

**Response to Comments on the
Beltrami Island State Forest
Forest Classification and Road/Trail Designation Plan**

March 2007



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Compilation of Comments.....	1
1 Anonymous 2006-09-07.....	1
2 Barten, Shirley 2005-12-07	2
3 Berry, Donald 2006-09-07	2
4 Bratvold, Sandy 2007-02-27	2
5 Gray, Dave 2006-09-07.....	2
6 Haack, Daniel 2007-02-20	2
7 Haack, Donald 2007-02-20	2
8 Haack, Kyle 2007-02-20	2
9 Hogenson, Myles 2007-03-01	2
10 Holthusen, Blair 2007-02-20.....	3
11 Holthusen, Denise 2007-02-20.....	3
12 Hruby, Wade & Mary Beth 2006-09-07.....	3
13 Klein, Kelly 2007-02-20.....	3
14 Maertens, Shirlee & Jerry 2007-03-01	3
15 Moe, Connie L. 2007-02-21	4
16 Moe, David 2007-02-20	4
17 Moe, Kim 2007-02-20.....	4
18 Moe, Tony 2006-03-06.....	4
19 Moe, Tony 2007-02-21.....	5
20 Ostwald, Brent 2007-02-22	5
21 Petersburg, Ryan 2007-02-21	5
22 Piga, Jim 2007-02-21	5
23 Piga, Nancy 2007-02-21	6
24 Reynolds, John 2005-12-06.....	6
25 Reynolds, John 2007-02-15.....	6
26 Roed, Shawn 2005-12-08	6
27 Rolczynski, Ron 2007-02-21	6
28 Rolczynski, Irene 2007-02-22	7
29 Sabol, Gerald 2005-12-07	7
30 Shaw, Dave 2007-01-04.....	7
31 Thompson, Bob 2007-02-20.....	8
32 Wichterman, Suzanne 2007-02-27	8
Response to Topics of Concern	8
1. Forest Classification with Respect to Motor Vehicle Use.....	9
2. Handicapped Access	9
3. Implementation and Enforcement	10
4. Private Land Access	10
5. Site Specific Comments	11
Bemis East Routes	11
Bemis Hill	11
Chilson Hills	11
Luxemberg SNA Area	12
Neheim Road / Hansen Creek.....	12
Nelson SFR Trail Loop.....	12
Roseau River / Elkwood Township.....	13
Segment_IDs 3937, 3938, 2036, 1901, 3181, 1744	13
Segment_ID 3757	13
6. Miscellaneous Comments.....	14

INTRODUCTION

In November 2004 the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) proposed classifying the Beltrami Island State Forest as *limited* with respect to motor vehicle use and identified roads and trails that would be available for public motor vehicle use. A public meeting was held in Warroad in February 2005 to explain the proposal and solicit public comments. The DNR received, compiled, and analyzed hundreds of comments on the draft plan.

In 2005 the state laws related to classification of state forest lands with respect to motor vehicle use and state rules related to use of motor vehicles in conjunction with big game hunting and trapping were amended. The amended law allowed for retention of the *managed* motor vehicle classification for state forest lands north of US Highway 2. The hunting and trapping exception was expanded to allow motor vehicles to use non-designated routes on forest lands classified as *limited* or *managed*.

Based on the comments received and the changes in state laws and rules, the DNR revised its proposal for motor vehicle use classification and road / trail designation in the Beltrami Island State Forest. The DNR worked with elected county officials and other agency representatives on revising the plan throughout 2006. A number of additional public information sessions were held. The DNR continued to accept public comments on the plan throughout the revision process.

In February 2007 the revised plan was released for final review and comment.

COMPILATION OF COMMENTS

The DNR accepted comments on the proposed forest classification and road / trail designations for the Beltrami Island State Forest throughout the plan revision period (Nov. 2005 to Feb. 2007). This document is a compilation of comments received during this period.

All written comments are compiled below. The transcription process maintained the content of the comment to the extent possible. Greetings and closings were not transcribed. There was no attempt to correct spelling, grammar, or misstatement of facts. There may be some errors due to illegible handwriting or typing errors by the transcribers. The comments are listed in alphabetical order by the last name of the person submitting the comment. The date that each comment was received is also noted. The DNR's analysis and response to topics raised in the comments is located below the comment compilation. The numbers in the left column of the comment table link to the responses.

