

**Minutes of the
Off-Road Advisory Workgroup
September 14, 2016
Ramada Lansing Hotel & Conference Center, Michigan Room
7501 W. Saginaw Hwy, Lansing, 48917**

The regular meeting of the Off-Road Vehicle Advisory Workgroup (ORVAW) was called to order by Chair Dunn on September 14, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. Members present were: **Chairman Dunn, Pat Brower (via phone), Don Helsel, Tim Kobasic, James Hunt, and Lewis Shuler.** The following Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff were present: Jody Johnson, Tim Schreiner, Nicole Colberg, Ken Huotari, Amy Swainston, and Paul Yauk.

Chair Dunn called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. He welcomed everyone and asked the board members and guests to introduce themselves. Before continuing with the agenda Chair Dunn asked for a moment of silence in recognition of the unexpected death of State Representative Peter Pettalia from a motorcycle accident on Monday, September 12, 2016. (He represented the 106th District - which includes Cheboygan, Presque Isle, Alpena, Alcona, and Iosco Counties.)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Dunn welcomed everyone and asked the board members and guests to introduce themselves. Newest member, James (Jim) Hunt from the Lansing Motorcycle Club, replacing Skip Schulz, was introduced. Jim has been active in the off road community for a number of years and one of the persons who was instrumental in getting chairman T. Dunn active on the ORV advisory work group. New DNR staff member Jessica Holley was introduced. Jessica started working as the Statewide Motorized Trails Analyst on August 29, 2016. Previously she worked for the Forest Resources Division in Gladwin. She has a bachelor's degree in Business Communications and Public Relations from Purdue University and came to the DNR from 10 years as a Purchasing Agent for a manufacturing facility in Clare. She is looking forward to working on a statewide basis for the ORV and Snowmobile groups. Jessica will be stationed out of the Cadillac Customer Service Center 231-775-9727 Ext. 6013.

MOTION: By D. Helsel to approve the June 22, 2016 minutes and seconded by T. Kobasic. Motion unanimously passed.

An update to the purchase of property was requested to be added to the agenda by Chair Dunn. Discussion on the sunset of the ORV License was discussed and determined to add to next month's agenda.

MOTION: By T. Kobasic to approve the agenda with amending to include the property discussion, and seconded by D. Helsel. The amended agenda was unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

- Handbook of Michigan ORV Laws/Safety Education subcommittee (T. Kobasic, D. Helsel, P. Brower, A. Swainston) was able to meet over a video conference call session. They have a number of changes they would like to have implemented. The suggested changes were given to the Advisory Board. Board Members were asked to review the recommended changes and report to D. Helsel in 2 weeks (by Oct. 1) with any comments or concerns. The committee wishes to have the handbook of Michigan Off-Road Vehicle Laws to be less of a primer for riding and more on regulations, rules, and safety. The group hopes some of the minor text changes can be implemented in the next printing of the handbook and more substantial changes in the 2018 printing. The edits will be recommended to the Law Enforcement Safety who prints the books.
- Legislation Update on HB 5275 – Chairman T. Dunn reported contact was made to Rep. Dole; however, no response was received. N. Colberg reported 5275 is expected to move forward.
 - Legislative Journal for the Senate displays last action taken on 9/8/16 with third reading with Substitute S-2 with immediate effect and title amendment. (SJ 63 ROLL CALL # 511 YEAS 28 NAYS 9 EXCUSED 0 NOT VOTING 0) The bill was received from the Senate to the House on September 8, with substitute (S-2), title amendment and immediate effect given by the Senate, consideration of which, under the rules, was postponed until September 13; see House Journal No. 62, p. 1789. On September 20, 2016 the House agreed to the title as amended (HJ66 Roll Call # 454 Yeas 68 Nays 38). The bill was referred to the Clerk for enrollment printing and presentation to the Governor.
- Sign Subcommittee Report – Alpha Markers and Alpha System – R. Katona and T. Kobasic reported on the use of alpha letters to identify primary and secondary ORV trail and routes. They have determined up to three letters can be used; using a West to East system. A single or double letter would be used for the primary or looped trail, with additional letters for the secondary connector trails. The letters would be mounted on a similar sized sign as the white arrows. They have the letter scheme determined for the Upper Peninsula but not the Lower Peninsula. The estimated costs for printing the alpha identifiers are around \$15,000.00. The costs for the signs should be able to come out of some outstanding DNR sign grant funds. It was recommended to continue to move forward with the alpha system in the UP. The group hopes to have the information included in the next version of the Motorized Sign Manual for sponsors.
- ORV Reimbursement Rates: P. Yauk shared with the Advisory board a handout on the costs of increasing maintenance rates. The rates for maintaining (brushing, signing, 50” trail grading) have not been increased since 2007. Due the increased of the ORV license and Trail permits more funds are available to cover paying maintenance partners more per mile. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased 11.70% from 2008 to 2016.

