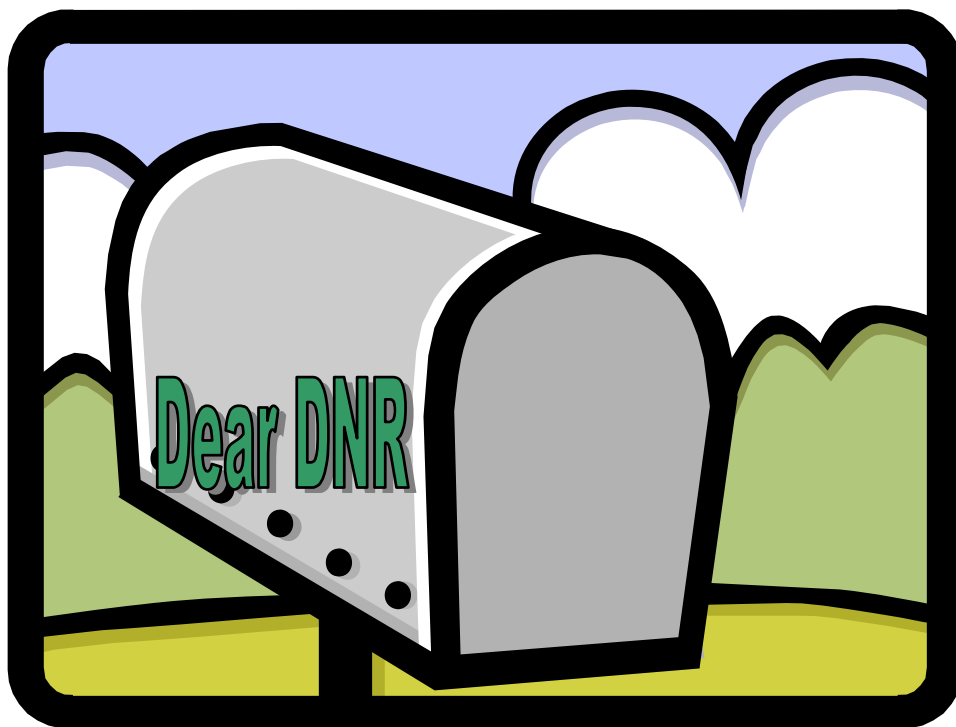


**Response to Comments on the Proposed Reclassification for
Motor Vehicle Use and Road & Trail Designations on State-
and County-Forest Lands in Hubbard County**

Final Document

March 17, 2006



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

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INTRODUCTION

On November 8 and 15, 2004 the MN DNR published a notice of the proposed reclassification and road/trail designation for State Forest Lands in Hubbard County in the *State Register* (pages 518-519.) The proposals were described in MN DNR statewide news releases dated November 9, 2004 and December 21, 2004. The notice was also published in the legal newspaper for Hubbard County. A public informational open house on the proposed reclassification and trail designations was held on January 12, 2005 in Park Rapids, MN to explain the proposal and to receive comments. The public comment period ended on January 28, 2005.

The DNR received numerous letters, comments, cards and petitions during the planning process and prior to the official comment period. The information and comments were considered in the draft plan. These Web-posted Response to Comments are a compilation of the **421** commenters' statements. The draft proposals were improved and clarified as a result of the public review process. (A total of **1990** comments were cross-linked to a formal DNR agency response. Numbers that include a letter such as 1412a were added after the initial numbering system was initiated. Each comment form, letter, or email was transcribed as received. The transcription process maintained the content of the comment to the best extent possible. Greetings, closings or personal attacks were not subscribed. There was no attempt to correct spelling, grammar, or misrepresentation of facts. There may be some errors due to illegible handwriting or typing errors by the transcribers. The Response to Comment Document includes all comment letters, emails and comment forms that were received during the official comment period. All comments have been individually entered and cross-linked to a formal category and response.)

The DNR used a content analysis process to develop the agency's response to concerns expressed by the public. Related comments were grouped together into topics prior to developing an agency response. Some topics are of a general nature (e.g. State Forest Management Objectives), while others are site specific (e.g. individual trail segments). Comments that expressed a concern or opinion but that were not directly pertinent to the classification or road/trail use designation were assigned to a miscellaneous category.

For each of the **25** categories, a succinct summary of the concerns was prepared by the DNR with input from Hubbard County. This is followed by a list of all the comments that were grouped under the topic (with hyperlinks to the original comments). The agency response to the topic is then presented.

Appendix A is a record of the comments that were received before the official comment period was opened. The entire Response to Comments document is available to download from the DNR Web site at: www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/ohv/designation/status.html CD copies are also available by contacting the DNR Regional Planner at: 218-755-3954

The DNR appreciates the time and effort of everyone who commented on the proposals. The draft proposals were improved and clarified as a result of the public review process. The DNR's motor vehicle use classification and road and trail use designation decisions for state forest lands in Hubbard County will be based on the draft proposal and the response to comments. The classification and road and trail designations will be implemented by publication of a written order of the Commissioner of Natural Resources published in the *State Register*.

COMPILATION OF COMMENTS

Transcribed comments are presented below. The transcription process maintained the content of the comment to the extent possible. Greetings, closings or personal attacks were not transcribed. There was no attempt to correct spelling, grammar, or misrepresentation of facts. There may be some errors due to illegible handwriting or typing errors by the transcribers. The comments are listed in alphabetical order by the last name of the person submitting the comment.

The numbers and letters to the left of the comments are hyperlinked to the topics that are addressed in the agency response section of this document.

<p>1</p>	<p>1. Aasen, Bob We are being kept off trails forcing users to go were they are not wanted. We need to provide more trails to stop damage that has been done. The same thing was done in the past with snowmobiles. We used to drive on private land and now have a wonderful trail system to use in Minnesota. There isn't a problem with snowmobiles and there doesn't have to be one with ATV product. All we are asking for is additional trail system to enjoy our sport.</p>
<p>2 2a 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</p>	<p>2. Adams, Mary Kindly include this letter in the input you have requested. As you will note, I am supportive of designated trails.....however, opposed to connecting trails, the creation of approximately 9 miles of technically "more challenge" area for ORV's and the proximity to wetland areas for the reasons noted below. In a nutshell....No.....this plan must be changed to ecologically, environmentally less destructive to forest lands and enforceable.</p> <p>On Jan. 12, 6:00p.m. DNR and Hubbard County Commissioners will hold an open house at the Park Rapids High School.. At that time the plan for motorized use of the Paul Bunyan State Forest will be presented. I believe the citizens of this county need to be aware of the impact this will have on the Bunyan and surrounding public/ private land. Establishing designated trails is a good thing, however, it becomes an increasingly complicated scenario.</p> <p>ATV's have a tremendous impact on the land, water and wildlife. Riding directly on vegetation, soil, streambeds, and wetlands for most of the year, without a snow cushion, will negatively effect the environment. ATV's are marketed to run off-trail, through mud, up hills, through streams, seeking ever more challenging terrain.</p> <p>How will trail use be enforced and are there enough dedicated funds available to maintain and repair the inevitable damage that will occur?</p> <p>Ditch use is also a big issue with local and summer residents. Damage to driveways and resulting erosion creates an eyesore, particularely in an area that prides itself on scenic beauty!</p> <p>Nine miles has been designated for more aggressive forms of motorized recreation. Would not private lands be more appropriate for such use? This approach would be more easily planned, managed, enforced, maintained and funded through user fees.</p> <p>OHV trails should be confined east of Spur I. There are already 115 miles in the dirt bike system which encompasses over half of the southern sector of PBSF. The Beaver Lakes Trail is the southern boundary of the "Gulch Lakes Management Area." Opening the Trail to ATV's will only invite illegal off road use.</p> <p>How do we protect large segments of public land for future generations? By establishing "connector routes" from communities to PBSF we run the danger of transforming the land into a haven for motorized vehicle use. It sets the stage for the spread of invasive species throughout the area.</p> <p>What does public research tell us about Minnesotans and their environment? MPCA Governor's Forums: In forums across the state citizens said that environmental regulators were too concerned about the economy. This was especially high in northern Mn. forums. This clearly says that citizens do not want their environmental agencies to sacrifice our natural resource environment for the sake of economic development. MPCA Stateside Citizen Survey: From across the state,</p>

<p>10</p>	<p>respondents said the most important reason to protect the environment was for future generations. Again, Minnesotans want to preserve our lands rather than cut them up into little pieces for motorized recreation. What happens in the Paul Bunyan State Forest and surrounding lands will tell us much about the vision for this county. The Bunyan is our "rain forest:, ours to protect as part of our natural Minnesota heritage. We owe that to future generations.</p>
<p>11</p> <p>12</p> <p>13</p>	<p>3. Adamson, Joel</p> <p>I would like to submit my comments to the DNR on the motorized trail designation in Paul Bunyon State Forest. First off, I would like to thank the DNR for all the time, effort, and dollars spent on inventorying all the various trails in the state forest. It was a formidable task and I thank you for that. I have to admit that I am very disappointed on the few miles of trail that have been designated for ORV use. The nine miles of trail we got is such a tiny percent of the many miles given to OHMs and ATVs, and about three of those miles are even shared with ATVs. This is a neat area, and I feel that ORVs should be allowed on more miles of trails. I believe the Minnesota Four Wheel Drive Association, of which I am a member, has submitted a proposal and I give that proposal my support.</p> <p>I understand that there have been a couple of ORV/ATV accidents in the past couple of months, which is unfortunate. However, I do believe it is possible for ATVs and ORVs to share much of the trail system. I would like to see ORVs have access to some of the more difficult trails and have speed limits on those trails to help prevent collisions between ATVs and ORVs. I feel a precedent has been set for speed limits on trails because snowmobiles presently have speed limits on the state trail system.</p> <p>30 years ago, when I first started driving in the woods, the only vehicles out there were OHMs and ORVs -- motorcycles, Jeeps, Broncos and Scouts, and a few trucks. Now it seems like ATVs have taken over the trails and we who still drive ORVs are being mostly left out of the picture. Even though our numbers are fewer, that is still being quite unfair. I would also like to point out that 30 years ago, there was never much said about trail damage, erosion, etc. I never saw much of it. But now in the last 10 or 15 years it has become a major issue. Isn't it interesting that it's been in the last 10 or 15 years that ATV use has mushroomed. Quite a coincidence, isn't it?</p> <p>Again I want to state that ORVs really deserve more miles of trails in the Paul Bunyon State Forest.</p>
<p>14</p>	<p>4. Alsip, James K.</p> <p>What in the world have you been smoking to propose a Challenge Trail in the Paul Bunyan State Forest?</p> <p>All State Parks are reserved for all of the people of the State of Minnesota, not just for a few people who feel they need a challenge. The State Parks are the only place where the citizens of the State of Minnesota can get any peace and quiet. Why would anybody in their right mind place a Challenge Trail in a State Forest? It is simply ludicrous. Isn't it the responsibility of government to protect the environment? If the above statement is true, then why do you feel a need for a challenge Trail, which will only tear up the environment? Wouldn't it make more sense to place a Challenge Trail on the Iron Range where man has already altered the environment?</p>
<p>15</p> <p>16</p> <p>17</p>	<p>5. Alwin Jack</p> <p>The quiet in the woods near my cabin on Jan. 6 was a moment to cherish. "This is the way it should be", I thought. The far-off drone of an airplane disrupted the solitude and the spell was broken. However, I suspect that noise pollution is the least of our concerns when compared to the damage that snowmobiles and ATV's do to the flora and fauna in the forest system and the wetlands.</p> <p>In the Wind River mountains of Wyoming, where I have back-packed many times, there is no such thing as motorized travel. The only modes of transportation are your own two feet or horseback, and even so the trails are changed every so often to avoid erosion.</p> <p>The forests and wetlands of Minnesota are too delicate and precious to be made available to ATV's, snowmobiles, and dirt bikes. It has been shown time after time that those machines are just too hard on forest trails and wetlands, and the temptation is too great to avoid going beyond set boundaries. My solution would be to keep all motorized vehicles out of the state forest but turn gravel pits and iron mine areas into parks for the thrill seekers.</p>
	<p>6. Andersen, David E.</p>

<p>18 18a</p>	<p>We do not want to share snowmobile trails with ATV's. They damage the trails in both summer and winter. This damage makes it very dangerous to drive snowmobiles down the trails. This is specifically on the Beaver lakess/Teoeo kakes/Halvorsen trails.</p>
<p>19 20 21</p>	<p>7. Anderson, Jan I was not able to pull up the proposal for Paul Bunyan State Forest & Recreation trails so I would like to make a general comment. I don't engage in these activities but I have some concerns. Are there other areas where these activities can take place? Are they so heavily used that more is needed? Are the people using these trails required to buy a license to do these activities? If not, they should be. People buy licenses to hunt, boat etc. As a taxpayer I do not want to support an activity that I have no interest in.I think we need to conserve our natural resources instead of letting inconsiderate, spoiled & selfish people continue to ruin our beautiful world!</p>
<p>22</p>	<p>8. Anderson, Larry As a resident of cass county to have ATV'S and Mud Trucks run on trials in our National Forest would destroy the quiet beauty of forest and also disturb the natural wildlife along those trails.I feel we can find a better place for these folks to have their fun and to make good use of the equipment.</p>
<p>23</p>	<p>9. Anonymous #1 Although the trails to be expanded do not appear to affect my residence in White Oak, I strongly oppose the plan. We all know the damage that atv's and 'mudders' do to our forests. You & I know that they will NOT stay on the trails.The planned expansion appears to be an environmental & economic disaster!</p>
<p>24</p>	<p>10. Anonymous #2 We have no right to destroy our nature resources for generations to come for the pleasure of a few! The financial boost to the area would in no way offset the destruction. So many have voice opposition to motorized vehicle use in our forests and swamps, yet the proposals continue. Comments are coming about wondering if voicing concerns makes any impact – that a decision has been made and all the concern is for not.</p>
<p>25 26 27 28 29</p>	<p>11. Anonymous #3 Paul Bunyan State Forest used to be one of – actually THE- favorite of our places to go to. We've lived here 20+ years. We would go to Paul Bunyan S.F. & just drive around – slowly and quietly – to look at what wildflowers were in bloom & would see various animals. In the fall – we'd drive through & see the beautiful fall colors – even in winter before the snow got deep. We would grouse hunt. Some of our happiest memories are there. Fishing also we did in Paul Bunyan and berry picking & picture taking. Walking, hiking, campfires. But not anymore. It has <u>all</u> been affected by ATV's. When we head down a trail & try to hunt- we get part way down & in or out roars an ATV. Please do not mislead the public that the majority are hunting or fishing. I have yet to see a person ATV-ing doing either. When trying to grouse hunt- we see <u>NO</u> grouse because of the ATV-ers roaring & tearing about. I have to put it that way, because I have yet to see one in P.B.S.F. driving responsibly. When you give them a totally unpatrolled area like that they act accordingly. To drive through-is to risk an accident-because the ATV-ers follow <u>NO</u> rules or regulations concerning the roads. They have an attitude that says to we, that have used P.B.S.F. responsibly for many years, "What are <u>YOU</u> doing in here?" If looks would kill-we'd be dead for the looks we're given. We no longer fish, hike, or anything else because of the horrid noise & commotion. Also, it is no longer safe in the P.B.S.F. Not only because of the reckless driving, but because of the "no rules -no enforcement, it's our playground" mentality. That mixed with drinking will bring some violent results. I predict a lot of trouble & I'm not putting myself in that environment. (Not only accident dangers- but I believe there will be physical violence. It's inevitable in that "anything goes" environment. PS- Saying ATV-ers don't drive while drunk is like saying <u>no one</u> drives cars drunk either. If a person wanted to be subjected to all the above & camp there- forget it. All the ATV-ers have the campsites. I've seen the trash they leave there too. Also I am appalled that DNR & ATV-ers try to lie & say there isn't much damage-it's exaggerated & there will be enforcement, etc. I've been in there all these years & seen a DNR person exactly twice. You can't lie about the damage- its already a fact-other areas who've allowed them in have proof- you are not inviting experts in to show the</p>

<p>30</p> <p>31</p> <p>32</p> <p>33</p>	<p>evidence and to explain the long term damage- you can't (don't want to) understand. (Plus the obvious damage already in PBSF & in ditches). There will be O enforcement. Just as there is not with snowmobiles & their trespassing & vandalism- just as there is not on the lakes. (We've done both these things a great deal & we know. We see it & NO enforcement people.) In case you've never been in there- PBSF is a very large area- you'll never "patrol" it and you know as well as we- no amount of \$ can repair the type of damage they do-you won't have enough even to deal with private property damage.</p> <p>Since we can no longer enjoy this area- a very big part of why we liked it here- I am now open to moving. My family of in (numbering) the 40's, who come here each summer now talk of finding somewhere else-away from this area entirely. I would have wanted to take some through PBSF (and did years ago), but no longer, not with the ATV-ers ruining even a simple drive and not with the forest looking like a disaster area with huge logged out sections. (By the way-in all these years- I've never seen 1 grouse or 1 deer or any animal in these torn up areas you log- we've tried- you can't even walk through them with all the downed debris- you're risking a broken leg.</p> <p>You are catering to a very small minority and ignoring the majority. Please quit being dishonest, deceiving & downright lying, to try to achieve your end. The majority have no doubt, its money behind this – you'll lose ours. We're quitting grouse hunting. We did not go this past fall and will not support the DNR in any way that we don't have to as long as they do not protect the natural resources. Once PBSF is ruined- it's ruined. We no longer see grouse or even deer or anything else. They are pushed elsewhere- why? Because someone is fishing or hiking- or taking a quiet drive? Of course not.</p> <p>ATV-ers should not have access to any of PBSF. And by the way, no matter where you limit them to- they will not stay there. They do not now nor will they ever. That is the way they are. I believe a few are responsible- but I've seen firsthand for years that the majority are not.</p> <p>Oh, horseback riding too. That's over with. I've done it in PBSF a number of times- but no more - that is an accident waiting to happen, and again, no peace and quiet. DNR – you are responsible for your part already in destroying PBSF and you'll have to answer to it in the future as well.</p>
<p>34</p>	<p>12. Armstrong, John</p> <p>My family enjoys driving our truck in the forests. Please try to give us as many miles of trails as possible.</p> <p>Our trucks are safer than ATVs or dirt bikes. Please don't confine us to a few miles. I think that would cause more damage not less.</p>
<p>35</p>	<p>13. Arnold, Everett</p> <p>I am disturbed and concerned that usage by 4 wheel vehicles would be considered in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. Having witnessed trail destruction caused by these vehicles I believe that the only place for these vehicles is on established gravel roads.</p>
<p>36</p>	<p>14. Aultman, Stephen</p> <p>In Section 33 of Fern Township, you have trail number 2343 starting at the south edge of Larry Burgoon's property and running first SW than west, turning north and than again west (see highlighting on trail of attached map). Where my marked trail ends, there is what's called Cranberry Slough, so we cannot go further. I am requesting that the County leaves this section of trail open to highway licensed vehicles due to Mr. Burgoon gives our deer hunting party permission to cross his property to access this trail system one month before deer season to check to make sure this trail is open as well as our trails to our deer stands and to check our stand sites. We also have permission to this trail during the nine (9) day deer season. This is usually the only time that we are back there. We take four (4) to six (6) pickups, jeeps or wagonaires back there to access our hunting area. Some of us have been hunting in this area for close to forty (40) years and using this route for the last twenty (20) years at least. If the County disallows the use of highway licensed vehicles, we will be cut off from this hunting area. Our hunting camp is right where we park our vehicles. This trail system is an old logging, so we follow that several years ago, we changed a short portion of the road to go around to the southside of a small slough hole.</p>
	<p>15. Babcock, Barry W.</p> <p>Here are my comments concerning the DNR OHV trail planning for Hubbard County and Paul Bunyan State Forest:</p>

<p>37</p> <p>37a</p> <p>38</p> <p>39</p> <p>40</p> <p>41</p>	<p>a.. The Beaver Lakes/Teepee Lakes connector trail should be dropped for these reasons: The trail crosses wetlands which is irresistible to renegade ATVers. It is the southern boundary to the GLMA/non-motorized area which is indeed foolish to make an ATV trail the border to a non-motorized area. And it is a premier snowmobile trail and ATV's will create too much rutting thus making grooming difficult in low to medium snow depths.</p> <p>b.. There are too many connector trails in this plan. The connector trails and the vast network of system and minimum maintenance roads open to motorized use makes a map of Hubbard County look like a hair net placed over it.</p> <p>The road density on our public lands has too many negative effects on wildlife and plant communities. There are too many of these trails funneling OHV's into Paul Bunyan. It possesses to great a danger of making PBSF a de-facto OHV park.</p> <p>c.. All OHV trails within PBSF should be confined to the Martineau Trails. Containment is critical to enforcement and maintenance. The DNR is far from demonstrating that they have the will or ability to adequately enforce or maintain OHV trails. Until they can demonstrate they can enforce and maintain trails in contained areas, they should not be proliferating these trails throughout our state forest lands. All system roads outside this footprint (Martineau Trails) should be closed.</p> <p>d.. There should be no ORV/4x4 truck trails in any state forest. Whether you call the special areas developed for these trucks; "challenge area's" - "technical trails" - places for these people to "test their driving skills" - or whatever, placing rocks, logs, or tight turns are manipulating our state lands for a miniscule group of people to provide amusement area's and setting a dangerous precedent for use of public lands.</p> <p>e.. Paul Bunyan State Forest is in the Itasca Moraines which places it in one of the most unique glacial geologic areas in the state. This area is primarily composed of highly erodable soils and placing this many OHV trails in this area is irresponsible by the DNR and lends credence to the notion that the DNR is not concerned about protection of our natural resources but more concerned about providing recreational area's for a recreation form that is not yet proven to be sustainable.</p>
<p>42</p> <p>43</p> <p>44</p> <p>45</p>	<p>16. Babcock, Linda Mae</p> <p>I am opposed to several aspects of the plan:</p> <p>1. I am opposed to the ORV trails. They should not be allowed to do this type of activity in the forest. I saw what these people did in Spider Lake and it is wrong.</p> <p>2. I am opposed to the Beaver Lakes/Teepee Lakes trail being used as a ATV trail. We used to camp at Lake 21 with our kids when they were young (before camping was closed there) so I am familiar with the area. Allowing an ATV trail to border this nonmotorized area (the Gulch Lake Management Area) will be asking for problems.</p> <p>3. All 'forest roads' west of Spur 1 or outside of the Martineau dirt bike trails should be closed. OHV trails should be contained to within this existing 'footprint' so that enforcement and maintenance and other problems associated with ATV riding can be more efficiently controlled.</p> <p>4. The connector trail concept is a bad idea, especially the one from near "Freedom Ridge" at the boundary of Itasca State Park. The damage around Freedom Ridge is an embarrassment. We should avoid trails that would make it easier for ATVers to ride from various parts of the region into Paul Bunyan. Paul Bunyan is special and to over run it with OHV's is disgusting.</p>
<p>46</p>	<p>17. Baer, Fred</p> <p>I am writing this letter to state my support for recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. There is a very long history of recreational off-road truck use, and based upon spring closures and temporary closures, any incidental damage caused by off-road recreational trucks can easily be mitigated. There are many miles of previously disturbed powerlines that are not available to off road recreational trucks, but are available to ATV's.</p>
<p>47</p> <p>48</p>	<p>18. Bahls, Jerold & Donna</p> <p>I have hiked many of the proposed ATV trails in the Badoura State Forest. I have some general comments and some specific comments.</p> <p>1) The soil in this area is extremely sandy. Trails with any slope will result in significant erosion.</p> <p>2) In general, it is important to separate motorized trails from non-motorized trails. I have had the experience while x-country skiing, of smelling snowmobiles before hearing them. Those who want</p>

<p>49</p> <p>50</p> <p>51</p>	<p>peace and solitude in the forest should not have to hear or smell motorized vehicles. Generally a half mile buffer, minimum, would be desirable.</p> <p>3) Trails should provide loops for riders. Trail # 811 is an out and back trail that ends at a wetland. This will present too much temptation for many riders. Unless this trail can be looped away from the wetland, it should not be utilized for motorized traffic.</p> <p>4) Trail # 792/799 is a good example of very suitable siting for ATV trails.</p> <p>5) Trails 1780 and 1788 bracket a creek. Placing trails directly across from each other on either side of a creek, invites the rider to use the creek as a ford. The photo below was taken in the Badoura State Forest near Trail 783. As you can see, riding through a creek is not uncommon. This photo was taken in late summer, 2004.</p> <p>I hope these comments will help you designate trails suitable for ATV riding, and protect vulnerable areas from abuse and degradation. The specific comments on loops and creek access are applicable to other trails and other state forests.</p>
<p>52</p> <p>52a</p> <p>53</p> <p>54</p> <p>55</p>	<p>19. Bair, Jonathan</p> <p>I am a resident of Moorhead, MN; however, I own land in Hubbard Co. I also spend most of my recreational time in Hubbard. I would like to write in my opposition to any plan that would open any connecting trails within the Paul Bunyan State forest or add additional trails for ATV use.</p> <p>The Hubbard County Commission and the DNR need to be realistic and take seriously the amount of damage ATVs and “mudder” trucks do to the environment. I am all for allowing these types of recreation, but I feel the responsible way to manage the damage they cause is to have their usage area well contained. Hubbard County has enough land to allocate separate for these vehicles. This will also give the county and the DNR a true assessment as to the cost of repair, since as of yet, the DNR does not have that figured out yet.</p> <p>I am also opposed to any type of dual usage plan on any trails. ATVs appear to be incompatible with any other type of recreational use on trails. They often destroy trail systems to the point were DNR and the County are unable to adequately repair them.</p> <p>I also oppose the proposed plan from an economic standpoint. ATV usage is during a time that resorts/businesses in the area are doing a lot of business already. The “hard” times for these businesses are during the winter months, so why ATVs would be allowed to utilize the trail system and very likely ruin them for the snowmobiling that will bring in revenue. Ruin the trails and the snowmobilers will go to other places, I know I will.</p> <p>After reading the article in the Park Rapids Enterprise that reported on the public meeting I have to make an observation. The paper reported a 10 to 1 response against the plan, yet the paper quoted the DNR Regional Director calling this a divisive issue. I don’t see how 10 to 1 is divisive, it seems pretty overwhelming. As for another DNR employee wanting specific trails listed; how about all of the trails being listed. To be more specific I oppose the use of the Beavers Lake trail, the Halverson trail, and the Teepee Lakes trail. I also oppose the use of these trails as well; 1918, 495, 596, and 457. I hope the County Commission and the DNR remember that they are public servants. They need to listen closely to what the people want, not what big business or the politicians say we want.</p>
<p>56</p> <p>57</p>	<p>20. Bair, Linda</p> <p>After the public meeting I have looked at the map that covers most of Thorpe Township and have the following requests for closure to motorized use:</p> <p>Trail number 457 - historically this was a walking /horse back riding trail -it was even signed that way. It was heavily used for horse back riding - it was even named the "Cathedral" in the part that has a stand of beautiful White and red pine by horse riders. It is the trail that erroneously got put in the Round River System. It has gotten so rutted that horses have difficulty riding on it. I have tried to get it removed for 4 years and was told continuously that it would be taken care of when the plan came out.</p> <p>Trail 522 - this is a new trail created for logging purposes. It is right on the boundary of my land. There is another trail 1/4 mile up that historically has been used for hunter access that goes inot the same logging area. That is sufficient. Now, there are starting to use this trail and I even called into Sheriff's Department during blackpowder season due to close proximity of shots to my house. This one needs to be gated, please.</p>

<p>58</p> <p>59</p> <p>60</p>	<p>Trail #596. This one goes into a network of trails that you have shown as closed. However, if you leave this access open, those trails WILL get used. They butt up against numerous parcels of private land and people who are very concerned about their trails being accessed as well as the noise. Get away from private land, please.</p> <p>495 - goes into the CCC camp used by horse back riders for camping - it is now a historical site. We have no problem with the camping use by hunters but it should not be accessed by OHV.</p> <p>The county connection - 1918 should not be included either. This connects up to privately leased Potlatch land and the connection between 495 and this trail crosses a township road that is illegal for ATVs. I am speaking on behalf of the Thorpe Town Board, horseback riders and - the Bass', the Bairs' and myself - private landowners affected along Cty 91.</p>
<p>61</p> <p>62</p> <p>63</p> <p>64</p> <p>65</p>	<p>21. Bair, Linda</p> <p>I have the following issues with the state plan for this forest</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There should be NO 4X4 truck trails on public land 2. The Trails that connect the two areas of designated ATV trails should be eliminated from the plan - ie. BeaverLakes/Teepee Lakes and Halvorsen trails. 3. The roads and trails east of Spur 1 need to be closed to OHV traffic period. The designated trail systems are PLENTY. 4. Snowmobile trails SHOULD NOT be shared. We already have to reroute in the Bunyan because of damage that was supposed to have been fixed and has not been. 5. Over 700 miles of trails/roads can not be enforced. In addition to that they have the ditches to ride! This is out of control for such a small number of people. It displaces other users
<p>66</p> <p>66a</p> <p>66b</p> <p>66c</p>	<p>22. Bair, William D.</p> <p>Enclosed is a copy of a letter sent to each of Hubbard County Commissioners related to AVT use in this area. I understand you are collating these citizen comments for consideration by the Department of Natural Resources. We appreciate your efforts in this regard.</p> <p>We have been home and land owners in Hubbard County since 1972 and permanent residents since 1984. A major reason for our coming to this area was the nature of the forest/lake country and the kind of generally quiet recreation available. Snowmobiling may not quite fit that "quieter" description but it does occur at a time when it interferes only minimally with others' pleasures and does little damage to the environment.</p> <p>We have been pleased with the assistance given us by the DNR in developing a forest plan for our property in Thorpe township and in assisting with wild life habitat improvement. Through the Nevis Trailblazers Club we have been active in trail development and maintenance and have produced many of the wood signs in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. Needless to say our affinity for that area is great and we are considerably concerned if we see anything happening to threaten the beauty and long term sustainability of that great natural resource. We want our grandchildren to appreciate the Paul Bunyan as much as we do!</p> <p>It's been good to have many meetings with DNR forestry discussing ways where snowmobile and logging interests could be accommodated in a cooperative fashion. We have also felt the policies of DNR Forestry were increasingly taking into consideration the aesthetics of forest management along with the essential considerations of forest productivity. We understand the needs for clear cutting to maintain a healthy poplar forest. Yet we believe there are ways to lay out cuts in size, proximity to roads and provision of visual buffers that enables clear cutting without destroying the aesthetics so important to residents and attractive to tourists.</p> <p>In addressing the issue of ATV use we see the potential for another step backward in protecting the natural resources of the area. We certainly do not object to expanding the recreational uses of the forest as ATV riders seek to develop their sport. Yet we hope that perceptions of short term economic value or the pressures of a well organized minority or commercial interests do not lead us to expand a trail system beyond management capabilities and environmental considerations. Thank you for your help.</p> <p>Attached letter: (see below) Mr. Floyd Frank Hubbard County Commissioner</p>

<p>67</p> <p>67a</p> <p>68</p> <p>69</p> <p>70</p> <p>71</p> <p>72</p>	<p>23419 State 87 Nevis, MN 56467</p> <p>Dear Floyd,</p> <p>It appears this is the time chosen for citizens to make their comments on the proposed plans for ATV use in the Paul Bunyan State Forest.</p> <p>First let me express my appreciation for the work of the task force in developing a common approach between State and County policies. Obviously much effort went into developing a plan which addresses the sometimes conflicting interests of the growing number of ATV riders and the concerns of many for the environmental and quality of life implications of this sport.</p> <p>The plan recognizes provision should be made in the State forests and Hubbard County to meet the legitimate recreational objectives of ATV riders and capture the economic benefit to tourism in the county (which probably is not as great as often stated.) It also recognizes that limits must be placed on ATV use. Yet, it provides for use well beyond the present ability of State or County agencies to maintain and repair trails or enforce regulations for their use. ATVs are constructed in a way and ridden at a time of year when they inherently do considerable damage to the fragile soils of this area. Add the actions of some irresponsible riders and irreparable damage can result to the environment, the quality of life of residents and the attraction for other tourism sectors important to the long term economic vitality of the area.</p> <p>These problems could be mitigated if the plan were to limit ATV use in the Paul Bunyan Forest to established and designated trails east of Spur 1. This would provide considerable trail availability more consistent with maintenance and enforcement capabilities. Further extension should await proven experience on this more controlled, more easily monitored area.</p> <p>ELIMINATE consideration of a connecting network of trails using the Beaver Lakes and Tepee Lake trails to connect to the Two Inlets System. These are established snowmobile trails and in ideal condition also for horseback riding, hiking and other summer uses.</p> <p>One only has to view the damaged portions of these trails where ATV use is presently permitted to imagine what these beautiful trails can become if approved totally for ATV use. Their use for ATVs would open great portions of Hubbard County to recreational uses inconsistent with the social/quality of life values of the area and detrimental to the long term economic value of tourism to the County.</p> <p>I would further urge the County Commissioners to take whatever action necessary to eliminate ATV riding in the county road ditches and to encourage the State to do the same in this area. This could do much to maintain the beauty of our area which is so attractive to tourists and residents alike, would minimize the costs of repairing approaches to crossroads and driveways, would reduce serious safety concerns and would make the existence of controlled ATV recreation more acceptable to the general public. This would appear to be in the best interests of ATV enthusiasts and critics alike.</p>
<p>73</p> <p>74</p>	<p>23. Baker, Arlene</p> <p>I still cannot believe that the DNR is considering truck driving trails in our State Forests!!!! Why are you encouraging the ravaging of our Environment!! Why?!!!</p> <p>I must admit that I do not understand the enjoyment that some thoughtless people get from reckless useless driving. Let them go to the race track. Why our precious land.</p> <p>My outrage extends to the use of personal watercraft that has despoiled the sanctity and the quiet of our valuable lakes. Let us put an end to this destruction of peace and quiet and tearing down of what nature has given us. I speak for all plants and animals. Please hear us!</p>
<p>75</p> <p>75a</p> <p>76</p>	<p>24. Ball, Peter</p> <p>I support recreational trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. The Paul Bunyan has had a long history of recreational off road truck use. Not all ORVS's are "mudder trucks," "mudder trucks" are not who want trails in Paul Bunyan.</p> <p>Minimum maintenance roads are not recreational, it is imperative the DNR give trucks trails. Less than 9 miles of combined trails and recreational minimum maintenance roads is not sufficient. ATVs got 37 miles of trails and 35 miles of recreational minimum maintenance roads, ORVs less than 9 miles!</p> <p>Trucks have been and can continue to share trails with ATVs. The powerline is already a disturbed area. How is an ORV worse than logging machinery? The DNR should be willing to do</p>

<p>77</p>	<p>more to try to keep more of the powerline open to trucks. More trails can be reworked and wet areas avoided to leave open move trail on the powerline. If the DNR can mitigate the powerline trails for OHM, it can do so for trucks who go slower. Proposed ORV designations do not equal more than .02% of Paul Bunyan land base.</p>
<p>78</p> <p>79</p> <p>80</p>	<p>25. Barclay, Mark L. I am writing to comment about the proposed Paul Bunyan State Forest truck, ATV, and dirt bike trails. The only thing these machines are going to do to any piece of State Land is to tear it up or destroy it completely. The riders and producers of these machines can give all the lip service they want, but all you have to do is look near any road ditch or watch any commercial advertising these products, to see their true intent. Advertisers of 4x4 trucks are always showing them with all four wheels spinning, kicking snow or dirt all over the countryside. What about the ATV ads? Drivers hell bent for election kicking rocks, dirt, logs and anything else in their way, out of their way! If they want to test their mettle, this state has numerous existing ecological disasters: We call them abandoned mine pits. Let them drive their machines there. Why create more ecological disasters on public lands? This current administration keeps talking about privatization. Let some entrepreneur build one on these courses on <u>private land</u>. They can collect the fees, build the courses and police the riders, and I wish them well! Five mph Technical Trails, let's get real! We need to preserve our public lands for our children and grandchildren, once they are destroyed, it's impossible to get them back; just look at our prairie grasslands.</p>
<p>81</p> <p>81a</p> <p>82</p> <p>83</p> <p>84</p>	<p>26. Barczak, Dave I oppose the MN DNR using tax dollars and public land for the creation of trails for off-road use by 4x4 trucks, ATV, and dirt bikes. First, I believe the private sector is fully capable of supporting this hobby with the X-Park (formerly Quadna ski hill) a prime example. X-Park provides a variety of terrain for all types of vehicles with lodging (camping, hotels, and town homes) on the adjacent Quadna Resort property. Have the policy makers visited X-Park to determine if the park can meet the requirements? If the State feels compelled to participate in providing this type of recreation, work in cooperation with the private sector. Second, if the State of MN gets into the business of providing recreational facilities for "off-road" vehicles, where will the line be drawn. If I were to purchase a large 6x6 Army truck as my recreational vehicle, will the DNR accommodate my interest? Will the State provide a designated area on LakeMinnetonka for my friends with jet boats who like to boat at 70 MPH? Third, the nature of the activity requires upfront and ongoing expense that should be funded in some manner other than DNR funds as the land will not be multi-use. One can easily see land used for this purpose is not capable of supporting flora and fauna. If the users are willing to pay a use fee, then they cost of land for this specific use, including a sound buffer as most of the vehicles do not have mufflers, should be factored into the use fee. I challenge the ability of the users to fully fund this project through use fees. With a shortage of DNR funds, why is the DNR considering support of an activity that is anything but NATURAL? I do not approve of my tax dollars being used to fund off road use on public land. Please pass my comments to the decision makers involved in this policy change.</p>
<p>85</p> <p>85a</p> <p>86</p>	<p>27. Barta, Tom In regard to the proposed plans for Off Highway Vehicle use in the Paul Bunyan State Forest, I want to be counted among those who do not approve of introducing a 4X4 Mudder Truck trail. Also, I am opposed to the connector trails in general and to those proposed for the Paul Bunyan in particular because it encourages more traffic and damage to the environment. We don't attempt to connect our lakes to make it more convenient for boaters. ATV and other riders should trailer their vehicles from trail system to trail system, as do the boaters. As to the Paul Bunyan, the area east of the Spur One Road is quite sufficient given the resources available to create, maintain and monitor the trails as they are contained in the current proposal. Please don't open the Paul Bunyan to any more degradation than will surely happen even if my concerns are considered.</p>

<p>87</p> <p>88</p>	<p>28. Barton, William</p> <p>I have personally seen the destruction of our natural resources by OHV traffic on the trail near Superior Shores north of Two Harbors. The snowmobile trail on the east side of the highway was turned into a muddy freeway - I was afraid I would be run down. I have heard friends who did not know better about getting their borrowed OHV stuck in the wetlands so badly that 4 or 5 of them had to wade in up to their chests in mud to retrieve it. I have a co-worker who has a photo of his son in a wetland up to the seat as his screensaver.</p> <p>I have heard we have more OHV trails in Minnesota than freeways! We do not need more OHV trails, we need to limit them and control irresponsible riders more than the poachers because they do more damage. In order to do this we need a manageable system. Closed unless posted open is a good idea. Closing some roads to OHV's is a necessity and contrary legal opinions can and will be challenged. 4-Wheel Trucks belong on our highways or private race tracks, not in our state forest lands.</p>
<p>89</p> <p>90</p> <p>91</p> <p>92</p> <p>93</p> <p>94</p> <p>95</p>	<p>29. Bass, Dan & Louise</p> <p>I do not agree with the proposed plan for motor vehicle use in and around the Paul Bunyan State Forest. The plan is too aggressive for these reasons: It will allow too much access to private lands, OHV's hurt the environment and adversely effect wildlife, there is not enough law enforcement available to effectively monitor the trails, conflicts between horses and OHV's or hikers and OHV's will be common.</p> <p>Changes I recommend for the plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Classify as "Closed" <u>ALL</u> of the Paul Bunyan Forest, not just the Gulch Lakes area. 2. "Close" all trails east of Spur 1. Until it can be established that maintenance and enforcement can be supported and works, the system should not be expanded beyond the primary system East of Spur 1 and the Martineau footprint in the southeastern part of the Bunyan. 3. The location of the Round River designated trail system is good – located near the Martineau OHM trail system. And that is where it should stay, East of Spur 1. 4. The Beaver Lakes/Teepee Lakes/Halverson connection should be eliminated from the plan until such time as it is determined OHV's will in fact stay on the trails. This connection takes them out of the Bunyan and puts them on county trails that give access to private lands and township roads. With local and state law enforcement at a minimum, let's watch the 148 miles of designated trails to see if they are used responsibly and if the state does in fact have the funds to enforce their proper use. 5. Classify the <u>Thorpe Tower Road</u> open to highway licensed vehicles only. Specifically, close all trails south of <u>Steamboat Forest Road</u>, east of <u>County Road 91</u>, north of <u>Thorpe Township minimum maintenance road</u> (2.2 miles), and West of Thorpe Tower Road to any type of motor vehicle. We live at 29660 County 91, adjacent to the west side of the forest and DO NOT want OHV's or other vehicles infringing on our privacy! 6. Use the money from OHV licensing and gas tax to make a separate OHV park where these vehicles can ride in a closed area without harming the environment, wildlife, or interfering with private property. Trail maintenance and law enforcement would also be kept to a minimum in an OHV park. <p>Please revise your plan in consideration for the local residents.</p>
<p>96</p> <p>97</p> <p>98</p> <p>99</p>	<p>30. Battey, Linda</p> <p>Let me start by saying that I'm very excited and pleased that the Paul Bunyan Forest is being considered for managed trails for ORV's. At the same time, I'm very disappointed that the only managed trails for 4 wheel drive trucks are forest roads that anyone can drive on, even with a car. I was expecting to see the power line area south of the Martineau trailhead included in the plan for trails. It seems that several user groups have been given somewhat preferential treatment in the establishment of trails in the abovementioned forest area. There are miles of snowmobile, ATV and motorcycle trails already existent in this forest. Apparently ORVs (4 wheel drive trucks) are to be basically prohibited from enjoying the use of this public land except on existing forest roads. I am an ORV owner and user and I feel that my user group is as deserving of the right to pursue our sport as are all the others. Anyone who is involved in this decision making process is concerned to protect the environment and preserve our forests as resources for our children and grandchildren to enjoy, as am I. Those of us who prefer to ride in the forest on more primitive passages than graded roads should all</p>

	<p>have this opportunity, provided that we practice good stewardship of the area while doing so. I ask that the DNR revisit it's current forest policy and allow more and better trails for ORVs, or at least allow future expansion of what is being considered now. I am under the impression that what is in the plan now, will be the only trails in the Paul Bunyan for ORV's. That is not exceptable to me.</p>
<p>100 101</p>	<p>31. Becker, Todd</p> <p>I am writing to comment on the MN DNR Off Highway Vehicle Plan for Paul Bunyan State Forest. We have family property which my mother owns near Paul Bunyan State Forest. I visit frequently and enjoy hunting and fishing. I enjoy the semi-wild lands of Paul Bunyan State Forest and many areas of Hubbard County. I believe the MN DNR plan for a web like ATV trail system in the Paul Bunyan and the proposed connecting trial concept for the county will seriously degrade the area. The idea of a 4 by 4 mudder truck trail in the forest is outrageous and will totally destroy that area of the forest. I believe an ATV trail system should be east of Spur One and within the Martineau footprint. Please do not ruin what is nice about Hubbard County, by going forward with this plan.</p>
<p>102 103 104 104a 104b</p>	<p>32. Becklund, Ryan</p> <p>Hello, My name is Ryan Becklund and I would like to show my support for keeping ATV/OHM use in the Paul Bunyan State Forest/Hubbard County Forest. I am an avid sportsman, and an avid ATV/OHM rider. I am always looking for more places to ride with my family and friends. I look forward to seeing my son and daughter carry on the tradition and riding in our state and county forests. I am against closing any trails to the public unless deemed totally necessary in order to protect the environment from pollution. This area has many places that the public could have more access to, not just limited to the trails that are there right now with the old logging roads and such. Expansion of trails is needed, but in a environmental friendly way. Examples of these are switch backs on hills to keep the erosion problems to a minimum and also better water crossings with a low-water bridge of some sort.</p> <p>I would like to stress the fact that in the proposal for this area that there are areas that are not included in the open to ATV/OHM riding. I do believe that at least some of these areas could be opened and maintained for limited ATV/OHM use. If some of them are to be closed, close the individual ones with signing them closed rather than with a blanket proposal.</p> <p>I would love to be able to ride from this area to other areas to explore our great northern countryside. I think the trails should connect to other areas and be a continuous trail region wherever possible.</p> <p>I spend a lot of money and time on my ATV/OHM hobby. I bring money into the local communities and support them with buying parts, staying in campgrounds, staying in local hotels/motels, food, and buying gas and other supplies. Without our support some communities would be loosing a lot of business.</p> <p>As a society today there are a lot of people that do not understand the need for such things as ATV/OHM parks or trails because they think they cause harm to the environment. Only uninformed people are saying these things. I for one, involve myself in promoting good quality ATV/OHM riding wherever I go with my family and friends. I show my children that you can have fun and be environmentally friendly. I hope my views are heard in this matter.</p>
<p>105</p>	<p>33. Beckman, Paul J</p> <p>I wish to register my opinion that the proposed truck trail (whether called a "challenge" or "technical" course doesn't matter) through the Paul Bunyan State Forest is an entirely inappropriate use of state lands (perhaps excepting those which have been previously used as gravel or other mining sites); represents a reversal of what was a reasonable DNR policy; kowtows to the off-road vehicle users; and sets a bad precedent for the future.</p> <p>State forests should provide an experience markedly different from that found at local raceways or areas in close proximity to freeways and industrial complexes. Please use wisdom, and put this proposal on the rejected pile, where it belongs.</p>
<p>106</p>	<p>34. Bender, Aldine</p> <p>I have great concern for the containment of access trails for recreational vehicle. It is so important for us to keep our forests a place for wild life and serenity. We need to think twice about destroying the areas that mean so much to so many. Provide adequate trails to ride that do not threaten</p>

	the environment.
107	<p>35. Bergendahl, Ragnar I fully agree with the restriction being placed on ATV's in state forests. They are so destructive.</p>
108	<p>36. Bergerson, Becky I am writing to express my concerns on the current plan for the Paul Bunyan State Forest. I know the DNR has been mandated to provide a plan for ATV/OHV trails in all state forests. The real source for change in this approach is the legislature. However the inclusion of a 4by4 truck trail is not a mandate and is certainly not anything that belongs in a state forest owned by the people of this state. This is an irrational catering to a small minority of state forest users. The same applies to widespread ATV trails. The great majority of MN citizens enjoy their state forest as areas where quiet abounds, a place for animals and birds, a place to enjoy the varied ecology of our state, the abundant lakes and wetlands, all these things that make MN a special state and wonderful vacationland for all of our country. Please preserve this resource for all the following generations and not let it be open to noisy and destructive pursuits. Once destroyed, the damage can not be undone. There is no logic in having the very department charged with preserving and protecting our natural resources be the very same department that wishes to change the face of our state forests forever.</p>
109	<p>We live in southern Clearwater County and will be greatly affected by connecting trails throughout the area. We have already encountered many examples of ATV damage and intrusion into our lives. They tear around on our township roads with little regard for private property or other vehicles, hikers or bikers using these same roads. I read where this is a family orientated sport but have yet to see any families riding in our area. It is inevitably a group of hard riding males with little appreciation of the beauty around them which they are unable to see through the cloud of dust that envelops them or the flying mud as they speed through every road puddle they find. The damage they do to our road ditches is an embarrassing thing to explain to visitors who can not imagine why our state allows such activity.</p>
110	<p>37. Berglund, Paul & Marcia We have been summer residents of Hubbard County for 38 years. We look forward to retiring here. We do not look forward to seeing trailer loads of ATVs coming "Up North". Then we hear about a mudder truck trail planned for the Paul Bunyan Forest, and also connector trails which would turn Hubbard County into a huge ugly ATV park. And all this destruction would result from catering to the small minority of OHV trail users.</p>
111	<p>The dictionary says a forest is an extensive wooded area, preserving its primitive wildness and usually having game or wild animals in it. The chief enemies of forests have always been insects and disease and fire. Now the chief enemy is the motorized vehicle, which has no place in a forest. To promote the best possible use of forest land, we must keep it primitive and wild and preserve the very elements that make it a forest. A forest is not a network of trails for motorized vehicles. We would then have Paul Bunyan Racetrack – not Paul Bunyan Forest. Tourists would have no reason to come to this unspoiled forest area they love, because it wouldn't be unspoiled anymore. We have seen what happens when ATVers ride the ditches, and to have them riding on wetlands and forest trails would do irreparable damage.</p>
112	<p>The PBSF should be closed to motorized vehicles. They can do no good, and would do much harm. The tiny group of motor users would chase out the majority who have been using the trail for years, walking on their own two feet. We count on the DNR and the Hubbard County Commissioners to respond to the vast majority of Hubbard County residents, who wish to keep our forests free of the pollution and destruction caused by motorized vehicles. Keep it a forest!</p>
113	<p>38. Berglund, Mike The West Gulch Forest Road crosses my property. I understand that there will be no change in the designation or types of vehicles allowed on that stretch of road as a result of the plan</p>
114	<p>39. Bergman, Garth Growing up in the Hackensack area, I have spent many days in the Paul Bunyan State Forests. I believe the forest should have truck (4x4) access. Being physically handicapped, and having an uncle who was mentally handicapped, truck access was an integral part of getting around. Many groups are saying that trucks don't belong and that most lakes are within a mile of a road. There is no</p>

<p>115</p> <p>116</p> <p>117</p> <p>118</p> <p>119</p>	<p>way that I or my uncle could walk that far. I am not asking for mudder truck access. I am asking for fishing, hunting, birding, photography and many other trail uses. Please let me family create more good memories and not make those memories a thing of the past. I am also not speaking of minimum maintenance roads. There are so many small trails leading to beautiful out of the way areas. I have only seen a handful of people in the 20 years we have been out there. No one on foot. We want to continue to go where the crowds aren't. It seems ATV use is being given more land and trucks are not. Most of the trails I have been on could easily handle trucks. Water crossings can be fixed with culverts or bridges and there are many of use who would gladly donate time and materials to keep our access. I know that there have been miles given to us under the power lines, but I also know there are many more miles under those same power lines. The water that is there is seasonal and does not flow anywhere. I believe that changes some of the rules about wetlands. In closing it's much easier to keep trails open now them trying to re-open them in the future.</p>
<p>120</p> <p>121</p> <p>122</p> <p>123</p> <p>124</p>	<p>40. Bergquist, Ruth</p> <p>I understand that public comments about trails designed for ATV's are being solicited. I live on a lake in NE Becker County and have had many negative experiences with how people operate ATV's, the noise and destruction of approaches along public roads, deep rutting on township and forest roads making them impassable for other vehicles and difficult even to walk along some of these roads. Below are some points I would like DNR trail people to consider.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. January is not a good time to ask for public comment on this topic because a high number of property owners and tourists enjoying these areas are not around in the winter are not aware of the plans or that there is a public comment period. I also understand that DNR trail personnel would like comments to be <u>specific</u>. However, it is difficult to visit the proposed trails in January! 2. Enforcement has not been sufficiently addressed. Production of ATV's outnumbers snowmobiles 4-1, therefore patrolling of the ATV trails is a must. The season for usage of the trails is much longer, riders are younger, destruction of public property more likely and based on observations of the past ten years there will be numerous violations of safety regulations. The proposed education classes will help, but the proposed number is too small. It takes several years before education has an impact. And based on experience with snowmobiles, after decades of "education" they are better at staying on trails, but patrolling is necessary as violations regularly occur. Speeding and drinking are still big problems. 3. Snowmobile riders do not want ATV's destroying their trails, otherwise I think it logical that ATV's use snowmobile trails wherever the trails are on dry lands. This should be a red flag. ATV drivers destroy natural resources. State forests are public properties and destruction of public property should not be allowed <u>especially</u> on DNR managed lands. Is it not DNR's responsibility to protect and preserve our natural resources? 4. It would be better to limit ATV trails to a few state forests or parks in each area, leaving others free from the disruption of these machines. Trails should be looped having riders end up at starting point where their trailers and vehicles are parked. Then it would be unnecessary for them to use ditches of public roads to return to the starting point. Tax monies are spent on vegetation in the ditches and approaches to homes. ATV's damage both. 5. An effort needs to be made to segregate ATV's from other activities. They do not mix well with other uses. People, birds, wildlife, natural plants would be grateful. It does not seem fair to long-established residents and taxpayers to suddenly change usage of public properties. Many have come to the area for a quality of life that includes respect for natural resources, enjoying wildlife and quiet woodsy experiences.
<p>125</p>	<p>41. Berman, Mark</p> <p>I am totally opposed to allowing truck technical trails in our state forests. State forests are for solitude, peace, quiet and wildlife, not oversized mechanical behemoths. It is bad enough that we have to put up with the proliferation of these gas guzzling, polluting monsters on our roads and highways. Let's not encourage their owners by allowing them in our pristine state forests as well.</p>
	<p>42. Berscheid, Joe</p> <p>As a regular Off Highway Motorcycle user of the Akeley trails, I would like to submit a comment supporting the OHM trails in the Akeley area.</p>

<p>126</p> <p>126a</p>	<p>My family and I are regular users of the OHM trails in the Akeley area. We ride both in the competitions and recreationally, and come to the area approximately 10 times per year. Akeley has an excellent forest system for such a trail, and we would like to see this privilege continue for years to come. I believe with proper management, these trails can be made to allow for excellent OHM riding opportunities without negatively impacting the forest.</p> <p>I would also mention that we are members of the local motorcycle club, the Paul Bunyan Forest Riders. Our club hosts the competition events as well as maintains the OHM trails system.</p>
<p>127</p>	<p>43. Bigalke, Scott</p> <p>I am writing in support of the Martineau trail system. I really feel there needs to be a recreational outlet like these trails for off-road motorcyclists. It would be a shame to shut these down after being open for so long. Shutting trails down is not the answer...working together and enforcing rules is.</p>
<p>128</p>	<p>44. Birnstengel, Bob #1</p> <p>I am opposed to the proposed plan. I feel that the DNR and Hubbard County should not intrude into the free marketplace. It is clear from what I read that there is a segment of the population, albeit small, that is seriously interested in driving their mud trucks and four wheelers through mud and over logs. Some have mentioned that this is good for the economy. This is obviously a business opportunity for any enterprising individual or company to simply purchase the needed land, develop the type of course desired and begin to sell tickets. I find it hard to believe that the corporations which manufacture these machines aren't already attempting to enhance their profits in this manner. Surely someone will decide to venture into this business. We need to keep Government, the DNR and the County, out of the picture and let free enterprise take over. This would not only make OHV owners happy but would also save our natural resources, something the DNR and the County, along with the rest of us should worry about. As you know once they're gone, they're gone.</p> <p>I urge you to drop this plan and proceed only with trails that aster careful study can be shown to not damage the environment nor compete with business.</p>
<p>129</p> <p>130</p> <p>131</p>	<p>45. Birnstengel, Bob #2</p> <p>I am opposed to any plan which further impacts our wildlife, pollutes our waters, or otherwise disturbs the wild nature of our forests. Our wild lands contain grey wolves, black bears, Canadian lynx and many other species which require large contiguous forest areas to exist. These animals cannot co-exist with OHVs crisscrossing their nesting and feeding areas. The DNR and Hubbard County should be protecting our natural resources, not proposing plans which will adversely effect our public properties. There is no public obligation to provide trails for OHV riders.</p> <p>OHV travel should be allowed only in those areas, such as some existing roads, which through careful environmental analysis can be shown to have no adverse consequences to our wildlife. Proposed connector trails should not be approved.</p> <p>An adequate portion of licence fees should be dedicated to the recruitment, training and equipping of conservation officers to enforce existing laws pertaining to OHV use.</p> <p>I urge you to withdraw the current proposal and to take the steps necessary to protect our forests and our wildlife.</p>
<p>132</p> <p>133</p>	<p>46. Birnstengel, Bob #3</p> <p>Please consider this a formal response to the DNR's plan to construct hundreds of miles of ATV trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. I am very much opposed to your plans to turn the forest into a recreation area for ATVs of all types. Wild lands such as those of this forest and other lands in the area, including those near Itasca State Park, need to be protected for all to enjoy. We all own these lands and we do not want them destroyed by a relatively few. Our state forests provide some of the last remaining semi-wild lands. These lands provide habitat for creatures that are found no where else east of the Rocky Mountains. The plant and animal communities are unique in the nation. Once they are gone they are gone.</p> <p>In my view the primary responsibility of the DNR is to protect and preserve our natural resources. It is your job to protect wildlife habitat, the watershed, old growth trees. I find it inconceivable that such plans are even being contemplated. You must know that these machines don't belong in a pristine forest. You must be aware of the damage these vehicles can do, the rutting, the erosion, the water pollution, the destruction of nesting areas, the noise... It is not the job of the DNR to</p>

<p>144</p> <p>145</p> <p>146</p>	<p>over-exaggerated. The proposed OHV plan looks like a good one and I feel should be implemented. Nearly every weekend we ride in the forest, and I would say 80% of the other OHVers we meet are families out enjoying the forest on their ATVs. We see very few of the type of people portrayed in the letters. I don't feel trails through hundreds of thousands of acres of land hurts anything. There are many opportunities for folks that choose non motorized recreation in the PBSF. There was a letter in a local paper from someone saying ATVs are destroying the snowmobile trails in the forest, this is simply not true as I have been snowmobiling in the PBSF this winter, and even earlier with marginal snow, I could not find any signs of "ATV damage" on the trail system, even the roughest part of the Round River ATV trail was perfectly smooth after it was groomed. I feel many negative comments stem from rumors, or lack of knowledge. With the popularity of OHVs on the rise, accomodations and trail plans need to proceed. OHVers help the local economy in this area that needs tourist dollars. There absolutely needs to be restrictions on OHVs in the forest, and I believe the DNRs plan should proceed.</p>
<p>147</p> <p>148</p> <p>149</p>	<p>53. Brink, John & Mary</p> <p>Being unable to attend the open house meeting in Park Rapids on information and public input regarding the use of motor vehicles in The Paul Bunyan State Forest, I wish to convey my opposition to any proposed changes that will allow any increase of these public lands for the use of all types off highway motorized vehicles. Further more, I am opposed to the use of state, county, township or forest roads for the use of these types of vehicles unless they are being used in agriculture or the express purpose of big game extraction during state hunting seasons.</p> <p>I believe these types of vehicles damage the sensitive environment of the forests and leave deep scars on the land for years to come. I have witnessed a continuous increase in the scale of the destruction from these vehicles due to the escalation in their numbers as well as their size and horsepower. If something is not done to curb this growing menace we'll soon have units the size of 4-wheel drive tractors used in the fields of the Red River Valley plowing through the forests and bogs of Minnesota all in the name of sporting recreation. Let's put the brakes on this now before the damage is so profound that extreme measures need to be taken to restore the forests for our future.</p>
<p>150</p> <p>151</p> <p>152</p> <p>153</p> <p>154</p>	<p>54. Brunkow, Gary & Cathy</p> <p>We are NOT in favor of off-road vehicle trail development in the Paul Bunyan State Forest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Allowing off road trails in the forest will set a precedence for similar development in other state forests. --Experience with these trails has proven to be inappropriate use of forest land, i.e. Forest Hills State Forest closure of vehicle trail. <p>Let's learn from our mistakes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Allowing this type of trail lends to mis-use of area trails and land. --Vehicle forest trails disrupt the natural environment and wildlife habitat. --This appears to be a "special interest" project and not in the interest of general population.
<p>155</p>	<p>55. Bryant, Zach & Dan</p> <p>Thank you for your efforts to provide places to responsibly ride for my son and I in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. I am hopeful that opponents of the plan will realize that the 149 miles of proposed trails is only a minisucule fraction of the total acres covered in this proposal. We enjoy riding as a safe, fun family activity and we rarely if ever encounter anyone on the trails. We sincerely hope you will create more trails to lessen the potential impact caused by concentrated use. Thanks again for all of your efforts to create trails that will allow us to continue to enjoy access to the great outdoors.</p>
<p>156</p>	<p>56. Buitenwerf, Eric</p> <p>I understand that the DNR's statewide forest road and trail planning efforts are mandated by the state legislature. However, I would like to express my fiercest objection to the legislature determining what types of recreation uses will be allowed on state lands. This decision should lie in the hands of the natural resource specialists the State has hired for their knowledge and expertise in protecting and preserving said resources. To disallow these specialists the capacity to determine appropriate land uses (i.e. requiring there to be an ORV trail designated within the Paul Bunyan State Forest) is to belittle their skills, jeopardize the resource, and waste taxpayer money.</p> <p>Clustered trails/multiple use trails</p>

157	<p>In the case of natural resource management, no motorized use is benign, especially when that use is mapped and promoted to the general public. The plan idea to allow different types of motorized use on certain trail corridors is a good one - it mitigates the overall impact to natural resources by limiting the total miles of trail constructed. It also mitigates difficulties to be encountered in maintaining and enforcing designated trails.</p>
158	<p>Sensitive natural resources</p> <p>How well trails connect to one another, end at convenient parking areas, or provide a variety of scenery and terrain should be considered only after an area's soils, hydrography, topography, plants, animals, and cultural artifacts are deemed suitable by local resource professionals to withstand continued motorized use.</p> <p>In the case of areas that may not yet have been inventoried for sensitive natural resources, it is far better policy to designate a trail at a later date than to initially designate a trail, determine damage is being caused to the resource, and then remove that trail from designation. Public outcry and enforcement troubles for the latter scenario will be far greater than for the former.</p>
159	<p>Enforcement</p> <p>Empirical evidence shows that, in general, motorized uses cause greater damage to natural resources than non-motorized uses. If an adequate enforcement presence is not visible to the public, there will be an increased chance for resource damage in areas where motorized travel is allowed.</p>
160	<p>Only designate an amount of trail that the DNR can adequately enforce. In the areas where Conservation Officer positions are unfilled, do not designate trails. Post currently designated trails as closed. As with snowmobiles and watercraft, enforcement should include speed, vehicle specifications, location of travel, license tag checks, driving under the influence, unsafe driving, and invasive species checks.</p>
161	<p>Exclusions</p> <p>The allowance of cross-country motorized travel for hunters and trappers should be revoked. If motorized vehicles are disallowed travel in an area to minimize damage to a resource and make enforcement easier, they should not be allowed for certain users under certain purposes.</p> <p>The greater number of loopholes and exclusions in a rule or regulation, the more difficult it becomes to enforce, and the more apt persons are to disregard it. This is most certainly the case with trail use: once any kind of path or trail has been established, others are more prone to follow it.</p>
162	<p>Invasive/non-native species</p> <p>The State of Minnesota spends millions of dollars on efforts to control the spread of invasive and non-native species (i.e. Eurasian Water Milfoil, non-native earthworms, leafy spurge).</p> <p>Motorized overland travel contributes to the problem of invasive species by acting as a medium to distribute non-native materials. Trails should be routed away from invasive/nonnative species locations, routes should be limited to impervious surfaces, and a public education campaign including the topic of invasive species needs to be created for OHV/OHM/ORV users.</p>
163	<p>Damage mitigation</p> <p>Limit travel to impervious surfaces. Not only will doing so mitigate invasive species dispersion as mentioned above, but it will also mitigate rutting, erosion, soil compaction, destruction of vegetation, and damage to roads, trails, and waterways.</p>
164	<p>ORV trail designation</p> <p>The proposed ORV route is the most troubling facet of the plan. There should be no ORV trail created in the Paul Bunyan State Forest.</p> <p>I am incensed that, against DNR resource specialists' recommendations, scientific research, and examples from other ORV areas in Minnesota and surrounding states, leadership within and above the DNR is requiring such. ORV use is among the most destructive of all uses to natural resources due to the sheer total area affected by large vehicles. ORV trails and motorized scramble or challenge areas have long been viewed by natural resource managers, ecologists, and biologists as "sacrificial lambs" - areas that will be severely disturbed or destroyed by human activities.</p>
165	<p>Funding motorized recreation such as OHV trails through a portion of the state's gas tax makes it all the more difficult for resource managers to make decisions based on what is best for the</p>

<p>166</p> <p>167</p>	<p>landscape rather than what special interest groups feel is owed them. This funding source needs to be repealed through legislative action.</p> <p>If there is a demand for recreational uses widely acknowledged to be destructive to natural resources, let the private sector meet that demand. Private off-road tracks, scramble areas, and resorts are proving quite profitable nationwide, and a free market system will limit the damage and expense of such areas to those that pay to use them.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>The DNR's mission to work with citizens to protect and conserve natural resources in a way to create a sustainable way of life should not be overshadowed by the need to provide recreation opportunities. Provide opportunities only that the agency can afford to maintain, enforce, and monitor so that those opportunities are sustainable for future generations. I truly appreciate the efforts of all involved in this planning process - you have been saddled with an extremely difficult task.</p>
<p>168</p> <p>169</p>	<p>57. Bullinger, Scot</p> <p>I support recreational trucks trails in the Paul Bunyan. Paul Bunyan has had a long history of recreational off-road truck use.</p> <p>Minimum maintenance roads are not recreational. It is imperative the DNR give trucks trails. The powerline area is an already disturbed area and will get continued utility traffic. More trails can be developed and wetland areas avoided to leave open more trails on the powerline.</p>
<p>170</p> <p>171</p> <p>172</p> <p>173</p>	<p>58. Bullis, Robert</p> <p>Hello my name is Robert Bullis, I live in Elk River MN. I hunt, camp and canoe in the Paul Bunyan state forest. I am appalled at the Commissioners office's decision to force truck trails in the Paul Bunyan state forest. The field people, who have the expertise and knowledge to make a EDUCATED DECISION were ignored and ordered to add these trails.</p> <p>I am tired of hearing about the economic boost to the local economies as a reason to add more OHV trails. How does the destruction of private and state property boost the economy? There is not sufficient law enforcement to patrol the trails we have now. Until the rider groups accept there share of responsibility for the costs of patrolling and maintaining there system, I don't see a reason to require the tax payers of this state to sacrifice there money and natural resources to appease this outlaw culture.</p> <p>I am also tired of the politicians dictating DNR polices to make corporate America happy. Our forests, lakes and streams not only are to be maintained for our enjoyment, they must be kept in the best possible condition for our children and grandchildren enjoyment.</p> <p>I am not in favor of this plan as it has no regard for the future of the forest. If we want to destroy it we may as well cut all the tree's down and make them in to 2x4's and paper at least then we make money on the timber sale. Provided we don't sell it at a lose just to make the timber companies happy. I guess the way the DNR Commissioner's office operates now it looks like a lose lose proposition.</p>
<p>174</p> <p>175</p> <p>176</p> <p>177</p>	<p>59. Cajw, Kelly</p> <p>I am writing this letter to inform you that I strongly support recreational truck off-road trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest.</p> <p>Power line trails are a perfect match for truck trails. The power line area is already disturbed and must be kept open for utility vehicles.</p> <p>ATV trails are found in use over all of the state of Minnesota. Truck trails are nearly non-existent. Many Minnesota citizens support off-road truck trails. However, there is no place for these people to legally drive off road.</p> <p>Trucks <u>do not</u> cause the level of damage to trails as ATVs do. Trucks are slower and the drivers are generally more responsible. Most support the tread lightly philosophy and <u>do not</u> drive mud trucks.</p>
<p>178</p>	<p>60. Calkins, Jon</p> <p>I am relatively new to this area, I moved to Minnesota in 1998. I have only recently discovered the Martineau riding area, which is fantastic from what I could tell. I only visited the area in 2004 and did not get the chance to ride my OHM in the area.</p> <p>I am concerned over the proposed closure of over 10% of the riding trails. Although it is a</p>

<p>179</p>	<p>long drive for me to get to the Martineau riding area, I have been anticipating making one or two trips (more as my children get older and can join in on the experience) each year going forward.</p> <p>I understand, with the new legislation, the DNR will be required to expend additional resources to mark trails. The DNR resources are already limited. With this type of management in mind, the number of riding trails will continue to be decreased simply due to costs verses budget for the DNR. This appears to be a well thought out method of ending OHM use on state and county land over several years time without most people realizing what is going on. Please advise what I can do to help prevent this from happening.</p>
<p>180</p> <p>181</p> <p>182</p>	<p>61. Carlson, Marty</p> <p>I have taken the opportunity to look over the Public Review Draft (11/08/2004) and while I appreciate portions of the draft there are some parts that leave me with questions. I appreciate the "trail riding alternative" that is realized as riding on the road or road right-of-way is not my intended use for my ATV and I would definitely choose the "alternative". I also agree that enforcement/education will play a major role in getting people on the right track.</p> <p>On the other hand, I find the 149 miles of proposed designated trails to be insufficient. I find it hard to imagine that of the 217,000 acres that less than 1/20 of 1% of that area would be suitable for motorized recreation without creating user conflict or environmental concerns for sensitive areas. I note the 421 inventoried miles that will remain undesignated through the current process. It seems to be more of a "blanket" closure rather than a case by case basis of trail inventories. I really find it hard to believe that of those 421 miles that none would accept motorized activity.</p> <p>It also seems that many of the spur trails that were once logging trails will, for the most part, be closed to motorized activity. This again seems to be more of a blanket closure and unacceptable. Why not close off trails that lead to sensitive areas rather than cut off all spur trail activity. That said, I appreciate the opportunity to express some of my comments/concerns to you. I also understand your objectives of environmental protection as well as avoidance of user conflict (a tough job, no doubt).</p>
<p>183</p> <p>184</p> <p>185</p>	<p>62. Case, Kevin</p> <p>Please dont close some of those areas for 4 wheeler and our dirtbikes. Our family spends time up there and we travel all the way from Mankato Mn, since there is no where to ride...</p> <p>Please keep it open. I pay license tabs on all my dirtbikes and 4 wheelers we have to register and there is no place close to ride.. Please keep it a family ride.. Please let me know if your are going to work with the SMDRA in Southern Mn to open up trails. I know there is quite a bit a money there to get out, but no land please work on the issue and get back to me.</p>
<p>186</p> <p>187</p> <p>188</p>	<p>63. Casson, John</p> <p>This letter provides comments on the proposed Off Highway Vehicle Plan for Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County lands.</p> <p>First of all, let me state that I have met personally with most of the Hubbard County Commissioners as well as DNR Commissioner Merriam and Director Martinson concerning this plan. It is very clear to me that the premise of this plan is that if we develop a trail system, most ATV riders will use the system in lieu of other places and the present ATV problems and issues in Hubbard County will be resolved.</p> <p>This premise is based on a fantasy and a prayer as opposed to reality. There is not one shred of evidence or case history to support the argument that if you build trails, the majority of riders will use them and nothing else. This concept is a fantasy perpetrated by OHV advocates and adopted by the DNR and our elected officials. Neither has a basis for taking such a position or for proposing such an extensive availability of our land and environment to this destructive activity. To the contrary, the evidence and real-life experience is clear and overwhelming that developed trail systems dramatically increase environmental destruction. All-terrain vehicles are designed and sold to go off trails and that's what operators use them for. Development of ATV trails in other parts of the country clearly demonstrate that significant numbers of ATV riders use the dedicated trails as launching pads for forays into wetlands, private property, non-motorized areas and pristine areas of the forest. They make existing problems worse. Decision makers need to be aware of this case history, prior to deciding on this proposal.</p> <p>As has been advocated, a reasonable solution is to have a contained and controlled trail system that is manageable and where activities can be monitored and regulations enforced. This</p>

189	<p>proposal does the right thing in development of an ATV trail system. However, unless the activity is contained, the trail system will be a complete failure. Besides the trail system, this plan provides OHV access to the rest of the Paul Bunyan State Forest, and the entire County. This clearly creates a completely unmanageable situation. Problems will only worsen from the present condition.</p>
190	<p>On page 17 of the Plan, it states "Managed use on managed trails". However, the Plan does not propose to practice this concept. Managed use is impossible given this proposal to keep most forest roads open to motorized travel. Many "minimum maintenance roads" should be closed or not even classified as roads (undesigned routes).</p>
191	<p>In the Hubbard County Forest Resources Management Plan, developed in 2002, it was stated that "the County will continue its policy of identifying appropriate forest roads and trails for motorized use". At the time that plan was developed, I requested that the County disclose the criteria used to determine which roads are "appropriate". This request was ignored, and now it is clear in this proposal, that County forest roads are deemed "appropriate for motorized use" unless they are under water. This plan indicates that there is no intent to manage motorized use on County managed lands. I do not believe this meets the expectations and needs of County residents.</p>
192	<p>Also during the development of the Hubbard County Forest Resources Plan, I commented that motorized access to land parcels less than 300-500 acres in size is unnecessary to provide residents with dispersed recreation opportunities (as defined in the Plan) and suggested that such parcels be closed to motorized uses. Clearly, this too has been ignored in this proposal. It appears as though Hubbard County chooses to provide an unmanaged condition for our public lands. Free-for-all chaos appears to be the rule. I will bluntly state that this is unacceptable to County residents.</p>
193	<p>This proposal of uncontained and wide-spread OHV activity in Hubbard County will undoubtedly result in overbearing stresses on our local government services. The Sheriff's office will be drawn into investigating accidents, trespass and more sinister incidents, and additional enforcement staff will ultimately be required. County rights-of-way will be increasingly damaged. Township boards, already strapped with tight budgets and few tools to deal with increasing issues, will have to deal with frequently damaged township roads and complaints because of ATV traffic.</p>
194	<p>In summary, this proposal doesn't even come close to meeting the needs of our natural resources and County residents. It is a plan for disaster and chaos. But, to be more helpful, I have listed below my specific recommendations for changes to this plan:</p>
195	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The designated trail system for ATVs should be contained and limited to the existing footprint of the Martineau OHM trail system. This is a generous portion of the Paul Bunyan State Forest and will provide a quality ATV experience that can be managed, monitored and controlled. With the exception of System Forest Roads, the remainder of the State Forest and County Lands should be closed to OHVs.
195a	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Connector trails should not be designated. Such trails serve as launching pads, as discussed above and give ATVs access to every corner of the County. For instance, concerning the proposed connector trail from Lake George to Lake Plantagenet, the Plan states on page 14, "The proposed ATV trail in this unit would provide ATV riders from northern Hubbard County connections to Lake George and trails to the south, west and east." By trails to the east, I presume it is meant the US 71 road ditch that passes ATVs through 7 miles of spotted knapweed and into my front yard! The clear intent of trails such as this is to provide unencumbered ATV access throughout the County. This defeats the purpose of developing a plan at all.
196	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. No ORV trails! Off road mudder trucking is an illegitimate, outlaw activity. Once again, how dare you try to legitimize this activity. Where do these people come from? I was raised to respect things and government endorsement of this activity is a disgrace. This activity has no business occurring anywhere, and certainly not on our public lands.
197	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Motorized activity on County lands outside of the State Forest needs to be managed and limited. Motorized activity should be limited to System Forest Roads, and no motorized access should be allowed on isolated parcels less than 500 acres in size. Reasonable parking areas should be planned so people can park and properly use these lands.
197a	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. This proposal shows ATV trails on County lands accessible only through private property. This provides exclusive proprietary use of County lands to individuals. This should not be how access to public lands is managed. If adjacent landowners are to have exclusive privileges, then I wish to have such privileges on the County lands adjacent to my property. Presently,

<p>208</p>	<p>A large network of separate signed trails gives legal access to a large area of our county. The thought that this would limit the destruction to given roads and trails does not hold water. What it does is develop a large area that will be impossible to police. It will effectively give our forests a greater exposure to the destruction of these machines.</p>
<p>209</p> <p>210</p> <p>211</p> <p>212</p>	<p>69. Clemmons, Mark</p> <p>I know that you are not receiving much communication from the OHV community regarding the upcoming land reclassification. This lack of communication is due to the nature of OHV enthusiasts. These people want very strongly to continue to enjoy their OHV hobby in the state forests. Unfortunately, these people are independent, non-political, and largely blue collar. They don't know how or where to speak up. They are afraid to speak up. They are predominately downtrodden white males. White males currently feel oppressed by all facets of American life. Most white men see themselves as little more than tax paying human garbage. That is due to the 40 year economic, legal and psychological war waged upon white males by the feminists. One of the only remaining healthy outlets for your average white guy is to ride his ATV or dirt bike.</p> <p>On the other hand, left wing types, such as feminists and environmentalists, are highly political and well organized. These socially and emotionally maladjusted people form rabid lobbying groups and systematically attack anything that represents the traditional American lifestyle. This includes attacking the right to ride a dirt bike or ATV through an empty forest. The fact that the OHV community is comprised of non-political people is essential to this current strategy of closing the forests via "reclassification". The architects of this plan are exploiting the fact that OHV people will not form groups and will not speak up. The characteristic disorganization and silence of the OHV community is being used to shut them down.</p> <p>You need to understand that the legislation that called for the reclassification of state land was intended to eliminate more than just OHV enthusiasts from state forests. It is intended as a first step to eliminate PEOPLE from state forests. Perhaps you are laughing at this statement. If you laugh its only because you are not aware of what has been taking place elsewhere in America. For example, in California, this exact same process started 20 years ago. First the motorized vehicles were eliminated. Then they eliminated bicycles. Next they eliminated campers and hikers. Today huge portions of California forest are closed to all human entry. The result is massive layoffs for DNR employees. They will not be needed when the forests are unoccupied. What's more, the state is facing severe budget problems. If the state forests are closed to the OHV community, then there will be demands to shed DNR staff. I will be one of those that will fiercely demand DNR cutbacks if the forests are closed.</p> <p>Finally, where do you want these angry white men to vent their rage? If not on an ATV or dirt bike in an empty forest, where do you want them to vent? I'll let your imagination ponder this question.</p> <p>The key point of this letter is this- For everyone's best interests, the state forests must remain widely open to the OHV community. The OHV community represents most if not all use of state forest land during the non-hunting seasons. If it's closed we won't need DNR staff. Motels won't get as many visitors, etc...</p> <p>I'm sorry if you read about things here that you are unfamiliar with. I studied political science. That is why I'm keenly aware of such matters. I also ride a dirt bike, and I want to continue to ride. I want my children to ride. Please keep the forests widely open to the OHV community.</p>
<p>213</p> <p>214</p>	<p>70. Collins, Don & Cheryl</p> <p>Please, please do not allow "technical trail" development for trucks in the Paul Bunyan State Forest, or in any other forest in Minnesota. Four-wheel drive vehicles can use the mine area near Gilbert, or other already ravaged mining or pit areas. Can we possibly save the forests for peaceful and quiet pursuits. We already suffer from snow mobile noise pollution in winter. Now we must endure more motor noise during the non snow months. Birds, wildflowers, mushrooms and wildlife will certainly be disrupted as much as humans trying to enjoy them, if trucks are using the areas.</p> <p>We hope the planning team returns to its original recommendation against truck trails in forested areas. We live in St. Louis County, but also have property in Cass County, just feet away from Hubbard County.</p>

<p>215</p> <p>216</p> <p>217</p> <p>218</p> <p>219</p> <p>220</p> <p>221</p>	<p>71. Collins, Thomas</p> <p>I am writing as a Minnesotan concerned about the direction of the controversial issue on OHV use and trail designation in Hubbard County. According to what I have read in the Park Rapids Enterprise, copies of which have been graciously supplied by a former resident with the same concerns, many county residents are currently weighing the pros and cons of the arguments and trying to identify the long-range effects of county and state decisions on the matter.</p> <p>For the past 40 years I have centered my outdoor activities in this area, either as a biologist at the Lake Itasca station, or as a bowhunter in the Lake George area, or as a nature photographer, snowshoer, hiker, or crosscountry skier everywhere. Like most others, I have been attracted to the beautifully clear lakes, the extensive coniferous forests, the "northwoods" biota as well as the stimulating climate and interesting geology. Since I first arrived in Minnesota in the 50's, many environmental changes have occurred and the long-range consequences of many are yet to be determined.</p> <p>My feelings, in general, about OHV's are clouded by my own personal experiences, which for the most part, have not been good. While quietly enjoying the woods during bowhunts, I have repeatedly been disturbed by thoughtless "four-wheelers" making new trails through the forest and evaporating the solace that I cherish, instead leaving behind a track of bent brush that lasts for months. Respect for property seems to be disregarded and hunting regulations are largely ignored. In one instance, I was fortunate in seeing the rear of the vehicle, which was running at dusk without lights, and narrowly avoiding a collision. They are noisy. Obviously my interests and theirs are mostly incompatible.</p> <p>For the person, like myself, who enjoys the quieter "sports", such as bowhunting, photography, fly-fishing, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, canoeing and hiking, the concept of extending and connecting trails for OHV's is very disturbing, particularly in the Paul Bunyan Forest. I cannot understand the necessity of some persons for somehow requiring that a motor always be attached to their anatomy, nor can I appreciate their attraction and appetite for traveling to areas of remoteness and pristine beauty over a field or areas designated for this use. Once these areas are opened to such use, the "honeycombing" will continue, erosion will flourish, and the reason for this land being dedicated to the preservation of the past will be lost forever.</p> <p>However, as the Area Trails and Waterways Supervisor recently stated, "There's room for everyone". True. The question is "Where"? This is the point at which the two edges of the sword meet-Where? Apparently, OHV's owners are not content with a restricted area designated for this purpose only but, instead relish a system of well maintained trails, periodically punctuated with gas and "watering holes", that extends and interconnects for miles and miles. Are the users willing to pay for this maintenance and repair?</p> <p>Finally, Minnesota has vested economic interest in the manufacture, success and popularity of OHV's, the use of which is adding to the growing economic burden of importing gasoline for the country. Snowmobiles have had less impact on the environment because of the snow "cushion" and the seasonal limitation to but a few months of the year and are selling at one-fourth the rate of ATVs, so consequently the problems of erosion and carelessness are expected to grow.</p> <p>Hubbard County is still a very beautiful area but not quite as attractive as it once was. Those marvelous lakes 50 years ago were for the most part, wreathed in natural woods dotted here and there with small clusters of modest, rustic cottages. Now the lakes resemble "park lagoons" in their being totally surrounded by houses, some palatial, and manicured lawns. Speedboats and skidoos have replaced the rowboats, sailboats and canoes; its noisy, smells of gas fumes and certainly not restful. Economic benefits have accrued, and some fortunes have been made but with an attendant cost in pollution, sanitation and road construction and repair. But the lake as a natural resource has been partially lost. Might the same thing happen with those magnificent forests?</p>
<p>222</p> <p>223</p>	<p>72. Conlan, Chris</p> <p>First of all I am not an ATV rider. I am however, in favor of multiple use programs. I am not sure how our society came to look upon "wilderness experiences" as something you drive to, get out of your vehicle and valaaaaa you are in a pristine, noiseless area.</p> <p>I have lived in Cook County for over 30 years and watched the environmental groups scream and complain about everything motorized (until they need a motor boat or snowmobile to do a rescue). There is enough land for everybody to have a place to do what they love most. Lets see fairness have</p>

	a place in decisions, not just money talking.
224	<p>73. Cook, Emeline “Forests Should be a Refuge”</p> <p>We must recognize the needs of all wildlife species! There is no relationship to natural resources and all the motorized vehicles. If left to be uncontrolled, our lands, waters and wildlife habitat will be consumed. It’s easy to designate trails, but we all well know it takes an act of Congress to modify. We must learn from years and decades from/of similar mistakes all over our world.</p>
225	<p>I am very concerned about (issue #1) our township roads which is in front of our house and other residents. When hundreds of these vehicles, plus campers, trailers, RV’s, ATV’s, etc., go past your doorstep every weekend during the summer, we do not have a single weekend of peace.</p>
226	<p>(Issue #2) State highway 34 trails were bad enough with two ruts with grass between; now it has been scraped down and gravel hauled in. The gravel is shot off to the sides and into the grass and people’s yards and flower beds. After rain, these are a string of mud holes – the native flowers, including the Lady Slippers are beaten into the ground; the nesting birds seldom use the bird house put up for them along the trail. All this destruction approved by DNR Trails & Waterways Supervisor. And no PERMIT evident (maybe: after the fact). The ditches along County Road 25 received the same destruction, without a permit.</p>
227	<p>(Issue #3) The DNR approved (and grant rec) to put an illegal ATV bridge over the canoe route connecting Crow Wing Lakes #3 and #4. Beautiful trees cut down, cement beams on each side and polluted sawdust hauled in; only to be washed into the steam with the first rain.</p>
228	<p>(Issue #4) We had a lovely environmental pond on the east edge of Akeley and Highway 34. There were nesting birds in the surrounding bushes in the spring – all was bulldozed down and dirt hauled in to fill it: all Trails & Waterways approved!! Highway 34 from Walker to Detroit Lakes was/is designated a SCENIC BYWAY – not so anymore. Please close these highway ditches! If no impact study is required, considering the environment wildlife and humans: There will be no end to the loss of our forests and the air we breathe. Some think ATVs etc. bring dollars into our community. We all know the cost of repairing the destruction far out weighs the sale of beer and pop. We cannot and must not overlook the one extremely important issue: our lives, our environment and our health are dependent on the world around us. We need to take care of our land, not destroy it. This is all we have. There will be no more.</p>
229	<p>I have attended H.C. board meetings. There is absolutely no help there and impossible to communicate with. They are insensitive to people’s needs as well as our DNR people. Where do we go for advice and help?</p>
230	<p>*When driveways are destroyed – the owner has to pay for repairs.</p>
231	<p>*Large license plates on motorized ATVs etc. so one could read them at a 60-70 mph speed.</p>
232	<p>*Large fines (ex. for driving thru yellow ribboned off areas, \$1,500 would be a good starting point (as Mpls. Plans to do)</p> <p>This is why we have had such destruction in this area. People are angry.</p> <p>*Please consider closing all ditch use.</p> <p>* Enclosed is my newspaper article on the harassment we have received. I’m not angry with my neighbor, just want consideration and respect.</p>
233	<p>Hello John,</p> <p>Thanks for reading my column. My column dealt with the trails designation process on federal national forest land. Minnesota state forest lands are managed differently, and while they also have been going through a designation process, it is different and has a different time line than on federal land.</p> <p>From your excellent letter below advocating riding in the Martineau area, I guess you have figured that out. It's letters like yours that let managers know that you really care.</p> <p>One of our BlueRibbon Directors, Sonia Bartz, is with ATVAM and is from Zimmerman. She has been active in the state forests designation processes and can likely help you with further questions.</p> <p>For my part, I understand that OHV recreation in Minnesota's state forests needs to be managed. They are a magnificent resource that offers wonderful opportunity for OHVers. Managers need to heed comments like yours and manage them for maximum opportunity while protecting the resource.</p>
	<p>74. Calkins, Jon I am relatively new to this area, I moved to Minnesota in 1998. I have only recently</p>

