

Wisconsin Off-Highway Vehicle Association's

Badger Tracks

From "The Northwoods" by CEO John Lewins

I have did my best to up hold the office of Chief Executive Officer - Director even though face with insurmountable challenges by myself and my board. We have kept the true mission of WOHVA in mind at all times.

We accomplished the partial reunion of WOHVA and W4WDA (Wisconsin Four Wheel Drive Association), that is monumental in OHV community which I hope the future Director can uphold for the betterment of the OHV.

I want to thank those volunteers and board members that stuck with me through thick and thin, I appreciate all you sacrifice for WOHVA and the mission!

I spread the mission through the two news outlets in the Crandon, as it is where we recreate off-road in Mole Lake reservation Forrest land at the graciousness of the Sokaogon Chippewa tribe. I spread the operation of us volunteers building and maintaining trails for the two events held there.

Many hours spent by myself and Toni Lewins to negotiate MOU's for this generosity of tribal land use. We do this for the love of the sport and benefit the community of which we recreate in, the fight to keep the volunteers as part of our family in mind as they are the backbone to this or any organization!

Again thank you to all the supporters from both organizations WOHVA and W4WDA, as out going Director I will never give up on our future together, so let's continue to move forward to a combined united front to get sticker program legislation passed, then move to bigger and better things in the OHV trails system!

In conclusion we are only as good as our support team of volunteers, it has been a Honor to serve you all!

Thank you very much,
John Lewins

MISSION STATEMENT

The Wisconsin Off-Highway Vehicle Association exists for the sole purpose of proactively assuring that public and private off-highway vehicular recreational opportunities are expanded in Wisconsin for safe use by this and future generations.



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"Your off-highway vehicle recreation future begins here"

2016 WOHVA Annual OHV Workshop and Membership meeting

This year's event brought about some changes from the norm. WOHVA was invited to host our activities in conjunction with the W4WDA 2016 Spring Convention. This was an opportunity for both groups to participate in each other's events in the same venue. The events were held at the Ramada Grand Seasons Hotel with Water Park in Waupaca, WI.

The morning consisted of W4WDA's BOD and Membership meetings. Followed by a lunch and learn event sponsored by WOHVA and presented by Alex Bub from the National Off Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC). The afternoon was packed with WOHVA's BOD, Membership and Spring Trails meetings.

The evening was also filled with activities. W4WDA had their family style dinner, while WOHVA honored its volunteers that have supported us throughout the past year. Each year WOHVA hosts an appreciation banquet where we crown a "Volunteer of the Year" award. This year we are proud to announce that Joel aka "Joel Thomas" Kasper was this year's recipient. Afterwards W4WDA hosted the entertainment with a DJ and raffle prizes.

The combined events were attended by nearly 75 OHV enthusiasts from around the state. There is already discussions regarding a continued partnership in the future.





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State News

The following pages are dedicated to an article from Bryan Much regarding the passage of legislation for an OHM "sticker program". Bryan is the President of the Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Association (WOHMA). WOHVA congratulates Bryan and WOHMA on this amazing feat!

What It Took To Get A Unanimous Vote On Wisconsin's Motorcycle Sticker Program by Bryan Much

***Part Two.** Last month, this newsletter reported on the new "OHM Law" in Wisconsin that creates a sticker program, allowing motorcyclists to generate funds in order to build and sustain off-highway motorcycle trails. The effort was started in 2008, when NOHVCC State Partner Alex Bub created the Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Association (WOHMA). This month, Bryan Much, current Association president and NOHVCC Associate State Partner, who spearheaded the legislative effort for WOHMA, gives the backstory on what it took to get the bill written and signed into law, with a unanimous vote.*

A Strategic Plan Turned Misconceptions Into State-Wide Acceptance

In early 2016, the Wisconsin Assembly voted 98 to 0, and the Wisconsin Senate voted 32 to 0, in favor of an off-highway motorcycle (OHM) program for the state. The Governor soon signed the Act into law. What went into getting this law in place with such overwhelming support?

The most important concept is that "Understanding Brings Acceptance." People that lack information about a recreational interest can sometimes imagine the worst about what it involves. We must tell our story so people come to know the reality of what we do and who we are.