By adjusting the rates to 20% it should cover additional CPI growth. L. Shuler suggested rounding the reimbursement rates to the nearest whole dollar and grading of 'difficult' or cycle trail was not displayed. P. Yauk agreed rounding all rates to the nearest whole dollar make since, and all current figures would be rounded up 20%.

MOTION: T. Kobasic moved to increasing maintenance rates by 20% or to the nearest even dollar. D. Helsel seconded and the amendment unanimously passed.

- New Confidence Marker (Carsonite) Installation: P. Yauk reported that the department checked with DNR staff regarding assistance installing the new confidence markers. The DNR Quality of Life (HR) wanted to ensure the existing maintenance sponsors did not want to perform the work. Many of the routes in the UP use the new markers. The DNR utilized SEEDS- a Youth Corps organization for installing posts on 23 miles of motorcycle trail in Wexford County. This may be an option for select locations, but would be very costly for a statewide implementation. Some trail maintenance sponsors are beginning to install the post, and keeping track of the equipment and hours put in. Lansing Motorcycle Club worked over the Labor Day Holiday weekend at the road intersections on the West Higgins Trail system. Much of the trail is traversed by forest and county roads so access was fairly good with vehicles. The Club still needs to go back and fill in between the new confidence markers and remove the old markers. Further discussion brought up the concept of paying a flat rate per post installed or per mile, spacing of markers and white arrows. A. Swainston passed around a one-page guidance for installing the posts used by SEEDS and Lansing Motorcycle Club. Chairman T. Dunn asked to provide information for review at the next ORVAW meeting.

Group	Trail Name – ORV Type	Length	Posts installed	Costs / Hours:
Youth Corps	Long Lake MC- Cycle Trail	23 Miles	~ 180	\$4,900.00
Lansing MC Club*	West Higgins - 50" ATV Trail	35 Miles	~ 160 of 260	76 man-hours *(9 people) 32 vehicle hours*(2 trucks,1 UTV)
	*Initial report from LMC for intersection crossings only; hours for removing old markers and filling between intersections still needed			

- Oakland County ORV: The purchase of the site was approved by the county and continues to move forward. It will be a partnership between the DNR and Oakland County Parks. The site is located off of I-75 at Grange Hall Road (Exit 101). The valuable minerals have been depleted at the site, and the initial plans for the pit were to use it as a landfill. The floor of the pit sits approximately 100' below I-75; sound testing revealed the ambient noise will have low impact to the surrounding residential area due to other traffic noises. Next steps will be determined planned phases for design. Getting

a location such as this has been an ambition of the off road community since 1975. There will be a Heritage Conference at the site that will provide tours, and discussion on future uses on Saturday, September 23, 2016.

- Crawford County Seven Mile Action Meeting: A. Swainston reported on a meeting hosted by Lori Burford, MDNR Shooting Range and Facilities Analyst to discuss an old gravel pit. Current uses are shooting, undesignated ORV, and mineral extraction. Since gathering input from users indicated that part of the reason for having the meeting was to gauge interest in possible options PRIOR TO spending money on sound testing or design. DNR internally needs to come up with recommendation on what is believed to be the most appropriate use of the site. Working to schedule a meeting for DNR (LAD, Minerals, PRD, LED) staff to work out a more concrete recommendation and issue statement to take to the Resource Bureau in October (October 11). One of the contrasting differences between the Oakland site and this site is the elevation of the pit is higher than the residential houses.

