

2015 NYS Geospatial Applications Awards Competition Entry Form

Please use the below template to submit your entry for the **2105 NYS Geospatial Applications Awards Competition**. By entering the competition, you grant permission for the NYSGIS Association to publish and publicize your entry.

Required Information

Sponsoring Organization:

Mohawk Valley GIS

Stakeholder/Participant List (by Organization):

Mohawk Valley GIS in partnership with nearly 100 snowmobile clubs across NY State, and the tourism agencies in Oswego, Chautauqua and Franklin counties.

Title:

NY Snowmobile Web Map and Trip Planner

Abstract:

In the early 2000s, paper maps and limited GPS offerings were all that was available for snowmobilers needing to know where the over 10,000 miles of snowmobile trails are located in New York State.

Seven years ago, snowmobilers were calling us looking for paper trail maps, as we had created some for neighboring counties in previous years. However, there were numerous challenges to this arrangement. Many clubs were unable to keep printing paper maps because of cost. Paper maps essentially are obsolete the moment they are printed, as trails can and do change annually because many are on private land. Planning routes in unknown areas was a daunting task.

Utilizing the power of geospatial technology, Mohawk Valley GIS creatively unified the fragmented landscape of snowmobile maps to benefit the snowmobile community and supporting businesses in New York State.

Statement of the Problem:

Limited resources were available to people interested in snowmobiling in New York State. At the time, no interactive map existed to display our over 10,000 miles of state funded trails, making it nearly impossible to plan where to ride without ordering paper maps from several counties and laying them all out on the floor.

Once on the trails, it became difficult, especially in inclement weather, to pull out one or more large size paper maps to figure out where you were when lost. Paper maps have no “you are here” feature.

Response to the Problem:

We create our first interactive map in 2009 using Manifold IMS, partnering with the snowmobile clubs in Herkimer, Otsego and Montgomery counties and with the Towns of Webb/Old Forge and Inlet (they have their own permitted trail system).

Each year, we reach out to the NY clubs and the riding public for suggestions for new features. We have grown to include a statewide web map, iOS and Android trails apps that work without reception, GPS overlay maps for Garmin receivers and .gpx regional track files and waypoint files for recreation grade receivers.

We are most proud of our route planner tool in the website and in-app turn-by-turn directions along the trail network. None of this would be possible without a strong foundation in GIS and a suite of GIS software tools.

Additionally, in 2012 we partnered with Oswego County Tourism to create a free trail app to promote clubs’ trails and businesses in Oswego County only. This was a huge success for County Tourism, measured by the number of new emails they added to their marketing campaigns. In 2013 and 2014, we added new partnerships with Franklin and Chautauqua counties as well, resulting in a representative app for each of three very popular snowmobiling destinations: Tug Hill, Adirondack Park and Western NY.

Results:

As of August 2015, we have reached 169,846 unique website visitors and 19,979 downloads of our trail apps. The trail apps were used for 282,710 sessions during the 2014-2015 snowmobile season.

We are honored to have a very loyal following of riders and to have earned the reputation of being the most accurate resource for snowmobilers in New York. We work with the snowmobile clubs each fall to update all the trail information, providing as up-to-date trails and intersections data as possible.

We have included a sampling of testimonials from riders from this past 2014-2015 season, at the end of this application.

Return on Investment/Cost-Benefit Analysis:

Priceless. We keep people safe and on the trails where they belong, helping to reduce land owner issues and potential fatalities.

“By the way, your app really saved my wife and I this weekend. We were out sledding early on Saturday in Delaware County. The wind was really howling and, in the open field, all the tracks were getting covered by blowing snow. The trails were not well marked and the drifts were getting challenging to manage, especially for my wife and I with this only being our second year of sledding. We turned back and this unfamiliar trail became even more challenging. Every open field we came to the tracks were indistinguishable. The breadcrumb tracking allowed me to see when I was coming off course. It saved us about four times during our journey. We got back to our cabin just as white out conditions hit. Thank you again for this tool. Was a lifesaver on Saturday. It is also giving us the confidence to go places we would have hesitated going a year ago.”

