

ATV Minnesota

"Your Voice For ATV Recreation in Minnesota"

Member Newsletter

November 18, 2026

Reminder: November 30th is the deadline for the Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Grant-in-Aid Annual Maintenance Application (Form 1) and the Capital Improvement Application (Form 3).





Over A Dozen Grant Programs Are Available To ATV Clubs

After the Minnesota DNR's OHV Grant-in-Aid program, the Polaris and Yamaha grant programs are likely the best known and most popular among the state's 70

ATV clubs. Many clubs have received grants from one or both. But there are over a dozen other, lesser known grant programs available to clubs.

Watch for a full list of grants in the January/February edition of our Minnesota Wheelin member magazine. For now, here are two of them that have December deadlines, so your club can submit an application to one or both.

1. Yamaha Access Initiative Grant Program - Next deadline December 15th, 2026.

Each quarter, Yamaha accepts applications from non-profit or tax exempt groups (clubs & associations), public riding areas (local, state and federal), outdoor enthusiast associations and land conservation organizations, and communities with an interest in protecting, improving, expanding and/or maintaining access for safe, responsible and sustainable use by motorized off-road vehicles. A committee reviews each application and awards funds to deserving projects. Learn more here: https://www.yamahaoai.com/



2. New! Minnesota DNR Announces Community Grant Program. First stage due in December, 2026.

“This is an expansion of the Environmental Trust Fund Account,” reports Ron Potter. “Prior to this change, that fund could only be used for new development. Now it can be used for trail maintenance projects. It is a two-stage application. First stage is a short application due in December. If successful with the Stage 1 application, you will then be invited to submit a Stage 2 application. The DNR is available to assist with these applications.”

More details from Joe Unger, OHV Program Consultant, DNR Parks & Trails:

The DNR is now accepting applications for the inaugural round of community grants funded through the Environmental and Natural Resource Trust Fund (ENRTF). This includes grants for maintenance and improvements of existing trails.

Grant requests must be between $20,000-$150,000 and the work must be completed within 12 months. The purpose of this program is to fund projects that may not have been eligible for ENRTF grants in the past.

Potential trail projects include:

•Resurfacing or repairing an existing trail surface or tread

•Correcting erosion or drainage problems affecting an existing trail

•Repairing or replacing an existing bridge, boardwalk or other trail feature in place

•Addressing accessibility barriers within an existing trail

•Stabilizing slopes or restoring vegetation disturbed by existing trail use or maintenance

•Rehabilitating deteriorated trail infrastructure

•Other work that maintains or improves the function, condition, safety, accessibility or sustainability of an existing trail

To learn more about the program and review the request for proposals and application, visit the Community Grants Funding Opportunities: **https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/.../funding-opportunities.html**

To learn more about the trail-specific grants, review Appendix D of the Request for Proposals: **https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/.../enrtfcg-fy2027-rfp-01...**

Stage 1 Information Sessions: November 19th: 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m. • December 8th: 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m. • December 15th: 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m. Registration instructions and access links are available on the official Community Grant Program webpage.

If you have additional questions, contact the DNR's Community Grants Team directly at enrtf.communitygrants.dnr@state.mn.us. This is a great opportunity to get larger projects completed. You can review the DNR news release here: **https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/.../minnesota-dnr-invites...**

Joe Unger Phone: 651-259-5279 Email: joe.unger@state.mn.us



I sure do miss those Commercials!

The November elections are behind us and change is in the air. The "ATV problem" has been identified by some in politics as the Number One issue to solve in the coming year. Make no mistake, some believe the way to solve it is by denying all access to public land. As I have said before, this is a land use issue and not an environmental issue.

Our anti-access opponents have opposed our efforts to protect public land. We need to educate our elected officials about our efforts. They work very hard for us and it is up to each and every one of us to let them know WE are the volunteers providing safety and environmental education to our youth. WE are the ones who are advocating designated trails. WE are the ones who are volunteering to monitor, educate and assist trail users.

It is the self-proclaimed "environmentalists" who put the Great Outdoors at risk by opposing any effort to designate and educate. Stewardship begins with experience.

In our ongoing efforts to work with our Legislators we will be hosting an event at the State Capitol in early February. There will be room for clubs to showcase their activities and to see their elected officials at work. This would be an excellent opportunity for parents to show children the workings of government.

