

Good afternoon, my name is Arthur Tenan. I'm from Cherryfield down in Washington County. Thank you for the opportunity to speak here today.

I'm gonna use my first minute to tell a story that I bet very few if any people in this room know what the hell I'm talking about. When I was a kid growing up, my father and my uncles had old trucks that at any given time might have a dump body on them, a blueberry body, or a body for pulpwood and logs. They used to be able to license those old trucks with a basic registration which pretty much just allowed them to drive it down the road empty. Most of the time they were off road, it wasn't an issue. Once in a while, they might get a job hauling gravel on a town job, or State Aid job. Or a load of pine logs going to Searsmont. This increased the risk of being stopped by a scale truck. They would go to the DMV and buy a booster. This booster was a short term permit to allow them to legally haul heavier loads. I don't believe this exists anymore.

So I have discussions with my one son who has a ATV now is technically illegal, and my other son who is a Maine State Game Warden. Not that we talk about it in depth, but we have the conversations at hunting camp.

Maine has a long and great tradition of public use of private lands. I worked in Wyoming for two years, and it certainly not that way out west. Many of us come and go on private land, use it like it was our own, and unfortunately, some abuse it. We all know the majority of the problems with ATVs is actually because of the operator, not because of the machine or the weight. This is a problem that will continue. We do, however, have to respect land on our rights, and if people do not want these bigger, heavier machines on their land, we have to respect that. Now in Washington County, the vast majority of our riding is done on the Downeast Sunrise Trail, which was designed for a trains, and dirt roads on the blueberry barrens and woods roads where weight is not an issue. I do understand there are some landowners in the western part of the state that do have concerns and justifiably so. 20 or 30 years ago when the ATV trail system was proposed and we were all riding Honda 300s, a far cry from what we have available to us now. I also believe, that in the near future we will see a large landowner who realizes potential return on their investment and organize and organize a private trail system and charge a user fee. If they want to develop their own trails on their land, run it, maintain it and charge access fees, they should be able to.

so I would propose a system similar to what my father and my uncles used to deal with. An across the board fee to register an ATV in the State of Maine. Allow landowners if they so choose, to sell a booster, so to speak. A decal that allows heavier machines on their property. This helps the landowner get a little bit of a return, and maybe influence other landowners to open their land. I also think it could be a tiered trail system. Something like, an A trail is limited to 2000 pounds. A B trail is limited to 2500 pounds. A C trail is limited to 3500 pounds. The onus will be on the state and clubs to get the word out, and riders to educate themselves.

Unfortunately, the snowmobiling industry is on the decline. We are just not getting snow that we used to. Conversely, the ATV industry is on the rise. As the Maine economy is suffering loss in the snowmobiling industry, it stands to gain in the already important ATV industry. People still want to get outside and recreate. I think we need to find a system where the state of Maine does not lose revenue, Landowners are given some incentive to

open their land, and the public continues to have the opportunity to enjoy everything the great state of Maine has to offer.

Many might think a tiered system would be too complicated.

I am old enough to remember when snowmobiling was in its infancy. People had to learn to be responsible when riding. Downeast, it took awhile for the public to accept the fact that they couldn't ride on the blueberry fields, though occasionally someone still does.

Hopefully this is my last year working full time. I hope to next year, start a small, part time business, doing local tours of the barrens utilizing a large capacity ATV. Our local large private landowners are not concerned about weight limits.

I hope to be able offer my clients the comfort that some of these machines offer.

Thank you.