

State Trails Council Meeting (11 April 2012)

The following are items of interest to our user group.

Most people will want to know the progress of the Motorized Recreation Area that the DNR is trying to get established in southwest Wisconsin.

They got pretty far into the process, but for now they have not been able to strike a deal (yet, anyway). The negotiations are confidential so we don't know the details, but we do know that the project they have been working on is on hold.

The Governor and the DNR are both enthusiastic about establishing a motorized recreation area in the southern part of Wisconsin where demand is the greatest. The Governor has been specific in emphasizing that point.

The DNR envisions a regional facility that will take in riders from surrounding states as well. Everyone is sure that the park will be a huge success. The issue now is getting a deal worked out for land.

There is some strong interest in trying to locate a park between Milwaukee and Madison. This would certainly hit the spot with the DNR's priority of trying to bring the facility to where the users live.

Clubs need to start looking at some potential local trail projects. This may involve trying to get some trails built in county forests. This time next year the DNR will be accepting grant applications (again) to get some more trail work done. Not sure what will become of Recreational Trails Program money in the future so we need to at least get something done next year if we can.

As a side note, it looks like we will be able to introduce the OHM legislation in January so sometime next year we will be able to generate funds for motorcycle trails.

We need to get in on the master plan for land that is becoming available at the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant. About 1845 acres (maybe more) of the 7345 acres available will go to the DNR. This land has no traditional uses so we stand a very good chance of working single track motorcycles into the plan for part of the land. I will check out what we need to do to get our desires into the plan. I will also coordinate with WOHMA and perhaps the Madison Motorcycle Club to try to get some local sponsorship and some organized groups in on working the OHM issue at the old Badger site. I'll work this with this with those organizations and will share information here as well.

As I mentioned, we now have dual sport motorcycle access to the Wolf River and Nicolet State Trails IN FOREST COUNTY. There is an issue afoot about keeping motorized off of the Wolf River State Trail (for the portion along the Wolf River) in Langlade County. We'll see how this develops. Right now it looks non-motorized.

The Department of Tourism spoke about what they have to offer as far as promoting some recreational interests. Alex Bub spoke with them about adding motorcycle trails to the ATV trail booklet when they reprint it. This has great potential once we get some things squared away about where we will have access to ATV trails (post OHM legislation) and as we get more OHM trails. No matter when the booklet is republished, we can offer what we have in place at that time. Trail access is going to be in transition for a couple of years as we work through access issues on the county level once legislation is in place. We may lose some

and we may gain some as far as ATV trails being open to OHM/DS goes. Hopefully we will gain in the long run.

Alex Bub reported that a portion of the Knobby Ridge MC Trail may reopen in June. Watch the web site for details as things develop.

We really need to get going on trying to find places to develop motorcycle trails in areas that will serve our interests. It takes a long time to get a project to move, so we need to seriously work on this now. Local clubs and individuals are the key to getting something done in a local area. It needs to start there. "Outsiders" can help with getting it done, but we will do the best if local people are seeking projects in their home area.

Along with that, if anyone has any serious leads on potential land for a motorized recreation area in the southern part of Wisconsin, let me know. Sometimes this is how the DNR gets onto a potential site. I will be happy to advance anything that has potential.

Tom Chase contacted me about an initiative they were working on with an event in the UP. He thought it might be a good idea to include ATV riders in an event like the one sponsored by the Wisconsin Trail Riders (single track/dual sport, and now maybe ATVs). I think it is a great idea. I spoke with Randy Harden of the Wisconsin ATV Association about this initiative and suggested that we talk about doing something along this line in the future. We need to start working together with ATV folks so we develop more understanding and respect for each other's recreational interests. I have said many times that people need to stop taking shots at other motorized user groups. We need to stand shoulder to shoulder to deal with people who are down on motorized users in general. Sharing some event time, even if we are on separate rides while on the trail, is a fine way to foster a good relationship. Keep in mind that the ATV user group has us outgunned as far as membership, money, political influence, and existing trails. Might be a good idea for motorized users groups to complement each other.

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