



## **Grooming Wet Snow for Cross Country Skiing**

**Have you ever wondered why the trail grooming at Telemark can get poor, or stops altogether, when Telemark receives wet snow, or the snow becomes wet from warm weather or rain? Wet snow is a big problem for all cross country trail groomers.**

**If you ball snow in your fist and it sticks together, and/or water drips out from between your fingers, it is wet. If grooming occurs in these conditions with a large modern snow machine (like Telemark's Bombardier 275) the tiller on the back will not shape the snow. The snow clogs the tiller and sticks to a large metal cylinder in the tiller that creates the corduroy effect on the trails. You will notice a groove and balls of snow in the middle of trail when this has happened. Grooming with a snowmobile by pulling the normal grooming attachments will not shape the trail snow as the snow sticks to the grooming devices. (Much like wet snow sticks to the bottom of your skis if you don't wax them.)**

**An even bigger problem occurs if there is a change in the weather pattern when the snow is wet. Warm weather (or rain) saturates the snow with water. If the temperature drops the wet snow freezes. The shape of the frozen trails will not change until the next warm weather, which could be weeks away. This is because frozen wet snow becomes solid ice, and grooming equipment will not change its shape. If you have the grooves and balls of snow mentioned in the last paragraph they will remain until the next warm weather thaws the frozen snow. This is why grooming will often cease even if there a great deal of wet snow.**

**All cross country trail groomers in Canada have the same problem when they have wet snow. You will not see this happening as often at cross country ski clubs that are higher because the snow does not get wet as often, due to generally colder temperatures at higher elevations. For example, Sovereign Lakes is 2000 feet higher in elevation than Telemark.**

**The Telemark grooming team has many, many years of experience grooming cross country ski trails, they have attended a program in cross country grooming by Cross Country Canada, and are equipped with the most modern grooming equipment. They are doing all they can to provide top notch grooming, but are limited by weather conditions like wet snow.**