

Huntersville West OHM Trail – Grant in Aid Program Proposal Project Summary

- Proposer:** Twin City Trail Riders OHM Club
Jeff Klein, President
- Sponsor:** Huntersville Township
- Project Location:** Wadena County, Shell River Township, Huntersville State Forest,
T138N, R34W, Sections 13, 14, 15, 16, 23, 24, 35
- Project Dimensions:** 44.94 miles total GIA OHM trail miles, including:
24.2 miles existing OHM trail
2.11 miles existing ATV/OHM trail
0.73 miles new OHM trail in County Road ROW
0.3 miles new OHM trail on state and private land
16.0 miles of minimum maintenance forest road
1.6 miles forest system roads

Project Description:

The majority of this proposal lies within the Huntersville State Forest. The proposed project will bring nearly 45 miles of OHM trail into the DNR grant-in-aid (GIA) funding program.

All but approximately one mile of the proposed GIA OHM trail alignment is currently in place and authorized for OHM use. The new alignment consists of 0.73 miles of new trail in Wadena County road right-of-way, and 0.3 miles of trail on state and private land, which is a reroute to avoid planned timber management activities where the trail currently crosses private land.

The proposal includes 24.2 miles of existing OHM trail, and 2.11 miles of existing combined OHM/ATV trail. These trails were designated in 2007 during the legislatively-mandated state forest classification and trail designation process.

The project also will designate 16.0 miles of state forest minimum maintenance road and 1.6 miles of state forest system road as GIA trail. These roads are currently open to OHM use, but designation as GIA trail will allow GIA funding to be used for maintenance and repair associated with OHM use. Approximately 4 miles of the minimum maintenance road are connected to the existing OHM GIA trail in the eastern side of Huntersville State Forest (Huntersville East). The remaining 12 miles of minimum maintenance road and 1.6 miles of system road connect to the proposed OHM GIA trail in the western part of the forest (Huntersville West).

Trail operations, maintenance and monitoring:

Trail segments on state forest roads will use the road surface. Along the county road, the trail will be located in the road ditch, benched into the slope or located on the far edge of the road. The majority of the trail is in place, the new 0.3 mile segment will be located on an existing logging route. Trail maintenance will include grading and shaping to drain snowmelt and stormwater runoff. Water quality Best Management Practices will be used to prevent erosion.

No wetlands will be filled as part of this proposal. The treadway will be brushed periodically to reduce the encroachment of woody vegetation. Invasive species management will be incorporated into trail monitoring and maintenance. Improvements and maintenance will conform to the principles outlined in the DNR publication “*Trail Planning, Development and Design Guidelines.*”

The trail will be operated, maintained, and managed by Huntersville Township with assistance and support provided by the Twin City Trail Riders OHM Club. The cost of maintenance is eligible for up to 90% reimbursement through the GIA program. The sponsor and the DNR will share monitoring responsibilities, supplemented by the Trail Ambassador program. The club will inspect the trail and perform maintenance and repairs as needed.

The trail will be open to OHM use year-round except during the rifle deer season. The trail will be closed as conditions warrant for safety considerations or to prevent erosion or trail damage.

Ancillary Facilities:

Trail users can access food, phones, and parking facilities just south of Wadena County Highway 18 at the river crossing in Huntersville. The east end of the proposed GIA trail links to 32.7 miles of existing GIA OHM trail (Huntersville East) that lies east of the Crow Wing River.

Need / Benefits of the Proposal: Grant-in-aid trail status will allow the OHM club to better monitor and repair these existing routes, and to schedule and perform routine treadway and corridor maintenance. State funding will also supplement current road authority maintenance funding.

The designation of this route as an official OHM GIA trail would enable OHMs to operate along county and township road rights-of-way. Written permission has been obtained from county/township road authorities to allow trail designation within the road rights-of-way.

Public Review:

The DNR invites written public comment on the proposal from June 19 to July 20, 2012. Copies of the proposal are available on the DNR website, (www.mndnr.gov/input), as well as at the DNR Bemidji Parks and Trails office.

Written comments on the proposal may be e-mailed to david.schotzko@state.mn.us, faxed to 218-755-4063, or mailed to Dave Schotzko, Area Supervisor, DNR Parks and Trails, 3296 State Park Rd. NE, Bemidji, MN 56601. For more information, or to request a printed copy of the proposal, please call Dave Schotzko at 218-308-2367, Rebecca Wooden at 651-259-5584, or the DNR Information Center at 1-888-MINNDNR (toll free).