



Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

ATV Advisory Committee

Thursday, November 14, 2024 - 9am to 3pm

Best Western Mill Creek Inn

3125 Ryan Drive SE, Salem, OR 97301

Meeting Minutes

OPRD ATV Committee Members In-person:

Virgle Osborne – Class II Rep & Chair

Dave Kimball – Class I Rep

Barrett Brown – Class III Rep

Matt Smith – Law Enforcement Rep

Kevin Rowell – USFS Rep

Chris Knauf – BLM Rep

Greg Jackle – ODF&W Rep

Amy Joyce – ODOT Rep

Peter Geissert – OHA EMS & Trauma Systems

Ethan Lodwig – EMS Rep

Other:

Grace Schuessler – Tread Lightly!

Matt Caldwell – Tread Lightly!

Danielle Fowles-McNiven – Tread Lightly!

Program

Tom Metsa – NOHVCC

Chris

OPRD Staff Present:

Jeff Trejo – OPRD Safety Education Coordinator

Michele Scalise – Grants and Community Programs
Manager

Mike Law – West Side Field Rep and contact for ATV
Program

Ian Caldwell – Central Oregon

Jodi Bellefeuille – Grant Coordinator for RTP

Denise Frechin – Notetaker

Jessica Horning – Statewide trails planner

Katie Gauthier – Government Relations and Policy
Manager

OPRD ATV Committee Members Zoom:

Dustin James – ATV Dealer Rep

Jody Phillips – Rural Fire Protection District

Ann Haak – ADA Rep

Matt Miller – Class IV Rep

Reid Brown – ODF OHV Program

Meeting Called To Order at 9:00 AM on Thursday, November 14, 2024, by Virgle Osborne.

1) Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

2) Approval of November 2023 Minutes (ACTION)

One Error – Weight limits of side-by-side change from 25,000 to 3,500.

Motion: Jody Phillips moved to accept the October 2023 meeting minutes. Second: Vote: No objections. Motion passed unanimously.

3) Public Comments:

Dawn Nelson – Lives near Sand Lake Recreation Area and formed “Sand Lake Community Group” to address livability issues. There is lack of noise enforcement, it seemed to increase after COVID, and we know there is a lack of staff for enforcement. No one is willing to give tickets to enforce the noise and the group thinks the state should do more education and outreach. They are most concerned with those exceeding the decibel limit of 97 decibels, they would like to have a solution, and be able to hold people accountable. There can be hundreds of people riding at the same time which increases the noise level and the ones that are louder can

be heard. They know it is a handful of offenders, but the longer non-enforcement goes on, more people are encouraged to not pay attention to the limit. We are concerned about safety and other things as well, but for their livability, the noise enforcement is top priority.

Barrett Brown – We take this to heart and will take the issue seriously.

4) Committee Member Updates & Feedback

Jody Phillips – Centers of Biological Diversity is suing the Forest Service over big events in the dunes (UTV Takeover and Dunesfest). They are protecting the Martin which is listed. I represent Save the Riders Dunes which is a group that advocates keeping the dunes open to riding. We're working with a lawyer and have gotten intervenor status along with Douglas County and Coos County. It gives us say in the lawsuit. We are siding with the Forest Service. We will see where that goes and keep you posted.

Matt Miller – In Central Oregon there is discussion that most of the side-by-side use is on Forest Service Class 2 roads. We're working with clubs, Forest Service and COHVOPS to look at trail grooming and maintenance options. Looking at tools and implements that can be easily transported over distances to clear groom routes. The Forest Service roads do not have scheduled maintenance.

Reid Brown – ODF is finishing a project that including an OHV trail building projects to open water streams through the Tillamook and Clatsop Forest. Finished 2024 annual operations plan in July. Have built 17 bridges in the last 18 months for motorcycles and side by sides. We had borrowed some of the OPRD equipment pool, which helped them know what to pick when purchasing equipment.

