michigan.
- There were 23,967 non-resident user fees sold during the 2020-2021 season, which is a 38% increase from when the last Snowmobile Study was conducted in the 2011-2012 season.

- 64.4% of residents and 59.6% of non-residents support changing the manual registration/user fee sales process through selling agents to a more automated electronic or on-line permit sales method – as long as it does not require a fee to implement
- 60.8% of resident and 67% of non-residents either ‘strongly support’ or ‘somewhat support’ increasing the current \$35 snowmobile registration/user fee – if it is used to improve the quality of snowmobile trail services and to help keep access open in Wyoming. A \$10 increase was the most favored amount by 32.4% of residents and 41.9% of non-residents, while 34.3% of residents and 40.5% of non-residents indicated support for a fee increase of \$20 or \$30.

■ Resident ■ Non-Resident
Priorities for use of snowmobile registration/user fees - responses saying these efforts were 'important' or 'extremely important'





Snowmobiling Use Patterns

While the State Trails Program manages 11 snowmobile trail systems, the majority of use by resident and non-resident snowmobilers occurs at 4 areas:

- 86.1% of all snowmobiling use occurs at 4 areas: Continental Divide – 29%, Snowy Range – 25%, Wyoming Range – 16.6%, and Bighorn Mountains – 15.5%
- 91.2% of all resident snowmobiling use occurs at these same 4 areas: Continental Divide – 37.1%, Wyoming Range – 20.8%, Snowy Range – 17.8%, and Bighorn Mountains – 15.5%
- 88.8% of all non-resident snowmobiling use occurs in these same 4 areas: Snowy Range – 36.8%, Continental Divide – 26.2%, Bighorn Mountains – 15.3%, and Wyoming Range – 10.5%

The majority of snowmobile outfitter use occurs at 4 state-managed trail systems plus Yellowstone NP:

- 70.2% of outfitter client use typically occurs at 4 areas: Continental Divide – 31.4%, North Bighorn Mountains – 20%, Gros Ventre – 9.8%, and Granite Hot Springs – 9%; all other areas reported 4% or less of total outfitter client use
- 8% of total Wyoming outfitter client use typically occurs in Yellowstone National Park

Changes in Yellowstone National Park snowmobile use patterns

- 41% of residents, 19% of non-residents, and 46% of outfitter clients indicated they had previously visited Yellowstone on a snowmobile
- Only 5.5% of residents, 3.5% of non-residents, and 18% of outfitter clients have taken a snowmobile trip into Yellowstone since 2004 (when rules changed, requiring snowmobile access to be 100% guided on Best Available Technology snowmobiles)

FIND SOMETHING UNEXPECTED



This report was produced at low cost by staff in 2022.