

NEWPORT TOWNSHIP OHV FEASIBILITY STUDY

Public Meeting

Thursday, February 11, 2021 • 6:00-8:00pm • via Zoom

Funded by a grant from the PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources



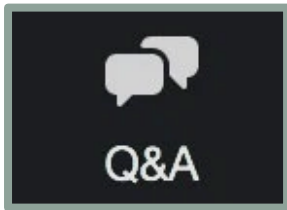
❖ PLEASE NOTE THIS MEETING IS BEING RECORDED

Welcome!

- Tonight's public meeting is being recorded.
- Attendees will be placed on mute and video will be turned off.
- We'll start the meeting with an overview of the project and discussion from our consultant, LAIRD, including preliminary results from the Public Survey.
- Questions and comments will be taken after the presentation. Each speaker has two minutes. We'll answer as many questions as possible before 8:00pm. Additional answers will be posted on the project webpage following the meeting.

Public Comments / Questions

During the Q&A session, there are two ways to participate:



- **Written Question:** Type your question/comment into the Q&A box by clicking on the icon.



- **Live Question:** Click on the “Raise Hand” icon and you will be added to the queue. For phone attendees, you can dial *9. When it’s your turn to speak, the host will unmute you and announce you by name or the last 4 digits of your phone number.

The host will alternate between the typed questions in the Q&A box and raised hands.



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INTRODUCTIONS

**PROJECT
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**PRELIMINARY
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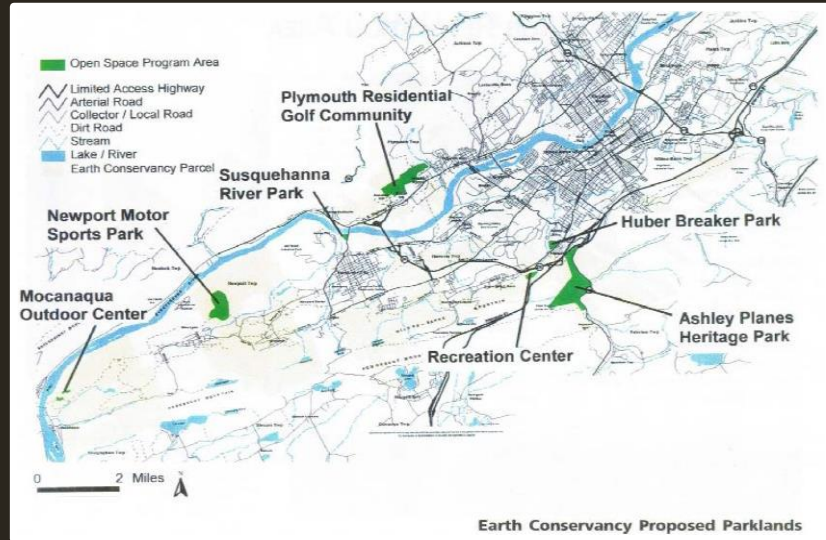
Q&A

**NEXT
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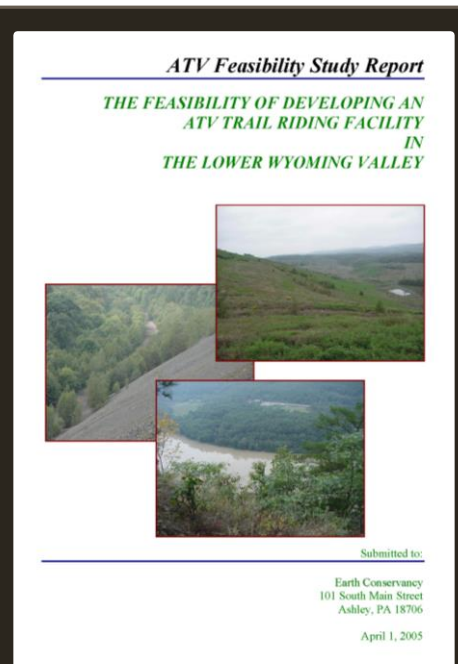
CLOSING

AGENDA

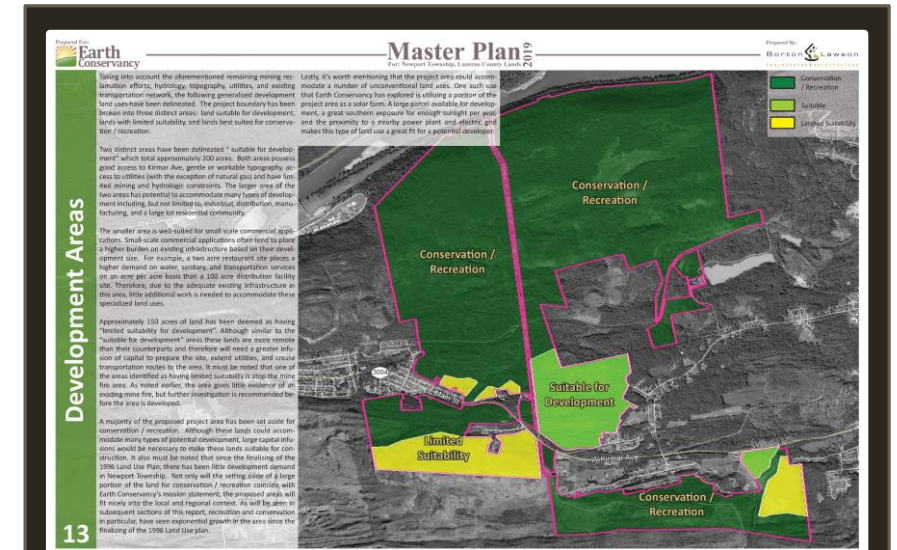
How We Got Here



Open Space Master Plan
(1999)