Ann Haak – Traveling a lot... Alaska doesn't have many regulations on any OHV use. Arizona is starting a program where everyone is required to take the online safety course and get a safety permit, but looking at charging a fee. Continued concern from ADA is the quietness of electric vehicles startling people on the trail (mostly bicycles).

Dustin James – Have settled down from COVID and there are a lot of people using the units and riding with no big issues. The local club and volunteers have done a lot of volunteer trail work. Seeing a lot of side-by-sides being used on public roadways, mostly in remote locations. Would like a program like Washington where they are street legal and able to be on roads that are 35 mph or less.

Ethan Lodwig – The EMS liaison modernization bill just passed which will improve emergency EMS response. Been working on the trauma board for trauma patients to go to the correct hospitals the first time. With Emerald Trail Riders Association. Been doing YSEP classes for safety cards. Working on rebuilding the club after COVID.

Barrett Brown – The Oregon Trail Coalition is a broad multiuse coalition of trail advocates. Have a vacancy on their advisory committee for motorized use, taking applications through December. Important to get someone from the motorized community. Recreation Immunity is an issue. Christmas Vally Dunes, EIS for public comment, good news our community provided

300-400 comments into the system. Added a new preferred alternative which keeps the dunes open, reinforces management planning, good outcome for them. Previous preferred alternative would close the dunes for cross country travelers and would only allow use on designated trails. NOHVCC National Conference was in Minnesota and they were working with Polaris. There was a lot of discussions about width and length. Polaris is working on making side-by-sides quieter and have changed the way the clutch is controlled so it doesn't rev as loud, especially through the campgrounds at low speeds.

Virgle Osborne – Their nonprofit, the Champagne Creek Ranch got the grant for the storage containers are on site. Continue with kids ATV program, many were done this year and they are the only ones doing the program in that area. Douglas County is talking about allowing ATV on county roads which started back up a few weeks ago and they are still discussing which roads. Went to SEMA (Specialty Equipment Market Association) in Las Vegas this year with the Legislature Leadership Caucus. They had a tour of behind the scenes and saw where they were dedicated to green energy vehicles that they have been testing. SEMA is concerned about the future of motorsports changing direction. In Oregon, calling for by 80% of vehicles to be electric by 2035 and 100% by 2050. With the election, we will see change in the federal dollars coming into the state because of political parts.

Dave Kimball – On the east side, seeing(hearing) more people with some loud vehicles and would like to see enforcement at the trail heads.

Matt Smith – For law enforcement challenges, sound is the biggest issue. The county has an ordinance but are not able to enforce it and haven't found a state statute they can use. They have been talking a lot about this for a while and the sound is a problem. We want to have a way to enforce it.

Kevin Rowell – Forest Service has a 750-million-dollar budget deficiency, and they will not be hiring temps for 2025 or extending permanent seasonal tours of duty. Those are typically 13 pay periods on then 13 pay periods off and we won't be able to renew them. Last year Kevin converted temp seasonal staff to permanent positions. Some units are not able to do that because they are smaller. Willamette National Forest had a lot of small fires which closed Huckleberry this summer. This summer starting to build a 2.5 mile single-track trail all by hand with ETRA.

Ian – OPRD has 10 different grants with USFS for 4.4 million dollars. We are communicating with USFS about how to get work done on the ground.

Chris – Continuing applying for OHV grants. Still working on e-bikes on federal lands. Had a request for some smaller UTV's since BLM cannot use quads. We need them to work on trails. They have located some and are filling the gap. (NOTE: Chris retired in April of 2025, David Moore appointed to position)

Peter Geissert – Are moving to a new software platform for the trauma registry in 2025 and have a grant from ODOT making a push on data quality. Will be building dashboards for local

and EMS agencies and will have a liaison to help with any data issues and help with the registry. Will have accurate information and be able to quickly identify emerging issues and situations.

Greg Jackle – ODFW is just getting over hunting season. Been working with local Oregon State Police Game Troopers and Forest Service about restrictions on roads open or closed to travel for during hunting season. Identifying open roads with a green dot on the road. Having more people wanting to use electric bikes on mountain bike trails which raises some concerns with wildlife. Balancing these will be a challenge. Sound issue also impacts wildlife.

