

Montana State Legislature

2015 SESSION

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

Business Page

[Signed by Chairman]

Roll Call

Standing Committee Reports

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Proxy Forms

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***Any other documents, which were submitted after the committee hearing has ended and/or was submitted late [within 48 hours], regarding information in the committee hearing.**

***Witness Statements that were not presented as exhibits.**

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2015 Legislative

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BUSINESS REPORT

**MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
64th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**

HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Date: Wednesday, February 11, 2015
Place: Capitol

Time: 3:00 PM
Room: 455

BILLS and RESOLUTIONS HEARD:

HB 375 - Revise motor vehicle minimum liability insurance laws - Rep. Steve Lavin
HB 391 - Generally revise snowmobile laws - Rep. David (Doc) Moore
HB 394 - Revise bicycle safety laws - Rep. Gerald (Jerry) Bennett
HB 407 - Increase certain vehicle registration fees to benefit Virginia/Nevada cities - Rep. Virginia Court
HB 414 - Generally revise vehicle license laws - Rep. Mike Lang
HB 415 - Revise laws governing highway work zones - Rep. Frank Garner
SB 184 - Allow for display of electronic proof of motor vehicle insurance - Sen. Jill Cohenour

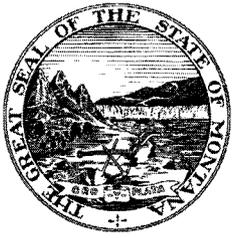
EXECUTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

None Taken

Comments:



REP. Steve Lavin, Chair



The Big Sky Country

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

ROLL CALL

DATE Feb 11, 2015

NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT/EXCUSED
REP. STEVE LAVIN, CHAIRMAN	✓	
REP. CHRISTY CLARK, VICE CHAIR	✓	
REP. NANCY WILSON, VICE CHAIR	✓	
REP. ROB COOK		✓
REP. WILLIS CURDY		✓
REP. CLAYTON FISCUS	✓	
REP. FRANK GARNER	✓	
REP. GEORGE KIPP III	✓	
REP. MARGIE MACDONALD		✓
REP. WENDY MCKAMEY	✓	
REP. MIKE MILLER	✓	
REP. LEE RANDALL		✓
REP. BRIDGET SMITH		✓
REP. KATHY SWANSON	✓	

14 MEMBERS



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MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

VISITORS REGISTER

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

DATE Feb 11, 2015

BILL NO: HB 375

SPONSOR(S): Rep. Steve Lavin

SHORT TITLE: Revise motor vehicle minimum liability insurance laws

Please leave prepared testimony with secretary.

Witness Statement forms are available if you care to submit written testimony.

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Name	Representing	Support	Oppose	Informat'l
Spook Gary	MEM	X		
Bob Biskupiak	Independent Insurance Agent	X		
Duane Mitchell	Richland Co	T		
Bray Epercar	PCT ALIST		X	
Jodie Leavel	AIA		X	
Koren H. Young	Richland Co.	X		
Honda Wiggers	NorthWestern Energy	X		



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MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

VISITORS REGISTER

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

DATE Feb 11, 2015

BILL NO: HB 415

SPONSOR(S): Rep. Frank Lerner

SHORT TITLE: Revise laws governing highway work zones

Please leave prepared testimony with secretary. Witness Statement forms are available if you care to submit written testimony.

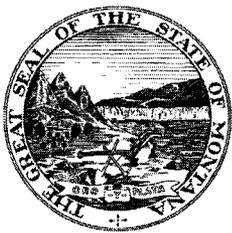
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Table with 5 columns: Name, Representing, Support, Oppose, Inform't. Handwritten entries include names like Jason Milderstog, Derek S. Harvey, Kevin Christensen, Cary Hegreberg, Trevor Livesay, and organizations like MT AFL-CIO, MHP, MSCO PFF, MDT, Contractors, MONTANA LINES, INC., AAA.



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MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

VISITORS REGISTER

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

DATE Feb 11, 2015

BILL NO: HB 391

SPONSOR(S): Rep. David (Dc) Moore

SHORT TITLE: Generally revise snowmobile laws

Please leave prepared testimony with secretary. Witness Statement forms are available if you care to submit written testimony.

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Name	Representing	Support	Oppose	Inform't
John Hogenrubur	USFS			✓
Chas Van Genderen	FLWD/Parks		✓	✓
SA Walker				
Curtis Friede		✓		
Brian Dennis		✓		
James Eagleson		✓		
Ronda Wiggers	Mt City Trsrs Assoc			&

Montana

SNOWMOBILE

Association



www.M-S-A.org

P.O. Box 56

Black Eagle, MT 59414-0056

February 10, 2015

To: House Transportation Committee

Re: House Bill 391



The Montana Snowmobile Association, a statewide organization of individual members and twelve local district clubs, opposes House Bill 391.

A study conducted last year by the American Council of Snowmobile Associations dedicated an entire chapter to the use of tracked OHVs on groomed trails. A copy of that chapter is included with this letter. The width of tracked OHVs is a prime concern given that their width is substantively more than a snowmobile's width which results in safety issues and also problems for the trail system.