<p>234</p> <p>235</p>	<p>discovered the Martineau riding area, which is fantastic from what I could tell. I only visited the area in 2004 and did not get the chance to ride my OHM in the area.</p> <p>I am concerned over the proposed closure of over 10% of the riding trails. Although it is a long drive for me to get to the Martineau riding area, I have been anticipating making one or two trips (more as my children get older and can join in on the experience) each year going forward.</p> <p>I understand, with the new legislation, the DNR will be required to expend additional resources to mark trails. The DNR resources are already limited. With this type of management in mind, the number of riding trails will continue to be decreased simply due to costs verses budget for the DNR. This appears to be a well thought out method of ending OHM use on state and county land over several years time without most people realizing what is going on. Please advise what I can do to help prevent this from happening.</p>
<p>236</p> <p>237</p> <p>238</p> <p>239</p> <p>240</p> <p>241</p>	<p>75. Cook, Douglas</p> <p>I was at the meeting in Park Rapids Minnesota at the high school about ATV and other motorized travel in Northern Hubbard County on January the 12th and this is my response. The ditch travel on state highway 34 and some county and township roads should not be allowed if at all possible.</p> <p>I believe a staging area for each area of Paul Bunyan that will have approved trails, be established in such a way, that the approved staging areas will have access to these trails only and no connecting trails be established. This would remove much of the recreation vehicle travel thru and near residential areas. This would eliminate, I believe, much of the negative response being generated by the concerned public.</p> <p>I think more thought is needed by the county and the DNR as how all this travel will be policed and where the money is to be obtained to build these staging areas.</p> <p>The manufacturing companys that have invested interest in all this should be encouraged to provide funds for much if not all of the construction of these staging areas.</p> <p>I believe not enough sensitivity to the damage, that has already been done by this recreation travel, has been demonstrated by our county and the DNR, as evidenced by the damage done under the old railroad bridge in Akeley, in the name of making a trail connection.</p> <p>I do not believe all these trail areas should be connected and that each trail area should be distinctive and unrelated and set apart.</p>
<p>242</p> <p>243</p>	<p>76. Cornell, Adam</p> <p>I am just writing to let you know that I am very disappointed to see that there is even a hint of consideration for allowing 4-wheel Trucks to run amuck within our Paul Bunyan State Forest. I own a cabin very near the state forest, and would seriously consider moving if such nonsense were allowed within our state forest. I, along with tens of thousands of other Minnesotans, primary reason for owning land and being up north, is to get away from the city. I leave the cities and want to be surround by the silence of the north woods...not the roar of 4-wheel trucks...I do not need to trade one 494 for another.</p> <p>Second of all, isn t the idea of opening up the state forest to vehicles contrary to the foundation of the forest? It was created in order to preserve the beauty of the land, to let nature grow free from human interference. Let us not now give into the few...please represent the majority of the population and do not allow the construction of 4-wheel courses within our state forest.</p>
<p>244</p> <p>244a</p> <p>244b</p>	<p>77. Cothsan, Tim</p> <p>I support recreational trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. The Paul Bunyan S.F. has had a long history of recreational truck use; i.e., off-road truck use.</p> <p>Minimum maintenance roads are not recreational, and it is imperative that the DNR gives trucks trails for off-road use. 6.234 miles of trails and 2.203 miles of recreational minimum maintenance road is not enough. ATVs have gotten 37 miles of trails and 35 miles of recreational minimum maintenance roads – a little unproportional as you can see. The DNR should be able to find more trails for trucks. Trucks have and can continue to share trails with ATVs. The powerline area is an already disturbed area and will continue to be used by utility traffic anyhow. The DNR should be willing to do more to try to keep more of the powerline open to trucks. More trails can be reworked and wet areas avoided to leave open more trail on the powerline. On the powerline, wet areas do not drain out into the watershed.</p>

245	<p>78. Craig</p> <p>I am writing to you about getting more truck trails in northern state forests. I am a member of Minnesota Four Wheel Drive Association and we are getting screwed out of user trails. Other motorized vehicles are getting trails in forests and we're not. Why? We are no more damaging than logging or any other machinery used in the forests. If we had user trails in the Paul Bunyan or Beltrami forests, it could bring big money to the area. We need more truck trails so we don't wreck the forests. Don't exclude us.</p>
246	<p>79. Cutler, Susan</p> <p>I am writing to comment on the proposed changes to the Paul Bunyan for Managed to Limited status. I generally support the proposed change in classification. I believe our state forests need clear designations for particular uses. However, I disagree with some of the specific proposals. I would like motorized recreation restricted to the area East of Spur 2. Keeping the area west of Spur 2 primarily non-motorized would be of benefit to wildlife sensitive to human encroachment. In the future motorized travel could always be expanded, however it would be nearly impossible to reverse the effects of increased motorized use once it has occurred.</p>
247	<p>I am also opposed to the concept of connecting trails. Motorized recreation is growing at a rapid rate. I think that is bad for the health of our planet, contributing to global warming, pollution, etc. I feel that connecting trails will encourage motorized recreation to grow at an even faster rate.</p>
248	<p>Finally, I am opposed to the designation of 9 miles for a truck "challenge" course. I do not feel that the Paul Bunyan State Forest is the appropriate venue for this type of recreation. A place where that the landscape has already been radically changed would be more appropriate, such as on Iron Range mining dumps.</p>
249	<p>80. Danelius, Steve</p> <p>Myself and many of my friends frequently use and appreciate the Martineau trails system & Hubbard county forest area. As OHV operators and specifically Dirt bike riders we have been riding in this and other Minnesota areas for most of our lives and strongly support the continued availability of these and other trails for all to enjoy.</p>
250	<p>81. David, Randy</p> <p>I am a 4X4 truck owner, and I would like to see more trails in the Above area for our vehicles. ATV's and motorcycles have many miles of trails and our group has none so far, and the proposed ORV trail consists of current forest roads. We have worked with the DNR for many years to develop a trail system for ORVs, and now it seems that we are not welcome in the forest. I don't understand the policy change or why we are being denied the ability to enjoy the use of our State Lands. Please consider this when you are making your decisions about this forest.</p>
251	<p>82. Davis, Joshua</p> <p>Please consider this as a brief, but official comment on the Paul Bunyan State Forest trail designation plan. I regularly visit Hubbard County forests on bird watching trips. When I visit, I am disappointed to hear roaring motors in the distance.</p>
252	<p>I request that on OHV maps the DNR also identify public lands (with mature forest stands if possible) that are out of earshot of designated ATV trails, say at least a one-mile buffer.</p>
253	<p>I also request that ATVs also be kept out of earshot of all canoe routes and lakes without boat landings.</p>
	<p>Finally, please make sure that enforcement information including number to call to report violations are prominent on all maps.</p>
254	<p>83. DeGayner, Bret</p> <p>Recreational trucks should be able to have trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. It has a long history of off road truck use. Please understand that "mudder" trucks are not set up for the trails we support. They mainly run thru mud holes on privately owned property.</p>
255	<p>Minimum maintenance roads are not recreational. P.S. Loggers do more damage in one hour than we can do in a year.</p>
	<p>84. DeHaut, Dave & Gloria</p> <p>We would like to state our position regarding the proposal to increase ATV trails in northern</p>

<p>256</p> <p>257</p> <p>258</p>	<p>Minnesota. We live near Itasca State Park, and can see in the roadside areas a great amount of damage already done by casual ATV riders. Increasing trail availability to encourage more individuals and groups of riders to come to this area will be a big mistake as far as scenic beauty and environmental protection is concerned. This should be a matter of much concern to the DNR.</p> <p>On a more personal note, we have experienced ATV riders trespassing on our large wooded tract of land. We maintain over four miles of trails for our own use, walking, skiing, etc. On New Year's Day we were walking in the woods, and saw ATV tracks in the new snow. We followed the tracks to a seasonal cabin across the lake, but did not approach or confront anyone, assuming that they had seen our signs or the bird houses, or the fact that the trails were maintained, and recognized that they were on private property and had gone home. Before we reached our home, we heard them again, roaring through our woods in our direction. We stood in the middle of the trail, forcing them to stop (they gave every indication of racing right past us), and told them they were trespassing. The answer given was that they were "lost"...sure, for the second time that day!</p> <p>All the evidence we have seen indicates that when ATV riders are encouraged to come to an area where they have no vested interest, most of them do not respect other people's property. Local riders are careful and respect their neighbors' land as well as public property. Please do not open more trails, especially ones that connect the dots between bars!</p>
<p>259</p> <p>260</p> <p>261</p> <p>262</p> <p>263</p> <p>264</p> <p>265</p> <p>266</p> <p>267</p> <p>268</p> <p>269</p> <p>270</p> <p>271</p> <p>272</p> <p>273</p> <p>273a</p>	<p>85. Derby, Ted & Mary Ellen</p> <p>Minnesota is drastically behind Wisconsin in providing ATV trails. For the past several years my wife and I have traveled to Wisconsin to ride our ATV on their county and state trails. We spend approximately \$1,200.00 to \$1,500.00 each year in Wisconsin for motels, meals, fuel, camping fees, and yes, we gladly pay the \$18.00 annual trail use fee required. We meet many other Minnesota ATV'ers in Wisconsin. Something is wrong with this picture! (I grew up on a farm just south of Verndale, MN. The rural north central counties could use the money we have been spending in Wisconsin.)</p> <p>This past October we had the opportunity to ride the trail near Akely, MN in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. This trail is an excellent example of what ATV owners need. Additional trails in the State/County forests would entice us to ride our ATV in Minnesota.</p> <p>Some interesting methods used in Wisconsin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.. ATVs are not allowed to ride in the road ditches. Routes are provided on paved State/County highways with the notice to "Ride on hard surface only!". (I've never seen a road ditch ruined by ATV ruts in Wisconsin.) b.. Speed limits on hard surface roads are set at 30 MPH. c.. Use of gravel county/township roads to connect trails. These are also posted to "Stay on road surface!" with speed limits set at 30 MPH and 10 MPH when passing a rural home (minimizes dust). d.. Access to ATV trails from county campgrounds/parks. e.. Routes provided into cities/towns to motels, restaurants, ATV repair shops, and, gas stations and convenience stores. f.. Some snowmobile trails are used as ATV trails during the summer and winter. g.. All trails are very well marked. <p>More comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.. Minnesota has hundreds of thousands of acres of forest land that is not generating much income for the state. b.. A trail user fee is not objectionable and would help off-set the cost of maintaining the trails. c.. I believe the current proposed 149 miles in 217,000 acres is a good start but very short of what is needed. d.. Use of old (and new) logging trails is an inexpensive method of providing ATV trails...just make sure the logging trails to sensitive areas are closed. e.. ATV routes connecting riding trails is a must in the ATV trail system. f.. Have trails open for ATVs (and groomed for ATVs) in the winter. The lodging/restaurant business would benefit. (The snowmobile season has been non-existent to very short.) g.. The state and counties need to work with the national forest to provide trails/routes in and through the national forest system. There are many roads in the national forests that "may" be legal for ATV

	<p>use...but it's almost impossible to be sure. A little about us:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a.. We are in the mid to late 50 age group. b.. Minnesota has always been our home. c.. We live in Fillmore County. d.. I'm semi-retired, Mary Ellen works full-time. e.. We ride an ATV designed for two riders. (My wife loves to ride but not drive.) f.. We "tread lightly" and carry out everything that we bring in. <p>Your effort to provide additional ATV trails is appreciated.</p>
<p>274</p> <p>275</p> <p>276</p> <p>277</p>	<p>86. DeVries, Wallace</p> <p>I am writing in support of "connector trails". I think the DNR has a great plan that will encourage ATV riders to stay on the trails. The plan to provide trails where riders can spend a week vacation riding and not have to go on the same trail twice is well thought out.</p> <p>As Freedom Ridge was specifically mentioned on the night of comments, I would like to comment on behalf of the business. I was told a short time ago that about all the county could approve for the campers at Freedom Ridge would be a trail going out from the campground six miles and back again. I can't see people wanting to come and camp if all they can do is ride out six miles and back again all weekend. Another problem is When people only have a six mile strip to ride on all weekend, they get bored and start to "explore" other trails they should not be on.</p> <p>The connector trails and the long distances to ride will give riders good reason to come to Northern Minnesota for vacations and weekend outings. When I worked in the Twin Cities area, employees I worked with would go on snowmobile outings, and the big talk when they returned was how they could travel 200, 300, 400 even 500 miles a weekend on snowmobile, with hardly ever having to take the same trail twice. This is what ATV riders are looking for also. The DNR plan will go a long way toward encouraging people to come and vacation in Minnesota and encourage Minnesotans to stay in Minnesota to vacation rather than going to other states.</p>
<p>278</p>	<p>87. DeWandeler, Jeannette</p> <p>I had the opportunity to ride ATVs in the Paul Bunyan state forest several years ago when the sport was young. Our group had a terrific time there and would like to be able to return to enjoy more of the same.</p> <p>I am in total support to delegate the trail system in proposal there. I don't believe that our use of less than 1/2 of a percent of the total forest area will do any long term and significant damage. Please submit my comments as a supporter of this fun, family oriented recreation that supports the economy in the areas in which it is allowed.</p>
<p>279</p>	<p>88. DuBose, Chris</p> <p>I am encouraged by your proposal to add off-road trails to the Paul Bunyan State Forest. I go there often to ride my dirt bike with my family. Although I personally will probably not use the new truck area, I think it is important to recognize that there are those that do and provide safe and environmentally responsible areas for them to use. Please forward my support for the new proposal.</p>
<p>280</p>	<p>89. Dudley, Cynthia</p> <p>The DNR proposal looks good except for connecting trails. If the intent is enforcement some day you need a connecting trail system for an officer to be effective. Please think about this.</p>
<p>281</p>	<p>90. Dudley, Jeff</p> <p>We need a connecting trail system in Hubbard County. The system planned now will make it totally impossible for any kine for law enforcement.</p>
<p>282</p> <p>283</p>	<p>91. Duevel, James J.</p> <p>As a hunter for some 30 years in the Paul Bunyan state forest, I'm extremely concerned about the current truck trail proposal that the DNR has put forth for Paul Bunyan State Forest. I think the proposal is a bad idea and further study should be undertaken to find a more appropriate place to run trucks.</p> <p>It is my understanding that state officials originally planned for no special truck trails for the Paul Bunyan state forest, based on advice from a local DNR planning team. Now, suddenly, the winds</p>

<p>284</p> <p>285</p> <p>286</p> <p>287</p>	<p>have shifted. I've read that DNR management in St. Paul redirected the thinking (see StarTribune article, 12/25/04). Was there adequate due diligence to reach this new conclusion? There couldn't have been. Therefore, the proposal needs further review and consideration.</p> <p>It's obvious that such a proposal will have a significant negative effect both on the beauty of this forest and its use for hunting, biking and other "passive" activities. I doubt the state forest management plan ever contemplated truck trail use. Why would we use some of the state's most beautiful land for such a use? Has the DNR given significant consideration to other areas, such as "stripped areas" (gravel pits, mining areas, etc.) or other marginal land, that could be used instead?</p> <p>I realize we need to find a compromise and have a place for off-road ATV and vehicle use. However, lets not be rash in concluding that Paul Bunyan State Forest is the place. Once trucks are in there, the destruction is done. Lets give this proposal more thought and try to find a solution that better balances the long-term interests of all stakeholders.</p> <p>In the end, after appropriate consideration, if the truck activity must be in this state forest, we need restrictions. Hunter/ATV problems suggest that "monster trucks" shouldn't be in the woods in the Fall. We can't hunt in the other three seasons, so keep them out during the hunting seasons.</p>
<p>288</p> <p>289</p> <p>290</p>	<p>92. Duncanson, Janet</p> <p>I'm writing to state my opposition to the planned expansion of ATV and OHV trails in Paul Bunyan State Forest. Our state forests aren't just for ATVs. They take over and destroy our state forests, destroy the environment. Destroy the wetlands. It's a disgrace that we've allowed this to happen in Minnesota. We are allowing special interests supported by ATV manufacturers to destroy our environment. Once it's gone, it's gone, it's gone forever. State forests are for us to enjoy, not destroy.</p> <p>I'm strongly opposed to this plan and we see the damage. The ATV'ers come and tear things all up and go home. Why would we ever allow this terrible management of our natural resources. As many people as may come to ATV, that many and more won't come because of the ugliness and destruction they cause.</p> <p>This plan needs to stop.</p>
<p>291</p> <p>292</p>	<p>93. Durigan, Tom</p> <p>I am against any Technical and/or Challenge Trails in any state or federal forest; especially Paul Bunion State Forest. Parks and government land are about the only "natural" places that people can go to have a peaceful, quiet time. Please leave them that way. If trails for bikes and trucks are needed, create them on the Iron Range where the land has already been destroyed by mankind.</p>
<p>293</p> <p>294</p>	<p>94. Durrant, Sue</p> <p>I read in the paper and heard reports on MPR about ATV use in state forests. I live in Central MN, and I firmly believe we need to protect the state forests and not allow trucks and ATVs in them. They are noisy and destructive. There is less and less unspoiled land and we need to preserve what is left. If the DNR decides to allow such use, the penalties and fines for breaking the rules should be stiffer and with repeat offenses, vehicles should be confiscated.</p>
<p>295</p>	<p>95. Eastman, Wayne & Nancy</p> <p>I am a 4X4 truck owner, and I would like to see more trails in the above area for our vehicles. The ATV's and motorcycles have many miles of trails and our group has none as yet. We have worked with the DNR for many years to develop a trail system for ORV's and have seen very little in the way of fulfillment. I don't understand why we are being denied the ability to enjoy the use of our State Lands in the same fashion the other groups are allowed to. Please consider this when you are making your decisions about this forest</p>
<p>296</p>	<p>96. Eaton, Heather; Russell, James; Russell Joel & Ann; Singer, William & Jo</p> <p>Re: the latest Star Tribune article about allowing ATVs and motorized vehicles in Paul Bunyan state forest, or any other public land for that matter.</p> <p>We vehemently oppose these efforts. These filthy, destructive machines should be banned, not allowed further access. Please record our opinion as such.</p>
	<p>97. Eaton, Todd</p> <p>I am a 4X4 truck owner, and I would like to see more trails in the above area for our</p>

<p>297</p> <p>298</p> <p>299</p>	<p>vehicles. It seems the ATV's and motorcycles have many miles of trails and our group has none so far. After all the time and energy that our user group has put into working with the State and the DNR to come to some kind of mutually acceptable compromise on this issue, you would think that we would have miles of 4X4 trails by now. What else can we do to be treated the same as the snowmobiles and other motorized user groups? Our group has volunteered to help in maintaining the trails and making sure they are environmentally sound. We offered to help minimize erosion and impact on the environment. What more can we do to prove that we are good enough stewards of the forest to be allowed to use it to enjoy our sport? Please consider this when you are making your decisions about this forest.</p>
<p>300</p> <p>301</p>	<p>98. Eggen, Brad</p> <p>I have not even finished my truck and people want to take public trails away just because of a few gutzy people that went mudding in a swamp? I oppose this bill 100 % But I do believe that swamps should be mudded in just to keep things churned up. Whoever is on our side should fight off all of these old goats that don't know what fun is. 4x4's should be allowed to do whatever they think they are capable of. Don't let them take away my fun that I have been building for 2 years now!!!!!! If this is taken towards the environmentalists side, drastic measures should be taken.</p>
<p>302</p> <p>303</p> <p>304</p> <p>305</p> <p>306</p> <p>307</p>	<p>99. Eischens, Audrey & Leonard</p> <p>Our family has been enjoying the recreational riding opportunities on our ATVs for many years. We have seen ATVing evolve into a very family oriented recreation enjoyed by our youngest grandchildren to 83 years old grandpa. We are active members of the Forest Riders ATV club and the All Terrain Vehicle Association of Minnesota. Having reviewed the proposed trail management changes for Hubbard County and State Forest lands I would enter the following comments into the public record.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restricting all OHV use in sensitive areas is an acceptable change. We are very aware of the damage that can occur in wetlands and fragile areas when unrestricted travel takes place in these areas. 2. Closing the small spur trails that were likely old logging trails is not acceptable to us. We often explore these trails and have found some awesome blueberry, chokecherry and raspberry patches along these trails. Since all of these trails have supposedly been inventoried, it would make more sense to post as closed any of them that may lead to sensitive areas rather than just doing a blanket closure of all of them. 3. The connecting trails that will link the separate riding areas are vital to a contiguous trail system. By establishing routes that will provide access to services in different areas the resulting dispersal of riders will lessen the concentration of use in a particular area. 4. Since the total number of miles available to ATVs has been drastically reduced under this plan, I question the 421 miles of "undesignated routes" as inventoried. Certainly there are suitable areas that could be opened for ATV use in those areas. 5. The current 149 miles of proposed ATV trails represents only 1/20 of 1 percent of the total 217,000 acres covered in this proposal. With the rapidly increasing number of registered ATVs in Minnesota, this seems like a disproportionately small area to address the recreational opportunities for us. While I certainly wouldn't expect and increase to 13% (the percentage of Minnesotans who ride ATVs or OHVs), there should be more miles made available for our use. 6. Maintaining the signage for the trails that are open will be of extreme importance. As we have experienced in the Two Inlets Trail system, the trail marking signs have a way of sprouting wings and disappearing. There seems to be some members of the "public" who obviously take great delight in removing or destroying these signs, thus creating confusion to riders who are trying to stay on designated trails. The potential for total disruption of the entire system by these actions is very real. The result will be riders becoming lost, riding in closed areas and thus creating the potential for environmental damage and user conflict. Signs must be maintained and anyone found removing or destroying them held accountable as defined by law.
<p>308</p>	<p>100. Ekvall, Lance & Angela</p> <p>I am a 4X4 truck owner, and I would like to see more trails in the above area for our vehicles. Why do the ATV's and motorcycles have miles of trails in practically every State forest and our group has virtually none? We have worked with the DNR for many years to develop a trail system for ORVs,</p>

	<p>especially in the Paul Bunyan area, and now it seems that we are not welcome in the forest except on graded forest roads. I don't understand the policy change or why we are being denied the ability to enjoy the use of our State Lands. Please consider this when you are making your decisions about this forest.</p>
<p>309</p> <p>310</p> <p>311</p>	<p>101. Eldredge, Paul & Jodi</p> <p>I support recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan. The Paul Bunyan has had a long history of recreational off-road use. Not all ORV's are mudder trucks are not who wants trails in Paul Bunyan. Minimum maintenance roads are not recreational, it is imperative the DNR give trucks trails less than 9 miles of combined trail and recreational minimum maintenance road isn't enough. ATV's got 37 miles trails and 35 miles recreational minimum maintenance roads or ORV's got less than 9 miles. Trucks have been and can continue to share trails with ATV's. The powerline area is an already disturbed area. How is an ORV worse than logging vehicles and machinery?</p> <p>The DNR should be able to find more trails for trucks. You have spring closures and temporary closures to help prevent damage. To help prevent damage, closed trails in the winter.</p>
<p>312</p> <p>313</p> <p>313a</p>	<p>102. Ellefson, Jack & Anne</p> <p>I highly recommend your inclusion to the non-motorized areas on the new DNR plan for Off Road Vehicles the Soaring Eagle Ski Trails. These trails have has over \$20,000.00 put into them to keep them maintained and flattened. There is no compatibility between Cross Country Skiing and ATV's and this relatively small area of 320 acres is serving as this counties only Cross Country Ski Area. We are 100% maintained by Itasca Tur Bike, Ski, and Run Club, and take no money from the State of Minnesota except for the trail pass money set aside for us.</p> <p>I also recommend that the Off Road Vehicles be limited to that area East of Highway 64 and North of Akeley known as the Martineau trails that are already being used for this purpose. No connector trails should be made between the State Forests and the Hubbard County land</p>
<p>314</p>	<p>103. Elling, Scott</p> <p>this is not good at all. go to some mine or something you cant wreck. do they pay the cost of repair in the state forest, or do I as a tax payer pay for it down the road, are we not short on money in the state government. were will it stop, if you say ok the one group, then do you say ok to then all</p>
<p>315</p> <p>316</p> <p>317</p> <p>318</p> <p>319</p>	<p>104. Elwell, Adela</p> <p>Please convey my dismay upon investigating the current plan referenced above. Having attended a number of meetings about this issue, I feel very strongly that we are very much at risk of "killing the goose who laid the golden egg"- or something along those lines!</p> <p>We moved to Minnesota 35 years ago because we thoroughly enjoy untrammled wild places. We chose not to build a home, but to buy one already built because we didn't want to destroy more wild land. That's a personal choice, I know. We don't go out every day to enjoy the remaining wild lands around us, but it is essential to know that they are there for the wild creatures that rely on them. I am a biologist with a graduate emphasis in ecology and I am gravely concerned about the proposed ATV trails.</p> <p>Trails decimate habitat for many animals, including some increasingly rare bird species due partly to the incursion of such common birds as cowbirds. Trails have the effect of isolating other animal species, which in turn tends to lower genetic diversity, just as has been shown in studies of island populations. From what I have read, even ski trails limit movements of small rodents, and the sound of motorized vehicles causes release of stress hormones in at least some large mammals.</p> <p>What does Northern Minnesota wish to become? I do understand the desire of our residents and tourists to "get out into the wilderness." I suspect that most of those who choose to use motorized vehicles do not want to destroy what remains, but perhaps they do not understand the extent of the damage that's being done. Maps that I have looked at showed so many trails that it would be hard to get beyond earshot of any type of motor.</p> <p>Enforcement of existing laws is virtually impossible given DNR and county law enforcement budgets.</p> <p>I completely approve of the rule change from open unless posted closed to closed unless posted open. This is an encouraging step! But it's not enough.</p> <p>The fact that some forest service roads and minimum maintenance roads cannot, by law, be</p>

<p>320</p> <p>321</p> <p>322</p> <p>323</p>	<p>closed to ATVs and dirt bikes is highly disturbing. If this opinion is confirmed by a disinterested attorney of high repute, other measures must be taken to protect the environment involved. Perhaps this would take legislative action. Mudder trucks have no place in our State Forests. This seems to me to be a private land activity because there is no way that the environment cannot be damaged by their presence. Connector trails must be closed until there is some assurance that they will not lead to even more blatant environmental abuse.</p> <p>It is discouraging to contemplate what DNR faces regarding this whole issue: state budgets and legislative activity appear to be taking the "bare bones" course of action. Without good, effective enforcement, it is obvious that ATVs will run rampant through our public lands. I have witnessed damage at Stumphges Rapids along the Mississippi as well as in many other places. Our DNR has, by and large, done a great job of maintaining our natural resources, and it is appalling to think that the dedicated work of thousands of past and present DNR employees may be lost to this recreational malady. I will certainly support sensible solutions to this issue if the counties and DNR can come up with them. Certainly something must be done soon!</p>
<p>324</p> <p>325</p> <p>326</p> <p>327</p> <p>328</p> <p>329</p> <p>330</p> <p>331</p>	<p>105. Engle, Tim</p> <p>ATV riding in the state of Minnesota has become a very popular year round activity. There are thousands of ATV enthusiasts that are looking for trails and other areas to ride their ATV's and to enjoy the great Minnesota outdoors. Currently, Minnesota falls far short in providing a trail system and riding areas when compared to neighboring States. Wisconsin for example, just reported how much of a positive impact ATV tourism had for the State from revenue through trail permits, and money spent at the local level for gas, hotel, food etc. This is over and above the income produced at the local level.</p> <p>Minnesota is currently home to 2 of the major ATV manufacturers, yet we are among the last in trail systems and riding areas. The State needs to move forward in becoming a leader for the development of trails, with an emphasis on a balance of land use and environmental protection. Most all ATV'ers are avid sportsman that encourage conservation, protection, and responsible management of our natural resources. Land closures are not the answer. I believe our State Officials have the common sense and intelligence to propose smart, manageable, and respectful laws and land use policies to satisfy everyone who enjoys our State. Land closures are not the right answer.</p> <p>With the money currently available, and the money that could be generated, the State could stand to profit greatly. These dollars could be spent on conservation, law enforcement, and grants to local clubs for maintenance and citizen patrols to help keep things in check. This proposed closure will have a negative impact on our State as well as the residents and tourists who are entitled to enjoy it. We need to work together to keep it open through responsible management, as mentioned above.</p> <p>Consider these facts:</p> <p>The current 149 miles of proposed ATV trails represents only 1/20 of 1 percent of the total 17,000 acres covered in this proposal.</p> <p>Closing the small spur trails that were old logging trails is not acceptable. It would make more sense to post as closed, any of them that may lead to sensitive areas, rather than just doing a blanket closure of all of them.</p> <p>The connecting trails that will link the separate riding areas are vital to a contiguous trail system. By establishing routes that will provide access to services in different areas the resulting dispersal of riders will lessen the concentration of use in a particular area.</p> <p>Since the total number of miles available to ATVs has been drastically reduced under this plan, question the 421 miles of "undesignated routes" as inventoried. Certainly there are suitable areas that could be opened for ATV use in those areas.</p> <p>I hope you will consider this in your decision making process. It is vital to the States economy to develop a trail system, and to work to keep lands available to ATVer's and others who reside and visit our state.</p>
<p>332</p>	<p>106. Enquist, Janet</p> <p>Please add my voice to what I hope is public outrage over the proposal to allow special truck trails in Paul Bunyan State Forest. Our taxes should not be paying for people to "test their skills" or their vehicles "performance" at the expense of public forest land. State forests should not have to</p>

<p>333</p>	<p>provide a "recreational opportunity" to those who wish to use their vehicles in ways for which they were not intended.</p> <p>I vehemently object to using my tax money which should be earmarked for the protection of a precious resource, our state forests.</p>
<p>334</p> <p>335</p>	<p>107. Epple, Judy</p> <p>I was greatly distressed to hear of the DNR's proposal for a truck trail in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. This seems to favor a small percentage of folks over what is good for our environments, future generations and the health of absolutely every person and creature in existence today.</p> <p>Is not the DNR to be the guardian of such things so that the majority of the people are not suffering due to the whims of a few? Where would it end? <u>Please</u> help me and others to regain their trust in the DNR by doing the right thing and designating such trails in areas that are not so environmentally sensitive. We depend on you and your powers to find other places that are mindful of the good of the whole.</p>
<p>336</p> <p>337</p> <p>338</p> <p>339</p> <p>340</p>	<p>108. Erchenbrack, Jane</p> <p>This letter provides comments on the proposed OHV Plan for Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County lands. My family enjoys camping at State Parks and State Forests. We appreciate the natural and pristine beauty of Hubbard County. I am concerned that the plan currently offered by the MN DNR will seriously jeopardize the environment of Hubbard County and the State Forest. I believe this plan will increase motorized use of the area and will have a negative impact on the reputation of Hubbard County as a family vacation destination. It will displace other users of the forest who are the vast majority of visitors to Hubbard County. OHV users comprise a small minority of visitors to the area and they have displayed careless disregard for our natural resources.</p> <p>A designated OHV trail system should be contained and confined to a limited area, so that it can be maintained and enforced. The expansive trail system planned will only benefit large corporations who manufacture these vehicles and a user group that looks to consume and abuse our natural resources rather than recreate with respect for the environment. This plan will have serious negative impact on the residents of the area and our forest, which is our heritage. The state forest system belongs to all residents of the state and should be preserved and protected.</p> <p>I am opposed to 4 by 4 mudder truck trails. It is a disgrace that this activity is being considered as legitimate use of public lands.</p> <p>This proposed plan is short-sighted and shows no regard for the ecological treasures our state forest provides. Please reconsider and provide a plan which will protect our forest and public lands for future generations.</p>
<p>341</p>	<p>109. Ericksen, Joe</p> <p>I am a supporter of recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. I enjoy our state forests and would visit them more often if I could use them with my hobby. ATVs have many miles of trails and truck trails are less than 9 miles. I as a trail rider should have the same amount of area to enjoy our state forests as a person on an ATV.</p>
<p>342</p>	<p>110. Erickson, Roy</p> <p>Why are you (the DNR) encouraging a hostel-dirty negative antinature etc.,ect activity????????? Will you next be encouraging cigarette smoking? Both activities have the same known science! I will fight you and your kind until death. try this slogan when promoting recreational activities: When Your Having Fun Outdoors: Make Sure Mother Nature Is Having A Good Day Too.</p>
<p>343</p> <p>344</p> <p>345</p>	<p>111. Erzar, Bill</p> <p>It seems unthinkable that ATV trails in Hubbard County will be closed. I believe you should consider re-routes or adding culverts or bridges.</p> <p>ATVers put about 3/4 million dollars into training and enforcement in 2004.</p> <p>Look what snowmobilers have done to improve trails and we are proud of those accomplishments. I have been teaching snowmobile safety for 30, yes thirty years, and am a member of the oldest snowmobile club in the U.S. We built and improved trails and conditions through many means. Things can be accomplished constructively if you work at it.</p>
	<p>112. Etzel, Jim</p> <p>My name is Jim Etzel from Hackensack, MN. I am writing to comment on the proposed trail</p>

<p>346</p> <p>347</p> <p>347a</p>	<p>system in the Paul Bunyan State forest. I think you should trash the whole idea! Mike Rahn, who I believe works for the DNR, said it all in the Pine Cone Press newspaper; he asks the question; Can state forests meet all recreational demands? He goes on to say that motorized recreation should take place in abandoned gravel pits and mines. The Paul Bunyan is no place for this activity because of the topography and abundance of wet areas. I am against motorized recreation in the PBSF and believe it should be classified as CLOSED!</p>
<p>348</p> <p>349</p> <p>350</p> <p>351</p> <p>352</p> <p>353</p> <p>354</p> <p>355</p> <p>356</p> <p>357</p> <p>358</p>	<p>113. Evarts, Edie & Bill</p> <p>We are resident homeowners of Hubbard County and users of the Paul Bunyan State Forest and county lands. These are our comments on the proposed off highway vehicle (OHV) use trails for the State Forest and Hubbard County lands. We agree that trails are needed for ATV and other off road users but see this plan as catering to off road motorized use at the expense of other users-hikers, walking hunters, horseback riders, snowmobilers, and other traditional public land users. We understand that the DNR was legislated to create OHV trails, however this legislated requirement should not be considered wholesale licence to disregard other users. OHV users are a small fraction of all forest users. A proper trail plan should have included a study of all user groups and types of trail needs, and not be, as this seems to be, an attempt to designate as many OHV trails as possible wherever it seems to work. Given the time constraints for implementing this plan, a conservative approach is wisest.</p> <p>Below are general comments followed by specific concerns.</p> <p><i>The trail plan is too ambitious.</i> Such an extensive trail system is unprecedented in Minnesota. Because ATV users have yet to demonstrate widespread responsibility for staying on trails and keeping them in good condition, use should be limited and concentrated. There were comments at the public meeting that riders are going to have to police themselves (i.e. peer pressure) because enforcement will not be able to monitor so many miles of trail. Proof of responsible ridership needs to be shown <u>before</u> trails are connected across the whole county.</p> <p>A track record of designated OHV trail use and maintenance needs to be established before a widespread system is implemented. <i>It needs to be demonstrated that clubs will be able to maintain trails, that the DNR will be able to properly administer funds for repairs, that there is sufficient staff and funding to repair and maintain damage on state (and county) lands, that enforcement is effective, and that there is not widespread abuse of the access by OHV users-before creating a county-wide connector trail system.</i> At present, no such use record exists, and our County should not be used as the test subject. If problems do come up, it will be much less damaging to the overall environment if initial access is somewhat limited. The economic impact of countywide trails also has yet to be determined. Will increased OHV access drive economic growth or drive away visitors that want a Northwoods experience? A gradual approach to trail implementation will allow time to address environmental problems and user conflicts when they first appear. Then as new trails are developed, if there is desire for more, the problems can be avoided. The look back and hope we don't have to say "whoops" approach should not be taken here, like it was at Spider Lake. Didn't those planners thing they had everything in place when that area was first opened? <i>It only makes fiscal and environmental sense to start a trail system on a scale that can be monitored and under conditions where problems can be addressed quickly before widespread damage to our forest occurs and the public is outraged at the management of their public lands.</i> In addition, as more OHV trail plans are implemented statewide and funds for trails are sent to other areas, it should become clear that Hubbard County's share of OHV funding may decrease.</p> <p><i>The trail system does not give enough consideration to other users, contrary to the DNR Direction memo of July 11, 2003 (see below).</i> It is evident that the public is quite polarized about OHV access on public land. Clearly that means that motorized and non-motorized uses have a certain degree of incompatibility. And certainly, non-motorized users are as diverse (hikers, walking hunters, bird and wildlife watchers, horseback riders, wild food gatherers) as are their reasons for not sharing access with ATVs. I won't go through all the reasons why the two types of use need to have some separation but I want to make this point: <i>given that OHV use is to increase, it makes sense that there will be more of a need to keep motorized and non-motorized recreational areas separate in the future, not less.</i> This plan does a poor job of achieving that aim. The planning did not include a study of all recreational forest users-so the public comments must be carefully weighed as they are probably the best indicator on non-motorized use in the forest and the potential impact of OHV trails on traditional users.</p>

<p>359</p> <p>360</p> <p>361</p> <p>362</p> <p>363</p> <p>364</p> <p>365</p>	<p><i>This plan essentially reduces the miles of trails available for non-motorized use and creates conflicts between users. Many miles of trails that could be considered walking trails were characterized as ATV trails in the inventory due to <u>any</u> evidence of human use. Many lightly used trails are also used by walking hunters and other groups. Once trails are managed as “official” ATV trails, walking use is essentially eliminated.</i> The conversion of currently gated snowmobile trails to ATV trails will also displace traditional users that prefer walk-in access for recreation. <i>Using snowmobile trails for OHVs is an incompatible use.</i> It doesn’t make sense to route ATV on snowmobile trails when the standard for snowmobile trail condition is higher than for ATV trails. Having to regrade snowmobile trails every fall is a poor use of trail funding, a waste of effort, and will be unfairly detrimental to snowmobile users if they are not properly maintained. The DNR website states: “The DNR expects construction costs for new ATV trails to be significantly less than those for snowmobile trails, for example which are considerably wider and developed to a higher standard.” Why run ATVs on a snowmobile trail all summer and then have to bring it back to that higher standard every year? This is a planned annual waste of trail funding monies.</p> <p>Our specific concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motorized use should be concentrated east of Spur 1 Trail. • ATVs should not be routed on snowmobile trails. • We are especially opposed to the Beaver Lakes-Teepee Lakes-Halvorson Trail ATV connector trail (except on existing Teepee Lakes Trail.) Especially offensive is opening up the Paul Bunyan State Game Refuge to motorized use via the Beaver Lakes Trail. This is one of the few remaining areas where shotgun and bow hunters can currently hunt without the disturbance of ATVs. • Connector trails should not be established at this time. Particularly troublesome are the “ditch” trails. As a county resident, I believe ditch trails across private property frontage will only decrease resale and taxable value. <p>Department of Natural Resources State of Minnesota Office Memorandum COMMISSIONER’S OFFICE, Box 9 Date: July 11, 2003 To: Field OHV Project Teams From: Brad Moore, Assistant Commissioner Subject: Direction for OHV Trail Designation and Forest Classification Review</p> <p>II. Provide for the needs of both motorized and non-motorized recreational users and minimize conflicts between those uses.</p> <p>Field OHV Project Teams should consider the needs of both motorized and non-motorized recreational users of our state forests. The number of OHV users is growing dramatically, and so have other uses of our state forests and public lands. It is important to keep in mind the needs and desires of all forest users as we move forward with the OHV trail designation and forest classification review process. In determining forest classification status the project teams should consider the broad range of recreational and utilitarian needs and how a change in status can be used to broadly serve those needs. It is our intent that the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources trail system be designed to provide opportunities for motorized and non-motorized recreation.</p> <p>Cc: Hubbard County NRM Sen. Rod Skoe Rep. Brita Sailor</p>
<p>366</p> <p>367</p>	<p>114. Farace, Vince</p> <p>I support recreational truck trails in this forest. Truck trails are a small fraction of the ATV miles. The powerline areas are a great place for trails – they are already used by maintenance vehicles. Trucks can be and are driven responsibly. Don’t let the excess of a few ruin it for the many. I am a member of the MN Toyx4’s and we place a great deal of emphasis on the tread lightly principles.</p>
	<p>115. Fehn, Lee & Irene</p> <p>I am writing this letter because of all the restrictions the state wants to put on atv riding trails in Paul Bunyan state forest. The wife and I live near the forest in the summer time, we are both retired</p>

<p>368</p> <p>369</p> <p>370</p>	<p>and do a lot of riding on the state forest roads and trails. It is a god blessing for me that I can get around on the roads and trails. My legs went bad on me 7 years ago and atving lets us both enjoy the outdoors. We ride mostly during the week and fine very little traffic on the forest roads and trails. I heard that they want to ban riding on forest roads. These roads are gravel and traveled very little out side of logging. These are the type of roads that you would think you would want us on because they would receive no damage. These roads and logging roads would leave routes open so we could get to the trails. I know that some people don't want us in the state forest, some people seem to be against everything. I believe that the state forests belongs to everyone in the state. Yes I know that there are a few bad apples in every crowd. It's like having one naughty child, you don't punish the rest of your kids because of one. I hope that the dnr has second thoughts before they put to many restrictions on these roads. It is the only chance for many of us to enjoy nature at its finest.</p>
<p>371</p> <p>372</p> <p>373</p> <p>374</p> <p>374a</p>	<p>116. Feil, David & Marion</p> <p>I want to go on record as being against ATVs on certain trails as it says in the editorial of our paper. Trails such as Beaver Lakes, Tee Pee Lakes, Halvorsen trail that goes through a game refuge and other wetlands.</p> <p>Looking at trails in the woods, in the ditches, and across people's driveways where ATVs have gone is devastating. The damage they do is un-repairable. All you have to do is drive around and look at the damage. Who fixes the approaches? I believe we should stop something before it becomes a bigger problem, not open more places to be ruined.</p> <p>The ATV owners say they have the "right" to the forest trails and that they'll maintain them. I fail to see they're maintaining anything. Other people have the right to peace and quiet in the woods too and not fall in the ruts and ruin made by ATVs.</p> <p>Why don't all the ATV people buy up a large parcel of land themselves and build trails, jumps and mud holes and tear around all they want and it would be a lot cheaper than trying to repair the damage they do to other properties?</p> <p>We do own an ATV but stay on our own land and therefore do no damage to other people's property and are very careful on ours.</p>
<p>375</p> <p>376</p> <p>377</p> <p>378</p> <p>379</p> <p>380</p>	<p>117. Feil, Patricia</p> <p>I am a horseback rider who enjoys getting out in the woods for solitude and quiet. In my hobby we are taught to respect nature and private property. The slogan is make no tracks. We teach that respect to our kids. If we camp we have tree savers to put around the tree as to save the bark and not destroy the tree. We tie to picket lines so the horses cannot chew on the trees. I ride in the Paul Bunyan State Forest and Smokey Hills among others. I have seen first hand the damage done by 4-wheelers and dirt bikes. The topsoil gets eroded away to sand and gets washed away. There are huge craters in the place of trails.</p> <p>I don't have anything against having a 4-wheeler for personal use. They have a variety of good uses. I don't however think they belong in our forests.</p> <p>The tire tread and time of year they are used and the speed all makes for permanent damage that cannot be fixed.</p> <p>Why should one group get to destroy our forests for their own pleasure with no one held accountable? Manufacturers make lots of money on snowmobiles for winter use, jet skis for water use and 4-wheelers for all terrain use. They spend millions on advertising people splashing through mud holes and flying down trails jumping logs and stuff. They are not advertising taking care of nature, it is speed and destroy to have fun. The speed these 4-wheelers go now is not meant for nature enjoyment. It is for racing down a trail as fast as you can go. This is what kids learn also. What boy wouldn't want to go splashing through mud holes. However this causes damage. Permanent damage.</p> <p>The state forests are for everyone to enjoy. They would be destroyed if 4-wheelers were allowed on trails. You only have to see the trails by Freedom Ridge to see what our forests would look like. I don't want Minnesota to look like that.</p> <p>I find it interesting that the 4-wheelers cause so much damage and never have to pay for or be accountable for it. No one polices them to stay on trails. They do damage to driveways but the landowner has to fix the damage because they have the right of way to use the ditch. They complain they want more rights to trails and such at whose expense? Not theirs. If they want trails they should have to fund them for gravelling and surfacing to hold up to the abuse and not make tax payers do it. They need to take responsibility for their sport and not just take.</p>

381	I think if allowed on trails in our forests, our forests would be destroyed permanently and that would anger me. Minnesota is known for our lakes and forests not for a 4-wheeler motocross course.
382 383 384 385	<p>118. Felt, Johanna</p> <p>Unfortunately I will be unable to attend the meeting this evening, but wanted to express my comments in regard to the ATV/OHV DNR plan for Hubbard County. The Snowmobile and ATV industry are a critical part to our economic growth in this area. We have relied upon snowmobiling to help us make it in our off season. Since mother nature cannot be relied on to always give us the snow needed to fill our rooms we have been trying to capture more of the ATV market. I can't express to you how vital we feel it is to our area to have a designated ATV/OHV trail. Families come up to go riding together and enjoy the time spent together in a beautiful area. The majority of riders are very responsible individuals. It is unfortunate that there are a few who, as in any walk of life, stray from the responsible path. We feel that the trail would be such an asset to our community and help our growth by increased sales in restaurants, gas stations, lodging, retail etc. Thus providing more jobs and employment, a truly win, win situation.</p> <p>We are also in favor of requesting from the State more funding to patrol these trails and the care of them. Somehow if we pull together I know that this will work out for the best. It is sad that there is opposition to this as it really is a benefit to our growing community.</p>
386 387 388 389	<p>119. Fiedler, Kurt</p> <p>My name is Kurt Fiedler and I am becoming concerned as to the lack of recreational trails available for me and my fellow recreational SUV/truck enthusiasts.</p> <p>I support recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan. The issue should not be all trucks are no longer to use the trails but more stringent control on what the trucks are going to be used for. I am not an owner of a mudder truck nor are any of my fellow cohorts. If a vehicle meets all legal road worthy points from bumper height to tire tread, these are the issues that should be addressed.</p> <p>Please don't take away trails already established. It will only make for more work when trails are re-established.</p>
390	<p>120. Foley, Joe</p> <p>I do not own a atv or a 4-wheel drive but have friends that do and enjoy them very much. A project like this is a good idea but not on public land!</p>
391 392 393 394	<p>121. Frey, Gregory J.</p> <p>As a landowner in Hubbard County I am opposed to making a truck trail or course through the Paul Bunyan Forest area. The last thing that needs to be encouraged is more motorized vehicle use through the woods. The constant noise of varying intensity would be very annoying and carry for a long distance. The trucks would tear the terrain to pieces. Anybody that says differently has not driven through the woods on logging trails.</p> <p>The sole purpose for the DNR to propose such a foolish idea is to get more money for their department. They have not done a good job of preserving duck and pheasant hunting and are promoting destructive land use rather than preservation and conservation. Years ago I used to hunt in Minnesota and now I have to go to the Dakotas to find a duck. It is very disheartening to see that the state has failed to do the job of preserving the woods and wetlands. Do not go ahead with this idea.</p>
395	<p>122. Garner, Gerald B.</p> <p>I hate the idea of these trails destroying the peace and serenity of any state forest. It defeats the concept of having designated forests. Wildlife would suffer, plant life would suffer and people like myself who are owners of properties and paying taxes on borderlands to state forest just don't need the screaming of gas engines destroying the peace and serenity state forest provide.</p>
396 397	<p>123. Gaudette, David</p> <p>I would like to voice my opinion as a tax payer. I hike in the woods, I hunt, I snowmobile, and I drive an SUV truck that I enjoy driving on trails in the state. Unfortunately, there are hardly any trails available to ride on. As a group of riders that respect the trails with our trucks, I would like to have trails available to me as part owner of our state forest. I own as much of the state forest as a person who does not drive a truck in the forest or who doesn't want anyone to have a motorized vehicle. I say make sure there are unmotorized areas, motorized areas, and safety issues addressed to insure rules are followed. I do not want to see torn up areas everywhere. I would just like my fair share</p>

	of area to ride in, as a tax payer.
398	<p>124. Gherity, Emily V.</p> <p>Years ago, we stopped using the Nemadji State Forest, directly east of our rural retreat. Fishing, hiking, blueberry picking, and bird watching do not mix with the heavy use of ORV's in that forest. The noise and habitat destruction eliminate any possibility of enjoyment.</p> <p>It was with disbelief, then, that I read in the Star Tribune that the DNR plans an offroad trail for trucks in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. Where, exactly, do loud, destructive vehicles fit in with any part of natural resource management? People in your field need to realize that once the ORV's enter an area, all other uses cease. Machines belong on racetracks or on privately owned land, and not anywhere in publicly owned forests. The preclude the true outdoor pursuits that have traditionally pursued in the forests.</p> <p>I consistently advise out of state visitors planning to visit Minnesota to steer clear of our state forests as they are overrun with ORV's. The taxes the vehicle owners pay on their gas purchases should properly be used to restore the land they destroy.</p> <p>For all of their popularity, ORV users are a small minority of Minnesotans whose presence ruins the forest experience for everyone else. Its time they started building their own private areas to enjoy their hobby without cost to anyone else and for the DNR to begin protecting natural resources instead of catering to the aggressive lobbying of this offensive activity.</p>
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401	<p>125. Giese, Richard</p> <p>I think we need more off highway truck trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. We have a very small amount of trails, and I would like to see more. Trails can be shared with ATVs. In a lot of areas some of the power lines can be used for trails.</p>
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403	<p>126. Gisvold, Deborah</p> <p>I am writing to you to address the proposed ATV/OHV trails in Hubbard and Becker Counties. I am appalled over the mere idea of allowing motorized vehicles to overrun our state forests. If we allow trails to be built, the plain and simple fact is that the destruction and devastation of property and of wildlife will be irreversible. Have we not learned our lessons in Spider Lake?</p> <p>I recognize that sometimes it is only a handful of people who abuse our trail systems, but there are other issues more critical than allowing a select group of people with a very small amount of the tax dollar destroy one of Minnesota's most valuable resources, its forests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is going to police, regulate and maintain the trails? We can't police the existing trails effectively! Riders simply go around signage, or create alternative trails. Tickets are ineffective. They simply don't care. No one can tell them where they can and can't ride; they are just going to go. • The sheer number and traffic through the woods and the wetlands will disturb the natural habitat for multitudes of species including ground nesting fowl, spawning fish, fox, deer, etc. Not to mention the species that might be consider "keystone species" those which we are unaware of, but are critical to the survival of hundreds if not millions of other species. As one DNR Supervisor stated regarding an area proposed to be used by ATV/OHV, "the impact on amphibian, reptile, and turtle populations haven't even been addressed." • What about pollution? Noise pollution. I can't venture into the yard these days (I have virtually no neighbors), and yet I hear the Buuzzzzzz of off-road motorcycles, jet-skis, and snowmobiles year round. Where can a person find solitude if not in their own yard (200+ acres isn't enough apparently). Where will the line be drawn? Let's not forget about air and water pollution adding CO₂, gases and oil into our clean air and into our watershed. • Tourists certain won't find solitude here anymore, they'll be going elsewhere. They won't be able to see wildlife. They won't be able to walk the trails or in the woods for fear of being run off of them. Many of our livelihoods will be in danger without the flow of the tourism dollar, those millions who cherish a quiet walk in the woods taking in all of its beauty and splendor, seeing an occasional Piliated woodpecker, deer or grouse. They will no longer come here. There will be no more backpacking, camping, hiking, picnicking, or fishing. They will no longer come here. • What about erosion? It is inconceivable that we have allowed the destruction thus far. The sedimentation and destruction of our valuable wetlands is unforgivable. It may never recover in areas where OHV trails have already damaged the vegetation.
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<p>409</p> <p>410</p> <p>411</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't forget the spread of noxious weeds! Just when we thought we had only a few invaders in a few select areas! • Then there are property values, of course, they will plummet. Who wants to live with the constant roar off ATV/OHV in the distance? <p>Ultimately, I recognize that everyone has a right to use the "commons," our forests and our wetlands. But, they will be destroyed, devastated. Our children's heritage will be gone, forever. And, at what cost? How do you put a price tag of erosion? How do you calculated the cost of seeing a deer in the wild? What is the price tag of repairing months, years, and decades of ruts and erosion? What is the economic impact on our communities if we can no longer bike, hunt, fish, camp or picnic in our state parks? How do you put a price on the piece of mind of just knowing that there is a place that is pristine, and virtually remains wild? Can the damage ever be repaired once it's been allowed to occur, ever? To this I say, do not allow it to happen. Find an alternate solution. Keep our forests, our wetlands, our preserves, our wildlife habitats, and our conservation areas free from a certain mechanized death!</p>
<p>412</p> <p>413</p> <p>414</p>	<p>127. Gobtop, Bill</p> <p>Public Safety</p> <p>Any trail system must be managed for the safety of the riders and public. Riders along the roadway are both in danger and a danger to others if they do not follow safe driving rules. Based on what I have seen near home you cannot expect all riders to be safe. I do not think you can police the actions of the riders if they are allowed to move between major trail systems.</p> <p>Environmental</p> <p>Heavy use of a trail system will create damage in that environment. I have already noticed the damage to the ditches from ATV riding. I have also noticed how trail and riding systems look when they are over used or used while wet. In both cases the damage will take an investment in time and staff to repair.</p> <p>Death of the North Woods</p> <p>We do not live in Hubbard County but have averaged two visits of more than one week each year for each of the last 10 years. During this time we have notice more people using the area and an overall reduction in the quality of the visit. I fear that with the addition of the ATV trail system we will need to find a different location for our vacations.</p>
<p>415</p> <p>416</p> <p>417</p>	<p>128. Goebel, Glen B.</p> <p>I am writing to express my support for the trail system for ATVs. I am the owner of the Super 8 Motel here in Park Rapids. As a business owner, I realize the potential upside to the economy if we are able to market trails to potential customers. In past years, Park Rapids benefitted from the snowmobile trails because those riders contributed greatly to our winter economy. Evidence to that effect is easily noted when we compare the past 5 snowless years to prior years. Any additional boost to our economy, no matter what time of year, is very necessary and I believe that the DNR is going about it in the right way. Give the ATV riders places to ride and they will be more likely to stay out of places where they should not be riding.</p> <p>I do ask that the DNR provide sufficient supervision and enforcement for this area because there are always going to be a few renegades which could potentially ruin it for the law abiding majority. We need to have enough people to handle this. I know this requires more money, but it is important that we keep things enforced so that this is as successful as snowmobiling.</p>
<p>418</p> <p>419</p> <p>420</p>	<p>129. Gorecki, John</p> <p>I am writing to ask that the DNR create more trails in state forests for trucks including the Paul Bunyan State Forest. I agree with the DNR Commissioner's memo; "It is imperative that we find recreational opportunities" (for trucks). I spend thousands of dollars every year in other states to have the opportunity to trail ride. Money spent on fuel, lodging, food and entertainment. Between myself and two or three friends, we spend literally tens of thousands annually outside the state of Minnesota. South Dakota, Utah, and Colorado are just a few of the states whom have recognized the fact that Off Highway Vehicles can coexist with hikers, bicyclists, wildlife and the environment at large while at the same time providing a significant boost to the tourism dollar.</p> <p>With hundreds of miles of trails in the state open to ATV's it only makes sense to afford the same opportunities to trucks. I spend thousands of dollars every year in the state of Minnesota on fuel,</p>

<p>420a</p>	<p>licenses and off road fees. Where are the trails that I have been paying for? I enjoy taking in the beauty that nature has to offer while driving my jeep and plan vacations around off road activities. I think that Minnesota is missing out on millions of tourism dollars and doing a disservice to its taxpayers by not providing more opportunities for OHVs.</p> <p>Additionally I wanted to tell that I have visited the DNR OHVRA in Gilbert on three or four different occasions with friends and I applaud the DNR for the job it has done with the park. Trips to Gilbert usually include four to six hotel rooms for one or two nights, numerous restaurant meals and tanks of fuel. Last summer in Gilbert I stopped my jeep in the middle of a trail waiting for some other vehicles to catch up, I shut my jeep off and looked to the right and there was a deer laying down less than ten feet from the trail, I videotaped him for a while, then he got up and walked away. I guess he was not afraid of my jeep, just a little camera shy.</p>
<p>421</p> <p>421a</p>	<p>130. Graham, Chester Clifton</p> <p>Off-road truck use is inconsistent with the purpose of our state forests. The inevitable destruction caused by the proposed activity should not be allowed. The Gilbert experience has taught that under the best of circumstances these “off-road scramble areas” are a disaster. “Challenge areas, mud holes and scramble areas” for trucks, dirt bikes and all-terrain vehicles (ATV) are not within the legislative intent when the state forests were established. Preservation and appreciation of animals, plants and the landscape itself and positive recreation was the intent of the state legislature when state forests were established. Please carry out the mandate of the DNR to protect and preserve our natural resources.</p>
<p>422</p> <p>423</p> <p>424</p> <p>425</p> <p>426</p> <p>427</p>	<p>131. Green, Jeffrey</p> <p>I, along with two other families, own 80 acres of hunting property in Thorpe township, legally described as the North Half of the Southeast Quarter (N SE) in Section 8, Township 142, Range 33, Hubbard County, Minnesota. An OHV trail has been proposed to be established just south of the Tepee Lakes area, near our hunting property.</p> <p>As a property owner and OHV owner, I support establishing a trail system for OHV's. I am, however, concerned about the limitations that are being placed upon the trails and the OHV owners and/or users. By limiting the miles of OHV trails in the State, there will be a concentrated impact on those trails designated as OHV trails. I believe that concentrating the number of users into a reduced trail system will result in a negative promotion of the trail system. As a long time Minnesota resident, I have seen similar limitations of the BWCA. I can remember in the 60's, it was almost impossible to see where portages had been set up in the BWCA, the natural beauty of the area appeared untouched and the portages blended into their surroundings. When the use of the designated portages increased over the years, the human traffic alone impacted the portages and opened them up to the extent that they were no longer secluded or pristine, but overused. Restrictions that were set up to preserve the environment through limited use of the portages, caused a negative impact and a breakdown of the area. I feel overly restricting the OHV trails will end up the same way. Reducing miles will increase traffic to a limited area, making it difficult to maintain and keep the quality of the trails for OHV users.</p> <p>I feel the State has shown a bias against mechanized vehicles, specifically OHV's. OHV's are required to be licensed, they are restricted for use only in certain areas. Where is the equality when bicyclists, hikers, horseback riders, and others, have few restrictions but do not have the user fees applied to OHV's. If OHV users are limited to "signed" trails, what happens to trails not "signed" for OHV's, do other groups have the right to use all of the other trails in addition to the OHV "signed" trails? It may be money well spent, if part of the license fees charged for OHV's would be used toward education of the public with respect to the environmental impact of, not only OHV use, but all human use. Whether "afoot or horseback", you have an impact on every part of the environment you touch. We all have to be responsible for its preservation.</p> <p>I would approve of regulation of the decibel levels and terrain tires on OHV's, but it would be of great advantage to everyone, including law enforcement personnel, if the State came up with clearer, enforceable regulations, instead of the confusing and inconsistent rules where you can go one place and not another. I feel it's not a matter of decreasing the trail area for OHV's that is as important as increasing enforcement of the current regulations governing OHV's so that the public would not be irritated by their improper use. Even with limited trails, there will still be non-regulated use of OHV's, such as use by leechers, use by bear baiters, use by the handicapped, all of which may negatively</p>

<p>428</p>	<p>impact the environment. Will limiting the remainder of the OHV users change this situation? We need to recognize the groups that have been given wider use privileges and understand that their use will affect the environment - we can't restrict everyone, for everything. The earth is here for us to use and enjoy, yet we do have a responsibility to preserve what we can. Education may be a much better tool than a restricted trail system for preserving and maintaining our State lands.</p>
<p>429</p>	<p>I am concerned that the State of Minnesota is becoming user-fee based. In the past, the State required state duck stamps, this has broadened to a requirement of pheasant stamps, trout stamps, will we eventually have to get a "stamp" for each specie? Many of the "stamped" species have been reduced in population to dangerously low levels. Are the State "restrictions" having an adverse effect on what the State is trying to preserve?</p>
<p>430</p>	<p>In other instances, the State has done a lot of logging, including logging near our hunting property. The State has not put a lot back into these cleared areas. It has simply allowed poplar to take over and "fill in" the areas logged. If there was more State investment into these areas to take them back to their original forest conditions or at least recent forest conditions, containing white pine, red pine, oak, birch - not leaving areas to become poplar forests, so dense they limit use by any groups, there might be enough room for all of the interest groups. The forests could be used by everyone with plenty of trails for each if the State weren't leaving poplar brush to grow uncontrolled in these areas.</p>
<p>431</p>	<p>I am not in favor of the proposed reduction in the OHV trail system in Hubbard County. OHV users are a great economic asset to, not only our community, but our State. Proper education, increased enforcement of existing regulations, and user fees applied equally to everyone using our state and county trails, could be a better solution than limiting one specific group of people.</p>
<p>432</p> <p>433</p>	<p>132. Green, Samuel , J.</p> <p>I live in Park Rapids and enjoy exploring the Paul Bunyan State Forest. I am very disappointed with trail designed for ORV's. I think Minnesota could take a few lessons from other states, like California and Colorado, when it comes to respecting the privileges of recreational trail riders.</p> <p>I admit some people abuse their privilege of traveling on forest roads and trails. The problem I see with the proposed plan, is if they are not careful they will end up punishing law-abiding citizens instead of the lawbreakers. We use forest roads and trails as a gate to the wilderness and everything it has to offer. With fewer trails open to the public, hunters and trail riders, like myself, will stumble upon a barricade, impeding us from enjoying the wonderful country we live in.</p>
<p>434</p> <p>435</p>	<p>133. Greniger, Kevin</p> <p>I am a 39 year old man who hopes to share my love of the outdoors with my family. We recently purchased ATV's as a way to spend more time outdoors and together as a family...but, I find it increasingly distressing the rate at which "public" lands are being crossed off the available list.</p> <p>The Paul Bunyan and Hubbard County forests are within travel distance for a family in Maple Lake Mn....and I would love to be able to use these forest areas and in so doing support suffering northern economies, we are not ripping up trails, going off trails, or destroying habitat. Instead, we are out to take in nature, and pass down an appreciation for nature. We support the state and federal forests with our taxes and entrance fees, as well as liscencing fees. We ask is to have access to these forests our taxes pay for. I hope that these forests will be accessible by atv for our family to enjoy.</p>
<p>436</p> <p>437</p> <p>438</p>	<p>134. Grob, A. Kenneth #1</p> <p>Attached is a letter that The Hubbard County COLA sent to the Hubbard County Commissioners in June. It has been slightly modified now that the official OHV Plan has been released. However, COLA believes that the issues presented in the letter are still valid, so I am sending it to you as the official comments from the Hubbard County Coalition of Lake Associations. COLA represents over 2200 lake residents in Hubbard County.</p> <p>To summarize our issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) We do not support the concept of attracting a high number of additional ATV recreational riders to Hubbard County. We see this as degrading the quality of life of permanent residents and damaging our forests. 2) OHV use will displace other recreational users of the forests. 3) The hidden costs of supporting an extensive trail system will exceed revenues.

<p>439 439a 440 441</p>	<p>4) Until it can be established that maintenance and enforcement can be supported and works, the system should not be expanded beyond the primary system East of Spur 1 and the Martineau footprint in the southeastern part of the Paul Bunyan.</p> <p>5) We are strongly opposed to the connector trails beyond those that are already part of the grant-in-aid system.</p> <p>6) Close all Hubbard County ditches to OHV use. The current destruction is an "eyesore".</p>
<p>442 443 444 445 445a 446 447 447a 447b 447c 447d</p>	<p>135. Grob, Kenneth #2</p> <p>The Hubbard County Coalition of Lake Associations (COLA), representing over 2200 Lake Association members, is writing this letter as concerned citizens of Hubbard County. We are concerned about the potential expansive OHV/ATV trail system that is being planned for Hubbard County and the Paul Bunyan Forest.</p> <p>COLA, as you well know, is chartered to assist in fostering appropriate use of our lakes and watersheds. As a group we are very concerned that the expansive system of trails being planned by the DNR will have serious impact to wetlands, watersheds, wildlife, and lakeshore property, and will seriously degrade our quality of life which we value so much here in Hubbard County.</p> <p>We are writing this letter because of our apprehension that Hubbard County will become the hub (ATV destination point) for a large ATV system. This use of our county lands and state forests would surely decrease property values and change the quiet, relaxed beauty for which Hubbard County is well known.</p> <p>We strongly urge the County Commissioners to take a strong proactive position to protect our environment and our quality of life, and reject the OHV/ATV connecting trail concept in Hubbard County. There are already many miles of designated trails for use in the Paul Bunyan Forest and the Two Inlets Area, and the destruction is evident and documented, including reckless destruction of wetland and watershed areas.</p> <p>It is the position of COLA that an ATV system in the Paul Bunyan State Forest remain East of Spur 1 and within the Martineau Area where motorized activity already exists. This is already an enormous section of the Paul Bunyan Forest. Any individual recreational group should be happy to have this land area devoted to their use. Expanding the proportion of the Forest that is laced with OHV trails will drive out other users of the Forest who also represent recreation, but without the noise and environmental damage.</p> <p>We are also adamantly opposed to the connecting trail concept. A connecting trail system will turn Hubbard County and the Paul Bunyan Forest in to an ATV park. It allows ATV users much more access to public lands than necessary at the expense of displacing other users and causing significant destruction to the environment. A connecting trail system will provide inviting access to every piece of public and private land in the County, and will result in all of our township roads, including the ones to our homes, becoming ATV trails.</p> <p>In summary, Hubbard County COLA believes that a connecting trail system will be a basis for free range use of county land and state forest land, leading to wetland and watershed destruction. Such a trail system gives too much access to individuals who have displayed careless disregard for the environment and the quality of life of long-established County residents and taxpayers. Enforcement and maintenance will be almost impossible to control given current funding and staffing of the DNR. This will give ATV users more free range to ride and impact the environment. We believe that a connecting trail system would destroy the ambience and reputation of Hubbard County that a majority of residents enjoy, just to satisfy a small minority group. The destruction will affect wetlands and minimum maintenance roads on a much larger scale. As we are all aware, the County's and Township's road maintenance budgets are already slim, and cannot accommodate a significant increase in the pace of required repairs that would follow high ATV use.</p> <p>We ask for your serious deliberation on this issue and that you consider the long-range impact on our County. The COLA Board and its lake association members would be happy to discuss this issue with you and clearly will be strongly involved during the comment period for the DNR proposed plan.</p>
<p>448</p>	<p>136. Groebner, Jim</p> <p>I can't believe that the MN DNR would even consider a plan to allow a 'Technical' off road truck trail through public land. The only word I can think of is 'OUTRAGEOUS'. This is simply a new low for the MNDNR.</p>

<p>449</p> <p>450</p>	<p>The people that would be users of this trail have found plenty of places where they can practice their 'skills'. I have personally seen them doing this kind of driving in places all over MN, mostly trespassing, places where they shouldn't be. They drive around signs stating 'No motorized vehicles beyond this point', I have had them come up behind me while I was walking a trail in the Superior NF, they are all over in CC Andrews SF, they rip up the stream bed in Whitewater WMA, etc. They are everywhere ruining habitat, and I'm sick and tired of putting up with their CRAP!. I don't see why the DNR should accommodate them with yet another place to ruin the peace and quiet.</p> <p>This so-called 'Park' will not prevent these greasy-headed punks from continuing their illegal activities on other lands. This proposal is not consistent with the mission of the MN DNR. This should be left to a private enterprise. This kind of activity is not a legitimate 'outdoor activity' because of its destructiveness to the environment. It belongs on some private land in a gravel pit where they can throw their beer cans and leave their mufflers laying around for the owner to clean up. I hope I am making myself clear, I will oppose this proposal at every opportunity! I am a long-time user of MN public lands. I'm just simply flabbergated that the DNR is even considering this.</p>
<p>451</p> <p>452</p> <p>452a</p> <p>453</p> <p>454</p>	<p>137. Gunderson, Patricia</p> <p>I am writing as a concerned citizen. I do not have an issue with ATV per se but I would like there use restricted so that our parks/forests can still be a safe home for the wild life animals and for the natural vegetation. Also, these parks/forests should provide a place for those who do not want to be impacted by the noise and pollution of ATVs.</p> <p>I appreciate the DNR keeping the Paul Bunyan South Unit ATV trail within the Martineau OHM trail system. However, the forest roads and trails west of Spur One need to be closed to ATV traffic, as recommended by the local evaluation team. The connecting trail that runs on the Beaver Lakes, Teepee Lakes and Halvorsen trails should be closed to ATVs as well. It runs along the Gulch Lakes wildlife management area and through the Game Refuge. Further, it connects the west trail system to P.Bunyan and risks turning Hubbard County into an ATV park.</p> <p>4X4 off-road trucks do not belong in public forests. The local team did not recommend these trails.</p>
<p>455</p> <p>456</p>	<p>138. Haarman, Janet</p> <p>I want the new policy that will develop "Truck Technical Trails" in MN State Forests and especially the Paul Bunyan State Forest to be Rescinded. I view the new policy as a reversal of the 2003 off-highway legislation. I do not agree with the special assistant to the DNR commissioner, that this new policy change is a "clarification".</p> <p>I think factory-equipped four-wheel drive trucks, SUVs and Jeeps should test their driving skills in specially designed sites not in State Forests. I agree with Senator Carrie Ruud that the state should purchase abandoned gravel pits, mining areas or other lands for off-highway vehicles.</p>
<p>457</p> <p>458</p> <p>459</p> <p>460</p> <p>461</p> <p>462</p> <p>463</p> <p>464</p>	<p>139. Haas, Carole</p> <p>As secretary of the League of Women Voters Bemidji Area and a member and participant of the League of Women Voters Minnesota action network, I have been authorized by our President, Lois Kruger, and board members to write a statement of support to the Department of Natural Resources for the state of Minnesota to develop an environmentally sustainable and protective policy governing OHV use on public lands in Minnesota and, particularly, for the forest lands in Beltrami and Hubbard Counties.</p> <p>In our view, the state of Minnesota needs to protect our state forests, particularly the Paul Bunyan State Forest by minimizing the impact of motorized vehicles that are allowed access to these lands. We believe that "Mudder trucks" have no place on our public lands; we believe the owners should provide private lands on which to operate their vehicles.. We believe all terrain vehicle use should be restricted to designated trails that are "declared open" but posted for use at reasonable speeds. These trails should not be placed so that sensitive wetlands would be destroyed. These trails should not be placed so that the rights of Minnesota citizens who enjoy "quiet recreation" would be abrogated. These trails should not put private property in jeopardy.</p> <p>In addition, ethical behavior by OHV operators must be enforced by law. Trespassing, destruction of forest lands, and harassing wildlife must be punishable offenses.</p> <p>OHV use is offensive to many citizens because of the damage done to Minnesota's public and</p>

<p>465</p> <p>466</p>	<p>private lands by irresponsible and uncaring operators. It is common to see deeply gullied and rutted roadsides and trails, and muddied and rutted wetlands and stream beds. These problems must be addressed by the DNR as this destruction is unacceptable.</p> <p>In order to educate and hold OHV operators accountable, the OHV manufacturers and owners should contribute to funds that would provide money for education and enforcement. The OHV companies and OHV users should provide money for these important functions since the state of Minnesota, reportedly, because of severe budget constraints is not able to do so.</p> <p>The members of the League of Women Voters of the Bemidji Area encourage you to "keep an open mind" and take our concerns and the concerns of many Beltrami and Hubbard County citizens about the many problems caused by the burgeoning proliferation and use of OHVs in our state. Please work to find a solution that considers our interests and concerns and work to find a solution that sustains and protects Beltrami and Hubbard County public lands, and public lands throughout the state. Thank you for the opportunity for the LWVBA to express our concerns about this controversial issue</p>
<p>467</p> <p>468</p> <p>469</p> <p>470</p> <p>471</p> <p>472</p> <p>473</p>	<p>140. Haas, Ed</p> <p>My wife and I are members of the Mississippi Headwaters Audubon Society and the Headwaters Canoe Club. We moved to northern Minnesota eight years ago because of the progressive nature of the state and the wonderful opportunity to live in a relatively unspoiled, not over-populated environment. We take care of our thirty acres of land trying to keep it healing from its previous use. We enjoy quiet recreation such as bird watching, canoeing, and hiking. When we head out to enjoy these activities on public land, we don't want to be bombarded by the roar of racing engines, to climb over rutted, muddied paths, or to see damage to wetlands caused by flagrant abuse by the irresponsible and destructive behavior of some OHV users.</p> <p>We want to see a limit placed on the amount of designated trail miles that the DNR is allocating for OHV riders. We want trails placed in areas where damage can be minimized, where private property will not be trespassed upon, and where laws can and will be enforced.</p> <p>Specifically, we want to see the Mississippi Headwaters Audubon Society's Neilson Spearhead Center property, which is located in Hubbard County, protected. The Neilson Spearhead Center is located on Spearhead Lake and is surrounded by county land. In looking at the proposed map of OHV trails for that area, we see that those trails will take riders along the south and west boundaries of the Neilson Spearhead Center property. Along with the MHAS Board, we are opposed to allowing OHV users on those trails. Monitoring use on those trails is nearly impossible with intrusion on to Neilson Spearhead property a great possibility.</p> <p>We encourage the DNR planners to be FAIR in making decisions. Consider all interests: campers, canoers, hikers, and bird watchers, as well as the OHV riders. Consider the health of the environment and all life that depends on it, not just how much money can be made and spent in Hubbard County.</p>
<p>474</p>	<p>141. Haidos, Chris</p> <p>As an avid OHM user, I thought it appropriate to provide just a few comments regarding the Martineau OHV trail system. I have had the opportunity to ride the Martineau trail system and I've been very impressed. I understand it exists as a direct result of hard work on the part of many OHV users, yet clearly the DNR's support is critical. Thanks for your continued support. While I recognize the objections many have to OHV's, I feel it is important to provide opportunity to all outdoor enthusiasts in a way that allows for education, and when necessary enforcement. Designated trail systems allow for this.</p>
<p>475</p>	<p>142. Halstenrud, Reid</p> <p>With regard to the Forest Reclassification process, and with the deadline for comments fast approaching, I wanted to speak up on behalf of the OHV/ATV community of registered trail users.</p> <p>As a registered ATV owner, I enjoy being involved in local clubs, fundraisers and everything that has to do with outdoor recreation. You see, many of us also support the many other outdoor activities that involve state licensing with revenues that go into enforcement and education. For myself alone in 2004 I purchased licenses or permits for fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, boating/canoing and BWCAW use.</p>

<p>476</p>	<p>OHV/ATV registrations alone put more than \$700K into the state system last year, so we would like to be heard on the subject of closing OHV trails. I understand there are valid points to both sides of this issue, but rather than close trails, please consider re-routes, bridges and culverts. I also agree that existing corridors should be used.</p>
<p>477 478 479 480</p>	<p>143. Hansen, Bruce</p> <p>I am writing this letter to oppose the proposed truck, ATV, and dirt-bike trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. Many years ago, the people of the State of Minnesota protected the biodiversity of this area by making it a State Forrest. Although one of the functions of forest lands is to provide for recreation, I do not believe this should be done at the expense of the biodiversity and soil erosion. Most forest top soils are very thin and prone to erosion. There is also the chance of water pollution from leaking oil or damage to the oil pan on off road vehicles. Minnesota is a large state with many types of land from abandoned mines to delicate ferns. Would not land already developed such as abandoned mines or land fills that are full and covered with earth be better suited to “test” the toughness of these vehicles? These areas could be reclaimed in part by planting trees and making obstacles on the “trails” through these areas. As the owner of Minnesota State Forest Lands, I would prefer that trucks, ATV’s and dirt-bikes stay on the roads and off the “trails” through my State Forest Lands.</p>
<p>481 482 483 484 485 486 487 488 489 490 490a</p>	<p>144. Hansen, Gary</p> <p>I am a deer hunter. I hunt in Zone 2 within the Paul Bunyan State Forest, and have done so for many years.</p> <p>I submit these comments from the perspective of a hunter who enjoys the hunting experience for more than the trophy , although that is indeed an added benefit. I truly enjoy the quiet of nature and the experience of being there with the wild and the wildlife. I do not want to either be bothered by motorized noise during the hunting week, nor do I want to constantly see the destruction that is sure to be caused to our outdoors with this type of recreation. I am relying on the DNR to put forward a plan that is both balanced and manageable for the department to monitor and enforce with existing staff resources. This type of recreation is known to have some of the outlaw element in participation and many of the users may not understand the long-term damage that they are causing by going off trail, an enforcement plan is necessary.</p> <p>As I see it the motorized trail system that is being proposed is far too extensive and does not allow for areas that are off-limits either for the other users or for wildlife with their habitat needs. It appears from the maps that there is no place in the Paul Bunyan that is planned to be further from a road or trail than a mile. I certainly hope that the final plan is not this fragmented. It is important for the DNR to consider some type of segregation zoning if you may that allows the forest user to know in advance where they can go for each type of recreation. Those of us who prefer the quiet type will have a place we can go for a quality experience. There should be no connector trails at this time, with time and with responsible use additional trail miles and amenities can be added in future. Keep the trails at a manageable level to start.</p> <p>Remember that wildlife also have their needs, the constant noise throughout the year of motors will disrupt normal feeding, breeding activities of many of our wildlife species. I request that the DNR take the environmental and wildlife concerns into consideration before a final plan is recommended. It does not appear as this has been done to date.</p> <p>The 4-wheel drive truck challenge trail should not be in final plan. I ve seen the ugly challenge area that was created by the DNR in the Foothills State Forest and this type of activity does not belong on our public forests.</p> <p>There must be a comprehensive plan for enforcement of trespass and other laws. There must be a plan to mitigate and/or repair the damage to public and private property. There should be no trails close to private property it is unfair to subject local landowners near the forest to the constant noise and disruption as well as the loss of property values that this type of trail will bring.</p> <p>I am urging the DNR to re-think the plan that is being proposed and to reconsider the impacts to local landowners, hunters and other quiet recreation folks, and the wildlife that is a key valuable asset in this forest. I hope that I will not need to find happy hunting in other locations due to the</p>

	over-reach of motorized trail planning.
491 492 493 494 495 496 497 498 499 500	<p>145. Hanson, Clyde</p> <p>Here are my comments on the Paul Bunyan State Forest OHV Plan. Please make them part of the public record.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The general rule for vehicle use will change from <u>open unless posted closed</u> to <u>closed unless posted open</u>. This is a very positive step. 2. About 421 miles of existing routes identified by the team <u>will not be considered forest roads nor designated recreational trails</u>. This is a positive needed step in the plan. 3. Ask the Commissioner's Office to get a second opinion from a disinterested respected attorney. If the same opinion is rendered – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Ask that the Study specifically state and acknowledge the risk of less than desirable control of OHV traffic due to the underlying laws ii. Pledge to support the Commissioner's Office in getting the law changed this legislative session. 4. The Study Team recommended that 4-wheel truck trails <u>not</u> be established in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. This recommendation was approved by the DNR Northwest Division Regional Management Team and approved by the OHV Policy Committee in St. Paul. The Commissioner's Office overruled this recommendation and ordered the Study Team to include a truck trail in the forest. We believe the Study Team and the DNR Northwest Division Team are much closer to the ground and brought more science to the issue than did the Commissioner's Office. Suggested Action: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Recommend the 4-wheel truck trail be struck from the plan. b. Ask the Commissioner's Office to re-examine other issues where the Study Team was overruled by the Commissioner's Office. 5. With the connector trails recommended, it is our fear that a totally unexpected level of ATV traffic will develop in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. In season, we already constantly see trailers and double deck trailers full of ATVs moving up state highways and county roads. No unit of government has demonstrated that ATV traffic can be well-managed on public land. We have not seen budgetary figures that show that a high level of ATV traffic can be enforced in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. Suggested action: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Recommend the connector trails be dropped from the plan until we see what level of traffic is generated in the forest with this plan. When the DNR and County demonstrate they have the funds and where-with-all to manage the level of traffic generated, then consider connector trails.
501 502	<p>146. Hanson, Reva</p> <p>i am sending this as i am very concerned with the traffic our forests and road ditches, etc. are getting from the people on 4 wheel vehicles. have you seen how they uproot all our wildflowers in the ditches? they won't come back. it also looks terrible. i know these people need places to ride so lets give them some and lets get them off the state forest trails and road ditches. can't we designate some trails just for them. like you do walking, snowmobile, and ski trails ? if we let it go as it is the forest trails will look like some torn up mud bog. we need to protect our wild animals , wildflowers and forests.</p>
503 504	<p>147. Hardy, Brett</p> <p>Thank you for your efforts in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. I live in Crow Wing County and I ride OHM's. It is very hard to find any place to ride lately that has challenging single track trails and is legal to ride. I think that the Paul Bunyan Forest and the Martineau trail system should be a model for more State Forests.</p> <p>I do think that it would be nice if we could look at some of the trails which have been marked for closing and see if perhaps they could be kept open or maybe put into a rotation with other nearby routes to alternate use each year to keep some variety in the area. Perhaps they have been chosen to be closed because of a particular lowpoint or such which could be routed around? With so many forests like Pillsbury being Closed and every other being Limited and containing few open trails, along with the loss of most Potlatch land in the last two years, it is important to those of us who ride to protect whatever opportunities remain open to us.</p>

