

# OFF-ROAD VEHICLE ADVISORY WORKGROUP

Minutes

October 10, 2017

3:00 p.m.

Staybridge Suites, 855 W. Washington Street, Marquette

## Welcome and Introductions

### Action Items

- Approval of the June 14, 2017 Meeting Minutes Mr. Kobasic motioned and Mr. Hunt seconded. Motion carried.
- Approval of the October 10, 2017 Meeting Agenda – The following changes were made to the Agenda: Added Consumers Energy Partnership, Permanent Easements in the UP *Matt Torreano*, Drummond Island signage Pat Brower, and change the order of some of the updates. Mr. Maike motioned and Mr. Kobasic seconded. Motion carried.

### Updates

Permanent Easements in the UP - *Matt Torreano*

We hired three contractors to help with acquisition of permanent easements in the UP. These acquisitions will make existing trail permanent even if ownership changes hands. Mr. Yauk added that if we don't have a trail, we don't have a trail program. In the past it was a handshake deal. Now we are seeking permanency with flexibility to move the trail, if necessary. Working with the Executive division, we have streamlined the arduous/time consuming process. In the past, we have lost a few opportunities due to the lengthy process. We are working on several projects one which is for a snowmobile only easement. This one is relatively easy as we have a willing seller and the funding comes from snowmobile funds. The easement from Weyerhaeuser is a bit more complex as we are seeking a multi-use easement with monies from several other funds. Mr. Bob Lambert asked if Weyerhaeuser was willing to sell enough for rustic campsites as the former owner Plum Creek indicated. **Mr. Torreano** would bring this into discussions with Weyerhaeuser. **Mr. Torreano** said we work closely with the local clubs who are aware where the trail is most vulnerable and where landowners are most willing to sell.

- Subcommittee Reports – no reports

- Staff Reports

**Mr. Yesney** thanked the UP staff who has spent hundreds of hours with much hard work. He also gave thanks to the great grant sponsors we have.

**Ms. Swainston** said they are maintaining the trail they have. We met with Consumers Energy and are in easement discussions with them. Starting to gear up for snowmobile meetings and starting to get in the reimbursement requests.

**Mr. Kakuk** talked about the infrastructure projects in the west UP. The Ewen bridge construction turned out well. MiTRALE helped with the Ontonagon to Rockland grade open now to ORV use. We have been replacing culverts and in the Keweenaw we added a couple of new trail segments. The UP is also in the process of documenting all trail bridge and culvert locations and conditions.

**Mr. Gaberdiel** said the 109 Route Moran to DeTour has been approved in Mackinac County. We are working on trail segments from Paradise to Grand Marais in the Munising area. The Trout Road bridge was replaced and we are working on road improvements from Soo to Raco. The Strongs to Raco grade purchase is still moving forward dependent on the title search. **Mr. Katona** talked about improving the routes by hole/spot filling when needed. With the beaver issues this year we are replacing many culverts. The Forest Island and Norway trails are being engineered as both have seen an increase in side-by-side use with damages done to the decking. We are waiting on DEQ permits. We will bid out the Norway project this year, if not then in early spring. **Mr. Kobasic** asked once the DEQ permit is in place when will actual work begin? Mr. Katona said at least the construction phase will be started by next summer. **Chairman Dunn** asked that we come up with a solution for the damages incurred by side-by-side use. Routes are a partial road in the middle of the woods that go to no destination. **Chairman Dunn** appointed Mr. Brower and Mr. Maike to look at this issue and come up with a solution.

**Cpl. Morey** talked about the current academy. We are looking for candidates for upcoming academies and ex-military are excellent choices. We are seeing a younger workforce these days.

