



## Minnesotans for Responsible Recreation

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### For immediate release

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### **- Radio spot asks Governor Ventura, "Where is the DNR?" in ATV protections**

Minnesota's DNR and the ATV lobby have been touting proposals designed to convince us they can promote ATV use and protect our environment too.

To clear the air,<sup>3</sup> Minnesotans for Responsible Recreation, MRR, is broadcasting a radio plea to Governor Ventura asking, "Where is the DNR providing our state comprehensive protection from ATV impacts? Jeff Brown, MRR Co-Director says "MRR wants the DNR to implement three basic policies to protect our state from the impacts of ATVs":

First, the DNR should declare a "designated routes only" policy requiring ATVs to stay on trails posted "open". Brown says, "This is what every neighboring state has already done, and what land managers and enforcement officials in our state want. It was the DNR Commissioner himself who said 'Nobody ever tears down 'open signs'". Current DNR proposals do nothing to change DNR policy that opens all trails to ATVs in 95% of our forests.

Second, MRR wants the DNR to complete objective environmental review of all ATV proposals to select acceptable routes. Where is the DNR? While the DNR professes environmental stewardship they are appealing a Cass County District Court order requiring them to complete environmental review of ATV proposals in North Central Minnesota.

Third, the DNR should provide adequate enforcement to keep ATVs on selected trails. MRR is calling on Governor Ventura to use the current balance of \$8 million in off-road vehicle accounts to boost ATV enforcement statewide.

MRR believes it is the \$12.5 million in DNR gas-tax accounts dedicated to off-road vehicles that is fueling the expansion of ATV use in Minnesota. MRR has requested an audit of these accounts after finding that motorized clubs are using this money to bulldoze illegal trails on public land. The state's legislative audit commission is reviewing this request which can be viewed on MRR's website.

Where is the DNR providing comprehensive statewide protection from ATV impacts? Gas-tax funding has confused the DNR's mission with that of the ATV lobby. Until the DNR chooses to protect our parks and forests over public relations and promotion of ATVs, not a single penny should be spent for mile of ATV trail developed. Minnesotans for Responsible Recreation urges Minnesotans everywhere to call Governor Ventura and tell him so. Hear "Where is the DNR?" and view ATV damage and DNR documents at MRR's website: [www.MnResponsibleRec.org](http://www.MnResponsibleRec.org).

Minnesota's voice for peace and quiet & healthy trails and waterways.