

MONTANA **SUMMER 2022** ***TRAIL RIDER NEWS***

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTANA TRAIL VEHICLE RIDERS ASSOCIATION



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2022 MTVRA State Ride

By Carl Siroky

This year's MTVRA State Ride occurred on May 13th near Cascade Montana at the Willo Ranch Company property, formerly known to many as Bull Run Guest Ranch. The event was held in conjunction with the Hamilton Memorial Trail Ride event.

Thanks go out to MTVRA's Russ and Mona Ehnes for their work in organizing and hosting the State Ride event, to the members of the Great Falls Trail Bike Riders Association (GFTBRA) who helped guide rides, and especially Willo Ranch Company for generously letting us enjoy their ranch for the weekend.

Turnout was great with over one hundred people attending the combined event. There were four people in attendance who were past MTVRA presidents, twenty-three people signed up to be new MTVRA members and nineteen people renewed their MTVRA membership at the event.

The weather was dry and cool throughout the weekend, which was great for trail riding.

On Saturday night most of the participants participated in the steak dinner that was catered for the Hamilton Memorial event. Following dinner there were drawings of raffle tickets for numerous prizes.



MTVRA On-Line Membership

For those that would like to enroll as new members or renew existing memberships on-line you can:

- Go to the URL: <https://montana-trail-vehicle-riders-association.square.site>
- Scan this code using a smartphone or tablet for an embedded link.



MONTANA TRAIL RIDER NEWS

Is published by the Montana Trail Vehicle Riders Association. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the MTVRA or its officers. Your editorial or news contributions would be appreciated. Carl Siroky, Editor, CarlSiroky@hotmail.com.

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MTVRA BYLAWS - Current bylaws, with changes approved June 2006, are available by request to Mona Ehnes, mona.ehnes@gmail.com

Electronic Network

Attention: Members if you are not receiving email news, please send in your email addresses. The cost of producing the newsletter, shortage of volunteers, and the real time lag in getting information to you in a timely fashion make the electronic network an important tool now and for

the future. We promise we will not deluge you with excess notices. All news releases sent to MTVRA will be reviewed for importance to Montana before sending out. To be added to the network, simply email mona.ehnes@gmail.com and ask to be added.

USFS Reveals Trail Partner Survey Results

From ARRA March 2022

In the fall of 2021, the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC) encouraged its State Partners to participate in a United States Forest Service (USFS) survey conducted by the USFS in partnership with the University of Colorado Denver. The survey, which had over 1,300 respondents, aimed to provide insights into the experiences and perceptions of trail volunteers and partners working with the Forest Service.

The survey results are intended to help inform the implementation of the Forest Service's 10-Year Trail Shared Stewardship Challenge (Trail Challenge), which focuses on working in shared stewardship with partners and volunteers to increase the collective capacity to maintain trails and increase trail sustainability.

Perhaps the most glaring revelation from the survey was that the USFS recognizes it has staffing issues, and it relies heavily on volunteers to build and maintain safe, sustainable trails. USFS employees are asked to do more with fewer resources, which means recreation sites may not receive all the attention they deserve from volunteer engagement. Additionally, the USFS recognizes it needs to improve communications and advertise opportunities to increase volunteer involvement to expand and enhance partnerships and address adverse staffing impacts.

"Partnerships and a clear understanding of what's needed on our trails is vital to keeping public lands open for the riding and driving we love so much," said Duane Taylor, Executive Director of the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council. "We appreciate the U.S. Forest Service for reaching out and trying to better understand its partners and also the volunteers who provided such valuable feedback. Most people don't know that thousands of volunteers put in tremendous amounts of work on public trails nationwide. We'll maintain our relationships with the USFS and the OHV community, and continue working with agencies, enthusiasts, and the industry to fulfill our mission of creating a positive future for OHV recreation."

To go to NOHVCC and view more information about the Trail Partner Survey scan the code at the right using a smartphone or tablet for an embedded link.



Places to Ride - Motorized Recreation Maps

By Carl Siroky,



During 2018 Seth McArthur with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) brought a website online to provide a single place to share statewide snowmobile and ohv digital maps with the motorized recreation community.

This website is outside the FWP website and contains maps for snowmobile and ohv recreational use on public lands in Montana. The maps are standardized, area specific, and provided through the Avenza Maps platform. All the maps are available for free download and were provided through support from Montana Trail Vehicle Riders Association (MTVRA) and Montana Snowmobile Association (MSA).

To go to the website, scan the printed code using a smartphone or tablet for an embedded link.



[Summer Motorized Trail Map](#)



[Winter Snowmobile Map](#)

Questions about or suggested improvements to the site can be directed to:

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2021 Summer Motorized Trail Pass Projects

Information from Seth McArthur
Snowmobile & OHV Program Manager
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks



During the 2021 cycle there were five grants awarded to applicants for Summer Motorized Trail Pass Projects. These projects were completed during the summer construction season using \$316,199 of the available funding collected through the Summer Motorized Trail Pass Program.

The table below provides information about the grant applications that were awarded and the projects which were completed during the summer and early fall of 2021. Reports from some of these projects were included in the Spring 2022 edition of this newsletter. To see the newsletter scan the printed code using a smartphone or tablet for an embedded link.



Applicant Name	Amount	Project Description
Great Falls Trail Bike Riders Association	\$80,004	Jefferson Division: High Springs, Castles, and Basin Creek ATV Trail
Montana Trail Vehicle Riders Association	\$100,000	Motorized Trail Maintenance on USFS Designated Trails
Capital Trail Vehicle Association	\$20,940	Little Hellgate Singletrack Reconstruction and Reroute
Citizens For Balanced Use	\$74,600	Trail Tread Restoration, Weed Treatments, and Trail Signage
Montana Nightriders Snowmobile Club	\$40,655	Summer OHV Trails in the West End of Mineral County

The grants for projects to be completed during the summer and fall of 2022 were still under review and had not been awarded at the time of this writing.

