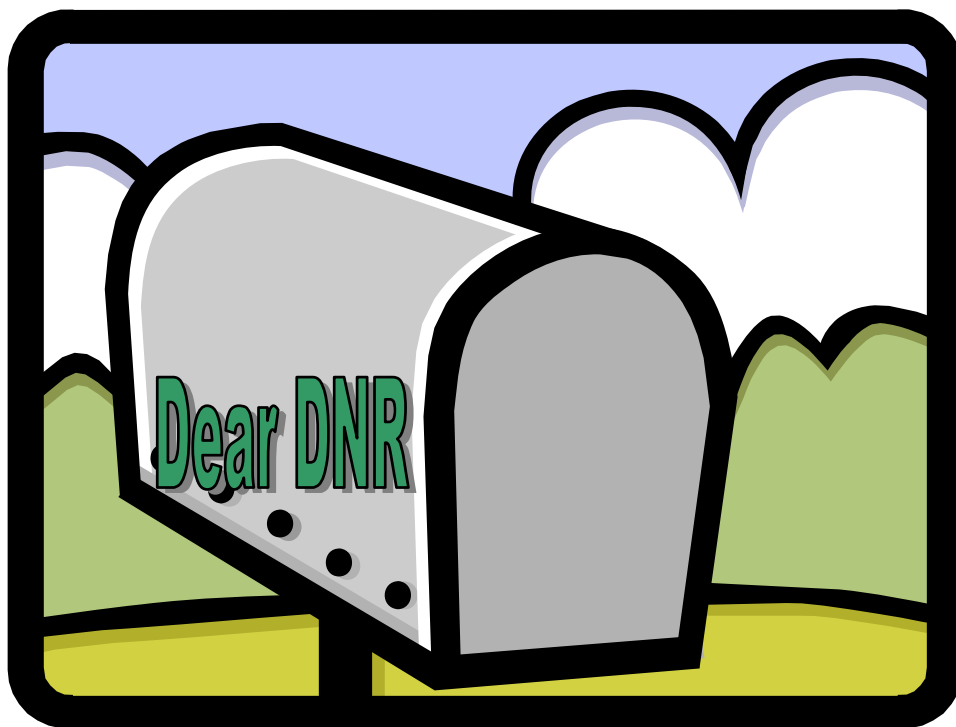


**Response to Comments on the Proposed Reclassification for
Motor Vehicle Use and Road & Trail Designations on State-
and County-Forest Lands in Hubbard County**

Final Document

March 17, 2006



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Hubbard County OHV Project Team

Mark CarlstromMN DNR Division of Forestry
Charles Krysel.....MN DNR Division of Forestry
Rob Naplin.....MN DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife
Dick KimballMN DNR Division of Trails & Waterways
Colleen Adam.....MN DNR Division of Enforcement
Janet BoeDNR Division of Ecological Services
Bob HoffmanHubbard County Land Department
Mark Juberian.....Hubbard County Land Department

Planning and GIS support provided by Jeff Asfoor, Jack Olson, Helen Cozzetto, Rick Jaskowiak.



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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Compilation of Comments.....	2
1. Aasen, Bob	2
2. Adams, Mary	2
3. Adamson, Joel	3
4. Alsip, James K.....	3
5. Alwin Jack.....	3
6. Andersen, David E.	3
7. Anderson, Jan	4
8. Anderson, Larry	4
9. Anonymous #1	4
10. Anonymous #2.....	4
11. Anonymous #3.....	4
12. Armstrong, John	5
13. Arnold, Everett	5
14. Aultman, Stephen	5
15. Babcock, Barry W.	5
16. Babcock, Linda Mae.....	6
17. Baer, Fred	6
18. Bahls, Jerold & Donna.....	6
19. Bair, Jonathan	7
20. Bair, Linda.....	7
21. Bair, Linda.....	8
22. Bair, William D.	8
23. Baker, Arlene.....	9
24. Ball, Peter	9
25. Barclay, Mark L.....	10
26. Barczak, Dave.....	10
27. Barta, Tom.....	10
28. Barton, William	11
29. Bass, Dan & Louise.....	11
30. Battey, Linda	11
31. Becker, Todd	12
32. Becklund, Ryan	12
33. Beckman, Paul J	12
34. Bender, Aldine.....	12
35. Bergendahl, Ragnar	13
36. Bergerson, Becky	13
37. Berglund, Paul & Marcia.....	13
38. Berglund, Mike.....	13
39. Bergman, Garth	13
40. Bergquist, Ruth.....	14
41. Berman, Mark.....	14
42. Berscheid, Joe.....	14
43. Bigalke, Scott	15
44. Birnstengel, Bob #1	15
45. Birnstengel, Bob #2	15
46. Birnstengel, Bob #3.....	15
47. Boese, Michael	16
48. Booth, Greg	16
49. Borseth, Gene & Barbara.....	16
50. Borth, Janet.....	16
51. Bradshaw, Allan	16
52. Braun, Chad.....	16

53.	Brink, John & Mary.....	17
54.	Brunkow, Gary & Cathy.....	17
55.	Bryant, Zach & Dan	17
56.	Buitenwerf, Eric	17
57.	Bullinger, Scot.....	19
58.	Bullis, Robert.....	19
59.	Cajw, Kelly.....	19
60.	Calkins, Jon	19
61.	Carlson, Marty.....	20
62.	Case, Kevin	20
63.	Casson, John.....	20
64.	Cheurette, Marcel	22
65.	Chesley, Elaine.....	22
66.	Chester, Bonnie	22
67.	Christensen, Jason	22
68.	Classon, Jone & Wayne.....	22
69.	Clemmons, Mark	23
70.	Collins, Don & Cheryl.....	23
71.	Collins, Thomas.....	24
72.	Conlan, Chris.....	24
73.	Cook, Emeline	25
74.	Calkins, Jon	25
75.	Cook, Douglas	26
76.	Cornell, Adam	26
77.	Cothsan, Tim	26
78.	Craig	27
79.	Cutler, Susan.....	27
80.	Danelius, Steve.....	27
81.	David, Randy.....	27
82.	Davis, Joshua.....	27
83.	DeGayner, Bret.....	27
84.	DeHaut, Dave & Gloria	27
85.	Derby, Ted & Mary Ellen.....	28
86.	DeVries, Wallace.....	29
87.	DeWandeler, Jeannette	29
88.	DuBose, Chris.....	29
89.	Dudley, Cynthia.....	29
90.	Dudley, Jeff	29
91.	Duevel, James J.	29
92.	Duncanson, Janet.....	30
93.	Durigan, Tom	30
94.	Durrant, Sue.....	30
95.	Eastman, Wayne & Nancy.....	30
96.	Eaton, Heather; Russell, James; Russell Joel & Ann; Singer, William & Jo.....	30
97.	Eaton, Todd	30
98.	Eggen, Brad.....	31
99.	Eischens, Audrey & Leonard.....	31
100.	Ekvall, Lance & Angela	31
101.	Eldredge, Paul & Jodi.....	32
102.	Ellefson, Jack & Anne	32
103.	Elling, Scott.....	32
104.	Elwell, Adela	32
105.	Engle, Tim.....	33
106.	Enquist, Janet.....	33
107.	Epple, Judy	34
108.	Erchenbrack, Jane.....	34

109.	Ericksen, Joe.....	34
110.	Erickson, Roy	34
111.	Erzar, Bill	34
112.	Etzel, Jim.....	34
113.	Evarts, Edie & Bill	35
114.	Farace, Vince.....	36
115.	Fehn, Lee & Irene.....	36
116.	Feil, David & Marion	37
117.	Feil, Patricia.....	37
118.	Felt, Johanna.....	38
119.	Fiedler, Kurt	38
120.	Foley, Joe.....	38
121.	Frey, Gregory J.....	38
122.	Garner, Gerald B.	38
123.	Gaudette, David.....	38
124.	Gherity, Emily V.	39
125.	Giese, Richard	39
126.	Gisvold, Deborah.....	39
127.	Gobtop, Bill	40
128.	Goebel, Glen B.	40
129.	Gorecki, John.....	40
130.	Graham, Chester Clifton.....	41
131.	Green, Jeffrey	41
132.	Green, Samuel , J.....	42
133.	Greniger, Kevin	42
134.	Grob, A. Kenneth #1	42
135.	Grob, Kenneth #2	43
136.	Groebner, Jim	43
137.	Gunderson, Patricia	44
138.	Haarman, Janet	44
139.	Haas, Carole	44
140.	Haas, Ed.....	45
141.	Haidos, Chris	45
142.	Halstenrud, Reid.....	45
143.	Hansen, Bruce.....	46
144.	Hansen, Gary	46
145.	Hanson, Clyde	47
146.	Hanson, Reva.....	47
147.	Hardy, Brett.....	47
148.	Harkins, Kay.....	48
149.	Haskins, Elaine	48
150.	Haug, Todd.....	48
151.	Headwaters Canoe Club	48
152.	Hedeen, Carter	49
153.	Hedeen, Flo	50
154.	Heikman, Joe	51
155.	Henry, Kenneth.....	52
156.	Hitchcock, Steve.....	52
157.	Holder, Amanda	52
158.	Holland, Randy.....	52
159.	Holland, Ren #1.....	52
160.	Holland, Ren #2.....	52
161.	Houghton, Mike & Nancy	53
162.	Housholder, John.....	53
163.	Hovde, Peter	53
164.	Huber, Charlie	53

165.	Huber, Mike & Dorothea.....	54
166.	Hudson, Tavis #1.....	54
167.	Hudson, Tavis #2.....	54
168.	Humenberger, Egon.....	54
169.	Humrickhouse, Mike.....	54
170.	Hurd-Lof, Lu Ann.....	55
171.	Ion, Darrel.....	55
172.	Irish, Ken.....	55
173.	Jackson, Nancy.....	56
174.	Jackson, Wade T.....	56
175.	Janzen, Mark.....	58
176.	Jaros, Dean.....	58
177.	Jason.....	59
178.	Jenson, Bob.....	59
179.	Johnson, David #1.....	59
180.	Johnson, David #2.....	59
181.	Johnson, Deanna.....	59
182.	Johnson, Leon L.....	60
183.	Jorgensen, Phil.....	60
184.	Jorgenson, Mary Ann.....	60
185.	Kadow, Marya Dawn.....	61
186.	Kavanagh, Ron.....	61
187.	Kay, Roger.....	61
188.	Kemnitz, Jon.....	61
189.	Kent, Bette.....	61
190.	Kermes, Michael.....	62
191.	Kerssen, Carl.....	62
192.	Kiecker, Alan.....	62
193.	Kietzman, Andy.....	62
194.	Kimar, Barbara.....	63
195.	Kimer, Thomas.....	63
196.	Kingsley, Doug.....	63
197.	Kirby, Dennis.....	64
198.	Klisch, Leo.....	64
199.	Kloskin, Vivienne.....	64
200.	Knight, Brad.....	64
201.	Kordasiewicz, Joshua.....	65
202.	Korte, Jane.....	65
203.	Kranz, Pat.....	66
204.	Krause, Matthew.....	66
205.	Kueber, Mary.....	66
206.	Kulhanek, Mike.....	67
207.	Kupertz, Gustaf.....	67
208.	LaFleur, Judith.....	67
209.	Lamp, Jerry.....	68
210.	Larson, Ben.....	69
211.	Larson, Bill.....	70
212.	Lashinski, Eugene.....	70
213.	Laske, Francine.....	70
214.	Laske, Letitia.....	71
215.	Lautt, Kim.....	71
216.	Leavitt, Andre.....	71
217.	Lein, Michael; Lein, Marceil.....	72
218.	Leinen, John Jr.....	73
219.	Leistikow, Norm.....	74
220.	Lenards, Mike.....	75

