

# DEER HILL ROAD ASSOCIATION

October 10, 2014

Board of Selectmen  
Town of Springfield  
PO Box 22  
Springfield, NH 03284

Gentlemen:

At your September 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting the representatives and members of the Mascoma Valley Snow Travelers spoke at length of the need to continue the use of Deer Hill Road as a snowmobile trail in order to maintain funding from the state and north-south access to other trails. The Board has authorized this use "on a temporary basis" for the past three years, requesting that the club explore alternative trail locations.

We, the residents, landowners, taxpayers and voters on Deer Hill Road, strongly object to the use of our road for a snowmobile trail. Our objections include:

There are 5 major curves and 4 major grade changes that make seeing an oncoming snowmobile with a lower profile difficult or impossible. Sections of our road are quite narrow, especially with snow banks. Although the Mascoma Valley Snow Travelers representatives assure us and you that snowmobile operators have not exceeded the speed limit of 10 mph and have kept to the right, observations by those of us who travel the road consistently disprove these statements. And now the state has doubled the allowable speed to 20 mph! We can only imagine the effect of reduced reaction time will have on collision avoidance. Despite repeated requests for a professional safety study the Board has deemed it unnecessary. It appears that a serious accident will be needed as a catalyst for action.

Our road is frequently used for hiking, biking and walking by residents and non-residents alike. Deer Hill Road is part of the Sunapee-Ragged-Kearsarge Greenway and is used year-round. Residents and others are often on the road. People and pets are less visible than automobiles, especially in low light conditions that exist during the winter months.

The winter maintenance of our road now includes enlarged shelves in some sections in an attempt to keep snowmobiles off the travel portion. We have a problem with this effort in that these shelves become compacted, turn to ice and

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inhibit drainage in mud season. Our access and emergency vehicle access is compromised.

One of the reasons that we have chosen to live on Deer Hill Road is because of the natural beauty and wildlife. Some residents have family that has been here for 100 or more years, others for 50 or more. We value this land and have taken steps to conserve much of it in perpetuity. We did not do this to provide a travel corridor for snowmobiles! The additional noise and air pollution brought by ever-increasing numbers of snowmobiles is offensive.

Where people are involved there are always economic issues. As explained by the Mascoma Valley Snow Travelers, their income from the state is based on the number of miles of trails it maintains. If it maintains fewer miles it gets less money.

Another economic aspect is the effect on our property values. Real estate professionals have confirmed that, should we wish to sell, it would be more difficult to do so and that the market value would be reduced because of the existence of a snowmobile corridor on Deer Hill Road. Should this translate into a reduced assessment or abatement? Should the rest of the taxpayers be required to pay more so the snowmobile club has a place to play?

The Board requested that the snowmobile club explore other options for a trail location. Since your September 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting none of us has been contacted by the snowmobile club. Perhaps another trail option has been discovered? Perhaps the Grantham trail can be connected to Sanborn Hill? We hope that the lack of contact from the club means that another option has been identified rather than that complacency has set in.

We urge the Board to deny the request to use Deer Hill Road as a snowmobile trail – for safety issues, for quality of life issues and for economic issues. We would welcome a Public Hearing if the Board feels it needs additional information.

Cindy Wells Ambler  
Richard Ambler  
John Garfield  
Sylvia Garfield  
Cynthia Hayes  
Perry Hodges

Herbert Marks  
Jane Seekamp  
Scott Seekamp  
Inessa Rifkin  
Victor Rifkin  
John Trachy