For more information about the Summer Motorized Trail Pass on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks website scan the code at the right using a smartphone or tablet for an embedded link.



Why Should We Have Event Insurance?

By Mona Ehnes

When a club or association holds an event on BLM, USFS, or at a county, state- or privately-owned facility (such as was the case with the recent MTVRA State Ride) an insurance liability policy helps protect the club, officers, volunteers and landowner from litigation should there be an injury during the event. The agency or entities who oversee the property and/or facility where the event is held will receive a certificate showing they have been added to the policy as 'additional insured'. This insurance requirement has been in place for many years.



The typical mindset of people is that they would never sue and generally people intend to accept responsibility for their own actions. However, most people may not be aware that if your health insurance company must pay a large medical claim for your injury at an event, they can file a claim to have the promoter of the event or entity where the event was held declared financially liable for consequences of the accident.

Getting this insurance policy in place may sound simple but it isn't. After the 9/11 terrorist attack on our country, insurance companies changed the way

they looked at all risks and, in the process reassessed motorized recreation to be a "high risk". The event insurance available for competition events is generally a Lloyds of London policy. As an AMA (American Motorcyclist Association) chartered club, MTVRA applies for a 'sanction number' for an event and with it for insurance for that event. Certificates are sent to the facility or agency prior to the event.

Along with having the insurance the event organizer is required to get signed waivers and releases from the attendees and participants at the event. Parents or guardians are required to sign releases for minors. These signed waivers are required to be kept on file for a time determined by the State. An 'event entry form' is provided for all to fill out and from that information an on-line report is filed with AMA showing the actual participants, such as riders and passengers. The insurance company requires that all attendees at a recreational event sign the releases because there isn't any way for the areas to be blocked off to keep riders and attendees separated as there is at a competition event.

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Little Hellgate Single-Track Trail Improvement Project

From Jody's email communication to CTVA members

Single trackers- As most of you are aware, in 2021 the Capital Trail Vehicle Association (CTVA) was awarded funding for a singletrack project on the Little Hellgate trail in the Big Belt Mountains. This grant is administered through FWP and funded from the proceeds of the Summer Motorized Trail Pass program. The project reroutes approximately one-half mile of trail, bypassing a steep washed-out section and eliminate a "road to trail" conversion. In addition, this grant would provide funds to repair damaged switchbacks, and new jack-leg fencing.

Under the contract, we have two years to complete this project.

Well, last year, extreme fire conditions, poor air quality, Forest Service backlog and covid made it very difficult to move forward, so no progress was made.

Knowing that we have only this season to wrap the project up, I was beginning to get a bit nervous. It would be a shame to lose this rare opportunity due to a backlog in the Forest Service or a scheduling conflict with the trail contractor.

Recently, on a Friday evening, between snowstorms, I received a message from the contractor. He informed me he had an opening in his schedule and planned on transporting his equipment to the Little Hellgate project area. Trail work would begin Monday afternoon!

Fortunately, a few volunteers were willing to donate some time over the weekend to prep for his arrival. Thanks to Michaela, Abe, and Ash, we were able to clear debris, cut downfall, and flag the half-mile reroute, finishing up just as the sun was setting on Sunday evening. Whew!



With Forest Service approval, excavator work began Monday, on schedule.

Tuesday, I met up with the new FS Trail Coordinator and seasonal Trail Steward at the Hellgate kiosk to view the project site. We arrived at the Harris Gulch trailhead about noon. We were surprised to see how much work was already completed. The damaged switchbacks were rebuilt and the entrance to the lower section reconstructed. The excavator had already moved on to the reroute and was progressing nicely.

After walking the flagged reroute and surveying the area, the FS folks met the operator and discussed trail design, location, and construction. This was a great opportunity to share information of our past successes and showcase a well-engineered, sustainable trail.

The new trail was completed early Thursday. That night it snowed six inches. Timing is everything.

As part of the grant agreement, a crew of CTVA volunteers will replace the old jack-leg fence at Harris Gulch by seasons end.

This new section is smooth and flows nicely with the original trail.

Oh yeah, and the views from the trail are to Canyon Ferry Lake as well as the Bridger, Tobacco Root, Pintler, and Little Belt Mountain ranges.

If you get the chance, check it out!

Thanks! Jody Loomis, CTVA

Montana Objects to Participating in the Administration's 30x30 initiative

From ARRA

In early March, Governor Greg Gianforte announced Montana will not be participating in the U.S. Department of the Interior's (DOI) efforts to advance President Biden's "30x30" initiative, calling it "long on philosophy and short on detail." The "30x30" initiative aims to conserve 30 percent of America's lands and waters by 2030. The U.S. Geological Survey indicates that 12 percent of U.S. land is in conservation status. To achieve 30 percent by 2030, another 440 million acres would need to be put into conservation, an area nearly five times the size of Montana.

In a letter to the Department of Interior (DOI), Governor Gianforte cited the following four reasons why Montana will not participate in the effort:

- The DOI's lack of requisite authority;
- Even if the DOI had the authority to undertake the actions outlined in E.O. 14008, those actions are inefficient and would cause significant harm to Montana and its private landowners;
- Issuing ambiguous questions for comment does not constitute the public notice required for federal action; and
- It is unclear how the DOI plans to fund the Atlas or any other associated efforts.

The letter was endorsed by the Montana Departments of Natural Resources and Conservation; Fish, Wildlife and Parks; Environmental Quality; Agriculture; and Livestock. "At a time when inflation is at a 40-year high and soaring, it is irresponsible to commit funds to advance inefficient and wasteful efforts, especially when the identified goals are already successfully met by the states and other stakeholders," the Governor said.

To view the governor's letter in its entirety scan the code at the right using a smartphone or tablet for an embedded link.



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What's Wrong in this Picture - Carelessness or Ignorance?

by Carl Siroky

What's wrong in these pictures? The pictures are from Pipestone at the Marsh Mine trailhead and at the bridge by the mine.



- At the trailhead the 50-inch trail restriction sign, fencing, and gate are disassembled and scattered on the ground



- At the bridge over the creek to the cabin the 50-inch OHV is barely able to squeeze across the bridge.

A recent posting on a private Facebook page from Cheri Lee, Administrator for the page "Montana Riders – Dirt Bikes and ATV's," gave disappointing insight with pictures and comments that indicate an ignorance, carelessness, or both regarding the 50-inch rule.

In the post, Cheri shows extensive violations of the 50-inch rule and resulting resource damage caused by the violators.

I've copied and inserted the post with the comments below to share what is becoming of a favorite OHV riding area of many.



Cheri's Post:
 This is going to get our FREE PUBLIC LANDS CLOSED OR PAY TO PLAY!!!
 Know your trails! If you don't fit then don't go there!
 DON'T RUIN IT FOR EVERYONE!
 A trail sticker costs \$25 for 2 years people!!!
 THESE ARE LOCAL PEOPLE not out of states or tourists! These were not the usual rentals I see violating trails....

Comments:
FB Commenter #1: It's all about the me and entitlement attitude, it stinks! I don't understand why folks can't just follow the rules and leave it better than you found it.

Replies:
FB Commenter #2: Looks like it fits to me Also not sure what a trail sticker has to with anything but you don't need them at pipestone....

FB Commenter #3 reply to FB Commenter #2: I'm pretty sure you do.

FB Commenter #2 reply to FB Commenter #3: you don't. But buy one if you want to. Registration sticker yes. Trail sticker no.

FB Commenter #3 reply to FB Commenter #2: sounds good

FB Commenter #4: We were stopped on trail by 4 wheeler cops. Permanent required. Trail sticker is not. I did notice r2r tracks all over and making new trails and people being stupid in them.

Replies:
FB Commenter #5 reply to FB Commenter #4: I saw this issue coming a long time ago.

Members from MTVRA and several other OHV clubs have put many hours into picking up trash and stewarding the area for responsible OHV use over the years.

I visited with Cheri about this situation, and found she is very passionate about and committed to keeping Pipestone open for OHV use and really discouraged to see the extensive damage caused to ATV trails by users with OHVs that are over 50-inches. As a motorcycle rider this is the same kind of frustration I have experienced when I see ATVs using single track trails. Cheri wants to see more help from clubs to return to stewarding the popular riding area.

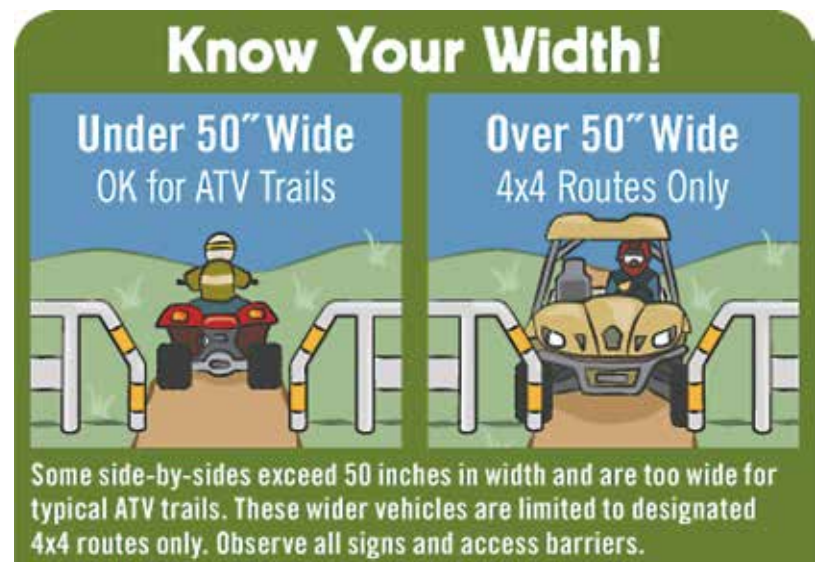
With the significant increase in the number of OHV's sold in the last few years It appears that people that bought the powerful OHVs that are over 50 inches wide are unaware of the 50-inch trail restrictions.

If the OHV is over 50 inches wide, then it must stay on the designated 4x4 jeep trails and can't be on the ATV trails. They are cool machines and there are lots of designated 4x4 trails.

Cheri is right.... ignoring trail restrictions gives the people who have the vision of "non-motorized use only on ALL public land" the evidence they need to petition the federal agency land managers to close ALL OHV trails in an area. These folks do take pictures, they do know about the resource damage caused, and they do work closely with the BLM and National Forest Supervisors.

The campaign for public education about the 50-inch restriction needs to be reinvigorated to help steward our OHV riding areas

The 50 Inch Rule



Some side-by-sides exceed 50 inches in width and are too wide for typical ATV trails. These wider vehicles are limited to designated 4x4 routes only. Observe all signs and access barriers.



Understanding 50-inch ATV gates

From the Standard Examiner, By LYNN R. BLAMIRE

The variety of ATV trails available to ride in Utah has been the subject of this column for the past 13 years. Some of that variety is reflected in the width of the trails. So what about those 50-inch gates? Trail restrictions exist for different reasons depending on the particular trail.

