

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

Date: 3/25/2026 at 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) (interim chairmen)	Yes
2	Captain Mike Eastman	NH Fish & Game Department	No
3	Brendan McDowell	Office of Planning & Development BEA	Yes
4	VACANT	NH Department of Transportation	N/A
5	Bill Finn for Director Charles Saia	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	Doug Sweeney	NH Mushers Association	No
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	Yes

Guests:

Name	Organization
Avis Rosenfield	Derry Trail Riders

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: Open 6:04, meeting called to order.

Introductions and Review Minutes: Minutes from the 11/19/2025 meeting reviewed. Motioned and seconded. All in favor as accepting the minutes as written with minor edits, approved. Introduction of members, DNCR staff and guests made.

Chief Rennie: Reviewed the following RSA:

216-F:5 Advisory Committee. –

I. The commissioner shall appoint a New Hampshire statewide trail system advisory committee, for the purposes of advising the director of parks and recreation on matters related to the New Hampshire statewide trail system. The members shall equally represent the different trail interests involved and the general public. This committee shall include, but not be limited to, representation from the following: the bureau of trails; department of fish and game; office of planning and development; department of transportation; governor's commission on disability; New Hampshire Snowmobile Association; a representative of Granite State ATV Association; Appalachian Mountain Club; New Hampshire Municipal Association; Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests; the New Hampshire Heritage Trail; the New Hampshire Farm Bureau Federation; the New Hampshire Horse Council, Inc.; the New Hampshire Musers Association; a representative of landowners; and the bicycle trail coordinator from the department of transportation.

II. OHRV trails, snowmobile trails, the New Hampshire Heritage Trail, and trail planning and development shall be specific items on the agenda of this advisory committee.

III. The advisory committee shall meet at least twice annually.

Poll of Members:

Terry Callum (NHSA): Great statewide snowmobile season. Clubs opened on December 15th and most are still open for riding today. This year allowed for about 100 days of snowmobiling. There were about 46,000 registrations, up from the previous two years. NHSA had over 15,500 registrations, with a lot of participation in Southern NH. The 54th year of the annual Easter Seals ride raised over \$108,000 for charity. NHSA is working with BOT (Bureau of Trails) on a state-wide trail map. The NHSA mobile app; Sled NH has had about 12,000 sales. NHSA created a 501c3 foundation, they are working with the DMV on rolling out a license plate with a snowmobile decal. Funds raised will be applied towards education projects, trail signs, workshops, annual events and potential college scholarships.

Debbie Briscoe (NH Horse Council): Member polls indicated the need for equestrian access to Rail Trails. As a reminder, paving trails displaces equestrians. Does BOT need help negotiating with private landowners for additional parking?
Chief Rennie: Negotiations typically focus on trail access and easements, but parking is not out of the question.

Debbie: Will there be additional parking spaces for the Presidential Rail Trail? Yes- and upcoming Recreational Trails Program (RTP) project will include creating a 50'x50' parking lot off Pinkham B Road, in Randolph, to accommodate parking for both horse trailers and other vehicles.

Debbie: Are there any updates on equestrian camping within State Parks?

Chief Rennie: Not now, our Interim Commissioner has been tied up, but we are expecting a new State Parks Director who will make those decisions.

Debbie: Are there any erosion control projects planned for Pawtuckaway State Park? Yes- there is a Student Conservation Association (SCA) hitch planned for work on hiking trails this upcoming summer.

- Northwood State Park would like to see more opportunities for equestrians. The Monadnock Coalition is looking to add more etiquette signs to the Cheshire and Farmington Rail Trail. Alexis Rudko: They can reach out to BOT for permission and request signs to post.
- Highway Plan Survey with DOT now includes equestrian's access.
- NH Horse Council included a letter of support for the Congressional District Spending (CDS) grant to replace the 6'x12' Rockingham Rec Rail Trail bridge tunnel.

Rod Cameron (NH Municipal Association): Rod is looking to research local communities surrounding state parks and will be putting out a letter/email blast to ask how they can best be represented in STAC with the challenges and uses with the Trail and park multi use. The idea is to give the communities surrounding State Parks the opportunity to share requests or concerns.

