

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**2024 Annual Report on
ATV Law Enforcement Grant Program
Presented to the 132nd Legislature Joint Standing
Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife**



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Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

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History:

The **ATV Enforcement Grant and Aid Program** was established through Title 12 §10322 during the 121st Maine State Legislature in 2003. Title 12 §10324 requires that the grant committee shall submit an annual report by January 15th detailing expenditures made from grant revenues and provide a detailed summary of ATV enforcement activities supported by the grant as well as any equipment or materials that it has accepted or awarded.

Executive Summary

The Maine ATV Grant Program is funded through a portion of Maine Gas tax revenues and last year generated \$151,623.62. The program received 47 grant applications this year and approved \$157,750 in grants, utilizing all funds that were available, including \$6,126.38 that had been rolled over from the previous year.

Overview

2024 Grant Distributions

- **47** grant applications were received (26 in the spring and 21 in the fall), requesting a total of: **\$491,120.16**
- The program generated **\$151,623.00** in FY24 and a little over \$6000.00 in unused funds were carried over from the previous year.
- The ATV Law Enforcement Grant Committee approved **\$157,750.00** for 2024 (the total available monies).

Grant Results

Through the grant funding, participating law enforcement agencies:

- **1,900** ATV focused patrol hours were conducted;
- **4,095** ATVs were checked;
- **232** citations were issued;
- **414** warnings were issued; and
- **453** “other” contacts were made, which includes interactions with individuals engaged in other outdoor recreational activities including hikers, fishermen, boaters, bikers, and others enjoying outdoor pursuits.

Funding

The program is funded by a portion of Maine’s gasoline tax revenues as specified in Title 36 Section 2903-D. Specifically, **0.4593%** of total gasoline tax revenues are allocated to ATV-related initiatives. Of this amount, **16.60%** is designated for the ATV Enforcement Grant and Aid Program as established in Title 12, Section 10322. These funds are deposited into a designated gas tax revenue account, from which they are allocated for use. The ATV Grant Review Committee awards the funds annually to qualifying law enforcement agencies within Maine. Any unused funds can be rolled over and utilized the following year.

Background:

The grants provided through this program aim to support, maintain, improve, and expand ATV enforcement activities and offer training for state, county, and municipal law enforcement officers. Funding is available for three types of projects:

1. **General ATV enforcement**
2. **Multi-jurisdictional enforcement**
3. **Training and equipment**

A key goal of the program is to involve the Warden Service in educating law enforcement agencies that do not typically handle ATV enforcement. These agencies then use the grants to address ATV-related conflicts, investigate crashes, educate the public on ATV laws, and conduct general enforcement activities.

The **ATV Enforcement Grant Review Committee** is responsible for reviewing, approving, and administering grants for projects that align with the criteria established by law:

- **40%** for general ATV enforcement
- **50%** for multi-jurisdictional high-problem area enforcement
- **10%** for law enforcement ATV training and equipment

Committee Structure and Changes

The Committee consists of **nine members**, including:

- **Three ex officio members or their designees:**
 1. The Game Warden Colonel
 2. The Chief of the Maine State Police
 3. The Director of the Forest Protection Unit, Maine Forest Service (within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry)
- **Six members appointed by the Commissioner:**
 1. One member from a statewide association of sheriffs
 2. Four members from a statewide association of police chiefs, representing northern, southern, eastern, and central Maine
 3. One member representing the Maine Criminal Justice Academy