221.	Leverington, Greg.....	75
222.	Libbey, Wes.....	75
223.	Lien, David A.	75
224.	Lier, Dave.....	76
225.	Lindesmith, Robert & Karen	76
226.	Lindl, Irene	76
227.	Lofquist, Paul	76
228.	Long, Steve.....	77
229.	Long, Mimi.....	77
230.	Longfellow, Doug.....	78
231.	Lucas, Dr. Jay	78
232.	Lucken, Ron #1	78
233.	Lucken, Ron #2	79
234.	Madson, Robin	79
235.	Maertens, Jerry	80
236.	Maertens, Shirley.....	81
237.	Mains, Morgan	82
238.	Maki, Robert.....	82
239.	Malmquist, Bryan	82
240.	Marsh, Helen	82
241.	Martinson, Dave & Cheryl	83
242.	Mattson, Jan.....	83
243.	May, Mary.....	83
244.	McBrady, Pat.....	83
245.	McCabe, Curt	83
246.	McDermott, Liz	84
247.	McDonnell, Diane	84
248.	McDonnell, Thomas	84
249.	McFarren, Vicki	84
250.	McKeown, Anthony	85
251.	McKibben, Steve	85
252.	McNulty, Tom	85
253.	McSteen, Kerstin	85
254.	Medenwald, Mike.....	85
255.	Medewold, Steve	86
256.	Melby, Ted	86
257.	Melzer, James	86
258.	Mills, Mike	86
259.	Monahan, Kevin	86
260.	Monicken, Melodee.....	86
261.	Morehead, Janet.....	87
262.	Mudrak, Andy.....	88
263.	Mueller, David & Joanne.....	88
264.	Myers, Gwen & Mason	89
265.	Myhra, Eric.....	89
266.	Naylor, William & Dorothy.....	89
267.	Nelles, Richard	90
268.	Nelson, Brian.....	90
269.	Nelson, Mike	90
270.	Nervig, Luther	90
271.	Newsman, Jerry	90
272.	Norrgard, Lois	91
273.	Norton, Matt #1	96
274.	Norton, Matt #2	109
275.	Novak, Terry.....	110
276.	Oberg, Margaret	110

277.	O'Brien, Tom & Maryann.....	111
278.	O'Brien, Tom	111
279.	Ohm, Richard	111
280.	Ohm, Teresa	111
281.	Olander, Alan	112
282.	Olander, Joel J.	112
283.	Olsen, DZ	112
284.	Olsen, Garrick.....	113
285.	Olson, Tedd	113
286.	Olson, Tim & Barbara	113
287.	Opheim, Ernie.....	113
288.	Ostrowski, Mike	114
289.	Ostwald, Brent.....	114
290.	Otto, Paul C.	114
291.	Overson, Josh	115
292.	Paavola, Eric.....	115
293.	Pantelis, John.....	115
294.	Parke, Robert & Barbara	115
295.	Parthun, Chris.....	115
296.	Peroni, Patti #1	116
297.	Peroni, Patti #2	117
298.	Perrine, Rich	117
299.	Pett, John	117
300.	Pfeifer, Mike & Pam.....	117
301.	Pollock, Amy	118
302.	Potratz, Jim & Marianne.....	118
303.	Potter, Scott	118
304.	Preus, Dorothy; Preus Jonathan.....	118
305.	Preus Dorothy #2	119
306.	Proescholdt, Kevin	119
307.	Prom, Mike	120
308.	Prussia, Leah.....	120
309.	Rahn, James.....	120
310.	Ralston, Doug.....	120
311.	Rambo, Bill & Avis	121
312.	Ranson, Ed.....	121
313.	Reedy, Steve	122
314.	Reiling, Scott	122
315.	Reitz, Otto & LaVerne.....	122
316.	Reitz, David & Judy	122
317.	Reynolds, John #1	122
318.	Reynolds, John #2	125
319.	Reynolds, John #3	125
320.	Rickardt, Craig	125
321.	Rogers, Deb	126
322.	Rogge, Tom & Maryn	126
323.	Ronan, Adrian.....	126
324.	Ronchetti, Linda	126
325.	Rothermel, Eunice	126
326.	Roux, Tristan	127
327.	Ruben, Adam.....	127
328.	Rusert, Jason.....	127
329.	Ryan, Jason.....	127
330.	Ryan, Tim	127
331.	Santiano-Francis, Karen	127
332.	Sapletal, Dave.....	127

333.	Schaedig, Terry.....	128
334.	Scheer, Bill	128
335.	Schettler, June.....	128
336.	Schmitt, Gregg.....	128
337.	Schnaith, Kent	128
338.	Schroeder, Rita #1	128
339.	Schroeder, Rita #2	129
340.	Schroeder, Carl & Mary	129
341.	Schumacher, Michael	130
342.	Schwartz, Richard.....	130
343.	Scotland, Lee	131
344.	Sharbo, Dave & Karen.....	131
345.	Sharbo, Peter.....	131
346.	Sherack, Jim	131
347.	Sherwood, David	131
348.	Shofner, John.....	132
349.	Shofner, Norma	132
350.	Shorter, Jon.....	132
351.	Shoultz, Lynnae.....	132
352.	Sievertson, Paul	132
353.	Silence, Charles	132
354.	Silence, Rhonda.....	133
355.	Smith, Jean & Frank	133
356.	Smith, Randy	133
357.	Smith, Brad & Lisa #1	133
358.	Smith, Brad & Lisa #2	134
359.	Smith, Joan E.....	134
360.	Smith, Melissa	134
361.	Smith, Scott	134
362.	Smith, Sharon	134
363.	Soderberg, Kim & Milford	135
364.	Sorensen, Maragaret	136
365.	Souba, Fred.....	136
366.	Springer, John.....	136
367.	Springer, Janice	136
368.	Steffel, Ev	136
369.	Steffel, Martin.....	137
370.	Stocker, Ollie.....	137
371.	Stone, Mike	138
372.	Strommen, Jon & Sarah.....	138
373.	Suhr, Gerald.....	139
374.	Sullivan, Mike	139
375.	Swanson, Rhoda	139
376.	Telfer, John & Patricia.....	139
377.	Teske, Brian.....	139
378.	Threinen, Colin.....	139
379.	Tillma, Jeff	140
380.	Timm, Adam.....	140
381.	Tjader, Frannie	140
382.	Tjader, Harvey	141
383.	Township Resolutions	145
384.	Traun, James.....	145
385.	Traxler, David L.	146
386.	Trout, Jerry	146
387.	Tuftin, Gene.....	147
388.	Ulmer, Eric	148

389.	Vanderbeek, Fred #1.....	148
390.	Vanderbeek, Fred #2.....	148
391.	Vaselaar, Ken	149
392.	Vlasak, Ray	149
393.	Waalén, Jay.....	151
394.	Wallin, Leana	151
395.	Wannebo, Larry	151
396.	Weatherby, Scott L.....	152
397.	Weber, Frank	152
398.	Weber, John #1.....	153
399.	Weber, John #2.....	154
400.	Weber, Marlene #1	154
401.	Weber, Marlene #2	155
402.	Welinski, Joel	155
403.	Werner, Steven	156
404.	Wesenberg, Don	156
405.	Westerman, Kathy	156
406.	Westrum, Rod.....	156
407.	Whetston, Stacey	156
408.	Wickham, Don.....	156
409.	Wilkening, Debbie.....	157
410.	Wilson, R.D.	157
411.	Winter, Le Roy	157
412.	Woizeschke, Kevin.....	157
413.	Wood, Terry	157
414.	Woodmansee, Alex #1.....	158
415.	Woodmansee, Alex #2.....	158
416.	Young, Cheryle.....	162
417.	Zappa, Mike.....	162
418.	Zimmer, Barbara & Ken.....	162
419.	Zimmerman, Al & Carol	162
420.	Zweber, Becky.....	162
421.	Zweber, Dean & Becky	163
422.	Form Letters, Petitions, Cards	163
	Response to Topics of Concern	163
1.	State Forest Management Objectives	164
2.	Non-motorized Recreational Opportunities.....	164
3.	OHV Opportunities	165
4.	Forest Zoning For Recreational Use & Spurs	165
5.	Funding Issues.....	166
6.	Use of OHV Dedicated Funds.....	167
7.	Trail Management Concepts, Practices, Costs, Maintenance	167
8.	ATV's and Snowmobile Trails.....	168
9.	Powerline Trails	168
10.	Hunting and OHV's.....	169
11.	Environmental Impact of OHV Use	169
12.	Economic Impact of OHV use.....	170
13.	Enforcement Issues and Public Safety.....	170
14.	Role of Volunteers.....	171
15.	User Conflicts & Needs.....	171
16.	County/Township/Private Landowners Issues.....	172
17.	OHVs in Highway Rights-of-Way (Ditch Riding)	173
18.	Gravel Pits, Mine Alternatives, Private Providers & Challenge Areas.....	173
19.	Connector Trails	174
20.	Paul Bunyan ORV Trails.....	175
21.	Martineau Recreational Trail.....	175

22.	North Country National Scenic Trail.....	175
23.	Other States Examples.....	176
24.	Site Specific Issues	176
25.	Miscellaneous Issues	176
Appendix A: Comments Received Prior to Public Comment Period.		177
1.	Anonymous (no date).....	177
2.	Anonymous (no date).....	177
3.	Bair, Linda (no date).....	177
4.	Bair, Linda 03.19.04	178
5.	Bair, William 03.13.04.....	178
6.	Concerned Citizens Group 03.19.04	179
7.	Clausen, Judy (no date).....	180
8.	Clay Township (no date).....	180
9.	Hendrickson, Nick (no date).....	180
10.	Hovde, Peter & Charlene (no date).....	180
11.	Hovde, Peter 02.17.04.....	181
12.	Jack Pine Coalition (no date)	182
13.	Johnson, Deanna 02.29.04	182
14.	Kennelly, Mike	182
15.	Lake Emma Township 04.01.04	183
16.	Leech Lake Snowmobile Club 03.20.04	183
17.	Mantrap Township Town's People Motion	183
18.	Nevis Trailblazers Snowmobile Club 03.08.04	183
19.	Petition #1 (typical)	184
20.	Petition #2 (typical)	184
21.	Remund, Bob & Karen	184
22.	Sample Form Letter #1	184
23.	Sample Form Letter #2	185
24.	Sharbo, Dave & Karen 03.03.04.....	185
25.	Snowmobilers Sample Card (typical)	186
26.	Thorpe Township #1.....	186
27.	Thorpe Township #2.....	186
28.	Toomey, Richard 02.17.04.....	186

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.

