



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT of NATURAL and CULTURAL RESOURCES  
**DIVISION of PARKS and RECREATION**  
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January 29, 2020

The Honorable George Sykes, Chair  
and the Transportation Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 203  
Concord, NH 03301

**RE: HB 1427, AN ACT removing authorization for OHRV use on certain sections of state highway.**

Dear Chairman Sykes and Members of the Committee,

Please accept this testimony on behalf of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Division of Parks and Recreation **in opposition to HB 1427**, an act removing authorization for OHRV use on certain sections of State highways due to pending legislation that would study all road use in Coos County.

This bill would close 6 sections of state highway to OHRV use in Coos County on January 2021 until that time that DOT requirements to open the highways are met. There exists in statute now a requirement that these roads are open to OHRVs. If passed, and this authority was removed, the NH Department of Transportation would revoke the permits that were issued for these portions of road until that time that new application to open them was approved. The Division would then advertise and hold public hearings in these communities to request that road sections be re-opened. Following those hearings, an application, if submitted, would provide documentation of a decision of support from the select board of that community.

We are very concerned about the impact that closures would have on OHRV access from the trail system to the businesses in the communities. For example, Jericho Lake Road in Berlin is the primary connection from the 85 mile OHRV trail system at Jericho Mountain State Park to downtown Berlin. The Division believes this bill should be addressed by establishing a committee to study minimizing road use for Ride the Wilds as proposed in HB 1156, legislation we are supporting.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. Chris Gamache, Chief of our Bureau of Trails, is prepared to answer any question that the committee should have.

Sincerely,



Philip A. Bryce, Director

Cc: Sarah L. Stewart, Commissioner