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July 1, 2002-June 30, 2003

Report to the Chairpersons of the House:  
Fish and Wildlife Committee  
Resources, Recreation and Development Committee  
Transportation Committee  
Ways and Means Committee

And Chairpersons of the Senate:  
Wildlife and Recreation Committee  
Ways and Means Committee

And State Library, as required by RSA 215-A:3, IX.

While servicing 96,361 registered off highway recreational vehicle owners (an increase of over 16% from FY 02), the Bureau of Trails accomplished the following:

- In cooperative effort between the Bureau of Trails, the Department of Resources and Economic Development's Design, Development and Maintenance Division and the New Hampshire Snowmobile Association, an improved and updated New Hampshire Snowmobile Trails Map was designed and printed.
- The Bureau of Trails, in cooperation with the Rowley Agency, reprinted and distributed the "Landowner Partnership" brochure for use by trail administrators or organizations utilizing the Bureau's Grant In Aid program.
- The Bureau implemented a new "Groomer Operator Safety Awareness Program", which was attended by 125 groomer operators. This program is one of the first in the country and additional prototype programs are being developed on at a nation level.
- Bureau field personnel accounted for over 18,500 hours of trail maintenance, over 3,000 hours of working with landowners concerns and project management and 496 hours of OHRV law enforcement.
- The Bureau and local snowmobile clubs accounted for over 50,000 hours of winter trail grooming (highest hours in history). FY 03 also accounted for the highest grant totals for winter trail maintenance and equipment purchase in Bureau history.

- The Bureau also updated and reprinted the Snowmobile Corridor Trail Map and updated and revised the ATV/Trail Bike Guide as an informational tool for OHRV enthusiasts.
- The Bureau implemented the first full season of a Trail Patrol Program for wheeled OHRV clubs, with support and cooperation from the Department of Environmental Services, Wetlands Bureau outreach staff. This peer/courtesy patrol accounted for over 250 volunteer patrol hours on NH's wheeled OHRV trails.
- The Bureau's website, [www.nhtrails.org](http://www.nhtrails.org), won a 2003 American Trails Website Contest award in the category of "Promotion of courtesy and trail sharing." All information was updated, better links added, new maps, club information, grant programs, winter trials report, Bureau history and law links were all updated on the site.
- The Bureau updates the statewide Trail Condition Report twice a week during the winter, to advise winter trail users of specific trail conditions all over the state, post safety notices and advise trail users of event updates. The Bureau also submits a monthly article to the New Hampshire Snowmobile Association's publication, Sno-Traveler. This article is directed toward the winter trail users and has reminders about statutes, program rules and other topics that the Bureau feels the general trail user, as well as the organized clubs, need to know.
- The Bureau also offered support materials and testimony for the HB 748. This bill made several changes to the OHRV statutes, including lowering the state OHRV decibel level from 99 db to 96 db, included the Bureau of Trails to the list of agencies that receive copies of OHRV accident reports from local enforcement agencies, changed the unsupervised age limit for younger OHRV operators from 12 to 14 years of age, added the NH Farm Bureau Federation, NH Horse Council and Granite State ATV Association to the statutory members of the Statewide Trails Advisory Committee and added the provision for use of funds in the Land Account for the development of New ATV/TB trails, if needed.
- The Bureau also gave testimony and offered support materials for House Bills 152, 385, 335, 254, 795 and 379 (which made OHRV offenses committed by someone between the ages 12-18 a violation). The Bureau also gave substantial testimony and materials for House Bill

420, which closed a 6-mile section of the Rockingham Rail Trail to summer OHRV use. The Bureau opposed this bill and with its passing was required to install new signage and launch an information campaign to inform users that the section of trail, that had been designated for their use for 20 years, was no longer designated for their use. This bill also made the winter parking area no longer viable for snowmobile use due to the closure of the parking area after dark.