Amy Joyce –ATV dealers, advises DMV how they deal with dealerships. On the safety side they have the transportation safety office of roadways which tracks crashes and fatalities from OHV. ODOT is doing a lot of work on crash data and making it timelier in receiving information.

Barrett: Want to make sure that we look at difference between ATV use for recreation vs transportation, when tracking statistics on accidents.

5) Legislative Updates

Katie Gauthier – We are not introducing any new ATV Legislation this session (2025). We've had proactive agency legislation in the long sessions around ATVs that would have expanded the safety education program for Class IV adults. We've presented this the last few sessions, and it hasn't passed. As an agency we decided to not propose it this time because it didn't seem useful to keep proposing the same legislation.

The Transportation Committee will be focused on funding for ODOT next session. Had a powerpoint that showed where funds come from and where they go and the over \$1 billion shortfall. Projecting that they need 2.8 billion next biennium and forecast revenue is closer to 1.7 billion. Currently their funding comes from gas tax, motor carriers and DMV fees. 30% of fuel taxes goes to counties and 20% goes to cities. The item labeled "transfer money" would include ATV funds. Have identified potential new revenue sources, including user fees, electric vehicle fees and general fund.

The recreational immunity bill from last session was a short-term fix to that bill based on a lawsuit where a hiking trail was being used for transportation (to the beach) and not considered recreation and would not be covered under the recreation immunity statute. There was a bill that fixed it adding walking, running, and biking, but that has a sunset the end of 2025. Believe Senator Prozanski is trying to introduce a bill that would repeal the sunset. Insurance companies for cities and counties have recommended closing trails used as transportation not recreation. Jodi mentioned that some agencies are identifying trails in transportation system plans with raises more questions.

Legislature starts Jan 21st. Will keep you updated if ATV related bills are introduced and their progress.

Barrett Question about ATV Funds Account and ending balance, which is around \$18 million. Ian – Have recently gotten an increase of allocation to spend so have about \$15 million for grants. We need to carry a positive balance to be able to cover expenses on a

yearly basis. Currently our allocation to spend is a little higher than revenues to reduce ending balance. SB 2017 increased fuel taxes from 30 to 40 cent per gallon. This increase was critical to keep up with raising costs due to inflation and salaries. Since Electric ATVs are a very small portion of vehicles, we are not having the issues that ODOT is currently having with EVs not purchasing fuel.

6) Sound Training & Enforcement

History – DEQ has allowable sound limits which varies depending on the type of vehicle from 99 to 95 decibels. Sand Lake is 97db and Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area (ODNRA) is 93db. California is at 96 db and there has been a lot of discussions about having Oregon also be at 96. The issue of sound has come up the last few years, especially concerns from neighbors in coastal dunes areas. We have an agreement with DPS Technical and Chris Reel to conduct law enforcement training and have been holding classes for Law Enforcement for several years. The Coos County area is having a lot of complaints. Matt Smith discussed several issues with the ability to easily test and cite for sound violations. There are officer safety issues with trying to look up vehicles, engine size and RPM. Additionally, need to get consent to test vehicle to since it is considered a search. Oregon has law for unreasonable noise on roads, which can be used on “sand roads” but not on open dunes where the most noise is coming from. Have looked at other programs like marine board that allows to “inspection” of vehicles.

Michele – do we have data of sound testing in our database? Yes, officers and USFS staff enter sound testing into LETS and we can generate Stats

Katie: We had talked about moving Authority to make rules to State Parks from DEQ. Had discussions with DEQ and could be easier to work with DEQ on new sound levels through the rule making process for Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR). By keeping rule making within DEQ would avoid a legislative bill for statute changes. Think Law Enforcement representatives needs address the inspection issue for enforcement and that would likely need Legislative Action.