1	1. Aasen, Bob We are being kept off trails forcing users to go where 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.
2 2a 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	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. 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. 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. How will trail use be enforced and are there enough dedicated funds available to maintain and repair the inevitable damage that will occur? Ditch use is also a big issue with local and summer residents. Damage to driveways and resulting erosion creates an eyesore, particularly in an area that prides itself on scenic beauty! 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. 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. 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. 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,

18 18a	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/Teoe kakes/Halvorsen trails.
19 20 21	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!
22	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.
23	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!
24	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.
25 26 27 28 29	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 NO 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 NO 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 YOU 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

30 31 32 33	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. 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. 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. 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. 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.
34	12. Armstrong, John My family enjoys driving our truck in the forests. Please try to give us as many miles of trails as possible. 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.
35	13. Arnold, Everett 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.
36	14. Aultman, Stephen 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.
	15. Babcock, Barry W. Here are my comments concerning the DNR OHV trail planning for Hubbard County and Paul Bunyan State Forest:

37	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.
37a	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.
38	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.
39	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.
40	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.
41	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.
42 43 44 45	16. Babcock, Linda Mae I am opposed to several aspects of the plan: 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. 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. 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. 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.
46	17. Baer, Fred 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.
47 48	18. Bahls, Jerold & Donna I have hiked many of the proposed ATV trails in the Badoura State Forest. I have some general comments and some specific comments. 1) The soil in this area is extremely sandy. Trails with any slope will result in significant erosion. 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

49 50 51	peace and solitude in the forest should not have to hear or smell motorized vehicles. Generally a half mile buffer, minimum, would be desirable. 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. 4) Trail # 792/799 is a good example of very suitable siting for ATV trails. 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. 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.
52 52a 53 54 55	19. Bair, Jonathan 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. 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. 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 where DNR and the County are unable to adequately repair them. 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. 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.
56 57	20. Bair, Linda 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: 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. 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 into 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.

67 67a 68 69 70 71 72	23419 State 87 Nevis, MN 56467 Dear Floyd, 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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.
73 74	23. Baker, Arlene 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?!!! 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. My outrage extends to the use of personnal 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!
75 75a 76	24. Ball, Peter 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. 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! 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

87 88	28. Barton, William 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. 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 managable 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.
89 90 91 92 93 94 95	29. Bass, Dan & Louise 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. Changes I recommend for the plan: 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. Please revise your plan in consideration for the local residents.
96 97 98 99	30. Battey, Linda 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

	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.
100 101	31. Becker, Todd 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.
102 103 104 104a 104b	32. Becklund, Ryan 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. 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. 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. 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. 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.
105	33. Beckman, Paul J 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. 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.
106	34. Bender, Aldine 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

	the environment.
107	35. Bergendahl, Ragnar I fully agree with the restriction being placed on ATV's in state forests. They are so destructive.
108	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.
109	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.
110	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.
111	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.
112	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!
113	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
114	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

126	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.
126a	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.
127	43. Bigalke, Scott 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.
128	44. Birnstengel, Bob #1 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. I urge you to drop this plan and proceed only with trails that after careful study can be shown to not damage the environment nor compete with business.
129	45. Birnstengel, Bob #2 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.
130	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.
131	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. I urge you to withdraw the current proposal and to take the steps necessary to protect our forests and our wildlife.
132	46. Birnstengel, Bob #3 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 nowhere else east of the Rocky Mountains. The plant and animal communities are unique in the nation. Once they are gone they are gone.
133	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

157	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.
158	Sensitive natural resources 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. 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.
159	Enforcement 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.
160	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.
161	Exclusions 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. 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.
162	Invasive/non-native species 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). 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.
163	Damage mitigation 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.
164	ORV trail designation 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. 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.
165	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

166 167	landscape rather than what special interest groups feel is owed them. This funding source needs to be repealed through legislative action. 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. Conclusion 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.
168 169	57. Bullinger, Scot I support recreational trucks trails in the Paul Bunyan. Paul Bunyan has had a long history of recreational off-road truck use. 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.
170 171 172 173	58. Bullis, Robert 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. 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. 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. 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.
174 175 176 177	59. Cajw, Kelly I am writing this letter to inform you that I strongly support recreational truck off-road trails in the Paul Bunyan State Forest. 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. 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. 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.
178	60. Calkins, Jon 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. I am concerned over the proposed closure of over 10% of the riding trails. Although it is a

189	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.
190	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 (undesignated routes).
191	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.
192	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.
193	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.
194	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:
195	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	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	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	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	5. This proposal shows ATV trails on County lands accessible only through private property. This provides exclusive propriety 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,

198	minimum maintenance roads are encouraging illegal cross-country travel which is impacting our public lands and adjacent township roads. 6. ATV use of State and County highway road ditches should be limited to designated and managed trails. Ditches were not designed for ATV use. The present condition of State and County road ditches in Hubbard County is an eyesore and a public embarrassment.
199	64. Cheorette, Marcel I support truck trails in Paul Bunyan. Not all ORV users are mud boggers. In fact, people who choose to only mud bog do not use these trails. The people who use the trails in my club are responsible and respectful to the trails and surrounding woods and wetlands.
200	65. Chesley, Elaine It is my understanding that the DNR is planning to allow trucks into the Paul Bunyan State Forest. Please <u>do not</u> allow this to happen. We need such areas to be kept safe for wildlife. Thank you for your consideration of this request.
201 202 203	66. Chester, Bonnie I would like to have a say in some positive comments on the Paul Bunyan State Forest/Hubbard County Forests. I have been riding ATV's for the last 10 years and totally enjoy riding, enjoying this great outdoors that the good Lord provided for everyone. Here we are looking at 217,000 acres of land and wondering why do we have to listen to the roar of ATV's, well for one thing its more than enough land for everyone to enjoy. I mean trails for hiking, biking, atving, snowmobilers. I am all for posting closed to sensitive areas, connecting trails that lead to separate riding areas this is what we need in Minnesota a trail system. Looking at other states they have managed very well with a trail system, spur trails that were old logging trails are great for riding. With so few trails of course they are going to be used all the time by everyone, but by making established routes to different areas it will lessen the concentration on just one trail. These trails were to be inventoried and make new trails in this case there should be 421 miles of trails. With 217,000 acres of land there has to be 421 miles that can be designated as trails with more in the future. With clubs in the area helping to maintain these trails we can still keep them open and beautiful even for the hikers. I look at trails as I look at our highways, if we only had one highway it would be used by all and would need to fixed all the time. But we have many highways leading all over the state, this is the example we need to be used on our trails. Everyone knows to stay on the highway and not drive in the median and ditches this is the education part we need to instill in atv'ers. With the Youth ATV Safety program this is what we strive for. We will strive to the young riders to stay on designated trails, obey the rules, respect the forests. ATV's are not going away, we are here to stay we just need to be sensitive to the environment.
204 205 206	67. Christensen, Jason I am writing this letter in response to the article on the front page of the Star Tribune Christmas Day. I am an avid ORV enthusiast, and it pleases me that the media has focused attention on the fastest growing sport in the Nation. I have followed ORV legislation closely for several years, and am concerned about the current closing of ORV access to Minnesota's beautiful State Parks. I know that the State Forest reviews that are currently in process have intentions of allocating trails to ORVs, but up to this point,no trails have been designated. I also follow closely with many of the organizations that are seeking to completely block OHV access to all State Parks, and hope that such legislation never comes into existence (such as the legislation that Senator Ruud is pushing). I don't have a "mudder truck" as these organizations portray the people of our sport, and use my Jeep to enjoy the wilderness of Minnesota with my family. I hope that Minnesotans can access State Forests in a responsible manner, and still have trails available that are an enjoyable challenge for the 4x4 enthusiasts.
207	68. Classon, Jone & Wayne I want to voice our objection to increasing access of 4 wheelers to our state forests and adjoining lands. These machines tear up the land and vegetation causing erosion and unsightly scares in the woods that lasts indefinitely. Even when travel is stopped it takes years to heal the scars. In many areas our soil is light/sandy and when the relatively thin humus of the forest floor is torn up it is very costly to stop the erosion and condition the land so that it will again support vegetation,

215 216 217 218 219 220 221	71. Collins, Thomas 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. 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. 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. 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. 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? 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. 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?
222 223	72. Conlan, Chris First of all I am not an ATV rider. I am however, in favor or 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. 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

	a place in decisions, not just money talking.
224	73. Cook, Emeline “Forests Should be a Refuge” 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. 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. (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. (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. (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. 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? *When driveways are destroyed – the owner has to pay for repairs. *Large license plates on motorized ATVs etc. so one could read them at a 60-70 mph speed. *Large fines (ex. for driving thru yellow ribboned off areas, \$1,500 would be a good starting point (as Mpls. Plans to do) This is why we have had such destruction in this area. People are angry. *Please consider closing all ditch use. * Enclosed is my newspaper article on the harassment we have received. I’m not angry with my neighbor, just want consideration and respect. Hello John, 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. 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. 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. 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.
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	74. Calkins, Jon I am relatively new to this area, I moved to Minnesota in 1998. I have only recently

245	78. Craig 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.
246 247 248	79. Cutler, Susan 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. 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. 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.
249	80. Danelius, Steve 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.
250	81. David, Randy 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.
251 252 253	82. Davis, Joshua 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. 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. I also request that ATVs also be kept out of earshot of all canoe routes and lakes without boat landings. Finally, please make sure that enforcement information including number to call to report violations are prominent on all maps.
254 255	83. DeGayner, Bret 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. Minimum maintenance roads are not recreational. P.S. Loggers do more damage in one hour than we can do in a year.
	84. DeHaut, Dave & Gloria We would like to state our position regarding the proposal to increase ATV trails in northern

256	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.
257	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!
258	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!
259	85. Derby, Ted & Mary Ellen 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 ATVers 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.)
260	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.
261	Some interesting methods used in Wisconsin:
262	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.)
263	b.. Speed limits on hard surface roads are set at 30 MPH.
264	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).
265	d.. Access to ATV trails from county campgrounds/parks.
266	e.. Routes provided into cities/towns to motels, restaurants, ATV repair shops, and, gas stations and convenience stores.
267	f.. Some snowmobile trails are used as ATV trails during the summer and winter.
268	g.. All trails are very well marked.
269	More comments:
270	a.. Minnesota has hundreds of thousands of acres of forest land that is not generating much income for the state.
271	b.. A trail user fee is not objectionable and would help off-set the cost of maintaining the trails.
272	c.. I believe the current proposed 149 miles in 217,000 acres is a good start but very short of what is needed.
273	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.
273a	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

	use...but it's almost impossible to be sure. A little about us: - 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. Your effort to provide additional ATV trails is appreciated.
274 275 276 277	86. DeVries, Wallace 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. 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. 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.
278	87. DeWandeler, Jeannette 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. 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.
279	88. DuBose, Chris 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.
280	89. Dudley, Cynthia 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.
281	90. Dudley, Jeff We need a connecting trail system in Hubbard County. The system planned now will make it totally impossible for any kind of law enforcement.
282 283	91. Duevel, James J. 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. 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

320 321 322 323	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. 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!
324 325 326 327 328 329 330 331	105. Engle, Tim 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. 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. 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. Consider these facts: 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. 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. 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. 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. 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.
332	106. Enquist, Janet 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

333	provide a "recreational opportunity" to those who wish to use their vehicles in ways for which they were not intended. I vehemently object to using my tax money which should be earmarked for the protection of a precious resource, our state forests.
334 335	107. Eppler, Judy 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. 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.
336 337 338 339 340	108. Erchenbrack, Jane 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. 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. 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. 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.
341	109. Erickson, Joe 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.
342	110. Erickson, Roy 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.
343 344 345	111. Erzar, Bill It seems unthinkable that ATV trails in Hubbard County will be closed. I believe you should consider re-routes or adding culverts or bridges. ATVers put about 3/4 million dollars into training and enforcement in 2004. 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.
	112. Etzel, Jim My name is Jim Etzel from Hackensack, MN. I am writing to comment on the proposed trail

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	118. Felt, Johanna 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. 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.
386 387 388 389	119. Fiedler, Kurt 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. 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. Please don't take away trails already established. It will only make for more work when trails are re-established.
390	120. Foley, Joe 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!
391 392 393 394	121. Frey, Gregory J. 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. 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.
395	122. Garner, Gerald B. 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.
396 397	123. Gaudette, David 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

409 410 411	• 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? 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!
412 413 414	127. Gobtop, Bill Public Safety 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. Environmental 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. Death of the North Woods 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.
415 416 417	128. Goebel, Glen B. 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. 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.
418 419 420	129. Gorecki, John 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. 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,

428	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.
429	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?
430	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.
431	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.
432	132. Green, Samuel , J. 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.
433	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.
434	133. Greniger, Kevin 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.
435	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.
436	134. Grob, A. Kenneth #1 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.
437	To summarize our issues:
438	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.