Montana law defines a Snowmobile as being "48 inches or less" in width. House Bill 391 fails to address any width limitations for tracked OHVs – which is a very serious error given the substantial width differential between snowmobiles, wheeled UTVs and all tracked OHVs.

The field testing conducted last winter by Trails Consulting found the following tracked vehicle widths (which are also noted in the attached report excerpt):

Snowmobile width: 48" or less

Tracked ATV width: 52"

Tracked Polaris 570 RZR width: 61.5" (this vehicle's wheeled width is 50") – I'm currently testing one of these vehicles which I have on loan from Polaris

Tracked Polaris Ranger: 68.5"

Tracked John Deere Gator: 70.5"

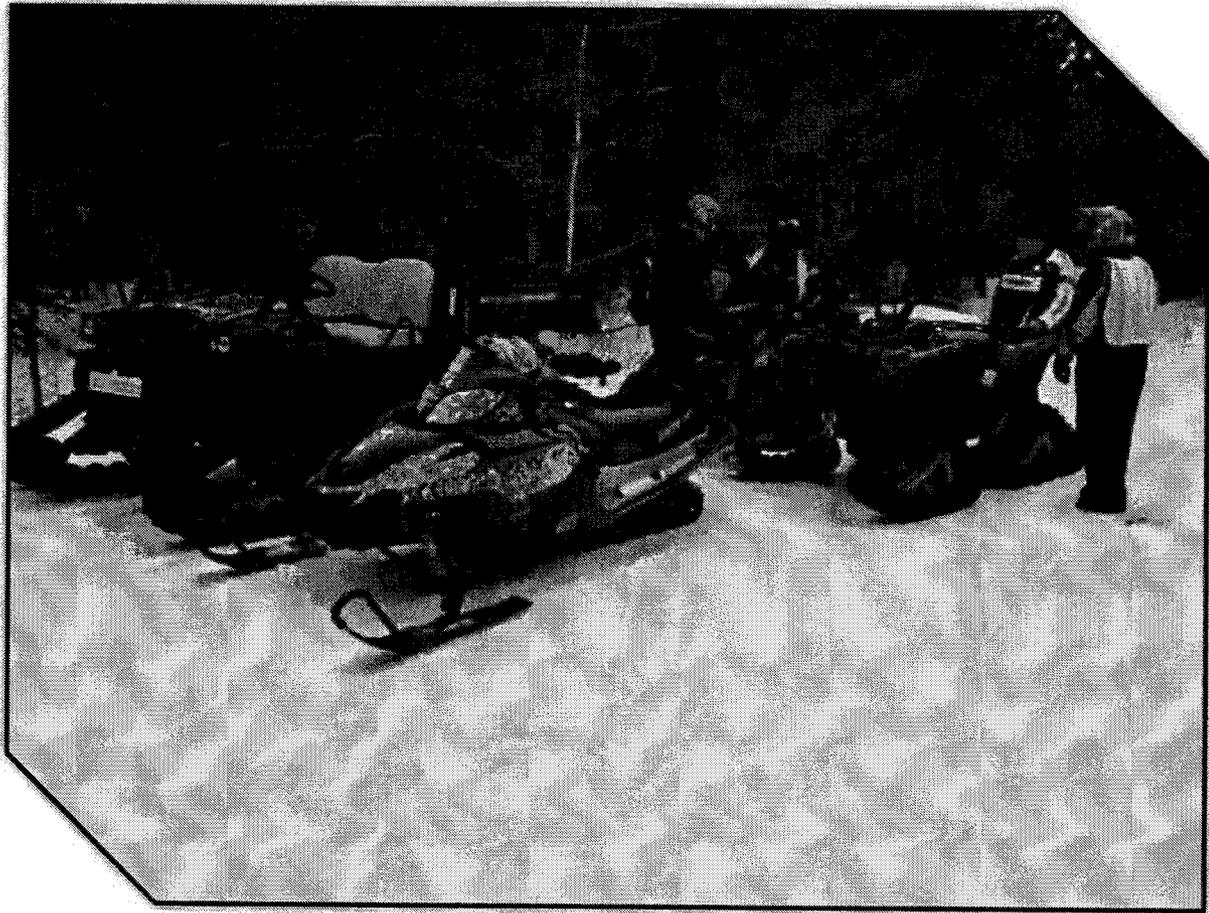
All tracked UTVs are absolutely too wide to be safely operated on groomed snowmobile trails without trail widening and adopting wider, more expensive grooming equipment. A tracked ATV's width is 4" wider than a snowmobile's width – while this may not seem huge, it's enough to warrant a minimum 9- to 10-foot wide grooming drag to ensure safe two-way travel.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our comments.