When I started working on the background involved with this legislation, I asked myself several questions. Who needs to know about what we are doing? Who will support us? Who will oppose us? What are the common complaints or misconceptions that we will have to overcome? I then went to work on these issues.

In my role on the Governor's State Trails Council, I worked through that multi-user group format to explain who we are and what we do, and to develop relationships with the other user groups. Over time, I was able to thaw some opposition. Getting involved with other organizations and local councils of interest can provide opportunities to tell our story and cast our recreational interest in a positive light. Show people you are interested in and support their interests as well.

I created an orientation briefing that I could take to committees, councils, forestry, parks, economic development representatives, and others around the state. I had to account for some people knowing very little about OHM, so I used a lot of photos in the presentations as I methodically explained what we are all about and what we were doing legislatively.

The presentations hit the spot. When I presented to a working group of state foresters and officials, I had someone point me to what could be good riding in his forest. At another briefing to a county trails council, I went from "never heard of OHM" to "now that I've learned about it I want to do it myself," with three people telling me they wanted to take it up. A fourth, a local government official who was at the meeting, called me a couple of weeks later to tell me that he and his wife wanted to get involved in riding dual sports. He is now a member of a new local club in the area and is working to help us develop a trail project. There are many more stories that demonstrate the success of making these presentations, but you get the idea.





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Understanding brings acceptance, and sparks enthusiasm.

Pictures and video clips in presentations are very valuable in showing people who we are and what we do. The pictures of family groups and individual riders go a long way to overcome negative stereotypes that people might have.

I try to tailor each briefing so that there is some local connection.

I also did an assessment of the common complaints or misunderstandings that we might face. For example, people complain about noise. I show them a sound testing kit and explain that we require sound testing at each event, and that we also offer voluntary awareness testing even during informal get-togethers. With regard to overcoming the "squirrely kid" stereotype, I point out that I am 61 years old, a retired Colonel, and that I am somewhat typical of a good portion of our user group. I also highlight our involvement in "self-policing" (peer) and the Trail Patrol program.

Some people will resent what you are doing just because they have an emotional bias against motorized recreation. It is best not to try to engage them completely because it is difficult to win an emotional argument with facts. When I would encounter this type of behavior during presentations, I would try not to get drawn into an unproductive argument and instead try to counter the opposition by continuing with a positive and factual representation of what we do. You can't satisfy everyone and it is sometimes best to move on.

One thing I learned as I engaged some people or groups is that there are many people that "never heard of you" as a recreational interest. We needed more visibility. I went to Travel Wisconsin (who never heard of us either) and sold them on giving us an account to post rides and events on the state-sponsored travel site. Their interests are largely economic. Our recreational interest contributes to that concern if we bring more people to an area or event.

The economic development representatives in a county can become huge supporters. They are always looking for a way to improve the local economy. If there is an opportunity for OHM to contribute to this, the economic development people can be very valuable allies, with a broad reach, as I found out in my work with some counties.

As things evolved, what could have produced the most opposition for our program became one of the biggest supporters. There are about 350,000 ATVs and UTVs registered in Wisconsin. Local clubs have significant influence with politicians. If we did not have the involvement, understanding, agreement, and support of the state ATV/UTV association, we would have been plagued with fighting what could have been local misinformation, speculation, and rumors that could lead to widespread opposition of what we were doing. Bad information and rumors seem to travel the furthest and fastest. Although the purpose of the legislation focused on developing motorcycle trails, enabling more access to ATV trails was also a goal.

Gain legislative attention and commitment: Do's and Don'ts

At the very beginning of the process, we needed to get legislative attention and convince someone there was a need for an OHM program in Wisconsin. To meet this need, I wrote a comprehensive white paper that described the need, listed key components, explained to someone not familiar with the recreational interest what it was about, and presented a clear path as to what had to be done to make things better. One Assemblyman enthusiastically embraced the issue and made it a priority for a legislative aide to work on. In the Senate, it was more difficult to find a sponsor. While waiting for an extended period for someone to commit, I recognized that there are politics within politics that are out of my realm, so I just needed to wait until it worked itself out. Doing otherwise might have derailed someone becoming a sponsor. As much as I like to drive an issue to keep it moving, there is also a time to sit down and shut-up and wait.