To better understand, we need to examine some land use history. Before 1970, there were no restrictions on cross-county travel. Dirt roads had mining, ranching, logging and other commercial purposes. Recreation played a minor role.

But 1970 saw the introduction of the Honda ATC – a three-wheeled, single-rider vehicle designed for recreation. That was followed in 1982 by the first four-wheeler that opened a new world of backcountry recreation. People began getting off paved roads in a big way.

In 1999 the Clinton administration moved to limit the development of new roads by passing the Clinton Roadless Rule. This required National Forests to inventory roadless areas by a specific set of standards. The new land designations were called Inventoried Roadless Areas.

Under new management rules, no new roads were allowed to be built in these areas. The new rules allowed for these route designations – single-track motorcycle, 50-inch-or-less motorized, trails open to all motorized vehicles, open areas, and specifically designated routes.

The Forest Service attempted to designate some roads that already existed in these roadless areas as “trails open to all motorized vehicles.” Some organizations felt this was a move disguised to allow roads in roadless areas and filed suit. The ruling was against the designation and required the Forest Service to remove this class of road from roadless areas.

In this ruling, however, the Forest Service was allowed to have trails open to vehicles less than 50 inches in width in a roadless area. The judge ruled that routes less than 50 inches constituted a trail and was not a road in disguise. This set a standard throughout the country allowing trails limited to 50 inches or less in Inventoried Roadless Areas.

With the popularity of the single-rider ATV came a new kind of recreation on public lands. These machines were agile and as they became more powerful, they became a preferred mode of transportation, compared to bulky full-sized trucks or jeeps. Trail systems were designed, engineered and constructed to accommodate these narrower machines.

The original purpose of larger side-by-sides was primarily for farmers, ranchers, and other commercial utility purposes. In 2004, Yamaha introduced a UTV called the Rhino, a sporty side-by-side that was built for recreation. People purchasing these large machines soon learned that they were not able to use them on trails restricted to 50 inches.

ATV manufacturers responded by developing a 50-inch-wide side-by-side that became extremely popular. The owners of larger UTVs saw these 50-inch two-person machines on the narrower trails and issues developed.



Safety quickly became a problem. Some people found ways around the restrictive gates, not knowing the nature of the trail. I know of someone who got stuck deep in a canyon too narrow to navigate. The situation required a costly rescue.

Sometimes drivers of large UTVs try to access trails designed for smaller ATVs in roadless areas. Some of these trails are there because of a court ruling, where otherwise they would not exist.

The reasons, then, for width restrictions could be because of the physical nature of the trail, the natural beauty of the trail is enhanced by a narrow width, or the trail is in a roadless area and exists specifically because of its width.

Where possible, trail systems have adjusted widths to accommodate these larger UTVs. The Paiute Trail now has three width designations and the Arapeen has expanded over 77 miles of trail to 66 inches.

Each Forest District has a Motorized Travel Plan that is kept current. These maps note trail restrictions so you can know before you go.

I have a UTV so I can take passengers. I also have ATVs that fit on trails with 50-inch restrictions.

When you go, take plenty of water, keep the rubber side down and respect the 50-inch gates. That narrow trail could be in a roadless area.

You can email Lynn Blamires at quadmanone@gmail.com.

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America's Outdoor Recreation Act Receives Unanimous Committee Vote

June 14, 2022

By Kali Kotoski

America's Outdoor Recreation Act of 2022 sailed through the Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources without a single dissenting partisan vote. Introduced by committee chairman Joe Manchin of West Virginia and John Barrasso of Wyoming, the landmark legislation comes with a bevy of AMA-supported acts. The Colorado Outdoor Recreation & Economy Act, the Simplifying Access to Outdoor Recreation Act, the Recreation Not Red-Tape Act, the Gateway Community and Recreation Enhancement Act, the Federal Interior Lands Media Act, and the Biking on Long Distance Trails Act are all included.

"The last time outdoor recreation legislation of this size and scale was enacted was 1963," said Senator Manchin.

The act aims to enhance outdoor recreation opportunities on land managed by the federal government. Specific provisions in the act include streamlining the permitting processes for guides operating on federal lands, expanding broadband internet connectivity at recreation sites, and supporting public-private partnerships to expand parking facilities. The legislation also seeks to promote collaboration between federal agencies while working with gateway communities grappling with an unprecedented surge in tourism.

The act now goes to the Senate floor before heading to the House of Representatives.



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Would Others Know Who To Contact If You Were Involved In An Accident?

From NOHVCC

One of the great things about OHV recreation is that we can get outdoors, often far from services. Many of us love to take our machines deep in the backcountry to escape our day-to-day routines. Of course, this sort of recreation requires responsibility. We should wear appropriate safety gear, recreate responsibly, travel with others and plan ahead. But, despite our best effort incidents happen. Even incidents that may be unrelated to the OHV recreation itself are possible – heart attacks, strokes, forest fires, animal run-ins and any number of other maladies can and do happen. As a result, it is imperative that we are prepared whenever we get in or throw a leg over our machines.

While there are lots of important steps to take to ensure your safe return from a day (or more) on the trails, NOHVCC Alabama Partner, Steve Newton has provided NOHVCC with one very easy idea to make sure your loved ones can be reached in the event of any incident.

Steve said, "One of our members on our last ride mentioned that if something happened during the ride, he would not know who to call for an emergency. So, I came up with a form and have asked our members to fill it out and keep a copy in their unit." The form (can be viewed on the NOHVCC website) includes simple information like name, address, emergency contact information, insurance information, etc. You could simply fill out the form, print and laminate it and keep it in or on your vehicle. Then any riding partners, good Samaritans or emergency personnel would know who to reach out to in the event of an emergency.

