

**Off-Road Vehicle Advisory Workgroup
Minutes
June 13, 2018**

The regular meeting of the Off-Road Vehicle Advisory Workgroup (ORVAW) was called to order by Chairman Thomas Dunn on June 13, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. Members present were: Chairman Dunn, Don Helsel, Tim Kobasic, Pat Brower, James Hunt, and Jim Maike. Lewis Shuler joined via telephone.

The following Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff was present: Jason Fleming, Cpt. John Steele, Cpl. John Morey, and Barbara Graves. Rob Katona, Greg Kinser, Ron Yesney, and Amy Swainston joined via telephone.

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Dunn welcomed everyone and asked that everyone mute their phones. He introduced Cpt. John Steele from the Law Enforcement Division and welcomed him to the meeting. Everyone introduced themselves.

Action Items

MOTION: T. Kobasic moved the approval of the March 7, 2018 meeting minutes. It was seconded by D. Helsel and it carried unanimously.

Chair Dunn asked the members if he could take agenda items out of order, to which everyone approved. T. Kobasic asked to table the Two Tier Education item. D. Helsel asked to table the MiTRALE Retention item and add Seasonal Restrictions on ORV Usage.

MOTION: J. Maike moved the approval of the June 13, 2018 amended meeting agenda. It was seconded by J. Hunt and it carried unanimously.

Updates

- Handbook of Michigan ORV Laws – Chair Dunn thanked the subcommittee for a fantastic job. Cpt. Steele said they completed the draft by the deadline of April 30, but they need final approval from the workgroup. The winching subject was left out to cut down on the length of the booklet and because they believe people should refer to their owner’s manual on the subject. Liability may also be a factor. Chair Dunn asked Jason Fleming to go back to the department’s legal services to get their opinion.

MOTION: That the workgroup ratifies the rewrite of the handbook contingent upon advice of department legal counsel that the inclusion of the topic of winching is allowed. T. Kobasic moved the motion, D. Helsel supported. The motion carried unanimously.

- ORV Digest to Match DNR's Other Guides – T. Kobasic suggested they follow the same format as the Hunting, Trapping, and Fishing Digests, to consider adjustments every other year, and to sell advertisement to help defray costs. T. Dunn said he would prefer pushing people to get information from the website; with law changes, the books will need to be updated every time.

Business Items for Discussion

- ORV Route System – P. Brower went over the ORV Route Rethink Subcommittee report (attached). Chair Dunn suggested they do more research after the forest road inventory is complete and report back.

Chair Dunn requested that laws for the use of child car safety seats in side-by-sides be on a future agenda.

- Event Permits and Criteria – J. Fleming went over the event permit and criteria after the question “Whatever happened to the 75 participants?” was brought up. He discussed when a permit is necessary and how they are scored based on their impacts to the environment. In addition, he went over issues with trespassing and rule violations caused by some groups, in particular, a group who held an “event” without a permit, and subsequently received several violations due to not following State Land Rules. He would look back to the workgroup on how to solve situations like these where groups are participating in a sport but doing it in a way that is detrimental to everybody else. He will forward the Events Management policy to the workgroup. If there are any questions on permit requirement, please contact the trail specialist.
- Oakland County Project – Jon Noyes from Oakland County Parks and Recreation thanked the workgroup for letting him speak. He gave a recap of the history of the Oakland County off-road park project and said it will be the largest urban off-road vehicle park open in the state. Thanks to the help of the workgroup, 235 acres were acquired; 113 acres will become available for use as of June 30 of this year when the final stockpiles will be removed. As of now, they are on target to have a grand opening in June 2019. Full acreage is planned to be open in 2022. He thanked the Great Lakes Four Wheel Drive Association for sponsoring a soon-to-be dust control testing protocol on the site. He will come back to the workgroup in about six months with an update.

T. Dunn would like the workgroup to meet at the site for the grand opening and possibly conduct a Workgroup meeting that night.

- Legislation Update, HB 5639 – T. Dunn gave an update on the history of the proposed legislation. He will keep tracking the legislation and keep the group

informed. HB 4846 and HB 4997 have had no traction, but he will keep an eye on them as well.

- 2018 NOHVCC Conference – L. Shuler reported that they are planning a pre-conference ride with the DNR at Silver Lake State Park on Monday, August 13th. If you need more information, contact Jessica Holley. There will also be a workshop in Lake County on Thursday, August 16th. If you are interested in attending, please contact him.
- Seasonal Restrictions of ORV Use – D. Helsel would like the workgroup to consider forming a subcommittee to discuss possible seasonal restrictions on ORV operations in the early spring to coincide with the weight limit restrictions within the counties. This year was a disaster in the Western U.P. because they still had snow, which turned to mud, then muck. Trails that they put a lot of effort into last year are worse than when they started last year; they need some way to manage it. Chair Dunn asked who would like to participate, to which D. Helsel, T. Kobasic, and P. Brower volunteered.

Staff Reports (by exception)

John Morey, LED, reported he expects the academies to be full.

Public Appearance

Larry Salmeto, ATV Off-Road Club of Michigan, asked if there was going to be any marketing updates at future ORVAW meetings and if they would be receptive to working with the clubs for ideas to help grow the sport and promote particular areas that could use it. Chair Dunn said they are working with the department on it. J. Fleming said it is part of his staff's role and Mr. Salmeto can contact him to discuss it more. Chair Dunn suggested that he also leave his contact information with J. Maik and J. Hunt, to work with them, and then they can bring something back to the next meeting.

D. Helsel thanked LED for providing some Conservation Officers for Ontonagon.

T. Kobasic, in regard to the pre-bid meeting for the Forest Island Trail project, is going to pen a letter to Mr. Paul Yauk on the importance of having a funding mechanism in place because they are at a point if this isn't done in its entirety this year, they are looking at a liability. He will send to Lansing to put emphasis on it.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.