



ATV Minnesota

"Your Voice For ATV Recreation in Minnesota"

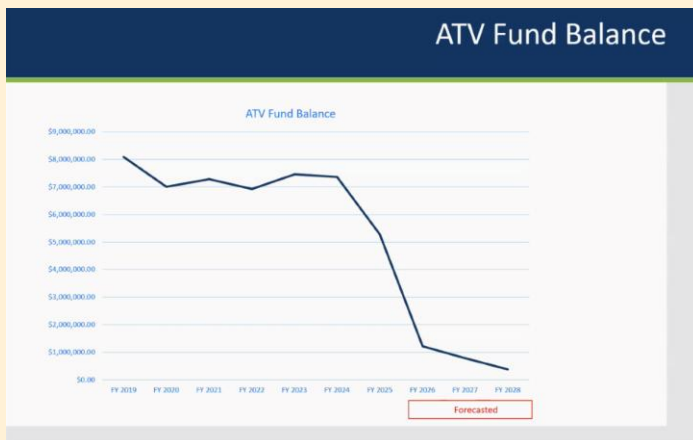
Member Newsletter

January 17, 2026

523 new members in 2025...welcome!



Trail Maintenance Tops Priorities At ATV MN 2026 Legislative Summit



**Fund balance down.
New club funding
requests presented,
discussed, tabled.**

Each year, ATV Minnesota holds a Legislative Summit prior to the next Session of the State Legislature. The purpose of this event is to develop a Legislative agenda for the Association and set priorities for our Lobbyist for his work at the State Capitol. This year's

Summit was held January 10, 2026, from 8 a.m. to noon, at Appeldoorn's Sunset Bay Resort, in Isle, MN.

Sixty-one people attended, up from 40 the previous year. They included the ATV MN executive board and regional directors, lobbyists, members from 23 ATV clubs and partners with DNR Parks & Trails, and SEH.

Here are a some highlights:

-Despite a 174-slide powerpoint and presentations by many speakers, the meeting started and ended on time.

-New this year: Forms submitted by clubs were more detailed, to help those attending better understand the scope of all the projects, how they tie together and support the Statewide ATV Master Plan.

-Details included not only the dollar amount requested, but also more background information: where the project is located; if the funding is for trail planning, permitting, design, or trail development; if it's part of an existing trail system or a new trail; if it connects to other existing trails or is a stand-alone trail. Finally, if the project is ready to go or if additional planning or permitting is needed. This year, clubs were able to preview all the initiatives prior to the Summit.

-Following a review of the 2025 Session, ATV MN lobbyist Jeff Anderson reported on the successes, and challenges last year in protecting the ATV dedicated account for trail maintenance, and what can be expected during the 2026 Session that begins in mid-February. "The ATV community has great support in both parties," he said. "But in order for us to be successful going forward, we have to educate legislators and build support with new legislators if we're going to see our future priorities get over the finish line." Opposing the anti-OHV bill continues to be a challenge, Jeff added.



-Dave Lislegard (photo), former State Representative, who helped get two dozen legislators to last year's Ride & Rally in Silver Bay, added to Anderson's comments. "We need to get ATV Minnesota members to invite their legislators to a club meeting. The more relationships we build outside the capitol, the easier it will be to connect them to our bills."

-Bruce Lawrence with DNR Enforcement reported on the impact of Artificial Intelligence, and its potential for people to create fraudulent fish and game licenses and ATV vehicle registrations. Regarding the current 2,000 maximum ATV weight limit, until it is increased, Conservation Officers will not be writing tickets for vehicles over 2,000 pounds, he said. COs continue to, at their discretion, write tickets for ATVs clearly much wider than 65 inches, Bruce added. Changes are also coming in the Trail Ambassador program,

requiring more detailed reporting by TAs, for added oversight, as the DNR, along with all State departments, comes under greater scrutiny.