Stanley Carte (WMNF): There is still snow up North. It has been a great snowmobile season. Seasonal employees are hired, however the permanent positions in Recreation department is down by 52%. In the Kankamangus Mountains, there is a project for the Lincoln Woods trail repairs. Hurricane Irene destroyed previous repairs. The historic and popular trail will be closed in February to clear fallen trees and make way for repairs to begin. WMNF will post on Facebook to inform the public of the closure. The west side of the trail used to have a bridge to cross over. Bank stabilization is to be applied to repairs.

Matt Scaccia (SPNHF): No major concerns for statewide trails. The 125th Anniversary celebration for the Forest Society is coming up. There will be many events this spring to celebrate with a focus on recreation. There will be an opening ceremony on May 15th for the RTP Project in Concord, NH. The project is open to the public for exploring. SPNHF will also be working on upgrades to the Andrew Brook Trail in Newbury that connects to Mount Sunnapee. RTP funds will be used on this project to improve access and installing a mobile aluminum bridge – a new method for SPNHF to address water crossings. Land Steward training is now incorporating more trail training curriculum for trail care beyond the basics.

Alexis Rudko: RTP did a similar project with the University of New Hampshire, they installed an aluminum bridge to connect Fish and Game to the campus woods. The prefabricated bridges look different from a “normal” snowmobile bridge but helps with cost.

Matt Scaccia: It's a new method, but we intend to have volunteers build the bridge in the field.

Matt Moore (AMC): The AMC trails department is getting ready for a busy season. They are looking to staff Pinkham Notch in late May to early June. There are a few Professional

Trail Crews to be sent to Crawford Notch State Park to work on steep grade accessibility. This year there will be a focus on a half mile around Pinkham Highland then focus will shift to the Lonesome Loop Waterfall Trail works next phase with RTP. Work is planned in the Rumney NH climbing area to provide safer belay pads for climbers.

- Trail Adopters program had 200 volunteer hours last year for New Hampshire.

Brendan McDowell (OPD/BEA): No major updates. Rec Ready NH has been out for a while, and the office of Planning and Development is looking for feedback. Feedback has been generally positive, and the public can provide feedback over email or online.

Debbie: A conservation commission showed the modules within the website. They have been readily available and a useful tool.

Gerry Bedard (NHDOT): The former Commissioner Bill Cass retired, and Dave Rodrigue is the new Commissioner. Nicole Bryant from Rails and Transit admin office has left the department. The Statewide Rail Trail crossing safety assessment is still ongoing but ideally completed this year.

- Marianne Borowski had called for help sponsoring the CDS grant, however NHDOT could not assist. However, there are other grant opportunities that do not require a government sponsor or the potential for State Representatives to sponsor the CDS grant.

Bill Finn (Governors Commission on Disability): Full meeting yesterday for the governor's commission. Many communities are interested in improving trail access.

Tim Blagden (Human Powered Winter Sports): Lake Placid had the Nordic Skiing world cup. There were thousands of spectators in the audience. NH hosted the U16 Nordic Skii Championships at Oak Hill Highschool. Many people are still using trails in the winter, however snowshoers are difficult to locate for input.

Tim DeSantis (NEMBA): There have been lots of questions from Warner residents about downhill trail at Kearsarge. From the mountain bike perspective there was support that that type of trail was considered. Many residents are upset about potential traffic and environmental impacts. Advocates understand this would be a multi-use trail. And they understand it's a long process to even get looked at by the state.

Jerry: DNCR has a clear process that moves slowly and the people of Warner feel they are not informed. Until DNCR goes out into the property, there is no major note. I

In the meantime, the public can keep emails going to Chief Rennie at NHParks@nh.gov.

Abby Evankow (NH Bike Walk Alliance): CVRT agreement dated March 9 regarding Rail Trail bike tours. Marianne Borowski secured a \$250,000 grant for the Ammo Rail Trail. Scott Wolso received \$450,000 for the trail. 68 trail counters will be installed across 38 trails statewide to collect data.

Alexis Rudko: Scott will need an SUP (Special Use Permit) to track the counters, including provisions for data sharing with the state.

Abby: Funding depends on the branch of government applied to. The CDS grant written by Marianne for the Rockingham Recreational Rail Trail will be managed by a local snowmobile club (501(c)(3)). The project includes replacing a culvert with a tunnel, adding solar lighting, and ensuring sufficient height for a trail groomer.

Guest Comments:

Avis Rosenfield (Derry Trail Riders): Question about timeline for Depot Road at Bear Brook State Park (west of the pavilion).