439 439a 440 441	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. 5) We are strongly opposed to the connector trails beyond those that are already part of the grant-in-aid system. 6) Close all Hubbard County ditches to OHV use. The current destruction is an "eyesore".
442 443 444 445 445a 446 447 447a 447b 447c 447d	135. Grob, Kenneth #2 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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.
448	136. Groebner, Jim 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.

476	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.
477 478 479 480	143. Hansen, Bruce 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.
481 482 483 484 485 486 487 488 489 490 490a	144. Hansen, Gary I am a deer hunter. I hunt in Zone 2 within the Paul Bunyan State Forest, and have done so for many years. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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

523	OHV use.
524	4. Keep open routes away from wetlands, intermittent and perennial streams, natural heritage sites, or other sensitive habitats.
524a	*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.
525	For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests:
526	1. Keep all OHV routes within the Martineau Trail footprint.
527	2. If routes are left open outside the Martineau Trail footprint, keep them at least a half mile from the North Country Trail.
528	* 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.
529	For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests:
530	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.
531	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.
532	*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.
533	For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests: 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.
534	*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.
535	For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests: Eliminate connector trails from the Hubbard County OHV plan.
536	*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.
537	For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests: Work for legislation that would permit system roads to be open to highway-licensed vehicles but closed to OHVs.
538	*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. For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests: 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.
539	152. Hedeem, Carter My philosophy regarding public forest use includes: A) Don't degrade it. B) Preserve it without degradation for future generations C) Open for all 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
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541 542 543 544 545 546 547 548 549 550 551 552 553 554 555	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! 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. 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: 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. 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.
	153. Hedeon, Flo 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. “What we don’t know about the future is in fact more important in planning than

	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.” 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. 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.
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556a	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.
557	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.
558	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.
559	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.
560	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.
561	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.
562	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.
563	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.
564	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.
565 566 567	154. Heikman, Joe 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

568	already disturbed area. The DNR should be willing to do more to try to keep more of this area open to trucks.
569	155. Henry, Kenneth As a OHM rider I visit the Paul Bunyan 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 than 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.
570	I would also like to see a primitive campground on the south side that would allow OHV travel in the camp ground.
571	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 opportunities (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.
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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	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.
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577	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 residents' 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.
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579	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.
580	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.
581	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.
582	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.

583	It is the role of the DNR to protect and manage state lands and the animals upon them. Its role is not to turn them over to harassment and destruction by reckless individuals and private clubs, or to concede to manufacturers of dirt bikes, ATVs, and mudder vehicles.
584 585 586 587	161. Houghton, Mike & Nancy Having moved here from Calif 17 years ago, to escape the pollution, traffic, and NOISE, we moved to Minnesota, near the PAUL BUNYAN forest to hear THE QUIET OF NATURE, We visited it a lot and did a lot of walking, birdwatching, and just ENJOYING NATURE as was intended in a FOREST. We would of course, stop at our local market in Nevis, fill up on gas and GOODIES for our adventures in the forest. After having lived here for about 5 years, the QUIET OF NATURE was replaced with the ROAR and POLLUTION of ATV's, roaring past us, and putting FEAR in us of getting run over or seriously injured. One of the times we yelled at the kids to watch out so they didn't hit us, and the FINGER from all of them and a "F U old lady" as they raced by us. NEEDLESS to say, we have NEVER RETURNED. Our kids visit from Tennessee, and Sacramento Calif in the summers and this was always a favorite spot for us to spend our days, but NO MORE. Now it has been taken over by LAWLESS people who have NO REGARD for Nature, or the wildlife in the forest. We STRONGLY OPPOSE ANY MORE TRAILS that would open our forests to ATV, 4 wheel drive trucks or ANY MOTORIZED TRAFFIC. It should be kept what it is, a FOREST, for us that love and respect nature to go and quietly bird watch, have our picnics, and enjoy the forest. IF this trail does go thru, they need to have A HUGE amount of DNR, and POLICE OFFICERS there to keep law and order and to arrest these people that are riding and causing trouble to older people and throwing their beer bottles and TRASH all over the forest. It is just LITTERED with beer cans and bottles after a day of 4 wheelers. WHAT A SHAME. THIS proposed trail needs to be STOPPED.
588	162. Housholder, John I just want you to here some possitive imput on the offroad riding area in Paul Bunyan state forest. I have been riding there for 8 to 9 years and I am a father of four kids. I really hope I will have a riding area to take them to. My son loves to ride dirtbike & my two older girls ride 4 wheelers. There are far more forests that we can't ride in than what we can and I am o.k with that but, they are set aside for the hikers, nature lovers & ect. I really don't think that it is fair to take away that right.
589 590 591 592	163. Hovde, Peter I spent some time last September going through the Paul Bunyan, and was just appalled at the damage ATVs and OHMs were doing to that forest. I continue to be hopeful that the DNR will begin to follow best management practices in its trail planning. I continue to be disappointed, as I am with the Bunyan plan. As you know, there is not a shred of scientific evidence which would recommend OHVs in our forests. If they are allowed in, all the scientific evidence would confine them to a very small, and less sensitive part of the forest. Instead we see ATV routes spread through the forest, overlaid with another web of OHM trails. And now, in a spectacular turn-around, mudder trucks as well. It is way past time that the DNR begins to act as a professional organization, rather than a shill for the rider groups and manufacturers. DNR has a lot of credibility it has squandered to build back up. Let's begin now, being professional with the Bunyan. Come back with a plan which is a model of best management practices. Those best management practices are out there, just waiting to be adopted by DNR. In particular, make the public, environment groups, and especially local residents as much a part of the process--they have a great stakeholding in this than the riders and manufacturers. Somehow, let's get the DNR back on task, focused back on its sacred duty to protect our precious natural heritage which makes this state the wonder that it is.
593 594	164. Huber, Charlie I believe the state is setting a bad precedent by allowing the ATV manufacturers and users to dictate to them that they must build ATV trails in public state and county forests. Everyone knows that ATV's can and will cause damage to the soil and wetlands. The hobbies which use them are not like hiking, hunting on foot, or other "leave no footprint" outdoor activities. They are not even like snowmobiling, which is done on frozen, snow-covered ground. The use of ATV's has allowed an increased in the number of "luxury" permanent deer stands and their associated trash on state land. I believe public officials are just fooling themselves if they think that by building trails in state forests they will be able to curb the violations and damage done by

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.
632	Close:#'s 151, 164.
632a	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.
632b	Close: #'s 940, 943, 949, 960,961, 962, 991, 992, 994, 997, 998.
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.
634	Close; #'s 888, 373, 376, 379, 409, 410, 423, 418, 491, 471, 1779, 1812. 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: 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.
635	Close; #'s 345, 347, 350, 355.
636	Paul Bunyan Game Refuge - between Spur 1 and Spur 2 Forest Roads.
637	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!
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646 647 648 649 650 651 652 653	Close: #'s 335, 343. The Beaver Lakes Trail - from Spur 1 Forest Road to Co. Rd. 93. 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. Close: #'s 325, 328, 339. 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. 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. 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.
654 654a 654b	175. Janzen, Mark 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.
655 656	176. Jaros, Dean 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

	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.
657	177. Jason No way. Keep our forests clean.
658 659 660	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.
661 662	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.
663 664	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?
665 666 667 668 669 670 671	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

672 673 674 675	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. 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. 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. 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.
676	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.
677 678 678a	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.
679 680	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

681	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?
682 683 684 685 686	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.
687 688 688a	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.
689 690	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.
691	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 Nemadji 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.
692	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

731 732 733 734 735	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. 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. 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. 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. 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.
736 737 738 739	201. Kordasiewicz, Joshua 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. 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.
740 741 742 743	202. Korte, Jane 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. 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.

744 744a 745 745a	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. 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. 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.
746 747	203. Kranz, Pat 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. 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.
748 749 750 751 752 753	204. Krause, Matthew I AM AN ATV OWNER. I very much support the development of a larger, substantial ATV trail network. I am very opposed to the elimination of access to ANY State Forest or public land in Hubbard County or statewide for that matter. I am also aware of the \$700,000 revenue put into education and enforcement in 2004 generated by ATV registrations. 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? 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. 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.
	205. Kueber, Mary 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. "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. 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".

754	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 ATVers ditch ride.
755	Another concern about the proposal of giving ATVers an access to CSAH 4 is once the ATVers 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 utilites lines/cables buried in the ditches? I already know what it has done to my mowing ability at my approach.
756	I have two approaches to my property, it is quite evidence that where there is a dwelling visable 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 refering to - it boils done 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.
757	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?
758	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 rinding in daylight - which in the summer can be a very long day.
759	I have had to ask ATVers, 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 snowmolies 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.
760	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 apporoaches 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?
761	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 invatition 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.
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763	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.
764	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.
	208. LaFleur, Judith

765	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.
766	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.
767	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.
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768	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.
769	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.
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772	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.
773	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%.
774	Resident and Friend of the Minnesota s State Forests
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776	209. Lamp, Jerry 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.
777	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

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789 790 791	210. Larson, Ben 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. 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.

