

Summary of the House Committee on Agriculture’s meeting on H673.

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H673: “An act relating to Vermont’s outdoor recreation economy.”

- Introduced by Representative Mike Rice. Walk-through by Ellen Czajkowski from the Office of Legislative Counsel.

Three sections:

1. Vermont outdoor recreation impact study
 - a. Outdoor recreation accounts for 5% of Vermont’s economy. This places it 2nd in the nation percentage-wise.
 - b. Conducted by Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) with consultation from the Vermont Trails and Greenways Council (VTGC) and the Vermont Outdoor Business Alliance (VOBA).
 - c. The study will assess Vermont’s outdoor recreation economy.¹
 - i. State and county-level economic data.
 - ii. Revenues and costs of Vermont’s outdoor recreation economy.
 - iii. Opportunities and recommendations for future growth.
 - iv. \$200,000 to hire a consultant to conduct the required economic analysis.
2. One full time ‘program support specialist’ for Vermont Trails and Greenways Council.
 - a. VTGC: An independent non-profit that serves an advisory role for Vermont Department of Forest Parks and Recreation (FPR).
 - i. VTGC oversees, maintains, and regulates the [Vermont Trail System](#).²
 - b. Responsibilities of the position
 - i. Administer membership to VTGC.
 - ii. Manage meetings, activities, and budget of VTGC.
 - iii. Assess the needs of Vermont’s trail stewardship community.
 - iv. Manage technical assistance resources for VTGC members.
 - v. Execute the VTGC’s advisory role to the Agency of Natural Resources.
 - c. \$100,000 appropriation for the position.
3. Appropriation for best management practices.

¹ Concerns were raised that the study does not contain any sort of due date. It is likely any contract would include a due date.

² The Vermont Trails System is a statutorily created system of trails. It was created to help promote stewardship and management of the trails. Members can apply to be included within the System.

- a. The Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation and VTGC will hire a contractor to develop a “set of universal trail best management practices.”
- b. These best management practices will be adopted for the Vermont Trail System.
- c. \$50,000 appropriation for hiring the contractor.