

# ATV Trail Use Report

## What's New

In this newsletter we look at the *Report on ATV Trail Use: Recommendations and Actions* submitted by the Duck Mountain Provincial Park Trails Working Group to Manitoba Conservation in 2010.

In developing the report, the Trails Working Group held 10 regular working group meetings, a full-day research session, and a series of public drop-ins in 2008 and 2009. More than 200 people attended the public drop-ins and 110 written questionnaires were returned.

A combination of the questionnaires, public opinion on park trails and trail conditions, and scientific and trail planning reports provided a variety of ideas for managing off-road vehicle use and contributed to the final recommendations found in the report.

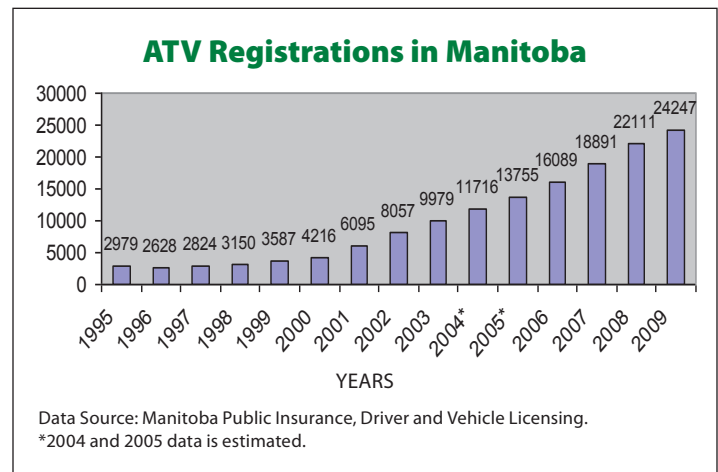
The Trails Working Group wishes to thank everyone who submitted comments and suggestions over the past two years.

## Managing Vehicle Use

Off-road vehicle use, and particularly ATV use, has increased significantly in Manitoba over the past 10 years. With this increase, negative vehicle impacts on park landscapes have become more apparent. Wet weather conditions in recent years have accelerated the deterioration of trails in some areas.



Duck Mountain Provincial Park Trails Working Group



## Recommendations

The key recommendation contained in the *Report on ATV Trail Use: Recommendations and Actions* is that ATV use should continue to be permitted in Duck Mountain Provincial Park, but that immediate action must be taken to halt practices that are damaging trails or causing unacceptable impacts on the park environment.

This report concludes that managing ATV use will help minimize environmental impacts and improve trail conditions for all park users.

Other recommendations for ATV use in the park include:

- incorporating a sustainable, high-quality ATV trail system
- avoiding sensitive areas or landscapes
- using existing trail sections as much as possible
- closing unsustainable sections of trails as improvements or rerouting of trails progresses
- designing and planning in accordance with best practices for ATV trail design
- defining an enforcement protocol
- developing an ATV public education program
- encouraging the establishment of a local ATV user group

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## Future Directions

Manitoba Conservation has reviewed the *Report on ATV Trail Use: Recommendations and Actions* and is continuing to work with the Trails Working Group on a second phase of the ATV trails project. Meetings of the Trails Working Group resumed in October 2010 and will continue for a five-year period.

During the second phase of the project, the Trails Working Group will work in co-operation with provincial wildlife managers as they develop a strategy to rebuild and maintain moose populations in the Duck Mountain area.

Trail routing to avoid sensitive ecological areas, public education, communications and enforcement will be an important part of the ATV trail planning initiative.

The Trails Working Group is optimistic that ATV trail riding can be managed sustainably in Duck Mountain Provincial Park. It is anticipated there will be "fewer but better" trails as a result of this initiative, that environmental impact will be reduced, and that riders will have a better recreational experience overall.

## Contact

The Trails Working Group is a community-based committee representing recreation, cottage, tourism, business, nature-appreciation, First Nation and government organizations. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please contact:

### Trails Working Group

c/o Duck Mountain Provincial Park  
Parks and Natural Areas Branch  
Box 53, 200 Saulteaux Crescent  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3J 3W3

Telephone: 204-945-3697

Toll Free: 1-800-214-6497

Fax: 204-945-0012

E-mail: [mgmtplan@gov.mb.ca](mailto:mgmtplan@gov.mb.ca)

The full report can be found on the Park and Natural Areas Branch website at:

[www.manitoba.ca/conservation/parks/consult/public.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/conservation/parks/consult/public.html)

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