

# Bike-Walk Alliance Of NH

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**BIKE-WALK  
ALLIANCE**  
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

## The State of E-Bike Legislation

Bike Walk Alliance of NH



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# HELP MAKE ROADS SAFER FOR BIKING & WALKING!

Join us to make NH better for biking and walking by improving Policy, Infrastructure and Education. Our efforts are supported by generous biking/walking enthusiasts, bike shops, businesses and organizations. We appreciate your support! #supportBWANH

[DONATE TODAY!](#)



## Policy

Policy is what guides the actions, activities, and laws of many of our state and local agencies.

Policy sets the tone, reflects our culture.

Creating and passing, policies and legislation that improve biking & walking in NH are priorities for BWANH.

[JOIN US!](#)



## Infrastructure

Want to get involved with a road, trail, or sidewalk project where you live, work or play?

Tired of Roadways that only accommodate motor vehicles? Contact us to find out how you can support safer and more biking & walking infrastructure changes in your NH community.

[LEARN HOW!](#)



## Education

Whether it's learning how to bike or how to fix a bike, we will guide you in the right direction. The Bike-Walk Alliance of New Hampshire provides on road and on trail education for youth and adults alike. Education is key to BWANH.

[LEARN MORE!](#)



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# BIKE-WALK ALLIANCE OF NH POLICY

The Bike-Walk Alliance of NH educates and advocates to improve conditions for walking and biking statewide.

**BEING ABLE TO WALK AND BIKE TO DESTINATIONS OF YOUR CHOICE  
DOESN'T HAPPEN WITHOUT THESE MODES OF TRAVEL BECOMING A  
PRIORITY AT THE LOCAL, REGIONAL AND STATE LEVEL.**

*Safely!*

# WHO WE ARE

## AMANDA GOURGUE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**Amanda** is an accomplished professional with extensive experience driving results for nonprofits. She breaks through barriers and achieves milestones like a runner crossing the finish line, thriving on challenges and exploring new possibilities. In addition to her professional achievements, Amanda was elected and served as a State Representative to the New Hampshire House of Representatives, where she advocated for her community. Her passion for healthy living and outdoor recreation is reflected in her personal life; she enjoys exploring new trails, participating in marathons, and going for leisurely jogs. Running has instilled in her a sense of discipline, resilience, and perseverance, qualities she brings to her role as the Executive Director of BWANH.

# WHO WE ARE

## DAVE TOPHAM, FOUNDER AND BOARD MEMBER



**Dave** is the founder of BWANH (2006) and co-founder of the Granite State Wheelmen bicycling club. Dave has been actively involved in group cycling and bicycling education since 1971. He lives in Salem, NH and is currently a volunteer Board member for seven NH bike-ped/rail trail organizations. Dave uses his background in computer systems to help keep the wheels rolling and the feet walking all over NH! He is one of the first League of American Bicyclists Master Certified Instructors in the country.

# Definition: Vulnerable Road Uers (VRUs)

Legitimately on the road but NOT protected by a metal cage like car passengers

- pedestrians 

- bicyclists 

- wheelchair users 

- equestrians 

- highway workers 

- public safety officials 

- medical first responders 

- motorcyclists 

# Definition: Vulnerable Road Uers (VRUs)

Legitimately on the road but NOT protected by a metal cage like car passengers

- scooters



- skateboards



- skaters



- *CHILDREN*

**SLOW**



**CHILDREN  
AT PLAY**



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# LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS

History

- **2009** - BWANH instrumental in 3-ft-min-to-pass law
- **2014** - BWANH supports Vulnerable Road User bill to educate public about dangers faced by road users outside of motor vehicles: pedestrians, bicyclists, wheelchair users, equestrians, highway workers, public safety officials, medical first responders, motorcyclists etc.
- **2015** - Rail Trail Study Bill (SB 80) established a committee which suggested an economic impact analysis of trail usage be included in the state's trails plan, including goals & metrics. 11 mtngs. in 18 mos. produced 40 pg. report.