<p>505</p> <p>506</p>	<p>148. Harkins, Kay</p> <p>I wish to express my opinion on the damage to our forests that include the ATV and trucks. I recall the photos in Star & Trib issue of 2-25-02. Please take the time to look at these photos. The damage they do is unconscionable. The scientists have proved the damage to our wetlands and plant destruction. These forests provide the wildlife their home, and we will destroy all their habitat. We must now take responsibility and <u>not</u> allow this form of recreation that sacrifices our natural resources.</p> <p>Please consider a new enlightened vision to limit their use in our precious forests. Protect the land for future generations. Please establish a legacy now to protect programs that are essential for the forests to survive. Please read Sigurd Olson: "Wilderness Meets a Deep Human Need." It was published January 14, 2002 page 11A in Star & Tribune. This article will inspire you to proceed with a new vision. This is all about money. How sad. What would I expect but the recreation ATV, truck companies to say? Please listen to your soul and protect our forests. Please read that article.</p>
<p>507</p> <p>508</p> <p>509</p> <p>510</p> <p>511</p> <p>512</p> <p>513</p> <p>514</p>	<p>149. Haskins, Elaine</p> <p>All OHV and ATV activity should be kept East of Spur one in the Paul Bunyan Forest. At least make that area the testing zone to prove the facts that have already been shown in Cass County in the Foothills forest. The whole or even majority of the Paul Bunyan should not be put at risk just because you can.</p> <p>I believe there is an unfair bias for OHV & ATV groups because they have the network/money.</p> <p>The Beaver Lakes Teepee Lakes, any and all lakes should not be in these designated areas. Our surface water is sacred. DNR has proved how easily surface water can be made useless! With such a large area there will never be enough funds to enforce the rules.</p> <p>Those of use who are compromising so much already ask when is our opinions going to be considered?</p> <p>Obviously someone is getting paid by someone who wants to sell something. What else could have such a great force to make the people in charge make such sever decisions that risk the forests.</p> <p>Why do they have to destroy the forests? I don't get it! Riding these machines doesn't have to be done in the woods! They are killing the natural environment! Why can't they go some where that don't care if the area is a dirt hole!</p>
<p>515</p> <p>515a</p> <p>516</p> <p>517</p> <p>517a</p>	<p>150. Haug, Todd</p> <p>I support recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan, the Paul Bunyan has had a long history of off-road truck use, something the DNR is supposed to keep in mind when doing designations. I don't believe that trucks got enough trails in the Paul Bunyan, ATVs got 37 miles of trails and 35 miles of minimum maintenance roads to be managed for recreational purposes, the DNR should be able to find trucks more. Trucks should get more of the powerline trail, the DNR should work harder to do more mitigative measures to keep more of the powerline open to trucks.</p> <p>The Wetlands Conservation Act allows for a limited amount of wetland impact, and the tiny wetlands between the hills on the powerline are self contained and do not drain out into the watershed. The powerline is an already disturbed corridor anyway, and it will get continued traffic from utilities, fire prevention, and DNR, what better place to put trucks.</p>
<p>518</p> <p>519</p> <p>520</p> <p>521</p> <p>522</p>	<p>151. Headwaters Canoe Club</p> <p>*OHV use threatens the quality of lakes and streams. OHV use in steam and lake beds is widely publicized in OHV advertisements, OHV magazines, and OHV television programs. Even if they are kept out of streams and wetlands, they have enormous potential to degrade steams and lakes through erosion and deposition of sediment. The design of the machines and the tread patterns of their tires ensure soil movement even when the operators attempt to use them in a conscientious manner. During our activities as stewards in the Adopt-A-River program, we have noticed appalling abuse of canoe access sites such as Coffee Pot Landing by OHV users.</p> <p>For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No open routes within a half mile of the Mississippi and Schoolcraft Rivers. 2. No open routes within a quarter mile of a lake. 3. Limit OHV use to times or seasons when damage to soils is unlikely or limit routes to areas where damage to soils is unlikely. Close routes if any noticeable soil movement or compaction results from

<p>523</p> <p>524</p> <p>524a</p> <p>525</p> <p>526</p> <p>527</p> <p>528</p> <p>529</p> <p>530</p> <p>531</p> <p>532</p> <p>533</p> <p>534</p> <p>535</p> <p>536</p> <p>537</p> <p>538</p>	<p>OHV use.</p> <p>4. Keep open routes away from wetlands, intermittent and perennial streams, natural heritage sites, or other sensitive habitats.</p> <p>*OHV use is disturbing to other forest users and to wildlife. The opportunity to view wildlife in their native habitat is a primary draw for canoeists and other non-motorized forest recreationists. Zoning the county for forest recreation is essential for protection of wildlife and other uses.</p> <p>For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keep all OHV routes within the Martineau Trail footprint. 2. If routes are left open outside the Martineau Trail footprint, keep them at least a half mile from the North Country Trail. <p>* Regulation of OHV use seems to be a difficult if not impossible task. The DNR does not apparently have adequate staff or funding to maintain control of this activity. One might argue that the plan actually is limiting existing routes, so the impacts should be expected to be lessened. However, after final acceptance of an OHV plan and subsequent production of OHV route maps, significantly increased OHV activity should be expected.</p> <p>For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start small and expand OHV opportunities if OHV use proves to be benign with respect to water quality, wildlife habitat, forest plan communities, and other forest users. 2. Work for legislation that will eliminate the hunter/trapper exemption to cross-country travel. This exemption makes OHV activity more difficult to regulate and makes OHV rules more difficult to enforce. <p>*OHV use have proven to be a significant vector for the spread of non-native invasive species, such as spotted knapweed. This problem constitutes a grave threat to the integrity of our forests.</p> <p>For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests:</p> <p>Limit the spread of invasive non-native species by closing routes in parts of the county where such plants grow in county and township road ditches.</p> <p>*OHV activity is relatively new to the landscape and the level of activity is increasing. Its potential effects, therefore, are undocumented. No limit to OHV activity is specified in the plan. Nobody can predict the level of increased activity that may result from establishing connector trails linking the Paul Bunyan State Forest to rural taverns, communities and surrounding counties, but such trails are expected to greatly increase OHV traffic.</p> <p>For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests:</p> <p>Eliminate connector trails from the Hubbard County OHV plan.</p> <p>*ATV use on system roads disturbs the road bed, dislodging large rocks and creating mounds of loose gravel and sand that makes travel difficult with low clearance cars and trucks. Such road conditions can effectively prohibit access to hiking trails, lakes and streams for other users.</p> <p>For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests:</p> <p>Work for legislation that would permit system roads to be open to highway-licensed vehicles but closed to OHVs.</p> <p>*Some areas should be restricted from all OHV use, year-round. Such a restriction in an area like the proposed Gulch Lakes Recreation Area would create a refuge for people seeking solitude and wildlife, alike. It could serve as a “control plot” to be compared to other areas at a later date to scientifically measure the environmental impact of OHVs.</p> <p>For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests:</p> <p>Work for legislation that would permit some areas within a state forest to be classified as closed within a state forest that generally had a limited classification.</p>
<p>539</p> <p>540</p>	<p>152. Hedeon, Carter</p> <p>My philosophy regarding public forest use includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A) Don't degrade it. B) Preserve it without degradation for future generations C) Open for all <p>Nothing too unusual so far. The “open for all” concept should apply to anyone not degrading the forest while enjoying it. However, just about anything we do in a forest can possibly be somehow degrading, so public use of a forest, in terms of being degrading, is all a matter of degree. Applying this to the present controversy I would ask that those making the final difficult decisions compare long term negative impacts of recreational OHV use with that of hunters, trappers, hikers, birders, berry</p>

<p>541</p> <p>542</p> <p>543</p> <p>544</p> <p>545</p> <p>546</p> <p>547</p> <p>548</p> <p>549</p> <p>550</p> <p>551</p> <p>552</p> <p>553</p> <p>554</p> <p>555</p>	<p>pickers and other “naturalist” types. There seems to be a rather large gap between the motorized and non-motorized groups mentioned. Although the non-motorized group accesses the forest in a motor vehicle, the vehicle is parked prior to engaging in other activities. The motorized group depends almost completely on OHVs for their recreation, for as long as they are in the forest!</p> <p>As far as I’m concerned, the public forests would be much better off without any OHV incursion. However, being somewhat pragmatic, I don’t expect them to be totally banned any time soon. Therefore, please know that I was rather pleased with the plan as proposed by the Hubbard County and local MN DNR committee members charged with the daunting task of recommending the extent of OHV use in Hubbard County forest lands and the Paul Bunyan and Badoura State Forests. The proposed classification as “Limited,” the decision to decrease the miles of existing trails being used by OHVs, and the general containment of the OHV trails in the east side of the Paul Bunyan were all positive steps. But then when brought to St. Paul, it was essentially changed back to status quo, except the “Limited” classification, and it lost almost all appeal to me.</p> <p>Consider the problems with OHVs in forests: noise and its impact on other humans and wildlife, trail degradation, little available law enforcement, upland vegetation destruction and soil compaction, and wetland destruction (the latter two by renegade OHV users). With the above in mind I make the following recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Confine OHV use to the Martineau Trail System footprint. That is one huge footprint! This one step would mitigate conflicts between OHV and other forest user interests tremendously. 2) Close that portion of the Martineau Trail System lying within the Paul Bunyan Wildlife Refuge. An OHV trail in a wildlife refuge is an oxymoron! 3) Close the Beaver Lakes Trail to OHV use. It borders the proposed non-motorized management area, and would encourage renegade OHV incursion into that area simply by its proximity. 4) Eliminate the concept of connector trails leading into the Paul Bunyan State Forest. These will only serve to increase the presence of OHVs and their negative impacts. 5) Close trails as soon as it is evident that irreparable damage is occurring, and don’t build new trail to replace the damaged one. That seems to have happened more than once in the Paul Bunyan State Forest in the past (A “damage them, so what, and forget them” mentality). 6) Close trails where cross-country OHV riding is originating. 7) Keep OHV trails as far from the North Country National Scenic Trail as possible. Not only is their noise unwelcomed by hikers, but also OHM and OHV travel on this trail, a budding problem here and an obvious problem in the Chippewa National Forest at least. 8) Reject the proposed Truck Trail. There is too much recreational motorized use in the Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County forests now. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Who is going to keep them off very wet trails? (I am aware of the spring Forest System Road closures) b) Many drivers of these vehicles will go slowly as promised, but who is going to keep off the speeding tire spinning testosterone overdosed drivers hell bent on getting up that hill? c) If this proposal for a truck trail is adopted, close immediately any trail showing irreparable damage. 9) Work to change the directive, whatever the source that states that All Forest System and Minimum Maintenance Roads are open to all motorized vehicles. Allow closure of at least Minimum Maintenance Roads to OHVs at the discretion of the Area Forestry Supervisor, while allowing highway license vehicle travel. Think about the following. If we knew, when the first OHV rolled off the assembly line, what we now know about forest damage from OHV use, would the MN DNR and Hubbard County have chosen to welcome OHVs into their forests? I doubt it! Short of a complete ban now, the least we can do is to seriously restrict OHV use in these forests.
	<p>153. Hedeem, Flo</p> <p>The basis for my comments lies in the following quote from H.B. Hutchinson, <u>Bringing Conservation into the Mainstream of American Thought</u>, 1969.</p> <p>“What we don’t know about the future is in fact more important in planning than</p>

<p>556</p> <p>556a</p> <p>557</p> <p>558</p> <p>559</p> <p>560</p> <p>561</p> <p>562</p> <p>563</p> <p>564</p>	<p>what we do know. For this reason, resource management designs should contain a large factor of safety. Moreover, resource planning should attempt to reserve a maximum choice for future generations by postponing actions that need not be made today.”</p> <p>The Anishanaabe Ojibwe people say: “Live always for the Seventh Generation.” “Social contracts” negotiated now as it pertains to the re-classification of forest land in Hubbard County, including the Paul Bunyan State Forest, requires a cautious approach to protect the interests of the generations that follow us.</p> <p>My personal use of the forest has been limited to hiking and camping. I experience with awe the wonders of nature in the quiet solitude afforded by large tracts of tree land. I am also involved with the building and maintenance of the section of the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCT) that goes through the Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County tax forfeit lands. We use highway-licensed vehicles on forest roads to access remote trail-heads and to work on trail related projects. Our Itasca Moraine Chapter of the North County Trail Association has worked closely with the local Department of Natural Resources personnel to avoid conflicts with the OHV trails already on the ground. As the Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County lands are re-classified to “limited” I would ask that the following problem areas be addressed to afford the greatest protection possible for the NCT.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Sec. 10-142-33: A dead end spur road that extends SSE from Refuge Road, crossing the NCT and continuing into the SE quarter of the section provides OHV access to the entire section and will facilitate traffic throughout the section. 2) NE ¼ Sec. 33 and NW ¼ Sec. 34-143-34: Pick one trail to remain open for OHV use in this “bottleneck” on the east side of the Schoolcraft drainage basin. 3) Sec. 1 & 2-142-35: The plethora of spur roads coming into these sections from the Lake Alice Forest Road will make routing the NCT difficult. In addition it will be difficult to restrict illegal (and legal) use of the NCT by motorized recreationalists. 4) The NCT, of necessity, has to cross the Martineau Trail four times between Hwy 64 and Waboose Lake. If any of those OHV trails can be eliminated it would benefit the NCT greatly. 5) “Challenge areas” by any other name (i.e. technical trails) are still challenge areas and have no place in the forest-lands in Hubbard County being considered for re-classification. Recreational truck driving should be limited exclusively to forest roads, if at all. <p>In as much as there are no dollars left in the OHV dedicated accounts for enforcement and maintenance, OHV trails should be limited to the Martineau Trail area, with no connecting trails. When the proof is on the ground that recreational motor vehicles are being used responsibly, consideration can be given for extending trails.</p> <p>The plan currently being considered for designated trails is based on an interpretation of the law that has forced a use that cannot be supported by the science of natural resource management. To open all roads to OHV traffic, simply because they are open to licensed vehicles for other purposes is bad policy. I would expect the DNR to stand firmly in support of efforts to close this loophole in current law.</p> <p>For the 12-month period ending September 2004, the DNR reported that more than 3,000 tickets and warnings were issued for OHV use violations. This represents only a tiny fraction of actual lawbreakers. Violations must result in more than just tickets and monetary fines. Loss of vehicles would serve as an actual deterrent.</p> <p>Anyone touring the Foot Hills State Forest can attest to the devastating effects of OHVs challenging a forest environment. Education and designated trails did not protect and preserve the forest-land for multiple uses. Please do everything possible to keep forest-lands in Hubbard County from becoming yet another OHV park.</p>
<p>565</p> <p>566</p> <p>567</p>	<p>154. Heikman, Joe</p> <p>I support trails for recreational use by trucks in the Paul Bunyan. This forest has had a long history of off road truck use. Not all ORV’s are mudder trucks, and mudder trucks are not the ones who want trails. Minimum maintenance roads are not recreational. It is imperative that the DNR give trucks trails. Less than nine miles is not acceptable. ATV’s got 37 trail miles and 35 miles of minimum maintenance roads. Trucks have and can continue to share those same trails. The powerline area is an</p>

568	already disturbed area. The DNR should be willing to do more to try to keep more of this area open to trucks.
569 570	155. Henry, Kenneth As a OHM rider I vist the Paul Buyan Forest trail system several times a year. I'm disappointed to see a reduction in the trail system for OHM. There are very few places in the state for OHM use. The ATV trail system is already much more extensive then the OHM trail system , and most ATV trail systems do not allow motorcycles on them. I would not like to see a reduction in miles of OHM trails. I would also like to see a primitive campground on the south side that would allow OHV travel in the camp ground.
571 572 573	156. Hitchcock, Steve I have a home in Akeley and use the Paul Bunyan State forest for recreation. It is great to see the county and the state working together on this important issue. I have a suggestion. I would like to see ATV trails that connect to each other and offer access to local towns like Akeley, Nevis, Laporte, Lake George, Lake Alice, etc. I believe this will stimulate the economy of these towns and bring much needed employment through restaurants, gas stations, etc. Would there be a possibility that there will be inter-connecting walking trails and also more non-hunting recreational oppourtunies (ie cross country ski trails) in the wildlife refuge? Looking at the map I can't tell where the wildlife refuges are. I could sure use some more information.
574	157. Holder, Amanda I am a member of the Minnesota 4 Wheel Drive Association who supports recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. Most members in our club wheel stock Geo Trackers and enjoy scenic trails in the forest. The impact we create is <u>less</u> than logging vehicles and machinery. Please keep truck trails open in Paul Bunyan!
575 576	158. Holland, Randy I'm writing to express concerns over DNR plans for Hubbard County, as well as statewide, with regard to expanding ATV usage. Anyone who has land along these trails, or through their property, knows self-policing and education methods aren't working.(My family owns 400+ acres south of Itasca State Park). And expanded access is the last thing that should be considered until the current situation is controlled better to ensure ATVs don't do long-term environmental damage, as well as not ruin the quality of life for those along these trails. I urge the DNR to stop pandering to ATV interests, they don't have the state's citizens best interests at heart.
577 578	159. Holland, Ren #1 The DNR's role should be to PROTECT public land and support CONSERVATION policies, NOT sell out to private interests, self-serving individuals, or destructive policies. The devastating environmental damage by mudder trucks, the disruption of resident's lives by environmental hellions, and the tarnishing of the historic conservation image of the DNR should be halted. Allowing mudder trucks on land, other than land which has already suffered extensive environmental damage, such as mine pits, should be emphatically rejected. I am a Hubbard county land owner, with a lifelong appreciation for the lake region forests of northern Minnesota.
579 580 581 582	160. Holland, Ren #2 While I don't live in Hubbard County, I own property there, and am writing in opposition to an ORV expansion on public lands. I recently saw a "mudder" truck being towed by a pickup. On the side of the mud-covered vehicle was a sign that said "Redneck Special." I wondered what kind of trail through wetlands this vehicle would make in the name of sport. There are some things that should not be allowed, no matter how much "fun" it is, and no matter how much money the activity generates. Trappers can trap without driving over bogs, hunters can drag their deer without ATV's, and kids can be trained to drive without a destructive impact on the environment. Trails near cabins or homes, with dozens of machines passing each day, can disrupt the lives of our rural tax paying residents (as well as wildlife) and lower the value of their property. Citizens are fed up with special interests dominating environmental legislation.

<p>595</p> <p>596</p> <p>597</p> <p>598</p>	<p>these machines on public land. Giving fines to the very few violators which do get caught will not solve the problem.</p> <p>The building of official state trails will just make it easier for these machines to spring off and make more seasonal hunting trails throughout the forests since they can be used for hunting from September 1st. through December 31st.</p> <p>Just because a lot of people are buying them does not mean the state must provide a place for them to be used! If the state keeps welcoming these machines into it's forests by building more and more trails (five years from now the trails built today will be over crowded) it will only get worse. Large areas of the forests will be like big amusement parks. Since it is the responsibility of the DNR to protect our forests and natural resources it is about time that DNR leadership in St. Paul takes a stand to really protect our public forests and wetlands from ATV damage. To keep it manageable, just be concerned with public land, and leave private land out.</p> <p>A side note: A lot of people also play golf (another outdoor sport); does that mean the state should be building golf courses for them in state forests? Or paint ball courses? Or shooting ranges? Or archery ranges? or...?</p> <p>Please, think about how you would like our state forests to look twenty years from now. They were set aside as public forests years ago for a reason.</p>
<p>599</p> <p>600</p>	<p>165. Huber, Mike & Dorothea</p> <p>We live on Co. Rd. 91 . We don't want any part of any trails in our area. The Paul Bunyan Forest is Beautiful the way it is. We sure don't need the 4 wheelers tearing it all up . We have seen along the roads what kind of damage they do... we do own a 4-wheeler. But we aren't our to tear up the country side with it. As most people do.. Who is going to keep these trails up ??? On week-end they will need daily grooming , If not more often. We have seen what the Spider Lake trails look like NO THANK YOU!!!!We want to KEEP our country LIKE IT IS!!!!</p> <p>Hay why not go to Canterbury Downs and build a track there". At least the city people won't have to drive very far then!!!! We want NO PART of 4- wheeler trailers in our area!!!!</p>
<p>601</p> <p>601a</p>	<p>166. Hudson, Tavis #1</p> <p>To support the Paul Bunyan State Forest recreational truck trails. The DNR should be willing to do more to keep powerlines open to trucks. More trails can be reworked and wet areas avoided to leave open more trail on the powerline.</p>
<p>602</p>	<p>167. Hudson, Tavis #2</p> <p>I support recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan Forest. The P.B. has had a long history of recreational off-road truck use. Not all ORVs are mudders (not at all), mudder trucks are not who wants trails in Paul Bunyan Forest. Minimum maintenance roads are not recreational, it is imperative the DNR give truck trails rights. ATVs received 37 miles of trails and 35 miles recreational minimum maintenance roads, ORVs received 9 or less. Proposed ORV designations do not equal more than .02% of P.B. land base. Please listen to our cause. Please understand our needs.</p>
<p>603</p> <p>604</p>	<p>168. Humenberger, Egon</p> <p>I think to change the general vehicle rule in the plan from "Open unless posted closed" to "Closed unless posted open" is a very good idea. Closing over 400 miles of user trails is also a step in the right direction. On some other important issues the DNR NW Team and the Study Team were overruled by the Commissioner's Office however. I believe the DNR NW Team and the Study Team are much more realistic about what the forest can tolerate. Please urge the commissioner's Office to reconsider and implement the plan worked out by the Study Team. We cannot afford to have our public land overrun by motorized equipment. We have just to much to loose. We need the forest for timber, hunting, hiking, fishing, camping, bird watching, berry picking, etc. It is time that we stand up against the onslaught of motorized vehicles on public lands. It is the responsibility of the natural resource professionals to make sure the forests will be there for us in the future and not being destroyed by Off Road Machines. I do own an ATV and know very well what those machines can do. Because I have an ATV does not mean I have the right to run my machine on public lands all over the country.</p>
<p>605</p>	<p>169. Humrickhouse, Mike</p> <p>Please note my opposition to the proposed truck trail/road development planned for the Paul Bunyan State Forest. The following are my reasons:</p>

<p>606</p> <p>607</p> <p>608</p> <p>609</p> <p>610</p>	<p>1.If as stated in media this road is not to be a "challenge" course, there already exist many opportunities and venues for forest road travel in our state and national forests as well as on county lands.</p> <p>2.This type of development impacts a much greater area than the road corridor because of noise generated by the vehicles using the road.</p> <p>3.The damage that will be caused by this activity is long term and expensive to repair should this road be closed in response to misuse.</p> <p>4.History has shown that intrusion by ATVs will be encouraged by the existence of this road no matter whether signs restricting its used are posted or not.</p> <p>5.While more and more vehicle road/trail systems have been created or proposed and a high level of logging activity has created even more roads, access to any significant trackless area in central Minnesota has become virtually nonexistent. Too often it seems the DNR is in the position of locking the barn after the horse is gone. May I respectfully suggest that DNRs' custodial responsibility is equally as important as its managerial charge in a situation such as this. And while maintaining and preserving may not be as obvious as signs and trails, it is none the less important and appreciated. Once trackless woods is gone, it's gone. Please lock the door.</p>
<p>611</p> <p>612</p> <p>613</p>	<p>170. Hurd-Lof, Lu Ann</p> <p>I wish to comment on behalf of my husband, Steve Lof, who has been a logger for more than 30 years. He has been a member of the MLEP (Minnesota Logger Education Program) since the program began and has attended several workshops on ways loggers can work around lakeshore and wetlands without damaging them. He understands the reasons wetlands need to be protected and is respectful of the reason for the rules.</p> <p>Imagine then, how upset he feels when he is working on a site and sees the damage to wetlands done by people "playing" on their ATVs. Two springs ago, he was working on a county sale in Akeley Township where ATVs were routinely plowing through a small wetland. To their credit someone, possibly a member of the Paul Bunyan ATV Club, put up a "no riding" sign (I don't remember the exact wording but the message was clear) in the wetland. On Monday morning, there were fresh tracks through it and the sign had been ripped out and tossed aside in the mud. This is the kind of behavior that has prompted such strong emotions on this issue. We know there are responsible riders, but this kind of behavior has been going on for so many years many of us just can't bear to see more of the kind of damage that has been and is being done.</p> <p>Specifically related to OHV trail planning, the objection is the double standard between those who work in the forest and those who play in it. The anecdote also relates why there is no trust that renegade ATV riders will respect signs or rules.</p>
<p>614</p>	<p>171. Ion, Darrel</p> <p>I just wanted to say what a treat it is to have the off-road trail system at the Paul Bunyan Forest. My brother and I have traveled there and stayed at the Municipal Campground twice already, and we are planning to do it again this coming summer. I realize we are not spending a ton of money during our stay, but we do eat at the restaurant, and shop at the hardware store, plus the campground fees, and gas and treats at the station/store. The trails are fun, well marked, and better than the ones at Appleton, Mn., which we also go to. We try to support the areas that are conducive to motorized fun.</p>
<p>615</p> <p>616</p> <p>617</p>	<p>172. Irish, Ken</p> <p>I have read the public review draft and reviewed the maps at the DNR's office in St. Paul MN, and I can see a lot of consideration has gone into this plan. There are many ATV/OHM and ORV trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. Hotels, restaurants, gas stations in the near by towns of Nevis and Akeley will benefit from having a connecting ATV trail to the Paul Bunyan State Forest. Routes to be managed for recreational ATV use cross highway 64 at various places and also trail crossings along highway 71 east of Itasca State Park. ATV trail crossing signs should be placed at trail/highway-crossing locations to warn motorist (Possibly installing yellow cautions lights).</p> <p>Having designated and managed trails is a good way to keep up with the increase in ATV recreation, protect the environment and manage this recreation. My family and I prefer to ride in designated areas and trails. This proposal will provide a wide variety of recreation for this sport, and the potential for new business and tourism in the area will increase. The DNR's decision to change the</p>

	classification to limited is a good choice.
618	173. Jackson, Nancy Strongly oppose truck ATV and dirt bike challenge trails in <u>our</u> Paul Bunyan State Forest. We need to keep our state forests free of such destructive activity. If this gets approved, all our forests would be up for such activity.
619	No – use abandoned gravel or mining pits for those who must have driving challenges. Most of us want peace and quiet for non-motorized recreational pursuits in our forests.
620	No truck challenge area in Paul Bunyan or any other state forests.
621	I also find it unfortunate the Area DNR Forester was told to OK a truck challenge in Paul Bunyan by DNR in St. Paul.
622	174. Jackson, Wade T. I am an avid area (Laporte) outdoorsman. Some officials involved with this planning process may recognize my name and my voice. From what I've read and seen of the maps, portions of the currently proposed ATV route will conflict with the increasing levels of multiple non-motorized recreational use occurring in some areas. Interestingly, these areas that attract this type of use are or are adjacent to unique or sensitive environments and terrain features. Your close attention and consideration of the following comments and observations will minimize the risk of negatively impacting these natural and recreational resources. I believe in the premise that controlling public access to natural and recreational areas is the corner stone to effective modern resource management.
623	Yes, I do agree that there should be a designated travel route for ATV enthusiast passing through the Paul Bunyan State Forest. However, this route should follow an existing forest road system as much as possible not a forest trail system . There are plenty of connecting forest roads to satisfy the needs of traveling ATV enthusiast who pass through the PBSF. That is not to suggest that all roads should remain open to ATV travel or all trails remain closed. Surely, a workable compromise can be achieved to balance the needs of all users of the Paul Bunyan State Forest.
624	For example: Close: #'s 315, 299, 313, 310, 894, 276.
625	Spur 1 Forest Road , from the East Gulch Forest Road up through the Bass Lake Camp Ground complex and the Lake 21 Day Use Area. It is highly traveled by licensed highway vehicles, winding, heavily used by bicyclist, hikers and campers. The latter of which generate numerous complaints against ATV riders throughout the camping season. Close: #'s 275, 1147.
626	West Gulch Forest Road , from Spur 1 to Co. Rd. 93. Again this forest road has a high use of non-motorized outdoor activities and the adjacent Gulch Lakes valley chain resonates the noise of ATV's and OHM's to a level of annoyance for the lake users.
627	I'm also very concerned about some of the proposed new ATV trail routes that I've seen on the map and trails currently opened to ATV's and other motorized use that should not have motorized access. I will identify these first by trail numbers, then location by way of geographical feature, followed observations and suggestions. Close: #'s 578, 2533, 593, 595.
628	Hart Lake area - west side. First of all, the soils here are mostly shallow and poorly drained (check soils map). Secondly there are sensitive wetland biomes located along here, already being negatively impacted by Jeep and ATV use. Trail # 2533 borders posted private lands and tracks right through an ash swale with moving surface water. Trail # 578 passes through and behind an active gun range and branches off onto a clandestine ATV trail, coursing south one and one-half mile to the county wildlife trail. Trails 593 and 595 encourage illegal access across and on the Paul Bunyan Snowmobile Trail.
629	And this entire area is used by a small pack of gray wolves for denning, as well as a lynx, otters, swans, cranes and eagle nesting. Additionally all these trails have fostered a culture of illegal cross country travel and trail construction that threatens the rare fauna found in this area. Close: #'s 645, 643, 693 and their system of trails #'s 130,133, 141, 662.
630	Hart Lake area -south east side. Again for the same reasons as presented above. This area gets especially high usage by mudder trucks, ATV's and is being ruined for all other recreational uses. It appears that the state canoe landing on the Necktie river across from the Humphrey homestead and

631	accessed from Co. Rd. 45 via trail # 645 to # 141, has been abandoned by Trails and Waterways and has turned into a party spot with a high risk of wild fire. Close:#'s 151, 164.
632	Pokety Creek - north of Laporte and west of the Paul Bunyan Snowmobile Trail. For years this little trail has encouraged illegal ATV access to the Paul Bunyan Snowmobile Trail, which has several side trails leading off of it. This has resulted in significant illegal motorized use of a non-motorized county wildlife trail less than a mile north of here and tracking eastward from the state trail. The sign and lock and chain near the trail entrance were vandalized years ago opening this walking trail to motorized use all the way down to the Necktie River valley. A clandestine ATV trail extends this wildlife trail north, to trail # 578. Close: #'s 940, 943, 949, 960,961, 962, 991, 992, 994, 997, 998.
632a	
632b	
633	Hunters Lake area - east of Garfield Lake. This is a dead end network of logging trails that has exploded in cross country trail construction. ATV use should be prohibited, and licensed motor vehicle use limited to the recognized township road. This area too is relatively expansive in scope, relative to bisecting county and township roads, and supports a denning pack of gray wolves. Cougar are sited here occasionally as well. Close; #'s 888, 373, 376, 379, 409, 410, 423, 418, 491, 471, 1779, 1812.
634	Kabekona Lake - south to Kabekona Forest Road, east from the Parkway Trail, west to St. Hwy. 64. This area is the biggest joke in the PBSF as far as illegal access by ATV's and OHV'S goes. It is without a doubt a "Fool's " plan. If you don't listen to anything else I have to say, please pay attention to this:
635	<p>Every barricade and sign prohibiting motorized access has either been removed, vandalized or regularly circumvented - ask any Conservation Officer or Forestry personnel that work this area. It is an enforcement nightmare to keep ATV's and motorized vehicles off of the easily accessed, crossed and overlapped Lester Lake Snowmobile Trail. Logging in this area has created a labyrinth of interconnected trails. Trail #'s 1812 and 1779 had at one time been signed and barricaded against motorized use, but now are regularly used by ATV's as it affords ready access to the Lester Lake Snowmobile Trail. Hunters are becoming fed up and irate over the ruination to their experience by all of the illicit machine traffic in here during the annual grouse, bear and white-tailed deer seasons. Increasingly this area is also being used by a wide variety of non-motorized recreationalist. Hikers, mountain bikers, birders and berries are finding these small interconnecting trails much to their liking. Conflicts between illegal ATV's with hikers and bikers from surrounding lake residences are frequently occurring in here. Additionally, the unique and fragile Lester Lake environment is at risk to irrevocable damage should even one ATV or OHM venture across it's purged water table and into the bowls of the white cedar swamp. With increased access by any group of OHV"s - even remotely close to this area - the history here shows that it will only be a matter of time before one or a group of vehicles "bombs" the Lester Lake swamp. Absolutely no ATV trail should be routed through this entire area. It would simply be too costly to sign and barricade every adjoining trail and it would be impossible to enforce. These are exactly the conditions that should be avoided in order to maintain a trail system of integrity. Further more, this area is gaining interest by non -motorized users and should be set aside for future observation of compatible recreational use. Numerous trails south of and including the Kabekona Forest Road provide multiple alternatives for routing an ATV trail from the Parkway Forest Road westward to Hwy. 64. From this point north to south, options exist in the form of currently established trails paralleling Hwy. 64. I admonish you. Please don't go through here. There are simply too many good reasons to paint this entire area south of Kabekona Lake red.</p>
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644	Paul Bunyan Game Refuge - between Spur 1 and Spur 2 Forest Roads.
645	Commonly referred to by archery white-tailed deer hunters as "Trophy Ridge", this area is seeing more conflicts every fall between hunters and OHM and ATV riders. Every hunter I've spoke with that hunts this location (even a group from out of state) complains at length about machines disrupting deer that they are hunting. The unanimous request by all these hunters is to eliminate motorized use through this area completely - at least during the archery and muzzle loader seasons. Having tried to hunt here myself, and experiencing first hand this same problem, I share their frustration and second the motion!

<p>646</p> <p>647</p> <p>648</p>	<p>Close: #'s 335, 343.</p> <p>The Beaver Lakes Trail - from Spur 1 Forest Road to Co. Rd. 93.</p> <p>This is positively a bad idea. The same goes for the Teepee Lakes Trail, but I'll address that next. Who's plan was this anyway? If you told me the local riding clubs - I'd believe it. What with the steep grades, little beaver ponds and all the side trails and sneaky entrances. Not to mention the beautiful ribbon of carpet that it is (I hike it and bike it regularly). Why not just designate it a full blown OHV route. Then everyone could use it. What the heck, the ATV"s will simply destroy it anyway. Think of the erosion and sedimentation of those clay hills dumping into the valleys and little wetlands. Not to mention the free spirited fun of rotor tilling all the widening beaver pond edges from receding water levels. Why, it could become the show case theme park of the entire State Forest system. I know what. Park Rapids Forestry could sell tickets and the proceeds could go towards recouping the tens of thousands of dollars flushed down the drain from the reconstruction project that transformed this old Jeep trail (late 1980's) into the plush trail that it is today. They'd have to be expensive tickets though, because in today's dollars this same trail recovery project would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. Maybe it would be a better idea to follow the Refuge Road, located south of this very bad idea.</p>
<p>649</p> <p>650</p> <p>651</p> <p>652</p> <p>653</p>	<p>Close: #'s 325, 328, 339.</p> <p>The Teepee Lakes Trail - from Co. Rd. 93 to the Steamboat Line Trail. I know that trail # 339 is already opened to motorized vehicles up to the barricade and start of trail # 328. That's fine I guess, given the historical use of this area by deer hunters and trappers. However, historical use of the Teepee Lakes to Gillette Lake area also reveals ample evidence of littering, cross country trail construction, the abandonment of personal gear like boats and canoes and fishing violations. Non of these violations are likely to diminish on this beautiful chain of lakes by promoting increased access. It's ridiculous to think otherwise. We already have a drive up access at Gillette Lake, with a great canoe route to and beyond big Teepee Lake. Illegal access to Crappie, Island and Teepee Lake by fisherman and nearby county land lease holders using ATV's is already ruining this great resource. There use to be 7 - 8 # large mouth bass and big pan fish in these lakes. Does anyone seriously believe that this situation as a whole will get better and not worse by allowing legal ATV access along Teepee Lake? I certainly do not.</p> <p>Consider re-routing this trail south of here. North of the intersection with the Refuge Rd. and Co. Rd. 93, then west down logging trail #394, up to trail #1423 which leads into trail #1522. At this point #1522 would need to be extended a short distance to #359 - 356, where the east / west section line can be followed west one-half mile then turn northwesterly for more than one- half mile, to link up with trail # 1920, the Halverson Lake Spur. This then can be followed north to the Halverson Lake trail, completing the detour and affording ATV riders a rugged and challenging route which completely circumvents the Gillette to Teepee Lakes chain.</p> <p>There is nothing wrong with limiting access to dwindling public wildlands to better manage them at a time when their popularity is growing. Thank you for this final opportunity to voice my comments on what is certain to be one of the most significant issues of the Paul Bunyan State Forest.</p>
<p>654</p> <p>654a</p> <p>654b</p>	<p>175. Janzen, Mark</p> <p>I am writing in support of recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. The Paul Bunyan State Forest has a long history of recreational off road truck use. It should be known that minimum maintenance roads are not recreational trails. 6.234 miles of trails are not enough! ATV's received 37 miles of recreational trails and 35 miles of minimum maintenance trails. I truly believe that the DNR should be able to find more trails. Trucks can and will share trails with ATV's. The powerline roads are already disturbed, and will continue to see utility traffic. Disturbance to any wetlands will happen whether or not off road trucks are allowed there or not.</p>
<p>655</p> <p>656</p>	<p>176. Jaros, Dean</p> <p>I hope you will allow most roads to be open. I am now 55 years old and suffer from a number of health problems including a bad back. When I was younger I really enjoyed the woods and littery walk all day grouse hunting or deer scouting etc. Now however I rely on the atv and it is truly a great machine for the outdoors. I putt along and take in all the scenery I used to and stop to hunt or play. Without this machine life would not be same and the quality would take a nose dive. Everyone is friendly on the trails and very few abuse the trails. I have seen some younger ones going a little fast, I</p>

	<p>have stopped them and told them to slow down and enjoy a little more and have no trouble from them giving me any lip. I just think they are young. Please hear my plea and help me and others of my age enjoy the outdoors again.</p>
657	<p>177. Jason No way. Keep our forests clean.</p>
658 659 660	<p>178. Jenson, Bob I am writing you to ask for your support in continuing open ATV and OHM riding areas in the State Forests and have particular interest in the Martineau trails. I enjoy the opportunities our state offers to ride my OHM (Off Highway Motorcycle). I had the opportunity to ride the Martineau trails quite a few times last summer. The trails were very well cared for and a lot of fun to ride. My group of friends and OHM riders in general are very considerate of the environment and, as I have seen, leave the trails and trailhead parking areas in great condition. At 38 years of age I have just begun riding. I have found that riding dirtbike is great exercise and is a great sport when enjoyed with friends. I certainly hope that these riding opportunities are available when my children are old enough to join me. We hope that you are able to keep these trails open and accessible and also hope for additional places to ride.</p>
661 662	<p>179. Johnson, David #1 I do not support the idea of connector trails between various ATV trails. Each trail should stay self contained. To do otherwise will invite the ATV riders to stray off the trails. Peer pressure, which seems to be the way the DNR will police trails, just will not work. If the DNR wants me to change my mind, show me an example of where it has worked. I dare say the DNR will not be able to show me anyplace in the state of Minnesota where it has worked.</p>
663 664	<p>180. Johnson, David #2 I oppose the building of connecting trails for ATV usage. Most of the connecting trails will allow unlimited access to private land since there will not be any policing of these connecting trails. I don't mind ATV riding if they stay on their trails. However that doesn't happen. I have seen them ride everywhere and anywhere without regard to rules against riding. Thus when riders cannot obey rules they have to be contained. If ATV's want to ride then they should find some private land and do whatever they want. But they have no place on public land. They just cannot use the land correctly. Thus why should they have it to destroy?</p>
665 666 667 668 669 670 671	<p>181. Johnson, Deanna This letter provides comment to the MN DNR and Hubbard County Board of Commissioners concerning the Off highway Vehicle Plan for Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County. I live in Hubbard County and own land very near Paul Bunyan State Forest. I believe a trail system is needed, but the plan should call for a confined, containable ATV trail system which can be maintained and enforced. Trails should be contained in a limited area east of Spur One in the footprint on the Martineau until the DNR can prove that they can enforce and maintain these contained trails. The US Forest Service is moving in this direction to concentrate trails. I am adamantly opposed to the pervasive ATV trail system and mudder truck trails planned for Paul Bunyan State Forest. The plan put forth by the MN DNR shows no regard for the protection of the unique terrain, the plant communities or for the wildlife of Paul Bunyan State Forest. I am adamantly opposed to the apparent aggressive agenda by the MN DNR to legitimize expansive ATV use of our public lands. I believe this plan will urbanize our semi-wild lands in Hubbard County and turn them into motorized recreation parks. This county is experiencing rapid development and growth. It is unconscionable to fill our state forest with motorized recreation corridors, critically diminishing habitat to sustain wildlife. Destruction and alterations of forests, native grasslands, wetlands and water supplies are rapidly reducing biological diversity. Proliferation of motorized recreation magnifies the threat of elimination of natural communities. According to the DNR website on plant communities, "To eliminate a single natural community is to eliminate entire chapters of possibility for future development, at the same time eroding the natural system, or "scaffolding" that supports human life. "What happened to the DNR's mission to protect the state's natural resource?" I adamantly oppose the planned connecting trail system. Such a trail system gives too much access to our public lands by a small minority group that has displayed careless disregard for the</p>

<p>672</p>	<p>environment. The plan does not give consideration to the vast majority of citizens of Hubbard County who do not want to see our environment degraded and treasure the natural beauty of this area. Hubbard County has wisely developed and maintained a thoughtful and effective shoreland ordinance, which has protected the pristine, natural beauty of this county. OHV connecting trails and the proliferation of OHV use in our forests and county lands is incongruent with the philosophy which has long established shoreland and land use policy in this county, a policy which seeks to protect the ambience and reputation of Hubbard County.</p>
<p>673</p>	<p>I adamantly oppose 4 by 4 mudder truck use of our public lands. By planning this inappropriate use of public land, the DNR is simply setting aside areas of the Paul Bunyan State Forest for total destruction by 4 by 4s.</p>
<p>674</p>	<p>By this plan, the MN DNR shows no regard for our ecological treasures or consideration of the pressures on wildlife caused by motorized use. Very significant increased fragmentation of the forest is inevitable with this plan. The leadership of the MN DNR has given in to the insatiable greed and self-centeredness of this user group, and to powerful corporations. It is disgraceful to use our public lands as market places for OHV's. The DNR is catering to a group where many display a mentality of use-and-devour with regard to wild land and creatures. This plan offered by the MN DNR is short-sighted and shows no consideration of our priceless natural resources, our wildlife or for other users of the land present and future. This plan shows no consideration for those of us who see intrinsic worth and sacredness in the land, a place to go for spiritual renewal and relate to God.</p>
<p>675</p>	<p>The policies of the current leadership of the MN DNR with regard to OHV use, if unchanged, will have devastating effect on our ecological treasures. Decisions made now will be your legacy.</p>
<p>676</p>	<p>182. Johnson, Leon L. I am adamantly opposed to any OHV travel in state forests. They are too destructive and disturbing to eco-systems and esthetics. Also County Memorial Forest administrators will likely follow state regulations, so please take this into consideration also. Lets protect our dwindling resources.</p>
<p>677</p> <p>678</p> <p>678a</p>	<p>183. Jorgensen, Phil I have owned an ATV since 1992 and consider myself to be a very responsible rider and steward of our natural resources. Being disabled, the ATV has enabled me to participate in more outdoors activities. I am an avid deer hunter and using the ATV has really helped me become more independent while I am in the woods. Currently, I am an active member of the All Terrain Vehicle Association of Minnesota which you know has a membership of over 10,000 and represents the interests of 270,000 ATV users in Minnesota. Originally, I belonged to the Wright County ATV Club, but in 2003 I became one of the founders of Granite City Trail Riders ATV Club in St. Cloud. I'm currently the vice president and Web Master. Please feel free to check out our web site at www.granitecitytrailridersatvclub.org I recently completed the Volunteer Instructors Course for ATV Youth Safety. Everything I do with the club or in my personal life is intended to demonstrate and promote responsible ATV rider ship. Our club is committed to providing ATV activities in a family friendly atmosphere. We actively encourage responsible rider ship as well as providing youth training sessions. Last spring, one of our activities was to cleanup Grand and Pearl lakes after the ice fishing season ended.</p>
<p>679</p> <p>680</p>	<p>184. Jorgenson, Mary Ann After reading the large article regarding ATV's in our County I decided to speak up. It appears that we in Hubbard County are being plagued more and more by ATV's. The peace and tranquility of our area in the County is already being destroyed by these means of "fun" for the owners of them, but they are making our lives more distressing day by day. It seems as though drivers of the ATV's think they own the world and can violate anyone's property even when the property is posted. Who are those that will be able to witness and control the violations? Is it not true that that, even at the present time, there are not enough men/women for law enforcement. The violations will continue and become worse and who will be available to control the ATV's? Also, has anyone ever had the experience of driving on Hwy 34, meeting cars and having snowmobiles traveling on each side of the road facing oncoming traffic on the wrong side of the road and not abiding by the proper rules that cars are required too? With lights shining from 3 vehicles all at once only makes one blinded and thus a great potential for cars having accidents. We had that experience on the evening of January 2nd, 2005. It appears there are plenty of snowmobile and ATV trails available already and the owners of</p>

<p>681</p>	<p>such should be forced to use the ones assigned to them. There should be strict enforcement of the same who are using the blacktop on the Heartland Trail, thus ruining the peace and quiet for hikers and those out skiing. The ATV's do not need more trails. They just need to use the ones that are already provided for them. Why can't they be appreciative of what they already have, instead of begging for more, and ruining our beautiful Hubbard County?</p>
<p>682 683 684 685 686</p>	<p>185. Kadow, Marya Dawn I am writing to provide comment to the MN DNR and to the Hubbard County Board of Commissioners concerning the Off Highway Vehicle Plan for Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County. I am a resident of Hubbard County and enjoy the quiet natural beauty of this county. I believe ATV's have a tremendous negative impact on land, water and wildlife. The current proposed plan presented by the MN DNR will seriously degrade our environment, destroy wildlife habitat and displace other users of our forests and public lands. An ATV trail system should be contained in a limited area east of Spur One. The plan should call for a confined, containable ATV trail system which can be maintained and enforced. I oppose the connecting trail system proposed in the plan. Connecting trails will encourage increased ATV use in the county and at a level our public lands cannot sustain. ATV trail systems should be contained. I oppose the plan for a 4 by 4 mudder truck trail in the Paul Bunyan. These vehicles destroy the land and trails for this activity should be developed on private land. I am a young adult and enjoy the lovely natural beauty of this county. I love to ride bike, hike and ski. I want to see this beautiful area preserved for my children to enjoy. This plan seriously threatens our public lands and does not protect our treasured resources for future generations.</p>
<p>687 688 688a</p>	<p>186. Kavanagh, Ron I support having recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan and Hubbard County. The Paul Bunyan has had a long history of recreational off-road truck use. Minimum maintenance roads are not recreational. It is imperative the DNR gives truck trails. 6.234 miles of trails and 2.203 miles recreational minimum maintenance roads is not enough. ATVs got 37 miles of trails and 35 miles of recreational minimum maintenance roads. The DNR should be able to find more trails for trucks. Trucks have been and continue to share trails with ATVs. The powerline area is an already disturbed area and will get continued utility traffic anyway. The DNR should be willing to do more to try to keep more of the powerline open to trucks. More trails can be reworked and wet areas avoided to leave open more trail on the powerline. On the powerline wet areas do not drain out into the watershed.</p>
<p>689 690</p>	<p>187. Kay, Roger Regarding your agency's plan to allow truck trails in the Paul Bunyan Forest, I'd like to ask what kind of stewardship is that? Allowing vehicles on natural areas will result in ever-increasing degradation. What kind of legacy is that to leave? Is DNR nothing but a referee among competing interests, with no thought of the long-term effects of their actions? What kind of respect does that show our natural area? If you must accommodate the motor heads, give them gravel pits and other already degraded areas, not natural areas that should be passed on in no poorer condition that we inherited them. In my opinion, all our natural areas should be closed to all forms of motorized abuse, including dirt bikes, ATVs, ORVs, snowmobiles, and 4x4s. Buy a copy of Aldo Leopold's book, <u>A Sand County Almanac</u>, and approach your responsibilities to future generations from his notion of stewardship.</p>
<p>691</p>	<p>188. Kemnitz, Jon I have some input on the trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. There are some great single track OHM trails there that are about the best in the state. There are lots of hiking trails in the state forests, and lots of ATV trails here and there. But there are only a few places in the state with specific OHM single track trails. I can think of only the Nemađji SF and the PBSF. I go to PBSF a couple of times per year just to ride on those trails. The club that maintains the trails seems to do a good job on them.</p>
<p>692</p>	<p>189. Kent, Bette I write in <u>objection</u> to the proposal to allow truck trails in Paul Bunyan State Forest. Because the state collects money from gasoline taxes and off-road truck registration fees, it seems ludicrous to</p>

<p>693</p> <p>694</p> <p>695</p>	<p>use the funding for quote “driver education efforts, trails and other off-road programs” which only accelerates off-road vehicle damage to forest lands (which belong to <u>all</u> citizens).</p> <p>As Senator Carrie Ruud, R. Breezy Point says in Star Tribune (quote) and I agree, that any exploitation of our lands, other non-forest areas, “abandoned gravel pits, mining areas, could be used for challenge driving.” The truck proposal is “awaiting disaster.”</p> <p>The final decision if adopted in Paul Bunyan truck trails proposal will only open up more truck uses in other state forests – an overall destruction of wild areas created to be habitats for “<u>our</u>” dwindling wildlife species – all due to excessive human activities! Because of it, the Dept. of Natural Resources will become “the destroyed of natural resources” vs. “defenders”!</p> <p>The voices of wildlife cannot be heard; I believe that ultra-violent, unnecessary practice of roaring through forest in juiced-up vehicles (of any sort) to tear up terrains for no good reason is the ultimate in bad and senseless reasoning! Animals, birds, amphibians (frogs are disappearing already), <u>all</u> will suffer to consequences! Also, our own future generations will have less wilderness experiences in their lifetimes. So few quiet natural areas remain – we need to fight to keep them as our Creator created them to be – quiet, fragile, untouched, esp. by human irresponsibility.</p>
<p>696</p>	<p>190. Kermes, Michael</p> <p>I am writing to show my support in ORV’s in Minnesota. I support ORV’s in the Paul Bunyan Forest. My family and I have shared many good times while enjoying the forest with an ORV. Proposed ORV trails / areas do not even equal .02% of the Paul Bunyan Forest. I don’t understand such a horrible proposal.</p>
<p>697</p> <p>698</p> <p>699</p>	<p>191. Kerksen, Carl</p> <p>I support recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan, the Paul Bunyan has had a long history of off-road truck use, something the DNR is supposed to keep in mind when doing designations. I don't believe that trucks got enough trails in the Pual Bunyan, ATVs got 37 miles of trails and 35 miles of minimum maintenance roads to be managed for recreational purposes, the DNR should be able to find trucks more. Trucks should get more of the powerline trail, the DNR should work harder to do more mitigative measures to keep more of the powerline open to trucks. The Wetlands Conservation Act allows for a limited amount of wetland impact, and the tiny wetlands between the hills on the powerline are self contained and do not drain out into the watershed. The powerline is an already disturbed corridor anyway, and it will get continued traffic from utilities, fire prevention, and DNR, what better place to put trucks.</p>
<p>700</p> <p>701</p>	<p>192. Kiecker, Alan</p> <p>I support recreational truck trails in both the Paul Bunyan and Beltrami Island State Forests. Re: conflict of use – I have been to Gilbert, have encountered ATVs on the same trails. All I have encountered are smiles and welcomes, never conflicts.</p> <p>ATVs have been granted many miles of recreational trails. The DNR needs to make larger effort in defining trails for 4 x 4 trucks. My experience has shown that ATVs and trucks can share trails.</p>
<p>702</p> <p>702a</p> <p>703</p>	<p>193. Kietzman, Andy</p> <p>I am interested in the new planning for Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs) and Mudder trucks in the Paul Bunyan State Forest for multiple reasons. I also consider myself to be fairly ‘middle of the road’ on the issue. As an ATV rider, I believe that ATV users have as much right as horseback riders, hikers, and bikers to enjoy public land that is owned by everyone. I also understand the frustration that occurs when a disrespectful rider trespasses on property or tears up public land for no other reason than to ‘show they can’. I think anyone who claims that there isn’t merit to either side of this argument is being unrealistic in their view. As owners of the resource it is all of our right to enjoy it, and as stewards of the resource it is all of our responsibility to treat it with respect. So it seems to me that the best way to go about resolving these issues is with a compromise. Easier said than done, obviously, or we wouldn’t be hearing about such a heated discussion as we have had lately about the subject. However, I am aware of a situation that has proven to be beneficial for both sides, and thought you may be interested in hearing about it.</p> <p>In Kentucky there is a recreational area known as ‘Land Between the Lakes’ (LBL). This is a large tract of land set aside for several user types. One of these is specifically for OHVs and Mudder trucks. In the past, LBL had similar issues to the ones we are experiencing in our area with ATVs trespassing on private land. A solution that they found worked well was to set aside specific areas for</p>

<p>704</p> <p>705</p> <p>706</p> <p>707</p> <p>708</p> <p>709</p> <p>710</p>	<p>these groups to use. With these areas in place, the ATV and truck riders seemed to prefer to go and ‘play’ in this special area as opposed to riding in areas with less challenging terrain, and so these areas were less impacted and more available for other user types.</p> <p>LBL has the area sectioned off so that these enthusiasts can get in and have fun without causing other issues in the area. They are charged a fee for use of the area, which pays for personnel to be on hand to supervise for safety and to ensure that people follow the rules. I believe that users of this area also have to sign a release removing the LBL area from liability for injury. Special terrain is set up to challenge these users, and it has been a huge success on several levels.</p> <p>First, other more traditional users have been allowed the space and peace that they desire. Second, ATV and mud truckers have been allowed the space and challenge that they want to see. Third, the fees for using the area help pay for the administrative costs to operate it, making the program fairly self-sustaining. Fourth, the tourism base has gone up due to the increased attraction for <i>both</i> ATV and non-ATV users, which has been a big boost for the local tourism economy.</p> <p>It has been over 5 years since I last visited LBL and saw the operation that they run there. I believe that they may have more funding available for their operation than we have, but I think it is still the type of program to strive for, and I think in the long run it could be self-supporting. If more details are needed, running a simple internet search on ‘Land Between the Lakes ATV’ reveals a lot of information, and LBL administration can be contacted at 800-LBL-7077 for more information.</p> <p>Hopefully, with a little cooperation between all groups involved, we can come to a conclusion to this situation that is satisfactory to everyone. Thank you for taking on the (frustrating) task of spearheading this decision making process. I hope the information on LBL is useful to you in this process. I was impressed with the balance they had there between different users, and thought that a lot of the issues applied to this area as well.</p>
<p>711</p> <p>712</p> <p>713</p>	<p>194. Kimar, Barbara</p> <p>I strongly object to opening the Paul Bunyan State Forest for an ORV trail. That proposal seems simply bizarre. It is inconsistent with state forest purposes, it will damage irreplaceable property, be harmful to wildlife, and most importantly, is completely unnecessary. A perfectly adequate ORV trail can be located almost anywhere from a bog to a gravel pit. The purpose and sport of such a trail is to test driving and machines. It has nothing to do with a remote forest setting. It doesn’t have to be, and shouldn’t be, located in a state forest.</p> <p>I also object to the connecting trail system throughout Hubbard County. ATV use should be concentrated in a specific area, such as the current Martineau Trail System and not, in effect, opened to the entire county.</p>
<p>714</p> <p>715</p> <p>715a</p>	<p>195. Kimer, Thomas</p> <p>I write in strong objection to the connecting trail system throughout Hubbard County. ATV use should be concentrated in a specific area, such as the current Martineau Trail System and not, in effect, opened to the entire county.</p> <p>I specifically object to opening the Paul Bunyan State Forest to a ORV trail. That proposal is truly obscene. It is inconsistent with state forest purposes, it will damage irreplaceable property, be harmful to wildlife, and most importantly, is completely unnecessary. A perfectly adequate OHV trail can be located almost anywhere from a bog to a gravel pit. It doesn’t have to be in a state forest.</p>
<p>716</p> <p>717</p>	<p>196. Kingsley, Doug</p> <p>I am writing to express my personal opinions and comments regarding the proposals for OHV trails in Hubbard County.</p> <p>I believe the proposed trail system is way too much too soon. I don’t think either the DNR or Hubbard County has enough experience with OHV trails to know yet what it will take to maintain those trails or to enforce compliance with rules and regulations. From what I have seen, existing trails both in Hubbard County and around the state are rutted, eroding and not being repaired or maintained. I have seen news releases of new maintenance techniques being tried near the Snake River in eastern Minnesota, but those techniques are experimental and appear to be terribly expensive. I have seen road ditches in Hubbard County being graded or graveled in an attempt to correct rutting or erosion problems. Unfortunately the resulting bare, compacted soils only lead to more runoff and pollution problems, especially where those road ditches are immediately adjacent to our lakes and streams. From those observations, existing OHV trails don’t appear to be very sustainable.</p>

<p>718</p> <p>719</p> <p>720</p> <p>721</p> <p>722</p>	<p>In my opinion it would be better to start out with a smaller trail system, find out how extensive problems are, learn what it will take for maintenance and enforcement, and build on that over time if problems can be resolved and if there are the funds and manpower available to do that. I would suggest that portions of the proposed trail system could be identified to be added in phases if there are not problems with an initial phase.</p> <p>I would recommend that the proposed "connector" trails should either not be included in the trail system or they should be identified as one of the very last phases to be added only after it is shown that there are not problems with other portions of the system. It seems that there would be less potential for enforcement problems without the connector trails.</p> <p>I would recommend that ORVs be limited to the system and minimum maintenance forest roads. Separate trails should not be included for ORVs. There is simply too much potential for damages to our natural resources.</p> <p>Much of the outcry about ATVs and this plan are the result of ATVs riding in road ditches and the damages that has caused to the ditches, to personal property, and to the environment. Because this is a cooperative plan between the DNR and Hubbard County, the plan should not be approved until Hubbard County makes a decision about ATVs in County road ditches, and that is included in the plan. ATVs should only be allowed in county road ditches where it is necessary that the ditch is part of a designated ATV trail and that should be limited to the absolute minimum.</p> <p>Finally, I think the proposed OHV system is too extensive and non-motorized recreationists are not receiving adequate consideration. I heard an estimate that roughly 87% of outdoor recreationists prefer to do so in a non-motorized fashion, and only 13% are prefer motorized recreation. This proposal dedicates about 60% of trails to motorized uses and only 40% are restricted to non-motorized. It is becoming exceedingly difficult to find places to walk or hunt a trail in peace and quiet without being subjected to the sound of motors. There are very few public lands that will not be within mile of a motorized trail. There should be more miles of non-motorized trail and fewer motorized.</p>
<p>723</p> <p>724</p> <p>725</p>	<p>197. Kirby, Dennis</p> <p>I urge further investigation on the proposal to allow atv's to share snowmobile trails. I live in the Park Rapids area and am opposed to this idea.</p> <p>Atv's dig ruts and holes in snowmobile trails and spew rocks over the trails. I have seen this first hand. We have spent many years, money, and time to build and maintain the 17,000 miles of snowmobile trails in Minnesota. If atv's are allowed to destroy snowmobile trails then Minnesota snowmobilers will go elsewhere. That means lost revenue for the businesses that rely on the snowmobile industry.</p> <p>I am in favor of the freedom to enjoy atv's but not at the expense of the snowmobiler. Let them build and maintain their own trail system. Please go out and see first hand the damage they cause to the snowmobile trails. Thank you for considering the negative impact if atv's are allowed to use snowmobile trails.</p>
<p>726</p> <p>727</p>	<p>198. Klisch, Leo</p> <p>I think that the use of forest land for truck trails would be inappropriate. It would be impossible to control the gradual degradation of the area of use. Why do they need a woods to do this in? Can't it be located in a mining area? I can't imagine another use that would have so much potential for short and long term damage. I don't see how this would protect our natural resources.</p>
<p>728</p> <p>729</p>	<p>199. Kloskin, Vivienne</p> <p>I am against truck trails in state forests. It does not make sense to have protected land and then turn around and allow it to be destroyed with motorized vehicles. I agree with Sen. Carrie Ruud that the state should purchase other areas, such as gravel pits, for that type of usage. Lets preserve our land!</p>
<p>730</p>	<p>200. Knight, Brad</p> <p>In regards to the DNR plans concerning ATV & OHV use of the Paul Bunyan State Forrest, I request a "limited" posting with any trail created for motorized recreation to be posted "open" otherwise trails remain closed to motorized wandering recreation.</p> <p>I have lived on the north side of Benedict Lake since 1975 and have used the logging roads to</p>

<p>731</p> <p>732</p> <p>733</p> <p>734</p> <p>735</p>	<p>get me within walking distance of various "wild life locations". It was quite often that I would direct vacationers who wanted to experience their forrest to a tree shaded walk down what is now the "Blue Trail". Previous to your improvement program, there was a portion of the trail that had large red pines casting shadows from both sides of the trail. At the end of this "dark forrest" was a small lean too shelter where someone could camp, start a fire and talk or listen together. For the benifit of snowmobiling your "management" team created a logging road capable of three or four snowmobiles to ride side by side. You took away the trees. Your management methods do not reflect local utilization or local opinions very well. But for the sake of the motorized crowd, we have an interstate route for the "motor dependant" troupes, vacationers and weekend warriors of the road.</p> <p>I wish to point out that the forrests up here are part of the headwaters basin. Without clean forrests, I doubt we could bring down the rain waters that feed the Mississippi and provide water for numerous cities further south of here. On the northside of Paul Bunyan State Forrest, west of hwy 64 you will notice a "game reserve" and a white cedar forrest of nearly 1200 acres. This tree is very difficult to cultivate humanly, and is concidered and endangered forrest. It can only live around here because the swamp waters are in a state of movement. Those waters are fed from the hills and valleys of the "gullies" and the striations that allow seepage can be horizontal through the base of the hills. I am concerned that increased petroleum products will harm primordial ponds and ground water flows. I do not approve of extensive bushwacking or trail riding of these ATV or OHVehicles.</p> <p>These forrests are managed to a state of minimal production with even less support for growth. I request an "environmental impact study" concerning the addition of idling motors polluting the microclimate of all our forrests, especially here in the Headwaters area. I have seen the fens and fief that were not protected by either the state or federal agencies.</p> <p>Our forrest takes 40 years to grow a popple the size of a Georgia popple that took 12 years. Our wood is of the highest quality yet we are using it to make paper.</p> <p>Also, your time for study of the issue is far too limited, I know of no where to view the maps on the weekend. This is abusive to those of us who work for a living. I have been attempting to get online since 4pm and after 45minutes, I am still unable to get online. I feel that your time limits are arbitrary and limiting to full concideration of such a serious issue.</p>
<p>736</p> <p>737</p> <p>738</p> <p>739</p>	<p>201. Kordasiewicz, Joshua</p> <p>I am writing in regards to the trail designation for the Paul Bunyan State Forest. I support recreational truck use and feel that they did not get enough designated trails in the forest. These trails have in use for many years by ORVs and that should be taken into account. ATVs got 37 miles of trails and 35 miles of forest road. There has to be more miles in the forest for OHVs. I feel the DNR should be working harder to keep that trail open to trucks. One place for them is along the power lines. It has a very minimal impact on wetlands, there is only one small area to cross and it doesn't drain into any other wetlands. The Wetlands Conservation Act makes provisions for just this type of trail. The power line is already a disturbed corridor and will continue to be so due to use by utilities, fire services and the DNR itself.</p> <p>I would encourage the DNR to do more to provide opportunities for OHVs in the Paul Bunyan State Forest as well as the rest of the state forests. If a forest is sustainable to ATV use it should be able to sustain trucks as well.</p>
<p>740</p> <p>741</p> <p>742</p> <p>743</p>	<p>202. Korte, Jane</p> <p>I am writing to let you know that I support changing Beltrami Island State Forest from a managed state forest to a limited state forest, meaning that all trails will be closed to motorized recreation unless specifically posted open to it. The 592 miles of existing routes identified by the team should not be considered forest roads nor designated recreational trails. The existing trails just to the northeast of Bemis Hill and in the Red Lake Wildlife Management Area should remain closed to motorized vehicles in the plan. The entire area north of the Thompson Forest Road and south of the Wobbles Grade should be closed to all motorized vehicles to protect the sensitive black spruce/cedar plant community at the base of the hill.</p> <p>Specifically, trail numbers 1238, 1270, 1319, 1329, 1361, 1363, 1369, 1373, 1402, 1474, and 1501 should be closed to motorized vehicles to protect the Bemis sand ridge and Bemis Swamp. The plan needs to address the commercial use of the forest by industry.</p>

<p>744</p> <p>744a</p> <p>745</p> <p>745a</p>	<p>A permit should be required for Polaris to field test their ATVs in Beltrami Island State Forest at the very least. Inspections should be required at least yearly and Polaris should be responsible for maintaining and repair of the trails that they use. I did not realize that the public citizens provide trails for a private business to test their machines. I am not aware of too many businesses that have that perk.</p> <p>In addition, four-wheel trucks especially do not belong on ANY trails in this forest. I support implementing this plan as soon as possible. The DNR field staff has worked hard on this plan and I appreciate their efforts.</p> <p>I also wish for the DNR to reconsider their proposal to make the Paul Bunyan forest in Hubbard county the hub of all the motorized traffic for the state. We have a cabin near the Paul Bunyan and will need to rethink our investment if this plan goes through. We purchased the land and built a cabin on Big Sand Lake over 30 years ago and the four wheelers and their noise and destruction was not in the abstract.</p>
<p>746</p> <p>747</p>	<p>203. Kranz, Pat</p> <p>I am outraged that the DNR would consider expanding anything for ATV use, in light of the abuse we have seen and heard about. I saw the article in the December 25 Star Tribune and want to register my opinion.</p> <p>As a taxpayer who moved to Minnesota to start my business career and new life over 25 years ago, I am disappointed that we are devoting any precious DNR resources to the ATV. We should restrict them severely and put our DNR resources on the important issues like wetland expansion, and supporting the health of our fish and wild game populations. The DNR has better things to do than deal with ATV's.</p>
<p>748</p> <p>749</p> <p>750</p> <p>751</p> <p>752</p> <p>753</p>	<p>204. Krause, Matthew</p> <p>I AM AN ATV OWNER. I very much support the development of a larger, substantial ATV trail network.</p> <p>I am very opposed to the elimination of access to ANY State Forest or public land in Hubbard County or statewide for that matter.</p> <p>I am also aware of the \$700,000 revenue put into education and enforcement in 2004 generated by ATV registrations.</p> <p>There is also realistically millions of dollars in related spending going into these local economies as a result of ATV/OHV opportunity and uses. I am so tired of these career environmental extremists pushing pencils everywhere in an effort to limit any public land access for any purpose other than their own. Isn't it time to for them to put their money where their mouths are, come out from under their rocks, and generate more than the occasional rally or parade at the capital? I've been fooled long enough, haven't you?</p> <p>ATV's are a family sport in our home, we all ride them. Why doesn't Minnesota learn to embrace this lifestyle, develop MORE trails and manage the growth that will continue for many more generations, not try to curtail it.</p> <p>I am in favor of raising registration fees to \$40.00 or \$50.00 annually if it will allow for many more dedicated and open riding systems. This is a beautiful state, on foot, on horseback, in a Jeep, on a ditbike, and yes, even on an ATV. I demand the same access to MY PUBLIC LAND that all Minnesotan's enjoy.</p>
	<p>205. Kueber, Mary</p> <p>Please let me introduce myself, my name is Mary Kueber and I live approximately 1 and a half mile north of Emmaville on County 4, Park Rapids. I am writing concerning the proposal of linking trails in the Paul Buyan Forest to County Road 4. The section below is cut and paste from the Internet from the Park Rapids Enterprise article: ATV trail plan would post 600 miles, 11-19-03.</p> <p>"In describing the process DNR personnel used in picking out the route for the new 130-mile designated trail, Carlstrom stated they tried to stay at least one-half mile away from year-round residences and one-quarter mile away from seasonal residences.</p> <p>In some cases - along CSAH 4, for example - this may not be possible. In those instances, commissioner Lyle Robinson suggested paving both the property owner's driveway and other approaches".</p>

754	<p>The line stating "along CSAH 4, for example - this may not be possible" is incorrect. If a person were to drive along CSAH 4 they would see there are year around residences which are less than one-half mile away and some less than one-quarter mile from the trail (including my house) no matter which side of the road ATVer's ditch ride.</p>
755	<p>Another concern about the proposal of giving ATVer's an access to CSAH 4 is once the ATVer's get to Emmaville where do they go from there? Will they not turn around and access the same trail they just came from? And will this not double the ATV traffic on this route? Does anyone know if what effect a certain amount of traffic compacting the soil will have on utilities lines/cables buried in the ditches? I already know what it has done to my mowing ability at my approach.</p>
756	<p>I have two approaches to my property, it is quite evidence that where there is a dwelling visible the ATVer show respect. My approach at the opposite end of the property is evidence of ATV reality. I really do not feel it is the one or two bad eggs everyone is referring to - it boils down to is anyone watching or is there a law enforcement office around. I am still confused on who is responsible for repairing and upkeep of approach damage - the DNR, Hubbard County, ATV club or myself and would appreciate any reply you could supply.</p>
757	<p>I have read the Recreational Motor Vehicles Regulation on-line and have another question, is my approach considered a road, a road as stated in the regulation book, if not, who has the legal right of way on my approach - ATVer, OHMers or my vehicle?</p>
758	<p>Another issue is the dust and noise that has increase this past year. The increase of ATVs and OHMs is disturbing. I can hear the noise in my house with no windows open. The noise level is much greater than the automobile traffic. There is also a gravel pit near by which I can hear the OHMs as if they on my property. When a person comes home from work or looking forward to a day off these machines destroy the solitude, peace and quite of my home and property. The traffic has no set hours, usually riding in daylight - which in the summer can be a very long day.</p>
759	<p>I have had to ask ATVer's, OHMers to exit my property. I have had to put up an orange snow fence across both ends of the private road at the south end of my property to keep them out along with snowmobiles. As of this winter and past the snowmobiles have just gone around and over the fence. The time and expense I find myself spending to protect my rights as a landowner is growing frustrating.</p>
760	<p>As I drive south to Park Rapids on County 4, I've noticed the snowmobile signage. Some of the signs conditions are becoming an eyesore. They have replaced my mail box post with a swing away for safety. But there are metal posts on this trail with no sign at all or bent. I would consider this a safety issue along with wondering why the DNR does not require the local clubs to maintain the signage as well as the damage done to residential approaches from the groomer that cannot make it over, or just forgot to lift the drag, their approaches, which I have also personally seen. Is this what I can look forward to towards the signage and upkeep of the trail on County 4?</p>
761	<p>I can assume that you have heard all of the complaints of violations about ATVs and OHMs, I am not going to go there with what I have seen. No matter if the trail plan goes through or not I would like to extend my invitation for the conservation officer/s who's job it is to patrol this area to feel free to use my property for observing OHV traffic.</p>
762	<p>I can assume that you have heard all of the complaints of violations about ATVs and OHMs, I am not going to go there with what I have seen. No matter if the trail plan goes through or not I would like to extend my invitation for the conservation officer/s who's job it is to patrol this area to feel free to use my property for observing OHV traffic.</p>
762a	<p>I can assume that you have heard all of the complaints of violations about ATVs and OHMs, I am not going to go there with what I have seen. No matter if the trail plan goes through or not I would like to extend my invitation for the conservation officer/s who's job it is to patrol this area to feel free to use my property for observing OHV traffic.</p>
763	<p>206. Kulhanek, Mike Many thanks for recognizing that a large population of 4 wheeling nature lover exist in MN and creating these trails. Because many of us live in the twin cities it would be ideal if we could have select trails near the suburban counties for this use. Many thanks again from many elderly and the like 4 wheeling nature enthusiasts.</p>
764	<p>207. Kupertz, Gustaf I support recreational trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. Having gone to BSU for college, I enjoyed trail riding in the area for stress breaks from school. To think that other students couldn't find pleasant ways to recreate to help the stresses of school saddens me. Since school I've made off highway adventures a way of life having been in several land rover magazines, written articles for magazines, and recently worked in Antarctica operating heavy equipment. I'd like you to please understand the trucks in the woods for some are an education about the wilds and a stress break.</p>
	<p>208. LaFleur, Judith</p>

<p>765</p> <p>766</p> <p>767</p> <p>767a</p> <p>768</p> <p>769</p> <p>770</p> <p>771</p> <p>772</p> <p>773</p> <p>774</p> <p>775</p>	<p>My family has watched the continued destruction and trespassing within the boundaries of the Smoky Hills State Forest for the last few years with great distress. We have had to install gates, and even sunk posts to keep atv s and ohv s from driving around our property which is also within the borders of the Smoky Hills State Forest, the next to be considered for trails.</p> <p>As a case in point, a local bait person cleared his own trail to Limbom lake. This person literally cut down trees for over mile for access. He left traps in the lake and piles of rotten bait on shore. This is a pristine environmental lake bordered by only our property and the Wildlife Management Area (WMA). We tried to discourage this illegal access by telling him to leave and by piling stumps, limbs and timber this criminal had illegally cut. Our efforts were simply removed. This was a clear, easily defended, illegal action. Yet it took several years and a visit from the Regional Conservation Officer to finally charge this bait seller with a misdemeanor.</p> <p>Yet another example of this recreational destruction; friends who purchased a 40-acre parcel mile from us have been forced to booby-trap the entrance to their hideaway. They watched in amazement as a family on 4 atv s lifted their double-cabled gate to ride into the private property. Additionally, while sitting on their own property in their own deer stand, 7 atv s came roaring by on their property, during illegal hours, oblivious of the owners who sat a few feet above them. They declined to confront this party of 7 who were all armed with deer rifles. Rightly so. In visiting this couple who love the quiet woods, I was grateful to have decided to drive my own 4 x 4. The logging trail was so eroded that I wondered if even my big F150 could make it to their cabin. Upon leaving this fall, they put out nail boards and even double strands of barbed wire a few feet beyond the cabled gates. We ll wait till spring to find out if even those extreme measures kept out the trespassers.</p> <p>One last example of why we don t want atv s or ohv s in our woods. There is a hunter s walking trail just off State Highway 34. Many atv s have found that they can go around the log gate. Even more distressing was the discovery this past fall, that another group had cut a trail from private property to access this walking-only trail! Truly another illegal cutting of a trail.</p> <p>When will this all end? Aside from the distressing fact that this state forest is managed mainly for timber, is the abundance of wildlife that will most likely leave. We have seen numerous wolves, pine martins, river otters, even mountain lions. It is always a moment of supreme delight and wonder to get a glimpse of these ephemeral creatures. We ve also had visits from pelicans, sand hill cranes, and trumpeter swans trying to set up a nest site. This wilderness is why we live here. No more. The sounds of the whining jet skis on a nearby lake, the road bikes on the trails, the yearly car road race, the constant annoying buzz of atv s and snowmobiles have already nearly destroyed one of our most precious resources in this lowest reach of boreal forest. It is fast becoming just another human wasteland.</p> <p>The DNR collects license fees on these destructive vehicles, but how is use of those funds planned? Is there enough collected to police, maintain and correct illegal activities? What about larger fines? Perhaps jail time for repeat offenders is called for. We ve not seen anything in the plans. Skiers do no damage to the environment, yet still must pay to use maintained regular trails, yearly, while the minimal atv licensing covers three years. Quite a bit of difference. At the very least, could those fees be increased to give the DNR more funds to protect the proposed trails? This 13% of the state s recreation population should never be allowed to destroy the woods for the other 87%. Resident and Friend of the Minnesota s State Forests</p>
<p>776</p> <p>777</p>	<p>209. Lamp, Jerry</p> <p>I have several concerns with the proposed trail system in the Paul Bunyon Forest but will only elaborate on three of them. First, however, I want to comment about the DNR Mission Statement. I believe the DNR has strayed from (maybe ignored) the first article in the statement. You have focused on providing recreational opportunities at the risk our natural resources rather than protecting them. In other words, recreation has take priority over conservation. I strongly believe that the DNR is caving in to groups that put their enjoyment far ahead of what is good for our public lands. I think that the DNR has forgotten that we humans are temporary but what we do to this planet is permanent.</p> <p>My first concern is the rather glib answers that were given regarding the enforcement issue. Prior to the comment portion of the meeting I asked several DNR and Hubbard County representatives</p>

<p>778</p> <p>779</p> <p>779a</p> <p>780</p> <p>780a</p> <p>781</p> <p>782</p> <p>783</p> <p>784</p> <p>785</p> <p>786</p> <p>787</p> <p>788</p>	<p>how the enforcement issue would be handled. The answers were that a major portion of the enforcement would be peer pressure or self-enforcement. Those were the answers given at the public meeting also.</p> <p>We were told that approach worked for the snowmobilers and should work for the ATVs. I take issue with that theory. Times have changed since snowmobiles were introduced, those days were in a less hostile and belligerent time. The extreme example to the dangers of confronting a law or rule breaker is what happened in Wisconsin last hunting season. That's probably one reason why our Conservation Officers carry weapons. In addition, ATV riders are more mobile than snowmobilers and can carry with them equipment to blaze new trails and destroy vegetation. This is a concern especially during deer hunting season.</p> <p>A more visible method of identification on ATVs and snowmobiles is needed to make enforcement easier. Example; the summer of 2003 I was walking on the Heartland Trail when I heard a ATV coming behind me, I stepped aside and it went past me so fast that I could not read the license. If I could have read it, he would have been reported. By the way, there are plenty of snowmobile tracks on the blacktopped portion of the Heartland Trail. That, plus the damage I've seen by snowmobilers tells me that self-enforcement for us snowmobilers is not that effective.</p> <p>My second concern regards any ATV trails in the Beaver Lakes and Gulch areas. There is no way that ATVs should be allowed anywhere near this part of the Paul Bunyon Forest. The slopes are too steep, (15 - 75%), the soils are too unstable and there are beaver dams in addition to the small lakes that are at risk to damage. There is also ongoing logging activity that will continue to cause all the disruption to the ecosystem it can handle.</p> <p>The newly logged areas, the ponds, small lakes and the steep slopes are all big temptations for people who look at them as challenges to be conquered rather than fragile parts of a forest that need to be protected.</p> <p>Third, there is no justification for a trail to accommodate 4 wheel drive trucks in the Paul Bunyon Forest. It would require too large an area to accommodate the desires of this group. There is simply not enough suitable terrain available if reasonable trail separation is to be accomplished. Also, the potential for serious erosion problems should be enough to cause the DNR to discard this idea. The statement that the eight mile trail will be a good start toward a longer trail for the trucks scares me. It makes me wonder if the Trails Department is trying to build an empire at the expense of the Paul Bunyon Forest.</p> <p>Finally, I am disappointed that the DNR has not gotten the MPCA and Hubbard County Soil and Water personnel involved in the process. I understand that at some point they may be asked to look over the plans. I question if their recommendations will be in time to make any meaningful changes in the event they find problems with the trail plans.</p> <p>PS: I just returned from an afternoon of snowmobiling in the eastern part of the Paul Bunyon Forest. As I was traveling on the Steamboat Forest Trail I came to the realization of the number of trails in the forest. The number of trails has to be reaching a saturation point. Earlier I was concerned about the trail density, now I am alarmed and appalled to think more trails are contemplated. It seems to me that nobody will be satisfied until the forest is laced with trails and the forest will no longer support quantities of wildlife. Yes, I know grouse and deer like the vegetation found on the trails but you are assuming vegetation gets a chance to grow. Thinking about yesterday's experience, I was reminded of the statement by MCEA's Matt Norton regarding the trail density. He was right, there isn't going to be enough separation between trails. It looks as though you have turned your back on the hikers and hunters who want a quiet experience in the woods.</p>
<p>789</p> <p>790</p> <p>791</p>	<p>210. Larson, Ben</p> <p>My name is Ben Larson. My dad and I ride 4 wheelers and we have spent a couple weekends in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. When we were there we thought that there wasn't enough signs to tell us where we were going. Once we found ourselves on a motorcycle trail.</p> <p>I have looked at the maps with my Dad and we think that there needs to be more loops in the trail system. Also, there needs to be more trails, not just riding on forest roads and county ditches. That's not any fun. I like trails that are difficult to ride on. Makes things more interesting. We ride for a bit, then then find a place to stop and enjoy the view and have a picnic.</p>

<p>791a</p> <p>791b</p>	<p>I have completed the DNR ATV safety course and currently ride a Honda Rancher. I always wear a helmet and my dad and I always ride responsibly. He really likes getting out into the forest to enjoy things. He says that it gets him away from things at work and he can relax. We always have a great time when we go wheeling. My Mom doesn't ride 4 wheelers. My Dad says "That's good".</p> <p>I hope there will be more trails in the Paul Bunyan Forest and not so much roads and stuff.</p>
<p>792</p> <p>793</p> <p>794</p> <p>795</p> <p>796</p> <p>797</p> <p>798</p> <p>799</p>	<p>211. Larson, Bill</p> <p>Trail designation for motorized use and maintaining a satisfactory level of non-motorized use in the Paul Bunyan State Forest and adjoining Hubbard Co. lands. A daunting task !</p> <p>I applaud the DNR and it's team of foresters in the work they have accomplished in the Paul Bunyan Forest. As an avid responsible ATV Rider, I look forward to checking out the proposed trails, ergo, my biggest frustration.</p> <p>The comment period ends January 28th. I will not be able to ride the trails until they are opened after the spring thaw sometime in May. This makes it extremely difficult to comment on specific trails and or segments. Looking at a map of proposed trails is fine, but a reliable observation and comment can only be made once the trails have been explored. I do see numerous small trail segments that seem to add to the total mileage of the proposal. These trail segments are either unaccessable, or so short as to make them unappreciated as part of a well laid out trail system.</p> <p>Responsible riders look for trial loops with connectors to other trails. Ideally, one could spend an entire weekend in the Paul Bunyan and never see the same trail twice. No back-tracking or dead-ends.</p> <p>Please keep an open mind on furture trail expansion and additions. As well as temporary and permanent closures as they are deemed necessary. Also, bear in mind the type of trail an ATV'er is looking for. We don't always want a well maintained gravel path thru the woods. Bouncing over obstacles (logs, rocks, etc) can make for an interesting and technical ride. A trail difficulty designation needs to be created. Much like symbols and designation of downhill ski runs. I would look forward to going down a Double Black Diamond ATV trail.</p> <p>In the proposal, I see a net decrease in the number of trail miles as compared to the current situation. While I fully understand the critria used to determine sustainable trails, the DNR must also consider that fewer miles means more riders per mile. Higher impact per mile. Higher maintainance costs per mile.</p> <p>I encourage the DNR and trail planners to seek out the ATV clubs in the area during the planning process. Afterall, the user group needs to be an active part in the decision making process. As well, seek out those same clubs for assistance in maintaining trails and enforcing current regulations. While a club member may be unable to issue a citation, they can record registration (license) numbers and that info forwarded to the appropriate CO's.</p>
<p>800</p> <p>801</p> <p>802</p> <p>802a</p>	<p>212. Lashinski, Eugene</p> <p>Instead of less ATV Trails I feel their should be more opened. The number of registrations keeps going up and more trails are needed. The government keeps taking the average \$400. sales tax per ATV. There is also the registration \$38.50 which is now mandatory with each sale, even if you only intend to ride on your own land. We have spent \$700,000 on driver education and are teaching younger people to respect the land and other peoples property. We have provided the money to upgrade our trails with culverts and bridges so there is no damage. The state and federal land belong to all of us and there is enough room for everyone to co-exist. Crowding more ATVs into less and less areas is going to increase the problems. ATVs provide a lot of jobs to Minnesota with two of the manufacturers in the state. If we're not going to have places to ride why don't we just outlaw them, shut down the plants, lay off the workers and all go on welfare.</p>
<p>803</p>	<p>213. Laske, Francine</p> <p>As a resident and Board Chair of Thorpe Township I would like to request that no trails established as open to OHV s connect or lead to any of our township roads. Approximately two thirds of our township lies within the boundaries of the Paul Bunyan State Forest. In the past our residents and property owners have considered this and our beautiful Big Mantrap Lake, to be our greatest assets. The expected proliferation of recreational vehicles that the increased trail system will bring to this area has many of us concerned about what it will do to the environment and the quality of life as</p>

