

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

11/19/2025

DNCR Conference Room (172 Pembroke Rd, Concord, NH 03301)

Attendance: STAC Committee Members: 9 minimum to meet quorum

	Name	Organization	Attended?
1	Craig Rennie	Chief of NH Trails Bureau (BOT)	Yes
2	Captain Mike Eastman	NH Fish & Game Department	No
3	Brendan McDowell	NH Office of Planning & Development	Yes
4	VACANT	NH Department of Transportation	N/A
5	Director Charles Saia - Bill Finn	NH Gov. Commission on Disability	Yes
6	Terry Callum	NH Snowmobile Association (NHSA)	Yes
7	Jerry Livesey	NH Off Highway Vehicle Association (NHOHVA)	No
8	Matt Moore	Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC)	Yes
9	Rod Cameron	NH Municipal Association	Yes
10	Matt Scaccia	Society for the Protection of NH Forests (SPNHF)	Yes
11	VACANT	NH Heritage Trail	N/A
12	Director Robert Johnson (VACANT)	NH Farm Bureau Federation	N/A
13	Debbie Briscoe	NH Horse Council (NHHC)	Yes
14	Tom DiMaggio	NH Mushers Association (Chairman)	Yes
15	Tom Thomson	Landowner Representative	No
16	Gerry Bedard	NH Department of Transportation-Bike/Ped	Yes
17	Tim Blagden	Human-Powered Winter Sports	Yes
18	Peter DeSantis	New England Mountain Bike Association	Yes
19	Abby Evankow	NH Bike-Walk Alliance (NHBWA)	Yes
20	Stanley Carte	White Mountain National Forest	No

Guests:

Name	Organization
Doug Sweeney	NH Mushers

DNCR Staff:

Andrew Pacuk	Bureau of Trails, Non-Motorized Coordinator
Brianna Leone	Bureau of Trails, RTP Coordinator
Alexis Rudko	Bureau of Trails, Deputy Chief

Open Meeting: Time: 6:03 PM, meeting called to order

Introductions and Review Minutes: All attendees members, DNCR Staff and guests started with a brief introduction. Minutes from the 8/13/2025 meeting were reviewed, motioned and seconded with minor adjustments for clarification.

Tom DiMaggio is stepping down as both the STAC Chairman and the NH Musers Association representative. He was recognized by the Bureau of Trails' Chief Rennie for his decades of dedicated service. Mr. DiMaggio began his involvement with STAC around 1992 and has expressed his gratitude for the experience. He noted that the committee's early meetings focused on resolving conflicts among various user groups across the state, and he is pleased with the committee's current progress, while encouraging everyone to continue the hard work. When the previous chairman, Paul Gray, stepped down in the 90's, he appointed Mr. DiMaggio as his successor, a role he has held ever since.

In appreciation of his many years of commitment and leadership, Mr. DiMaggio was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation. He shared his thanks with everyone for the opportunity to serve. For the NH Musers Association, Tom has nominated Doug Sweeny to take his place as a STAC member.

Poll of members:

- **Terry Callum** (NHSA): NHSA is transitioning into high gear mode as winter is fast approaching, and memberships are rolling in. The Annual Trail Masters meeting took place last weekend (November 12th, 2025) and hosted various workshops held by vendors, local programs, BOT staff, all to assist and further educated trail users and volunteers. NHSA's previous director is retiring. Terry Callum, as of September 1st, 2025, is the new Executive Director of NHSA, after volunteering for 33 years. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit NHSA is working with the DMV on obtaining a snowmobile plate decal. If approved, proceeds from the decal will go to fundraise and support their newer foundation that supports snowmobile trail riders.
- **Debbie Briscoe:** (NH Horse Council): There was a recent incident recently where a "rouge" motorized user vocalized their distaste for equestrians on the Rockingham Rec Trail. In general, people are kind and considerate when passing but may lack insight into proper equestrian etiquette. Equestrians worked with the Roc-Rec Committee with clearing the Fremont Rail Trail. Rockingham-Recreation Rail Trail needs improvement in visibility, at the east intersection on Fremont's North Road in for riders to avoid any issues with vehicles. Our clearance needed for line of sight is higher than other users, as we stand 12ft from the edge of the road prior to crossing. Half mile from the Newfield trail

parking lot, potholes show up every couple of years and would like these to be repaired. Ideal mileage a day for equestrians is about 6-14 miles.