Barrett made a motion to pursue rule making with DEQ. Jody second. Discussion: Generally feel 96db is a good level to go with since other states are there and it is reasonable to meet within the industry. Concern about what level DEQ might want to set sound limit at. Discussion that having State Park conduct the rulemaking process would give us more control over the final sound limit. **Barrett withdrew his motion.** Committee feels that addressing the sound issue as soon as possible is important.

Discussion about enforcement of sound and ability to check sound. Looking at Marine Board, ODOT and State Police for inspections for vehicle or hunting violations. There are statutes that allow for inspections. But we don’t have that for ATV Sound. Ian and Katie will continue to research.

7) Oregon Trails Plan Update

Jessica – Working on updating the Statewide Trails Plan. It is a policy level plan that’s updated a minimum of every 10 years. What we need to get out of this plan is updating our grant program

scoring criteria for the ATV grant program and the Recreation Trails Program (RTP). We have three general buckets in this plan, non-motorized trails, ATV/OHV/Snow mobile trails and water trails. We are using the ATV and RTP committees that are already established. For the process timeline, we are doing a phased flexible approach to make sure we're being responsive to everybody's needs and not just be a repeat of what we have done before.

- Summer 2024 – SCORP Trails Summary Report
- Fall 2024 – Trails Partner Survey
- Winter 2025 – Partner workshops
- March 2025 – ATV Grant Meeting – review scoring criteria
- April and May 2025 – Grant Criteria workshops with RTP and ATV Committees
- Summer 2025 – Develop additional tools/resources

OPRD wrapped up the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan using a lot of surveys. Then went through hundreds of pages of reports and pulled out the most important information related to trails to use as our baseline. Sent out an email about our Trails Partner Survey which is sharing what we know so far which is geared towards land managers and Non-Profit partners, not necessarily users which is what the SCORP data covers. Working on getting the criteria for the grant through the workshop. Working with the group and asking what resources we want to prioritize working on. Trails summary report: Looked at stats: 9.7 million motorized trail activities a year. \$276 million in spending on ATV Activities. \$581 million economic value which looks at willingness to spend. ATV is fairly well represented across the board. Average household who has ATVs rides is 1-2 weekends a year.

Committee: This number seems low, since many riders are out year round. This number is average of all riders. (NOTE: Staff relooked at numbers and adjusted to 29 times/year)

Permit sales and registration history has been fluctuating with a peak in 2020. There is a decrease in snowmobile registrations, thinking might be due to low funding for enforcement. Seeing a lot of people are not registering snow mobiles because there is no enforcement, and it doesn't have direct funding.

Dustin – One of the big problems were seeing is the inability to register snow bikes and tracked side by sides. Some might have the OHV stickers on for summer use. Losing funding for snow program since only "snowmobiles" can register.

Trail Partners Survey – 185 respondents, 60 are working with OHV/ATV trails. The funding priorities and top issues have not changed a lot, funding, trail maintenance and increasing accessible trail options are the highest priorities from the survey. In 2016 we were dealing with travel management plan and closing trails. Trail etiquette and safety education have been coming up. Looking at options for creating new funding resources for the trails because we are lacking on funding. Guidance on recreation immunity statutes. Will meet with ATV Grant Subcommittee in March and May.

8) Partnerships

Marc was unable to attend. Tom Metsa has been working for NOHVCC for the last 3 months. Recently retired from Colorado State Parks and was working with the ATV Program.

They are planning to hold their National Conference in Bend in fall of 2025. There will be people coming nationally and it's a chance to show off the Oregon program. Had the 2024 National Conference in Minnesota.

We partner with NOHVCC to conduct Great Trails Workshop which is a two-day class. Did a training at Shotgun Creek in 2024 and planning one in central Oregon in 2025.

At the National Conference last month in Minnesota – They talked a lot about sound, an interesting case we learned about was Polaris was working with a rental company that was having issues with sound and were able to modify vehicles to reduce the sound output. The Colorado grant program is similar to ours. They had success with grants that paid for a roaming USFS trail crew that would go around and do maintenance. Also have a program called Good Management that works in different areas that we know are going to be funded to streamline the grant funding process. They had 26 crews that get priority funding who are managing the area, doing repairs, signage and all the things for active management.