- Tread Lightly, Inc.: A. Swainston, D. Helsel discussed Tread lightly 12 month intensive media campaign through a variety of channels. Current they are under contract with USFS for the public service campaign. Tread lightly will be hosting a user input session on media campaign topics and posters. The following is a summary of the current topics being considered:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Fall Topics:</u> - Sharing the Trails tips - Implement #RIDEONMICHIGAN - Conversation about best trails in MI - ATV/UTV safety tips - Hunting with OHV tips - Share "E" RIDE ON video (Educate yourself) - <u>Winter Topics:</u> - Snowmobile tips from TL.org 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share "R" video (Travel Responsibility / Respect the rights of others) - Sharing the snow tips - Respected Access "Snow Before You Go" - Snowmobile PSAs - Responsible snowmobile tips from TL.org - <u>Spring Topics:</u> - Wet trail tips - OHV Tips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "A" Tip video (Avoid Sensitive Areas) - Highlight safety gear - <u>Summer Topics:</u> - ATV Tips - Importance of packing out trash - OHV Tips - "R" video (Travel Responsibility / Respect the rights of others) - Highlight best trails in Michigan
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Website: <https://www.treadlightly.org/programs/ride-on/ride-on-michigan/>

The input meeting will be November 29, 2016 from 9:30 am – 4:00 pm Location: R.A.M. Conference Center. Board members should RSVP as soon as possible to: Jerrica Archibald, Jerrica@treadlightly.org.

NEW BUSINESS

- Silver Lake State Park ORV Update. Jody Johnson, Park Manager gave a PowerPoint presentation on the changes implemented in spring of 2015 (attached):
 - Dune vehicle counts average 2,000- 2,5000 per weekend
 - 4 Commercial leases for renting vehicles(3 active)
 - Still offers Parking Lot Voucher System for those trailering in ORV's
 - Encouraged 'Dune Ready' vehicles to be ready before getting to the park (flag, licenses/permits, tire pressure, etc.) due the vehicles not taking up space in the parking lot.
 - Recovery & Towing Company available for immediate assistance.
 - UTV – Side by Side for initial incident / emergency response

SLORVA task force has worked with Michigan DNR State Park staff to address some of the issues identified and various ORV facility improvements. A few of the design concepts were the following:

- By pass entrance for dune ready vehicles
- Widening out the Dune entrance road
- Expanding the parking lot for trailers and tow vehicles
- Installing air station to inflate tires to adequate road pressure
- Drop off location for commercial lease rentals
- Restroom facilities to handle the increased number of visitors.

The task force has worked with various agencies, preformed an environmental impact study due to the critical dune habitat and awaiting results from the DEQ for any further modifications.

- Land Purchase Update: P. Yauk updated ORVAW board members on continued progress of acquiring property to connect the Wisconsin and Michigan trail systems. One of the key segments on the Iron Belle is between Bessemer to Wakefield to Ironwood and Hurley, WI from Union Pacific Rail. DNR is getting closer on a 2 mile segment. It is getting more difficult to purchase rail lined due to the companies retaining the parcels to store rail cars.
- Reports on ORV Events and Free ORV Weekends
 - Jack Pine / Pine Cone Enduro (AMA), Aug 20 & Pine Cone, Aug 21 is one of the longest running enduro events held on State Land. It occurred on the 2016 August Free ORV weekend. They had over 256 riders with less than 70% not having an ORV sticker. Participants represented 10 different states.
 - Six Days of Michigan (CCC) was held July 24-30 had over 130 riders that traveled over 7,500 miles in the six day of riding representing over 19 states and a rider from Europe.

