



## Testimony in Opposition to LD 276

### **An Act to Modernize ATV Classification, Registration, Trail Access and Landowner Protections.**

Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts and members of the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, my name is Anthony Hourihan and I represent Irving Woodlands. Irving Woodlands owns and manages approximately 1.3 million acres of forest land in the State, and we have been landowners in Maine since 1947. We voluntarily host many forms of outdoor recreation on our lands, including approximately 295 miles of ATV trails.

We are testifying in opposition to LD 276. We are frustrated that despite participating in multiple studies, task forces, and working towards good policy on ATV recreational use on private lands, we are being ignored. This amended bill, although well intentioned, is another example of all the previous work on this topic being totally disregarded to accommodate the sale of bigger and more expensive machines. The work of the task force back about 5 years ago set out width and weight standards that begrudgingly the parties agreed to, which suggests it was the result of compromise. LD 1308 passed this legislature last year, and the report put out for public comment due in February of this year has completely been ignored in this process.

When Irving Woodlands first agreed to limited ATV trails, the recreational activity involved a machine capable of hauling 2 people and weighing around 1,000lbs, these machines were 4' wide. Trail riders were outside in the air and had to work at steering and handling a machine, it was more like off season snowmobiling. ATV's have evolved and now can seat 4 people side by side in a climate-controlled cab complete with stereos, the push to keep making these bigger is more like an alternative to driving your pickup truck off road. It has been clear landowners want to limit this; this is not what they signed up for. Irving Woodlands has been open to changes related to ATV's if it involved acceptable compromises that took into consideration the different positions of stakeholders, was based on facts, and resulted in good balanced policy decisions. This hasn't happened here, and despite the feedback from landowners, proponents including ATV Maine have failed to address concerns, and their lack of effective leadership on this means they are "rolling the dice" and threatening an important viable outdoor recreational activity on private land!

**I urge you to Vote Ought Not to Pass on LD 276 and urge you to support Committee Amendment B on LD 19.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Anthony Hourihan