ATV Feasibility
Study Report
(2005)

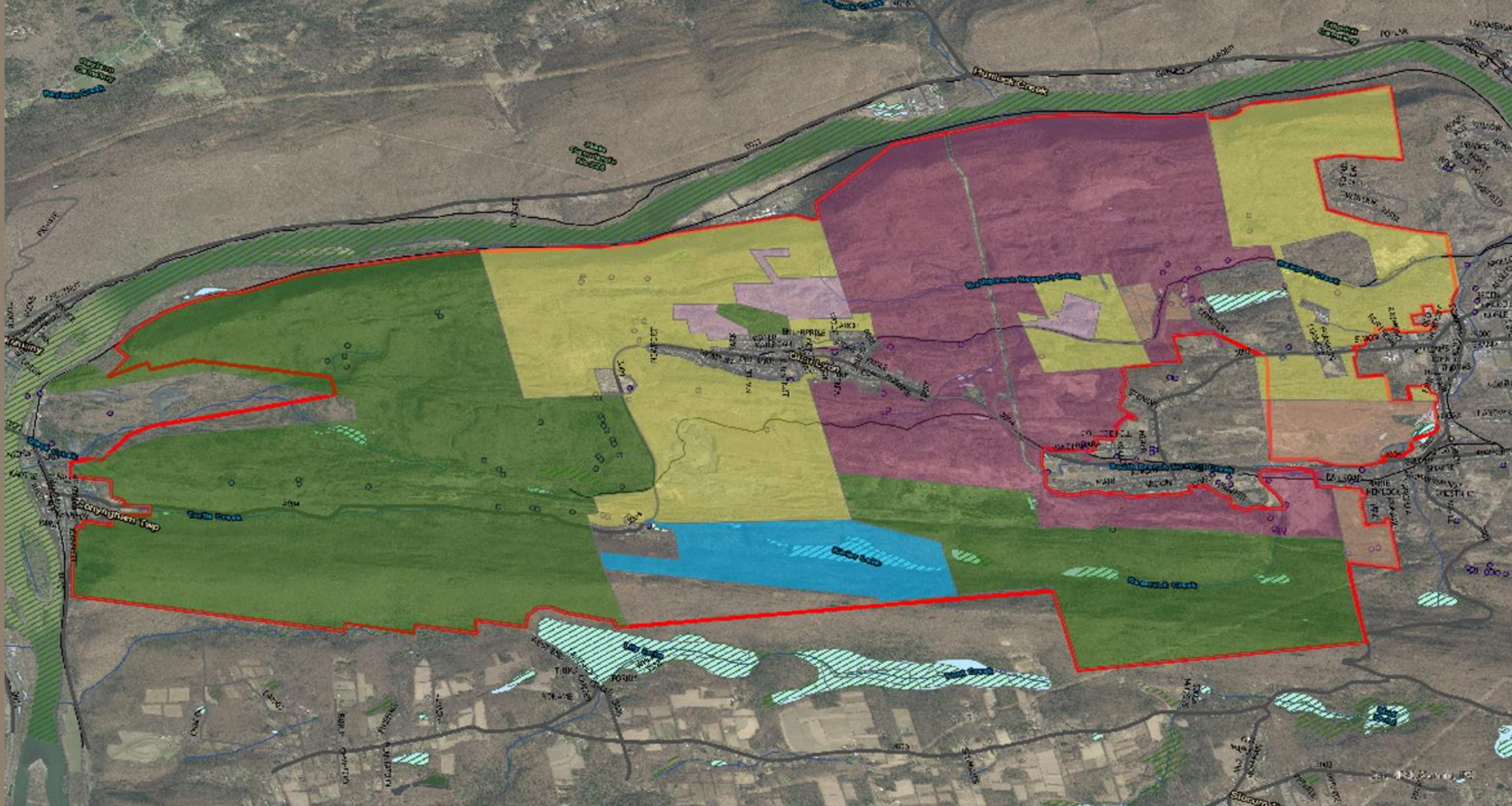


Newport Township Master Plan
(2019)

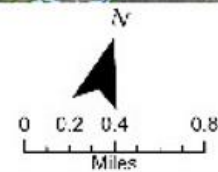
Why Now?

- **Scope:** Original ATV Study only determined which EC properties were suited for park and limited Newport Township evaluation to 2,500 acres. No conceptual plans were created.
- **Land Use:** Recognition land was more appropriate for recreation/conservation; limited infrastructure.
- **Popularity:** Continued increase in OHV ridership in PA.
- **Trail Development Opportunities:** In 2020, PA DCNR revised policy “to explore new ATV trails and connectors on state forest lands.”