-Joe Unger with DNR Parks & Trails reported on significant drops in ATV registrations, and the fund balance in the ATV Dedicated Account. "We need to see that graph going up again, to raise the Grant-in-Aid appropriation, to put more money into the trails," he said. "This is why we need the fee increase."

-Discussions continued related to the ATV fund, and the need to fully fund the Grant-in-Aid account for trail maintenance. Resolution No. 1 (ATV Dedicated Account Funding Request) was voted on and passed, reading in part: **“Fully funding the GIA maintenance account is the #1 legislative priority for ATV Minnesota.”**



-Many outstanding and well-documented funding requests for new and connector trails, bridges, parking areas, kiosks and more, were presented in great detail. Clubs presenting included: Carlton County Riders, Alborn Dirt Devils, Pequaywan Area Trail Blazers, Prospector ATV Club, Quad Cities ATV Club, Ranger Snowmobile & ATV Club, Twig Area Trail Riders, Voyageur Country ATV, Whiteface River Riders ATV Club, Woods and Wheels, and Mille Lacs

Drift Skippers.

-Chris Rokke, northeast regional director, and project presenter, summed up this year’s dilemma facing all the clubs. “There are a lot of great things that we can do in the state. The problem is we don’t have the money. How do we balance it all with a statewide strategy and long-term planning?”

-After more discussion on options for 2026, all new resolutions and fund requests through the ATV Dedicated Account, instead of being prioritized 1/2/3, were tabled, in order to focus on increasing funds for trail maintenance, through an ATV registration increase. **“The fee increase remains the number 1 priority for 2026,”** said ATV MN president Ron Potter, with a motion passed by those attending.

-A motion was made and seconded to include \$25,000 for the CJ Ramstad/North Shore Trail Master Plan work, which has been proposed and worked on for 20 years. Motion carried unanimously.

-A motion was made and seconded to put in Voyageur for \$1 million and \$750,000 in bonding for Cass County and \$880,000 for the Rum River bridge as number one priorities. Motion carried unanimously.

-A motion was made and seconded to have the ATV definition updated as a top priority. Motion carried unanimously. Lislegard said it will be a challenge getting movement at the legislature on the weight increase issue, but encouraged ATV MN and its member clubs to continue the discussion during the 2026 Session and beyond.

-A motion was made and seconded to keep the number two priorities of sales tax exemption and operators 16 and 17 with a passenger. Motion carried unanimously.

-A motion was made and seconded to drop the opt-in at registration, and Class 3 definition issues. Motion carried unanimously.

-A motion was made to drop the not-prioritized items: ATV with tracks, driving lane operation, reduced registration fees for current club members and ag zone ditch restrictions. Motion carried unanimously.

Thanks to all those attending the 2026 Legislative Summit. A big thank you to Erv Kleinschmidt and Jenn Jancsek, for organizing the meeting and lodging, and compiling the slide presentation. The complete handout was provided to all those attending. For clubs not attending that would like to see the project proposals in detail and slides presented by the DNR, send a request by email to the ATV MN office: atvmnoffice@atvmn.org.



ATV MN Major Events: Save The Dates! Registration Now Open For Ride & Roast!

You may have read in the latest issue of our Minnesota Wheelin magazine that we have opened registrataion for our two major ride events in 2026. As it turns out, we aren't quite ready to open registration for September's Ride & Rally, but we have opened it for the May 16th Ride & Roast. **Here is an update on both events.**

May 16, 2026 ATV MN Ride & Roast

Next spring's Ride & Roast will be hosted by the Alborn Dirt Devils, and will be located at the community center in Meadowlands (7758 Western Ave, Meadowlands, MN 55765). Four guided rides are being planned, plus a

"ride on your own" option at registration. Camping will be available, and there will be bands playing on Friday and Saturday evenings. The club needs lots of volunteers to make this a successful event. If you are interested in helping out, want to get on the email list for event updates, or would like to sponsor the event or provide monetary assistance or items for the event auction, contact the club at albornatvclub@gmail.com.

