

Statewide Trails Advisory Committee (RSA 216-F:5)

May 9, 2018

DNCR Conference Room

In Attendance

Members:

- Chris Gamache NH Trails Bureau (BOT)
- Josh Walter Bike-Walk Alliance of New Hampshire (BWANH)
- Raynold Jackson Society for the Protection of NH Forests (SPNHF)
- Larry Keniston NH DOT, Bike/Ped Program (DOT)
- Tom DiMaggio NH Mushers Association
- Scott Munroe Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC)

Staff/Guest:

- Alexis Rudko Bureau of Trails, RTP Specialist (staff)
- Phil Bryce Director, Division of Parks & Recreation
- Avis Rosenfield NH Horse Council

Open Meeting

6:35 PM, meeting called to order

Review Minutes

Minutes from the December 18, 2018 meeting reviewed. Motion to approve by Chris G, with addition of Scott Munroe to attendance, second Josh M. Minutes approved.

OHRV/Snowmobile Update

- Season has not ended yet. Still some riding in Pittsburg. Little over 44,000 registrations; which is up a little from last year. Good start before Thanksgiving and overall a good riding season. Accidents are up a little from last year. 1/3 of all accidents are from rental agencies. No trail fatalities, though there were 2 snowmobile fatalities that occurred on lakes.
- Gearing up for start of OHRV season on May 23rd. Working with clubs and towns on some small changes to trail routes. SPNHF and NHOHVA sent a joint letter to Senate asking for funding for a comprehensive trail plan was noted. HB 660 is a bill that would direct Trails Bureau to complete 3 studies, if funding can be found, about OHRVs over the next 2 years. General fund request for the studies was \$700,000.

Recreational Trail Program Update

Alexis R reported that we have been given NEPA approval for 2019 projects and are awaiting Federal obligation in their financial system. Targeting May 15th Governor & Executive Council meeting for contract approvals and then projects could start for this year. Press release was sent out about 2020 application being on our website. A program change this year is that any organization that plans to apply for RTP funds will have to attend a training class on the grant rules. We have always encouraged attendance but it will now be mandatory. Some discussion about current program rules, grant minimum and maximum grant awards and meeting Alexis and Chris will attend next week with FHWA Coordinator from D.C. and other state RTP administrators.

Heritage Trail Update

Nothing new. Discussion about existence of HT again and whether new initiative in central part of the state might be able to be the HT; not really where originally intended to be located or why. STAC has discussed at several other meetings that this is not a high priority for anyone.

Old Business

- Legislative updates: There was discussion about several pieces of legislation that would have impacts on trails. Senate Bill (SB) 185 would update a 2004 DOT State Trail Plan. The plan is actually about rail trails and would be renamed the State Rail Trail Plan and the bill has some funding to complete the work. This has been tried in the past but funding was never given to complete the work. SB 187 is a snowmobile bill that would increase registration fees and would also create a study commission to look at snowmobile trail topics. HB 660 would direct this agency to create an OHRV trail plan for Coos County, update the 2003 statewide ATV/Trailbike Plan and also work on an economic impact study. The bill has no funding to complete the plans. Agency is working on a federal grant to try to create a Coos County Trail Plan, that would address all trail users. There are a variety of other bills that would make some changes to OHRV and snowmobile law. Phil B noted several other bills the agency was able to help stop; specifically, a bill that would have allowed everyone to have dogs off leash on all trails on state lands and one that would have required animal owners to remove animal waste from all state lands and another bill banning smoking in all state parks. State parks are not defined., All state park lands are legally defined as 'reservations'.
- Franconia Notch hiker parking issues update from Chris and Phil. NHDOT plans to post signs against parking along the Parkway, which is also Interstate 93. Confusion about laws and whether limited time parking is allowed on the interstate, off of pavement, or not. State Police do not issue parking tickets and towns do not want to do it. State Parks is renting 2 vans again to transport hikers to the trailheads from Cannon Mountain. Parks will start charging to park in lots at the trailheads later this year.

New Business

- Bear Brook State Park management plan being updated. Current plan was done in 1984 and needs updating. Trails are the primary use in the park but there is a campground, day use area and a new camping cabin area and a new campground for equine use is being developed. Steering Committee will meet next week for first time and several STAC members are on this agency Steering Committee.
- Winter trail etiquette discussion will be put off until next meeting. Chris did not bring the materials and it is better suited to a discussion prior to winter. This is different than the previous Trail Etiquette discussions about users, this topic is about winter fat tire bikes wanting to post signs asking walkers and other to stay off trail when the snow is soft. Trying to prevent 'post-holing' on trails.
- White Mountain Trail Collective met this past Saturday. This is a group of trail maintenance groups (non-motorized) that help with trails in the White Mountain Region. Goal is to increase communication and solicitation of help for trail projects.
- eBike email from Chris G to members was discussed and further discussions about enforcement and the legislative definitions ensued.

Guest Comments/Questions

No guest questions

Next meeting will be planned for September. Proposed date will be sent out prior to scheduling. Question about starting meeting at 6:00pm so drive home isn't so late. 6:00 may cause issues for attendees trying to come from work. Next meeting will start at 6:30

Motion to adjourned by Chris G, second Josh M. Meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM.