

November 29, 2007

Mr. Mark Holsten, Commissioner
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155

Mr. Bruce Martinson, Chair
Cook County Board of Commissioners
411 W. Second Street
Grand Marais, MN 55604-1150

Mr. Bill Kron, Chair
St. Louis County Board of Commissioners
St. Louis County Courthouse
100 N. Fifth Avenue W.
Duluth MN 55802-1292

Re: ATV Use on the North Shore State Trail

Dear Messrs. Holsten, Martinson and Kron:

The Lake County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution in 2001 supporting ATV use on the North Shore State Trail (NSST). Since that time, there has been some movement toward this end including unsuccessful legislation for opening part of the trail in limited portions of Lake and St. Louis Counties.

The Lake County Board of Commissioners would now like to renew their efforts towards opening portions of the NSST to ATV use and to invite the DNR and Cook and St. Louis Counties to join in this effort. In recent discussions, a tentative proposal has surfaced that would open the Trail to ATV use starting on the Normana Road in St. Louis County, travel Northeasterly through Lake County and possibly end in Schroeder in Cook County.

A portion of the NSST in Lake County is already being used for ATV use as part of the Moosewalk ATV Trail. Lake County's policy on recreational trail development is to utilize existing trail corridors whenever possible. The NSST corridor is currently open to snowmobiling, hiking, horseback riding and mountain biking. Infrastructure such as bridges and culverts are already in place. The two main obstacles for ATV use are the addition of

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ATVs to existing trail permits on private lands and on Superior National Forest land and areas where the existing trail crosses wetlands.

A feasibility study entitled, **ATV Use on the North Shore State Trail**, was completed by the DNR Trails and Waterways Department in 2006. The estimated cost for projected modifications on the sections mentioned in this letter came to \$292,800.00. This amount would be greater now due in part to an increase in wetland mitigation credit prices, which will only increase in the future.

The Lake County Board of Commissioners is of the opinion that now is the time for the three most Easterly counties of the Arrowhead to join with the DNR to plan together and to seek legislation that would fund the accommodation of summer use ATVs on the North Shore State Trail. To this end, I would like to propose a meeting in the near future to discuss this project. Please let me know your thoughts and send me your suggestions for a timely meeting on this project. Thank you for your time and please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Derrick L. Goutermont, Chair
Lake County Board of Commissioners

DLG/whr

cc: The Honorable Tom Bakk
The Honorable David Dill