



# Grooming The Future

Advancing winter trails for tomorrow's Teton Valley



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Teton Valley continues to grow. With that, winter trail use continues to grow. Teton Valley Trails and Pathways' successful Winter Trails Program is now an essential part of our community's recreation infrastructure. TVTAP is seeking to grow capacity and acquire resources to accomplish grooming tasks more efficiently and more sustainably.

## INTRODUCTION

As demand for a sustainable grooming program has increased over the last decade, we have met the demand with more volunteers and more equipment. The sheer volume of work our organization endures has increased dramatically over the last 5 years. This has put pressure on staff and machinery to the extent that the level of grooming quality is at risk, staff and volunteer burnout is increasing, and the equipment we use for grooming is subject to increased wear and a shorter useable life.

With the advantage of TVTAP's previous experience owning a snowcat (2004 – 2008), and with a careful approach for the future, we hope to grow our winter trail grooming program to the next level by adding a snowcat to our fleet.

## NEXT LEVEL GROOMING STRATEGY

We have learned that the best, most efficient grooming strategy for TVTAP's winter trails is a hybrid strategy where we supplement snowmobile grooming with targeted grooming by a snowcat. We will continue to groom regularly with snowmobiles and volunteers at all venues, transporting the snowcat to the different venues on a rotating schedule as needed.

***The reality is that our grooming toolbox is missing a critical (and very expensive) tool...a SNOWCAT!***

## CONSIDERATIONS

Decision-making regarding a campaign of this size has not been taken lightly. Organizational capacity, equipment needs, storage infrastructure and cost are all considerations that have been taken into account while assessing the viability of procuring a Snowcat for Teton Valley Trails and Pathways.

Our program requires a small snowcat that can be easily transported to different trail venues throughout Teton Valley with a reasonably sized truck and trailer.



## EQUIPMENT

**Snowcat-** The Favero Snow Rabbit SR3X is an Italian machine that has been in use in North America since 2015, and is used for grooming ski and snowmobile trails, remote access, personnel transport, and navigation of extreme mountain terrain where compact size is a necessity. The Snow Rabbit has a 134HP efficient Kohler turbo diesel TIER-4F engine that consumes only 3.5 gallons per hour and is equipped with a 12-way blade, hydraulic powered tiller and dual track setters. The Kohler diesel engines are ubiquitous in North America, meaning parts and service are easily attained. Its size is just under 8 ft. wide, weighs under 6K pounds, and will easily fit on a standard sized 22 ft. deck-over tilt trailer. In addition, although Italian made, all parts for Snow Rabbits are stocked by dealers in the U.S., specifically in Wyoming, Wisconsin, and Vermont.

**Truck-** A ¾-ton or 1-ton pickup will easily have the capacity to transport the lightweight snowcat between trailheads. The addition of a flatbed with toolbox and accessory fuel tank will support the grooming program's growth and also be a year-round asset for the organization.

**Trailer-** The 22-foot deck-over tilt trailer will be essential to transport the Snow Rabbit between grooming venues throughout the winter. Additionally, the trailer will be used to transport our mini-Trail Dozer for summer trail work. TVTAP does not currently have a trailer to transport this machine.

## STORAGE

Our goal is to secure an enclosed garage space to house the snowcat year-round.

During the grooming season the snowcat should be stored on the trailer in a secure and centrally located facility. This will enable quick transport to trail venues, allow the machine to defrost between use, and provide a space to do preventative maintenance and repairs as necessary.

Proper off-season storage and maintenance of a snowcat is critical to reduce overall operating costs.

Snowcats spend a significant part of the year sitting completely idle. They must be properly stored out of the elements to help protect the major investment.

## STAFF CAPACITY

The addition of a Winter Program Manager will alleviate the workload on TVTAP's current winter staff.

Our current operating model is not sustainable riding on the shoulders of the Program Director. This new position will support the Grooming Program operations by sharing the responsibility of being on-call, managing volunteers to maintain trails to TVTAP's standards, helping with event organization, and of course operating the snowcat collectively with other TVTAP approved operators.

Our strategy is for this campaign's funding to pay for this position in full for the first year, then TVTAP will begin absorbing the expense of this positions for the next two years. By year four TVTAP will be fiscally ready to pay for this position in full for the life of the program.

## MAINTENANCE

Snowcats are renowned for their need for high levels of maintenance, especially preventative. A great deal of care is necessary to prevent small issues from becoming big ones. With a new Snow Rabbit, big ticket maintenance costs are not likely to be encountered for the first few years. It is realistic to budget for maintenance costs between \$5K-\$11K per year. This campaign will fund the first five years.

Replacement of the machine should be at 10 years of age or 5,000 hours of use.

## STRATEGY

Please see below our plan for purchase, ongoing maintenance, and operations costs.

Item	Description	Cost
Snow Rabbit SR3X	Snowcat purchase	190 K
Truck	¾ ton, 4x4, flat bed, fuel tank, tool box	50K
Trailer	22 ft x 8' deck over tilt, 14K GVWR	17K <i>funding committed</i>
Storage	Facility	60k <i>funding committed</i>
Staff Capacity (Winter Program Manager)	Year 1 – 35 K Year 2 – 23 K Year 3 – 12 K	70 K <i>funding committed</i>
Maintenance	8 K / year x 5 yrs	40 K <i>funding committed</i>
<b>TOTAL=</b>		<b>\$427,000</b>

## CONCLUSION

TVTAP is at a crossroads where growth and community expectations are overwhelming our current resources. The acquisition and targeted use of a small snowcat would serve to alleviate the pressure on some of our existing equipment and staffing strains, resulting in more streamlined operations.

The grooming benefits of a snowcat are many, including superior renovating and track setting capabilities and the power to blade snow and level trails efficiently. We know that adding a snowcat to our fleet is more than just buying a piece of equipment. A whole infrastructure to support this piece of equipment is necessary for the winter program and the organization to be successful in the future.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE SNOW RABBIT SR3X PLEASE EXPLORE:

<https://www.faverosnowtech.com/en/snow-rabbit-3-3x/>

<https://www.facebook.com/favero.snowgroomers/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NpjfSlgZ2hU>