Steve even took it one step further saying, "Also, Patricia (Steve's wife) and I have started wearing "Dog Tags" with our information on them. We thought that since we are on the road so much, if something happens then the police would have our contact information."

As we all increasingly rely on cell phones and other electronic devices to navigate our lives, we can often overlook simple ways to be prepared. Steve and his club have come up with an easy way to ensure that our loved ones can be notified of emergencies – let us all follow their lead.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION	
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	CELL PHONE
	EMAIL ADDRESS
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	RELATIONSHIP
	HOME PHONE
	CELL PHONE
SECONDARY CONTACT:	NAME
	RELATIONSHIP
	HOME PHONE
	CELL PHONE
INSURANCE INFORMATION:	COMPANY
	POLICY #
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:	

International Trails Summit

By Bob Walker



The International Trails Symposium and Training Institute and Summit, co-hosted by American Trails and the Professional Trail Builders Association, provides training opportunities and amazing networking for trails enthusiasts. It happens close to us in Reno this next year. It is highly recommended you consider attending!

American Trails (AT) and the Professional Trail Builders Association (PBTB) will join forces to co-host the International Trails Summit (a collaborative effort of the 25th International Trails Symposium and Training Institute and the Sustainable Trails Conference) in Reno, Nevada during the week of April 17, 2023. The combined, high-impact event will convene a diverse trail and outdoor community to

learn, build relationships, and find solutions to the challenges of developing and elevating outdoor recreation opportunities for all. The joint conference will also feature the World Trails Network – Hub for the Americas (WTN-Americas).

For more information scan the code at the right using a smartphone or tablet.



Trailer Safety

From NOHVCC

As many OHV enthusiasts rely on trailers to get their OHVs to and from riding areas, NOHVCC is excited to participate in Trailer Safety Week starting June 5. Help NOHVCC support this important initiative by sharing the links and articles below in club newsletters, on social media, and websites.

Each year the National Association of Trailer Manufacturers (NATM) promotes this traffic safety effort which, "aims to close the gap of communication between trailer manufacturers, dealers and end-users of trailers to make towing safer and raise awareness of safe towing practices."

The need for safe and responsible practices does not begin or end at the trailhead. Responsible OHV enthusiasts will protect themselves and others as well as their vehicles



by engaging in safe trailering. The articles below were shared by Polaris and provide OHV-specific information about safe loading and towing – read them yourself to brush up and share them so others can be better prepared as we move into the riding season for much of the Country. To read more about this, follow this QR code:



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Montana Bear ID Tips

Learn how to tell the difference between a grizzly bear and black bear.

Despite the names grizzly and black, coat color is the least reliable characteristic for identifying bears. For instance, grizzlies may be pale—almost luminous—blond, or reddish blond, light brown, darker brown, or even almost black. To add to the confusion, the common name grizzly is derived from the term “grizzled,” which refers to white-tipped hair. Grizzled hair occurs mainly on the back and shoulders; thus, from a distance, a grizzly bear appears to have darker legs and lighter upper parts. Incidentally, it is to this “grizzled” or frosted appearance of the coat that the great bear owes its nickname of “silvertip.” But not all grizzly bears have grizzled hair or are deserving of their nickname. And to complicate matters just a bit more, black bears, despite their name, are not always black. They can also be brown, cinnamon, blond, or a combination of light and dark hair.

A grizzly typically has a concave or dish shaped profile that extends from between its eyes to the end of its nose. A black bear normally has a long, fairly straight profile from forehead to nose tip. The dished-face profile of the grizzly makes the face appear broader (when seen full front) than that of the black bear; the face and forehead of the black bear appears more round.



A “Silvertip” and “on-black” black bear



Notice the dish-shaped face of the grizzly bear on the left and the straight profile of the black bear on the right.

Grizzly bears have smaller, more rounded ears, whereas the ears of a black bear appear larger, longer, more erect, and pointed.



Most people tend to overestimate the weight and size of bears. A typical adult female grizzly weighs 200-350 pounds and adult males weigh 300-650 pounds. An adult black bear, which can easily weigh 200-300 pounds, may not only weigh the same as a female grizzly but also be about the same height (3–3½ feet at the shoulder). Then too, an adult male black bear will be much heavier and taller than a young grizzly. And just in case it isn't difficult enough yet, try to imagine yourself distinguishing a juvenile dark-haired grizzly from an adult cinnamon-colored black bear in the dim light of an early morning or the long dusky shadows of an early fall evening.

Even under the best of conditions you'll find it's nearly impossible to judge the size and weight of a bear in the wild.

Other characteristics such diet, behavior, and habitat use are even less reliable because black bears and grizzly eat similar food, display similar behaviors, and occupy much of the same territory.

Analyzing the physical characteristics will enable you to tell the difference between a grizzly bear and a black bear. Key among these are the presence of a shoulder hump, the shape of the facial profile, the size and shape of the ears, and the length of the front claws.

Grizzly bears have well-developed shoulder muscles for digging and turning over rocks. These muscles appear as a prominent shoulder hump between the front shoulders, which is visible in profile. Black bears have no shoulder hump. A black bear's highest point, when it's on all fours, is the middle of the back or the rear, depending on how the bear is standing.



Notice the “hump” and lack of “hump”

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WE NEED PHOTOS!

We are always looking for good photos to feature in the newsletter. Set your camera to high-resolution and snap away. Who knows, your image may end up as the next newsletter cover! Send your photos to Carl Siroky, carlsiroky@hotmail.com Be sure to include the date the photo was taken, the location, the event (if applicable), and the names of anyone in the photo. You may also include a little write-up about the photo. We may include your story in the newsletter!

