



# Havelock & District ATV Club

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I am glad to respond to your inquiry as best I can, both from my personal perspective and in reference to the objectives of the local Trails Club; the Havelock & District ATV Club. Please let me make it clear that though named an “ATV” club that our organization builds, maintains and strongly promotes Multi-use Trails.

The ATV bylaw of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen was passed in order to link trail to trail, to link trail to services (food, fuel & accommodations), to link trail to economic centres and to link trail to folk’s homes. The bylaw opened the Township’s roads to all ATV operators holding a driver’s license and operating a licenced and insured ATV. It is not exclusive to club members. Some unique and locally specific elements were placed in the HBM bylaw: a curfew was included as was a reduced speed limit from 50 km/h down to 20 km in medium density populated areas where 60 km/h is the posted limit for cars. I ride my ATV from my home, approximately 2 ½ km to the trail. The limit on my road is posted 60 km/h allowing me to legally travel past my several dozen neighbours at 20 km/h.

Riding on the road is not our wish. We want to ride on the trails. Unfortunately this is not possible everywhere- yet. But one thing we do not support or enjoy ourselves is the use of the road as the riding venue. Our hope is that as we offer more off-road riding opportunities that you will see fewer people choosing to ride only on the road.

The HBM bylaw does not give any consent whatsoever for ATVs to ride without permission on privately owned roads, commonly marked as “FR” or Fire Route. The ATV club has no trails on Fire Routes in the Cordova Lake area. That would only happen with signed consent from the owners and an agreement from us to participate actively in the maintenance of the road as we would on all our trails. Though technically we “might not need” permission to use a FR which is on crown land, we would only do so after reassuring those who maintain the road that we take our responsibility for maintenance very seriously. We also remind our members to “respect private property” and “do not trespass.” Unfortunately we have little influence on those who do not connect with our organization.

There is also a second bylaw governing ATVs which belongs to the County of Peterborough. Our neighbour, Hastings County has delegated all road responsibility to the lower tier townships- other than the provincial highways like highway seven. Each township in Hastings County has chosen to allow ATV access on all of the roads it owns. Alternatively, the County of Peterborough has chosen to open only the pieces of its County Roads which the club requested as links in the route. Hence the yellow signs on 48 & 46 stating “ATV Access Begins” or “Ends.”

Up until last year it was illegal to ride an ATV to Sam’s Place in Cordova. We worked to open that piece of County Road. As a developing club it is important to us that we are able to link or trail network to the outside communities in order to encourage the economic benefits rolling in with the folks on

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neighbouring trails ready to do business in our community. We have also found that this means we need to have the opportunity for our trails to loop or be part of larger loops preventing the need for the trail user to double back the way they came. We have made it a priority to wherever possible invest in trail agreements not at-risk of easy revocation by land-owners. Though not 100% possible we are endeavouring to develop our trail network as much as feasible on municipal and crown lands. We do carry liability insurance which does cover the landowners who have agreed with us to allow trail across their properties. At this time we do not have trail on private land in the Cordova Lake area. We have been focussing our efforts in areas where there is no alternate way to connect our trails; road or otherwise. Our trail network connects to the EOTA trail at County Road 50 south of highway seven and using trail and road links reaches the Gut Conservation Area which is a short gravel road trip back onto the EOTA trail at Coe Hill. Piece by piece we are working to find alternatives to the road links. But that is a long & tedious endeavour. Our route through the Cordova area utilizes Preston Road & links to County Road 48, east through Cordova to Vansickle Road and stays on the road until the Devil's Four Mile north of the lake. This is our longest road link. But until alternate off-road trails can be determined & negotiated, this is what we have to work with.

To address your reasoning directed at the safety and handling of an ATV on a road surface, I feel that I need to clarify that tires can be but are not always the factor in handling and safety. I owned an ATV manufactured in 2000 which was locked in four wheel drive at all times. With factory installed tires it handled great on the trail and on gravel roads. But handling became problematic on hard-top roads above 50 km per hour- not a problem as 50 km/hr is the fastest speed allowed within the Highway Traffic Act on the road. Manufacturers, recognizing the need for better handling have re-engineered ATVs to handle better under varied conditions. My 2010- same model, but upgraded to allow the front wheels to be disengaged from the power-train has no handling problems. Some ATV owners put lift kits and large tread tires on their vehicles. These modifications allow the vehicle to operate well in mud but have an adverse effect on the road operation. The Highway Traffic Act requires that ATV operators ride within their abilities and in a safe manner taking into consideration the condition of the surface, riding on the shoulder, only using the roadway when the shoulder is unsafe to use. Keep in mind that our province requires all users of the roads to share the road. All the laws of the Highway Traffic Act apply to the operators of ATVs on the road and equally to those in cars.

Let me reassure you that The Havelock & District ATV Club is working to be a positive presence in the community. We take our work very seriously and take a conciliatory approach to working with our neighbours who might enjoy the out-of-doors in a different way. I intend to keep open dialogue with any willing to participate constructively.

Thank you for the chance to share with you,

Phil Higgins; President, Havelock & District ATV Club

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