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Off-Highway Vehicle Regulations 2003-04



Includes regulations
for All-Terrain Vehicles,
Off-Highway Motorcycles,
and Off-Road Vehicles

**PROTECT
YOUR
PRIVILEGE
TO RIDE**



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This is a summary of Minnesota's safety laws, rules and regulations for off-highway vehicles. For the purposes of this guide, off-highway vehicles include all-terrain vehicles, off-highway motorcycles and off-road vehicles. For complete regulations, consult state statutes and rules.

WELCOME

People enjoy using off-highway vehicles for trail-riding, off-road transportation, competition and other activities. Your attitude toward your surroundings and your behavior as a rider affect the attitudes of other outdoor users, landowners and lawmakers. Ride responsibly!

If you tread lightly on the environment, are courteous to others, respect private property and obey the law, you are contributing to the positive image of off-highway vehicle activities. Responsible riders are also safe riders. Be sure to wear appropriate protective gear and maintain your machine. Don't take chances that endanger yourself or others.

What's New

- Off-highway vehicles (OHV) include all-terrain vehicles, off-highway motorcycles, and off-road vehicles. The term recreational motor vehicle will no longer be used to describe the above vehicles.
- ATVs now include vehicles up to 900 pounds. See page 6.
- Increases for filing fees and ATV registration begin July 1, 2003. See page 10.
- In addition to public land and waters, all off-highway motorcycles (OHMs) operated on private land or used in organized track racing events must now be registered with the DNR.
- You may now renew your OHV on-line. Visit our website at www.dnr.state.mn.us
- Youth ages 12 through 15, who are accompanied on another ATV by someone 18 or older who has a valid driver's license, will be able to operate an ATV larger than 90cc on public lands and frozen waters if they have taken the new ATV training class that includes a riding component. See page 30.
- The 2003 Legislature directed the Commissioner of Natural Resources to review the 46 state forests that are currently classified as "managed," determine the status of existing forest roads and trails, and reclassify these forests as either "limited" or "closed." This is to be completed by December 31, 2006.
- County lands lying within the boundaries of a state forest that are classified as either "limited" or "closed" have the same OHV rules and regulations as state forest lands, unless the county



board adopts a resolution modifying those restrictions.

- Law changes prohibit most off-trail travel in state forests. See page 20.
- OHVs may not operate in marshes, bogs, or ponds or on unfrozen public waters including lakes, rivers, and streams.
- Road authorities now have the ability to restrict ATV operation within roadways, including ditches. These restrictions would not apply to agricultural use. See page 31.
- State forest lands and other public lands may be closed to OHV travel during the spring thaw cycle or periods of extremely heavy rainfall. Check the DNR website or local DNR office for closure periods.

A Message From Your DNR Conservation Officers

Despite manufacturer's warnings and restrictive laws, children continue to sustain severe injuries operating all-terrain vehicles. Conservation officers believe that most ATV users do not understand the short wheel base design and power of the ATV that may cause the machine to flip over forwards or backwards. This is the number one cause of death and injury in ATV accidents.

Talk to your children about the dangers and risks associated with riding an ATV. The result could be the prevention of serious injury or death.



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DEFINITIONS

The term off-highway vehicle (OHV) is used to describe all-terrain vehicles, off-highway motorcycles and off-road vehicles.

All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) are motorized, flotation-tired



vehicles with at least three, but no more than six low pressure tires, with an engine displacement of less than 800 cubic centimeters and total dry weight of less than 900 pounds. ATVs with a total dry weight of more than 900 pounds are classified as ORVs.

Off-highway motorcycles (OHMs) are motorized, off-highway



vehicles traveling on two wheels. OHMs have a seat or saddle designed to be straddled by the operator and have handlebars for steering control. Motorcycles may be legal for highway use and still considered to be OHMs if used for off-highway operation on trails or natural terrain.

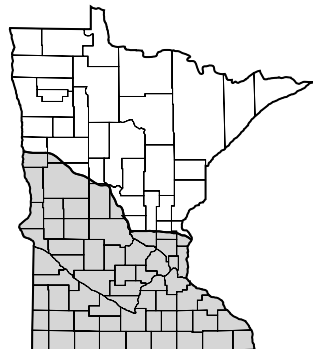
Off-road vehicles (ORVs) are motorized, recreational vehicles



capable of cross-country travel on natural terrain, such as four-wheel-drive trucks and ATVs that have an engine displacement of more than 800 cubic centimeters or total dry weight of more than 900 pounds. Vehicles NOT considered ORVs include snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles,

motorcycles, watercraft or aircraft. Farm, logging, military, emergency, law enforcement, utility, trail-grooming and construction vehicles are not considered to be ORVs when used for their intended purpose.

Agricultural zone means the areas in Minnesota lying south and west of a line along the following highway rights-of-way: starting at the North Dakota border, the line goes east along State Highway 10 to State Highway 23, then follows Highway 23 east to State Highway 95, which it follows to the Wisconsin border. The agricultural zone referred to in this guide applies

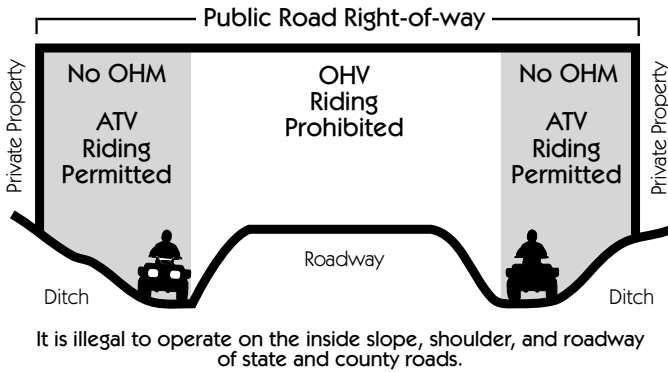




only to ATV use. **Agricultural zone restriction:** You may not drive an ATV within the right-of-way (ditch) of a state or county road from April 1 to August 1 in the agricultural zone. This does not apply to ATVs licensed and used for agricultural use.