- Craig: Our district supervisor can look around the area for any potential causes, such as beaver ponds.

The recent NH Rails to Trails conference was a success. Equestrians are always looking for more parking to accommodate horse trailers. Currently in need of parking in the Raymond and east Epping area.

Riders want to protect Class 6 roads in the Pembroke area after a change in town ordinances may no longer control development on class 6 roads. There are deadlines for efforts to preserve the Class 6 roads for safe equestrian use. Podunk Road in Bear Brook State Park has lots of potholes and is supposed to be maintained by DOT.

- Craig: Can Gerry reach out to the District Engineer for that area for more information?
 - Gerry: Yes.
- **Rod Cameron:** (NH Municipal Association): Attends STAC to represent NHMA, and as the land-use technician for Belmont, has been doing similar committees for a while. Before the next meeting, Rod is planning to get further direction from NHMA on how to best represent their needs as a user group.
 - Craig: We can provide the governing statute for background if needed.
 - Alexis: This role might be different from other members; BOT can coordinate further to determine the roles expectations.
 - Rod: Went online to look for trail mapping data, specifically where linkages can be made. The data would be helpful in determining potential opportunities and improvements.
 - Alexis: NHGranit layers may not be updated – NH BOT is working on an updated GIS layer for state trails; this may take a few years.
- **Abby Evankow** (NH Bike Walk Alliance): Highlighted the presentation that Alexis Rudko presented for the recent NH Rails to Trails Coalition conference. Cross NH Adventure trail finished their Recreational Trails Program (RTP) project for improving 5 miles of the Ammonoosuc Rail Trail with the help of BOT staff. NH and VT groups are trying to restore a 900' bridge in Hinsdale NH to Brattleboro VT. In the southwest, user groups are looking to connect MA trails to the area. There is a nice mix of material that works very well for multiple users in the area.
 - Tom Dimaggio: How does the gravel mix differ from what is typically applied?
 - Craig: The special mix reduces the dust; it can be slick but binds up strong.

- Note: Abby will share specs with Brianna (RTP Coordinator) to pass along to all STAC members.

- **Matt Scaccia:** (SPNHF): No major concerns to share, the past season was very effective. SPNHF has a current RTP project at their headquarters located in Concord, NH. The project is to upgrade a trail for accessible use including accessible features. The project, on a 100-acre nature reserve on the Merrimack River, should be open within the next week or so. Monadnock Trails Week had about 50 volunteers that put in over 700 hours. SPNHF hired a professional trail crew to lead volunteers throughout the day. The year 2026 is the 125th anniversary of SPNHF - there will be more outreach campaigns, events and merch available throughout the year.
 - Gerry: Is the trail material you use for ADA compliance, different than the rail trail surface?
 - Matt: I can check to compare to what other groups are using and will relay the information.

- **Matt Moore** (AMC): AMC is wrapping up field operations. Some AmeriCorps crews that maintain 30 miles on trails within the state assisted in running staff-led volunteer events. Lots of volunteer hours over multiple events. Worked on Bridal Path in Franconia State Park with the World Trail Network. Complete Phase 1 RTP project at Lonesome Lake Trail boardwalk. Also did work on Lafayette Place Campground work adding in stone steps. Adopt a trail program: has been very successful with over 225 trail adopters in AMC. Over 1000 hours on state lands for volunteer work. In WMNF, 3000 hours of maintenance. AMC is celebrating 150th anniversary in 2026.

- **Tom Dimaggio:** (NH Mushers Association): Retiring from representing NH Mushers Association and appoints Doug Sweeny to take his place.

- **Brendan McDowell:** (Office of Planning and Development): The NH Business and Economic Affairs (BEA) has created a curated set of web modules to assist communities and organizations with outdoor recreation. These tools can help assist communities and trail organizations with planning their RTP or GIA projects. For more information, please visit their website here: [Rec Ready NH – A Guide to Outdoor Recreation and Economic Growth | Choose NH](#) or on the NH Trails Bureau website.

- **Gerry Bedard:** (NH Department of Transportation): The Bureau of Rail & Transit is completing Bartlett and Fabyans temporary crossing for this winter. Working towards creating permanent crossings for future. The state formally released Right of First of Refusal to Concord connecting 5.7 miles to the Northern Rail Trail. DOT did not own this section.