791a	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". I hope there will be more trails in the Paul Bunyan Forest and not so much roads and stuff.
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792	211. Larson, Bill 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 ! 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. 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 unaccessible, or so short as to make them unappreciated as part of a well laid out trail system. 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. Please keep an open mind on future 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. 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 criteria 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. 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.
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800 801	212. Lashinski, Eugene 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.
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803	213. Laske, Francine 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

804 805 806	we know it. 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. 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.
807 808 809 810 811 812	214. Laske, Letitia 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. 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? 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. 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. 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.
813 813a	215. Lautt, Kim 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.
	216. Leavitt, Andre Why would the DNR, a department that is suppose to PROTECT are states natural resources,

814	even consider putting a 4 wheel drive course in our state forest. Once again the department sells out to a special interest group.
815	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!!
816	217. Lein, Michael; Lein, Marceil
817	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.
818	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.
819	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.
820	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.
821	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.
822	This order did not say if environmentally and scientifically possible it said just do it.
823	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.
824	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.
825	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.
826	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
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829 830 831 832 833	nearby landowners, and no consideration for their impacts on other forest users, wildlife or soil and water resources. 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. 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. 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. 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.
834 835 836	218. Leinen, John Jr. 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. 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. 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. 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

837	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? 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. 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.
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840	219. Leistikow, Norm 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. 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? 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. 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. 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? 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?
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871 872	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 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. 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.
873 874	224. Lier, Dave 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.
875 876 877 878 879	225. Lindesmith, Robert & Karen We are writing in opposition to the proposed road for recreational use by pick-up trucks in the Paul Bunyon 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”. 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.S. With education and health care issues at the fore in the legislature, you will need to justify this proposal. It is about priorities.
880 881	226. Lindl, Irene 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. 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!
882 883 884	227. Lofquist, Paul 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. I am always reminded by my family, upon their return from MT. Baldy in the Upper

920	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"? 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 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.
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928	233. Lucken, Ron #2 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.
929	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. 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?
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932	234. Madson, Robin 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. We would like you to be aware of the concerns coming from good people such as ourselves,

	236. Maertens, Shirley I would like to give input but first, please consider some initial comments to that input regarding the PBSF OHV plan. 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. 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. 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. Input: PBSF OHV Trail: 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 955a 956 957 958 959	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. What do I trail ride in? A 1988 Subaru GL station wagon... I get stuck in mud. I completely 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. 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 maintainace roads. Miles of forest roads and min. maintainace 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 solitutde just isnt there. The big smile on my face isn't present on a forest road. 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 comprmise'. This is completely 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'. 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?
960 961	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!
962 963	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.
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	241. Martinson, Dave & Cheryl 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.
966 967 968 969 970 971	242. Mattson, Jan 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. 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. 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! 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!
972 973 974	243. May, Mary 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. 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. 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.
975 976 977	244. McBrady, Pat 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. 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. 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.
	245. McCabe, Curt

978 979 980	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. 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. 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.
981 982 983 984 985 986 987 988	246. McDermott, Liz 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. (Added written text) 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.
989 990 990a	247. McDonnell, Diane 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. Now for the Badoura State Forest. I feel the general public would be served to keep OHV trails open and for people to enjoy.
991 992	248. McDonnell, Thomas 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.
	249. McFarren, Vicki 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 -

1011 1011a	255. Medewold, Steve 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.
1012 1013 1014 1015	256. Melby, Ted Until the damage caused by ATV and 4-wheelers in the Paul Bunyan State Forest is repaired, there should be a statewide ban. 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. All highway and road r/w should be closed. MN DNR should purchase large tracts of land and these vehicles should be restricted to these areas.
1016 1017 1018 1019 1020	257. Melzer, James 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). 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.
1021 1022 1023	258. Mills, Mike 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 .
1024 1025	259. Monahan, Kevin 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.
1026 1027 1028	260. Monicken, Melodee 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: 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. 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

1029 1030 1031 1032 1033 1034 1035 1036	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.) 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. 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. 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. 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 . 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. 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. 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.
1037 1038	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.

1039 1040 1041	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. 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. 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. 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.
1042 1043 1044 1045	262. Mudrak, Andy 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. 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. 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. 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.
1046 1047 1048 1049 1050 1051 1052 1053 1053a 1053b	263. Mueller, David & Joanne 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". 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. 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. 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. 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'. Management of our forest resources must be friendly to all users, not just to specific groups,

	or easy for the managers.
1054	264. Myers, Gwen & Mason 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: 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. 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. The forest roads and trails west of Spur One need to be closed to ATV traffic, as recommended by the local evaluation team. 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. 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.
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1060	265. Myhra, Eric 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.
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1064	266. Naylor, William & Dorothy 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. 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. 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
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1068	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.
1069	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."
1070	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.
1071	267. Nelles, Richard 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.
1072	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.
1073	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?
1074	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.
1076	268. Nelson, Brian 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.
1077	269. Nelson, Mike 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.
1078	270. Nervig, Luther 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.
1079	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.
1080	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.
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1084	271. Newsman, Jerry 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

1085 1086	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.
1087 1088	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! 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.
1089 1090 1091 1092 1093 1094 1095 1096 1097 1098 1099 1100	272. Norrgard, Lois 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. 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. 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. 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. Concerns Raised - Require Response: 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

	the best interest of the DNR and the state taxpayers that the authority to close these roads be acted upon. 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.
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1102	- 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.
1103	- There is No comprehensive plan for enforcement of trespass and other laws.
1104	- There is No plan to mitigate and/or repair the damage to public and private property.
1105	- 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).
1106	- 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.
1107	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.
1108	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?
1109	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.
1110	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.
1111	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 in more insidious, taking place unseen at the chemical and genetic levels.
1112	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.
1113	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,

	personal safety and a healthy environment are losing access to this experience as increasing areas of the state are impacted by noise and development.
1114	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.
1115	According 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."
1116	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.
1117	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.
1118	Other Impact from ATVs submitted for consideration Extent and manner of OHV recreational use 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.
1119	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

	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.
1120	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.
1121	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
1122	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.
1123	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
1124	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
1125	of what exact percentage of riders is breaking the law, the damage they do is exceptionally long-lasting and is severe.
1126	Social and environmental effects of OHV recreation 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
1127	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.
1128	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. Consider some examples:

1129	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.
1130	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.
1131	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.
1132	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.
1133	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.
1134	The costs of providing, managing, monitoring, maintaining, repairing, and enforcing OHV trails far exceed the costs for other forms of recreation.
1135	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

	<u>COMMENTS AND ATTACHMENTS INCORPORATED AS COMMENTS</u>
1145	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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1150	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,
1151	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.
1152	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.
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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	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.
1156	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.”
1157	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.
1158	III. Meaning of “OHV”
1159	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.
1160	IV. Minnesota’s 2002 and 2003 OHV laws, their significance, and current conditions
1161	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.
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1163	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.
1164	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.”

	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.”
1165	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.
1166	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.
1167	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.
1168	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.
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1170	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 – 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
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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.

1173	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.
1174	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.
1175	<u>V. Extent and manner of OHV recreational use</u> 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. 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. 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.
1176	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.
1177	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

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	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.
1178	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. VI. Abusive Riding <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.
1179	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. 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.
1180	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.
1181	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.
1182	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.
1183	VII. Environmental and social effects of OHV recreation 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.
1184	A. Power and torque 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

	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>
1185	B. Distance and speed 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.
1186	C. Multiple effects and affected areas 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:
1187	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.
1188	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

1189	powerful engines, aggressively-treaded tires, and a tendency of operators to gun the engines and spin wheels intentionally. 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.
1190	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 OHVs. 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.
1191	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.
1192	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.
1193	Because of OHV recreation's singular status as the most inherently damaging form of

	outdoor recreation, the DNR should maintain high standards for resource protection in its administration and management of OHV recreation on public lands in Minnesota. OHV recreation requires more intense management oversight – monitoring, maintenance, repair and enforcement – than the DNR devotes to any other form of outdoor recreation. 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. 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. 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. 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 “cliente.” 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. 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. 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. 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> 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. <u>VIII. The costs of providing, managing, monitoring, maintaining, repairing, and enforcing OHV trails far exceed the costs for other trails and recreation.</u> 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. A. Maintenance, monitoring, and repair costs The best estimate yet provided for maintenance costs was for a hardened-surface ATV trail in
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1213a	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. 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.
1213b	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.
1213c	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.
1214	B. Enforcement costs
1214a	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. 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:
1214b	<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.
1214c	<i>Population served has doubled:</i> Since 1945, Minnesota's population has grown from 2.54 million to 5.04 million people. <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.
1214d	<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,

	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.
1214e	<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.
1214f	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.
1214g	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. 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.
1215	<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> 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.
1216	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. When natural resource damage is noticed and corrective action is taken, however, the bill to

	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
1217	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.
1218	<u>X. Informal agreements with OHV clubs cannot be counted on to provide problem-free continuous and effective service to the state.</u>
1219	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 (see 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.
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1223	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.
1224	<u>XI. Consequences of designating too much: costs exceed means.</u>
1225	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.
1226	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.
1227	<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>
1228	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
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1231	<u>XIII. Badoura State Forest</u> No trails should be designated in the Badoura State Forest. The DNR should recommend the Badoura more state forests for reclassification to closed.
1232	<u>XIV. Paul Bunyan State Forest</u> 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.
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.
1236a	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.
1236b	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.
1236c	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.
1236d	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.
1236e	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.
1236f	OHV trails should not be designated within 1 mile of designated walking trails other than the NCT.
1236g	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.
1236h	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.
1236i	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

1242	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? 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. (attached article) 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. 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?' 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. Emeline Cook Akeley
1243 1243a 1244 1245	275. Novak, Terry 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. 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. 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.
1246 1247 1248	276. Oberg, Margaret 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

1261 1262 1263 1264 1265 1266 1267 1268 1269 1270 1271	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. 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. 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.
1272 1273a	281. Olander, Alan 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. 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. 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.
1274 1275	282. Olander, Joel J. 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. 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.
1276	283. Olsen, DZ 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

1287a	Realistically, connecting trails translates into connecting bars via ditch trails. Will the DNR be held 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.
1288	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.
1289	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!
1290	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.
1290a	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!
1291	288. Ostrowski, Mike 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 ATVer's public a diversified trail system it will reduce creative riding, offer a safer and more enjoyable experience with controlled impact on these lands we hold so dear.
1292	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 ATVer's 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.
1293	289. Ostwald, Brent 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 Paul Bunyan and I believe that's a great system of trails which I hope remains virtually the same. I'm a member of atvam and Fatratx atv club and I know the members of our club share my concerns after riding the trails of Paul Bunyan last summer. We are all very responsible riders sharing concerns for the environment and see the dilemma that fewer trails present. That dilemma 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 there are trails that are borderline as far as environmentally sensitive consider if they can be upgraded with additional base material, a matting, or rerouted to maintain the trail integrity.
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1296	290. Otto, Paul C. 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
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	off-road truck use, lets continue that by keeping it open to OHV use.
1298	291. Overson, Josh 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.
1299 1300 1301	292. Paavola, Eric 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! 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. 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.
1302 1303 1303a	293. Pantelis, John 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.
1304 1305 1306 1307 1308	294. Parke, Robert & Barbara 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. 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. We have three questions: 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	295. Parthun, Chris 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"

1310 1311 1312 1313 1314 1314a 1314b	is the correct perspective. 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. 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! 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! We respectfully request that proposed trail numbers 119, 2583, 182, 183, 203, 249, and 246 be changed from "open" to "closed" designation.
1315 1315a 1316 1317 1318 1319	296. Peroni, Patti #1 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: - 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. 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." 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: I have no control over the ruination and desecration by ATV's which are: <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> 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.