	1 <i>Anonymous 2006-09-07</i>
1a	1712 (Chilson Hills) closed now – should it be open (repair low spot?)
1b	3937 3938 2036 & 1901 closed now. Was shown as open at winter meeting in Warroad. 1744 suggest brush out for habitat. Good deer, grouse, bear hunting from end. 0 – 0 off Faunce Butterfield corner to west closed. 3181 closed now between 2 access routes of 3308. (transcribed)

	2	<i>Barten, Shirley 2005-12-07</i>
2a	I have been visiting the BWCA ever since I was 21, I am now 62, and still enjoy going up there and canoeing and enjoying the trails. However, I will not enjoy going up there and seeing oil cans and other such litter, and other trails blazed by the ATV's that are going to be allowed on this pristine land. The BWCA(Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness) means NO motorized vehicles! So, let's keep it that way. If I can walk it so can they! I had a stroke in 1994, and where else can I go where I don't have to listen to the whine of an engine?	
	3	<i>Berry, Donald 2006-09-07</i>
3a	In regards to Chilson Hills trail. We would like it to be kept open for 4 wheel travel. This is a list of people I know use it: Ellerbusch family, Berry family, Adam family, Firk family, Battle family, Thompson family. This is important as we have several deer stands up in the hills. Some of us cannot walk that far.	
3b	1624, 1723, 1656, 1749, 1805, 1854 are access now. (transcribed)	
	4	<i>Bratvold, Sandy 2007-02-27</i>
4a	My family opposes the proposed ATV/OHM Managed Recreation Trail going off the Nelson Forest Road around Cloverdale Township, T159, Range 34W, Section 2 on the west side and loops out to Nelson Forest Road around Eugene Township, T160, Range 34W, about south center of Section 34. (sister of Ron B. Rolczynski)	
	5	<i>Gray, Dave 2006-09-07</i>
5a	#3757 Road to cabin has been walking trail only. We use wheelers and autos (when dry) to access cabin. If this road is changed from a walking trail to a motorized trail this road will become impassable. We have maintained it by mowing and removing fallen trees etc. This trail is used by a lot of bird hunters in the fall. (transcribed)	
	6	<i>Haack, Daniel 2007-02-20</i>
6a	The proposed Beltrami forest trail looks good. Thanks to the county commissioners, DNR, and state legislator for the work. (In batch of comment forms from Fourtown – Grygla Sportsmans Club) (transcribed)	
	7	<i>Haack, Donald 2007-02-20</i>
7a	Proposal looks good. (In batch of comment forms from Fourtown – Grygla Sportsmans Club) (transcribed)	
	8	<i>Haack, Kyle 2007-02-20</i>
8a	The trails are a good route through the woods and is a variety of different terrains. (In batch of comment forms from Fourtown – Grygla Sportsmans Club) (transcribed)	
	9	<i>Hogenson, Myles 2007-03-01</i>
	I believe everything is fair for both sides there are a couple improvements that we can work on together but at this	

