

# RULES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING

These rules are set in accordance with Jackson Electric Cooperative Bylaws, Article II, Section 7. Jackson Electric Cooperative's annual meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 19, 2022, at the Lunda Theatre in Black River Falls.

## Annual Meeting Rules

1. The meeting will be conducted in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised edition.
2. Any speaker must be recognized by the Chair before speaking.
3. Only members and duly registered guests will be recognized by the Chair; each person so recognized must give his or her name.
4. Unless otherwise approved by the Chair, those recognized are to limit their questions and comments to three minutes, with any rebuttal limited to two minutes.
5. Questions and comments from members and duly registered guests will be in order during old and new business sessions, and at the conclusion of the officer reports, if invited.
6. No resolution affecting Jackson Electric Cooperative may be submitted by any member, unless written copies have been received by Jackson Electric Cooperative by February 4, 2022. This will permit time for review by the Jackson Electric Cooperative Board of Directors to make its recommendation to the meeting as to approval or rejection.
7. No signs or handouts will be permitted within the building of the place of the meeting, except such handouts as required for the official conduct of the Annual Meeting. No handouts made available outside of the building will use the name of the Cooperative, its letterhead or logo to imply that the Cooperative supports or opposes any resolution.
8. No demonstrations shall be held within the building of the place of the meeting.

## Annual Meeting Voting Procedures

Voting may be by voice vote (one vote per membership).

## UPCOMING DISTRICT MEETINGS

District meetings will be held in Districts #1, #6, and #9. Members who have a meter in each of these districts will receive a meeting notice via USPS with a mail date of January 17, 2022.

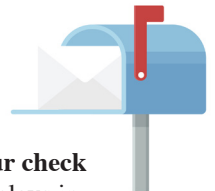
All meetings will begin at 7 p.m. The meeting dates and locations are as follows:

- District #1 – Wednesday, February 9, 2022, Northfield Town Hall**
- District #6 – Tuesday, February 8, 2022, Jackson Electric Cooperative**
- District #9 – Monday, February 7, 2022, Melrose Town Hall**

Call for District Director Nominations was published in the November 2021 issue of the *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News*.

## REMINDER: YOUR PAYMENT MAY BE DELAYED

If you mail your electric bill payment via USPS, please make sure you allow enough time for your payment to get to our office. **We post your payment when we receive it, not the date written on your check or the postmarked date.** There are mail delays in the postal service, so please plan accordingly.



Other options to pay your electric bill:

- Online at [www.jackelec.com](http://www.jackelec.com)
- Telephone at 844.759.3984
- Enroll in auto pay
- Secure drop box at Jackson Electric's parking lot

## 2022 ENERGY EFFICIENCY REBATES

This year's rebates for the purchase and installation of qualified energy efficient appliances, lighting, heat pumps, and more are available. Visit [jackelec.com/rebates-and-incentives](http://jackelec.com/rebates-and-incentives) to determine if your item qualifies or contact our office. More details on this year's rebates will be announced in next month's *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News*.



# RIDING IN A *Winter Wonderland*

It's no secret that Jackson County's beautiful ATV trail system draws in tourists from all over, boosting the local economy. As the temperature drops and snow begins to fly, there's another reason to visit Jackson County: snowmobiling. The miles and miles of groomed and maintained trails that locals and visitors have come to enjoy would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of local snowmobile club volunteers who share a passion for this winter sport.

**Teamwork Makes the [Trail] Dream Work** "All the work is volunteer," says Kris Ward of the Woodland Riders club. "The trails are maintained by club members."

Kris' family is actively involved in snowmobiling, including his 16-year-old son who serves as an Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs (AWSC) youth representative for Jackson County. Kris and his family stay involved with the snowmobile club to ensure the trails stay open and safe for riders.



Kris and Trudy Ward

Snowmobiles may be out for what's sometimes just a short period of time depending on the season's snowfall, but snowmobile club members work months in advance to ensure the trails are ready for riders to enjoy. Member-volunteers do much of their prep work in the fall, trimming tree branches, cleaning up trees or debris that may be obstructing the trail,

Each club owns a groomer to maintain their section of trails.



maintaining bridges, and putting up signage. They try to save the hunting land signage for the end to respect active hunters. "We want to make sure everyone has an enjoyable experience on the trail," says Joel Busse of the Black River Trail Riders club.

Joel bought a snowmobile a few years ago. He knew there was a club and wanted to be part of a group. "I enjoy being part of a group with a common goal," he says.

