

## **NOHVCC Conference and Knobby Ridge Updates**

I recently attended the annual NOHVCC off-road conference (8/20/12 – 8/25/12), this year held near Great Falls, Montana. The riding was great, the presentations and discussions even better.

The conference also included the second meeting of the newly formed INOHVAA, the International OHV Administrators Association. Wisconsin is represented by Gary Eddy, the Wisconsin DNR ATV/Snowmobile Bureau of Law Enforcement Administrator. The purpose of INOHVAA is to promote best management practice of recreational OHV use throughout the worldwide OHV community. So far over half the states have joined, as have the Canadian provinces. New this year Australia has joined. I met Steve Pretzel, the President of the Recreational Trailbike Riders Assn. - Western Australia. All I can say is, after hearing his talk I'm glad we are much further along with getting OHV recreation accepted in the US. Australia is currently and successfully fighting a national discourse on the "damn trail bikers" that puts them in the same public mind set as outlaw bikers. They have successfully use information from the NOHVCC web site to start changing the minds of the electorate and agencies in Australia. Seems that the fight for trails is the same worldwide. It also appears that New Zealand is much more friendly to OHV recreation.

INOHVAA presented a study labeled "Results of Ambient Air Measurements in Proximity to an ATV Trail Superior National Forest 2012" This is important, some anti-OHV groups have been claiming we pollute the air and should be removed from the forests and public/private lands. The results showed higher air pollution whenever a car or truck passed near the trail. Nice ammunition to have when these type of discussions rear up.

There was also a discussion on standardizing trail signs. The "Michigan Motorized Trail Signing Handbook" was presented as an example to work from. There is a lot of work to do here but at least a discussion of the issue was started.

Mobile workshops were held. The first one was at the [Pipestone BLM riding area](#), 30,000 acres with an extensive riding area for all OHVs. Adjacent was a 170,000 acre national forest with many more miles of trails that connected to the BLM land. I would recommend the area for riders, it is open year round and winters are mild. The trails are open year-round.

The other area was the [Bull Run Ranch](#), a 13,000 acre private riding area with memberships available. In the mountain foothills, trails are from mild to wild. And steep, with drop-offs and lots of rocks. Both areas we witnessed trail rehab methods and new trails being built with motorized equipment brought to the conference.

Maintenance standards were discussed along with differences from state to state. We are currently dealing with an inadequate manual being used in Wisconsin that the Wisconsin Foresters Association has been told to use. This is part of the problem we are dealing with at Knobby Ridge MC Park in Clark County. Bridget Brown and the DNR staff are currently writing a new manual that also addresses OHV recreation, since the current manual does not mention OHV anywhere in the manual including not even one photo of an ATV, OHM, or Jeep. The current Wisconsin manual is titled "Wisconsin's Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality; Field Manual for loggers, landowners, and land managers". Nowhere does it mention single track, ATV trails, or recreational activities or just how to deal with water quality so forests can be "certified" for timber sales. This manual need to be recalled and replaced and has no place in dealing with public recreation in Wisconsin forests. It does include some good material, but not regarding the latest best practices for OHV trail

construction of sustainable trails.

**Economics of Recreation:** The Western Governors Association decided to find out the economic impacts of recreation. The MIC stepped forward and funded the portions of the studies that dealt with Off-Highway Vehicles. Please read the report, it's amazing how much clout we can have when the dollars generated by OHV recreation are known. An FYI, the photo on page 4 in the [report](#) showing a KTM rider in front of an ATV rider is yours truly, taken by NOHVCC staff on our property in Random Lake. The photo was also used by the Michigan CCC for a cover of their 2009-2010 trail riding guide of Michigan Trails. Go Wisconsin!

<http://www.westgov.org/>

<http://www.westgov.org/component/content/article/261-news-2012/401-outdoor-recreation-a-646-billion-industry>

**GPS technology for OHV Management:** providing GPS maps of the MVUM (Motor Vehicle User Map) that the USFS provides is now optional for the Forest Service. Only about 20 National Forests provide the service, all out West. It would be cool for Wisconsin to follow suit but we need to ask for it. There are apps out there that provide zoom features as well as print options for the GPS tracks.

This past Monday evening (8/27/12) there was a meeting at Knobby Ridge with the County Foresters. The Foresters led a discussion on what has been happening, what has not been happening, and the route to getting the park reopened. The club will participate with the Foresters on a trail tour to identify everything that still need to be done to open both the kids loop as well as the main 6 mile loop. They would like to have all trail crew leaders participate in this trail examination. That is where the riders come in. The local club needs help. The trails are maintained by the MOTR (Midwest Trail Riders Association)

<http://motrweb.webs.com/>

The club has a few very dedicated local and semi-local members who work on the trails with motorized equipment, but it's not enough. They need help in laying material on the hills to make them sustainable plus general maintenance such as trimming the trail edges, filling ruts, etc. They also need trail crew chiefs who would be willing to lead a team on trail maintenance. These Trail Masters should know the proper techniques for building/maintaining/rehabilitating trails or who are willing to learn the techniques as well as lead a team of your friends in this activity. I have volunteered to lead a team representing WOHMA and am looking for volunteers myself. I have recently taken the Wisconsin DNR Trail Master Certification Course and will volunteer to teach a class as needed.

The club is looking for Trail Masters and their crew of volunteers to help in the trail rehab effort. Discussion has centered on a crew of volunteers adopting a trail section and being responsible for that portion of the trail. WOHMA has volunteered to take the last mile section of the 6 mile loop, from the bridge crossing the small creek to the culvert at the trail end where we ride through to the parking area. Trail work days will include trail work plus bringing your bike to ride in the section after the work is done. There must be some reward for the work done, but if you do volunteer the day will be mostly work before test inspection of the trail.

There's a new Facebook page created to share info on work days called "[Team Nunbus Trail Crew](#)". Like it to be added to the updates if you're on Facebook.

**IMPORTANT:** There will be a meeting in Neillsville on September 12<sup>th</sup> in front of the County Council on the future of Knobby Ridge. **The future of the trail system will be on the agenda for the meeting which will take place at 9:00 AM in the county board room on September**

12<sup>th</sup>. A large number of riders is requested. There were 24 riders at the meeting at Knobby Ridge with the Clark County Forestry and Parks Department, we would like even more for the council meeting. If you come, please be respectful and willing to be part of the solution.

Larry Strangfeld will be the focal point of the trail rehabilitation effort. Please contact him at his e-mail if you are interested in helping. Also consider joining the club, there is strength in numbers. If you want to help with the WOHMA trail crew please contact me as well.

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***JOIN THE CLUB - BECOME INVOLVED!***

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