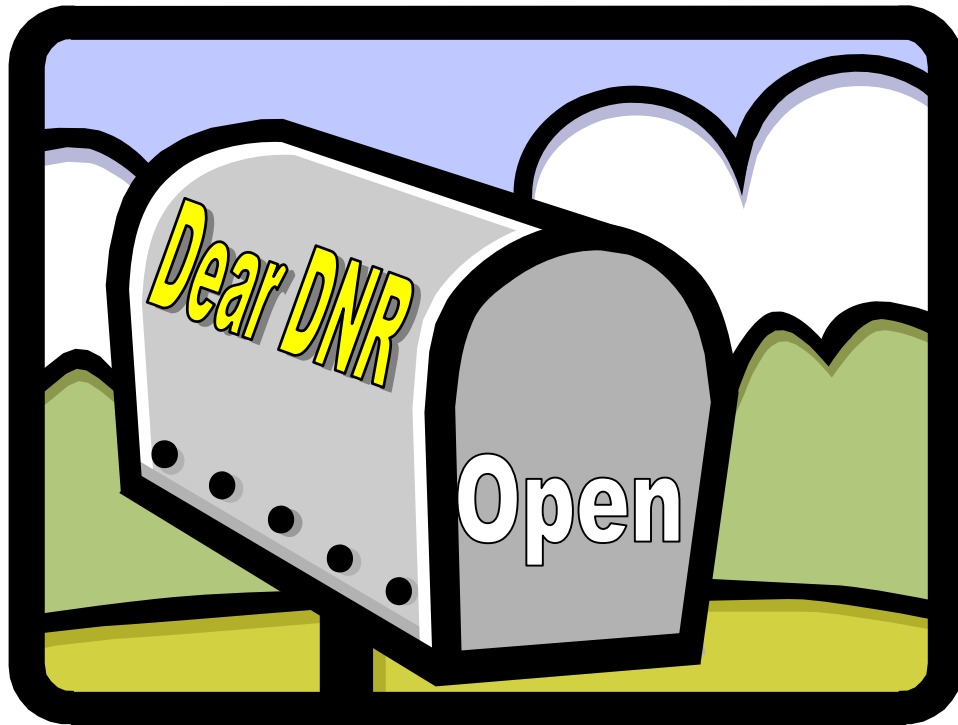


**Response to Comments on the Proposed  
Areas with Limitations on Off-trail and  
Non-designated Trail Use and Non-Motorized Trail Designations  
for  
Forest Lands in Hubbard County**

March 5, 2007



**Minnesota Department of Natural Resources**

## Areas with Limitations on Off-trail and Non-designated Trail Use and Non-Motorized Trail Designations Team

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## INTRODUCTION

On November 21, 2006 the MN DNR published a notice of the Proposed Non-Motorized Areas and Trail Designations for Forests in Hubbard County in the *State Register* (cite 31 SR pg. 676). The proposals (now referred to as Areas with Limitations on Off-Trail and Non-Designated Trail Use and Non-Motorized Trail Designations), were described in MN DNR statewide news releases dated November 21, 2007 and December 21, 2007. The notice was also published in the legal newspaper for Hubbard County. A public informational open house on the proposed areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use and trail designations was held on January 17, 2007 in Park Rapids to explain the proposal and to receive comments. Approximately 100 citizens attended the meeting and interacted with the Hubbard County field team. The official public comment period ended on January 31, 2007.

In total, the DNR received **51** comment letters and e-mails; submitted both at the Park Rapids public meeting and until the close of the official comment period on January 31, 2007. The DNR appreciates the time and effort of everyone who commented on the proposals. The draft plan was improved and clarified as a result of the public review process.

This document is a compilation of the comments received and the DNR's response to the concerns about the proposed areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use and non-motorized trail designations in Hubbard County. The designations will be implemented by publication of written orders of the Commissioner of Natural Resources published in the *State Register*.

Each comment letter, or e-mail was transcribed as received. The transcription process maintained the content of the comment to the extent possible. Greetings and closings were not transcribed. There was no attempt to correct spelling, grammar, or misstatement of facts. There may be some errors due to illegible handwriting or typing errors by the transcriber.

The DNR Hubbard County Team used a content analysis process to develop the DNR's response to concerns expressed by the commenters. Comments were grouped by topic and statements of public concern were developed. The DNR and Hubbard County planning process was a collaborative process with the Hubbard County Natural Resources staff. Responses to the statements of public concern that are specific to state forest lands are included in this document as well as County forestlands concerns.

## COMPILATION OF COMMENTS

Transcribed comments are presented below. 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.

	<b>1. Adams, Mary</b>
<a href="#">1a</a>	Thanks for the opportunity to provide input. I shall be brief, but you'll get the gist of my concerns, nevertheless.
<a href="#">1b</a>	*Restricting motor vehicle within the 5 recommended areas is good.
	*Keep motorized vehicles away from the National Scenic Trail. Many of us have put in hours of work making the North Country Trail a reality. Keep motorized at least 4 miles away from the trail, on either side, throughout the entire length of the trail.....thus, hiking can be a true experience of solitude and beauty.
	*If it is necessary to cross the North Country Trail, (which should be avoided entirely) crossings should be minimal.
<a href="#">1c</a>	*The Game Refuge Area should be non-motorized in its entirety.
<a href="#">1d</a>	*Keep motorized traffic east of Spur I.
<a href="#">1e</a>	* Keep motorized vehicles off the Refuge Road. Safety concerns make it necessary to also reconsider traffic on 2, between Middle and East Crooked Lakes.
<a href="#">1f</a>	* A great non-motorized area would be around the 21 Lakes, which presently has the least road density at present. Keep it a serene, wilderness experience.
	<b>2. Alto, Joyce and Erland</b>
	Representing Lakes and Business

<p><a href="#">2a</a></p> <p><a href="#">2b</a></p> <p><a href="#">2c</a></p>	<p>Dear Dick Kimball. We talked with you tonite about our concerns about #2 CSAH. 1<sup>st</sup> of all I see the Crooked Lakes are in the proposed non-motorized area! So now I come over with our concern! We oppose any use at all of CSAH #2 from Hillview Rd. to Innes Forest Rd. at the South Boundary of Paul Bunyan State Park. We strongly object to the use of this part of #2 for any use other than the vehicles that have the right to go 50 mph there! Can you imagine adding 4 wheelers to the mix of cars, trucks, tractors, logging trucks, runners, walkers, people crossing the road (often) to access beaches and docks??? This road has no ditches; no roadway at all except the 33 feet of roadway. There have been over 20 cars in East and Middle Crooked Lakes in the last 30 years from driving too fast, to small a road, or whatever! I have tried to get a 30 MPH signage there and have had no luck. We are also owners of Breezy Pines Resort. Our guests cross the road regularly to access the boat docks we have on our TAXED Middle Crooked frontage. DANGEROUS. (I will flag down cars at times!). ATVs HAVE driven on #2 in past years, some are good drivers, some scare me, they go side x side, some go fast, they think they can see far ahead. You can't see everything. We've driven it for 34 years! Our business is based on QUIET, why must we destroy another resort in our county? THIS ROAD IS UNSAFE as it!</p> <p>Ps. We are for the Crooked Lakes to be a non-motorized area. This should help our resort, even if it is small and on the other side of Middle.</p> <p>I suggest you take #85 from #2 to #105 (or 277 St). Please do not go on #2 for our lakes sake. Remember Hillview Rd. was built to protect our lakes from traffic, with the lakeside road being closed. Now you want to put more traffic on a similar, much more trafficated road.</p>
	<p><b>3. Anonymous</b></p>
<p><a href="#">3a</a></p>	<p>The road in the "Mantrap" Area Trails end road should <u>NOT</u> be closed to ATVs and snowmobiles. There are to many residences that would be impacted and inconvenienced.</p>
	<p><b>4. Babcock, Barry</b></p>
<p><a href="#">4a</a></p>	<p>When considering that the 29 state forests that thus far have undergone reclassification or are in the hopper for the commissioner to sign off on, only have 4% of the land (1,260,000 acres) are designated as closed, which falls far short from being in balance with the proportion of the states population that desire places where OHV recreation is not allowed.</p>
<p><a href="#">4b</a></p>	<p>The Gulch Lakes Management Area has been in the planning process since the inception of the OHV public process beginning in May 1998. This GLMA proposal has undergone too many processes hurdles to still be on the drawing table. The GLMA and the other nonmotorized areas are not enough. My convictions say that we should not only go ahead with these closed areas to OHV's but we should have many more.</p>
	<p><b>5. Bair, Linda</b></p>
<p><a href="#">5a</a></p>	<p>The Gulch Lakes Management area has been in the planning process since 1998 – I served on the first task force for these machines. This is a very small percentage of the total land that is available for this use. The fact that these riders want access to everything when they had the perfect opportunity to graciously say – “this is good” – is one reason we have to start making sure other users have areas to access that are not invaded by these riders. This should have been resolved long ago – it has been in the process way too long and was always intended to be set aside by the DNR and the county.</p>
<p><a href="#">5b</a></p>	<p>I actually feel this is way too little acreage set aside. I am still frustrated at the outcome of the designated trails that brought OHV traffic west of Spur 1 and provided them with connecting trails on the refuge road, teepee lakes trails, etc.</p>
	<p><b>6. Bair, William D.</b></p>
<p><a href="#">6a</a></p>	<p>Department of Natural Resources Trails and Waterways Commissioners, Hubbard County</p> <p>This is to express my appreciation for the cooperative work you have accomplished in planning a unified system of trails on both State and County lands. This will contribute to the safety and enjoyment of many who make a variety of uses of these lands. Many of us still have a good deal of concern for the environmental impact of some of these uses, but I'm sure you will give these concerns full consideration</p>