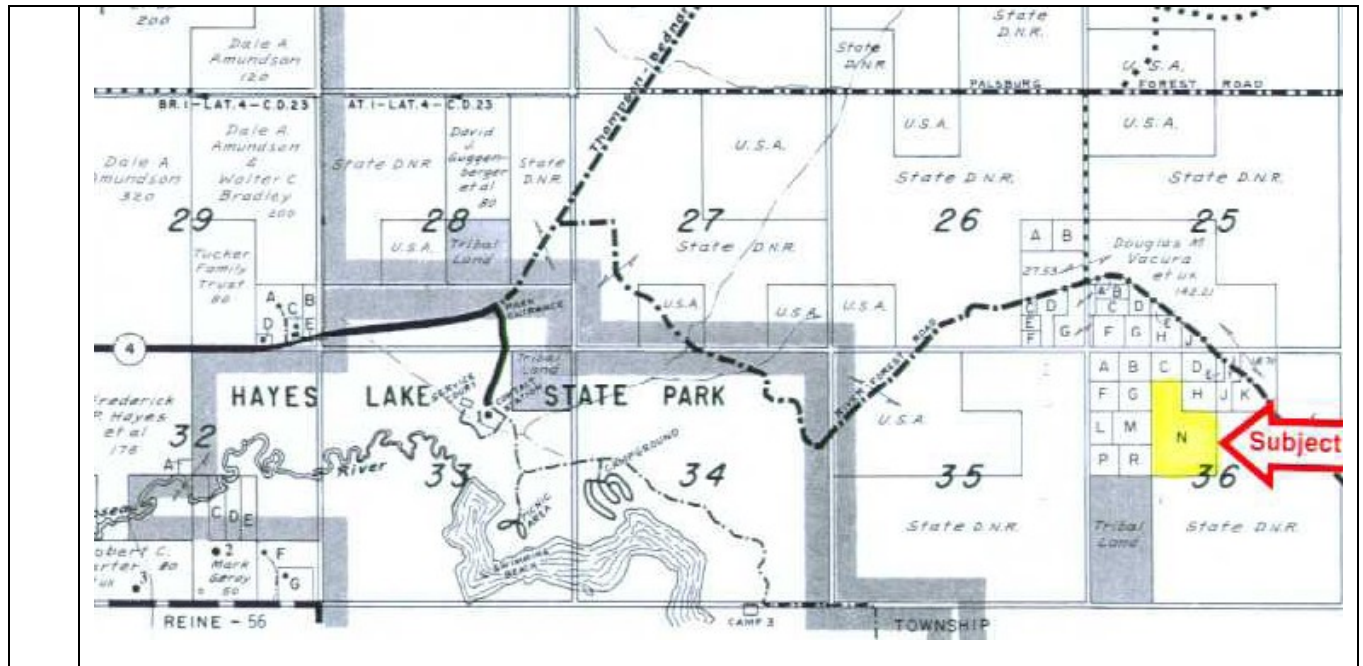
9a	time it is not feasible, the important thing is that we worked together as a team understood for the most part each other issues. What I think now needs to happen is that we work together to get things mapped out so that there is no confusion by locals or visiting tourist, we need this ASAP to keep any negative exposure of mistaken areas and routes while still building on the benefits that tourist can bring to the locals of Northern Minnesota.
	10 Holthusen, Blair 2007-02-20
10a	Looks good. (In batch of comment forms from Fourtown – Grygla Sportsmans Club) (transcribed)
	11 Holthusen, Denise 2007-02-20
11a	The county officials and DNR did a good job on the proposed trails in Beltrami County (In batch of comment forms from Fourtown – Grygla Sportsmans Club) (transcribed)
	12 Hruby, Wade & Mary Beth 2006-09-07
12a	The Bemis Hill area has one of the only handicapped accessible bathroom facilities in the entire area. The surrounding trails all appear to be closed to ATV usage (designated as walking trails). Our concern is that this is limiting trail access to anybody disabled requiring a handicapped accessible bathroom. How does this fit into ADA?? Is this not discriminating usage for those requiring these facilities?? (transcribed)
	13 Klein, Kelly 2007-02-20
13a	Looks great, and they did a good job! (In batch of comment forms from Fourtown – Grygla Sportsmans Club) (transcribed)
	14 Maertens, Shirlee & Jerry 2007-03-01
	Thank you for reviewing our comments for the Forest Road and Trail Designation Plan for Beltrami Island State Forest.
14a	1. Although we feel it's token, we certainly appreciate the four designated non-motorized areas. However, in reading the plan, it appears that a number of access routes are established just east of Bemis Hill Road and along the west boundary of the East Bemis NM area. We request that these should be closed to motorized uses.
14b	2. We also feel that the access routes and proposed OHV trail between the south boundary of East Bemis and north of Thompson Road should also be closed to OHV uses. This is within the watershed protection area of the proposed Bemis Hill SNA.
14c	3. Access routes east of Blacks/Winner Rd and west of Dick's Parkway within the general area of Luxemberger SNA should also be closed to motorized traffic.
14d	4. The proposed OHV trails on either side of the Roseau River in Elkwood Twp. should not be established. No motorized trails should be established in riparian areas and you know why.
14e	5. The access route east of Nehiem Road and south of Hanson Creek should be closed to OHV travel. That's all I've time for.

14f	<p>DNR asked for public input; we gave public once upon a time. We've been there and done that. But the natives were restless and now DNR wants input again. Well, you know what? You may as well give "them" what they want because if you don't, you'll be doing this all over again! Too bad, but that is how it was. You, DNR, wear people down until you get what you want, not necessarily what's best for the resource. How often can we spend time doing this? Northern Minnesota is a gem and it seems that as population pressures increase, it becomes more of a land treasure. It should be kept in tact and maintain its ecological integrity. The original plan respected wetlands and other sensitive areas. I'm not sure this one does as much.</p> <p>Having said that, thank you, and we hope you do what's best for the public lands.</p>
	<p>15 <i>Moe, Connie L. 2007-02-21</i></p>
15a	<p>I approve of the Beltrami Island State Forest trail. The proposal looks good. When will the trails be completed with signs, maps, etc.?</p> <p>(In batch of comment forms from Fourtown – Grygla Sportsmans Club) (transcribed)</p>
	<p>16 <i>Moe, David 2007-02-20</i></p>
16a	<p>I agree with the new trail plan of Beltrami Island State Forest. It is a good recreational area and great for family fun.</p> <p>(In batch of comment forms from Fourtown – Grygla Sportsmans Club) (transcribed)</p>
	<p>17 <i>Moe, Kim 2007-02-20</i></p>
17a	<p>The Beltrami Island State Forest trail plan is a wonderful plan. I am very eager to try out the new plan and am wondering when everything will be ready?</p> <p>(In batch of comment forms from Fourtown – Grygla Sportsmans Club) (transcribed)</p>
	<p>18 <i>Moe, Tony 2006-03-06</i></p>