- Handbook of Michigan ORV Laws/Safety Education Subcommittee *Jessica Holley*
  - Separate Issues:

- Handbook: Updates, Printing, Distribution

**Mr. Kobasic** said the handbooks should be given out at the point of sales when a person buys a license/trail permit. The current handbook needs to be updated. It was also noted that the old signs are still in the back of the book. Can these be printed in-house with information that is only pertinent to Michigan? We would need at least 232K – one for each license sold. **Chairman Dunn** said the workgroup should continue on with changes to the handbook and bring something tangible to the next meeting. Move forward with the recommendations from previous meetings and provide the proposed changes to Cpl. Morey to bring to Lansing to start the review process for 2019. **Mr. Kobasic** amended the motion with an emphasis on at least changing the back page regarding the signs. Mr. Hunt seconded. Motion carried.

- Safety Education Workbook – Request updates through publishing company or consider researching another source

**Mr. Kobasic** said some of the information is canned and not applicable to youth students. We need to have something that is straight forward. He also discussed the matter of a tiered testing where adults and seasoned riders would be tested and then a test/handbook geared toward youth. While the number of accidents are down there is a rise in the severity of injuries. Mr. Kobasic, Mr. Helsel, and Mr. Brower were charged as a sub-committee to examine the ATV/ORV Certification Program to: 1) Review the possibility of doing an in-house Trails Digest, 2) Examine the teaching curriculum to see if it should be modified and consider if a two tier system of certification is warranted. 3) Review the current test questions to assure they are applicable to the youth taking them. We are to report an outline by the first meeting of 2018.

- Legislation Update - *Paul Yauk*

- SB 552 Vehicles; off-road; permit fee; extend sunset.

This legislation is moving forward and is now in the House under recreation and tourism. There is strong support in legislation. We will have to deal with the issue again in 2024. Anna Mooney is the Department liaison with the legislature.

- HB 4846 Vehicles; off-road; operation of off-road vehicles on far right of streets, roads, and highways; allow unless prohibited by local unit or MDOT.

There is a lot of concern with the bill and there is lack of support. The bill is being directed to a workgroup with discussion in Lansing during the Committee meeting. **Mr. Shuler** stated as is, this bill does not make a lot of sense. Chairman Dunn said M roads are not conducive to ORV use. **Mr. Kobasic** said only our connectors would meet the standards of this bill. Opening all roads carte blanche is not a wise idea. **Mr. Maibe** says in the bill it states that if you ride the M roads, you will need more insurance coverage. **Chairman Dunn** asked if the workgroup need to make a resolution on this issue. It was suggested we wait to see where this goes in committee and address it if needed.

- P.A. 288 of 2016 Department Update - *Dennis Nezich*

The Governor signed the Act in 2016 to identify and categorize the State forest road system with location, condition, and motorized restriction. This will provide consistency in both the UP and NLP on which roads are open to ORV and which are closed to ORV use.

Consideration was given to the various user groups and protection of sensitive and unique sites. Field staff inventoried 7,600 miles in the NLP and initially determined 87% of the roads could be open to ORV use with the remaining 13% closed. There were public meetings, emails, letters and the use of an on-line map where a person could click on a specific road and leave a comment on that particular location. Public input, special management areas, and lack of continuity were taken into consideration and the roads were tweaked a bit to reflect the concerns. In October the recommendations will go to the NRC and another comment period and review with a final decision to the Director. **Mr. Kobasic** asked about the PR dollars and fish and game lands. **Mr. Nezich** said that we inventoried existing roads in place. The decision was based not so much on the funding source unless ORV use was perceived to impact habitat. It was not based on new trails in the woods. **Mr. Kobasic** asked who was going to post the roads and how that would be paid for as this was an unfunded mandate. **Mr. Kobasic** proposed a resolution for the Governor to introduce special appropriations funds from the Statewide general fund to off-set the entire cost current and future of this project. **Mr. Hunt** seconded. Motion carried.

- Budget Update *Jacklin Blodgett* (See attached)

Out of the \$36.25 permit fee, \$1 goes to the safety/education fund, \$0.25 to the dealer/agent, and \$35 toward trail improvements (of that \$35 the breakdown is as follows: not less than 50% or \$17.50 for OTV trail maintenance and development, 12.5% restoration/damages, 31.25% LED, 3 1/8% administration, the remaining 3 1/8% will go into the trail improvement grants).