<p>804</p> <p>805</p> <p>806</p>	<p>we know it.</p> <p>Linda Bair, another of our township supervisors has already written and requested that trail numbers 457, 495, 522, and 596 be closed. My family and I are some of the horseback riders she refers to and we concur with her statements.</p> <p>I do not have a map in front of me as I write this, but I would also request that no trails lead to or cross any of our township roads, which are few. They include Junco Drive, Inner Forest Road, a minimum maintenance road, which we share with Mantrap Township, and our Town Hall Rd which is also a minimum maintenance road that is an extension of Steamboat Rd to the west. All of these roads along with our cemetery road are posted closed to ATV travel. That doesn't stop some riders from trespassing on them and subsequently onto private property. We realize that OHVs have a right to enjoy the forest as we do and that some of their trails will be in our township, but please respect our needs also and keep them off and away from areas that lead to private property and our township roads.</p>
<p>807</p> <p>808</p> <p>809</p> <p>810</p> <p>811</p> <p>812</p>	<p>214. Laske, Letitia</p> <p>I am a science teacher in Brainerd, Minnesota and I am very thankful for all the DNR has done to promote education about our state's natural resources to my students. We have learned a lot about wetlands, water quality, forest management, and wildlife conservation.</p> <p>I am wondering how the ATVs/OHVs use of the forests/wetlands fit into what we have been taught about the importance of wildlands. Aren't we suppose to be teaching our children stewardship of the land?</p> <p>I am sure all public agencies hear the line I often hear from my students and their parents... My tax dollars went into this and I am going to do what ever I want. Instead of lobbying to allow more state land to be opened to OHVs, the ATV/OHV manufacturers should be buying their own land around the state and setting up courses for use by the destructive machines they created. Perhaps they could even charge a fee for use of their land and hire folks to enforce the rules of this ATV park.</p> <p>I would appreciate it if you would consider restricting the use of ATVs/OHVs to the area east of Spur 1 in Hubbard County. My family has owned property in Hubbard County for fifteen years and has enjoyed horseback riding, berry picking and bird watching in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. After the first season of use by ATVs the trails that use to be ideal for horseback riding, hiking, and biking were pockmarked by erosion making the uneven rutted trails dangerous and stony to horses and hikers. In a dry summer like we just had, it was amazing to see that usually seasonal puddles in the trail maintained water due to mudding by the ATVs. Even the minimum maintenance road, which I had previously been able to travel on in my small car, was made impassible due to mudding in puddle areas.</p> <p>As I drive up to Nevis from my home in Brainerd, I pass the Spider Lake area west of Pine River. In a few short years, the trails have increased as has the erosion. ATVs run circles around trees and climb up and down the hills by the road leaving areas that were once green, a sandy brown. We must not allow the same thing to happen to the Paul Bunyan State Forest.</p>
<p>813</p> <p>813a</p>	<p>215. Lautt, Kim</p> <p>Please open Paul Bunyan 4X4 Trails...I am a member of a 4X4 Club in Fargo-Moorhead which was established over 30 years ago. I am also a member of the Minnesota 4 Wheel Drive Association. Our family travels through out Minnesota and part of Wisconsin using state forests and recreational parks such as Gilbert, Park X, Spider Lake (Foothills) and Troll Haugen. The opportunity to have these parks are wonderful. It is a great way for our family to spend another weekend in Minnesota off-roading and camping within the state. We send money in your state for gas, lodging, licenses, food etc. Don't take this away from your state. I don't think the people that are against these trail probably spend the money we spend. 4 wheel enthusiasts are always looking for new and fun places to go but there so few parks. These parks are vital to the off-roading community. We respect and appreciate them. It is great to have these places to go. We as a family hope that you keep this area open.</p>
	<p>216. Leavitt, Andre</p> <p>Why would the DNR, a department that is suppose to PROTECT are states natural resources,</p>

<p>814</p> <p>815</p>	<p>even consider putting a 4 wheel drive course in our state forest. Once again the department sells out to a special interest group.</p> <p>The needs of the many must outway the needs of the few. If this issue was put to a state vote, trucks as well as ATVs would be banned because more people care about our woods and enviroment then drive these noisy and destructive machines. Yet, they seem to be given special treatment. It is these obvious give aways that give credence to the idea that the DNR should be run by a private enterprise not under the command of the state government. NO 4 wheeling in the woods!! The DNR's job is to protect MN's natural resources not give them away for a few tax dollars!!</p>
<p>816</p> <p>817</p> <p>818</p> <p>819</p> <p>820</p> <p>821</p> <p>822</p> <p>823</p> <p>824</p> <p>825</p> <p>826</p> <p>827</p> <p>828</p>	<p>217. Lein, Michael; Lein, Marceil</p> <p>First of all, we commend the Department of Natural Resources and Hubbard County for developing a combined plan for ORV trail management in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. This should result in less confusion for OHV riders and others interested in the issue.</p> <p>We strongly support the overall plan to classify these lands as limited or closed to riding unless posted open. Practically speaking there is no other alternative in this area. Many miles of unofficial trails have been built by OHV users in the last several years. Not all of these trails were discovered as part of the inventory process. The building of these trails and the maintenance of others has continued after the DNR inventory under guise of cross county travel for big game hunting . The result is that the inventory is not complete and out of date. Finding all existing trails, adding new ones to the inventory, and posting signs on all of them would an impossible task. I will mail a copy of the comments including a map showing trails missing from the inventory in the area immediately north of Middle Crooked Lake.</p> <p>Examples include two segments of unofficial trail not shown on the inventory in sections 9 and 10 of Mantrap Township. These connect what used to be four dead-end logging trails. The result is a several miles of trail loops which climb steep slopes and cross waterways. Another example is 1,000 foot trail constructed just before the 2003 deer season. It currently dead ends at a permanent platform deer stand. But it is only about 100 yards from one of the other trail loops. It s probably only a matter of time before a connection is made and a new unofficial trail loop exists.</p> <p>No other practical option for managing OHV use in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. OHV riders only have themselves or other OHV riders to blame for painting themselves into this corner. The DNR staff can not realistically sign every existing trail or every trail that is constructed the week before deer season. We are left with the only practical option you can't drive an OHV on a trail unless a sign tells you it s open to motorized travel.</p> <p>We are strongly opposed to the inclusion of the challenge area north of Akeley. We find it ironic that press releases state the Plan was developed with scientific methods. If that were true the original plan drafted by the area managers would have been approved by the DNR Commissioner. Instead the plan was sent back to DNR staff with the implicit orders to include a challenge area. This order did not say if environmentally and scientifically possible it said just do it.</p> <p>Even if we believed a challenge area had a place in this area, we would have to ask how enforcement efforts will be increased to deal with existing problems and the entire set of new issues that this area and the people that use it brings. The best plan in the world is no good without enforcement.</p> <p>The new plan, even without the challenge area brings a new level of responsibility to DNR enforcement staff. Right now we can not file a legitimate complaint about someone driving an OHV on any of the unofficial trails. That will change when the plan goes into effect. Enforcement staff will have to react to complaints about the use of hundreds of miles of existing closed trails in addition to the current issues they deal with. Add in the challenge area, which will attract another constituency and problem to area Conservation Officers responsibilities and we further increase the enforcement problem.</p> <p>Existing enforcement of regulations is woefully inadequate. We have only been checked by a Conservation Officer twice in over 20 years of year round fishing and/or hunting in this area. Both times we were in Itasca State Park not in the actual Paul Bunyan State Forest.</p> <p>We strongly support closing the unofficial trail system north of Middle Crooked Lake to OHV traffic. These trials were built by private individuals with no public input, no consideration for</p>

<p>829</p> <p>830</p> <p>831</p> <p>832</p> <p>833</p>	<p>nearby landowners, and no consideration for their impacts on other forest users, wildlife or soil and water resources.</p> <p>We do not support the proposed new construction connector trail just south of Wabbose Lake. This will bring new increased traffic into the area and split a relatively untouched area with a major trail. The entire concept of connector trails should not be allowed to move forward without more information on projected use. The development of this trail would bring increased use of County Rd 2 and nearby townships roads by OHV s, particularly ATV s. This raises many issues including safety and noise.</p> <p>We can not pass up the opportunity to comment of the big game hunting cross country travel exemption for ATV s. We hesitate to speculate what definition of cross country travel the legislature had in mind when it adopted this exemption. A picture comes to mind of an ATV driving across an open meadow or perhaps through a recent clear cut to hang a portable deer stand or to retrieve a harvested deer.</p> <p>But what is really happening is a far different picture. Examples would be two cases from the 2003 deer season. In one instance, two ATV s pulled a trailer load of building supplies and portable tools into the forest on an unofficial trail constructed in 2001. A large permanent deer stand was constructed. In another case, a group of hunters used a gas powered brush cutter and a chain saw to build 1,000 feet of new trail through the forest. An ATV then used the new trail to haul building materials and portable tools to construct a large permanent deer stand. The irony in this situation is that this trail ended only 100 yards from another unofficial trail that was constructed in 2001 and resulted in three other substantial deer stands.</p> <p>These trail construction efforts have resulted in miles of trails with multiple access points that are hard to discover. In some case the access points seem to be camouflaged to prevent discovery. This trail building and maintenance will continue into the future and be an enforcement headache unless the cross country travel regulations are either changed or more strictly interpreted. Today s regulations can result in motorized traffic right next to a managed walking trail again under the guise of the big game hunting. It also results in new trail construction without thought or public input. Each of these trails then becomes another enforcement issue and a potential issue for nearby landowners and other forest users.</p>
<p>834</p> <p>835</p> <p>836</p>	<p>218. Leinen, John Jr.</p> <p>As President of the North Country Trail Association I feel I must comment upon "Forest Road and Trail Designation Plan for DNR and Hubbard County Administered Forest Lands in Hubbard County.</p> <p>As I'm sure your aware, members of the Itasca Moraine Chapter of the North Country Trail Association have been building a connecting segment of this Federally Authorized National Scenic Trail, forbidden by statute to allow motorized traffic, through Paul Bunyan State Forest. While doing so they worked very closely with Forest Ranger, Mark Carlstrom, so that this premier footpath could be routed so as to minimize any contact between the trail and OHV traffic. This has been especially difficult acknowledging your extensive Marteneau ATV Trail System which needed to be crossed to connect the trail to existing trail on the western boundary of Chippewa National Forest and Itasca State Park. With the aid and inspections by Mark Carlstrom and Steve Novak the proposed route of the North Country Trail was agreed upon and our members were able to build a finest quality footpath with minimal contact with the Marteneau system. We were able to establish a good track record of the best type of public agency, private citizen partnership.</p> <p>In light of the past cooperation between your agency and my private non-profit advocacy organization to develop and maintain this Federally authorized National Scenic Trail I am quite dismayed to learn of the proposals contained in the Forest Road and Trail Designation Plan. Acknowledging that the new "posted closed unless posted open" policy is a great improvement over past policy but the amount of additional OHV usage suggested in the Study Team Plan has the potential to over run the whole Forest. Reasonable limits must be included in any plan allowing for protection of non-motorized trails, this National Scenic Trail especially.</p> <p>Moving on past my major concern about the Study Team Plan I'd like to add, I understand that the DNR number one job is to protect the resource. Acknowledging that no unit of government</p>

<p>837</p> <p>838</p> <p>839</p> <p>839a</p>	<p>has demonstrated that OHV traffic can be well-managed on public lands, I see nothing but undo stress on all of the resources. Wildlife will certainly be impaired. Watersheds are sure to experience a drop in quality, sadly in a area of our state that relies on it's waters for so much of its income. Can anyone question that this additional use and its accompanying pollution won't have an effect on the tress in the forest and the profitability of its harvest?</p> <p>In closing I'd like to comment that if there are so much monies available in these dedicated motorized usage accounts, monies that are not made available to all other user groups, then these monies should go into enforcement. I know that there is only one Conversation Officer to monitor OHV use for all of Northwest Minnesota. I'm sure that all aspects of natural resource protection could use additional Conversation Officers. With the sums of dedicated monies available to this damaging user group I think this money should be taped to provide more CO so this user group can be reined in and taught to be a responsible user group like those who populate most of the other user disciplines.</p> <p>I hope that my comments will be considered. Its time to consider what is best for the land and all of the citizens of the State of Minnesota not just the demands of a small porton of the population that want to degrade what belongs to all of use at a significant decrease in value to us.</p>
<p>840</p> <p>841</p> <p>842</p> <p>843</p> <p>844</p> <p>845</p> <p>846</p> <p>847</p> <p>848</p> <p>849</p> <p>850</p> <p>851</p> <p>852</p>	<p>219. Leistikow, Norm</p> <p>While I attended the public meeting at Park Rapids and turned in written comments there, I did have additional comments and questions. I would have asked the questions that night but questions were cut off and the leader went to comments before I could do so. Since I had submitted the written comments, I did not speak at the meeting so that others could have that time.</p> <p>I noted from the map of an area I am familiar with, that some of the open trails depend on crossing either private land or Potlatch land. Examples include #s 1866, 868,1458,15522,1507 just to name a very few of the examples. At the meeting, it was indicated that the Potlatch land could be a problem and I suspect the private leases of that land would be a large part of it. What will happen regarding the trails in the areas that cross either Potlatch leased and posted land, or private land?</p> <p>A second observation is that some trails are dependent on use of county and township roads. County #4 for example, already has a great deal of damage and nothing has been done to fix some of the worst erosion problems. As a township supervisor, in charge of our township roads, I worry that the effect of bringing more riders to the area will be on our roads, ditches and forest areas. Already, we see trailers filled with mud caked machines pulling into and out of our area. The use has increased rapidly and the proposals would seem to exacerbate the problem, esp. with the connecting links. Who will pay for the damage to our township roads. (or do I already know this answer?) If you do not think this is a serious problem, you need to reconsider it. The damage being done is already extensive.</p> <p>I heard several 4X4 owners speak to the fact that they do not damage the trails, and that they go "so slow that the speedometer does not even move." A cynic might suggest repair of the speedometer, or that if they do go that slow, 9 miles would last them all day. Actually, I suspect they do have a point and a need. I wonder if they would do any damage to the many logging roads we have that are actively used for logging. Perhaps some of these areas should be investigated and managed for 4X4 traffic. Under NO circumstances should MUDDERS be allowed in the forest areas. They need to be restricted to private parks and courses constructed for their use. I do note the difference between 4X4 traffic and mudder trucks. So should you.</p> <p>I do not need to tell you that the Gov. and others are in a budget cutting and under funding mode. I have been appalled at the limits, financial and otherwise, that have been placed on our DNR and natural resources. Facing these limits, how can we expect enforcement to do the job? ATV revenue totals about \$2.5 million. This year you spent that on the study. In the future, will you no longer spend money on study and planning? I fear the expense of repair will transcend the money available. The funds needed for enforcement will be extensive or no enforcement will be done. Are the officers currently in the field going to be expected to watch these trails and won't that spread our enforcement efforts, already over-taxed, too thin?</p> <p>Finally, in some areas, we now have speed limits on boats, no wake zones, power limits on motors and the new four stroke engines are so quiet you can barely hear them run. Can't we limit the tires to turf tires, restrict motor size and speeds, and as we do fishing, set seasons, so that ATV traffic does not tear up the soft turf in the spring season? Can restrictions on engine noise be developed?</p>

	Some ATVs even operate with mufflers removed.
853	<p>220. Lenards, Mike</p> <p>Please don't close our trails in Paul Bunyan state forest it is a great place to ride,we seem to be losing more and more trails. My family loves to ride there. Please don't let the anti crowd stop everyone from enjoying our great state.</p>
854 855 856 857 858 859 860	<p>221. Leverington, Greg</p> <p>Truck trails should not contain extra rocks and logs. This trail should be open to everyone.</p> <p>A plan needs to be in place and extra money set aside for enforcement and maintenance. Plan needs to say that when a trail has a rut more than 6” to 1 ft. deep at any location, it will be closed for repair and not opened until done.</p> <p>If this plan is in place, camping policy needs to be changed. People will cut campsites around every lake.</p> <p>Current plan is too large to manage, start small. No connecting trails to other forests. Buy lots of snow fence. Fix the Foot Hills first.</p> <p>Make ample room for horses. Remember <u>historic use</u> didn't include ATV and trucks. Don't force your plan on people if they don't want it.</p> <p>Foothills was a place for all people to enjoy. Now it is an ATV truck park. The local people are afraid to go and picnic and swim or even hunt.</p> <p>Wild animals have been chased out. Don't spoil your area.</p>
861 862 863 864	<p>222. Libbey, Wes</p> <p>The 4-wheel truck plan should be eliminated. I would expect that the Study Team had more data and spent more time than the commissioner. Connector trails should be omitted until traffic volume is known. I strongly support the closed unless posted open provision; also the 421 miles of existing routes not be considered forest roads or designated recreational trails.</p>
865 866 867 868 869 870	<p>223. Lien, David A.</p> <p><i>I am writing to urge you to cancel any plans for additional truck, OHV, and dirt-bike trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest, It's time we drew a line in the sand and said enough is enough! Minnesota's remaining wild forests should be protected completely, and preserved in their natural state as much as possible.</i></p> <p>As an avid hunter, camper, and hiker who grew up in northern Minnesota, I spend many weekends exploring and experiencing our public lands and feel that we need more of a balance between preservation and development. In a nutshell, we need more designated roadless areas and other wild places to let us escape from the noise, pollution, traffic and trappings of civilization that are slowly but surely degrading our way of life.</p> <p>How can anyone enjoy the outdoors with trucks, OHVs and dirt-bikes crawling up every passable road and trail? Allowing OHVs to go in and tear the country to shreds, ruining the silence, solitude, and stunning landscapes everyone else goes to this region to enjoy is not acceptable. “The value of wilderness seems so self-evident that it is difficult to articulate a response to those who would destroy it. We preserve buildings and other objects of great beauty or historical significance. Why do we question the value of preserving an intact ecosystem?”</p> <p>To underscore the damage that the growing numbers of OHVs are doing to public lands, recently Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth said that “unmanaged” recreation is one of the four big problems facing our National Forests. Since 1972, the number of OHVs has grown from 5 million to more than 30 million. Unmanaged, OHVs can cause costly damage, including wetlands loss, soil erosion, spread of invasive weeds, water pollution, wildlife disturbance, and noisy intrusion into backcountry recreation. (quote: Eye on Washington.”Happy ORV Trails.” <i>The Green Elephant</i> (www.repamerica.org): Summer 2004.</p> <p>The U.S. is a nation of vast resources and spectacular beauty, but much of it has been or is being developed, logged, mined, drilled, and crisscrossed with roads and OHV trails. Consequently, today wildlands and wildlife are disappearing faster than ever. Wise leaders like the great conservationist Teddy Roosevelt recognized the need to set aside parts of the land to be unspoiled for future generations. It's time we started following in his footsteps.</p> <p>To start making a difference for the better, visit one or all of the following sites: The Wilderness Society – www.wilderness.org; The National Parks Conservation Association –</p>

<p>871</p> <p>872</p>	<p>www.npca.org; Defenders of Wildlife – www.defenders.org; The Natural Resources Defense Council–www.nrdc.org; The Trust for Public Land – www.tpl.org; The Nature Conservancy – www.tnc.org; REP America – www.repamerica.org; The League of Conservation Voters – www.lcv.org</p> <p>Most of them have <i>Take Action</i> centers that allow individuals to send letters to their elected legislators and other decision-makers with one click of a mouse. The centers oftentimes are able to “recognize” each visitor, automatically select his or her Senator and Representative, and sign their names to advocacy letters. Doing this takes at most a matter of minutes and it puts your elected officials on notice that you care about the issues impacting wilderness, wildlife, and public lands across the country.</p> <p>Again, it’s time we drew a line in the sand and said enough is enough! For too long our public lands have been managed for the betterment of corporations and narrowly defined motorized recreational interests and not for the betterment of the American public. Today Americans are demanding that these lands be preserved in their natural state for the betterment of wilderness, wildlife, and future generations. Please do all that you can to ensure that this happens.</p>
<p>873</p> <p>874</p>	<p>224. Lier, Dave</p> <p>I believe strongly that truck trails need to be designated in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. With a long history of off road truck use this area has proven that it can sustain the minimal use that OHVs will bring. ATVs and OHMs both received a much larger system of trails, while trucks were basically excluded from the plan. ATVs and trucks can share the same trails! Trucks travel at extremely low speeds and not all trucks are interested in “mudding.” In fact most avid off-roaders are not the least bit interested in “mudding” but are more likely looking to ride twisty, technical trails that can challenge their driving skills. I hope you can reconsider your plan and make room for more truck trails in this state forest.</p>
<p>875</p> <p>876</p> <p>877</p> <p>878</p> <p>879</p>	<p>225. Lindesmith, Robert & Karen</p> <p>We are writing in opposition to the proposed road for recreational use by pick-up trucks in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. We fail to see exactly how this road project could be classified as necessary for recreational use. If we understand correctly, drivers in their large 4 x 4 pick-ups will ride/drive in their trucks over logs and boulders. There is no particular purpose that is of benefit to the human body riding about in a truck in the woods. It cannot in any way be classified as recreational. In fact, it is most harmful to the environment and to the wildlife that borders this proposed road. I do not currently have sufficient evidence there is a great need for the construction of this “off-road truck playground”.</p> <p>We strongly urge you to reconsider your mission and purpose in maintaining and protecting Minnesota’s environment. Should you go ahead with this project, it would seem to us that you are abdicating your primary purpose in protecting Minnesota’s natural resources.</p> <p>P.S. With education and health care issues at the fore in the legislature, you will need to justify this proposal. It is about priorities.</p>
<p>880</p> <p>881</p>	<p>226. Lindl, Irene</p> <p>The most important thing about all sports “toys” is to respect other people’s property and be liable for any damage they cause. If they would be held responsible for the damage they caused and had a few more people “policing” this sort of thing, believe me there wouldn’t be so much destruction.</p> <p>It takes awhile, but I had problems with my private road, and then a deputy to understand the complaint being made. I have had my private road look like a plowed field and then no one felt as though they were doing anything wrong. But a call to 911 put them back on their heels and a deputy to understand the total damage. Gravel isn’t cheap and if it should start again, a gate will slow them down. I know its not easy to figure this out, but we can’t continue to let this go on and us trying to fix their damage!</p>
<p>882</p> <p>883</p> <p>884</p>	<p>227. Lofquist, Paul</p> <p>Needless to say, the article in the Mpls. Tribune relating to opening up trails in this state park to SUV, trucks, Atv s and dirt bikes is and has been a very upsetting thought. I must confess that I am not aware of other parks and state lands that would allow these vehicles to use trails, but I am sure that this is an impossible task to control, where these grown up boys take on the most challenging obstacles that are not part of the designated trails. I might also add the the wild life that live in these protected areas need protection, as well.</p> <p>I am always reminded by my family, upon their return from MT. Baldy in the Upper</p>

<p>885</p>	<p>Peninsula of Michigan. They speak of the damage caused to tree roots, native plants and the culverts and gullies that develop from the use of this hiking trail by off the road vehicles. The area is posted, yet this does nothing to protect the environment from these dare devils on wheels, who have little or no respect for this wild blueberry countryside and its black bear population. Fortunately, the Nature Conservancy, of which we are supporters, just purchased this large parcel of acreage and hopefully, the members can do more to stop the devastating effects of these toys that destroy our forests and wetlands.</p> <p>I am sure that the lobbying interests representing the resorts, casinos and tourism are all putting pressure on our legislature to push this legislation through. Let's hope that the legislature puts the environment ahead of some individuals intent to destroy our remaining wild areas.</p>
<p>886 887 888 889</p>	<p>228. Long, Steve</p> <p>I attended the public meeting January 12 and have read most of the available literature. I don't use or own a 4-wheeler, but accept their existence reluctantly, if they are operated in a responsible manner.</p> <p>I feel the trail system allowed for 4-wheeler use should be as limited as possible. Preferably located east of Spur 1 in the Paul Bunyan State Forest area. The Beaver Lake, Steamboat and Tee Pee Lake areas are heavily used by horseback riders and should be dedicated to non-motorized use. I don't think that designated OHV trail systems should be connected.</p> <p>Above all, enforcement is critical. Especially of noise from modified exhaust systems.</p>
<p>890 891 892 893 894 895 896 897 898 899 900 901 902</p>	<p>229. Long, Mimi</p> <p>I am writing regarding the proposed OHV access in State Forests; specifically in Hubbard County, and in opposition to those newly planned OHV Forest Trails and Connecting Trails. These new plans are (I have heard) apparently almost ready to be fully implemented - in spite of the Open Houses scheduled for viewing and "input" from the public.</p> <p>Through my involvement with my lake shore association and with the Hubbard County COLA, I am discovering many things about the DNR: specifically - that INDIVIDUALS working in Hubbard County/Beltrami County are exceptional people - with seemingly only the best interests of the local ENVIRONMENTS at the top of their agendas. HOWEVER, I am also learning that the attitudes/goals at the STATE level seem diametrically opposed to these "KEEP MINNESOTA LAKES AND FORESTS CLEAN AND VIABLE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS" beliefs. Is it true that the two divisions of the DNR at the State level are at odds over the future of our forests and lakes? How is it possible that either of those divisions can see anything but the gradual and in many cases, quick, destruction of the Forest/Wetland environments from allowing more and more access to those forests/wetlands by OHV's? Exactly how much influence do the motorized outdoor industries in the State have on the DNR? Why would their interests be allowed to contradict the supposed mandate expected and given to the DNR from the millions of people in Minnesota who expect our forests, lakes and wetlands to be here, undiminished, for future generations?</p> <p>My daughter recently sent me a list of Legislative proposals by environmental groups. I whole heartedly concur with each one of these ideas. The problem is - as I have heard over and over in meeting after meeting - that the DNR doesn't have the funds to enforce the laws/policies that are already on the books - how in the world would any of these proposals work if they can't be enforced?????:</p> <p>Minnesota environmental groups' proposals for stricter ATV laws:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double fines for ATV law offenses. • Allow conservation officers to seize ATVs for flagrant and repeat offenses. • Make some ATV law violations apply to operators' driver's license records. • Prohibit anyone younger than 16 from riding an ATV. • Start a 1-800 hot line to report ATV offenses. • Make permanent a currently temporary law that created a damage account for ATV-caused environmental damage. The account is funded by a portion of ATV registration fees. • Make snorkel exhaust systems, which allow ATVs to operate in deep water, illegal. Also ban extreme tires with 1-inch or deeper tread lugs. • Double the size of ATV license plates to at least 6 inches by 12 inches so conservation

	officers and others can identify illegal operators.
903	<p>230. Longfellow, Doug</p> <p>I am writing concerning the use of the Paul Bunyan State Forest by off-road vehicles, and in particular, Enduro motorcycles. For generations, I have hunted here with my family. One of the wonderful things about Minnesota is the State Forest system which allows hunters to respectfully use this land for hunting, trapping, hiking, and all kinds of other activities, without having to spend tens and hundreds of thousands of dollars to purchase land of their own. In return, by enlarge, the people who use this land (primarily hunters) have given back by treating the land as if it were their own, and by contributing financially in the form of hunting/trapping licenses, etc. Within the past couple of years, we have noticed a growing degradation of this forest as a result of the motorcycle activity that you have approved.</p> <p>I want to share some comments of hunters of the Paul Bunyan State Forest.</p> <p>License fees are the largest source of revenue to fund projects that benefit conservation so I would hope this doesn't fall on deaf ears.</p> <p>Moving the trails to the interior of the forest from the already desecrated roadside is ludicrous and an insult to the sportsperson's intelligence, but of course out of site to the general public.</p> <p>Dirt Bikes dig single ruts and are built to tear up the landscape and scar the land.</p> <p>Dirt Bikes are not environmental friendly and the noise factor along from May to November is affecting the deer herd close to these race trails and race tracks.</p> <p>Hunters are justifiably concerned about the impact over the past years of this destruction but are finally finding strength in numbers. Hunters find inspiration in the beauty of the outdoors and passion in preserving the forests. Honda, KTM, Yamaha and others do nothing to insure the hunting and peaceful woods that once was enjoyed. Hunters of small game and deer take it seriously as indicated by the unfortunate incident in Wisconsin this deer season. On heavily pressured public land, preseason scouting brings us more and more disappointed seeing what has been running through the forest all summer and fall.</p> <p>If ATV trails are a fact of life, why not bring them back to the roadside?</p> <p>If the State of Minnesota is in the racing business and supports public land destruction, can we build these people a roadside flat track for their enjoyment and thrill seeking in June, July and August?</p> <p>What liability does the State assume for personal injury on these ruts by unsuspecting sports people?</p> <p>What grooming could possibly be done to the interior trails by Round River and what has been done is not visible.</p> <p>Is there a fee for dirt bike races and if so who profits from the use of the state land.</p> <p>How many national forests support race tracks and trails?</p> <p>To find harmony, trails must be kept out of the interior. This insures a solution to the sports person, trail users and wild life.</p>
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917	<p>232. Lucken, Ron #1</p> <p>I am writing to you so as to state my concerns about the proposed increase in trails for ATV 's in Hubbard county and the state of Minnesota.</p> <p>As a life long resident of Northern Minnesota I have become very troubled by the direction the local commissioners and other political leaders appear to be headed in proposing increased ATV trail systems in environmentally fragile areas. Have we not taken the blinders off so as to see the destruction these machines have caused !! Enforcement is a huge problem now, what will it be like if you increase the system throughout the area? Our local officials are posting signs telling ATV's not to drive on a hill or through a pond. The ruts in those areas are up to three feet deep. Doesn't it seem a little ridicules that such signs need to be posted, and then when posted the destruction becomes even worse. We hear this is caused by only a few but if you live out in the country you know it is more then a few.</p>
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<p>920</p> <p>921</p> <p>922 923 924 925</p> <p>926</p>	<p>I keep hearing our local and state leaders talk about the economic impact that ATV's have on our area and the state of Minnesota. I would challenge them to furnish hard cold dollar figures to support that theory and even if they do have some economic impact is this the type of activity that you want to promote. It may well drive out the families that have truly had a life long economic impact on our area, the family that has vacationed up north for generations and are looking for the quietness, and relaxation that comes with a trip up north. Boating, fishing, biking, swimming, hiking to name a few are what the majority come for now as their families did in the past. I surely hope that we are not going to be the ones that our grandchildren our going to look back on and say "why did they allow ATV's to do that"?</p> <p>I think we need to take a step back before we do something that we are going to be sorry for in the years to come. The counties need to ban ditch riding (other then for farm use) so as to help with the enforcement problems. It seems to make sense that ATV's need to be restricted to an area and this would help. We don't want Township roads to become the connectors. Would you want to live on a noisy, smelly, dusty race track? Remember our lesser traveled roads have many families on them and enjoy their peace and quiet as well. I am not sure if our elected leaders have loss sight of what the majority of the people want or if they have just gotten caught up in the hype that is being pushed by the ATV industry and the DNR law interpretations</p> <p>I know that the solutions to satisfying all is not easy but I think we need to remember that our use of the earth we live on is a privilege and not a right as the ATV groups seem to be pushing.</p>
<p>927</p> <p>928</p> <p>929</p> <p>930</p> <p>931</p>	<p>233. Lucken, Ron #2</p> <p>I am writing to you in regard to ATV trail proposals both in Hubbard county and for the state. I will not address the destruction that these machines bring to our environment as that is well documented. What I can't understand is why the DNR who is suppose to protect our environment is pushing the present plans. I understand that there is a push to develop these trails but does that make it right for our environment? ATV's don't have a right to destroy our peace and quiet in the outdoors, paying a fee does not give one the right to impose on the majority their "sport". I believe that AtV's can be used on private land and for the hunter who needs help in dragging out a deer or for use on the farm, but to be roaring around in our forrest, on county and township roads and ditches does not make any sense and seems to be irresponsible on the part of our local and state leaders to propose such action.</p> <p>I need to relate a story that took place last year with my 11 year old grandson. While we were walking a trail in the Schoolcraft refuge hunting grouse, two four wheelers with came roaring up to us and blocked the trail. The riders were two men about fifty or so. I thought they were going to ask us how we were doing but to my surprise they started swearing at us and asking if that was our truck at the start of the trail and why we were blocking it. I told them it was a walking trail but that did not matter to them it was like we were the ones that were doing something wrong. My grandson was a bit scared and was glad when they took off. This is only one of several incidents that have taken place while hunting but it makes one wonder, how can you enforce the law back in the woods.. On our township road it is fairly common in the summer to have groups of ATV's coming roaring past the house faster then would be safe for a car. Our township has made the road a restricted one for ATV's but that is not the answer as they continue to roll through. We need to ban all county, township roads and ditches. If we did that it would certainly help with enforcement as citizens could be extensions of our officers.</p> <p>I also am wondering if the proposal is indeed a proposal or only a pacifier for the majority and if this is actually a done deal. Is it?</p>
<p>932</p>	<p>234. Madson, Robin</p> <p>I write to you as a resident of Minnesota, and ATV enthusiast. Our family has enjoyed the sport of ATV for 17+ years. Our four children were raised to enjoy the natural beauty that is observed while on the trail. They learned to “tread lightly”, and observe all trail rules. As adults, they appreciate what they learned and shared as a family. For each trail ride, we organize our group of friends and make it a fun weekend for which we rent hotels/cabins, eat at local restaurants, buy our fuel and supplies and support the general economy of MN forests/communities.</p> <p>We would like you to be aware of the concerns coming from good people such as ourselves,</p>

<p>933</p> <p>934</p> <p>934a</p> <p>934b</p>	<p>and our friends. Your new approach leaves 421 miles of ‘undesigned routes’, which could mean an even further reduction in available trails. We believe that the connecting trails, and undesigned routes could be made available without harm to sensitive areas that must be protected. The old logging trails are a logical choice for ATV routes, as they are established and require no damage to new forest cover.</p> <p>Please make your decision with everyone in mind, and not only the more vocal minority that would make us out to be earth-eating monsters. We do care about Minnesota’s natural resources. We live here, and we are proud to bring family/friends from neighboring states to enjoy our trails.</p>
<p>935</p> <p>936</p> <p>937</p> <p>938</p> <p>939</p> <p>940</p> <p>941</p> <p>942</p> <p>943</p> <p>944</p>	<p>235. Maertens, Jerry</p> <p>The Mississippi Headwaters Audubon Society (MHAS) with many of our membership living within the Bemidji, Park Rapids, and Walker area, Paul Bunyan/county forest land users, and a Hubbard County landowner adjacent to the Paul Bunyan State Forest, we have the following comments concerning the OHV plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paul Bunyan classification - We are very pleased to see that the area OHV team recommended the forest OHV classification be changed from "managed" to "limited" and that this was accepted by the DNR Commissioners Office. We believe that changing the forest trails from "open unless posted closed" to "closed unless posted open is the only way to go. 2. Renegade trails - We are also pleased to see that many of the renegade trails created during the years when cross-country travel was permitted will also be closed. 3. Martineau OHM trail - We prefer to see all OHV trails kept within the Martineau trail footprint as recommended by others and originally recommended by the area OHV team. Establishing OHV trails on forest roads, minimum maintenance roads, and trails outside the Martineau footprint as presently proposed will negatively impact the other forest users, which in total numbers far exceeds the OHV users. 4. ORV Trails (4 x 4 Truck Trail - We do not believe that the establishment of 4 x 4 truck trails in our state forests is appropriate; therefore, we are opposed to the establishment of a 4 x 4 truck trail. 5. North Country Hiking Trail - We recommend that the DNR drastically reduce the number of motorized trails crossing the hiking trail. The users of the North Country Hiking Trail should be provided the best possible experience while going through these public lands and should not have to hear or worry about some motorized vehicle making contact with them. 6. Connector Trails - We would prefer that connector trails at this time be removed from the plan. . 7. Nielson Spearhead Center - MHAS is the owner of the 450 acre Nielson Spearhead Center on Spearhead Lake. Except for 2 parcels of land, Spearhead Center is surrounded by county land. The Paul Bunyan forest boundary is about mile from the Centers west boundary. According to the maps, OHV's will be permitted on several trails along the west and south edges of the Center. We are opposed to permitting OHV uses on the trails in Sections 11, 14, and 23, T.145N., R.34W. MHAS's Spearhead Board will be making additional comments on the Spearhead area. MHAS is aware, concurs, and shares these concerns. <p>The DNR's determination that "if highway licensed vehicles are permitted on a forest roads OHV's must also be permitted" seems to be in conflict with determinations given to environmental and conservation organizations. How is it that the DNR can create OHV trails for one specific OHV and yet cannot restrict or set aside a forest road only for highway licensed vehicles?</p> <p>The DNR has also now determined that the legislative intent is that mudder truck trails should and will go into our state forest. The legislators representing the Paul Bunyan forest area have spoken loud and clear that mudder trucks should not be permitted on the Paul Bunyan. When the Garber administration came out with the decree that mudder truck trails are not appropriate on state forest did the DNR receive anything from the legislature telling the DNR that this was not the intent and you must establish mudder truck trails? We would guess not!</p> <p>We also hear that present legislation does not permit the establishment of non-motorized areas within a state forest. If under present law and rules this is not possible, we would support legislation or rule changes to permit the establishment of non-motorized areas. What is the DNR's intent on this? Is the DNR going to go to the legislature with a recommendation for such?</p>

<p>945</p> <p>946</p> <p>947</p> <p>948</p> <p>949</p> <p>950</p> <p>951</p> <p>951a</p> <p>952</p> <p>953</p> <p>954</p>	<p>236. Maertens, Shirley</p> <p>I would like to give input but first, please consider some initial comments to that input regarding the PBSF OHV plan.</p> <p>To speak of a final OHV plan as a "consensus and balance" between concerned citizens from both "sides," I don't see how it can happen as I think that many of us involved on both sides of the OHV issue are on different wave lengths and that some of us are going to have some issues shoved down some throats. For example, I get the feeling from the "powers that be" that there will be connector trails, that there will be 4x4 truck trails, etc. and get use to it ---ATVs are here to stay. I don't disagree they are here ---and if they wish to use the forest in a sustainable manner and "at reasonable and prudent speeds" and in small groups that do not cause havoc to vegetation or disturbance to critters, including people, fine! But that is the not what many of us are observing. To assume that compliance can rely on enforcement and education is blowing sunshine to the four winds. Too many of the machines are not and will not be used that way. With all the publicity and bad press that motorized recreation has received over the past three years, wouldn't you think offenders would have cleaned up their act? They really cannot police their own through peer pressure or regular enforcement because many of them have an attitude.</p> <p>Some day we as a people will wonder why we have cut up and urbanized our remaining semi-wild forests, woods and fields. We have something unique that few other states have and we are sacrificing its future for short-term vision of so-called "economic" benefits and "fun" for a few. So we have some 200,000+ ATVs registered! We are told that they represent a very small percentage of those using the state lands according to that Generoux Survey of 2002. Why must we give so much access to so few? Perhaps the DNR should review its determination of the 2003 "legislative intent." It is my understanding that some legislators have said there was no intent of necessarily including ORVs in trail development or establishing a specific number of trail miles.</p> <p>I realize that we were requested by local Trails and Waterways people to refer to trail specifics in our comments and to suggest alternatives to problem issues of the proposed OHV plan. I can understand that; and that shows where they are coming from as they have a trail to develop. To do that though precludes that one has technical knowledge of precise trail location and maintenance, soils and wetlands, wildlife, etc. Not many lay people can approach it from such specific standpoints. The maps were confusing as it was difficult to get bearings. But I do care big time about the State Forests and what the extensive motorized recreational trail systems will do to the innate personality of the entire landscape.</p> <p>Input: PBSF OHV Trail:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Of the total plan, the worst part is the proposed ORV trail. An alternative suggestion is simply to omit it. I adamantly oppose any State involvement in allowing ORVs trails on our public lands. This type of motorized rec vehicle does not belong in our forests or fields ----unless, of course, they want to go down the same forest roads in the same manner that I do in my vehicle, at the same rate of speed and under the same conditions as regular licensed vehicles! -- -- that way, they could also better enjoy the scenery and critters they say they wish to experience. Some of these "trucks" with their monster tires and three foot high chassis are an affront to the forest and other "semi-wild" places; on public lands, they are a form of pornography (---like indecent). You people don't want to call them "mudder" trucks but when they come to town, that is what they look like to me. Their vehicle capabilities and activities belong to free enterprise. Why not encourage someone in the private sector establish a mudder or ORV truck park for these enthusiasts? They don't belong on public lands. 2. No connector trails --- for the all the many and same reasons, I'm sure, that you have heard from all the others. 3. Keep the designated ATV trail within what is referred to as the footprint of the Martineau dirt bike trail system at this time. This would facilitate monitoring and enforcement and at the same time allow renegade or undesignated trails outside this area to recover from previous use. 4. On page 6 of the OHV Draft, it states under "Recreation Assessment, Developed Campgrounds- . . . A number of private campgrounds are also located in Hubbard County, providing for additional opportunities for camping. . . . " I suggest that no ATV trails be allowed within a minimum of two miles of any currently existing public or private campgrounds if opposed by such private owners. This
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	constitutes a "preexisting condition" and unless there is approval from private campground owners, the State should act as a good neighbor and honor this situation for camping facilities already established.
955	237. Mains, Morgan I am an individual member of the Minnesota 4Wheel Drive Association. A lot of 'mudder truck' propoganda has been pushed around. Please do not let this ignorant stereo type of ORV trail riders skew reality of our recreation.
955a	What do I trail ride in? A 1988 Subaru GL station wagon... I get stuck in mud. I completly agree with the US Forestry Service and the DNR's approach that UNmanaged recreation of ALL kinds is NOT sustainable. Regulated recreation is the only way we are going achieve sustainable recreation in state and national forests. This does not however mean excluding certain recreations or minimizing them into nonexistence is an answer.
956	Unfortunately this is what is happing to ORV recreation. In most state forests now we have been minimized and in some cases completely excluded. This is not a fair use of public land for ORV enthusiasts. Just looking at the numbers of miles granted this might sound wrong but one needs to break down those miles into trails, forest roads or minimum maintanace roads. Miles of forest roads and min. maintanace roads are being designating for ORVs but hardly any miles of actual trails are being designated. Trails are what we need; not roads. If we just wanted to drive on roads we wouldnt have to leave our neighborhoods. We want to take a weekend, go camping at a beutiful forest, and enjoy HOURS of trail riding. The experience of a winding trail in the woods is nothing compared to driving on a road. The feeling of peace and solitudte just isnt there. The big smile on my face isn't present on a forest road.
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958	Here is the trend I'm whitnesing unfold in this inventory and designation process. ORVs are designated little to nothing for miles. Especially when you compare milage to ATVs andOHMs. Now when we raise a stink and say this isnt acceptable, we get a few more miles, and it's considered a 'significant comprimise'. This is completly unacceptable and frankly an insult to our recreation. ORVs are no more destructive than an ATV. All those photos of the "spider lake incident" were done by ATVs! Yet they get passed around with the message 'get these mudder trucks out of our forests'.
959	Please reconsider this draft plan. ORVs need fair representation and fair use of state forests. This recreation is growing in HUGE numbers. In the creation of this sustainable trail system please consider another aspect of the sustainability. Will the pathetic amount of miles being designated for ORVs sustain even the current amount of ORVs in MN? How about 10 years from now when that number has doubled?
960	238. Maki, Robert My family and I enjoy the sport of off-road motorcycling in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. We ride there as often as we can and enjoy trail riding, trail rides, and Enduro races also. I believe it is a very good opportunity to spend time with our kids, doing something we all enjoy! It is one of the few places we have to ride OHM in Minnesota. I support the DNR trail sticker and keep my bike as quiet as possible. Please do what you can to keep the trails open in the future!
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962	239. Malmquist, Bryan My family and I would like to bring it to your attention that we support the use of recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. You will see that my family is from the metro area, however we (my wife and I) grew up in northern Minnesota. We have enjoyed trail riding since we were children and we would like our son to be able to experience and enjoy the pastimes that we grew up with. We are very insulted with current legislation that has given trail miles to ATV's and motorcycles and have left us with none. We would greatly appreciate the DNR's support to help the people that would like to take their children out for a weekend to enjoy the forests from their OHV's. I would like to close by saying thank you to the work that the DNR has done to manage our forests and would hope that the decisions made in the future will reflect the best interests of the state and users of these forests as a whole.
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964	240. Marsh, Helen Once again I'm writing to someone who, I hope, can stop the OHV-ATV-mud trucks from entering our Paul Bunyan State Forest, thus preventing the destruction of the ecological balance of our forest, plus the noise pollution of the machine. Please count my NO vote. The DNR doesn't have the

	manpower to control this kind of devastation.
965	<p>241. Martinson, Dave & Cheryl</p> <p>As outdoor enthusiasts, we enjoy motorized sports of many kinds. As 4X4 truck owners, we would like to see more trails in the state forests for our vehicles. We don't know why every other motorized sport user group has miles of trails in the State forest system while the 4X4 user group has virtually none. We are as concerned in preserving the forest as a resource for our children and grandchildren to enjoy as any other Minnesota citizens. We should be able to use the forests for enjoyment just as other motorized sport aficionados are allowed to do. Please consider this when you are making your decisions about this forest.</p>
966 967 968 969 970 971	<p>242. Mattson, Jan</p> <p>I will not be able to attend the public meeting at Park Rapids next week, but I would like to offer some comments. I own 120 acres in Cass county adjacent to public land, so I am familiar with the popularity of OHV's and the problems they create. Please do not allow the use of these machines to proliferate. We all know what has happened in Foothills State Forest and many of the county right of ways already. Unfortunately, most of the operators of these machines that I observe are violating the law, and the chance of being caught and tagged is very low. Once a "trail" has been made by one machine, it will continue to be used; regardless of signage, berms, etc.</p> <p>Several years ago, two ATV's went across part of my property and the tracks were clearly visible for two years. This was only two machines and two riders! I have had to gate my driveways to prevent access, as signs are ignored.</p> <p>I feel that the Genie is already out of the bottle, but please don't encourage the use and manufacture of any more of these machines for "recreation". And let me say also that I hunt and fish, believe in the use of public land for non-motorized activity, but not in the destruction of the very places we seek to enjoy!</p> <p>Finally, how would the DNR feel if I opened my property to OHV's; created a challenge hill and mudhole through my wetlands? Remember, the land does not really belong to you or me, we are just stewards while we are here. Show some stewardship!</p>
972 973 974	<p>243. May, Mary</p> <p>Please <u>do not</u> allow more motorized vehicles in the Paul Bunyan Forest. I use the forest and area for hiking, camping, and horseback riding.</p> <p>My main objection is <u>noise</u>. It is a shame to be in the forest and not be able to enjoy the quiet sounds when trucks and ATVs are revving. My experience has been that on the whole the motorized people are rude and difficult to deal with. Lots of time it's the combination of drinking, smoking and swearing in this group that makes it hard to have my grandchildren around them too.</p> <p>Please reconsider allowing more vehicles in this area. I think mining areas makes more sense both for the environment and for other residents trying to enjoy the outdoors.</p>
975 976 977	<p>244. McBrady, Pat</p> <p>This is my input to ohv usage on state forest land. I am an atv owner and rider but now stay almost exclusively on private land. I was previously against restrictions on where ohv's could ride in the state forests, but in the last few years I have seen the explosive increase in the numbers and usage of ohv's. The damage done to trails, roads, ditches, driveways, wetlands, etc. has astounded me. First the vegetation is killed and then in this sandy, hilly, country the erosion starts and ruins much. Trails have been cut and bushwacked into remote areas that previously were accessed by foot for a very secluded outing.</p> <p>I have had posted wildlife food plots and trails, that have been torn up by trespassing atv's. There is about no place these machines don't go. You cannot have an afternoon grouse hunt without being accosted by these machines.</p> <p>Some major restrictions on ohv usage on state forest land needs to be put in place. I feel small areas where these machines are allowed without connecting trails to other areas and severely restricting ohv usage in all other areas is the only way to stop the large scale major damages from continuing to get progressively worse.</p>
	245. McCabe, Curt

<p>978</p> <p>979</p> <p>980</p>	<p>With much disgust, I read the article in the Tribune a short time ago that the DNR has backtracked on the Paul Bunyan Forest of not allowing any OHV trails.</p> <p>First of all, a couple years ago I had an opportunity to ride ATV with a friend (his machines) in Two Inlets State Forest. It was after we had had some rain. The trails were so cut up with deep ruts that everyone was swinging out into the forest to find some drier ground. I had rode my mountain bike on the same trails just the previous summer. The total destruction in one season was unbelievable.</p> <p>Regarding the OHV trails in Paul Bunyan. Our state forests should never be allowing this kind of activity. I moved up to this part of the country for some country quiet and peace. With our young men and women dieing in Iraq fighting not only terrorists but for OIL, it seems ironic and hypicritical that we should propose a place where we not only will destroy the land but encourage the use of these gas guzzeling, noisy, polluting rigs a place to "PLAY". IS THIS OUR LONG TERM SOLUTION? PLEASE, PLEASE THINK BEYOND TODAY.</p>
<p>981</p> <p>982</p> <p>983</p> <p>984</p> <p>985</p> <p>986</p> <p>987</p> <p>988</p>	<p>246. McDermott, Liz</p> <p>I hope to see the Hubbard County Board take a strong pro-active position to protect our environment. I am opposed to the proposed plan for the ATV trail system in the Paul Bunyan State Forest and in Hubbard County. The concept of connecting trails will turn Paul Bunyan State Forest into an ATV park. This concept makes the ability to enforce trail usage an impossible task. It allows ATV users more access to public lands than I feel necessary at the cost of displacing other users and causing very significant destruction to the environment. Such an increase of ATV use in Hubbard County would ultimately have negative economic impact for the county as it will change the character of the community and detour visitors and new residents interested in other activities and who appreciate our county for its unspoiled beauty. We would prefer to see the ATV trail system east of Spur 1 where there is already motorized activity on the Martineau trail system leaving the west half non-motorized where there are residences and non-motorized activities can continue in peace.</p> <p>(Added written text)</p> <p>This area of northern Minnesota is loved and visited by so many each year precisely because of the tranquil escape it provides from the Metropolitan area, and offer the restorative effects of its natural beauty. Myself and my family members have spent so many summers, and winters, in the area specifically for these reasons. However, the alarming increase in ATV useage, as well as off-road vehicles and personal watercraft, is rapidly destroying the very things that draw countless visitors to the Hubbard County area each year. If your decisions regarding ATV trail expansion rest on the status of your local economy, please ensure that you apply ample weight to the devastating impact that a loss of annual vacationers and loss of retirees looking for year-round homestead property would have if forced increasingly north in the search for peace. Should such a short-sighted expansion plan be put into effect, choose wisely. Choose long term. Choose to build up and not tear down, which is what this plan would do.</p>
<p>989</p> <p>990</p> <p>990a</p>	<p>247. McDonnell, Diane</p> <p>Please keep as many miles open to OHVs. I think that existing corridors should be used. Please do not close trails. If reroutes need to be done to continue use maybe bridges and culverts could be implemented. This would be a standard request for all of MN.</p> <p>Now for the Badoura State Forest. I feel the general public would be served to keep OHV trails open and for people to enjoy.</p>
<p>991</p> <p>992</p>	<p>248. McDonnell, Thomas</p> <p>We need to keep trails open for all people to enjoy what our fore fathers fought and died for in this country. The freedom to enjoy the out of doors without oppression from special interest groups closing everything. The trails should be left open for OHV. Family sports such as ATVing is a great way to enjoy the out of doors together. Think of the fall colors. We have older folks that enjoy viewing the fall colors by ATV. Long walks just don't work anymore for many older folks. We are not all baby boomers. Let not leave the folks who had us out of the picture. I think they are responsible riders also. If a trail is there, it can be used by all.</p>
	<p>249. McFarren, Vicki</p> <p>I would like to let you know what a wonderful family activity we have made of riding our ATV's. As I read all of the negative reports published in the Park Rapids enterprise, I had to write to you to present a non-negative side -</p>

<p>993</p> <p>994</p> <p>995</p> <p>996</p> <p>997</p>	<p>Next, I wonder to myself how many of these people (negative writers) have actually been in the Paul Bunyan forest or around the area. Or if they have even been on an ATV.</p> <p>Our family has been riding in the Paul Bunyan forest for over ten years. We are fortunate enough to own property inside the forest. We are a family of five (currently age range 15-50) and each of us owns an ATV. At least two times a year, we and five other families (and children) load up on groceries and gas in Park Rapids & Akeley and head up to Paul Bunyan forest for a three-day weekend. It ends up consisting of 20-25 machines, I haven't seen any thing being damaged or wetlands ruined. We stay on the current roads & trails. In the course of our 3 days of riding, we meet approximately 100 other riders, there again - none of them are tearing up the roadways or blazing new trails, going thru wet lands - chasing out the wild life. Again, we have been doing this for over ten years - where is all this destruction and noise that is supposed to be up there? Maybe they have mistaken logging truck ruts for 4-wheeler ruts? We have taught our children responsible riding. There is room enough for trails and responsible riders. Build the trails. Give us a chance to prove this.</p> <p>Please do not let the negative people try and shut this down before we are even given a chance. We are avid users of the Paul Bunyan forest - not only as riders but also as hunters. If they limit the use of ATV's in the forest, maybe it should also be considered to limit the use of logging trucks, they seem to do much more damage.</p> <p>I am sure that if I had the time and energy to dig up past articles on the start up of the snowmobile trail ways - it was probably met with the same resistance - but it seem the snowmobiles have proven them wrong, give the ATV's a chance.</p>
<p>998</p> <p>999</p>	<p>250. McKeown, Anthony</p> <p>Public lands should be for the public (and critters), all of the public. Off road motor vehicles should not be allowed on public lands. Some possible exceptions might be snowmobiles in season and limited time (place access for people with physical handicaps). Off road motor vehicle use is not compatible with traditional uses. To allow off road motor vehicles is to exclude all other users.</p>
<p>1000</p> <p>1001</p> <p>1002</p> <p>1003</p>	<p>251. McKibben, Steve</p> <p>In reviewing your plan it seems to me that the 149 miles of trails is a small percentage of the hundreds of thousands of acres of forest. If there are some sensitive areas that need to be protected I suggest just closing an access off to them rather than closing a whole area. I see it vital to keep connecting trails open to have a continuous trail system. A broader range of trails would surely help lessen higher traffic on lesser trails thusly resulting in a lesser impact on the forest overall.</p>
<p>1004</p> <p>1005</p>	<p>252. McNulty, Tom</p> <p>You're giving up more and more territory to destructive vehicles -- ATVs, dirt bikes and snowmobiles -- and we will never get it back. Wildlife can't lobby, so your "stewardship" of Minnesota's natural areas is dictated by Polaris, Honda, etc. Thanks from everyone who respects and reveres nature.</p>
<p>1006</p> <p>1007</p> <p>1008</p>	<p>253. McSteen, Kerstin</p> <p>I am writing to register my vehement opposition to the expansion of trails for four-wheel-drive trucks in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. These plans have already proven to be detrimental to the environment, i.e. the Spider Lake Recreation Area.</p> <p>I also find it completely inappropriate that the DNR should instruct its agency planners that "It is imperative that we find recreational opportunities for trucks," as reported in the December 25th StarTrib article. Why is this imperative? Is it not more imperative to preserve the natural, quiet beauty of our woods, streams and lakes and the creatures that live there? It is obvious that the Minnesota DNR needs to reorder its priorities and put the needs of the environment first, rather than the needs of the Minnesota Four Wheel Drive Association. I will be anxiously waiting to see how this issue plays out.</p>
<p>1009</p> <p>1010</p>	<p>254. Medenwald, Mike</p> <p>I support recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. This area has a long history of off road use. Do you know not all trucks that go off road are mudders. As a trail rider the land we use and care for in ways that keep the beauty. Minimum maintenance roads are not recreational. The DNR should be able to find trails state wide for all to use.</p>

1011 1011a	<p>255. Medewold, Steve</p> <p>I am a supporter of off road trucks and trails for many years. Every little bit of legal land to use helps. The Paul Bunyan trail would help that little bit seeing it was used in the past. I feel with a watchful eye and help from supporters it would be nice to have more trails in Minnesota. I also have ATVs. It would be nice to go the same places or close to the same with my ORV or sharing the trails. It would be nice if the DNR would help find and support more trails.</p>
1012 1013 1014 1015	<p>256. Melby, Ted</p> <p>Until the damage caused by ATV and 4-wheelers in the Paul Bunyan State Forest is repaired, there should be a statewide ban.</p> <p>Until there are at least 10 Conservation Officers working full-time to enforce the closed unless posted open policy, there should be a statewide ban.</p> <p>All highway and road r/w should be closed.</p> <p>MN DNR should purchase large tracts of land and these vehicles should be restricted to these areas.</p>
1016 1017 1018 1019 1020	<p>257. Melzer, James</p> <p>A truck challenge route in our National Forests. This seems like some kind of joke. Like something out of the movie "Road Warrior." Like just one more thing in the Republican free-for-all society (Except for gay people and people who need abortions).</p> <p>First, there's the disturbance to wildlife. Second, there's the noise. Third, there's the difficulty to manage these trails for erosion. Fourth, we're talking about vehicles that get about 5 miles to the gallon. Gee, that sends a great message. Please, don't do anything so stupid. Wouldn't the folks in Europe love to get a hold of this. The people who believe we are trying to run the world. It's like a line from the play "The King and I" where the King is puzzled by the fact that the English think him a barbarian. Why don't we let these four-wheel truck challenge drivers carry shotguns and chainsaws, too. So they can bring home some good firewood and supper while they're at it. And put a liquor store on the trail. Tell them to get their fat rears out from behind the wheel and go for a walk in our State Forests.</p>
1021 1022 1023	<p>258. Mills, Mike</p> <p>The proposal for motorized vehicle trails at Spider Lake and/or other areas in the P.B. state forest is absolutely ridiculous and wrong! The people who come up here from the Cities have absolutely no regard for the preservation of nature's beauty and the environment that we should all be working to preserve for our children. We have seen pristine areas absolutely trashed and ruined by these people, and the DNR and other enforcement agencies are not funded and/or staffed to prevent it. There is no "right" for motorized vehicles to desecrate our beautiful northwoods, and most of us who live in this area strongly opposed .</p>
1024 1025	<p>259. Monahan, Kevin</p> <p>If aggressive off-road trucks are allowed in Paul Bunyan, I certainly would never return by myself or with my family for any camping/hiking trips. I believe an outdoor adventure for most people means enjoying the sounds and sights of a natural, undisturbed environment. I would also believe the smell of exhaust is something most are attempting to get away from when traveling to Paul Bunyan. Please don't allow this to happen.</p>
1026 1027 1028	<p>260. Monicken, Melodee</p> <p>Maybe you recall the 1998 comprehensive DNR survey of recreational users of public land: 70% of the survey respondents were NON-MOTORIZED recreational users. However, ATV lobbyists have influenced recent legislation which provides for little, if any, environmental review of trails. Some concerns I have or am hearing from other county residents:</p> <p>1. TOO MUCH TRAIL: Seven hundred+ miles of ATV trail is too much ATV/OHV trail for Hubbard County. If we have that much OHV trail, it will be hard to find places and trails suitable for any other pursuits. The DNR plan spokesman said the planned trails are currently "one-half mile away from year-round residences and one-quarter mile away from seasonal residences." I guess that was supposed to be reassuring to residents concerned about noise from a nearby trail. It isn't.</p> <p>2. MULTIPLE-USE???: Quiet forest zones are essential, and desirable in areas beyond the BWCA. When ATV/OHV riders monopolize a trail or a particular part of the forest, they render that area</p>

<p>1029</p>	<p>unusable for everyone else. The noise and fumes of their machines, the recklessness of some scramble riders, the likelihood of inebriates--these conditions make it unlikely that people will take their kids to the same area for a picnic or fishing expedition. The DNR and fast-growing counties like Hubbard should plan forest access to accommodate the thousands of cyclists, swimmers, walkers, campers, runners, hikers, bird watchers and anglers who are seasonal visitors and/or already living here. The damage the OHV riders leave behind means that the area is usually unappealing for so-called "multiple use." (Everyone, even the ATV clubs, knows that the term "multiple use" is a joke in this instance--a phrase that legislators and agencies employ to placate those taxpayers who realize that when OHV users are in an area, the rest of us can't be.)</p>
<p>1030</p>	<p>3. FAIRNESS: Many of us who oppose a plan for 600+ miles of trail in Hubbard County are ATV owners and riders. (I am.) But we still don't understand why the taxpayers of MN should subsidize the expensive "recreational" interests (sitting on an ATV is a "sport" now?) of a very vocal, industry-subsidized minority, a group which apparently insists on its right to repeatedly destroy lands and trails owned by all Minnesotans. Their demands are equivalent to a group of NASCAR enthusiasts insisting on state-maintained highways for their races, adjacent to Highway 10.</p>
<p>1031</p>	<p>4. DAMAGE AND PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES: Living here, we've seen the great damage that OHV/ATV riders inflict on our environment. Large groups ride through the ditches of our county and township roads, creating erosion, damaging wetlands, and spreading knapweed throughout Hubbard County. The DNR should take a strong, proactive position to protect our environment and ensure public safety. They should abolish ditch riding, especially near state, county, and township roads. In the past fifteen years, we've experienced hazard and near accidents as ATV's suddenly rolled down an embankment or out of the ditch on Hubbard County Hwys 4, 34, 40, 64, 71. and 2.</p>
<p>1032</p>	<p>5. DAMAGE TO PRIVATE PROPERTY: We know county residents who have repaired their driveways five and six times (at their own expense) because the DNR and county ignored the financial and environmental costs of ATV "ditch riding." We've observed ATV riders who created completely new trails through public and private lands, chainsawing any and all trees/brush in their path.</p>
<p>1033</p>	<p>6. INDUSTRY ADVOCACY GROUPS: Instead of financing the persistent lobbying efforts of ATV clubs, I think the manufacturers should put their money where their mouth is-- e.g. buy some big tracts of land where they can create and maintain trails and scramble zones in areas of far northern MN (say, right next to their industry's factories or near the homes of industry CEO's). At the very least, the ATV advocacy groups, legislators, county boards, and agencies who are so gung ho in their support of ATV access should designate most motorized trails in areas that are not already recreation destinations (i.e. north central MN) for thousands of Minnesotans who are non-motorized users of our public lands .</p>
<p>1034</p>	<p>7. ENFORCEMENT: Those miscreants who carve new trail, trespass on private property, "snorkel" into wetlands, create scramble areas in our forests, etc. should face stiff penalties, including vehicle confiscation and hefty fines. These penalties are the norm, not the exception, in other states. We need effective, funded enforcement. And the state fees collected from ATV/OHV owners should be disseminated to those areas in the northern tier of the state where most of these vehicles are used.</p>
<p>1035</p>	<p>8. LICENSING FEES: An increase in licensing fees for ATV's is warranted if MN is going to provide funding for law enforcement and finance the expense of siting, building, and maintaining ATV trails and scrambles. The rest of us shouldn't have to pay, over and over, for their continual abuse of the environment.</p>
<p>1036</p>	<p>9. CONNECTOR TRAILS: Permitting ATV traffic on connector trails and in ditches is the worst part of the current proposal. ATV's should be taken by trailer to designated trails, just like boats are trailered to the public access on local lakes. ATV/OHV riders should not be permitted to ride in ditches or on county or on township roads. The fact that so many recreational ATV users are averse to creating trails on their own property demonstrates their understanding of just how abusive this recreation is to the environment.</p>
<p>1037 1038</p>	<p>261. Morehead, Janet I'm writing to strongly oppose the expansion of the ATV & OHV trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. They are destroying what once was a wonderful place for all to enjoy. We believe the DNR has caved into special interests of the ATV industry. The state forests are for all to enjoy, not to destroy & make the forests unusable for others.</p>

<p>1039</p> <p>1040</p> <p>1041</p>	<p>They aren't a race track, but that's what its become & to allow "mudders" those people whose whole purpose is to see how much they can tear up is just plain unconscionable.</p> <p>For as many people as the state may think it draws having a race track in Paul Bunyan, as many more will not come because of their destruction. Our resorts are fading and what will replace it, ATVs in tents, with a pile of beer cans.</p> <p>We are driving away other people who come to enjoy our forests & the peace they found. Now its like Minneapolis in there. An awful dump & will get worse.</p> <p>We're totally against it & see the results of it here even south of Nevis. They are tearing up our ditches & driveways too. And it will only get worse.</p>
<p>1042</p> <p>1043</p> <p>1044</p> <p>1045</p>	<p>262. Mudrak, Andy</p> <p>I am a member of ATVAM, and have 3 ATV's, which have the dnr sticker on them. I ride in a lot of places in MN and would like to have more areas open. I agree with the ATVAM position, which is The current 149 miles of proposed ATV trails represents only 1/20 of 1 percent of the total 217,000 acres covered in this proposal.</p> <p>Closing the small spur trails that were old logging trails is not acceptable. It would make more sense to post as closed, any of them that may lead to sensitive areas, rather than just doing a blanket closure of all of them.</p> <p>The connecting trails that will link the separate riding areas are vital to a contiguous trail system. By establishing routes that will provide access to services in different areas the resulting dispersal of riders will lessen the concentration of use in a particular area.</p> <p>Since the total number of miles available to ATV's has been drastically reduced under this plan, question the 421 miles of "undesignated routes" as inventoried. Certainly there are suitable areas that could be opened for ATV use in those areas.</p>
<p>1046</p> <p>1047</p> <p>1048</p> <p>1049</p> <p>1050</p> <p>1051</p> <p>1052</p> <p>1053</p> <p>1053a</p> <p>1053b</p>	<p>263. Mueller, David & Joanne</p> <p>We support the basic tenets of the plan, and also support the concept of connecting trails. The one concept that gives us pause is that of "Closed unless posted open". This concept lends itself to "negligent management" by not posting anything and then being occupied with other matters! We would much prefer trails to be open unless posted closed for a specific reason, i.e. "Hiking/Hunting Trail. Closed to motorized traffic", or "Motorcycle Trail. Closed to other motorized traffic".</p> <p>The business and economic impact to the area must be considered also. Much of the economy of this area comes from its use by people who live elsewhere. You must consider the impact of severely limiting the use of the forests on local sales and service business in the area. This argues for keeping the reasonable use of all aspects of the forest open.</p> <p>In the interest of historical conservation (i.e. Itasca Park) some areas should be kept undisturbed. The rest of forest usage should consider the volume of users. And for those of us who are seniors, and are not likely to be active hikers and backpackers, access by ATV or ORV becomes the method of travel of choice.</p> <p>Ditches! The ditch in front of our property is part of the Round River ATV Trail. We do not understand the big unrest over ruts in ditches! The unrest over ruts in driveways we can sympathize with, but there are two or three aspects to this. First; the ruts are mainly caused by the few who try to jump the drives, Second; motorcycles, that legally are not allowed to ride ditches anyway, cause ruts in drives, Third; We are members of the Akeley Paul Bunyan ATV Club, and club officers have continually met with local and DNR officials to find ways to remedy this problem. While these officials have been sympathetic to our efforts, for the most part, club officers have been required to apply for permit after permit, only to be told we cannot work in the ditches and on drives until we have yet another permit! By allowing ATV clubs to repair the ruts, at least some of the opposition to ATV's can be alleviated.</p> <p>Lastly, why should trails be closed on 1 Nov if there is no snow until Jan? The one answer that comes first to our minds is, it is easier! The same may apply in the spring. At least at first look, there appears to be a disconnect between it being to dry to burn , but to wet to ride. While this may be true at some times , we doubt it is always true. Again, the answer may be, it's easier. Management should be by common sense, not by the ease of 'that's our policy'.</p> <p>Management of our forest resources must be friendly to all users, not just to specific groups,</p>

	or easy for the managers.
1054	<p>264. Myers, Gwen & Mason</p> <p>The DNR has been working very hard since the 2003 Legislature charged it with reviewing Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use in all state forests and reclassifying these forests as either "limited" or "closed." Many of the DNR recommendations have been excellent, paying close attention to the potential for environmental damage in a variety of ecological conditions, and for this, thank you. In general, the DNR seems to be working with local evaluation teams and largely taking their advice on trail location. Unfortunately, the Hubbard County proposals contain several glaring exceptions to this rule:</p> <p>The eight-mile ORV trail in Paul Bunyan's southern unit violates the wishes of the local team and violates the DNR's past position that 4x4 trucks belong on roads, not forest "trails." The "challenges" included in this proposed eight-mile route make this a scramble area, in spite of the DNR's past position that these are harmful to the environment. The DNR is caving in to demands from a tiny minority of Minnesotans; this trail must be eliminated from the proposal.</p> <p>The connecting trail that runs on the Beaver Lakes, Teepee Lakes and Halvorsen trails should be closed to ATVs. It runs along the Gulch Lakes wildlife management area and through the Game Refuge. Further, it connects the west trail system to P.Bunyan and risks turning Hubbard County into an ATV park, the effect the local evaluation team most wanted to avoid.</p> <p>The forest roads and trails west of Spur One need to be closed to ATV traffic, as recommended by the local evaluation team.</p> <p>The DNR must consider the rights of 95% of Minnesota citizens who favor less invasive recreational activity in our state forests. The DNR's mission is to work with all of our citizens to "protect and manage the state's natural resources....," not the very few who own OHVs or who own companies which manufacture OHVs.</p> <p>Please consider the majority of citizens in Hubbard County and the majority of citizens in Minnesota and remove the offending trails from your plans for this beautiful area of our state.</p>
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1060	<p>265. Myhra, Eric</p> <p>i am an auto dealer here in walker, and i also am a volunteer with the walker ambulance service. my concern is public safety, i've been volunteering since 1977, and we have our share of snowmobile accidents in that area of the paul bunyan state forest that we attend to , as well as north ambulance out of park rapids, and first responders from akeley, nevis, and lakeport first responders. there have been more accidents for motorcycles, and atv's and i can just imagine the type of accidents we will be dealing with, when these are 4wd pickups going through the trails like the atv's and motorcycles do. i like outdoor sports and we do need tourism up here, but i have personally been on these rescues that take us down trails, most of the time walking in with back boards, as far as 2 miles. these activities place a burden on volunteers who leave their work and families to respond to emergencies. its my hope that your committees keep public safety in mind when designing these trails. i've always wondered about the liability factor when someone wants to blame some agency for a poorly designed or neglected trail system.</p>
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1064	<p>266. Naylor, William & Dorothy</p> <p>We strongly oppose use of 4 by 4 trucks on forest roads and trail designations in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. We own property on Bottle Lake of the Mantrap chain of lakes near the proposed area. Our family has valued the Paul Bunyan Forest as a place set aside to hike, enjoy nature, birdwatch, and hunt grouse for 35 years. We are alarmed at the thought of such a noisy and horrific intrusion on the proposed area.</p> <p>If this state feels a need for the above mentioned activity, can't they find a place other than one of the states most beautiful and peaceful forests, home of wildlife such as bear, wolf, cougar, bobcat, deer, an occasional moose and our beloved eagle along with many others which make the park ecologically balanced. This is the only near wilderness park which Hubbard County has. The peace and tranquility of this area's near wilderness will be disturbed for the Mantrap lake chain of property owner's and tourists, who have come to this area because of the near wilderness qualities that it offers.</p> <p>Why were the Foothills State Forest and the Spider Lake Recreation Area truck challenge areas closed? It was because the trucks rutted and tore up these areas. Experience has proved in other</p>
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<p>1068</p> <p>1069</p> <p>1070</p>	<p>areas that the intrusion goes beyond the actual designated trails. Hubbard County has stated that the hilly terrain is unsuitable for truck trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. The use of oversized vehicles will reek havoc with the plant life and the forest floor.</p> <p>As Senator Carrie Ruud, R-Breezy Point stated: “The state should purchase gravel pits, mining areas and other lands for people, who want special driving challenges. Providing truck trails in state forest in inviting disaster.”</p> <p>We hope that the proposed project will be dismissed and the DNR returns to their original policy against truck challenge courses on state forest trails and lands.</p>
<p>1071</p> <p>1072</p> <p>1073</p> <p>1074</p> <p>1075</p>	<p>267. Nelles, Richard</p> <p>I have been a strong DNR supporter my entire life. I :am 68 years old so I feel I have some knowledge. I have been a DNR volunteer for the past 34 years. I :am currently doing or have done 21 different jobs for the DNR. For the past eight years I have averaged 630 documented hours a year for the DNR. I drive my own vehicle a average of 4302 miles a year doing DNR work. Plus I drive a DNR vehicle as well .My duties take me off the main roads and into remote areas. My duties out of the Grand Rapids office are as follow. Deer Trapping, radio collaring fawns ,scent stations, bear tetracycline and radio telemetry.</p> <p>I have seen considerable damage to trails and wetlands, caused by ATV,S. We need to keep these people more confined to designated areas. We can t allow them to continue to damage our State Forests. In my case I see where they leave forest service roads, township roads and onto trails I use. Then into wetlands and edges and then see how much muck they can throw. I have had them intentionally vandalize my scent stations because they came along and asked what I was doing. The next day after going back to check station and 100 miles tablet is gone and their print is in the center. When we haul in deer traps behind a big snowmobile the sled tips over caused by ATV rutting. Have you ever been to Spider lake?</p> <p>Please read Internal Peer Review Draft # 5 dated 10-03-2002 from Ecological Services Div. Of MN DNR. The DNR is doing more for the OHV people then they did for the ducks. Our wetlands are gone and continue to go and now we’re going to encourage more damage to existing wetlands by allowing ATV traffic. I want to continue to support the DNR but Trails and Waterways are not listening to Ecological Services.</p>
<p>1076</p>	<p>268. Nelson, Brian</p> <p>I am a member of the MN4WDA and we need trails to drive on. We are not looking for mud holes. We like rocks and trails to drive our trucks on.</p>
<p>1077</p>	<p>269. Nelson, Mike</p> <p>This is in regards to the motor vehicle use on state and county forest lands in Hubbard County. I’m in total support of the designation trail systems, as they have been set up.</p>
<p>1078</p> <p>1079</p> <p>1080</p> <p>1081</p> <p>1082</p> <p>1083</p>	<p>270. Nervig, Luther</p> <p>I am writing to strongly object to the plan of the DNR to open Paul Bunyan State Forest for truck trails. The local planning team of DNR and Hubbard County Officials stated that the hills and sandy soils in the forest would be unsuitable for truck trails. That recommendation was made by local people who are familiar with the forest. I urge you to follow their recommendations.</p> <p>Paul Bunyan State Forest is not suitable for a race track for a small minority of people who wish to drive their 4-wheel drive trucks off of established roads and highways. The trucks will add a substantial amount of noise, will destroy the trails and will introduce a motorized element into the Paul Bunyan State Forest that is not necessary. People operating these 4-wheel drive trucks are not seeking to enjoy the beauty of the forest. Therefore, do not put them in a beautiful forest, but instead find locations, such as abandoned gravel pits and perhaps abandoned mining areas on the iron range. Department of Natural Resources is suppose to be a steward of our natural resources. Putting trucks into Paul Bunyan Forest would be a betrayal of that stewardship.</p>
<p>1084</p>	<p>271. Newsman, Jerry</p> <p>I have been riding the established ATV tails since 2000. I realize there are people who enjoy riding logging roads, but the small winding ATV trails (made by the people who ride them, just going around trees and interesting places) are attractive to people who just enjoy the forest and birds and animals. Yes, the birds and animals are not afraid of us. A bear just stood up and looked at us and then</p>

<p>1085 1086</p> <p>1087</p> <p>1088</p>	<p>walked away. By making a trail that winds through the trees keeps the speeders down and encourages the rider to enjoy the forest. I am 72 years old, have had 7 back operations and this is the only way I am able to enjoy the Paul Bunion forest. I have driven over 2400 miles on my machine and most of it has been In the Paul Bunion forest.</p> <p>The greatest tragedy is that we are not allowed to ride after November. I believe ATV's should be allowed to ride in the forest when there is less that 2 inches of snow!</p> <p>People claim that ATV's damage the forest floor haven't been in the forest. I can show you a trail that was closed 2 years ago, and if I didn't show it to you, you could not find it. The forest just grows back.</p>
<p>1089</p> <p>1090</p> <p>1091</p> <p>1092</p> <p>1093</p> <p>1094</p> <p>1095</p> <p>1096</p> <p>1097</p> <p>1098</p> <p>1099</p> <p>1100</p>	<p>272. Norrgard, Lois</p> <p>I present these comments on behalf of American Lands Alliance, a nonprofit conservation organization working to protect and enhance our public land resources as functioning ecosystems for wildlife as well as recreation. American Lands is opposed to many aspects of this Plan.</p> <p>First, it is a mandate that our Department of Natural Resources (DNR) protect and maintain environmental quality and ecosystem health. This is a priority above providing recreation, any type of recreation, on our state owned public lands. A Minnesota code of heritage protection for today and for future generations is in numerous existing statutes, and is revealed in other forms of recreational management in the DNR. Why this is not a core value for the ongoing motorized recreational subset of DNR management is confounding.</p> <p>Time after time in the ongoing OHV trail planning process in the DNR we see ecosystem/ecological science thrown out the window, as well as social/recreational science. This has been a frustrating and infuriating process. And today, with the latest changes out of St. Paul, the Paul Bunyan becomes yet another example.</p> <p>American Lands supports the "Limited" classification for the Paul Bunyan State Forest (PBSF). American Lands supports the proposed closure of approx. 421 miles of roads/trails.</p> <p>Concerns Raised - Require Response:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An ORV "challenge" area is not a legitimate use of our public lands. This lesson should have been learned with the disgusting destruction of our public land resources created from the DNR constructed and managed challenge area in the Foothills State Forest. I cannot believe it is possible for an agency entrusted with protection of our Minnesota public lands to even consider backtracking on this. The 4-wheel truck trail should be struck from the final plan. 2. There should be no "connector routes" at this time. In future if the motorized recreational users prove that they can be law-abiding and responsible, the DNR can consider additional trails. It is certain that "connector routes" from communities to PBSF will only transform Paul Bunyan into a de-facto OHV park. There is only one conservation officer for the entire NW region (from Pillager to the Canadian border). The State must contain these trails to make them manageable. No unit of government has demonstrated that ATV traffic can be well-managed on public land. This sport has proven to have a large contingency of an "outlaw culture". It is not a myth that riders will go off-trail - this is a fact that must be factored into the planning. NOT until there is proof of adequate enforcement & maintenance in contained areas should these trails be extended. 3. There should be no trail segments bordering the proposed Gulch Lake Management Area (GLMA). The GLMA is a proposed "non-motorized area" and opening the Beaver Lakes Trail to ATV use will only invite illegal off road use in the GLMA. Snowmobiles pose much less of a problem. 4. North Country Trail. There should be no proposed routes near the North Country Trail. The solitude of this trail should be protected at all costs. This plan should not create a displacement for the use groups who have committed time, labor, and money to the upkeep of this trail. ATV trails must be deleted or rerouted around this national treasure. 5. Authority to close certain forest service roads and minimum maintenance roads to ATV traffic. It is the "law" in many existing statutes that the DNR manage our public lands responsibly, and protect the resource from damage. Steps must be taken to allow the closure of some roads - just because they can handle an occasional passenger or other vehicle does not mean that they can handle the "sport" of motorized recreation. Many forest roads were not built and are not equipped for this type of heavy use. Erosion, rutting, and other expensive damage can and will occur on some of these roadways and it is in

	<p>the best interest of the DNR and the state taxpayers that the authority to close these roads be acted upon.</p>
1101	<p>6. Economics: Before we commit grave mistakes on our public land systems we must have comprehensive and legitimate documentation on the costs for maintenance, monitoring and enforcement. To date the DNR has not been able to provide these numbers.</p>
1102	<p>- For instance, DNR has yet to show documentation on estimated costs to monitor and maintain a trail system. The only comprehensive estimates I've heard of are from a hardened-surface ATV trail in the south-eastern corner of the State - this is \$1,100/mile/year.</p>
1103	<p>- There is No comprehensive plan for enforcement of trespass and other laws.</p>
1104	<p>- There is No plan to mitigate and/or repair the damage to public and private property.</p>
1105	<p>- Have trail planners considered the very real decrease in property values that occurs along ATV trails, and the loss of property selling opportunities for private landowners along these trails? (Realtor's complaints along a trail system in PA).</p>
1106	<p>- Another economic cost associated with a too-extensive motorized trail system is the lost tourism from other recreational uses. A study in WI has shown that the biking industry generates at least \$450 million a year in revenue to the state. (manufacturing of, retail sales, recreational tourism and racing events). The amount of money spent by wildlife watchers in Minnesota was \$523.5 million in 2001, and is probably much higher today.</p>
1107	<p>I know that this has been stressed over and over but since this is not being done yet to date I will repeat once again. We must not create a trail system that is not able to be managed adequately with the available staff hours that can be dedicated to it. This means a system mile ratio that matches up to the CO's time to enforce as well as the staff time to monitor, maintain and repair.</p>
1108	<p>The trail plan being proposed is irresponsible. The spider web of trails shown on the maps in essence make the Paul Bunyan SF a motorized park - has there been any thought as to the long-term plans? Looking out 10 years - even 5 years what do you expect this forest will be?</p>
1109	<p>7. Environment: The scientific literature indisputably demonstrates that OHVs cause significant and severe direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on the environment. The complexity and interrelatedness of impacts frequently interact synergistically, producing a "whole" more damaging than the sum of the individual impacts.</p>
1110	<p>The lack of environmental review in this Plan is blaring. Since there is no site specific analysis included in the Plan I must speak in generalities when commenting on environmental effects. Of note is the many lakes and wetlands within the PBSF and the very real threat that an over-extensive trail system will have on these quality resources. The DNR is being questioned in many aspects of waterfowl management of late, protection of our wetland resources should be a primary focus in all parts of the state.</p>
1111	<p>The litany of environmental impacts created by ATVs and other motorized recreation has been brought forward on numerous occasions. Some of this damage like the mud holes, deep ruts, erosion and crushed vegetation are highly visible. Minnesota's landscape has rutted wetlands, churned-up streambeds, sediment-choked spawning gravel in trout streams, eroded hillsides, compacted soils, and extensive vegetation loss. All of these impacts are inherent in the recreation and whether it is the claimed 2-3% or the estimated 75% of the users that ride renegade on our public lands this will be a continuing problem. But another very serious impact of OHVs is more insidious, taking place unseen at the chemical and genetic levels.</p>
1112	<p>OHVs compact and destabilize the soils and alter physical and chemical parameters that can affect long-term hydrological patterns, soil fertility, pH and toxicity. Crushing the surface layers of the land alters the population dynamics of subterranean organisms through both direct mortality and underground habitat fragmentation. The animals and plants vulnerable to such impacts include ecologically critical groups that perform such important functions as fixing nitrogen, transporting micronutrients, breaking down organic debris and forming the base of the food chain.</p>
1113	<p>Noise is a pollutant and a very disturbing social impact. Annoyance is a common judgmental response to noise regardless of its level, it has its base in the unpleasant nature of some sounds, in the activities that are disturbed or disrupted by noise, in the physiological reactions to noise, and in the responses to the meaning or messages carried by noise. Minnesotans seeking peace and quiet, fresh air,</p>