<p>18a</p> <p>18b</p>	<p>I was very impressed at the open house in Wauvead, Mn. on the 6th of March. I am happy that Roseau County and the Department of Natural Resources are able to come to some agreement on how to provide access to Beltrami Island State forest.</p> <p>The Bemis hill recreation area is one of the most visited places in B.I.S.F. I believe that the team should take another look at this site, trails 1747, 1680, 1661 and 1547 should not be closed at the bottom of the hill. these trails are a through route and have been used for many years with no maintenance. They should be repaired and left open for motorized travel. there are many vertical trails that are closed now and that should give any one that likes a good walk up hill about all they need. and I am Believe if they want to hike on trails 1747, 1680, 1661 and 1547 no one will to tell them they can't.</p>
	<p>19 Moe, Tony 2007-02-21</p>
<p>19a</p>	<p>The Beltrami Island State Forest trail plan is acceptable. The team of county commissioners and DNR personnel spent a lot of time on Beltrami Island State Forest and have produced a good trail network.</p> <p>(In batch of comment forms from Fourtown – Grygla Sportsmans Club) (transcribed)</p>
	<p>20 Ostwald, Brent 2007-02-22</p>
<p>20a</p>	<p>Been awhile since I've made any comments directly to you, Mr. Olson. The last comments may have been on the Moosewalk trail during the planning process. That's a stellar trail that sets an example for what can be done. I haven't seen the proposed plan or map for Beltrami but I'm certainly encouraged by the prospect that it will be under the managed classification. Personally, I've met with Steve Schug of the USFS Tofte district and also some of the people at the Grand Marais [USFS] office, trying to offer some ideas about trail connectivity in those areas. I'm getting a better idea of the monumental job of trail inventory, and the processes it takes to finalize a forest plan in regard to motorized recreation, so when I say thank you for your efforts, know I mean it.</p>
	<p>21 Petersburg, Ryan 2007-02-21</p>
<p>21a</p>	<p>Trails look great in the forest and I have heard nothing but good comments about the trail system.</p> <p>(In batch of comment forms from Fourtown – Grygla Sportsmans Club) (transcribed)</p>
	<p>22 Piga, Jim 2007-02-21</p>
<p>22a</p>	<p>THIS LETTER IS TO LET YOU KNOW JACK AND WHOEVER THAT WE VERY MUCH OPPOSE ONE TRAIL IN PARTICULAR IN THE BELTRAMI ISLAND STATE FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN. THE TRAIL PROPOSED ATV/OHM MANAGED RECREATIONAL TRAIL IS ON NELSON TRAIL APPROXIMATELY 3 MILES NORTH OF THE FAUNCE-BUTTERFIELD ROAD. THE TRAIL WE ARE OPPOSED TO GOES OFF THE NELSON FOREST ROAD AROUND CLOVERDALE TOWNSHIP, T159, RANGE 34W, SECTION 2 ON THE WEST SIDE AND LOOPS OUT TO NELSON FOREST ROAD AROUND EUGENE</p>