	<p>among the many other factors involved.</p> <p>It is good to see the areas you have identified as non-motorized. It is fully appropriate that at least this much of the forest area should be set aside to assure the quiet enjoyment of many users with minimal environmental impact. Congratulations for your foresight!</p> <p><a href="#">6b</a> Permit me to return to a subject that you may feel has been decided once and for all. Many of us were disappointed that you did not concur with the recommendation of several township boards, a snowmobile club and many individuals to limit present development of ATV use to an area east of Spur 1. This recommendation was to permit developing a system of maintenance mitigating environmental damage, to minimize conflict with other “users” of the forest and to facilitate monitoring and enforcement requirements. If, however, a “connector” trail was “required”, the northern alternative of those suggested by DNR was preferable. However, the County Board, as its membership existed then, apparently chose not only this northern route for ATVs but also a “return route” utilizing a previously gated snowmobile route (Tepee Lakes/Halverson). It crosses cty 91 near the old CCC camp where a good deal of horse back riding occurs. It is my hope that reconsideration is possible of the necessity of this “return route” for ATVs which will prejudice the present use by others. Thank you for your accomplishments and your consideration of these issues. <i>signed: William Bair</i></p>
	<p><b>7. Bergquist, Ruth</b></p>
<a href="#">7a</a>	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to learn about the above proposal at the public meeting on January 17 at the Park Rapids Area High School. I am grateful for the thought and effort that brought about designating this non-motorized area. It should be attractive to the great majority of the population that enjoy the quiet activities and scenery of our State Forests. My hope is that quiet zones will become more common. However, I also cannot help feeling disappointed and frustrated to know that Minnesota state Forests are now dominated by noisy, dusty, muddy recreational vehicles and if one wants to get away from them it will be necessary to some research to find the isolated spots reserved for “quiet” recreation. The priorities seem to be reversed. The non-motorized users are getting the “leftover” territory. Only about 5 percent of Minnesotans own ATV’s; not all of them are trail riders. ATV activities eliminate other users - the 95 percent of Minnesotans who might want to visit State Forests. The two do not mix and cannot share the same territory. The result could mean that the “other” users will stay away. This result does not seem fair. State forests are being handed over to a small special interest group.</p>
<a href="#">7b</a>	
<a href="#">7c</a>	<p>I have some questions about the non-motorized areas. How will the public know where these areas are and how to access them? Throughout the nation enforcement of OHV’s is a problem. How do you plan to control behavior of the OHV riders and keep them out of non-motorized areas? Will punishment to violators be strong enough to be a deterrent?</p>
	<p><b>8. Carleton, George</b></p>
<a href="#">8a</a>	<p>It saddens me we are so afraid to block off more public land for noninvasive use. the clubs do not police anything but more destruction. show me one atv'er policed buy a club!!! i know there is a economic impact but dead and injured atv'ers has impact too. who will fix all the areas torn up in the future? atv'ers? i think it will be non atvers-taxpayers. thanks and good luck. one trick would be to put proposed areas too a general public vote-atvers are a minority.</p>
	<p><b>9. Casson, John</b></p>
<a href="#">9a</a>	<p>The issue of the Gulch Lakes Non-Motorized Area has been around for years. It is unbelievable that it has taken this long to enact such a minor, no-brainer measure. This non-motorized proposal is a good start, but just a start. The future of Minnesota's natural resources and wild areas depends on their wise use into the future. Allowing motorized vehicles wherever one wishes to go in public forests is not wise use. While I applaud this proposal, much more land and many more areas need this same classification. This is much more than a recreational issue. The entire biological integrity of Minnesota's forests are at stake. Our wildlife populations and natural ecosystems will depend increasingly in the future, on areas where human access is controlled and managed. This proposal falls way short of providing the space required to provide the biological integrity we expect our land managers to manage for. Up to half of our State Forest land base will need this same or similar classification in the future. So, don't pat yourselves on the back if and when you enact this proposal and consider yourselves good land stewards. Get to work and enact really</p>
<a href="#">9b</a>	

	meaningful access management that focuses on the biological integrity you are mandated to ensure, or get out of the way and let some else do the job!
	<b>10. Cotant, Harold</b>
	Representing North Country Trail
<a href="#">10a</a>	“Non-Motorized” should be defined with exceptions, such as clearing trails with power equipment (chain saws, etc.) and these areas can still be “logging” maintained. And during trapping seasons, the lakes should be able to get to with 4 wheelers and snowmobiles.
	<b>11. Davis, Matthew</b>
	Representing North Country Trail Association
<a href="#">11a</a>	I first would like to applaud the MN DNR for taking the step to designate non-motorized areas and non-motorized trails within the Paul Bunyan State Forest. It would have been ideal to have a higher percentage of the land-base designated non-motorized. The plan calls for 4% which will make it difficult to build infrastructure for non-motorized recreation.
<a href="#">11b</a>	Other concerns I have:
<a href="#">11c</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The North Country Trail is not open to bicycles, horses or motorized recreation</li> <li>• We would like to see the North Country Trail designated non-motorized within Hubbard County forest land.</li> </ul>
<a href="#">11d</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More resources (staff time and money) needs to be devoted to enforcement of the new regulations. If use doesn't change following designation, I'm left wondering what we gained.</li> </ul>
<a href="#">11e</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In general the NCTA is not against motorized recreation, but we are trying to provide a long-distance hiking experience that is based upon self-reliance and an absence of mechanized/motorized devices. That is difficult to do when the trail lies in close proximity to motorized recreation routes.</li> </ul>
<a href="#">11f</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terminology is inconsistent – it should say North Country Trail or North Country National Scenic Trail.</li> </ul>
	Thanks for the effort!
	<b>12. DeWinter, Rick</b>
<a href="#">12a</a>	I truly believe the DNR is making a mistake with regards to the ATV riders trail bans. You are looking only at the vacationers/ pinecone eaters. What about the several hundered people who help make their living in these areas, trappers loggers etc..
<a href="#">12b</a>	By banning riding in these areas your not going to improve anything but seriously risk even more abuse. People do dumb things but all of us who live here don't. Please reconsider this action as it takes away from what makes this area a great place to live and vacation.
	<b>13. Dunn, Anne M.</b>
<a href="#">13a</a>	As a camper/hiker; gather of wild herbs, food, mushroom and medicines; a consumer of wild meat and fish; and year-round resident of northern Minnesota I insist that the non-motorized use areas within the state forests be protected from further ATV/OHV assault.
<a href="#">13b</a>	Preserving non-motorized areas within public lands is of significant value to those who walk the land in a respectful manner. Furthermore, we do a great disservice to our children when we neglect their need for a true wilderness experience.  I have been told that the land does not belong to us.....but to those who are coming. It is said that we are borrowing if from out children. I have been told that we should not make decisions today without considering the impact they have on the next seven generations.
<a href="#">13c</a>	I pray we can trust you with the future of our children and the well-being of our great mother. Yours in the struggle for peace, justice and human dignity. <i>Signed: Anne M. Dunn</i>
	<b>14. Englund, Josh</b>
	In a recent issue of Park Rapids Enterprise Newspaper, I learned of a new proposed non-motorized vehicle

