



# OFF-ROAD VEHICLE ADVISORY WORKGROUP (ORVAW)

## Meeting Minutes

Virtual TEAMS Meeting  
Date: November 2, 2023  
1 - 3 p.m.

### **Welcome – Roll Call**

#### PRESENT FOR THE OFF-ROAD VEHICLE ADVISORY WORKGROUP:

- James Maike, Chair
- Keith Lynch, Vice Chair
- James Hunt
- Bob Meyers
- Mike Maves (absent)
- Jarrod Biebel
- Trevor Hoffer

#### PRESENT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DNR) STAFF

Tim Novak, Scott Slavin, Jeff Kakuk, Rob Katona, Ron Yesney, Blake Gingrich, Jessica Holley-Roehrs, Andrea Stay, Peter Costa, Paige Perry

### **Meeting minutes**

#### ACTION ITEMS

Meeting called to order at 1:03 p.m.

#### Roll Call

Motion was made by Keith Lynch to approve the August 9, 2023 minutes, Jarrod Biebel seconded, with all in favor. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Bob Meyers to approve the November 2 agenda, seconded by Trevor Hoffer, with all in favor. Motion carried.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

### **Jeremy Valley**

Reintroduce Michigan Motorized Recreational Council (MMRC) which has been around for about 20 years. The council is comprised of representatives from major ORV clubs and organizations in Michigan with a purpose to improve ORV related items. The council would like to share that they are offering assistance to other clubs and organizations and to the Department (DNR).

### **Paul Mulder**

Paul expressed a need to order 24" stop signs this fall, noting they are in shortage.

## BUSINESS ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

### **NEW TRAIL PROCESS**

Greg Kinser, DNR

The DNR new trail development process starts with a conversation with the regional trail specialist. Next the trail will be mapped, identifying any private lands or potential issues. From there the trail proposer and the local DNR contacts will complete a trail proposal form, which will be submitted internally for various DNR divisions to review and approve. Depending on the complexity of the trail proposal, this process can sometimes be lengthy and costly.

### **UPPER PENINSULA M-ROAD APPROVALS/MICHIGAN DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION (MDOT)**

Rob Katona, DNR

Rob shared an overview of the process off-road connector routes, utilizing M-roads (see attached documents). Some of the steps Rob outlined are below.

- Contact trails specialist in the area.
- Trails specialist will contact MDOT and local county.
- Add item to agenda at the local unit government council meeting.
- Forms need to be completed and submitted to local government agencies.
- Stakeholders need to be identified and notified.
- Circle back to regional trail specialist then submit forms and maps to MDOT.
- MDOT has 60 days to reply.

## **LAKE COUNTY ORV SKILLS PARK**

## Bob Meyers

Lake County received some trust fund money to help establish this ORV skills park. The park will be a semi-controlled environment to allow new and current users to build skills. One section will be for beginners, you then progress into an intermediate trail environment, and finally proceeding to an advance area. The park offers a generous size parking lot to accommodate trucks and trailers. Additionally, DNR ORV certification classes will be offered at this facility. The grand opening is projected Spring of 2024, more details will be release through Lake County.

## **TRAILS ADVISORY BOARD SUMMIT MEETING SUMMARY**

Tim Novak, DNR

A meeting survey has been sent to all trail advisory board members. Trails staff will appreciate if everyone that attended complete the survey.

## UPDATES

### **USFS UPDATE**

Connor Landeck, USFS

### **ALPHA SYSTEM EXPANSION FOLLOW-UP**

Ron Yesney, DNR

Currently, the upper peninsula is using an alpha system to identify and sign ORV trails. There has been interest in expanding this same alpha system to the lower peninsula ORV trails. The snowmobile trails follow a numerical system, this expansion will differentiate ORV trails from snowmobile trails and make them easier to identify and follow for trail users. The DNR is asking ORVAW for their support in moving forward.

### **MOTION**

Motion was made by Jim Maike, seconded by Bob Meyers, with the majority in support. Recommending the DNR to continue the same trail identification from the upper peninsula to the lower peninsula for ORV's.

### **ORVAW Board Members Vote**

Keith Lynch – In support

Jim Maike – In support

James Hunt – In support

Bob Meyers – In support

Mike Maves – absent

Jarrold Biebel – In support

Trevor Hoffer – In support

## **ORV EQUIPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE**

Thomas Dunn

The ORV Equipment Subcommittee has met several times and met with the Departments legislative, legal, and financial departments. The committee has concluded that under the P.A. 451Section 324-.215 off-road (ORV) trail improvement funds is legally and legislatively able to purchase equipment with these funds. The committee recommends that ORVAW forms a new subcommittee to investigate and understand the availability of the funds to purchase equipment within the parameters of the program as well as the need for the equipment. We also recommend surveying the stakeholders for the actual need of the equipment to perform their duties and we further recommend that the Department provides personnel in the trail fund and financial area to be part of the committee as well as stakeholders with strong financial equipment backgrounds.

## **2024 MEETING DATES**

Coming Soon

## **ROUND ROBIN/CLOSING**

Bob Meyers has been receiving a few complaints regarding lack of knowledge. Bob would like Michael Hearn, DNR LED, to provide reports of activity by regions (# of stops, tickets, complaints) to gauge what is happening all over the State. Lastly, the ORV officer bill has passed Senate and will be moving on to the Governor.

Jarrold Biebel ran through some new passages of the laws, one being the new dedicated season starting Dec. 1 to March 31. Also, there was a slight increase in license fees.

