

# Manitoba Association of Cottage Owners



## ATV's in Cottage Country



MACO'S position as of July 31 2009

### **Background to the Issue:**

- Over the past ten years ATV's or four-wheel drive quads have become increasingly popular in cottage country. All-terrain vehicles are part of an increasingly popular recreational pastime all over Manitoba.
- Irresponsible operation of these vehicles has increasingly led to property damage; most damage is non-intentional but some is clearly intentional.
- Frequently ATVs are operated along the ditches of municipal right-of-ways or on walking trails in the built-up areas. Irresponsible use has led to damage to municipal drainage systems. In some instances of severe use the ditches are damaged and left in an unsightly condition.
- Irresponsible ATV use on private lands poses a real threat to crops and livestock. Crop destruction and weed seed introduction are common examples.
- Irresponsible ATV use can lead to irreparable damage to the environment such as vegetation, trees and bush.

### **Cautionary Notes:**

- There is no well known group that acts as an umbrella organisation for ATV owners.
- The [All Terrain Vehicle Association of Manitoba](#) has been formed and may be acting to serve as an umbrella organisation.

### **Policy or Program Implications: What is current Policy or Program for this issue?**

- ATV's have the ability to cause considerable damage to the environment especially in low land and water filled areas.
- Generally, ATVs are allowed on lands owned by the ATV operator. Unless they are designated as trails ATV operators are expected to get permission from the land owner before travelling on private lands.
- ATV operators need to familiarize themselves with local and regional bylaws to safely enjoy riding without violating the law in each area. Many Municipalities have passed local by-laws in addition to the province.
- Many municipalities have begun to develop by-laws to regulate ATV use.

### **Action Taken by MACO:**

- None at present but MACO is aware of the situation

### **MACO's Recommendations for the Future:**

- Encourage the continued development and expansion of the All Terrain Vehicle Association of Manitoba to develop trails

- MACO will work actively with other trail groups in Manitoba to encourage responsible ATV use.

### ***Position of MACO***

- MACO believes the ATV's represent a legitimate recreational vehicle in cottage country.
- MACO believes responsible ATV use for recreational exploration and access to the back country in the summertime is important activity for many cottagers.
- MACO believes ATV trails must be developed in much the same way the snowmobile trails have been developed for the wintertime.
- MACO believes that all trails that are developed for ATV use must be on lands that will minimise environmental insult.