



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



KEITH CREAUGH
DIRECTOR

SUBMITTED: October 12, 2015

MEMORANDUM TO THE DIRECTOR

Information: Natural Resources Commission

Subject: Orders to Regulate Use of the Soo to Raco Railroad Grade, Chippewa County
Land Use Order of the Director Amendment No. 5 of 2015
FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Authority:

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, authorizes the Director to issue orders to implement land use rules.

Discussion and Background:

The Department recommends allowing operation of off-road vehicles (ORVs) less than 65 inches in width on approximately 13.3 miles of the Soo to Raco railroad grade. This change would reclassify the snowmobile trail as a designated route as defined by R299.921 (d)(V), which would, expand the allowable ORV size when the route is properly signed. The proposed order would restrict the route to wheeled motor vehicles less than 65 inches in width. This restricted route would provide connectivity with county roads and U.S. Forest Service roads that are open to ORV use. This change is an important step in establishing a proposed ORV route to connect St. Ignace to Sault Ste. Marie.

Currently, because the Soo to Raco railroad grade is classified as a snowmobile trail, the order only permits motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles that are 50 inches or less to operate on the grade of the Soo to Raco trail, but the trail width can safely accommodate passage of two larger vehicles less than 65 inches in width. Increasing the size limitation to less than 65 inches will allow the newly popular side-by-side ORVs to legally operate on the grade, expanding recreational options for the ORV community.

Side-by-side ORVs are becoming more popular as practical recreation vehicles that meet the needs of the elderly and disabled individuals. Consumer trends indicate that side-by-side ORVs may soon be more popular than the smaller 4-wheelers, with growth of approximately 15 percent this year. The Department is attempting to accommodate the increased use of side-by-side ORVs because of this recreation industry trend.

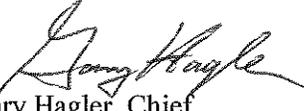
This order is supported by Superior Township, the Off-Road Vehicle Advisory Workgroup, Chippewa Sportsmen's Off-Road Vehicle Association, and individual residents. This order is also supported by Fisheries Division, Forest Resources Division, Law Enforcement Division, and Wildlife Division.

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Orders to Regulate Use of the Soo to Raco Railroad Grade, Chippewa County
Land Use Order of the Director Amendment No. 5 of 2015

Recommendation: This order is being submitted for information and consideration. This item appeared on the Department's October, 2015 calendar and may be eligible for approval on December 10, 2015.

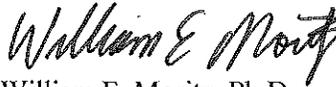

Ronald A. Olson, Chief
Parks and Recreation Division


Gary Hagler, Chief
Law Enforcement Division


William O'Neill, Chief
Forest Resources Division


Russ Mason, Ph. D., Chief
Wildlife Division


James Dexter, Chief
Fisheries Division


William E. Moritz, Ph.D
Natural Resources Deputy

LAND USE ORDERS OF THE DIRECTOR

Amendment No. 5 of 2015

By authority conferred on the Director of the Department of Natural Resources by Section 504 of the Natural Resources Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.504, and in accordance with R 299.921 to R 299.933, the Director of the Department of Natural Resources orders the following:

4.14 Certain state-owned lands, Chippewa county, entry, camping, vehicle use, prohibited conduct.

Order 4.14 A person shall not do any of the following upon the described state-owned lands, Chippewa County:

(1) A person shall not enter upon the state-owned lands of lot 5 within the SW¼ of section 32, T51N R5W, Chippewa County, between April 1 and June 15.

(2) A person shall not operate a motorized vehicle upon the state-owned lands south of Farm Truck road within sections 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14, and 15, T49N R7W, west of Farm Truck road within section 13, T49N R7W, west of highway M-123 within sections 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23, T49N R7W, north of highway M-123 and west of Farm Truck road within section 24, T49N R7W, within the NW¼ of section 29, and within the N½ of section 30, T49N R7W.

(3) A person shall not operate a **wheeled** motorized vehicle **which is 65 inches or greater in width** ~~except motorcycles, ATVs and snowmobiles~~ upon the Soo to Raco designated route located in sections 10, 11, 15, 21, 29, 31 and 32, T47N R1W, section 36, T47N R2W, sections 1, 2, 3 and 4, T46N R2W, and sections 11, 12, 14, 15, 16 and 17, T46N R3W.

(4) A person shall not operate a wheeled motorized vehicle within sections 13, 23, and 24, T44N R1E, Chippewa county, an area known as the Munuscong refuge, commencing easterly from the gate at the approximate section line between sections 13 and 14, at the east end of the campground road along the south bank of the Munuscong river, and southerly from the gate on the approximate section line between sections 14 and 15 south side of 21 Mile road, one mile east of Riverside drive.