- Alexis: The bridge is expected to be completed this summer. District 2 staff are working on it alongside other projects, which may affect timing. Mike is ready to begin but is waiting on favorable weather conditions.

Avis: Horse access is ready, but approximately 100 members are requesting camping at Bear Brook. Out-of-state members are also interested in camping in New Hampshire. Camping plans are contingent on completion of the bridge crossing. DOT indicated they would add two white lines to mark crossing sections and install “Slow Horses” signs.

Avis will follow up with DOT to confirm.

- Andrew: An existing trail behind the shelter pavilion (near the kickball field) could be used as a detour during events.
- Peter: Additional uses, including equestrian activity, may complicate trail management.

Bureau of Trails Update for OHRV and Snowmobiles: Chief Craig Rennie

- Regarding the 21-mile-long Conway Branch rail line, the **Conway Branch Rail Trail Advisory Committee** met on March 19, 2026, to discuss DNCR plans regarding future trail planning after the consultant selected through the RFQ process was tabled and subsequently pulled from G&C review. DNCR is planning to use the RFP process moving forward to ensure we get the most competitive pricing when selecting a consultant. Also, BOT will be evaluating trail construction in the short term in the Ossipee village area and proceeding north to Route 16.
- As of March 17, 2026, **snowmobile registrations** were up this past winter with 46,140 sleds registered. This is an increase of 4,506 registrations from the previous year.

Grant in Aid (GIA) Updates:

- **Winter GIA Grooming season** is wrapping up. Many of the clubs have closed their trail systems and our Trail Conditions Reports have finished for the season.
- This winter we had 6 clubs that went over their **GIA grooming award** and have absorbed those costs. Although no grant increases were awarded, documenting these additional hours will help the GIA Advisors to consider increasing hours for those clubs during the fall GIA grant round.
- **Summer GIA Workshops** were held yesterday March 24, 2026, at 2 locations (USFS HQ in Campton from 1:00-3:00pm and at the DNCR Lancaster Office from 6:00pm-

8:00pm) and again on Thursday, March 26, 2026 (1:00pm-3:00pm, and 6:00pm-8:00pm at DNCR HQ in Concord). All four sessions have good attendance sign-ups and there are a lot of new names and additional club officers that will be attending this year.

- **Summer GIA Applications** will be sent in an email blast to the clubs on March 31st and available online. There may be a few changes to the application this season, but that will be covered in the training sessions. Applications will be due Friday, May 1st at 4:00 pm.
- **Trail Sign Order** forms were sent to clubs last week and are due Friday, April 10 and can be submitted electronically or hard copy.

Recreational Trail Program (RTP) Update:

- **Federal Fiscal Year 2025 (Project C) RTP**
 - o April 14th, 2026, is the last day to complete any tree clearing on extended projects.
- **Federal Fiscal Year 2026 (Project D) RTP**
 - o RTP Coordinator will reach out in the coming month regarding contracts.
- **Federal Fiscal year 2027 (Project E) RTP**
 - o Applications will be available for download on the BOT website starting March 30, 2026. The application deadline is May 30th, 2026, at 4:00 PM.
 - o 2 RTP Training workshops will be held on April 29, 2026 at DNCR HQ in Concord. One Workshop will be held in the evening on April 28 at the DNCR office in Lancaster, NH. Details are posted on the BOT RTP website this week and will be shared through an email announcement.
 - o **Reminder: Attendance at least one workshop is required in order to apply for RTP.** Each session is limited to 30 participants, please email Brianna.h.leone@dncr.nh.gov with your name and organization to reserve your spot in advance.

Legislative Update: Chief Craig Rennie

- **HB1307** regarding extending the commission to study OHRV use in NH (HB1188) by 2 years and adding a member of the department of tourism. Ought to Pass.
- There was a bill to allow for disabled hunting from a vehicle.

Heritage Trail Update: No representative present to comment.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

- Think before you sink: groomed etiquette sign from Army Corps of engineers. Found on Facebook for the US Army Corps of Engineers from a 2/4/26 post. Is this something that we can discuss and would this be recommended to use at DNCR kiosks? How does NEMBA use this signage?
- Peter: this is a common problem with ruts. Just an education message.

- Can DNCR have the PDF of these signs? Central NEMBA created these.
- WMNF shared some of their signs. DO you have luck with those? Not really.



Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2026, at 6:00 PM at DNCR HQ.
Motion to adjourn and seconded. Meeting Adjourned at 7:23PM.

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