When there is enough snowfall and the trails are open, each club grooms its portion of the trail system. Grooming takes place when volunteers are available, which often is at night. It's also easier to see the groomer at night to avoid possible collisions. Maintenance, grooming, and signage expenses are tracked by each club throughout the year to qualify for state funds disbursed at the county level. "I handle the grant requests and manage the state funding for maintenance expenses," shares Jon Schweitzer, Jackson County Forestry and Parks assistant administrator.



Jon Schweitzer

Jon serves as the Jackson County snowmobile trail coordinator, is a certified snowmobile safety instructor, and works closely with the snowmobile alliance, which is made up of representatives from each club. He answers questions locally regarding routes, safety, and what can or cannot be done. "We also have a very close positive working relationship with the AWSC," Jon says.

In addition to the hundreds of miles of trails covered by Jackson County's snowmobile club members, there are also 100 miles of trails east of Black River Falls that are maintained by the county. You may be familiar with these trails if you ATV during the summer months. The county does the grooming and maintenance on any of the trails that are open to ATVs during the summer.

Paul Schmidt of the Hatfield Roadrunners club is also a member of a Neillsville area snowmobile club. He attends alliance meetings for both Clark and Jackson County, staying informed of any changes in the law. He recognizes that



Paul Schmidt



Joel Busse



snowmobiling is fun, but there's also a lot of work behind getting the trails ready for riders. "I do what I can anytime to do my share and contribute," he shares.

**The Benefits of Membership** While there are separate clubs and different routes, deep down, all club members recognize the camaraderie of the sport. For JR Knutson of the Jackson Trempealeau Ridgerunners club, snowmobiling is deep in his family's roots, starting with his grandpa in the 1970s and trickling down to his dad, uncles, cousin, and brother-in-law, who are also involved with the club. "It's a great way to get together with family or have camaraderie with people that have the same love for snowmobiling," JR shares.



JR Knutson



Brent Stello

In addition to the camaraderie, another reason to join a club is to get to know other members and find people to go riding with. The Jackson County area has beautiful scenery that cannot be seen from the road, and sunrises and sunsets are a whole new experience when viewed from the trail. "You get to know other members and find people to go riding with," adds Brent Stello of the Barnyard Trail Riders club. "It's a fun winter sport. You get to know other members and ride together. There's beautiful scenery that you can't experience driving down the road."

When you become a member of one of the local snowmobile clubs, you are also becoming a member of the AWSC, which offers several benefits. Not only are you eligible for a discounted trail pass, but you also receive a subscription to the *Wisconsin Snowmobile News* magazine. AWSC also offers a scholarship opportunity for eligible high school seniors.

**Fueling the Economy** When the tourist season fades and winter makes its appearance, business slows down for many local establishments. Trail access to these businesses provides an added economic boost during the off-season. Some snowmobilers make a day trip, stopping and supporting several establishments along the way. Others may decide to hop on their sled for a shorter trip instead of driving into town to grab something to eat. "There's nothing cooler than jumping on a snowmobile and going somewhere for lunch, seeing things you don't normally see from the road," shares Kris.

The snowmobilers on the trails are not limited to Jackson County residents. With corridor trails across all 72 counties, riders have several options on where they can go. Paul explains that winter travel with a snowmobile is different than visiting a destination in the summer. In the summer, campers or travelers generally pack everything they need. Many snowmobilers load up their snowmobile and buy what they need when they get to their destination, such as gas and food. These riders are also likely supporting the hospitality industry if they're here for an extended stay. "Last year was the first year all 72 counties were open at the same time. It's a clean sport that supports gas stations, bars, and restaurants," Paul says.

**RESPECT** Snowmobile club volunteers put in countless hours throughout the year preparing the trails so that they are safe and enjoyable for everyone. In return,



Riders are asked to respect landowners' property, following the marked signage and staying on the trail.

## Trail Information and Safety

Trails are open December 15 through March 15, depending on weather conditions. Visit [www.co.jackson.wi.us/forestry-parks](http://www.co.jackson.wi.us/forestry-parks) for current trail conditions.

The snowmobile safety course is required in Wisconsin for anyone born on or after January 1, 1985. Students must be 12 years old or turning 12 in the same year the course is taken. Visit [dnr.wisconsin.gov/Education/OutdoorSkills/safetyEducation](http://dnr.wisconsin.gov/Education/OutdoorSkills/safetyEducation) to find an upcoming course.