<a href="#">14a</a>	<p>plan for five different areas in Hubbard county. In the article was stated that "Hunting and Trapping Exemptions do not apply in the designated non-motorized areas". Does this mean that Bait trappers will not be able to get permits to access these non-motorized vehicle areas? I hope that I as a Bait Trapper will still be able to get those Permits otherwise things could get a little difficult. My family has been trapping minnows in those areas (which are not more than a couple of miles away) for over 20 years. We use ATV's only for trapping purposes and rely on the trails and our machines every day. Damage to the trails means Damage to our equipment so it is in our best interests to keep both in the best condition possible. Many of the trails that are closed already were made by bait/fur trappers long before the non-motorized areas were even close to being planned. We used these trails to access ponds that already had minnows of certain species in them.</p>
<a href="#">14b</a>	<p>Avoiding mixing species has always been one of our main priorities. Although, do to self-appointed "fish transplanters" many ponds have already been contaminated with sunfish, perch, and walleye. Most of the contaminating has been done by fisherman that think they could have their own private little fishing hole out in the woods. Some ponds have also been turned into rearing ponds used by the DNR to raise walleye fingerings to a transplantable size once all the minnows have been eaten. I suppose the DNR Fisheries has the right to do whatever they want but many of their walleye are left behind every year only to die out and pollute the water or survive and continue to keep the original species of minnows/leeches from coming back.</p>
<a href="#">14c</a>	<p>With every passing year I grow more fearful that someday there will be no place for me and my family in the bait business. If a new law is passed to stop all wild bait/minnow harvesting it will be the downfall of the live bait industry and possibly State Fishing Income. My family has put everything into the bait business along with many other families that will have nothing else to do for income. We rely on mainly wild bait harvesting from public water. Live bait is a very abundant natural resource that replenishes annually and plays a very important role in fishing economy. Most Live Bait bought and sold in Minnesota was harvested from public water. Prohibiting Wild Bait harvesting would increase the cost of bait to fisherman so much that I am sure many would rather choose not to go fishing. This would cause a decrease in license sales and massive decrease in fishing product sales altogether. Also road and trail closure from</p>
<a href="#">14d</a>	<p>ATV and OHV use will discourage Hunting, Fishing, and Camping enthusiasts of certain age and physical condition from participating due to lack of accessibility. If someone were in a wheelchair would they be able to use the walking trails? It is in our states best interest to keep people Hunting and Fishing so why make it anymore difficult and costly for our residents and non-residents to do so. Please take the time to consider my thoughts and do your part to ensure the well being of our great state.</p>
<p><b>15. Evarts, Edie</b></p>	
<a href="#">15a</a>	<p>This letter is in support of the plan for five non-motorized areas and the designation of various miles of non-motorized trails for hiking and/or hunting. I agree all areas proposed should be non-motorized. In</p>
<a href="#">15b</a>	<p>addition there are two areas where non-motorized <u>trails</u> are proposed, but the area itself is not proposed as non-motorized which should de designated non-motorized. These areas are the state land west of Hennepin Lake and the county land with a non-motorized trail loop that is north of Many Arm Lake (near County 40). There should also be oppourtunities for non-motorized recreation in the south and east portions of the Paul Bunyan State Forest. None have been proposed in this plan.</p>
<a href="#">15c</a>	<p>I appreciate the cooperative nature of the proposal and commend the DNR and Hubbard County for going forward with designation of non-motorized areas. However, <b>the amount of motorized area versus non-motorized area is disproportionate to how the public uses the outdoors for recreation.</b></p>
<a href="#">15d</a>	<p>According to the 2004 Outdoor recreation Participation Survey of Minnesotans: Report on Findings (MN DNR Office of Management and Budget Services 2005), <b>54% of outdoor recreation participants are participants in walking or hiking outdoors</b> for exercise or pleasure and only <b>10% participate in offroad ATV riding</b>. In addition there is a portion of the hunting public that desires oppourtunities to hunt without conflict with ATV users. Hunters are 16% of the population so some smaller percentage could be expected to want to hunt using ATVs. Still, if all hunters were included as ATV users, that would still only be 26% of the public, compared to 54% of participants being hikers. It is also likely a portion of "nature viewers" who make up 24% of the population would support non-motorized areas. Even the portion of people in</p>

	<p>Minnesota that like to access tent camping by hiking, canoeing, or boating matches the number of ATV users (10%).</p> <p><a href="#">15e</a> <b>The amount of state land being dedicated to off road riding also is not in keeping with public opinion.</b> In the Awareness and Satisfaction Survey results (DNR-Bureau of Information, Education, and Licensing, June 2000), <b>the number one statement that survey respondents <u>disagreed</u> with most with was:</b>  <b>1) The DNR should establish more sites on public land for motorized off-road vehicle recreation.</b>  It is of note that this was in 2000, prior to new trails being made in the Paul Bunyan SF as per the Forest Road and Trail Designation Plan adopted in 2006.</p> <p><a href="#">15f</a> Paul Bunyan State Forest is listed as composed of 72,107 state acres and 40,000 Hubbard county-owned acres. Although all of the non-motorized areas proposed are not in the State Forest- a back of the envelope calculation indicates the 8,658 acres proposed are less than 8% of the State Forest area. Since offroad ATV users are only 10% of the public (and granted there are hunters etc that use ATVs that are outside this group), it seems reasonable to expect more areas where people can recreate without ATV noise, traffic, and disruption. Since non-motorized use does not rule out traditional uses of the forest, such as logging, this seems reasonable.</p> <p><a href="#">15g</a> Lastly, I would like to comment on an attitude I perceive that comes out at public meetings. There are often remarks on how fast ATV riding participation is increasing in our state. This is used as justification for the need for (in my opinion) an overly ambitious trail system that leaves few areas of state land where non-motorized recreation is a priority. However the rate at which the public has been taking up new activities in the last 5 years is almost the same between ATV off road use (7.4%) and hiking (6.3%) according to the 2004 Outdoor recreation Participation Survey of Minnesotans: Report on Findings (MN DNR Office of Management and Budget Services 2005). If the growth of ATV use is a driving factor in development of trails, hiking trails and/or non-motorized areas should be developed right along with them. I don't think I need to give justification that the two uses are incompatible- that is well established in surveys and public comment. And as mentioned previously, there is also a portion of hunters that desire non-motorized areas for hunting. Thank you for considering my comments.</p>
	<p><b>16. Forbes, Karen</b></p>
<a href="#">16a</a>	<p>Less than 5% of our states population owns ATVs. I would like you to keep this in mind when considering closing State Forests to OHV's in Hubbard County.</p>
<a href="#">16b</a>	<p>We, you, have a responsibility to the majority and to the land. We have critical habitat at stake and we must steward our land in responsible ways. Please do not use the "enforcement problem" as basis for your decision. If "enforcement" is such a great problem then we should also legalize drugs, underage drinking, and other such crimes. Also, ask, who will and how will we repair all the damage, when, several years down the road the DNR realizes what a huge mistake has been made in opening the forest to OHVs? Can't we be proactive?</p>
<a href="#">16c</a>	<p>While I am not opposed to OHVs, I am opposed to OHVs in every State Forest. I am opposed, as a non-motorized user of our State Forests, to the noise and destruction I and others like me will be subjected to in wild areas where you allow OHV's.</p>
<a href="#">16d</a>	<p>I encourage you to go see, first hand, the level of damage caused by these vehicles. Consider this damage when making decisions and ask yourself is this is tax dollars well spent. I'll tell you here this is not what I want my taxes going to support. How about you?</p>
	<p><b>17. Gebhard, Duane M.</b></p>
	<p>Representing North Country Trail</p>
<a href="#">17a</a>	<p>We very much appreciate the new designation of non-motorized areas, and only wish it could be larger and extended to other forest areas. It is so upsetting to see the way a whole industry of noise-makers and forest destroyers have assumed they can take over our pristine forest areas. We would request:</p>
<a href="#">17b</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least a 4 mile buffer zone between the motorized and non-motorized. These motors are so loud they can be heard for miles!</li> </ul>

<a href="#">17c</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There should be <u>NO</u> snowmobiles allowed in the non-motorized areas. They tear up the trails and leave noise and air pollution.</li> <li>There must be strict enforcement of this plan for it to have any value at all. Minnesota should follow the example of Wisconsin, with a policy of confiscating the motorized vehicle on the spot. Otherwise there is no teeth in the designation.</li> </ul>
<a href="#">17d</a>	
<b>18. Gebhard, Duane M.</b>	
<a href="#">18a</a>	I attended the public open house at the Park Rapids High School last week regarding the non motorized designations. I submitted some comments on a form. However since then, I have learned that only 5% of Minnesotans own ATVs, and yet 95% of public forest land is open to their use. Only 5% has been classified as non motorized to be preserved from the noise, pollution, and destruction of forest land and animal habitat. THAT IS ABSOLUTELY OUTRAGEOUS!. How is it that the DNR has sold out to the special interest groups and the manufacturers of ATVs? Therefore I want to go on record with the complaint that you have given away far too large an area already! Stop it! The non motorized and protected area should be at least 10 times the size that it is.
<b>19. Germain, Dale</b>	
<a href="#">19a</a>	My concern is that the areas you are closing to motorized traffic will create a hardship for them. Residents in these areas will have to trailer ATV's, snowmobiles, etc. to where (?) in order to ride them to a trail. Case in point the Mantrap area. This area has thirty or so residents; there is no place within a reasonable distance they can trailer an ATV, park and ride. There are several elderly folks in this area that rely on their ATV's to get around because of health reasons and it's easier than getting in and out of a car for them. If you want to designate specific walking, biking trails that's fine, but it would be unfair to make people have to trailer snowmobiles, ATV's miles away from home to use them when they should be able to leave their homes with them.
<a href="#">19b</a>	It may be necessary to designate a specific corridor for their "limited use" so they can get in and out of these areas. I know of several people who will move their residence if they can't leave their property on their recreational vehicle.
<a href="#">19c</a>	Keep in mind walkers and bikers don't pay license fees for trail use and ATV's riding is growing faster than bicyclists are.
<b>20. Hedeem, Carter</b>	
	Representing Itasca Moraine Chapter of the North Country Trail Association.
<a href="#">20a</a>	The proposal for "non-motorized" areas in Hubbard County, especially the largest one through which the North Country National Scenic Trail traverses, is welcomed by this chapter. Its adoption can only enhance the NCNST. The chapter's only areas of concern regarding this specific proposal are as follows.
<a href="#">20b</a>	Although we appreciate the formal inclusion of the NCNST as a non-motorized trail where it presently exists in Hubbard County, noted in the proposal as 20 miles, we would suggest that it be designated instead as a non-motorized trail "throughout it's length in Hubbard County, both the existing trail, and future trail segments as they are added." This would include it not only now, but into the future as well in one document.
<a href="#">20c</a>	At slightly under 4% of the County and DNR managed lands, the total area intended for non-motorized designation is mighty small indeed. On the other hand, we realize that others think the proposal at 4% is too much, so we are grateful it is being put forward at all. Maybe someday....?  Again, the Itasca Moraine Chapter wholeheartedly supports the proposal, and appreciates the efforts all involved in getting it this far. We know it hasn't been easy.
<b>21. Hedeem, Florence</b>	
<a href="#">21a</a>	As a member of the Itasca Moraine Chapter of the North Country Trail Association, I would like assurance that all of the foot path that has been laid and will be laid in the future for the North Country National Scenic Trail [sic: North Country Scenic Hiking Trail] will be designated "closed". I would also request that the potential impact of noise pollution be considered when assigning the "closed" designation. Even in