To be honest, as a student, I did not have an opportunity like this and most of what I learned in civics class went in one ear and out the other. I have been told that seeing government work first hand helps to bring the lesson home. This will serve the next generation well as they work through the challenges that they will face as they mature. It is my hope that they will be able to go out for a leisurely ATV ride to unwind from those challenges. Protecting that privilege is up to us.

The 2007 ATVAM Vision Meeting dates have been set. The annual Vision Meeting is where we chart our course for the future. It is critically important for EVERY club to be represented. I know some of us will need to travel from far and wide; the meeting is not in my back yard either. I thank you in advance for making the commitment to attend.

This will be my third Vision Meeting and my first as President. I have thoroughly enjoyed every one. The time before, between and after the sessions are valuable networking opportunities.

Motorized Recreation in all forms is under vicious attack, and we must share the strategies that are working and identify the ones that are not. Working together we can and will prevail.

PHILL MORUD

20 Years Ago: A Message That Still Rings True Today

The more things change the more they stay the same, goes the saying. Example: this article rings as true today as when it was published 20 years ago, in the December 2006 issue of Minnesota OffRoad, at the time the ATVAM member newspaper. It was written by then ATVAM president Phill Morud. It reads, in part:

The "ATV problem" has been identified by some in politics as the Number One issue to solve in the coming year. Make no mistake, some believe the way to solve it is by denying all access to public land. As I have said before, this is a land use issue and not an environmental issue.

Our anti-access opponents have opposed our efforts to protect public land. We need to educate our elected officials about our efforts. They work very hard for us and it is up to each and every one of us to let them know WE are the volunteers providing safety and environmental education to our youth. WE are the ones who are advocating designated trails. WE are the ones who are volunteering to monitor, educate and assist trail users.

What HAS changed?

Today, there are more ATV clubs and more dedicated volunteers across Minnesota than in 2006. Working with and monitored by their county funding sponsors and the Minnesota DNR, they are participating in the Grant-in-Aid program, using Best Practices in the planning, building and maintenance of over

80 State Trails, plus trailheads, parking areas, informational kiosks and restrooms.

ATVAM (today 'Doing Business As' ATV Minnesota) helped get the ATV Safety Training program off the ground. In 2025 there were 914 ATV Safety Instructors, holding 115 classes to certify students to safely operate ATVs.

In 2007, with ATVAM's help, the Minnesota Legislature established the volunteer Off-Highway Vehicle Trail Ambassador program to assist in safety and environmental education, and monitoring trails on public lands. In 2025, according to the DNR's annual volunteer report, there were 185 Trail Ambassadors, spending 5,205 hours monitoring thousands of miles of trails for safety hazards and washouts to keep the riding public safe. They also educate adult and youth riders on safety and trail etiquette. Riders they visit with appreciate it. The DNR and State Legislature like the program, because it's inexpensive and cost-effective.

Those are just a few of the many ways today's ATV recreation and trail systems have advanced in 20 years.

But the challenge remains. As in 2006, our challenge is to educate new and veteran legislators on the importance of motorized recreation. To the benefit of OHV riders, communities and local economies, tourism, and the ability to enjoy our state's natural beauty while protecting its natural resources.

Following the 2026 election, we know that many State Legislators are in favor of motorized recreation. But there are also new legislators who may be unfamiliar with ATV clubs and trails. Unless they are properly informed, some may simply oppose ATV trails and trail funding.

In addition, some of the loudest voices at the State Legislature in the early 2000s are still at it today, joined by organizations that oppose motorized recreation on public lands. As Phill Morud said in 2006, *"It is the self-proclaimed 'environmentalists' who put the Great Outdoors at risk by opposing any efforts to designate and educate. Stewardship begins with experience."*

As was the case 20 years ago, and still is today, ATV Minnesota members, member clubs and trail riders across the state must continue advocating for safe, responsible motorized recreation, preserving and protecting our ATV, ORV, and OHM trail systems, regarded by many as the best in the country.

Each year, that work begins at the Legislative Summit, just 2 weeks away.



Please Register Today!

ATV MN Legislative Summit
December 5th in Wahkon

The legislative landscape in Minnesota dramatically changed after the election.

Jeff Anderson, ATV MN lobbyist, will be giving an informative update at the Summit. Be sure you're there to hear it, and work with the statewide board of ATV clubs to form an action plan for our 2027 legislative initiatives.

Club presidents and representatives: watch for the meeting agenda and resolution forms.



An important meeting, in preparation for the 2027 Legislative Session

Plan now for your ATV club to be represented at this important meeting, in preparation for the 2027 Legislative Session, which begins January 12, 2027.

