

Manitoba



Conservation

Climate Change and Environmental Protection Division
Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch
123 Main Street, Suite 160, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 1A5
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www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/eal

File: 5524.00

July 28, 2011

Cathy Hummelt
Parks and Natural Areas Branch
Box 52, 200 Saulteaux Crescent
Winnipeg, MB R3J 3W3

Dear Ms. Hummelt:

Re: Duck Mountain ATV Trail Project – Request for Additional Information

We have now completed our review of comments received from the public and the Provincial Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) with respect to the environmental assessment under the Environment Act for the Duck Mountain ATV Trail Project. The review has generated requests for additional information.

Please provide a detailed response to the attached July 4, 2011 letter from Hugh Arklie.

The Proposal indicates that archaeological sites will be compiled where ATV trail development will be considered. The Heritage Resources Branch should be contacted to discuss the requirements for this study. A heritage resources impact assessment, as outlined in the attached June 10, 2011 Memorandum from the Historic Resources Branch, will be required.

The following comments from TAC are attached for your information only:

- July 8, 2011 Memorandum from Manitoba Water Stewardship; and
- June 9, 2011 letter from Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation (MIT).

If you have any questions, you may contact Elise Dagdick at elise.dagdick@gov.mb.ca or at 945-8173.

Yours truly,

Tracey Braun, M. Sc.
Director
Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch

- c. Public Registries, File: 5524.00
Heather Flynn, Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency

Box 126 RR 2
Dugald, Manitoba
ROE OKO

July 4, 2011

Bill Blaikie
Minister of Conservation
Legislative Building
450 Broadway Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 0V8

Dear Mr. Blaikie:

**Re: Environment Act Proposal
Duck Mountain ATV Trail Project**

The following are my comments on the aforesaid proposal. They are listed in the same chronological order as in the EAP itself.

EAP Form

A class 2 proposal such as this requires the payment of a \$5,000 fee. The only logical payer is ATV Manitoba. Who paid the fee?

1.0 Executive Summary

"The purpose of this project is to reduce the environmental impact" of ATVs" (emphasis mine). What does this mean, exactly? By what percentage will damage be reduced? What is an acceptable level of damage in a provincial park when it is caused by ATVs?

Paragraph 2 of the Executive Summary lists "potential impacts". Why spin-doctor the terminology? "Potential impacts" is really "guaranteed damage".

Paragraph 3 of the Executive Summary refers to "A community-based Trails Working Group". From the first day the TWG was dominated by local ATV proponents. In no way was it representative of a broader community.

Paragraph 7 of the Executive Summary asks that the environmental license, that will undoubtedly be issued promptly, be effective for at least 10 years. This is nonsense. Throughout the body of the document it is clear that this is a giant experiment with unknown outcomes. This license should require annual renewals based on the performance of the Parks Branch and the behaviour of ATVers.

2.2 History of ATV Use

In response to the rapid rise in the number of ATVs on the land, the province is dutifully responding by spending money and effort on this regrettable phenomenon. But when canoeists and kayakers ask for more road-accessible lakes to be designated for non-motorized vessels we are ignored.

The last paragraph of this section makes the amazing conclusion that ATV use has contributed to the drop in the park's moose population while the entire document actually encourages the use and ultimate growth of ATV use. In Manitoba, ATVs out rank moose in parks.

2.3 Trails Working Group

See paragraph 2. It is not surprising that "the TWG has established a shared understanding of ATV issues" (emphasis mine). Preaching to the choir will get you that.

See paragraph 3. I really need more elaboration on "new enforcement and public education strategies". Expect to fail on this one. After all, it was irresponsible behaviour by ATVers that got them rewarded with this EAP.

3.5 Description of Proposed Development

See paragraph 2. It is appalling that ATV trails will lead into fishing lakes. The noise, pollution and litter that they will introduce is inevitable.

3.6 Funding

The EAP anticipates a 10 year endeavour but government funding is requested for only 5 years. This is not how one balances a budget. And don't get your hopes up about significant contributions from other groups, especially ATVers.

5.0 Description of Environmental effects of the Proposed Development

Apparently, "the environmental effects of the proposed development will be reviewed on an ongoing basis" (emphasis mine). Yes, but will they be reported to the public?

5.5 Trail Development

See paragraph 2. "Best practices for ATV trail development" is an oxymoron in a provincial park.

Given the dismal maintenance regime now in force in Manitoba's provincial parks I see no reason to expect that the intensive maintenance required on ATV trails will ever be performed. The Parks Branch, today, cannot paint picnic tables, shingle cooking shelters or repair fire pits.

6.0 Mitigation Measures and Residual Environmental Effects

See bullet 1. "Noise, vehicle emissions, garbage and fire hazard concerns may be higher in areas with designated ATV trails." No, really?

See bullet 3. Where I live no amount of observing trails prevents ATVers from trespassing. They view it as a challenge.

7.0 Follow-up Plans, including Monitoring and Reports

See bullet 1. "Park staff will visually monitor and assess trail conditions on an annual basis." Does this mean once per year?