<p><a href="#">21b</a></p>	<p>forested areas unrestricted vehicular noise travels for several miles. Does the below proposal adequately address my concerns?</p> <p>"Three of the proposed non-motorized areas are within the Paul Bunyan State Forest (PBSF) boundaries and two of the proposed non-motorized areas are outside the boundaries of the PBSF but within Hubbard County.</p> <p>Together the five proposed areas comprise 8,658 acres. By designating these areas as 'closed', the hunting exemption will NOT apply, thereby making these areas totally non-motorized.</p> <p>The DNR proposes the designation of 20 miles of the North Country Scenic Hiking Trail, 19 miles of Non-Motorized Trails, 68 miles of Hunter Walking Trails and 63 miles of Unit Snowmobile Trails within Hubbard County.</p> <p>Hubbard County proposes the designation of 19.4 miles of Hunter Walking Trails within the County but outside the State Forest boundaries."</p>
<p><b>22. Hedeem, Florence and Carter</b></p>	
<p><a href="#">22a</a></p>	<p>Above all, do no harm to the natural environment that is dependent on the choices we humans make as to its use. According to Executive summary made available at the hearing, there are 138,000 acres of country-administered land and 79,000 acres of DNR Division of Forestry-administered land in Hubbard County. The proposed plan designates 8,658 acres as non-motorized, less than 4 percent of the managed land. The inequity is egregious.</p>
<p><a href="#">22b</a></p>	<p>Non-motorized use of the Paul Bunyan State Forest has by far the least impact on the resource, now and into the future. Motorized use negatively impacts nearly every aspect of the resource. (Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2005-2010, Cha. 4)</p>
<p><a href="#">22c</a></p>	<p>At the public hearing on January 17, 2007, and previously, we raised the concern that the DNR proposal designating "20 miles of the North Country National Scenic Hiking Trail" will require revisiting this issue every time more footpath is laid. In fact, at the hearing, the cartographer determined that 21.3 miles of NCNST was already on the ground between Hwy 64 and Hubbard County 91, the area specifically referred to in the designation. In 2006 our local Itasca Moraine Chapter of the North Country Trail Association laid another 4.7 miles of trail. Plans are in the works to complete additional trail to Hubbard County 4 in 2007.</p>
<p><a href="#">22d</a></p>	<p>We would ask that the entire length of the NCNST trail on DNR and County Administered Forest Lands in Hubbard County be designated non-motorized, a requirement for certification as a National Scenic Trail.</p> <p>The NCNST has National Scenic Trail designation and is administered by the National Park Service. While much of the trail on the ground is built and maintained by volunteers, such as ourselves, it is still considered a national treasure. We would ask that the DNR and Hubbard County keep that in mind as designations protecting the footpath are determined.</p>
<p><a href="#">22e</a></p>	<p>The status "closed unless posted open" to OHVs is the most appropriate for preserving quiet space for the quiet sport of hiking.</p>
<p><a href="#">22f</a></p>	<p>No amount of signage has been shown to be an effective deterrent to illegal access where the NCNST is crossed by motorized users. To further protect the NCNST it is imperative to minimize crossings by motorized vehicles, including OHVs.</p>
<p><a href="#">22g</a></p>	<p>Furthermore, attention must be given to noise pollution created by motorized use. A sound buffer of four miles or more would be most effective, however impossible that may be to accomplish.</p>
<p><a href="#">22h</a></p>	<p>Enforcement in state and county forest lands is largely ineffective because it is so under-funded and under-staffed. Gas tax dollars now designated for building motorized trails far exceeds the actual use of OHVs on public land. (Where ATVs are Ridden. Larimore. 2005.) Enforcement and damage accounts</p>

	should be supplemented from designated motorized trail dollars.
<a href="#">22i</a>	We support the non-motorized designation as presented, but just wish it was a bigger area. Thank you for your consideration of these comments.
	<b>23. Holz, Alice</b>
<a href="#">23a</a>	The plan has many good points. I am pleased especially with the area in Mantrap Lake, which is set aside as non-motorized area. But it could be broader.
<a href="#">23b</a>	I think it is necessary to make sure non-motorized trails have a 4 mile corridor of non-motorized areas (at least 2 miles on either side) to assure that noises from motorized vehicles are not intrusive.
<a href="#">23c</a>	It is far too easy for motorized vehicles to make trails wherever they please. They often disregard whose land they are on or what vegetation loss and soil erosion occur. It is harder to restore lands to their natural state. Therefore I believe it is important to preserve as much of our state and county lands as possible in quiet spaces where motorized vehicles are only allowed for deer hunting, where wild life can thrive, where our trees and wild flowers can grow and where a quiet walk in the woods is possible without the sound of a ATV or motorcycle intruding. Why not more areas of our DNR lands be designated as non-motorized?
	<b>24. Holz, Del</b>
<a href="#">24a</a>	My sense is that the “trails” listed above ( <i>ref. to proposed non-motorized trails</i> ) areas will have the <u>least</u> adverse impact on the environment, and as such, should be considered on that basis. It is also essential
<a href="#">24b</a>	<u>excepting</u> the snowmobile trails, to keep the motorized trails separated by at least 4 miles to avoid “sound pollution” for the walkers and hikers. The motorized portions will obviously have a negative impact on wildlife as well, and this is further cause to keep the two genres separated by the 4 miles noted above. If anything, you could designate double the hiking/walking trail miles w/o any additional adverse effect – not true of motorized portions.
	<b>25. Hudson, Dallas Clell</b>
	Representing Trouts Unlimited, Quality Deer
<a href="#">25a</a>	This is a good start, but there is nothing east of 64 in the Paul Bunyan. Ya just started building a new trail last fall going threv the middle of East Steamboat loop off Parkway. This took in the <u>ONLY</u> gated trail “over a mile” east of 64 that was unmotorized. This is unacceptable and needs to be restored or replaced.
<a href="#">25b</a>	And ya need to quit building logging roads and leaving them open. There is no longer a square mile section in the entire forest that doesn’t have a trail through it. That is a shame. I remember trapping as a youngster when ya had to walk. “snowmobiles were illegal and there weren’t ATVs and how peaceful the forest was and how vast between on roads. Not anymore. What’s happened from what we’ve learned from the likes of Leopold. Have we totally forgotten the need to get away from the noise of the city. Some of us haven’t and still need the peace and quiet of the wilderness. It’s a shame to grow up in it and now have to drive a 100 miles to find it. Take a look at a trail map or altitude photo from 10 years ago, then 20, then 30. You’ll see all the roads that have been built. Soon there will be no place left for the wolf, the eagle, or the grouse. Our grandkids grandkids deserve better and to think we call ourselves civilized.
	<b>26. Johnson, Deane</b>
<a href="#">26a</a>	I strongly support the non-motorized areas that are proposed for the Hubbard County region. Soaring Eagle ski area has (in good snow years) had increasing public use and clearly deserves the designation to protect the XC ski experience. We have had trail damage from apparently deliberate incursions nearly every year.
<a href="#">26b</a>	The other areas are also worthy, and will offer walking hunters, hikers, skiers, and other sportspersons the opportunity to enjoy the forest without the noise and trail damage that vehicles bring. The areas proposed are a very small percentage of state forestlands, and I would hope that nonmotorized areas will be significantly expanded in the future.
<a href="#">26c</a>	
	<b>27. Johnson, Deane</b>
<a href="#">27a</a>	I write to provide comment on the proposed Non-Motorized Areas and Trails on State Forest Lands and County Lands in Hubbard County. I strongly urge the continued designation of these non-motorized areas.
<a href="#">27b</a>	This proposed area comprises a very small percentage of the forest land, only about 14%. This is but a small step in the right direction. Only 4% of our state forest land is designated as closed thus far, despite the fact that the vast majority of forest users are traditional non-motorized users, seven to eight times the

