

Maine Department of Conservation
Bureau of Parks and Lands
Meeting to Discuss Proposal for Developing a Snowmobile Plan
For the Katahdin Region

East Branch Sno-Rovers Club House – East Millinocket
December 5th, 2006 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Chris Drew – Baxter State Park
Bill Patterson – The Nature Conservancy
Marcia McKeague – Katahdin Forest Management
Matt Polstein - New England Outdoor Center
Ken Delano – Benedicta Snowgang
Phil Knowles – Benedicta Snowgang
Jim Splan – Benedicta Snowgang
Al Howlett – Friends of Baxter State Park
David Moore – Northern Timber Cruisers
Bob Meyers – Maine Snowmobile Assoc.
Cathy Johnson – Natural Resources Council of Maine
Maurice Marden – MSA-Trails
Jim White – MSA Trails
Bruce McClean - MAGIC
Jeff Campbell – East Branch Sno-Rovers
Galen Stanley – East Branch Sno-Rovers
Jeff Fayle – East Branch Sno-Rovers
David Violette – East Branch Sno-Rovers
Shawn Bouchard – East Branch Sno-Rovers
Nancy Deschene – East Branch Sno-Rovers
Camille Deschene – East Branch Sno-Rovers
Dan Bridgham – MSA
Sylvia Bridgham - MSA
Frank Clukey – East Millinocket
Kathy Lee – Town of Medway
Kevin Miller – Bangor Daily News
Vaughn Bouchard – Jo-Mary Riders SC
Dave Silvia – Jo-Mary Riders SC
Rick Lavasseur – Jo-Mary Riders SC
Brian Wiley – Katahdin Area Chamber of Commerce
Donald Dudley – Bowlin Matagamon SC
David Robb – Bowlin Camps
Rick Hill – Mt. Chase Lodge
Stephen Stanley – County Commissioners

From the Bureau of Parks and Lands:

Scott Ramsay - Supervisor, Off-Road Vehicle Division
John Titus – Senior Planner

Opening comments from Scott: The Bureau is looking to find someone else besides John to write this Comprehensive Plan, as his time is being redirected full time to management planning.

John provided a handout of a proposed outline for the Comprehensive Plan (attached); followed by some discussion

Bob Meyers gave a summary of his Economic Study updates since 1997 (attached); followed by some discussion

John provided a summary of how the states of NH, NY, and MI handle trail agreements with private landowners; followed by some discussion

General Comments

- Scott: Please give us feedback on what you want to see included in the Plan; looking for some club history; John: a summary of the major snowmobile events in the Katahdin area since the 1970's would be helpful.
- There is a need for food, gas, and related services along the trail system. Many folks won't ride unless these services are available; the Plan should illustrate where services currently exist and where there is a need; distance between services should be between 30 and 50 miles.
- There are businesses that have recently closed that will impact these services for the upcoming winter.
- Bruce: MAGIC is looking to spend down \$500,000 from Rep. Michaud's office for pedestrian and bike trails; but other trail users, including snowmobiles could benefit; and effort is currently underway to get trail groups together to talk about where and how this money could be used.
- A snowmobile trail on the back side of Baxter State Park would be worth exploring; network of existing roads could provide for much of the system; this would involve directing some use into the Telos area of the AWW which would require some research to see if this would be acceptable.
- There was a group of legislatures, trail groups, etc. that met many years ago to look into leasing of land, etc. We should take a look at that study.
- Bob: Snowmobile rentals are now a big factor in looking at the economics, which was not the case in 1997.
- Rentals steadily grew from 1997-2002, but have leveled off since.
- There are around 100 rental sleds in the Millinocket area.
- Bob: The \$350 million economic impact figure for an average winter is probably realistic, as it is conservative (doesn't include property and vehicle purchases).
- We do know that many in this area buy property because of the snowmobiling, although they may use it at other times of the year.
- Brian: Will work on getting information from the Chamber number of beds, restaurant visits, etc. resulting from snowmobiling. Probably could update an old study from the 90's that was done for that purpose.
- Scott: Will work on putting together a cost per mile for maintenance and management of the trail system.
- Can get some taxation data to for seasonal comparison purposes.
- We may have better luck working with the new railroad owner in resolving connection problems from Lincoln to Millinocket; Scott will be looking in to this.
- We definitely want to have further discussion on developing a Medway-Benedicta trail system along the west side of I-95.

- Scott: Agreeable to having a subgroup of this committee look into exploring trail options discussed today; this will involve discussions with the landowners first, but we can work on this through the winter

Scott closed the meeting by saying we would probably not need to meet as a full group until later this year, but once a draft is put together for legislative review in March, it will be circulated for comment. It will be well into next year before the final plan is complete. We should also think about organizing a tour for legislatures and others involved with putting together LD 2015, perhaps in February.

A spaghetti dinner was provided by the East Branch Sno-Rovers Club