**If you've ever considered joining a snowmobile club, attend a meeting in your area and see what it's all about:**

**Barnyard Trail Riders – Brent Stello**  
Covers around 67 miles of trails in the Melrose, Mindoro, Four Corners, and North Bend area. Meets Monday nights at the Melrose Rod and Gun.

**Black River Trail Riders – Joel Busse**  
Maintains approximately 100 miles of trail in the Black River Falls, Alma Center, and Merrillan area. Meetings are held September through March on the third Thursday of each month. The location may vary, but meetings are typically held at Skyline Golf Course.

**Hatfield Roadrunners – Paul Schmidt**  
Responsible for about 10 miles of trail within the Hatfield area. Also responsible for beacons around each side of Lake Arbutus and marking the lake when it freezes over. Meetings are held at the Hatfield Fire Department on the first Saturday of each month.

**Jackson Trempealeau Ridgerunners – JR Knutson**  
About 100 miles of trail covering the Blair, Taylor, Hixton, York, Northfield, Newcomb Valley, Ettrick, Beach's Corner, and Happy Hollow areas. Meetings are held September through April on the third Monday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Taylor General Store and Cafe.

**Woodland Riders – Kris Ward**  
About 47 miles on the east side of Jackson County in the Millston area. Meetings are held monthly, usually at 9 a.m. on the first Saturday of the month. Past meetings have been held at the 400 Club.

riders are asked to be respectful of landowners' property and to obey the trail signage. "Be safe, courteous to other riders, and respect the trails that you are on," JR and Brent concur.

If you've ever hopped on a snowmobile and enjoyed the trails, you've probably seen a "Stay on Trail or Stay Home" sign somewhere along the way. This issue has become pertinent statewide, with the AWSC launching a "Respect Our Landowners" ad that reminds riders that going outside the blazers is disrespectful to the thousands of Wisconsin landowners who allow the use of their land for 25,000 miles of trail. Club members also do their best to make people aware that it's important to respect the landowners and stay on the trails. "If you do know of snowmobilers causing issues, please communicate with the club so that we can stop this from happening," Joel says.

Landowners generously allow riders to cross their land on the agreed-upon trail. All it takes is one person to go off the trail, which is trespassing, to lead to possible closure or rerouting of that area. Rerouting could mean a longer way to your destination or closing off an area that once led to a business. "We route the trails to the businesses," says JR. "It becomes difficult to find a new route," adds Brent.

Another issue many clubs currently face is property transfers. Larger parcels may be divided and sold to several new owners. A trail that was used for years suddenly becomes unusable if the new property owner decides that they do not wish to grant trail access on their property. While this decision ultimately lies with the property owner, they are encouraged



Riders enjoy a freshly groomed trail, taking in scenery unseen from the road.

to consider the idea and can discuss their concerns before committing. "There is a Wisconsin Law [Chapter 350.19 Section 895.52] that states landowners are not liable for injury," explains Brent. "I think it's important for more landowners to know this."

## Community Involvement

*Thank you, landowners* is a common phrase amongst snowmobile club members. Without landowners, there wouldn't be a trail system. Each area club shows their appreciation to its landowners through appreciation events or gift certificates supporting local businesses. "We can't thank the landowners enough, and we hope that they continue to let us use their property," Joel states.


Snowmobile clubs want to keep the landowners happy to ensure the longevity of the trail system. When routing the trails each year, club members look for a safe, scenic route that the landowner has approved. If the trail route is different from what you remember from previous years, it's likely that the trail was rerouted due to a change of ownership, crop rotations, safety, or other reasons. "We talk to our landowners every spring and fall to address concerns," JR adds.

Snowmobile club volunteers also give back to the communities they belong to, whether that's through donations to community-wide events, fundraisers, fire/first responder departments, to youth scholarships, or the donation of time itself. "Most of the money that we earn through trail maintenance goes back into the community," concludes Paul.—*Brandi Shramek, Member Relations Advisor*

## ENERGY ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

If you are in need of energy assistance, please visit [homeenergyplus.wi.gov](http://homeenergyplus.wi.gov) to learn more about the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program and income guidelines or contact your county's Department of Health and Human Services.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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Diggers Hotline 800.242.8511  
Card Payments 844.759.3984  
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Board of Directors: Gary Woods, President  
Chris Curran, Vice President  
David Peasley, Secretary-Treasurer  
Jerry Huber, Dairyland Power Representative  
Daniel Smrekar, Kristi Hanson, Stanley Gran, Brian Huber, Jerry Wagner

Kevin Babcock, General Manager/CEO

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