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From: Mary Fleming [<mailto:mjfleming@charter.net>]

Sent: Wednesday, November 22, 2006 12:34 PM

To: Sen.Breske; Schmidt, Dan; Patronsky, Mark; Legislative Council; planning@co.fond-du-lac.wi.us; rrussell@fdlreporter.com; ians@riponprinters.com; ideas@wpr.org; wbay@wbay.com; jkuszyns@sheboygan.gannett.com; eniese@thenorthwestern.com; athompson@postcrescent.com; editorial@gokewauneeconomy.com; Brian Davis

Subject: ATV use on state trails

There could be significant changes in the use of Wisconsin State Trails in the near future. In Fond du Lac County, ATV riders are petitioning to have year round access to the state trails, such as Wild Goose State Park Trail, Eisenbahn State Park Trail, Mascoutin Valley State Park Trail and Northwestern Trail. At the state level there is a Special Committee on State Trails Policy that is also exploring the use of ATVs on all of Wisconsin's State Trails throughout the state.

While I can not speak for all who use the trails during the warmer weather, most of whom I have spoken to are adamantly against ATV use on these groomed trails during the warmer months. These trails create healthy recreational opportunities by providing people of all ages with attractive, safe, accessible and low- or no-cost places to cycle, walk, hike, or jog. The trails are an escape from the motorized world into a more natural environment where wildlife is often viewed. Most of us are walking, pedaling or jogging and do so to increase our level of health and quality of life. There are few places to go to enjoy the kind of environment that the trails offer. In the winter, they are a wonderful highway for snowmobiles. It seems we have a very good system worked out to utilize the trails to their maximum.

If the trails are opened to ATVs year-round those that participate in silent sports or frequent the trails for healthy recreation will not be able to use the trails safely. These vehicles travel at speeds up to 60mph. A dog or a child or someone on a bicycle would have little chance if hit. We also know that alcohol will become a factor if the trails are opened up to year round use. At this time those of us who value our safety are able to use the trails outside of snowmobile season without having this be a safety factor.

Those of us with concerns that ATVs presence on these trails would inhibit their use for the intended purposes and be a detriment to the environments they transect need to speak out now. A meeting is scheduled December 6th at the City\County Shared Government Center, 160 South Macy Street, Fond du Lac at 6:15pm in Rm G. It is imperative that we have a large presence at this meeting in order to show committee members our rejection of this petition. I also urge you to write, email or call Senator Roger M. Breskeis who is the chair of the Special Committee of State Trails Policy. The next meeting of this committee is slated for January 4th. There is a government website with the committee members listed as well as agenda and minutes from past meetings.

http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/3_COMMITTEES/special%20COMMITTEES/2006/TRAIL/index.htm

If ATVs gain year round access to our state trails it would be a terrible loss to those of us that have had the trails increase our quality of life by their use and to those that may have found them in the future.

Sincerely
Mary Fleming
Ripon, WI