Public waters and wetlands where OHVs may not ride include marshes, bogs, and ponds, or unfrozen lakes, rivers, and streams. Additional information on these public waters and wetland types can be viewed on DNR's website.

Public road right-of-way means the entire right-of-way of a roadway that is not privately owned, including the traveled portions, banks, ditches, shoulders and medians.



Off-road vehicle staging area means a parking lot, trail head, campground or other location to which a off-road vehicle is transported by truck, trailer or another motor vehicle for use on public lands.

Off-highway vehicle use areas are areas posted or designated for off-highway vehicle use.

Watch for these signs:



ATV Trail Indicator



OHM Trail Indicator



ORV Trail Indicator

Look for these seasonal closure signs in state forests:

ROADS and TRAILS
in the State Forest
are

CLOSED

**TO ALL MOTORIZED USE
UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

For the most current information, call the DNR
INFO CENTER AT 1-888-646-6347 OR

OR
visit the website at:
www.dnr.state.mn.us

Thank you for your cooperation

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

ROADS and TRAILS
in the State Forest
are

CLOSED

**TO ALL MOTORIZED USE
EXCEPT**

Forest Road

For the most current information, call the DNR
INFO CENTER AT 1-888-646-6347 OR

OR
visit the website at:
www.dnr.state.mn.us

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

ROADS and TRAILS
in the State Forest
are

**CLOSED
EXCEPT**

Forest Road

**IS OPEN TO VEHICLES
UNDER 1000 POUNDS**

For the most current information, call the DNR
INFO CENTER AT 1-888-646-6347 OR

OR
visit the website at:
www.dnr.state.mn.us

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Before operating an OHV in a state forest verify the classification of the state forest. Look for the following signs:



Tax Time Is Your Time To Help Wildlife

Look for the line with the loon on your Minnesota tax form and donate to the Non-game Wildlife Checkoff. It's fast, easy, and tax deductible. Be part of the wildlife success story.

OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES

REGISTRATION

An individual must be at least 18 years old to register a off-highway vehicle.

Anyone who sells a off-highway vehicle must provide a bill of sale to the buyer.

ATVs

All ATVs operated in Minnesota must be registered with the DNR, even if used exclusively on private property.

OHMs

All OHMs operated on public lands, frozen public waters, private lands, or in track racing events, must be registered with the DNR.

ORVs

All ORVs operated off-road must be registered with the DNR. In addition, individuals may not have ORVs that are not licensed for road use in possession at an ORV staging area, designated trail or other designated area unless the vehicle has been registered with the DNR for off-road use.



- Stay on the Trail
- Avoid Wetlands
- Keep Your Sound Down
- Share the Trail
- Respect Wildlife

Minnesota OHV registration is NOT required for:

- Off-highway vehicles registered in another state or country and not in Minnesota for more than 30 days.
- ATVs that are used exclusively in organized track racing events.
- OHMs registered for highway use when operated on forest roads.

Registration Fees

ATV Registration Fees	Fee Fees	Issuance Fees	Total	Duration
New Public Use	23.00	8.50	31.50	3 Years
Renewal Public Use	23.00	6.00	29.00	3 Years
Transfer	4.00	8.50	12.50	As long as machine is held by same party
Duplicate	4.00	6.00	10.00	
New Private Agricultural	6.00	8.50	14.50	
Private/Agricultural	6.00	8.50	14.50	
Duplicate	4.00	6.00	10.00	
Dealer–New	50.00	8.50	58.50	1 Year
Dealer–Renewal	50.00	6.00	56.00	1 Year
Manufacturer–New	150.00	8.50	158.50	1 Year
Manufacturer–Renewal	150.00	6.00	156.00	1 Year

OHM Registration Fees	Fee Fees	Issuance Fees	Total	Duration
New	30.00	8.50	38.50	3 Years
Renewal	30.00	6.00	36.00	3 Years
Transfer	4.00	8.50	12.50	
Duplicate	4.00	6.00	10.00	
Dealer–New	50.00	8.50	58.50	1 Year
Dealer–Renewal	50.00	6.00	56.00	1 Year
Manufacturer–New	150.00	8.50	158.50	1 Year
Manufacturer–Renewal	150.00	6.00	156.00	1 Year

ORV Registration Fees	Fee Fees	Issuance Fees	Total	Duration
New	30.00	8.50	38.50	3 Years
Renewal	30.00	6.00	36.00	3 Years
Transfer	4.00	8.50	12.50	
Duplicate	4.00	6.00	10.00	
Dealer–New	50.00	8.50	58.50	1 Year
Manufacturer–New	150.00	8.50	158.50	1 Year
Manufacturer–Renewal	150.00	6.00	156.00	1 Year



How To Register A Off-highway Vehicle

Off-highway vehicles can be registered at a deputy registrar of motor vehicles office (where automobile licenses are handled) or at the DNR License Bureau in St. Paul. You may also renew your OHV license on-line at www.dnr.state.mn.us. No additional fee will be charged for your on-line purchase.