ORV Financial Update  
10-2017.pdf

- Carsonite Installation Update - *Jessica Holley*

In with the new and out with the old signs nailed to the trees. Most of the UP is complete with the help of the sponsors and volunteers. Where there are dual trails, the snowmobile backers will be attached to the posts. Cedar posts with backers will be placed where needed to meet the distance between the markers.

## **New Business**

- Term Renewals

It was noted that you will be on the board until notified otherwise. Mr. Dunn is the Acting Chairman of ORVAW and an Acting member of MTAC. **Chairman Dunn** proposed to have both Mr. Kobasic and Mr. Hunt to continue their membership on the board.

- 2018 NOHVCC Conference in Grand Rapids - *Lewis Shuler*

The event will be in August at the Doubletree hotel with workshops, Honda, demonstrations, and rides. NOHVCC was started as a 501c3 service organization in the mid-1980 with funding from Honda. Currently there are 35 states involved. Volunteers are creating a positive off road experience for trail users. We provide the tools to achieve these goals. We help establish new OHV clubs and strengthen current clubs.

- MI-TRALE Request to Retain Our Current Route Names - *Don Helsel*

Discussion was tabled as Mr. Helsel was absent.

- Consumers Energy (Consumers) Property and DNR Trails

Consumers has no ORV trails on their land. There are transmission and gas lines, underground pipelines, and landings and there are erosion and safety concerns around these areas. There are no license/lease agreements on our land for ORV use. With snowmobile use, we have issued easements to clubs and they install fences and gates to cut down on the trespass issues.

- Discussion of Success of Free ORV Weekend Campaign

Discussion was tabled

- Project Reports from DNR Staff

**Mr. Yauk** said we are in the process of filling Todd Neiss's position. Megan LeMarbe is the Non-motorized Trails Grant Coordinator. The map of shared ORV/snowmobile trails will be updated and on-line. This summer the Governor rode the Hermansville-Escanaba trail showcasing that Michigan is a motorized trails State. Bridge and culvert projects are being completed with the Ham Creek Bridge in Missaukee County coming in under budget. The funds were available in 2004 for ORV signage and the project is now nearing completion. We are moving forward with a scramble area in Oakland County. We are creating a list of ORV friendly State Parks and Campgrounds.

- Drummond Island Signage - *Pat Brower*

With the a few mishaps on the trail by users who were unfamiliar with the area, **Mr. Brower** would like to place signs along the trail similar to the ones used nationally for skiing and kayaking. Easy – 23, Moderate – 19, and 15 difficult. It would be great to have Michigan the national standard but Michigan has an extra designation – 2 wheel-drive pickup truck on forest roads. There are three options: do nothing, accept the proposal as noted with the 57 signs, or proposal A use 34 signs and the 2 wheel drive pickup truck trails would remain unsigned. Mr. Shuler said we should label all the trails on Drummond Island as difficult and skip the individual signs as there are not many forest roads on the island. Chairman asked about the liability of signing the island if signed difficult. **Mr. Kobasic** said there are measures in place that indemnify users that their use carries an inherent risk. **Mr. Gaberdiel** asked if it is a good idea to sign specific areas that are difficult should we therefore sign the difficulty of all routes. **Chairman Dunn** asked if we will be opening a Pandora's Box. **Mr. Maike** said we should be leery of putting up signs especially if another area has similar issues. **Mr. Shuler** said we could put a disclaimer on the map similar to the one Mr. Brower presented. **Mr. Maike** made a motion to proceed with a map of the difficulties and when the map is approved place at the Trailheads and info kiosks with additional paper maps. Mr. Brower seconded the motion. Motion carried. **Mr. Yauk** will work with Kim Kennedy and have a map produced.

- 2018 Meeting Schedule – August in Conjunction with NOHVCC Conference?

