

# OFF-ROAD VEHICLE ADVISORY WORKGROUP (ORVAW)

## Meeting Minutes

February 21, 2020

6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center (RAM)

### **ATTENDEES**

#### **ORVAW**

Thomas Dunn  
Donald Helsel  
James Hunt  
James Maike  
Curt Brower  
Keith Lynch  
Paul Hittie

#### **DNR**

Ron Olson  
Jacklin Blodgett  
Jessica Holley  
Nikki Van Bloem  
Annalisa Centofanti  
Paige Perry  
Paul Yauk  
Nicole Toman  
Cary Foster

Meeting called to order by the ORVAW Chair, Thomas Dunn at 6:20 p.m.

### **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

#### *Workgroup Responsibilities*

ORVAW Chair, Thomas Dunn, started the meeting by outlining some of the workgroups responsibilities. He said the group engages with the public to gather thoughts, concerns, and ideas. The ORV trail system is multi use, meaning all trail users will benefit from improvements. Thomas Dunn asked Donald Helsel to chair, being he was not feeling well. Donald Helsel agreed to chair.

The ORVAW members introduced themselves:

1. James hunt represents lower peninsula trail riding community and Lansing Motorcycle Club.
2. Keith Lynch represents Sportsman's Off-Road Vehicle Association of Delta County.
3. Donald Helsel represents upper peninsula ORV trail riding community.
4. Paul Hittie represents Great Lakes Four Wheel Drive.
5. Jim Maike represents the ORV community.
6. Curt Brower represents the Silver Lake Recreational Association.
7. Thomas Dunn, ORVAW chair.

Donald Helsel made a motion to approve September 11, 2019 draft meeting minutes. The committee unanimously approved.

Donald Helsel asked for approval to take the agenda items out of order, and the committee members unanimously approved.

The following additional items were requested from the committee to add to the February 21, 2020 agenda.

- ❖ Discussion around Grayling military reservation (h)

Motion was made to approve the February 21, 2020 agenda with the additional item, committee members unanimously approved.

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### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### *ORV Funding/Budget*

*Budget Overview*

*Project List*

*License Sales*

Paul Yauk, reported on the funding, stating the 2020 ORV grants have been sent out. The upcoming release of Motorized Automated Grants Given (MAGG) will improve process times. ORV permits are increasing each year. Donald Helsel asked if the ORV permit information will be incorporated into the MAGG data? Paul Yauk said the information will be available in the MAGG system.

Thomas Dunn asked what the important items on the project list for funding and budget review are. Paul Yauk will get the list from the trails engineer and send out the list to the committee. Thomas Dunn asked if the projects are funded, and Paul Yauk said yes. Donald Helsel added that he appreciates Nikki Van Bloem sending out the supplemental list.

License sales and ORV handbook was brought up by the committee. DNR Law Enforcement Division (LED), Cary Foster, said the handbook is behind schedule due to an internal position issue. Cary Foster hopes to have a finalized copy ready to the publisher within a couple weeks. He is not sure of the turnaround once it is in the publishers hands. It was mentioned that DNR UP Trails Coordinator, Ronald Yesney is the liaison with LED working to coordinate the review of the handbook before submitting sent to the publisher. Donald Helsel wanted to be assured DNR Trails staff will review the handbook with LED before submitting to the publisher. Donald Helsel requested that LED to keep in touch through this process. The committee discussed that electronic versions will be desirable for future publications.

#### *Mr. Houston's Concerns*

Thomas Dunn started this conversation by addressing ORV damage on private and public land property. Mr. Dunn requested to connect Mr. Houston with the right people by end of this meeting. Everyone would like to see resolution on damages and looking for a remedy to avoid future incidents.

#### *Mr. Houston*

Don Helsel said his concerns are noted by the committee. Thomas Dunn said this is an issue that is happening all over. The ORV group is not a committee that can make decisions, but rather a group that advises the State to make changes or improvements. Mr. Houston stated violators should be fined and reprimanded accordingly. Thomas Dunn said Mr. Houston will need to connect with the right people. Mr. Houston requested that when a license is purchased, it should be downloaded to have access to the ORV handbook. Don Helsel commented that ORV handbooks can be difficult to come by, saying most of the chain stores do not have them. Jessica Holley asked for an approximate count of the current stock in storage right now. Don Helsel said not sure of the count, but it is low. James Hunt will check quantities and get back to Jessica Holley. Mr. Houston confirmed that he realizes there will not be a resolution tonight. Ron Olson stated some of the damages from Mr. Houston's pictures are not on state land, they are right of ways and such. Ron Olson said maybe a marketing theme can curtail some of this activity. Thomas Dunn said there is a restoration fund where projects are in process, but they cannot fix every

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problem out there. Mr. Houston is seeking acknowledgement from the committee and DNR for assistance to develop an overall plan.