<p>1114</p>	<p>personal safety and a healthy environment are losing access to this experience as increasing areas of the state are impacted by noise and development.</p> <p>In addition to the impacts to the quiet recreational user, animals exposed to high-intensity sounds suffer both anatomical and physiological damage, including both auditory and non-auditory damage (Brattstrom and Bondello 1983). Intermittent sounds or startle noises have been shown to have many effects on humans including annoyance, disruption of activity, increase in heart rate, vasoconstriction, increase in blood pressure, stomach spasms, headaches, stress, fetal convulsions, ulcers, and coronary disease (Baldwin and Stoddard 1973, Brattstrom and Bondello 1983). However, the larger more sophisticated, better protected human ear is capable of withstanding high intensity sounds which easily damage smaller, more simplistic ears, like those of lizards, amphibians, birds and other animals. Thus OSHA and EPA recommended noise guidelines for humans may not provide protection for wildlife hearing.</p>
<p>1115</p>	<p>According to the EPA, noise acts as a physiological stressor producing changes similar to those brought about by exposure to extreme heat, cold, pain etc. (EPA 1971). The EPA states that: "Clearly, the animals that are directly affected by noise are those capable of responding to sound energy and especially the animals that rely on auditory signals to find mates, stake out territories, recognize young, detect and locate prey and evade predators. Further, these functions could be critically affected even if the animals appear to be completely adapted to the noise (i.e. they show no behavioral response such as startle or avoidance). Ultimately it does not matter to the animal whether these vital processes are affected through signal-masking, hearing loss, or effects on the neuro-endocrine system. Even though only those animals capable of responding to sound could be directly affected by noise, competition for food and space in an ecological niche appropriate to an animal's needs, results in complex interrelationships among all the animals in an ecosystem. Consequently, even animals that are not responsive to or do not rely on sound signals for important functions could be indirectly affected when noise affects animals at some other point in the ecosystem. The "balance of nature" can be disrupted by disturbing this balance at even one point."</p>
<p>1116</p>	<p>There are many species of birds and other wildlife that fit the category of those that need direct response to sound energy (many bird species including and especially owls and other raptors, frogs and other amphibians, etc.) The PBSF is home to some of the plant and animal communities that make Minnesota unique, the timber wolf, fisher, marten, and goshawk. This wildlife resource is a heritage value that should not be taken lightly.</p>
<p>1117</p>	<p>It is apparent that in the trail plan that there has been no analysis as to the impacts on our wildlife resources. The devastating loss of a true "natural" forested habitat having a full complement of species variety on our public lands is an atrocity. All species, from the deer, timber wolf, martin and lynx, to the various amphibians, from the northern goshawk and red-shouldered hawk, to the diversity of plant species, should have a right to food, shelter and adequate habitat. Due to the continued and relentless loss and over-use of our natural resources our present society is now at a level of species extinction that has not occurred in 65 million years. It is imperative that we recognize the importance of restoring and maintaining natural biodiversity. We must protect the full range of variety and variability of the ecological complexes in which species occur, in places substantial enough to guarantee their continued existence, for this and future generations.</p>
<p>1118</p>	<p>Other Impact from ATVs submitted for consideration Extent and manner of OHV recreational use</p> <p>According to DNR figures and the January, 2003 Office of the Legislative Auditor's Program Evaluation Report titled State-Funded Trails for Motorized Recreation (OLA Report), there were over 180,000 ATVs, 6,300 OHMs, and 1,400 ORVs registered in Minnesota at the end of 2002. OHVs (other than OHMs) used exclusively on private lands need not be registered for public lands use, and so are not counted in these figures. The uses of OHVs on public lands include sport riding, secondary-recreational riding (as in ATV use associated with hunting), and other utilitarian uses.</p>
<p>1119</p>	<p>The great preponderance of OHV riding in Minnesota is ATV riding, and the bulk of all ATV riding is performed by a fairly small minority of Minnesotans. Those who own a registered ATV often own more than one. According to the July, 2001 study prepared for the DNR by John P. Genereux, titled "An OHV Recreation Planning Tool Based on: A Survey of Resource Managers; and A Survey</p>

<p>1120</p>	<p>of [OHV] Riders in Minnesota" (DNR's Genereux Study), "10% of all ATV owners accounted for 57% of all forest riding on ATVs.. In other words, 60% of the riding was being done by 10,000 ATV riders." Furthermore, "over one-half of the ATVs registered for recreation in Minnesota are not being used in the [public] forests." "74% of ATV riders own or rent land where they can ride ATVs and other OHVs." Id. at p. 55.</p> <p>According to best information available, therefore, OHV users of Minnesota public lands represent a small subset of the state's population, yet it is commonly understood that the amount and the severity of the damage they do through their OHV riding activity is entirely out of proportion to their numbers. This incongruity is due in part to the nature of the machines they ride, but also due to the manner in which they ride.</p>
<p>1121</p>	<p>Some OHV riders are attracted to opportunities to create and drive through mud; to throw dirt, sand, and mud; to climb steep hills; to corner sharply at high rates of speed; to spin their wheels. The stated reason for the attraction of riders to all of these activities is that riders are generally looking for opportunities to "challenge their machines." The over-arching reason they ride on public lands because they can find those opportunities on the natural landscape. The riders who fit this description are not riding first and foremost to see or appreciate nature, or to maintain the environmental condition of the public lands on which they ride. As put in the DNR's Genereux Study, "[a]ccording to this survey, riders do neither understand nor appreciate the possible connection between their riding and environmental damage. Respondents think mud, natural water hazards [otherwise known as lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, and vernal pools], and hill climbs are all appropriate uses in the forest.." Id. at p. 25.</p>
<p>1122</p>	<p>It is difficult to know how many OHV riders break the law while riding, and estimates vary widely. Riders will say emphatically but without offering evidence or any substantiating explanation that "just a few" percent, or frequently, "three percent," of riders are causing all the trouble. There are two problems with this assertion. First, the few people who have claimed to keep any kind of record of the behavior of riders claim the percentage who break the law is much larger. One such estimate is offered by recently-retired CO Roger Lueth. His April 18, 2003 letter to the Legislature on the OHV problem in Minnesota, as seen from the eyes of a veteran CO, is highly informative. He estimates the ratio of "irresponsible" to responsible OHV riders is about 75:25, or 75% causing trouble. The design of OHVs makes them inherently environmentally destructive in many locations they ride. Regardless of what exact percentage of riders is breaking the law, the damage they do is exceptionally long-lasting and is severe.</p>
<p>1123</p>	<p>Social and environmental effects of OHV recreation</p>
<p>1124</p>	<p>In important ways, no other recreational activity compares to OHV riding. First, no class of recreational activity has ever put as much power at the disposal of the outdoor recreationist as OHV riding. Traction power and torque are selling points, with manufacturers currently engaged in an "arms race" of sorts, as they compete to make machines faster and more powerful. The consequences of this conferral of power are demonstrated in manufacturers' commercials, and translated on</p>
<p>1125</p>	<p>A second feature of OHV riding is the fact that it allows its practitioners to travel longer distances and cover larger areas than any other form of outdoor recreation. Ardent hikers might cover 10 miles or more in a day's effort; ardent canoeists might cover 30 miles or more with substantial effort and under decent conditions. According to the a DNR's 2001 Genereux report, an average ATVer, by comparison, likes to cover 30 miles of trail riding in just 2 hours' worth of riding, and an OHMer likes to cover 40 miles in under 2 hours. Id. at p. 53. I believe the DNR defines a "rider day," its unit for measuring volume of motorized recreation, as four hours worth of riding, and so a typical OHV "rider day" amounts to over 60 to 80 miles of riding. And some riders do ride even farther. With the exception of bicycle touring (on roads), no other sport comes close to these amounts.</p>
<p>1126</p>	<p>A third feature of OHVs is the size of the area that they affect on the landscape. This area is not just the 3-to-8-foot wide ribbon of trail over which they roll. More accurately, an OHV has multiple effects on the landscape, and the different effects are felt over different-sized areas. Nearly every effect, however, has a "footprint" on the land that is felt over a larger area than similar effects from other forms of outdoor recreation.</p>
<p>1127</p>	<p>Consider some examples:</p>

1129	<p>Erosion - When OHVs ride over steep slopes or weak soils, the affected area can grow over time. At first it may be just the area where surface vegetation is destroyed and the sediment travels. Over time, the disturbed area often grows, spreading down-slope as destabilized soil succumbs to gravity and precipitation; and spreading upslope as erosion below undercuts and causes the collapse of soil upslope. Depending on the relative weakness of the soil and other local site factors, the area affected by an OHV's passage may spread and grow over time to cover an area much larger than the tracks initially left by the OHV. The erosion effects of OHVs are inherently likely to be several levels of magnitude greater than those of hikers, cyclists, or skiers, for example, because the OHV without the rider typically weighs several hundred pounds (for OHMs), up to 900 lbs (for ATVs), or even several tons (for ORVs); and because that tremendous weight is coupled with powerful engines, aggressively-treaded tires, and a tendency of operators to gun the engines and spin wheels intentionally.</p>
1130	<p>Sedimentation - OHVs operating illegally near or in a stream, river, or lake, stir up or cause the erosion of sediment, and frequently also introduce the seeds of invasive non-native weeds. Sediment and noxious weed seeds can be transported great distances by water. That entire area receiving the sediment and seeds is another area affected by OHVs. The sedimentation effects of OHVs are many levels of magnitude greater than for other forms of non-motorized recreation because hikers and cyclists behave differently when encountering wetlands, streams, and lakes. Like hikers and cyclists (just to name a few non-motorized forms of recreation), canoeists lack both the power and the inclination to destroy wetlands or churn up lakes or streams. Similarly, because hikers, cyclists, and canoeists travel shorter distances and generally avoid becoming mud-caked; their innate capacity to spread the seeds of noxious non-native invasive weed species is lower than that of OHVs.</p>
1131	<p>Noise pollution - OHV noise legally may approach 99 decibels at a distance of 20 inches from the muffler, according to the DNR's 2002-03 Recreational Motor Vehicles Regulations, at p. 13. This volume is considerably greater than the typical volume associated with average street vehicles such as a typical car or pick-up truck. When revved and running, OHVs can be heard at great distances up to and over two miles. Even if a single OHV can be heard only within a radius of one mile, it still has a "soundshed" - the area where people and wildlife are affected by its noise - of 3.14 square miles (area = πr^2, with the radius = 1 mile). When a single OHV travels 33 miles (the average length of a preferred ride for ATVers and OHMers, according to the DNR's Genereux Study) on a trail, in the course of a 2 or 3-hour ride, it affects all the people and wildlife within an area of 69 square miles (33-mile long x 2-mile wide soundshed, plus a semi-circle on each end with a radius of 1 mile). Hikers, cyclists, canoeists, etc., simply do not generate the sustained high-volume noise of an OHV. A moderately noisy hiker might be heard over a distance of 100 yards at most (if talking exceptionally noisily), and thus the entire area affected on a 10-mile day-long hike would be about 1.15 square miles (600-foot wide x 10-mile long soundshed, plus a semi-circle on each end with a radius of 300 feet), or just 1.7% the area affected by an ATV.</p>
1132	<p>Non-native noxious invasive weed spread - An ATV driven through a few feet of spotted knapweed can pick up 2,000 seeds, and when ridden farther, will spread those seeds for tens of miles. How much might it cost the County if ATV riding in ditches were to increase the number of non-native noxious invasive species (NNIS), or to double the rate of spread for those already here? There is no doubt that ATVs exacerbate the NNIS problem, and the only question is how much worse will the problem become.</p>
1133	<p>In sum, the combination of inherent abilities (to do more damage, travel longer distances, and affect larger areas with their various effects) to disturb people and damage the environment make OHVs the most intrusive and inherently destructive form of outdoor recreation yet. For these reasons, ATV/OHV recreation projects and decisions deserve the most careful environmental review accorded any form of outdoor recreation.</p>
1134	<p>The costs of providing, managing, monitoring, maintaining, repairing, and enforcing OHV trails far exceed the costs for other forms of recreation.</p>
1135	<p>Since the first meetings of the Minnesota Motorized Trail Task Force, the DNR has received requests to show the costs of building, managing, monitoring, maintaining, repairing, and enforcing OHV trails, and has been largely unable to do so. The best estimate that has ever been provided was</p>

<p>1136</p> <p>1137</p> <p>1138</p> <p>1139</p> <p>1140</p>	<p>for maintenance on a hardened-surface ATV trail in the south-eastern corner of the State. Those figures were provided by the DNR to an individual named Tom McMillan, and showed that yearly maintenance totaled just over \$1,100 per mile of trail. DNR's Trails and Waterways staff has at various times estimated costs at closer to \$50 to \$150/mile, but has not supported these estimates with figures or documentation similar to the documentation showing \$1,100/mile/year.</p> <p>Other forms of recreational trails do not require such enormous investments in maintenance. Nor do other forms of recreational trails carry the enforcement costs of motorized trails. The full costs of enforcing rules on public land dictating where OHVs can and cannot travel are probably an order of magnitude greater than what is currently being spent. Failure to enforce rules governing OHV riding carries still greater costs, of course, measured in environmental damage, reduced quality of life and quality of recreational experience for other citizens, and the monetary costs associated with repairing damage after the fact, and with lost tourism and other economic activity as a result of visitors' bad experiences in an area due to OHV recreation.</p> <p>Recreational trails that cater to less destructive activities carry monitoring, maintenance, repair, and enforcement costs that are just a fraction of those for OHV trails. Monitoring need not be as frequent because the trails withstand the lighter impact of lighter forms of recreation for longer periods of time. Less wear and tear per unit time translates into much lower maintenance and repair costs. And other forms of recreational trail use, unlike OHV riding, are far more likely to stay on the trails provided, resulting in far less damage off-trail, and thus far lower costs to repair illegal off-trail traffic.</p> <p>I repeat - it is a mandate that our Department of Natural Resources (DNR) protect and maintain environmental quality and ecosystem health. This is a priority above providing recreation, any type of recreation, on our state owned public lands.</p>
<p>1141</p> <p>1142</p> <p>1143</p> <p>1144</p>	<p>273. Norton, Matt #1</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed OHV trail designation plan (“draft plan”) for the Paul Bunyan State Forest and other lands (including the Badoura State Forest) in Hubbard County. I am the forestry advocate and a staff attorney for the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA). MCEA is the legal and scientific voice protecting and defending Minnesota's environment. We work in the courts, the legislature and state agencies, using science and policy to develop, communicate and implement environmental change. MCEA has a history of involvement in the issues surrounding motorized recreational trails, with particular focus on the environmental effects and social conflicts associated with ATVs and other Off-Highway Vehicles.</p> <p>In 2002, I was appointed by the previous Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Mr. Garber, to the Motorized Trail Task Force (Task Force). During that experience I became very well acquainted with many people in your office, and with the issues that the DNR and all of us face in trying to stop the tremendous damage to our wildlife and natural resources from OHV use and abuse. Since serving on the Task Force, I have worked in St. Paul in an effort to craft legislation to bring a workable, and resource-protective, order to OHV management. I worked on the passage of the 2003 OHV law, and the changes to it in 2004. I have worked with many individuals in the divisions of Trails and Waterways, Ecological Services, Wildlife, Waters, and Enforcement to better understand the challenges that you and they face. I have personally spent hundreds of hours on the Paul Bunyan State Forest (PBSF) over the last several years, hunting, hiking, biking, and bird watching. I have seen hundreds of miles of unsanctioned, user-created, and designated OHV trails in the PBSF. I have seen tremendous and widespread resource damage from OHVs, including eroding hillsides, eroding forest roads, eroding powerline right-of-ways, devegetated and soil-scrambled wetlands, muddy streams, eroded lake shores and stream banks; physical evidence of scofflaw behavior by OHVs, including destroyed state property such as signs, gates, and once-standing timber greater than 4” in diameter; passive management tools, like gates, “no motorized vehicles permitted” signs, “non-motorized trail” signs, “hunter walking trail” signs, boulders, sunk posts meant to block trails, and berms meant to seal trail heads off to motors, all defeated simply by being driven around or over. There is no denying that a state of lawlessness and frequent resource damage prevails on the PBSF.</p> <p>I thank you, and the area team members who have worked hard on these plans. MCEA appreciates your efforts. We know that you have worked very hard in producing this public draft of the plan. MCEA’s comments follow.</p>

COMMENTS AND ATTACHMENTS INCORPORATED AS COMMENTS

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In the summer of 2004, MCEA staff and interns spent more than 200 hours riding trails in the PBSF with GPS units and digital cameras, recording the condition of trails and the locations of current or potential future problem areas, for the purpose of establishing particularized and well-documented information for submission along with this comment letter. A hard-drive crash that occurred while the drive was being backed-up delayed the analysis of this data by several months. At a cost to MCEA of nearly \$2,000, an out-of-state data recovery firm has recovered the data we wish to use in our GPS-pictorial assessment. MCEA received the data, on a DVD, in the MCEA office yesterday, January 27, 2005. MCEA staff and interns will be analyzing and preparing the data and will submit it to you and others in the DNR as the earliest possible date. We anticipate that work will begin preparing the data today, and may continue for the next two weeks or longer, though we hope it will go more quickly. We greatly regret the hardware and data-recovery problems that we have experienced, not to mention the frustrating delay and cost to us, and will work to deliver our delayed submission of the additional information to you as soon as we can. Because the data is depends upon a linkage of GPS and photographic data, no other manner of presenting the data is possible at this time. Please consider this a place-holder note in MCEA's comments for insertion of the added data at a later date.

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In addition, I have made a series of requests to DNR staff at all levels over the past several months, requesting GIS analysis of the trail densities, and requesting maps showing how much of the PBSF and other lands were within a 1-mile buffer of all forest roads and trails proposed to be open to OHVs, along with a numeric quantification of percentage the public land acreages within that same buffer. I have received no trail density data up to this point. At a meeting last month with the Commissioner on the subject of the maps, I was told that he would discuss my request with others, and look into the making of such maps and figures available. I heard nothing more about the maps until Wednesday of this week, January 26, 2005, when I was disappointed to learn that the requested maps would not be produced. The same day I made arrangements to have such maps made, as soon as possible. I will be submitting them very soon. Please include them, and the percentage data associated with them, as part of MCEA's comments, as well,

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I. Introduction

These comments and the maps, attached and discussed below with these comments, are intended to help you in your consideration of adjustments to the plans between the draft and final versions. This letter, along with the attached maps and selected additional documents, is intended to provide you with more information that you may find useful regarding Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs), the significance of the OHV law passed during the 2003 state legislative session, the extent and manner of OHV use, OHVs' social effects and public reaction to them, and their environmental effects on the state's natural resources. Some of MCEA's analysis and comments are generally applicable to all plans. Comments specific only to a particular plan are noted as such.

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MCEA reserves the right and plans to supplement this comment letter as soon as is possible. There are two reasons for this need to supplement these comments and attachments. First, as noted above, MCEA has experienced a significant hardware failure in the past month that has affected our ability to recall, manipulate, and produce significant GPS and photographic data that were collected by MCEA staff and interns during this past summer. Second, MCEA repeatedly requested the creation of certain maps, without which the commenting public is unable to clearly see the degree to which proposed trail designations will permeate state forest land with OHV effects. These maps will help the public to understand the influence OHV effects will have on the habitat value provided by, and the public's experience of, these four state forests. MCEA hoped that the maps would be produced by the DNR, and did not hear definitively from the DNR as to when or whether these informative and necessary maps would be produced for the PBSF until Wednesday, January 26, 2005, when it was learned that the maps would not be produced. MCEA now plans to have those maps produced and supplement this comment letter with those maps, in order to address the points such maps would illustrate.

[1154](#)

II. A note about the DNR's 2002 OHV ecological effects assessment paper

Among the documents accompanying this comment letter is a copy of the October, 2002 DNR draft document entitled, "Assessing the ecological impacts of ATV trail construction and use on public lands: facts to consider and a review of the literature." This DNR document (hereinafter, "2002 OHV

1155	<p>ecological effects assessment paper”) is the single most valuable document for anyone wishing to understand the full environmental effects of OHV recreation in Minnesota. It is public knowledge that disputes within the DNR have kept the 2002 OHV ecological effects assessment paper from moving beyond a “draft” stage, and that pressures applied inside the Department kept the document from being distributed to Area Team members for review and consideration. This document is an informative and frank review of scientific literature. Given the highly judgment-based nature of the plans Area Teams were asked to produce, the 2002 OHV ecological effects assessment paper should have been made available to you, as Department staff, in the interest of giving you as wide and complete a collection of background information as possible.</p>
1156	<p>The 2002 OHV ecological effects assessment paper makes clear that some good pertinent scientific research already is available, that it should be considered, and that DNR staff has substantial experience and major concerns with OHV effects. It contains information upon which you can base rational land management decisions restricting OHV use, in order to protect both the recreating public (the great majority of which is and will remain non-motorized, despite the fact that OHV recreation is growing) and the natural resources under the Department’s stewardship. The Department must consider all relevant information. Otherwise, the Department risks jeopardizing good management and failing to ensure that difficult decisions must be made using imperfect data, the DNR makes decisions that “err on the side of the resource.”</p>
1157	<p>The DNR should review the 2002 OHV ecological effects assessment paper and, when making adjustments to the draft plan, consider the paper for what it is: internal DNR commentary on the general effects that OHV trails have on natural resources and people.</p>
1158	<p>The DNR should review the 2002 OHV ecological effects assessment paper and, when making adjustments to the draft plan, consider the paper for what it is: internal DNR commentary on the general effects that OHV trails have on natural resources and people.</p>
1159	<p>III. Meaning of “OHV” The term OHV includes All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) (characterized by three to six low pressure floatation tires and a design that requires the rider to straddle the seat); Off-Highway Motorcycles (OHMs); and Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs) (most often 4-wheel-drive trucks, but also other vehicles weighing more than 900 lbs dry weight, vehicles having an engine displacement of over 800 cubic centimeters, and other vehicles not classified including those with more than six flotation tires.</p>
1160	<p>IV. Minnesota’s 2002 and 2003 OHV laws, their significance, and current conditions The 2002 and 2003 Legislative sessions produced notable OHV legislation. The 2002 law banned OHVs from traveling “cross-country” on public lands. Cross-country travel was defined as travel off of any road or trail. Trail, however, is not well-defined in State law, and according to some can be interpreted very broadly to encompass any linear track that looks like a trail, including perhaps game trails, grown-over ancient skid trails, or even the bent vegetation traces left by a single vehicle recently operated across a formerly trail-less area in violation of the “cross-country travel ban,” as it is widely known. Accordingly, the cross-country travel ban was perceived from the outset by most observers (including DNR Conservation Officers and citizens following the issue) as being relatively inconsequential for at least two reasons: 1) it failed to address the fact that continuing use of existing trails was causing as much or more environmental damage and social discord as the creation of new trails through cross-country riding; and 2) even with respect to the blazing of renegade trails by cross-country riders, the ban is plagued by the administrative impossibility of being effectively enforced, in large part because existing trails are not contained and manageable, but are instead spread throughout vast areas on most forests.</p>
1161	<p>A second part of the 2002 OHV law directed the DNR to establish a “Motorized Trail Task Force” with a 6-month mission: make recommendations to the DNR and the Legislature on a number of subjects. That Task Force reported 31 unanimous recommendations, but failed to reach unanimous agreement on any proposed recommendation addressing “natural resource protection concerns” with motorized trails. While a number of the reported recommendations and many of the proposed-but-failed recommendations (those that drew one or more veto votes) were quite good, and have value for policy-makers in MCEA’s opinion, the Final Report, in its entirety, was vehemently attacked primarily by motorized interests as a failure when it was delivered in mid-January, 2003. These attacks were leveled against the report in its entirety, including the 31 recommendations that had recently been approved unanimously.</p>
1162	<p>A second part of the 2002 OHV law directed the DNR to establish a “Motorized Trail Task Force” with a 6-month mission: make recommendations to the DNR and the Legislature on a number of subjects. That Task Force reported 31 unanimous recommendations, but failed to reach unanimous agreement on any proposed recommendation addressing “natural resource protection concerns” with motorized trails. While a number of the reported recommendations and many of the proposed-but-failed recommendations (those that drew one or more veto votes) were quite good, and have value for policy-makers in MCEA’s opinion, the Final Report, in its entirety, was vehemently attacked primarily by motorized interests as a failure when it was delivered in mid-January, 2003. These attacks were leveled against the report in its entirety, including the 31 recommendations that had recently been approved unanimously.</p>
1163	<p>The state of Minnesota passed a more extensive law concerning OHVs in May of 2003. Among other important provisions, it directs the DNR to evaluate and re-classify (with respect to OHV use) all 54 State Forests currently permitting OHV use off of forest roadways. Under the existing classification scheme, all State Forests are classified as either “managed,” “limited,” or “closed.”</p>
1164	<p>The state of Minnesota passed a more extensive law concerning OHVs in May of 2003. Among other important provisions, it directs the DNR to evaluate and re-classify (with respect to OHV use) all 54 State Forests currently permitting OHV use off of forest roadways. Under the existing classification scheme, all State Forests are classified as either “managed,” “limited,” or “closed.”</p>

	<p>Currently, 45 State Forests are “managed,” eight are “limited,” and four are “closed.” State Forests in the “managed” classification permit OHVs to travel on any trail.¹ In State Forests classified as “limited,” OHVs may use, and must remain on, trails specifically provided and posted (“designated”) by the DNR for them. On “limited” State Forests, all trails are presumed closed to OHVs unless posted open. In State Forests classified as “closed,” no designated trails for OHVs are provided and no OHV trail riding is permitted, but motor vehicles licensed for highway travel, including some OHMs and most ORVs may use (and must remain on) inventoried State Forest roads (unless posted otherwise). As a result of the 2003 OHV law, there will no longer be any forests in the “managed” classification. The DNR has until December 31, 2006 (now extended to December 31, 2008, by action of a request to that effect to the Legislature in January, 2005) to evaluate all State Forests now classified as “managed” and reclassify them as either “limited” or “closed.”</p>
1165	<p>State law on OHVs does not require the DNR to build or to designate ORV trails. The law <u>permits</u> the DNR to do so, but not at the expense of the DNR’s other responsibilities to protect wildlife and natural resources. The law is <u>permissive, not prescriptive</u>. In other words, just because there is an ORV dedicated account, that does not mean that the DNR has to create trails for the ORVs. It is permitted to do so (if it can do so without violating other requirements), not told that it must do so. The funds <u>can</u> be used to build/designate ORV trails, but they do not <u>have</u> to be used to build/designate ORV trails. Any assertion that state law requires the DNR to establish ORV trails is flatly wrong.</p>
1166	<p>The scheduled elimination of the “managed” classification, and the movement of all State Forest lands to a management status in which trails are closed unless posted open, constitutes a major change in state policy. The 2003 OHV bill accomplished this change, and it was passed into law despite stiff opposition from motorized recreation enthusiasts and the OHV manufacturers. It passed because of the strength and sustained nature of public outrage. The outrage was and continues to be fed by OHV-caused damage to public resources and wetlands, disruption to the private lives of Minnesotans, and degradation of Minnesota citizens’ outdoor recreation experiences.</p>
1167	<p>The same concerns that prompted Minnesotans to demand governmental action on this issue in 2003 are directly relevant to this proposed draft plan. Minnesotans are not outraged over hiking trails, hunter walking trails, ski trails, or kayak and canoe routes. To the extent these and other non-motorized types of recreational trail have drawn any public attention in the context of OHVs in the past years, it is only because OHVs have used them illegally, have damaged them, and in many cases have prevented the rightful non-motorized uses to which those trails are devoted.</p>
1168	<p>What is rare, largely due to extremely severe resource constraints and the widespread uncontained layout of OHV trails, is the successful collaring and prosecution of the people responsible for natural resource damage. Almost equally rare is the effective and prompt repair of the damage OHVs cause. As illustration, consider the continued use and proliferation of non-designated, renegade trails in and around the areas of the Foothills State Forest, where designated trails have existed for years. Contrary to claims that all is now well in the Foothills State Forest, the damage to previously untouched natural resources, like streams, continues.</p>
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1170	<p>The DNR must base its decision on how many miles of OHV trails to designate, and where, on at least three broad filters: 1) physical features and wildlife needs – i.e., what wildlife and the resources can sustain. Part of winnowing down possible OHV-designated trails under this first filter will involve eliminating trails that go to or through wetlands and streams; 2) DNR resources (dollars and staff time) available to be devoted to OHV trail monitoring, maintenance, and enforcement</p>
1171	<p>– i.e., the DNR must not seek to designate a “Cadillac” trail system on a budget only big enough to monitor, maintain, and enforce a “Geo Metro” trail system. The DNR cannot afford to meet minimal expectations of professional resource management and protection on the enormous trail designation proposal that is shown in the PBSF Draft Plan; 3) social considerations – the DNR must show that it has laid proposed trails out that are physically sustainable; that it can monitor, maintain, and enforce; and that do not degrade the recreational opportunities and experiences of the non-OHV-riding majority</p>
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¹ Lack of sufficient law enforcement resources, combined with the broad definition of “trail,” has already allowed the proliferation of more than 7,000 miles of user-created, or “renegade,” motorized trails on State Forest lands, according to DNR estimates (Statement by Mike Carroll at the April, 2003 meeting of the Minnesota Forest Resources Council). Due to the proliferation of unplanned OHV trails in “managed” State Forests, the term “managed” as a forest classification is generally conceded to be a misnomer.

	<p>of the state's population, as well as the many citizens who live near public land and the proposed OHV trails. This draft plan would contain a much smaller number of trails if the second and third filters were used.</p>
<p>1173</p>	<p>The DNR should not base its decisions as to how many miles of OHV trail to designate on the demands of OHV enthusiasts because those demands are not likely to be met, ever. Nor should the DNR justify OHV trail designation decisions on the argument that designating more miles of trails, or trails in new locations, will stop illegal riding and the proliferation of renegade trails.</p>
<p>1174</p>	<p>V. <u>Extent and manner of OHV recreational use</u></p>
<p>1175</p>	<p>As a group, OHV users represent a small subset of the state's population, and many of those riders seldom ride on public lands, or do so for very limited purposes a few times a year, at most. The most ardent recreational riders are an even smaller subset of that small minority of Minnesota citizens.</p>
	<p>According to DNR figures and the January, 2003 Office of the Legislative Auditor's Program Evaluation Report titled State-Funded Trails for Motorized Recreation (OLA Report), there were over 200,000 ATVs in December, 2004, and 6,300 OHMs, and 1,400 ORVs registered in Minnesota at the end of 2002. OHVs (other than OHMs) used exclusively on private lands need not be registered for public lands use, and so are not counted in these figures. New registrations in 2003 and early 2004 have pushed the ATV numbers up over 200,000. Uses of OHVs on public lands include sport riding, secondary-recreational riding (as in ATV use associated with hunting), and other utilitarian uses. The great preponderance of OHV riding in Minnesota is ATV riding.</p>
	<p>A fairly small minority of the riders accounts for the bulk of all ATV riding. Those who own a registered ATV often own more than one, so 200,000 registered ATVs does not equate to 200,000 households. According to the July, 2001 study prepared for the DNR by John P. Genereux, titled "An OHV Recreation Planning Tool Based on: A Survey of Resource Managers; and A Survey of [OHV] Riders in Minnesota" (hereinafter, "DNR's Genereux Study"), "<u>10% of all ATV owners accounted for 57% of all forest riding on ATVs.... In other words, 60% of the riding was being done by 10,000 ATV riders.</u>" Furthermore, "<u>over one-half of the ATVs registered for recreation in Minnesota are not being used in the [public] forests.</u>" Finally, most of those who do ride in state forests have other places where they could ride: "<u>74% of ATV riders own or rent land where they can ride ATVs and other OHVs.</u>" DNR's Genereux Study, at p. 55.</p>
<p>1176</p>	<p>A super-majority (78%) of Minnesota's 475,000 deer hunters do not use an ATV in any way when hunting, according to a January, 2002 report on a survey conducted for the DNR by Responsive Management, titled, "Minnesota Deer Hunters' Opinions and Attitudes Toward Deer Management" (2002 Deer Hunter Survey), at pp. 15-18. The most common use among those who do use an ATV for hunting is the retrieval of deer from the kill site to the hunter's home or vehicle.</p>
<p>1177</p>	<p>According to best information available, therefore, OHV users of Minnesota public lands are not a monolithic group with identical interests and desires for recreational trails. As a group, OHV users represent a small subset of the state's population, and many of those riders seldom ride on public</p>

² Note that actual station sizes vary from under one hundred square miles to well over 1200 mi² and the official size of a C.O.'s station does not change when vacancies occur. Still, officers do try to cover adjacent empty stations. For simplicity's sake, the calculations here are straight averages, made by dividing total area of the state by the number of available field officers.

³ Restoration costs can dwarf the often-touted economic benefits of OHV recreation. Consider the Flanders Lake incident, one of the few recent instances in which costs of wetland damage have been quantified. There, 1 or 2 trucks driving through a type 3 wetland and in nearby Flanders Lake on the morning of the 2003 duck opener, did damage in just minutes that cost Minnesota approximately \$4,000 to \$6,000 to repair.

⁴ OHV recreation carries economic costs in the form of recreation and other activities that are displaced due to bad experiences caused by OHV interactions. When the Flanders Lake incident occurred, it carried costs beyond the bill for wetlands restoration. The mudders ruined the duck opener for at least two resident duck hunters by harassing them and later threatening them physically when the hunters asked them to go elsewhere. Word spread throughout the state, and the economic damage to the area from the incident, though hard to quantify, may be significant. Even if only two migratory waterfowl hunters choose not to hunt the area again, that means a loss to the area of some portion of \$1,280 (average yearly expenditures for two waterfowlers) that now will be spent elsewhere. Consider also that one state's study found that noise impacts alone, just from jet skis, drove away enough tourists to cause approximately \$1 billion in lost revenue each year, nationally. See Final Report of the New Jersey State Comparative Risk Project, at p. 154.

1177a	<p>lands, or do so for very limited purposes a few times a year, at most. The most ardent recreational riders are a subset of that small subset.</p> <p>The DNR should not elevate OHV user groups above any other group when managing state forests, and should not make the mistake of assuming that all registered OHV owners want what the most ardent OHV club members want. Those who do not ride OHVs vastly outnumber those who do. State forests are owned by all Minnesotans, collectively. All of us have the right to use the state forests, and none have the right to abuse them. All of us have the right to expect the DNR to manage use so that use is consistent with protection of these natural resources for the future.</p>
1178	<p><u>VI. Abusive Riding</u></p> <p><u>“According to this survey, riders neither understand nor appreciate the possible connection between their riding and environmental damage. Respondents think mud, natural water hazards [otherwise known as lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, and vernal pools], and hill climbs are all appropriate uses in the forest....”</u> DNR’s Genereux Study, p. 25.</p>
1179	<p>It is commonly understood that the amount and the severity of the damage OHV users – particularly the recreational riders – cause through their OHV riding activity is entirely out of proportion to their numbers. This incongruity is due in part to the nature of the machines they ride (as will be discussed more extensively, below), but also due to the manner in which they ride.</p>
1180	<p>Some OHV riders are attracted to opportunities to create and drive through mud; to throw dirt, sand, and mud; to climb steep hills; to corner sharply at high rates of speed; to spin their wheels. The stated reason for the attraction of riders to all of these activities is that riders are generally looking for opportunities to “challenge their machines.” The over-arching reason they ride on public lands is because they can find those opportunities on the natural landscape. Riders who fit this description are not riding first and foremost to see or appreciate nature, or to maintain the environmental condition of the public lands on which they ride.</p>
1181	<p>It is difficult to know how many OHV riders break the law while riding, and estimates vary widely. Riders will say emphatically but without offering evidence or any substantiating explanation that “just a few” percent, or frequently, “three percent,” of riders are causing all the trouble. There are two problems with this assertion. First, the few people who have claimed to keep any kind of record of the behavior of riders claim the percentage of those who break the law is much larger. One citizen who has kept notebook records on the OHV ditch riders observed near his home has numbers showing 70% or more of those riding in ditches break at least one law when in plain view. Without knowing what methodology he used it is impossible to say whether it is valid, of course, but at a minimum it is information as sound as the conflicting anecdotal claims offered by the riders themselves. Other sources of information that could be considered are estimates from DNR Conservation Officers (COs). One such estimate offered by recently-retired CO Roger Lueth, in an April 18, 2003 letter to the Legislature on the OHV problem in Minnesota, places the ratio of “irresponsible” to responsible OHV riders at about 75:25, or 75% causing trouble of one kind or another.</p>
1182	<p>One reason for the discrepancy in estimates may be that the riders’ definition of what constitutes “causing trouble” environmentally is not very well-informed, as the DNR’s Genereux Study shows. It would not be surprising if riders’ ideas as to the appropriate uses of their machines are defined, largely, by the OHV advertising they see on television. A second reason is that the design of OHVs makes them inherently environmentally destructive in many locations where they ride. This is discussed in greater depth below. Regardless of exactly what percentage of riders is breaking the law, the damage they cause is exceptionally wide-spread, long-lasting, and severe.</p>
1183	<p>The DNR should avoid making statements as to how many riders are renegades, and focus instead on the damage they do and how to prevent it, as that is the real issue.</p> <p>VII. Environmental and social effects of OHV recreation</p> <p>In important ways, no other recreational activity compares to OHV riding. Because of its inherent differences from all other forms of recreation, OHV recreation requires more intense management oversight – monitoring, maintenance, repair and enforcement – than the DNR devotes to any other form of outdoor recreation.</p>
1184	<p>A. Power and torque</p> <p>No class of recreational activity has ever put as much power at the disposal of the outdoor recreationist as OHV riding. Tractive power and torque are selling points, with manufacturers currently engaged in an “arms race” of sorts, as they compete to make machines faster and more powerful. The consequences of this conferral of power are evident in manufacturers’ commercials, and appear on</p>

	<p>Minnesota’s landscape as rutted wetlands, churned-up streambeds, silt-choked spawning gravels in trout streams, eroded hillsides, compacted soil, and vegetation loss. It cannot be over-emphasized that the sheer power and weight of the machines means that even when ridden responsibly, or at least without intent to cause environmental damage, <u>OHVs carry an inherent capacity to cause damage that is unparalleled in the history of outdoor recreation.</u></p>
<p>1185</p>	<p>B. Distance and speed</p> <p>A second feature of OHV riding is the fact that it allows its practitioners to travel longer distances and cover larger areas than any other form of outdoor recreation. Ardent hikers might cover 10 miles or more in a day’s effort; strong canoeists might cover 30 miles or more when traveling light, with substantial effort and under decent conditions. According to the a DNR’s 2001 Genereux report, an average ATVer, by comparison, likes to cover 30 miles of trail riding in just 2 hours’ worth of riding, and an OHMer likes to cover 40 miles in under 2 hours. <i>Id.</i> at p. 53. I believe the DNR defines a “rider day,” its unit for measuring volume of motorized recreation, as four hours worth of riding, and so a typical OHV “rider day” amounts to over 60 to 80 miles of riding. And some riders do ride farther. With the exception of bicycle touring (on roads), no other sport comes close to these amounts.</p>
<p>1186</p>	<p>C. Multiple effects and affected areas</p> <p>A third feature of OHVs is the size of the area that they affect on the landscape. More accurately, an OHV has multiple effects on the landscape, and each effect is felt over a different-sized area much larger than the 3-to-8-foot wide ribbon of trail over which the OHVs roll. Nearly every effect has a “footprint” on the land that is larger also than similar effects from other forms of outdoor recreation. In other words, while other forms of recreation may share some of the types of effects on the land, the magnitude and combination of those effects is nearly always greater with OHV recreation. Consider some examples:</p>
<p>1187</p>	<p>Sedimentation - OHVs operating illegally near or in a stream, river, or lake, stir up or cause the erosion of sediment, and frequently also introduce the seeds of invasive non-native weeds. Sediment, pollutants such as phosphorus and hydrocarbons, and noxious weed seeds can be transported great distances by water, once they are suspended in that water. The entire area receiving the water-borne sediment, pollutants, and invasive non-native seeds is another area affected by OHVs. The sedimentation effects of OHVs are many levels of magnitude greater than for other forms of non-motorized recreation because recreational OHV operators behave differently than other recreationists when encountering wetlands, streams, and lakes. Whereas hikers, cyclists, canoeists, anglers, hunters, birdwatchers, and other non-motorized recreationists lack both the power and the inclination to destroy wetlands or churn up lakes or streams, recreational OHV riders have the power to do such damage and regularly choose to ride in ways and places that damage the water quality, aquatic vegetation, and sediment structure of wetlands, streams, rivers, ponds, and lakes. While not all riders do environmental damage intentionally, the inclination among recreational OHV riders as a whole to ride in wetlands, streams and lakes, where environmental damage immediately results, is indisputable and is readily acknowledged among riders, land managers, private land owners who have experienced trespass problems, and environmental organizations. Rider advocates typically argue about what percentage of their fellow riders are responsible for such behavior, rather than dispute the regularity of these occurrences. A quick survey of the stories and advertisements on television, in any ATV magazine, and most ATV websites is likely to turn up images and story lines portraying and glorifying these activities. As a result of the behavior, and the innate ability of OHV tires to churn up more sediment than a pair of hiking boots, sediment loads from OHV riding are enormously larger than those generally associated with other forms of recreation. As a consequence, the area affected by the transport of such sediments and water-borne pollution is larger.</p>
<p>1188</p>	<p>Erosion - When OHVs ride over steep slopes or weak soils, the affected area can grow over time. At first it may be just the area where surface vegetation is destroyed and sediment travel begins. Over time, disturbed areas on slopes often grow in a down-slope direction as destabilized soil moves with gravity and precipitation; and spreading upslope as erosion below undercuts and causes the collapse of soil upslope. Depending on the relative weakness of the soil and other local site factors, the area affected by an OHV’s passage can spread and grow over time to cover an area much larger than the tracks initially left by the OHV. The erosion effects of OHVs are inherently likely to be several levels of magnitude greater than those of similar numbers of hikers, cyclists, or skiers, for example, because the OHV without the rider typically weighs a couple hundred pounds (for OHMs), up to 900 lbs (for ATVs), or even several tons (for ORVs); and because that tremendous weight is coupled with</p>

1189	<p>powerful engines, aggressively-treaded tires, and a tendency of operators to gun the engines and spin wheels intentionally.</p> <p>Noise pollution - OHV noise legally may approach 99 decibels at a distance of 20 inches from the muffler, according to the DNR's 2002-03 Recreational Motor Vehicles Regulations, at p. 13. This volume is considerably greater than the typical volume associated with average street vehicles such as a typical car or pick-up truck (i.e., those not intentionally modified with "glass pack" mufflers designed to magnify and make the engine/throttle noise heard at great distances). <u>When revved and running, OHVs can be heard at great distances up to and over two miles.</u> Even if a single OHV could be heard only within a radius of one mile, it still has a "soundshed" – the area where people and wildlife are affected by its noise – of 3.14 square miles (area = πr^2, with the radius = 1 mile). When a single OHV travels 33 miles (the average length of a preferred ride for ATVerS and OHMerS, according to the DNR's Genereux Study) on a trail, in the course of a 2 or 3-hour ride, it affects all the people and wildlife within an area of 69 square miles (33-mile long x 2-mile wide soundshed, plus a semi-circle on each end with a radius of 1 mile). Hikers, cyclists, canoeists, etc., simply do not generate the sustained high-volume noise of an OHV. A moderately noisy hiker might be heard over a distance of 100 yards at most (if talking exceptionally loudly), and thus the entire area affected on a 10-mile day-long hike would be about 1.15 square miles (600-foot wide x 10-mile long soundshed, plus a semi-circle on each end with a radius of 300 feet), or just 1.7% the area affected by an ATV. Because this calculation assumes, too conservatively, that OHVs can be heard only at or within distances of one mile, the actual comparison of soundsheds is, in reality, far more unequal. Hence, scores of non-motorized users could use the same area of state forest in a given day without noise disturbance and possibly without ever knowing the others are present, while a single OHV operator would intrude upon the experience of them all.</p>
1190	<p>Non-native noxious invasive weed spread – OHVs are highly effective vectors for the spread of non-native noxious invasive species. For example, a motor vehicle driven through a few feet of spotted knapweed can pick up 2,000 seeds on the vehicle frame, undercarriage, and any mud that may attach to the vehicle, and will spread 90% of those seeds over the course of a 10-mile drive. The plants germinating from the resulting swath of invasive seed spread will then lead to foreseeable secondary invasive seed spread downwind and/or downstream. In contrast, hikers, cyclists, canoeists and other non-OHV recreationists generally avoid becoming mud-caked and travel shorter distances, and as a result their innate capacity to spread the seeds of noxious non-native invasive weed species is lower than that of OHVerS. Other notable secondary effects non-native noxious invasive species colonization on a site include major decreases in ground water recharge and water quality. Decreased rain or floodwater infiltration leads to increased cross-surface water flows following rain events, increased erosion and transport of suspended sediments into surface waters, and thus decreased water quality. Infestation and formation of monocultures of invasive species like spotted knapweed can increase surface water run-off rates by 56% and suspended solid yields by 192% (Lacey et al. 1991). The cost of controlling noxious non-native invasive weed species in Minnesota is enormous. The bill is paid by taxpayers, counties, private landowners, and the state. There is no doubt that OHV riding increases the number of non-native noxious invasive species in the state and the county, the rate of those species' spread, and hence the monetary and ecological costs of weed spread and control activities, like herbicide spraying and mechanical control.</p>
1191	<p>In sum, the combination of inherent abilities (to do more damage, travel longer distances, and affect larger areas with their various effects) to disturb people and damage the environment make OHVs the most intrusive and inherently destructive form of outdoor recreation yet. For these reasons, and for all the additional reasons elaborated upon in the attached DNR assessment of OHV effects, OHV recreation requires the most intense management oversight – monitoring, maintenance, repair and enforcement – devoted to any form of outdoor recreation.</p>
1192	<p>In addition to the site-level factors that have been considered, such as location of wetlands and unstable soils, the DNR's site-focused trail review process should include the need to forestall the spread of non-native invasive species to areas of the state where they currently are rarely found. This should include: permanently closing to OHVs all trails through sensitive and rare natural communities; closing areas and trails where non-native invasive species are found until they are eradicated; and permanently closing areas and trails that are infested with any highly invasive noxious non-native species that has persistent seed viability in the soil.</p>
1193	<p>Because of OHV recreation's singular status as the most inherently damaging form of</p>

	<p>outdoor recreation, the DNR should maintain high standards for resource protection in its administration and management of OHV recreation on public lands in Minnesota.</p>
1194	<p>OHV recreation requires more intense management oversight – monitoring, maintenance, repair and enforcement – than the DNR devotes to any other form of outdoor recreation.</p>
1195	<p>OHV-related effects and resource damage should be minimized as they occur on the trail, and effects having a tendency to migrate off the trail alignment, such as erosion and non-native invasive species, should be detected through frequent monitoring and addressed before they can leave the trail tread.</p>
1196	<p>When funds are insufficient to conduct desired monitoring, maintenance, repair, or enforcement, designated trails should be temporarily closed until the operational OHV trail inventory has been pared back to the level that can be sustained with available resources.</p>
1197	<p>The DNR staff trained to identify non-native invasive species, as well as other natural resource threats associated with OHV trails, must monitor trails frequently and have authority to order immediate temporary closures.</p>
1198	<p>The above environmental effects, among others, degrade the quality of life and the recreational experiences of many people. The non-motorized majority does not want its recreational experiences, quality of life, or the ecological health of public lands and neighboring private lands to be degraded by these or other effects of OHV recreation. The DNR and its individual Divisions cannot exclude this non-OHV majority from its “clienteles.” All Minnesotans own the state forest lands collectively, and each individual has an equivalent expectation that those lands will be managed to provide him or her with opportunities to recreate. The OHV-enthusiast community shares in these expectations, but everyone’s expectations are limited by the competing needs of other citizens. The social and ecological limits imposed by the amount of wear and tear the land can tolerate without doing widespread or long-term damage to ecological health should be the first and last considerations used by the DNR in providing OHV recreation opportunities.</p>
1199	<p>Equal expectations to an opportunity to recreate, of course, are not the same as the right to dictate how many miles of OHV trail will be provided. The amount of OHV recreation that can reasonably be permitted on public lands is constrained by the hallmarks of OHV recreation itself: severe damage to forest resources and water quality, and social conflicts due to broad popular reaction to that unsightly environmental damage, as well as the intrusiveness of OHV noise over great distances, and the irritating propensity of ATV operators to trespass on private property and to interfere with others’ enjoyment of their public and private lands.</p>
1200	<p>The DNR should manage the state forests in a way that serves all Minnesotans – including the widely diverse non-motorized 90% majority of the state – not just OHV enthusiasts. In addition to limitation by the costs of administering the trails (discussed below), the amount and distribution of OHV trails also should be limited by the DNR’s obligation to provide sufficient room and opportunity in the state forests for the enjoyable recreation of non-OHV users.</p>
1201	<p>To provide just one example, the land area in the state forests that is distant (e.g., more than a mile in most cases) from designated OHV trails should bear some rational relation to the split between motorized and non-motorized recreationists, ATV-using and non-ATV-using deer hunters; etc. <u>What percentage of the State Forests under your plans is more than a mile distant from designated trails? What percentage of those lands are uplands, as opposed to wetlands? How does this split accommodate the majority of state forest users who are non-motorized users?</u></p>
1202	<p>Where particularly sensitive resources, such as state parks and state or national wild and scenic rivers, are involved the buffer should be larger than a mile, as determined by the lay of the land, the ecological and cultural resources at issue, and the type and volume of background noise that would otherwise exist at the boundaries of the sensitive resource.</p>
1203	<p><u>VIII. The costs of providing, managing, monitoring, maintaining, repairing, and enforcing OHV trails far exceed the costs for other trails and recreation.</u></p>
1204	<p>Over at least the past recent years, the DNR has received multiple requests from members of the Motorized Trail Task Force, citizens, and legislators, to show the costs of building, managing, monitoring, maintaining, repairing, and enforcing OHV trails. The DNR has been unable, so far, to document these costs in any concrete way.</p>
1205	<p>A. Maintenance, monitoring, and repair costs</p>
1206	<p>The best estimate yet provided for maintenance costs was for a hardened-surface ATV trail in</p>
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1213a	<p>the south-eastern corner of the State. Those figures were provided by the DNR to an individual named Tom McMillan, and showed that yearly maintenance totaled just over \$1,100 per mile of trail. Similar figures were quoted to the Motorized Trail Task Force by DNR Trails and Waterways staff in answer to questioning by Task Force Member Jerry Bahls. DNR's Trails and Waterways staff has at various other times estimated costs at closer to \$50 to \$150/mile, but has not supported these estimates with figures or documentation similar to the documentation provided in response to state Data Practices Act requests showing costs of \$1,100/mile/year.</p> <p>The DNR's draft plans should not propose designating OHV trails in an amount that exceeds the Department's resources and ability to monitor regularly, maintain, and repair promptly those trails in a manner that avoids most environmental damage resulting from legal use of the trails, and contains that damage to the trail alignment. There should be a specific stated standard for the frequency with which the DNR staff conduct monitoring rides; specific expectations for how quickly problems are to be fixed after being identified; and standards for the temporary, indefinite, and permanent closure of designated trails.</p>
1213b	<p>Appropriately designed trails that cater to less destructive forms of recreation activities carry monitoring, maintenance, and repair costs that are just a fraction of those for OHV trails. Monitoring need not be as frequent because trails withstand the lower impact of these lighter forms of recreation for longer periods of time. Less wear and tear per unit time translates into much lower maintenance and repair costs. And practitioners of other forms of recreational trail use, unlike OHV riding, are far more likely to stay on the trails provided. Better behavior combined with less innate power to damage soil, vegetation, quietude, etc., equates to far less damage off-trail, and thus far lower costs for repair illegal off-trail traffic.</p>
1213c	<p>In addition to tracking the full costs of OHV trails, the DNR should track the costs of other types of trails, as well, including canoe routes and non-motorized trails such as the North Country Trail.</p>
1214	<p>B. Enforcement costs</p> <p>Enforcement needs and costs are higher for OHV forest trails than for any other kind of recreation. There are many reasons for this. As discussed above, the capacity of an OHV to damage forest resources (vegetation, soil, water, wildlife, recreational experiences of other users, etc.) is greater than that of any other type of recreation. Consequently, in terms of preventing natural resource damage, it is more important to prevent OHV violations (e.g., mudding or wetland damage), than non-OHV violations. Yet deterring OHV violations is very difficult because some of the same qualities that make them so damaging also make OHVs more difficult to detect and catch in the act. Due to their speed and all-terrain travel abilities, and the shorter sight-distances in forest cover, detecting and catching OHV violators is more difficult than detecting or catching other violators who move more slowly (hikers, bikers, canoeists), or are more trail-bound (bikes, snowmobiles, boats), or operate where they are more visible (boaters, anglers). In short, deterrence is both more important to achieve and more difficult to achieve in OHV recreation than in any other setting.</p>
1214a	<p>The upshot is that any level of enforcement effort that might have been tolerable in a pre-OHV world, would no longer suffice in the current OHV-affected environment. Minnesota is currently drastically under-enforced by any measure:</p> <p><i>Enforcement's ranks at historic low:</i> At full complement (i.e., if all patrol stations were staffed with an officer), the DNR would have 153 Conservation Officers. Currently, the Enforcement Division has roughly 130 field officers. This is less law enforcement than Minnesota had in 1945. An anticipated 2005 academy, if funded, would produce another 18 officers, yet continued retirements will still keep the Enforcement Division below the full complement and below 1945 levels.</p>
1214b	<p><i>Population served has doubled:</i> Since 1945, Minnesota's population has grown from 2.54 million to 5.04 million people.</p>
1214c	<p><i>Duties have increased:</i> The range of duties assigned to Conservation Officers has increased dramatically, to include such things as jet skis, snowmobiles, OHVs, and wetlands laws enforcement, on top of the traditional game warden duties.</p>
1214d	<p><i>Deterrence dropping off?:</i> Doubling the number of people and the assigned enforcement duties makes a C.O.'s job more difficult in many ways. First, part of an officer's effectiveness is based on the extent to which he or she is known by the people in his or her patrol area (station). Time constraints and increased duties may prevent officers from doubling their close personal contacts, meaning they may not be as well-informed about happenings in their stations as they might once have been. Second,</p>

	<p>enforcement effectiveness depends on deterrence, which is related to potential violators' perception of the risk of getting caught. When there are twice as many people in the forest or on a lake, duties increase, but the number of officers decreases instead of doubling, the likelihood of being contacted by an officer drops in half (at least). Either the officer works the same number of lakes in a given day and cuts the percentage of anglers contacted, or the officer continues to contact the same percentage of anglers on a lake by increasing the number of anglers contacted, and halves the number of lakes visited. Either way, the deterrent effect drops when the actual chance of being contacted by a C.O. is cut in half.</p>
<p>1214e</p>	<p><i>Size of the average C.O.'s station:</i> Minnesota's land area is 79,610 mi². Assuming there are 135 C.O.s in the field, each officer will have an average of 590 mi² to patrol.² Minnesota compares poorly with Wisconsin in this measure. Wisconsin has 5.4 million people, a land area of 54,310 mi², and 153 officers when at full complement (in February, 2004 there were 8 vacancies). Wisconsin's average C.O. station size is therefore 375 mi² (at current enforcement strength of 145 officers). The average Minnesota C.O. has a station that is 215 mi² larger, and thus each square mile of Minnesota is under-enforced by 57%, compared to Wisconsin. Even adjusting for Wisconsin's slightly (8%) larger population, Minnesota's land area is 47% under-enforced.</p>
<p>1214f</p>	<p>More Conservation Officers must be hired, and more of each officer's time should be devoted to activities that deter and catch OHV violators. This is because the cost of effective enforcement is dwarfed by the costs – including aesthetic, ecological, and fiscal costs – of insufficient enforcement. Whether or not more C.O.s are hired, the DNR's draft plans should not propose designating OHV trails in an amount, or in a distribution pattern in the state forests and in the C.O.'s district, that exceeds the DNR's resources and ability to patrol those trails frequently enough to deter violators.</p>
<p>1214g</p>	<p>Enforcement's only sensory advantage when working OHVs, compared to other natural resources and recreation enforcement work, is auditory. OHVs can be heard at distances of several miles, and a trained ear can distinguish between different types of motor vehicles. As a result, if designated trails are clustered in one part of the forest and absent from other parts, and if the state forest is sufficiently large, then C.O.s may be able to rely to a great extent on their sense of hearing to determine whether OHV violations may be taking place. Thus if the designated OHV trail plan for a state forest is designed to permit it, the C.O.'s ability to rely on hearing as a first indicator of potential violations expands the C.O.'s effective detection distance or enforcement radius to perhaps a mile or more. If, on the other hand, the layout of state forest land ownership does not permit clustering of trails in one or more areas, and creation of large areas of public ownership without designated trails in other areas, the C.O.'s effective enforcement radius shrinks to line-of-sight. In forested cover, that distance is measured in tens of feet or yards.</p> <p>The DNR should get the most from its available and foreseeable C.O. enforcement resources by clustering trails in the state forests to the greatest extent possible, in order to maximize the amount of the C.O.'s station where his or her effective enforcement radius is greatest. The DNR should minimize the dispersal of trails throughout the state forests, because it tends to reduce the effective enforcement area of the DNR's officers, and thus leads to higher likelihood of renegade riding and resource damage going undeterred and undetected.</p>
<p>1215</p>	<p><u>IX. Other monetary and non-monetary costs of OHV trails: environmental damage; unsatisfying recreational experiences for the non-motorized majority; and economic losses</u></p> <p>Aesthetic costs include damage to the enduring values and qualities that define Minnesota's outdoor-oriented quality of life. These values and qualities include scenic beauty, a clean environment, absence of sensory irritants, etc. These same values and qualities happen to influence where people choose to recreate, live, and retire, and so are tightly tied, socially, to fiscal costs of resource damage.</p>
<p>1216</p>	<p>Even if damage in a Wildlife Management Area or state forest goes unnoticed and unrepaired (no money is spent to fix it), that natural resource damage persists, and still exacts its price from the state and local economies by affecting the health, stability, and diversity of Minnesota's water, forests, and wildlife populations. Consider the cumulative effect of multiple ATVs being driven back to waterfowl respite lakes. Even if the violations go unnoticed, they still deprive waterfowl of refuge and respite habitat, and so it leads to increased stress and decreased vigor in reproducing ducks. In the big-picture this puts an additional downward pressure on duck populations. It becomes an additional stress that ducks and other wildlife must overcome (through ideal weather conditions, more expensive wetland restorations, etc.), if the populations are to be maintained and increased.</p> <p>When natural resource damage is noticed and corrective action is taken, however, the bill to</p>

	<p>repair damage is generally higher than the cost of prevention through effective law enforcement. It is always easier, cheaper, and less painful to avoid a disaster than to clean up after one. In addition to ecological restoration costs,³ the costs of natural resource damage include lost tourism and tourism-associated economic activity due to visitors' bad experiences with OHV noise and unpleasant environmental damage.⁴</p>
<p>1217</p>	<p>Secondary costs also are generated by environmental degradation that goes un-redressed. Damage to water quality and wildlife habitat in wetlands, streams, ponds, and lakes, for example, hurts migratory waterfowl and fish populations. Migratory waterfowl hunting generates \$251 million, and fishing generates more than \$2.8 billion in economic activity in Minnesota each year, according to data from the Outdoor Heritage Education Center. Degradation of habitat – which supports traditional outdoor recreational activities like hunting and fishing – carries the serious risk of major damage to the most sustainable (and arguably the most culturally significant) element of Minnesota's economy. Investment in enforcement is necessary to prevent these aesthetic and fiscal costs.</p>
<p>1218</p>	<p><u>X. Informal agreements with OHV clubs cannot be counted on to provide problem-free continuous and effective service to the state.</u></p>
<p>1219</p>	<p>ATV and other organized riding clubs always attempt to downplay the cost to governmental units of trail construction, maintenance, monitoring, repair, and enforcement. They do so with assurances that informal arrangements will be made to provide maintenance and repair, monitoring, and even self-enforcement work. MCEA advises against relying on these assurances for several reasons. First, the experience with snowmobile trails is that clubs do sometimes back out of commitments to monitor and maintain trails. Second, clubs may perform inadequate or untimely work, and may even violate federal and state law while doing their work (<i>see</i> May 17, 2002 letter from Cass County Environmental Services Wetland Act Administrator to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, attached). Third, clubs resist entering into formal agreements. For example, the 2003 OHV law directs the DNR to enter into <i>informal</i> agreements with motorized clubs, a change that was made to the legislation – as MCEA understands it – at the insistence of the OHV lobby. The insistence on agreements being informal belies the value of the clubs' assurances that they will provide long-term, consistent, effective, and high-quality services at significant cost-savings. These informal agreements cannot be counted on to provide problem-free continuous and effective service to the state or the DNR, and thus trail projects will always necessitate DNR expenditures at some level to monitor, or step in and conduct (or undo) work done by private clubs and individuals.</p>
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<p>1223</p>	<p>In the interests of the public land and wildlife, and the full citizenry of the state, the DNR should not create motorized recreational trails in an amount or distribution that exceeds its own abilities to monitor, maintain, and enforce.</p>
<p>1224</p>	<p><u>XI. Consequences of designating too much: costs exceed means.</u></p>
<p>1225</p>	<p>MCEA suggests the draft OHV trail designation plans now up for comment should be improved, and that if certain improvements are not made, then the costs of managing OHV recreational activity at an appropriate standard of excellence are likely to become, if they are not already, unaffordable. The state, by attempting to satisfy OHV riders, will have taken on obligations and costs that it cannot afford to meet. Actual availability and use of maintenance, repair, and enforcement resources at levels necessary for effective maintenance, repair, and enforcement is necessary to avoid environmental destruction on state forests and neighboring lands.</p>
<p>1226</p>	<p>If the state fails to meet the financial costs of providing the monitoring, maintenance, repair, and enforcement, then other less damaging forms of outdoor recreation, as well as the general quality of life and the environment, will suffer. The state cannot responsibly create a "Cadillac" OHV trail system on a budget only big enough for a Geo Metro. Doing the job on-the-cheap will not keep the promise of providing OHV riding opportunities while vigorously protecting the environment. OHV trail miles should not be provided, except in conjunction with environmental protection, law and order, and provision for all the non-motorized users, as well.</p>
<p>1227</p>	<p><u>XII. Do not sacrifice natural resources or quality of life and recreation in order to create a completely inter-connected state-wide system of OHV trails</u></p>
<p>1228</p>	<p>The assertion that Minnesota should provide OHV enthusiasts with interconnected trail systems across the state because ATV owners can't afford to trailer their machines to designated trails is false. ATVs are \$5,000 to \$8,500 machines. Those who own them certainly can afford to trailer them. Most people who want to recreate in other ways (swimming, biking, cross-country skiing, camping) have to travel first in order to do so. Machines as inherently destructive as ATVs should not be treated</p>
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1230	preferentially in comparison with these other forms of physical recreation. The 2003 state OHV law does not stipulate to the creation of regional or state-wide interconnecting trail systems for OHVs. The DNR should not allow the continued sacrifice of non-motorized recreational opportunities and natural resources in the effort to create interconnected regional or state-wide trail networks.
1231	<p>XIII. Badoura State Forest</p> <p>No trails should be designated in the Badoura State Forest. The DNR should recommend the Badoura more state forests for reclassification to closed.</p>
1232	<p>XIV. Paul Bunyan State Forest</p> <p>No ORV trails should be designated in the PBSF. ORV trails are not required by law, they are not sustainable, and they should not be designated. The proposed designation of ORV trails in the PBSF should be removed.</p>
1233	All OHV trails proposed for designation should be pulled back to within the already-substantial footprint of the Martineau Trail system. The area team has all the authority necessary to simply decline to designate any roads or trails for OHV designation outside the Martineau Trail system footprint. Doing so will allow the forest to have some areas where other uses prevail, and can be enjoyed with less likelihood of disturbance from OHVs. It will also make the Enforcement Division staff responsible for enforcing state game and natural resource laws much more effective, for reasons discussed above.
1234	All existing and proposed OHV trails currently shown within the boundaries of the game refuges, and prairie chicken and sandhill crane special management areas should be removed.
1235	Remote little trail segments that dead-end or loop in state-managed lands outside the statutory boundaries of the PBSF in Hubbard County should not be designated. They are too remote and widely distributed to be effectively monitored and maintained. Remove them from the list of designation proposals.
1236	Trails within a 2-mile buffer around the Itasca State Park should not be designated for OHVs. OHVs can be heard a great distance and have a proven record of going off-trail. The noise and off-trail negative effects associated with designated OHV trails should be kept at least 2 miles from Itasca State Park, which is a jewel, if not the crown jewel in Minnesota's State Park system.
1236a	No trails that go up/down along the fall line of hills should be designated. As Troy Scott Parker and others have amply informed the DNR, such lay-outs of trails make erosion a foregone conclusion. Such trails do and will damage sensitive natural resources, such as hillsides, stream and river and lake water quality, wetlands, and soils.
1236b	Trails existing or proposed for OHV designation within a 2-mile buffer of the North Country Trail (NCT) should be greatly reduced, and should be eliminated within a 1- mile buffer. OHVs should be trailered from locations to the south of the NCT to areas north of the NCT for access to the designated OHV trails within the footprint of the Martineau trail system.
1236c	All trails proposed for OHV designation should be videotaped along their entire length, and the digital record of the rides during which the record is made should be indexed according to the numbered trail segments that appear on the DNR's maps of the PBSF. The record should be stored for later comparison of future conditions with the conditions as they exist in 2005. This record will allow the DNR to show that designating OHV trails, as it proposes, actually improves the condition of the public lands and natural resources.
1236d	Trails should not be proposed in areas with weak soils subject to erosion. The DNR should publicize its standards regarding soil qualities and types appropriate for sustaining the effects of OHV riding.
1236e	OHV trails should not be designated within 1 mile of designated walking trails other than the NCT.
1236f	DNR should close certain forest roads to OHV use. Roads outside the footprint of the Martineau Trail system should be posted closed to OHV use in order to protect public safety and natural resources. The DNR has statutory authority to do so.
1236g	DNR should not be endorsing the designation of OHV trails on county lands. There is no language in the 2003 OHV law that requires the DNR to do so, and no reference to county lands <i>except</i> for the county-administered lands within statutory state forest boundaries.
1236h	The geological record of the formation of this part of Minnesota existing in the moraines and eskers and outwash plains and other features found in the PBSF are of significant historical significance. MCEA has submitted on several occasions a thick sheaf of documents for inclusion in the
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<p>1236j</p> <p>1236k</p> <p>1236l</p> <p>1236m</p> <p>1236n</p>	<p>record. MCEA submitted at least three copies of these documents in comments on the Pillsbury, Foothills, Chengwatana, St. Croix, Nemadji, General C. C. Andrews, Whiteface River, Fond du Lac, Solana, and Wealthwood State Forests. MCEA considers and assumes these comments to be within the possession of the DNR, and available to you for your review. MCEA hereby incorporates those documents by reference into this comment letter.</p> <p>The locations of all signs, gates, berms, and other passive enforcement/management tools should be GPSed by the DNR and stored in a readily-accessible GIS layer by the DNR.</p> <p>Important wildlife areas not already mentioned on the PBSF should be insulated from OHV use by not designating OHV trails within 1/2 mile of such areas.</p> <p>Streams, wetlands, lakes, and rivers should be protected by not designating OHV routes within eyesight (during the leaf-off conditions) of such features.</p> <p>Some trails proposed for designation for OHVs penetrate into the heart of areas that otherwise have few trails. Such trail segments should be eliminated from the designation proposal in order to create more areas where hunters, hikers, bikers, campers, birdwatchers, and others who would like to escape the effects and influences of OHVs can do so.</p> <p>XV. Additional information attached</p> <p>Attending this letter, and sent via U.S. Mail, will be several maps and photographs, as well as additional documents that may be helpful sources of information, including a review of the effects of recreation on wildlife, compiled by the Montana Chapter of the Wildlife Society.</p> <p>XIX. Conclusion</p> <p>This completes MCEA's comments on the draft trail plans for the PBSF/Hubbard County Plan.</p>
<p>1237</p> <p>1238</p> <p>1239</p> <p>1240</p> <p>1241</p>	<p>274. Norton, Matt #2</p> <p>I thought you might like to read an LTE - perhaps you've already seen it. It is pasted at bottom. FYI, as I'm sure you know, my disappointment with the PBSF plan, as publicly released, goes far beyond what I felt was productive to share at the public hearing. I was pleased that the comments were as thoroughly negative on several points in the proposed plan (connector trails, expanding designated trails beyond the footprint of the quite sizeable OHM network, truck trails) as they were. By my tally, the anti-plan:pro-plan ratio of comments ran about 3:1 or more, and was heavily leavened with people representing an array of organizations and townships, too. I don't remember the Hubbard County Coalition of Lakes Associations speaking, but I know they already have sent DNR a letter condemning many of the same aspects of the plan listed above.</p> <p>I also thought that it was telling that the motorized partisans are still playing the same theme-song, to wit: the solution is always to give more trails and then just wait for the bad behavior to fade away. There's nothing new or true in this mantra, despite the fact that it seems to be firmly believed by some of those who speak it. I know the Department knows it is not that simple, but your plans have to reflect that fact. There's no credit left for the DNR to draw on, otherwise, at this point. We're all still waiting to hear how the other components (monitoring, maintenance, enforcement) are going to be guaranteed and paid for. These questions were asked 2.5 years ago.... Trails without sufficient amounts of these components are unsustainable, and everyone knows it.</p> <p>Trails with layouts that cover the entire forest like a hairnet, and that leave the non-motorized majority of the population with plenty of space free from OHVs are not fair, and everyone knows that, too. I really hope that the quality (not to the exclusion of quantity) of the comments means something. I hope that the letter to the editor below means something.</p> <p>And what about the wildlife? If playing it conservative with the amounts and densities of trails and motorized routes, in order to err on the side of the resource, isn't in the works, then when will a forest review and reclassification plan call for the necessary funds to do the necessary research on furbearer and other wildlife species' ability to tolerate motorized use? There could and should be a statement in these plans stating that research (literature review and/or field work here in Minnesota) is absolutely necessary before the full trail proposal in these plans is instituted, and that until that research and the funding necessary for it, is conducted and provided, only a bare fraction of the full trail proposal will be signed and designated in the current process. We can't just wing it with wildlife if we're going to learn something from this whole process and be able to take scientifically-informed corrective action in the future.</p> <p>I sincerely hope that the PBSF plan is revised, massively, to avoid the DNR's putting its</p>

<p>1242</p>	<p>stamp of institutional approval on what is, by any measure I can think of, currently a plan that invites disaster. Will the revision right the past and continuing wrongs (to the resource and regular local people), or will it aim to make the situation, with a little luck, just a lesser disaster?</p> <p>Some people have lost any faith that the DNR will produce the much-revised, much better plan that needs to come out of this review. I m still holding my breath, and am telling others that they should, too. My faith is at stake. Please don t let me down.</p> <p>(attached article)</p> <p>ATV groups do not police their own It is a good sign to have many people expressing their views on the ATV issue. My comments are long overdue, mostly because we do not want to be enemies with anybody. According to an article in the paper, the writer feels all one has to do is talk gently to these people that are destroying our environment and our lives not so, we've tried this! As one writer said, Soon you'll have a hundred of these ATVs going past your house.! Well, we already have and will possibly have more. The dust is so thick we cannot have a single weekend to be outside. You would be embarrassed to invite guests. We cannot open our windows or the doors. The noise level is deafening and harmful to our ears. The dishes rattle in the cupboards as they travel over the washboard road they have created. At my husband's pulmonary function exam, he found the air we are breathing is harmful. One thing the doctor strongly advised is to avoid any exposure to the dust. During the activities, it would seem there are hundreds of cars, campers, trailers, RVs and 5th wheels on our road. We have to shut ourselves in. Then, when they leave to head back to wherever, it starts all over again. They promised to put up "slow" signs when needed; they didn't appear or the quality of the sign was not such that you could view it at their fast speed.</p> <p>How ridiculous can their attitude be when they send you an arrangement of flowers with a dustpan in it - with a note, 'Now you can pick up the dust?'</p> <p>Then there was a time we were told we should get a motel in Brainerd while a rally was being held. The peace and quiet of the country is no more. Our lives and the lives of many, many others are being harassed and disrupted, as well as the mental anguish we live with. We want a healthy environment. We want respect.</p> <p>Emeline Cook Akeley</p>
<p>1243 1243a 1244 1245</p>	<p>275. Novak, Terry</p> <p>I am writing to comment on the proposed reclassification of the Paul Bunyon and Badoura State Forests. I strongly agree with going to a Limited (versus Managed) designation. Over the last 15 years I have seen steadily increasing motorized (and non motorized) use of the PBSF. Trails open to motorized vehicles are severely eroding in places and the current level of use is not sustainable.</p> <p>I very strongly disagree with designating 9 miles of trail for 4 x 4 (mudder) trucks. The slopes are too steep and the soils too fragile. I have toured Spider Lake - it's a disgrace. I think the same thing would happen here.</p> <p>I would also like to see motorized recreation confined to an area east of Spur 2. As proposed, almost the entire forest is webbed with trails. We need quiet areas also. I am concerned that the trail locations were user developed and may need relocating. With this comment, there needs to be high levels of enforcement and maintenance that aren't currently in place.</p>
<p>1246 1247 1248</p>	<p>276. Oberg, Margaret</p> <p>Please when making final decisions about OHV trails that OHV owners registration put \$700,000. into state education and enforcement in 2004, and will be as much or more in 2005. Local clubs "all over the state" are working to educate riders on responsibility and safety. There is just way to much space dedicated to non motorized recreation and not near enough to persons who don't have the time to spend on a leisurely hikes and skiing "not to mention people with disabilities who can not enjoy our forests with out motorized help" Contrary to common beliefs that all OHV operators are rowdy, beer drinking, irresponsible slobs that are to lazy to hike or ski. I myself have a chronic heart condition that prevents me from hiking in rough terrain. I am limited to slow walks on smooth surfaces and not for very long distances.I was born here in Cook county and love going into the woods to see nature . I could not do this with out the younger generations, And their OHVs. MY wish is for many more trails and further into the forests where it is so quiet . except for birds, wind, and a squirrel now and then. To just sit and observe it all. The newer machines are very quiet at times you can not hear</p>

	<p>them over the wind and forest noises. This is very much to my liking . I don't like very loud machines of any kind.</p>
1249	<p>277. O'Brien, Tom & Maryann</p> <p>I am a 4X4 truck owner, and I would like to see more trails in the above area for our vehicles. There is no reason why 4X4 owners should not be considered every bit as capable of showing respect for their surroundings and keeping the forest pristine as any other user group. We are as concerned in preserving the forest as a resource for our children and grandchildren to enjoy as any other Minnesota citizens. We should be able to use the forest for enjoyment just as other motorized sport aficionados are allowed to do. Please consider this when you are making your decisions about this forest.</p>
1250	<p>278. O'Brien, Tom</p> <p>I'm contacting you in regards to the Paul Bunyan Forest Plan, and that I support motorized vehicle recreation opportunities in the Paul Bunyan Forest. I am a member of the Midwest 4 Wheel Drive Association, the Minnesota Four Wheel Drive association and The Minnesota Swamp Bucks 4x4 Club.</p>
1251	<p>I would like to see the roads and trails open unless marked closed, as opposed to closed unless specifically marked as open to OHV's. The ATV's have a significant amount of trails and an opportunity for the OHV's to have a place to trail ride like them would be appreciated.</p>
1252	<p>279. Ohm, Richard</p> <p>I must applaud the hard work put in by all the individuals involved with the reclassification of forest road and trail designation in Hubbard County. I especially applaud the collaborated effort of Hubbard County and the MN DNR.</p>
1253	<p>I am an outdoor enthusiast who enjoys all aspects of outdoor activities. I thoroughly enjoy snowmobiling, ATVing, and hunting. In the last year I have: bicycled the Heartland and Itasca Park, cross-county skied Soaring Eagles, and walked through many acres of public lands during the hunting season.</p>
1254	<p>As I have reviewed the Public Draft and viewed the maps posted for ATV trails in Hubbard county I do have some concerns:</p>
1255	<p>1.. It appears not all trails were inventoried, as were supposedly done. Trails I currently ride my ATV do not appear on any maps. What will happen to these trails?</p>
1256	<p>2.. I have not heard anyone address the future of new trails that will be developed for logging purposes on these public lands.</p>
1257	<p>3.. Is it the best interest of the environment to allow many of the closed spur trails to grow over? This will no longer allow bicycling, horseback and many novice hikers. Will this create a more significant fire danger in these areas that will no longer be accessible?</p>
1258	<p>4.. I feel the current proposed ATV trails represent a very small percent of the available public land. I do believe the current proposal is an excellent starting point. We need to have the connecting trails that link specific riding areas together. I think the trails will have to be evaluated as more people enter in to the sport of ATVing. I do believe it is imperative that something is done to bring a viable trail system together for Hubbard County in the immediate future.</p>
1259	<p>In closing I believe the current proposal is a beginning that addresses the needs of many outdoor users of public lands. I hope this plan will allow for future changes to the forest road and trail designation. As we know public lands and users are continuously changing. We need to have a plan that allows for these changes. I believe there is a need for additional enforcement of these new rules in all aspects of public land. We have a beautiful natural resource (public lands) that has to be shared for everyone not kept secretly for a small group of people.</p>
1260	<p>280. Ohm, Teresa</p> <p>I am replying to the forest reclassification of Hubbard County forests and land from managed to limited. The effort put into establishing a plan that would work well for all interest groups involved is greatly appreciated. I am a ATV enthusiast as well as snowmobiling and just enjoying the outdoors.</p> <p>In the plan presented, it is unclear about the undesignated trails. If these trails are completely left unmaintained, signed, and mapped they will grow back and no longer exist. This would be fine for some of these trails, but I worry about eliminating all of them due to the fact that they act as access as well as fire breaks in case of forest fire outbreaks. These trails also benefit the wildlife as trails</p>

<p>1261</p> <p>1262</p> <p>1263</p> <p>1264</p> <p>1265</p> <p>1266</p> <p>1267</p> <p>1268</p> <p>1269</p> <p>1270</p> <p>1271</p>	<p>especially when used in the winter as I have seen how the deer and other wildlife are able to get around easier on a trail then going through the woods in deep snow. In the future, these undesignated trails would be great opportunities for trail expansion as well as trails that will continue to be built due to the logging industry.</p> <p>I have been reading and hearing a lot of negative comments about recreationalists and how this plan proposes too many trails for motorized users. I believe that motorized users need ample miles of trail in order to limit the impact of usage. If the trail system is designed for the amount of use it will be easier to maintain since the impact is spread out over the trails. This plan is allowing the horseback riders and hikers free reign of the forests and county land. Since they are allowed on every trail and road they have full access to the forest yet they still believe that the plan is allowing for too much motorized use. I am all for a multi-use system, but do believe that some trails should be designated just for motorized as a safety factor. Another issue with multi-use is if the trail is maintained by ATV's for ATV use it should continue to stay that way and not be taken away in the future by the non-motorized users that feel the trail is being damaged by the ATV use. The other concern I have is about the season on the ATV trails. I agree that not every trail should be open year around, but I think your missing a tourism opportunity if some trails are not designated year around. In the no snow months there isn't a lot of other opportunities for the motorized user groups to come to the area. Also the bad winters have led people to sell their snowmobiles and buy ATVs to be run year around. Closing a trail due to conditions is fine, but look at leaving some winter riding experiences. In the future I am concerned about Co. Rd. 89 and Co. Rd. 4 not being a designated route the roadway (portions are designated). I have heard of county roadway bans for roads not in the designated system. If these bans come into place in the future without Co. Rd. 4 designated access into Park Rapids for area hotels, gas stations, and restaurants is very limited. Co. Rd. 89 portion that is not designated allows for business and residential access also.</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time in putting together a trail system that is a great beginning, but I hope will allow for change in the future. Expansion of the system will be needed if you want to continue to keep impact to the system at a minimum.</p>
<p>1272</p> <p>1273</p> <p>1273a</p>	<p>281. Olander, Alan</p> <p>As a life long resident of Hubbard County and someone whose home borders the Paul Bunyan State Forest, I am very concerned about the ORV trail system being proposed. As a boy, I spent many days in the forests and on our lakes observing and learning from the natural wonders I saw. As the years have crept by, I have increasingly seen the pressures on our forests and lakes, and the negative effects this pressure has caused.</p> <p>I believe the activities that we should be promoting in our forest lands are those that cause the least amount of disturbance to the forest itself and the wildlife that inhabit it. Birding, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, camping, wildlife watching, to name a few, are environmentally friendly, bring money to the area, require very little in the way of regulation and enforcement, and, I believe, are the future of tourism in our area. The expansion of ORV activities will never allow this "eco-tourism" to happen.</p> <p>I'm sure the DNR is under great pressure by ORV manufacturers and organizations to decide in favor of their demands. However, our forests are just that, forests, not mechanized vehicle courses. The DNR should be deciding in favor of the forests, wildlife, and the activities that fit most closely with nature.</p>
<p>1274</p> <p>1275</p>	<p>282. Olander, Joel J.</p> <p>I am adamantly against opening the forest to any truck trails. I believe it would be an environmental detriment to the park. Please leave these truck trails to abandoned gravel pits.</p> <p>It is my understanding that the planning team originally recommended no truck trails due to environmental concerns. It was only after lobbying by motorized vehicle groups that the plan was revised. This is no way to run a department. The DNR continues to disregard its mission of maintaining and promoting our state's natural resources.</p>
<p>1276</p>	<p>283. Olsen, DZ</p> <p>Paul Bunyan is one of the lovely places that I'd love to bring my family. I have a road registered stock land rover Discovery with new tires that has a lovely time on the trails in the forest. My 4-year old daughter has enjoyed the "funny turning" feeling from her car seat and my 2-year old</p>

