

Massachusetts Off-Highway Vehicle Advisory Council Meeting #47
Tuesday, December 6th, 2022
Venue: Zoom virtual meeting

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

Scott Morrill (EoEEA / MA OHV Coordinator)

*Randy Toth – SAM representative

Jeff Miller - SAM

*Lt. John Girvalakis – MEP ATV and Boating Safety

*Michael White – Mohawk 4x4 / OHV user representative

Shelly Kaleita – Beacon Hill Consulting

*Max Rosbold-Gabbard – DPH Massachusetts

Colin Novick – not for profit representative

*Chuck Kulda – Power sports dealer representative

John Bartley – Beacon Hill Consulting

Nicole Giles – Army Corps of Engineers

Terry Sinclair – OHV user / Maine ATV

*Matt Westfield – OHV user rep

Meeting #47 was chaired by Scott Morrill from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs (EOEEA). The meeting was held online via Zoom from 10 AM to 2 PM. There were 13 attendees; 8 official committee members.

Scott Morrill, the OHV coordinator for the state, highlighted a safe and successful riding season despite staffing issues with DCR. Mr. Morrill also discussed was the possibility of exemptions to registration related to emergency response and state vehicles. Mr. Morrill has also reviewed the OHV fund, upon request from the OHVAC, and will report on the fund during the June OHVAC meeting. Mr. Morrill has also been busy assisting local clubs with their gathering of information and development of RTP grant submissions.

Nicole Giles, of the US Army Corps of Engineers, updated the committee on the Hodges Village Dam ACOE property. Ms. Giles informed the committee that there was approximately 30 miles of trails located on the 1200 acre property, 22 of which allow dirt bike use. Ms. Giles indicated that the number of new riders and visitorship to the property were up. The staff at Hodges Village Dam are also creating new partnerships with the New England Mountain Bike Association in trail repairs. Ms. Giles noted a trend in some visitors using rented U-hauls and bringing in dirt bikes to their parks in that manner. In some of these areas there were some issues of graffiti and property damage. MA Environmental Police were notified and are aware of the occurrences.

Michael White of Mohawk 4x4 announced that his club had completed a charity ride on Old Florida Rd in Savoy for the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts. His club raised \$2,199.00 dollars which will help provide for 8,796 meals.

Chuck Kulda of the Power Sports Dealer Association stated that sales were down due to stock, though service was up three times its normal average. He also mentioned that in some instances parts were on delay for just over six months. Mr. Kulda also stated that his dealership was out of registration forms, which he hands out to all new sales of OHV's.

Randy Toth of the Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts reported that web app was ready and available for \$4.99. Although print maps were still available SAM hopes to transition to the web maps as it has up-to-date information and can be edited more frequently. SAM is also transitioning to online trail passes and has switched their magazine over from print to digital. These may all be found at sledmass.com. Mr. Toth also reported that there were many clubs pursuing RTP grants this year despite multiple problems finding equipment acquisition problems related to the Buy America compliance restriction for the RTP grant process. SAM has also voiced concern over possible upcoming Ware Watershed access restrictions and once again were inquiring about a Greenwater Pond reroute through October Mountain State Forest which had been walked and GPS'd by Mr. Toth and Mr. Morrill some years ago.

Lt. John Girvalakis of the MA Environmental Police updated the committee on environmental police issues and announced the retirement of long-time OHVAC member Captain Merri Walker. The accident report for the time between September 1st, 2022 and December 1st, 2022:

11 dirt bike, 13 to 54, 5 of which were under the age of 18. Of the 11 reported dirt bike accidents 6 were off-road, 2 were on a track, 1 was on a railroad and 2 were on a public way.

There were 4 reported ATV accidents, two of which involved passengers. 3 of the ATV accidents were on a public way.

There were also 2 reported accidents involving side by side OHV's, one of the injured passengers being a 6 year old juvenile.

The number of training and safety classes have been increased and safety training for first responders is ongoing.