	TOWNSHIP,T160,RANGE 34W,ABOUT SOUTH CENTER OF SECTION 34. OUR FAMILY HAS ENJOYED MANY YEARS OF PEACE AND QUIET THE FOREST OFFERS AND DO NOT WANT ANY CHANGES BUT ARE VERY MUCH OPPOSED TO THE ABOVE SINCE WE,AFTER MANY YEARS HAVE INTEREST IN PRIVATE PROPERTY IN EUGENE TOWNSHIP,SW1/4,SW1/4,T160N,RANGE 34W,SECTION 34,THAT WE WANT TO ENJOY FOR YEARS TO COME,THANK YOU,
	23 <i>Piga, Nancy 2007-02-21</i>
23a	Repetitive Letter, see Piga, Jim
	24 <i>Reynolds, John 2005-12-06</i>
24a	I would like to submit the following comment (promise) that conflicts between the MN DNR / renegade ATV riders and those Minnesotans concerned about protecting our natural resources will continue.
24b	The MN DNR has ample evidence that the mismanaged classification is a failure when it comes to protecting our resources and the rights of traditional user groups. The MN DNR knows full well that "closed" signs will be torn down making enforcement virtually impossible. There simply is NO EXCUSE for this classification. You have my personal promise that this will be the source of endless conflicts.
	25 <i>Reynolds, John 2007-02-15</i>
25a	Please register my comments into the public record so that people can read them in the future and see that what has happened to this forest was expected. I strongly oppose the "managed" classification of this forest or any forest in Minnesota. The classification creates an unenforceable environment and will result in needless damage to our public asset. This has always been the case and it always will be the case. It tells the world that the MN DNR DOES NOT CARE! There is no excuse for repeating this over and over. If Commissioner Holsten was actually concerned with doing the job that we are paying him he would refuse to sign this forest plan.
	26 <i>Roed, Shawn 2005-12-08</i>
26a	Re: ATV status in the Beltrami Forest. This law signed by Gov Tim Pawlenty to allowed the DNR to offer less restrictive regulations for State forest north of Hwy 2 will have a major negative impact on the Beltrami forest. As a camper and outdoorsman and frequent user of ATV's I still am disappointed in the DNR's stance on this issue.
26b	If you have ever been to this area it is extensively wetland and lowland areas that will be substantially damaged by ATV use. This area is critical to many types of wildlife and this area should be better protected. For example when I used this are for camping, hiking, or fishing, as a user I don't harm the land or the ecosystem. ATV's will add noise pollution, exhaust, as well as damage the land. As disappointing as it is to admit, there is a faction of ATV users who don't mind the trials and respect the land.
26c	The DNR should restrict use of ATV's on any sensitive or lowland areas. It is my hope that the law that was passed to appease the ATV enthusiasts be overturned. I currently have many trails and areas to ride - this sensitive, and treasured area should not be one of them.
	27 <i>Rolczynski, Ron 2007-02-21</i>

27a	<p>THIS LETTER IS TO LET YOU AND WHOEVER KNOW THAT I VERY MUCH OPPOSE ONE TRAIL IN PARTICULAR IN THE BELTRAMI ISLAND STATE FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN.THE TRAIL PROPOSED ATV/OHM MANAGED RECREATIONAL TRAIL IS ON NELSON TRAIL APPROXIMATLY 3 MILES UP FROM THE FAUNCE-BUTTERFIELD ROAD, THE TRAIL WE ARE OPPOSED TO GOES OFF THE NELSON FOREST ROAD AT CLOVERDALE TOWNSHIP,T159,RANGE 34N,SECTION 2 ON THE WEST SIDE AND LOOPS OUT TO NELSON FOREST ROAD AROUND EUGENE TOWNSHIP,T160,RANGE 34W, ABOUT SOUTH CENTER OF SECTION 34. MY WIFE AND I HAVE SPENT MANY YEARS ENJOYING THE FOREST AND THE PEACE AND QUIET IT BRINGS AND FINALLY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MY OWN PROPERTY THERE AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE IT STAY THE WAY IT IS. ONCE AGAIN AS OWNER OF SW1/4,SW1/4,EUGENE TOWNSHIP,T160N,RANGE 34W,SECTION 34 WE ARE VERY MUCH OPPOSED TO THAT TRAIL BEING AN ATV/OHM RECREATIONAL TRAIL.</p>
	<p>28 <i>Rolczynski, Irene 2007-02-22</i></p>
28a	<p>THIS LETTER IS TO LET YOU KNOW JACK AND WHOEVER THAT WE VERY MUCH OPPOSE ONE TRAIL IN PARTICULAR IN THE BELTRAMI ISLAND STATE FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN.THE TRAIL PROPOSED ATV/OHM MANAGED RECREATIONAL TRAIL IS ON NELSON TRAIL APPROXIMATELY 3 MILES NORTH OF THE FAUNCE-BUTTERFIELD ROAD. THE TRAIL WE ARE OPPOSED TO GOES OFF THE NELSON FOREST ROAD AROUND CLOVERDALE TOWNSHIP,T159,RANGE 34W,SECTION 2 ON THE WEST SIDE AND LOOPS OUT TO NELSON FOREST ROAD AROUND EUGENE TOWNSHIP,T160,RANGE 34W,ABOUT SOUTH CENTER OF SECTION 34.. (OUR FAMILY)HAS ENJOYED MANY YEARS OF PEASE AND QUIET THE FOREST OFFERS AND DO NOT WANT ANY CHANGES BUT ARE VERY MUCH OPPOSED TO THE ABOVE SINCE WE,AFTER MANY YEARS HAVE INTEREST IN PRIVATE PROPERTY IN EUGENE TOWNSHIP,SW 1/4,SW 1/4,T160N,RANGE 34W,SECTION 34,THAT WE WANT TO ENJOY FOR YEARS TO COME,THANK YOU,</p>
	<p>29 <i>Sabol, Gerald 2005-12-07</i></p>
29a	<p>I am pleased to see the DNR got this one right and thank you for listening to the sports people of northern MN. Not only does this allow some great access for hunters and riders but allows consumers to feel confident that they can purchase ATVs and have a place to use them. That was a dominant subject among our group was it worth it to purchase an ATV and then have no place to ride. This is a great compromise and stick to your plan when the other groups scream. This is what the vast majority of northern MN residents wanted to hear from the DNR.</p>
	<p>30 <i>Shaw, Dave 2007-01-04</i></p>
30a	<p>Subject: land access question.</p> <p>I have a question about land access. I am purchasing a piece of property in Beltrami near Hayes park. It is in Beaver township section 36 parcel "N" is what we are buying. it currently has access from the river forest road using an old logging road that crosses state land & leads to the south east corner of the property. I am wondering if we can feel confident in this access, I am worried that we might buy it & find that our access is illegal. Can you tell me if we are going to be OK or not? please see this map image showing the property location.</p>