#### *Nicole Toman – Event Permits*

Nicole Toman introduced an “Event Form” (PR4761), which is rather new, and is to be used when requesting events. The DNR created this form to make it more accommodating for trail events. This form does not replace the Wheeled Motorized Activity (WMV / PR0358) form. The PR4761 forms allows for a simple review, but provides information for follow-up, in case of damages or unexpected incidents. Curt Brower asked if this form replaces the Silver Lake event form, Nicole Toman replied no. This form does not require as much information as the standard event form. Paul Hittie asked how this form will make its way to Law Enforcement Division. Nicole Toman said the form requires signatures, which will be reviewed by designated DNR staff. The signed form will be returned to the applicant. Don Hesel asked how far in advance should you submit the PR4761 application, Nicole Toman said 2-4 weeks, or as soon as you can. Nicole Toman said this form was created specifically for ORV user groups.

#### *Marketing Efforts – Jessica Holley*

Jessica Holley reported that Doug Donnelly, a co-worker, is working on marketing efforts by connecting with the marketing and outreach division. Some of the scope is for targeting ride right emails, media campaigns, and press releases. Please send any thoughts or ideas to Doug Donnelly or Jessica Holley. Thomas Dunn would like to send a message out via social media with more information surround the PA288. Ron Olson said social media is inexpensive and agrees with that approach. Don Hesel asked for an update on the video that was taken recently. Jim Maike has a drone video he can send to Jessica Holley.

#### *MAAG – Jessica Holley*

Jessica Holley gave a quick update on the MAGG Program stating that is moving forward at a fast pace. The MAGG team is engaging grant sponsors with online training. Some challenges they have encountered are tech savvy users. Jessica Holley has training manuals that will share with the ORVAW members.

#### *Maintenance Expectations*

Thomas Dunn asked *about* GPS locations and pictures for every tree cut on trails for maintenance. Paul Yauk said he will check with stewardship.

### **UPDATES**

#### *Grayling Trails – Paul Hittie*

Paul Hittie reported on the ORV use of state forest trails around the military base in Grayling. Has there been a change in the policy? Nicole Toman said it is the State Fire and Rescue Division (FRD) that is handling this, and she will check in with the department to make sure there is consistency. Don Hesel asked Nicole Toman to share the information once she finds out.

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### *Holly Oaks*

The ORVAW committee recognized that a donation from MAGNA Corporation was made to make an obstacle feature at the Holly Oaks ORV Park. Oakland County Parks hired a consultant from Utah to design the course. Several planning meetings have taken place. Spring will be groundbreaking. The course may be called Mount Magna.

### *Silver Lake*

Curt Brower presented a PowerPoint, highlighting improvements made to the park over the last five years.

### *DNR Regional Updates - written updates*

#### **MEETING UPDATES**

This will be discussed internally, in consideration of meeting time.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

Meeting adjourned by Thomas Dunn at 8:01 p.m.

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## Updates for Trails Advisory Groups meeting, Feb 21-22, 2020

### **North Central LP (Paige Perry)**

#### MULTI-PROGRAM PROJECTS

- Alpena to Hillman Phase 1 to Herron with 2 bridges- newest update involves a new rule for wetlands mitigation. Currently working with EGLE and MDOT to determine status.
- Little Black River Bridge on the NCST temporary 8' wide bridge in place to avoid winter reroute onto ~2 miles of city streets. Design is engineered and bids came in significantly over cost estimates. Still seeking funding to construct new.
- Gaylord South Trail outcry over the control structures installed to separate trail from RR seems to have subdued. Gaylord Area Snowmobile Club, Otsego County, City of Gaylord Chamber, Lake State Railway and DNR (specifically club contact Scott Thompson) have done a great job coordinating a consistent message to the public in terms of transparent information on the resurfacing project and the snowmobile public.
- Rogers City Spur Proposal
  - 'Bypass' Trail proposal was approved contingent on MDOT and PIRC permissions. MDOT permissions received. PIRC denied. Many thanks to Dave Campo of PIST and Matt Treinen DNR Contact! There is good momentum now to continue to pursue a hybrid multi-use proposal using some Carmeuse (that would trade for DNR owned corridor) and some MDOT.
  - Swan River Bridge on Rogers City Spur is slated for engineering in 20. Construct in 21-22.
- MDOT initiated meeting to discuss realignment of NWST along US 31 due to upcoming road project

