

Special Legislative Committee on Enhancing Recreational Trails for
Nonmotorized Use
Chairman, Senator Jim Sullivan

To: Committee member, Joel Patenaude
From: Sue Drum, Secretary for Northwoods Citizens for Responsible
Stewardship (www.ncrs.info)

Our grassroots group, NCRS was formed to promote non-motorized trails for
silent sport and nature study. We are strongly in favor of developing a
segregated and reliable money pool for maintaining and developing non-
motorized trails throughout Wisconsin.

NCRS originates in Vilas County, a county with 45% public land. In April 2008,
Vilas County residents as well as residents from all over Wisconsin and
neighboring states, defeated over 70 miles of ATV trails proposed by DNR
Stakeholders to run through the heart of the Northern Highland American Legion
State Forest. In 2004 Vilas County residents voted 63% against ATV trails on
County forest land. We oppose motorized trails because we wish to preserve the
health of our wild resources.

Statistics from the DNR 2005-2010 SCORP (Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor
Recreation Plan) support an increasing need for well maintained, non-motorized
trails in Wisconsin.

A SCORP Survey asked two questions:

1. What barriers are keeping you from recreation outdoors as often as you
would like?
Answers: a. increasing ATV usage and associated impact b. noise pollution
from motorized vehicles c. possible loss of silent sports facilities
2. What recreation issues will be growing in significance in the next 5 years?
Answers: a. and b. need more biking and hiking trails

In the top 12 Wisconsin outdoor activities, enjoying the peace and beauty of
nature ranks highest.

According to Vilas Counties Director of Tourism and Publicity, the main
attractions that draw tourists are fishing and water recreation, especially canoes
and kayaks, biking and hiking and birding. As our network of bike trails grows so
does our number of tourists. All chambers report a business upswing from
increased bicycle traffic and bicycle events.

The SCORP Report supports a greater user need and desire for non-motorized
trails.

1. Non-motorized, outdoor activity encourages exercise. Exercise is no longer
just "good" for you, it is being prescribed to treat obesity, depression and for

cancer and cardiac rehab. Non-motorized trails will augment any state health program

2. A connected network of non-motorized trails will encourage fossil fuel conservation at a time when oil prices are high and will continue to climb. Self-propulsion is an inexpensive, ancient form of alternative energy that works and should be encouraged.

The growing network of connected bike trails in Vilas County and throughout Wisconsin are the only true multi-use trails because they share so many uses: bike, hike, skateboard, roller blade, jog, walk for pleasure, view and photograph nature, collect berries and firewood, camping and in winter snowshoe and cross-country ski. Non-motorized trails are low cost, high use trails compared to the high cost and low use of motorized trails.

NCRS thanks all the members of this legislative committee for taking on the challenge of improving our non-motorized, state trail system by developing an adequate funding source.

Attached is a suggested source of funds that may help in your decision.

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Problem: Find a segregated and reliable funding source for non-motorized trails

Solution: Require all bicycle riders using public roads and trails to be licensed.

Cost: \$10/2years for residents: \$5 annual fee for out of state bikers

All motorized recreation plus fishing and hunting require a license. License fees usually help maintain the form of recreation for which they are collected.

1. Require a valid registration and license plate on all bicycles riding on public roads or trails.
2. 2. WDNR can handle registration and the funds collected reserving funds to maintain and build non-motorized trails.
3. A Bicycle registration form can be purchased from bike dealers when they sell a bicycle.
4. A bike license could also be purchased from DNR service centers and willing fishing and hunting license agents as well as on the internet
5. All new bicycles would be sold with a license application
6. Bicycles in use would be given two years to become licensed
 - a. All bike dealers would display a "need to license" poster
 - b. Reminders to license bikes could be enclosed in property tax mailing along with reminder to license dogs.
 - c. Newspapers, radio and TV announcements

According to SCORP Report there are about 3,645,000 bicycle users on public land

At \$10 every 2 years this would bring in \$30,500,000 every 2 years and \$15,250,000 every year. Expenses for handling would have to be deducted.

My husband and I are members of the Presque Isle Pedalers, our local bike club. The club tried to raise money by sending out a request for funds with the tax bill. We told residents that the money would be used to build a bike trail in P.I. and explained our trail proposal. The Pedalers collected over \$8,000 because the people really wanted that trail.

In the same way, I believe people would not mind a license fee if they knew the money helped build and maintain bike trails.

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