



WASHBURN COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

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Washburn County Policy - ATV/UTV Routes on County Trunk Highways

Wisconsin statutes (Wis. Stat. 23.33) provide Washburn County the responsibility/authority to designate county highways, or sections of county highways, for use by ATV/UTV's (All-Terrain Vehicle/Utility-Terrain Vehicles). These sections/routes are generally recognized as connections of ends of off-highway trails when it is obstructed by a city, village, natural obstacle, or other impediment.

Washburn County's primary concern when making a determination on designating a county highway as an ATV/UTV route is public safety. ATV/UTV's on county highways will create an additional conflict for the traveling public and safety will be considered a priority.

Application/Process

Route requests shall be submitted in writing for consideration by the Washburn County Highway and Dam Committee. All applications **must** be submitted by the local jurisdiction (City/Village/Town) to be considered. The route request must include a copy of approved local jurisdiction minutes requesting the ATV/UTV route. Route requests must state the road requested and indicate the beginning and end limits of each route. Applications will be considered annually, with the submittal deadline being the last Thursday in January in the year to be considered. Upon recommendation of the Washburn County Highway and Dam Committee, the route would be considered by the Washburn County Board. The designation and opening of an approved ATV/UTV route will become effective upon adoption of a County Ordinance by the Washburn County Board and erection of necessary signage by the Washburn County Highway Department. The Washburn County Highway Department is the only entity authorized to install signs on the County system. The expense of installation and maintenance of signs shall be paid by the municipality that requests the ATV route to be open.

Considerations

Safety of the travelling public is the utmost concern for Washburn County, below is a list of factors that will be considered by the County in determining whether a county highway, or section of county highway could be designated as an ATV/UTV route. This list is not exhaustive, and as every county highway has unique features, additional factors may be considered:

- ADT (Average Daily Traffic)
- Washburn County Sheriff Department Concerns
- Accident History within proposed route.
- Verification that all other route options have been considered.
- Presence of school zones or other special consideration areas.
- Will the requested route connect segments of other ATV/UTV trail network?
- Vertical/Horizontal highway alignment issues.
- Sight distance issues at the posted highway speed.
- Pavement Width.
- Commercial heavy truck volumes.
- Environmental hazards.

Other Items

If a situation warrants closure of a designated ATV/UTV route on a county highway, the Highway Commissioner shall have the authority to temporarily suspend or close the route subject to a review and determination by the Washburn County Highway and Dam Committee. Permanent closure will require approval of the Washburn County Board of Supervisors.

POLICY APPROVED BY THE WASHBURN COUNTY HIGHWAY COMMITTEE, 10-19-20, AMENDED AT THE 8-16-21 & 12-18-23 MEETINGS