#### NAW

- Event Permits: Great Lks Relay, Fundraiser in the Jordan Valley
- Trail Proposals: 3 for NCT keep stalling... Still trying to keep moving (will get finalized before spring!)
- Pathway 'you-are-here' maps: Working to finalize new template for next batch of pathway signs
- Norway Ridge EGLE Permit for multi-site maintenance is nearing final approval (many thanks to Local DNR Contact Blake Gingrich at PH Hoeft SP)
- Project Bridges on
  - NCT/IBT- Carp River Bridge - engineering cost estimates and structural options are being reviewed currently with NCTA, consultant
  - HCP - Black River Bridge - Engineering services are requested (1:3) for brand new build (this bridge was removed 3 years ago due to structural instability)
  - HCP - Pigeon River Bridge - Engineering services are requested (2:3) for evaluation, likely removal of existing and rebuild (this bridge was repaired 7 years ago and is twisting again due to poor design)
  - Pickerel Lake Pathway - Pickerel River Bridge - Engineering services are requested (3:3) for design only (hoping that staff and volunteers can remove current footbridge and replace in kind)

#### ETS

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- Trail Proposals: Inspiration Point EQ Pathway and Horse Camp proposal near Cheboygan pending

### SAW

- JVTC Pinney Bridge Rd: Letter sent to JKVTC to explain Right of Way questions brought up at last SAW meeting
- Event Permits: Vintage Snowmobile out of Indian River FOE and Petoskey Snowmobile Club
- Incident Reports: Derailment of train in Otsego Co, Single snowmobile impact to posts, Snowmobile stuck in RR Switch

### ORVAW

- Event Permits: Six Days of Michigan, Rites Of Spring -working with Elissa Buck to establish ROS into a multi-year event permitting pilot
- Grading Contracts for next summer – working to secure agreements/ contracts to work in 2 additional maintenance grades on dual use Routes that have been historically graded only once in late fall

### **Northeastern LP (Amy Swainston)**

#### **NAW**

- Greg Kinser attended last Grayling Trail Committee Group (interest in Pure Mi Trail designation for water trail, crack repair of existing non-motorized trail); as well as meeting with Road Commission and Township supervisors for local community fundraising for Iron Belle trail progress within the County
- Assisted City of Clare by providing a letter of commitment from RTP funds for the MDNR match of \$300,000 to complete a 2.5-mile gap in the Pere Marquette trail which is a match to a TAP grant
- NEMCOG – Sunrise Committee is wrapping up preliminary plans for extending a bicycle / pedestrian path from Alpena to Oscoda.
- Continuous work by NEMCOG in wrapping up preliminary plans for Roscommon, Ogemaw. Continued detailed preliminary plans and designs for Iosco, Crawford.
- Recently Trails have been getting some snow resulting in improved groomed ski trails and reducing the hard packed – icy conditions. (Ogemaw, Tisdale, Mason Tract)

#### **SAW**

- Trail inspection of the Thumb area trails was done in early Feb. and substantial signage was done to all the trails to be open for the February snow systems. Efforts are continuing to update the maps to align with current land rights and Trail proposal information.
- Kalkaska county snowmobile – groomer incident/accident; speed was noted as the contributing factor in the initial report.
- (Continue to have numerous inquiries at Customer Service Center / Law Enforcement contacts related to wheeled vehicle use on groomed snowmobile trails. Many of which were inventoried as forest road, county seasonal road or are part of the designated ORV route system)

#### **ETS:**

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- Proposed EMR CCAA adjustments to FRD for areas where Shore to Shore trail encroached into the protection habitat to lessen the reporting / impacts the threatened species near Grayling.