As good as the legislators, aides, and drafters are, they need you to be involved, share what you know, and work with them to get the best product you can. If you are respected in this process, you will have more opportunities to be part of getting it just right. You also have to watch for developments in other bills and related programs to make sure you are updating your bill.





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Don't take up issues that will create opposition with other groups that will cause them to start throwing flags in opposition of the bill. For example, Wisconsin is a "no-helmet state" for on-road motorcycles. Some thought OHM should require helmets. If we would have included an overall requirement for helmet use, we would have had other motorcycle groups in the state opposing our bill on principle.

Keep your eye on the ball: get a program up and running and worry about changes that might develop later on. It is routine to have to modify legislation over the years to account for changes or unintended consequences.

Keep everyone informed along the way.

It is important to communicate the progress of the bill with our user group to keep them in the loop and ready to respond if you need a show of support. I chose to do this with a blog and through e-mail notifications. I would also give an update at the AMA District meeting. One must be aware that whatever is shared on social media and web sites is also usually available to those who may oppose you.

At key times during the process, I solicited members of our recreational interest to submit meaningful comments to appropriate legislators. Since there is a lot of material to digest and issues to understand, I would create a list of points to make that aligned with the consistent message we needed to send. This was not a cut-and-paste or mass e-mailing. People were encouraged to draw from the talking points to create their own message in their own words. I also offered more guidance about a proper attitude and approach that would make a legislator more likely to want to respond favorably. Part of this involved telling the legislator more about who the writers were and how all this affects their families.

Present a clear and coordinated message.

When it comes to committee hearings related to the bill, it is important to control what is presented during the hearing. Even the most well-meaning enthusiasts can inadvertently take things in the wrong direction, simply because they don't know what they don't know. I witnessed some other hearings where people on the same side of an issue don't even agree and they inadvertently open cracks in their position.

Those in favor of the bill need to present a single, coordinated message. There is no need for a bunch of people to repeat the same thing over and over. Have a principal presenter that has the right presence and message for the committee. Have a back-up to respond in the event that someone presents some opposition during the course of the hearing. Have a show of support and interest in the bill by bringing in additional people to register in favor of the bill. You don't need a mob, but you do need to show that approving the bill in committee is important enough for at least some people to show up and watch.

Support of the state Associations and DNR was critically important.

Also key to success at these hearings was the testimony (written or in person) from WATVA, that the bill had been fully coordinated with them and that they supported it. This answered any questions that arose from individual legislators about how this affected their ATV riding constituents. I also highlighted this coordination in my remarks.

As I was working on the bill with the legislative people, I contacted people within the Wisconsin DNR that would later be affected by the program, to get their insight on how we needed to handle some issues that would involve them. This was a huge payoff. Getting the input from the people actually involved in some of the systems led to their confidence and support that things would properly be accounted for. This was especially important when the draft bill went to the DNR for comment. It headed off some opposition by addressing it ahead of time. Developing these contacts proved useful during the DNR review of the complex bill. DNR people felt comfortable contacting me to help them sort through the requirements of the bill.





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Relationships develop credibility and trust.

Much of the progress is based on the credibility and trust that is developed through relationships with people involved in the process. Don't underestimate this.

Developing contacts is a long process. Once you have the confidence and trust of some others, they may be willing to make introductions and share some of their contacts with you. Even so, you still have to prove yourself to the contact. People are careful about sharing some contacts because of the risk of someone that doesn't get it screwing things up.

Our process took about seven years. We had a period of upheaval in Wisconsin that put our legislation on the back burner for quite a while. Nonetheless, once I took this on I wasn't going to quit.

Recognize and thank everyone involved.

Once the legislation was done, I made it a point to recognize the people that were the significant contributors to this effort. It was important, not just because it was the right thing to do, but also because many of these are the same people that I will have to go back to in some future action. I wanted to be sure they were treated right.

One of the quickest ways to lose valuable players is to fail to acknowledge the extraordinary effort they made for you. Some of the key people I recognized, and made a big fuss about calling attention to their contributions, include the President of the ATV/UTV Association and his principal coordinator; the Assembly man and Senator who sponsored the bills, and the legislative aide that I worked with for a few years to get the bill put together. During the process, he got a different job as a legislative rep in the DNR, but I didn't forget him simply because he transferred out before the project was done. Of course, I was always expressing my appreciation along the way for the people that meaningfully helped out in other capacities.

