

Feb. 5, 2017

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
101 S. Webster St.
Madison, WI 53707

Ref: DNR supported 4WD opportunities

The purpose of this letter is to provide input and comments regarding OHV recreational opportunities in Wisconsin with an emphasis on licensed 4 wheel drive vehicles.

First we would like to provide some input on the present state of 4WD opportunities in Wisconsin. Currently Wisconsin does not have any WI DNR supported riding areas or trails in the state. There are a few privately owned areas that allow 4WD enthusiasts a place to recreate. These areas are not open to the public except for select events or membership status.

Wisconsin residents spend millions of dollars every year traveling out of state to other venues which allow us to enjoy our sport. Here are a few destinations outside of Wisconsin that have state DNR OHV parks, trail riding or other challenge areas.

The Iron Range Off-Highway Vehicle State Recreation Area in Gilbert MN is a great model of an OHV destination. It is a well managed riding area and a good example of the OHV community and DNR officials working together. This OHV park provides an excellent experience for all types of OHV recreation and all skill levels.

Michigan also provides excellent OHV opportunities including 4WD's. Michigan has a series of trail riding opportunities throughout the Northern Lower Peninsula as well as in the Upper Peninsula.

Silver Lake Sand Dunes, located on the shores of Lake Michigan is a representation of a challenge area with a specific interest level.

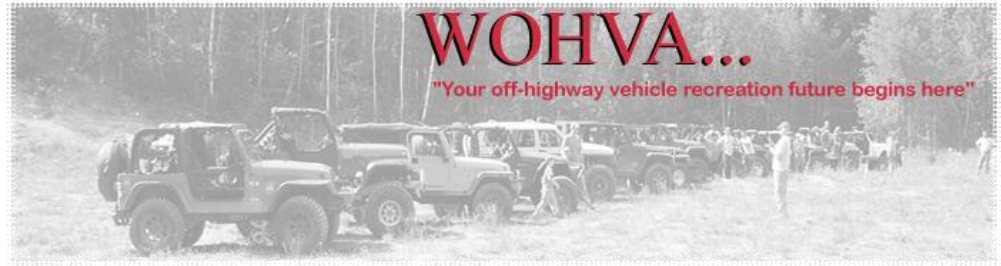
Redbird State Recreation Area in Linton IN has 1400 acres dedicated to all types of OHV recreation. This area is open 7 days a week and provides an great experience to all skill levels.

Other locations in the midwest that provide OHV enthusiasts an area to recreate on are: The Badlands Off Road Park in Attica IN, Coal Creek OHV Area in Oliver Springs TN, The Cliffs Insane Terrian in Marseilles IL.

On a national level thousands of 4WD enthusiasts travel to Moab Utah every year as well as the infamous Rubicon Trail.

Mission Statement

The Wisconsin Off-Highway Vehicle Association exists for the sole purpose of proactively assuring that public and private off-highway motorized vehicular recreational opportunities are expanded in Wisconsin for safe use by this and future generations.



A little bit about the current 4WD community here in the Badger State. Wisconsin has two major 4WD orientated associations in the Wisconsin Off-Highway Vehicle Association (WOHVA) and the Wisconsin Four Wheel Drive Association (W4WDA). Recently both organizations have entered into a partnership to provide a common voice for all 4WD enthusiasts, supporting legislation to establish a funding source for 4WD trail development and management.

Using the WI Outdoor Recreational Activity Fact Sheet as a guide, the following is some of the data we have collected.

Regions of the state most desirable for participation: Areas for High interest levels are Great Northwest, Northwoods, Upper Lake Michigan Coastal and Mississippi River Corridor. With the other 4 regions either a medium or low interest level.

When during the year is participation High / Medium / Low: Summer and Fall have high participation levels, Spring is medium activity and Winter has low activity levels

Supporting facilities and setting:

Trails – More than 4' in width with a cleared width of more than 8'. Surface of Native material and other (man made challenge areas).

Boat launch – Yes (if applicable)

Drinking water - Yes

Topography preferred: Mostly hilly terrain and Some hills and some flat.

Is this activity best located: First choice, Away from population centers with second choice doesn't matter. (Locations closer to metropolitan areas are favorable if the terrain and topography are conducive to our type of activity)

Habitats preferred: Forests, Savannas, Streams/Rivers and Lakes

Amount needed:

Miles of trail: 20-50 (comments to follow later)

Acres of habitat: Minimum 200 with no maximum for a park setting

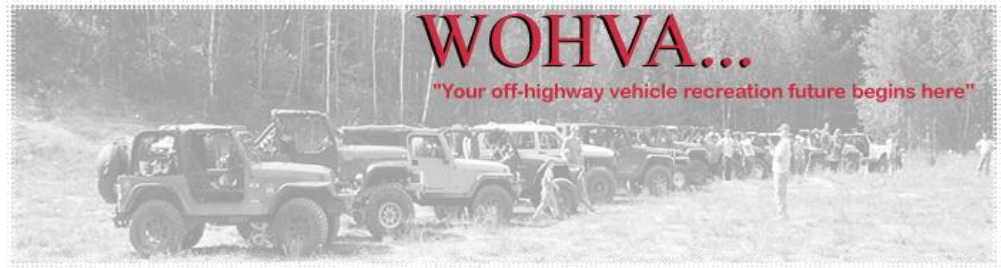
Types of facilities: Parking for trailers, Trail head kiosk with maps and information, Camping, Toilet facilities (pit or full), Wash station (if applicable), Vending (if applicable), picnic area.

Other: OHV challenge areas.

Willingness to travel: More than 50%

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Areas of consideration for potential riding areas would include the following but not limited to: old / abandoned skidder trails, deserted quarry's, gravel pits and mine sites, forest areas that have suitable terrain and soil to allow sustainable traversing, existing forest roads with man made and maintained challenge areas, etc. Natural terrain is of particular interest. Any area the DNR is willing to suggest is open to us for consideration.

The types of trails that most 4WD enthusiasts enjoy vary greatly from easy family oriented "a day in the woods" to a more challenging activity for the experienced driver with a capable vehicle.

Below is some of the terrain and types of obstacles most seem to enjoy:

- Hills
- Two track roads
- Rock challenge areas
- Twisty trails
- Self contained mud pit

Below are some of the areas of interest:

- Scenic overlooks
- Lake access
- Camping
- Historic monuments

Other types of activity that 4WD enthusiasts enjoy are trails such as the Trans Wisconsin Adventure Trail or the newly developed Border to Border trail running across MN. Multi use trails are vital to any trail development but specific challenge areas for the type of OHV keeps all user groups entertained.

In closing if the opportunity presents itself our organizations would provide resources to assist in trail development, building and sustainable management and maintenance.

Thank you for your consideration to accommodating the interests of 4WD enthusiasts in future trail developments.

Sincerely,

Tim Duenkel
Executive Director
Wisconsin Off-Highway Vehicle Association

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