Study Area



Earth Conservancy 2,500±	Pinchot State Forest 1,400±	NWI PA	Pa Inact Rail 1995
Silverbrook 150±	Kieler Lake Lodge 600±	Pa State Roads 2020	Luzerne Co Streams 1996
Northampton 600±	Generalized Study Area	Pa Rail Lines 2018	NHD Waterbody PA
Pollock 2,600+	AML Inventory Points 2020-01	Pa Local Roads 2020	



SHEET 3
Property Ownership
Newport Township
OHV Park Feasibility Study

Project Goals



- Investigate wants and needs of ATV/OHV riders and other outdoor recreational enthusiasts in community;
- Investigate challenges and benefits of an outdoor motorized recreational area;
- Develop conceptual plan(s) for 10,000-acre study area;
- Investigate ownership models (public and/or private);
- Prepare report and outline permitting, funding opportunities, and next steps towards planning/construction.



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Project Team



LAIRD LA • WAR LA • The Institute





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Planning & Implementation Process



- Ownership is central to the project moving forward. EC will not own or operate the park.
- Negotiating role of other major landholders.
- Ownership model will determine funding options.

Feasibility Study Tasks & Timeline



Potential Results

What might we expect from an OHV park?

- Organized & Legal Riding Area
 - Designated places for specific activities
 - Liability reduction
 - Environmental sustainability & accountability through quality design/management
 - Address misunderstood & unmet needs of several sports communities (e.g., motorsports, climbing, paintball)
- Economic Development
 - Draw for outdoor enthusiasts from far and wide
 - Increased revenue for stores, restaurants, and services (sales, parts, repairs)
 - Need for overnight accommodations/campgrounds

A brief look at what's happening in Shamokin at AOAA [here](#):





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OHV Public Survey

- Earth Conservancy website, mail, and email
- Accepting responses through May
- 2,400+ responses received so far
- Results are preliminary; still collecting responses



Public Survey
Newport Twp. OHV Recreational Park Feasibility Study

Please check ☒ or write in your answers for each question.

1. Zip Code:*

2. Age: ☐ Under 18 ☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-39 ☐ 40-55 ☐ 55+

2. Race/Ethnicity: ☐ Asian or Pacific Islander ☐ Black or African American ☐ Native American or Alaskan Native
☐ White or Caucasian ☐ Multiracial or Biracial ☐ Some Other Race ☐ Prefer Not to Answer
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin? ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Prefer Not to Answer

4. Gender Identification: ☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Other ☐ Prefer Not to Answer

5. Veteran: ☐ No ☐ Yes

6. Highest Level of Schooling: ☐ Some HS ☐ HS Graduate/GED ☐ Some College ☐ Associate's Degree
☐ Bachelor's Degree ☐ Graduate Degree ☐ Prefer Not to Answer

7. Household Income: ☐ Less than \$25,000 ☐ \$25,000-\$49,999 ☐ \$50,000-\$74,999 ☐ \$75,000-\$99,999
☐ \$100,000-\$149,999 ☐ Over \$150,000 ☐ Prefer Not to Answer

8. Are you an Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) rider? Passengers in OHVs with more than one seat count as riders. ☐ Yes ☐ No
IF YOU ANSWERED "YES," PLEASE CONTINUE TO QUESTION 9. IF YOU ANSWERED "NO," SKIP TO PART II.

9. If yes, for how many years have you been riding? ☐ 0-1 ☐ 2-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 10-15 ☐ 15+

10. What type of OHV do you use/own? Check all that apply. ☐ ATV ☐ Dirt Bike ☐ 4x4 ☐ Side-by-Side ☐ Truck/Jeep
☐ Snowmobile ☐ I do not own an OHV ☐ Other: _____