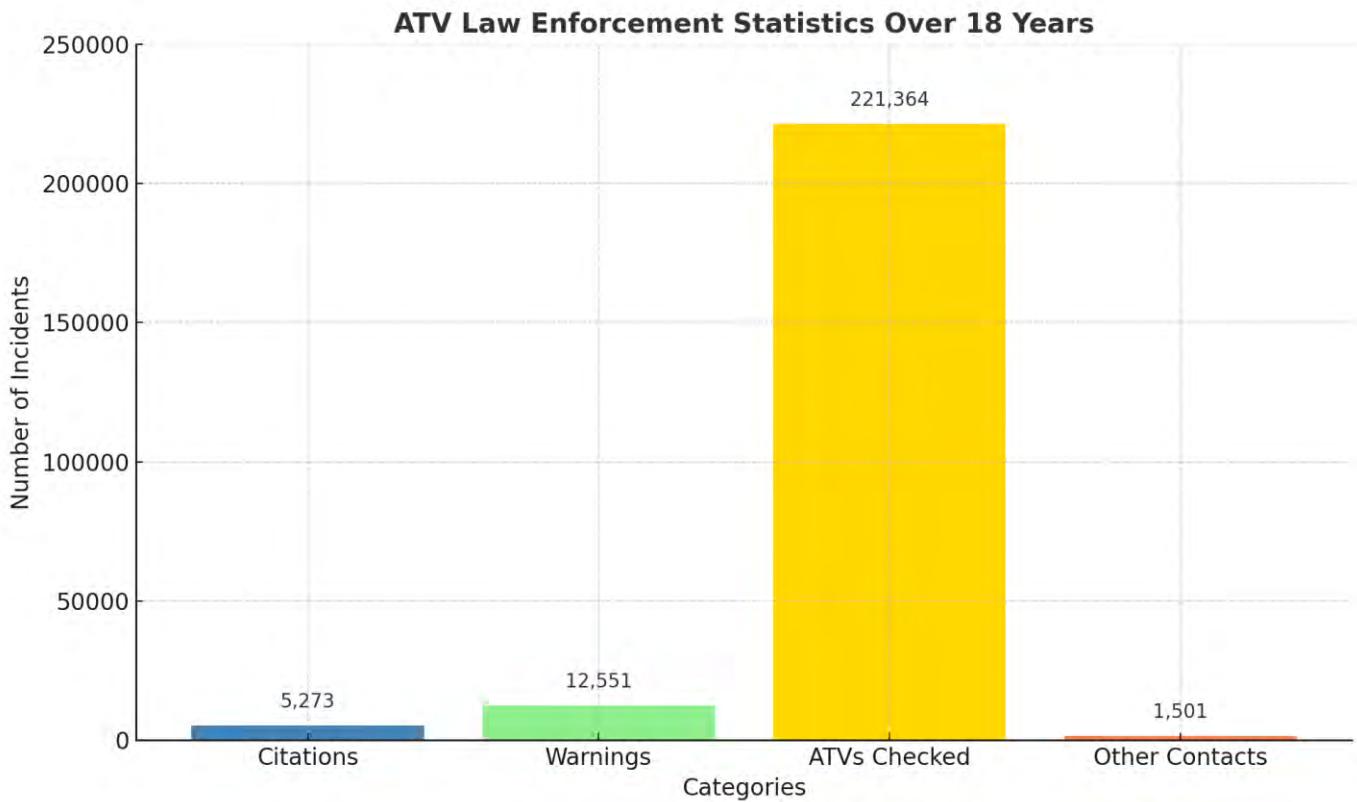
The composition of the ATV Enforcement Grant Review Committee has experienced significant changes recently due to retirements, term limits, and resignations. In 2025, the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife will prioritize filling these vacancies.

Program Administration

To minimize administrative expenses, the Committee holds virtual meetings whenever possible. This year, the Committee appointed a full-time game warden to oversee the program and serve as the ATV Grant Coordinator. This approach ensures consistent program implementation and accountability while avoiding the need to use grant funding for a contract position.

Historical Summary (2006–2025):

- Total Requested Grant Funds:** Since spring 2006, law enforcement agencies have collectively requested \$8,969,293.68 in funding from this program.
- Total Available Grant Funds:** The program has generated \$3,005,369.17 available to award from ATV Gas Tax revenues over this 18-year period, averaging \$166,964.95 per year.
- Declining Annual Funding:** In recent years, the average yearly funding has decreased to \$147,000 over the past five years. This reduction is largely attributed to rising fuel prices, which result in less travel and consequently lower contributions to the ATV Gas Tax fund.



This bar graph depicts the ATV law enforcement statistics over the past 18 years, showing the contributions of the grant funding. The data highlights the number of citations, warnings, ATVs checked, and other types of contacts. It should be noted that other contacts were not being documented until 2022.