Sincerely;

Scott Herzog, President

Chapter One Excerpts from: Assessment of Tracked OHV Use on Groomed Snowmobile Trails



Conducted by Trails Work Consulting
For the American Council of Snowmobile Associations

September 2014



CHAPTER 1: TRACKED OHV MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONCURRENT OHV MANAGEMENT

Local jurisdictions should consider the following factors when deciding to either allow or prohibit concurrent OHV use on groomed snowmobile trails. While the importance of each factor will vary by locale, all should be fully considered for informed and objective local decision making:

- 1. Funding Assistance:**
- 2. Risk Management:**
- 3. Landowner/Land Manager Permission**
- 4. Groomed Trail Width:** The grooming implement (drag or tiller) used on a snowmobile trail where concurrent OHV use is allowed must be a key consideration since the implement's width determines the groomed trail's 'managed width.' Unlike other trails, a snowmobile trail must frequently be reestablished after new snowfall or drifting – oftentimes daily, several times weekly, or no less than once weekly. Therefore a single pass with the grooming implement is what ultimately establishes and maintains a snowmobile trail's width at the beginning of the season and between subsequent snowfall or wind events.

While trail width can be widened with successive grooming passes that overlap and widen the initial groomed trail route, significant time (many hours, up to multiple days) often passes between initial trail establishment/reestablishment and widening passes. Subsequently 'widening passes' can generally not be depended upon to provide wider (than the grooming implement's width) trails that are safe for all allowed vehicles – unless the second widening pass occurs almost immediately after the first pass. This is important since 'groomed trail' status implies/requires a higher standard of care than ungroomed trails.

Public snowmobile trails with two-way traffic should generally be managed so that a single grooming pass establishes a groomed trail width that safely accommodates at least twice the width of the widest vehicles allowed on the trail. Since all tracked ATVs and UTVs are generally wider than snowmobiles, wider trails (and therefore wider grooming equipment) may likely be required when concurrent OHV use is allowed.

The following minimum grooming implement widths should be used, according to the width of vehicles allowed on the trail, to provide minimum sufficient trail width for two-way vehicle traffic to meet. Wider grooming equipment should be considered when possible to increase the margin of safety.

Snowmobile-only Trails: A modern snowmobile is generally 48 inches or less in width; allowing twice this width (96 inches) for two-way traffic suggests that a grooming implement at least 8'-6" (102 inches) wide should be used on groomed trails where only snowmobile use is allowed (no tracked ATV/UTV use is permitted). While an 8'-6" wide implement provides minimum required clearance, a 9-foot wide implement would provide better width for two-way snowmobile traffic.

Trails with Tracked ATV Use: The tracked ATV used for this project's field test was 52 inches wide; allowing twice this width (104 inches) for two-way traffic suggests that a grooming

implement at least nine feet (108 inches) wide should be used on groomed trails where tracked ATV use is allowed (but no UTV use is permitted). While a 9-foot wide implement provides minimum required clearance, a 10-foot wide implement would provide better width for two-way tracked ATV traffic.

Trails with Tracked UTV Use: The tracked UTVs used for this project's field test were 68.5 to 70.5 inches wide; allowing twice this width (137 to 141 inches) for two-way traffic suggests that a grooming implement at least twelve feet (144 inches) wide should be used on groomed trails where tracked UTV use is allowed. While a twelve feet wide implement provides minimum required clearance, a grooming implement that is at least 12'-6" wide or wider would provide better width for two-way tracked UTV traffic.

NOTE: Phase 2 of this Assessment project is currently evaluating impacts from a tracked Polaris 570 RZR. While this vehicle is 50-inches wide with wheels, its tracked width is 61.5-inches wide. This is a critically important factor since the 50-inch RZR is considered a 'summer trail legal width' it's tracked width would no longer be a legal width on summer motorized trail routes. While a 10.5-foot wide implement provides minimum required clearance, a grooming implement that is at least 11' wide or wider would provide better width for two-way tracked RZR (small 570 model) traffic.

Tracked OHV use (other than tracked motorcycles) clearly requires wider groomed trail widths than what is required for snowmobile-only trails. This creates a potential need for wider grooming implements, which could create at least two new issues for trail managers:

- A. **Increased Clearing Width:** A trail's 'clearing width' is its narrowest opening along the trail between gate posts, bridge abutments, trees, rock outcrops, etc. This narrowest width, even if it's at only one location, dictates the maximum width of trail grooming equipment since it must be able to cover 100% of all groomed trails. Consequently 'clearing width' may need to be enlarged on some trails if implement width needs to be increased to provide wider trails for tracked OHV use. Wider equipment could in turn require tree removal, widening of gates, removal of outcroppings, and/or widening of bridges in order to accommodate passage for nine to twelve feet wide (or even wider) grooming implements. The trail manager will subsequently incur additional costs for required trail widening work; there could also potentially be increased environmental impacts from tree removal and the other trail widening efforts.
- B. **Increased Operating Costs:** Trail grooming operating costs typically increase as the width of grooming equipment increases. Pulling a wider grooming implement, particularly a 10 to 12-foot plus wide drag, could require more tractor horsepower. Using wider grooming equipment typically consumes more fuel and may also lead to higher maintenance and repair costs due to the tractor working harder to pull heavier implements. Overall grooming costs will likely increase.

5. **Trail Grooming:**
6. **Potential Trail Use Patterns:**
7. **Potential Partnerships:**
8. **Shoulder Season and Off-Season Management:**