PUBLIC APPEARANCE

No one submitted comment request card to address the ORVAW board. However, three emails were received by board members since the last meeting and read aloud in front of the panel:

- David Newman regarding ORV use in Leelanau County, and potential ORV's legislation related to age of operator, special equipment or trial basis on select forest roads. Chair T. Dunn will respond highlighting the pending HB5275 and County Road ordinance.
- Jim Moraska with Normenco Snowmobile Club regarding consideration of increased rates for signing and brushing ORV Routes. T. Kobasic will respond with the information from tonight's meeting regarding maintenance rate increase.
- Andy B ORV rider with comments on ORV rules and regulations being consistent state wide, street legalization of UTV's regarding Michigan residents and nonresidents.

MOTION: D. Helsel made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 p.m. L. Shuler seconded motion unanimously passed.

Next Meeting: November 2, 2016; Location TBD – T. Dunn requested to be held in the Lansing area.

DNR Carsonite Post/Confidence Marker Installation, Removal of Old Orange Confidence Markers,

In general, carsonite posts shall be installed at roughly ¼ mile (1,320 feet) intervals
HOWEVER additional markers will be required for the following conditions:

- Intersection of roads—install carsonite posts so trail riders can clearly see where the trail extends beyond the road. Carsonite markers shall be installed on the right hand side where the trail intersects the road (2 carsonite posts per intersection).
- Near undesignated trails--- On occasion trail riders will venture off the designated system—causing an intersection, or spur. Install carsonite posts in a clearly visible location to direct riders to the designated system. If YOU are unclear where the trail goes—then riders are also likely unsure of the correct trail route.
- Gloves are required to for installers or when handling the posts to reduce fiberglass splinters.

Additional Conditions:

- Use common sense for the ¼ mile marker distance. Locations can vary 10-30 feet up or down the trail to insure good visibility. Don't install carsonite postss behind bushes, trees etc. where constant brush cutting will be needed.
- Alternate or stagger markers on both sides of the trail and install on the outsides of curves versus inside of curves.
- Install carsonite posts approximately 2-3' from trail edge so it is VISIBLE from both travel directions. In tight forest cover—you may need to install the posts closer to the trail.
- The top of the carsonite post should be approximately 4.5' from the ground level (drive 18" into the ground).

Removal of Old Orange Markers:

- A REASONABLE attempt shall be made to remove the aluminum nails (which hold the orange triangle markers) from the tree. IF the head of the nail rips off, and nail cannot be removed- pound the stud portion of the nail into the tree.
- Orange Triangles & nails shall be gathered, removed from State lands and disposed of properly. The orange markers are recyclable—check with your local recycling center.

DNR Responsibilities:

- Provide 1-2 carsonite drivers to install the new posts; drivers returned ASAP for other clubs.
- Provide assistance when needed. Please contact your local recreation specialist to arrange for verifying the posts you should use for your trail type, driver location, and estimated quantities.