### **ORV:**

- A wheeled motorized activity form (PR0358) was created to facilitate notification of the activity by the organizer to the Department and to allow for staff review of the activity to determine whether the event permit criteria has been met. This form establishes a consistent mechanism for organizers to provide basic activity information for evaluation. Staff were provided the form in Feb. and will be posted on the DNR Website soon.
- Concern expressed by clubs seeking request for reimbursements (RFR) to reduce backlog of requests and follow thru with reimbursement requests. This may be resolved with MAGG but there is a need to define and standardize ways to keep sponsors in the loop of who's has / has not approved the RFR. I.E.: If it has been received by Trail Specialist; if it has been checked; approved for payment to Lansing. Locally I have responded to RFR confirming receipt and included the club when approved – processed on to Lansing.
- (Continue to have numerous inquiries at Customer Service Center / Law Enforcement contacts related to wheeled vehicle use on groomed snowmobile trails. Many of which were inventoried as forest road, county seasonal road or are part of the designated ORV route system)
- Proposed EMR CCAA adjustments to FRD for areas where ORV trails encroached into the protection habitat to lessen the reporting / impacts the threatened species. (Leota, Old State House)
- ORV Jonesville Bride – have consultant hired to look at bridge and evaluate current condition and improvements for connectivity.

### **MTAC:**

Continue to have numerous inquiries at Customer Service Center / Law Enforcement contacts related to wheeled vehicle use on groomed snowmobile trails that are dual designated.

### **Northwestern LP (Scott Slavin)**

Current priority project list funded or partially funded for 2020

#### **Non-Motorized Projects:**

1. East Branch of the Hersey River culvert replacement
  - a. Location: White Pine Trail, Ashton MI East Branch Hersey River
  - b. Status: Engineering and design complete, project is bid out.
  - c. Cost: 1.1 million
  - d. Funding: "funded" Project was part of the 11-mile paving project from Reed City to Leroy. The remaining funding for the paving project will be used for culvert replacement.
2. Rogers Farm Pond culvert replacement

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- a. Location: White Pine Trail, Stanwood
  - b. Status: Engineering and design complete, project is bid out
  - c. Cost: \$382000
  - d. Funding: “funded” using a trust fund grant and part of a 3 million MEDC grant.
3. Cold Creek culvert replacement
- a. Location: White Pine Trail, South of Big Rapids
  - b. Status: Engineering and design is underway
  - c. Cost: Unknown
  - d. Funding: “funded” using MEDC grant for 3 million.
4. Byers Creek culvert replacement
- a. Location White Pine Trail, south of Big Rapids
  - b. Status: Engineering and design is underway
  - c. Cost: Unknown
  - d. Funding: “funded” using MEDC grant for 3 million.
5. Tustin culvert replacement
- a. Location: White Pine Trail, Tustin
  - b. Status: Engineering and design underway
  - c. Cost: \$ 500,000
  - d. Funding: “funded” funding has been provided form the snowmobile supplemental fund.
6. Reed City Covered Bridge replacement
- a. Location: White Pine Trail, Reed City
  - b. Status: Bridge inspection report and conceptual design is complete.
  - c. Cost: 1.2 million
  - d. Funding: “not funded” Bridge inspection/conceptual design was funded. Additional funding for replacement has been pursued with TAP grant and NRTF grant, both unsuccessful.

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7. 29-mile paving project Big Rapids to Sand Lake
  - a. Location: White Pine Trail, Big Rapids to Sand Lake
  - b. Status: Culvert replacement is underway, RFP's need to be submitted for engineering and design.
  - c. Cost: Estimated cost 8-9 million
  - d. Funding: "not fully funded" 3 million has been acquired by a MEDC grant and is being utilized to repair several culverts that need to be repaired prior to paving. The remaining balance of MEDC grant will be used for engineering and design.
  
8. Lewis Bridge Abutment project
  - a. Location: Betsie Valley Trail, Elberta
  - b. Status: Engineering and design is complete, Natural Rivers Permit is out for review
  - c. Cost: \$79,000
  - d. Funding: "funded" RTP funding and friends group matching grant has been utilized to fund the project.
  
9. Re-Surfacing project Crystal Lake Segment
  - a. Location: Betsie Valley Trail, Beulah
  - b. Status: Engineering and design is complete
  - c. Cost: \$300,000
  - d. Funding: "partially funded" Friends group received a NRTF grant for \$150k, RTP grant for \$150,000 has been submitted.
  
