This issue of the Snow Survey Centennial is dedicated to Transportation! Yes, I know - a bit of a 'yawner' one might think - BUT this is Snow Survey! Back in the early days of the program, transportation in the summer was via the old Ford shown below. It was a traditional fill up the oil and check the gas, carry spares for all 4 wheels and maybe that wasn’t quite enough - kind of a vehicle.

Winter transportation in those early days was, as you likely surmise, by foot, snowshoe and ski! And what wonderful days those were - unless you have ever traveled a substantial distance on snowshoes in light density snow, uphill both ways with a large pack of snow tubes, survival gear and lunch - boy does the romance fade in a hurry on that little scene - it almost puts the work back in the fun of Snow Surveys!
As with all things, science advances and progress is made in making things faster, better and certainly more complicated. There were many attempts to make a machine that would convey people and equipment across the snow faster and safer. Below are some of the more memorable attempts taken from the Proceedings of the Western Snow Conference.
My favorites of all these are the Cleated Drum #6 and the Double Spiral Vehicles #8 - right out of a Wile E. Coyote and Roadrunner cartoon - just imagine coming down a hill on either vehicle... or going up one for that matter.
17. Tucker Kitten – 1951
18. Tucker 4-Denton – 1949

19. Early Frandsen – 1948*
20. Frandsen Snow – 1946*

21. Frandsen Snow Cab-over 1949*
22. Trackmaster – 1955*

23. Thinskii Sprite – 1962
24. Thinskii Juggernaut – 1963*

* Dates partially estimated
Pay close attention to the #4 entry, the model A Ford - modified as a snow vehicle to use for Snow Surveys. It was developed for and by SCS employees who became hero's soon thereafter.
Currently, snow surveyors use the traditional snow shoes and ski’s, but more reliable mechanical methods are typically employed such as snowmobiles and helicopters.
Pictured above is Randy Julander with a 600 lb snowmobile on top of a well constructed snow shelter in which he had just spent the night. Snow can be phenomenally strong as well as great insulator. Snowmobiles provide a reliable means of collecting snow data for the Program as well as a greater margin of safety.

Snow Surveyor Kendall "Big Daddy" Dastrup and Pilot "Dangerous" Dan Rudert pose at 11,000 ft elevation next to the fastest form of transportation used in the Snow Survey Program today, the helicopter. Using this form of transportation allows for 20 to 40 snow courses to be measured by a pair of Surveyors in a single day.

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