

## [“How about that weather!?!” - When it Snows, People Go Snowmobiling](#)

### **Contact Ed Klim**

It's been cold and, yes, this has been a great winter snowmobiling season for most of us. The snow in most of North America fell early and allowed many trails and riding areas to be open the first week in December 2008. The snow stayed through most of the winter with a few expected meltdowns, but generally speaking the snowmobiling conditions have been excellent. I just received a note from my friend in Sweden and he reports the snow cover and snowmobiling season in Scandinavia is fantastic and people are enjoying the winter snowmobiling in Northern Europe.

The economy is certainly challenging, but most of the dealerships have been busy selling new and used snowmobiles as well as possibly record numbers of parts, garments and accessories.

Much to the surprise of some folks, this has been the second cold, snow-covered winter for most of North America. They call it a local weather phenomenon. According to the National Climate Data Center, 2008 has been America's coldest year since 1977. The Northern hemisphere snow cover extent in December 2008 was 16.95 million square miles. This was 0.17 million square miles ABOVE the 1966 through 2008 December average!

I have received numerous reports of record snowfalls and record low temperatures across North America and it leads me to believe the 10 year cycle of colder, snowier winters is just now beginning. My belief is supported by numerous scientists such as the Imperial College of London Astrophysicist and Forecaster Piers Corbyn, who reports that official data in every year since 1998 shows world temperatures have been colder.

Living in the Great Lakes region, I am heartened by the fact that, the Great Lakes – which is the largest body of fresh water in the world – are experiencing rising water levels. Last year, Lake Superior rose 17 inches – and still rising! This summer Lake Superior will be at a level above the historical level, according to the Federal Great Lakes environmental Research Laboratory in Michigan. Virtually all of the Great Lakes are increasing in levels. A key indicator of global health is the level of the Great Lakes – so our earth seems to be continuing its cyclical behavior.

Winter enthusiasts from around the world are showing their interest in snowmobiling.. Those non-snowmobilers, as we know, have a very high desire to go snowmobiling and in fact “they are going snowmobiling.” Visits to our Go Snowmobiling web sites have increased over 50% this year and more than 40% of the new visitors are non-snowmobilers who are gathering information so they can have their first snowmobiling experience.

The Take a Friend Snowmobiling Campaign, supported by virtually all of the state and provincial associations has proven to be very successful and has helped attract non-

snowmobilers onto the snow with us and expanded our family of friends and organized snowmobiling members.

Final counts on the number of individuals who have visited the Go Snowmobiling web site will be tabulated in April 2009, but you can be rest assured the numbers will be encouraging to all of us.

Yes, it's been a great wintery, snow-filled season and we look forward to the last few weeks of spring riding.