11. When riding, what skill-level trails do you prefer? ☐ Beginner ☐ Intermediate ☐ Advanced/Extreme

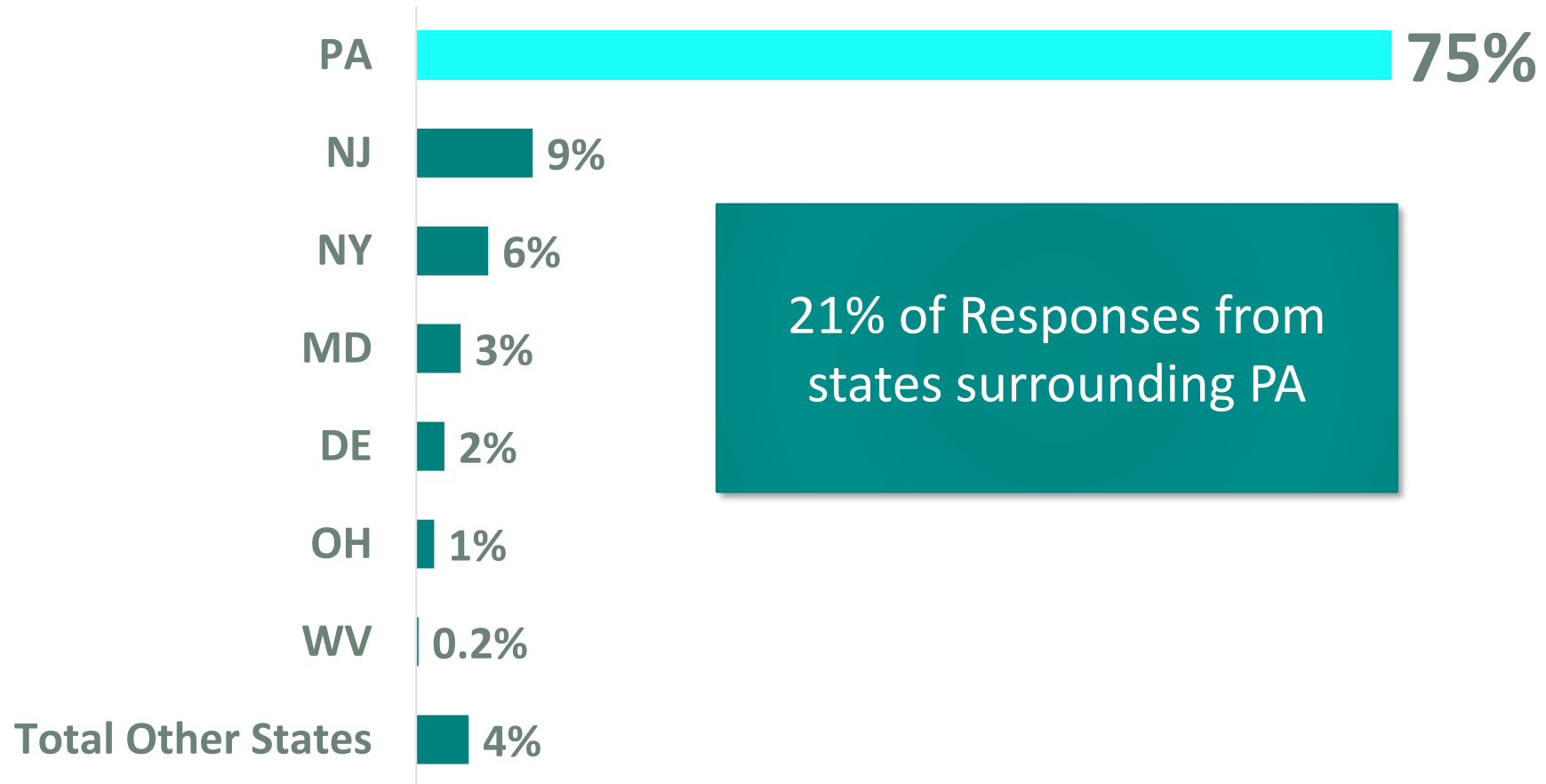
12. What type of course do you prefer? Check all that apply. ☐ Beginner Track ☐ Motocross/ATV Track
☐ Mudding Area ☐ Obstacle/Challenge Course ☐ Open Area ☐ Rock Crawling ☐ Trails
☐ Other (please specify): _____