Ian is working with Scott Johnson, who works for the Forest Service in Forest Grove and Jason Wells, who is contractor trail builder with a lot of experience using an excavator, to put on a 5-day equipment training class. The training is a mixture of classroom and field sessions at Cline Buttes. Warn Industries came and did a class room session and went into field for winching exercises. Work on hands on training for dozers and excavators. And then more advanced skills like constructing reverse grades.

We received a few grant requests from Tread Lightly for our RTP and ATV programs from items such as brochures, posters, and backpacks. Then Tread Lightly! put in a grant to hire an Oregon program manager. They would represent Tread Lightly for the state of Oregon. Ellen worked in that position and then got a promotion within Tread Lightly! Grace was recently hired for that position.

9) Tread Lightly!

Tread Lightly! has an ATV Grant with us to help fund an Oregon Program Manager. Grace Schuessler was recently hired into this position.

Grace: Tread Lightly! has been advocating to keep America's outdoor recreation areas beautiful and healthy and accessible. They do this through promoting responsible recreation with education, communication, events, and stewardship. We're a nonprofit organization with deep roots in the adventure community and we're teaming up with in Oregon Parks and Rec. Our goal is to balance the off road and OHV users need for fun and exploration with the need to conserve the places they ride. Grace is here to support everyone with whatever she can.

Some tasks she has done since starting is: Working with Ian at OPRD. Working with a few clubs around Oregon, showing up at stewardship events and making connections. She is doing

planning now for 2025 and working with public land stewards. She's looking at doing a backpack initiative for when you buy an off-road vehicle you get a backpack or bag with education materials and information. Also doing an Radio Controlled Car course that engages kids and adults. Grace is creating the Oregon OHV initiative along with having signage for the larger recreation areas. Looking at keeping people engaged and being out there.

Kevin: Tread lightly provides a yearly email about the partially customizable signs we can put up. Grace: Working on that right now, will be pushing for signage. Should be around the end of November.

10) ATV Safety Program Update

Online & Hands-on Training Stats

Safety Card – Currently have 353,974 ATV Safety Cards issued since we started the program and 67% are from Oregon. Had 8,196 cards issued in the last year. Youth under 16 have to take a hands-on evaluation within 6 months. Oregon Motorcycle Riders Association (OMRA) is doing 82% of the classes, OSU is 17% and ASI is 1%. Been fairly consistent over the last 5 years with about 500 kids getting trained each year. Most classes are for ATVs, about 60% and motorcycles are about 40%. Working on getting more students to the training. More communication with students needing training. Have a hands-on training request on the website if people can't find a course.

Law Enforcement Tracking (LETS) Incident Reporting

Discussed trends of top 15 citations over the last year. Most citations were for "No ATV Permit" at 166. Coos County did a lot of enforcement of alcohol ban in the last year. Incidents tend to be dropping since 2021. Most injuries were to operator. About 20% are to passenger. Operator injuries were highest for Class I at 53%. When passengers were injured, 70% were with Side-by-sides. Almost 60% of incidents were rollover. There is a lot of side-by-sides running the trails in the dunes areas, which can be dangerous due to limited visibility and trails in bad condition. Seeing an increase of injuries since 2022 for both ATVs and side-by-sides. Reviewed several incidents from 2024

PeaceHealth ATV Trauma Data

Ethan works at a Level 2 Trauma center. Trauma registries are databases built on information gathered by EMS and hospitals when caring for traumatically injured patients. Most states host a Data Bank, which is uploaded to the National Trauma Data Bank. Sometimes there is ambiguous incidents coded as "ATV" and "motorcycle" which sometimes includes electric bicycles or street motorcycles. Have better coding system now to clarify type of vehicle. Saw a spike with Class II and IV Vehicle accidents in 2020. Have an Injury Severity Score (ISS) that rates how badly people are hurt. Score of 1 is cut on skin, femur fracture is 9 and 75 is lethal. Over 15 is considered serious and should go to trauma center.

