

New Hampshire Statewide Trails Advisory Committee (STAC)  
Meeting Minutes from October 14, 2008

### **In Attendance**

Members:

- Tom DiMaggio (Chair) NH Mushers Assoc
- Greg Placy NH DOT/Dist 1
- Ken Domey NH Off Highway Vehicle Assoc
- Jerry Moore NH DOT/Bike-Ped
- Debbie Briscoe NH Horse Council
- Jack Waldron SPNHF
- Judy Silva NH Municipal Assoc
- Marianne Leberman WMNF
- Roger Lohr XC Skiers

Staff:

- Bill Gegas NH Trails Bureau

Guests:

- Tom Kokx Thomas Kokx Associates (NH Div of Parks Strategic Plan Consultant)
- Gerry Gold SRK Greenway

### **Open Meeting**

7:03 PM, meeting called to order.

### **Introductions**

Members and guests introduced themselves and their affiliations.

### **Review Minutes**

Minutes from the April 8, 2008 meeting reviewed and accepted.

### **OHRV Update**

Constant and intense rainfall this summer has stalled many OHRV and snowmobile trail projects and has created newer trail damage in some area. Many projects have not been able to begin until this Fall. Snowmobile parking areas may see a reduction in plowing for the 2008/2009 season.

### **Recreational Trails Program**

The FHWA has released the preliminary notice for the State's apportionments. NH's apportionment for 2009 is \$1,460,261. This is a significant increase compared to previous year's apportionments. The reason for this is because the FHWA has incorporated a more recent model for estimating fuel consumption by Four-Wheel Drive Vehicles and Light Trucks. The previous model showed a higher consumption of fuel by FWDVs and LTs, so states that had programs for these vehicles received a higher percentage in federal gas tax funds. NH does not have a tracking program for these types of vehicles. Based on the current model more funds are being diverted to states who's motorized programs only include ATVs, trail bikes and/or snowmobiles such as NH. This current apportionment is not set in stone. FHWA has issued rescissions the past couple of years. With an ongoing war and recent federal bailouts, rescission to this year is anticipated.

The federal Secretary of Transportation had released a public statement calling for a streamlining and restructuring of the national highway fund. She specifically recommends that smaller programs such as "Recreational Trails" be eliminated in the next transportation bill. The current bill is set to expire this next session. With the presidential, senatorial and congressional elections approaching it is unknown who will be the next president who will appoint as Secretary of Transportation or who will take legislative office. The Trails Bureau will work with Chairman DiMaggio to draft a letter on behalf of the STAC to be sent to NH's Senate and House representative urging the importance and continuation of the RTP for NH.

The committee requested to receive a list of grantees, awards and project descriptions for the upcoming grant round.

### **Heritage Trail Update**

No new updates.

**Old Business**

Trail Etiquette: Chairman DiMaggio has distributed the initial report of responses from the committee members regarding trail etiquette amongst different trail users.

Non-motorized trail funding: No sub-committee meeting have been held to this date. Chairman DiMaggio will organize new meeting for sub-committee. The rest of the committee may submit comments and recommendations to the Chairman. Chairman DiMaggio will prefer to hold the next STAC meeting before the upcoming legislative session, so as to present the committee's recommendations to the House RR&D Committee.

Trail Adopter Program: Information is now on the Bureau's website for the pilot areas for this program. Additional information can be obtained from Jennifer Codispoti at the Trail Bureau.

**New Business**

NH Division of Parks & Recreation Strategic and Capital Improvements Plan, Tom Kokx of Thomas Kokx Associates: NH legislation call for a State Parks development plan every 10 years. It has been 20 years since the last plan was completed. The purpose is to identify and address emerging uses as opposed to historical uses. The plan must also look at the Division's mission, vision and goals. Tom has been working with a technical team of various Parks Division staff and outside professionals, conducting interviews with Parks field staff, and has held a series of public input meetings. Regarding trail uses, responses have been different in different regions: North-need for more motorized trails, Seacoast-need for more non-motorized, Merrimack towards Connecticut valleys-need for both. Many citizens are unaware that Parks is self funded. Day use fees are identified for additional funding. A need for partnerships has also been identified.

Division of Parks and Recreation Director's position: Currently this position is vacant following the departure of Director Allison McLean. The committee has been reminded that it exists legislatively for the purpose of making trail recommendations to the Director.

**Next meeting**

Set for December 9, 2008 DRED conference room, 172 Pembroke Road, Concord.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.