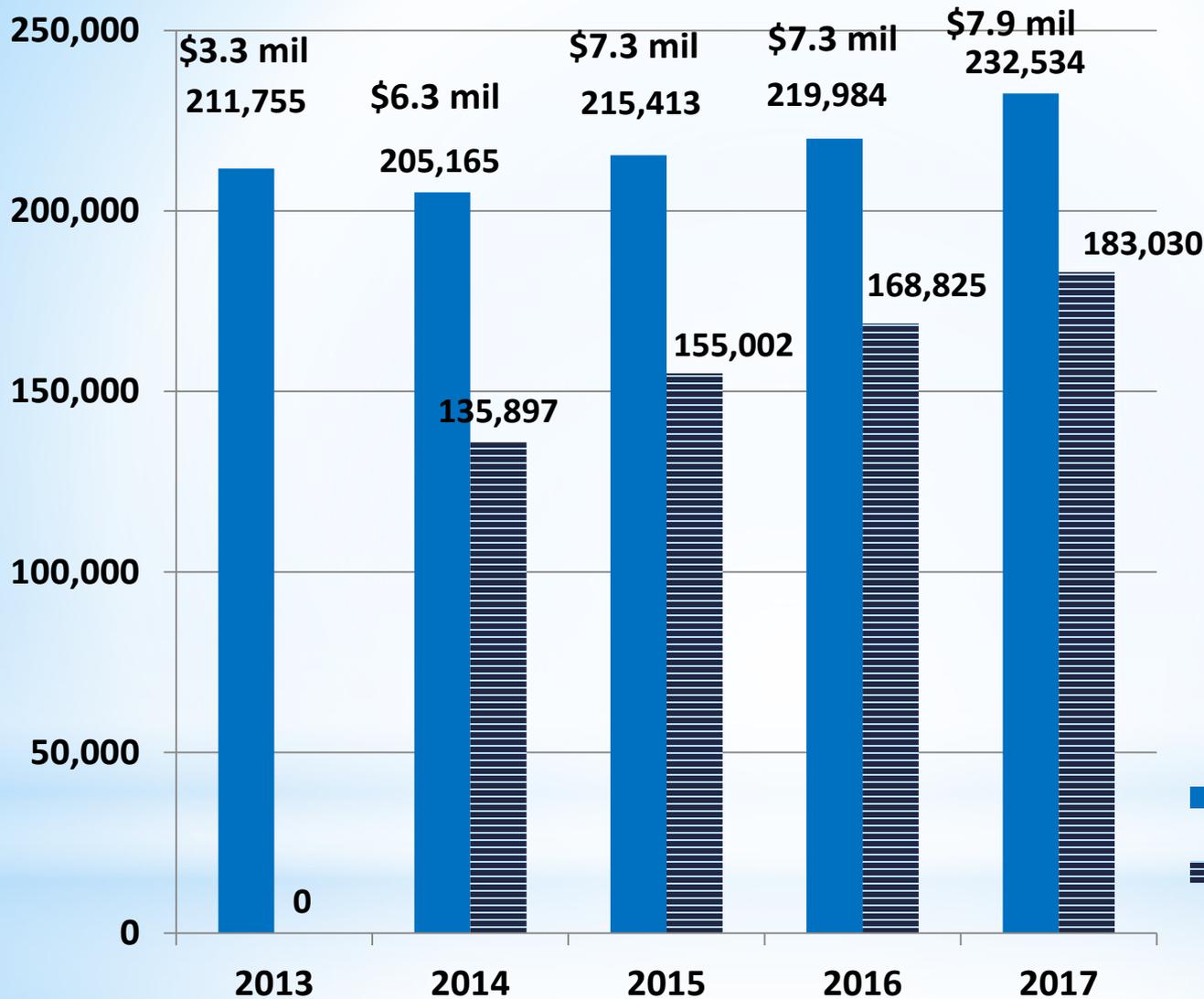
Ms. Holley will send out requests for meeting dates.

### **Public Appearance**

None

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 6:10 PM.

