

2008 NJ Team Presentation Problem

It is estimated that there are approximately one million off road vehicle riders in the New York/ New Jersey metropolitan area. In New Jersey alone there are 300,000 registered off road vehicles. Off road vehicles consist mainly of dirt bikes, dune buggies and quads. Riding an off road vehicle is quickly becoming America's fastest growing sport. Riding an off road vehicle is banned in New Jersey except on land a rider owns, land who's owners have given permission, or a public off road vehicle park. Currently there exists only one public off road vehicle park in the entire state of New Jersey. It is located off Route 72 in Chatsworth. This park is projected to close in September 2008 leaving New Jersey with an abundance of riders and no public place to ride.

There are inherent environmental problems with driving an off road vehicle over land. The vehicles can destroy animal habitat, displace wildlife, pollute water and air, destroy vegetation, compact soil and increase runoff and erosion. In a February 24, 2008 New York Times article titled *Off Roads and Off Limits*, Nate Schweber the author cites, "Because of an ever decreasing amount of undeveloped space in the metropolitan area, off highway vehicles can be a flash point between riders, environmentalists and government officials". It has been shown that when riders don't have an accessible public place to ride they will (as they put it) go to the "dark side" and ride illegally on private or public lands.

In 2002 Bradley Campbell, then Commissioner of the NJDEP promised to provide New Jersey off road vehicle riders public places to ride. To date, this has yet to occur. The American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) in it's position paper on support of access to public lands recognizes that no single recreation type is appropriate for all public lands, there are certainly many places where off road vehicle use can exist in harmony with the other values, resource development and protection, cultural heritage protection and other recreational uses, for which public lands are managed. The AMA then continues to say that management of our national public lands is guided by the Multiple Use - Sustained Yield Act of 1960. The act is meant to encourage a wide variety of activities, so long as they also can take place in harmony with natural resource values. According to the AMA, so long as off road vehicle recreation can be managed responsibly, it should be encouraged.

Taking all this information into consideration, your team must develop a plan for off road vehicle use in New Jersey. Review how other states regulate off road vehicles. Currently the state has purchased an abandoned mine in Monroe Township to create an ATV park, as part of an effort by the Department of Environmental Protection to stop illegal off-road vehicle and dirt bike riding in state parks and in the Pinelands. Review the characteristics of this site and state whether or not this would be a good location for an off road vehicle park in New Jersey, If your team determines this is **not** a good location, propose another location and clearly support why your team chooses this location.

During your 10 minute presentation your team will be judged upon how well you can manage this intensive outdoor recreation activity. Your plan should put forth the following:

1. A framework of regulations for off road vehicles and riders
2. Clearly state why your team supports or does not support the current proposed location in Monroe Township NJ
3. If your team does not support the Monroe Township location, propose an alternate public location in the State of New Jersey where off road riding can occur legally.
4. Provide supporting information regarding either the Monroe Township location or your teams alternate location and the characteristics that make it amenable to off road vehicle riding
5. Include the necessary measures that would be needed to maintain a public off road riding park and protect the natural environment surrounding it.

References:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/emc/nfma/includes/musya60.pdf>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/24/nyregion/nyregionspecial2/24Ratvs.html? r=1&oref=slogin>