	<p>boy sings a little song "going for a ride in a rover." I'd sure like to show them Paul Bunyan and camp in that beautiful forest.</p>
<p>1277</p> <p>1278</p>	<p>284. Olsen, Garrick</p> <p>I have only recently gotten in to the idea of having my family and me take a trip into the woods with a Land Rover. This has mostly been because my 1960 Land Rover restoration has not been mobile under its own power until recently.</p> <p>Just this spring, we got a 1996 Discovery. This is a hoidy-toidy type of European SUV that I'm NOT willing to drown in a swamp or roll over. I wouldn't do that to the restoration mentioned above after 6 years of work, either! However, it is really fun to bounce around in the woods on Forest Trails and up hills. I still giggle when I remember my 4 yr old, Grace, saying, "That makes my tummy feel funny," after we crested a ridge through a dense pine forest. That was a great trip with my family in The Forests. I look forward to trips when we can drive in deeply, camp, and continue the next day. I want to immerse my family in the remoteness of nature that The Forests provide.</p> <p>I believe in the Tread Lightly principles (http://www.treadlightly.org) where a slipping wheel that makes a track is a failure of driver or vehicle and that trucks should only be driven on an existing trail. I would really like to maintain the option of recreation in the forests in our Land Rovers for me and my family. I'd like to have this protection for recreation in place for my daughter when she and I build up a 109 Station Wagon from the mid 60's, too. I'm hoping to start this project with her in 2015.</p>
<p>1279</p>	<p>285. Olson, Tedd</p> <p>As an avid, responsible, environmentally respectful off roader, I highly disagree with the current proposal for the Paul Bunyan State Forest. As a BOD position holder with the Minnesota Toy x 4's, I encourage you to get an insight as to our activities, methods, use, etc. You may have a gross misconception as to what our sport entails.</p>
<p>1280</p> <p>1281</p> <p>1282</p> <p>1283</p> <p>1284</p> <p>1284a</p>	<p>286. Olson, Tim & Barbara</p> <p>We are NOT in favor of off-road vehicle trail development in the Paul Bunyan State Forest for the following reasons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Allowing off road trails in the forest will set a precedence for similar development in other state forests. --Experience with these trails has proven to be inappropriate use of forest land, i.e. Forest Hills State Forest closure of vehicle trail. <p>Let's learn from our mistakes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Allowing this type of trail lends to mis-use of area trails and land. --Vehicle forest trails disrupt the natural environment and wildlife habitat. --This appears to be a "special interest" project and not in the interest of general population.
<p>1285</p> <p>1286</p> <p>1287</p>	<p>287. Opheim, Ernie</p> <p>The current OHV plan for the Paul Bunyan State Forest is again putting the carriage before the horse. There is no way the DNR should even begin to think of approval of a plan that has almost no accountability for damages done to public and private property. The damage caused is too widespread to attribute it to A few bad apples. as Ray Bohn, Nels Kramer, the Eischens and the rest of the OHV advocates would lead us to believe.</p> <p>The assertion that ATV s rarely travel over 5 MPH is preposterous! Sen. Hackbarth s assurance of self-policing is nothing more than an empty promise! These reasons alone are precisely why we find ourselves embroiled in trying, not to protect our civil rights, but also the environment. Their oft repeated claims that educational classes will bring an end to the outlaw riders is ridiculous. Statistics show that it is not the younger drivers, who must take a test to attain a license to operate an ATV, but by and large, the most frequently ticketed are adult operators who are not required to take a test of any kind!</p> <p>The plan calls for connecting trails mainly via ditch travel. Remember, ditches are an integral part of our state, county and township road systems. A large share of your highway tax dollars is dedicated to the design and construction of ditches. The ditches are being ruined and no one is being held responsible! We pay for it with our highway taxes! Tax money that could be put to much better use.</p>

<p>1287a</p>	<p>Realistically, connecting trails translates into connecting bars via ditch trails. Will the DNR beheld accountable for impaired drivers? Hardly! Those hospital and funeral expenses will be left for the rest of us to pay for through higher insurance rates. Remember, Dick Kimball, a DNR Trails and Waterways division supervisor was quoted in the April 17, 2003 Northwoods Press as saying, We have to get away from connecting the towns and enhance the trail system. We need to get a system or a couple of systems that we can build on. Eventually the Round River trail near Akeley may be a unit trail where we can get away from forest roads altogether.</p>
<p>1288</p>	<p>As I have always advocated, ATV s can and should be trailered to the designated trails. They should not be allowed to ruin personal or private property without consequence! There is little if any consideration given to the people most affected by the planned trail. Namely, but not limited to, those who live along or near to the proposed trail. The additional traffic, noise, damage to driveways and approaches etc. It also doesn t address the concerns of those of us who use the forest for other activities, i.e. hiking, hunting etc.</p>
<p>1289</p>	<p>And let s not forget disrespect. I can t count the times I have confronted OHV riders about trespassing only to have them become indignant and confrontational that someone would actually have the audacity to hold them to task!</p>
<p>1290</p>	<p>Then to top it off, Commissioner Head in the Sand all but mandates a challenge trail for 4X4 s!This is so far removed from the mission statement of the DNR that he might as well be save Minnesota a salary and collect his as an OHV lobbyist.</p>
<p>1290a</p>	<p>We have the privilege to live in a state where we have lakes, and rivers and forests. It is our duty as citizens to be responsible stewards of these irreplaceable resources. However, it is the far more important that the DNR take the lead! It is the most important reason for the existence of the DNR!! They cannot play both sides of the fence. The environment must never take a backseat to recreational opportunities ! And neither should our civil rights!</p>
<p>1291</p> <p>1292</p>	<p>288. Ostrowski, Mike</p> <p>Times are changing. Yes, believe it or not, times are changing with the forming of pro-active ATV clubs and their concern for the environment and protecting our Natural resources. The progressive ATVer's know if we offer the general ATVing public a diversified trail system it will reduce creative riding, offer a safer and more enjoyable experience with controled impact on these lands we hold so dear.</p> <p>I think it's important to keep that in mind with the new trails being proposed for the Paul Bunyan forest. Please take the time to get input from the people who will use the updated trail system. It makes so much sense to use the experience and knowledge of the people who enjoy the sport of ATVing in a respectful manner. The new clubs are a great resource. Not taking advantage of all the positive things they have to offer would be a step back from some promising possibilities. Be a great example, show other areas and states what a co-operative effort can achieve.</p>
<p>1293</p> <p>1294</p> <p>1295</p>	<p>289. Ostwald, Brent</p> <p>I would like to offer my 2 cents worth of opinion towards the reclassification of Paul Bunyan, Beltrami, and Badoura State Forests. I have ridden the trails of Pbunyan and I believe that's a great system of trails which I hope remains virtually the same. I'm a member of atvam and Fatrax atv club and I know the members of our club share my concerns after ridding the trails of Paul Bunyan last summer. We are all very responsible riders sharing cconcerns for the environment and see the dilema that fewer trails present. That dilema as I see it is that fewer trails encourages normally law abiding riders to go off designated trails to explore other non-designated but existing trails. So, in your inventory and new trail system please consider this fact and keep all the trails we can. If ther are trails that are borderline as far as environmentally sensitive consider if they can be upgraded with addition base material, a matting, or rerouted to maintain the trail integrity.</p>
<p>1296</p> <p>1297</p> <p>1297a</p>	<p>290. Otto, Paul C.</p> <p>I am writing in support of recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. The DNR should be able to find OHV trucks an acceptable area for our needs, 6.2 miles of trails and 2.2 miles of recreational minimum maintenance road is <u>not</u> enough. ATVs got over 35 miles of trails and another 35 miles of recreational minimum maintenance roads. The powerline area is an already disturbed area and will continue to get utility traffic. The Paul Bunyan State Forest has a long history of recreational</p>

	off-road truck use, lets continue that by keeping it open to OHV use.
1298	<p>291. Overson, Josh</p> <p>I have been a member of the River Runner 4x4 Club out of Litchfield, MN for over six years. I have also been active in the Minnesota 4-wheel drive association for the same amount of time. We have very few places to use our off road trucks. We have 11 miles of state land trails to use in the Spider Lake area and we also have the Gilbert off-road park. Please support the DNR truck trail plan at the Paul Bunyan area.</p>
1299 1300 1301	<p>292. Paavola, Eric</p> <p>I support recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. The Paul Bunyan has had a long history of recreational off-road truck use. The club I belong to, Minnesota Landrovers, has all trail riding trucks. I am on the inside and I can tell you “mudder trucks” don’t go to state forests. They do not fit on the trails. Mudder trucks are only used in wide open spaces or stadiums!</p> <p>Minimum maintenance roads are not recreational. It is imperative the DNR give truck trails. Truck trails are my family’s way of exploring the back country in a safe comfortable manner. My daughters have been trail riding since they were infants and they love it. Hannah 7, Eva 4, and Nora 6 months will be going to Colorado to explore the back country there for the last week of July, 2005. They would be heartbroken if they were unable to go for trips here in Minnesota. Less than 9 miles of combined trails and recreational minimum maintenance road is not enough to plan a weekend around. Off road trucks are far more environmentally friendly than ATVs, motorcycles, or logging. All of which get plenty of state forest mileage. Proposed ORV designations do not equal more than .02% of Paul Bunyan land base. The DNR should be able to find more trails for trucks.</p> <p>You have spring closures and temporary closures to help prevent damage. If problems arise with a trail, it can be closed or modified as necessary. It is very difficult to start new trails.</p>
1302 1303 1303a	<p>293. Pantelis, John</p> <p>I support recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan, the Paul Bunyan has had a long history of off-road truck use, something the DNR is supposed to keep in mind when doing designations. I don't believe that trucks got enough trails in the Paul Bunyan, ATVs got 37 miles of trails and 35 miles of minimum maintenance roads to be managed for recreational purposes, the DNR should be able to find room for our recreation. Trucks should get more of the powerline trail, the DNR should work harder to do more mitigative measures to keep more of the powerline open to trucks. The powerline is an already disturbed corridor anyway, and it will get continued traffic from utilities, fire prevention, and DNR, what better place to put trucks.</p>
1304 1305 1306 1307 1308	<p>294. Parke, Robert & Barbara</p> <p>We would like to comment on the proposal for truck, ATV, and dirt-bke trails in Paul Bunyan State Forest. We believe that this kind of motor vehicle use is incompatible with conserving and protecting our State’s natural resources.</p> <p>Our understanding is that Minnesota DNR staffing has recently been cut back to the point where it is extremely difficult to do the work with which it is charged, and that likewise, funding for current projects is inadequate. It is hard to imagine how DNR could adequately monitor, enforce, and maintain the trails given this proposed new usage. It is even harder to imagine how DNR could fund repairing damage to the forest that has been often observed to occur by these kinds of vehicles.</p> <p>We have three questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is there a plan that provides funding to provide staff to monitor and enforce trail usage to minimize damage? 2. Will there also be funding to repair the damage that is likely to occur? 3. Have you considered the impact of noise pollution on other users of the Paul Bunyan State Forest?
1309	<p>295. Parthun, Chris</p> <p>Please accept this letter of formal comment from the Neilson Spearhead Center Management Board on the proposed plan for the Paul Bunyan State Forest lands in Hubbard County. We are very pleased to see that the interdisciplinary team recommended the forest OHV classification be changed from "managed" to "limited" and that this was accepted by the DNR Commissioners Office. We believe that changing the forest trails from "open unless posted closed" to "closed unless posted open"</p>

<p>1310</p> <p>1311</p> <p>1312</p> <p>1313</p> <p>1314</p> <p>1314a</p> <p>1314b</p>	<p>is the correct perspective.</p> <p>Our specific concern is with the proposed designated routes for use by ATVs, OHMs and ORVs near Spearhead Lake in Rockwood Township. The interdisciplinary team that evaluated potential uses for all of the inventoried routes has not adequately considered the impacts to adjacent privately owned land. Dick Kimball, DNR area trails and waterways supervisor in Bemidji, has been quoted as stating that "This plan and the planning process...has created a plan that we believe fulfills our core mission of managing use on managed trails." It is our belief that this core mission should include consideration of adjacent private landowners' property management values, and respectfully integrate this in the proposed plan. However, the proposed plan does not appear to reflect this respect.</p> <p>Specifically, the 460 acre Neilson Spearhead Center (NSC) property around Spearhead Lake is almost completely surrounded by county land, and is approximately mile from the Paul Bunyan Forest boundary. According to the maps, OHVs will be permitted on several trails along the west and south edges of the Center. We are adamantly opposed to permitting OHV uses on trails that end at our property boundaries in Sections 11, 14, and 23, in T145N, R34W!</p> <p>The Neilson Spearhead Center is owned by the Mississippi Headwaters Audubon Society, and is a perpetually protected nature preserve that serves as an environmental education and research center. Motorized OHVs are prohibited within the NSC property, yet proposed trail numbers 119, 2583, 182, 183, 203, 249, and 246 end at our property boundaries! The difficulties in enforcing our no-OHV policy will be greatly exacerbated by these trails remaining open, and our environmental education and research programs will be detrimentally affected!</p> <p>We respectfully request that proposed trail numbers 119, 2583, 182, 183, 203, 249, and 246 be changed from "open" to "closed" designation.</p>
<p>1315</p> <p>1315a</p> <p>1316</p> <p>1317</p> <p>1318</p> <p>1319</p>	<p>296. Peroni, Patti #1</p> <p>I'm Patti Peroni, a Lake Alice Township resident and the owner of RSR where I also live. 7 years ago I signed 2 leases, one with the DNR, the other with Hubbard County for use of the land north and east of my business for the purposes of letting visitors and locals ride horses upon this land. Obligations of the leases are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay a yrly least cost Pay the yrly property taxes Maintain the existing snowmobile trail (meaning leave it in fall as good as you saw it in spring). Show proof of insurance, 1 million Aggregate, 300,000 per occurrence and 300,000 personal/advertising injury. As anyone in business knows, these are some hefty costs. Combined totals run a little over \$5,000 dollars a year. <p>I was also permitted to blaze new trails, at my own cost and hard work with the same stipulations of the lease. DNR's recommendation "make the trail as weavy as you can so you don't have ATV's tearing up the countryside."</p> <p>For 7 years, what is said to me daily for the 18 week season? It's so beautiful, all we know is sidewalks and traffic, it's so quiet, it's so beautiful here, what flower is that? Is this what it's really like; thank you for offering this opportunity. In the last 5 years I've had to apologize daily for 18 weeks to groups of 7-10 people, most who have enjoyed this land on a yearly basis. My apologies are:</p> <p>I have no control over the ruination and desecration by ATV's which are:</p> <p><i>Saplings busted down, shredded tires left behind, 2 cycle plastic oil containers, wildflowers that aren't there but were in abundance and the overwhelming leftovers from human consumption. Every morning or evening for 18 weeks I would clean up the damage, whether ruts or trash. MN Rule 6100.1950 is very clear on trail utilization. Subpart 5 states:_____and Subpart 7a. states_____. Violations of these rules have gone unchecked for over 5 years.</i></p> <p>Also in the last 5 years...Noise arrives, not just on my leased trails, but also through the forest itself, on my personal property, and the property of my neighbors who border this land. Halting horses, endangering children, adults and the lives of my horses. In the last 4 yrs, I have had 5 insurance liabilities due to ATV's, 21 near misses of groups of 6 to 10 riders that I felt obligated to return the cost (\$2,600.00) of their trail ride because I was so thankful no one was harmed and they understood the lack of control of the ATV's. I have at my own cost had signs made. 2.9 miles enters into private property, no thru access to Freedom Ridge, horse trail rides operating. I have posted yellow diamond shaped signs "horse riding only". This has helped some but the problem still exists.</p>

1320 1320a	<p>I am not expressing this point solely to reduce the costs of my business, but to add an additional viewpoint when all is considered in who is accountable for the safety and maintenance of my land and the land I lease. How much do the ATV's pay for liability insurance? If I'm obligated to pay the lease, property taxes for the full year and pay liability insurance, ATV's are infringing on this and I am the one paying the cost of it. My insurance has increase by 30% because of ATV related events. I would like this problem to be well attended to. In not, I'm asking, "May I pay \$20.00 per horse for a license?" (referred legislation as an attachment)</p>
1321 1322 1323 1324 1325 1326 1326a 1326b	<p>297. Peroni, Patti #2</p> <p>My name is Patti Peroni, homeowner/resident and owner of Rising Star Ranch (horse trail riding summer tourist visiting spot), neighboring Itasca State Park. I currently lease state and cty land for purposes of horse back riding. My trails extend from the pipeline to the east till you reach Hwy 3. I live on top of the hill, frontage road which use to be old 71. Been here for 7 yrs, watch ATV use expand.</p> <p>Concerns I have:</p> <p>No proper marking of where ATV's are to go. I have to maintain my leased trails, the 4whlrs have bombarded these trail during rain, ruts galore, and no concern for signs marked horse trail riding only. 5 horse accidents have happened in the last 4 yrs. because of above. Nine near misses of accidents. Tourists unhappy for the noise on their ride. Garbage/leftover tires, junk wrappers and popcans. I've picked them up.</p> <p>Breaking down signs designating which trail my guest are going down.</p> <p>Regarding living here and having people in summer here, riding up the hillside past this ranch/home with no regard to traffic at great speeds.</p> <p>Ignoring posted no trespassing signs.</p> <p>I have so many issues with 4 whlrs not knowing where to go, or how policing can be achieve without homeowners taking things into their own hands. Why lease to a trail riding outfit who benefits the forest and maintains it if I have to do damage control?</p>
1327 1328 1329 1329a	<p>298. Perrine, Rich</p> <p>I have observed from recent newspaper articles the county is considering changes in its segment of the State Forest relative to use by motorized vehicles such as dirt bikes, motorcycles, and mudder trucks. It seems to me the state forests are set aside to preserve them for the distant future, for our descendants and theirs too. Therefore, any use of state forest land should be reserved for types that contribute to preservation of the natural habitat and animal life that occurs there naturally. I am opposed to any use that contributes to erosion, noise pollution and animal harassment. Bringing these motorized vehicles into a state forest is akin to inviting a horse herd into a church. Any casual observer knows the consequences will be negative for the church and those who have respect for its real purpose.</p> <p>The free market economy is well equipped to generate privately-owned ventures where these toys can be used for a fee. The damage can be managed, and the user can be observed while he recreates in this chosen fashion. This will provide jobs and related consumer spending in the areas where entrepreneurs establish such businesses and the public lands can be preserved for all who will use them with respect. The alternative is the wanton waste surely to follow from establishing any more trails for vehicles which, by design, advertising, and history promise nothing but problems.</p> <p>The state and people do not owe anyone opportunity to practice destructive acts on public lands. Regardless of how the organized riding clubs might whine, they are simply trying to convince public officials to allow them privileges they are neither entitled to nor can exercise responsibly. There is simply no way to guarantee responsible use of what belongs to all of us. I implore your wise judgment on these matters for the alternative is bound to betray the public trust.</p>
1330	<p>299. Pett, John</p> <p>I am a member of the River Runner 4x4 Club in Litchfield, MN and a member of the Minnesota 4-wheel drive association. We don't have many trails to four wheel on and we are looking for more land. I support the DNR truck trails in the Paul Bunyan area.</p>
	<p>300. Pfeifer, Mike & Pam</p> <p>We would like to make a few comments on the ATV issues going at this time. We currently</p>

<p>1331</p> <p>1332</p> <p>1333</p> <p>1334</p> <p>1335</p> <p>1336</p> <p>1337</p> <p>1338</p>	<p>own a resort on Little Mantrap Lake in Becker County, along the Hubbard County line. The issue of ATVs has come up at our resort a few years ago. The majority of our customers have made comments they would not come to our resort if we allowed ATVs coming and going into the resort. So, we do not allow ATV riding into, out of or within our resort. We have posted 2 signs indicating no ATV riding into the resort, but signs do not work. Several times a year, I have to stop someone coming into the resort, on our private drive or sometimes they just go through the neighbor's private property, which is posted no trespassing, and drive through the resort. We also do this to be considerate of our neighbors around us.</p> <p>Our customers, also indicated they would go to different areas, if there would be ATVs destroying the peace, serenity and the wonderful natural resources of this area. We think ATVs can change the character of this beautiful area. We need to be careful of turning this area into an ATV park.</p> <p>Dedicated ATV trails lead to environmental destruction. All-terrain vehicles are designed to go off trail. They are not trail-riding vehicles and ATV riders do not stay on dedicated trails. We think ATVs should be contained in specific areas without connecting trails. Damage and vandalism to private property by ATV riders is an issue all over Northern Minnesota. ATV riders can't be managed without a vigorous enforcement presence.</p>
<p>1339</p>	<p>301. Pollock, Amy</p> <p>I am writing to inform you that I support the DNR plan for recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan area.</p>
<p>1340</p> <p>1341</p> <p>1342</p> <p>1343</p>	<p>302. Potratz, Jim & Marianne</p> <p>What does it mean to set aside lands for a State Forest? Does it mean opening it up to ATVs, Dirt Bikes, Mudder Trucks, and every other type of destructive vehicles imaginable? We don't think so. The whole idea of a State Forest is the retention of a pristine area for all of the public, not only for now, but for the future. One only has to travel along almost all of our county roads and glance at the ditches on either side to see the tell-tale tracks of destruction left by these people and their machines. Think about it. Their track (no pun intended) record is not good. Why should fewer than 2% of the people have a green light to inflict this kind of a visual, audio, and environmental insult to the other 98% of the people of our state?</p> <p>To say that we oppose this proposal is the ultimate understatement. Is it only a matter of time before Itasca State Park, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, and other natural sanctuaries are invaded by these obnoxious machines? Once the damage is done, it will be virtually impossible to repair the damage. We urge you to reconsider your proposal of opening up all these miles of trails with their connector system to the off road vehicles. Bear in mind that the vast majority of our tourists come here to get away from noise and exhaust fumes. What they are looking for is a peaceful and beautiful environment to enjoy during their vacation time with us. We urge you to preserve it, rather than throw it away.</p>
<p>1344</p> <p>1345</p>	<p>303. Potter, Scott</p> <p>I am writing to express my concern on the future of OHV (truck) trails within the Paul Bunyan State Forest. As an active user of OHV trails and parks, I question why trucks received only 9 miles of combined trail and recreational minimum maintenance roads when ATVs got 37 miles of trails and 35 miles of recreational minimum maintenance roads within the Paul Bunyan State Forest. The stereotype that depicts ORVs as large mudder trucks is just that, a stereotype. The people who want and are writing to keep these trails open do not fit this description. We would like to continue the long history of recreational off road truck use within the Paul Bunyan. If these trails do not work, they can be closed at a later date. It will be impossible however to open up trails at a later date.</p>
<p>1346</p>	<p>304. Preus, Dorothy; Preus Jonathan</p> <p>This concerns the discussion among DNR, state forester, counties and the general public about what sort of trails should be allowed in our public forests. We are walkers and XC skiers whose trails have been damaged by ATVs, particularly Grandpa's Hill trail just near our cabin. It was ruined for skiing by ATVs some years ago, and the washouts are so deep that there is no practical way to restore the trail without heavy equipment - which does its own damage.</p> <p>So we favor the proposal to limit ATV traffic to relatively level trails that are at least a mile</p>

	you keep us on your contact list for future developments of this plan.
1355	<p>307. Prom, Mike</p> <p>We've been racing akleye since 1999 as a family, its help teach leadership, responsibility, good faith, and better manners to the hole family. A race win for us is not an individual feat its a family win. There 2 of us that ride and 2 more that chace, it takes all to win from working on school grades to be able to race, to gas and go crew, to wrenching on the bikes, everyone has there job and it has to be done on a weekly and timely basis for a win to happen. Both our riders are in the top 5 every yr. so far. With kids not haven anything to do that where trouble starts. Our kids work all week long on this stuff washing bikes, practice ridding, it consumes a lot of idle time, and best of all they love it. we as parents get complimented all the time as how well mannered our kids are and that's greatly do to racing in general. If were not racing somewhere we're riding be it akeley , huntersville, spiderlake, rock dam Wis.</p> <p>There not to many things that parents and kids enjoy together anymore and it would be a shame to lose this one.</p>
1356 1357 1358 1359 1360	<p>308. Prussia, Leah</p> <p>This letter provides comment on the proposed Off Highway Vehicle Plan for Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County lands. I am a frequent visitor to Hubbard County and enjoy camping, hiking, biking, skiing and kayaking. I love the semi-wild lands and pristine beauty Hubbard County has to offer.</p> <p>I believe this plan put forth by the MN DNR will seriously jeopardize the treasured natural beauty of this area. This plan proposes extensive availability of the Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County's public lands to this destructive activity and to a small minority user group who for the most part has displayed careless disregard for our natural resources.</p> <p>I am opposed to the invasive, web like trail system proposed by the MN DNR. A designated trail system for ATV's should be contained and limited to the existing footprint of the Martineau OHM Trail system. Trails should be confined and contained so that they can be maintained and enforced.</p> <p>There should be no designation of connector trails. By establishing "connector routes", we run the danger of transforming our public lands and forests into a haven for motorized vehicle activity.</p> <p>I oppose the designation of off road mudder truck trails in Paul Bunyan State Forest. This is an illegitimate use of public lands and an activity that should be confined to private land.</p> <p>This plan shows careless disregard for our ecological treasure. I ask the MN DNR and Hubbard County Board of Commissioners to reconsider this plan. Please consider a plan that will protect the environment for future generations. Our state forests are our heritage and should be treated as such.</p>
1361	<p>309. Rahn, James</p> <p>The citizens of Minnesota should have no obligation to provide satellite roadways to any vehicle. If the owners choose to use their vehicles for "recreation", they should be elated that they have the Gilbert area to drive. It is our obligation as licensed drivers to drive our vehicles in a safe and responsible manner. To "test" a vehicle is a choice. That's what tractor pulls and demolition derbys are designed to do. Our forests should in no way be compromised to accommodate there hobbies.</p>
1362 1363	<p>310. Ralston, Doug</p> <p>I oppose the current proposal regulating ATV/OHV use in Hubard County. The number of miles provided for ATV/OHV use is excessive, and is compounded by the "connector trails" proposed.</p> <p>ATV/OHV's are sometimes compared to snowmobiles, the idea being that if we provide trails for the one, we must provide equal access to the other on the basis of fairness. ATV/OHV's are fundamentally different from, and more destructive than, snowmobiles. The same programs and restrictions that work for snowmobiles would be inadequate to regulate ATV/OHV's. Snowmobiles are limited by their very design to a narrow trail system, and operate on top of a protective barrier (snow) that insulates the trail from damage. Also, snowmobiles operate (at best) 3 months of the year. ATV/OHV's impact directly on the land, they can (and often do) go anywhere, and operate 12 months a year. The difference in impact is huge, and the proposed trail system would produce an intolerable increase in damage (proposals for after-the-fact damage control are environmentally as well as economically vague).</p>

<p>1364</p> <p>1365</p> <p>1366</p> <p>1367</p>	<p>ATV/OHV's are often justified on the basis of their economic impact on the local area, and by the often-heard quote, "ATV's are here and we must accomodate them". The first argument (money) only holds true in the short run. Over the longer haul, the cost of damage repair (where it can be done) and the destruction of the very natural beauty that brings people to the area will likely outweigh the short-run cash impact. The second argument (they're here and therefore we have to accomodate them) just makes no sense to me. That "they're here" is true, but we do not have to accomodate anyone's recreation if it will cost us too much of our natural environment.</p> <p>All counties in MN will have the oppportunity to plan for ATV/OHV use as part of the DNR's initiative. As one of the first counties, Hubbard has a choice, either to decide to "accomodate" ATV/OHV's and become a permanent mecca for their use, or to decide to restrict ATV/OHV's, keep the environment we have, and let other counties become the ATV/OHV meccas. I think a vote of residents would be in favor of the latter.</p> <p>I'm not an extremist who wants to see the forest fenced off from motorized use. I own snowmobiles, and I may buy an ATV for use with chores around my property. However the current proposal goes too far to accomodate recreational use of ATV/OHV's.</p>
<p>1368</p> <p>1369</p> <p>1370</p> <p>1371</p> <p>1372</p> <p>1372a</p>	<p>311. Rambo, Bill & Avis</p> <p>In a recent book titled "Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed" by Jared Diamond, a thesis is presented contending that societies decline and finally collapse because of their neglect of the environment. It's a question of the continuation of cultural practices that ignore the environmental conditions within which a society functions. The ancient settlements in Greenland is one of his examples. Diamond contends that Greenland's ecosystem was too fragile to sustain the practices the Norse brought with them from their Scandinavian homelands.</p> <p>When thinking of our modern American culture one may well apply Diamond's thesis to the growth of American consumerism that has translated into an aggressive exploitation of our national resources. These are complex socio-economic mechanisms that have many facets. The gasoline engine may be one important aspect of this process, and one dimension of this is the insertion of motorized joy riders into the forest and desert lands of our nation. To think of governmental agencies, like the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, encouraging the introduction of large numbers of motorized vehicles into our forest lands should strike any reasonable person as just another shameless American assault on the environmental bounty that has blessed this land. This is an assault by a small minority of enthusiasts and a few greedy corporations that have won the support of the legislature in the sainted name of economic development. But, at what costs?</p> <p>This pattern repeats itself in many places in which cultural practices translate into economic development and eventually environmental degradation. As an example, the ATV/OHV campaign to extend motorized trails into the Chippewa and Paul Bunyan forests and beyond is a good example of Diamond's thesis where a people's values and practices extract destructive costs from the environment that sustains them. What is truly ironic, and sad, is that these programs are found in a state that traditionally had maintained progressive programs of environmental protection. No more!</p> <p>Our family owns lakeshore property in Minnesota, and we live at our lake for five months every year. We have been doing so for almost forty years. However, we live and vote in Oklahoma, a state that is generally seen as dominated by rightwing values. Yet, Oklahoma conservation officers have told me that motorized activities in the state are not allowed in lands that permit hunting. Most recreational motorized activities are confined to private facilities that charge fees.</p> <p>Is there anything that can be done to stem the unregulated intrusion of motorized clubs into the forests of Minnesota. Sad to say, no! In defense of their alliance with Artic Cat and Polaris, the DNR bureaucrats point to their enforcement intentions. The environmentalist merely point to the number of enforcement personnel in the state and the DNR's case is lost.</p> <p>What do I want the good people of Minnesota to do? The answer is nothing but sit back and listen to the cash registers ring while basic components of their ecology wither, and while their forests sustain an erosive intrusion by a people who should know better.</p>
<p>1373</p>	<p>312. Ranson, Ed</p> <p>I live in Wadena County, but I hunt, fish and hike in Hubbard County. I own an ATV which I use for making maple syrup and for other work uses on my farm. I use it very conservatively. Even used carefully it cuts ruts when the ground is soft, it is noisy when revved up, and it leaves evidence of its passage wherever it goes. I don't think it really has a place on public land. I was a township officer</p>

1374 1374a 1375 1376 1377 1378 1379	<p>for twelve years, and during that time I began to see more and more damage to township roads and rights-of-way by these machines. Ditch banks, driveways and field approaches take most of the impact. I don't think tax-payers should have to pay to repair the damages that OHVs cause.</p> <p>Because their use is now established, I suppose some trails will have to be left open, but the notion of leaving 686 mile open to ATV traffic is appalling. In my opinion, OHV trails should be circumscribed loops which do not connect, in order to avoid damage to other public roads. Likewise, trails should not be linked because this will just encourage traffic. The DNR should not create a system that is likely to turn Hubbard County into a destination for the users of these machines.</p> <p>Mudder trucks should be banned entirely. They belong in arenas or in old mine pits, not in the woods. The damage they do is unquestionable. The noise they make is terrible. Just because people can build such machines is no reason that they should have a place in our woods.</p> <p>The DNR should be in the business of protecting the environment, minimizing the adverse impact of use of public land and regulating consumptive uses so that there is something left for our kids. Give the ATV guys a few miles of trails if you must, but if you do, please promise the rest of us that you will police them.</p>
1380 1381	<p>313. Reedy, Steve</p> <p>As a member of the Minnesota Toy x 4 club, I am writing to voice my opinion regarding the recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest and the Beltrami Island State Forest. The Paul Bunyan State Forest has a long history of recreational off-road truck use and I support the idea of recreational truck use in the Paul Bunyan State Park. In my opinion more trails can be reworked and wet areas easily avoided to retain more open trail on the powerline.</p>
1382	<p>314. Reiling, Scott</p> <p>I am writing today to express my concerns with the planning process in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. I feel it is a travesty that ORV's got less than 9 miles worth of trails, compared to the 37 miles of trail and 35 miles of roads that ATV's received. We have been using the existing trails for years, leaving them open to us is not going to suddenly create damage to forests. I urge you to revisit the plan for the Paul Bunyan State Forest and include more miles for the people who have been using these lands for years!</p>
1383 1384	<p>315. Reitz, Otto & LaVerne</p> <p>This is to express our strong opposition to the proposal to open state forests to unmodified four-wheel-drive trucks for recreational purposes. Environmental damage that would ensue is just too great. We have biked the paved trail that heads southwest out of Walker. Parallel to the paved trail is one for snowmobiles. But there are gouges in the blacktop indicating that snowmobiles with studs did not stay on the trail made for them. We have cross-country skied in the forests of northern Minnesota on what were supposed to be groomed trails just for that purpose. Only to discover that ATVs had rutted the trail in places making it difficult to ski properly. We do not have faith that those using trucks for recreation in the forests will be any more careful than the other motorized users.</p>
1385 1386 1386a	<p>316. Reitz, David & Judy</p> <p>As our family has had and enjoyed a cabin in the Longville area for over 40 years we would like to comment on the current trail proposals for Hubbard County and Paul Bunyan State Forest. We agree with the proposal to reclassify trail systems for these state and county lands as "limited" or "closed unless posted open". This should help to avoid conflicts between varying users of public lands and assist in the protection of sensitive areas. We strongly disagree with the proposal to open a new trail system for ORV users. Much of Hubbard county is glacial moraine soils which are prone to erosion. As we understand, a planning team of DNR and Hubbard County officials had previously recommended no truck trails because of concerns about soil damage. The proposal also notes that there are currently 484 miles of minimum maintenance roads which will continue to be open to ORV users. We encourage following the advice of the local planning teams from the Hubbard County area and would encourage the DNR to attempt to find less environmentally sensitive areas for ORV use.</p>
1387	<p>317. Reynolds, John #1</p> <p>Dear Crow Wing County Commissioners, The comments in the newspaper article (Park Rapids Enterprise) copied below are on the proposed expansion of ATV trails in Hubbard County but I assure you that the sentiment is the same in Crow Wing County. We value our forests as much as we value our lakes and our quality of life. It is a mistake to think that just because the property owner with a</p>

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torn-up driveway or ATV trespass hasn't contacted you yet that we don't care. The county has hundreds of damaged driveways and many miles of damaged ditches yet very few property owners contact commissioners. The tourists who see our ditches and leave shaking their heads don't contact you either. It is a mistake to think that just because the hunters who visit our area each fall don't take the time to research who to contact doesn't mean they don't care about the rutted forest trails and damage wetlands they see in our forest either.

We saw that that county residents care during the the county forest management plan public hearings a couple of years ago in Fifty Lakes and Brainerd. The representative from nearly every table and spoke for the need to control ATV's in our forest. The only question left is anyone listening?

(Attached news article)

Comments on the proposed off-highway vehicle (OHV) trail designation in Hubbard County continue to arrive, currently reflecting approximately 10-to-one opposition to the plan, according to Paul Swenson, the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) northwest regional director. The opponents, he said, argue the proposal offers "too much motorized access to the forest."

To date, more than 300 comments have been e-mailed and mailed to the DNR and county on the OHV trail designation and forest classification. The deadline for submission is Friday, Jan. 28 at both offices.

"The public is very divided on the issue," Swenson said, noting last week's forum had provided a "good exchange of ideas on the issue." County board chair Floyd Frank said the commissioners will review the comments, likely in early February, and take a final look at the plan for possible revision. Comment summaries as well as individual remarks will be taken into consideration, he said. Townships will make decisions regarding connecting trail systems on their roadways, Frank said.

The current plan drafted by the DNR is calling for 686 miles of corridor to be open to motorized use, closing 422 miles of existing roadway/trails. Of the 686 miles, 574 miles are system forest roads or minimum maintenance county and state roads. Open trail miles total 112.

Most of the comments reflect support or opposition for the proposal in general terms. But Area Trails and Waterways supervisor Dick Kimball is encouraging specificity. He's asking that respondents indicate specific trail route segments, whether the trail should be open or closed and why ATV use raises concerns/or should be open for travel. "ATVs are here to stay," Kimball said. "We need to have a place for them to ride. There's room for everyone." The OHV trail designation "is a major change in how public land is managed," Swenson said. "It will take some doing."

Hubbard County is among the first in the state to draft the OHV forest classification and trail designation as it relates to OHV use. Beltrami, Clearwater and Becker counties will soon be addressing the issue. Kimball anticipates "concentrated OHV use" in Hubbard County until the plans in surrounding counties are in place. The Hubbard County plan, Swenson said, will reflect a "cultural change" in forest management. The "minimal trail system" being promoted by local residents may meet local needs, but it does not address the issue in the long term, he said. "It's a real balancing act; Minnesotans have strong opinions on the issue," Swenson said.

Asset or detriment

Letters drafted on the issue are arriving from both county and outstate residents Hubbard County's Coalition of Lake Associations (COLA) is urging the county commissioners to "reject the connecting trail concept, to keep ATV use east of Spur 1 and within the Martineau Trail system. "A connecting trail system will be the basis for free range use of county land and state forest land, leading to wetland and watershed destruction," the letter to the commissioners states. "Such a trail system gives too much access to individuals who have displayed careless disregard for the environment and the

quality of life of long-established county residents and taxpayers," COLA representatives stated last summer."...The county's and townships' road maintenance budgets are already slim and cannot accommodate a significant increase in the pace of required repairs that would follow ATV use," the letter continues.

The DNR commissioner's office is currently compiling an assessment of cost per mile for maintenance and enforcement of forest areas designated for OHV use. Trails and Waterways director Laurie Martinson said the report is expected to be completed early next week.

Andy Kietzman of Park Rapids suggests a compromise may be reached by setting aside specific areas for ATV and 4X4 truck use, citing a Kentucky recreational area that charges a fee for OHV use and has personnel on site.

Johanna Felt, AmericInn's general manager, noted the ATV market will add a boon to the local economy, "since Mother Nature can't always be relied upon to give us snow," referring to snowmobilers. (ATV production is now outnumbering snowmobiles by four to one, Kimball said.) "We feel the trail would be an asset to our community and help our growth by increased sales in restaurants, gas stations, lodging and retail," Felt said.

Lou Eischens, Forest Riders Grant-in-Aid coordinator, said the club has gone through a lengthy process of permits, meetings, maintenance, mapping, signing, training and educating related to ATVs. "It must be working," she wrote, citing no complaints heard at public meetings. "The trail designations are needed," she wrote, "and maintenance will need to be done. We appreciate that Hubbard County, the state and the DNR are going forward with a plan instead of doing a Band-Aid approach to each issue."

Polarized mindsets

But there are diverse opinions. Brad Eggen (who did not indicate his address in the e-mail) wrote: "I have not even finished my truck and people want to take public trails away just because of a few gutsy people that went mudding in a swamp." "I oppose this bill 100 percent, but I do believe that swamps should be mudded in just to keep things churned up. Whoever is on our side should fight off all these old goats that don't know what fun is. 4X4s should be allowed to do whatever they think they are capable of. "Don't let them take away my fun that I have been building for two years now! "If this is taken toward the environmentalists' side, drastic measures should be taken," Eggen wrote in his letter to the DNR's Helen Cozzetto.

"Why are you (the DNR) encouraging a hostile, dirty, negative, anti-nature activity?" asked Roy Erickson (with no address indicated). "Will you next be encouraging cigarette smoking? "Try this slogan," he advises: "When you're having fun outdoors, make sure Mother Nature is having a good day too."

Dennis Kirby of Park Rapids said he's in favor of ATVs using the forests, "but not at the expense of snowmobilers." His sentiments echo those of more than 500 snowmobile riders who have signed a petition on the issue.

Minnesota summer residents Bill and Avis Rambo of Oklahoma cited a recently published thesis contending societies decline and collapse because of neglect of the environment. "To think of governmental agencies, like the Minnesota DNR, encouraging the introduction of large numbers of motorized vehicles into our forest lands should strike any reasonable person as just another shameless American assault on the environmental bounty that has blessed this land," the Rambos wrote.

"The only thing these machines are going to do to any piece of state land is to tear it up or destroy it completely," Mark Barclay of Chaska wrote. "The riders and producers of these machines can give all the lip service they want, but all you have to do is look near any road ditch or watch any commercial advertising of these products to see their true intent," Barclay stated.

Gloria and David DeHaut, who live near Itasca State Park, commented, "All the evidence we have seen indicates that when ATV riders are encouraged to come to an area where they have no vested interest, most of them do not respect other people's property."

Adam Cornell, who owns property near the Paul Bunyan State Forest, said "I leave the Cities and want to be surrounded by the silence of the north woods...not the roar of four-wheel trucks. I do not need to trade one (highway) 494 for another. Isn't the idea of opening the state forest to vehicles contrary to the foundation of the forest?"

Corporate wishes

"I'm tired of the politicians dictating DNR policies to make corporate America happy," a "very disappointed" Robert Bullis of Elk River wrote. "How does the destruction of private and state property boost the economy?" The plan, he stated, "has no regard for the future of the forest."

	<p>Regarding the Paul Bunyan State Forest: I support recreation truck trails in the forest as long as the trails are closed for spring and other temporary closures to help prevent damage. Not all off highway trucks are fast and mudder trucks.</p>
1401 1402 1403	<p>321. Rogers, Deb</p> <p>I became a summer resident in Hubbard County to enjoy the pristine lakes and forests, abundant wildlife and for quiet walks in the woods. I live across the road from woods where there are numerous ATV riders. The noise disrupts our peaceful quality of life and scare away wildlife. The ruts and trash left on the trails make walking much less enjoyable. Please limit the use of these vehicles on public property!!</p>
1404 1405	<p>322. Rogge, Tom & Maryn</p> <p>As I drive around Hubbard County I see numerous places where ATVs have driven and destroyed the vegetation and left permanent ruts. In lieu of this I think it wise to restrict these types of vehicles to designated trails. However if the DNR does not have sufficient funds to patrol and insure that the OHV stay on the trails then the establishment of these new trails will be a waste of time and money.</p> <p>I was of the opinion that the mission of the DNR was to protect and enhance the natural resources of the state of Minnesota. The proposal which the DNR is bringing forth on the OHV seems instead designed to destroy a significant portion of our natural resources and to go against the majority of citizens who are opposed to such a plan. I will add my voice to those opposed to the DNR's plan to be discussed on January 12 in Park Rapids.</p>
1406 1406a	<p>323. Ronan, Adrian</p> <p>Hello, I spend about two weeks a year riding the off road motorcycle trails in the paul bunyan state forest and have for the last 5 years. I have no problem with sharing trails with atv,s . I feel that off road motorcyces are not getting our fair share of trails. We pay the same fees to ride but the amount of trails that we have access to is far limeted compared to atv,s. I am very concerned with the loss of any ohm trails as there are so few statewide.</p>
1407 1407a 1407b 1407c	<p>324. Ronchetti, Linda</p> <p>I strongly oppose a truck trail in any state forest. Trucks have highways, animals and that of nature needs its own environment. I live near Gilbert and have seen the distruction that vehicles do. And the destruction has mostly been done by a smaller vehicle than a truck. I have seen vehicles in streams, on bike paths, on ski trails and once they get bored with all or their trails are too rutted, then they are off to blaze new trails through the woods. This is not a good idea for our woods. The DNR should be protecting our resources. That should be a priority rather than how to bring a few short sighted dollars into the local economy.</p>
1408 1409 1410 1411	<p>325. Rothermel, Eunice</p> <p>I am a full time resident of Hubbard County, Minnesota. I live on one of our county's beautiful lakes and enjoy the wonders of nature daily. I am also a cross-country skier, a hiker, a camper and a snowmobiler. My husband and I enjoy activities in the Paul Bunyan Forest areas during all seasons of the year.</p> <p>I am writing to ask you to please consider all the residents of Hubbard County when you decide on the policy for the OHV use of our natural resources. I am not opposed to use of designated trails for OHV vehicles. I think that everyone is entitled to the use of our state land. I just think that some of the land should be able to remain quiet and for the use of foot traffic and campers and skiers only.</p> <p>Please do not allow for the connecting trails in the Beaver Lakes/Teepee Lakes and Halvorsen areas. Please allow some of these trails to be used by those of us who do not use OHV. I believe we are entitled to land use for our enjoyment, too.</p> <p>As a snowmobiler, last year I rode on some of the trails in Spur 1 that had been used by OHV traffic. The ruts were incredible and made for VERY uncomfortable riding. There needs to be a provision for repair and maintenance of these OHV trails.</p> <p>I strongly ask and encourage you to not open the Beaver Lakes, Teepee Lakes and Halvorsen areas to OHV traffic at this time. In the future, if their stewardship proves worthy and their numbers increase, perhaps then these areas could be opened. It would be much easier to open them at a later</p>

1411a	date than to open them now and have to close them later. When making your very important decision in this matter, please consider ALL of the Minnesota residents and park users, as we all are entitled to use, care for and enjoy the wonderful natural resources we are privileged to live near by and you are entrusted to care for.
1412 1412a	326. Roux, Tristan I'm writing to express my concerns about the closing of trails to trucks in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. I am a strong believer in recreational truck use in state forests. There is no reason trucks can't share trail systems with ATVs. The DNR has done a very poor job of finding appropriate trails for trucks. I hope that trail systems are created more fairly in the future.
1413 1414	327. Ruben, Adam I would like to request your consideration for mine and my group's support of recreational truck trails in Paul Bunyan State Forest. In general, I believe our trucks make less of an environmental impact than ATV's. Our trucks are not "mudders," they are made for trail use. We are courteous and family-oriented in our activities and can share trails with ATV's with no difficulty. Also, minimum maintenance roads are important for many reasons beyond recreational driving.
1415 1416	328. Rusert, Jason I am writing you today to express my interest in Paul Bunyan State Forest. I fully support the use of recreational trucks and would like to see more trails for off road truck use. Paul Bunyan has had a long history of off road truck use. ATVs got 37 miles of trails and 35 miles of minimum maintenance roads. Trucks only received 6.234 miles of trails 2.203 miles of minimum maintenance roads. This is not enough. I would have no problem sharing trails with ATVs.
1417	329. Ryan, Jason I am a 4X4 truck owner, and I would like to see more trails in the above area for our vehicles. There is no reason why 4X4 owners should not be considered every bit as capable of showing respect for their surroundings and keeping the forest pristine as any other user group. We are as concerned in preserving the forest as a resource for our children and grandchildren to enjoy as any other Minnesota citizens. We should be able to use the forest for enjoyment just as other motorized sport aficionados are allowed to do. Please consider this when you are making your decisions about this forest.
1418	330. Ryan, Tim My name is Tim Ryan and I live in Cloquet ,Mn. I just wanted to let you know I appreciate all your efforts in the badoura natl. forest and Martineau trail system. I am an avid offroad motorcyclist and hope to do much more in the future. I have been riding and racing for 37 years and enjoy riding my bike on trails as much as anything. I truely believe we can all get along in Minn. forests my using some common sense and smart trail building. I have been in the Range riders Moto club for many years and fully understand the need for treading lightly and less sound.
1419 1419a	331. Santiano-Francis, Karen I have often wondered for whom the DNR and MPCA are working, the public, or the lobbyists. I think in this proposal, we have our answer. This is an outrage, a pandering to big business and interest groups that defies description. I hope that this is defeated, soundly, by the opinions and votes of the citizens of this state. I am ashamed of the DNR officials that decided this proposal should be made. They are supposed to be PRESERVING the State resources, not pandering them to the largest bidder. A change in their thinking is urgently needed. Perhaps a change in administration would assist in that, and is devoutly to be wished for.
1420	332. Sapletal, Dave Why ruin a beautiful state forest like the Paul Bunyan by allowing trails for OHV, ATV's and motor bikes. Think of the adverse long term effects of building the trails in a state forest. The DNR officials who are proposing this have their head in the sand, and are really taking a step back in sound management of public lands used by a variety of state residents. OHV's have no place in a natural area

	such as the Paul Bunyan forest. I strongly recommend that the leadership of the DNR reconsider their proposal for the trails.
1421 1422	333. Schaedig, Terry Just read an article on Hubbard County's proposal to follow the DNR's guidelines in closing roads unless posted open. I would like to comment favorably on this proposal if you could provide me with an address or email address to send comments. I did not entirely understand the article. Does the DNR now have those rules in place - closed unless posted open or is that under consideration for state lands as well? I assume motor vehicles includes ATVs; I hope so because damage is increasing on public lands and I also would like to see more people afoot, rather than being convinced a trip to the woods automatically means a ride.
1423	334. Scheer, Bill Hearing about loosing more places to ride an ATV is disturbing. I'm a senior citizen with a bad back which leaves only a few things I can still do. Fishing is one and riding an ATV slow through the forests enjoying the flora and fauna. I think we have earned this with the taxes we paid over the years. Don't punish the rest of us for a few bad apples. Please don't take any more away from us.
1424 1424a	335. Schettler, June After reading the email titled "DNR and County Officials Get An Earful", I would also like to comment on this matter. I have been a resident of Minnesota for more than 50 years, and an employee of this great State for 15 years. I am a mother, and a grandmother, with a love of the outdoors that I want to be able to pass down to my grandchildren, and they to their grandchildren. We need to preserve our forest's natural beauty, as well as protect the natural habitat that is so vital for the wildlife that reside within. Our job is to <u>protect</u> the natural resources, not to destroy them by allowing motorized vehicles of any type in our forests because these motor heads feel the need for adventure. How many years will it take to redo the wrong that will be done, and where will it stop if this type of activity is allowed? Let's let Mother Nature rule so that all creatures (two or four legged) can enjoy what God created without the noise, pollution and possibly irreversible impact to our environment caused by our own making if more trails are allowed within our forests.
1425	336. Schmitt, Gregg My name is Gregg Schmitt and I live in Chisago County, but have been to the Akeley area many times. Our state forests are for all of us to use. There certainly is enough land to please everyone, and I support an area where off road trucks can be used.
1426 1427	337. Schnaith, Kent I am a user of the Martineau trail system. It's wonderful to have a place where I can ride and occasionally participate in organized events. I really like the single-track OHM trails. I appreciate the trail system and would like to see it used as a model for other state forests.
1428 1429 1430 1431 1432 1433	338. Schroeder, Rita #1 The Martineau Trail runs within 100 yards of our property. The dirt bike race every weekend "it seems" is very noisy and has hurt a lot of beautiful scenery areas. We would like to see it moved away from "Schroeder Lake." We are scared for our grandchildren. These bikes have gotten off their trail and ended up on our property many times in the past. So has lots of 4-wheelers trespassed on our property. We have a 4-wheeler but it never leaves our property. We would just like to have the dirt bike (track) moved farther from the lake. And "no" 4x4 trucks racing to hear all that. It used to be quiet where we live. Now I can't let the kids go very far from the house. The dirt bikes race up our road and across our property on a weekend of a race. A fawn was hit by a dirt bike and ended up in our yard. We have stopped many dirt bikes and 4-wheelers from crossing our land. Now since the dirt bike track is there, people come in and camp. Drinking and throwing trash all over the place. We have pictures. The 4-wheelers use it to get to and from the new bar the Stompin Grounds off of 64 in Akeley. Please don't let them open that trail too. They have made enough of a mess in our beautiful woods. The roadways on 34 are a mess. As is the Paul Bunyan Forest. All you see driving on 64 in rutted up trails. The trail the dirt bikes use was started 3 weeks after the DNR said <u>no more new trails</u> . That is the one trail that goes around "Schroeder Lake" was put in after that. No one ever raced on it before.

<p>1448</p> <p>1449</p> <p>1450</p> <p>1451</p> <p>1452</p> <p>1453</p> <p>1454</p> <p>1455</p> <p>1456</p> <p>1457</p> <p>1457a</p> <p>1457b</p>	<p>believe the destruction. We had read about damage to the forests but had not seen it first hand. This was an authorized trail and the damage was extreme. There were ruts as much as three feet deep. Is the DNR monitoring these trails and repairing the damage? This trail was north of Akley just off HWY 64. Can you tell me if this has been repaired?</p> <p>We then realized what ATV/OHV can do to a forest. How can the DNR propose connecting trails in our forests unless it is monitoring and repairing existing trails? We do not believe that the DNR should promote the destruction of forests. As a DNR professional, I am sure that it must pain you terribly to know the destruction that is presently going on.</p> <p>_ *We are against:* _</p> <p>Connecting trails</p> <p>Mudder trails for 4X4 trucks</p> <p>_ *We are for:* _</p> <p>Limiting the number of trails until there are adequate funds for enforcement of rules. We understand that there are few funds available for that purpose.</p> <p>Increasing the number of conservation officers.</p> <p>Having a plan for maintenance, monitoring and enforcement by the DNR.</p> <p>Engineering trails to limit speeds, prevent erosion, protect forest and wetlands and insulate wildlife and residents from ATV/OHVs.</p> <p>Containing ATV/OHV damage to a limited portion of the forest and to less sensitive parts.</p> <p>Mandating environmental review of proposed trails.</p> <p>Increasing ATV/OHV registration fees and increasing fines for violations.</p>
<p>1458</p> <p>1459</p> <p>1460</p> <p>1461</p> <p>1462</p> <p>1463</p> <p>1463a</p>	<p>341. Schumacher, Michael</p> <p>This letter is in response to your request for public comment on the proposed OHV designations in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. I am strongly opposed to these premature and frankly, reckless decisions.</p> <p>That OHV recreation is allowed at all on public lands seems contrary to the DNR's mission, which is to manage and protect the public's natural resources for the benefit of all citizens of Minnesota and for future generations. The destructive nature of recreational OHV's, be they 4x4, ATV or motorcycle, should exclude their use on public lands, period. As someone who spends a great deal of time on public lands, I have witnessed firsthand the destructiveness that individual ATV's have on our public lands. To think of opening the PB State Forest to state sanctioned OHV use makes me shudder; It also makes me very angry. Has the DNR forgotten the example of the Spider Lake Recreation Area so soon?</p> <p>I realize that the DNR, as an administrative agency, necessarily finds itself in the middle of conflicts between user groups and lobbies. I also know that the motorized lobby has the ear of the current DNR commissioner. But come on! Let some common sense and facts set the DNR's OHV policy.</p> <p>Fact: It only takes an ATV or OHV to create thousands of dollars worth of damage to public lands.</p> <p>Fact: The DNR doesn't have the resources or personnel to enforce the laws it is responsible for now, let alone hundreds of additional miles of designated OHV trails.</p> <p>Fact: There is but a single CO for OHV enforcement for the entire NW region.</p> <p>Finally, I hope the DNR realizes that the OHV/ATV groups are a tiny minority of the population. It's time for the DNR to have some intestinal fortitude and do the right thing: No ATV/OHV trails on our public lands. At the very least, not until there is adequate funding, through heavy user fees, to enforce the laws as they stand regarding this "sport". I believe it is the DNR's duty to resist the motor lobby, because it is the right thing to do for the resource. Let the motor lobby go to the Legislature and argue otherwise. It shouldn't have to be up to the rest of us to be reactive to bad policy.</p>
	<p>342. Schwartz, Richard</p> <p>The DNR politicians – names? Have designated far too many trails in state forests (e.g. Paul</p>

1464	Bunyan State Park, Badoura, Hubbard and Winona and Wabasha counties, etc.) for the <u>convenience</u> of <u>destructive</u> OHV use. <u>DNR personnel</u> can <u>not</u> prevent the vicious destruction of MN forest land by ATV thugs and hoodlums trash you <u>knowingly</u> destroy. More trails for OHV? NO .
1465 1465a	343. Scotland, Lee Without going into a long list of objections, I wish to express my objection to the proposed expansion, and corridor connections. This is a this is a nonreversible destructive use of the area I live next to. I cannot fathom the need to facilitate this use of the environment.
1466 1467 1468 1469 1470 1471 1472	344. Sharbo, Dave & Karen You heard from us last year, and we are writing again as today's public hearing on the Hubbard County/DNR OHV is fresh in mind. You have heard the arguments. We would like to be counted among the residents opposed to the draft plan and concerned about its impact on our homes and lives. We have several specific requests. Please: 1. Adopt a guiding principle for Hubbard County of limiting OHV activity to specific areas of the County, rather than spread throughout the County. 2. Keep the primary Hubbard County trail system east of Spur 1 and within the Martineau footprint in the southeastern part of the Paul Bunyan. 3. Do NOT establish connector trails to other areas of the County. 4. Close Hubbard County roads and ditches to all OHV use. Include meaningful penalties for violation up to and including confiscation of an offending operator's vehicle. 5. Do not approve any further expansion of club-sponsored trails in Hubbard County. 6. Eliminate ORV trails from the plan and do not support them as publicly funded trails.
1473 1474 1474a	345. Sharbo, Peter I write to comment on the DNR's OHV proposal, specifically relating to Hubbard County. Although I am not a Hubbard County resident, I am a regular visitor to the area. Throughout the summer and fall I am a heavy user of public lands in the county, including activities relating to hiking, fishing, and grouse and deer hunting. I am opposed to the creation of excessive OHV trails, especially connector trails and mudder truck routes, on public lands due to the long-term effects on the eco-systems involved. The disregard for the environment displayed by a percentage of ATV users causes a tremendous amount of damage in a very short period of time, and, according to my observations, the damage quickly extends beyond designated trail systems as riders "create" new trails whenever and wherever they deem appropriate. I urge that law enforcement funding go hand in hand with whatever OHV trail system is adopted. I also urge that enforcement and maintenance costs for the trail system be funded through OHV license fees and/or trail usage fees.
1475 1476 1476a 1476b 1476c 1476d	346. Sherack, Jim I am furious about the recreational or "entertainment for the wealthy" areas being proposed for the Paul Bunyan State Forest. I am all for enjoying outdoor activities but I don't believe it is right to use hard earned tax payers dollars to provide playgrounds for those who can afford modified vehicles, (and the gas), when it destroys the vegetation and quiet, disturbs the animals who live there, and pollutes our forests. Just because some can afford these vehicles, doesn't mean we have to provide the real estate. Then if they injure themselves we taxpayers can pay for their medical bills as well as a big settlement. These types of facilities need to be provided by private enterprise. Groups who enjoy paintball, trapshooting, skateboarding, and even hunting groups must find their own private land. I disagree that the the State has an obligation to provide truck driving challenge areas, and it is imperative that the state discourage gasoline waste, and pollution. It is simply not an appropriate way to spend gas tax money, when it facilitates such a small percentage of the population. If we are so flush with money, we need to balance our budget so we don't pass on more debt to our grandchildren.
1477 1477a	347. Sherwood, David I am writing in regards to the forest plans for: Paul Bunyan State Forest and Beltrami Island State Forest. I support recreational truck trails for Paul Bunyan and Beltrami State Forests. Proposed

	<p>ORV designations do not equal more than .02% of the land base. The DNR should do more to keep these forests open, especially considering the use they get from logging.</p>
<p>1478</p> <p>1479</p> <p>1480</p> <p>1481</p>	<p>348. Shofner, John</p> <p>I would like to comment on the proposal to re-classify the Paul Bunyan State Forest, Badoura State Forest and the Hubbard County administered lands. After attending the public hearing in Park Rapids on January 12, 2005, and reviewing the information available, I feel that the DNR and Hubbard County officials have devised a very workable plan for all the uses for these areas.</p> <p>My main concerns are that the main routes will always be open for general traffic, that there is planning and implementation of connecting trails, and that the county and state allow for ATV's to have the ability to ride in the road ditch areas so that the people who live in the local areas will be able to ride from their homes to the forest lands.</p>
<p>1482</p> <p>1483</p> <p>1484</p> <p>1485</p> <p>1486</p>	<p>349. Shofner, Norma</p> <p>I would like to comment on the proposal to re-classify the Paul Bunyan State Forest, Badoura State Forest and the Hubbard County administered lands. After attending the public hearing in Park Rapids on January 12, 2005, and reviewing the information available, I feel that the DNR and Hubbard County officials have devised a very workable plan for all the uses for these areas.</p> <p>My main concerns are that the main routes will always be open for general traffic, that there is planning and implementation of connecting trails, and that the county and state allow for ATV's to have the ability to ride in the road ditch areas so that the people who live in the local areas will be able to ride from their homes to the forest lands.</p> <p>One of the comments made during the hearing was a concern for the future of our children and grandchildren. Our family has spent many weekends together ATVing and camping. It is very important that our grandchildren and great-grandchildren be raised with the same values of caring for our forest lands and enjoying nature as we know it. We have watched the miracle of seeing wildlife as we travel through the woods and hope the same for the future generations to follow.</p>
<p>1487</p> <p>1488</p>	<p>350. Shorter, Jon</p> <p>I am a citizen who spends a considerable amount of time in the local forests. I run, x-c ski, hike, and bike extensively throughout the year. When I heard about proposed language to open up the Paul Bunyan State Forest for four-wheel drive vehicles, I was deeply saddened. The amount of damage they incur on the trail system is devastating. I see the effects every time I run the forest. Please work to keep these trucks, jeeps, four-wheelers, etc....on the roads, not the trails that others have worked so hard to establish.</p>
<p>1489</p>	<p>351. Shoultz, Lynnae</p> <p>I am a member of a 4x4 club in Litchfield, Minnesota and the 4-wheel drive association. Many of our members are concerned about the amount of trails we have and I am in favor of the DNR truck trails in the Paul Bunyan area. We hope to see the trails open up there.</p>
<p>1490</p>	<p>352. Sievertson, Paul</p> <p>Just wanted to say as an ATV owner and lifelong owner of 4 wheel drive pickups that I support responsible ATV use on State lands and somewhat limited use of 4 wheel drive pickups and SUV's on those same lands.</p>
<p>1491</p> <p>1492</p> <p>1493</p>	<p>353. Silence, Charles</p> <p>I am sending this e-mail to speak up for MORE designated OHV trails, not less. I am an avid ATVer and I don't want ANY of the trails in HubbardCounty, Badoura State Forest, or Paul Bunyan State Forest closed.</p> <p>With the Forest Service eliminating logging roads under its Roadless Initiative and the DNR inventorying roads to "undesignate" I am very concerned that ATVs will end up with a fragmented, disjointed, bunch of roads to ride on. The whole point of going ATVing is to have a nice, long, ride that doesn't double back on itself - the same sort of trails that hikers, mountain bikers, snowmobilers, and cross-country skiers want.</p> <p>The prejudice against motorized recreation has gotten ridiculous. There is no reason that there cannot be more shared trails. Mountain bikes and ATVs enjoy the same kind of trails. Hikers can hike</p>

	<p>on ATV trails if they want - we stay off of their trails, but we don't care if they go on ours. It is really frustrating when "Silent Sport" advocates have over 3 million acres of land locked up in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. How much more do they need? Why should the DNR have to turn over more land for non-motorized use? Enough is enough! Please give ATVers, who PAY for their trails somewhere to ride!</p>
<p>1494</p> <p>1495</p> <p>1496</p> <p>1496a</p>	<p>354. Silence, Rhonda</p> <p>I am writing to comment on the OHV Forest Reclassification and Road/Trail Designation Status Plan for the Badoura State Forest. My family and I are avid ATVers. We are not just ATVers - we also enjoy hiking, fishing, hunting, camping, snowshoeing and wildlife watching. We live in Cook County, on Minnesota's North Shore, where there are no designated ATV trails, so we are forced to travel to find a place toride. We greatly enjoy the Moosewalk Trail in the Finland-Silver Bayarea, but it is 50 miles away. I hope that you will listen to the locals in Hubbard County and keep their favorite trails open.</p> <p>I understand that the Hubbard County Inventory found 1, 026 miles of roads & trails open to OHVs and that many of those roads and trails are being closed, ending with 686 miles. I am very concerned about the net loss of miles. I would encourage the DNR to not close trails, but to build reroutes around environmentally sensitive areas. Bridges and culverts should be used wherever possible to keep the trails ATVers have been using open. ATV Clubs all over the state are working to educate riders on responsible riding - but we have to have somewhere to ride. Please keep existing trails open, especially those that provide loops and scenic riding opportunities.</p>
<p>1497</p>	<p>355. Smith, Jean & Frank</p> <p>It is our sincere hope that you will join the ranks of the far sighted officials in the past who worked so hard to save our precious natural environments and that you will vote against opening any more invasive trails for destructive vehicles such as dirt bikes, 4 wheelers and mudders. Please listen to the many responsible people who are against it and not the few self centered individuals who can hardly wait to do additional damage - some aren't waiting. The vast majority have spoken loud and clear, they do not want additional trails designated for these loud and destructive vehicles. The future of this special area rests squarely on your shoulders. Please do not take this serious responsibility lightly.</p>
<p>1498</p>	<p>356. Smith, Randy</p> <p>I am a member of the River Runners. I support the DNR plan for truck trails in the Paul Bunyan area.</p>
<p>1499</p> <p>1500</p> <p>1501</p> <p>1502</p> <p>1503</p>	<p>357. Smith, Brad & Lisa #1</p> <p>I am writing you in regards to the requested public comment for the proposed OHV use changes in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. As an ORV owner and hobbyist, I am very interested in having trails in which to drive my vehicle. There are thousands of miles of trails for use by snowmobiles, ATV's and off road Motorcycles. To date there are only 11 miles of trails for use by 4x4 Trucks ORV's in the State Forests. No other completed forest plans have had any designated trails for ORV use.</p> <p>Those of us with 4x4's appreciate the DNR's efforts in attempting to provide us with trails. However the existing forest roads are maintained at a level most cars can drive on with little or no problem due to their routine maintenance schedules. I also drive ATV's on the Soo Line Trail system where a portion of the trail has been paved for Bicyclists. This made it a shared use trail with a dirt trail adjacent to the paved trail to maintain split use and a continued challenge for ATV's. A certain amount of challenge is important to the enjoyment of any sport.</p> <p>There are numerous Four wheel drive clubs in Minnesota. Most of the clubs belong to a larger state wide organization, and many to the regional and National 4x4 groups as well. These clubs have a long history of volunteering in there communities and have shown themselves to be reliable and environmentally conscious. The 4x4 community would be happy to have designated trails that the DNR could count on any number of clubs to assist in the trail blazing and continued maintenance. Currently this Forest plan has approximately 8.437 miles of trails designated for ORV use only. This is certainly better than the current status, of zero miles. It is my understanding that other trails marked ORV trails are open for use by 4x4 trucks unless marked closed.</p> <p>Furthermore as a Minnesota tax payer and a great outdoor enthusiast I would like to see a</p>

1504 1505 1505a	<p>large area for ORV staging on the trail system for trucks with trailers. I would also like to see more challenging ORV trails that can share use with ATV's and Motorcycles as it is in the Gilbert, MN trail system. It would also be nice to have more trails in other Minnesota State Forests that are available for use by 4x4 truck enthusiasts and are more challenging than driving down a dirt road. Many Minnesota 4x4 club members have to travel outside of the state to enjoy our sport which looses tax revenue for the state and possible tourism into Minnesota from other State's.</p>
1506	<p>358. Smith, Brad & Lisa #2 I am a 4X4 truck owner, and I would like to see more trails in the above area for our vehicles. There is no reason why 4X4 owners should not be considered every bit as capable of showing respect for their surroundings and keeping the forest pristine as any other user group. We are as concerned in preserving the forest as a resource for our children and grandchildren to enjoy as any other Minnesota citizens. We should be able to use the forest for enjoyment just as other motorized sport aficionados are allowed to do. Please consider this when you are making your decisions about this forest.</p>
1507	<p>359. Smith, Joan E. We should not be taking public land and letting ATV's or trucks destroy it. The land was set aside for nondestructive purposes. If the owners of ATV's and Trucks want somewhere to play, why don't they buy other land in the state. To let them in our forest is an absolute ridiculous proposal.</p>
1508 1509	<p>360. Smith, Melissa I'm am a life long resident of Cook County. We have absolutely NO trails at ALL open for use that we don't have to trailer at some point in order to have a 1 hours ride at 5 miles per hour. This is completely unacceptable. There is enough land out there for everyone to enjoy. 5-10 years ago. Dog sledders turned down an extension of snowmobile trail from Devil Track Lake to the Grand Portage Trails. After many court cases opposing the new trail that would of benefited many residents and two resorts. The same dog sledders apologized and said that they now wish that the trail would of happened. Go figure! I beg you and everyone else that makes decisions to keep all trails open to everyone. I am an avid ATVer, snowmobiler, snowshoer, canoer, cross country skier and a hiker</p>
1510 1511 1512	<p>361. Smith, Scott I wanted to drop you a quick note on the upcoming proposals on ATV use in the Paul Bunyan State forest. It seems to me that we continue to gravitate towards the outright banning of ATV use on public lands. We all pay for the state forests, so we should all be afforded the rights to use them in ways we see fit. Banning of any activity in state forests will only accomplish constant fighting between groups with differing philosophies. There is room in the park to accommodate everyone. More trails would make more sense, this would reduce congestion that is occurring in the small access areas that are currently available. It would also reduce the likelihood of those very few riders who take it upon themselves to leave the trail system and cause damage to protected areas, as they would have plenty of trails to ride. Currently, only about 1/20 of 1 percent of the forest is allocated to ATV trials. Banning the use of ATV's in these forests is unacceptable, especially when such a small portion of the forest is allocated for ATV use and the vast majority is allocated for other use.</p>
1513 1513a 1513b 1514	<p>362. Smith, Sharon I write today to urge my Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to reconsider any action that would increase or encourage the use of motorized vehicles in my state forests! As a life-long resident of north-central Minnesota, I have seen our lakes and forests change immensely with the influx of development and demands of overuse. Snowmobiles were the first intruders into the wilderness and silent sanctuary of our forests, however, other than their noise and exhaust fumes, the visible damage they caused virtually disappeared with the snow each spring. These off-road vehicles that operate on soft ground, over fragile plants and any terrain do not compare in any way! The very thought that the state agency that is responsible for protecting our most precious resources would encourage this invasion and destruction is beyond comprehension to me. I see no viable justification for the DNR to even consider accommodating this type of recreation within our forests. Natural, they are not! I can not find words strong enough to express my horror with regard to this issue. It is inconceivable to me that even one penny of my tax dollars should be spent in an effort to provide an</p>

<p>1514a</p>	<p>amusement park for use of gasoline powered machines in the FORESTS of my state! What is natural about that? Aren't we having a hard enough time protecting our environment from over use due to the increased population without inviting this serious MISUSE? I urge you to reconsider ANY planned "recreation" development for these vehicles!</p>
<p>1515</p>	<p>Let the owners, manufacturers and enthusiasts of this relatively new "sport" provide recreational areas for themselves on private property. Do not give them state land on which to operate. I believe these forest were set aside to be protected from development so that future generations might have the opportunity to experience nature as it was created, as it is naturally . There is nothing natural about the roar of gasoline engines and ripped and rutted trails. Keep these machines where they belong, on private property. The percentage of users is so small compared to the population of traditional forest users such as skiers, hikers, fishermen, hunters, campers, berry pickers, bird and wildlife watchers and other outdoor enthusiasts who depend on our DNR to protect and provide a natural environment so that traditional Minnesota "activities" can continue to be enjoyed by our descendants.</p>
<p>1515a</p>	<p>How can you even consider displacing the rest of us from our forests in favor of these destructive, noisy, stinky machines? Wake up! Yes they are tax payers too, but they do not have the right to demand a portion of our heritage for their private use, which is exactly what they are doing. Once these vehicles are allowed to claim a portion of our forests, the forests become unusable for those of us who wish to experience the silence and beauty of the nature in all it's magnificence. These vehicles turn our forests into urban roadways with all of the charm of an interstate highway!</p>
<p>1516</p>	<p>I don't go to a noisy, urban environment to enjoy the bounty of nature, why should these "riders" come to my natural environment to create an atmosphere that is incompatible with the silence and tradition of the natural environment? Let them take their own money (not my tax dollars) and create their own obstacle courses to navigate. Let them buy their own land, maintain their own trails and if they wish to experience nature, let them plants their own trees and create their own forests to destroy if they wish. Our shared forests are not the place for this! I find no valid argument to invite this type of use into our natural environment, and no excuse for the agency I employ to protect it to be involved with the acquisition or designation of lands for this type of development . It is totally incompatible with the mission which the people have entrusted to DNR to accomplish!</p>
<p>1517</p>	<p>As a Minnesota Master Gardener, I volunteer hundreds of hours assisting residents in re-establishing natural balance in their immediate environments. Reclaiming and restoring areas of damaged environment requires tremendous resources of cash and labor, as you well know. Please, please don't commit any of our limited cash and labor to the destruction of our forests!!!</p>
<p>1518</p>	<p>Following last years discussions and debates in the legislature, I thought the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources had come to understand the ramifications of motorized vehicles in the forests and had realized the wishes of the general population with regard to allowing this type of activity on public lands. Now I see that the paid lobby and industry outcry has once again forced this issue to this ridiculous outcome. I can't tell you how very disappointed I am in this reversal of direction.</p>
<p>1519</p>	<p>Heed common sense and common opinion and don't bend over under the pressures of an industry with only one thing in mind, that being the almighty dollar!!! Don't sell us out!!! Let those companies that profit from the sale and use of these vehicles purchase and maintain land on which to use them. Do not give them the forests that belong to all Minnesotans, do not allow the traditional forest user to be displaced and do not burden Minnesota's tax payers with the additional tax load that will be required to develop and maintain use areas for these vehicles! Tell them if they want to see our forests they should get off their machines and take a walk!</p>
<p>1520</p>	<p>363. Soderberg, Kim & Milford</p>
<p>1521</p>	<p>This letter is to express our opinion on the designation of Hubbard County Road #4 ditch as a ATV trail system component. As long time resident along Co. 4 we have seen erosion increase along with trash and litter in the ditches. Our residence is most likely the closest to the ditch (less than 100 ft) along the highway between the Halverson Lake Trail and Lake George. Three of our four bedrooms unfortunately face the highway. Our grandchildren sleep in these rooms and have been awakened by noise from ATVs. Not to mention the dust and dirt. We <u>see our real-state taxes increase and the erosion of the enjoyment in the area decrease. I would like to know if those who came up with this</u></p>
<p>1522</p>	<p><u>see our real-state taxes increase and the erosion of the enjoyment in the area decrease. I would like to know if those who came up with this</u></p>
<p>1523</p>	<p><u>see our real-state taxes increase and the erosion of the enjoyment in the area decrease. I would like to know if those who came up with this</u></p>
<p>1523a</p>	<p><u>see our real-state taxes increase and the erosion of the enjoyment in the area decrease. I would like to know if those who came up with this</u></p>
<p>1523b</p>	<p><u>see our real-state taxes increase and the erosion of the enjoyment in the area decrease. I would like to know if those who came up with this</u></p>

<p>1526</p> <p>1527</p> <p>1528</p> <p>1528a</p>	<p>idea have to live with this plan, They do not. Not one county commissioner or committee member or ATV club member is affected. The Cal Johannsen property is unoccupied.</p> <p>I also would ask why the property owners were not asked about their opinion. You know the answer, <u>not one would agree with the trail designation</u>. We have seen the area in front of our house used as an area to "jump the approach". This area we mow ourselves and maintain for the appearance. We have looked out the window to see ATV riders urinate in our yard. I'll bet those in favor of the trail do not have this to look at. I do not accept the old adage of a few ruin it for all, in this situation the majority are the problem and there will not be any enforcement of any violations, not to mention property damage or approaches.</p> <p>Read the paper other townships and counties do not expose the property owners to such a plan. I watch and read the newspapers from Park Rapids and Bemidji. Look at the opposition in Beltrami and Roseau Counties. Polaris Industries is located in Roseau and the county will not support ATV use. What does this tell us? Wake up to all those who think they are looking out for the betterment of the area. You will not bring in tourism dollars only headaches for those affected. Remember that it is none of the planners or supporters!</p>
<p>1529</p> <p>1530</p> <p>1531</p>	<p>364. Sorensen, Maragaret</p> <p>It is of great concern to me that the DNR continues to open more and more trails for ATVs in Hubbard County. How can we have more trails when there are no dollars for enforcement and maintenance? If the DNR has suffered budget cuts in the present administration, how can you open more trails, it seems to me you would cut more trails. This sport of ATVs and mudder trucks is too invasive to be given any more room. In this world where we are becoming more crowded and putting more stress on our natural resources, I believe we will have to slow down or we will have nothing left. There are sports that are far less invasive on our forests, wildlife, neighbors, really "the earth." It is behooves us to think of it "before" not "after." It seems to me the DNR should be concerned about conserving not ruining our natural resources. Hubbard County does not need more trails and the Paul Bunyan State Forest certainly does not. It is time to say NO.</p>
<p>1532</p> <p>1533</p> <p>1534</p>	<p>365. Souba, Fred</p> <p>It's hard to believe our Dept. of Natural Resources would provide tearing around space for trucks into a wild area. One wonders to what reasonable degree this is helpful to our disappearing and fragile wilderness areas? The irresponsible actions of so many "riders" that have damaged so much of our (?) forests would seem to require DNR to <u>stop all ATVs</u> from riding slipshod for no good reason over forests terrain! Other lands, i.e., gravel pits, mining areas would be better for such challenges.</p>
<p>1535</p>	<p>366. Springer, John</p> <p>I am a member of a 4x4 club from Grand Rapids , Mn . I live in the north metro . I support the land use trail use as well as the road use of the Paul Bunyan state forest. I also would like to see more trails for 4x4 use in all public lands.</p>
<p>1536</p> <p>1537</p> <p>1538</p> <p>1539</p>	<p>367. Springer, Janice</p> <p>My husband and I own property in Hubbard county(Thorpe twnshp) and wish to contribute our opinion to the upcoming discussion about increased ATV or OHV use in our area. I prefer that no more use is added by way of trails or connecting links or ditch use.</p> <p>My experience thus far near our retreat/cabin on the edge of the state forest is that there is no enforcement and little respect by the ATV users for our public lands. More than once we have driven down the forest road to find 3 or 4 ATV's doing cookies and loop to loops out in a wetland area that is temporarily drying due to the drought. Merrily doing untold damage to a habitat that is already stressed.</p> <p>Our area is traumatized enough by logging as it is without adding more insult by more trails that the riders won't stay on anyway. I find the noise of them offensive. I came to this area for a respite from noisy cities, not more of the same.</p>
<p>1540</p> <p>1540a</p>	<p>368. Steffel, Ev</p> <p>I'm against the use of OHV on <u>any</u> of our forest trails or roads. Why? They cause too much damage to the type of soil we have in this area. More and more land is being taken over by people moving to the north and living in the country. (They move here for the peace and quiet.) The wildlife is losing its natural environment. (Keep the forests for the wildlife.) Where will they go when forests are gone?</p>

<p>1541</p> <p>1542</p> <p>1543</p> <p>1544</p> <p>1545</p> <p>1546</p> <p>1547</p> <p>1548</p> <p>1549</p> <p>1549a</p>	<p>Solution</p> <p>-Buy land throughout the state for this use (similar to private hunting farms).</p> <p>-Build trails like biking and snowmobile trails – maybe connecting towns.</p> <p>-Are there some old roads in the state that can be made to use OHV?</p> <p>-Is there land in the Iron Range that can be bought or leased?</p> <p>-Makers and sellers should be required to inform buyers where they can and cannot go on these vehicles.</p> <p>-What about old gravel pits?</p> <p>Can we afford to make another mistake like the one done at Spider Lake in Cass County. I hope this isn't a "done deal." Sounded like it from the DNR representatives. Once this land is lost, it's gone – NEVER TO BE THE SAME AGAIN.</p> <p>Who is going to enforce these people who cause the damage? Doubt that peers will work, not until there's been a lot of damage.</p> <p>(We have new neighbors that completely destroyed the bushes on our lakeshore, off the road damage. They also drove over silt fence protecting wetland and then driving over wetland. This damage happened over one weekend.)</p> <p>DNR mission statement – to protect the environment – not against providing areas for the OHVs. There are other solutions than going in the forests.</p>
<p>1550</p> <p>1551</p> <p>1552</p> <p>1553</p> <p>1554</p> <p>1555</p>	<p>369. Steffel, Martin</p> <p>Please be advised that the under-signed attended and spoke (briefly) at the DNR sponsored "public open house" Wed., January 12, 2005 at the Park Rapids High School.</p> <p>In my comments, I stressed that the DNR's first and most important responsibility is to protect, maintain and develop our state's natural resources. All other responsibilities are secondary, at best. Having reviewed the DNR's "mission statement" as presented on the projector screen, I respectfully submit that said statement is contradictory in that it would abandon its primary responsibility as previously stated but rather formulate policies that would compromise ecological stewardship by policies that would result in attempting to "be all things to all people" – a premise clearly stated on the overhead screen. Avoid setting policies that cannot be enforced!</p> <p>With the above principles and ideas clearly in mind, I hereby do respectfully set forth these specific recommendations for your review:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delete the "connector trails" from your plan for Paul Bunyan Forest; we submit the present trail system is adequate; 2. Ban so-called "mudder trucks" and vehicles of such like which have tires with large "lugs" which could cause serious damage; 3. Contain ATV traffic to the present system of trails – E. of Spur 1. Limit new trails development to this area. Again – enforcement! 4. Delete any proposed new trails to be established West of Spur 1. <p>Formulate strong policies that would hopefully avoid a reoccurrence of the Cass County Spider Lake area trails (debacle)/destruction.</p>
<p>1556</p> <p>1556a</p> <p>1557</p> <p>1558</p>	<p>370. Stocker, Ollie</p> <p>I couldn't believe the article in last Saturday's Tribune (12/25/04) describing the plan to open up more truck trails in the Paul Bunyan Park. I have been vacationing between Brainerd and Walker for over 20 years. Yearly we bike the Paul Bunyan and Heartland trails, go on nature hikes, etc. I've always enjoyed the pristine beauty of the Park, seeing the deer, eagle, etc. especially when you get deeper into the park away from the traffic etc. The thought of a truck trail ripping through the woods, tearing up the vegetation, scaring away wildlife for miles around, and filling the area with noise and exhaust pollution makes me sick!! I am adamantly opposed to such a truck corridor for several reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Some of Minnesota's most precious assets are our woods and lakes. Once they are destroyed, by pollution and irresponsible use, they will take decades to replace. RAPING THE FOREST so that a few people can get their thrills, will do such irreparable damage. They will destroy the fragile ecosystem that is already being over taxed by air pollution and development. Our forests are our last few refuges where nature and wildlife can be protected. Such a proposed trail will definitely destroy those assets in the Paul Bunyan State Park. 2) I strongly believe such a trail is totally unnecessary. Unlike the glamorous Jeep commercials

<p>1558a</p>	<p>that show a driver getting to a remote location where he/she can take in the raw beauty of nature, people using this trail only want to test our their vehicles. If they were serious about approaching wildlife, they would find a much quieter, gentler way to enter the forest rather than by a roaring, exhaust spewing 4x4. So if the primary purpose of such a trail is to test a vehicle's mettle, go to a gravel pit, a mining area where the drivers can have all the challenges he/she wants without destroying a fragile ecosystem. Go to a setting that is already denuded of wildlife, is already scarred, and the further effects of four wheeling will be very minimal. Abandoned gravel pits, iron ore mines, etc. are the perfect setting for such activity. Opening up such Truck Technical Trails is irresponsible. It blatantly will destroy and do immeasurable harm to the ecosystem where it is located, as well as having an impact on nature for miles around. The role of the DNR is to protect our fragile natural resources from those who selfishly want to destroy those resources for their own selfish desires and whims.</p> <p>RAPING THE WOODS SO THAT A FEW HOT SHOTS CAN GET THEIR THRILLS IS BLATANTLY IRRESPONSIBLE!!!!</p>
<p>1559</p> <p>1560</p> <p>1561</p> <p>1562</p> <p>1563</p>	<p>371. Stone, Mike</p> <p>I am sending this letter as part of the requested Public Comment on the proposed OHV use changes for the Paul Bunyan State Forest. As an ORV owner and hobbyist, I am very interested in having places where I am allowed to use my vehicle. There are thousands of miles of snowmobile trails, and exactly 11 miles of 4X4 truck trails in our State Forests so far. In the first 6 completed forest plans, there were NO designated trails for ORV's.</p> <p>Those of us with 4X4's appreciate the DNR's efforts in attempting to provide us with trails, but we want to stress that simply designating existing forest roads as "trails" is not enough. That would be like telling the ATV's they can only run on paved bike paths. A certain amount of challenge is important to the enjoyment of the sport. 4 wheel drive clubs abound in Minnesota. Most belong to a larger State wide organization, and many to the regional and national 4X4 groups as well. These clubs have a long history of volunteering in their communities and have shown themselves to be reliable and environmentally conscious. The 4X4 community would be so happy to have designated trails that the DNR could count on any number of clubs to assist with trail blazing and maintenance and thereby keep costs down.</p> <p>I am unsure why access to the forest is being denied to just the 4X4 user groups, when on each of the preceding forest plans the ATV's and off road motorcycles have both been granted more designated trails. Hundreds of miles of designated trails. Your plan designates 8.437 miles (of which 2.203 miles are minimum maintenance forest roads) for ORV use. This is certainly better than 0 miles, but I feel that there is much more area currently being used by ATV's that could and should be shared with the 4X4's wherever possible. I ask that you consider adding more logging roads to your proposed ORV trail inventory and also the area under the power line where the DNR feels it is appropriate.</p>
<p>1564</p> <p>1565</p> <p>1566</p>	<p>372. Strommen, Jon & Sarah</p> <p>As owners of a 40-acre parcel within the Paul Bunyan State Forest, we have read the draft plan with great interest and wish to share some of our comments and concerns.</p> <p><i>General Comments on the Planning Process</i></p> <p>We fully support the change from an "open unless posted closed" system to a "closed unless posted open" system. Under the old system, sensitive areas often were not closed until after damage was detected. The closed unless posted open system better protects the landscape since it requires an active determination that OHV use is appropriate before an area is designated as open.</p> <p>We also believe, however, that the planning process suffers from a lack of vision and is being approached in a backwards fashion. The current process involves inventorying all existing roads and trails (many of which are illegal, user-created trails) and whittling down from there. There is no clear idea of what the end result will be. A more logical approach would be for DNR to provide a clear vision of the extent and types of OHV opportunities the agency will provide throughout the state. Trail designation, then, would be guided by the overarching vision, and the forest plans would provide the building blocks to complete the vision.</p> <p><i>Specific Comments on the Paul Bunyan Plan</i></p> <p>We do not support the designation of a 4-wheel truck trail in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. Although we own a 4x4 truck and do enjoy driving forest roads (mostly to access our property), we do not believe there is a need to provide off-road trails with "natural" obstacles on state forest land.</p>

<p>1567</p> <p>1568</p>	<p>According to the plan, there will be 89 miles of system forest roads and 484 miles of minimum maintenance roads open to motorized vehicles, thus providing ample opportunity to drive a 4-wheel truck through the forest.</p> <p>The maps accompanying the draft plan do not provide a clear picture of noise impacts to private property or other areas of the forest. We suggest creating maps which depict a half-mile buffer around each designated trail so that a person can identify quiet areas for birding, hiking, bowhunting, etc. Furthermore, we suggest that decibel limits be used to reduce noise impacts to wildlife and other forest users.</p> <p>Finally, we support the designation of the non-motorized Gulch Lake Area. We believe that active planning for both motorized and non-motorized areas should occur hand-in-hand. We find it curious that planning efforts often revolve around motorized use, a process which leaves only “leftover” areas for non-motorized users. Instead, we believe that active planning for hiking trails, ski trails, and other non-motorized areas is essential.</p>
<p>1569</p>	<p>373. Suhr, Gerald</p> <p>I am a farmer and I also check lake property on my gravel road. I feel there should be a stipulation put in for people who do not joy ride. We also do organic spraying for these folks. The rig was bought to fit the 4-wheeler ATV. I pay a license for my 4-wheeler ATV.</p>
<p>1570</p> <p>1571</p> <p>1572</p> <p>1573</p> <p>1574</p>	<p>374. Sullivan, Mike</p> <p>I am writing you in concern of the lack of truck trails in your area. It seems as though many truck existing trails in Paul Bunyan have been eliminated after many years of usage by 4X4 trucks. The last time I wheeled there the trails showed no signs of permanent signs of unrepairable damage. Yet they were eliminated in the OHV plans. I appreciate the chance to still use some minimum maintenance roads but they are not trails. It would be great to see trails remain as they were before the DNR saw fit to remove them from the plans.</p> <p>My question to you is how does the DNR make a state forest a motorized recreational experience and not include trucks even though the state legislation created a gas tax fund to support a trail system in Minnesota state lands? What trails in your area have been found non-repairable or non-supportable? I have my older maps to review your coordinants.</p>
<p>1575</p>	<p>375. Swanson, Rhoda</p> <p>I have to say that if ATV's are allowed on the expansive trail system proposed, it will be a great detriment to all of our state forests. ATV riders will NOT stay on designated trails- they think it is much more fun to be adventurous and graze their own trails. Our forest wildlife and plant life will suffer. Please....No!</p>
<p>1576</p>	<p>376. Telfer, John & Patricia</p> <p>Our State Forests, such as Paul Bunyan S.F., should not be the playground for aggressive off road trucks or four wheel-drive vehicles of any kind. It's completely inappropriate that DNR would neglect its obligation to protect our state public lands and instead would turn around and permit the endangerment of the forests and wild creatures therein. If you have any power of decision in this matter as DNR Planner, make your decision in favor of the environment and urge others also to do what is right.</p>
<p>1577</p> <p>1578</p>	<p>377. Teske, Brian</p> <p>This note is in regard to the trails of Minn. for ATV use. I'm from Rochester and the amount of trails in southeast MN. is very small, so to travel to the North is a nice way to see that part of the state.(riding on trails).Some people will always ruin things for others, but most of the people will stay on trails so they can ride them next time. Please check out the ATV Connection Forums, on where to ride? a lot of good information on places to ride in the US also check out the Hatfield Macoy Trail System in West Virginia with plans on going into the surrounding states. If MN. could hook up with Wis. and Mich. what a way to bring some extra money into this state. I also realize the (Balance) between everthing! which is find,but what would happen if after two wagon trains, no more could come this way?You and I might not be here. This Planet is not going to last forever.it will die, yes we are to take care of it,but then only allow let say 100,000 cars and no more,is that fair? I also have 4 acres and take care if it with pride.</p>
	<p>378. Threinen, Colin</p>

<p>1579</p> <p>1580</p>	<p>Having to fight for our right to use state forests is a huge disappointment, and an insult to our objective of recreation. Our involvement comes from a deep appreciation of a pristine “untouched” environment. I speak for the majority by saying we are all explorers. Whether it’s because one of us collects exotic mushrooms, nature photography, wild flowers, or just some fresh air. Land Rovers are recognized worldwide as an exploratory vehicle that can go anywhere, for any purpose. There is no other reason for our worry than that of the threat of losing our ability to explore.</p> <p>As far as comparisons to ATV vehicles, there is none. We impact the environment far less than our ATV friends. Always I travel with friends who ride with me, in my vehicle, together. We are powered by one engine, four tires, and one tank of gas. If I wanted to go with my friends on ATVs, there would be four vehicles, four engines, and sixteen tires. I need not to mention noise. Two stroke engines, like the ones used on ATVs, are one of the most unenvironmentally sound devices made. Our club is rooted to being part of the environment in the most responsible way possible.</p>
<p>1581</p> <p>1582</p>	<p>379. Tillma, Jeff</p> <p>I wanted to register my comment on the proposed Off Road Truck trail near Walker, MN. The idea is absolutely absurd and I adamantly oppose this idea. State Forest lands are increasingly the only undisturbed lands available, and to allow trucks to rut the landscape to cater to a few joy riders is irresponsible. The DNR should continue to pursue off road courses in the mine pits and dumps in NE MN, not relatively undisturbed hardwood forests. Look for areas which are already destroyed and build your parks there.</p>
<p>1583</p>	<p>380. Timm, Adam</p> <p>I am a 4X4 truck owner, and I would like to see more trails in the above area for our vehicles. Trailriding is an activity that my family can do together and all enjoy. Exploring the forest, picnicing, and spotting wildlife are great things to do with my parents . I choose to do this from the comfort of our 4X4 truck as opposed to an ATV or a motorcycle. The truck is much quieter and allows me to carry the necessary stuff for an all day outing. It would be a shame if we are not to be allowed a variety of places to enjoy these activities. Please consider this when you are making your decisions about this forest.</p>
	<p>381. Tjader, Frannie (refer to Headwaters Canoe Club response)</p> <p>*OHV use threatens the quality of lakes and streams. OHV use in stream and lake beds is widely publicized in OHV advertisements. OHV magazines, and OHV television programs. Even if they are kept out of streams and wetlands, they have enormous potential to degrade streams and lakes through erosion and deposition of sediment. The design of the machines and the tread patterns of their tires ensures soil movement even ,when the operators attempt to use them in a conscientious manner. During our activities as stewards in the Adopt-A-River program. we have noticed appalling abuse of canoe access sites such as Coffee Pot Landing by OHV users.</p> <p>For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No open routes within a half mile of the Mississippi and Schoolcraft Rivers. 2. No open routes within a quarter mile of a lake. 3. Limit OHV use to times or seasons when damage to soils is unlikely or limit routes to areas where damage to soils is unlikely. Close routes if any noticeable soil movement or compaction results from OHV use. 4. Keep open routes away from wetlands. intermittent and perennial streams, natural heritage sites, or other sensitive habitats. <p>*OHV use is disturbing to other forest users and to wildlife. The opportunity to view wildlife in their native habitat is a primary draw for canoeists and other non-motorized forest recreationists. Zoning the county for forest recreation is essential for protection of wildlife and other uses.</p> <p>For this reason. the Headwaters Canoe Club requests:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keep all OHV routes within the Martineau Trail footprint. 2. If routes are left open outside the Martineau Trail footprint, keep them at least a half mile from the North Country Trail.

