

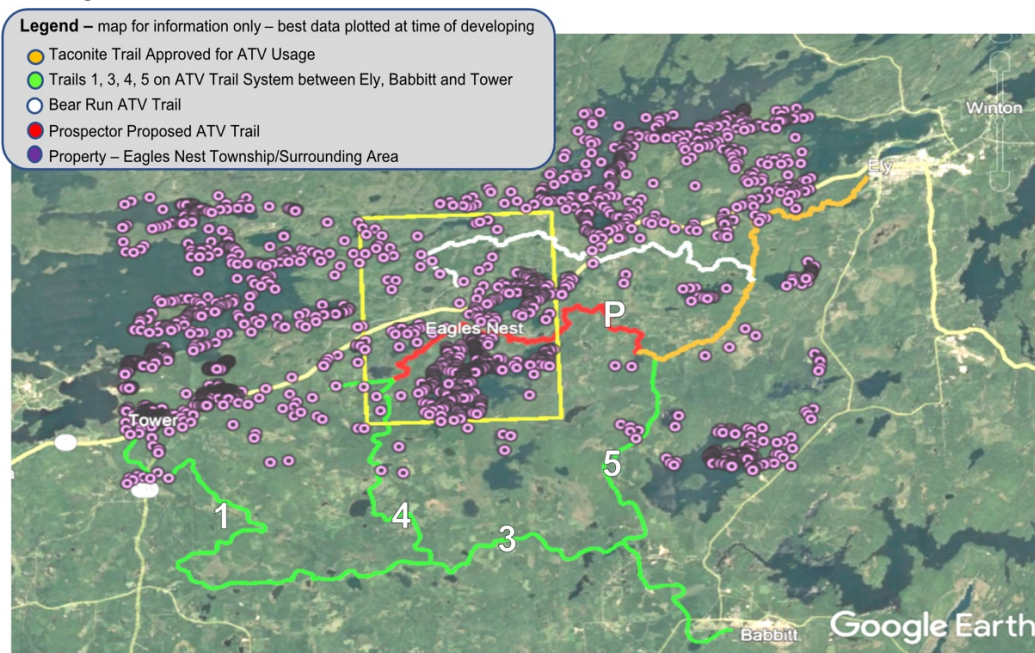
SF #1324: Rationale for the Local Permission Requirement for All New OHV Trails

At present, there is no statutory requirement for Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) routes or re-routes traversing Tribal lands or their ceded territories to secure approval from Tribal governments. There is also no statutory requirement that OHV routes or re-routes secure Township approval to traverse Township lands.

The bill measure in SF #1324 requires approval from Tribal authority and written approval from affected township, city, county, and road authority where the land and roads are located.

Meetings with tribes, local landowners, and local government units would be conducted with full information on proposals or reroutes such as traffic expectations to determine impact to stakeholders. This prevents situations such as Eagle's Nest Township in St. Louis County, where the Township Supervisors voted to oppose an OHV route going through their residential area which is not being upheld by the County or the OHV Club proposer.

Eagles Nest Township in Minnesota exemplifies this issue. During a township board meeting, an ATV club representative announced that an ATV trail would pass through the midst of the township. The community rallied to oppose this trail due to a higher volume of traffic and noise from ATVs directly through peaceful residential areas as well as concern over safety and environmental damage. The trail remains regardless of the local opposition to the trail that was demonstrated by a petition signed by almost the entire citizenry of Eagles Nest Township along with two resolutions by the Board of Supervisors. (Trail marked as red line on map; each purple dot indicates a private property in Eagles Nest and surrounding area.)



In contrast, Cass County practices local approval as a requirement before a proposal is placed on the County Commissioner's agenda for consideration. The questions are asked, "What is the neighborhood? Who lives there? What do they want?". The practice of cooperative action with the county, neighborhoods, and user groups is a cornerstone of Cass County's operation resulting in successful trail proposals and is a good model to follow.