Trevor Hoffer would like to work on establishing new trails in the U.P.

Jim Maike created the Lake County ORV Skills Park with his drone, here is the link to the video.

[https://youtu.be/w6Y\\_6AJlKkc?si=7Qe8-pksWNMHC9lo](https://youtu.be/w6Y_6AJlKkc?si=7Qe8-pksWNMHC9lo)

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

## **PROCESS FOR REQUESTING OFF-ROAD VEHICLE (ORV) CONNECTOR ROUTES ON STATE TRUNKLINE HIGHWAYS**

All documents and forms referenced herein, and additional information and resources are available on MDOT's [ORV Connector Routes](#) web page.

### **Eligibility**

[The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act](#), as amended, [Part 811](#), specifically Michigan Combined Laws (MCL) [324.81101](#) and [324.81131](#), now provides that MDOT may authorize the operation of ORVs on a highway, other than an interstate highway, subject to the requirements and restrictions of the law, and at the discretion of MDOT. Only the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and/or the legislative body of a Local Unit of Government (LUG) may request MDOT to authorize the operation of ORVs on a segment of State Trunkline Highway. (See MCL 324.81131, subsections (6) and (7)).

The MDNR and or the Local Unit of Government should investigate potential alternate routes that do not involve the state trunkline highway and demonstrate to MDOT that there are no reasonable or viable non-highway alternative routes prior to requesting ORV Connector Routes within the State highway Right-of-Way.

### **Process for Requesting Authorization**

#### **1. Coordinate with MDNR and/or LUG & MDOT prior to submitting a permit application**

Prior to formally submitting a permit application, it is recommended that the LUG and MDNR coordinate and discuss the proposed ORV connector, and then meet with the appropriate [MDOT Transportation Service Center \(TSC\) Construction Permit Staff](#) to conduct a preliminary assessment and review, including the following:

- The designation of the proposed ORV connector;
  - An official MDNR Designated ORV Route Connector, or
  - A Local Route Connector,
- The identification of the appropriate Permit Applicant,
  - For Official MDNR Designated Routes – MDNR shall be the permit applicant.
  - For Non-MDNR (Local) Routes – The LUG shall be the permit applicant.
- The limits of the proposed highway segment (provide a site location map),
- The physical space available and allowable within the highway Right-of-Way (ROW) that might reasonably and safely accommodate ORV traffic, either;
  - On the shoulder, or
  - Off the shoulder, or
  - As a combination of on the shoulder and off the shoulder
- The identification of any construction or improvements that may be required
  - Approaches or crossings (connections to the highway shoulder)
  - Culverts or bridges
  - Earthwork, grading, slope flattening, tree removal etc.
- Review of the [Guidelines for Off-Road Vehicle \(ORV\) Connector Routes on State Trunkline Highways](#)
- Review Environmental Requirements for Activities Within MDOT ROW, ([Form 2486](#))
- Review Special Conditions for Authorized ORV Connector Routes on State Trunkline Highways, ([Form 3764A](#)).

## 2. Draft a detailed color ORV Connector Route Aerial Photo Map

This map can be used for stakeholder engagement purposes, and then edited as needed to be submitted with the permit application. Any aerial photo image source can be used, such as commonly available satellite images on the web, provided that the images are relatively current and provide adequate resolution. (See [Example ORV Connector Route Aerial Photo Map](#))

## 3. Engage stakeholders

The LUG shall solicit comments from stakeholders in accordance with the requirements of MDOT's Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) for Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Connector Routes, ([Form 3764B](#))

## 4. Adopt a LUG Resolution

The LUG must adopt and sign the Resolution to Request Authorization to Adopt an Off Road Vehicle (ORV) Ordinance, ([Form 2207F](#))

## 5. Submit an Individual Construction Permit Application Package

An official request for MDOT to authorize the operation of ORVs on a highway shall be in the form of an individual construction permit application through Michigan Business One Stop (MBOS) online system, using MDOT's Construction Permit System (CPS), with all of the following required documents attached:

- A signed copy of Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) for Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Connector Routes, ([Form 3764B](#))
- A signed copy of Resolution to Request Authorization to Adopt an Off Road Vehicle (ORV) Ordinance, ([Form 2207F](#))
- A detailed color ORV Connector Route Aerial Photo Map
- A detailed set of plans if construction or improvements are needed

Note: The individual permit application (request) is not considered complete without all of the required documents attached to the permit application package. Incomplete applications shall be placed on hold until all required documents are received.

### Information for using MBOS and CPS:

The permit applicant (MDNR or LUG) shall register and create a MBOS account. Refer to [MBOS Instructions for Governmental Agencies, Schools and Colleges](#) to set up your account in MBOS. Once you are registered in MBOS you will be able to add CPS as a task to submit your permit application.

An ORV user group, consultant or other party can submit a permit application on behalf of the LUG or MDNR, if they have been delegated user authority in the LUG or MDNR account.

## 6. MDOT Review of the permit application

MDOT has the statutory requirement to approve or deny the permit application package within 60 days of receiving a complete permit application.

**Note:** The permit applicant will be notified by email through CPS when the permit is approved and issued or denied. If the permit is issued, the permit applicant can then view and print the permit package using CPS, (See [Example of an Issued MDOT Permit](#))

**If MDOT approves and issues the individual permit application** the MDNR and/or the LUG may proceed with adopting an ORV ordinance and other requirements in accordance with the issued permit.