	31 Thompson, Bob 2007-02-20
31a	Proposal with commissioners and DNR looks good. (In batch of comment forms from Fourtown – Grygla Sportsmans Club) (transcribed)
	32 Wichterman, Suzanne 2007-02-27
32a	Our family is concerned about and oppose a particular trail in the Beltrami Island State Forest Management Plan about 3 miles North of the Faunce-Butterfield Road. An ATV/OHM managed recreational trail has been proposed on Nelson Trail approximately 3 miles North of the Faunce-Butterfield Road. The trail we OPPOSE goes off the Nelson Forest Road around Cloverdale Township: T159, Range 34W, Section 2 on the West side and loops out to Nelson Forest Road around Eugene Township, T160, Range 34W, about South Center of Section 34. As our family enjoys the peacefulness of the great north woods, we strongly oppose the noise pollution that would be generated from an ATV trail. We want to continue to enjoy our private property in Eugene Township: SW1/4, SW1/4, T160N, Range 34W, Section 34. Please respect our request and thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

RESPONSE TO TOPICS OF CONCERN

Related comments were grouped together into topics prior to developing an agency response. Some topics are of a general nature while others are site specific. Comments that expressed a concern or opinion but that were not directly pertinent to forest classification or road/trail use designation were assigned to a miscellaneous category.

For each of the topics a succinct summary of the concerns was prepared. This is followed by a list of all the comments that were grouped under the topic (with hyperlinks to the original comments). The agency response to the topic is then presented.

1. Forest Classification with Respect to Motor Vehicle Use

Summary of Concerns

Comments on this topic were sharply divided. Some feel the *managed* classification is inappropriate or unworkable. Others support the *managed* classification.

Comments on This Topic

[20a](#), [24b](#), [25a](#), [26a](#), [26c](#), [29a](#)

Response to Concerns

Legislation passed in 2005 allows the retention of the *managed* classification for state forest lands north of US Highway 2. The Commissioner of Natural Resources was also given the authority to designate areas with limitations on the hunting- and trapping-related motor vehicle uses normally allowed on *limited* and *managed* state forest lands. The DNR feels that the *managed* classification can work in large, remote forests such as the Beltrami Island. The DNR designated four areas with limitations on off-trail and non-designated trail use to protect resources and provide a variety of hunting opportunities.

The *managed* classification does not allow unrestricted motor vehicle use in the forest as some seem to believe. All motor vehicle users (except for licensed big game hunters and trappers using ATVs for specific activities at specific times of the year) must stay on existing routes. It is illegal to operate a motor vehicle in a manner that causes rutting, erosion, damage to trees or crops when using undesignated routes – even if the route is not signed as closed to motor vehicle use. It is illegal to “carelessly upset the natural and ecological balance of a wetland.” It is also illegal to create an unauthorized trail. The fact that an existing route is non-designated does not mean that it is suitable for motor vehicle use. The user is responsible for determining if their use of the vehicle will cause rutting, erosion, or damage.

Non-designated routes are subject to proactive closure if motor vehicle use results in excessive impacts to natural resources.

2. Handicapped Access

Summary of Concerns

The concern is that motor vehicle users will not have access to the handicapped accessible toilet facilities at Bemis Hill.