During its annual meeting in mid-April, the Wisconsin ATV/UTV Association, Inc. awarded Much with its Presidents Award, "for outstanding service and leadership."

To learn more about the Wisconsin OHM Association, visit: www.wohma.com. To follow Much's blog on the progress of the new OHM Law leading up to October 1 when it goes into effect, go to: <http://advrider.com/index.php?threads/wisconsin-ohm-ds-motorcyclists-trail-and-legislative-issues.423792/>.



**TIRED OF HAVING YOUR
FAVORITE TRAILS LOCKED UP?**



www.wohva.com



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The National Front

H.R. 5129 Legislation to Streamline Recreation Permitting Process Introduced by Rep. LaMalfa

Dear BRC Action Alert Subscriber,



BRC's Don Amador Visiting with Congressman David Valadao in 2015 on Various Recreation Issues including Event Permit Reform.

Outdoor recreation clubs, organizations and outfitter/guide related businesses have a lot to celebrate today as Congressman Doug LaMalfa (R-CA) announced that he has introduced the Guides and Outfitters Act (GO Act), H.R. 5129.

H.R. 5129 Guides and Outfitters Act (GO Act) [LINK](#)

For the last 5 years, BRC has been urging Congress to address excessive costs and red-tape associated with both motorized and non-motorized recreation groups getting special recreation permits.

[BRC's SRP ISSUE PAGE](#)

BRC looks forward to working with legislators and other recreation groups on this issue as The GO Act proceeds through Congress.

Congressman LaMalfa's News Release [LINK](#)

Thanks and as always, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact BRC.

Don Amador
Western Representative
BlueRibbon Coalition
925-625-6287



www.wohva.com



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2016 WOHVA Calendar of events

February

2/20/2016 BOD Mtg.
Holidays Pub & Grill Neenah, WI

April

4/16/2016 Annual OHV Enthusiasts Workshop &
Membership mtg.
Ramada Grand Seasons Hotel & Waterpark Waupaca, WI

4/23/2016 Spring Trails Mtg.
Location TBD

June

6/4/2016 Trail build & maintenance
Mole Lake, WI

6/11/2016 Trail build & maintenance
Mole Lake, WI

6/15/2016 BOD Mtg.
Location TBD

6/25/2016 Trail build & maintenance
Mole Lake, WI

July

7/2/2016 Trail build & maintenance
Mole Lake, WI

7/9/2016 Trail build & maintenance
Mole Lake, WI

7/14/2016 21st Northwood's Mole Lake JJUSA
Mole Lake, WI

7/30/2016 Trail build & maintenance
Mole Lake, WI

August

8/6/2016 Trail build & maintenance
Mole Lake, WI

8/13/2016 Trail build & maintenance
Mole Lake, WI

8/17/2016 BOD Mtg.
Location TBD

8/18/2016 8th Annual GNTR
Mole Lake, WI

September

9/3/2016 Trail build & maintenance
Mole Lake, WI

9/4/2016 Volunteer opportunity – Brush Run Races
Crandon, WI

9/17/2016 Fall trails mtg.
Location TBD

9/18/2016 Grand Larsony Annual car show
Kewaskum, WI

October

10/15/2016 BOD Mtg.
Fredonia, WI

December

12/10/2016 BOD Mtg.
Location TBD





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Wisconsin Off-Road Vehicle Park Individual Annual Membership Application Form

Please complete application, attach payment for \$10 (payable to WORVPI) and mail to: WORVPI, 116 South Lake Avenue, Crandon, WI 54520

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email _____ Telephone _____

www.WORVPI.org

Wisconsin Off-Road Vehicle Park Association/Club Annual Membership Application Form

Please complete application, attach payment for \$100 (payable to WORVPI) and mail to: WORVPI, 116 South Lake Avenue, Crandon, WI 54520

Club/Association Name _____ Name of Contact Person (also voting representative) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email _____ Telephone _____

www.WORVPI.org



www.wohva.com