

**SPECIAL 30th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE**

THE AUTHORITY FOR WESTERN SNOWMOBILING

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www.snowest.com

# SnowWest

**SnoWest**

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YEARS

**We Dissect:  
900 Mtn. Sleds  
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There's nothing like being in the heat of the battle and having to try and test something during, well, trying times.

We've had a Buddy Tow for a year or so and never really had the opportunity (thank heavens?) to use it. Then, last winter, when we were riding with some buddies in the mountains of Utah, one of their sleds went down big time (after all, the company's slogan is, "It's not for you ... it's for your buddy") and boy were we glad they had their Buddy Tow on hand. We were five miles from the trailer and the sled had to be towed back in. The track had locked up so there was no towing the sled in that condition—we needed something to put the machine on to drag it out.

Enter the Buddy Tow. Each tow kit includes a special plastic sheet and two runners, along with complete instructions. You can tow sleds with varying track lengths—the sled we towed had a 159-inch track on it and the Buddy Tow worked fine. There are two models available, the Pro and the Lite. The Pro model is black, fits all track lengths and includes stabilizing runners. The Lite has a natural color, fits tracks up to 144 inches but does not include stabilizing runners.

The Buddy Tow is lightweight and rolls up for easy storage.

The Buddy Tow isn't designed for and won't work in all conditions. Steep inclines or declines can be a problem and it is not recommended to be used on ice.

## Highmarks

The Buddy Tow was designed to be easy to use and we found that to be true. We had the special plastic sheet on the sled in no time. No tools are required for installation. We easily towed the sled back to the trailer. Fortunately we were about a mile from a groomed trail when the sled had troubles and that made the towing even easier. But even though we had to get to the trail from some powder, the Buddy Tow made the task a snap. The manufacturer strongly suggests that you not exceed 15 mph when towing the disabled sled. We found that to be good advice. When we went faster, the sled being towed tended to get a little out of sorts. Slow it down and we were

## Buddy Tow

fine. The investment for the Buddy Tow paid for itself that day.

## Tumbles

The only downside is that you still have to carry the Buddy Tow with you. It's too big to fit in a backpack and it is suggested you carry it on the back of the sled's tunnel. That's probably the



best idea. Just be sure to anchor it down securely.

## What It'll Cost You

The Pro model retails for \$59.95.

## How To Get A Hold Of A Buddy Tow

Contact Dynamic Concepts (877) 230-9401 or [www.buddytow.com](http://www.buddytow.com). \*

# One-On-One With Gale Norton

By Christine Jourdain - Executive Director, ACSA

In one word, the difference with the Bush administration is access—access to the administration, access to the agencies, access to our public lands.

I had the opportunity to spend some time recently with Department of Interior Secretary Gale Norton. She was touring a recreational vehicle factory, then while in route to address the Family Motorcoach Association, I had the opportunity to ride in a Monaco RV and speak with her.

How often does that happen? Well, with this administration, it happens much more often than in the recent past. It makes you go back a few years and remember how out of touch and out of reach the decision-makers were. Times have changed for the better when it comes to recreation.

When talking with Secretary Norton it was obvious how this administration thinks and how aligned the Departments are with the administration—from the top down. As we've heard numerous times, the Bush administration thinks decisions for public lands should be made at the local level. Decisions on public lands impact those residents in and around the area—not the people in and around Washington, DC.

According to Secretary Norton, "The only way to accommodate all forms of recreation is balance." Balance is key in planning for public lands managed by the Department of Interior, which include the National Parks, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Reclamation, Mineral Management Services and the U.S. Geological Survey.

When asked about the Yellowstone National Park Temporary Winter Use Plans and Environmental Assessment, Norton replied, "We truly believe there is a place for snowmobiles in Yellowstone and, with the requirement of guides and best available technology, along with caps on the number of snowmobiles allowed on a daily basis, we feel there is proper balance." In our discussion on the requirement of commercial guides, Norton emphasized the decrease in accidents and violations when commercial guides were required during the winter of 2003-04.

Norton praised the advancement of technology in the new snowmobiles, especially in the 4-stroke snowmobiles. She said, "the new technology is impressive."

After discussing snowmobiling in Yellowstone, I asked about snowmobiling in other National Parks, where it is currently allowed and Parks that do not currently allow snowmobiling. After consideration, Norton replied, "I think this is where it comes down to local decision making and proper balance."

After spending the better part of a day with the Secretary of Interior, I can honestly tell you that she truly believes in what she is doing and she said, "at the end of the day, after every decision has been made, you have to ask yourself if you are doing the right thing and I think this administration is doing the right thing."

It all comes back to access—not only to "our" public lands, but also to the decision makers.