- The Bureau gave substantial testimony to House Bill 152 (clarified State's position that towns cannot require landowners to have site-plan review for public trails-preemption) and House Bill 385 (would require landowners to have town input/approval for public OHRV trails on their lands). Both of these bills, 385 and 152, came about in response to a lawsuit that pitted the Town of Lyndeborough against a local landowner, for allowing public wheeled OHRV trails on his property. The Bureau, through the Attorney General's office was/is a party to this suit also.
- The Bureau also provided materials and testimony for House Bill 244, which established a study committee to review the landowner liability protections for landowners that allow public use of their land for snowmobile trails. The final report of the committee found that NH statutes do protect private landowners in NH.
- The Bureau put out a request for proposals to develop the Statewide ATV/TB Trail Development Plan, which was mandated in HB 1273. The environmental consulting firm of Woodlot Alternatives, Inc., from Topsham, ME was awarded the contract. Staff worked with Woodlot Alternatives to provide them with all of the background materials and information that was requested. The report was completed 12/31/03 and is included with this annual report.
- The Bureau began the water sampling and trail study of the ATV connector trail in the Nash Stream Forest. This trail is now in the second year of a 3-year pilot trail with an in-depth environmental study looking at wildlife, erosion and water quality questions regarding ATV use on trails.
- The Bureau began "Criteria review" of Bear Brook State Park, for potential ATV trail development, using the new statutory criteria that were passed into law through HB 1273. A team of state employees; from DES-Wetlands, Fish & Game-Wildlife, Div. of Historical

Resources, DRED Parks and Forests Divisions and six members of the local communities surrounding Bear Brook State Park met to discuss possible trail impacts and issues surrounding motorized use of summer trails. Bureau staff performed on-site reviews of the property to determine if ATV trails could be feasible. The study is currently on hold while inconsistencies and issues with the statutory criteria are corrected.

- The MEAD properties were sold to Wagner Wood Lands and the future status of the wheeled OHRV trail system (150 miles) is currently uncertain.
- The Bureau played a very active role in the preservation of the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters property and the protection of the public recreational trail systems on the property. The Bureau assumed responsibility for the maintenance of 300 miles of public roads on the property.
- The wheeled OHRV trail system in Carroll County (the only one) is now in jeopardy of being lost due to a land conservation deal that is being pursued by national and local conservation groups.
- The Bureau of Trails continues to lease nearly 400,000 acres of private property for recreational trail use.
- Approximately 5,000 private landowners are offered protection under the Bureau of Trails Landowner Liability Policy.
- The Bureau of Trails continues to manage 300 miles of State of New Hampshire owned Rail Trail for multiple use trail recreation. The Bureau staff repainted and installed newly designed reflective barriers to the 500+ gates on the rail trails under DRED control.
- With the combined efforts of the Bureau and local snowmobile clubs over 350 miles of recreational trails were maintained within the White Mountain National Forest.
- With combined efforts of the Bureau and local Wheeled OHRV clubs, over 100 new miles of wheeled OHRV trails were opened to the public on private lands. The few designated riding areas are seeing increased, above average use. Without more new trails opening the demands on the existing trails will continue to increase.

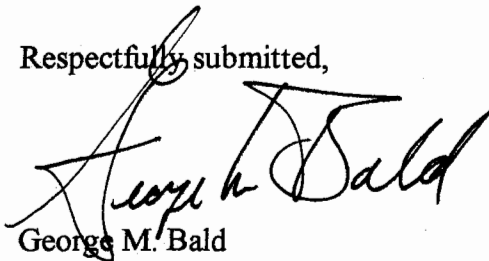
- 16 permits were issued to the Bureau of Trails, by the Department of Transportation, for snowmobile trail highway crossings, bridge crossings and trail connectors along highway rights-of-way.
- The Bureau of Trails administers the federal Recreational Trails Program. In federal FY 2003 the Bureau received, from the Federal Highway Administration, and awarded \$628,178.21 in grants to 45 organizations, representing all categories of trail users, for trail projects in New Hampshire.
- The Bureau awarded Recreational Trails Program Education Grants to the Granite State ATV Association; to purchase trail patrol vests for the wheeled patrollers and develop and print a Noise Education brochure and purchase decibel meters for educational uses, and the Department of Environmental Services, Wetlands Bureau; to develop waterproof posters for wetlands information to OHRV operators. The grant also made outreach education available to OHRV trail users from the Wetlands Bureau.
- The Bureau of Trails administers a Grant In Aid Program that manages 6,830 miles of public snowmobile trails and 750 miles of public wheeled OHRV trails, in cooperation with 104 snowmobile clubs and 23 wheeled OHRV clubs. A total of 197 (103 winter grooming, 83 snowmobile and 11 wheeled summer construction and equipment) contracts were executed in FY 2003, providing funds for OHRV clubs enrolled in the program.
- Actual expenditures-FY 2003 (Grant In Aid)
 

