

## Kelsey Notch Trail 3-Year Assessment Comments

The history section of The Nash Stream Forest plan states "Nash Stream Forest was purchased by the state through the Land Conservation Investment Program (LCIP) to preserve the property's natural beauty, landscape, rural character, natural resources, and the quality of life in New Hampshire.

It also states "It was purchased primarily to:

1. Ensure that the property continues to contribute to forest economy through the sale of wood products;
2. Provide continued public access for recreation; and
3. Protect the area's natural beauty and ecological values."

Because the Nash Stream Forest is a very large tract of land that is about 15 miles long and 7.5 miles wide, it is necessary to cross through parts of the Forest with OHRV trail connectors.

But all of the OHRV trails, including the Kelsey Notch trails, have been run along the outer edges of the Forest so that the traditional uses in the heart of the forest are not impacted.

The 2.56 miles of OHRV trails in Kelsey Notch that run along the northern boundary, take up only 9.3 acres of the 40,013 acres in the Forest.

The 8 miles of OHRV trails along the western edge of the Forest take up another 29 acres. Together these trails are less than 1/10 of 1 percent of the land area in the forest.

The Kelsey Notch trails are critical connectors between many miles of trail on private land that join various town trail networks together.

In addition, these OHRV trails provide public access to Nash Stream Forest for a greater cross-section of the population and allow summer visitors, including the physically challenged, to enjoy the Forest.

This access is in keeping with the enabling legislation of the LCIP program which stated "The purpose of making these investments is to strengthen the social and natural resource fabric of local communities and to enhance the local and regional economies in the State that depend on tourism."

Given the protracted decline of the mill based economy, Coos County is in the middle of a transition to a tourism based economy which includes OHRV recreation.

Since Nash Stream Forest was purchased with unrestricted public funds, there are no statutes that limit OHRV recreation on the property. OHRV riders have just as much right to recreate on public lands purchased with LCIP funds as other traditional users.

The Metallak ATV Club, who has a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to maintain the Kelsey Notch trails, has done an outstanding job working with multiple State agencies to perform annual maintenance on those trails, keeping them in tip-top condition.

We believe that ALL of the requirements specified in 2016 CORD findings have been met and that the use OHRV's on the Kelsey Notch trails is consistent with RSA 162-C:6 and these trails should be given the status of "designated trail" as provided under the Nash Stream Forest Plan.

Respectfully Submitted,  
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