

New Hampshire Statewide Trails Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes, April 12, 2011

In Attendance

Members:

- Tom DiMaggio (Chair) NH Musers Association
- Chris Gamache NH Trails Bureau
- Dennis Ford NH Snowmobile Association
- Jack Wheeler NHOHVA
- Debbie Briscoe NH Horse Council
- Scott Hatch Northeast Association of 4WD Clubs
- Jack Waldron Society for the Protection of NH Forests
- Marianne Leberman White Mountain National Forest
- Dianne Hanley NH Rail Trail Coalition
- Judy Silva NH Municipal Association
- Kim Fortune NH Farm Bureau

Staff:

- Jennifer Codispoti NH Trails Bureau

Guests:

- Hal Graham Trailwrights
- Raynold Jackson Trailwrights
- Gerry Gold Sunapee-Ragged-Kearsarge Greenway Coalition

Open Meeting

7:05 PM, meeting called to order.

Introductions

Members and guests introduced themselves and their affiliations.

Review Minutes

Minutes from the September 14, 2010 meeting reviewed, approved.

Member Updates

Debbie B of the NH Horse Council gave a presentation on her organization and horses. Many of the members in the NHHC do competitions, trail riding (pleasure and competition), endurance rides and hunt club. Debbie reminded us that horses are 'prey' animals and rely on flight instinct. If you can see a horse's eye, then they can see you. A horse and rider are approximately 4 feet wide at the horse's belly. Good trails for horses are approximately a 5-6 foot cleared width and 10-12 feet high. They prefer 6-8 foot bridges with a curb rail. Trailer parking is the biggest issue for trail riders. There are approx 10 trail clubs in NH. The next presentation will be about snowmobiles from the NHSA representative.

OHRV/Snowmobile Update

Trails are still being groomed in Pittsburg, but will be wrapping up shortly. The best riding was in the Lakes Region and south. The season was very good and busy. Unfortunately there were not as many people travelling to the north country, which impacted local businesses. The groomer safety video for groomer training was completed. The VT reciprocity weekend was a success and will likely happen again in 2012 and possibly include Quebec. ME, NH and VT recently met to discuss regional snowmobile management. A recent meeting of snowmobile administrators and USFS personnel took place in Gorham to review and comment on proposed new USFS signage guidelines.

Recreational Trails Program

NH's apportionment is not available yet and we have received less than ½ of the money. A recession was announced and we may have to grant money out, but take it back later – it is all up in the air still. Trail organizations should look at sending a congressional support letter. Senator Ayotte and Representative Bass have been updated on the importance of RTP. As an agency, we cannot lobby for the program to continue. 2011 grant applications will be scored on April 20th and notifications will be sent out by the end of the week. Bill Gegas is no longer with the Bureau of Trails, he took a position as the South Seacoast Regional Manager in the Bureau of Park Operations. An MOA between DRED & DOT

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has been completed, which outlines the management and fiscal responsibility of the program with DRED and DOT will do the FHWA billings for us.

Heritage Trail Update

No new project updates

New Business

The Commissioner reopened the search for a new Director of Parks. Parks is running great with Interim Director, Gail Wolek.

May 23rd is when mud season ends and trails reopen.

Other Power Driven Mobility Devices: Department of Justice ruling March 15th allows people with mobility disabilities to use power driven mobility devices (such as ATV's). We are working on a policy to help guide users on trails.

Old Business

DRED volunteers: The Volunteer Program is still moving forward. Forms have been approved by the Attorney Generals Office. We are also giving out letters of permission including a maintenance plan to organizations to get basic maintenance work done without checking with the Bureau.

Legislation: House Bill 131 has passed the House RR&D Committee. It was referred to the judicial committee and amended. Moving on to Senate. ATV trail criteria study committee bill in the House. State agencies hope to have it pass to address the known issues and get a workable process for review and possible approval for ATV trails on State lands.

Guest Comments/Questions

Next meeting

Set for September 13, 2011, 7 PM, DRED conference room, 172 Pembroke Road, Concord.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.