	number who are motorized users.
<a href="#">27c</a>	The OHV user group is able to access the vast majority of our forest lands, even though they are the only user group which drastically damages the environment and infringes on and endangers our wildlife. They also displace and drive out traditional users of the forest.
<a href="#">27d</a>	Setting aside non-motorized areas in the Paul Bunyan will protect semi-wild land and consequently give refuge to wildlife species that require quiet and land with less corridors. My cabin sits in the area between these proposed non-motorized areas, so I and well aware of the unique beauty and treasure we have in these areas. This designation will help provide protection for wildlife such as Northern Goshawk, bobcat and also the wild flowers of this area, I have had the privilege to enjoy seeing.
<a href="#">27e</a>	I have read in the local paper of OHV users referring to the Paul Bunyan Forest as a "piece of the pie." This language betrays the mentality of this user group. The forest was also referred to as a place to make money for a bait business. Our forest land should not be viewed as something to be devoured or used up as a "piece of the pie, would suggest. And, why should anyone expect that our public forest land always be available as a source of personal income. Our forest land after all does belong to all of us. And, our forest land belongs to those generations who follow us. State forests should be managed sustainably, prudently and with good stewardship. The setting aside of non-motorized areas respects the values of those of us who see the forest for its intrinsic worth and precious heritage. We must remember the wild creatures who inhabit our forestland who need space and quiet to thrive and continue to exist.
<b>28. Johnson, Judy H.</b>	
	I attended the Park Rapids meeting, looked over the maps and read the draft proposal. Following are a few of my thoughts.
<a href="#">28a</a>	The wall maps show a spider web of fragmented forest logging roads, (the draft states there are 1,107 miles). The draft also states that before intense logging occurred, the forest community was primarily made up of mixed red and white pine. Today, this landscape has been changed to an aspen dominated interspersed with plantation tree farms. The draft also states that wildlife management will focus in the future on 3 species; ruffed grouse, prairie chicken and sandhill cranes. In my humble personal opinion is that it is a SAD commentary to what once was a diverse biological functioning system. It is a tragedy.
<a href="#">28b</a>	The forest fragmented roads left an opportunity for another industry to move in: the off-highway vehicle. Further, it took 10 years for the Dep't of Natural resources to step in and regulate this industry. It makes a public citizen wonder who the DNR is serving. But none the less, setting aside 7,967 acres out of 217,000 public owned forested lands for non-motorized use is a very small but positive step in the right direction. In those areas, it is my hope that the wildlife species that were driven out of the 209,040 acres can somehow survive as those of us humans that support a more quiet recreational opportunity.
<a href="#">28c</a>	In closing, I want to mention an issue that is far more important than appeasing an OHV Industry or the small number of people who support it. The issue of Global Climate Change. Each OHV contributes with their exhaust to greenhouse gases. What responsibility will this industry show or what responsibility will the agency (DNR) play in helping to halt this looming threat to future generations? That is the critical question.
<b>29. King, Neil</b>	
	Representing ItascaTur Ski, Bike, and Run Club
<a href="#">29a</a>	We (ItascaTur Ski, Bike, and Run Club) have spent \$25,000 or more in the past 10 years to improve our trails and get them flat. Now that they are that way we can groom to ski with only about 4 inches of snow. If we allow 4 wheelers on the trails( mostly in the fall during hunting season the trails are often wet and very vulnerable) they will cause rutting. With only a 2 inch rut it takes 6 inches of snow to fill it and make it flat. If we have deeper ruts we might need 12 inches or more to fill it or we might never get them flat. We eventually will end up with a useless trail for skiing until we re-grade the trails. That cost could be thousands of dollars.

<a href="#">29b</a>	<p>This is a very small area and with little effort hunters can walk in and hunt, likewise a deer can be hauled out by hand to a nearby trail. We realize that hunters use the Soaring Eagle area to hunt grouse, duck, deer, and other small game. We try to accommodate them by not grooming or starting skiing until deer hunting season is over. However we also realize that this 320 acres and can only accommodate a very small population of hunters. On the other hand in the past years we have grown from accommodating 500 skiers annually to over 2000 last year.</p> <p>We are supported by the tourism business community of Park Rapids and the Park Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce. As the only cross country ski area in Hubbard County. We are a valuable asset to tourism offering a alternative to motorized sports . We are also a asset to the Park Rapids region providing winter fitness to opportunities.</p>
<a href="#">29c</a>	<p>This past summer we kept the trails mowed for running, walking, bird watching. And all non-motorized activities compatible to Soaring Eagle.</p>
<a href="#">29d</a>	<p>As ItascaTur Club, we accept and respect other activities not associated with our own activities at Soaring Eagle, however we ask that this area be designated as non- motorized for the best use of this small acreage.</p>
	<p><b>30. Knight, Charles</b></p>
<a href="#">30a</a>	<p>We are concerned about the parking lot off of Hwy 38. The entry is a hazard and a death trap. Please move entry up the hill or down but not where it's at.</p>
	<p><b>31. Lein, Mike</b></p>
<a href="#">31a</a>	<p>I would like to express overall support for the Non-Motorized Area Plan for the Paul Bunyan State Forest.</p> <p>I am a landowner near the Crooked Lakes Non-motorized Area and a frequent visitor to it. I know this area has suffered the same abuse as much of the Paul Bunyan due to OHV use. This includes the construction of unauthorized OHV trails. The designation of this area as "Non-Motorized" will protect parts of the shoreline of two Natural Environment Lakes [Middle Crooked and Coon/Seno], at least 10 wetlands, one known active osprey nest and many mature white pines from possible damage and/or interference from OHV activity.</p>
<a href="#">31b</a>	<p>I would also point out that access to this area will still continue via the township road that runs east and west through the area and possible access by water from Middle Crooked Lake. Inconvenience to users should be minimal. Thanks for the opportunity to comment.</p>
	<p><b>32. Maertens, Jerry</b></p>
<a href="#">32a</a>	<p>We are pleased with the five non-motorized recreational areas and recreational trails being proposed by the DNR and Hubbard County. We believe this is a step in the right direction.</p>
<a href="#">32b</a>	<p>This said, it is obvious that these proposals are a mere token of acres that should be non-motorized. All you have to do is really look at the numbers of motorized users versus non-motorized to see how bad non-motorized recreation is short-changed. We sincerely hope that non-motorized areas receive future review and that the remaining forests going through a similar process have non-motorized areas in proportion to area users.</p>
<a href="#">32c</a>	<p>We would also like to thank forest field team for their work and vigilance during this planning process. We are sad to see that the DNR Administration forced the Paul Bunyan mudder truck trail through the planning process over field team recommendations to delete mudder trucks from the plan.</p>
	<p><b>33. Matheny</b></p>
<a href="#">33a</a>	<p>My family lives in Hubbard County, in Arago township. We live on a County road, and the road is an "informal" link between ATV trails in our area. I frequently see riders on the paved road itself, and have seen much irresponsible "driveway" jumping on our driveway and our neighbor's. While we own several ATVs ourselves, we use them for yard work, snowplowing, and general labor.</p>
<a href="#">33b</a>	<p>We also own and ride horses on several forest roads, where we have frequently run across ATVs on roads clearly posted closed to them. They are a danger and a hazard in most cases, having willfully veered at</p>

	frightened horses.
<a href="#">33c</a>	Until ATV clubs have proven that they have the ability to promote or enforce law-abiding riding, I feel they have taken over far too much of our forests already. The majority of local people are not the ones causing damage and riding irresponsibly, so why should our area be sacrificed for tourists "fun"? We can not get back damaged areas, and I hope that nature still exists in its current form when I have grandchildren who will come and visit "up north".
	<b>34. McKeown, Anthony</b>
<a href="#">34a</a>	All DNR and County Administered land in Hubbard County should be non-motorized areas. Destructive forms of recreation should not be allowed on any public land in Minnesota.
	<b>35. Miller, Darin C.</b>
	Representing Itasca Moraine Chapter of the North Country Trail
	First I would like to thank you for taking this very important step towards keeping this area one of the best areas of our state to live in or visit.
<a href="#">35a</a>	Over the last few years, I have been working on building and maintaining the North Country National Scenic Trail. I do this because I believe that non-motorized recreation will become even more popular in the future. As Fuel costs rise and people become more aware of how the use of petroleum effects our environment, I believe more people will turn to non-motorized recreational activities. With your forethought and careful planning, I believe we will be well positioned to meet the future needs of visitors and residents alike.
<a href="#">35b</a>	Although I am only familiar with the trails and areas within the boundaries of the Paul Bunyan State Forest, I firmly believe that having non-motorized areas scattered throughout the region is vital to meeting future needs. Again, thank you for all the time and effort that you have invested in this plan.
	<b>36. Monicken, Melodee</b>
<a href="#">36a</a>	I am very unhappy with the overall plan for Hubbard County motorized trails. There was so much input, solicited and unsolicited, and STILL the DNR is building connecting trails near the historical CCC camp and including truck trails. Surely you understand that this plan makes people even more cynical and suspicious about the influence manufacturers and their paid lobbyists (clubs?) have on northern legislators and on the DNR's upper management.
<a href="#">36b</a>	Privately, every employee of the DNR and MPCA whom I know personally will agree that the damage done to the environment by ATV's is impossible to monitor, egregious, and irreversible.
<a href="#">36c</a>	Privately, they all admit that the demand for ATV trails in north central MN is the equivalent of NASCAR enthusiasts requesting a parallel racetrack the length of highway 10.
<a href="#">36d</a>	Privately, they all confess that DNR efforts to accommodate a powerful MN business interest have made a mockery of the "multiple use" rationale. Everyone acknowledges that when ATV's use an area, the noise, speed, and resulting damage render it unusable for everyone else.
<a href="#">36e</a>	A significant plurality of Minnesotan's prefer non-motorized recreation on our trails, but the proposed non-motorized areas are much smaller than they should be. Only 5% of Minnesotan's own ATV's, and many of those do not own them for non-utilitarian purposes. Lest you imagine that I am anti-ATV, I am not. I own an ATV. It is a utility vehicle that I use several times a week. But I think the pretense that riding around on a vehicle is a "sport" is one that a state agency charged with protecting and managing our natural resources should be discouraging, not encouraging.
<a href="#">36f</a>	
<a href="#">36g</a>	If you have to install trails for off-road vehicles, I believe they should all be located within spitting and listening distance of the legislators and manufacturers who are insisting on this concession. Give the rest of us the peace and natural environment we keep pleading with you to preserve.
	<b>37. Olander, Alan</b>
<a href="#">37a</a>	I urge you not to give our forests and other natural areas away to the small, but vocal, ORV community. I