1364	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. All counties in MN will have the opportunity 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. 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.
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1368	311. Rambo, Bill & Avis 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. 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? 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! 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. 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. 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.
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1373	312. Ranson, Ed 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

1374 1374a 1375 1376 1377 1378 1379	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. 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. 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. 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.
1380 1381	313. Reedy, Steve 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.
1382	314. Reiling, Scott 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!
1383 1384	315. Reitz, Otto & LaVerne 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.
1385 1386 1386a	316. Reitz, David & Judy 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.
1387	317. Reynolds, John #1 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

1388 1388a 1388b	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.
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	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."
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	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.
1401 1402 1403	321. Rogers, Deb 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!!
1404 1405	322. Rogge, Tom & Maryn 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. 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.
1406 1406a	323. Ronan, Adrian 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.
1407 1407a 1407b 1407c	324. Ronchetti, Linda 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.
1408 1409 1410 1411	325. Rothermel, Eunice 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. 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. 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. 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. 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

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

1448 1449 1450 1451 1452 1453 1454 1455 1456 1457 1457a 1457b	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? 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. _ *We are against:*_ Connecting trails Mudder trails for 4X4 trucks _ *We are for:*_ 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. Increasing the number of conservation officers. Having a plan for maintenance, monitoring and enforcement by the DNR. Engineering trails to limit speeds, prevent erosion, protect forest and wetlands and insulate wildlife and residents from ATV/OHVs. Containing ATV/OHV damage to a limited portion of the forest and to less sensitive parts. Mandating environmental review of proposed trails. Increasing ATV/OHV registration fees and increasing fines for violations.
1458 1459 1460 1461 1462 1463 1463a	341. Schumacher, Michael 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. 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? 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. Fact: It only takes an ATV or OHV to create thousands of dollars worth of damage to public lands. 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. Fact: There is but a single CO for OHV enforcement for the entire NW region. 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.
	342. Schwartz, Richard The DNR politicians – names? Have designated far too many trails in state forests (e.g. Paul

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 disagee 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

	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.
1478 1479 1480 1481	348. Shofner, John 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. 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.
1482 1483 1484 1485 1486	349. Shofner, Norma 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. 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. 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.
1487 1488	350. Shorter, Jon 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.
1489	351. Shoultz, Lynnae 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.
1490	352. Sievertson, Paul 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.
1491 1492 1493	353. Silence, Charles 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. 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. 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

1504 1505 1505a	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 loses tax revenue for the state and possible tourism into Minnesota from other State's.
1506	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.
1507	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.
1508 1509	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
1510 1511 1512	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.
1513 1513a 1513b 1514	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

1514a	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!
1515	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.
1515a	
1516	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!
1517	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!
1518	
1519	
1520	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!!!
1521	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.
1522	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!
1523 1523a 1523b	
1524	363. Soderberg, Kim & Milford
1525	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.</u> I would like to know if those who came up with this

1526	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.
1527	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.
1528	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!
1528a	
1529	364. Sorensen, Maragaret
1530	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.
1531	
1532	365. Souba, Fred
1533	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.
1534	
1535	366. Springer, John
	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.
1536	367. Springer, Janice
1537	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.
1538	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.
1539	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.
1540	368. Steffel, Ev
1540a	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?

1558a	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 out 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. RAPING THE WOODS SO THAT A FEW HOT SHOTS CAN GET THEIR THRILLS IS BLATANTLY IRRESPONSIBLE!!!!
1559 1560 1561 1562 1563	371. Stone, Mike 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. 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. 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.
1564 1565 1566	372. Strommen, Jon & Sarah 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. <i>General Comments on the Planning Process</i> 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. 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. <i>Specific Comments on the Paul Bunyan Plan</i> 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.

	*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. For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests: 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. *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. For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests: 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. *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. For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests: Eliminate connector trails from the Hubbard County OHV plan. *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. For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests: Work for legislation that would permit system roads to be open to highway-licensed vehicles but closed to OHVs. *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. For this reason, the Headwaters Canoe Club requests: 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.
1584 1585 1586 1587 1588	382. Tjader, Harvey General Recommendations 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. 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. Designate only as much trail as the DNR can afford to maintain and provide law enforcement on. 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. 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.

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
	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,
1593	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
1596	"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.
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

1602	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.
1603	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”.
1604	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.
1605	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.
1606	General observations on OHV use, from 25 years of forestry experience: Hunter/trapper exemption to cross country travel 1. Threatened and endangered species and species of concern (natural heritage elements): 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.
1607	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:
1608	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.
1609	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.
	2. Quiet areas/ non-motorized recreation: 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.
	3. Old Growth forest areas: 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

1610	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. 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.
1611	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.
1612	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. 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.
1613	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

1614 1614a 1614b	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. ATVs: road damage 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. 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. 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.
1615 1616 1617 1618 1619	383. Township Resolutions The Town of _(see below)_ Resolves: 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. 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
1620 1621 1622 1623 1624	384. Traun, James 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. 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? 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

1625	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.
1626 1627 1628 1629	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.
1630 1631 1632 1633 1634 1635 1636 1637 1638 1639 1640	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

1641 1642 1643 1644 1645	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. 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. 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? 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. 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. 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. 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. 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."
1646	387. Tuftin, Gene 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

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	General Comments: 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.
1666	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.
1667	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.
1668	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 of ways. 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.
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1669	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.
1670	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.
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1671	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.
1672	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.
1673	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, but understands the damage exceeds the benefit.
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1685	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.
1686	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.
1687	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.
1688	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.
1689	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.
1690	396. Weatherby, Scott L 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.
1691	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?
1692	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.
1693	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.
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1695 1695a	397. Weber, Frank 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.

1696 1697 1698 1699 1700 1701 1702 1703 1704 1705 1706 1707	398. Weber, John #1 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 be Hubbard County Board/MN DNR in November 2003. Of the hundreds of comments/questions/points that could be raised, I will be rather brief. Where to begin? 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: • 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: 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 spreadout in various directions Another place to begin would be to address some catchwords and phrases such as: • "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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1762	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.
1763 1764 1765 1766	414. Woodmansee, Alex #1 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? 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.
1767 1768 1768a 1768b 1769 1769a 1769b 1770 1771	415. Woodmansee, Alex #2 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. 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. 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

	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.
1772	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 (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. 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. 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. 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. 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
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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	The DNR, while it does acknowledge that access also includes berry pickers and the like, still needs to broaden its 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.
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1785	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.
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1788	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
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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 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!
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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 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 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.
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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 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 be able to be left open for ORVs. If you can mitigate the wetland issues for an OHM they can be mitigated for ORVs. The DNR should be willing to do more to mitigate problems to keep trails open. I 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 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 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
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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. 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.
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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

[22](#) [23](#) [32](#) [40](#) [42](#) [61](#) [66a](#) [66b](#) [73](#) [78](#) [81](#) [82](#) [85](#) [87](#) [89](#) [90](#) [96](#) [99](#) [100](#) [102](#) [105](#) [106](#) [107](#) [108](#) [112](#) [125](#) [132](#) [137](#) [138](#) [139](#) [140](#) [141](#) [147](#) [150](#) [152](#) [156](#) [173](#) [186](#) [189](#) [196](#) [201](#) [206](#) [210](#) [212](#) [222](#) [243](#) [255](#) [256](#) [271](#) [278](#) [284](#) [288](#) [293](#) [296](#) [319](#) [320](#) [325](#) [335](#) [338](#) [340](#) [346](#) [348](#) [350](#) [355](#) [357](#) [369](#) [376](#) [381](#) [395](#) [399](#) [403](#) [411](#) [421a](#) [430](#) [436](#) [443](#) [447d](#) [457](#) [466](#) [477](#) [491](#) [492](#) [498](#) [506](#) [514](#) [539](#) [541](#) [555](#) [560](#) [564](#) [579](#) [583](#) [586](#) [588](#) [592](#) [596](#) [598](#) [603](#) [610](#) [611](#) [617](#) [618](#) [624](#) [627](#) [648](#) [657](#) [669](#) [676](#) [689](#) [702a](#) [720](#) [730](#) [739](#) [740](#) [746](#) [811](#) [816](#) [817](#) [846](#) [863](#) [864](#) [865](#) [882](#) [890](#) [916](#) [928](#) [931](#) [934a](#) [935](#) [943](#) [955a](#) [972](#) [978](#) [980](#) [982](#) [989](#) [991](#) [995](#) [996](#) [998](#) [1004](#) [1010](#) [1016](#) [1020](#) [1023](#) [1024](#) [1037](#) [1047](#) [1053a](#) [1054](#) [1059](#) [1066](#) [1070](#) [1077](#) [1079](#) [1084](#) [1089](#) [1092](#) [1108](#) [1157](#) [1164](#) [1166](#) [1173](#) [1177a](#) [1193](#) [1199](#) [1205](#) [1223](#) [1227](#) [1241](#) [1243](#) [1254](#) [1256](#) [1258](#) [1271](#) [1273a](#) [1280](#) [1282](#) [1284a](#) [1304](#) [1309](#) [1327](#) [1340](#) [1349a](#) [1350](#) [1356](#) [1367](#) [1369](#) [1378](#) [1385](#) [1386a](#) [1389](#) [1403](#) [1411a](#) [1414](#) [1419](#) [1420](#) [1421](#) [1424](#) [1458](#) [1463a](#) [1464](#) [1476](#) [1477a](#) [1478](#) [1482](#) [1486](#) [1495](#) [1497](#) [1507](#) [1510](#) [1512](#) [1513](#) [1530](#) [1532](#) [1540](#) [1547](#) [1564](#) [1575](#) [1576](#) [1579](#) [1593](#) [1605](#) [1625](#) [1630](#) [1632](#) [1636](#) [1645](#) [1665](#) [1677](#) [1686](#) [1713](#) [1732](#) [1733](#) [1736](#) [1741](#) [1742](#) [1758](#) [1762](#) [1770](#) [1771](#) [1773a](#) [1790k](#) [1796](#) [1798](#)

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

[48](#) [251](#) [252](#) [312](#) [337](#) [349](#) [358](#) [360](#) [471](#) [480](#) [524](#) [572](#) [638](#) [642](#) [706](#) [722](#) [887](#) [944](#) [970](#) [1026](#) [1167](#) [1206](#) [1207](#) [1210](#) [1213b](#) [1236f](#) [1239](#) [1346](#) [1408](#) [1422](#) [1487](#) [1556](#) [1568](#)

