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25 John Street, Suite 181  
Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, B5A 3H3

December 15, 2023

Municipality of Argyle  
5 J.E. Hatfield Court, P.O. Box 10  
Tusket, Nova Scotia, B0W 3M0

Dear Warden and Council Members

**Situation:** At the end of April 2023, the Yarmouth Rail Trail experienced the destruction and theft of 11 posts between the road intersections of Prospect Street to Pitman Road. On September 20, the Yarmouth Rail Trail experienced the destruction of bridge railing on the Argyle Head Bridge (over 100 feet long). Wooden bracing and the posts were cut and removed in one long piece on one side of the bridge. In November, additional posts were removed and taken. In total 48 posts have been removed at public road intersections between Lake Annis Road to Prospect Street. Each time destruction of property was reported to the RCMP.

**Background:** These barriers (posts) and bridge railings were in place to prevent vehicles, larger than 66 inches, to enter the trail/ cross bridges, to slow down users as they entered a public highway intersection or bridge and allow removal of posts to enable a wider opening for emergency vehicles and trail repair equipment. The trail width goal was determined by the Department Natural Resources Parks, Outreach & Service Delivery in the letter dated January 29, 2018. On June 28, 2023, the Association wrote Tory Rushton, Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables, a letter outlining the frustration we have been experiencing with vandals making the trail wider at their discretion cutting and stealing metal posts to maintain the 66-inch wide trail opening. On August 16, 2023, we received a very vague email from Mr. Rushton's office stating the department is working on with the Trail and OHV Officer of CCTH by establishing a working group to investigate the matter (log #2023-00940). We followed up with Cory Robar, Trail and Off-highway Vehicle Program Administration Officer, on October 16 requesting a progress report of the working group.

**Assessment:** We have yet to hear back officially from the working group. The Argyle and Yarmouth Municipalities, Town of Yarmouth and ATV Association have invested in our community's trail over many years. The Yarmouth County Trail Development Association members are frustrated with the lack of attention from both the provincial government (OHV) and local law enforcement bodies (DNRR and RCMP). As volunteers, we fundraise and manage the repair work of the trail, however the level of vandalism occurring goes way beyond a few missing stop signs or spray painting of concrete benches. With 48 barriers (posts) needing to be replaced, we are waiting to hear the results of the working group's investigation before we proceed with making a work plan.

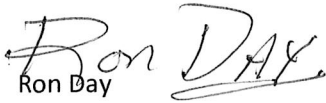
**Request: The Association needs help raising awareness of the trail issues in a constructive and productive manner. We need help furthering the agenda below:**

1. Re-evaluate the width opening based on current multi-user traffic and safety allowances.
2. Develop a standardized provincial set of multiple-use trail rules stating the opening width.
3. Communicate the multi-use trail rules to all interest groups and trail managers.
4. Enforce the trail opening width on all former rail corridors as decided by the province.

Yarmouth County Trail Development Association

If more information is required, please contact Yarmouth County Trail Development Association at the above address or by phone to Ron Day at (902) 761-3081 or email at [ronday1542@gmail.com](mailto:ronday1542@gmail.com) .

Sincerely,

  
Ron Day

Yarmouth County Trail Development Association President

Cc: Municipality of Yarmouth  
Town of Yarmouth  
Sou'Wes Nova ATV Association