



**MOTORIZED RECREATION AREA
Plan Synopsis
(December 9, 2014 December 16, 2014)**

The Wisconsin Off-Road Vehicle Park, Inc. (WORVPI) is proposing development of a Motorized Recreation Area (MRA) in Forest County. The concept being proposed is to assist Forest County, in greatly expanding their forest land holdings, by developing a multiple revenue stream using sections of the county forest to develop and operate the aforementioned MRA. Annual proceeds from the MRA will be delivered to Forest County. Operating proceeds are projected to be so substantial as to afford Forest County the ability to partially relieve the property tax burden.

WORVPI's proposal is for a four stage acquisition process, beginning in the southernmost section and moving northward (see Crandon Timber, LLC Phase 1, Option B Map). This staged process allows Forest County the option to review the actual revenues (as compared to forecasted) before completing the acquisition process. The second stage of acquisition calls for acquiring a six mile stretch of the Peshtigo River, thus assuring future generations' public access to this nationally recognized trout habitat. It's important to note that the corridor along the river will be a non-motorized recreation area and access will be available from points inside, as well as outside of the perimeter of the MRA.

Site design is a critical element of the MRA. The MRA will be designed in a way that is user friendly for all visitors, while at the same time limiting environmental impact and providing for maximizing timber production. Site design will consider on-site facilities, engineering, environmental impacts and visitor safety. The site design will use established best practices to make the MRA safe and enjoyable for visitors.

Facilities

The MRA will offer facilities that will enhance the visitor's trip. The facilities will be designed to focus on the visitor's convenience. Providing great facilities is critical to making the MRA a world class destination. Below is a list of essential facilities that will be included in the design.

Entrance Station

The entrance station will accommodate multiple lanes of traffic and have a gate that allows visitors to pay as they enter. The entrance will also have a lane for those who have season passes, and accommodate visitors traveling in RV's and/or hauling multiple vehicles on trailers.

Parking

The MRA will provide adequate parking for its visitors (see Off-Road Vehicle Park Business Plan for Wisconsin Off-Road Vehicle Park, Incorporated by Creative Enterprise Center at Ripon College for forecasted attendance). The parking layout (see WORVPI Development Concept) will be flexible and accommodate all types of vehicles and vehicles with trailers. The parking will be designed to allow visitors to easily get into the MRA and off load their vehicles for use.

Restrooms

The MRA will provide handicapped accessible bathrooms for the use of its visitors, and have designated men's and women's locker rooms where guests can change and shower.

Vehicle Wash Station

Vehicle wash station(s) will be available to accommodate all vehicle types that visit the MRA. Station(s) will be located near the parking area for vehicles with trailers. Washing will be required before entering or exiting the MRA to address invasive species.

Training Area

Since it is the stated mission of WORVPI that it "educates and encourages the principles of safe and responsible motorized recreation" it is important that the MRA provide a training area where beginners can practice. The training area will be centrally located close to parking, camping and picnic areas. Training will be available for all vehicle types.

Trails and Other Riding Activities

The MRA will provide a wide variety of trails and riding activities that appeal to beginners, intermediate and expert OHV users. Trails and riding areas will be developed to provide maximum visitor enjoyment while allowing for timber growth and management.

Concession, Souvenir and Picnic Area

The MRA will have a concession and souvenir area located near the entrance and exit to facilitate operations with minimum staffing. A picnic area will be located near the concession area. Picnic areas will have picnic tables, grills and garbage cans. A shelter that can be rented and used for larger group events will also be available for private/public gatherings.

Camping Area

A camping area will be located on site to provide camping for visitors, situated near the restroom facility, and connected to the trails and training area. A buffer will be designed to clearly separate the camping area from the trails and training area.

In addition to on-site camping the MRA will partner with other campgrounds in the county. This would help provide the maximum benefit to the entire county. The Forest County Outdoor Recreation Plan identifies 651 campsites in the county with 291 being private, 275 in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, 65 at Veterans Memorial Park, and 20 sites at the Sokaogon-Chippewa Community Park. In addition to the campgrounds there are several hotels and resorts at which park visitors will stay while visiting Forest County.

Opportunities for Young Riders

Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) riding is often a family vacation activity. To address the special requirements of a family vacation and assure young riders' safety, the MRA will establish a children's trail and/or riding area. Locating a specially designed children's area near the family camping area allows parents to supervise their children's activities while relaxing after a day on the trails. A children's area limits the temptation of younger riders to ride around the parking and camping areas. Such an area also serves to limit interaction between smaller and larger vehicles. This area will be large enough to eliminate conflict with others in the area to ensure the safety of young riders. The children's area will not be combined with the training area.

Additional Amenities

It is vital for visitor enjoyment and safety for the MRA to be adequately accessible, and that visitors be well informed as to rules and expected conduct. Informational kiosks (as well as signs) will be available throughout the MRA and displayed on trails/roads. Visitor experiences will be further enhanced through the availability of picnic shelters in appropriate areas within the MRA.

Hiking trail development within the previously noted Peshtigo River Corridor will provide wheelchair accessible viewing and rest areas. The corridor will also include the same type of trail kiosks, signage, picnic areas and shelters as noted in the previous paragraph.