Keith G, northern NJ

Additionally, the state-wide trail data has led riders to explore areas of New York State which they had not previously visited, or perhaps did not even know existed as snowmobiling destinations. In turn, these snowmobilers patronize local businesses for essential services. We help connect riders to these businesses by promoting over 400 local business locations in close proximity to the trails that offer food, lodging, gas, snowmobile parts/repair/tours and so on.

The three county tourism agencies (Oswego, Franklin and Chautauqua) have been able to capture many of these new riders via the expansion of their email marketing lists. By doing so, the agencies support sustainable economic growth in their communities, by attracting and subsequently retaining the new riders. *“Oswego County was extremely pleased to have been selected as the pilot community for this invaluable tool” according to David Turner, the County’s director of Community Development, Tourism and Planning. “With an average annual snowfall of over 160 inches and almost 400 miles of trails, snowmobiling is our primary winter attraction here and the mobile app now has us connected to potential visitors from places we never even considered might be interested.”*

Snowmobiling contributes just over \$850 million in direct and indirect spending within New York State¹, and we are very proud to be a key contributor to this successful effort as a small GIS and technology consulting enterprise.

¹New York State Snowmobile Association commissioned economic impact study report, 2011-2012.

Key Participants: (Name, Organization, Title)

NYS Snowmobile club officers, groomers and members - all volunteers - who create and maintain the trails every season.

Linda Rockwood, Mohawk Valley GIS, owner/GIS consultant

David Vail, Mohawk Valley GIS, systems developer

John Marino, Mohawk Valley GIS, GIS analyst

David Turner, Oswego County, Director Community Development, Planning & Tourism

Contact Information:

Name _____ Phone # _____ Email _____.

Linda Rockwood 315-624-9545 linda@mohawkvalleygis.com

Deadline & Submission Information

The deadline for entries is Tuesday, September 15, 2015. Please E-mail this completed template to Ben Houston at Benjamin.h.houston@gmail.com, with "GIS Applications: [Name of Submitting Organization]" in the message Subject line.

Thank you for your submission and Good Luck!

Testimonials from riders

You are the best!!!! I developed a heated holder for my phone so it will not go dead and it works perfect. I am making them for all that ride with after they strongly encouraged me to do so. This is a great app and the breadcrumb works great now. We ride in western ny and tug hill allot and this app is a necessity. I appreciate you getting back to me so fast.

Thanks
Frank

New Trail maps have been spot on, on the GPS. Super accurate compared to others I have used thanks !!!!
Keith Joseph, Facebook

1/19 email
Hi Linda,

We recently purchased the nysnowmobile map and loaded it on our new Garmin Montana 600t. We went snowmobiling in Wyoming co last Friday and our new Garmin with the nysnowmobile map worked very nicely. Thank you for making the nysnowmobile map it is very helpful.
David and Lesley Stevens

Aly Hynes, on Facebook, 1/19/15

I purchased the app and used it for the first time this weekend and we loved it. I love the breadcrumb feature and how it showed where we traveled this weekend and have us an exact mileage of our trip. We are very pleased with the app and know that other riders

would be too. It makes it even better to know that some of the cost of the app goes right back into the sport that we love so much!

1/30 email Linda,

Once again you saved the day, thanks so much. I envisioned having to go back to the paper map!! yuk!

I have used your app on one trip around Wyoming County where I planned the route, uploaded it then followed it out on the trail with 7 other riders in tow. Love it, very efficient and accurate way to navigate.
Corey M., Monroe County

The ap was great! We launched from Winona state park for the first time 2 weeks ago and had an awesome experience! The ap helped us go a way we have never been with no confusion....

