



OFF-ROAD VEHICLE ADVISORY WORKGROUP (ORVAW)

Meeting Minutes

Location: Virtual meeting

Date: Nov. 9, 2022

5-7 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 Timm
- Jarrod Biebel (absent)
- Trevor Hoffer

PRESENT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DNR) STAFF

Tim Novak, Annalisa Centofanti, Greg Kinser, Paige Perry, Jill Sell, Ron Yesney, Peter Costa, Nicole Hunt, Michael Morrison, Michael Hearn (LED), Andrew Kenyon (USFS)

Others: Paul Mulder, Karen Middendorp, Karl Davenport, John Newman, Howard Campbell, Thomas Dunn, Scott Nestle, Don Britton, Jenny Cook, Craig Pinkelman

Meeting minutes

ACTION ITEMS

Meeting was called to order at 5:04 p.m.

James Hunt made a motion to approve the August 24 minutes, asking to add Jim Maike's last name to page 3, second sentence down in the minutes. Keith Lynch seconded, with all in favor. Motion carried.

Bob Meyers made a motion to approve the November 9 agenda, James Hunt seconded, with all in favor. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

John Newman identified the Sunset Bill and acknowledged it is on the agenda.

Jenny Cook, representative from the Equine Trails Subcommittee. Jenny focused on awareness for the safe trail passing plan.

Paul Mulder mentioned that next spring or fall, the invite still stands from Leota Township to host an in-person meeting for ORVAW.

BUSINESS ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

LAND USE POLICY AND FORMS

Nicole Hunt, DNR, reviewed the permissions in order to use public lands. The Department recently went through a multi-year process of developing a policy on the use of State managed lands. The result is one consistent policy across all the DNR land managed divisions (PRD, WLD, FRD). Changes taking effect are more internal than external. One web page houses all the land use requests (<https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/managing-resources/public-land/permission>). Nicole demonstrated where the forms are located and how to apply. The wheeled motorized vehicle activity notification form allows the DNR to determine if a permit is needed and is only for groups with wheeled vehicles.

ORV AFTERMARKET LIGHTENING

Bob Meyers made a motion resolution as follows, recommend Michigan Trails Advisory Council (MTAC) and DNR that the ORV lighting requirements be updated to read like the Michigan Motor Vehicle code with regards to flashing lights and aftermarket lighting (realizing a statutory change is needed). Motion seconded by Keith Lynch. Motion Carried.

James Maike - yes

Keith Lynch - yes

James Hunt - yes

Bob Meyers - yes

Mike Timm - yes

Jarrold Biebel – absent

Trevor Hoffer - yes

ORV SUNSET BILL

James Hunt and Thomas Dunn spoke about the upcoming ORV Sunset Bill. This legislative bill historically occurs every 5 years, renewing or changing ORV license and permit fees.

Karen Middendorp has drafted a document, which is on the legislative floor, to omit/remove the sunset reference. Karen is seeking approval from ORVAW. Thomas Dunn added this has to be completed by April 2024 to avoid the ORV license and permit fees reverting to zero.

Keith Lynch made a motion for the approval to move forward with legislatures to get a bill written to remove the sunset reference and seconded by James Hunt. Motion carried.

James Maike - yes

Keith Lynch - yes

James Hunt - yes

Bob Meyers - yes

Mike Timm - yes

Jarrold Biebel - absent

Trevor Hoffer - yes

NEW TRAIL SIGN (50" TRAILS)

James Hunt proposed a sign for ORV 50" trails (see below). Mr. Hunt pointed out when an ORV leaves a state forest road there needs to be a way to identify whether the trail is 50" when entering a state designated ORV trail.

James Hunt made a motion to enter the proposed sign change for discussion within DNR to review and incorporate into the ORV handbook, with Bob Meyers second. Motion carried.

(Carry this item over to the next ORV meeting agenda).

James Maike - yes

Keith Lynch - yes

James Hunt - yes

Bob Meyers - yes

Mike Timm - yes

Jarrold Biebel - absent

Trevor Hoffer - yes



ORV MAINTENANCE – SNOW GROOMER USE (POLICY)

James Maike discussed the idea of pursuing a statute change in the snow program to allow snow grooming equipment to be used on ORV trails for maintenance. At this time, private fund raising is one of the sources used to replace drags on groomers for ORV trails. Keith Lynch pointed out that multi use clubs can go out and groom with their equipment on ORV trails and get reimbursed from state grants. ORV clubs need equipment. The ORV program needs to find a way to fund equipment with state grants.