	<p>*Regulation of OHV use seems to be a difficult if not impossible task. The DNR does not apparently have adequate staff or funding to maintain control of this activity. One might argue that the plan actually is limiting existing routes, so the impacts should be expected to be lessened. However, after final acceptance of an OHV plan and subsequent production of OHV route maps, significantly increased OHV activity should be expected.</p> <p>For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests:</p> <p>1. Start small and expand OHV opportunities if OHV use proves to be benign with respect to water quality, wildlife habitat, forest plant communities, and other forest users. 2. Work for legislation that will eliminate the hunter/trapper exemption to cross-country travel. This exemption makes OHV activity more difficult to regulate and makes OHV rules more difficult to enforce.</p> <p>*OHV use has proven to be a significant vector for the spread of non-native invasive species, such as spotted knapweed. This problem constitutes a grave threat to the integrity of our forests.</p> <p>For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests:</p> <p>Limit the spread of invasive non-native species by closing routes in parts of the county where such plants grow in county and township road ditches.</p> <p>*OHV activity is relatively new to the landscape and the level of activity is increasing. Its potential effects, therefore, are undocumented. No limit to OHV activity is specified in the plan. Nobody can predict the level of increased activity that may result from establishing connector trails linking the Paul Bunyan State Forest to rural taverns, communities and surrounding counties, but such trails are expected to greatly increase OHV traffic.</p> <p>For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests:</p> <p>Eliminate connector trails from the Hubbard County OHV plan.</p> <p>*ATV use on system roads disturbs the road bed, dislodging large rocks and creating mounds of loose gravel and sand that makes travel difficult with low clearance cars and trucks. Such road conditions can effectively prohibit access to hiking trails, lakes and streams for other users.</p> <p>For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests:</p> <p>Work for legislation that would permit system roads to be open to highway-licensed vehicles but closed to OHVs.</p> <p>*Some areas should be restricted from all OHV use, year-round. Such a restriction in an area like the proposed Gulch Lakes Recreation Area would create a refuge for people seeking solitude and wildlife. It could serve as a "control plot" to be compared to other areas at a later date to scientifically measure the environmental impact of OHVs.</p> <p>For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests:</p> <p>Work for legislation that would permit some areas within a state forest to be classified as closed within a state forest that generally had a limited classification.</p>
<p>1584</p> <p>1585</p> <p>1586</p> <p>1587</p> <p>1588</p>	<p>382. Tjader, Harvey General Recommendations</p> <p>Cluster motorized recreation in one area within a state forest. This strategy will allow a diversity of uses, recognizing that motorized recreation and non-motorized recreation are not compatible. It will also limit disturbance of wildlife and native vegetation. It will help limit the spread of invasive non-native species. At some future date, scientific studies can evaluate the effects of motorized recreation on water quality, wildlife populations, soil productivity, wetland integrity, etc., because part of the forest will have been held as a control.</p> <p>Limit OHV use to routes that are impervious to damage under any weather or soil moisture condition <u>or</u> limit OHV use to dry or frozen soil conditions. This is the way we deal with logging activity. Soil compaction and rutting are undesirable, whether they are caused by skidders or by OHVs.</p> <p>Designate only as much trail as the DNR can afford to maintain and provide law enforcement on.</p> <p>Work for changes in state law to eliminate the gas tax-based funding for off-road vehicles. It seems to be driving a program that is working against the protection and management of natural resources.</p> <p>Work for changes in state law to eliminate the hunter/trapper exemption for cross-country travel. It makes illegal OHV use difficult to prosecute, and it threatens sensitive habitats. We cannot expect the average OHV user to have the knowledge and forbearance to recognize and avoid all endangered, threatened, or sensitive species; designated Old Growth forest stands; and fragile habitats.</p>

1589	Do not designate routes in the vicinity of wetlands, streams, natural heritage sites, or other sensitive habitats. Consider the fact that Hubbard County has not had a County Biological Survey, so many rare resources could be destroyed before they are discovered if the precautionary principle is not employed.
1590	Start small, and increase opportunities for motorized recreation after it has been proven to be environmentally benign and administratively affordable.
1591	Require that machines operating on state lands must be equipped with differentials on all drive axles and non-aggressive tire treads. Develop measurable and enforceable specifications on tire treads such as less than one inch of relief in the tire surface, no metal lugs or studs, etc.
1592	Do not designate OHV routes in the forest in parts of the county where township and county road ditches contain non-native invasive weeds such as spotted knapweed. Close routes in the vicinity of road ditches where a new population of such weeds develops.
Site-specific Comments on OHV trail plan for Hubbard County	
1593	The following suggestions are confined to state-administered forestland within my work area. For the most part, I have confined my comments to impacts that have occurred or might occur within the treadways of routes designated "open" on the map titled "Hubbard County Draft Forest Route and Trail Designation Plan Motorized Routes and Routes Closed to Motorized Use – 11/03/04. However, I think we have to responsibly consider impacts to surrounding lands that might incur illegal or legal (due to the hunter/trapper exemption) cross-country traffic because they lie near "open" routes. For example a route that draws traffic into an area typified by steep slopes, trout streams or wetlands could produce unwanted impacts when riders leave the designated route, whether they are joy riding or retrieving big game.
1594	
1595	NWNE and Lot 1, 13-143-35: This tract of state land contains a designated old growth stand. Reducing motorized traffic within this tract would be in the interest of managing this old growth stand for "old growth" characteristics. One "open" route runs to the east, bisecting the old growth stand and dead-ends just beyond the eastern extent of the stand. I suggest that this route be closed. A second "open" route runs south, along the border of the old growth stand, accessing private land in Lot 4, but Lot 4 appears to be accessed from the south, as well. I believe the route is gated and posted on the north property line of Lot 4. If possible, closing this route and allowing access to Lot 4 only from the south would be in the interest of managing the old growth.
1596	
1597	NENW Section 21-144-32: An "open route" running through this forty appears to be within ¼ mile of a bald eagle nest. Bald eagle management guidelines discourage such uses during the nesting season. I suggest closing the route on the east edge of this forty, or close the entire "trail" at its intersection with County Route 45.
1598	Lot 3, 30-144-33: The map shows a small cluster of "open" routes in the proximity of Kabekona River, a trout stream. I suggest caution in designating open routes in the proximity of trout streams, as trout are dependent on clear water and the "bad apples" in the OHV user "barrel" seem to have a penchant for creating turbidity in streams.
1599	NWNE Section 11-144-34: The map shows two "open" dead end spur routes taking off to the east from the primitive road that accesses Brokaw Lake. These spurs were intended as temporary routes established for timber access only. I suggest that they be closed.
1600	16-144-35: This section has over a mile of "open" routes designated on the map. Soilview, the draft soil atlas for Hubbard County, lists wetness and slope as limiting considerations for forest roads on the soils found in this section (Blowers fine sandy loam). The main route going into this section follows Hennepin Creek, a designated trout stream that would be vulnerable to erosion and deposition from activities on adjacent lands, as well as to turbidity caused by in-stream travel by OHVs. My experiences using this route have convinced me that it is usable only during dry or frozen conditions. I suggest that routes in this section be closed.
1601	NENW Section 16-145-35: The main "open" route crossing this section coincides with a Grant-In-Aid snowmobile trail. It crosses a wetland at the head of an intermittent stream in the NENW. This route has been deeply rutted in the past. It should be rerouted, closed or the crossing should be improved with some type of structure. I suggest either rerouting or closing the route, because I have observed on OHV television programs, in OHV publications and evidence in the forest that riders have trouble resisting making mud holes out of wetlands just such as this, in spite of the presence of crossing structures provided for their use. Another reason to close this route is the fact

	<p>that a very fragile xeric plant community, Central Poor Dry Pine Woodland, lies just to the north of the wetland previously mentioned. Any off-road vehicle traffic would be very destructive of vegetation in this area.</p>
<p>1602</p>	<p>Section 16-145-34: Over a mile of “open” routes are indicated within this section. The soils are classified in Soilview as Rockwood and Blowers fine sandy loams. Forest road concerns listed in Soilview for these soils are poor traction, slope and wetness. Rockwood soil units in this section can have slopes of 30%. A route used by ATVs on state land in Section 22 (nearby, to the SE) is indicated on the map as closed. However, the problem that arose on that route in Section 22 could also become a problem in Section 16, as well as on the “open” routes on County-administered lands in Section 22. The treadway of the closed route in Section 22 has become a pure stand of spotted knapweed, a noxious, invasive and allelopathic weed. Knapweed abounds in the county and township route ditches in this area and is easily spread when vehicles move from the route ditches into the forest. Out of concern for these soils, the native vegetation being threatened by invasive noxious weeds, and for the wetlands and stream that lie nearby portions of this route system, I urge extreme caution in the designation of these routes as “open”.</p>
<p>1603</p>	<p>SE1/4 Section 28-145-34: An “open” route crossing county-administered forestland and terminating at the edge of state forestland appears to come within ¼ mile of a bald eagle nest. Bald eagle management guidelines would discourage motorized recreation within ¼ mile during the nesting season.</p>
<p>1604</p>	<p>SENE Section 36-145-33: A short spur route enters state forestland from 279th Ave. It ends at a wetland. Designating this route as “open” seems to be an invitation to go mudding. I suggest that it be closed to protect that wetland ecosystem.</p>
	<p>General observations on OHV use, from 25 years of forestry experience: Hunter/trapper exemption to cross country travel</p>
	<p>1. Threatened and endangered species and species of concern (natural heritage elements):</p>
<p>1605</p>	<p>I spent several days this fall, evaluating, planning, and implementing protection measures for a patch of ramshead ladyslippers that were growing in a jack pine stand that had been defoliated by budworms and was slated for a salvage timber harvest. While working on this project with DNR eco-services and parks staff, I was as impressed by the dedication of these people as I was by the sensitivity and fragile nature of these plants. We don’t know why they grow where they do or how to help them proliferate. They exist in small colonies that are widely separated from other populations of their species. Hopefully, we have taken sufficient care to protect this colony from the logging that is occurring nearby.</p>
<p>1606</p>	<p>However, we offer them no protection whatsoever from inadvertent destruction by motorized recreationists who know less about the forest and its wild inhabitants than they do about the mechanical abilities of their machines. The ladyslippers I mention are just one example of a myriad of natural heritage features that are not protected from cross-country travel. If future hunters and trappers are allowed universal access to the forest, our logical response should be to post these areas to exclude motorized recreation. Two problems are obvious to me in this regard:</p>
<p>1607</p>	<p>To effectively exclude cross-country travel, signs would have to be posted very close together. Fencing might be a better alternative. This would probably consume the entire OHV budget, as natural heritage elements are scattered throughout the forested area of Minnesota.</p>
<p>1608</p>	<p>DNR Eco-services staff is justifiably hesitant to reveal the locations of natural heritage elements to the general public because they may be subject to collection or destruction from observers. Therefore, signing or fencing could have the opposite effect of what is intended.</p>
	<p>2. Quiet areas/ non-motorized recreation:</p>
<p>1608</p>	<p>Cross-country travel may leave no quiet areas where people can pursue non-motorized recreation interests without the unfair competition and annoyance of motor vehicles. As a forester and hunter in the early 1980’s, I found many areas while I was working that were out of reach by motor vehicle, where I could hunt in solitude and peace on my days off. I doubt if such places exist anymore. The strategy of clustering open routes will help, but with cross-country travel by hunters and trappers being nearly universal, it is not enough.</p>
	<p>3. Old Growth forest areas:</p>
<p>1609</p>	<p>During the 1990’s, DNR foresters evaluated hundreds of Old Growth candidate stands prior to designating them for protection. One factor in the evaluation was roads and trails, the presence of</p>

	<p>which was considered detrimental to the stand's Old Growth character. Ironically, we walked to or through most Old Growth candidate stands on user-constructed ATV trails. Most of these trails led to a hunting scaffold. The Old Growth stands that didn't have trails going to or through them then probably will soon. Many of those candidate stands have now been designated as Old Growth and the ATV traffic is still out there.</p>
1610	<p>4. Xeric/hydric soils: The effects of OHV use on wet (hydric) soils are obvious to everyone (except, apparently, to those who damage them). The effects on dry (xeric) soils are perhaps less so, but still critical. Both of these areas provide habitat for fragile and sometimes rare plant communities (like the ramshead orchid), where one pass from an OHV can do irreparable damage.</p>
1611	<p>5. Non-native Invasive species: "Spotted knapweed: Since its introduction into the United States in the mid-1800's, spotted knapweed has been able to flourish without the presence of natural enemies that reduce its vigor in European/Asian eco-systems. Once this plant becomes established, it reduces the biological diversity of habitats that it infests. Spotted knapweed has a low palatability for both livestock and wildlife species and is a serious weed problem on pastures, roadsides, and wildlife management areas across Minnesota." - Minnesota Department of Agriculture website.</p>
1612	<p>Last summer, while supervising a brushing project on a planting site in the Paul Bunyan State Forest, I used a forest road that is also a designated snowmobile route. Evidence of use of the road by ATVs was clear by the width of the vehicle tracks. The road was covered with spotted knapweed and little other vegetation. Within northern Hubbard County, this non-native invasive pest dominates vegetation in many road ditches. ATVs travel in road ditches, pick up seed, and disperse that seed in the forest. It is aggressive in taking over disturbed areas like logging sites and areas prepared for tree planting and is allelopathic, discouraging other species from growing through chemicals exuded into the soil.</p>
1613	<p>6. Earthworms: "Minnesota's hardwood forests developed in the absence of earthworms. Without worms, fallen leaves decompose slowly, creating a spongy layer of organic "duff." This duff layer is the natural growing environment for native woodland wildflowers. It also provides habitat for ground-dwelling animals and helps prevent soil erosion. "Invading earthworms eat the leaves that create the duff layer and are capable of eliminating it completely. Big trees survive, but many young seedlings perish, along with many ferns and wildflowers. Some species return after the initial invasion, but others disappear. In areas heavily infested by earthworms, soil erosion and leaching of nutrients may reduce the productivity of forests and ultimately degrade fish habitat." - Minnesota DNR website. We rely on the shade tolerant tree seedlings in hardwood forests to replace the older trees as they die. Those seedlings are absent in forests invaded by worms. The mature trees may experience early mortality. You can feel the soil compaction that results from worm activity as you walk through the forest and you can see the exposed tree roots (like gingivitis). These conditions can lead to decay and death. These hardwood forests are growing on the most productive and biologically diverse sites we have in the forest. Their health, longevity, and future are in jeopardy. Dr. Lee Frelich, associate professor at the University of Minnesota, has been studying the effects of the invasive worms on the forest. He says that transporting worm eggs and larvae in clods of mud that can get trapped in tire treads and on the frames of ATV's is a very real possibility.</p>
	<p>Trucks: Rutting and soil compaction A major part of my job over the past 25 years has been the administration of timber permits on state lands. Rutting and soil compaction have been primary concerns in this program throughout that time. Before a tract of timber is sold, we determine the soil type and its suitability for logging equipment. On that basis, we stipulate or recommend an operating season that will minimize soil compaction. We also stipulate outcome-based cutting specifications related to rutting – how deep and long the ruts may get before we shut the operation down. When logging trucks make ruts in logger-built temporary roads, the logger repairs them. Nevertheless, when rutting exceeds our specifications, we shut the logger out of the road he has built and is maintaining. Restoring proper drainage to a road after a mud hole develops is a laborious and difficult process. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. We have no such control over rutting and soil compaction made by recreationists, no seasonal</p>

<p>1614</p> <p>1614a</p> <p>1614b</p>	<p>restrictions, and no outcome-based performance specifications. They are hard to catch because they don't have an exclusive permit to operate in a specific area like a logger does. They don't repair the road after they wreck it. It is left for a logger to repair the next time it is used for timber harvesting.</p> <p>ATVs: road damage</p> <p>The fact that ATVs do not have differentials has a profound effect on the ground they travel over. When making a right turn, the left wheels have farther to go but are turning with the same RPM as the right wheels. Consequently, the wheels on one side of the vehicle spin out, dislodging soil and rocks. A forest road that gets a lot of ATV traffic begins to look like a carnival ride with high, banked curves. Such roads can become difficult to drive on with a truck, and they keep getting worse until the road is reconstructed by a logger who is re-establishing access to a timber permit. The churned up soil provides a seedbed for invasive species and 'opens the seed bank,' promoting the proliferation of weeds from seeds that are lying dormant in the soil.</p> <p>Considering the amount of public land that is relied on for ATV recreation, public land management agencies should have input into the design of these vehicles. They should be built with differentials. Machines that lack differentials should be denied access to public lands. Public land management agencies should also provide input into the types of tires that are produced and used on public lands. Some tires seem to have been designed for agricultural tilling, rather than treading lightly through the forest.</p> <p>ATV users need to develop an ethic that asks not whether something is possible, but whether it can be done without damage to the forest. Until adoption of such an ethic is evident in the forest, more regulation is needed.</p>
<p>1615</p> <p>1616</p> <p>1617</p> <p>1618</p> <p>1619</p>	<p>383. Township Resolutions The Town of _(see below)_ Resolves:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Designated trails for ATVs in the Paul Bunyan State Forest should be contained within the footprint of the Martineau trail system east of Spur 1. Access to forest roads, minimum maintenance roads and trails west of Spur I should be closed. 2. The Department of Natural Resources and/or Hubbard County should not include connector trails between designated use areas in the ATV trail system. This includes but is not limited to the Beaver Lakes/Teepee Lakes/Halvorsen Trails. 3. Hubbard County should eliminate ATV travel on county roads and ditches. 4. In addition, there should be no access given or trails designated for 4X4 mudder trucks on public lands in Hubbard County. 5. The designated funds set aside for this activity may be used to purchase private lands. <p>Lake Alice Township – November 9, 2004 Mantrap Township – October 11, 2004 Straight River Township – October 17, 2004 Thorpe Township – October 4, 2004 Schoolcraft Township – December 1, 2004 Clay Township – November 24, 2004 Helga Township – October 20, 2004 Lake Emma – October 5, 2004</p>
<p>1620</p> <p>1621</p> <p>1622</p> <p>1623</p> <p>1624</p>	<p>384. Traun, James</p> <p>I am writing to comment on the MN DNR off highway vehicle plan for Hubbard County and Paul Bunyan State Forest. I live in Moorhead and own a cabin near Nevis. I come to Hubbard County to enjoy its quiet natural beauty and to get away from the city with all its noise and disruption. I have already found it upsetting to come to my cabin and see the increased ATV use in the area.</p> <p>Since Hubbard County is among the first in the state for OHV forest classification and trail designation, and the DNR is admitting an anticipation of concentrated OHV use in Hubbard County, why would this county contemplate allowing this planned network of connecting trails which will turn Paul Bunyan State Forest into a motorized recreation park, along with our county lands and ditches? Why would we want to be an experiment for the web like trail systems the DNR is planning?</p> <p>I am opposed to the pervasive ATV trail system and mudder truck trails planned for Paul Bunyan State Forest. An ATV trail system should be a confined, controllable system which can be maintained and enforced. It should be in a limited area east of Spur One in the footprint of the</p>

1625	<p>Martineau. I want to see Paul Bunyan State Forest preserved as it has unique terrain which should be there for this generation and future generations to enjoy. It is also necessary habitat for wildlife.</p>
1626 1627 1628 1629	<p>385. Traxler, David L. We live in section 21 Clay Township Hubbard Cty, You trail map shows a designated ATV trail deadending at the north boundary of our property Legal description SE1/4, sec 21-142-34. Without this snowmobile trail being a designated ATV route I have had many cases of Trespass by ATV riders, they have stolen gates cut wires and cut trees to make themselves a route around my gates and fence. This problem will intensify with this new designation. What will the DNR be doing to mitigate this problem and who will enforce the no Trespass law or are we once again on our own? ATV riders have no respect for private property or the law. I would appreciate a reply and please consider this a formal objection to this part of the trail system as presently presented.</p>
1630 1631 1632 1633 1634 1635 1636 1637 1638 1639 1640	<p>386. Trout, Jerry I am very pleased that the team is recommending the forests be classified as 'limited' and therefore relative to the general rule for motor vehicle use 'closed unless posted open.' This is a huge improvement over the current classification. In conversations with DNR Forestry people in Park Rapids, we changed our original route planning for the North Country Trail. We were told that if we followed their general recommendation, the DNR would attempt to keep motorcycles, ATVs and trucks away from the North Country Trail. Our interpretation of the understanding was that recreational motor vehicles routes would continue to be located within the footprint of the Martineau system and any expansion would be away from the North Country Trail. I believe we have been let down in respect to this mutual planning. It appears to me this letdown came as a result of the interpretation of MN Laws 2003, Chapter 128, Article 1, Section 167 [FOREST LAND OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE USE RECLASSIFICATION]. It is not crystal clear, but our understanding is that due to DNR interpretation of the law and the resulting rules and guidelines, the study team was directed by DNR leadership that Forest System Roads and Minimum Maintenance Roads that are open to licensed vehicles must be considered open to all motorized vehicles such as ATVs, motorcycles and 4-wheel drive trucks. I believe the interpretation of the law is going to lead to some serious safety issues and accidents. Those of us who drive and work in the forest on a regular basis are often startled by on-coming traffic, logging trucks and other vehicles. I request that DNR leadership ask for a second opinion on the interpretation of the law from a disinterested attorney. If this request cannot be accommodated or the same opinion is rendered, then I believe the study should state that due to the law, the amount of roads available to OHV traffic exceeds what the resource can accommodate, therefore, the study should request that efforts commence immediately within the DNR to influence the legislature to change the law. Those of us that live in this area and have grown to love the beauty of the Paul Bunyan State Forest and surrounding areas are haunted by the experience with recreational motorized traffic in the Foothills State Forest and around Spider Lake. No one knows what the tipping point is, but it appears once the word gets out to the OHV community that nearly unlimited riding opportunities abound, the resource is overwhelmed. The interpretation of the law mentioned above puts the PBSF and Hubbard County-Administered land at risk with respect to OHV traffic. Providing special trails dedicated to off-road trucks adds to the risk of overwhelming the resource. Providing an extensive system of connector trails adds to the risk of overwhelming the resource. At a minimum, the connector trails should be a reasonable distance from hiking and non-motorized areas. The Beaver Lakes Connector Trail violates this concept. No level of government, township, county, state or federal has proved they can manage high levels of OHV traffic. There are abundant examples of failure to do so in our area of the state. We must be conservative in opening up recreational opportunities to OHV traffic. I could go on for several pages with compelling reasons why we should take a more conservative approach to opening up motorized recreation in the forests and county-administered land. I do not believe I should have to do it. It is the DNR's responsibility to defend the resource. I do</p>

<p>1641</p> <p>1642</p> <p>1643</p> <p>1644</p> <p>1645</p>	<p>consider it my job to raise a red flag when I believe the resource is being steam rolled, laws are being interpreted such that resource managers cannot manage the resource and high level people without scientific briefs override decisions made by people close to the ground with science on their side.</p> <p>Furthermore, I believe the <u>root problem</u> regarding roads and trails and recreational motor vehicles has not been properly defined. In all seriousness and with due respect to the study team and DNR leadership in St. Paul, I submit the following parable.</p> <p>Let's assume that over a very short period of time new high-tech fireworks were developed that proved to be just irresistible to people of all ages. In addition, fireworks over the lake were the most dramatic and rewarding. Furthermore, even though the chemicals from the fireworks set about destroying walleye, pike, muskellunge and pan fishing, it inexplicably was a terrific boon to bass fishing. Fireworks were so popular, that an industry quickly grew up around fireworks employing thousands of people including highly paid chemists and physicists. Advertising revenue at newspapers and outdoor and fishing magazines were at record levels. Firework shows were held at the Convention Centers and outdoor magazines and writers had these events listed at the tops of their columns and invited fireworks advocates to come down to their booths and chat. Writers at fishing camps with their children, extolling the terrific family experience of the wilderness and bass fishing, had cartoons of fireworks in the background of pictures that accompanied the articles. This of course gave cover to legions of fishermen who had an inkling that pike fishing was not what it used to be but bass fishing was so fabulous and so much easier and the fireworks were so great and being endorsed by nearly everyone.... What is there not to like?</p> <p>Due to the quickness of deterioration of most fishing, the fireworks phenomena collapsed under its own weight. The industry objected and convinced the legislature that we needed to develop a plan to allow fireworks over the lake to continue unabated. The legislature said, fine, but you, the industry, develop the plan and sell it to everyone involved. End of parable.</p> <p>In the real world of OHVs in the Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County-administered land the DNR was asked to solve a problem not unlike that above. NOW WE HAVE IDENTIFIED THE ROOT PROBLEM. That is why OHV use on public land is the most divisive issue facing the DNR today. We have put the DNR in a box from which no organization in the world could crawl.</p> <p>There is no question but that natural resources in the forest will be damaged as a result of unabated OHV traffic. The number and diversity of birds, mammals and plant species have only one way to go with unabated motor vehicle traffic in their environment. Down! Hunters, hikers, bird watchers, berry pickers, fishermen and property owners near state forests and county-administered land will all be less successful in their endeavors and negatively impacted in a number of ways with unabated use of OHVs on public land.</p> <p>The whole package embodied in this study, beyond the control of the study team, places the emphasis on maximizing the OHV experience. The OHV element is getting a free ride. The DNR is carrying their water for them. As evident at the January 12th hearing in Park Rapids, OHV advocates, except for one family of 4-wheel truck enthusiasts and a couple of others were silent, letting the study speak for them. Hunters, Hikers, bird watchers, horse riding enthusiasts, fishermen and property owners tried to point out the risks with going with the study results. The emphasis properly placed would have emphasized the natural resource. Hunters, hikers and like minded should have been able to sit back and let the OHV enthusiasts explain how the plan requires rules for riding, penalties, training for riders, explain where funds are coming from for a reasonable level of personnel for rule enforcement. There was none of this. The whole approach is backwards.</p> <p>The thrust of the study IS: "A plan that will provide for hundreds of miles of recreational motor vehicle riding and hopefully people looking for quiet experience in the woods will have that opportunity." The thrust of the study SHOULD BE: "A plan that guarantees natural resources are protected and a certainty that hikers, hunters and like-minded people can enjoy the forest in its natural environment. To a limited extent, the plan provides for some road and trail riding for OHV enthusiasts."</p>
<p>1646</p>	<p>387. Tuffin, Gene</p> <p>I read and reread the article by Jean Ruzicka (Park Rapids Enterprise) about the DNR/OHV trail plan. I am an ATV enthusiast so I considered it from that perspective. If I understood it correctly, it sounds like there are more miles of ATV trail being proposed. I, of course, would like that. I have two sons who have been through the state DNR training for watercraft certification and ATV safety training. We have a cabin near Hackensack and love to ride the Round River trail in the Paul Bunyan</p>

<p>1647</p> <p>1648</p> <p>1649</p> <p>1650</p> <p>1650a</p> <p>1650b</p>	<p>Forest. I am a member of the Akeley Paul Bunyan Trail Riders club, as well as ATVAM the Minnesota organization of ATVers. I also belong to ATVA, the only national organization for ATV's. I don't do sports or hunt or fish, and if I do, it's catch and release. But I do love getting out on my ATV with family and friends for a nice ride. Typically I like to ride 50-75 miles on a ride. We never go cross country or in wetlands but stick to the trail only. On one ride recently I saw, for the first time, two beautiful scarlet tanagers. I don't believe that our motorized presence in the woods harms the wildlife, they seem to have plenty of untouched habitat to thrive in.</p> <p>What us ATV'ers are looking for (I believe) is a trail system/network that will take us from one destination to another, to another and back again. What I mean is places to stop for gas, food, restrooms. Places we can shop for a few provisions to bring back to camp/cabin or home. We have money we want to spend to support local businesses. I would urge the DNR to consider designating more of those (non-designated) trails to be used for both motorized and non-motorized use. If they are already there, why not use them. That way we don't cut into forest lands to build trails new. I am aware that "use of" the public forest lands is subject to user issues from a variety of groups. I personally think from having been out there in the woods, that there is plenty of room for all of us.</p> <p>In conclusion, I would ask one other thing: Please don't close the trail to ATV's at a predetermined date and make it snowmobile only. Some years there has not been enough snow and us ATV'ers would love to ride and patronize local businesses. Why not consider a year round ATV trail such as the one in the St. Croix State Forest? The snow is fun to drive in.</p>
<p>1651</p>	<p>388. Ulmer, Eric</p> <p>I can't possibly fully express my excitement for the proposed off-road truck driving area via email. This is exciting and much over due. Hopefully the DNR will also invest in OHM trails as well, as these are equally as scarce as OHV trails such as the one proposed. I support the DNR in the Paul Bunyan State OHV trail project.</p>
<p>1652</p> <p>1653</p> <p>1654</p> <p>1655</p>	<p>389. Vanderbeek, Fred #1</p> <p>Signing online this a.m. to AOL the first thing I see on Welcome screen is the Following: Driving Circles Around SUV's. New Jeep can spin around in place: 2005 Detroit Auto Show The 2005 North American International Auto Show is featuring over 50 new vehicles this week. Take a peek into Edmunds.com coverage of the show and check out some of the highlights which include the all-new Dodge Charger, Jeep Hurricane concept (pictured) and the LF-A concept from Lexus. Get Your Dream Car</p> <p>This is exactly what we all see taking place. I don't see anything at all "Healthy" for our forests/ wildlife ourselves at all in allowing or creating more roads. Not one single bit. My pointy about "Noise Pollution" below does not come biased, I play the guitar very very loud and always have. Although, it's always in my own house or appropriate place. Pertaining to our environment and it's protection, we already have more than enough roads and vehicles contributing to global warming as it is. I myself own a Jeep Cherokee. I LOVE driving on the Echo Trail and many places in it. There's already far more roads than I'll ever see in my lifetime here in Beautiful MN. I know this fact I also have a motorcycle. and LOVE gliding along wilderness hwys/scenic byways on that too. That's what roads are for. Parks/Natural State and the wildlife within themReverence for all Life in this earth required that they were established. Right along with the DNR. Reverence for all Life in this earth requires that the DNR IS established.</p> <p>There will not BE any Reverence for the DNR at all if it takes a "Pro-Private-Industry/Self Seeking" stance on this and quite honestly the very literal truth is that should the DNR abandon that purpose for which it has been formed, then those wronfully negligent guardians thereof legally shall be facing willful negligence suits by environmental groups and the like. This is a very serious matter and at this point in time, with all the actual facts at everyone's disposal these days nobody can claim "They didn't know any better"</p> <p>I'm grateful the public is allowed to be heard on this matter, and see it as a very positive tool that DNR professionals who've made it their life's work can use to educate an ignorant public and both a self seeking industrial machine with at the same time and acknowledge the victory it surely has brought :)</p>
	<p>390. Vanderbeek, Fred #2</p> <p>Having Lived here in MN all my Life and Loving the outdoors, fishing, hunting swimming/</p>

<p>1656</p> <p>1657</p> <p>1658</p> <p>1659</p> <p>1660</p>	<p>all ways love for the environment was applied and instilled in me by my father who spoke these same words from his father a Holland Immigrant. "Love for the environment instilled and applied." I do not see this at all in ATV enthusiasts. I see environmental degradation. I see the spread of Eurasian milfoil. I see a complete lack of reverence for wildlife under the guise of "Sport." I've seen Grouse populations devastated. I've seen areas once plentiful and teeming with Life overrun with noise pollution which DOES AFFECT BREEDING and feeding and so much more. All under the guise of being an "Outdoorsman/Woman."</p> <p>I do not own a snowmobile, but their impact on the environment is frankly quite harmless compared to the onslaught 4-wheeler ATV's have brought upon the land. I read this past summer one lake infected with Eurasian Milfoil will effect 7 miles all around it. ATV's and what they haul, and additional roadways carry upon them an awful lot upon them. There is a significantly serious difference altogether from an outdoor enthusiast and a thrill seeking ATV 4-wheeler enthusiast. One is happy as a Carnival with oil and gasoline covered in grease and the sound of diesel engines at a state fair and the other sees it quite differently. One is enthused about nature's awes, the other is enthused about going on a joy ride. One is interested in the "Health of a forest and it's inhabitants" and the other is interested in tires with ripping threads on them. I AM not at all saying that handicapped people should be prevented from operating ATV 4-wheelers in our Beautiful Minnesota parks, but I AM saying that everybody else should be prevented from doing so, save law-enforcement-DNR officials. Period.</p>
<p>1661</p> <p>1662</p>	<p>391. Vaselaar, Ken</p> <p>I am opposed to the DNR's plan to allow/contrive trails for 4-wheel drive trucks in our state forrests. It has already been demonstrated that they cause intolerable amount as of destruction and erosion (prompting the 2002 policy now under attack). Certainly these enthusiasts can be accomidated by having the state buy and develop old mine land and the like, which would perhaps help the local economies in those areas as well. We need to preserve our natural forests. I oppose this plan.</p>
<p>1663</p> <p>1664</p> <p>1664a</p>	<p>392. Vlasak, Ray</p> <p>Where to begin...there are so many issues. Perhaps first who I am; second the specific comments Mr. Swenson requested and last; general comments and recommendations.</p> <p>Who I am:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest Township, Becker County Chairperson • Becker County Park and Recreation Board Chairperson • Bad Medicine Lake Area Foundation Chairperson • Bad Medicine Lake Area Association Director • North Country Trail, Itasca Moraine Chapter Director • MN Deer Hunters Association, Park Rapids Chapter Director • Park Rapids Chamber of Commerce Member • Mule Lake WMA Advisory Committee Member • Mantrap Valley Conservation Club Member • Friends of Itasca Member • Nature Conservancy Member • Owner and Operator High Pines Resort and Tree Farm • Congress of Minnesota Resorts Member • Retired 3M Company Research and Development Chemical Engineer <p>The following information represents personal comment/opinion. It does not represent the organizations listed above.</p> <p>Specific comments:</p> <p>My use of the Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County public land is limited because I live in Becker County and the White Earth State Forest. My use to date has consisted of hiking, building and maintaining the North Country National Scenic Hiking Trail. My position is that under no circumstances shall OHV activity occur within 1 mile of the North Country Trail or any dwelling. I take this position based on the experience where I live, and impacts of OHV activity on my resort business. My only compromise would be to permit very limited perpendicular intersections. By limited I mean no more than 1 per 2 miles of NCT. The United States Constitution is supposed to guarantee</p>

1664b	domestic tranquillity. I do not have domestic tranquillity when I must put up with OHV noise at all hours of the day, observe the damage to land wherever I drive, and have my hunting activities disturbed on nearly every trip to the woods by ATV operation.
1665	<p>General Comments:</p> <p>The ruling designating trails and roads as closed unless posted open is about the only positive aspect of the current proposal. Of course without enforcement and penalties that hurt even this rule is worthless.</p>
1666	<p>Scientific Results: I take issue with Mr. Swenson's statement that a consensus must be established. The decision regarding where and how much OHV activity will be permitted on public lands must be made based on scientific research. No scientific research results have been presented by the DNR to prove no impacts or sustainable activity. Until the research is completed all OHV use of public land should be stopped.</p>
1667	<p>Open for Hunting: Instead of allowing increased use during hunting seasons, it makes more sense to eliminate use during hunting. How have we come to a policy which is 180 degrees from what is right? ATV's disturb wildlife resulting in less satisfying hunting experiences and results. High Pines Resort serves approximately 60 hunters each fall. None of these people use ATV's and many speak their dissatisfaction with their presence in the forest when they are hunting.</p>
1668	<p>Machine Specifications: The present machines should be restricted to private property and commercial facilities. They do not belong on any public property including road right aways. After sustainable trails are established with appropriate funding and enforcement, the DNR should only license machines for use on public land that minimize impact. I own a John Deere Gator 4X6. It is designed such that the wheels will not lose traction on most surfaces. It only goes about 15 mph max which is well within the speed the ATV clubs say they want to go. It has ¼ the PSI pressure on the ground (flotation tires) of typical ATVs. The one thing it lacks that should be incorporated is differentials on the drive axles. These are the specifications that should be incorporated into a licensed machine. Just think of all the lives that would be saved, and all the humans that would not be turned into vegetables due to head injuries by only allowing this type of machine on public land.</p>
1668a	<p>DNR Reputation: The MN DNR has brought irreparable damage to their reputation with this proposal. I know that the on the ground DNR employees are totally embarrassed by these DNR actions. I have repeatedly defended the DNR in the many local meetings I attend. As a scientist, I understand the value of scientific disciplines and the expertise they bring to decisions. How wrong I was. Now I know beyond a doubt that politics have more to do with DNR decisions than science. DNR leaders responsible for these decisions should be ashamed of themselves for the tremendous negative impact they have had on an organization of national and world renown. I can no longer defend the DNR.</p>
1670	<p>Trails and Roads for OHV: In addition to the physical separation, only trails and roads that are built and maintained by a road and trail authority with funding generated by OHV users should be permitted for OHVs. They must be laid-out such that they do not fragment the forest. 650 miles or whatever the figure is for the PBSF and Hubbard Co. land is ridiculous. From the map it doesn't look like there is a forty anywhere without a trail. There should be no more than 1 or 2 trail crossings in any section.</p>
1670a	<p>Tourism Impact: If OHV impacts continue at the current level, tourism as we know it today will disappear and be replaced by something no one wants. It is a good thing those new jails are being build. The space will be needed to house the new mentality that will prevail amongst visitors and residents. The last couple years guests arriving at are resort are in shock by the condition of our land from ATV's. Then they find no peace because every day and evening the natural sounds they expect have been replaced by loud trail bikes and ATV's. These tourists will not continue to come to this area. They are looking for a new place to go, a place that has the peace they are seeking.</p>
1671	<p>Whether a majority support the current plan or not is irrelevant because it is not sustainable. It cannot proceed without forever destroying one of the most unique areas of our country. Our society is doomed to perish if we do not learn how to manage the future in a sustainable way. You have failed to take into account the silent majority.</p>
1672	<p>PS: My wife Lynette will not write testimony. She is confined to a wheelchair with ataxia. From the very beginning of these issues, she has always stated that OHV operation should only be permitted on private property. And for her, there is no way for her to access public lands except for the few accessible trails mostly in parks. This from a person who would benefit greatly from ATV trails,</p>
1673	<p>but understands the damage exceeds the benefit.</p>
1673a	

<p>1674</p> <p>1675</p> <p>1675a</p>	<p>393. Waalen, Jay</p> <p>Myself and my family use and support the Martineau Trail system, Since these trails were established and marked we have been vacationing in the Akeley area and have enjoyed the trails. However, we also travel many miles each year to adjoining states with OHV trail systems that actually go somewhere, or are linked together with other systems.</p> <p>I wish Miinesota would look to other states that have sustained successful traill systems for guidance and a little less time listening to Enviro extremists. We are grateful for any trails we are allowed to legally ride on, and don't think we are entitled to any and all forest lands, but we do spend a fair amount of money vacationing and riding trail systems in other states.</p>
<p>1676</p>	<p>394. Wallin, Leana</p> <p>The trails that are being considered in Paul Bunyan State Forest are contributing to an unnecessary, useless, and destructive hobby! These kinds of sports don t belong in with the natural settings and wildlife. It is defeating the purpose of the forests. The drivers can use the areas of gravel pits, mines, or whatever else is already destroyed. Just the sound of the trucks, and ATV s will affect wildlife adversely.</p>
<p>1677</p> <p>1678</p> <p>1679</p> <p>1680</p> <p>1681</p> <p>1682</p> <p>1683</p> <p>1684</p>	<p>395. Wannebo, Larry</p> <p>I oppose many of the features and philosophies of the Paul Bunyan State Forest Plan. It is clear that the DNR is performing a massive land grab by incorporating thousands of acres of county land in this plan. To prove my point, the plan does not even carry the name of the Paul Bunyan State Forest on the cover or in the first 10-12 pages of the plan. This was not an oversight, but an intentional deletion designed to mislead the commissioners and citizens of Hubbard County and of the state. The legislative charge to the DNR was to reclassify the state forests, not to grab county lands to make possible a vast state-wide network of ATV and OHV trails.</p> <p>The excessive dedication of roads and trails in the PBSF makes it clear that the DNR and Commissioner are trying to punish the Jack Pine Coalition and the citizens of Hubbard for opposing some of your outlandish outcomes to create a reasonable trail system for OHVs/ATVs. This plan goes far beyond being reasonable with its excessive mileage and the Commissioner's addition of trails for mudder trucks.</p> <p>The planned OHV/ATV routes that impose on the North Country trail are a clear slap in the face to non-motorized forest users. The solitude of the North Country Trail should be protected at all costs. Just as your plan would not take riders into a wetland, it should not intentionally displace other use groups who have invested time, labor and money to create a place for their sport. Motorized and non-motorized user groups should never be mixed. If as the DNR and motorized interests have often said, "there is enough room for everybody", then why would an ATV trail need to impose on an existing non-motorized facility? ATV trails must be deleted or rerouted around this national treasure.</p> <p>The vast trail plans in the PBSF is not the end, but the start for an onslaught of applications for more connector trails. In 5-10 years, this area will become a motorized recreation Mecca, forever changing the dynamics of a community and area that was once known for its peace and quiet. Your plan will affect the economic and quality of life attributes of the community.</p> <p>The DNR has not scientifically proven that it can afford to manage, maintain and enforce use of motorized trails. This plan is a senseless experiment. Common sense, and past experience in Minnesota and other states, has proven that motorized users do not stay on designated trails. This is not a myth, but a fact that the DNR is choosing to ignore. Rather than creating a huge number of trails that you know the DNR cannot manage, wouldn't it make more sense to start with a more manageable number of miles, then open more miles as the motorized recreationists demonstrate that they can and will abide by the rules that will make their sport affordable? This plan places our natural resources at great risk.</p> <p>As I add up the forest roads, minimum maintenance roads, 149 miles designated for ATVs and 100 miles for OHMs outlined in the plan, I come up with about 822 miles for motorized recreation. If you conservatively consider the "neighborhood impact area" to be 40 acres on both sides of a motorized road/trail, the impact area is 65,760 acres. This means that your plan will negatively impact on other user groups and wildlife on nearly 30% of the 217,000 acres in the planning area.</p> <p>This fragmentation of a state forest and other public lands will seriously impact the</p>

<p>1685</p>	<p>eco-system in the area. Your plan is conspicuously void of environmental review. I find it hard to believe that a comprehensive environmental review of 217,000 acres can be written on just one page of your plan. It would appear that the DNR commissioner has imposed his "intent" of the legislature in the suspension of EQB Rule requirements.</p>
<p>1686</p>	<p>If the DNR would have simply complied with the legislation to reclassify the PBSF, you would have been able to focus your resources on 84,900 acres, rather than 217,000 acres. Not only could your limited staff focus on a more comprehensive environmental review on fewer acres, but the DNR would have a better chance of the long-term management of the area.</p>
<p>1687</p>	<p>With approximately 1,781(2003, say it is even 2,100 in 2004) ATVs registered for use in Hubbard County, this plan makes it clear that the DNR is pandering to motorized recreationist and the industry at the expense of the citizens of Hubbard County. Turning over 30% of your public lands to a minority group of motorized users is just plan poor public policy.</p>
<p>1688</p>	<p>It is easy to see why citizens have difficulty making "scientific and site specific" comments on this forest plan, when the DNR did not give the citizens anything scientific to respond to. It's all political and that is a shame when it comes to protecting our rich natural resources.</p>
<p>1689</p>	<p>The DNR plan for the expanded PBSF is a perfect model of how not to do it. It clearly reflects the internal political problems in the DNR. The plan is not realistic when it comes to meeting the minimal demand. Most importantly, it does not reflect the DNR's responsible to protect the natural resources of the state of Minnesota.</p>
<p>1690</p> <p>1691</p> <p>1692</p> <p>1693</p> <p>1694</p>	<p>396. Weatherby, Scott L</p> <p>I am deeply concerned with the DNR's proposal to allow 9 miles of the state's Paul Bunyan State Forest area to be converted into Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) "truck trails". I would like to state my opposition to the proposal and ask that it be revised to exclude trails within State Forest areas.</p> <p>I have enjoyed the Bunyan area for years, hunting, camping, fishing and picnicking. I cannot fathom what it would be like to try and enjoy those activities with off-road vehicles - monster trucks, jeeps, and the like -- roaring by, tearing up the terrain and ruining the beauty and peace of the area. We have already seen great degradation of our forest's beauty with 4-wheeler ATVs zipping up and down tote roads and trails all over the state, where we used to walk in peace and quiet. If the DNR now wishes to provide a place where off-road trucks can "go wild", can you at least do it somewhere that isn't already established as a beautiful park atmosphere, with majestic trees and rolling hills? I can only imagine what roaring mufflers, flying mud and debris, and spinning out vehicles would look like to my son as I try to show him the beauty of the outdoors. Thoughts of the Dukes of Hazzard come to mind, with hillbillies drinking beer and shouting yee-haws at the tops of their lungs. What a disgrace! Why can't we preserve the dignified peace of what already exists?</p> <p>My understanding is that there have been serious issues raised with how "off-road zones" may damage - perhaps permanently - the land and upset the natural balance of soil, water, plant and animal life, etc. These issues should be explored fully before such zones are created, probably with great difficulty of ever removing or limiting them once established.</p> <p>At a bare minimum, if the DNR feels the need to create these ORV "truck trail" zones, please don't stick them in the middle of a beautiful, existing state forest area where new truck activities would greatly disturb the enjoyment historically available to others in the area - walkers, bikers, campers, hunters, and fishermen. Also, if the DNR must create the trails somewhere, please limit the times of the year they are available so there is no conflict in the woods between truckers and sportsmen during hunting season. You are asking for trouble if you let the ORV's operate year-round, when other sportsmen are also outdoors. Many of my sportsmen comrades agree with this point of view, and several are writing to you on this important issue.</p>
<p>1695</p> <p>1695a</p>	<p>397. Weber, Frank</p> <p>I am very much in favor of having off-road truck use in the Paul Bunyan State Forest and in Beltrami Island State Forest. The Paul Bunyan State Forest has already had a history of off road truck use. I feel that it is unfair to "shut out" off-road trucks from using the power line right of way. I feel the DNR could do more to develop and promote off-road truck trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. Most off-road truck people are responsible stewards of the land and should not be shut out of the state forests.</p>

<p>1696</p> <p>1697</p> <p>1698</p> <p>1699</p> <p>1700</p> <p>1701</p> <p>1702</p> <p>1703</p> <p>1704</p> <p>1705</p> <p>1706</p> <p>1707</p>	<p>398. Weber, John #1</p> <p>Please add these comments to those being received regarding the proposed OHV Trails Plan for the Paul Bunyan State Forest. I've been thinking about this matter since before the initial work session held by Hubbard County Board/MN DNR in November 2003.</p> <p>Of the hundreds of comments/questions/points that could be raised, I will be rather brief. Where to begin?</p> <p>One place would be the DNR's call for "specific comments". Given that the 11/03/04 Trails Plan maps still contain 686 miles (the distance from here to Kansas City, MO) proposed for motorized use and given that the Plan was sprung on the public at large in the dead of winter, expectation for "specific comments" is certainly not the most realistic. Be that as it may, I offer the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No ATV/OHV connecting trails across DNR/Hubbard County administered lands. (Example would be Beaver Lakes/Teepee Lakes/Halverson Trails.) • Any "managed/designated" ATV trails in Paul Bunyan S.F. should be kept east of Spur 1 and contained in the area where the Martineau Trail system is found. • Eliminate all trails west of Spur 1 that would provide access to Forest roads, minimum maintenance roads & other trails. • The semantic gamesmanship of changing name from "truck challenge area" to "truck technical trail" does <u>not change</u> the negative impact such a trail would have on Paul Bunyan and should be eliminated from the Plan. (Weren't any positive lessons learned from the Foothills S.F. experience?) • Now focusing on two Sections of a specific township (Mantrap) that should highlight some inherent flaws in this version of the Plan that could be pointed out in many other township sections across the County: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mantrap Twp. Sect. 11: An "orange" (managed ATV trail) purposely dips south to meet a "red" ("not available to ATV use") trail. At the January 12th "open house" when asked how ATV riders will be kept off the "red" trail, DNR replied: There will be <u>no</u> sign...so they won't ride there. How will a "no sign" stop anyone from proceeding south along "red" trail & ending up just a few feet from Heritage Rd. (a Township road) where cross country travel to Nevis and/or Akeley could/would ensue?? Also the "orange" trail is too close to Spring and Goose lakes and even crosses Potlatch land, when I heard that Potlatch was not allowing motorized trails across its lands? 2. mantrap Twp. Sect. 16: "Green" trail should be eliminated from Plan because it is too close to many water bodies (including Middle Crooked and Coon lakes). <u>Plus</u> it looks like it would encourage an illegal connection w/Hardwood Dr. in Sect. 15. Once on Hardwood, ATVs would/could spread out in various directions <p>Another place to begin would be to address some catchwords and phrases such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Technology": Why <u>not</u> let shakeout/fallout phase of OHV technology occur <u>before</u> opening up Paul Bunyan S.F./County lands? • "Sustainable trails": I'll overlook the oxymoronic nature of the phrase when applied to OHV activities. Rather, why aren't all the puzzle pieces, so to speak, clearly identified and laid out to see if they will point toward a <u>sustainable</u> future for these trails? (A few of these pieces being impacts on forest flora & fauna, financial resources for maintenance, education and resources, human resources necessary to perform these activities, etc.) • "Environmental assessment": If the MN Department of Natural Resources truly believes in its mission with resource protection and preservation being foremost, why didn't it lobby MN Legislature vigorously in 2003 to factor in a full environmental review of any OHV trails proposed rather than the exemption until 2008 that short circuits this important step? • "Snowmobiles 25 years ago are just like ATVs today": There is <u>no</u> comparison between ATVs and snowmobiles of the past, present or future. The two really are the proverbial "East is East and West is West...." • "Peer Pressure": When it comes to OHVs in general and ATVs in particular there is "peer pressure" at work. Unfortunately it is largely <u>negative</u>, not positive! If the Plan is banking on peer pressure to make up for its many deficiencies (maintenance, education and enforcement
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<p>1708</p> <p>1709</p> <p>1710</p> <p>1711</p> <p>1712</p> <p>1713</p>	<p>shortfalls), it is truly bankrupt.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Easy to create a trail; hard to delete/alter later”: If nothing else, this reality should be displaying a strong <u>brake</u> on such an extensive trails Plan. • OHV pressure will be concentrated in Hubbard County until Beltrami, Clearwater and Becker counties have OHV trails”: Only way that will be a remote reality for Hubbard County will be entire elimination of connecting trails. Otherwise, Hubbard will be the hub/crossroads for those other counties and pressure will increase. • “Boring/milk toast trails”: At several public meetings, a DNR representative used those terms to describe the ATV trails that were being planned. How likely will ATVer stay on “boring” or “milk toast” trails with all marketing and peer pressure to the contrary? • “Obese Society”” How in good conscience can the MN DNR be promoting <u>more</u> motorized trails when America is facing obesity of epidemic proportions (pun intended) rather than more <u>muscle</u>-related activities? Aren’t health care and insurance costs increasing at unsustainable levels? • “Tourists”: OHV trails, more often than not, will be attracting heavy-impact “eco-terrorists” rather than more desirable “eco-tourists” for a sustainable economy. • Hubbard County Plan will bring a ‘cultural change’ in forest management”: With a growing population, the last thing you would want to do in protecting and preserving a natural resource would be to intentionally and deliberately concentrate negative population impacts such as 686 miles of motorized trails in around a fairly small forest—the Paul Bunyan. Rather, solid sustainable biological management practices should prevail as a #1 priority. Otherwise, intentional dissection of the natural fabric holding Paul Bunyan together will occur if the Plan moves forward to the implementation phase unless greatly scaled back.
<p>1714</p> <p>1715</p> <p>1716</p> <p>1717</p> <p>1718</p> <p>1719</p> <p>1720</p> <p>1721</p>	<p>399. Weber, John #2</p> <p>Why didn't the County Board hold at least one, if not two public hearings on trails crossing County-administered lands? Weren't County Commissioners elected, among other duties, to look out for the best interests of <u>County</u> lands? Instead, the Board seems to have deferred to letting the MN DNR calling the shots (i.e. whatever is fine for State lands is fine for County lands.) I recognize that State and County land ownership boundaries can appear confusing. That is all the more reason for each jurisdiction --the State and the County--to take a vested interest in each's own lands.</p> <p>The plea has been made to "provide specific comments." Given the complex intertwining of proposed trails and the relatively brief time, in the dead of winter, to provide comments does not make this an easy task to fulfill.</p> <p>However, here are several specifics for County lands: 1) Mantrap Twp. Sections 11 & 12: On the 11-03-4 ATV Plan map, an "orange" (managed for ATVs) proposed trail meanders on the western edge of Sect. 12 before perfectly bisecting C.A.L. in Sect. 11. This "orange" trail appears to go too close to larger wetlands such as Spring and Goose lakes as well as numerous smaller water bodies in Sect. 11. Also it purposely veers to meet a "red" ("not available to ATV use") trail extending south within a few feet of Heritage Rd. (a Mantrap Township road) where cross country traffic would then proceed to Nevis and/or Akeley. When asked at the Jan. 12th "open house" what would keep an ATVer from heading south on the "red" ("no ATV") trail, DNR replied: There will be <u>no</u> sign ... so they wouldn't ride there. How gullible are we supposed to be in order to believe that having "no sign" would keep anyone from driving an ATV along this non-trail??!! I'm sure a closer look at other sections in other townships would reveal similar undesirable setups.</p> <p>2.All connecting trails should be eliminated at this time.</p> <p>A few of many reasons that could be cited: 1) Ways already exist to get to the bars in the County. 2) Connecting trails invite a proliferation of illegal, but unstopped "renegade" trails damaging wetlands, township roads and private property. 3) ATV staging points would negate need for connecting trails. Rebutting the claim that parked tow vehicles and trailer invite vandalism, I offer a) Paid (with parking fees collected) attendants on site and/or TV surveillance cameras constantly monitored in Sheriff's Office. 4) These trails bisecting, dissecting and fragmenting County forests <u>plus</u> the illegal trails they will spawn (there is plenty of <u>negative</u> peer pressure to make your own trail) certainly will undercut the County's achieving goals of its Forest Management Plan adopted a few short years ago.</p>
	<p>400. Weber, Marlene #1</p> <p>It seems totally wrong and incomprehensible that the DNR wants to turn Hubbard Co. into an</p>

<p>1722</p> <p>1723</p> <p>1724</p> <p>1725</p> <p>1726</p> <p>1727</p>	<p>ATV & Mudder Truck playground. 4x4 trucks should NEVER be allowed in State forests. If these people want to tear around & drive over logs & boulders they should have to use private land developed just for that purpose. Why should they be catered to by the DNR?? This type of "recreation" has no place in State forests. An <u>8 mile trail</u> is proposed- - they shouldn't be given <u>8 inches</u>. And the ATV's should only be allowed on a limited number of trails. Certainly all the connecting trails aren't necessary. If people can afford these toys then they can afford a trailer to haul them where they want to ride. I can't understand how the Dept. of <u>NATURAL RESOURCES</u> wants to encourage the <u>destruction</u> of natural resources. The manufacturers & ATV clubs seem to have a tremendous clout. What about the <u>majority</u> of the people who don't like the destruction & noise- - who live here because the peace and & quiet & serenity of the woods & lakes are important to them - - who care about the wildlife & all the creatures who call the forest home - - who think progress is learning to care for the environment.</p> <p>If the Co. Commissioners want to encourage this because it will "bring money" to Hubbard Co. they should realize it will cost much more to solve the problems all this will bring.</p>
<p>1728</p> <p>1729</p> <p>1730</p> <p>1730a</p> <p>1731</p> <p>1732</p>	<p>401. Weber, Marlene #2</p> <p>Turning Hubbard Co. into a playground for ATVs and mudder 4x4 trucks is totally wrong. If you think this will "bring money" to the County, that is a very flawed concept. The type of people & problems it would bring would far outweigh any benefits. This would turn away the people who care about the environment, the wildlife, the beauty & peace & serenity of our area. And those of us who live here & care about those things would seriously wonder if we should stay here. We do almost our entire shopping, from cars to groceries, here in Hubbard Co., & try to support the merchants. If you decide the ATVers from the Cities, & wherever, are who you want here, why should we feel the need to support the County?</p> <p>Mudder 4x4 trucks should NEVER be allowed on public lands. This is entirely out of place in our forests. If these people want to ride on challenge tracks it should be on private land, developed for that purpose. Why should our forests be sacrificed for -these terrorists?</p> <p>As for ATVs -- some trails seem unavoidable. These should be east of Spur 1 & within the Martineau Trail System. The connector trails should definitely be eliminated. If people can afford these toys, they can afford a trailer to transport them to where they want to ride.</p> <p>Our forests are some of the few places where one can find true natural areas, & with wildlife who depend on the forests for food & homes. Fragmented forests are not good for wildlife -- or for the MAJORITY of the people who care about the environment.</p> <p>Please don't allow the problems & destruction this Plan would bring. Keep the trail system small & under control. Hubbard Co. is a beautiful place. Don't let it become a place where "anything goes" & "who cares about peace & quiet?".</p>
<p>1733</p> <p>1734</p>	<p>402. Welinski, Joel</p> <p>Please don't take this personally as I'm sure you are just the dumping ground for the publics comments about this sad and disgusting use of our natural resources. I have lived in this State my entire 45+ years. I am an outdoor enthusiast from the word "go". I am not a "rocket scientist" by any stretch of the imagination, but I am smart enough to know what this proposal will end up doing to this beautiful and wild place known as the Paul Bunyan State Forest.</p> <p>From what I read between the lines in the article in the Tribune, someone with some power is saying that this truck lobby has and is spending enough money to give them the rights to run this STATE FOREST into the ground. Well, I am here to tell you that I am sick and tired of someone with some money thinking they can just go and do whatever they want. Do you people in the DNR know who bought and paid for that STATE FOREST in the first place????? And just who pays and has paid to maintain it all these years????? Now you intend to turn your backs on so many people for some stupid extremists. Get your collective heads out of your collective rear ends for Pete's sake!!!!!!We have put our faith in the MN DNR to take care of our PUBLIC lands for all of us to enjoy. You are letting ALL of us down including yourselves. Your reputation as stewards of the land and waters is on such shaky ground the way it is and you choose to continue to go backwards.....shame, shame, shame!!!!!!!</p> <p>The days of me buying hunting licenses, fishing licenses, boat licenses, duck and pheasant stamps---you name it, are numbered if this bunch of crap becomes reality. So some guy can go and</p>

<p>1735</p> <p>1735a</p>	<p>tear up what is sacred to so many of us because he has paid gas tax and off-road truck registration fees????? Get real!!!! You want to talk money in the DNRs pockets??? Your jobs depend on hunters, fisherman, trappers, bird watchers, cross country skiers, State Park users.....the list is long. How much in taxes are collected by the State on all the tools and equipment used for these outdoor activities???? I am sure it kicks the daylights out of whatever these trucks generate in revenue!!!!</p> <p>Build your stupid off-road truck course around the State Captial and see how all the politicians like that!!!! Seeing as how they don't get much accomplished when they are in session maybe they would like to watch what stupidity they do create and just how much revenue they get in return!!!!</p>
<p>1736</p> <p>1737</p>	<p>403. Werner, Steven</p> <p>My name is Steven Werner, owner of the new Stompin' Grounds Lodge & Camp Grounds located 3 miles north of Akeley on Hwy 64. I have reviewed the new ATV trail proposal that has been issued for the Paul Bunyan Forest and I would like to say that it is a great start at providing trails for all to use. I hope the DNR and Forest personal continue linking trails so that the users of the trails can continue exploring the beautiful land that we have here in Minnesota.</p> <p>One issue I would like to see addressed is the chance for ATV riders to continue using the trails during the winter when we have no or very little snow. I believe the trails should continue being closed during the deer hunting season in Section 2 but as soon as the deer season is completed I would like the trails opened back up. Recently, we have had very little snow fall the last few years and ATV riders still cannot use the trails. Once we receive sufficient snow fall and the snowmobile clubs start grooming then the trails can be closed to ATV's and let the snowmobiles have their fun. Please give this issue some consideration and again a good job on the new proposal.</p>
<p>1738</p> <p>1739</p>	<p>404. Wesenberg, Don</p> <p>I am disheartened to continually see ORVs referred to as mudder trucks. Our club does not enjoy mud and does everything to avoid it. Nine miles of trail is not enough for us to drive several hundred miles to enjoy the outdoor experience we desire. To see logging, which does more damage than we could possibly do, continue while we are told no repeatedly is not fair. We need a more extensive trail system in Paul Bunyan State Forest.</p>
<p>1740</p> <p>1741</p>	<p>405. Westerman, Kathy</p> <p>After reading the article I was upset to learn that the office in St. Paul was going to overturn a well-thought out plan by the local people regarding allowing trucks in this Paul Bunyan State Forest. There are better areas for trucks to "play" than state forests, especially on with shallow, sandy soil and a potential for much harm from heavy equipment. Personally, I'd like to keep everyone out of the forests but I know that's unrealistic. Already overused mining areas would be much more appropriate for truck use.</p> <p>I was impressed with your willingness to state your opinion. As a school employee I know it can be difficult to disagree but it is essential if we are going to be true to what we believe. My hat is off to you! I am an active member of The Nature Conservancy and believe we need to do all we can to save what we have. I appreciate your courage and good sense in trying to work out a compromise.</p>
<p>1742</p> <p>1743</p> <p>1744</p>	<p>406. Westrum, Rod</p> <p>I am a township supervisor (Lake Emma) and also our lake association representative on Hubbard County's Coalition of Lake Assoc. Our efforts are to work for a clean and safe environment. I oppose any plan to allow ATV's and OHV's to use our state forests and would not want to allow for any connecting trails as well. The OHV's industry should purchase private lands and develop these lands to suit the wants and needs of their constituents. The Marty-Theissen bill in the state legislature is a good start.</p>
<p>1745</p>	<p>407. Whetston, Stacey</p> <p>I am writing to you to let you know that I am in favor of the DNR plan for the recreational truck trails in the Paul Bunyan area. We appreciate your support and know that this would be an excellent area to trail ride in.</p>
<p>1746</p> <p>1747</p>	<p>408. Wickham, Don</p> <p>I would like to make a couple comments about the future of the Paul Bunyan forest. I would like to see more truck trails. I do believe that there is a place for trucks. The ATVs have a lot more.</p>

	<p>Trucks do not do any more damage than they do. There are some areas that we should not be in, but some would be OK. Please consider us when you are recommending.</p>
<p>1748</p> <p>1749</p> <p>1750</p> <p>1751</p>	<p>409. Wilkening, Debbie</p> <p>I have been a life long resident of Walker, MN. I am also a business owner in Walker and would welcome any changes to increase year round interest in our area and enhance our tourism industry. I have over the years enjoyed the beauty of the Paul Bunyan Forest area and used it for hunting, walking and just a nice drive thru the forest. The current forest road system makes it easy for any vehicle to enjoy the surroundings and wilderness the forest has to offer. I know there are many area residents, and tourist aware of this area, who use the forest in this same manner.</p> <p>There is a need to accomodate small recreational vehicles in the forest system. I do support some changes to the off road trails (spur trails) to accomodate four wheelers, snomobiles and dirt bikes. It would most likely be a very popular destination for tourist and locals alike which would provide an outlet for use of their vehicles and stimulate the tourist industry in our area. But, I firmly believe four wheel drive trucks would be too destructive to the proposed trail system and will make it unappealing and non-travisable by the smaller recreational vehicles.</p> <p>I propose the DNR dedicate a small portion of the proposed area for just four wheel drive trucks to include different terrains and difficulty to satisfy the drivers. The rest of the proposed trail systems should be limited to smaller recreational vehicles. I hope the agency takes in to consideration the many people who already enjoy this area for the way it is today. I believe there is a compromise to satisfy both interests without destroying the aesthetics already in place so it can be enjoyed by future generations also.</p>
<p>1752</p> <p>1753</p> <p>1754</p> <p>1755</p>	<p>410. Wilson, R.D.</p> <p>I just came across an article about a study into the continued use of the Paul Bunyan forest by ATVs. We have a lake home on Lake Kabekona and for several years have used ATVs. I am 50+ years old so maybe I am not a good representation of the average ATV rider however; after just receiving my new property tax statement I feel a need to be heard. I certainly support protecting the environment and see how improper use of any motor vehicle can do significant damage to it. That said; I think that the DNR needs to look at what can be done to improve the number of trails, reduce the need to ride ditches, look for ways to reduce the environmental impact, such as; the use of wood chips to reduce erosion. I found this used in Wisconsin, it seemed very effective.</p> <p>Like it or not, the northern economy needs tourism. I know that the DNR must walk a tight line but the DNR must become a more pro-active organization. Accept the challenge of finding a solution that benefits both sides. What can I do to help?</p>
<p>1756</p> <p>1757</p>	<p>411. Winter, Le Roy</p> <p>This is in regard to ATV s. If we don t control them, they will control us. The vehicle is designed to destroy any land they come in contact with. I live near the Smokey Hills state forest and you don t have to go too far into in to see what destruction they create. They don t need more trails. They need more controls.</p>
<p>1758</p> <p>1758a</p>	<p>412. Woizeschke, Kevin</p> <p>Awesome job !!! This plan provides quality recreational opportunity for all user groups, both motorized and non-motorized, while protecting the natural resources of our state forests. I have ridden the Martineau OHM trails. These single-track trails provide a very satisfying user experience. The scenery is beautiful. What a great way to get out and enjoy our natural resources !!!</p>
<p>1759</p> <p>1760</p> <p>1761</p>	<p>413. Wood, Terry</p> <p>I do not think we need a truck technical trail in the Paul Bunyan State forest or any other State Forest. I have a cabin next to Lyons State Forest. ATV'S have caused more damage to the trails in the last three years than has ever been done before. They have made so many ruts and mud holes that the trails are almost impossible to ride bike on or drive a normal car on. Every weekend but one that I was at my cabin I caught ATV'S trespassing on my property. Their riders seem to have no regard for the rights of others.</p> <p>What is wrong with SUV'S just riding on the trails we already have. If they want to tear around they should use abandoned gravel pits. I think State Forests should be for people to enjoy just</p>

1762	<p>as they are as natural areas. If you can't enjoy the state Forests without tearing them up, go to a gravel pit that is already ruined. I do not think the State is obligated to provide a special place for trucks to drive. What the ATV'S have done to the State Forest Trails and rights of ways to roads is terrible. The State Forests should be kept natural for people to leave the hustle & bustle of city life behind, not to bring it with them to the State Forests.</p>
1763 1764 1765 1766	<p>414. Woodmansee, Alex #1</p> <p>I don't get it, I was under the impression from Swampbucks reps at the association's general meeting that most of what they had asked for in their GIA showed up in the draft proposal as mmr, you mean they asked for stuff that a Buick could navigate?</p> <p>Can no more of the powerlines be mitagted other than that 8/10 of a mile? Is that 8/10 mile where the suposed "challenge" is with fallen logs and boulders to get over? Do these small wetlands between the powerline hills drain into any larger water system? Were they natural or were they there because of the power line corridor? I believe I was told once that some of the ones in the Foothills formed because of the powerline corridor and were not there naturally originally. Cass county is actually going to build a bridge over a wetland between hills on a powerline trail so OHVs can use the entire length of the trail, at least that was what Norm Moody last told me his plan was, actually not a wetland but a small beaver pond.</p>
1767 1768 1768a 1768b 1769 1769a 1769b 1770 1771	<p>415. Woodmansee, Alex #2</p> <p>Hello, my Name is Alexandra Woodmansee, I live in Glencoe, MN and I am the Land Use Director for the Minnesota Four Wheel Drive Association. I am writing to you in response to your proposed trail plans for Paul Bunyan State Forest. I write not only for myself and my husband and the trails we want, but as per my elected position I can safely say that what I write represents the feelings and desires of my entire organization. While I can say that I am writing you on behalf of my organization, I still hope that at least some of our approximate 1000 members will write to you themselves and not just rely on me to do their speaking for them.</p> <p>In general I would like to say a few things about the process. All maps generated for every forest should include identifier numbers for every trail segment so that the public and DNR can better understand what trails people are referring to both in comments and at public meetings. Inventory maps also need to be made available to the public before the public review period begins, like during the planning process. When I say inventory maps I do not mean the township square aerals with the trail inventory superimposed, I mean inventory maps like those on display at the public meetings. Now that the inventory is complete maps like that should be generated for all forests and be made available to the public even for forests not currently in the public review process. It is hard to get out and compare our desired and historically used trails against the DNR maps and plans in a timely manner. It might make this process easier for everyone if user groups were able to let the DNR know what we would like to see designated prior to the decision making taking place. But it is difficult to be prepared even just for the public meetings and comment writing especially if the earliest we can get the maps is when the plans go public and that happens to coincide with hunting season or winter. Also, every draft plan should include Area Location, Area Land type Associations, and Area Natural Features maps. Lastly, every team should prepare a document that lists all trail segments by their identification number followed by the reason(s) as to why that trail was designated open or closed. This would be helpful so that user groups can say "oh, okay, I can't go there because there is a salamander nesting area" or "wait a minute, the DNR goofed, that eagle's nest is on that other trail not this one". It would help user groups argue in an educated manner for what they felt should left open while helping them to understand why certain trails should be closed. It would also provide a paper trail for the public showing that there was indeed a process that the area teams followed and that their decisions were not just made arbitrarily.</p> <p>I will start then by reminding you about your own mission statements. The DNR's general mission statement reads: Our mission is to work with citizens to conserve and manage the state's natural resources, to provide outdoor recreation opportunities, and to provide for commercial uses of natural resources in a way that creates a sustainable quality of life. The mission statement of the Division of Forestry reads: Through shared information, technology, and understanding, we empower others and ourselves to: sustain and enhance functioning forest ecosystems; provide a sustainable</p>

	<p>supply of forest resources to meet human needs (e.g., material, economic, and social); protect lives and property from wildfires; and provide a dollar return to the permanent school trust.</p>
<p>1772</p>	<p>Now, I included that same paragraph in my comments for Fond du Lac State Forest assuming that it was understood what I was getting at, however, from speaking to a team member I found out I need to come out and say why I included the mission statements. The DNR needs to be reminded that in addition to conservation they are supposed also work towards providing outdoor recreation opportunities (which includes trails for trucks), supplying forest resources for human needs including cultural and economic (such as providing a place for the off-road truck culture to recreate which also brings dollars into communities near the trail systems), and protect lives and property from wildfires</p>
<p>1773</p>	<p>(which would include making sure that there are enough routes not so far overgrown by designating them as open that fire fighting people and equipment can get to every where they are needed should that need ever arise). I say the DNR needs reminding of their own missions because based on the area team decision making thus far in the first 13 forests area teams are not fulfilling all of the aspects of their mission statements for all groups equally.</p>
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<p>1774</p>	<p>Just as with Reaganomics the trickle down theory apparently does not work when applied to information within the DNR either. For those who have heard or read my rantings before I apologize for the broken record. As a user group we have talked with many DNR folk and held many meetings with the commissioner and on down the ranks and have tried to explain who we are, what we want, and what we really do and don't do. I see that this information has not spread the way we were assured it would and that misconceptions still abound and continue to adversely affect area team decision making.</p>
<p>1775</p>	<p>I am continually having to explain to DNR folk what ORVs find to be a trail versus what a road is, what we want and need are trails, not roads. The system forest roads and the vast majority of minimum maintenance roads are no more recreational to an ORV than the gravel road I live on or my dirt driveway. Roads provide access and access alone, and more often than not incomplete access at that. Part of the recreational aspect of trailriding in an ORV is getting to go places and see things that someone driving a Honda Civic could not. Part of the recreation of trailriding in an ORV is challenging your driving skills and your truck, whether it is getting over a fallen log or a large rock, making a tight turn, keeping your wits about you when in an off-camber situation, or getting up a steep hill. For myself and the majority of ORV people, the real challenge is in having a truck that can do the most possible off road while still being totally highway driveable, getting to a trail that challenges us enough but where we won't do any damage to our truck, and then being able to drive that truck home. Forest roads and most minimum maintenance roads in addition to not offering the deeper access we are looking for and have a right to, also do not offer ORVs enough of a recreational experience.</p>
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<p>1777</p>	<p>Now, just to set the record straight, the average Jeep exerts only about three and a half times the pressure of a pedestrian (according to numbers provided by the Vermont DNR) in terms of pounds per square inch. Unlike ATVs and OHMs, trucks travel off road at very slow speeds averaging two to five miles per hour. This translates into lower RPMs out at the tires, and an ORV 's tires are often less aggressive than those on ATVs and OHMs as well. Also, there are 1/50 the number of trucks as there are ATVs and 1/2 the number of trucks as there are OHMs. So, in addition to the above mentioned examples of the lower impact of trucks, by sheer numbers alone ORVs will have less impact on the trails than ATVs and OHMs. take two identical trails, on one run 200 ATVs, on the other run 5 trucks, then see which trail is in worse condition.</p>
<p>1778</p>	<p>The DNR's focus in this process seems to be on access and not recreation. Well, in terms of access alone then, access is still being denied to those who drive trucks. Not everyone owns an ATV, so those who drive trucks and want to access the forest deeper than the system roads or minimum maintenance can take them are being kept out because not enough trails are being designated for ORVs. Some are not able to walk well enough, like my friend Helen Cole who drives a Toyota Land Cruiser and was a member of the Minnesota ToyX4s until just recently when she moved to Virginia. She had had several knee surgeries and still has recurrent infections in her knees. She uses her Land Cruiser to access some of the neatest places out there, whether in the Smoky Mountains, the Black Hills, or in Minnesota state forests. Some choose to use ORVs for the protection an enclosed vehicle gives from the elements or because children in car seats can't go on ATVs and OHMs. In terms of</p>
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1779a	access for hunters, not all hunters hunt with ATVs, so you are denying deeper access to other hunters simply because they choose to hunt with their trucks.
1780	<p>The DNR, while it does acknowledge that access also includes berry pickers and the like, still needs to broaden it's idea of what access is for and what people consider recreation. To a degree, access in and of itself can be recreational, but as mentioned in an earlier paragraph, deeper access where we know a regular car can't get to is the kind of access that is recreational to an ORV and requires trails, not a minimum maintenance roads that are passable by Buicks. The DNR needs to designate more trails for ORVs in Paul Bunyan State Forest and state wide, period. And while ORV-only trails would be nice, ORVs will take any trails we can get even if we have to share them with others. ATVs, OHMs and ORVs have been sharing trails for decades with no problems, and in fact trucks have been in the forests for decades longer than ATVs have even been around. The June 9th memo from the commissioner's office reiterates that ATVs and ORVs can share trails. Some argue that motorized recreation is only a small percentage of overall recreational activities in our state forests. I would like to point to the MN DNR Trails and Waterways' "Profiles of Nine Trail User Populations: A Component of the Border to Border Trail Study" which gives estimated user numbers for ATVs, bicyclists, hiker/walker/backpackers, horseback riders, roller bladers, dirtbikes, four wheel drive trucks, snowmobiles, and cross country skiers. The overall numbers reflect that motorized trail users actually make up about a third of the state's recreationalists, not the small percentage that motorized opponents would have people believe. According to this publication 32.2% of all trail users in the state are motorized, and more specifically that 10.2% are four wheel drive trucks. These numbers show that there is a great need for motorized trails and that the DNR should be more zealous about providing motorized trails. These numbers also clearly show that the DNR needs to especially increase trail opportunities for ORVs.</p>
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1785	<p>Some people in this sport have trucks that are designed to do extreme things, they got into the truck for the sake of the sport. These are NOT the type of people you would find on the trails that ORVs are asking for state forests, these people have and use the appropriate opportunities at Gilbert. A nation wide study fact found that only 10.3% of off-road truck enthusiasts like mud, 14% of off-road truck enthusiasts are extreme rock crawlers, and the other 75% of off-road truck enthusiasts go off-road for trail experiences, for hunting or fishing, and so on. So there is indeed a whole other larger population of ORV folk who need and desire easy and medium level long trails. This easy to medium trail seeking population accounts for the majority of the sport are the ORV folk who need and desire long, scenic, can't-take-your-Honda-Civic-on-it, trails in our state forests. And it is just this type of experience that cannot be had at a place like Gilbert. I am a good example of this type of ORV user. I got into four wheel drive trucks first for the sake of the truck, I plain and simple have a thing for unique four wheel drives. Recreating off-road with my trucks (yes I own multiple 4x4s) is a way for me to get out and use my trucks, it is something to do to get further enjoyment out of my trucks. I do not wheel for the sake of wheeling alone. Does a hiker go out and hike for the simple purpose of moving their legs in that fashion? On this same token I wheel because I like to get outdoors, because I like to look at pretty scenery, because I like to camp (primitive camping at that), because I like to get together with other people who share my interests, and so many more reasons I'd bore you if I kept going on.</p>
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1788	<p>The experience I and other ORV folk are looking for in the state forests is one where it is close enough to the Twin Cities that we can leave home at about dinner time Friday night and get to the campground at a decent enough hour to set up camp. We want to be able to get up in the morning, pack the kids, the dogs, and a picnic lunch into the truck and hit the trails. We want to have a picnic lunch on the trail, and we want long enough trail systems that we can be out till dinner time without having seen anything twice. Dinner could be a potluck with wine at the campground like the Minnesota Land Rovers do, or it could be heading into the nearest town for burgers, pizza, and a beer like the Minnesota ToyX4s do. Sunday morning we want to be able to do more trail riding, preferably on trails we hadn't already run on Saturday, but if we had to re-run the same trails that could be okay, and then head home after lunch or even later and still be home in time to make a decent bedtime. At the speeds that the average ORV travels at off-road, a minimum of say 15 miles would be needed for a satisfying one-day trail system, but 20 miles would make a great day and a half. Gilbert is so much</p>
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1790	farther away for many to travel to, and it does not offer the kind of experience described above. At Gilbert no single trails is much longer than one mile and the majority of the riding opportunities there are too extreme for the casual off-road enthusiast.
1790a	Every forest so far has come up with excuses to exclude or barely include ORVs yet ATVs are left in making it seem more like discrimination than true environment concerns. In fact some of the comments have been "not in my forest" taking on an almost proprietary tone when the state forests belong to all Minnesota residents. In Minnesota we have State Parks, National Parks, County Parks, County Park Reserves, National Wildernesses, State Wildlife Management Areas, National Wildlife Refuges, National Waterfowl Production Areas, State Scientific and Natural Areas, and various city parks, nature centers and preserves, bird and wildflower sanctuaries, and more, all of which are non-motorized and protected. The trails we ask to keep open in state forests for ORVs are already
1790b	disturbed corridors, ones that have seen use for as long as 50 or 60 years. And yes, maybe some of them look rough, but keep in mind that has been 50 or 60 years with no maintenance, think what could be done to these trails with maintenance!
1790c	Here in Paul Bunyan you have even more reason to keep open as many trails for ORVs as possible, free labor for maintenance. In Paul Bunyan you have an ORV club, The Minnesota Swampbucks, who put in a Grant in Aid proposal meaning they are willing to come up and do what is necessary to keep the trails they are asking for in good shape. Whether or not the trails are managed as Grant in Aid they are willing to do what it takes to get and keep those trails open. Take them up on this offer. Designate more of what they have been asking for and see how they do. The DNR also has the
1790d	power to use temporary trail closures and seasonal closures that can help manage trail conditions, and MN4WDA members are very good at following these closures. Remember, if you close a trail to an ORV it is closed year round. So please designate more trails for ORVs and manage them, maintain them. If in a couple of years it is not working out, then close the trails. You never know until you try. It is easier to designate more trails open now and go back and close what isn't working out then it is to
1790e	try to add more trails later. Maybe area teams know this, maybe it all really does just boil down to personal prejudices. I mean with one area team I offered to take members on a trail ride in the forest in question to show them in person what we wanted by way of recreational trails, what we really do, and what our impact really is. The ride was cancelled and I was told "It wouldn't have made a difference anyway". I hope that this type of closed mindedness for the sake perpetuating false negative impressions of ORVs is not what has been at play here in the Paul Bunyan planning that has caused so few trails to be designated for ORVs.
1790f	More specifically in Paul Bunyan I can say ORVs would like to see more of the powerline trail left open to ORVs. There is a long segment that was left open for OHMs, #1524. If this was
1790g	designated for ORVs and met what is currently proposed it would create a fabulous, sensible loop with that minimum maintenance road on the other side of Hwy 64, MMR segment numbers 441, 538, 539, 561, 575, and 592. If the DNR was going to leave the powerline open to OHMs then this trail should
1790h	be able to be left open for ORVs. If you can mitigate the wetland issues for an OHM they can be
1790i	mitigated for ORVs. The DNR should be willing to do more to mitigate problems to keep trails open. I
1790j	mean Norm Moody with Cass County told me he was planning on engineering a small bridge over a small beaver pond along the powerline trail in the county administered portion of Foothills State Forest so that he could re-open that trail to all motorized user groups. But alas it seems that the spirit of
1790k	this process has turned from creating "manage use on managed trails" into creating as little use as possible. The DNR should only be closing that which there is a true and obvious need to close, instead area teams have been closing as much as they can and leaving open as little as they can get by with
1790l	leaving open. So far in the first 13 forests about 1500 miles of trails, and I do not mean minimum maintenance roads or system roads but honest to goodness motorized use aparent trails. Of this approximante 1500 miles of trails about 500 miles have been proposed designated for ATVs and only 21 miles of trail have been proposed designated for ORVs. Out of 13 forests. That is about 25% of the forests to go through this review process. If each area team along the way makes decisions based on their personal anti-ORV sentiments and says "you'll get trails in the next forest" or "you'll get trails in the northern forests", then when that last forest comes up for review and they say the usual "not in my forest", ORVs will be left standing there holding an empty bag. Remember, the commissioner has said

	it is "imperative" that you find trails for ORVs. So where will the buck stop?!?!?!?!?
1791	416. Young, Cheryle I have not had as much opportunity to ride in the Paul Bunyan State Forest-Hubbard County area as I would like since I'm from the Twin City area. But being an ATV rider I want to keep as many riding opportunities available as possible. Me and my family do travel the state with our ATVs and RV to ride and see other parts of our state. We are responsible riders that want to be able to continue to recreate through out Minnesota.
1792	I am disappointed in how difficult the maps are to read. I was not able to travel the distance to attend the public hearing for this forest and the map I did have a chance to look at is impossible to read. So I was not able to as specific as your department has requested. http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/ohv/designation/hubbard_atv.pdf
1793	The current 149 miles of proposed ATV trails represents only 1/20 of 1 percent of the total 217,000 acres covered in this proposal. Closing the small spur trails that were old logging trails is not acceptable. It would make more sense to post as closed, any of them that may lead to sensitive areas, rather than just doing a blanket closure of all of them.
1794	Since the total number of miles available to ATVs has been drastically reduced under this plan, why are the 421 miles of "undesignated routes" inventoried not included? Some of those miles should be able to be opened for ATV use.
1795	Connecting trails that will link the separate riding areas is very important! It will allow a continuous trail system that will provide access to many communities. Which will impact the economy of the surrounding areas.
1796	417. Zappa, Mike My name is Mike Zappa and i wanted to take a minute to write to you about the Paul Bunyan trail system. I like many others would hate to see anything negative happen to those trails. I have been riding those trails for about 4 years now and have brought many friends to them with me. Everyone i have brought with me says that they love it. They all have made trips on their own to the forest and plan on making many more. Everyone that had made the trip up to the trails has spent money in the near by towns for Hotels, Gas, Food, etc. Please don't make these trails "limited" and leave them as "managed" trails. I look forward to riding my dirtbike along with my friends and young son in the future. Its getting harder to find good places to ride like the Paul Bunyan Forest.
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1798	418. Zimmer, Barbara & Ken My husband and I are opposed to any ATV traffic in any county, state or national forest.
1799	419. Zimmerman, Al & Carol We have owned a lake cottage on Big Sand Lake near Park Rapids since 1969. We chose to have our vacation home and now our retirement home in Hubbard County because of the pine trees, clear waters, and peace and quiet. We had planned to retire to our lake cottage when our working days were over, and we have now retired. We now have put these plans to retire in Hubbard Co. on hold because we fear that the peace and quiet and the beauty of the natural environment is threatened by the noise and destruction of the ATV's, dirt bikes, and mud- der trucks.
1800	We have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars building our planned retirement home and patronizing businesses in Park Rapids, Dorset, Nevis, etc. We used to be able to recommend that our friends, also, go to Hubbard Co. to enjoy the unspoiled natural beauty. Now, we are hesitant to recommend Hubbard Co. to other people and we spend less time there because the great natural beauty and the peace and quiet that attracted us and many others is being diminished and, in some cases, ruined by nature-destroying machines that threaten the peace and quiet that made Hubbard Co. so desirable. We urge you to take a stand before it is too late to protect the environment that makes Hubbard Co. so special and is now threatened by the noisy, destructive machines that take away what attracted us and many others to Hubbard County.
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	420. Zweber, Becky I am sending this letter as part of the requested Public Comment on the proposed OHV use changes for the Paul Bunyan State Forest. As a family ORV owner and hobbyist, I am very interested

1801	in having places where I am allowed to ride my vehicle. There are thousands of miles of snowmobile trails in this state, hundreds of miles of designated ATV and off road motorcycle trails and exactly 11 miles of 4x4 truck trails in our State Forests so far. In the first 6 completed plans, there were NO designated trails for ORV's.
1802	Those of us with 4x4's appreciate the DNR's efforts in attempting to provide us with trails, however we want to stress that simply designating existing forest roads as "trails" is not enough. That would be like telling the ATV's they can only run on paved bike paths. A certain amount of challenge is important to the enjoyment of the sport for four wheel drive clubs abound in Minnesota. We belong to a larger state wide organization as well as regional and national 4x4 clubs as well. These clubs have a long history of volunteering in their communities and have shown themselves to be reliable and environmentally conscious. The 4x4 community would be so happy to have designated trails that the DNR could count on any number of clubs to assist with trail blazing and maintenance and thereby keep costs down.
1803	
1804	I am unsure why access to the forest is being denied to just the 4x4 user group, when on each of the preceding forest plans the ATV's and off road motorcycles have both been granted more designated trails. Hundreds of miles of designated trails. Your plan designates 8.437 miles (of which 2.203 miles are minimum maintenance forest roads) for ORV use. This is certainly better than 0 miles, however I feel that there is much more area currently being used by ATV's that could and should be shared with the 4x4's wherever possible. I ask that you consider adding more logging roads to your proposed ORV trail inventory and also the area under the power line where the DNR feels it is appropriate.
1805	
1806	421. Zweber, Dean & Becky I am a 4X4 truck owner, and I would like to see more trails in the above area for our vehicles. Trailriding is an activity that my family can do together and all enjoy. Exploring the forest, picnicing, and spotting wildlife are great things to do with your kids. We choose to do this from the comfort of our 4X4 truck as opposed to an ATV or a motorcycle. The truck is much quieter and allows us to carry the kids and the necessary stuff for an all day outing. It would be a shame if we are not to be allowed a variety of places to enjoy these activities. Please consider this when you are making your decisions about this forest.
	422. Form Letters, Petitions, Cards (see appendix A for samples of form letters, petitions and cards sent in prior to the official public comment period.)

