

Wisconsin ATV Association

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October 3, 2006

Secretary Scott Hassett  
Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 7921  
Madison, WI 53707-7921

Re: Support for Emergency 13.10 request – County Law Enforcement Aids

Dear Secretary Hassett:

Our organization represents the best interest of the Wisconsin ATV registration program. As you are aware there are over 300,000 ATVs now registered here in Wisconsin. The health and well being of the registration program is of paramount importance to our leadership as well as to our thousands of Wisconsin ATV Association (WATVA) members.

The majority of our ATV trails in this state are on county managed properties. While the "Ride Smart" Trail Patrol Ambassador program has been very successful in its capacity to *inform and educate* thousands of riders how to recreate responsibly and ethically, the self-policing aspects of the program need sufficient credentialed law enforcement officers in place to work effectively.

WATVA understands the value our state conservation wardens play in protecting our natural resources while enforcing the laws of many other outdoor recreational programs. County law enforcement is equally important in that regard. Both law enforcement types are an integral part of protecting the well being of the Wisconsin ATV registration program.

The County Law Enforcement Aids program is currently funded at \$200,000 per year. ATV numbers continue to increase on trails and in parks resulting in additional hours being patrolled. Therein lies the immediate emergency, counties that participated in the ATV LE Aids were prorated at 65%. We all know counties will not be in a financial position to justify that kind of loss doing ATV patrols, at a time when the program needs them the most!

This situation creates a dire situation in that many county LE departments will be forced to **curtail** instead of increase ATV patrol hours. In discussions with our professional affiliates at the Wisconsin County Forests Association (WCFA) we

agreed to support an additional \$200,000 via an emergency 13.10 request. In checking budget numbers with the state ATV coordinator Larry Freidig (Community of Financial Assistance) we were advised the ATV account has sufficient underestimated revenue available due to higher than anticipated registrations to fund this 13.10 request.

In further discussions with Gary Eddy (Bureau of Law Enforcement) and with Larry, we further support a preliminary request for the next budget cycle to increase the annual appropriations for County LE Aids to **\$500,000 per year**. It is our understanding by implementing this emergency 13.10 request the county sheriff's shortfall would be covered, therefore remedying the alternative which would greatly damage the ATV program.

We appreciate your consideration and thank you for your past involvement in our growing program.

Sincerely,

Randy Harden  
President  
Wisconsin ATV Association

CC: Gary Eddy, Larry Freidig – DNR

Colette Matthews, William Walker, Mike Peterson - WCFA