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# LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS

History

- **2017** - BWANH led crafting of HB 1731, to improve bicycle safety statewide, updating car-centric language in several RSAs, also:
  - Clarifying that a driver may cross a double yellow line when safe so as to pass a cyclist at the required 3 foot or more
  - Clarified that a cyclist may signal a right turn using their right arm and hand
  - Clarified that a cyclist may use a flashing headlight, a HUGE boost for visibility & awareness.
  - This bill passed ***unanimously*** and educated several state agencies about the importance of clearer laws to protect bicyclists.



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# LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS

History

- **2018-2019**

- Rail Trail Plan Bill - Tourism and local economies have thrived nationally once rail trails became publicly available. NH's nearly 300 miles of abandoned rails provide many opportunities. Major projects are now underway all around the state. This bill established an Advisory Committee to update a 2005 plan including:
  - NH rail trail inventory, ownership, development and maintenance costs
  - positive economic impact that rail trails can bring to New Hampshire.
  - Advisory Committee included:
    - NH Travel and Tourism Bureau
    - Trails Bureau
    - NH Rail Trails Coalition



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# LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS

Today

- FOCUS is on Slowing traffic where motor vehicles share the road with VRUs
- Support Senator Ricciardi's LSR (which we initiated) to lower minimum speed limit that local authorities can legally set on local roads. **25mph -> 20mph**
  - *Related:* Work with partners to develop guidance regarding an engineering or traffic investigation
  - *Related:* Possibly follow up with legislation to clear up confusion about definitions of districts
- Support Senator Long's LSR 3124 - Supporting "Stop Super Speeders" legislation fostered by Families for Safe Streets, requiring extreme reckless offenders to install "intelligent speed assistance" devices in order to drive.
- Founded by Amy Cohen of New York City whose son Sammy was killed ten years ago by a speeding driver while trying to retrieve a soccer ball.

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# E-Bike Landscape



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# E-Bike Landscape

- Can you pick out the legal E-Bike?



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# E-Bike Landscape

- Personal Electric Vehicles (PEVs) have **EXPLODED!**



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# E-Bike Landscape

- Personal Electric Vehicles (PEVs) have **EXPLODED!**
- Many are sold as "E-Bikes" - but many are **NOT!**
- Today it's a wild-west rodeo
  - Many shapes & sizes & power-levels of vehicles
  - Many are one click away on Amazon
  - Riders take them many places - streets, roads, trails, paths
- Some are clearly dangerous. *Which are legal and which are **NOT**?*
- Law enforcement is in search of training on PEV categories & legalities
- *How is a responsible Parent/Consumer to know?*



A person wearing a bright green jacket and a pink helmet is riding an e-bike on a winding road. The road is surrounded by trees with autumn foliage in shades of yellow, orange, and red. The text "BWANH" is overlaid in white on the left side of the image.

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# E-Bike Landscape

- **E-Bikes defined in Federal Law since 2002**
  - Regulated as human-powered bicycles under Consumer Product Safety Act
  - Must comply with bicycle safety standards
  - Are not "motor vehicles" & not subject to NHTSA vehicle standards
  - Designed, manufactured & tested like traditional bicycles

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# E-Bike Landscape

- **Classes of E-Bike**

- Defined in N.H. Revised Statute §259:27-a

- **Classes 1-3:** a *pedaled* vehicle w/ *power < 750 watts* (nominally 1 horsepower)

- **Class 1:** pedal-assist, no throttle, assistance stops at 20 mph

- **Class 2:** throttle provides power w/o pedaling, power stops at 20 mph

- **Class 3:** pedal-assist, no throttle, assistance stops at 28 mph

- **Out-of-Class:** power > 750 watts **OR** throttle power past 20 mph **OR** pedal-assistance past 28 mph ... **ANYTHING ELSE**

