

FROM/DE: HIGHWAY SAFETY DIVISION

DATE: December 23, 2011

OPP & OFSC WARN THAT THERE WILL BE NO SNOWMOBILING IN MOST OF ONTARIO DURING THE HOLIDAYS

(ORILLIA, ON) - With the delayed onset of winter throughout much of the province, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) and the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) are warning snowmobilers that snow and ice conditions in southern Ontario and many parts of northern Ontario are unlikely to be safe for travel by snowmobile during the holidays: the smart choice is *not to ride* a snowmobile during this time.

According to the OFSC, some northern districts have received early snowfall and any locations with limited trail riding will be shown on OFSC Trail Status Reports (www.ofsc.on.ca) as they become available. However, neither current nor forecasted conditions in the rest of the province are suitable for holiday snowmobiling, including:

OFSC Prescribed Snowmobile Trails – With the exception noted above for some northern areas, most OFSC snowmobile trails will remain closed during the holidays. The OFSC advises snowmobilers that riding on closed OFSC trails on private property is very risky and could result in trespass charges.

Lakes, Rivers, Swamps and Bogs – No ice is ever 100% safe. Waterways throughout southern Ontario remain open or have insufficient ice to support the weight of a snowmobile or any travel across a frozen surface. Ice conditions in many parts of northern Ontario remain variable and should be carefully checked before going.

Off-Trail/Cross Country – Riding on other terrain is not recommended. This “no-go” advisory includes public roads, open fields, utility corridors and public lands.

The OPP is committed to saving lives on Ontario’s highways, trails and waterways through the reduction of preventable injury and death. Initiatives are developed and delivered through the Provincial Traffic Safety Program. Visit opp.ca for more information.

The OFSC is devoted to proactive leadership in promoting safe, responsible riding, on and off Ontario snowmobile trails by building safer snowmobiling knowledge, attitudes and behaviours through rider education, safety legislation development and enforcement. For more information, visit ofsc.on.ca.

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