	agree with the person who, at the Park Rapids meeting, said , "we should respect the people who respect the beauty of the forest". The qualities of the forest that we enjoy will be severely compromised if ORV users are given what they want.
<a href="#">37b</a>	The statement that ORV users "police" themselves is laughable. I don't believe anyone can police their activities well enough, especially if they are given more and more areas in which to engage in their sport. My property borders the Paul Bunyan Forest, and I see first hand how well they "police" themselves. They drive around and over "no motorized vehicles" signs and purposely enter wetland areas. Many recently logged areas immediately become new trail sites. ATVs drive down my drive way apparently just to see where it goes.
<a href="#">37c</a>	I know there are responsible people in all activities, and those who are not. In this case, the price of putting up with the irresponsible is just too high.
<b>38. Parsons, Leah</b>	
<a href="#">38a</a>	I am writing in regards to concerns I have about the proposed closing of trails in the Gulch, Mantrap, and other areas mentioned in the article on January 20th in the Park Rapids Enterprise. If this is passed, not only will it negatively effect some businesses directly, but it will also hurt many more in the long run.
<a href="#">38b</a>	The people that will be most directly affected are fur trappers and minnow trappers, followed closely by fishermen and hunters who will be unable to easily access the places they have been going to for years. I have heard concerns from people in fear of losing their businesses and livelihood over this proposal. It is unfair that some of these areas many people have relied on for so long can be ripped away on a whim of the DNR and other special interest groups. Not only will the trappers and hunters be affected, but also the tourist trade in the area. Many people that visit here, 'and shop at local stores, eat at local restaurants and stay at local hotels,' enjoy making use of these trails. If new regulations are passed such as ones suggested, it will cause people to seek out other places to vacation at and inevitably hurt our local economy.
<a href="#">38c</a>	In the article Mary Adams states we should "respect the people who respect the beauty of the forest." As a nature lover and a leech trapper I cannot agree with her more, but I do not believe making access to these trails more cumbersome is the right way to go about it. I spent many hours in the Gulch and around Crooked Lake this last summer on foot and on A.T.V.s, spending sometimes 10 hours a day in these areas. For my co-worker and myself to disrespect the trails and tear up the landscape would only cause grief and harm to ourselves. Roads and highways are not closed off because of a few reckless drivers acting disrespectful or littering, so how is it just and fair to punish everyone using A.T.V.s based on a few peoples actions. It is simply not right and completely unethical to punish the majority of the people because of the actions of a select few.
<a href="#">38d</a>	I would like to end by saying please think of everyone that would suffer from this and the extent of hardship and misery it could actually bring about, for there are those of us relying on these trails and places to survive.
<b>39. Reynolds, John</b>	
	Please register my comments into the public record.
<a href="#">39a</a>	I support the Gulch Lakes Management Area non-motorized area. I further wish that the classification of our state forests represented the reality that motorized recreation is not only unsustainable but that it also only represents a tiny fraction of the citizens of this state. It is ridiculous that the vast majority of Minnesotans who do not use motorized recreation are ignored by the MN DNR.
<b>40. Sailer, Phil</b>	
	Representing Itascatur Ski, Bike and Run Club
<a href="#">40a</a>	Thank you for your work and support of all of these areas in this area, especially the Soaring Eagle Area which our club maintains. It is the only ski area within 30 miles to my knowledge and we work hard to provide a quality area for skiing. The local area office of the DNR has been very supportive of what we are doing and this will help a lot.
<b>41. Schumacher, Mike</b>	

41a	I support all nonmotorized proposals for the Paul Bunyan State Forest. I would like to see more and I hope in the future that more nonmotorized areas are set aside and that the motorized areas that are open are heavily enforced and if the damage from ATV/OHV trails cannot be dealt with that those trails are closed. I think it is ridiculous that we have to jump through these bureaucratic hoops to basically get the crumbs when, if some common sense and scientific reasoning were employed, ATV/OHV use would not be allowed, and your decision would not be based on political pressure from the governor/legislators, via the commissioner. We all know what's driving this process – corporate money (Arctic Cat/Polaris). This state is going backward on conservation and the sight is ugly.
<b>42. Sieve, Marty</b>	
42a	I am writing to convey my support for the Proposed Non-Motorized Areas and Trail Designation for DNR and County-Administered Forest Lands in Hubbard County, dated November 13, 2006.  As a resident of the county and a frequent visitor to the Gulch Lakes, I am especially pleased with the inclusion of that area in the proposal. The Gulch Lakes are among the region's most beautiful, unique natural assets. They invite activities associated with quiet contemplation, like hiking, studying, observing and just plain looking and listening- all of which are incompatible with the noise and excitement of motorized sport. Thank you for putting this proposal forward. If there is anything I can do to help with its adoption, please let me know. <i>Signed: Marty Sieve</i>
<b>43. Smith, Liz</b>	
43a	I strongly endorse keeping the Soaring Eagle Ski Area as a non-motorized recreational area. It is a fabulous place to cross-country and skate ski and it has been made that way through the efforts of a dedicated group of skiers who have spent thousands of hours clearing trails, marking trails, keeping them groomed and building a warming house.
43b	To even think of this small 320 acre parcel being destroyed by the deep ruts left by ATV's is unconscionable. There are acres and acres of areas that are currently designated to be used by ATV's in the forests surrounding Park Rapids and going north to Walker and Bemidji. They also use virtually every ditch in the state. The need for more trails for motorized vehicles does not surpass the need for keeping this pristine ski area in its present condition.
43c	Please come and visit this area to see for yourself how valuable this area is to the growing numbers of skiers who travel for miles to come to a site such as this. Each year the numbers continue to increase which is a reflection on the need for continuing Soaring Eagle as a strictly non-motorized area. Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.
<b>44. Spangler, Maurice</b>	
Representing Itascatur Ski Bike Run Club	
44a	I hope that the DNR will see fit to designate Soaring Eagles Cross Country Ski Trail as a non-motorized area (except for parking lot access). Neil King, Itascatur club president, has, I believe, sent you a similar e-mail highlighting the main points for keeping it so and I won't belabor the issue. It's so important to minimize any activity that might cause ruts on the trails. We allow mountain biking, for instance, but don't advertise or encourage it for fear that, if that activity becomes too popular on the trails, it might cause ruts as well. We don't have a problem with people hunting on the trails in the fall, other than having our signs shot up, but we do take them down during hunting season. Like any wise Minnesotans, we don't run or walk in the woods during hunting season either. But we do have a problem with ruts caused by vehicles and wish that hunters could walk rather than ride when they go out. It's better for their health anyway and fits with our Itascatur ski club's mission of promoting healthful aerobic outdoor activities in our area.
44b	
<b>45. Theisen, Frank</b>	
Establishment of Quiet Zone in Arago Township section 16	
45a	My name is Frank Theisen and am a life long resident of Arago township. I have hunted and trapped section 16 for 66 years. Until recent years we have had vehicle access to this wonderful area. Soaring Eagle ski area removed this access to their trail area. We reluctantly complied with this restriction. The new proposal removes vehicle access to the south part of the section and to the lake on the west.

<p><a href="#">45b</a></p> <p><a href="#">45c</a></p>	<p>Our hunting party consists of senior citizens up to age 82. this regulation will greatly hinder our use of this “PUBLIC” property. At our ages we are physically unable to carry stands, drag deer and other activities without vehicle use.</p> <p>We ask that you exercise some common sense in implementing these regulations. A two week exemption at deer season time would at least allow us to use this “PUBLIC LAND” I write this on my own behalf and on behalf of my hunting party.</p> <p><i>Signed: Frank Theisen, Gwen Theisen, Deb Theisen, Ralph Vonasek, Todd Vonasek, Seth Vonasek, Rick Franklin, Matt Symalla, Stew Shaft, Jerry Mack and Patrick Mack.</i></p>
<p><b>46. Therkilsen-Gebhard, Jennifer</b></p>	
<p><a href="#">46a</a></p> <p><a href="#">46b</a></p> <p><a href="#">46c</a></p>	<p>I strongly support the DNR proposal to set aside the five areas including the Gulch Lakes, Mantrap Lake, Crooked Lakes, Soaring Eagle and Crocus Hills for non-motorized use - at minimum! My personal preference would be to increase non-motorized areas significantly more within state forest and county areas. However, starting with the above named trails, I request a 3-5 mile wide buffer on both sides of the trails to preserve the natural terrain, sound barrier and sight lines.</p> <p>DNR and county personnel or other designated folks must be given authority to enforce the boundaries of the non-motorized areas. I hear confiscation of trespassing vehicles can be a marvelous deterrent. Perhaps a hotline that citizens can call to report abuses would also be helpful.</p> <p>We have lived here now less than two years, but already have enjoyed the Soaring Eagles ski trails many times and have done hiking in several state forests. We were discouraged last fall to meet an ATVer in an off-limits trail and would hope that will not happen again. Or if it does, that there will be a process in place to allow us to report the violator.</p> <p>Our family and friends who visit from southern Minnesota, Florida, Wisconsin, Switzerland and Germany would add their support for this proposal. Thank you.</p>
<p><b>47. Tjader, Harvey</b></p>	
<p>Representing Headwaters Canoe Club, North Country Trail Association</p>	
<p><a href="#">47a</a></p> <p><a href="#">47b</a></p>	<p>The Headwaters Canoe club is strongly in favor of designating the Gulch Lakes Area for non-motorized recreation to provide an area for quiet recreation on the Gulch Lakes chain and the Crappie-Island-Tepee Lakes chain.</p> <p>The Itasca Moraine Chapter of the North Country Trail Association also strongly favors this designation to ensure that at least a portion of our section of this national scenic hiking trail will provide a quiet experience, away from the threat of being run over by a motor vehicle.</p>
<p><b>48. Trout, Jerry</b></p>	
<p><a href="#">48a</a></p> <p><a href="#">48b</a></p>	<p>I request that the decision makers in the DNR ponder the points below when finalizing non-motorized plans for Hubbard County.</p> <p>I certainly endorse the plans outlined in the study. I believe, however, it borders on the minimum of what should be considered non-motorized areas. I acknowledge that a lot of people own ATV and OHV vehicles. But those numbers still represent a small percentage of Minnesota people who enjoy the peace and quiet of the outdoors. But more importantly, of the people who own ATVs, a very few of them are engage in recreational trail riding. Consequently, ATV trail riding enthusiasts, those who would benefit from motorized trails in Hubbard County, are an extreme minority of the people of Minnesota.</p> <p>The citizens of Minnesota, and particularly DNR personnel need to be aware of the rapid degradation of natural areas in our state. The concept of managed forests and motorized traffic contributes significantly to the marginalizing of our precious and dwindling resources. If we continue in this mode, it will just be a short time, relative to the history of our planet, before nothing is left on this planet but human beings and a</p>