James Maike asked for anyone interested in forming a subcommittee to research using snow grooming equipment on ORV trails/routes. James Maike would like to see one member from each advisory trail subcommittee.

The following have volunteered.

Paul Mulder

Scott Nestle

Craig Pinkelman

Thomas Dunn

Karl Davenport

Bob Meyers (ORVAW)

Karen Middendorp (SAW)

NAW –

ETS -

Thomas Dunn mentioned some snow equipment is not conducive for dirt. Karen Middendorp stated the snow program has raised license and permit fees to cover the costs of equipment. Karen suggested a need to work on ORV legislation to increase fees in order to fund equipment costs.

UPDATES

USFS UPDATE

Andrew Kenyon reported updates for U.S. Forest Service. Finished a project in Alcona County, the ORV H7 trail reconstruction and snow trail 966. This project received grant funds from the states ORV trail improvement fund. Forest roads have opened this year and on west side of state a lot of ORV damage from all motorized equipment, especially in the Baldwin district.

ORV TRAIL FUND INCREASE \$3.1M

Tim Novak, DNR, provided this update. Funds will be split up between Law Enforcement Division (LED) and Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) special projects with grant sponsors. Funds are scheduled for FY2023.

NELP TRAILS SPECIALIST UPDATE

Greg Kinser, DNR, introduced Blake Gingrich, DNR, as the new northeast Lower Peninsula Trails Specialist. Blake started on October 30 and has been with the DNR for over 19 years in various roles.

CAMP GRAYLING

Greg Kinser, DNR, provided an update on Camp Grayling. The DNR received a proposal requesting to increase the use of state forest lands for military training. This proposal

requires a lot of careful consideration and public input. A website is dedicated to this with more information.

<https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/managing-resources/public-land/camp-grayling-proposal>

(Carry this item over to the next ORV meeting agenda)

LAKE COUNTY M-37 EASEMENT

James Maike shared a written update from Len Todd (Lake County), below.

From the north, we are looking at ~150' along the south side of US10 between North Sheridan and South Sheridan roads which are offset from each other.

From the South we are looking at about 1 mile from 68th Street to the south Village of Baldwin limit.

We have walked down both paths with MDOT Highway Department. They have indicated that both paths are possible.

The US10 path is a no-brainer. It is on the MDOT right of way and clearly can be easily accomplished and is clearly safe.

The M-37 path is much less feasible due to the amount of effort it would take to solicit comments from landowners and possibly move some grandfathered signs, etc. Also, it is questionable if we could get the space to set up points at where we would cross M-37 so that we could stay on the East side of M-37 for the majority of the path, etc.

Currently, we are waiting for the Village to formalize their current RV Ordinance. Once we have that, we are currently planning to apply for the US10 route. This will help us determine the level of effort, etc. It will also give us a path from the north into the Village. For the M-37 path, the Lake Co. Orv Committee is scheduled to meet in December/January to decide whether or not to pursue a M-37 Route. It should be noted that the Eighth Street bridge work is currently scheduled to be completed summer of 2023. Once that bridge is in place, we can go back to old route unless the FAA starts pressing the Village to remove the current ORV routes off the Airport. Then we may have to pursue a path along M-37 from the south side of the Airport to the Village, which would take a lot less effort, but still would have to deal with the M-37 crossing design., etc. Currently we are waiting on the Village to complete their ordinance, which MDOT has requested be complete before we move forward with either path.

MISORVA MILLION UPDATE

2023 FREE ORV WEEKENDS (JUNE 10-11 / AUG. 19-20)

ORVAW COMMITTEE UPDATES

Q4 REGIONAL TRAILS SPECIALIST HIGHLIGHTS

Rob Katona, DNR, provided some ORV project highlights within the central Upper Peninsula. Working together with the USFS, the DNR is expanding and connecting routes from the east to west.

Peter Costa, DNR, mentioned the Straits Snow Club has changed leadership and the Trout Lake Club will be taking over the ORV trail maintenance.

2023 MEETINGS

Coming Soon

CLOSING/ROUND ROBIN

Motion to adjourn was made by James Hunt and seconded by Bob Meyers, with all in favor. Motion carried. Meeting ended at 7:14 p.m.