

Guidelines for the Establishment of Snowmobile and ATV Access Routes

Title 12 §13106-A. subsection 5 G and §13157-A subsection 6 H allows the establishment of Snowmobile and ATV Access Routes. These routes may be established within the highway Right of Way within a built up portion of a municipality or unorganized or unincorporated township if the appropriate governmental unit has designated the public way as an access route.

Definitions:

Built Up or “compact” - means a section of the highway where structures are nearer than 200 feet apart for a distance of ¼ of a mile.

Appropriate Governmental Unit – Organization responsible for Summer maintenance of the travel way.

Requests:

The requests for an ATV and Snowmobile access route must be done as a written request by a Dept. of Conservation approved ATV club to the Department of Conservation, Off-Road Vehicle Division, of Parks and Lands 22 State House Station Augusta, ME 04333-0022 Phone: (207)-287-4958 FAX: (207)-287-8111.

The request for an ATV or Snowmobile access route must be accompanied by a written request by a municipality after a public hearing has been held by the municipal officers in the municipality in which the access is located.

Eligible locations:

Locations which are eligible to be considered for ATV and Snowmobile Access Routes are State and State Aid highways located outside of Urban Compact limits.

Criteria for Authorizing Access Routes for ATV's and Snowmobiles

1. What highway is the access route crossing?
 - Deny the application if the route will cross an Interstate highway or other controlled access highway.
2. Will the access route traverse a High Crash Location?
 - Determine the pattern of crashes if any and make determination whether the access route will have a negative impact. Deny the application if the access route is deemed to make the situation more hazardous to road or recreational users.
3. Are there wetlands to be traversed?

- If yes, contact MaineDEP and get their recommendation before proceeding any further.
4. What is the sight distance at the trail heads?
 - If sight distance is not met, deny the access route. ATV's and snowmobiles are allowed to access along our highways up to 500 yards without our permission, if the site does not have adequate sight distance, the traffic engineer should look at signing for the crossing and possibly provide additional text to the signs (e.g. Blind Curve) if the sight distance is not met and there are no other relocation options for trail head
 5. What is the length of the proposed access route?
 - If the access route is less than **500** yards, no action is required.
 6. Are there geometric issues on the roadway?
 - If there is not ample room to run off the shoulder area, does the roadway have horizontal and vertical curves that would make it unsafe for either the ATV/Snowmobile user or motorist? If unsafe, deny application
 7. If no room is available to run an ATV off of the roadway, then what is the existing shoulder width and surface type?
 - Width of shoulder should determine whether access is granted. 4 foot minimum width minimum. If the roadway has a narrow shoulder and the AADT is low and the speed differential between ATV user and vehicular use is minimal then engineering judgment should be used to determine whether permit is granted.
 - If the shoulders are paved and are wider than 4 feet, ATV's must use the shoulders.
 - If the shoulders are paved, but are less than 4 feet wide, ATV's must use the travel lanes on the road, provided posted speed doesn't create too big of a speed differential and the geometry is adequate.
 - If the shoulders are gravel, the ATV's must use the paved travel lanes. Travel on gravel shoulders next to the paved travel lanes is not authorized. Check geometry and speed differential in making determination.
 8. Snowmobiles and ATV operators must follow the rules of the road and all other rules pertaining to Snowmobile/ATV usage, including traveling in the direction of traffic. Snowmobiles and ATV shall travel in single file and travel at speeds of

not less than 15 mph and not greater than a speed that would be considered unsafe.

Posting:

MaineDOT will post approved routes identifying sections of roadway as an ATV or Snowmobile access route. Route will be delineated by highly visible signs identifying the beginning and ending of approved routes. Additional signs will be provided at intervals of 0.2 miles. All signs will be posted conspicuously and shall have reflectorized white lettering on a green background. (see below).

Enforcement:

Enforcement shall be upheld by State Police, county or local law enforcement having jurisdiction over that section of roadway.

Elimination:

MaineDOT reserves the right to eliminate any approved ATV or Snowmobile access routes as a result of safety concerns, change in trail head locations or at the request of the appropriate municipality, unorganized or organized township.



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Title 12 §13106-A. Operation of snowmobile
Subsection 5

G. Notwithstanding paragraphs A to F, a snowmobile may be operated on the extreme right of a public way within the built-up portion of a municipality or unorganized or unincorporated township if the appropriate governmental unit has designated the public way as a snowmobile-access route for the purpose of allowing snowmobiles access to places of business. A public way designated by an appropriate governmental unit as a snowmobile-access route must be posted conspicuously at regular intervals by that governmental unit with highly visible signs designating the snowmobile-access route. Before designating a public way as a snowmobile-access route, the appropriate governmental unit shall make appropriate determinations that snowmobile travel on the extreme right of the public way may be conducted safely and will not interfere with vehicular traffic on the public way. For purposes of this paragraph, "appropriate governmental unit" means the Department of Transportation, county commissioners or municipal officers within their respective jurisdictions. The jurisdiction of each appropriate governmental unit over public ways pursuant to this paragraph is the same as its jurisdiction over the passage of vehicles on public ways pursuant to Title 29-A, section 2395. Municipal or county law enforcement officials having jurisdiction have primary enforcement authority over any route established under this paragraph.

Title 12 §13157-A. Operation of ATVs
Subsection 6

H. Notwithstanding paragraphs A to G, an ATV may be operated on the extreme right of a public way or as directed by the appropriate governmental unit within the public way of a municipality or an unorganized or unincorporated township if the appropriate governmental unit has designated the public way as an ATV-access route. An ATV must travel in the same direction as motor vehicle traffic on a public way designated as an ATV-access route. A public way designated by an appropriate governmental unit as an ATV-access route must be posted conspicuously at regular intervals by that governmental unit with highly visible signs designating the ATV-access route. Before designating a public way as an ATV-access route, the appropriate governmental unit shall make appropriate determinations that ATV travel on the extreme right of the public way or as directed by the appropriate governmental unit within the public way may be conducted safely and will not interfere with vehicular traffic on the public way. For purposes of this paragraph, "appropriate governmental unit" means the Department of Transportation, county commissioners or municipal officers within their respective jurisdictions. The jurisdiction of each appropriate governmental unit over public ways pursuant to this paragraph is the same as its jurisdiction over the passage of vehicles on public ways pursuant to Title 29-A, section 2395. Municipal or county law enforcement officials having jurisdiction have primary enforcement authority over any route established under this paragraph.