See bullet 2. "An enforcement strategy will be developed". This is an Environment Act Proposal, not a wish list. The license should be withheld until the strategy is defined and accepted as having some chance of success. Otherwise, this is boiler plate.

See bullet 3. What is "Public education programming", if not more boiler plate? An EAP is meant to be rigorous. This is loose talk and merely demonstrates that the Parks Branch is doing the bidding of ATVers.

See bullet 6. The "Establishment of a volunteer Trail Ambassador program" is proof that the Parks Branch is not prepared to follow through with legitimate enforcement. It would rather let the fox guard the hen house.

Other

I cannot seem to find a definition of "ATV" in this EAP. Does it include high-revving, yappy dirt bikes with narrow tires that gouge the landscape? Does it include go-carts and home-made vehicles? Does it include Jeeps and dune-buggies?

Conclusion

I have no doubt that the EAP will be approved. Upon that event, I request that Duck Mountain Provincial Park be decommissioned as a park. The combination of Louisiana-Pacific and ATVs is intolerable.

Yours truly,

C. HUGH ARKLIE

*cc: Tracey Braun
Director
Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch
Manitoba Conservation
Suite 160
123 Main Street
Winnipeg MB R3C 1A5*

*Barry Bentham
Director
Parks and Natural Areas Branch
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Box 50
200 Saulteaux Crescent
Winnipeg MB R3J 3W3*

*Jack Dubois
Director
Wildlife Branch
Manitoba Conservation
200 Saulteaux Crescent
Winnipeg MB R3J 3W3*

DATE: June 10, 2011

TO: Elise Dagdick
Environmental Officer
Manitoba Conservation
Suite 160-123 Main Street
Winnipeg MB

FROM: Gordon Hill
Impact Assessment
Archaeologist
Historic Resources
Branch
Main Floor 213 Notre
Dame Avenue
Winnipeg MB
R3B 1N3
PHONE NO: (204) 945-7730

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT ACT PROPOSAL

YOUR FILE:5524.00

HRB FILE: AAS-11-2506

DUCK MOUNTAIN ATV TRAIL
MB PARKS & NATURAL AREAS BRANCH

I have reviewed the above-noted application for an Environment Act License. The Historic Resources Branch has concerns with regard to this project's potential to impact heritage resources.

Section 5.1 Mapping indicates that archaeological sites will be compiled. The contact person for this information is Gary Dickson, Manager, Provincial Heritage Registry Services at the Historic Resources Branch. He can be contacted at Gary.Dickson@gov.mb.ca or 204-945-4420.

In order to identify and assess any heritage resources that may be negatively impacted by the ATV trail, it is recommended that an archaeological consultant be employed to conduct a heritage resource impact assessment. If desirable, the Branch will work with Manitoba Conservation to draw up terms of reference for this project.

If at any time significant heritage resources are recorded in association with these lands during development, the Historic Resources Branch may require that an acceptable heritage resource management strategy be implemented by the developer to mitigate the affects of development on the heritage resources.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Brian Smith, Manager, Archaeological Assessment Services Unit at Brian.Smith@gov.mb.ca or 204-945-1830.

C. Gordon Hill



DATE: July 8, 2011

Memorandum

TO: Elise Dagdick
Environment Officer
Environmental Assessment and
Licensing Branch
Manitoba Conservation
123 Main Street, Suite 160
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 1A5

FROM: William Weaver, M.Sc.
Environmental Review Officer
Manitoba Water Stewardship
200 Saulteaux Crescent, Box 14
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3J 3W3

TELEPHONE: 945-6395
FACSIMILE: 945-7419

CC: Laureen Janusz
Ed MacKay
James Stibbard
Wendy Ralley

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT ACT PROPOSAL FILE: 5524.00
DUCK MOUNTAIN ALL TERRAIN VEHICLE TRAIL PROJECT
MANITOBA CONSERVATION – PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS
BRANCH

Manitoba Water Stewardship has reviewed the referenced file, forwarded for comment on May 18, 2011.

- Manitoba Water Stewardship requires an Environment Act Licence to include the following:
 - The Licencee is required to comply with the guidelines of Manitoba's All Terrain Vehicle Interdepartmental Committee.
 - Manitoba Water Stewardship was advised that a contact person is Ms. Rebecca McKay, Senior Policy Analyst, Manitoba Conservation, telephone: (204) 945-0819.
 - The Licencee is required to located a course or trail for an "all terrain vehicle" or "off-highway vehicle" at least 30 metres away from the shoreline of all surface waters, marsh areas, and wetlands.

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Manitoba Conservation - Parks and Natural Areas Branch

- An "all terrain vehicle" or "off-highway vehicle" must not be driven in the banks of surface waters, wetlands, or marsh areas, at any location.

- Any rutting that occurs from repetitive use, particularly if it is wet when the event occurs, and if it has the potential to enter surface water, should be addressed (leveled and re-vegetated).

- The Licencee is required to comply with the Manitoba Stream Crossing Guidelines for the Protection of Fish and Fish Habitat (attached).