10. Betsie Valley Trail Master Planning design
  - a. Location: Betsie Valley Trail, Frankfort to Copemish
  - b. Status: Conceptual design being completed by Johnson and Hill
  - c. Cost: \$40,000
  - d. Funding: "funded" Friends of the BVT funded this project.
  
11. Sign Project Pere Marquette Trail
  - a. Location: Baldwin to Clare
  - b. Status: A project request needs to be submitted
  - c. Cost: \$100,000

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- d. Funding: “funded” RTP funding has been allocated to this project.

### 12. Cadillac Pathway single track development

- a. Location: Cadillac Pathway, Cadillac
- b. Status: Mapping underway for 12 miles of new single track
- c. Cost: Unknown
- d. Funding: NMMBA and DNR seeking grants

### **Snowmobile Program**

### 13. Bear Creek Swamp re-route

- a. Location: Free Soil, Lake and Mason Counties
- b. Status: EPA permit for construction is out for review
- c. Cost: \$130,000
- d. Funding: “funded” Funding was provided from the snowmobile program.

### 14. Fife Lake re-route/Easement acquisition

- a. Location: Fife Lake, Trail 5
- b. Status: Re-route construction is completed; easement acquisition has been requested.
- c. Cost: Unknown
- d. Funding: “unfunded” Request for use of snowmobile easement fund has been requested.

### 15. Manistee River Bridge decking project

- a. Location: Betsie Valley Trail, Mesick
- b. Status: Inspection and scoping report has been completed, decking project is on hold
- c. Cost: 1 million
- d. Funding: “unfunded” Inspection and scoping report was funded with RTP dollars. Engineering/design need to be funded along with construction this is estimated to be 1 million.

### 16. Kaleva to Chief snowmobile easement purchase

- a. Location: Chief

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- b. Status: Property acquisition is underway and scheduled for presentation to the NRC for approval.
- c. Cost: \$80,000 for property and \$100,000 for land clearing and capping of the surface.
- d. Funding: “funded” Snowmobile acquisition fund has been utilized to fund this project.

#### Off Road Vehicle Program

##### 17. Missaukee Junction ORV trail reroutes

- a. Location: Cadillac
- b. Status: Project was complete in 2019 but a portion of trail was obliterated by a timber harvest
- c. Cost: Unknown
- d. Funding: FRD will utilize timber sale management fund to complete the reroute on the obliterated trail.

##### 18. Missaukee County 2 unnamed creek bridge replacements

- a. Location: Missaukee County, Miss-kal trail
- b. Status: Engineering and designing is underway
- c. Cost: \$500,000
- d. Funding: “funded” funded with 2019 supplemental.

##### 19. Sharman RD Trail Head construction

- a. Location: Grand Traverse County, Grand Traverse Motorcycle Trail
- b. Status: Trail proposal is still under review
- c. Cost: \$20,000
- d. Funding: “funded pending proposal” The site is a natural gas pumping station that has been de-commissioned. The gas company will be helping to grade, gravel and improve the access road.

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**FROM: PAUL GABERDIEL**

### **FEBRUARY 2020**

Workgroup updates,

**MTAC-** Haywire Grade has been awarded the 2020 Pure Michigan Trail award. The Haywire is also celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a rail trail this year. Events celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary will be snowmobile, Equestrian, Bicycling and ORV. We have had 3 major storms in the East UP. Because of the heavy damage seen on the snowmobile trails, trail maintainers my want to plan for additional trail maintenance work this spring.

**ETS-** Haywire Grade 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary event will on June 6, 2020.

**NAW-** Haywire 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary biking event will be on August 22, 2020. We have had 3 major storms in the East UP. Because of the heavy damage seen on the snowmobile trails, trail maintainers my want to plan for additional trail maintenance work this spring.

**ORVAW-** Haywire 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary ORV event will be on October 3, 2020.

Haywire Grade has been named as a Pure Michigan Trail. We have had 3 major storms in the East UP. Because of the heavy damage seen on the snowmobile trails, trail maintainers my want to plan for additional trail maintenance work this spring.

**SAW-** Haywire 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary Snowmobile event will be February 29, 2020.

Haywire Grade has been named as a Pure Michigan Trail.

Ride Right campaign placemats have been distributed to 7 food locations for last weekend, working on distribution to 4 more for this weekend.

Haywire 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary events participation registration can be done online at [www.visitmanistique.com](http://www.visitmanistique.com)