# ORV License/Permit Sales Through September



% Change From 2016 to 2017  
 ORV License: +5.7%      Trail Use: +8.4%

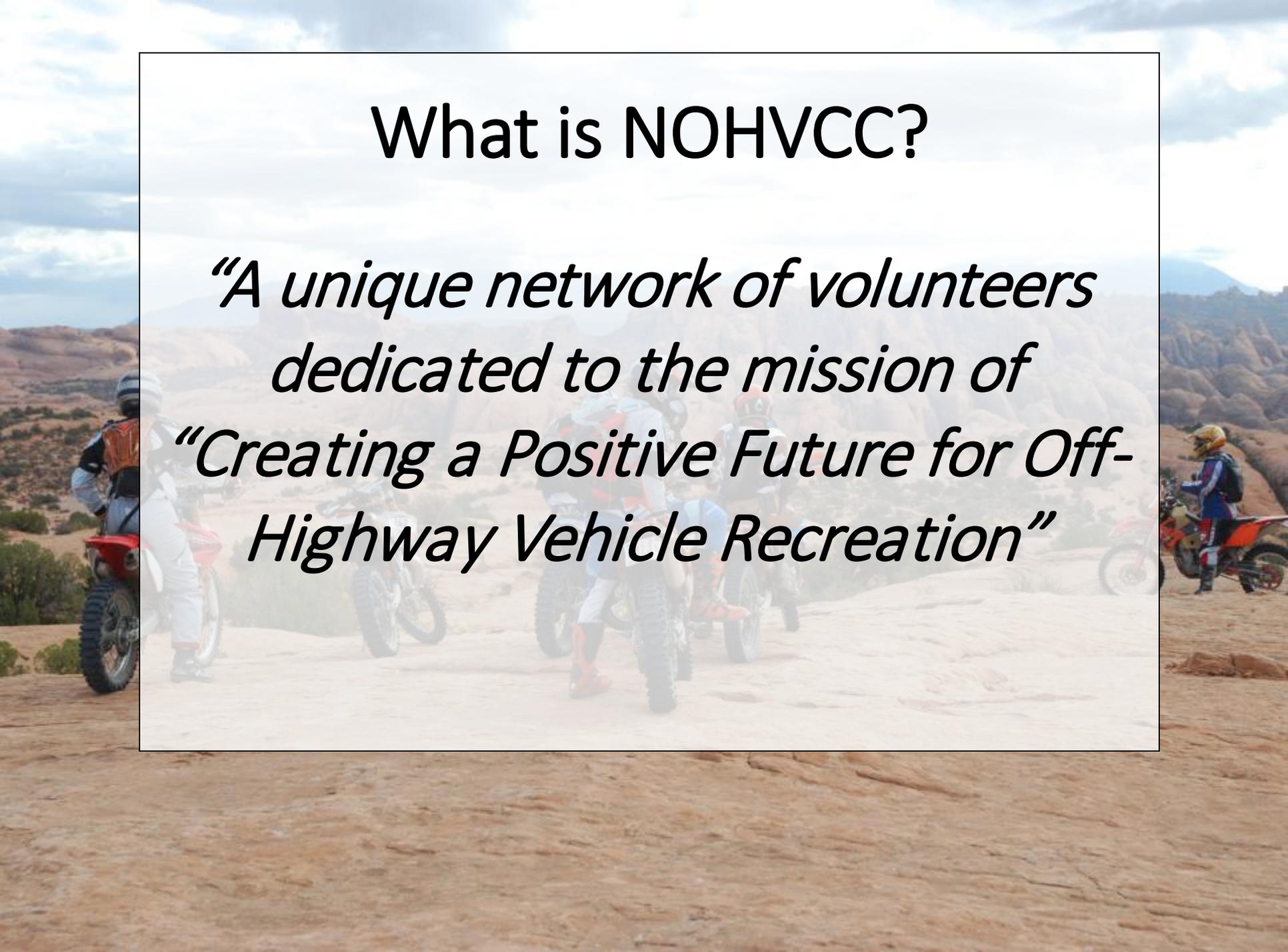
## ORV Budget - FY2017 (FY2018 - estimated to be \$7.1 million)

<b>Expenditure Category</b>	<b>FY 2017 Appropriated Amount</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Maintenance & Development	\$ 3,534,000	50.00%
Damage Restoration	\$ 883,300	12.50%
Law Enforcement	\$ 2,208,700	31.25%
Administration	\$ 222,300	3.12%
Law Enforcement or Maintenance	\$ 220,400	3.12%
Total	\$ 7,068,700	100.00%

What is NOHVCC?

