

**HB 1068:
North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department
Senate Transportation Committee
Fort Totten Room, 09:00 AM
Thursday, February 18, 2021**

Good morning Chairman Clemens, members of the committee; my name is Anton Hillig, Motorized Recreation Coordinator for the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department. I appear today in support of HB 1068 for an Act to amend and reenact subsection 8 of section 39-24-01 and subsection 2 of section 39-29-01 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the definition of an off-highway vehicle.

We are requesting that the definitions of an off-highway vehicle (OHV) and snowmobile be changed to address those OHVs converted to operate on snow. This change keeps pace with industry trends, eliminates user registration confusions, assists with law enforcement's understanding of classifications, and enhances our overall program of responsibility.

The definition of an off-highway vehicle has changed over the last decade, most recently in the N.D.C.C §39-39-01 in 2013, as a means of keeping pace with industry trends. The current definition describes an OHV as any motor vehicle not designed for use on a highway and capable of cross-country travel but presents the potential for confusion by not addressing modifications to operated solely on snow, specifically converted class 1 OHVs.

North Dakota currently has 41,999 OHV registrations as of December 1, 2020. In a conservative estimate, four (4) percent or 1650 of these OHVs have been converted to operate on snow by the installation of a tracked vehicle kit. Nationally, seven to eight (7-8) percent of OHVs are being converted to operate on snow to extend the riding season of owners, provide transportation to ice fishing adventures, and increase trafficability in general. The general cost of converting an OHV to operate on snow ranges from \$3K- \$5K depending on the type of OHV and the conversion kit performance.

With the emergence of this new technology, our office has fielded multiple calls from consumers who were confused on whether they needed to register their tracked OHV as an OHV, as a snowmobile, or as both. This recommendation also provides clarity for authorized use on NDPRD snowmobile trails, assists law enforcement when referencing citations, and prevents the allure to register these machines a second time as snowmobiles.

In closing, this requested change provides users and other stakeholders clarity when discerning N.D.C.C. §39-29-01 and N.D.C.C §39-24-01 as standalone documents while eliminating the possibility of having to register a vehicle twice. As we prepare to usher in a new motorized recreation trend into North Dakota, tracked vehicle use on snowmobile trails, this legislation will streamline processes to welcome additional riders to our winter trails.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my remarks; I would be pleased to answer any questions that the committee may have. Thank you for your time and consideration