



**Abbot Explorers ATV Club
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Regarding Hearing on LD 276 Mar. 25th, 2026

Greetings Members of the Committee. My name is Larry Daggett, Club Trailmaster, representing the Abbot Explorers ATV Club, located in Abbot, Maine. Our Club includes the towns of Abbot, Guilford, Blanchard, Monson, and sections of Kingsbury, which are located in Senator Stacey Guerin's and Representative James White's districts.

Our Club Trail system is composed of approximately 59 miles of varied off road terrain. When connecting public roads are included, our trail system expands to approximately 70 miles. We are a very rural area with a well-developed ATV trail system, which inter-connects with several adjacent ATV Clubs, including the Clubs for Greenville, Bingham, and The Forks. Our Trail system is composed of former Railbeds, (which are PRIVATELY owned, NOT State owned), Active and Inactive logging roads, and developed trails maintained and inspected to State standards. Some, but not all of our system is shared with local snowmobile clubs as well. Last year, 2025, our Municipal Trail Grant allowed this Club to expend \$99,592.96 for Repairs and infrastructure improvements on our system to show our Landowners how much we appreciate and respect their contribution to our success.

Our system is 96 % privately owned, the remaining 4 % is publicly owned by the Towns of Abbot and Guilford. The 59 miles of actual trail is composed of Twenty-Six individual Landowners. Some of these Landowners own as much as several thousand acres (Weyerhaeuser, AFM, and Linkletter), as well as some which may only own one or two acres. However, we feel each should be shown as much equal respect as possible from our Club.

This Bill, (LD 276), in my experience with our Landowners as the Club Trailmaster for the past fourteen years, will very likely create a break in our connection to the Greenville / Rockwood area. A separate Landowner, which owns several miles of the system connecting us to the Wind towers / Bingham / The Forks area already has our Club on a year-by-year probation basis due to the lack of enforcement available to address their past concerns. Losing this Landowner would also indirectly affect the newly established link from Newport to Greenville with the Dexter Rail Riders Club. These Landowners were reluctant to allow the increase from 60 inches to 65 inches / 2000# in 2019 when proposed and passed. Bill LD 19 in 2025 originally proposed an increase to 2500#s, with a 7-6 recommendation to pass, however somehow it has been modified to an allowance of 2950#s. Perhaps this is a backdoor effort to achieve a desired result closer to LD 341, (3500# limit), which received an ONTP (Ought Not to Pass) designation in the same session.

The Abbot Explorers ATV Club **opposes** LD 276, and the manner in which the Legislature is treating our Landowners by changing LD 19, and considering LD 276. This indicates to many that LD 276 will be put into the Legislative pipeline to achieve an end result regardless if LD 19 passes or fails its vote. We are fully aware that two manufactures have been eager to make larger and larger luxury units which exceed current weight limits. Some units have already been produced for a few years, why the hard push to ignore Landowners? The suspicion is that width requirements will be next to go. The perception by some is "Landowners be damned" we want what we want! I see no laws or reasons these folks cannot purchase their own land and drive till their hearts content. Regarding the often-made comment "our farmers want / need to go from property to property", is it possible to register it under "Farm Equipment" rules like the other equipment? Is it illegal to post my private property that "All ATV / UTV any size is allowed" and these groups can gather to like-minded sections causing the economic boom anticipated? Since the extra weight is not supposed to create any extra damage to a trail, they certainly should be able to afford to privately maintain them. We only spent an average of \$1,688 / mile last year.

Do we have Landowners representing a broad cross section of parcel size, instead of lobbyists and Politicians populating the advisory board? We understand many people would like to purchase and operate a VEHICLE such as the Can Am Defender Max Lone Star HD11, with a dry weight of 2,755#s and 890#s of cargo, (that would be 4 folks like me) totaling 3,645#s. The Polaris Ranger 1500XD North Star is listed on the Polaris site as being 3,323#s WITHOUT cargo. In comparison the 2025 Jeep Wrangler curb weight is 3,970#s, a difference of 325#s compared to the Can Am. The EPA shows the average weight of 2025 domestic passenger vehicles to be 4303#s. With the desire to open municipal roads as prevalent as it is, perhaps we should be proactive and require all ATV / UTV manufacturers of all models to meet DOT SAFETY standards (think bumpers and air bags), along with Insurance of Operators. Is there a large difference between two Jeep Wranglers colliding at 20 mph, and two Can Ams colliding at 20 mph on a 65-inch trail? The opinion has been offered that "we need to be like NH. and VT.", or we will lose economic opportunity / revenue. Be careful what you wish for, as they have Police actually patrolling the trails enforcing the alcohol and speed limits in Gorham NH. Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers just signed on 2/6/2026 a new weight limit of 3500# (without fluids) for ATV /UTV units. A quick comparison shows Maine has 1.3 million acres, 6.5% of the State as Publicly owned including State Parks, 93.5% being privately owned. Wisconsin has 5.9 million acres, 17% as publicly owned, 83% is held privately. The Wisconsin Legislature seems to realize weight limits are needed to protect private Landowners as well as public lands. I have traveled for a living since 1999 and have spoken with many people from Minnesota to Wisconsin to Michigan to New York, to North /South Carolina, to Georgia, about what they have for Clubs / Trail systems as the times have changed. The Northeast is the envy of the East Coast. The States south of Maine all the way to Florida, have nothing to match what we currently have. When I ask why, the answer most often heard is NO ONE WILL LET US ON THEIR PROPERTY. They need to spend \$400 to \$600 per weekend at a private ATV / UTV park. Please don't let the Red Trail Closed signs the State provides be the ones most often seen this year.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our views to your Committee

Regards,

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