Here is the link to register online or by mailing in a printed form with a check, plus a list of lodging and camping options:
<https://membership.atvmn.org/rideroast/>



September 18-20, 2026 ATV MN Ride & Rally

The 2026 ATV MN State Convention/Ride & Rally will be held in Park Rapids, hosted by the local ATV clubs: Akeley Paul Bunyan Trail Riders, Fire Frost, Forest Riders, Red River Riders, Timberland Dirt Devils, and Woods and Wheels.

All event activities will be at the Hubbard County Fairgrounds, 201 Fair Ave, Park Rapids, MN 56470. There will be vendors on-site both days, with spaces indoors. A 10x10 space is \$150, a 10x20 space is \$300. There is plenty of room for on-site RV and tent camping, with some sites having electric hookups. The Friday President's Ride will depart from the fairgrounds at 10 a.m. The exact route is still in the works. There will be entertainment Friday evening.

Saturday features three guided rides, all departing from the fairgrounds, on popular and well-maintained ATV trails in the Two Inlets, Smoky Hills and Paul Bunyan State Forests. There will also be a "ride on your own" option when registering. The Saturday evening banquet, is always well attended, with silent and live auctions, and a traveling trophy presented to the ATV club with the most member attending.

New, legal ATV routes through town will be signed starting next riding season, allowing access from the hotels to the trails, and temporary routes will be open during the event to the Hubbard County Fairgrounds. There are blocks of rooms reserved for those attending the Ride & Rally, totaling 135 rooms, at the AmericInn, Heartland Inn, and Super 8.

Now is a good time to reserve your lodging at the participating hotels in Park Rapids, or others in the area. Complete details, event schedule, on-site camping details, registration for riders, vendors and camping, sponsorship opportunities and more will be coming soon on the ATV MN website (atvmn.org).



w.a. fisher
100 years



W.A. Fisher Is First Major Sponsor Of The 2026 Ride & Rally

Thanks to Jeff Leese and W.A. Fisher for being the first major sponsor of the 2026 ATV MN State Convention/Ride & Rally. The company, based in Virginia, is a Half-Throttle Sponsor, with a \$2,000 contribution as an "in-kind" sponsorship. It designed and printed the Event Sponsorship brochure, using copy and photography provided by the event host clubs and the ATV MN.

The 8-page brochure is now being used by the six host clubs to recruit major sponsors, and donations to the silent and live auction, at Ride & Rally, September 18-20 in Park Rapids. To be a Ride & Rally sponsor or to get a copy of the Sponsorship Brochure, with complete details on the major sponsorships and their benefits, and where to ship auction

donations, contact Lynn Kramer (email: lynnpierce98@gmail.com). **We recognize and thank all event sponsors before, during and after the Ride & Rally.**



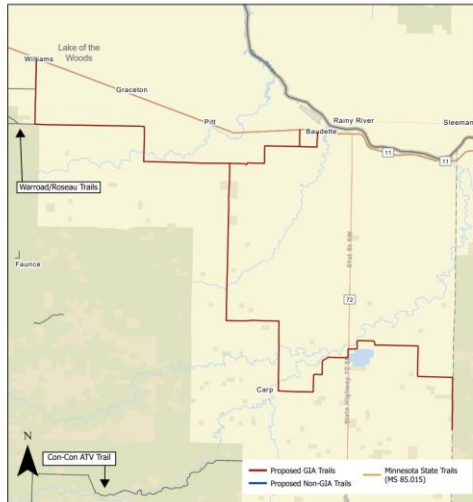
13th Club Added To Northwoods Trail Alliance

By Perry May

The Pine Center Sportsmen's Club (PSSC) was welcomed into the Northwoods Regional ATV Trail Alliance during the Northwoods Alliance meeting held on January 14, 2026, as the 13th member club. Steve Alberg provided an overview of the PSSC and the 23 miles of Pine Center Trails that they manage, all within Crow Wing County. These trails currently connect to the Fort Ripley (31 miles) and Crow Wing Southern Loop (60 miles) trails. Future connections to the Soo Line South will provide a new loop for riders heading west. This trail system is only 90 miles from the north metro, and allows metro area riders a chance to head north for some ATV riding and make it back home for dinner.