The difference in claws help distinguish the difference in the tracks.

Compared to a black bear's tracks, grizzly tracks of the front feet are more square. If you take a straight edge and hold it across the track of a grizzly front foot, just in front of the pad and behind the toe on either side, it will not cross the toe on the other side of the foot. A black bear front track is more rounded and a straight edge will cross the toe on the other side of the foot.



Visible, long claws on the grizzly on the left and much shorter claws with the black bear on the right.

grizzly bears, which are still federally protected across much of their Montana habitat. If you choose to hunt black bear, you need to be able to distinguish between a black bear and a grizzly bear.

Also, remember it's illegal in Montana to kill a female black bear accompanied by young.

As with all other aspects of hunting, it's the responsibility of the hunter to be sure of the species before pulling the trigger; claims of self-defense are exhaustively investigated. The decision to act responsibly is up to you.



Article reprinted from the Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks website.

Montana is bear country.

All bears are potentially dangerous. The majority of human-bear conflicts involve bears protecting their young or a food source. The overwhelming majority of bear encounters do not involve conflict.

Avoiding a conflict is easier than dealing with one.

- Bear spray is a highly effective, non-lethal bear deterrent. Carry EPA-approved bear spray and know how to use it.
- Never feed wildlife, especially bears. Bears that become food conditioned lose their natural foraging behavior and pose a threat to human safety. And it is illegal to feed bears in Montana.
- Know your bears. It is important to know the difference between grizzly bears and black bears, whether you are hunting or hiking.
- Always keep a safe distance from wildlife. Never intentionally get close to a bear.
- Loud noise, such as banging pots and pans, using an air horn or your car alarm, or shouting, is a simple, effective short-term way to deter a bear on private property.

Best practices for riding and running

- Anyone traveling quickly can be at high risk of surprising a bear.
- Slow down and look ahead, especially in areas of dense vegetation, berry patches, and around blind corners.
- Ride daylight and in groups.
- Make noise! Let bears hear you, especially where visibility is limited.



Telling the two species apart is important for you the hunter, the future of hunting, and

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General Map Reading Skills

From the Treasure State ATV December 2018 Newsletter

The following article is from the Treasure State ATV December 2018 newsletter. You can find more information about the club at <http://www.tsatv.org/>

Choose the right type of map for your needs.

There are numerous different types of maps. If you pick a map which isn't suited to your needs, you will have a hard time reading it. Some common types of maps include:

- General purpose maps, which are most roadmaps and atlas maps. They show basic information on cities, towns, roads, railways, parks, water bodies, and so on.
- Street maps, which show detailed information at the street level.
- Geologic maps, which help you identify geologic features such as fault lines.
- Topographical maps, which are maps that show contours and elevation.

Use the Map Key to learn how to interpret the map.

Somewhere on the map, you will find a "Key", also called a "legend." The information here is used for interpreting what you see on the map. On the key, you will discover symbols with a description of what they mean. That way when you see them on the map, you will know how to interpret them.

The key may also define different colors used on the map. It should show you the scale as well, which tells you how to interpret distances.

The map's grid.

Most maps have lines running across them vertically and horizontally to form a grid. Usually, the horizontal lines are lines of latitude. The vertical lines are lines of longitude. There are some exceptions, however. Some mapping companies may use unique proprietary grid systems.

Figure out what type of grid you are looking at, and then make sure you understand how to use it. If you have a set of latitude and longitude coordinates for a location, for example, you can trace across the lines on the map with your finger and find the spot on the map. This is also a good way to tell others where you are.

Know which direction is magnetic north. Turn the map in your hand so that it is oriented the same way you are facing.

"North" seems like it should be a simple concept, but there is actually more than one "north." Magnetic north is the direction your compass points and true north is north according to the axis of the Earth.

You cannot rely on the grid system alone to tell you where north is on your map. Look over the map carefully to see which direction the map designates as "north." Then check to see if it is true north or magnetic north. Otherwise, you could quickly become lost while attempting to use your compass and map to find your way.

Learn how to interpret contour lines.

Does your map have a lot of wavy lines on it, especially around hills and mountains? These lines follow the shape of the land and are referred to as "contour lines." The more space you see between the lines, the less steep the grade of the terrain is and the more densely the lines are packed together, the steeper the incline. The other useful thing to know about contour lines is that a single line represents a single elevation. Imagine for example that you see a line going around a mountain. If you could walk along that line all the way around the peak, you would be at the exact same elevation the entire time.

Keep in mind that contour lines do not show every single detail of the terrain. Think of them as being limited in terms of resolution. You could see contour lines which indicate relatively flat ground, but a deep ditch which doesn't appear on the map could separate them in real life.

There are two types of contour lines Index Lines and Interval Lines. Index lines are thick and include a number designating their elevation while interval lines are thin and have no number. The map should, however, tell you what each interval represents. If the interval is 50 feet, that means that each interval line is 50 feet above or below the nearest topographical line. So, if you are looking at an index line of 1,000 feet, and the map has a 50-foot interval, the next interval line above it is 1,050 feet. The interval line above that one is 1,100 feet. The interval line below the 1,000 feet index line is 950 feet and so on.

Incorrectly interpreting contour data could result in driving hundreds of miles only to encounter an impassable range. Or it could involve hiking for days just to hit a steep precipice you cannot possibly descend. For this reason, it is a crucial skill anytime you will be navigating uneven terrain.

Use context clues in your environment to determine your location.