The information required for registration of an off-highway vehicle includes the make, model, year, serial number, and sales receipt. For ATV and OHM registration the engine size is also required.

- ATVs and OHMs purchased from a retail dealer must be registered by the dealer. Transfers and registration renewals are the responsibility of the owner.
- A registration number and a decal are issued when an ATV or OHM is registered.
- Because ORVs are sold primarily for roadway use, owners must register their own ORVs for designated trail and staging area use. The owner is given a registration card and decals at the time of registration.

Individuals are not required to carry the registration card, but it must be provided within a reasonable time period when an enforcement officer requests to see it.

Alternative and Multiple Registrations

ATV

Private Use Registration: ATVs may be registered for private use when used exclusively for agricultural activities or harvesting wood, or used exclusively on private property. A private use registration is valid until the ownership of the ATV is transferred and is not transferable.

Dual Registration: Some circumstances require ATVs to be registered for both public and private use. Public use registration covers most situation where the private use registration is required, but it does not cover certain situations where ATVs must be operated on roadways. Public use registration allows for operation of ATVs on the outer slope of roadside ditches along state and county roads, and, if local laws do not prohibit, on the right side of township roads.

It does not, however, allow for operation on the road surface. If an ATV is used for agricultural purposes that require operation on the road surface, a private use registration is required. If the same ATV is also used on public land or water, both public and private use registrations are required.

OHM

Dual Registration: Some OHMs are equipped in such a manner that they may be legally licensed for roadway use. An OHM licensed for roadway use, which is also used off-road must have both the regular motorcycle license and the DNR OHM registration.

ORV

Dual Registration: Most ORVs are licensed for roadway use. An ORV licensed for roadway use, which is also operated in designated public ORV use areas or trails must have both the regular vehicle license and the DNR ORV registration.

Dealer and Manufacturer Registration

OHV dealers and manufacturers must register with the DNR to operate machines for testing or demonstration purposes. A registration certificate and a registration plate will be issued. The registration certificate must be prominently displayed in the place of business.

The registration plate must be displayed on the vehicle before dealers or manufacturers may operate or permit operation of any off-highway vehicle they own or control.

Dealer and manufacturer license applications and plates are **ONLY** available at the DNR License Bureau, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4026, 1-800-285-2000 or 651-296-2316.

Turn In Poachers

Don't let poachers steal your fish and wildlife. If you see someone violate a hunting or angling law or hear about a violation, call the toll-free TIP hotline at 1-800-652-9093.





Display of Numbers and Decals

ATV

ATVs registered for public use or with a dual registration must display current public use registration number and decal(s) on a plate at least 4 inches high and 7½ inches long. The plate must be clearly visible on the back of the vehicle and at least 12 inches from the ground. For a public use registration, the decal must be displayed in the upper left section of the plate. For a dual registration, the private use decal must also be displayed on the plate, in the upper right corner. The plate and decal must be maintained in a clear and legible condition.

Registration letters and numbers must be:

- at least 1½ inches high with a 3/16-inch stroke
- in English and placed from left to right
- in a color that contrasts with the background of the plate.

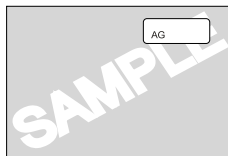
ATVs registered for private use only must display the private use decal in the upper right section of the plate. No numbers are needed for this type of registration.



ATV Public Use



ATV Dual Registration



ATV Private Use

OHM

OHMs registered only for off-road use must display current registration number and decal on a plate at least 4 inches high and 7½ inches long. The plate must be clearly visible on the back of the vehicle and at least 12 inches from the ground. The decal must be displayed in the upper left section of the plate. The plate and decal must be maintained in a clear and legible condition.

Registration letters and numbers must be:

- at least 1½ inches high with a 3⁄₁₆-inch stroke
- in English and placed from left to right
- in a color that contrasts with the background of the plate.

OHMs licensed in Minnesota for roadway use and off-road use must display the OHM decal in the upper left section of the regular motorcycle license plate. The DNR registration number should **not** be displayed.



OHM
Off-Road Use Only

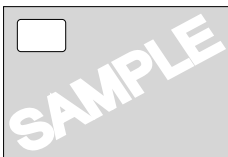


OHM Roadway and
Off-Road Use

ORV

ORVs registered only for designated trail or area use must display the current decal on a plate at least 4 inches high and 7½ inches long. No registration number should be displayed. The plate must be clearly visible on the back of the vehicle and at least 12 inches from the ground. The decal must be displayed in the upper left section of the plate. The plate and decal must be maintained in a clear and legible condition.

ORVs licensed in Minnesota for roadway use and also used off-road in designated public ORV trails and use areas must display the ORV decal in the upper left section of the regular motor vehicle license plate. The DNR registration number should **not** be displayed.



ORV
Off-Road Use Only



ORV Roadway and
Off-Road Use



Expiration and Renewal

The expiration date appears on both the registration card and the decal. All public use ATV and all OHM and ORV renewals expire on December 31st of the last year the registration is valid.

Individuals who notify the DNR of mailing address changes should receive a notice by mail to renew their registration. Whether notified or not, owners are responsible for renewing their public use ATV, OHM and ORV registrations.

Private use ATV registration does not expire. It is valid until the ownership is transferred.