13. How many times have you gone riding in the past year? ☐ 0-2 ☐ 2-5 ☐ 5-10 ☐ 10+

14. When do you primarily ride? ☐ Weekdays ☐ Weekends ☐ Holidays ☐ All/No Preference



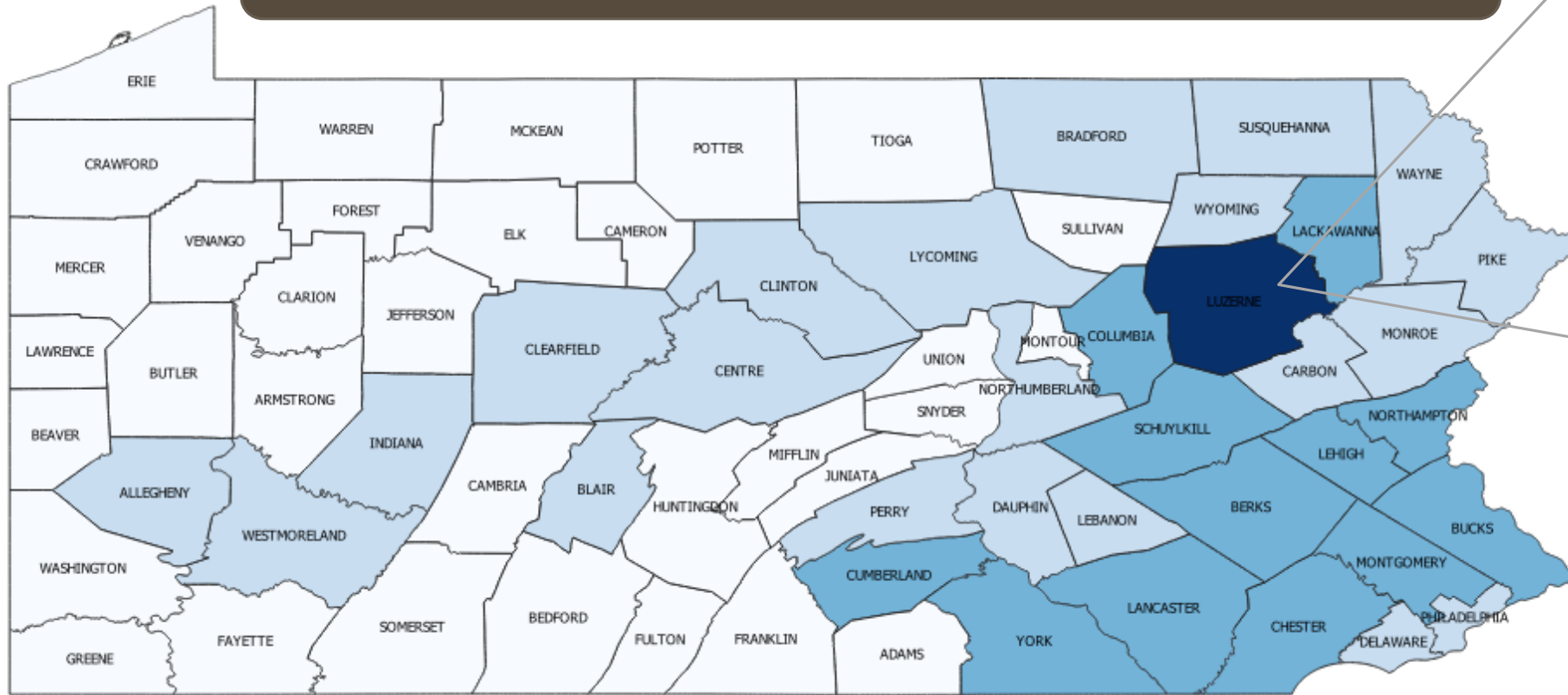
Responses by State



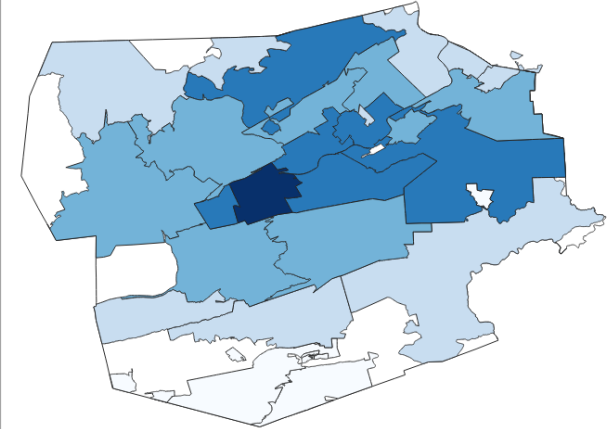
2,416 Responses, excluding blank or invalid zip codes.

PA Responses by County

38% of Responses in PA are from Luzerne County



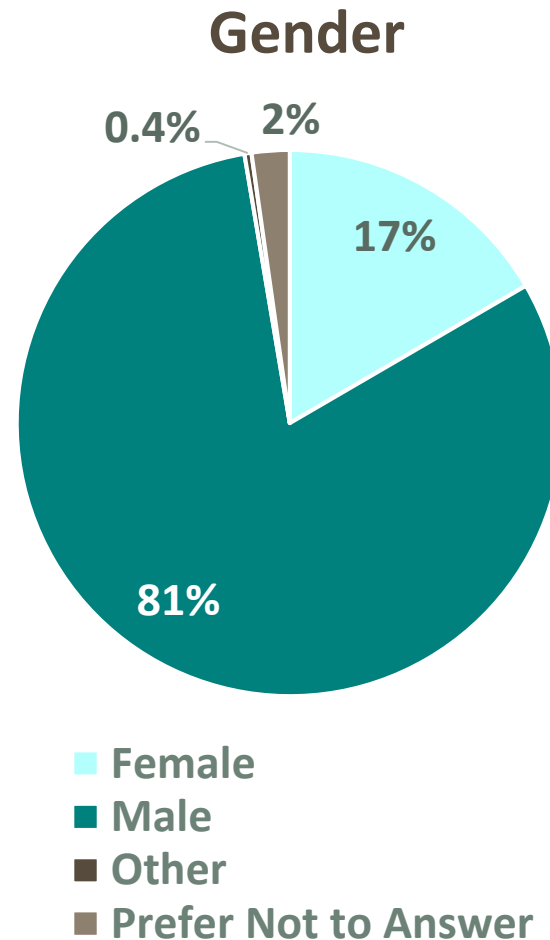
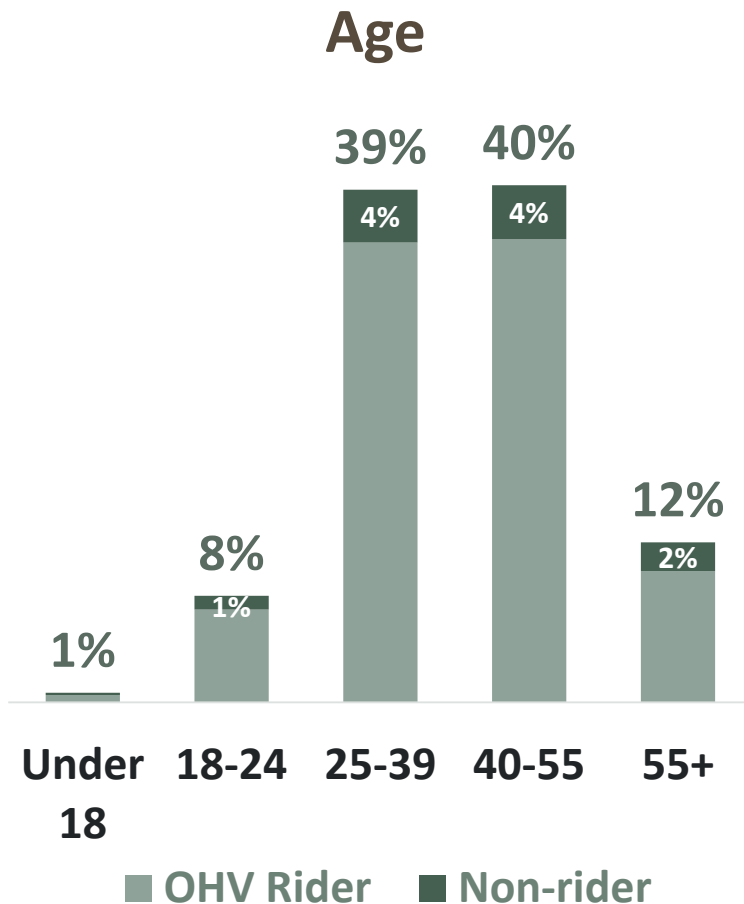
Luzerne County Zip Codes





