

Governor's Snowmobile Council February 2, 2022

Present:

Pat Poulin, Chairman
Trevor Carbo, Vermont State Police
Cindy Locke, VAST Executive Director
Gary Nolan, VAST Law Enforcement Committee
Star Poulin, Governor Appointee
Dick Jewett, Governor Appointee
Michael Smith – VT DMV
Jenna Reed – Vermont F&W

VAST Staff Present:

Cindy Locke – Executive Director
Ken Brown, VAST Trails Manager
Cyndy Carrier Brown, VAST Assistant

Guests:

Stan Choiniere, VAST Safety Committee
Mike Mustacio (in for Ken Gammell)
Jacob Metayer – Vermont State Police
Jason Luneau – Morristown PD
The meeting was convened at 3:04 PM via Zoom.

Approval of Minutes

Star Poulin moved to approve the January minutes as presented; Cindy Locke seconded. Motion carried.

SSTP Financial Report

Dick Jewett moved to approve the SSTP report as presented; Gary Nolan seconded. Motion carried.

Agency Reports

Vermont State Police

- Trevor Carbo – There have been 1,011 education classes
- Patrols have been out for a few weeks but not much going on
- Compliance is 100% so far

Fish & Wildlife

- Jenna Reed – only stops have been for DMV registrations and everyone is cooperating

Southern Vermont Rescue – Paul Doucette

- Communicating with ____? _____ Fisher who has been sharing some information, photos and maps, illegal trails
- Somerset Reservoir trail is closed – some issues with people; Dover PD has been good about checking on this area; educating people
- Have seen some off trail riding in southern Vermont
- Next week I have a meeting with all the agencies of the Rescue Task Force
- Matt and I talked about setting up a link on the website to Chapter 22 of the snowmobile regulations
- At safety checks people have been very happy to provide information

DMV – Mike Smith

- There is not much going on, just registrations coming in
Registrations so far:

2022 – 20,378

2021 - 18,881

2020 – 18,954

2019 – 19237

2018 - 18695

2017 - 17936

2016 – 19328

- Pat Poulin – We are seeing a lot of NY registrations since we have been attending the NY shows

VAST – Cindy Locke

- TMA stickers have been mailed out
- TMAs to date are 22,464; that does not include transfers or club only memberships
- Budget is based on about 18,000
- Phones are busy
- Got a call from Gary Urbanti about the 710 trail; it's working out well, respecting their trail system
- Ken Brown made up some signs that the club agreed upon; Be Respectful, Trail is Rough
- Safety ambassadors are out checking signs, etc.
- Electric snowmobiles – Had another meeting with Tom from this company
- They would like to launch in Vermont – 3-day event; one day with Governor, will let law enforcement know when
- Agency is helping with charging stations
- I am hoping that VAST will be able to pick up one of these sleds next year
- Mike Smith – How are we going to make up for the gas tax?
- I don't believe that these electric sleds are going to be a very large number

- This might bring new people into riding
- I sent the letter to the Administration in November and the Governor has put into the budget
- Law enforcement - \$50,000 and \$1 million for equipment, groomers, capital repairs. I have requested that the money go through DMV/AOT
- I possibly may have to testify regarding this
- Michelle Boomhauer is also looking at these monies
- AORRG is with the Agency of Financial Regulations getting approved

Law Enforcement – Gary Nolan

- I have been out some; all is good

VAST Safety Committee – Stan Choiniere

- We are still waiting on one of our signs to come in and will then make them available to the clubs.
- The safety video cost has come in a little higher than we expected

SSTP Trail Report – Matt Tetreault

- Most areas have a good base, so this extra snow coming will be great
- Small issues – sleds stopping in driveways, etc. but nothing bad yet
- We have had a lot of grooming equipment broken down already this year
- Question – Route 17, the new trail that the cub is trying to resurrect
Where does this stand?
- The selectboard had tabled the item until their January meeting, which they have had
- Need some clarification on some items
- They need to leave the issue alone for now. It goes through the Forest Creek WMA, so the cub would have to go through the formal process on this with the state
- The trail is not active

Legislative

- Jenna Reed – Possibly doing some changes in the wording to address the issue that riders are required to show proof of insurance to law enforcement

Appointee Reports

Northwest – Star Poulin

- Riding here in Champlain Valley is pitiful, but there are some riders out.
- Most grooming has not been happening; they did the first storm, but nothing since
- Richmond Club was just about ready to fold. They had about 20 new people step up to keep the club doing

Northeast - Mike Mustacio

- I will be heading north shortly.
- The VELCO powerline trails are great; not a lot of snow, but it is staying in place
- Instead of a Class 1 groomer, use something that is lighter on these trails

South – Dick Jewett

- Some good riding up in higher elevation, lower is sketchy
- Had 4 cars stuck out of one of our trails
- One more thing – ATV with tracks riding on some of the trails. They bought TMAs from the DVSJ, so we knew that was not correct. The Wilmington PD is aware of this, so they are checking that area, as well as the wardens
- CT in training.
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Miscellaneous

- Over 800 people have pre-registered for the 3-day weekend
- Mike Mustacio – Wilmington last year, two cars that got stuck on a trail
- Can we put some enforcement out there about people driving on the trails. Fines?
- VSP sent out a press release with informational stuff
- If you are friends on the State Police FB account you will get these releases, etc.
- Maybe VAST could write a thank you letter to landowners and then distribute it to the clubs?

Windsor County – Patty Companik

- Stan Choiniere – We send a thank you letter to all of our landowners every spring
- Cindy Locke- Will draft up a letter and submit it to the board

Next meeting is March 2nd at 3:00

Meeting was adjourned at 3:52 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Locke
Executive Director/VAST