When: December 5, 2026, from 8 a.m. to noon

Where: The meeting room in the Tulibee Tavern, 235 Main Street, Wahkon, MN 56342 (320-495-3318)

Why attend? It's your ATV club's opportunity to help give ATV Minnesota and its lobbyist direction and priority on what Legislative issues and policies will be pursued during the 2027 Legislative Session. All ATV MN member clubs are encouraged to send representatives. **Our objective this year is to have clear and concise legislative objectives, and an action plan that we can all rally around to get it accomplished.**

We need you to register today so we have a good head count for food.

Registration is required, use this link to register: **https://membership.atvmn.org/summit/**. A $20 fee per person covers morning snacks, coffee, juice, water, lunch, and printed handout materials.

Pre-Summit meetings to streamline the meeting - The ATV MN executive board and regional directors are working to discuss the key agenda topics prior to the Summit, to streamline the meeting, including further discussion on the ATV definition, and a discussion on creating new revenue streams for Grant-in-Aid.

Thanks to Robb Dubbs, owner of Tulibee Tavern — an ATV MN business member — for providing the meeting room at no cost. Rob is an active member of ATV MN, and president of the Mille Lacs Drift Skippers Snowmobile and ATV Club. His club maintains trail sections on the South Soo Line, Foxy Loop, and Red Top trails. The location of this meeting will be in Mille Lacs County and in the ATV MN Central Region.

The future of ATV riding in Minnesota starts at the Legislative Summit. We hope to see you there!



Save The 2027 Dates!

February 17, 2027 - ATV Minnesota 'Day At The Capitol' & Legislative Reception

March 20, 2027 - ATV Minnesota Vision Conference

May 22, 2027

ATV MN Ride & Roast In Hill City - Registration Is Open!

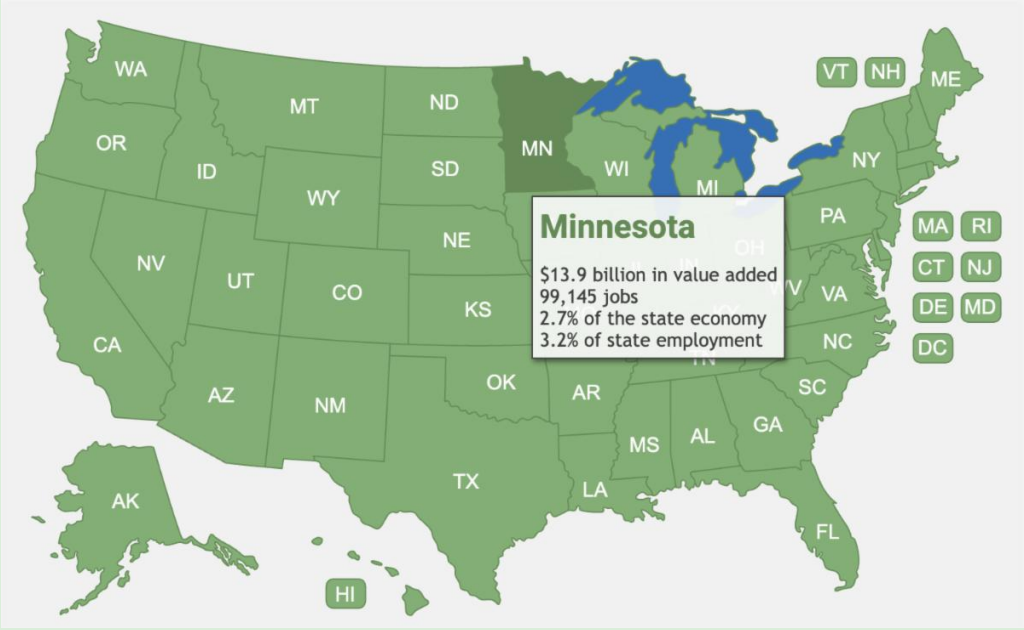
Hosted by the North Woods Quads, Hill City, with assistance from the Northwoods Regional ATV Trail Alliance. This year, held at Trails Inn Quadna Mountain Motel & RV Park, Hill City. More details and online registration at atvmn.org. *Flyer by Dean Schliek. Please copy and post it on your club's newsletter or Facebook page.*

September 17-19, 2027

ATV MN Ride & Rally In Aitkin

The 2027 ATV Minnesota State Convention/Ride & Rally will be in Aitkin, MN, hosted by the Northwoods Regional ATV Trail Alliance. Six of its 13 member clubs have organized and hosted Ride & Rally in the past. The NWRATA has received support and approval from Aitkin County, the City of Aitkin, and from the Aitkin County Fairgrounds, which has buildings to host rider registrations and the Saturday evening banquet, plus rest rooms, parking and on-site camping. **More details coming soon.**

Is Your Club Getting All The News? Be sure to have your ATV club president or representative attend the monthly ATV MN statewide board meetings, held the third Tuesday of the month via Zoom. Invites are sent to all ATV clubs. Let us know if your club contact isn't getting them.