Comments on This Topic

[12a](#)

Response to Concerns

Toilet facilities at Bemis Hill are located adjacent to a designated state forest road and are not located in the Bemis East restricted area. All motor vehicles, including OHVs, can use the forest

road to access the toilets, parking area, and well near Bemis Hill. There will be designated non-motorized trails near Bemis Hill that will be closed to motor vehicles.

3. Implementation and Enforcement

Summary of Concerns

These comments focused on the need to adequately sign designated roads / trails and provide user maps so that motor vehicle use can be managed and prohibitions on motor vehicle use of closed areas and non-motorized trails can be enforced. The commenters also want to know when the signs and maps will be available.

Comments on This Topic

[9a](#), [15a](#), [17a](#)

Response to Concerns

All routes designated as forest roads, motorized trails, non-motorized trails, and proactive closures will be signed on the ground. User maps showing the designated roads and trails will be published. The effective date for the designations will be December 31, 2007. It is anticipated that most of the signing of designated roads and trails will be done during the 2007 field season.

4. Private Land Access

Summary of Concerns

Do forest roads and access routes provide 'legal' access to private property?

Comments on This Topic

[30a](#)

Response to Concerns

The forest road and trail designations in this plan determine what uses and what types of vehicles the public is allowed to use on the routes on state forest land. State forest roads are typically open to public use by highway-licensed vehicles (cars, pickups, etc.) ATVs, off-highway motorcycles, and off-road vehicles (jeeps). System state forest roads are typically maintained to a level where they can be used by low clearance highway vehicles (cars). Minimum maintenance state forest roads are open to the same types of vehicles as system roads but they may not be maintained to a level where low clearance highway vehicles can routinely use them. However, the DNR is not a 'public road authority' like the county or township so state forest roads may not meet the safety, signing, and maintenance standards set for public highways. Access routes are open to public motor vehicle use but state forest rules prohibit vehicle use if such use would result in rutting, erosion, or damage to trees. The DNR does not maintain access routes.

State forest roads and access routes do not provide 'legal' access to the property in the sense that a public highway would. The DNR may issue private land access permits to private landowners or leaseholders allowing them to use motor vehicles on specific routes that are not available for motor vehicle use by the general public when the only reasonable access is across state land (*Minnesota Statutes*, section 84.773, subdivision 3).

5. Site Specific Comments

Summary of Concerns

These comments were specific to the sites or routes mentioned and each is addressed below.

Bemis East Routes

Comments on This Topic

[14a](#), [14b](#)

Response to Comments

The access routes mentioned in comment 14a are located in a gravel pit and will remain open to motor vehicle use. The routes will be signed to prohibit motor vehicles from entering the Bemis East restricted area. The gravel pit area will be monitored for spotted knapweed.

The ATV/OHM Trail mentioned in comment 14b is intended to provide a route for recreational OHV riding that does not use Thompson State Forest Road, which has relatively high levels of highway licensed vehicle use. The trail is on upland soils. The route is currently used by motor vehicles and will be dual designated as an ATV/OHM Trail and a minimum maintenance forest road.

Bemis Hill

Comments on This Topic

[18b](#)

Response to Concerns

The designation of routes near Bemis Hill was one of the most difficult tasks for the planning team. The decision to close routes 1547, 1680, 1661, and 1747 along the base of the hill to motor vehicle use was based on the fact that there is an alternate route through the area for the ATV/OHM Trail, that these routes at the base of the hill were included in the Bemis East restricted area and is near the relatively undisturbed native fen plant community, and that previous motor vehicle use on the steep, erosive soils on Bemis Hill has caused extensive erosion.

Chilson Hills

Comments on This Topic

[1a](#), [3a](#), [3b](#)

Response to Concerns

Segment 1712 is a portion of a snowmobile trail that is too wet for motor vehicle use and will be proactively closed.

Segments 1624, 1723, 1656, 1749, 1805, 1854 will be non-designated access routes. These routes will not be signed or maintained but they will be available in a 'as is' condition for motor vehicle use. When using non-designated routes motor vehicle cannot be operated in a manner that causes rutting, erosion, or damage to trees or crops. Routes 1749, 1805, and 1854 are in wet areas, have a medium REAC score, and 'close until repaired' comments.

Luxemberg SNA Area

Comments on This Topic

[14c](#)

Response to Concerns

The routes mentioned in comment 14c do not encroach on the Luxemberg SNA, which is part of an extensive wetland area with no inventoried routes. The routes will retain the designations contained in the February 2007 draft plan.

