

North Dakota Off-Highway Vehicle Program

2006—2009 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE



North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department

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Introduction

Purpose of the Plan

Strategic plans provide organizations with a road-map to the future. They chart a path designed to allow an organization to respond to market conditions & trends.

By providing focus, strategic plans also enable organizations to make the best use of their limited financial, technical and human resources.

Strategic plans typically cover an extended time period, anywhere from three to five years.

The plan which follows is an update of the 2003 – 2006 ATV Utilization in North Dakota Strategic Plan prepared by Agency MABU. This updated strategic plan is designed to provide the North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department, along with other public agencies and private organizations, with clear direction regarding strategies relating to all-terrain vehicles and off-road motorcycles collectively known as Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV).

The contents of the 2006—2009 Strategic Plan Update are a direct result of successes, challenges and legislative action that have arisen from the original plan.

Development of this plan relies on input from the North Dakota OHV Taskforce. The taskforce consists of key stakeholder groups that are either involved with or impacted by OHV usage including:

- N.D. Parks & Recreation Department
- N.D. Game & Fish Department
- N.D. Forest Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- North Dakota Off-Road Vehicle Association
- North Dakota Powersports Dealers Association
- Williams County Sheriff's Department
- National OHV Conservation Council
- Private Users

Accomplishments

Many of the goals from the 2003 - 2006 strategic plan were accomplished. These accomplishments set the foundation for continued advancement of North Dakota's OHV program.

- An ATV Advisory Task Force was created with representatives from key stakeholder groups to assist in validating, modifying and implementing the strategic plan.
- NDPRD assisted in development of ND Off-Road Vehicle Association.
- Leadership and staffing resources were examined resulting in the addition of an OHV Safety Coordinator.
- On-site safety education classes were developed to certify youth riders.
- Youth safety curriculum was developed for off-road motorcycles in addition to ATVs.
- Funding was secured in 2004 and 2005 through the Recreational Trails Program to develop the Roughrider OHV Trail as a pilot project.

Accomplishments

- NDPRD and NDDOT partnered to develop a multi-use trail plan for the Pembina Gorge and Turtle Mountain areas which included a component dedicated to OHVs.
- The 2005 - 2007 OHV Safety and Operations Guidelines booklet was developed for distribution to dealers, law enforcement and users.
- North Dakota Century Code Chapter 39-29 was rewritten to include ATVs and Off-Road motorcycles and to be more responsive to the riding community.
- An OHV section of the NDPRD website was developed.
- An on-line dealer safety fee payment system was developed.

Strategic Issues

Strategic Assessment Process

During the spring of 2003 the Agency MABU facilitated a planning session sponsored by the North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department with other federal and state agencies as a means of assessing strategic issues and opportunities relating to OHV utilization in North Dakota.

The OHV Taskforce continues this process to ensure strategic issues are brought to the forefront of the planning process.

Strategic Issues Identified

- Improve safety, especially relating to children, helmets and rules of the road.
- Evaluate state laws to more appropriately reflect current usage and emerging trends.
- Work with partner organizations to encourage the organization of OHV users throughout the state.
- Increase public awareness of current laws.
- Increase public awareness relative to areas that are currently available for OHV use.
- Work with local government and users to establish designated OHV use areas in ND.
- Partner with local and state law enforcement to increase understanding and awareness of changing laws and enforcement issues.

Our Mission & Vision

Purpose of a Mission Statement

The mission statement of a program or organization concisely defines its reason for existence.

Purpose of a Vision Statement

A vision statement defines a positive, realistic future state for a program or organization.

It paints a vivid picture as to where the organization or program is headed.

Mission Statement

North Dakota's OHV program exists to advance and support the use of Off-Highway Vehicles in North Dakota through the:

- Provision of safety education
- Communication of pertinent information to targeted audiences (e. g. OHV users, OHV dealers, legislators, law enforcement, etc.)
- Enforcement of laws
- Development of use areas

Vision Statement

The vision for North Dakota's OHV program is to establish an operational model that promotes collaboration between public and private entities as a means of creating a high quality, safe riding experience for OHV users throughout North Dakota.