# What is NOHVCC?

*“A unique network of volunteers  
dedicated to the mission of  
“Creating a Positive Future for Off-  
Highway Vehicle Recreation”*



# What Is Our Purpose?

- Provide a wide spectrum of resources (tools) to individuals, clubs, associations, and agencies to help achieve our goals
- **NOHVCC is a service organization**
- **501c3 Educational Foundation**
- **We succeed only if you succeed**

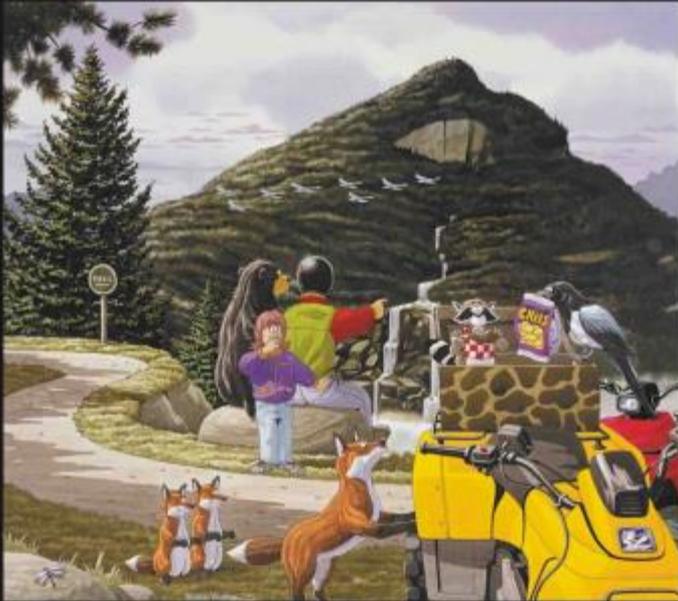
# Our Goals

- **Provide a nationwide OHV communications network**
- **Help establish OHV clubs and associations**
- **Strengthen clubs and associations**
- **Develop partnerships with decision makers**
- **Promote a positive image of OHV recreation**
- **Provide educational materials and opportunities for recreationists and land managers promoting safe, responsible OHV recreation**
- **Invest in youth through education**
- **Ensure recreationists are aware of their impacts**
- **Provide “on the ground” expertise and services**

# Provide an International OHV communications network

- NOHVCC State Partners and Associates
- BLM, USFS, ACOE, NPS, FHWA
- State OHV Programs, DNRC, Fish and Game, Parks and Recreation, RTP Administrators
- BSA, 4-H, SCA, Youth Corps
- AMA, ARRA, BRC, ACSA, ORBA, TL!, SEMA
- MIC, SVIA, ROHVA, ASI, MSF
- Canada, Australia, Iceland, Mexico

# ADVENTURE TRAIL



ENJOY OUTDOOR ADVENTURES.

Off-highway vehicle (OHV) is a healthy way for family and friends to have fun, explore trails and discover wonderful things along the way!



*"Creating a Positive Future for Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation"*

## Adventure Trail

### Poster Series

- Sets of 10 available for S&H
- Large 24"x36" size
- Classrooms
- Dealership
- Mall exhibits
- In trailers
- At trail rides and meetings

# OHV Management Workshops

- Open communications – Agencies, OHV Recreationists, Environmental Community
- Present range of management options
- Success stories – trail systems that work
- Four “E’s” philosophy
- Educational efforts
- Recreationist Needs and Desires
- ATV, ROV, and Dirt Bike training
- Field trips (Seats on Seats)

# GREAT TRAILS

## A Guide to Providing Quality OHV Trails and Experiences





# Management Guidelines for OHV Recreation

Written by Tom M. Crimmins

In association with the  
National Off-Highway Vehicle  
Conservation Council



# NOHVCC Land Advocacy Workshop Series DVD