Neheim Road / Hansen Creek

Comments on This Topic

[14e](#)

Response to Concerns

The access routes mentioned in comment 14e do not encroach on Hansen Creek and will be left as non-designated access routes.

Nelson SFR Trail Loop

Comments on This Topic

[4a](#), [22a](#), [27a](#), [28a](#), [32a](#)

Response to Concerns

One of the factors in designating routes as ATV/OHM Trail was to avoid use of the wider, higher standard, and busier system forest roads when possible. System forest roads were dual designated as ATV/OHM Trail when it was the only reasonable route that provided a necessary link to other parts of the OHV trail system. The Nelson Forest Road is one of those links. The Nelson Forest Road is open to use by HLVs and OHVs. The Nelson Forest Road is closer to the private property mentioned in the comments than is the trail loop that is the subject of the commenters' objections.

The loop mentioned in the comments (segment_ids 2831, 2847, 2876, and 2897) used a minimum maintenance forest road that provided a short detour around a portion of the Nelson Forest Road (a system road). This minimum maintenance road loop connects to non-designated access routes leading south to an extensive area of state forest land. The minimum maintenance road loop also connects to 3 access routes that lead to the private property mentioned by the commenters. The minimum maintenance road is open to use by HLVs and OHVs. The access routes can be used by motor vehicles as long as such use does not result in rutting, erosion, or damage to trees. The minimum maintenance road may be maintained by the DNR. The access routes will not be actively maintained.

Given that the Nelson Forest Road is a necessary connection in the larger ATV/OHM Trail in the Beltrami Island State Forest and that the minimum maintenance road loop was only an alternate route for the same connection it is not critical that the loop be part of the designated ATV/OHM Trail system. The DNR will not designate the loop as part of the ATV/OHM Trail. The loop will remain designated as a minimum maintenance forest road and will still be available for

OHV use. Dedicated OHV funds will not be available for maintenance of the loop. The Nelson Forest Road will be dual designated as a system forest road and an ATV/OHM Trail.

Roseau River / Elkwood Township

Comments on This Topic

[14d](#)

Response to Concerns

The main designated ATV/OHM Trail system in the Beltrami Island State Forest forms an elongated east-west oval located north of the Red Lake WMA. This oval is linked to trails in the Four Town area in the southern part of the forest using the Morehouse, Moose River West, and Dick's Parkway forest roads. The trails near the Roseau River in Elkwood Township are key to both the main oval and to the link to the south. The proposed trails will provide connections yet avoid use of routes on former ditch grades that cross extensive wetlands and are no longer suitable for motor vehicle use. The trail on the north side of the river connects the Stotz and McAdams/Elkwood forest roads. The trail on the south side of the river provides the link to the Morehouse road, which is part of the link to the southern trails. These trails will require improvement to meet sustainability standards before they are signed as part of the designated ATV/OHM trail. The intent is to relocate the river crossing to a more suitable site. All required studies and permits will be completed prior to developing the new river crossing, including federal environmental analysis if the crossing is located on LUP land. Other than the river crossing, the trails will not encroach on the Roseau River.

Segment_IDs 3937, 3938, 2036, 1901, 3181, 1744

Comments on This Topic

[1b](#)

Response to Concerns

Segments 3937, 3938, 2036, and 1901 are snowmobile trails that are mostly too wet for use by motor vehicles. These routes will proactively be closed to motor vehicle use except snowmobiles.

Segment 3181 is a short route (0.3 miles) that is too wet for motor vehicle use and will be proactively closed.

Segment 1744 will be a non-designated access route and will not be actively maintained.

Segment_ID 3757

Comments on This Topic

[5a](#)

Response to Concerns

This route serves as an access from the Moose River West Forest Road to private property. It had been gated but those accessing the private property had been allowed to use motor vehicles on the route. The route will not be designated or managed as a non-motorized trail. It will be a non-designated access route. It will not be actively maintained. The general public and those

accessing the private land will be able to use the portion of the route on state forest land. Those using motor vehicles on the route cannot cause rutting, erosion, or damage to trees.

6. *Miscellaneous Comments*

Summary of Concerns

These comments express a concern or opinion that is not directly pertinent to the forest classification or road/trail designation decisions that are the subject of this planning effort. These comments display the range of opinions and the passion the commenters have for natural resources or their preferred forms of recreation.

Comments on This Topic

[2a](#), [6a](#), [7a](#), [8a](#), [10a](#), [11a](#), [13a](#), [14f](#), [16a](#), [18a](#), [19a](#), [24a](#), [26b](#), [31a](#)

Response to Concerns

Comments noted. There are no changes to the draft plan in response to these comments.