Replacement Registration Cards

Off-highway vehicle owners may obtain a replacement registration card for \$10.00 from a deputy registrar or the DNR License Bureau. Replacement decals are available from the DNR License Bureau or the Deputy Registrar of Motor Vehicles at a charge of \$6.00. Replacement decals and numbers must be affixed in the same manner as the original.

GENERAL OPERATIONS

The following regulations apply to all off-highway vehicles: all-terrain vehicles, off-highway motorcycles and off-road vehicles. Information and regulations specific to each of these vehicle types can be found in the All-Terrain Vehicle, Off-Highway Motorcycle and Off-Road Vehicle sections of this booklet.

A valid driver's license is required to operate anywhere on road rights-of-way including ditches, inside and outside slopes, and crossing roads. The only exception would be on portions of a designated trail that specifically include a road right-of-way.

Required Equipment

Off-highway vehicles operated on public lands, waters, trails, public streets and roads open to vehicle use must be equipped as follows:

Helmet

- Any person under the age of 18 must wear a helmet when operating an ATV or OHM.

Lights

- Headlights and taillights must be on during hours of darkness or reduced visibility.

Brakes

- Brakes must control movement and stop and hold the vehicle.

Throttle

- The throttle must return the engine to idle when pressure to advance the throttle is removed.

Mufflers

- Mufflers must have a federally approved spark arrestor.
- Overall noise emission may not exceed 99 decibels at a distance of 20 inches.
- Mufflers may not be altered to increase motor noise, or have a cutout, bypass, or similar device except for organized events.

Towing

- A straight arm bar must be used to tow a sled or trailer containing passengers.
- A disabled vehicle towed by any means may contain a person to steer.
- At least 16 square inches of reflective material that is unobstructed and visible, must be mounted on each side and at the rear of a sled or trailer.

Where You May Ride

You may operate an off-highway vehicle:

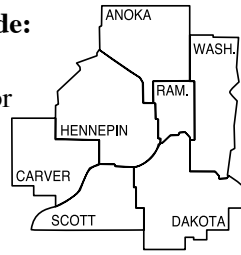
- on your own land that is not a marsh, bog, pond, or unfrozen stream, lake or river
- on private land with the landowner's permission
- on frozen public waters where you have legal access (if not restricted by law or local ordinances)
- on public lands that are open to OHVs. Land uses may vary; be sure to check federal, state, and local regulations for details.



Also see hunting exception on managed or limited state forest lands on page 20.

In the seven-county metro area, you may ride:

- on your own land that is not a wetland
- on land other than your own, with written or verbal permission of the landowner, occupant or lessee
- on land posted with signs specifically permitting the use of off-highway vehicles.



Where You May NOT Ride

Also see specific sections for additional restrictions.

You may not operate a off-highway vehicle:

- on the median of a four-lane highway
- within the right-of-way of any interstate highway
- on the right-of-way between opposing lanes of traffic
- at airports
- in marshes, ponds and bogs, or unfrozen public waters including lakes, streams and rivers
- on any frozen public waters located in a restricted area, or frozen waters where you don't have legal access
- in most state parks, state recreation areas, state historic sites, wildlife management areas, or state scientific and natural areas with the exception of posted trails and areas
- in any areas, including streets, restricted by local ordinances or municipalities
- in a tree nursery or planting area
- on state forest lands that are posted or designated closed to motorized uses (see pages 20–22)
- on agricultural land without permission (see page 25)
- along or on the roadway, shoulder, inside bank or slope of a public right-of-way.
- **OHM's cannot be operated in ditches.** See diagram on page 7.

Inside the seven-county metro area, you may not ride on land you do not own, unless given written or verbal permission to ride on that land by the owner, occupant or lessee.

Outside the seven-county metro area, you may not ride on land that you have been told verbally, in writing, or by posted signs, not to ride.

Other Prohibitions

You may not:

- operate an off-highway vehicle in a careless, reckless or heedless manner that endangers another person or their property
- litter
- enter or leave lands by cutting wire or tearing down a fence
- mutilate, destroy, damage or remove any property within a trail or on state land
- post, damage or remove any signs on any lands or waters unless you are the landowner, occupant or lessee of the property.

Check For Other Government Regulations or Ordinances

Cities, towns, and counties may further regulate the operation of off-highway vehicles under their jurisdiction. Check with the appropriate unit of government for additional regulations.

National forests and Voyageurs National Park regulate motor vehicle use on federal lands. Check with the managing agency before riding on these lands.

Speed

You may not operate a off-highway vehicle at a speed greater than is reasonable under all of the surrounding circumstances or greater than the posted speed limit on any public lands, waters, trails, or public road rights-of-way. Speed limit signs may be erected along specific portions of trails.

The speed limit may be waived in writing by the DNR for an organized race or similar competitive event. Contact the DNR at 1-888-MINNDNR (646-6367).

To report a violation:

Contact your local police department, sheriff's office, the state patrol, or a DNR conservation officer. Conservation officers are dispatched through the state patrol. To reach a conservation officer, call your nearest state patrol headquarters.



Trail Riding

- All trail signs must be obeyed.
- One-way trails must be traveled in the direction indicated.
- When meeting or being passed by another trail user, you must stay to the right half of the treadway.
- When passing another trail user, you must pass on the left half of the treadway and only when the trail is free from oncoming traffic for a sufficient distance to safely pass the other trail user.
- When entering or crossing a trail treadway you must yield to trail traffic.
- When two trail users are about to enter an unmarked treadway intersection from different directions, the trail user to the right has the right-of-way.
- Motorized trail users must yield the right-of-way to non-motorized trail users and shut off their machines when meeting a horse until the horse has passed or until waved on.

