



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **GRANT BOOSTS INDIAN CREEK RECREATION EFFORTS**

**Uniontown, PA** – A Fayette County nonprofit is looking forward to a brighter 2021, thanks to a national recreation grant.

Yamaha Motor Corporation, U.S.A. recently awarded the Indian Creek Valley ATV Club \$10,000 as part of its Outdoor Access Initiative. Supported by Yamaha motorsports dealers and customers nationwide, the proactive, grassroots program promotes safe, responsible riding and sustainable, open riding areas.

Founded in 2000 as a family-oriented organization promoting outdoor safety and respect for the environment, the Indian Creek Valley ATV Club is located in Melcroft, Saltlick Township. It currently boasts more than 900 all-terrain vehicle, side-by-side and off-highway motorcycle riders from nine Pennsylvania counties and three adjacent states.

The club will use the grant to fund its ongoing trail restoration and maintenance efforts, as well as connect the Fayette organization with other Yamaha grant recipients, including off-highway vehicle (OHV) riding groups; state and national land managers; and local government agencies across the country.

ATV Club board member John Schwanekamp said the grant will allow for improved trail quality and safety for its ever-growing membership.

“Our club is a nonprofit that’s run exclusively by its member volunteers. We have no employees; no one is ever paid for the work that they do; and like so many churches, clubs and civic organizations, the volunteers with the most available time are usually the retirees,” Schwanekamp said. “Although we have 550 family memberships, the majority of our work - administrative and on the trails - is performed by 20 to 30 members in their 60s and 70s. So, for all of those volunteers who fill holes and ruts with shovels and rakes; who trim miles of trails with string trimmers; mow grass; spread gravel; and remove fallen trees with chainsaws, a \$10,000 grant means a lot.”

With Fayette County citizens desperate for entertainment and recreation options during the COVID-19 pandemic, the club’s membership surged in 2020. Pennsylvania officials also reported an increase in visitations to state-owned forests and game lands over the last year, Schwanekamp added.

“The ability to get outdoors and recreate safely while complying with social distancing guidelines has been invaluable during the pandemic. With 40 miles of trails, it’s not uncommon to ride for hours and not see another machine until a rider gets close to the parking lot,” he said. “Bouncing through the woods under a cool canopy of green foliage, breathing fresh air and maybe getting a little muddy is a great way to get away from it all, clear the cobwebs and have some healthy fun.”

The equivalent of 105 yearly membership fees, the grant will allow the club to buy materials and better tools, as well as occasionally hire an excavator to help with difficult trail work, Schwanekamp added.

“It all helps to lighten the load. Plus, at its core, applying for grants is a type of competition. You put your plans and strategies in the arena against those of organizations from all over the country,” he said. “When we’re awarded a grant, it’s a type of win, and those are always gratifying. We are proud of our efforts to keep local land accessible and safe for off-road enthusiasts.”

The club is open daily, year-round, with some restrictions during the spring and fall hunting seasons. It is one of only two public, off-highway vehicle-riding facilities in southwestern Pennsylvania, and boasts a variety of trails varying in challenge classification from “beginner” to “most difficult.”

To date, the club has received more than \$73,000 in grants from the Outdoor Access Initiative. Subsequent to the latest grant, Yamaha also released a Featured Case Study of the Indian Creek Valley ATV Club, which can be accessed online at [www.YamahaOAI.com/project/Indian-Creek-Valley-ATVClub](http://www.YamahaOAI.com/project/Indian-Creek-Valley-ATVClub).

For more information about the club, including membership requirements and property details, visit [www.icvatvclub.com](http://www.icvatvclub.com).

To learn more about Fayette County, visit [www.FayetteCountyPA.org](http://www.FayetteCountyPA.org).

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