RESPONSE TO TOPICS OF CONCERN

The DNR's motor vehicle use classification and road and trail use designation decisions for state forest lands in Hubbard County will be based on the final plan proposal, and Response to Comments. The classification and road and trail designations will be implemented by publication of a written order of the Commissioner of Natural Resources published in the *State Register*.

The DNR used a content analysis process to develop the agency's response to **1990** comments expressed by the public. Related comments were grouped together into topics prior to developing an agency response. Some topics are of a general nature (e.g. State Forest Management Objectives), while others are site specific (e.g. individual trail segments). Comments that expressed a concern or opinion but that were not directly pertinent to the classification or road/trail use designation were assigned to a miscellaneous category.

For each of the **25** categories, a succinct summary of the concerns was prepared by the DNR with input from Hubbard County. This is followed by a list of all the comments that were grouped under the topic (with hyperlinks to the original comments). The agency response to the topic is then presented.

The DNR received numerous letters, cards, comments and petitions during the planning process and prior to the official comment period. These comments are recorded under Appendix A.

1. State Forest Management Objectives

Summary of Concerns

There are a variety of opinions on what are appropriate management objectives and uses of State Forests. Comments vary from preserving the forests as undisturbed natural areas to utilizing the forest for commercial purposes to opening the forests for all recreational purposes. Some commenters did not feel that minimum maintenance roads qualified for good OHV riding experiences. Other commenters wanted OHVs strictly regulated to minimum maintenance roads. Issues and conflicts with loggers were also discussed. Comments included those who feel the DNR should not provide for any motorized uses to those who support both non-motorized and motorized uses of the forests. Some commenters did not recognize the distinction between State Forests and State Parks. Comments both supportive or in opposition concerning ORV trails can also be viewed under the Paul Bunyan ORV category. Comments reflect the passion that the public has for natural resources and their preferred forms of outdoor recreation.

Comments on This Topic

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Response to Concerns

State Forests are actively managed to provide a wide range of goods and services, including outdoor recreation. (Refer to the proposed plan for a brief history of motorized use in the Paul Bunyan & Badoura State Forests). State Forests are not, by statutory definition, designated wilderness or solitude areas. They host a mix of commercial, industrial, and resource management activities that are generally inconsistent and incompatible with wilderness, or a 'wilderness-like' experience (eg. timber harvest, motorized recreation, wildlife habitat manipulation, mining, prescribed fires, tree planting, fuelwood and bough harvest, etc.). State Forests are accessible by roads, and have traditionally hosted a mix of motorized and non-motorized recreational opportunities. The multiple use management policy does not require that all uses be allowed on every acre of forest land. It allows a mix of management emphases across the State Forest system.

There seems to be some confusion from commenters on the difference between State Forest management and State Park management. State Forests differ from State Parks, Wildlife Management Areas (WMA), State Trails, or Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA), which generally preclude OHV recreation.

The DNR will continue to manage State Forests within the statutory guidelines. Current statutory direction is to move to a 'closed unless posted open' policy for OHV use within State Forests south of Highway #2. (MN Laws 2003, Chapter 128).

2. Non-motorized Recreational Opportunities

Summary of Concerns

Comments related to the need for and availability of non-motorized recreational opportunities and the need to separate conflicting uses by including buffers between recreational users. Comments included the lack of focus on non-motorized opportunities in the plan and damage to existing trails by OHVs. Commenters also stated that non-motorized trails are environmentally sensitive compared to motorized trails. Commenters discussed costs involved with maintenance of non-motorized trails. Gulch Lakes and the North Country Trail were of particular concern.

Comments on This Topic

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Response to Concerns

This proposal supports a net forest and county-wide reduction of miles available for OHV use. The proposal does, in fact, designate de facto closed areas by designating roads and trails within those areas as non-motorized routes. The Gulch Lakes, Mantrap Lake, Crooked Lakes, Soaring Eagle Trail, and the Crocus Hill non-motorized areas are identified in the plan. Motorized forest users will be confined to designated roads and trails, while non-motorized forest users may traverse most any route through the forest – designated or not. The DNR will work to limit off-trail riding and halt the proliferation of unauthorized OHV use by initiating management techniques including signing, barricades, user education, increased enforcement and closure of trail segments where appropriate.

3. OHV Opportunities

Summary of Concerns

Comments relate to the perceived lack of OHV opportunities in state forests, or point to successful OHV trails. Some commenters were supportive of the proposal, while others discussed access issues (too few or too many accesses). Some commenters discussed the growing number of ATV users within the state forest and the need for better recreational opportunities. ORV and OHM groups cited the lack of riding opportunities relative to ATV trail miles. References to logging trails and challenge areas were also made. OHM trails (Martineau) are fairly extensive in the Paul Bunyan. Some commenters felt trails should be shared, while others expressed a concern about a lack of or impacts to single-track OHM trails. Comments on the Martineau OHM trails are listed under that heading. Comments on the proposed Paul Bunyan ORV trail can be viewed under that category.

Comments on This Topic

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Response to Concerns

The DNR and Hubbard County intend to provide a well-distributed system of designated OHV trails and motor vehicle routes that provide recreational access to state and county forest lands, while accommodating utilitarian forest users (eg. Hunters, anglers, trappers, nature watchers, harvesters and gatherers). The consensus of the DNR and Hubbard County Field Team is, that this proposal provides reasonable utilitarian and recreational motorized access to most forested areas of Hubbard County. In so doing, it also recognizes the needs and desires of non-motorized constituents to use state forest lands without the influences of motor vehicles.

4. Forest Zoning For Recreational Use & Spurs

Summary of Concerns

Many comments centered on issues related to ATV use east of Spur 1, restricting use to the Martineau footprint and closing trails west of Spur 1. No OHV use was encouraged. Other commenters discussed the need to zone the forests to separate non-motorized and motorized uses. Buffer zones to separate uses, protect the environment, decrease noise levels and aid enforcement efforts, were also discussed. Comments also addressed small spurs of less than one mile and remote spurs that were outside the statutory boundaries of the state forests.

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Response to Concerns

There is no state land allocation decision likely to satisfy all interests. Given the limited size and configuration of the forestland base, it is impossible to completely separate all motorized and non-motorized use areas. The DNR and Hubbard County Field Team believes, that this proposal provides reasonable motorized access to most areas of the forest, while recognizing the needs and desires of non-motorized forest users to access and enjoy the forest absent motor influences.

The current condition supports a mix of motorized and non-motorized recreation, as is customary for most state forests. This proposal supports a net forest-wide reduction in motorized road and trail miles. The proposal does, in fact, designate de facto closed areas by designating roads and trails within those areas as non-motorized routes. The Gulch Lakes, Mantrap Lake, Crooked Lakes, Soaring Eagle Trail, and Crocus Hill are identified as non-motorized areas in the plan. Motorized forest users will be confined to designated roads and trails, while non-motorized forest users may traverse most any route through the forest – designated or not.

Although physical constraints and legal/policy protections for wetlands do sometimes result in a higher density of roads and trails in upland areas, areas without designated roads or trails provide opportunity for dispersed non-motorized recreation during most of the year.

The DNR and Hubbard County Field Team focused a majority of motorized recreational use in the south unit of the Paul Bunyan State Forest to the area east of the Spur 1 Forest Road. This includes trails for ATV, OHM and ORV. (The exception in this area of the county is the trail connecting the ATV trails to the existing Grant-In-Aid trails along CSAH #4.)

Short spur trails throughout state and county forest lands are proposed to be closed to OHV use through this plan, or open by special use permit only. Short spur trails that will be closed are those in small public ownership or public lands that are landlocked by private ownership. These short spurs are generally less than 1 mile in length and usually go through clear cuts to loggers landing areas. Other reasons for closing spurs include problem areas such as wetlands, steep erodible soils or the elimination of cross-country ‘wild cat’ trails.

5. Funding Issues

Summary of Concerns

Issues centered on enforcement, permits, signage, and funding for ongoing trail monitoring, maintenance and enforcement. Others questioned legislative intent and the use of public dollars for recreational uses of the forests. The use of ATVs for utility purposes (e.g. farm use) was discussed, as were user fees, special vehicle license plates, insurance requirements, legal liability, and increased medical costs attributable to OHV use.

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Response to Concerns

The Minnesota Legislature has directed the DNR to accommodate OHV activity and appropriated funding for this purpose. The DNR and state legislators are cognizant of fiscal limitations and the substantial cost of operating recreational trail systems. The current proposal supports a net forest-wide reduction in motorized road and trail miles. The DNR believes that current funding levels provide the resources necessary to administer this addition to the statewide system of OHV trails and riding areas.

To date, OHV dedicated funds have been adequate to manage designated OHV trails. The DNR will monitor and adjust expenditures, adjust the size of the designated trail system, or propose changes in user fees, if the dedicated funds are incapable of supporting the designated OHV trail system. Refer also to “Use of OHV Dedicated Funds” category for further explanations.

6. Use of OHV Dedicated Funds

Summary of Concerns

Concerns were expressed regarding the use of dedicated OHV funds and the lack of ORV trails and riding opportunities. Some suggested increased funding for enforcement, natural resource protection and trail maintenance purposes, and to purchase private lands for OHV activities.

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Response to Comments

The major source of funding for the acquisition, development, management and maintenance of the motorized trail program are the dedicated accounts. However, other sources of revenue for OHV trails include grants from the National Recreational Trail Program, charitable gambling funds, Iron Range Rehabilitation Agency, local units of government, volunteers, state organizations and local clubs. There are four dedicated accounts which include snowmobile, all-terrain vehicle, off-highway motorcycle, and off-road vehicle. The purpose of the dedicated accounts and allowable expenditures are stated in statute.

The largest sources of revenue for all accounts are the unrefunded gas tax and registrations. The unrefunded gas tax is the largest source of revenue in the off-highway motorcycle and off-road vehicle accounts. Registration is the largest source of revenue in the all-terrain vehicle account.

7. Trail Management Concepts, Practices, Costs, Maintenance

Summary of Concerns

Comments include suggestions for designing OHV trails that are sustainable, cost effective, and provide quality OHV riding experiences (ie. not roads), while avoiding conflict with non-motorized uses. Designated OHV trails should connect in loops, have clear and concise signage, be available in various locations around the state, and be adequately funded and maintained. DNR should estimate maintenance costs and match the designated trail system to available staff and budget. Management objectives and lack of detail regarding monitoring plans were also of concern. Lack of focus on non-motorized trails and related issues was criticized. Questions regarding the future of undesignated trails, damages, mitigation and litigation arose, as did concerns involving trails near wetlands, water access sites, environmentally sensitive areas, campgrounds and adjacent private properties.

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Response to Concerns

The current road and trail designation process in Hubbard County is primarily focused on deciding which existing routes are suitable for providing motor vehicle access to state and county forest lands. The designation process also seeks to identify existing routes that could be part of a quality OHV trail. This approach does not preclude future proposals for well-designed, quality OHV trails in the area. Suggested trail design features will be considered as trail proposals move through the site-level design and development stages.

The DNR and Hubbard County acknowledge that all recreational trail use, including both motorized and non-motorized, carries the potential for adverse environmental effects. However, with appropriate trail alignment and design, sound construction techniques, materials and timely monitoring and maintenance, OHV use of state and county forest lands can be provided. Hardened trail treads will be employed where native soils cannot resist displacement. Improved water crossings will be used to minimize disturbance to surface water, wetlands and other sensitive natural features. Regular trail monitoring, maintenance and field enforcement will help ensure that trails do not fall into disrepair or generate unacceptable social or environmental impacts over time.

8. ATV's and Snowmobile Trails

Summary of Concerns

Commenters identified the need to separate ATV and snowmobile trails in order to minimize the potential for rutting or erosion of snowmobile or cross-country ski trails that could preclude trail grooming, especially under low-snow conditions. Safety and maintenance issues were also raised. Some users would like to see ATVs allowed on snowmobile trails during winter months when there is too little snow for snowmobiling. Trail use by dog sledgers was also discussed.

Comments on This Topic

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Response to Concerns

The DNR (and others) provide a variety of geographically-dispersed motorized, non-motorized and mixed-use or multi-use trail recreation opportunities. While some trails are designated for a single-use, most corridors serve more than one purpose and accommodate more than a single type of trail user.

It is the DNR's policy to encourage incidental, secondary or shared use of designated trail corridors whenever possible, subject to user safety, user satisfaction, logistical and resource management considerations. This policy is intended to minimize new corridor development through the forest and the number of total trail miles necessary to meet trail use demand. Multiple designation also broadens the funding base available to develop, manage and maintain recreational trails. Although some trail uses are clearly incompatible (e.g. snowmobiles and cross-country skiing), there are various management tools (e.g. wider tread, dual treadways, one-way travel, speed limits, seasonal-use restrictions, special signing, etc.) that can be applied to shared corridors to minimize the potential for conflict and to maximize both user safety and satisfaction. Seasonal use restrictions are a cornerstone of this plan and will be used to reduce or eliminate user conflicts.

Conflicts between motor and non-motor recreation users can and do occur. Moreover, given the limited size and irregular configuration of the state and county forest land base, it is impossible to completely separate all motor and non-motor use areas, or even to insulate forest users from sounds emanating from outside forest boundaries. Careful consideration and efforts by the DNR have been made to implement practices that designate separate areas for non-motorized and motorized use.

9. Powerline Trails

Summary of Concerns

Comments centered on the request to use powerline right-of-ways as OHV trails. Supporters reason that these corridors are already disturbed and should be suitable for OHV use with little added planning or review. Some ORVers and OHMers were concerned that ATVs had been given preferential access to area powerline corridors.

Comments on This Topic

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Response to Concerns

The DNR will review designations of OHV trails on existing utility rights-of-way, to see if any of these corridors are suitable for trails. It is true that because these corridors already exist and have been substantially modified, costs for establishing trails along the corridors is lower than clearing new trail corridors. However, some existing rights-of-way are simply not suitable for use as OHV trails. These cross open water, wetlands, traverse steep hills, or are located adjacent to private lands or other incompatible land uses. Moreover, utility rights-of-way tend to be very wide, open and linear. Regular use of vegetation control and other utility corridor maintenance activities may also detract from the use of these corridors as recreational trails.

The major powerline running parallel to Highway #64 is an area of attraction for some OHV users. This powerline runs perpendicular to the topography and across wetlands, lakes and ponds. Portions of the powerline are suitable for

OHV use. This plan includes designated uses that will be perpendicular to the slope on sites with short grades. The majority of the corridor does not meet these criteria.

10. Hunting and OHV's

Summary of Concerns

Commenters fear disruption of quiet hunting experiences in the State Forests by OHVs. Hunter/trapper exemptions were discussed. Other concerns focused on the use of ATVs for hunter retrieval only or problems with cross-country travel and destruction of habitats by machines. Concerns also addressed destruction of habitats by motorcycles in the forests.

Comments on This Topic

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Response to Concerns

This plan is intended to bring about improved management control of the Hubbard County forests by limiting OHV and motor vehicle access to designated routes judged sustainable by an interdisciplinary DNR and Hubbard County Field Team. The DNR and Hubbard County believe that the present proposal represents a marked improvement over the current condition. Little new road or trail construction is proposed or anticipated.

Construction of permanent, unauthorized trails on state lands is prohibited, and violators are subject to citation and civil and/or criminal penalties. Off-trail or cross-country travel is also prohibited in Minnesota's State Forests, except for certain hunting and trapping provisions pursuant to MS 84.926. An ATV can travel off forest trails and forest roads, or a highway licensed vehicle/ORV/ATV can travel on forest trails not designated for a specific use, if the person has the applicable license in possession for the following activities: retrieving big game in September; hunting big game, transporting or installing stands in October, November or December; tending protected furbearer traps; tending minnow traps.

All county lands outside the state forest boundaries will be open to utilitarian forest users using Highway License Vehicles only and will be restricted to inventoried trails. The Hubbard County Field Team will recommend to the County Commissioners to adopt ordinance changes reflecting these authorized uses.

11. Environmental Impact of OHV Use

Summary of Concerns

The operation of motorized vehicles on forest lands can impact soils, water quality, wetlands, vegetation and wildlife resources. Noise pollution and heavy motor trail density were concerns for many commenters, as was the future of Old Growth timber stands. OHV enthusiasts state that they do not agree with this assessment and are careful to avoid sensitive landscapes. Questions surfaced regarding the future of undesignated trails and wildlife corridors. Many commenters questioned the mission of DNR relative to environmental protection versus recreational trail development. Others called for added environmental review steps and scientific research before proceeding with OHV trail development.

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Response to Concerns

The DNR and Hubbard County acknowledge that all recreational trail use, including both motorized and non-motorized, carries the potential for adverse environmental effects. However, with appropriate trail alignment and design, construction techniques and materials, and timely monitoring and maintenance, OHV use of state and county forestlands can be provided. This involves the use of stable, naturally shaped, engaging and narrow OHV trails that encourage relatively slow travel and highlight natural features. Hardened trail treads will be employed where native soils cannot resist displacement and sustainable crossings will be used to minimize disturbance to surface water, wetlands, and other sensitive features. Regular trail monitoring, maintenance, and enforcement are intended to help ensure that trails do not fall into disrepair. Best Management Practices will be incorporated to address issues of unacceptable social or environmental impacts.

Implementation of the current proposal will result in a substantial reduction in the mileage of routes that remain 'open' to motor vehicle use. The DNR and Hubbard County Field Team considered the full range of potential environmental effects when making its motor route determinations. The DNR and Hubbard County believes that the present proposal represents a marked improvement over current conditions.

12. Economic Impact of OHV use

Summary of Concerns

Comments included both positive and negative economic impacts to communities, resorts, campgrounds, property owners and the state from the proposed OHV changes to State Forests. Comments also addressed issues related to the role of DNR to the OHV motorized industry. Examples of impacts to communities in other states were also cited.

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Response to Concerns

The DNR and Hubbard County are concerned with the economic effects of their decisions. However, natural resource impacts, environmental concerns and social impacts were key factors in the DNR and Hubbard County Field Team's decisions. The DNR and Hubbard County will work closely with cooperators, planning partners and with local communities to implement an economically-sustainable strategy for accommodating recreational use on state forest lands and lands administered by Hubbard County.

Connectivity of recreational usage of off-highway vehicle trails were seen by the County Commissioners, as a critical component for economic development in the county.

13. Enforcement Issues and Public Safety

Summary of Concerns

Law enforcement concerns include illegal OHV operation, trespass, OHV damage (wetlands, water, erosion, rutting, or disturbance of fragile ecosystems). Concerns also focused on limited funding for added enforcement needs. Some suggested statutory changes to limit OHV noise levels, improve public safety, and to restrict seasons and hours of use. Public safety concerns were expressed regarding OHV traffic on forest roads, mixed-use trails and public highways.

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Response to Concerns

This plan is intended to bring about improved management control by limiting OHV and motor vehicle access to designated routes only. Effective field enforcement becomes possible once road and trail signing is in place, rider maps are available, and forest users have a clearer understanding of just what is and is not permitted within these 'limited' forests. Implementation of educational programs and compliance with rules and regulations is expected to dramatically improve the functioning of officially designated OHV trail systems.

The DNR will monitor and re-evaluate trail use and trail conditions periodically to determine whether additional measures (e.g. signage, dual trail tread ways, speed zones, temporary closures, special restrictions), are necessary to remedy demonstrated user conflicts or to mitigate potentially dangerous conditions. The DNR will work closely with Hubbard County and in consultation with partners and affected stakeholders to limit off-trail riding and the proliferation of unauthorized OHV trails and unlawful riding.

The DNR agrees that marking trails to aid emergency responders is a good idea. Systems have been developed for use on snowmobile trails that could be transferred to OHV trails. The DNR will work with local 911 emergency personnel in developing a trail location signing system. A sign manual has also been developed to ensure continuity and consistency of sign standards for state and county forest roads and trails.

The DNR will also work with the MN Department of Transportation to address the need for trail crossing signs along public highways.

14. Role of Volunteers

Summary of Concerns

Concerns were expressed about the role and effectiveness of volunteers in OHV trail management and maintainance. Concerns were also expressed about possible legal issues in using volunteers, including the considerable time and dollars devoted to these efforts. Volunteer reimbursement is seen by some as being in direct conflict with the spirit of volunteerism.

Some commenters opposed clubs or trail organizations developing Grant-In-Aid (GIA) trail systems in state forests.

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Response to Concerns

The DNR has considerable experience in using volunteers for a variety of tasks. Volunteer contributions include trail maintenance (brushing, mowing), obtaining leases, easements or permits from private landowners, trail signing, teaching safety classes, producing local maps, trail maintenance, and trail grooming.

Trail organizations, clubs and their local government sponsors, play an integral role in providing and managing trails through the Grant-In-Aid process. The DNR takes very seriously both its fiscal responsibility for Grant-In-Aid trails assistance programs, and its obligation to respond to the growing, changing needs of Minnesota's recreational trail users. This has prompted the department to re-examine the current system of grants, with an eye towards improved accountability and program performance. As the Legislative Auditor noted in 2003, increased oversight is needed to ensure that dedicated trail recreation funding is not used for programs or purposes other than the purposes for which registrants paid. The department supports these findings. The DNR is working with legislators, trail clubs and local government sponsors, to enact reforms that make the Grant-In-Aid trails program more accountable and responsive to both state and local club needs.

15. User Conflicts & Needs

Summary of Concerns

Many perceived conflicts between non-motorized and motorized uses of state forests were expressed by commenters. Each group has different needs and issues. The impact of noise and disturbance is a major concern to

non-motorized users. Other issues include cross-country trail conflicts, mobility limitations and the need for motorized access to state forests. Various user group studies were cited to support public positions and arguments.

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Response to Concerns

Conflicts between motor and non-motor recreation users do occur. However, given the limited size and irregular configuration of the state and county forest land base, it is difficult to separate all motor and non-motor use areas, or even to insulate forest users from sounds emanating from outside forest boundaries (eg. roads, highways, commercial or residential development).

In some locations, the presence of motorized vehicles is the existing condition. It is likely that those wishing to avoid motorized activity, already avoid or minimize their use around these areas. Some level of displacement may have already occurred and will persist with or without the current proposal. Speculation regarding the proportion of motorized versus non-motorized users in the forest is largely unfounded. Currently, no user data on non-motorized or motorized use of Hubbard County forests is available.

This plan supports areas that will focus on separate non-motorized and motorized zones for users. Motorized forest users will be confined to designated roads and trails, while non-motorized forest users will traverse most any route through the forest – designated or not. The DNR will have to address the issues of off-trail riding and proliferation of unauthorized OHV trails. Unlawful riding can result in unacceptable resource impacts and lead to conflicts with other forest users.

16. County/Township/Private Landowners Issues

Summary of Concerns

Comments related to access issues, connector trails, and the need for clear and consistent riding rules on state and county lands. Related issues include trespass, noise, devaluation of properties, damage to private driveways and liability for damage repairs. Ditch riding is viewed by many as an important issue facing Hubbard County. (refer also to Ditch Riding category). Hubbard County shoreline ordinances and Forest Management plans were discussed, as were issues relating to the Neilson Spearhead Center. Some commenters charge that there has been a lack of input and review by other county agencies. Issues concerning large private landowners such as Potlatch, and private campground owners were also identified.

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Response to Concerns

As of the effective designation date, motorized forest users will be confined to designated roads and trails, with certain seasonal exceptions for big game hunting and trapping. The DNR and Hubbard County have addressed off-trail riding and the proliferation of unauthorized OHV trails by the closure of many small spur trails. Upon implementation, all trails will be ‘closed’ to OHV use unless posted ‘open’ to such use.

The DNR and Hubbard County will not designate existing routes for motor vehicle use unless the public (and not just adjacent landowners) have adequate legal access to the route from a public road or highway, or legal access via public land. Private landowners will no longer enjoy exclusive vehicular access to state forestland from adjacent properties. While this may prove inconvenient for adjacent property owners, dedicated OHV funds cannot be expended to sign and maintain trails that the public-at-large cannot access.

The DNR and Hubbard County will work with landowners, lessees and seasonal cabin owners who must cross state forestland to access their property.

Special Use Permits may be issued on selected routes for specific purposes to allow vehicular access to these landlocked parcels and properties.

This planning process has been a collaborative effort by the DNR and Hubbard County from its inception. Both entities believe strongly that because of the intermingling ownership and common issues, collaboration is essential.

17. OHVs in Highway Rights-of-Way (Ditch Riding)

Summary of Concerns

Some area residents are concerned about public safety, OHV noise, enforcement and maintenance in roadside ditches. Impacts to private driveways and road crossings from OHV riding were also cited, as was the control of weeds spread by OHV use. Commenters suggested the county get involved with these issues in order to reduce confusion surrounding responsibility for road ditch maintenance and enforcement. See also comments under County/Private landowners.

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Response to Concerns

Under Minnesota Law, snowmobiles and ATVs can legally operate along the bottom or back slope of most road ditches, subject to certain restrictions. Ditch maintenance is the responsibility of the local road authority (ie. MN DOT or County Highway Department). OHV enforcement is conducted jointly by state and local enforcement authorities, with the assistance of DNR Conservation Officers. Private driveways, constructed across transportation easements paralleling public roadways, are typically the responsibility of the property owner or easement holder. Counties can, at their discretion, close some or all, public road ditches to OHV travel for public safety or resource protection reasons.

Upon implementation of the proposed OHV trail designation, Hubbard County will review the use of road ditches as connectors to the designated trail system and will also review the need for other county ditch routes as corridors for OHV use regularly or on an as-needed basis.

18. Gravel Pits, Mine Alternatives, Private Providers & Challenge Areas

Summary of Concerns

Several commenters expressed the need for controlled ATV and ORV riding opportunities within state forests. Private providers and increased user fees were suggested as tools for accomplishing this. The OHV park in Gilbert was used as an example. Commenters cited extensive damage to the environment from OHVs and suggested contained "challenge" areas as one possible solution.

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Response to Concerns

The Minnesota Legislature has directed the DNR to accommodate OHV activity and has appropriated funding for this purpose. The DNR is, in turn committed to providing vehicular access to state forests in a responsible and sustainable manner. The current plan is intended to bring about improved management control of the Hubbard County forests by limiting OHV and motor vehicle access to designated routes judged sustainable by an interdisciplinary DNR and Hubbard County Field Team. It is the consensus of the Field Team, that this proposal provides adequate motorized access to most areas of the forest, recognizing the needs and desires of non-motorized

constituents to use state forest lands and Hubbard County lands, absent motor influences. The DNR and Hubbard County believes that the present proposal represents a marked improvement over the current (unmanaged) condition.

The Hubbard County Field Team will recommend to the County Commissioners to draft ordinances regarding trespass issues and gravel pits.

19. Connector Trails

Summary of Concerns

Both positive and negative views of connector trails were expressed by commenters. Comments centered on the Beaver Lakes/Teepee Lakes/Halverson Trails and Freedom Ridge area, and issues related to the Gulch Lake Management Area. Unauthorized trails were also discussed. Commenters expressed concern for fragile ecosystems and steep slopes that could be impacted by ATV use in this part of the forest, as well as damage to existing snowmobile trails in these areas. See also User Conflicts & Needs category. Some see a positive link between connector trails and tourism and/or regional economic development.

(Note: For the purposes of this document, the DNR defines connector trails as links between existing trail systems that provide access from the loop trail to services such as gas, food, or lodging. These connector trails often include forest roads or public highway rights-of-way.)

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Response to Concerns

The DNR and Hubbard County are committed to providing vehicular access to state forests in a responsible, sustainable manner. The current plan is intended to bring about improved management control of the Hubbard County forests by limiting OHV and motor vehicle access to designated routes judged maintainable by an interdisciplinary DNR and Hubbard County Field Team. In the judgement of the Field Team, this proposal provides adequate motorized access to most areas of Hubbard County forest lands, recognizing the needs and desires of non-motorized constituents to use the forest lands absent motor influences. It also provides for trail connections to other roads and trails, to support services, and to popular riding destinations. Little new construction is proposed or anticipated. The DNR and Hubbard County believe that the present proposal represents a marked improvement over the current (unmanaged) condition.

Field Team members voiced reservations regarding the proposed BeaverLakes/Teepee Lakes/Halverson connector trail. Concerns surround the potential for increasing user conflicts due to its proximity to the proposed Gulch Lakes non-motorized recreation area and the North Country Trail (NCT), the site sensitivity issues at the Teepee Lakes location, and the public safety issue of increased vehicular traffic on the Halverson State Forest Road (a narrow, winding, hilly road without shoulders or safe sightlines visibility.) A suitable site route to eliminate the Halverson was not forthcoming. While the Field Team recommended delaying implementation of connector trails in the proposal, the Hubbard County Board of Commissioners regarded the connectivity of designated ATV trails to services as a critical component of the plan. Furthermore, the need for strategically located parking and staging areas at various sites (especially in the southern part of Paul Bunyan State Forest), was also seen as being critically important to provide.

Upon reviewing the existing routes, the Hubbard County Field Team offered three alternatives for providing connector routes for consideration by the Hubbard County Board of Commissioners. These routes included the North Route (Gulch Lakes Forest Road east and west/County Road #91/Halverson), the Middle Route (Beaver Lakes/Teepee Lakes/Halverson), and the South Route (Refuge Forest Road/Teepee Lakes/Halverson). On November 16, 2005, the Hubbard County Board of Commissioners unanimously passed a resolution to adopt all three connector routes for implementation. The north and south routes would be developed first, with the middle route ear-marked for future development, or as an alternative, should either the north or south routes prove unworkable.

20. Paul Bunyan ORV Trails

Summary of Concerns

Comments focused on the need to provide added ORV trail mileage within the Paul Bunyan State Forest. Others oppose any ORV trails in state forests and believe that this activity should more appropriately be provided by private enterprise. See also Gravel Pits, Mine Alternatives, Challenge Areas, Private Providers. Some viewed ORV trails as 'challenge trails' for 'mudder trucks'. Cross-referenced comments can also be viewed under the OHV Opportunities category.

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Response to Concerns

The Minnesota Legislature has directed the DNR to accommodate Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) activity and has appropriated funding for this purpose. The DNR has, in turn provided Field Teams with specific guidance regarding the specific types and desired characteristics of ORV trails to be located in DNR-administered lands. In the judgement of the Field Team, this proposal complies with all departmental guidelines and provides adequate ORV access in the designation of a nine (9) mile managed and maintained ORV trail south of the existing Martineau Trailhead.

21. Martineau Recreational Trail

Summary of Concerns

Off-highway Motorcycle (OHM) use on the Martineau Trail prompted questions regarding the level of riding experience required to ride the trail, and the need for expanded riding opportunities in other locations. Critics cite noise, soil erosion, unauthorized challenge areas and chronic maintenance issues. Other commenters requested that no additional OHM trails be developed outside the Martineau Trail and that other existing undesignated routes be closed.

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Response to Concerns

Comments were reviewed by the DNR and Hubbard County Field Team. It is anticipated that the Martineau Recreational Trail will be reviewed and modified throughout the planning and implementation process in order to provide a quality riding experience for OHMs, while addressing the concerns of non-motorized users.

22. North Country National Scenic Trail

Summary of Concerns

Concerns centered on noise issues, the need to buffer the hiking trail from motorized trail influences, and public safety issues arising from motorized vehicle crossings of this coast-to-coast National Hiking Trail.

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Response to Concerns

The North Country National Scenic Trail (NCT) is plainly marked and signed as a non-motorized hiking trail. It was inventoried as such. DNR Field Teams have been specifically instructed not to displace or disrupt any designated trails – motorized or non-motorized throughout this process. Future corridor acquisition plans and ongoing negotiations for missing segments of the NTC will also be respected. The DNR has collaborated with the the North

Country Trail (NCT) throughout this process, and is committed to signing all motorized trail crossings and other road and trail junctures to protect public safety, and to encourage trail users to observe posted rules and suggested trail user etiquette.

23. Other States Examples

Summary of Concerns

Several examples were cited from other states as examples for the DNR to explore regarding use, enforcement, monitoring and provision of facilities related to OHVs.

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Response to Concerns

The DNR routinely communicates with other federal, state and county land managers on this and other matters. Many agencies across the country are struggling with this very same issue. Information and lessons learned from these exchanges will be applied as appropriate in order to improve the outcome of this forest classification and OHV trail designation process.

24. Site Specific Issues

Summary of Concerns

Comments below relate to individual trail segments, unique targeted areas or as they pertain to the forest inventory and mapping process. Scientific information was presented for the Field Team to consider, and legal interpretations of state statutes and forest management goals were reviewed. Some commenters expressed frustration that trails could not be field checked (by concerned citizens) because the comment period was during winter months. All specific or actionable comments have been extensively reviewed by the DNR and Hubbard County Field Team and indicated changes made to the final plan and maps as warranted.

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Response to Concerns

All specific or actionable comments were reviewed by members of the DNR and Hubbard County Field Team. Changes were made to the final plan and maps as warranted, through a detailed review of all site specific comments. Changes to the 2005 OHV legislation, along with considerable public comments, prompted the inter-disciplinary team to reevaluate the proposed plan and maps. The public should refer to both the November 2004 pre-public review maps and 2005 post-public revised maps to note changes regarding site specific comments. Maps can be viewed at: www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/ohv/designation/status.html

25. Miscellaneous Issues

Summary of Concerns

These comments express a concern or opinion that are not directly related to the Hubbard County forest classification or road/trail use designation process. Comments on DNR process and public input are generally discussed, as are OHV-related topics and issues that do not fit under any other topic or category.

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Response to Concerns

Comments were noted and include issues that do not directly relate to this plan. However, many of these comments are pertinent to the larger issue of OHVs on public lands and where applicable will be incorporated by the DNR.

APPENDIX A: COMMENTS RECEIVED PRIOR TO PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD.

The DNR received numerous letters, comments, cards and petitions during the planning process and prior to the official comment period. The information and comments were considered in the draft plan. Appendix A is a record of the comments that were received before the official comment period was opened.

1. Anonymous (no date)

To the Hubbard County Commissioners:

We come to snowmobile in your area and are very opposed to the idea of sharing trails with ATVs. Our experience shows that the damage done to the trails makes it much less desirable for our well established sport - requiring a considerable amount of snow to cover the rutting that occurs. Many of these trails were built with snowmobile funds and we would hate to see them misused in this way. Of special concern here are the Beaver Lakes Trails, Wilder trails and the Coon Lake trail that are already showing damage.

2. Anonymous (no date)

I am very concerned with the Paul Bunyan and Hubbard County OHV Trail proposals. An ATV trail system in Paul Bunyan State Forest must stay east of Spur I and in the Martineau Trail Area where motorized activity already exists. I am adamantly opposed to the concept of connecting trails. The concept of connecting trails will turn Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County into an ATV park. This concept makes the ability to enforce trail usage an impossible task. It allows ATV users more access to public lands than I feel necessary at the cost of displacing other users and causing very significant destruction to the environment.

3. Bair, Linda (no date)

I have questions for the planning team:

Who did you ask for input?

Snowmobilers? Here we have over 500 cards addressed to the Commissioner of the DNR and over 500 addressed to you requesting that you not put ATV Trails on snowmobile trails due to the damage ATVS cause. There is also a letter from a local snowmobile club requesting the same. This sharing could greatly damage the economic basis, snowmobiling brings into our County - the major winter tourism economy. We cannot afford that loss. It has yet to be proven if any damage can be truly repaired.

Townships? Here we have resolutions from township annual meetings asking that you contain these trail systems and that you drop the connecting trail concept due to lack of enforcement. Our townships should have had a lot more involvement in this process. As keepers of public lands within our boundaries you should be sensitive to what your neighbors want.

Other public land users, residents and landowners - here are over 300 letters from horseback riders, canoers, hikers, hunters, landowners and residents. These letters are again asking you to contain the OHV trails and NOT allow shared trails or connector trails. This does not include the numbers of emails you have been receiving over the last few weeks. This minority of users does not deserve displacing the rest of us.

Who is going to enforce this on county lands? Where is the money to come from?

So, County Board Commissioners:

Though many of us in this room would prefer that these machines be limited to private parks and not given access to public lands, we recognize that compromises are being made. We do not feel that your scaling this grandiose plan back is too much to ask as a compromise on your part. You need to know if the DNR can in fact manage a smaller system from a damage control and enforcement standpoint before you go any further.

This has not been the case in the Foothills model in Cass County.

Contain the OHV access to the PBSF to East of Spur 1 in the Bunyan where this traffic already exists. Move the Round River trail system back to where it was originally planned to be - overlaid on the Martineau. This is already over 100 miles of existing OHV trails. This leaves the Game Refuge free of damage. Get them off of the snowmobile trails -

Do not buy into this idea of connecting trails - too hard to enforce and leads ATVs into a much greater span of public lands than necessary. This is the biggest issue your constituents have with this plan. It puts ATVs all over the county.

You have a difficult decision to make and it is best not to make it based on economics. The damage done

will far outweigh any benefit you may think it will bring.

4. Bair, Linda 03.19.04

Dear County Commissioners:

I attended the meeting on March 10 and wanted to thank you for letting some of the public speak. I was very pleased to hear mention made of your planning several public meetings regarding the use of ATVs on county lands.

I am part of a growing group of concerned citizens that have been very active in getting letters and cards signed for you regarding feelings in our county on this issue. I wanted to make sure that you understood where we are coming from on this. I was concerned that perhaps we are not always as clear as we want to be when Commissioner Robinson made mention of comments coming from uninformed people and that opposing the DNR plan was essentially asking them to keep the status quo. I hope we are not part of that group because we certainly believe in the designated trail concept.

Some of us were at the first presentation the DNR made late last year to the townships and county board. That presentation made it very clear that the intention at that time was to use some of the snowmobile trails and have a network of connecting trails through county lands and Grant-in-Aid trails. This is the plan that we are referring to when we say we are opposed to the DNR plan. We already know that the DNR has to designate trails and then close down the rest under the limited forest classification. The question is how much and what to designate.

When we say we want the motorized traffic to remain East of Spur One and within the footprint of the already existing motorized trails, we are referring the OHV trails that have already been designated and mapped - the Martineau and the Round River Trails systems. We are not referring to shutting down the west side to snowmobiling or the vehicular traffic that has always used the roads.

When we refer to not designating any more trails for OHV, we are referring to the fact that there are already two trail systems in Hubbard County that have been designated - The Round River Trail system and the Two Inlets trail system in addition to the over 100 miles of OHM trails called the Martineau. So in a sense - when you look at this plan and see it as downsizing the trails available to ATVs because under the current "managed" classification they can ride on any forest road or trail unless it is posted closed.; we are looking at it as a plan that expands those trail systems that already exist by designating additional trails and connections that currently are not part of those systems. EX. Beaver Lakes Trail, Teepee Lakes Trail, and the Halvorsen Trail in the Bunyan. The team members say these are still in the plan and they go well outside the Spur One border and actually create the southern edge of the game refuge and wildlife management area called the "pink pig".

The shared use of these trails will displace other users and put OHV traffic into a township that doesn't want them but has little say over state land within its boundaries. It will shut an entire trail down to other users that have been using the Beaver Lakes for years and it will jeopardize the quality of snowmobiling in our county because of the damage they leave behind.

We are opposed to the expansion of the designated trail system that would include "connecting trails" because of its affects on property owners, ditches, snowmobiling and the huge enforcement issue. An issue of great concern to us is the effect that OHVs will have on tourism in our county. Connection trails will funnel more ATV's into areas that are already the primary attraction for people visiting our county. When these people return and find OHV use increasing - will they keep coming back? We cannot afford to displace these traditional users of our state and county lands.

Some of us were also part of the 1998 team that Commissioner Frank mentioned. Many of the concerns expressed then, still exist and many more have surfaced in the 6 years since we served. Back then, sharing trails with snowmobiling sounded fine, now, experience shows that it's not so good. Back then, as a business owner, I thought this might be an opportunity to expand my business. I now believe the cost is too high.

Enforcement is a huge concern. Please thoroughly research what funds are truly available and who will actually be doing the enforcement and how much there will be.

We are hoping that as you look at this issue, you will see that starting in the limited, controlled way we are suggesting, will give you an opportunity to see how it will work, see how much funding for enforcement and damage repair there really is. It would seem to be a good compromise with a safety net.

5. Bair, William 03.13.04

Mr. Floyd Frank

Chairman, Hubbard County Commissioners

Hubbard County Courthouse

Park Rapids MN 56470

We appreciated your meeting March 10 on ATV trails being open to the public. We are pleased to see the

cooperation between the county and DNR in developing a unified approach to the use of both state and county lands. It is clear that considerable professional attention is being given to an issue of key importance to the economy and quality of life of this area.

We were encouraged by much of what we heard as plans are progressing to give some order and restraint to the rapidly growing ATV recreational use of forest lands. Yet, as has often been said, "the devil may be in the details"... and there were few details presented in the March 10 meeting.

Many of us have been proponents of multiple uses of our forest resources beyond their essential contribution to our economy through logging. Improving access to the forests whether it be for hunting, bird watching, biking, snowmobiling or now, ATV riding, can make a great contribution to tourism and to the quality of life of the area. At the same time, it is critical that these uses be developed in a way to protect the nature of the area and the natural resources we prize and to assure one user group does not displace another.

It's hard to comment on a plan still in progress but several points made in the meeting caused me some concern. One speaker stated an attempt was made "to share trails as much as possible". There were also several allusions to the county board apparently requiring the development of "connecting trails." There is an obvious underlying conflict of interest between groups that want more access for ATVs and those who wish more restriction. The issues of shared trails and connecting trails are likely to make the disagreement even more pointed. I attended a snowmobile club meeting and a township annual meeting where both groups voted UNANIMOUSLY to urge the county and DNR to not consider sharing ATV and snowmobile use except on well maintained forest roads or developing the extensive system that "connecting trails" implies. I understand other townships expressed similar concern.

It will be difficult to mediate the positions of the two groups which urge either more or less ATV access. However, it may be possible to mitigate the differences and find some common ground by giving careful consideration to these two issues of shared trails and connecting trails. Focusing more attention on the development of trails specifically for ATVs in an area of the county/state lands less likely to interfere with other uses and where maintenance and enforcement will be more manageable would address both sides of this issue. Additionally, planning for selected use of some of the well maintained forest roads by ATVs can ameliorate the problems of environmental impact, construction cost and maintenance and will address the interest of the ATV community to have substantial access.

Comments made by the DNR and the conservation officer did not inspire great confidence that adequate funds and personnel for maintenance and enforcement would be available for a substantial network of ATV trails either on state or county lands. Statements that this would be taken care of from user fees and because the DNR is "committed to it" may be the "triumph of hope over experience." I have seen much good work of the DNR in improving snowmobile trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. However, I have also been in many meetings where suggestions for further improvements and increased grooming were met with the response, "there's not enough funds available (at least for this area)"... and this was following a substantial increase in the cost of snowmobile licenses.

It was a good decision to have more county meetings for public input than DNR plans to sponsor. It will be impossible to satisfy the interests of all involved. However, these meetings will provide another measure of the strength of public support for or opposition to the proposals developed by the DNR/county working group. These meetings and subsequent actions of the county and DNR can demonstrate that the planners will take into consideration the wishes of the public.

Apparently, much of the DNR planning is constrained by directives from St. Paul and the legislature. Yet, we urge the county commissioners to take a strong role in assuring that the final plan reflects the particular circumstances of Hubbard County and the wishes of your constituents to assure a sound economy, expand environmentally conscious uses of our natural resources and enhance the quality of life for all who live and visit here. Thank you for your leadership in this difficult task.

Copies: County commissioners, working group, DNR, Governor Pawlenty

6. Concerned Citizens Group 03.19.04

Dear Commissioner Merriam,

In this box you will find over 500 cards signed by snowmobilers asking you to keep ATVs from sharing snowmobile trails in Hubbard County. This from just a total of 8- 10 hours on various Saturdays at the end of the snowmobile season. Over 95% of the riders asked, signed these cards because many of them, though perhaps ATV riders themselves, have seen the ruts and damage done to the trails by OHV and do not believe that there is a network of clubs nor sufficient funds to keep up with the repair. They are also concerned with the concept that the Hubbard County team is proposing for connecting trails between state lands and through county lands for the same reason - most of them are snowmobile trails - perhaps built and maintained with snowmobile funds.

You will also find letters from horseback riders who will be displaced from the Beaver Lakes Trail/Tepee

Lakes Trail - a major, scenic snowmobile trail. It is the one beautiful trail through the Bunyan that is close to the old CCC camp where many horseback riders camp and ride from. So, two major user groups displaced for 1 minority group by including this trail in the system. In addition, this trail creates the southern edge of a Wildlife Management area as well as going through the Game Refuge.

Then you will find letters from many other residents and users very much opposed to expanding the current designated trail systems - Martineau - OHM, Round River - ATV and the Two Inlets systems that already exist.

You will also find letters from the surrounding townships with more to come, asking the county board to nix the idea of connection trails and any expansion of the Round River or Martineau Trail systems. There are copies of letters to the editor of our local paper, the Enterprise, as well as an article on the most recent DNR presentation to the county board.

When these letters ask for the West side of the Paul Bunyan to be non- motorized, they are referring to OHV - not regular vehicular traffic or snowmobiling. When they talk of the expansion of the ATV trails they are talking about the final trail system being much greater than the aforementioned systems already in place.

You will find recommendations from the Jack Pine Coalition for the Paul Bunyan State Forest.

As we educate more and more of our neighbors, the outrage grows. Please insure that our input is taken seriously - we are the ones who will have to live with the decisions you make. Please forward this information on to the ATV review team.

7. Clausen, Judy (no date)

I hope to see the Hubbard County Board take a strong pro-active position to protect our environment. I am concerned with the Paul Bunyan Forest and Hubbard County OHV trail proposals. An ATV trail system in Paul Bunyan State Forest must stay east of Spur I and in the Martineau Trail Area where motorized activity already exists. I am adamantly opposed to the concept of connecting trails. The concept of connecting trails will turn Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County into an ATV park. This concept makes the ability to enforce trail usage an impossible task. It allows ATV users more access to public lands than I feel necessary at the cost of displacing other users and causing very significant destruction to the environment. The resolution of the ATV issue has the potential to greatly affect the quality of life and property values in Hubbard County.

8. Clay Township (no date)

At the Clay Township Annual meeting held on March 9, 2004, the residents in attendance voted to recommend to the Hubbard County Board that they take a strong pro-active position and oppose any plan to designate any additional OHV trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest and on county owned land. As demonstrated in other areas, such as the Foothills State Forest, the enforcement issue is major and it is impossible to keep these vehicles from wandering off designated trails onto private property, wet lands, and restricted areas in the State Forests. The maintenance issue is also a crucial one as ditch riding has been shown to create havoc with residents driveways, and damage to township and county roads could soon become a major budget as well, as safety issue.

The concept of connecting trails has the potential for turning the Paul Bunyan into an ATV park. While we recognize that the use of these vehicles for recreational purposes has become very popular and is a big industry in our State, the concept of connecting trails allows ATV users more access to public lands than we feel necessary at the cost of displacing other users and causes very significant destruction to the fragile environment.

Such an increase of ATV use in Hubbard County would ultimately have negative economic impact for the county as it will change the character of our community and detour visitors and new residents interested in other activities and who appreciate our county for its unspoiled beauty. We would prefer to see the ATV trail system east of Spur 1 where there is already motorized activity on the Martineau trail system leaving the west half non-motorized where there are residences and non-motorized activities can continue in peace.

9. Hendrickson, Nick (no date)

To the Hubbard County Commissioners:

We come to snowmobile in your area and are very opposed to the idea of sharing trails with ATVs. Our experience shows that the damage done to the trails makes it much less desirable for our well established sport - requiring a considerable amount of snow to cover the rutting that occurs. Many of these trails were built with snowmobile funds and we would hate to see them misused in this way. Of special concern here are the Beaver Lakes Trails, Wilder trails and the Coon Lake trail that are already showing damage.

10. Hovde, Peter & Charlene (no date)

Dear Commissioner ,

A decision facing of immense proportions is facing your county, what to do about the DNR's plan for Off-Highway Vehicle (ATV) use in state forests and connector trails. You will be making that decision. It's a heavy responsibility.

But it won't seem so at first. The DNR plan and their officer's assurances will seem reasonable. The flood of e-mails you will receive will make it seem like a majority of people support this plan, intensely. It will seem that accepting the DNR's plan as it stands is reasonable; the DNR are the experts, after all, duty-bound to protect our environment. And it will seem to make good political sense to satisfy that all those riders who will claim they only want to enjoy our state and county lands like the rest of the public. It will seem the easy and logical choice to vote to Implement the DNR's plan for Hubbard county.

Please do not. ATV use is like a cancer. Once it is established in an area, it quickly grows out of control, and the damage it does to that area is just horrific.

The ugly trails cutting into the beauty of our area are just the beginning. The land and the forests will suffer first. But then things begin to leave-the animals and the birds, and then many tourists who just want to enjoy our forests and lakes in peace and quiet, and finally, even some residents who have had their dreams of retiring into our area's natural beauty shattered.

There is one inevitable and unavoidable truth about ATV use in an area. ATV use drives out all other use. Use by hikers and hunters, by birders and bikers, that real majority of residents and tourists alike who enjoy our forests and lakes without wrecking the land and harassing every living thing on it.

We know of which we speak. We have a cabin just across your county line; we were intending to build our retirement home on that property. We have had to endure the DNR's plans and assurances, and the waves of ATV riders from the metro area that just keep on coming, who use our once quiet paradise as their playground, riders who could care less about the forests, the flora, the fauna, and us local residents.

Eventually, that flood of e-mails coming your way will be seen for what it is, a well- organized campaign by rider groups such as ATVAM, backed by financial and political clout of Polaris and Arctic Cat, along with the few local business such as ATV dealers and bar owners. But by then it may be too late. When the real majority of residents and tourists begin to experience how badly their land, lives, and pleasures have been degraded and damaged by ATVs the angry complaints will come raining down on whoever voted to enable all that destruction, and take it out on those public officials in the next election.

As we indicated at the outset, we sympathize with you. We don't envy you your task ahead. But please, look beyond the easy assurances of the DNR Trails and Waterways and the organized pressure of ATVAM. With your decision, contain and limit this blight of ATVs as best you can. Hubbard County and our great state will be far the better for your courageous decision.

11. Hovde, Peter 02.17.04

Dear Commissioner Merriam,

Like many others, I am opposed to the proposed plan for the ATV trail system in the Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County.

While our state lands must be open to public use, there is an elementary responsibility that all users of those lands must meet-the lands are not damaged by the use, and that the user leave the land in as good a condition as he or she found it.

With ATVs, that elementary responsibility is difficult to meet, because of the design of the vehicles-the lugged tires, the four-wheel drive slippage, the pollution, and the noise. With the operators of far too many ATVs that simple responsibility is impossible to meet as they plow through wetlands, tear up hillsides, and cut illegal trails. They simply use the trails to get off the trails.

The idea of connecting trails will turn Paul Bunyan State Forest into an ATV park. The idea of multi-use trails is simply a hoax. Once ATVs use a trail, every other use-by people, pets, or wildlife--is precluded. Noise, harassment, and the danger of being hit by a machine going 50 mph makes it so.

But the biggest problem of all seems to be completely overlooked by the trail planners of the DNR, We have known now for decades that the fragmentation of habitat leads to marked declines in species. Oh, the separated patches of woodlands make look good to us, but to a bird or an animal, if the forest patches do not meet its needs, it will abandon the area in search of another home. If it can find no other, it will not breed, and the decline becomes inevitable.

The planned ATV connecting trails are bad enough. Once the illegal trails that inevitably come with ATV use in an area are set down the fragmentation is complete. All one has to do is go to Spider Lake. The birds and the animals have vanished, all due to ATV use in the DNR's "model" program. The DNR has made a desert of one of our state forest areas.

I know the DNR has multiple and competing missions and goals. But for heaven's sake, the preservation of our natural resources has got to top that priority list, for if those are damaged or destroyed, all the tourism and all the recreational potential will have vanished along with the birds, animals, and the forests and wetlands themselves.

Until and unless ATVs can be made so they do not damage the state lands they are using, they do not deserve to have any state forest lands set aside for them. Until and unless ATV operators can be made to operate their vehicles in a responsible manner, they do not deserve to have any access to state forest land. Once that time comes, ATVs should be welcomed onto our state lands, so they can enjoy the beauties of our state along with the rest of us. Until that time comes, ATVs should be confined to parks set far enough away from natural areas and homes so that their lives are not disrupted. Making a state forest into an ATV park is simply a travesty. That the DNR has been taking the lead in expanding this irresponsible ATV use is an embarrassment to our state, as it should be to the DNR itself.

12. Jack Pine Coalition (no date)

Jack Pine Coalition Recommendations to DNR Concerning Forest Reclassification for Paul Bunyan State Forest:

1. No more trail implementation until DNR can demonstrate adequate enforcement and maintenance. The problem in our state forests, as we see it, is now out of control. To give away more good land to this sport is foolish until we start getting the "genie back in the bottle."
2. All OHV trails should be confined within the Martineau trail system. No trails outside the existing boundaries of the Martineau Trails. There is already 115 miles in this dirt bike system which encompasses over half of the southern sector of PBSF. This only seems reasonable. The minority of OHV forest users have over half the forest. We need "balance."
3. Eliminate Martineau Trails that currently exist in the Paul Bunyan Game Refuge and make the "refuge" out of bounds for OHV use. They should never have been permitted in there.
4. Do not use the Beaver Lakes snowmobile trail as an ATV trail. This snowmobile trail passes through wetlands.
5. The Beaver Lakes Trail is the southern boundary of the "Gulch Lakes Management Area." The GLMA is a proposed "nonmotorized area" and opening the Beaver Lakes Trail to ATV use will only create illegal off road use in the GLMA. Snowmobiles do not pose a problem into the GLMA.
6. "Inventoried Forest Roads" should be utilized as ATV trails. As few "forest access routes" as possible should be used. Until tougher statutory changes are made to illegal ATV use, it is only asking for trouble to permit ATV use in the "out of the way" places.
7. Grant-in Aid distribution to clubs should be audited. \$30,000 to \$35,000 a year going to clubs in Hubbard County seems extraordinary when generally only existing motorized corridors are being use with no maintenance (these are approximately the amounts going to the Paul Bunyan and Forest Riders ATV Clubs). Where is the money going? Do signs cost \$30,000 a year? With little or no GIA money going to enforcement and reparations the greater question is misuse of GIA funds.
8. We are certain that "connector routes" from communities to Paul Bunyan State Forest will only transform Paul Bunyan into a marketplace for OHV related businesses - this will make PBSF a de-facto OHV park. It is not the job of the DNR to cater or subsidize business. If people want to ride ATV trails - let them trailer their machines.

13. Johnson, Deanna 02.29.04

Dear Mr. Frank,

The Hubbard County Board will be making a decision soon which will greatly impact the future and character of this county. You are being asked to allow a plan calling for expanded ATV use in state forests and connector trails which will bring in greater numbers of ATV users to this county. Please do not allow this to happen. As other communities have experienced with such plans, ATV use will grow out of control and cause horrible damage to our beautiful county. Too many riders just use trails as access to get off trails. ATV's are a cancer to the land.

Hubbard County will not experience economic benefit from this plan. ATV use will displace other users. Hubbard County is attractive to most visitors because of it's natural beauty. ATV use will create untold environmental damage which will have to eventually be cleaned up at huge expense. Expanded ATV use will change the character of our county from a family vacation area to a drink and party atmosphere. Is this what we want? Is so you will need to plan for increased law enforcement to handle the crowd you will be inviting in.

It may seem easy to give into ATV clubs and the small number of businesses who support them. These folks are getting their support from large companies out of Hubbard County like Artic Cat. Remember who you serve. It is safe to say at least 80% of folks don't want increased ATV use and you will have to answer to them as the damage and changes come, if you decide to allow this. You will also have to answer to yourself, as the beauty of our county would be eroded by the horrific damage these machines leave in their path. Please serve your constituents and this county well by making a decision which will preserve the unique beauty of this county. I also own land on West Crooked Lake near Paul Bunyan State Forest

14. Kennelly, Mike

I am very concerned with the Paul Bunyan and Hubbard County OHV Trail proposals. An ATV trail system in Paul Bunyan State Forest must stay east of Spur I and in the Martineau Trail Area where motorized activity already exists. I am adamantly opposed to the concept of connecting trails. The concept of connecting trails will turn Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County into an ATV park. This concept makes the ability to enforce trail usage an impossible task. It allows ATV users more access to public lands than I feel necessary at the cost of displacing other users and causing very significant destruction to the environment. Thank you for your attention.

15. Lake Emma Township 04.01.04

To: Hubbard County Commissioners

At the Annual Meeting of Lake Emma Township on March 9, 2004, the Lake Emma Township residents present overwhelmingly expressed their opposition to designating any additional OHV trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest or on county-owned land, and they requested that the Township Board draft a letter to the County Board in response to this.

They urged the County Board take a strong pro-active position and oppose any plan to designate any additional OHV trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest, as well as on any county-owned land. As demonstrated in other areas, such as the Foothills State Forest, the enforcement issue is major and it is impossible to keep these vehicles from wandering off designated trails on to private property, wet lands, and restricted areas in the State Forests. The maintenance issue is also a crucial one, as ditch riding has been shown to create havoc with residents' driveways, and damage to township and county roads could soon become a major budget item, as well as a safety issue.

They further stated that the concept of connecting trails has a potential for turning the Paul Bunyan into an ATV park. While they recognized that the use of these vehicles for recreational purposes has become very popular and is a relatively new and somewhat important industry in our State, the concept of connecting trails allows ATV users more access to public lands than we feel necessary, at the cost of displacing other users, and it causes very significant destruction to the fragile environment.

It was their opinion that such an increase of ATV use in Hubbard County could ultimately have negative economic impact for the county, as it could change the character of our community and deter visitors and new residents interested in other activities and who appreciate our county for its unspoiled beauty. They would prefer to see the ATV trail system east of Spur 1, where there is already motorized activity on the Martineau Trail System, leaving the west half non-motorized where there are residences and non-motorized activities can continue in peace.

16. Leech Lake Snowmobile Club 03.20.04

To Commissioner Merriam:

The Leech Lake Riders Snowmobile Club would like the opportunity to voice our concern about the issue of sharing snowmobile trails with ATV's in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. As you may already be aware many volunteer hours, on the part of snowmobile club members, have gone into the brushing, signing and continual maintenance of our snowmobile trails which we are proud of.

The designated ATV trails already established in the Paul Bunyan Forest show first hand the destruction they cause to the trail and surrounding areas (surrounding areas defined as sloughs and wetlands next to the trail that they venture into and tear up!). The concern is that if our trails in the forest are opened to the ATV's they will become the same way. The snowmobilers in MN have created the Performance Base Trail Maintenance Grant System, which you may already be aware of. The ATVers of MN need to come up with a similar grant or maintenance system for their trails. We see many trails being designated for ATV's but absolutely no maintenance being done! When a trail is rutted out by an ATV and not maintained it is virtually impossible to create a smooth, level base with our snowmobile trail groomers. If we can't keep our trails groomed the people will not come to our area. Many of our local business rely on snowmobilers for their livelihood!

Specific trails that are of concern in the Paul Bunyan Forest are the Beaver Lakes Trail, Wilder Trails and the Coon take Trail. We ask that you seriously consider the decision to open these trails to ATV's. We value our existing snowmobile trails and have worked hard for them! It is our position that these trails not be opened to ATV's!

17. Mantrap Township Town's People Motion

A motion was discussed and passed March 9, 2004 to recommend to the Hubbard County Board of Commissioners that it take a strong pro-active position and oppose any plan to designate, additional ATV trails in the Paul Bunyan Forest and on county-owned land. The ATV trail -system must stay -east of spur I and in the Martineau Trail area where motorized activity already exists.

18. Nevis Trailblazers Snowmobile Club 03.08.04

To: Hubbard County Commissioners, Department of Natural Resources, Governor of the State of Minnesota

The Nevis Trailblazers Club has always been a proponent of multiple use of both public and private forest resources. We welcome the attention to planning for a more organized and environmentally conscious response to the interests of a rapidly growing number of ATV riders.

The Trailblazer Club has spent many years and many volunteer hours developing and maintaining snowmobile trails, working with the DNR and logging interests to establish cooperative approaches. This cooperation has produced great improvements in such trails as the Beaver Lakes, Lester Lake, Thorpe Alternate and Waboose North trails to say nothing of the miles of Grant-in-Aid trails maintained on private lands. These are valuable assets to our forest use and economic base which should not be compromised.

In its meeting Saturday, March 6, 2004 the Trailblazers club voted unanimously to pass on to the above addressees our suggestions:

With the exception of well-maintained forest roads, no trails should be designated for shared use by ATVs and snowmobiles. The damage already done to established off-road snowmobile trails by ATV use is apparent; concentrating ATV use on "designated" off-road snowmobile trails can only make the matter worse. Snowmobiling has demonstrated its economic advantage to the area as a winter activity; the area can ill afford to have that advantage compromised by plans for ATVs sharing off-road trails and damaging them for snowmobile use.

No trails should be developed for ATV use unless there is adequate funding available and organizations are in place to assure environmentally sound construction and proper maintenance.

Thank you for your attention. We appreciate your work to enhance the use of our natural resources while minimizing potential negative impacts.

19. Petition #1 (typical)

I the undersigned do not approve any of restrictions or limitations of ATV's on Hubbard County lands. I feel that detouring the use of Hubbard County Lands will negatively impact the local economy and tourism industry.

20. Petition #2 (typical)

Dear Commissioner Merriam:

As horseback riders in the state of Minnesota, we are asking, that the Beaver Lakes Trail and the Tepee Lakes Trail in the Paul Bunyan State Forest NOT be included in the ATV trail system being planned in Hubbard County.

21. Remund, Bob & Karen

To: Hubbard County Board of Commissioners

We are adamantly opposed to the proposed plan for extending an elaborate ATV trail system into the Paul Bunyan State Forest and other areas of Hubbard County. The land of Hubbard County is extremely sandy and therefore highly erodible; it also has many vulnerable wet lands. For these reasons alone, trails for motorized vehicles should be both minimized and strictly regulated. The characteristics of ATVs and other off-the-road vehicles, and the hell-for-leather manner in which they are driven for "sport", inevitably produce significant damage in addition to dust, exhaust fumes and noise.

The use of public lands by the public should be facilitated and encouraged. But the goal should be for the highest and best use. Turning an area of the Paul Bunyan State Forest into an ATV raceway (with absolutely no hope of adequate enforcement of any rules whatsoever) would be an unconscionable lowest-common-denominator use of a lovely, secluded area. The enjoyment of a semi-wilderness environment is impossible when riding at speed on an ATV. The Paul Bunyan State Forest would be spoiled for other more relaxed and contemplative activities such as picnicking, hiking, biking, trail riding and bird watching, as well as canoeing and fishing in the charming small lakes that dot the area.

Owners of lakeshore property, such as us, are subject to restrictions in land use intended to preserve the quality of the lakes and the semi-wild nature of the shore. At the same time, public access to these lakes allows the unrestricted introduction of powerful, highly intrusive boats and personal watercraft - as well as the virtual certainty of eventual introduction of harmful biota. Enforcement of rules intended to minimize these impacts is essentially nonexistent (because impractical). What is the rationale for creating another set of such problems?

We hope to see the Hubbard County Board take a vigorous, proactive position to protect our environment.

22. Sample Form Letter #1

Dear Commissioner Merriam,

I am opposed to the proposed plan for the ATV trail system in the Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County. The concept of connecting trails will turn Paul Bunyan State Forest into an ATV park. This concept makes the ability to enforce trail usage an impossible task. It allows ATV users more access to public lands than I feel necessary at the cost of displacing other users and causing very significant destruction to the environment. Such an

increase of ATV use in Hubbard County would ultimately have a negative economic impact for the county as it will change the character of our community and detour visitors and new residents interested in other activities and who appreciate our county for its natural beauty. We would prefer to see the ATV trail system east of Spur I where there is already motorized activity on the Martineau trail system leaving the west half non- motorized where there are residences and non-motorized activities can continue in peace. Thank you for your attention.

23. Sample Form Letter #2

To Commissioner Merriam:

We understand from a presentation made to our County Board by the DNR that there are plans to use the Beaver Lakes trail in the Paul Bunyan State Forest as an ATV trail. Horse back riders have been camping at the old CC camp for many years and riding that trail specifically for its scenic beauty and hilly terrain. We are adamantly opposed to this idea. We understand that the ATVs have funds to build trails -why is it necessary to AGAIN displace other users for a motorized sport? There are plenty of trails and land to the East of Spur I already being used for motorized traffic -over 100 miles in the Martineau trail system is our understanding. The Beaver Lakes trail goes through a game refuge and creates the southern edge of a future non-motorized wildlife area. Lets keep it that way.

24. Sharbo, Dave & Karen 03.03.04

We are writing in anticipation of your 10 March meeting with the DNR regarding ATV/ORV trails in our county. We realize the meeting is to be informational, and that no decisions are planned at that time. However, as you consider their ideas we would like you to know that many of us in the county do not want to see expansion of trails on public lands or connector trails creating a web of destruction in our neighborhoods.

After over thirty years as seasonal property owners in Hubbard County we built a new home and moved here full time about two years ago. We had previously been aware of the growing network of rutted trails and destruction of habitat in the county, both in the ditches and the woods. Our awareness of the people involved and the expectations of the "trail builders" grew dramatically when we became full timers. A neighbor declared (in a public meeting, discussing the issue of whether a proposed dedicated ATV trail would run on private property against the will of the owner) "I can ride my machine anywhere I want, and you had better get used to it." This was not an aggressive kid trying out a surge of testosterone. The speaker was an adult businessperson, active in a club that is advocating more trails and portraying themselves as responsible riders! We have heard the argument that the "bad apples" are limited to one or two percent of riders, but that certainly has not been our experience and it misses the point. Continuing vandalism to our property reinforces a vivid picture of the tensions that exist between trail riders and property owners in our county.

Yes, the machines and the subculture that goes with them are here. Minnesota has been slow to address the impact of increased numbers of machines riding on and off trails on our state, but the legislature made a good start at addressing the problems with the changes enacted in 2003.

Please keep the following concerns in mind as you hear the DNR proposals:

1 . Significant areas of our public forests already bear the profound impact of heavy ATV/ORV use. Given the strong pressure to keep public land open for motorized uses, any further designation of trails must be confined to those areas. As over 90% of MN residents of the state are not motorized trail users, a majority of public lands must be protected from the noise and destruction of ATV/ORV use. This includes not only the immediate impact of rutted trails, but also the noise corridor that goes with any motorized trail. (Sources vary, but all indicate low single digit percentages of the state's population using ATV/ORV trails.)

2. "Connector" trails are a misnomer. They would not simply connect distant points, but they would keep ORV use in our neighborhoods and ditches, extending the web of destruction that already exists. Enforcement of trail regulations would be impossible, given the vast amounts of land involved and the limited resources dedicated to enforcement. A direct parallel exists on our waterways. We do not expect a channel to drive our boat to another lake. We pull it out of the water and trailer it!

3. Arguments citing the economic benefit to our communities from widespread ATV/ORV use are short sighted and misleading. Yes gas, beer and motel rooms bring a few dollars in today. The ruts and the roar of the machines will gradually have an impact on all other visitors to the region. Tourists will reconsider coming to an area that has lost its beauty as well as its peace and quiet. Hunters will stop coming when they learn it is not possible to walk in the woods without the noise and destruction of machines all around them. Retirees who bring economic stability when they make the transition from seasonal to full time residents will look for other areas. Both game and non- game species of wildlife will also respond to the division and destruction of their habitat. Multi-use of woods and trails simply cannot exist when ATV/ORV users are present.

4. Also, consider the argument that "scramble areas" and "ATV parks" belong on private land rather than public. Yes, we know that the state is already in this business, but that does not have to set the standard for future facilities

or spread across the rest of the state. User fees would provide economic support, rather than the increasingly scarce tax dollar. Regulations and their enforcement would be a matter for the proprietors rather than the rest of us. Obviously zoning and land use issues would have to be addressed, but those are easy tasks for government compared with sponsoring a growing and destructive use of our environment.

25. Snowmobilers Sample Card (typical)

To Commissioner Merriam:

As snowmobilers in this state, we are very opposed to the idea of sharing trails with ATVs in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. Our recent experience shows that the damage done to the trails makes it much less desirable for our well established sport - requiring a considerable amount of snow to cover the rutting that occurs. Many of these trails were built with snowmobile funds and we would hate to see them misused in this way. Of special concern here are the Beaver Lakes Trails, Wilder trails and the Coon Lake trail that are already showing damage.

In talking economics, we don't think you can surpass this sport in a good snow year so why is it necessary to put a new sport on the trails at the cost of the other?

26. Thorpe Township #1

To: Hubbard County Commissioners

At the January 14, 2004 Thorpe Township Board meeting a motion was passed requesting that I send an email to the Hubbard County Commissioners stating the Board's position and concern regarding future OHV trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. As a very small township with two thirds of its land in the State Forest the Thorpe Township Board strongly opposes the concept of connecting trails which would increase motorized traffic in our area and jeopardize the unspoiled beauty that people seek when coming to this area.

In a recent survey our residents, both seasonal and permanent, indicated that the natural environment and the beauty of the lakes and the woods was the number one reason they choose to own property here. Increasing the use of motorized travel in this sensitive area can only have a negative effect on the environment and we would strongly urge the Hubbard County Board to take a firm Pro-active position to protect this environment.

We oppose the proposed ATV trail system plan in the Paul Bunyan and would recommend that the ATV trail system stay east of Spur I where motorized activity has already been developed on the Martineau trail system. Please leave the western portion free of ATV/OHV traffic where people can come and continue to enjoy the quiet and beauty of nature. Thank you for your consideration.

Fran Laske, Thorpe Township Board Chair

27. Thorpe Township #2

At the Thorpe Township Annual meeting held on March 9, 2004, the residents in attendance voted to recommend to the Hubbard County Board that they take a strong proactive position and oppose any plan to designate an additional OHV trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest and on county land. The Round River Trail System and Martineau Trail System are sufficient in the Paul Bunyan. As demonstrated in other areas, such as the Foothills State Forest, the enforcement issue is major and it is impossible to keep these vehicles from going off-trail onto private property, through wet lands and restricted areas on public land. The maintenance issue is also critical as ditch riding has shown to create havoc with resident's driveways. Damage to township and county roads could soon become a major budget and safety issue as well.

The concept of connecting trails has the potential for turning the Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard County into an ATV park. While we recognize that the use of these vehicles for recreational purposes has become very popular and is a big industry in our state, the concept of connecting trails allows ATV users more access to public lands than we feel necessary at the cost of displacing other users. It causes very significant destruction to the fragile environment.

Such an increase in ATV use in Hubbard County would ultimately have a negative economic impact for the county. It will change the character of our community and deter visitors and new residents interested in other activities and who appreciate our county for its natural beauty. We prefer to see the ATV/OHV trail system remain East of Spur I where there is already motorized activity. That would leave the west side free of OHV activity where there are residences and non-motorized activities can continue in peace.

Start small to test the theories of the DNR in terms of damage control and enforcement. ATVers like most other sports enthusiasts should have to trailer to their trail systems

Thorpe Township residents

28. Toomey, Richard 02.17.04

Dear Commissioner Merriam,

I am opposed to the proposed plan for the ATV trail system in the Paul Bunyan State Forest and Hubbard

County. The concept of connecting trails will turn Paul Bunyan State Forest into an ATV park. This concept makes the ability to enforce trail usage an impossible task. It allows ATV users more access to public lands than I feel necessary at the cost of displacing other users and causing very significant destruction to the environment.