



Landowner Advisory Committee  
[www.kingdomtrails.org](http://www.kingdomtrails.org)

February 14, 2024

Dear House Committee on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry,

The Kingdom Trail Association's Landowner Advisory Committee requests **your support in passing H.673, an Act relating to Vermont's Outdoor Recreation Economy**, proposing such initiatives as a statewide outdoor recreation economic impact study to understand better how impact is distributed across recreational activities and land ownership.

Kingdom Trail Association (KT) is a world-class trail system deeply intertwined with the local community. In 1994, Northeast Kingdom community members banded together to develop the multi-use nonprofit trail network that is KT. This year, KT will celebrate its 30th anniversary. KT's trails extend throughout the Caledonia County towns of Burke, Lyndon, and Kirby and the Essex Country town of East Haven, generating over \$10,000,000 in annual direct spending for the Northeast Kingdom region. Our land makes this economic impact possible, for which we do not receive compensation.

KT's Board of Directors has authorized its Landowner Advisory Committee to reach out to you on behalf of KT. We, the undersigned, are the members of KT's Landowner Advisory Committee. All of us are landowners who allow KT's trails to cross our properties. We represent the different geographic locations within the trail network, varying size properties, and land uses.

Our committee's primary role is to support KT in facilitating a better and more productive engagement with all 105 landowners and encouraging communication between KT and the landowners. We are an avenue that meaningfully connects with them and offers them a voice in KT's activities, providing suggestions and advice to the KT Board of Directors, a forum for sharing feedback and concerns, and a space for KT to address questions. In short, we speak for the 105 landowners who generously, and without compensation, make their properties available for the trails that make KT and the positive economic impact possible.

We are not alone. Currently, over 70% of Vermont's public-access trails are on private land and dependent on the benevolence of private landowners. With increased demand on our trail assets and a sharp increase in second homeownership across Vermont, non-profit trail stewardship organizations, like KT, face more and more challenges in retaining public access to crucial trail corridors. We need your help.

During the upcoming 2024 session, as an active member of the VTGC, Kingdom Trails will be working to advance legislation focused on optimizing the benefits of outdoor recreation in Vermont. After the July 2023 floods, we understand economic vitality and climate resiliency will be at the top of every legislator's priority list. We also know firsthand the economic, public health, and conservation benefits of communities investing in outdoor recreation.



**Landowner Advisory Committee**  
[www.kingdomtrails.org](http://www.kingdomtrails.org)

We need your support for this legislation that includes a comprehensive economic impact study of how Vermont benefits from outdoor recreation, both on the state and community levels. This study will result in concrete recommendations on many aspects of outdoor recreation, including how we, as a state, invest in trail maintenance and stewardship. This question of how we develop an appropriate mechanism to recognize private landowners will be a critical component of how we retain public access to Vermont's trail system. Please support Kingdom Trails and their private landowners by supporting this legislation.

Please do not hesitate to reach out, as we are always happy to share more. We are incredibly grateful for your steadfast service to our region and thank you for your consideration, support, and listening.

Doug Clarner, Burke

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Doug Clarner', on a light-colored background.

Chair, Landowner Advisory Committee

**Landowner Advisory Committee Members**

Tom Brodrick, Burke

Jim Crone, Lyndonville

Jon Falabella, East Haven

Georgia Gould, Burke

Michael Greenblatt, Lyndonville

Dave Kennedy, Burke

Jaime Lipka, Burke

Blake Nuzzo, Burke

Cody Sayers, Burke

Marti Walther, Burke