

Massachusetts OHV Advisory Committee Meeting # 51 Notes
Tuesday, December 5th, 2023
Venue: Purgatory Chasm State Reservation
198 Purgatory Rd, Sutton, MA

In Attendance: (* Indicates OHVAC member or sitting in for a member)

Scott Morrill (EoEEA / MA OHV Coordinator)

*Michael White – OHV user representative

*Raffi Peterson - NETRA representative

*Randy Toth – SAM representative

Robert Gubala – Patriots ATV Club

*Colin Novick – Non-profit representative

Jim Caffrey – Non-profit representative

*Jack Chapin – Law Enforcement / MEP representative

*Matt Westfield – OHV users' representative

*Michael Toomey – Friends Group representative

Jeff Miller – SAM

Chris Spillane – DCR

Samantha Szala – DCR

Jon Oulette – Southcoast Motorangers

10:10 Meeting is called to order.

Mr. Morrill provided an update on developing a training workshop for the OHV community in the upcoming year. Mr. Morrill also stated that an appraisal had been completed for a property in Plymouth with the possibility of leasing the property for OHV use. Mr. Morrill also brought up term limits of sitting board members and some board members voiced their concern over the attendance record of other board members.

The next update was provided by Randy Toth, the SAM representative. Mr. Toth that early bird sales for SAM trail passes had been decent and there are hopes that this will be a better snow year. Mr. Toth stated that it was a successful snow show and that all of the vendor spaces were sold out. Mr. Toth brought up concerns from some SAM members in the allocation of funding to OHV trails. The concerns were over why motorized received, on average, \$330,000 annually when non-motorized received approximately \$11.5 million.

Raffi Peterson of NETRA provided the next update. Mr. Peterson cited the need for smooth permitting and exemptions as scheduling was important due to there being

roughly 70 – 80 events per year. Mr. Peterson mentioned that it was another successful year with very few injuries and high participation / turn-out. Mr. Peterson stated that there were more people looking to ride and find more places to recreate. Mr. Peterson also mentioned that his club, Pilgrim Sands, had successfully completed a short turnout to avoid people getting misdirected and using part of the road.

Captain Chapin of the MA Environmental Police provided the next update. Captain Chapin, who is new to the committee, presented accident numbers from January 1st to November 30th. There were 53 accidents reported, 4 fatalities, 56 injured. 20 occurred on a public way and 33 off-road.

The next discussion was initiated by Michael White regarding roads and ways access for 4x4. Mr. white noted that the town had voted to keep Old Florida Rd, from Adams to Florida. Mr. White stated that it was still a town road and was concerned about maintained access and whether DCR would continue to permit access – even with it being a town way and not a DCR road. Mr. White also noted that DCR staff were extremely helpful and easy to work with. Mr. White stated that he was working with an abutter to the trail in addressing all of their concerns and that they had been happy with the steps taken by Mr. White's 4x4 club. Mr. White also wished to continue the discussion with DCR about similar roads and the possibility of officially recognizing these ways as being open to travel and minimizing confusion about rights to access.

Michael Toomey of the friend's network promoted the final discussion. Mr. Toomey raised many good points regarding avenues to outreach and public awareness regarding OHV use and opportunities. Mr. Toomey asked the question of how do people know about what is offered and our trail system? How are they promoted? Why are there no kiosks? Perhaps pamphlets at service centers and areas similar would be a good spot. Mr. Toomey mentioned decision makers for these areas and engaging them in requesting access to these areas. Mr. Toomey made a motion to invite Anne Gobi, new MA Office of Outdoor Recreation Director Paul Jahnige, Secretary Tepper, and Under Secretary Cooper to an upcoming OHV Advisory Committee meeting in an effort to discuss this and other matters with them. This motion was seconded by Randy Toth with none opposed.