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

[11](#) [13](#) [34](#) [75a](#) [77](#) [98](#) [103](#) [115](#) [126](#) [135](#) [136](#) [144](#) [154](#) [155](#) [176](#) [181](#) [183](#) [204](#) [209](#) [244a](#) [245](#) [250](#) [260](#) [270](#) [276](#) [295](#) [297](#) [300](#) [305](#) [306](#) [327](#) [330](#) [341](#) [383](#) [386](#) [389](#) [396](#) [416](#) [423](#) [434](#) [502](#) [504](#) [515a](#) [567](#) [569](#) [602](#) [606](#) [654a](#) [660](#) [688](#) [691](#) [698](#) [701](#) [707](#) [737](#) [748](#) [749](#) [764](#) [791b](#) [792](#) [796](#) [800](#) [821](#) [853](#) [874](#) [933](#) [956](#) [957](#) [958](#) [963](#) [994](#) [1000](#) [1003](#) [1007](#) [1011a](#) [1042](#) [1076](#) [1119](#) [1248](#) [1251](#) [1263](#) [1276](#) [1277](#) [1292](#) [1293](#) [1297](#) [1300](#) [1303](#) [1344](#) [1355](#) [1382](#) [1406a](#) [1412a](#) [1416](#) [1427](#) [1490](#) [1491](#) [1493](#) [1494](#) [1499](#) [1506](#) [1508](#) [1511](#) [1559](#) [1562](#) [1570](#) [1572](#) [1577](#) [1646](#) [1651](#) [1653](#) [1710](#) [1739](#) [1747](#) [1763](#) [1772](#) [1776](#) [1778](#) [1780](#) [1781](#) [1783](#) [1790a](#) [1790l](#) [1791](#) [1801](#) [1804](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[7](#) [44](#) [63](#) [68](#) [86](#) [91](#) [101](#) [182](#) [202](#) [246](#) [303](#) [328](#) [362](#) [439](#) [445](#) [452a](#) [484](#) [507](#) [524a](#) [537](#) [538](#) [683](#) [802](#) [809](#) [1001](#) [1043](#) [1057](#) [1206](#) [1208](#) [1211](#) [1214g](#) [1236](#) [1236a](#) [1236m](#) [1245](#) [1255](#) [1457](#) [1467](#) [1468](#) [1553](#) [1554](#) [1567](#) [1584](#) [1615](#) [1624](#) [1670a](#) [1693](#) [1698](#) [1699](#) [1730](#) [1749](#) [1751](#) [1793](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[20](#) [83](#) [84](#) [95](#) [131](#) [134](#) [165](#) [179](#) [235](#) [239](#) [268](#) [269](#) [326](#) [333](#) [356](#) [385](#) [393](#) [400](#) [429](#) [438](#) [447a](#) [447c](#) [465](#) [511](#) [527](#) [608](#) [641](#) [692](#) [708](#) [771](#) [772](#) [774](#) [848](#) [849](#) [905](#) [914](#) [1029](#) [1034](#) [1100](#) [1118](#) [1134](#) [1137](#) [1171](#) [1175](#) [1196](#) [1212](#) [1214f](#) [1222](#) [1224](#) [1226](#) [1305](#) [1306](#) [1307](#) [1318](#) [1320a](#) [1374a](#) [1446a](#) [1453](#) [1457b](#) [1461](#) [1474a](#) [1476a](#) [1476c](#) [1514](#) [1523b](#) [1529](#) [1569](#) [1711](#) [1735](#) [1735a](#) [1752](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[184](#) [218](#) [420](#) [426](#) [435](#) [476](#) [750](#) [753](#) [775](#) [801](#) [839](#) [1246](#) [1573](#) [1587](#) [1619](#) [1670](#) [1734](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[52a](#) [116](#) [163](#) [177](#) [188](#) [190](#) [231](#) [240](#) [307](#) [311](#) [343](#) [352](#) [377](#) [425](#) [468](#) [489](#) [519](#) [522](#) [523](#) [548](#) [552](#) [554](#) [566](#) [575](#) [589](#) [591](#) [616](#) [623](#) [631](#) [632b](#) [659](#) [665](#) [717](#) [718](#) [731](#) [733](#) [744a](#) [752](#) [762](#) [789](#) [797](#) [798](#) [810](#) [812](#) [822](#) [833](#) [837](#) [845](#) [855](#) [876](#) [906](#) [910](#) [913](#) [915a](#) [919](#) [942](#) [950](#) [990](#) [1012](#) [1039](#) [1063](#) [1072](#) [1085](#) [1101](#) [1102](#) [1104](#) [1127](#) [1129](#) [1135](#) [1136](#) [1139](#) [1145](#) [1169](#) [1172](#) [1177](#) [1183](#) [1185](#) [1191](#) [1192](#) [1194](#) [1195](#) [1201](#) [1213](#) [1213a](#) [1213c](#) [1225](#) [1236b](#) [1236d](#) [1236e](#) [1236j](#) [1243a](#) [1260](#) [1262](#) [1266](#) [1283](#) [1294](#) [1295](#) [1301](#) [1315a](#) [1319](#) [1322](#) [1324](#) [1335](#) [1349](#) [1351](#) [1352](#) [1396](#) [1398](#) [1410](#) [1436](#) [1440](#) [1448](#) [1450](#) [1455](#) [1456](#) [1479](#) [1483](#) [1488](#) [1496](#) [1500](#) [1503](#) [1505](#) [1543](#) [1560](#) [1571](#) [1585](#) [1589](#) [1590](#) [1607](#) [1613](#) [1614](#) [1683](#) [1703](#) [1704](#) [1708](#) [1754](#) [1766](#) [1775](#) [1777](#) [1786](#) [1787](#) [1789](#) [1790b](#) [1790e](#) [1790i](#) [1794](#) [1802](#)

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 tread 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

[1](#) [18](#) [64](#) [122](#) [145](#) [273](#) [298](#) [361](#) [363](#) [382](#) [632a](#) [636](#) [723](#) [724](#) [725](#) [778](#) [997](#) [1074](#) [1087](#) [1267](#) [1348](#) [1363](#) [1384](#) [1509](#) [1513a](#) [1650b](#) [1658](#) [1706](#) [1737](#)

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

[76](#) [97](#) [118](#) [169](#) [175](#) [244b](#) [310](#) [367](#) [402](#) [516](#) [517a](#) [568](#) [601a](#) [654b](#) [688a](#) [699](#) [738](#) [1297a](#) [1303a](#) [1381](#) [1695a](#) [1764](#) [1790f](#) [1790h](#) [1790j](#) [1805](#)

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

[26](#) [31](#) [148](#) [161](#) [215](#) [282](#) [287](#) [481](#) [490a](#) [530](#) [595](#) [637](#) [645](#) [768](#) [779a](#) [780a](#) [830](#) [831](#) [832](#) [903](#) [908](#) [909](#) [929](#) [1176](#) [1388a](#) [1443](#) [1445](#) [1588](#) [1594](#) [1606](#) [1608](#) [1657](#) [1664b](#) [1667](#) [1694](#) [1779a](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[3](#) [10](#) [15](#) [21](#) [24](#) [38](#) [41](#) [47](#) [74](#) [80](#) [104b](#) [111](#) [119](#) [129](#) [133](#) [139a](#) [142](#) [149](#) [153](#) [157](#) [158](#) [162](#) [167](#) [172](#) [187](#) [207](#) [220](#) [223](#) [224](#) [289](#) [290](#) [301](#) [302](#) [315](#) [316](#) [317](#) [336](#) [342](#) [347a](#) [375](#) [378](#) [392](#) [405](#) [406](#) [408](#) [409](#) [413](#) [424](#) [442](#) [447b](#) [451](#) [460](#) [464](#) [478](#) [486](#) [505](#) [510](#) [517](#) [518](#) [529](#) [531](#) [543](#) [576](#) [577](#) [580](#) [581](#) [585](#) [590](#) [593](#) [604](#) [607](#) [612](#) [629](#) [640](#) [647](#) [651](#) [653](#) [668](#) [670](#) [674](#) [682](#) [694](#) [695](#) [732](#) [734](#) [747](#) [759](#) [769](#) [770](#) [776](#) [782](#) [784](#) [787](#) [788](#) [807](#) [815](#) [836](#) [838](#) [839a](#) [860](#) [866](#) [867](#) [868](#) [877](#) [878](#) [883](#) [885](#) [891](#) [892](#) [893](#) [907](#) [917](#) [925](#) [926](#) [927](#) [946](#) [949](#) [971](#) [973](#) [979](#) [987](#) [1005](#) [1008](#) [1017](#) [1018](#) [1019](#) [1021](#) [1025](#) [1038](#) [1040](#) [1065](#) [1068](#) [1075](#) [1080](#) [1081](#) [1088](#) [1090](#) [1091](#) [1109](#) [1110](#) [1111](#) [1112](#) [1113](#) [1114](#) [1115](#) [1116](#) [1117](#) [1120](#) [1122](#) [1128](#) [1130](#) [1131](#) [1133](#) [1140](#) [1142](#) [1148](#) [1154](#) [1156](#) [1161](#) [1163](#) [1165](#) [1170](#) [1178](#) [1181](#) [1184](#) [1186](#) [1187](#) [1188](#) [1189](#) [1190](#) [1200](#) [1202](#) [1209](#) [1215](#) [1240](#) [1261](#) [1275](#) [1284](#) [1290a](#) [1308](#) [1313](#) [1317](#) [1328](#) [1329a](#) [1334](#) [1360](#) [1365](#) [1370](#) [1372a](#) [1373](#) [1392](#) [1394](#) [1397](#) [1398b](#) [1402](#) [1405](#) [1407b](#) [1419a](#) [1424a](#) [1442](#) [1457a](#) [1459](#) [1474](#) [1475](#) [1513b](#) [1514a](#) [1519](#) [1521](#) [1531](#) [1533](#) [1538](#) [1540a](#) [1549a](#) [1550](#) [1557](#) [1558a](#) [1580](#) [1609](#) [1610](#) [1612](#) [1635](#) [1640](#) [1643](#) [1648](#) [1652](#) [1655](#) [1656](#) [1659](#) [1666](#) [1669](#) [1672](#) [1685](#) [1688](#) [1689](#) [1692](#) [1705](#) [1725](#) [1731](#) [1753](#) [1756](#) [1765](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[9](#) [54](#) [66c](#) [67a](#) [70](#) [104a](#) [128](#) [146](#) [171](#) [219](#) [221](#) [229](#) [331](#) [353](#) [384](#) [407](#) [410](#) [415](#) [431](#) [473](#) [508](#) [582](#) [614](#) [709](#) [745a](#) [751](#) [802a](#) [813a](#) [920](#) [932](#) [948](#) [985](#) [986](#) [988](#) [993](#) [1048](#) [1105](#) [1106](#) [1216](#) [1217](#) [1270](#) [1273](#) [1333](#) [1343](#) [1364](#) [1388](#) [1407c](#) [1446c](#) [1505a](#) [1522](#) [1525](#) [1528a](#) [1650](#) [1664](#) [1671](#) [1675a](#) [1712](#) [1718](#) [1727](#) [1728](#) [1748](#) [1755](#) [1773](#) [1788](#) [1797](#) [1800](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[4](#) [12](#) [27](#) [28](#) [29](#) [65](#) [67](#) [72](#) [88](#) [121](#) [143](#) [159](#) [160](#) [180](#) [193](#) [208](#) [232](#) [238](#) [253](#) [257](#) [294](#) [318](#) [323](#) [344](#) [351](#) [370](#) [388](#) [404](#) [412](#) [417](#) [427](#) [459](#) [463](#) [470](#) [482](#) [488](#) [493](#) [494](#) [528](#) [553](#) [563](#) [587](#) [594](#) [635](#) [650](#) [656](#) [662](#) [680](#) [705](#) [716](#) [744](#) [761](#) [762a](#) [766](#) [767](#) [773](#) [777](#) [779](#) [780](#) [791a](#) [824](#) [825](#) [826](#) [827](#) [850](#) [851](#) [852](#) [889](#) [894](#) [895](#) [896](#) [897](#) [898](#) [899](#) [900](#) [901](#) [902](#) [912](#) [918](#) [947](#) [961](#) [968](#) [1013](#) [1022](#) [1033](#) [1052](#) [1053](#) [1060](#) [1061](#) [1073](#) [1095](#) [1096](#) [1099](#) [1103](#) [1107](#) [1123](#) [1124](#) [1125](#) [1138](#) [1143](#) [1144](#) [1160](#) [1162](#) [1168](#) [1174](#) [1180](#) [1182](#) [1197](#) [1204](#) [1214](#) [1214a](#) [1214b](#) [1214c](#) [1214d](#) [1234](#) [1238](#) [1242](#) [1259](#) [1265](#) [1285](#) [1286](#) [1289](#) [1314a](#) [1320](#) [1323](#) [1325](#) [1326](#) [1326a](#) [1326b](#) [1332](#) [1338](#) [1372](#) [1379](#) [1390](#) [1391](#) [1393](#) [1398a](#) [1404](#) [1432](#) [1438](#) [1441](#) [1444](#) [1454](#) [1462](#) [1463](#) [1537](#) [1548](#) [1549](#) [1586](#) [1591](#) [1614b](#) [1623](#) [1628](#) [1633](#) [1668a](#) [1682](#) [1720](#) [1757](#) [1790d](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[117](#) [126a](#) [203](#) [299](#) [345](#) [373](#) [475](#) [678](#) [678a](#) [799](#) [1062](#) [1071](#) [1218](#) [1219](#) [1220](#) [1221](#) [1291](#) [1471](#) [1496a](#) [1501](#) [1520](#) [1561](#) [1647](#) [1707](#) [1767](#) [1790c](#) [1803](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[12](#) [25](#) [30](#) [33](#) [53](#) [66](#) [114](#) [124](#) [217](#) [354](#) [359](#) [368](#) [397](#) [398](#) [414](#) [428](#) [433](#) [437](#) [449](#) [461](#) [467](#) [472](#) [483](#) [535](#) [540](#) [584](#) [613](#) [622](#) [639](#) [655](#) [677](#) [681](#) [686](#) [702](#) [763](#) [858](#) [859](#) [872](#) [904](#) [921](#) [934b](#) [945](#) [984](#) [992](#) [999](#) [1027](#) [1028](#) [1049](#) [1053b](#) [1058](#) [1086](#) [1198](#) [1203](#) [1229](#) [1247](#) [1252](#) [1264](#) [1423](#) [1460](#) [1515a](#) [1516](#) [1517](#) [1523a](#) [1644](#) [1650a](#) [1660](#) [1673a](#) [1680](#) [1684](#) [1691](#) [1726](#) [1774](#) [1779](#) [1782](#) [1785](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[191](#) [192](#) [197](#) [197a](#) [230](#) [372](#) [374a](#) [380](#) [462](#) [469](#) [490](#) [512](#) [599](#) [672](#) [679](#) [721](#) [758](#) [760](#) [765](#) [767a](#) [786](#) [803](#) [806](#) [841](#) [842](#) [843](#) [844](#) [881](#) [930](#) [954](#) [966](#) [969](#) [975](#) [976](#) [981](#) [1014](#) [1031](#) [1041](#) [1236h](#) [1269](#) [1288](#) [1310](#) [1311](#) [1315](#) [1316](#) [1331](#) [1337](#) [1366](#) [1387](#) [1388b](#) [1401](#) [1429](#) [1431](#) [1434](#) [1437](#) [1465a](#) [1466](#) [1526](#) [1527](#) [1528](#) [1536](#) [1539](#) [1620](#) [1621](#) [1627](#) [1629](#) [1678](#) [1687](#) [1714](#) [1719](#) [1721](#) [1760](#) [1799](#) [1800a](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[5](#) [71](#) [123](#) [198](#) [233](#) [236](#) [441](#) [501](#) [532](#) [756](#) [757](#) [791](#) [922](#) [1030](#) [1036](#) [1050](#) [1051](#) [1132](#) [1287](#) [1341](#) [1374](#) [1470](#) [1481](#) [1485](#) [1592](#) [1611](#) [1617](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[6](#) [14](#) [17](#) [19](#) [79](#) [81a](#) [166](#) [213](#) [285](#) [292](#) [314](#) [321](#) [347](#) [374](#) [390](#) [400a](#) [420a](#) [421](#) [450](#) [456](#) [458](#) [479](#) [578](#) [600](#) [619](#) [664](#) [690](#) [693](#) [712](#) [715a](#) [727](#) [729](#) [808](#) [847](#) [911](#) [923](#) [951a](#) [974](#) [1015](#) [1032](#) [1069](#) [1082](#) [1121](#) [1179](#) [1274](#) [1329](#) [1361](#) [1377](#) [1399](#) [1407a](#) [1476b](#) [1504](#) [1515](#) [1518](#) [1523](#) [1534](#) [1541](#) [1544](#) [1546](#) [1558](#) [1582](#) [1662](#) [1668](#) [1673](#) [1676](#) [1723](#) [1740](#) [1744](#) [1761](#) [1784](#) [1790](#)