	<p>few hardy species of flora and fauna. Human beings have already chased most of the big game, song birds and migratory waterfowl out of Minnesota. With the invasion of ATVs and OHVs having access to all areas, residences being established everywhere, forest fragmentation and other negative impacts in our previously wild areas, bear and wolves will soon be long gone too. We already have a good start on getting rid of the moose with heat tolerant parasites decimating the moose herds. Aggressive management of state and county owned land focused on eliminating or at least minimizing motorized recreation can offset some of the development occurring in the private sector.</p>
<a href="#">48c</a>	<p>Novelty forms of motorized recreation that have a significant negative impact on our natural resources should in no way be approved, endorsed or promoted by the DNR. ATVs and OHVs used as recreational trail riding machines are a novel form of recreation and without question destroy the aura of wild areas and have a negative impact on the fecundity of our wildlife in our prairies, forests and streams. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.</p>
<p><b>49. Van Kempen, Ted; Booth, Steve</b></p>	
	<p>Representing: Schoolcraft Township, Hubbard County</p>
<a href="#">49a</a>	<p>The Schoolcraft Township Board of Supervisors, Hubbard County, has closed portions of two township roads to OHV use. 1<sup>st</sup> Schoolcraft Drive from Hubbard County 44 north to ½ mile past Schoolcraft trail. 2<sup>nd</sup> Schoolcraft Trail from Schoolcraft Drive to public boat access on Evergreen Lake. The Township will be posting signs in these areas this spring '07.</p>
<a href="#">49b</a>	<p>The Board would like the DNR to add these Township road closures to your maps. And if maps are to be made available to the public that these roads be marked as closed to O.H.V. use. Also, if alternate routes could be shown. This would help direct O.H.V. traffic away from the homes on Evergreen Lake. <i>Signed with map attachment: Ted A. Van Kempen</i></p>
<p><b>50. Wannebo, Larry</b></p>	
	<p>The Gulch Lake area sounds like a nice place...kind of like Sucker Bay on Leech Lake. Sometimes I wonder if the colorful names of some of our MN natural resources and attractions are misunderstood by people from other states and countries.</p>
<a href="#">50a</a>	<p>Taking a lesson from some of those countries that have large populations on a limited amount of useable land, I hope you will be more considerate in your Gulch Lake Management Area declaration. Those many other countries are very poor in public lands while we still have some public spaces in this country. But, aside from WWW 3 or a plague, our population will surely grow, particularly in the areas of lakes and trees, places like the GLMA.</p>
	<p>Leaving other countries, think of those MN counties that have little or no public land for any kind of recreation. They have to buy private land for parks and trails. Or, they come north to enjoy what they don't have.</p>
<a href="#">50b</a>	<p>This GLMA area needs to be protected from extensive OHV use to save a little space for people that enjoy the peace and quiet and who never leave a footprint. It seems the consumptive use of OHVs, a minority of public land users, is being given a greater consideration in the matter than the majority of open space users that cause no damage.</p>
<a href="#">50c</a>	<p>The hikers, walkers, nature lovers, bird watchers cost little or nothing to manage, monitor and enforce. Seems to me that in these times of trying to do more with less people and money, that the DNR would choose to serve the larger population. Get the most bang for your buck and there is the bonus of knowing that you did what you could to preserve a little unfragmented space on your watch.</p>
<a href="#">50d</a>	<p>It is not a balancing act between ATVers and others. It is not a balancing act between the environment and the economy. It is not a balancing act between politics and science. It is one person at a time; citizen, politician and agency administrator, each doing what is right based on what they know and feel.</p>
<a href="#">50e</a>	<p>In a DNR survey of public land managers sometime ago, it was found that "About one-half (45%) of</p>

<p><a href="#">50f</a></p>	<p>them did not think a system of forest trails would meet demand or help reduce illegal riding." Reading the CO reports, I'll bet there are even more managers feeling pinched right now. It is inconceivable that the legislature would order the DNR to create a statewide system of trails in state forests, especially ignoring the EQB rules.</p> <p>It is up to you to step back from the immediate pressure and to see the bigger picture. The majority of the public supports you...so you can't be wrong in ordering less OHV space in the GLMA. Thanks.</p>
<p><b>51. Weber, John</b></p>	
<p><a href="#">51a</a> <a href="#">51b</a> <a href="#">51c</a> <a href="#">51d</a> <a href="#">51e</a></p>	<p>After examining the maps at the Jan. 17<sup>th</sup> open house, I am submitting the following public comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I highly support establishing the five areas in Hubbard County as non-motorized. However, I would add that I feel the 8,658 acres they comprise is quite modest in scope.</li> <li>• As our sedentary, obese population ages, muscle-powered activities and recreational opportunities gain added importance and should always be strongly supported.</li> <li>• Only a few, short generations ago, motorized recreational activities were rare if they even existed. Now muscle-using activities are becoming the exception, not the usual or commonplace.</li> <li>• Since the geographic placement of the five areas is fairly isolated, one from the other, in addition to each one being generally quite small, I am concerned about the intrusion of motorized activities on them. Noise would probably be the largest form of intrusion. Noise that carries many miles further than most motorized-enthusiasts realize or are willing to admit. So I would ask: Are their adequate noise-buffer distances separating the non-motorized from motorized areas?</li> <li>• <u>All facets</u> (i.e. noise, exhaust fumes &amp; faster pace, to name only a few) of motorized 'recreation' generally drive a wedge between people and their opportunity to appreciate the natural world on <u>its</u> terms. On the other hand, non-motorized opportunities promote a lifelong, healthy bond of a sustainable, rather than consumptive nature.</li> </ul> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to make public comments.</p>

## RESPONSE TO TOPICS OF CONCERN

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) while others are site specific (e.g. North Country Trail). Comments that expressed a concern or opinion but that were not directly pertinent to the road/trail use designation were assigned to a miscellaneous category.

For each of the **nine (9)** topics a succinct summary of the concerns was prepared. 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.

### 1. State Forest Management Objectives

#### Summary of Concerns

Within all state forests, there are a variety of opinions on what are appropriate objectives and uses of State Forests. Many commenters are concerned that non-motorized areas, trails and acreages in state forests are too few and too close to motorized recreation. There were several requests for the inclusion of buffers (3-5 mile linear corridors) between non-motorized and motorized recreational activities to muffle 'noise pollution'. A few commenters remarked on why snowmobiles are allowed to be included in this non-motorized plan. Other commenters are concerned that non-motorized areas will curtail present motorized activities, which have traditionally been allowed but were unregulated until the adoption of the DNR 2006 OHV plan.

#### Comments on This Topic

[1a](#) [4a](#) [5b](#) [6b](#) [7b](#) [9b](#) [11a](#) [12b](#) [13b](#) [15c](#) [15d](#) [15f](#) [16a](#) [16c](#) [17b](#) [18a](#) [19c](#) [20c](#) [22a](#) [23b](#) [23c](#) [24b](#) [25b](#) [26c](#) [27b](#) [27c](#) [28b](#) [36d](#)  
[46a](#) [48b](#) [51d](#)

### Response to Concerns

State forests are actively managed to provide a wide range of goods and services, including outdoor recreation. 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 (e.g. timber harvest, motorized recreation, wildlife habitat manipulation, mining, prescribed fires, tree planting, fuel wood 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 forestland. The use of buffer zones to separate uses, protect the environment, decrease noise levels and aid enforcement efforts in and on non-motorized areas and trails has been researched and reviewed by the DNR for further management considerations.

Under *MN Rule 6100.0500, Subpart 7*, snowmobiles are excluded from the definition of motor vehicles. Only unit snowmobile trails on state forestlands have been included in this plan for designation. Designating these trails will preclude ATVs, and OHMs from traveling on these trails.

This plan is an attempt to formally address the need for areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use and non-motorized trail designations and to provide a balance to the adopted Hubbard County OHV plan of March 17, 2006.