(5) A person shall not operate a wheeled motorized vehicle within sections 13, 23, and 24, T44N R1E, Chippewa County, as posted.

(6) A person shall not operate a motorized vehicle on the existing trail, located on state-owned land, along the section line between sections 8 and 17 and sections 16 and 9, then northward through sections 9 and 8 and westward through sections 5 and 6, T44N R1E, except for department management purposes.

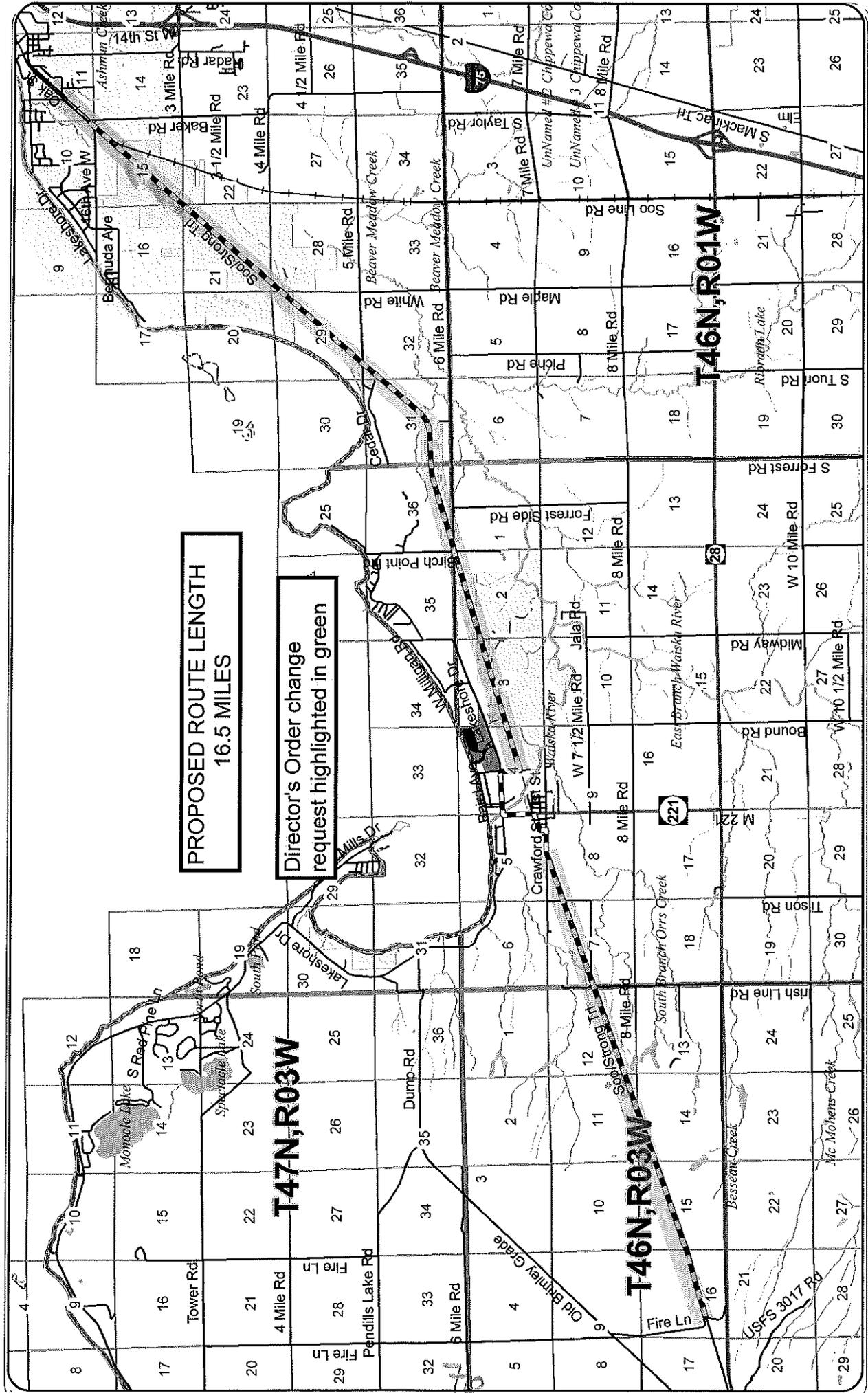
(7) A person shall not camp, build fires or leave unattended motorized vehicles or moored boats on state-owned property known as Raber dock within section 28, T43N, R3E, Chippewa County.

This amended order shall be posted on or after the 11th day of December, 2015.

Issued on this 10th day of December, 2015.

Keith Creagh
Director

Proposed Soo - Raco ORV Route



**PROPOSED ROUTE LENGTH
16.5 MILES**

**Director's Order change
request highlighted in green**

Legend

- Proposed Soo to Raco ORV Route
- State Forest Land
- State Parks



Date: 04/03/2014
Produced By: Bob Katan



