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Haines Borough Assembly
P.O. Box 1209
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Ref: Ordinance 14-02-368 ATV use on streets and highways within the borough and allowing snow machines' on highway shoulders within the borough.

Dear Assembly;

Having lived throughout most of the state since coming to Alaska in 1966, I have personally witnessed and participated in the use of both ATV's and snow machines' on the community roads and highways in rural Alaska.

They are a very common mode of transportation and an accepted part of Alaska's rural culture.

Haines is rural and should be viewed and function in that light.

Just recently we returned from 18 months in Barrow, a community of 5,000. ATV's and snow machines have all of the rights, privileges and responsibilities of automobiles. Drivers are held accountable just as one in an automobile. Automobile drivers mix with the ATV's and snow machines in normal traffic conditions.

Children under 13 wear helmets as required by law and they follow all of the same traffic laws as the automobiles including the use of hand signals for turning. There is no age limit on drivers of either ATV's or snow machines.

It is amazing to watch young children functioning within that responsibility realm and functioning well. The entire community supports this portion of the culture and participates with it.

The only negative that I experienced was the sound of the snow machines in the late night. That was then remedied by the city setting in place an ordinance that prohibited snow machine traffic in residential areas after a certain time in the evening. With that ordinance the issue was resolved.

Though it may seem shocking to some to think that ATV and snow machine drivers can be a responsible and a positive influence in a community, the evidence supports that youth given responsibility early and required accountability along with it do much better in their maturation process.

Our culture basically states that youth are relatively non-functional until they have a drivers license.

I have watched as the drivers of these type of vehicles feel much more accepted, responsible and involved in the community lifestyle.

We support the use of ATV's and snow machines as proposed.

Respectfully;

Steve Virg-In

Sarah T. Virg-In