

## **Special Committee on State Trails Policy –**

### **ATV / Snowmobile Fuel Tax**

It is common knowledge that Snowmobile fuel tax revenue is the primary source of funding for snowmobile trails, with snowmobile registration fees being second. (The tax revenue is based on an estimate of 50 gallons per registered snowmobile annually, though the season commonly lasts only 2-3 months.)

For ATV's, the primary source of revenue is derived from ATV registrations, with the ATV fuel tax being second. In the case of ATV's, the revenue only uses an estimate of 25 gallons per registered ATV annually, where the usage can be spread out over 11 months of the year. Even though this usage time is much greater for ATV's, this outdated estimate of fuel used is still employed in the appropriation formula. While the registration cost is the same for snowmobiles and ATV's, the registered number of ATV's is known to have exceeded that of snowmobiles for some time now. This would lead one to believe there should be a greater amount of funds available for developing and maintaining ATV trails. (The promise of that additional trail funding is what prompted ATV owners to support a measure to more than double their registration fee in recent years.)

We would request that the ATV fuel tax allocation be raised to a more realistic figure of at least 50 to 75 gallons annually.

#### **Additional suggestions:**

Remove the registration and fuel tax revenue funds from under the jurisdiction of the DNR, and place them under control of a separate agency, administered by representatives of the ATV community.

Audit funds given to counties for trail development and maintenance on a regular basis.

ATV funds should not be used to build trails designed for others to use while limiting ATV usage on them to a short period of time each year. If ATV's and Snowmobiles pay their own way for trails, would it not seem fair to have some contribution from the hikers, bikers, and other silent sport trail users?

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