Engineering

To complete the site design for the MRA an experienced motorized recreation area engineer(s) will be contracted. The Professional Trail Builders Association (PTBA) website is a premier source for qualified engineers. The PTBA has an extensive list of trail specialists, professional trail contractors, designers, and consultants. The MRA will also consult with an environmental engineer to ensure that the site design considers the local environment. WORVPI volunteers will also be trained in trail construction and maintenance techniques.

The engineers selected for site design will follow established site design concepts that such institutions as National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC) and Tread Lightly! have advocated. Research embodied by such publications as Park Guidelines for OHV's by George Fogg can provide valuable guidance in the design process. These materials will serve to guide the development of the MRA in a manner which provides an excellent trail system that is also environmentally sustainable.

NOHVCC, a national partnership organization dedicated to fostering off-highway motorized recreation, has partnered with Marshall University to offer a series of four off-highway vehicle courses. The objective of these courses is to provide both university students and professional employees of planning and land management agencies with state-of-the-art courses. These will deal with the general aspects of OHV recreation and the planning, construction, operation and management of OHV trails and facilities. The Recreation and Park Resources program at Marshall University offers an undergraduate degree and graduate degree with an emphasis in off-highway vehicle recreation.

In Management Guidelines for OHV Recreation by Tom Crimmins the point is made that engineering design can ameliorate many of the challenges posed by creating an OHV trail system. "Trail location is one of the primary factors in managing or avoiding potential impacts. Trails should be located or relocated to avoid sensitive areas such as riparian zones, cultural sites, and important wildlife habitats." This is why the location of the MRA is so important. In addition to preventing direct environmental impacts, siting the MRA in an area of low population density will insulate it from possible effects on surrounding residents. As with other environmental impacts, on matters involving noise and dust the MRA will abide by state and federal standards, and to be proactive in its environmental stewardship.

Environmental & Personal Safety

Providing long-term, sustained OHV recreational opportunities is a top priority for MRA management, but this means several environmental concerns must be addressed. Previously conducted GIS analysis considered the location of floodplains, wetlands and soils in identifying areas best suited for an MRA, and avoiding these environmentally sensitive areas. Noise and dust will be monitored to assure compliance with federal, state tribal and local regulations. This is particularly important because the Forest County Potawatomi Community has been granted status as a Class 1 Air Quality District, with authority to review air quality issues within a 62-mile radius of tribal properties within the Towns of Wabeno, Blackwell and Lincoln.

WORVPI's careful design will strive to prevent environmental impacts, and an aggressive education program will foster an attitude among users that avoids the kinds of behaviors that can lead to negative environmental effect. Again, the

location of the MRA to minimize impacts on critical resources and away from residential areas will prevent problems and contain impacts on surrounding uses.

Dust Barriers

The best way to deal with dust is to stabilize soils. The MRA will continuously stabilize soil along the trails by reshaping slopes, reseeding and replanting bare areas. Vegetation creates wildlife habitat while plant roots help stabilize the soil. A concentrated program of soil stabilization will be implemented to control dust on-site. Although any dust would originate well within the MRA and is unlikely if soil conditions on the trails are controlled, monitoring dust impacts at identified locations at or near the boundaries will assure ensure that there are no negative impacts on neighboring properties.

Sound Barriers

The most effective noise control measure is to locate the MRA away from other uses. Sound barriers, however, will be used in areas where the MRA impacts a residence or business. A sound barrier, which can take the form of a wall or an earthen berm, would only be needed in areas where noise from the MRA might impact its neighbors, and would provide an obstruction to help reduce the overall loudness. When foliage is on the trees this will also provide a sound barrier.

The Motorcycle Industry Council (MIC) sound test manual will be followed to provide effective enforcement of OHVs in the MRA. The SAE J1287 is the sound testing procedure for OHVs as defined by the Society of Automotive Engineers. The manual details the entire procedure for implementing the SAE J1287 sound test which is used by land management agencies throughout the country.

Spills

There is always a chance with motorized vehicles that fuel or lubricant can escape into the natural environment. To avoid environmental impacts policies will be developed by the Park that address the occurrence of such spills, and to ensure that in the case of such an event every effort is made to prevent the escape of any hazardous material into the environment. The MRA will take a proactive approach to these incidents, as to other potential issues, and in the spirit of stewardship of the natural world will seek to make the MRA Park an environmental showcase.

Safety

Safety and education are core components of WORVPI's mission, and safety is critical to the success of the MRA and making it a family oriented travel destination. Rules will be developed for the MRA that emphasize the importance of safe operation of off-road vehicles, but that are appropriate to the specific characteristic of each type of vehicle. The types of protective gear that makes sense for an off-road motorcycle would be excessive for a four-wheel drive pick-up. In order to tailor rules to the actual likelihood of injury, it is necessary to

balance the need for protection against the comfort and quality of the user experience.

The MRA will encourage all participants to have passed the Wisconsin official off-roading safety course and have their certificate(s) available. The previously outlined training area will be used for beginners to learn how to ride with proper safety techniques before advancing to more challenging areas.

The Wisconsin DNR, NOHVCC, and sources like Shifting into 4WD by Harry Lewellyn, Honda Tips & Practice Guides for the Off-Highway Motorcyclist, and ATV Safety Training Manual by Estrem provide a variety of methods to provide a safe riding environment, and will be used in the trail design phase. The facility will be compliant with all state and federal regulations.

"FOREST COUNTY ROCKS!"