Lisa Dashnau Facebook, Feb 9

We recently purchased the nysnowmobile map and loaded it on our new Garmin Montana 600t. We went snowmobiling in Wyoming co last Friday and our new Garmin with the nysnowmobile map worked very nicely. Thank you for making the nysnowmobile map it is very helpful.
Dave and Lesley, Ontario County Feb 3, 2015

By the way, your app really saved my wife and I this weekend. We were out sledding early on Saturday in Delaware County. The wind was really howling and, in the open field, all the tracks were getting covered by blowing snow. The trails were not well marked and the drifts were getting challenging to manage, especially for my wife and I with this only being our second year of sledding. We turned back and this unfamiliar trail became even more challenging. Every open field we came to the tracks were indistinguishable. The breadcrumb tracking allowed me to see when I was coming off course. It saved us about four times during our journey. We got back to our cabin just as white out conditions hit. Thank you again for this tool. Was a lifesaver on Saturday. It is also giving us the confidence to go places we would have hesitated going a year ago.

Keith G, northern NJ

[your] overlay for the gps is AWESOME!!!!!! We rode from Niagara Falls to Franklinville which is 140 miles one way in about 8 hrs and then back on Sunday. I cannot express enough how much time having my Garmin suction cupped to my windshield saved over stopping at every intersection to check my outdated paper maps and cell phone app.

I will highly recommend to everyone that they purchase your overlay and run it while riding. It was a life saver....I can't believe I didn't purchase it years ago...

Thanks so much and happy trails, Sid S. Niagara County

I have the great trail map downloaded and LOVE it!! (iphone app) AIMEE K DEWISPELAERE

Love the app by the way best money spent! SueAnn, West Monroe

Just wanted to say im very happy with your snowmobile maps app. I have been designated the leader in my group now by the elders who have 30 plus years each of riding time. It's allowed me to take our group on weekend trips out of town this year. Its been great. Logged 1200 plus miles so far and still exploring. I use the app along with paper maps to correct or confirm my location. Just a great app. Thank you! zacharysutliff@gmail.com

really appreciate the app... it's helped me on numerous occasions! TOLBERT, JAMES

I love this app and encourage everyone to use it! ontapvt <ontapvt@comcast.net>

After the quick tour I would say the web map works great. It is easy to use and easy to print out the map sections.

I'll do more reading on your website but I think I would be interested in the web map and the App for my smart phone.

Thanks,
Tim

Thank you - great App and always getting better! Harry Gough

You guys have excellent customer service. Thanks again,
Greg Eastman

Love the maps and program. Lance Baxter

I have downloaded the latest ap for \$19.99. I have to say it is amazing and worth every penny.
Austin Walker

I appreciate your quick response and trust me I will use this ap all of the time. I actually live in Allentown, PA and ride Ny I love it. My county in PA is Lehigh County. By the way I see a lot of people using your ap it is a great creation on the trails. Knowing where you are is key. Can't wait to see what comes next. You can quote anything I say. Best I have had to date for directions. If you need me to try anything for you feel free to contact me.

Austin Walker , Power Systems Rental Representative
Email-awalker@ransome.com Mobile (215) 316-6026

Facebook Dan Hankey

Guilty as charged. Your app was invaluable on the journey. There was a 20 mile section of trail that had zero stakes or signs. All we had to guide us was your app on my phone and tracks. Your app was a huge help. Keep up the good work!

<http://www.dootalk.com/forums/topic/1036393-ride-across-the-state/>

Totally agree. I will never be without this app has saved me a few times this year due to bad or no trail markers around here. Thank you for the hard work and best app out!
Facebook, Eric Sanford

This exact same situation happened to our group of experienced riders Saturday night. Wind blowing sore so bad as you pulled into a field through a fence opening, there was no way to know where the trail was. The 3 of us would slowly drive around the field in hopes that our headlights would catch the yellow reflectors. This was a bit risky as the snow was soft and deep off trail, getting stuck was a good possibility. After a few minutes of "wandering" we used the Ap and the breadcrumbs to direct us back to the trail. We lost the trail in fields a couple times that night. The phone ap is well worth it. Thanks.

