

## **DOUGLAS COUNTY POLICY FOR ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLE (ATV) ROUTES ON THE COUNTY TRUNK HIGHWAY SYSTEM**

The Douglas County Highway Committee recognizes that ATV use within the County is on the increase and has been increasing despite the lack of ATV routes on the Douglas County Trunk Highway System. An ATV route is a highway, or section of highway, designated for the use of ATV's by the governmental agency having jurisdiction. A route is generally recognized as a means to connect the terminal ends of a trail when it is obstructed by a city, village, river, railroad track or other impediment. The Wisconsin state statutes give the Counties the authority to accommodate ATV's on County Trunk Highways designated as routes. One of the benefits of having routes is that local businesses adjacent to the route can benefit from increases in sales year round. Restaurants, motels, gas stations, and chambers of commerce can see a substantial increase in foot traffic that is delivered via ATV's.

The attached Application Form must be completed and forwarded to the Highway Committee by the Northwest Trails Association for consideration. Before a highway segment can be considered for designation as an ATV route, the petitioner(s) shall demonstrate to the Highway Committee that no other practical option as an off road trail exists. The single most important route consideration is the safety of all users: ATV riders, pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists, automobile and truck operators, and others. The following criteria shall be considered by the Highway Committee during the review and approval of reasonable requests for ATV route establishment.

- Has the route application been submitted by Northwest Trails Association in accordance with the annual January 1<sup>st</sup> deadline?
- Is the required application form completed with sufficient detail?
- Have all alternatives been fully investigated?
- Does the requested segment connect segments of ATV road route networks?
- Is the applicant's location considered to be a "starting point" of an ATV route? To be considered a starting point, an establishment must post a sign designating an adequate parking area for loading and unloading of ATV's.
- Length of segment requested
- Posted speed limit of the roadway
- Traffic volume on requested segment
- Pavement condition (PASER Rating)
- Vertical or horizontal alignment safety concerns
- Pavement width
- Is the route approved by the County Highway Department?
- Is the route approved by the County Sheriff's Department?

The County as the unit of government that designates the routes is responsible by statute to post the proper route signs. Route signing must be clearly understandable to everyone. The County Highway Department as the maintaining authority of the highway's designated as ATV routes shall install and maintain the legally required signage.

Northwest Trails Association shall reimburse the County Highway Department for all costs related to furnishing and installing required signs and for all costs associated with sign replacement or maintenance. Northwest Trails Association shall also reimburse the County Highway Department for all costs associated with other required roadway maintenance, such as gravel shoulder maintenance, caused by ATV use.


The posted speed limit for ATV's shall typically be 25 miles per hour. If the route passes within 150 feet of a home or dwelling, the posted speed limit shall be 10 miles per hour. ATV's are also required to slow to 10 miles per hour or less if within 100 feet of a person who is not on an ATV, snowmobile, motorcycle, or other motor vehicle.

If a situation develops that warrants closure of a designated ATV route, the Highway Commissioner shall have authority to temporarily suspend or close the route subject to review and final determination by the Highway Committee. Temporary signs indicating the ATV route closure will be erected until final determination by the Highway Committee. Should the designated route be permanently closed, the ATV route signage will be entirely removed.


Following due consideration of the economic and recreational value to connect trail opportunities and weighted against public dangers, public health, liability aspects, terrain involved, traffic density and history of automobile and truck traffic; the Douglas County Highway Committee is authorized to establish necessary and reasonable ATV routes on the County Trunk Highway System. The Douglas County Highway Committee shall retain sole authority for closure or termination of any ATV route on the County Trunk Highway System. The designation and opening of an approved ATV route will become effective upon County Board action to add the route to the County Ordinance and publication in the official County newspaper.

This policy shall become effective upon passage by the Douglas County Board of Supervisors of an ordinance designating all-terrain vehicle routes and their regulation on the County Trunk Highway System.

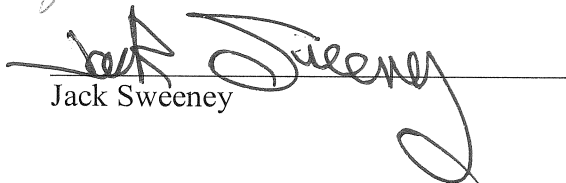
Adopted this 3 day of 8, 2009 by the Douglas County Highway Committee.

  
Kay Johnson, Chair

  
Nick Baker, Vice Chair

  
John (Jack) O'Brien

  
Rich Thompson

  
Jack Sweeney