How can you pinpoint your current location on the map? One useful trick is to check your environment for context clues. Say you see three large mountains to your left and a small, distinctively shaped pond in front of you. If you find these features on the map and you check the scale, you should be able to take a pretty good guess as to where you are. It is vital to make the correct determination about your current position before you attempt to try and navigate to your destination.

Align the map with the direction you are facing.

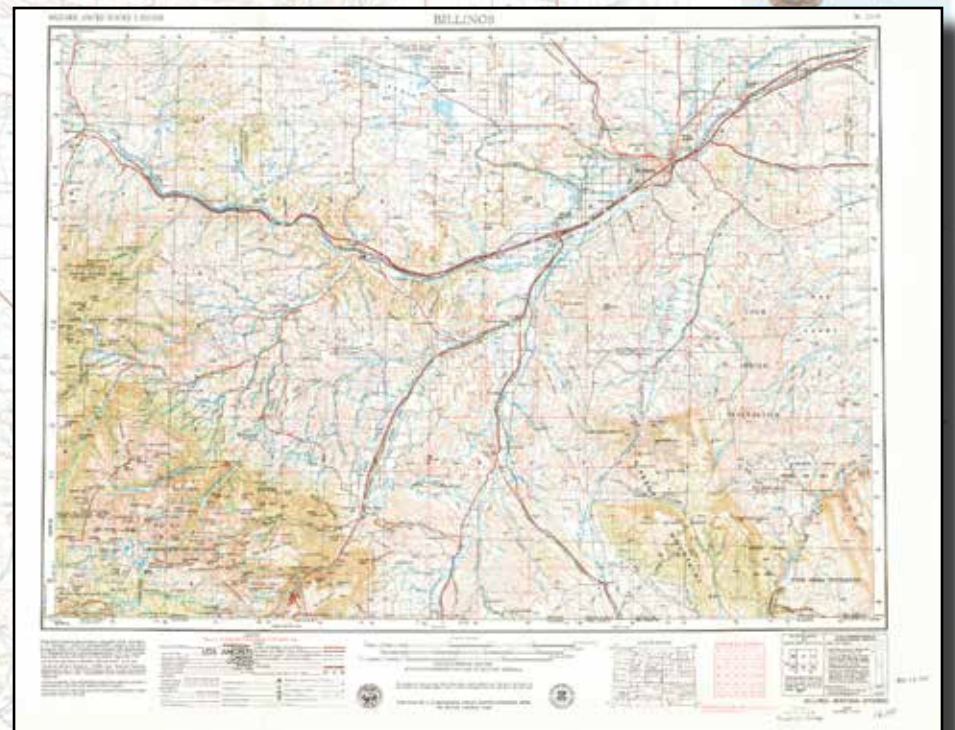
Usually, north is somewhere near the top of most maps. Personally, if I am trying to walk south, and I have the map oriented with north pointing up, I find it confusing. Everything is a mirror image of what I expect. In this situation, I recommend that you read the labels you need to, and then turn the map physically in your hands so that the top of the page is the direction you are facing. Following the map should be much easier.

As you start walking, keep your thumb on the place on the map where you checked it last. This technique is known as "thumbing".

This technique may not sound necessary, but it makes life simpler. It can be very easy to lose track of your position on a large, complicated map. But if you keep your thumb on your most recent position, you can check back in a few minutes and immediately see where you have been. Each time you reach a new landmark, you can move your thumb.

Conclusion: The Key to Getting the Most Out of Maps is Knowing How to Read Them

When you go out for a ride in a big unfamiliar area having a map with you is essential, but if you need to use a map merely possessing it will not be enough. You need to know how to interpret what is on it to find your way safely to your destination. Thankfully, learning to read maps is straightforward. Study some maps and practice close to home a few times before you head out on a journey. That way you will be prepared wherever you go.



Laws and Regulations for Operating an OHV in Montana

- MCA 23-8 — Off-Highway Vehicles
- MCA 61-8-401 — Driving under influence of alcohol or drugs
- MCA 61-9-418 — Motorcycle and quadricycle noise suppression devices – motorcycle and quadricycle spark arrester.
- To legally operate on roads (including roads on Public Land), operators of motorcycles must have a motorcycle endorsement on their driver's license (MCA 61-5-102).
- A person who operates an OHV must have in the person's possession a license to drive a motor vehicle, unless the person:
 - Is under 16 years of age but at least 12 years of age, AND;
 - At the time of operation of the OHV, has in their possession a certificate showing the successful completion of an OHV safety education course approved by FWP, AND;
 - Is in the presence of a person who possesses a valid driver's license, AND;
 - Is operating an OHV that is not subject to street legal requirements, i.e. operating on trails or unpaved highways (MCA 23-2-824).
- A person under 12 years of age may operate an OHV on unpaved roads or highways if the person is accompanied by an adult and the OHV is operated in a reasonable and prudent manner (MCA 23-2-824).
- A motorcycle operator may not carry a passenger unless the machine is designated for more than one rider, or another seat has been firmly attached to the rear or side of the operation and the position of the passenger does not interfere with the operation of the motorcycle or the view of the operator (MCA 61-8-359).
- All motor vehicles, including properly modified and licensed OHVs, are entitled to the full use of a traffic lane, and a vehicle may not be driven or operated in a manner that deprives any other vehicle of the full use of a traffic lane (MCA 61-8-359).
- An OHV may not be operated below the ordinary high-watermark of a stream on state, private or federal lands except on an established road or trail that enters or crosses a stream by the shortest practical or designated route to the road or trail on the opposite bank (MCA 61-8-371).
- A person operating an OHV shall operate the OHV in a reasonable and prudent manner at all times (MCA 61-8-359)

OHVs and Public Roads

OHVs must be street legal to be ridden on roads. To be street legal, vehicles must be registered for on-highway (paved roads only) use. These vehicles must have specific equipment (functioning headlamp, stop lamp, brakes, electric horn, rearview mirror, exhaust muffler, and spark arrester) and a license plate on the rear of the machine. (MCA 61-3-301)

Some Forest Service and BLM roads may be open for use by OHVs. Contact the appropriate Forest Service or BLM office for information such as road designations, closures, conditions, and maps.