Crossing Public Roads

A valid driver's license is required to operate anywhere on road rights-of-way including ditches, inside and outside slopes, and crossing roads. The only exception would be on portions of a designated trail that specifically include a road right-of-way.

When making a direct crossing of a street or road:

- come to a complete stop and look both ways
- yield to all traffic
- cross the road at a 90 degree angle
- cross a divided road only at an intersection.

Bridges and Obstructions

You may operate an off-highway vehicle on a bridge, a roadway shoulder or the inside bank of a public road right-of-way if necessary to avoid obstructions to travel. You must remain on the farthest right-hand lane, enter the roadway within 100 feet of the bridge or obstacle and make the crossing without delay. You may not cross a bridge that is part of the traveled lanes of an interstate highway.

STATE FOREST LANDS

Rules Relating to Motor Vehicle Operation on State Forest Lands

State forest lands are classified by the commissioner for purposes of motor vehicle use. “Motor vehicle” means any self-propelled vehicle including, but not limited to, automobiles, trucks, dune buggies, minibikes, motorcycles, trail bikes, and all terrain vehicles (ATVs). It does not include snowmobiles. Motor vehicle use is regulated on state forest lands as follows:

State Forest Lands Classified as **Managed**:

- Motor vehicles may operate **only** on forest *roads* and forest *trails* **unless** they are posted and designated **closed**.

State Forest Lands Classified as **Limited**:

- OHV use is prohibited on State Land and on county administered land within the boundaries of a state forest, except on designated OHV roads and trails.
- Counties may adopt a resolution to modify the above restrictions on county-administered land within state forest boundaries.
- Motor vehicles may operate **only** on forest *trails* or *other areas* that are posted and designated **open**.

State Forest Lands: **Managed or Limited**

- Exception: Persons lawfully engaged in hunting big game or constructing hunting stands during October, November, and December, retrieving big game during September, or trapping during open seasons, may use ATVs off forest trails in a manner consistent with the general operating restrictions. This exception does not apply in the Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood Forest.

State Forest Lands Classified as **Closed**:

- Motor vehicles and snowmobiles are **not allowed** except:





- › Vehicles licensed for highway use may use forest *roads* that are not posted or gated closed.
- › Vehicles may operate on frozen *public waters* where it is not otherwise prohibited.
- › Snowmobiles may operate on designated *trails*.

State Forests Classified as *Closed*

- Birch Lakes State Forest
- Burntside State Forest*
- Insula Lake State Forest
- Lake Isabella State Forest
- Lake Jeanette State Forest*
- Sand Dunes State Forest

* *Portions within the BWCAW classified as closed.*

State Forests Classified as *Limited*

- Chengwatana State Forest
- D.A.R. State Forest
- General C.C. Andrews State Forest
- R.J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest
- Rum River State Forest
- St. Croix State Forest
- Snake River State Forest
- Nemadji State Forest
- Some areas of Foothills and Finland State Forests

State Forests Classified as *Managed*

The other 46 state forests not listed as closed or limited are classified as *managed*. The 2003 Legislature directed the Commissioner of Natural Resources to review the 46 state forests that are currently classified as *managed*, determine the status of existing forest roads and trails (either open or closed to OHV's), and reclassify these forests as either *limited* or *closed*. This is to be completed prior to December 31, 2006.

General Operating Restrictions - anywhere on state forest lands that motor vehicles are allowed.

- No motor vehicle operation is allowed on designated non-motorized trails unless also posted open for a motorized use.
- No motor vehicle operation is allowed on or over lakes, rivers or streams except:
 - › when the water body is ice covered
 - › on a bridge, culvert or designated low water crossing.

- Motor vehicles or snowmobiles may not operate on forest lands in a manner that causes erosion or rutting, damages, or destroys trees or growing crops. The rutting provision does not apply on designated motorized trails.
- Motor vehicles or snowmobiles may not operate within the boundaries of an area that is posted and designated as closed to such use.
- Motor vehicles on state forest roads must travel at a reasonable and prudent speed; obey posted speed limits, parking and traffic regulation signs; observe road closures; and may not operate in a manner that causes damage to the road, land, or other natural resources.
- No person shall construct an unauthorized permanent trail on forest lands.
- Special Provision for Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood Forest: Motor vehicles and snowmobiles may operate on forest roads that are not posted closed and ONLY on forest trails that are designated for motorized use. No motorized travel is allowed off of designated trails under any circumstances. Motorized trails are open for ATV and OHM use from May 1 to November 1.

Events On State Forest Lands

A permit is required from a DNR area forester to hold an event on state forest lands. The DNR may charge a fee for the use of the land. Security such as a bond or cashier's check may be required to ensure that cleanup, sign removal, damage, repairs and other actions are completed.

For emergencies or authorized special events, the DNR may provide temporary exceptions to the general rules for a specific state park, forest campground, forest day use area or state forest lands. Notice of the exception will be posted at the site.

Help Stop the Spread!

Many exotic species such as garlic mustard, spotted knapweed, and leafy spurge are harmful to wildlife, forests, trails, and roadsides. Cleaning mud from OHVs, trailers and other equipment, and footwear between outings helps prevent the inadvertent spread of harmful exotic species to new locations.



ENFORCEMENT

Conservation officers, deputy sheriffs, police and peace officers, and natural resource officers enforce off-highway vehicle rules. You must stop when signaled by a law enforcement officer.

