

From: Stewart, Sarah
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2019 1:51 PM
To: Tango-Lowy, Torene
Subject: FW: ATVs on State/Town Roads

From: Stewart, Sarah
Sent: Friday, June 22, 2018 8:56 AM
To: Bryce, Philip <Philip.Bryce@dncr.nh.gov>
Subject: FW: ATVs on State/Town Roads

We can discuss this on Monday- Just want to send your way so I don't forget!

I want to run this email (below) by you before I respond in case you have some specific thoughts. Also- Buddy Dion wants to sit down with me to discuss some ATV issues too. I figure I should meet one-on-one with these guys, listen to them, get some understanding of their perspective, then we can discuss our strategy. Of course this is part of a larger topic- and I know Will Abbott and Jim O'Brien etc are eager to participate in some big picture conversations about trails...particularly what is happening with the Coos County Trails study.

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From: John Petrofsky [mailto:jpetrofsky@googlemail.com]
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2018 11:55 PM
To: Stewart, Sarah <Sarah.Stewart@dncr.nh.gov>
Subject: ATVs on State/Town Roads

Dear Commissioner Stewart,

Congratulations on your new position!

I wanted to quickly bring to your attention a number of problems, and potential solutions that people in Coos County are working towards, in relation to the policy of permitting ATV traffic on State (and Town) roads.

When ATV's were allowed on state and local roads 5 years ago, the goals made sense. The move was billed as a short term action to allow access to trails where absolutely necessary, and as a stopgap until actual off-road trails were secured.

The actual impact has been a far cry from what was expected. For example the road my family lives on was in theory opened to local ATV traffic only. This has not been honored, and it is common to have hundreds of ATVs come by on a given day, few adhering to the speed limit, with associated problems of trespass and damage to property. There is very little law enforcement. There are simply too many areas to patrol, and too few Fish and Game officers. This is not their job, and we need them elsewhere.

I have neighbors in their sixties and seventies who no longer sit on the front porches of the houses they were born in, because there is too much dust and noise from ATVs. The peace and quiet that attracted many second home owners to the region is gone, and it's increasingly common to hear stories of people thinking of leaving. Even on lakes, people are selling. ATVs are displacing other traditional recreations, like hiking, and mountain biking. No one else wants

to be around them, understandably. Far from being a boon to the economy, giving ATVs free reign is hurting.

You will likely hear from a handful of business owners who think ATVs are helping. They are mostly ATV rental owners and ATV tour operators. In places like Colebrook and Pittsburg there are businesses that are thriving without ATVs having direct access. In many cases these businesses are actually doing better than those on the trails.

In fact, there are local business owners who feel that ATVs are hurting them economically. These people feel that ATVs drive away the tourists that have been coming to the North Country for generations. They are too afraid to speak out, however. Why? As one example, a campground owner in Pittsburg recently closed his land to ATVs. His property was immediately vandalized with several thousand dollars in damages. No one wants this, and people are afraid.

This sounds crazy, but it's true. This is the result of allowing ATVs on public roads.

People are starting to speak out against the situation. ATVs can work on trails in the woods, but on public roads, conflict is inevitable. Most feel that there must be common-sense solutions to be had. For example, would it really hurt the ATV trade if ATVers trailered to trailheads? This is the approach used by snowmobilers, hikers, equestrians, kayakers, mountain bikers, etc. In other words, everyone else.

I would sincerely appreciate the opportunity to speak with you, and I believe that many of my neighbors would love the opportunity to share their experiences, and offer solutions to the burden and negative impact we increasingly find ourselves under. I am confident a solution can be found, but we have to start the conversation.

Sincerely,
John Petrofsky

Stewartstown, NH