

[December 5, 2006]

Senator Breske, I request that you give serious consideration in exploratory meetings to the proposed policy to allow ATV's access to all state recreational trails throughout Wisconsin. My husband and I are avid bikers and we enjoy taking our vacations and/or short trips to locations in Wisconsin that have state bike trails or other recreational trails meant for hikers/bikers. We gladly pay any local, state, or annual trail fees to help support and maintain these trails.

We have become increasingly disappointed in the last couple years, however, in finding that some trails designated for non-motorized vehicle use only in the summer, particularly those further north in the state, are being used by ATVs. Trail composition and surface maintenance for safe biking is extremely difficult to maintain when ATVs use these trails. They leave major ruts and/or gravel piles that make biking less than enjoyable if not downright hazardous. I took a spill on one such "chewed up" trail this past summer, but fortunately had to contend only with scraped leg, elbow and hand on the ride back home. During that ride back home we actually had to pull off to the side when one ATVer went past. While he did so at a safe speed, we were not happy to have to "eat his dust". This was a trail that was supposed to be closed to ATVs.

While I wish that all recreational trails in the state of Wisconsin were for hikers/bikers exclusively due to the health benefits that can be obtained from biking vs. riding a motorized vehicle, we realize that there are others who enjoy different sports than we do. We recognize that snowmobilers also share some of these same recreational trails during the winter, but their use does not overlap with bike season and most often proper grooming and maintenance of trails after their use doesn't leave them impassable to bikers.

We are more than willing to let ATVs have the trails that already exist or may be developed specifically for them for summer or year round use. I admit, we have tried at times to bike on these types of trails when they were the only ones available in an area we were vacationing in, but we soon gave up as they were virtually impassable on bikes and we likely won't try it again in the future.

We ask please, however, that no current state recreational trails meant for biking/hiking be turned over for ATV or other motorized vehicle use during biking season. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

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