## **2. Areas with Limitations on Off-trail and Non-designated Trail Use**

### Summary of Concerns

A majority of commenters are pleased to see the DNR and Hubbard County address and formally add non-motorized recreational opportunities to the adopted OHV plan of March 17, 2006. Most commenters view this as a positive step for the DNR and Hubbard County to continue on, but feel that there are too few acres set-aside for non-motorized users. (refer also to #1 Summary of Concerns under State Forest Management Objectives). Commenters support recreational areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use and non-motorized trail designations as being environmentally sensitive and less damaging to wildlife. Some commenters are frustrated that the process of designating these areas and trails has taken such a long time to designate and implement.

### Comments on This Topic

[2b](#) [4b](#) [5a](#) [6a](#) [7a](#) [9a](#) [13a](#) [15a](#) [17a](#) [21b](#) [22b](#) [22e](#) [22i](#) [23a](#) [24a](#) [26a](#) [27a](#) [27d](#) [29d](#) [31a](#) [32a](#) [32b](#) [34a](#) [35b](#) [36e](#) [39a](#) [41a](#) [42a](#) [47a](#) [48a](#) [50a](#) [50f](#) [51a](#)

### Response to Concerns

This plan proposal is an extension of the March 17, 2006 adopted OHV plan to formally recognize and designate areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use and non-motorized trail designations in Hubbard County. Due to legislative changes, it was required of DNR to conduct a separate public process for these recreational uses within the state forests of Hubbard County. The five areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use include: Gulch Lakes, Mantrap Lake, Crooked Lakes, Soaring Eagle, and Crocus Hills. Non-motorized forest users may traverse most any route throughout the forests – designated or not. However, designation of these five areas and non-motorized trails as specified in the plan, allows the DNR and County to formally adopt and implement management strategies to ensure their proper use and upkeep and to provide a balance of recreational opportunities for users.

## **3. Recreational Uses vs Commercial Uses**

### Summary of Concerns

Several commenters expressed the need to separate recreational uses from utilitarian or commercial uses with regards to using ATVs in areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use.

### Comments on This Topic

[10a](#) [12a](#) [14a](#) [14c](#) [27e](#) [33a](#) [36f](#) [38a](#) [38b](#) [38d](#)

#### Response to Concerns

This plan is intended to address non-motorized recreational uses of state and county forest lands only. Commercial uses of the forests are addressed on a case-by-case basis, under an access permit from the Area Forest Supervisor.

## **4. Users Concerns**

#### Summary of Concerns

Many perceived conflicts between non-motorized and motorized uses in state forests were expressed by commenters. Each group has different needs and issues. The impact of motorized users noise and disturbances in the forests is a major concern for non-motorized users. The use of buffer zones to separate uses, protect the environment, decrease noise levels in areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use and on trails and to aid enforcement efforts was also a common concern of the non-motorized public. (Refer to agency response under State Forest Management Objectives). Some commenters do not agree that some of the proposed areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use should be restricted to OHV use, or are concerned about disabled users being restricted from select areas within the forest lands.

#### Comments on This Topic

[14d](#) [15e](#) [15g](#) [17c](#) [19a](#) [33b](#) [37a](#) [37c](#) [38c](#) [43b](#) [44b](#) [45b](#) [50b](#) [51e](#)

#### Response to Concerns

There is no state land allocation decision likely to satisfy all interests. Given the size and configuration of the forest land base, it is impossible to completely separate all non-motorized uses from the effects of motorized users. However, the DNR and Hubbard County Field Team agreed early on in this process to include areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use and non-motorized trails for recreational use. The proposed areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use including Gulch Lakes, Mantrap Lake, Crooked Lakes, Soaring Eagle and Crocus Hills were all identified and included in the first OHV plan that was adopted by the Commissioner of DNR on March 17, 2006. This current plan proposal further increases the availability of non-motorized opportunities by also including the designation of non-motorized trails and hunter walking trails. Motorized forest users are now confined to travel on designated roads and trails, while non-motorized forest users may traverse most any route throughout the forests, designated or not.

## **5. Enforcement Issues**

#### Summary of Concerns

Law enforcement concerns include illegal motorized use in areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use and on non-motorized trails, trespass, motorized damage to sensitive environments, rutting in non-motorized zones and noise concerns. Conflicts between non-motorized and motorized users were a concern, as well as public safety concerns regarding cross travel between non-motorized and motorized users.

#### Comments on This Topic

[7c](#) [8a](#) [11d](#) [16b](#) [16d](#) [17d](#) [22h](#) [33c](#) [37b](#) [46b](#) [46c](#) [50e](#)

#### Response to Concerns

This plan is intended to bring about improved management control in Hubbard County for non-motorized recreational use within forest lands that are administered by both the DNR and the county. Effective field enforcement will become possible once all road and trail signage is in place; recreational user 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 areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use and non-motorized trail systems.

The DNR will monitor and re-evaluate the use of areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use and non-motorized trail systems periodically to determine whether additional measures are necessary to remedy demonstrated user conflicts or to mitigate potentially dangerous conditions. DNR will work closely with Hubbard County and in consultation with partners and affected stakeholders to ensure that areas and with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use and non-motorized trail systems retain their integrity.

## **6. North Country Trail**

### Summary of Concerns

Concerns of the public centered on noise issues, the need to buffer (4 mile corridor width) this national hiking trail from motorized trail influences, and public safety issues arising from motorized vehicular crossings of this non-motorized trail. Other comments included having the trail be designated without specifying mileages, as portions are not yet constructed or ready for public use.

### Comments on This Topic

[1b](#) [11b](#) [11c](#) [11e](#) [20a](#) [20b](#) [21a](#) [22c](#) [22d](#) [22f](#) [22g](#) [35a](#) [47b](#)

### Response to Concerns

The North Country 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 throughout this process. Future corridor acquisition plans and ongoing negotiations for missing segments of the NCT will also be respected. The DNR has collaborated with the 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.

This plan formally recognizes and designates the existing NCT segments located on state forest lands. Future segments of the trail that are currently not yet constructed on state forestlands, will be added to the designation, as they become available for public use.

## **7. Soaring Eagle Ski Area and Trails**

### Summary of Concerns

Public concerns centered on this unique non-motorized area being relatively small in acreage and there being continued overuse and trespass by ATVs. Rutting is a concern as well as specifics regarding enforcement of violations.

### Comments on This Topic

[26b](#) [29a](#) [29b](#) [29c](#) [40a](#) [43a](#) [43c](#) [44a](#)

### Response to Concerns

The DNR is committed to keeping this area closed to motorized vehicles and enforcing the new regulations once the proposed plan is approved and implementation is in place in the field.

## **8. Site Specific Issues**

### Summary of Concerns

Comments below relate to individual trail segments, unique targeted areas (Mantrap Lakes, Game Refuge Area, Crooked Lakes, Mary Arm Lake, Arago Township), or as they pertain to the forest inventory and mapping process. Scientific information was presented for the DNR and Hubbard County field team to consider, and legal interpretations of state statutes and forest management goals were reviewed. Other concerns centered on the lack of areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use or non-motorized trails east of Hwy # 64 or in the south and east portions of the Paul Bunyan State Forest. One concerned citizen referred specifically to an entry and parking lot off Hwy #38.

### Comments on This Topic

[1c](#) [1d](#) [1e](#) [1f](#) [2a](#) [2c](#) [3a](#) [11f](#) [15b](#) [19b](#) [25a](#) [30a](#) [31b](#) [45a](#) [45c](#) [49a](#) [49b](#)

### Response to Concerns

All specific or actionable comments were reviewed by members of the DNR and Hubbard County field team. Changes have been incorporated into the final plan and maps as warranted through a detailed review of site specific comments, or are addressed by the team or field staff during the implementation stage of this plan on a site by site basis.

Concerns that no areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use are proposed in select portions of Hubbard County, has been a team decision to better accommodate both motorized and non-motorized uses in these select areas.

The non-motorized trail loop north of Mary Arm Lake is gated and designated as a county hunter-walking trail.

The reference to a trail east of Hwy #64 serves as a connection from the Parkway to an ATV trail on Steamboat.

The concern over a parking lot off Hwy #38 refers to a proposed snowmobile trail that is related to the adopted OHV plan and will be resolved by the field staff during the implementation stage of that plan.

The concern over restricting hunting access in section 16 of Arago Township is currently under state legislation which prohibits off-road vehicular traffic in non-motorized areas and trails. However, ATVs and trucks can drive on the minimum maintenance roads leading directly to these non-motorized areas and trails.

Site specific comments referring to the inclusion of township requests for road or trail closures have not been included in this plan, as this plan refers to state and county administered forest lands only. Townships have the authority to open or close roads over which they have jurisdiction including roads in the Mantrap Area.

## **9. Miscellaneous**

### Summary of Concerns

Several commenters are concerned with motorized issues in Hubbard County and the focus of the previous adopted March 17, 2006 OHV plan. Other issues pertained to global warming or management of specific natural resources not related to this plan were also brought forward.

### Comments on This Topic

[13c](#) [14b](#) [28a](#) [28c](#) [32c](#) [36a](#) [36b](#) [36c](#) [36g](#) [48c](#) [50c](#) [50d](#) [51b](#) [51c](#)

### Response to Concerns

The current plan is an attempt to formally recognize the needs of non-motorized users within DNR and Hubbard County forestlands and to formally designate these areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use and non-motorized trails as specified by the Hubbard County field team. Other issues such as OHV concerns, global warming and other natural resources concerns are outside the scope of this plan and are not addressed in this document.