SILVER LAKE STATE PARK

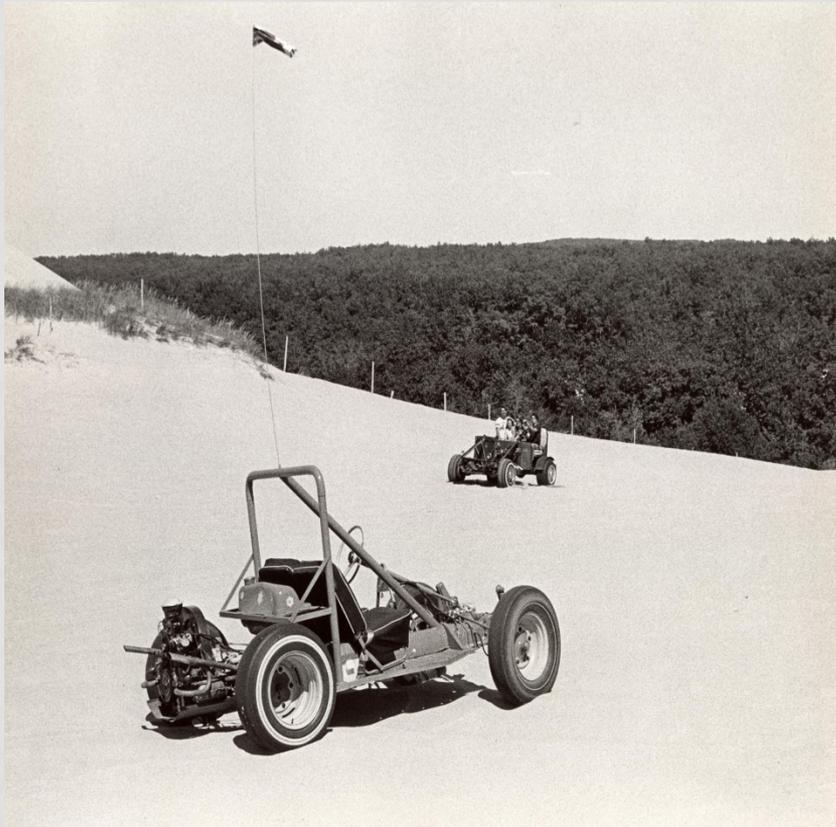


SILVER LAKE STATE PARK



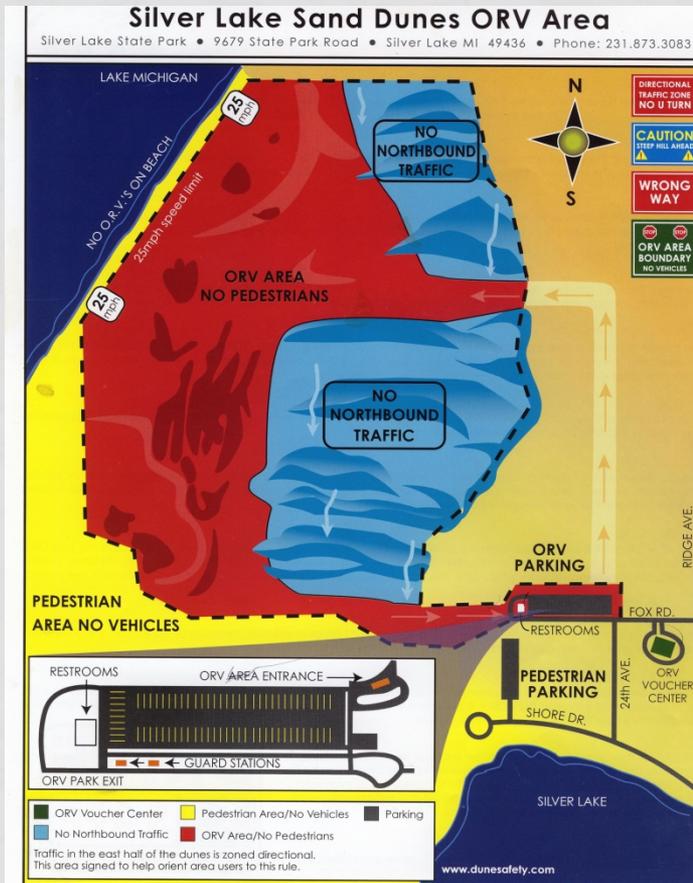
- Approximately 850,000 to 1 million visitors come to visit Silver Lake State Park each year.
- The park encompasses just over 2,900 acres.
- The majority of visitors are drawn to the 450 acre ORV Scramble Area.

SILVER LAKE STATE PARK ORV



- The ORV area began in 1955 with 242 acres.
- In 1977 William Lathers land was acquired to make the ORV area the 450 acres which it remains today. It is one of the park's biggest demands.

THE OFF-ROAD VEHICLE AREA (ORV)



A TYPICAL WEEKEND



ALL TYPES OF VEHICLES GO OFF-ROADING. SOME SAFE...



AND SOME NOT QUITE SO.



YET, OTHERS NEED JUST A LITTLE
EXTRA WORK.