Percent of Responses

	0 – 0.5%
	0.51 – 2%
	2.1 – 5%
	5.1 – 10%
	More than 10%

Respondent Characteristics

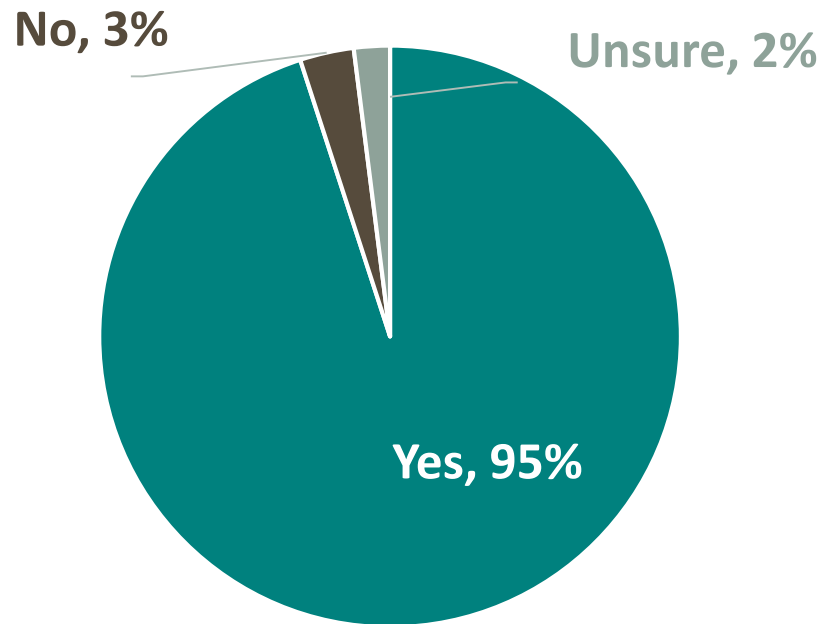



Race	
91% White/Caucasian	
3.5% Other Race	
5.5% Prefer Not to Answer	
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin?	
92% No	
2% Yes	
6% Prefer Not to Answer	

	12% Veterans
	2% Disability 11% Other Physical Limitation

Support for OHV Recreational Area

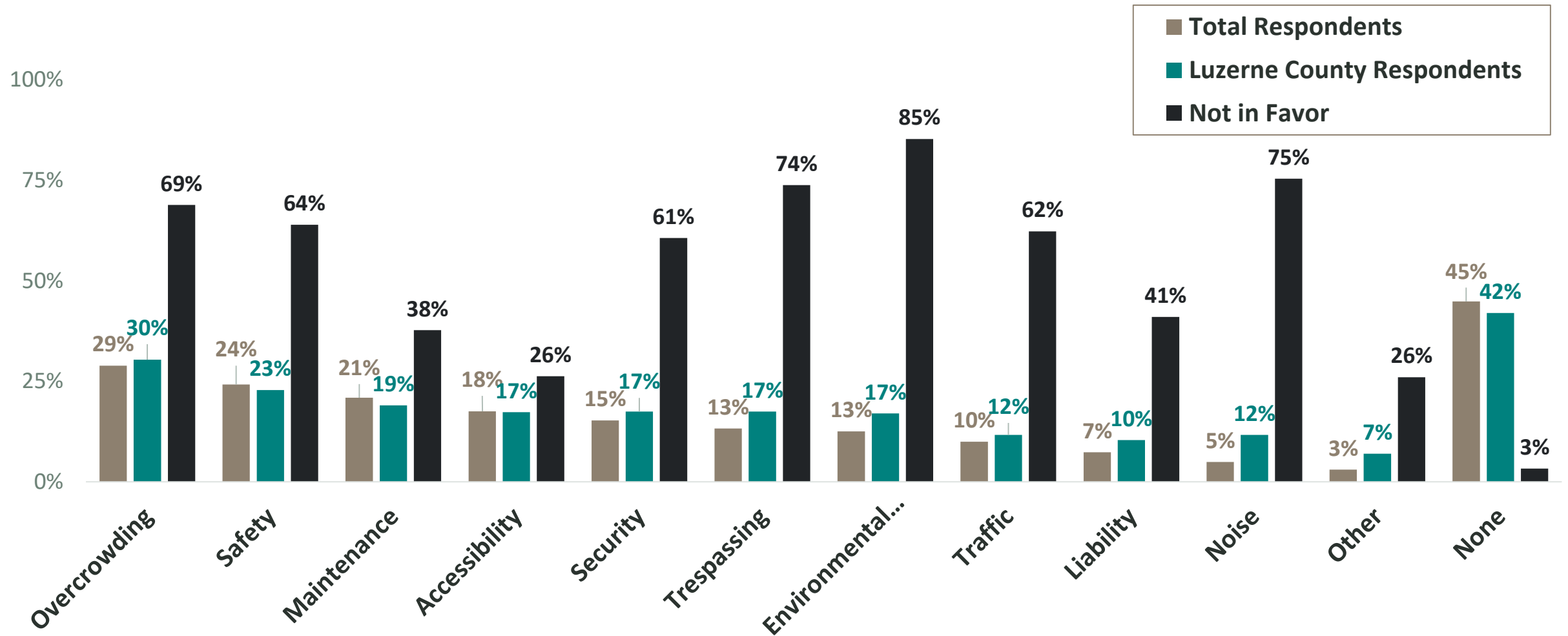
Would you be in favor of an OHV area in Newport Township?
(All Respondents)