Penalties

- Fleeting an enforcement officer is a felony. In addition, the OHV used may be forfeited.
- A violation of ATV or ORV laws is a misdemeanor.
- A violation of OHM laws is a petty misdemeanor or a misdemeanor.
- Many operation/registration, and trespass violations can also be enforced by issuing a civil citation.

Reporting Stolen, Abandoned or Destroyed Vehicles

A registered off-highway vehicle that is abandoned, stolen, or destroyed must be reported to the DNR within 15 days. Complete the reverse side of the registration certificate and mail it to the DNR License Bureau. No fee is charged for reporting the vehicle.

Accident Reports

The operator and an officer investigating an off-highway vehicle accident must file a written report of the accident to the DNR within 10 days if:

- the accident resulted in a human injury requiring medical attention or hospitalization, or death; or
- the total damage was \$300 or more for ORVs, or \$500 or more for ATVs or OHMs.

OPERATING WHILE INTOXICATED

Operating an off-highway vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, a controlled substance, or other hazardous substance is unlawful. Operators who are impaired may be required to submit to tests by an enforcement officer to determine the presence of these substances. There is a separate, additional criminal penalty for refusal to submit to the test requests, and the person's operating privileges for the vehicle type will be suspended for one year upon refusal. OHV DWI convictions and refusals are recorded on

the violator’s driver’s license record and may affect their driver’s license privileges.

An operator who is found to be impaired can be charged with a misdemeanor, gross misdemeanor, or felony level DWI. Persons convicted of a misdemeanor will be subject to: up to \$1,000 fine (plus surcharges); possible jail sentence; and loss of OHV operating privileges for one year.

In addition to the above misdemeanor penalties, the following gross misdemeanor penalty provisions may apply if the person has any prior DWI violations, has an alcohol concentration of .20 or more, or has a child under age 16 with them on the OHV:

- up to \$3,000 fine
- longer, mandatory jail time
- chemical use assessment and long-term monitoring programs
- loss of motor vehicle driver’s license privileges
- motor vehicle plate impoundment of all motor vehicles owned or leased individually or jointly by the person
- forfeiture of the OHV
- substantially higher fines.

Felony level penalties include all of the above provisions, and include substantially higher fines (up to \$14,000), longer revocations, and longer mandatory jail time.

TRESPASS

Ask First! The trespass law now applies to all outdoor recreation including operation of your off-highway vehicle.

Landowners, lessees or land managers need only post their land once a year. The signs must be at intervals of 1,000 ft (500 ft in wooded areas) or signs may be placed at primary corners and at access points to the property. Signs must state “No Trespassing” or similar words in 2 inch letters and the signature or name and telephone number of the landowner, lessee or manager.



Just because property isn’t posted, that doesn’t mean you have the right to enter someone else’s private property. The posted signs



indicated the landowner's intention to prevent unauthorized entry. There can be civil and criminal penalties for violation of the trespass laws. Civil penalties start at \$50 for first offense, and range up to \$500 and loss of license or registration for a third offense within three years.

All conservation and peace officers enforce trespass laws.

You must have permission to:

- enter legally posted land
- enter agricultural land. "Agricultural land" is land that is plowed or tilled; has standing crops or crop residue; is within a maintained fence for enclosing domestic livestock; is planted native or introduced hay land or grassland; or is planted to short rotation woody crops (hybrid poplar and other woody plants that are harvested for their fiber within 15 years of planting).

Please Note: All planted grassland, hay land, and short-rotation woody crop land meet the definition of agricultural land, including grasslands enrolled in the federal Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), or the state RIM Reserve program. These lands do not need to be posted to prevent unauthorized trespass.

You may not:

- wound or kill another person's domestic animal or destroy private property
- pass through a closed gate without returning it to the original position
- stray off marked trails.

RELATED GAME LAWS

A person may not discharge a firearm or bow and arrow at a grouse, or a decoy of a grouse placed by an enforcement officer, unless the person is at least 20 yards away from a motor vehicle and the motor is turned off. Exceptions will be made only for hunters with disabilities who are in possession of a valid permit allowing them to shoot from a stationary motor vehicle.

General Restrictions

It is unlawful to:

- transport a firearm on any off-highway vehicle unless it is unloaded and completely enclosed in a case or is a handgun carried under a valid permit to carry
- transport an archery bow on any off-highway vehicle unless it is unstrung or enclosed in a case
- use any off-highway vehicle to chase, run over or kill a wild animal
- shoot or attempt to shoot an animal from any off-highway vehicle without a special disability permit to do so.

To reduce disturbance during prime hunting hours, a person possessing a valid deer license may operate a off-highway vehicle during the firearms deer season only:

- before legal shooting hours (one-half hour before sunrise)
- from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m.
- after legal shooting hours (one-half hour after sunset).

The above does not apply to vehicles licensed for roadway use.

A permit to operate a off-highway vehicle during the legal shooting hours for deer may be issued by a conservation officer in the event of an emergency or another unusual condition.

Special Permits for Disabled Hunters

A permit may be issued to shoot from a standing OHV to a licensed hunter who has a permanent physical disability and is unable to step from a vehicle without the aid of a wheelchair, crutches, braces, or other mechanical support or prosthetic device; or is required to use supplemental oxygen to assist breathing because they are unable to walk any distance because of a permanent lung, heart, or other internal disease. For more details contact the Department of Natural Resources Information Center toll free 1-888-MINNDNR (646-6367).

ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLE SAFETY SECTION



ATV owners are cautioned that any inexperienced rider in the first month of operating an ATV has 13 times the average risk of injury. Never permit the inexperienced to operate an ATV until they have read the owner's manual and all warning labels, and have completed a certified training course.

Know the uniqueness of ATV design and the potential risk of accidents and injury.

ATV Design

High ground clearance and short, narrow wheel base

Seating straddles the top of the machine

Wide, low pressured, knobby tires

Powerful drive train with high and low gear ratios

Fixed rear axle for traction

Potential Risk

Operator must have sufficient size and weight to properly balance the vehicle. ATV may roll or flip with shift of body weight. ATV is more likely to roll than skid in turns and on hillsides.

Requires operator to maintain balance on the machine. Operator can fall or be thrown. No protection for the operator in a collision or roll over.

Wobble or bounce may cause loss of control. Vehicle is more likely to roll than skid in turns and on hillsides.

Has power to climb or accelerate until it flips over backwards. Capable of speed too fast for conditions and or skill of the operator.

Prevents the inner wheel from rotating freely when attempting turns on pavement. Loss of control occurs when torque to the inner wheel releases in the sudden lurch forward.

Passenger Restrictions

To maintain stability and control an ATV operator needs the entire seat to shift position. The weight and position of a passenger restricts an operator's ability to prevent roll overs and flips.

Because an ATV does not provide foot rests or hand grips for a passenger, the passenger has a high risk of falling or being thrown from the machine.

State law prohibits a person from operating an ATV with more persons on the vehicle than it was designed to carry. Generally, ATVs are not designed to carry passengers.

The only exception to this regulation: an adult parent or guardian may operate an ATV with one child under 16 years of age as a passenger provided the child wears a helmet.

Double riding can be unsafe and even hazardous, especially on trails rated as moderate or difficult, like those found at the Iron Range Off-Highway Vehicle State Recreation Area where passenger restriction laws are strictly enforced.



Warning

Approximately 40 percent of ATV related deaths and injuries are to youths under age 16. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission warns that young people, under the age of 16 years, should never operate an adult sized ATV (over 90cc engine size). State law prohibits youth under the age of 16 years from operating ATVs over 90ccs on public lands and waters, including public roads and road rights-of-way unless the youth has completed the new riding component test on an ATV over 90ccs and is accompanied by a person 18 or over who has a valid driver's license.



Why Children Are At Risk Operating ATVs

Children cannot maintain position or control without increased risk of falling or being thrown from the machine because:

Leg Length

A minimum of 3 inches of clearance between the seat and the top inseam of the pants when standing on the foot rests is required to enable the operator to maintain balance on the foot rests when turning and riding over hills and rough terrain.

Arm Length

While seated on the machine and gripping the handle bars, there should be a distinct bend in the arm at the elbow. Without a bend, there will not be sufficient reach to properly grip the handle bars when turning.

Hand Size

While gripping the handle bar with fingers extended to the brake lever, the first joint of the index finger should extend beyond the brake lever. If it does not, the hand is too small to safely operate the brake.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (USCPSC) states that a variety of factors converge to place children at risk as operators of ATVs including:

- Children believe that any products purchased by their parents are safe.
- Danger and risk are underestimated because of the child's own lack of experience with accidents.
- Children between the ages of 12 and 15 often overestimate their skills, particularly with increased experience.
- Children can easily get into trouble trying to imitate more complex maneuvers of older friends.



YOUTHFUL OPERATORS

It is unlawful for anyone in control of an ATV to permit it to be operated contrary to the following requirements:

Age	Requirement
Under 12	May operate only on private property with permission of the owner.
12 through 15	<p>ATV safety certificate valid only if the rider is able to properly reach and control the handle bars and reach the foot pegs while sitting upright on the seat of the ATV.</p> <p>ATV safety certificate is valid for ATVs 90cc or less, unless the person has completed the new riding component test on an ATV over 90ccs.</p> <p>May operate an ATV on public lands or frozen public waters with a safety certificate, only if accompanied on another ATV by a person 18 or over who has a valid driver's license.</p> <p>May make a direct crossing of roadway with a safety certificate, only if accompanied on another ATV by a person 18 or over who has a valid driver's license.</p> <p>Must wear a helmet while operating on public lands, frozen waters and on road rights-of-way.</p>
16 and 17	<p>May operate an ATV on public lands and frozen public waters without a safety certificate.</p> <p>Must have a driver's license to make direct crossing of roadway, or operate on road rights-of-way.</p> <p>Must wear a helmet while operating on public lands, frozen public waters and on road rights-of-way.</p>

ATV EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The DNR Division of Enforcement administers an ATV safety training program. The course includes ATV familiarization, operating procedures, ATV laws, loading and towing procedures, ethics, safety hazards and environmental consequences.

For a \$15 fee, students who successfully complete the safety training program, riding component, and written test are issued a safety certificate.

A duplicate ATV Safety Certificate can be obtained at any Electronic Licensing System (ELS) hunting and fishing agent for \$3.50.

Youth ages 12 through 15, who are accompanied on another ATV by someone 18 or older who has a valid driver's license, will be able to operate an ATV larger than 90cc on public lands and waters if they have taken the ATV training class that includes a riding component. For information on safety training, to request the independent study portion of the course, or to check locations for the riding component testing, contact DNR Web Site www.dnr.state.mn.us, or the DNR Information Center, Twin Cities 651-296-6157, Toll free 1-888-646-6367 or DNR Safety Training Program Headquarters, 1-800-366-8917.