ORV NUMBERS

- *Around 2000 to 2500 ORVs on most weekends*
- *Double these numbers for Holiday Weekends and events.*

OPERATIONAL CHANGES IN 2015

- Elimination of Dune Ready Vouchers
- All permit sales moved to the Welcome Center and other locations.
- Dune wrecker staged on site to remove vehicles blocking traffic flow.
- Purchase of improved grading equipment.
- Re-initiated use of volunteers for parking lot efficiency
- Emphasis to become Dune Ready

WHAT IS DUNE READY??

Are you Dune Ready? (flip over for details)

- Street Legal**
Driven to dunes, no trailer
- Safety Flag**
Attached in proper location and 10' high
- All required permits on vehicle**
Recreation Passport, ORV Pass, Trail Pass
- Tires Aired Down (recommended)**
Maximum of 15 psi
- Seat belts for all occupants**
- Eye Protection**
Windshield, goggles or face shield
- Spark arrester type exhaust**
- Maximum Noise 94db**
- No Alcohol**
Coolers will be checked

www.michigan.gov/orvtrails



Before entering Silver Lake State Park ORV Area, please review all rules and regulations at the Welcome Center or online at www.michigan.gov/dnr

- ◇ **All required permits on vehicle**
(Purchase at Welcome Center, campground office or headquarters)
 - Recreation Passport (state park vehicle pass)
 - ORV permit
 - Trail pass
 - For a list of more places to purchase an ORV permit in Oceana County, visit www.mdnr-elicence.com and click "License Agent Locations"
- ◇ **Street Legal**
 - Drive into dunes/no trailer
 - Safety flag (attached in proper location and at least 10' high)
 - Flags must be purchased prior to entering park (available at most local businesses)
- ◇ **Seat belts for all passengers**
- ◇ **Eye protection**
 - Windshield or goggles
- ◇ **Spark arrester type exhaust/reverse flow exhaust**
- ◇ **Maximum noise 94db**
- ◇ **No alcohol**
 - Alcohol is not allowed within ¼ mile of ORV area
- ◇ **Valid unrestricted Driver's License**
- ◇ **Recommended tire pressure maximum of 15 psi**
- ◇ **Don't forget to pick up a map!**

If you are bringing in a trailer or need to use the parking lot, please visit the Welcome Center for information on how to get a parking lot voucher.

For more information, please contact Silver Lake State Park at (231) 873-3083 or visit www.michigan.gov/silverlake.

SILVER LAKE WELCOME CENTER



- Parking Lot Vouchers are used during the heavy traffic season.
- There have been lines of four or more miles to get a voucher in order to drive in the dunes on a holiday weekend.

PERMIT SALES

- **ORV Permit/Trail Permit**— more than 22,000 sold annually or over \$80,000 into ORV funds.
- 10 % of Statewide sales
- **Recreation Passports**— required on *ALL* vehicles generating \$500,000 for Parks.

RENTALS – COMMERCIAL LEASES GENERATE AROUND \$56,000 ANNUALLY



USE PERMITS/EVENTS GENERATE OVER \$20,000 ANNUALLY

- **Manufacturers testing vehicles**—GM, Ford, Fiat Chrysler, Arctic Cat, AM General, etc.
- **Commercial Filming activities**—music videos, vehicle testing, advertising, Destination Polaris TV, Pure Michigan campaign, etc.
- **Organized Events**—Weddings, Long Travel Roundup, Bronco Takeover, Heroes on the Dunes, Jeep Rally, etc.

ORV GRANT FUNDS

- Signage for ORV area, traffic cones
- Tractor equipment to grade/groom
- Emergency response equipment
- Polaris RZR UTV
- Parking lot lighting
- Air up station
- Parking lot gravel
- Traffic counters

CURRENT CHALLENGES

- Not enough parking room to accommodate current visitors.
- Long wait off site for guests hoping to access dunes.
- Narrow entrance road easily blocked by vehicles.
- Traffic back-ups and congestion on area roads.
- Need for more bathroom facilities.
- Sound level/Spark arrestor enforcement/compliance.

SILVER LAKE RECREATION ASSOCIATION (SLRA)