 Luzerne County	Support Among Luzerne County Respondents		
	In Favor of OHV Area?		
	Yes	No	Unsure
	88%	8%	4%

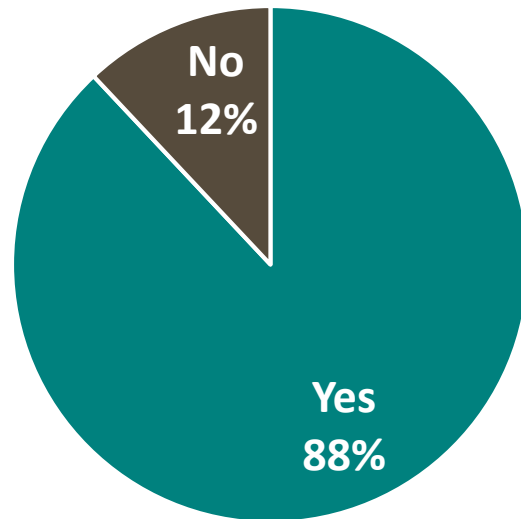
Support Among OHV Riders and Non-Riders			
Current Rider?	In Favor of OHV Area?		
	Yes	No	Unsure
	85%	2%	1%
Yes	85%	2%	1%
No	10%	1%	0.4%

OHV Park Areas of Concern

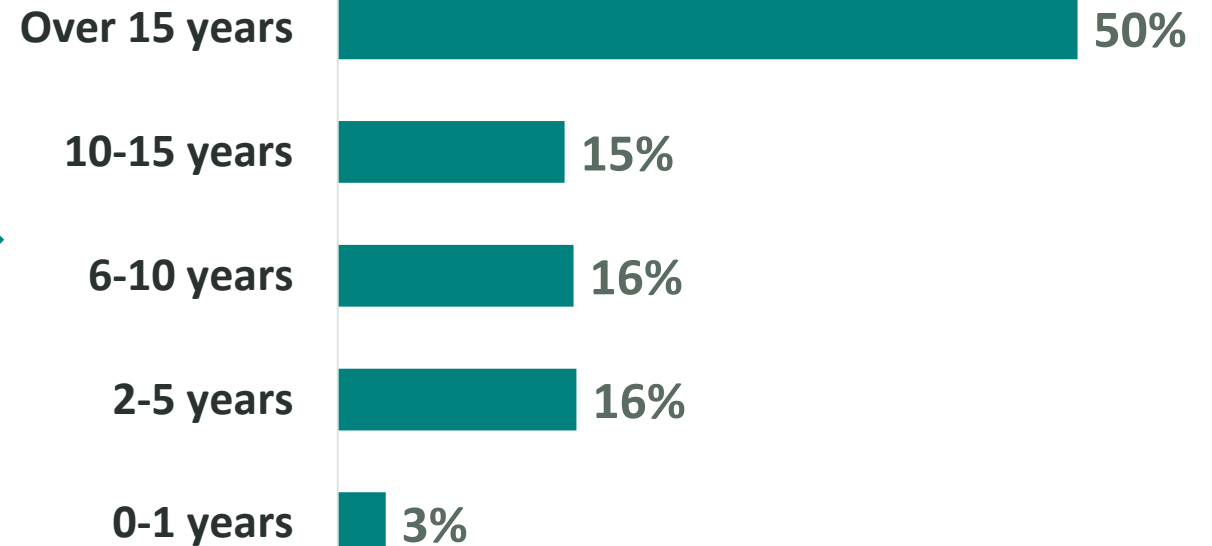


OHV Riding Experience

Are you an off-highway vehicle (OHV) rider?