- In Active Transportation there is a study to assess safety of rail trail crossings. Documentation should be available for the next STAC meeting.
 - o Craig: Maybe we can ask the City of Concord to present their plans to clarify intentions and hear from members of STAC.
 - o Tim: The City of Concord has received a TAP grant to pave the trail from Boscawen to Sewells Falls Road, to connect to the paved section in the south of Concord. There may be room to add an additional surface alongside the paved trail for other users. The project has not yet started the engineering phase.
 - o Alexis: How does the city have a TAP grant without owning the section?
 - o Tim: Concord had an agreement in place with Pan-Am before CSX bought it so the project has been in the works for years. The rail bikes are being displaced. Seeking to have a portable set of tracks for rail bikes in places that would be feasible in locations.
 - o Tom: The consensus in years past was to leave rail trails as dirt except where there is width to have a side-by-side trail.
 - o Abby: So, paving is not desirable for both snow groups and equestrians?
 - o Terry: Yes, because the pavement can damage machines when there is less snowpack and snowmelt faster on the darker trail surfaces.
 - o Tim: In general, try to use a lighter colored nit-pack when designing trails.
- **Bill Finn:** (Governors Commission on Disability): Chuck Saia requested Bill Finn sit in for STAC meetings. The work that trail user groups are putting into the trail systems is fantastic. I would like to offer support for increased access to trails for those with disabilities, including those who may be visually impaired. It is disappointing to see rail bikes leaving, they provide good access to the trails.
 - o Craig: The rail bikes are for profit businesses; they are not necessarily for the public to access trails.
- **Peter Desantis:** (New England Mountain Bike Association): There's a small movement to reclass class 1 e-bikes as EMBT as the industry continues to expand. There may not be legislation for this at this time.
 - o Gerry: What's the difference between EMTB and a regular e-bike?
 - o Peter: When people close trails to e-bikes it kicks off class 1. Pedal assist, no throttle.
 - o Gerry: That's the current definition.
 - o Peter: People are talking about this anyway.
 - o Alexis: Not sure if question was answered. What is the need to redefine what a class one e-bike is?

- Peter: It's not a new definition in law, but just to refer to class 1s as "EMBT" to give a distinction between the general "e-bikes" as most people think of class 2 or 3 when referring to an "e-bike".
 - Tim: You may need to talk to "People for Bikes" if you want to do a rebrand. They are a national organization to promote information about biking.
 - Debbie: How many places are people riding, that only allow class 1 e-bikes?
 - Andrew: All state parks you can only ride class 1.
 - Terry: Maybe try "e-bicycle" for class 1 and "e-bike" for class 2 or 3.
 - Abby: The Bike Walk Alliance and NHRTC are working on Class 1 definitions, 2 & 3 are defined and clear. E-bikes out of allowed classes, define by law should be policed better.
- **Tim Blagden:** (Human Powered Winter Sports): Working on getting a Nordic newsletter in publication. Work has been done on the Concord Lake Sunapee Rail Trail, started cutting trees on Nov 1st for their RTP project – per RTP regulations. Not sure if hunting close to trails is okay, recent trail cameras have noted hunters walking the trail system.
 - Craig: No one can hunt on the trail itself. You must be at least 15' off the road to discharge a firearm, and 100 yards (300') away from dwelling. People often use trails to get into the woods.
 - **Doug Sweeney:** (NH Musers Association): Will be taking seat on STAC once approved through DNCR. Doug serves as the VP for NH Musers Association. Doug is the contact for the musers at Profile Falls, operated by the Army Corps of Engineers. There have been various clean up days at Profile Falls, the last being September 20th, 2025. ATV training season started Nov 1st at Profile Falls. The Auburn Sprint Race was held this year, at Manchester Water Works.
 - **Q:** Does the STAC committee have a representative to legislative body?
 - Tom: The older meeting minutes have State Rep on them.
 - Craig: There was a state landowner rep, Tom Thomson, but has not attended in many years. Some groups at the table have lobbyists.

Bureau of Trails Update for OHRV and Snowmobiles: Bureau Chief

- Regarding the 21-mile-long Conway Branch rail line, the [Conway Branch Rail Trail Advisory Committee](#) selected an engineering/consulting firm (SE Group) to assist the committee with infrastructure assessment and feasibility of future trail construction options. DNCR is waiting for the consultant's work plan and cost estimates, but several site walks are being planned to look at trail conditions along various sections.

