

Outline of a Proposal for Town of Fletcher to Explore Off-Road All-Terrain Vehicles Policy

We, as residents of the Town of Fletcher, and stakeholders in the decision whether to open town roads to the use of off-road vehicles strongly recommend the Selectboard appoints a Study Group to research any and all potential positive and negative impacts stemming from the decision. In this document, we have outlined the Group's structure, scope of work, and deliverables by which the Selectboard will be able to make the most reasonable and well-informed decision. We propose the Study Group be created as follows:

1. Structure

- a. The Study Group shall be made up of 6 or 8 residents with an even number of proponents from each of the two positions.
- b. There shall be two co-chairs, one representing each position
- c. There shall be one selectboard member who will act as a purely neutral facilitator and liaison for the board.
- d. The Study Group shall be disbanded after reporting its findings in no less than 6 months-time.

2. Scope

- a. The Study Group shall evaluate all impacts of either maintaining the status quo or allowing off-road vehicles on town roads. Main areas of study should include;
 - i. Safety regarding all parties (operators, pedestrians, on-road vehicles, etc.)
 - ii. Enforcement
 - iii. Cost of all related operations (registration programs, enforcement, maintenance, etc.)
 - iv. Other consequences as discovered by the Group (eg. potential business income, non-compliance impacts, noise, erosion, property values, etc.)
- b. The Study Group shall seek input from the following organizations, entities, and stakeholders;
 - i. Vermont Law Enforcement, including;
 1. State Police, Game Wardens, Franklin County Sheriff, Town Constable, and Franklin County State's Attorney
 - ii. Vermont Department of Transportation
 - iii. Relevant transportation and insurance providers
 - iv. Other Vermont municipalities that have opened town roads to off-road vehicles. This shall include the following;
 1. Relevant municipal governing officials
 2. Residents of the municipalities representing both sides of the issue where possible. And;
 - v. Other Vermont municipalities that have repealed or rejected opening town roads to off-road vehicles, including;
 1. Relevant municipal governing officials,
 2. Residents of the municipalities representing both sides of the issue where possible.
- c. The Study Group shall present its findings at a Town-wide Informational Meeting, summarizing the results of the inquiries above.

3. Deliverable

- a. The Study Group shall deliver a report summarizing all positive and negative impacts of allowing off-road vehicles on town roads under the status quo and multiple levels of permission.

After delivering the report to the Selectboard, we recommend it be reviewed closely with the Town's legal counsel to discern which outcomes may be allowed under state statute and what the Town cannot directly legislate.

We hope this recommendation is adopted by the Selectboard. We see the option of a Study Group as a way to provide the best, most unbiased information possible to the Board while promoting the ideals of the democratic process through resident involvement and placing the least burden possible on the board, itself. The purpose of this proposal is simply to achieve the best outcome possible for all residents. By structuring the Study Group in this way, we intend to keep the fact-finding process as unbiased as possible, relieving some of the tension built up by this historically emotional policy.