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.)

Comments on This Topic

[2](#) [8](#) [18a](#) [37](#) [37a](#) [43](#) [45](#) [52](#) [62](#) [69](#) [93](#) [104](#) [109](#) [130](#) [195](#) [216](#) [237](#) [241](#) [247](#) [258](#) [272](#) [274](#) [275](#) [277](#) [280](#) [281](#) [304](#) [313a](#) [322](#) [329](#) [364](#) [365](#) [371](#) [379](#) [440](#) [444](#) [446](#) [447](#) [453](#) [485](#) [499](#) [500](#) [509](#) [533](#) [534](#) [546](#) [547](#) [549](#) [571](#) [615](#) [661](#) [663](#) [671](#) [684](#) [713](#) [714](#) [719](#) [781](#) [790](#) [795](#) [829](#) [857](#) [862](#) [888](#) [924](#) [934](#) [936](#) [940](#) [952](#) [977](#) [983](#) [1002](#) [1035](#) [1044](#) [1046](#) [1056](#) [1094](#) [1097](#) [1228](#) [1230](#) [1237](#) [1257](#) [1287a](#) [1336](#) [1342](#) [1354](#) [1358](#) [1362](#) [1395](#) [1409](#) [1411](#) [1446d](#) [1451](#) [1465](#) [1469](#) [1473](#) [1480](#) [1484](#) [1492](#) [1542](#) [1551](#) [1616](#) [1638](#) [1649](#) [1675](#) [1681](#) [1697](#) [1709](#) [1717](#) [1724](#) [1730a](#) [1743](#) [1795](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[2a](#) [35](#) [46](#) [75](#) [110](#) [164](#) [168](#) [170](#) [174](#) [199](#) [200](#) [214](#) [242](#) [244](#) [248](#) [254](#) [279](#) [283](#) [286](#) [291](#) [308](#) [309](#) [332](#) [334](#) [339](#) [366](#) [387](#) [391](#)
[401](#) [418](#) [448](#) [454](#) [455](#) [487](#) [496](#) [497](#) [515](#) [542](#) [551](#) [565](#) [574](#) [601](#) [605](#) [609](#) [620](#) [621](#) [667](#) [673](#) [685](#) [687](#) [696](#) [697](#) [700](#) [711](#)
[715](#) [726](#) [728](#) [736](#) [745](#) [783](#) [785](#) [813](#) [814](#) [823](#) [854](#) [861](#) [875](#) [886](#) [938](#) [951](#) [955](#) [959](#) [962](#) [964](#) [965](#) [1006](#) [1009](#) [1011](#) [1055](#)
[1064](#) [1078](#) [1083](#) [1093](#) [1232](#) [1244](#) [1249](#) [1250](#) [1272](#) [1278](#) [1279](#) [1281](#) [1290](#) [1296](#) [1298](#) [1299](#) [1302](#) [1330](#) [1339](#) [1345](#)
[1353](#) [1359](#) [1376](#) [1380](#) [1383](#) [1386](#) [1400](#) [1407](#) [1412](#) [1413](#) [1415](#) [1417](#) [1425](#) [1452](#) [1472](#) [1477](#) [1489](#) [1498](#) [1502](#) [1535](#)
[1552](#) [1556a](#) [1566](#) [1581](#) [1583](#) [1618](#) [1622](#) [1637](#) [1661](#) [1690](#) [1695](#) [1700](#) [1722](#) [1729](#) [1738](#) [1745](#) [1746](#) [1750](#) [1759](#) [1806](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[39](#) [44](#) [92](#) [127](#) [178](#) [194](#) [234](#) [249](#) [313](#) [439a](#) [445a](#) [452](#) [474](#) [503](#) [525](#) [544](#) [561](#) [658](#) [666](#) [937](#) [953](#) [960](#) [1233](#) [1236g](#) [1357](#)
[1406](#) [1418](#) [1426](#) [1428](#) [1434a](#) [1435](#) [1439](#) [1446](#) [1674](#) [1758a](#) [1797a](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[526](#) [550](#) [556](#) [834](#) [835](#) [939](#) [1098](#) [1236c](#) [1447](#) [1631](#) [1663](#) [1664a](#) [1679](#)

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.

Comments on this topic

[16](#) [211](#) [259](#) [261](#) [262](#) [263](#) [264](#) [265](#) [266](#) [267](#) [324](#) [394](#) [419](#) [432](#) [703](#) [704](#) [710](#) [884](#) [1214e](#) [1371](#) [1578](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[36](#) [49](#) [50](#) [51](#) [55](#) [56](#) [57](#) [58](#) [59](#) [60](#) [94](#) [113](#) [120](#) [195a](#) [225](#) [226](#) [227](#) [228](#) [422](#) [520](#) [521](#) [545](#) [556a](#) [557](#) [558](#) [559](#) [625](#) [626](#) [628](#) [630](#) [632](#) [633](#) [634](#) [643](#) [644](#) [646](#) [649](#) [652](#) [741](#) [742](#) [743](#) [754](#) [755](#) [794](#) [804](#) [805](#) [819](#) [820](#) [828](#) [840](#) [941](#) [990a](#) [1045](#) [1147](#) [1149](#) [1151](#) [1152](#) [1153](#) [1155](#) [1158](#) [1231](#) [1235](#) [1236i](#) [1236k](#) [1236l](#) [1236n](#) [1253](#) [1268](#) [1312](#) [1314](#) [1314b](#) [1321](#) [1347](#) [1430](#) [1433](#) [1446b](#) [1449](#) [1524](#) [1563](#) [1574](#) [1595](#) [1596](#) [1597](#) [1598](#) [1599](#) [1600](#) [1601](#) [1602](#) [1603](#) [1604](#) [1626](#) [1634](#) [1696](#) [1701](#) [1702](#) [1716](#) [1768](#) [1769a](#) [1769b](#) [1790g](#)

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.

Comments on This Topic

[151](#) [185](#) [205](#) [273a](#) [357](#) [495](#) [513](#) [536](#) [562](#) [573](#) [597](#) [675](#) [735](#) [793](#) [856](#) [869](#) [870](#) [871](#) [879](#) [915](#) [1067](#) [1126](#) [1141](#) [1146](#) [1150](#) [1159](#) [1368](#) [1476d](#) [1545](#) [1555](#) [1565](#) [1614a](#) [1639](#) [1641](#) [1642](#) [1654](#) [1715](#) [1768a](#) [1768b](#) [1769](#) [1792](#)

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, 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 it 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 Lake 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 Teepee 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.