

A Voice From Vilas County

Our state needs trails to get people outside, trails to exercise our bodies and relax our minds, trails to allow citizens to witness the beauty and diversity of our natural environment, and trails to provide opportunities for tourism. The Wisconsin DNR's SCORP Report clearly shows that people living in and visiting our state enjoy being outdoors. The percentages in that report demonstrate that silent sports are the most important forms of recreation in our state by far.

Silent sport trails are healthy. Our epidemic of being overweight and its associated health problems is treatable with outdoor physical activity. People need to have quality opportunities for this activity they can access without huge expenditures in time and travel.

WISCONSIN DOES NOT NEED MORE ATV TRAILS

Clearly shown in the SCORP report is the fact that ATV riding is incompatible with all silent sports. Therefore increasing ATV usage could decrease outdoor physical activity and our citizens health.

Not providing more ATV trails might mean that some people won't be riding ATVs, so they will either find something else to do outside or they will stay inside and watch TV. Either alternative is healthier for them and the environment. Also obvious is the fact that we don't need more opportunities to use imported oil.

Wisconsin provides plenty of chances to ride around and enjoy the states beauty. Its network of roads is already here for all to enjoy. We don't need a new network for every form of rubber tired gas propelled vehicle that is marketed.

We don't need ATV trails for the economy of every area in our state. Wisconsin's northern counties rely heavily on tourism to support their economies. Northern tourist spending is at its highest in Door County, with no ATV trails and third highest in Vilas County, again no ATV trails. These counties are blessed with natural beauty, peace and quiet that have drawn tourists for over a century. Adding ATV trails to these areas would compromise the quality of what they already have to offer and their citizens have repeatedly voiced this concern. Yet the WDNR is looking at putting ATV trails in Vilas County even though Vilas county citizens have shown by referendum that they oppose ATV trails. This is an example of a small well funded group pressuring our government to bring an activity into an area where the majority of the citizens living there know it is a bad idea and have demonstrated their opposition.

LET'S LEAVE VILAS COUNTY ATV TRAIL FREE!

With increasing demand for the limited space on our public lands it becomes quite clear that activities like ATV riding, which need dozens of miles per hour of use and disrupt any other recreation in the vicinity are too consumptive for our limited resource. While at this time it may appear that we have room for everybody and everything that certainly will not be the case in the near future. By using our trail resources for silent sports we can maximize our potential for healthy outdoor physical activities while minimizing our potential for environmental degradation, there-by keeping Wisconsin the wonderful place to live and visit it has been for generations past and yet to come.

Thank you,
Al Eschenbauch

As a post script to my comments you have before you I would like to add that as the area national forests are providing less opportunities for ATV use, as the county forests are asking the state to take some of the "burden", as I receive more and more reports of restaurants and hotels no longer courting - ~~even~~ the ATV customers - even shunning them, I wonder why the State of Wisconsin would want to encourage what is obviously a Bad Idea form of recreation.

I would also like to see some of the ATV Funds set aside to clean up and repair the damage caused by ATVs both on Private and public land,

Another portion of those funds should be designated for Invasive Species monitoring and eradication. ATVs are a Ideal vehicle for transporting Invasive seeds and the disturbed soil they create ~~are~~ is an excellent seed bed. These Pockets of Invasive Vegetation must be dealt with before they spread further.

Thank You