Strategic Focus Areas

Strategic Focus Defined:
Strategic focus represent broad areas of emphasis that are most important to an organization's or program's ultimate success.

In order to maintain a solid foundation for North Dakota's OHV program, the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department has identified the following areas to be of strategic significance:

Focus Area #1

Statewide Organizational Structure/Planning

Focus Area #2

OHV Use Areas and Supporting Facilities

Focus Area #3

Safety Education

Focus Area #4

Laws and Enforcement

Focus Area #5

Public Information

Focus Area #1

Statewide Organizational Structure/Planning

Goal #1: Maintain an OHV Advisory Task Force with representatives from key stakeholder groups to assist in validating, modifying and implementing the strategic plan.

Goal #2: Foster the development and growth of North Dakota Off-Road Vehicle Association and the local clubs which NDORVA represents.

Goal #3: Sponsor meetings throughout North Dakota to bring the OHV user, local government, law enforcement, NDPDA and NDORVA together.

Goal #4: Perform market assessment/survey of Off-Road motorcycle users in North Dakota to identify needs and trends relating to this user group.

Focus Area #2

OHV Use Areas

Goal #1: Identify and inform the public of use areas that are currently available for OHVs in North Dakota. Specifically work with NDORVA to identify local riding opportunities that are not widely known.

Goal #2: Assist in communicating NDORVA's "Riders Code of Conduct" to users, the public at large and land managers of designated use areas.

Goal #3: Identify new funding mechanisms to support clubs and local government's development of OHV use areas in North Dakota (e.g. easements, trail construction, signage, etc.).

Goal #4: Educate OHV users, clubs and landowners about NDCC 53 - 08 regarding limited liability for owners of recreation lands.

Focus Area #3

Education

Goal #1: Develop a volunteer trainer program to deliver a higher number of classroom OHV safety education courses throughout a wider geographic area.

Goal #2: Explore the merits of developing a video OHV safety education course for individuals who cannot attend a classroom OHV safety education course.

Goal #3: Explore the feasibility of providing onsite, hands on safety education for youth who drive ATVs and off road motorcycles.

Goal #4: Partner with the North Dakota Powersports Dealers Association to gain better compliance on collection of the dealer safety fee.

Goal #5: Conduct media relations activities to promote safety education to the general public.

Focus Area #4

Laws and Enforcement

Goal #1: Refine existing laws and regulations as they relate to current OHV usage. Identify changes necessary and seek legislative action as deemed appropriate.

Goal #2: Develop partnerships to engage local and county law enforcement entities in efforts relating to OHV use areas and regulations.

Goal #3: Partner with ND Department of Transportation, Office of the State Tax Commissioner, and NDPDA to streamline the sale and registration process of ATVs and Off-Road motorcycles.

Focus Area #5

Public Affairs

Goal #1: Partner with NDORVA to create and distribute a regular newsletter to OHV clubs, dealers and registered operators.

Goal #2: Update and regularly distribute informational materials addressing laws, registration, safety, use areas, enforcement and etiquette to targeted audiences.

Goal #3: As OHV use areas are designated and developed, work with the North Dakota Division of Tourism to promote to OHV enthusiasts from outside the state.

Goal #4: Develop an OHV dealer's packet which includes the ND OHV Safety and Operation Guidelines, How to Register Your OHV pocket card, safety education literature and the dates of safety classes for the year for dealers to hand out as a part of a new and used vehicle purchase.

According to North Dakota Century Code (Chapter 39-29):

