

**Motion passed at July 16 HRTA meeting**

**That HRTA working through the HRM AT Advisory committee requests a staff report that examines the economic, trail user, community group, and environmental implications of including motorized use in HRM's support for trails. This report would include but not be limited to the following:**

- the addition of an existing motorized trail
- the addition of a motorized trail network in HRM
- the addition of recreational motorized trails in HRM
- the addition of motorized AT trails in HRM

**We further request that staff seek council's direction on these matters**

**Background :**

Halifax Regional Trails Association (HRTA) represents 23 community groups that have developed and managed trails, or are in the process of developing trails. The types of trails are, or a combination of the following: active transportation-greenway, recreational, and wilderness . One of the issues that is ever present in the background , and often becomes an immediate issue is the use of OHV's on our trails. Currently there are 2 member groups that operate so called shared use trails. These trails were grandfathered in when they became part of HRTA. At the time the province which controlled the ROW for these trails established the trails as motorized. Shearwater Flyer is part of the Cole harbour Parks and Trails Association's (CHPTA) trail system , and it is currently motorized . The board and membership of CHPTA have recently voted unanimously to apply to Lands and Forestry to remove the motorized use .

**The problem:**

Motorized drivers are not significantly impacted by NON motorized trail users ; therefore they are happy to promote shared use. The opposite is true for NON motorized users. The impact is significantly negative for them. It is not a win-win situation.

OHV use, whether authorized under the provincial shared use policy , or unauthorized , presents several issues for both existing and new community trail groups.

-safety issues for other users

- deterrence for other users
- environmental degradation
- substantially increased costs for maintenance .
- past community consultation methods have led to false readings of community support , leading to communities having motorized use on their trails when the majority of the community surveyed didn't really want it. Registered motorized users represent roughly 3 to 4% of the population. Most surveys indicate 70% want non motorized.
- OHV use has proved to be essentially unenforceable as the machine is designed to go anywhere , and long experience has shown that law enforcement have given up on having any real control.
- increased vandalism to infrastructure
- existing community volunteers are already overworked and finding it difficult to deal with the increased maintenance and other issues resulting from OHV use.

It's time for Halifax to do a comprehensive study to substantiate what trail volunteers and users already know are the issues . It's time to make a solid declaration in support of human powered trails based on facts and years of experience under the 'shared use' model. There are scientific articles/studies and other evidence that make it clear that shared use does not work in populated areas. We need a fact based comprehensive report and council direction to support human powered trails, and counter pressure and misleading claims coming from the ohv industry and ohv associations.