

# Matthew Lourey State Trail Master Plan Amendment

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



### ***What is a Master Plan Amendment?***

Amendments to state park or trail master plans are prepared to accommodate new facilities or activities, or expansion of parks or trails. Park and trail plans and amendments are developed through an open public process, in partnership with local communities, park and trail users, and interested citizens.

The Matthew Lourey State Trail is an existing 80-mile multi-use, natural and gravel surfaced trail, primarily located in Pine County, and is authorized by Minnesota Statutes 85.015, Subd. 13, (4). This amendment will amend the Master Plan for the Minnesota-Wisconsin Boundary Trail (1982), the original master plan for this trail corridor, as well as an amendment that was included in the Gandy Dancer Trail Plan (1994) which relates to portions of this trail.

### ***What changes are being proposed by this amendment?***

The Matthew Lourey State Trail Master Plan Amendment proposes:

- The addition of Class I and Class II All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) and Off Highway Motorcycle (OHM) use to four separate segments (totaling about 23 miles) of the Matthew Lourey State Trail, joining trail segments already open to such uses for a combined total of approximately 47 miles of continuous ATV/OHM use.
- The addition of winter ATV use along the Matthew Lourey State Trail in the Nemadji and St. Croix State Forests, sharing the groomed trail with snowmobiles.
  - *There has been an increase in demand for winter ATV trails and this trail provides a unique opportunity to develop a loop system by connecting with other trails in the area, including the Gandy Dancer Trail to the east, where winter ATV use is currently allowed and shares the groomed trail with snowmobiles. The Gandy Dancer Trail also allows Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) use in the spring, summer and fall.*
  - *Additional winter ATV trails are available off of the Gandy Dancer Trail as it travels into Wisconsin: Douglas County (to north) offers about 300 miles; and Burnett County (to south) maintains about 100 miles. Both counties also provide year-round ATV trails off of the Gandy Dancer Trail.*
- No ATV or OHM use is proposed for Matthew Lourey Trail segments within St. Croix State Park.
- No new trail segments are proposed for development as part of this amendment. All proposed changes will occur within the existing trail corridor.

### ***Why are these changes being proposed?***

ATV and OHM riding continue to be popular outdoor recreation activities and there is demand for more areas close to population centers. The proposed amendment will allow for a sustainable, high quality motorized recreational opportunities along an existing trail corridor. These changes also provide additional connectivity by creating trail linkages to other trails within the Nemadji and St. Croix State Forests. Treadway improvements, including maintenance and monitoring opportunities, will also be facilitated by these changes.

### ***Has environmental review occurred?***

Yes, in June 2011, the DNR completed an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the proposed changes to the Matthew Lourey State Trail. The DNR, which served as the Responsible Government Unit, concluded that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required because the project does not have the potential for significant environmental effects. The project will comply with all necessary permits and approvals.

### ***When will these changes be implemented?***

Implementation and construction activities will begin following final approval of this amendment. It is estimated that one to two construction seasons are needed to complete all construction activities.

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## How will trail users know which uses are allowed where and when?

Trail design, education, monitoring and enforcement are keys to the success of any trail system.

- Additional signage is needed to indicate which uses are allowed where, and when, along the trail and at key intersections and junctions with other trails. Trail etiquette information will also be provided.
- Temporary trail closures will be implemented:
  - *Seasonal and temporary trail closures may be imposed at any time for any use due to treadway repairs, wet soil conditions, logging operations, or other natural resource protection or public safety concerns. Periods of heavy precipitation and the spring thaw could also result in trail closures.*
- Volunteer Trail Ambassador Program:
  - *Volunteer trail ambassadors, though not licensed peace officer, are responsible for greeting fellow outdoor enthusiasts, educating trail users, giving minor aid in emergencies, and providing useful information about responsible OHV use on public lands.*
- Additional gates or barriers may be installed along with signage, as necessary, to manage motorized uses along the Matthew Lourey Trail, especially at intersections with GIA snowmobile trails that do not allow other types of use.
- Trail rules and regulations will be enforced to provide a safe and enjoyable trail experience and is a tool to address unauthorized trail uses, as well as other issues.

## Are there other winter ATV trails in Minnesota?

Yes, there are other winter ATV riding opportunities in Minnesota:

Trail	Location	Length	Use
Appleton Area Recreational OHV Park	Appleton (Grant-In-Aid)	18 miles 330 acres	ATV (Class I, II), OHM, ORV (Year-round)
Gandy Dancer Trail	Pine County	13 miles	ATV (Class I, II)*, OHM (Year-round), with snowmobile use
Genoa Trail	St. Louis County, Eveleth to Gilbert (Grant-In-Aid)	3.4 miles	ATV (Class I, II)*, OHM (Year-round), with snowmobile use
Iron Range OHV Recreation Area	Gilbert – State Recreation Area	36 miles 1,200 acres	ATV (Class I, II), OHM, ORV: May – October, 7-days/week; November – April, Fri-Sun only
Soo Line South Trail	Carlton County: Moose Lake, MN to Superior, WI (Grant-In-Aid)	32 miles	ATV (Class I, II), (Year-round), with snowmobile use

*\*Shares winter use with groomed snowmobile treadway*

State forest roads remain open for OHV use until there is adequate snow depth for grooming for snowmobile use. Always obey road and trail signs. Check for seasonal or temporary trail closures on the OHV Trails page at: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/ohv/closures.html>

## For more information or to provide comments:

Comments on the Draft Master Plan Amendment will be accepted through **March 30, 2012**.

To get the latest information regarding the status of the Matthew Lourey State Trail Master Plan Amendment, go to: [http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/trails/matthew\\_lourey.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/trails/matthew_lourey.html) or contact:

**Diane Anderson**, Principal Planner  
DNR, Division of Parks & Trails  
Email: [diane.k.anderson@state.mn.us](mailto:diane.k.anderson@state.mn.us)  
Phone: 651-259-5614  
Address: 500 Lafayette Road, Box 39,  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

**Joe Alberio**, District Supervisor  
DNR, Division of Parks & Trails  
Email: [joe.alberio@state.mn.us](mailto:joe.alberio@state.mn.us)  
Phone: 218-485-5410  
Address: 701 S. Kenwood, Moose Lake, MN 55767