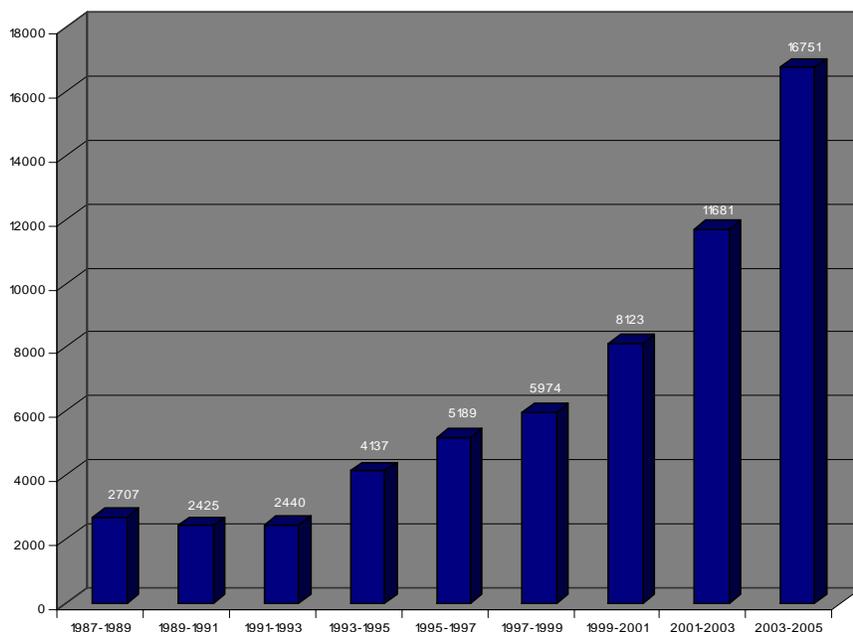
- Off-Highway Vehicle means any wheeled motorized vehicle not designed for use on a highway and capable of cross-country travel on land, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other natural terrain. An off-highway vehicle must be classified into one of the following categories:
 - Class I Off-Highway Vehicle is a vehicle that does not qualify as road capable under chapters 39-21 and 39-27, has a seat or a saddle designed to be straddled by the operator, and has handlebars for steering control of two wheels.
 - Class II Off-Highway Vehicle is less than fifty inches [1270.00 millimeters] in width, travels on three or more low-pressure tires, has a saddle designed to be straddled by the operator, and has handlebars for steering control.
 - Class III Off-Highway Vehicle weighs less than eight thousand pounds, travels on four or more tires, has a seat and a wheel for steering control, and is designated for or capable of cross-country on or over land, water, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other natural terrain, unless registered by the department under chapter 39-04.

Facts & Figures

- Upon sale of an OHV, dealers collect a five dollar safety fee from the buyer. This is a one time assessment to support the OHV safety education program.
- OHVs are registered for two years through the North Dakota DOT for a fee of \$5. In addition, at the time of registration a trail tax of \$5 is collected and placed into a fund managed by the North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department.

The North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department is authorized by the Legislature to expend up to \$125,000 per biennium from the trail tax fund to develop OHV use areas, facilities and safety programs.

The number of registered OHVs in North Dakota has grown steadily, especially in the past decade.



Facts & Figures

The North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department offers a OHV Safety Education course for youth, ages 12-16, who do not have a valid driver's license or OHV Safety Certificate, and who plan to ride OHVs on lands other than those owned by their parents or guardians. Upon taking a written exam and receiving a score of 75% or higher, the student receives a safety certification card.

The Student Safety Course includes:

- An OHV student safety manual
- A booklet covering OHV laws
- A skills certification form

The North Dakota Powersports Dealers Association is a network of professional powersport dealers dedicating time and resources to protect, preserve and expand their businesses and the organizations associated with them. The NDPDA understands the power of strength in numbers and working together in a pro-active manor to improve the overall business atmosphere. For more information go to www.ndpda.com/index.html.

Facts & Figures

The North Dakota Off-Road Vehicle Association (NDORVA), known informally as the North Dakota Dirt Riders, is a nonprofit group that aims to improve rider access and safety for ATV and dirt bike enthusiasts. NDORVA hopes to work with local, county and state governments to develop improved trail systems and safety courses. The organization also serves to bring people together that share a common interest, Off-Road riding. The North Dakota Off-Road Vehicle Association originally started in the early 1990s but quietly fell away. In 2005 members of a Bismarck riding club, the Dirt Riders, saw the need for a statewide organization and reorganized NDORVA. The group is always looking for new members with a strong interest in riding. For more information go to www.nddirtriders.org/.



Off-Highway Vehicle Utilization in North Dakota 2006 - 2009 Strategic Plan Update

For more information contact:

North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department, 1600 East Century Avenue, Suite 3, Bismarck, ND 58503

Phone: 701-328-5357, Fax 701-328-5363, Email: parkrec@nd.gov, Web: www.parkrec.nd.gov