Facebook, Frank Calandra

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A quick story for you. Had my phone on my arm connected to my adapter running your app on an all day ride. Screen stayed on, worked beautiful etc. Just before getting back to camp, hit some bumped up trail not thinking anything of it looked at my arm and my phone was gone, just the cable hanging! Now here it is pitch dark at a field opening. Mind you were just finishing up a successful 100 mile ride, so you can only imagine my disbelief. So I look around and didn't I see what looked like a house/street light in the horizon, it was my phone! Due to the trail app keeping the phone on it was bright enough to show up in the snow, about a football field away! If I waited another min my phone would have shut off due to the frigid temps. I retrieved it with no problems. Being that my wife and I were cold and already wanted to be back to camp hours earlier, a lost phone wouldn't have contributed (at that moment) many positive thoughts if you know what I mean, lol. Besides that, your trail app didn't disappoint once again. From Dan Guiney

[Joanne Westerdale Peters](#)

8:40am Mar 5

Thank you so much for your interactive page! I appreciate so much, seeing all the other places in NY that we have not seen (yet). It lends itself to encourage riders to visit other trail systems. That said, do you think there could be a list of parking with trailer places that would be easy to access, maybe from a map image??

The tourism industry should help finance these advances. B and B's/hotels suggested or reviewed by riders, and restaurants that wouldn't monopolize the sites' space but linked to it, for reference. It's wonderful to see our community of riders having so much fun. It has been more than a great year of riding. Thank you again for your work to keep the page current!
Let the snow fly!

I have been using your [overlay] maps on my latest rides. I'm impressed with the accuracy of the information.

Thanks,
Eric

I personally LOVE your website. It is amazing. kristen eldridge <kristen_eldridge@yahoo.com> Groton Ridge Runners club

Excellent map site. I stumbled upon it this morning and enjoyed the interactive map. I will be purchasing the Garmin Nuvi maps for sure every year. The mileages on the routes are dead on with my odometer. Thanks for a great site. Greg Ruhland

We just finished a 903 mile trip across the state (Delaware county to Buffalo) and used the app exclusively to find our way, it was great!! The hardest thing was finding lodging each night.

Thanks for a great app, Jonathan B. LaFever

VERY helpful app got to a spot to where I gave directions using the gps .perfect app can't wait to use it again when sled is fixed. (Google Play store review)

Great app for future planning of rides and also on the go help of seeing where you are!! It's awesome being able to plan a ride , send it to your phone app then use it as you would like. Pull it out at an intersection to see what way to go and where your heading, recommend to anyone out there riding!! (appStore review)

I ride about 2000 miles a year mostly in NY and I've tried all the trail Apps out there. This one beats them all hands down. The App Team is quick to answer any user questions plus the web planning tool really is a bonus. (appStore review)

SURVEY COMMENTS

This is a great app. very easy to use and very helpful.

Thanks again for your efforts. Being from Ohio and not knowing the area very well we were constantly checking our location.

I appreciate your efforts to enhance the snowmobile travel experience !

Thanks you for the wonderful app. I used it extensively this winter.

Buying a GPS and installing your map has greatly increased my confidence to explore areas I would not normally ride. Thanks for creating your maps and I am looking forward to future improvements.

Love the app thanks for all your hard work updating the app this year.

Thank you for providing a great way to navigate the trails using your phone app! It has helped us out on many rides.

Thank you for providing a great service!

This worked better than expected. I can't wait to try out the next version.

Thanks for the great customer support with this app!

Love, Love LOVE the android app! Thank you :)

I just want to say I truly loved using the Snowmobile app this year. I never brought a map with me in the 2000 miles of trails I rode this year. About 400 miles were new trails we were able to explore with the use of the app. Cathy Schmitt, 3/16 email