- Devised by PeopleForBikes; Legally recognized in 41 states

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# E-Bike Landscape

- Summary - New Hampshire E-Bike Laws (as of Oct 1 2025) *[slide 1 of 2]*
- **3-Class framework:** Class 1/2/3 defined by state law; e-bikes afforded bicycle rights/duties (RSA 259:6; RSA 265:144-a I).
- **License/registration/insurance:** Not required for e-bikes ([RSA 265:144-a II](#)).
- **Paths:** Class 1/2 allowed on bicycle or multi-use paths unless a jurisdiction prohibits; Class 3 not allowed unless within/adjacent to a roadway or expressly permitted (RSA 265:144-a VII(a)–(b)). Town can overrule.
- **Natural-surface non-motorized trails:** Path rules don't apply; agencies may regulate (RSA 265:144-a VIII). Town can overrule.

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# E-Bike Landscape

- Summary - New Hampshire E-Bike Laws (as of Oct 1 2025) *[slide 2 of 2]*
- **State Parks (DNCR): Class 1–2** e-bikes allowed on DNCR-managed trails where bikes are allowed; DNCR recommends  $\leq 20$  mph. [DNCR Biking](#)
- **U.S. Forest Service:** E-bikes are treated as **motor vehicles**; allowed on motorized roads/trails unless otherwise designated. [USFS e-bike guidance](#)
- **Minimum age (Class 3): 16+**; passengers allowed if designed for them ([RSA 265:144-a IX](#)).
- **Helmets (Class 3):** Required for riders/passengers under **18** ([RSA 265:144-a X](#)).
- **Speedometer:** Required for Class 3 only.

A person wearing a bright green jacket and a pink helmet is riding an e-bike on a winding asphalt road. The road is surrounded by trees with vibrant autumn foliage in shades of yellow, orange, and red. The text "BWANH" is overlaid in white on the left side of the image.

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# E-Bike Landscape

- **E-Bike Legislation in NH, 2018-2019**
  - Established current NH E-Bike law
  - E-Bike Bill - BWANH, w/ help from People For Bikes, wrote & initiated NH's first bill clarifying the definition of e-bikes. (Section 265:144-a) This bill also clarified rules on e-bike usage on road, trails, etc. Bill passed, becoming effective in Aug 2019. Public education efforts continue.

A person wearing a bright green jacket and a pink helmet is riding an e-bike on a winding asphalt road. The road is surrounded by trees with vibrant autumn foliage in shades of yellow, orange, and red. The scene is captured from a slightly elevated perspective, showing the curve of the road and the surrounding landscape.

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# E-Bike Landscape

- **E-Bike Legislation in NH, 2024**

- Attempt to update E-Bike Bill - in 2024, NH HB 1445 tried to add further clarification but was deemed "Inexpedient to Legislate."
- Summary (had it passed):
  - Limited path & trail use to E-Bikes incapable of exceeding 15 mph.
  - Added requirements for head & tail & brake lights
  - Added requirement for speedometer for all classes
  - Added minimum operator age of 16 yrs for all classes
  - Restricted all E-Bikes from sidewalks
  - Define Electric Scooters & Unicycles, restricted them from sidewalks, paths, trails
  - Required DoS & DMV to develop registration procedures

A person wearing a bright green jacket and a pink helmet is riding an e-bike on a winding asphalt road. The road is surrounded by trees with vibrant autumn foliage in shades of yellow, orange, and red. The scene is captured from a slightly elevated perspective, showing the curve of the road and the surrounding landscape.

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# E-Bike Landscape

- **E-Bike Legislation in NH, FUTURE**
  - Attempt to update E-Bike Bill once, ITL.
  - Many states are reacting to the proliferation of so-called "e-bikes" by passing restrictive laws.
  - NH Law Enforcement looking for training about how best to handle "e-bike" proliferation.
  - These all suggest that further E-Bike legislation is needed here soon.

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# E-Bike Landscape

- Questions?
- Discussion
- Feedback