



Outdoor Recreation Day at the Statehouse

H. Environment Committee Testimony

February 5, 2026

9:00 am - 10:00 am, Ethan Allen Room, Statehouse

Good morning, I'm Sandy Enman, co-owner of the Sleepy Hollow Inn, a Ski & Bike Center in Huntington, which our family purchased in 1999. Today, we offer 32 km of cross country skiing in winter, and mountain biking and hiking in the summer. The lodge has 8 guest rooms and weddings are held in our Round Barn. The business is truly a family affair with my son as General Manager, and husband as trail groomer, and daughter also assists with operations. We employ over 20 people, manage over 800 acres of land and annually serve over 15,000 skiers, mountain bikers and wedding guests.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our experience as an outdoor and hospitality business committed to quality visitor experiences, access to year round recreation, and land management for natural resource values.

Which is why we appreciate the work happening by the State and many partners on the Vermont Conservation Plan in crafting the current framework that balances community resilience and biodiversity.

Private forest landowners and outdoor businesses like ours have important roles to play in protecting natural areas and connectivity while ensuring that recreation access provides public education and economic vitality. Especially with the impacts of climate events in recent years, we know that building and maintaining trail networks with stewardship practices and resilience in mind is a necessity.

We believe that outdoor recreation is essential to the success of many of the Plan's pathways and actions - whether it leads to partnerships that conserve biodiversity in specific places as outlined in objective one OR to investments and innovations that advance stewardship and community resilience in objective three.

Since 2023, we've been involved in a mutually beneficial partnership with The Nature Conservancy, and have enrolled most of our land in the Family Forest Carbon Program. This program allows Sleepy Hollow to be paid for the carbon we sequester in our forests over time. The payments total \$142,000 over a 20 year period. This partnership has been fantastic for Sleepy Hollow, as it aligns with and strengthens our conservation and environmental goals. For instance, with the financial help of the FFCP, we were able to mostly retire our diesel PB100 grooming machine, and purchase a new fully electric Prinoth grooming machine. We're also able to still harvest some timber and firewood from the property, while maintaining access to the public for skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, and mountain biking.

Without the ski industry in Vermont, our economy would suffer greatly. We hope our business story and this partnership serves as a model for how outdoor recreation can be a key driver in achieving the State's conservation goals while bolstering Vermont's local economies and community vitality. Thank you for your time!