Grant in Aid (GIA) Updates:

- **Summer GIA contracts** are coming to end on December 31, 2025. In total, the GIA program awarded **\$1.8 million** to clubs for trail improvements and equipment purchases.
- For the **Winter GIA Grooming** grant round, we worked with the GIA Advisory Committee to award a record **\$3 million dollars** for grooming and plowing for the upcoming season, so that we should keep the trails in excellent overall condition throughout the winter.

Recreational Trail Program (RTP) Update: RTP Coordinator.

- **Federal Fiscal Year 2025 (Project C) RTP**
 - All community grant recipients are encouraged to check in with the RTP Coordinator Brianna Leonne to share updates on their project's progress.
 - Reimbursements are available for all 2025 RTP projects through December 31st, 2025, unless otherwise noted.
 - Note: Tree clearing is now permitted as of November 1st, 2025, and may continue through April 14th, 2026, for projects that have received an extension.
- **Federal Fiscal Year 2026 (Project D) RTP**
 - Based on available funding and a very competitive pool of applicants, the selection committee has approved **40 out of 52 grant applications**, totaling **\$1,590,000** in awards.
 - Of these awards: **10** went to *Motorized* projects, **16** to *Diversified* projects and **14** to fund *Non-Motorized projects*.
 - The 2026 projects will now move into the Federal Environmental Review process under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This stage will take several months, and the RTP Coordinator will reach out with updates or questions as needed.

Legislative Update: Bureau Chief

- **HB513 (2024)**: Regarding allowing a snowmobile connector trail within the I-89 ROW in Sutton. We are still waiting on DOT to finalize an encroachment agreement that will then be submitted to federal highways. BOT can't proceed with the connector trail until agreement has been finalized.

- **HB1188 OHRV Study Committee:** Not much to report, although there is an upcoming meeting this Friday, November 21st at 10:00am at DNCR HQ.

Heritage Trail Update: There are no current representatives present to comment. Old maps are available of the original plans, but there are no “official” maps.

- Gerry would like to know more information about where, and what the Heritage Trail is. Signs have been noted on a few streets in Concord.
- Alexis: The Heritage Trail was never fully developed so it technically does not exist. It is a concept from the 90’s that would have connected various parcels across multiple municipalities to create one, very long trail. This would be a large, time-consuming project to take on.
- Craig: There hasn’t been anyone to represent the Heritage Trail in about 20 years. It is technically on BOT to oversee, but there is no one on the public side to represent the Heritage Trail user groups.
- Gerry: How do we accommodate for a trail that does not exist? For example, I-93? The markers on Loudon Rd in Concord?

Old Business: Discussion.

- Abby: Is there a remote option available for attendance for special consideration? For example – having a 2-hour drive?
- Craig: The previous Director Bryce did not allow remote access. There has been legal advice to avoid the remote option, and the in-person meetings have been generally successful.
- There is currently no Director for Parks and Recreation to change this decision.

New Business: With Tom Dimaggio stepping down, the Statewide Trails Advisory Committee needs a new Chair. Chief Craig Rennie is willing to serve as Interim Chair.

- Matt Scaccia: What are the responsibilities of the Chair?
- Craig: Meet quorum, which is assisted by the RTP Coordinator: Brianna Leone. The Chair also guides the meetings through the agenda, properly manage discussions.
- Alexis: As of now, there are no official bylaws for the committee, but responsibilities will be further defined when these are written. This will take time and a lot of review/discussion. A draft for discussion will be available for the committee once they are written and reviewed by our in-house attorney.

- Peter: It would be ideal to have these bylaws set before electing a new Chair. Craig will be a good interim chair.
- Terry: It may be beneficial to have a set term for the Chair to rotate perspective.
- Motion for Chief – Craig Rennie to serve as interim chair. Approved.
- *Please add nhtrails@dncr.nh.gov to respective mailing lists.* Ex: the equestrians and snowmobilers have safety campaigns that they promote. What are other user groups sending to their users? This will keep BOT updated.

Next Meeting Date: March 25th, 2026, at 6:00PM at DNCR HQ

- Meeting motioned to adjourn and seconded. Meeting Adjourned at 7:42 PM.

Meeting minutes taken by:
Brianna Leone
Recreational Trails Program Coordinator
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
New Hampshire Bureau of Trails

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Digitally signed by
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