Data From 2019 to 2023 at Trauma Center where Ethan works (Springfield)

Class I & IV Vehicles: 243 injuries, average age of 41. Average ISS of 10.8, 79% drivers, 19% passengers and 60 % on beach.

Class III Vehicles: 106 injuries, average age of 30, average ISS of 10.1, 28% on beach, 10% on track and 5% were jumping.

Trauma data should be reviewed by someone who understands ATV Recreation to make sure information is correct. Working on better integrating different data systems.

DHS/OHA ATV Data

Peter Giesert with Oregon Health Authority. Have put together a dashboard using some EMS data by month and year from 2021 to 2024, using cause of injury codes. Have issues with some of the codes and still updating. Track where EMS encounters patients. Sometimes "At residence" means they were injured at a riding area, then they drove home and then called 911. Class I ATV is largest vehicle for trauma. Have coding for protective gear. Look at where patient goes after hospital. 95% go home. Slight increase in alcohol use.

Ethan and Peter discussed 6 digit trauma bands to track patients.

11) ATV Program Update

Permit Sales – Jeff

Went over numbers of sales and trends over time of the different classes, side-by-sides have spiked in 2020. This includes online and in person sales. In 2023, Class I permit sales were 40.3%. Class II were 19.7%, Class III were 24.4% and Class IV were 15.6%. Online sales are about a third of the total sales. Have 182,229 active permits in 2022 and 2023.

Budget & Grants – Ian

We still don't have the legislative approved budget for the next biennium and we won't know the final numbers until June. We are estimating \$15 million for ATV grants for 2025-2027. Had \$15 million budgeted for grants in 2023-2025 and allocated \$13,651,355. Had \$3 million increase from previous year. Seeing increases in requests due to inflation and salaries.

Outreach Events

Did an ATV Law Enforcement workshop in April 2024 and focused on EMS response. It's a combination of classroom training and field scenario exercises. Two years ago, we really focused on sound. Also had youth instructor training and life flight and landing zone training.

OPRD staff attended "Play Outdoors" in Klamath Falls in January and USFS "Outdoor Adventure Day" in La Pine in June with Ellen from Tread Lightly!.

Jeff attended dune's safety event in May in the Florence area. Worked with PeaceHealth who are focused on safety. Challenge with younger kids (under 4) that don't have DOT helmets and youth needing safety seats which are required the same as on the highway.

Messaging & Brand

Been using the name "Oregon ATV" and we brand everything that way. Recently acquired .gov domain name of "oregonatv.gov".

Have had the same look for our exhibits for last 20 year with some different styles and colors. We have developed a branding book to guide us with colors, fonts and design elements. We are working with an ad agency that is helping us pull things together. We are looking at 5 components: Proper riding gear, vehicle knowledge and proper fit, training, adult supervision, and know before you go. Working on messaging.

Dealership communication – Thinking about a congratulations email that has safety components and links. Maybe mirror it with a backpack of information. Would like dealerships to get the information out.

We are working on a new look for the website for the safety education card. New look for ATV Booklets, both English and Spanish versions. Also new look for business cards that have QR codes to get ATV Permit and ATV Safety Education card, which are used a lot by Law Enforcement in the field.

ATV Highway Access Routes

Lakeside now allows residents to ride from their home to the ATV Business Route. Talking with people from Summer Lake about how to get to the Fremont Forest, working with ODOT and tribes. Looking at access to Mitchell which has a wide shoulder. Might be able to cross highway and allow vehicles on the shoulder. We're tracking all the numbers for Law Enforcement activities in both Sumpter and Lakeside.

12) Next Meeting

Second week in November 2025 - will send a poll to figure out a good time. NOHVCC National Conference will be in October of 2025.

Barrett: Concerned about recreation immunity legislation. Oregon Trails Collation is working on fixes, but some of the motorized recreation issues can be different.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:15 PM on Thursday, November 14, 2024, by Virgle Osborne.