

Update to the Economic Contribution of Snowmobiling in Maine Report: December 2024

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Previous Results:

The total estimated contribution of snowmobiling to Maine's economy was \$607 million dollars from the **2018-2019 season** (see [our 2020 report](#)). That is equivalent to **\$746 million** in today's (2024) dollars.

Updated Results:

Using 2022-23 snowmobile registration numbers, we estimate that the total contribution of snowmobiling to the Maine economy during the **2022-23 season** was **\$710 million** (in 2024 dollars).

Using registration numbers recently [reported in the Bangor Daily News](#), which include through the end of February 2024, we estimate that the total contribution of snowmobiling to the Maine economy during the **2023-24 season** was **\$582 million dollars**. This is a **decrease of \$128 million** compared to the previous year. As reported, this season had a strong decline in the number of registered snowmobiles. Please see the assumptions for why this economic contribution estimate is potentially an **underestimate** of the decline.

Methods:

As documented in the report released in 2020, the University of Maine completed a comprehensive update of the economic contribution of snowmobiling in Maine. Extensive sampling of resident and non-resident snowmobilers captured the spending profiles for the 2018-19 season. It had been twenty years since the previous estimate, and there were significant changes in how people spent money while participating in snowmobiling. There were also significant shifts in resident and non-resident registrations.

To provide this current April 2024 update, we used the average trip and non-trip spending profiles of resident and non-resident snowmobilers from the 2020 report. We then adjusted these amounts for inflation, moving everything into constant 2024 dollars. Next we calculated the industry-wide economic contribution for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 seasons by using the

number of snowmobile registrations (resident and non-resident) in each of those years to expand to the total direct and indirect/induced amounts.

This method can be used through the 2027-28 season and then the spending profiles should be updated through a **comprehensive survey of 2028-29** snowmobile riders. We expect that after a decade, changes in spending patterns may be evident due to the pandemic, climate change, and other shifts in tourism.

Assumptions:

The registration numbers for the 2023-24 season are not yet finalized and will need to be updated after all registrations are reported (March & April online registrations and municipal registrations). We anticipate minor changes given late spring registrations are minimal and municipal registrations account for only a small proportion of all registrations.

We assume that spending patterns have not significantly changed from the 2018-19 season in terms of the typical resident and non-resident snowmobiler. Both the base and updated calculations rely on the number of snowmobile registrations and thus the assumption that all snowmobilers in Maine register their snowmobiles. In general, compliance with registration requirements is perceived to be close to 100%.

These assumptions have the potential to **underestimate** declines in economic contribution because snowmobilers may register their snowmobiles at the beginning of the season and then **not take as many, or any, trips** as usual due to poor snow conditions. The calculation of economic contribution rests on estimates of spending, and total trip spending may be affected if individuals **shorten their trips or choose not to travel** at all due to the poor snow conditions. **Non-trip spending, such as equipment purchases, may also decline in such years.** Taken together, the estimate for the 2023-24 season likely underestimates the loss in economic contribution from the poor winter conditions.