ORR Hosts Webinar on New Federal Outdoor Recreation Economic Data

The Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (ORR) hosted a public webinar with the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) on November 18, to discuss the latest data from the Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account (ORSA).

BEA's annual ORSA statistics measure the outdoor recreation industry's economic contributions and offer valuable insights into its role in the U.S. economy. The new data will provide industry stakeholders, policymakers, the media and the outdoor recreation community with an opportunity to better understand and communicate the sector's economic significance.

We will report on the webinar's discussion and news in a future newsletter. To see national statistics on outdoor recreation, including state-by-state stats as shown in the map, visit https://recreationroundtable.org/. It can be helpful in your club's advocacy for new ATV trails.





Winter Riding Begins!

There are 20 State ATV Trails open during the winter months. Two are groomed. The Northern Traxx ATV Club plows the Chisholm Trail. The Over The Hills Gang has a DNR grant to groom the ATV-only trails in the Moose River Trail system.

The club grooms two of the loops, and keeps the third loop "au naturel" for riders who want the challenge of riding in deep snow.

Some trails have restrictions. Always check the DNR website for details and open/closed status. For more places to ride, go to **atvmn.org**, and tap the "Resources" tab to see our 9-page booklet "Winter Riding Opportunities in Minnesota." *Graphics by Dean Schliek, ATV MN First VP and member of the Communications Committee.*

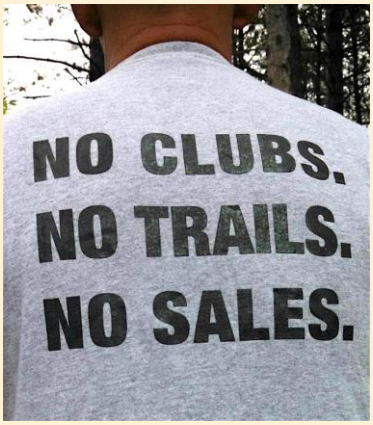


It's Gift Giving Season! Here are two great ideas:

1) Give a gift membership to ATV Minnesota, just $30. Easy to order online or with a mail-in form, at atvmn.org, tap the "Join" tab.

2) Give ATV MN gear!

For yourself or as a gift to family and friends. Get ready for all your winter rides and outdoor activities. Gear up with the latest ATV Minnesota T's, hoodies, caps and more, available in a wide variety of colors, sizes and styles for men, w0men and kids. Go to atvmn.org and tap the "Store" tab to order online. **Thanks for supporting ATV Minnesota with your purchase!**



ATV MINNESOTA

"Your Voice To Ride"

(And Have Fun!)

There are 70 dedicated ATV clubs and their volunteers, building and maintaining fun, sustainable ATV trails for the riding public (plus bridges, boardwalks, kiosks, parking, selfie stations and more).

Get involved, and take pride in supporting the sport and the trails you ride. Join ATV MN today, and join the clubs where you live or ride. Go to atvmn.org to see a full list and a map of club locations.

Invite friends and family to join ATV MN.

Gift memberships available!



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 recreation 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 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.

Thanks To Our Corporate Sponsors

For Their Generous, Financial Support Of ATV Minnesota!



-Timber Bay Lodge & Houseboats ($2,500 Bronze Sponsorship) - Visit timberbay.com to learn about its amazing lodges (sleep up to 15), traditional cabins and fleet of houseboats. Timber Bay Lodge & Houseboats is on the south shore of Birch Lake, near Babbitt, **with direct access by ATV to the Prospector Trail system.**

Facebook page at:

https://www.facebook.com/timberbaylodge



Be A Corporate Sponsor!

Financial support from businesses large and small are helping ensure a positive future for ATV recreation in MN.

Four levels: $2,500 Bronze / $5,000 Silver / $10,000 Gold / $25,000 Platinum

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!

To learn more, visit atvmn.org and tap the "Sponsorships" tab.

ATV Association of Minnesota

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