

[November 8, 2006]

Greetings; My husband William Bablitch and I are residents of Presque Isle, WI in Vilas county. We have owned our property for over 20 years and changed our residency from Madison to Presque Isle last year so that we could have a voice in the issues that affect northern Wisconsin.

I was proud of our Presque Isle town and Vilas county when both approved the prohibition of ATV trails on public lands owned by those two entities. To see that public sentiment now being challenged again is an affront to the will of the people and the nature of our fragile natural resources.

I am an avid outdoors person. I own a resort in Presque Isle and I know from first hand experience that the reason people come to northern Wisconsin is to experience that part of nature and the north that is not found in other parts of our state or the country.

I am also an avid kayaker and a member of the growing population of silent sports participants. To think that our lakes and rivers, such as the Manitowish River, will be compromised by the development of ATV trails that will affect our shorelines, wetlands and water quality in order to meet the interests of one sport is appalling. Surely there are places to locate these sports that will not destroy in weeks what nature has taken centuries to nurture.

I applaud the principle of a stakeholders group and efforts to mediate the interests of these various constituencies. I am a mediator by profession and support your efforts to surface the issues and look for solutions. But, do not forget that there is a constituency that is not at the table but whose interests must also be addressed: the generations of citizens who will follow us and deserve to have their interests in our environment and our northwoods protected as well.

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