Welcome to the Pine Center Sportsmen's Club, into the recently recognized National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council's (nohvc.org) 2025 Association/Club of the Year: The Northwoods Regional ATV Trail Alliance. Come visit with us at the Northern Off-Road Expo (northernoffroadexpo.com) on April 10-11, 2026 in Brainerd, MN .

Lake of the Woods Connector Trail



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For more information, contact:
Karen.Cladas@state.mn.us
2025



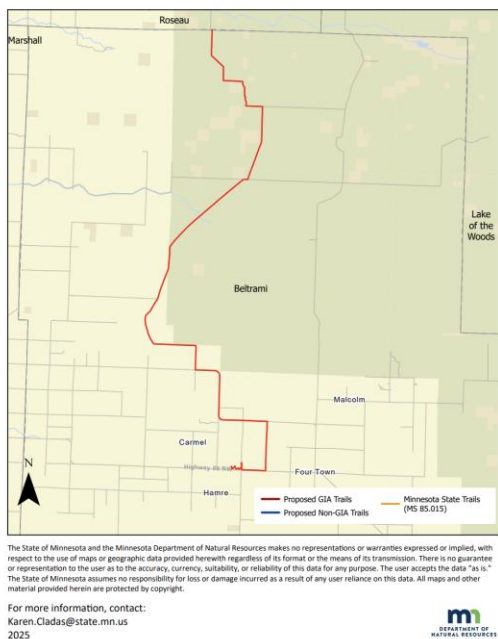
Minnesota DNR Seeks Public Comments On Proposed OHV Grant-in-Aid Trails

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is accepting public comments on two proposed off-highway vehicle (OHV) trail projects under the Grant-in-Aid (GIA) program. The OHV GIA program is a cost-share partnership between the DNR, local government sponsors and local clubs. The program funds the maintenance and development of trails for all-terrain vehicles, off-highway motorcycles and off-road vehicles. These proposals are open for public comment:

Lake of the Woods Connector: This proposed 58-mile route in Roseau and Lake of the Woods counties would use existing roads and trails that are currently open to OHV use. The proposed route includes Lake of the Woods County roads, segments along

the bank-tops of county judicial ditch rights-of-way, and about one-half mile of private trail. The proposal would formally designate the route under the GIA program, linking existing roads and trail segments. The route would be open to all OHVs including ATVs, ORVs and OHMs.

NorthStar Connector Trail



North Star Connector: This proposed trail would consist of a 28-mile route on the Moose River Dike in Beltrami County. The corridor is currently open to motorized use under existing management protocols. The proposal would formally designate the route under the GIA program and continue to allow Class 1 and Class 2 ATV use. The proposed designation does not change the existing operation of the Moose River Dike Road, including seasonal closures to motorized vehicles.

The DNR will accept written comments until 4:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 16, 2026. Comments can be submitted by:

- Email to karen.cladas@state.mn.us. Mention the name of the proposed trail(s) being commented on in the subject line and email body.
- Mail to Karen Cladas, OHV acquisition and development specialist, Parks and Trails Division, Minnesota DNR, 14583

County Highway 19, Detroit Lakes, MN 56501.

A map of the proposed trail segments is at the [DNR's OHV trail plans and proposals webpage \(mndnr.gov/input/mgmtplans/ohv/plans/plans.html\)](https://mndnr.gov/input/mgmtplans/ohv/plans/plans.html). For more information, call Karen Cladas at 218-407-7176.