Trail Maintenance & Construction-Snowmobile:	\$1,738,653.40
Equipment Purchase-Snowmobile:	\$328,920.05
Trail Maintenance & Construction-Wheeled:	\$84,063.84
Equipment Purchases-Wheeled:	\$87,224.20
Landowner Insurance Policy:	\$63,861.00
- 93 Grant In Aid projects were audited in FY 2003 (28 equipment, 65 construction).
- The Bureau of Trails continues to administer all OHRV and multi-use recreational trails on Department of Resources and Economic Development properties. Through cooperative agreements, the Bureau also manages trails on the White Mountain National Forest and property

of the US Army Corps of Engineers. We continue to promote responsible trail use, respect for all trail users and multiple trail use on accessible lands.

- Copies of the financial reports for the Bureau of Trails, from FY 2003, are attached to this report. Also attached to this report is a copy of the Woodlot Alternatives, Inc. final report entitled "A Plan for Developing New Hampshire's Statewide Trail System for ATV's and Trail Bikes".

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George M. Bald". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "G".

George M. Bald  
Commissioner

GMB/cjg

DEPARTMENT OF RESOURCES & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
 STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES - FISCAL YEAR 2003  
 BUREAU OF TRAILS GRANTS-IN-AID

	003 Grant-in-Aid Snowmobiles #2206	003 Grant-in-Aid Whedled #3104	004 OHRY Registration #2259	005 Trail Acquisition #3106	006 Trail Groom Equip Whedled #3105	006 Trail Groom Equip Snowmobile #6350	007 Transfer from Fish & Game #5923	009 Equipment Fund #7520
Balance Forward from FY 02	\$851,164.30		\$426,348.01			\$18,792.94	\$340,714.15	\$150,319.94
Income	\$1,356,389.00	\$206,982.00	\$754,866.02	\$23,000.00	\$98,747.00	\$315,013.00	\$667,372.97	\$245,229.00
Salary & Benefit Adj. Acct	-\$1,940.97		-\$6,682.96		-\$804.11		\$9,910.51	-\$482.47
Auctions								\$4,400.00
Bal Fwd for Encumbrances	\$6,191.05							\$44,836.77
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE</b>	\$2,211,803.38	\$206,982.00	\$1,154,531.07	\$23,000.00	\$97,942.89	\$333,805.94	\$1,017,997.63	\$444,303.24
Distribution	\$2,211,803.38	094	\$354,154.71	095	\$57,500.00	\$333,805.94	\$1,017,997.63	\$444,303.24
			091	093	\$40,442.89			
Expended	\$1,338,284.07	\$84,063.84	\$707,756.28	\$0.00	\$87,224.00	\$328,920.95	\$628,287.76	\$358,932.74
Year End Balance	\$873,519.31	\$122,918.16	\$446,774.79	\$23,000.00	\$10,718.89	\$4,884.99	\$389,709.87	\$85,370.50
Expenditures								
010			\$59,352.89				\$153,051.61	
020			\$4,560.36				\$11,767.45	
022			\$5,376.80				\$13,874.20	
026			\$6.98				\$18.02	
059			\$30,151.50				\$77,802.32	
060			\$39,247.87				\$101,274.41	
070			\$73.08				\$1,994.84	
090			\$104,056.37				\$268,504.91	
091	\$1,338,284.07		\$464,230.43					
092								\$358,932.74
093					\$41,247.00	\$328,920.95		
094		\$84,063.84						
095					\$45,977.00			
096								
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	\$1,338,284.07	\$84,063.84	\$707,756.28	\$0.00	\$87,224.00	\$328,920.95	\$628,287.76	\$358,932.74