GENERAL OPERATIONS

- A driver's license is not required on a designated trail that includes a road right-of-way.
- Agricultural zone restriction: You may not drive an ATV within the right-of-way, including the ditch, of a state or county road from April 1 to August 1 in the agricultural zone (see definition on page 4). This does not apply to ATVs licensed and used for agricultural use.
- A person with a valid driver's license may operate an ATV registered for private use and being used for agricultural purposes on a public right-of-way of a trunk, county, state aid, or county highway, if the ATV is on the extreme right side of the road. A left turn may be made if it is safe to do so.
- The headlight and taillight must be on at all times if your ATV is equipped with them.
- You may not exceed 10 mph on the frozen surface of public waters within 100 feet of another person that is not on an ATV (including people that are fishing) or within 100 feet of a fish shelter.
- Grant-in-aid snowmobile and ski trails are closed to ATVs unless specifically allowed.
- Operation on a township road: A person with a valid driver's license may operate an ATV on the right half of a township road, unless prohibited by local regulations. If traveling at a slower speed than other traffic on the township road, the ATV should be driven as close as practical to the right hand edge of the road.
- Road authorities now have the ability to restrict ATV operation in ditches. A public hearing must be held and these restrictions would not apply to agricultural use.

OFF-HIGHWAY MOTORCYCLE SAFETY SECTION



Safety Tips:

- Any person who operates an OHM must wear eye protection.
- Always wear a helmet and protective clothing.
- Never carry a passenger on vehicles intended for one-person use.

YOUTHFUL OPERATORS

It is unlawful for anyone in control of an OHM to allow it to be operated contrary to the following requirements:

Any person under the age of 18 must wear a helmet.

Age	Requirement
Under 12	<p>May not make a direct crossing of a public road right-of-way.</p> <p>May not operate an off-highway motorcycle on a public road or public road right-of-way.</p> <p>May not operate an OHM on public lands or frozen public waters unless accompanied on another OHM by a person 18 years of age or older.</p>
Under 16	<p>Must possess a valid off-highway motorcycle safety permit to operate an OHM on public lands or frozen public waters.</p> <p>May make a direct crossing of a public road (except an interstate highway) if accompanied on another OHM by a person 18 years of age or older who holds a valid driver's license.</p> <p>May operate within a road right-of-way that is part of a designated trail when accompanied by a person 18 years or older who holds a valid driver's license.</p>
16 and 17	<p>Must have a driver's license to operate an OHM on a public road and the motorcycle must be licensed for road use.</p> <p>A driver's license is not required on designated trails when the trail specifically includes the road right-of-way.</p>

OHM EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The DNR Division of Enforcement administers an OHM safety training program. The course includes OHM familiarization, operating procedures, OHM laws, loading and towing procedures, ethics, safety hazards and environmental consequences.

For a \$5 fee, students who successfully complete the training program and written test are issued a safety certificate. Duplicate certificates are available from the DNR if the original is lost or destroyed.

For more information call the DNR Information Center, Twin Cities 651-296-6157, Toll free 1-888-646-6367 or DNR Safety Training Program Headquarters, 1-800-366-8917.

GENERAL OPERATIONS

- Your OHM must have a headlight, a taillight and brakes to be operated on a public road. The lights must be on while operation on a trunk, county, state aid, or county highway or when crossing a public road right-of-way, one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise or in conditions of reduced visibility.
- You must wear eye protection when operating an OHM.
- A valid driver's license with a motorcycle endorsement is required to operate anywhere on road rights-of-way including crossing roads. The only exception would be on portions of a designated trail that specifically include a road right-of-way.
- You may not operate an OHM in ditches, unless it is a trail designated for OHM use. OHMs registered for highway use may operate on road ways. (See diagram on page 7.)
- You may not exceed 10 mph on the frozen surface of public waters within 100 feet of a person fishing or a fishing shelter.



OFF-ROAD VEHICLE SAFETY SECTION

YOUTHFUL OPERATORS

A person under 16 years of age may not operate an ORV. The owner of an ORV may not knowingly allow it to be operated by a person under 16 years of age.



GENERAL OPERATIONS

- All ORV passengers and operators must wear seat belts.
- A valid driver's license is required to operate anywhere on road rights-of-way, including ditches, inside and outside slopes, and crossing roads. THE ONLY EXCEPTION would be for those portions of a designated trail that specifically include a road right-of-way.
- ORV's are required to have lights on while crossing public roads one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise and during periods of reduced visibility.

You may:

- operate on state forest roads, trails, and lands as described on pages 17 and 18.

You may not:

- operate an ORV within the right-of-way of an interstate highway
- operate an ORV within a public road right-of-way except on a designated trail, and when in possession of a valid driver's license.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

DNR Web Site: www.dnr.state.mn.us

For information on ATV or OHM safety training contact: DNR Information Center, Twin Cities 651-296-6157, Toll free 1-888-646-6367 or DNR Safety Training Program Headquarters, Camp Ripley, Little Falls, MN, 1-800-366-8917.

For information on ATV, OHM, and ORV trails contact: DNR Information Center, 500 Lafayette Rd., St. Paul, MN 55155-4040, Twin Cities 651-296-6157, Toll free 1-888-646-6367.

For more information on registering your off-highway vehicle call: DNR License Bureau, 500 Lafayette Rd., St. Paul, MN 55155-4026, Twin Cities: 651-296-2316 Toll free 1-800-285-2000.

Hearing impaired: Twin Cities 651-296-5484, Toll free 1-800-657-3929.