MN DNR Is Hiring Seasonal Positions

January marks the start of state parks and trails seasonal hiring and a chance to explore roles that connect your workday to Minnesota's landscapes. From internships and seasonal positions to long-term career pathways, state parks and trails offer more than just a job. Many staff begin with a single season and grow their careers over time, moving between regions, learning new skills, and taking on greater responsibility. Whether you're drawn to natural

resources, maintenance, interpretation, hospitality, or public service, your interests can make a real impact. If you're looking for work that combines place with purpose, now is the time to explore your options. [Browse open positions and apply online today.](#)



\$850,000 Awarded In Grants Across The Taconite Assistance Area

Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation (IRRR) recently awarded \$850,000 in Culture & Tourism grants, assisting 34 projects that support arts, culture, history, tourism and recreational activities, enhance the quality of life in the region and attract visitors. “These Culture & Tourism grants help communities across the Taconite Assistance Area highlight what makes them unique, from their history and arts to outdoor amenities, while also giving people more to see, do and experience in the region,” IRRR Commissioner Ida Rukavina said. “This investment strengthens quality of life for residents and supports the local organizations that make the Iron Range a vibrant place to live and explore.”

Grants were awarded to the following organizations:

- American Legion Post 248, Lozar-Mrace-Loushin (based in Ely): \$24,497 to purchase a food trailer.
- **Babbitt ATV & Snowmobile Club: \$39,572 to purchase trail maintenance equipment.**
- Balsam Township: \$30,000 to support Phase 1 improvements to a community park.
- Breitung Township: \$28,200 to make improvements to a bike trail, ballfield, disc golf course and sand volleyball court.
- City of Chisholm: \$30,000 to complete Phase 1 of the Longyear Lake Park revitalization project.
- Club Mesabi: \$30,000 to launch a social media influencer campaign in partnership with Discover the Range.
- **City of Ely: \$24,130 to purchase trail maintenance equipment.**
- Ely Folk School: \$30,000 to enhance the entry and access to the building.
- Embarrass Region Fair Association: \$30,000 to remodel Embarrass Timber Hall.
- **City of Emily: \$30,000 to expand and enhance amenities in community parks.**
- Finland Minnesota Historical Society: \$4,000 to strip and repaint the interior of a historic schoolhouse.
- Grand Rapids Archers: \$17,500 to replace the roof at Grand Rapids Archery Club.
- Greenway Joint Recreation Association: \$9,000 to enhance the Greenway Recreation Facility entrance.
- **Greenway Snowmobile Club: \$49,000 to purchase a trail groomer.**
- Gunflint Trail Historical Society: \$30,000 to develop an Anishinaabe exhibit at Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center.
- Hibbing Historical Society: \$27,900 to complete Phase 1 of a local newspaper digitization and preservation project, making them accessible to the public.
- International Wolf Center: \$25,700 to redesign Little Wolf Exhibit, a hands-on educational space for youth.
- John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon: \$9,750 to develop and launch a tourism campaign and produce cultural and printed materials.
- Lawrence Township: \$30,000 to update a playground.

- **Lawron Trail Riders Snowmobile Club (central Itasca County): \$37,000 to purchase trail maintenance equipment.**
- Light After Loss MN: \$14,000 to develop the new Hope Remembrance Park in Hibbing.
- City of Marble: \$30,000 to support Phase 2 improvements to a community park and sports complex.
- Minnesota Children's Press: \$22,500 to expand the letter-writing youth programs at Cook County History Museum.
- City of Nashwauk: \$30,000 to upgrade a community playground.
- North Central Minnesota Farm & Antique Association: \$30,000 to build out the interior of its community hall in Blackberry Township.
- North Star Foundation of the Mesaba Inc.: \$30,000 to replace the bathroom and shower building at Mesaba Cooperative Park.
- Northern Lakes Arts Association: \$15,000 to launch an advertising campaign and purchase sound and stage equipment to present Broadway in the Boundary Waters.
- City of Orr: \$27,700 to purchase wooden piles for Phase 1 construction of the City Park Fishing Pier.
- Slovenian Union of America Branch 23: \$7,500 to launch an advertising campaign and produce cultural and printed materials for Zarja Day at Minnesota Discovery Center.
- Tower Soudan Historical Society: \$30,000 to make improvements at the Historic Tower Fire Hall and the Tower Train Depot Museum.
- Township of White: \$14,965 to add amenities at Loon Lake Community Center.
- Wabana Township: \$30,000 to support Phase 2 improvements to a community playground.
- City of Warba: \$13,800 to make Phase 1 electrical improvements to Feeley Park.
- Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center: \$18,286 to launch a marketing campaign and enhance the center's campus.

