

LVRTC-MP
C/o VAST
26 Vast Lane
Barre, VT 05641

REC'D DEC 08 2006

Dec 7, 2006

Dear VAST,

I am writing to express my concern over the use of snowmobiles on the Lamoille Valley Trail, the old railroad line. I'm not utterly anti-snowmobile, but I feel it's totally inconsiderate to those of us who live right along the line (in East Hardwick village, in my case) that the hours of operation are from 6 am to 11 pm. Just because our windows are closed does not mean that we don't hear the machines. The noise is disturbing, and I can assure you that it wakes me up, as well as other people who live even closer. It makes one extremely grouchy, and also makes one unfriendly towards snowmobiles in general. If they were quieter, it wouldn't be a problem, but the fact is they are very noisy. Why does the trail have to be open for such long hours? With these hours, both the early-to-bed types and the late risers are bothered. I think it would be reasonable to ask that the hours of operation be from 7 am to 9 pm, or even better still dawn to dusk. I also believe that most towns have noise ordinances that prohibit loud noise after 10 pm. Why should snowmobiles be exempt? Plus, I think we can count on a few people "pushing the limit", feeling it's ok to ride a little earlier or later than the rules allow. If the night hours were reduced to 9 pm, hopefully that would mean everybody would've stopped riding by 10 pm. Maybe Friday or Saturday nights they could ride later. Please reduce the hours of operation!

Also, who is responsible for policing the line and ensuring that riders are following the rules? Who are we supposed to call if someone roars through in the middle of the night? I can personally vouch that it happens, and not that infrequently. If those of us most affected by scofflaws get frustrated and irritated enough, by having no recourse to solving any of these problems, then there will probably be more and more of us looking unkindly on VAST, snowmobilers and Vtrans in general. Please make it easy and effective for us to voice our concerns and solve problems.

Why shouldn't the first lease period be two or three years, rather than ten? Will the public have no say at all during that time? If so, I don't think it's quite fair. A shorter lease period would mean more accountability, and responsiveness to public concerns.

Finally, regarding herbicide use. When the railroad used to spray herbicide, they published notices in the paper a month or so beforehand. If you objected to having this done by your property, you called them to let them know, and made arrangements to avoid getting sprayed. We used to put flags up. They also tagged all the streams that crossed the tracks, so the spray wouldn't get in there. It was a perfectly reasonable solution to environmental concerns, and I ask that the same system be followed in future.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments,

Sincerely,



Rachel Kane

PO Box 147, East Hardwick, VT 05836