OHVs and Trails

Most OHV trails are on public land. Trails are maintained by local clubs or government agencies, oftentimes with grant money provided by Montana State Parks. OHV funds are derived from OHV gas tax refund and decal fees.

For information about trail riding areas contact the local Forest Service or BLM office for a Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM).

Safety & Equipment

Helmet — Helmets can prevent and reduce the severity of head injuries. Helmets must meet DOT or Snell standards and be worn by those under 18 who operate or ride a motorcycle or quadricycle on streets or highways (MCA 61-9-417).

Eye Protection — Is recommended for operators of OHVs not equipped with a windshield.

Headlights — Motorcycles must be operated with lights on at all times when operated on any paved public roadway (MCA 61-8-359).

Muffler — All motorcycles or quadricycles operated on the streets and highways must be equipped at all times with noise suppression devices, including an exhaust muffler, in good working order and in constant operation. Or noise suppression device that prevents emission of sounds above 96 decibels during stationary sound testing (MCA 61-9-418).

Stop Lamp — All OHVs must be equipped with at least one properly functioning stop lamp while being operated on a paved highway (MCA 61-9-206; MCA 61-9-109 (5), (6) (a))


Rearview Mirror — Required when OHVs are operated on a paved highway (MCA 61-9-404; MCA 61-9-109 (5), (6)(a)).

You can find the Montana Code Annotated by following this QR code.



Reprinted from the Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks website.

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BMC 2022 Event Schedule

Date	Time	Event & Promoter Contact	Series / Notes
April 30	9 AM	Motoclimb Super Series, Dan Matsunaga 406-321-2245, Kevin Bromenshenk 512-623-0934	Moto Super Series
May 1	9 AM	Bentonite Brawl Cross Country, Evan Ask 406-671-7982, Casey VonOlnhausen 406-855-7640	US AMA Hard Enduro
May 15	9AM	Scrambles, Mark Cardwell 406-690-0125	
May 21-22	9 AM	Yellowstone Cross Country, Brendon Cady 406-794-6501, Bryan Roach 406-860-7665	406XC
June 4	6 PM	Big Sky Flat Track Under the Lights, Nick Gabel 406-839-3353	
June 5	9AM	Big Sky Challenge Trophy Hill Climb, Nick Gabel 406-839-3353	
June 4-5	Varies	Big Sky Challenge Pro Hill Climb, Austin Teyler 510-461-0943, Tyler Cardwell 406-794-8496	Rockwell WSPHS
June 11-12	8 AM	Spring Classic Motocross, Full Track, Alex Carmel 406-861-6082	Practice Saturday
June 25-26	9 AM	46th Elk Basin Cross Country, Trever Pankratz 406-208-2514	406XC
July 15	5 PM	Motocross Friday Night, Lonnie Quast 406-670-9751, Dusty Quast, 406-672-4817	
July 30	8 AM	Great American Trophy Hill Climb, Travis Spadt 406-694-3699, Erin Spadt 406-696-6804	
July 30-31	Varies	103rd Great American Pro Hill Climb, Cord Mitchell 406-672-8383, Shannon Chamberlain 406-694-6920	Rockwell WSPHS
Aug 7	6 PM	Flat Track Under the Lights, Nick Gabel 406-839-3353	
TBD		Supercross at Montana Fair, Lonnie Quast 406-670-9751, Dusty Quast, 406-672-4817	
Aug 27	9 AM	Nighttime Trophy Hill Climb, Lonnie Quast 406-670-9751, Dusty Quast, 406-672-4817	
Aug 27	1 PM	Nighttime Hill Climb, Lonnie Quast 406-670-9751, Dusty Quast, 406-672-4817	
Sept 10-11	8 AM	Fall Classic Motocross, Full Track, Mark Cardwell 406-690-0125	Practice Saturday
Sept 24	9PM	Motocross, Full Track, One Day, Jeremy Miller 307-899-1321, Brandon Voldseth 406-208-5225	
Oct 16	9 AM	Haunted Hill Climb, Zach Crone 406-663-3340, Shiloh Crone 406-633-3340	

Montana OHV Clubs

- | | |
|---|---|
| Billings Billings Motorcycle Club | Hamilton Ravalli Co Off-Road Users Assn. |
| Billings Rimrock Trail Riders | Helena Capital Trail Vehicle Assn. |
| Billings Treasure State ATV Assn. | Lincoln Blackfoot Valley OHV Assn. |
| Bozeman 5 Rivers Trail Riders | Manhattan Gallatin Valley Dirt Riders |
| Butte Mining City Trail Riders | Missoula Western Montana Trail Riders Assn. |
| Glendive The Ranch Riders | Seeley Lake Seeley-Swan ATV Club, Inc. |
| Great Falls Great Falls Trail Bike Riders Assn. | Trout Creek Cabinet Ridge Riders |
| Hamilton Bitterroot Ridge Runners | |

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"To create a positive future for Montana off-highway vehicle recreation by creating an ongoing communications forum through which OHV enthusiasts and organizations can share information and experiences; participate in educational opportunities; build partnerships with land managers, land owners, and supporters; and become partners in protecting, promoting and creating a positive image of OHV recreation."

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Additional money included for donations to the legal defense fund are greatly appreciated!