

# Beltrami Island State Forest Trail Revisions: Frequently Asked Questions

## Why is the Department of Natural Resources revising the trails?

The DNR is committed to maintaining a safe, sustainable and fun trail experience throughout Minnesota's State Forests. To accomplish these objectives, we must review past trail plans to determine what is working and what is not. The DNR may add connections, designate new trail or close or reroute what is not working. Ideally this will provide a balance between safety, environmental sustainability and user satisfaction.

## How has the public been involved?

The DNR recognizes the importance of public participation and began the planning process with a public information session and scoping period. DNR also met with local government officials early in the planning process and met with local clubs for additional input approximately half-way through the planning process. As required by State Statute, notice of these changes will be published in the State Register for 60-days public review. There will also be a public meeting where the public may review changes and comment. The DNR will review and respond to public comments following the comment period. Once the comment response is complete, the Commissioner of Natural Resources will sign the designation changes as Commissioner's Orders.

## What changes are to be expected?

The DNR is looking to designate a variety of off-highway vehicle (OHV) trails, hunter-walking trails (HWT) and minimum maintenance roads (MMR) through this plan. Over 25.5 miles of OHV trail and MMR will be added as well as over 10.5 miles of HWT added. Approximately 3 miles of the HWT will be open to motorized use, either through current designation or currently open as access routes. The DNR is also proposing to un-designate approximately 1.3 miles of MMR. These routes will stay open as access routes. Through this process, the DNR is not proposing to close any trails and there will be a 24.1 mile net increase in designated motorized trail/MMR. These new designations will bring the total miles of designated OHV trail in the forest to approximately 262 miles and the total walking trail miles to approximately 51 miles.

Route Designation	Current Miles	Miles Added	Miles Undesignated	New Total Miles
<b>Forest Roads</b>				
System	355.5	0	0	355.5
Minimum Maintenance	118.7	1.66	2.31*	118.05
<b>Trails</b>				
Hunter Walker	47	10.54	0	57.54
Non-Motorized (hike, horse, etc.)	4.4	0	0	4.4
ATV/OHM	238.9	17.37	0	256.27
ATV/OHM/ORV	0	6.39	0	6.39
<b>Other</b>				
OHV Warm-Up Area	0 Acres	1.58 Acres	0 Acres	1.58 Acres

*\*One-mile of undesignated minimum maintenance road will be designated as ATV/OHM trail; 1.31 miles of undesignated minimum maintenance trail will be left as access routes.*

### What are the benefits of designating a trail?

Designation ensures the trail will receive funding for maintenance, signage and mapping. Unlike an access route, a designated trail may only be closed through a public process, giving the public the opportunity to weigh in on whether a trail should be closed or stay open.

### Where will the money for these changes come from?

The designated OHV trails will be funded through the dedicated OHV accounts. Money in these accounts comes from OHV registration fees and a portion of the state gas tax. The DNR will also work with local clubs who may be interested to add the new trails to their Grant in Aid system. Hunter-walking trails and MMRs will be funded through their appropriate accounts.

### When can we expect to see these changes?

After the DNR responds to comments received during the public review period and the DNR Commissioner signs a Commissioner's Order designating the roads and trails, the DNR may begin construction. Some routes that are currently well-used access routes will only require signage and addition to the maps. These changes can take place immediately. Other routes which are new trail or not frequently used access routes may require additional maintenance, which will occur over the next two to three seasons.