Cities, townships, nonprofits, Tribal governments and governmental entities located within the **Taconite Assistance Area** are eligible to apply.

Learn more about the Culture & Tourism grant program.

Email Danae Beaudette or call her at 218-735-3022 for Culture & Tourism grant information.

Please Share Your Club's News & Events -- We want to promote your club rides and future events, and share your club's success stories about new trails, charity rides/events, and more. They can be short articles with a few photos, or just a photo and caption (include the who, what, when where details). Send them to David Halsey, ATV MN communications director: d.halsey@atvmn.org. Thanks!



ATV MINNESOTA "Your Voice To Ride" (And Have Fun!)

Seventy-two dedicated ATV clubs and their volunteers, building and maintaining fun, sustainable ATV trails for the riding public (and bridges, boardwalks, kiosks, parking, selfie stations and more).

**Invite friends and family to join today.
Gift memberships available!**

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See the mailing label on your Minnesota Wheelin magazine for your membership renewal date. Be sure to include your email address on the renewal form we send you to receive our

twice-monthly newsletter. Send renewals to ATV MN, PO Box 300, Stacy, MN 55079. You can also join/renew at atvmn.org.

Belonging to ATV Minnesota, you join thousands of riders throughout the state, have fun, and help create a positive future for ATV riding in Minnesota.



As a family or individual member, for \$30, you receive:

- A subscription to Minnesota Wheelin magazine (published times 6 a year).
- Twice-monthly newsletter by email with the latest news.
- Membership card and ATV MN logo sticker for your ATV.
- Invitations to events, including our Legislative Summit, Vision Conference, Ride & Roast in the spring, and State Convention "Ride & Rally" in the fall, as well as membership meetings.
- A full-time lobbyist at the State Capitol, helping create pro-ATV legislation, and moving forward bills to provide funding for new trail systems.

As a business member, for \$90 you

receive:

All of the above, plus:

-Your business name and contact information listed in our Minnesota Wheelin magazine and on the ATV Minnesota website.

-Discounts on advertising in Minnesota Wheelin. For details on rates and deadlines, send an email to Creston Dorothy at Pro Print in Duluth: cdorothy@proprintus.com.

-Opportunities to reach more customers by sponsoring or donating to our events.

To join, contact **ATVAM** or call (800) 442-8826.

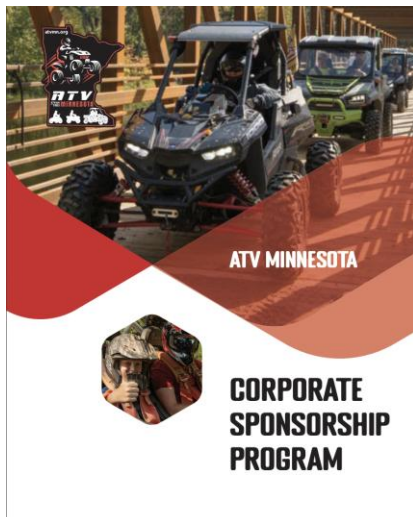


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Each includes ads in Minnesota Wheelin magazine, and publicity of your business, organization or club at ATV MN events, on websites, social media and more!

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ATV Association of Minnesota

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