- In order to protect riparian areas, the Licencee is required to establish and maintain an undisturbed native vegetation area located upslope from the ordinary high water mark and adjacent to all waterbodies and waterways connected to the provincial surface water network:
 - A 30-metre undisturbed native vegetation area is required for lands located adjacent to all surface waters, including wetlands;

 - Permanent development is prohibited within an undisturbed native vegetation area;

 - The combined alteration—including new and existing structures—within this undisturbed native vegetation area is limited to a maximum of 25 % of the shoreline length (for example: 25 metres per 100 metres of shoreline length) of each lot for a boat house, path, dock, etc.; and,

 - Alteration within this undisturbed native vegetation area—including a dock and/or the removal of near shore or stream aquatic habitat—shall not occur unless an activity conforms to a Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada Operational

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Statement or an activity is reviewed by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

- The Licencee is required to comply with Manitoba Water Stewardship's Wetland Policy:
 - The net loss of semi-permanent or permanent wetlands shall not occur. Wetlands are defined as areas that are periodically or permanently inundated by surface or ground water long enough to develop special characteristics including persistent water, low-oxygen soils, and vegetation adapted to wetland conditions. These include but are not limited to swamps, sloughs, potholes, marshes, bogs and fens.
 - A proponent shall establish and maintain an undisturbed native vegetation area with at least a 30-metre width.
- Prior to the commencement of construction of all stream crossings that require culverts or bridges, the Licencee is required to submit an application for a Water Rights Licence to Construct Water Control Works:
 - A contact person is Mr. Ed MacKay, C.E.T., Senior Water Resource Officer, Water Control Works and Drainage Licensing, Manitoba Water Stewardship, 1129 Queens Avenue, Brandon, Manitoba R7A 1L9, telephone: (204) 726-6226, email: ed.mackay@gov.mb.ca.
- The Licencee is required to develop a standard protocol to prevent the introduction of foreign biota:

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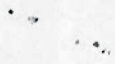
- A contact person is Ms. Lauren Janusz, Fisheries Biologist, Fisheries Branch, telephone: (204) 945-7789.
- The Licencee is required to develop and implement an Emergency Response Plan, including provisions for oil spills, gas spills, fires, and floods.
- **Manitoba Water Stewardship submits the following recommendations:**
 - Manitoba Water Stewardship recommends including water sources for public water systems in an inventory (section 5.1 of the proposal) of features to be considered as part of the evaluation process in determining trail alterations.
 - **Stream crossings are implemented at designated road crossings. If this is not feasible, Manitoba Water Stewardship recommends implementing clear span bridges to minimize alteration to the stream's hydrology and allow unrestricted fish passage.**
- **Manitoba Water Stewardship submits the following comments:**
 - **Manitoba Water Stewardship does not object to this proposal, at this time.**
 - **The Manitoba Department of Water Stewardship's recent policy direction recommending undisturbed native vegetation areas to protect water is founded, in part, on the 135 recommendations in the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board's (December 2006) report titled, "Reducing Nutrient Loading to Lake Winnipeg and its Watershed, Our Collective Responsibility and Commitment to Action." All 135 recommendations were accepted in principle by the Minister of the Manitoba Department of Water Stewardship, on behalf of the Government of Manitoba.**

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- **Maintaining an undisturbed native vegetation area immediately adjacent to the shoreline of lakes, rivers, creeks, and streams helps stabilize banks, provides aquatic and wildlife habitat and protects water quality through filtering overland runoff. The width of an undisturbed native vegetation area should be the widest width possible and practical. In conjunction with other best management practices such as eliminating fertilizer use adjacent to surface waters, and the proper management and disposal of waste water, maintaining an undisturbed native vegetation area adjacent to waterbodies is important to help prevent degradation of water quality.**

- **The Manitoba Department of Water Stewardship is mandated to ensure the sustainable development of Manitoba's water resources. Manitoba Water Stewardship is committed to the goals of: protecting aquatic ecosystem health; ensuring drinking water is safe and clean for human health; managing water-related risks for human security; and stewarding the societal and economic values of our waterways, lakes and wetlands; for the best water for all life and lasting prosperity. Manitoba Water Stewardship achieves these goals, in part, through administering legislation, including The Water Protection Act, The Water Rights Act, and The Water Power Act.**

William Weaver, M.Sc.





Infrastructure and Transportation

Highway Planning and Design Branch
Environment Section
14th Floor – 215 Garry St., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 3P3
T (204) 945-2369 F (204) 945-0593

June 9, 2011

Tracey Braun
Director, Environmental Assessment & Licensing Branch
Manitoba Conservation
123 Main St., Suite 160, Winnipeg, MB R3C 1A5

RE: Duck Mountain Provincial Park ATV Trails
Client File No 5524.00


Dear Director Braun:

MIT has reviewed the Environment Act Proposal noted above and while we have no objection to the ATV Trails Project, we would like to draw attention to the following:

- MIT would like to be consulted for input once the proposed trail routes have been established. Both MIT Region 1 and Traffic Operations need to review the access points to and from the Provincial Roads (PR 366 and PR 367) within the Park as well as trail signage within the Highway right of way.

Thank you very much for providing us the opportunity to review the proposal.

Sincerely,


Kimber Osiovy, M. Sc., P. Eng.
Manager of Environmental Services