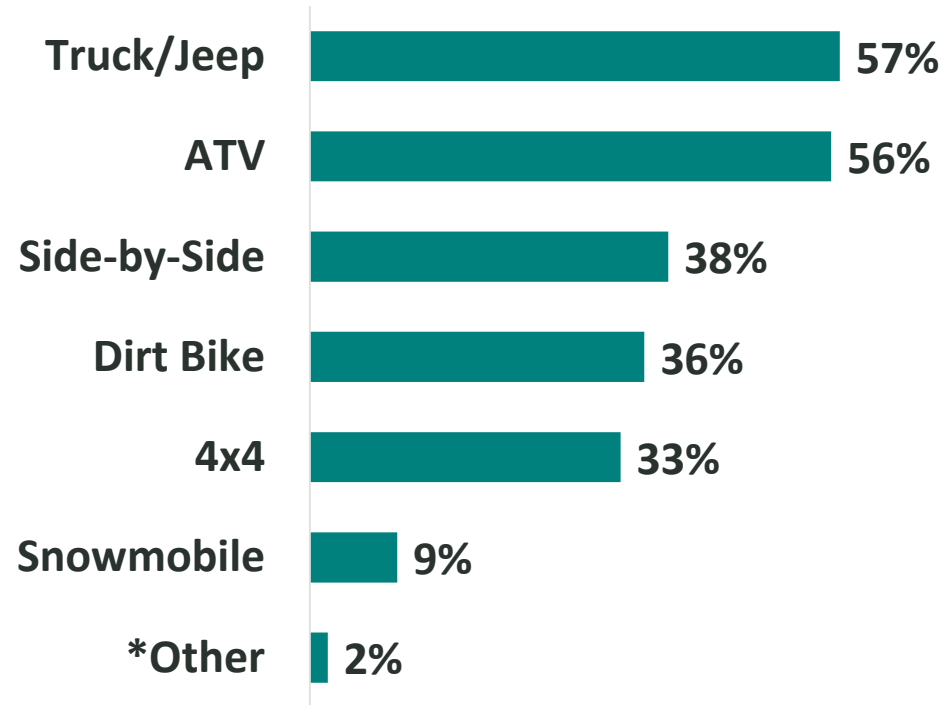


If yes, for how many years have you been riding?



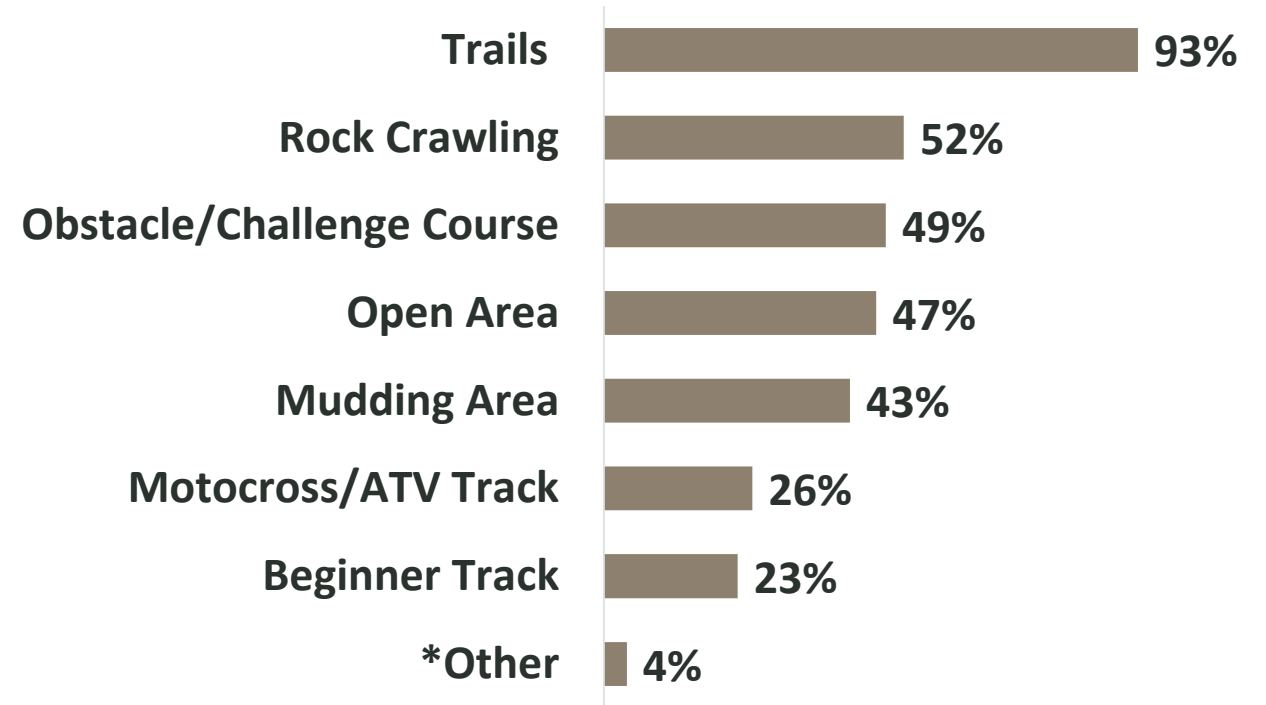
Vehicle Types and Course Preferences

Type of OHV Use/Own



**Other common OHV types include: dual sport motorcycles, buggy/dune buggy, and rock crawlers/bouncers.*

Type of Course Preferred



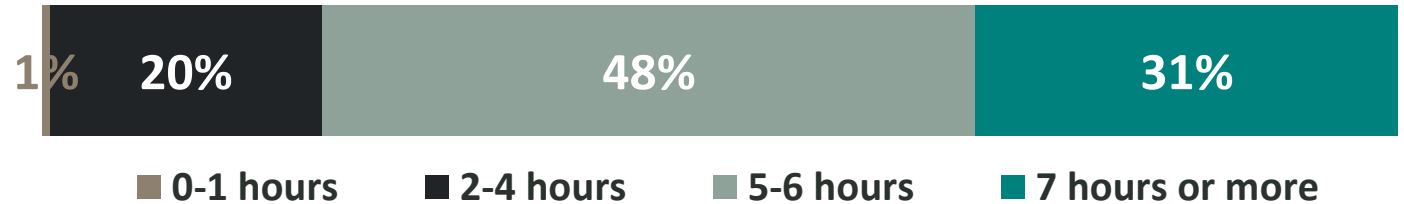
**Other commonly preferred courses include: single track, hill climbs, and technical tracks.*

Riding Patterns

How many times have you gone riding in the past year?



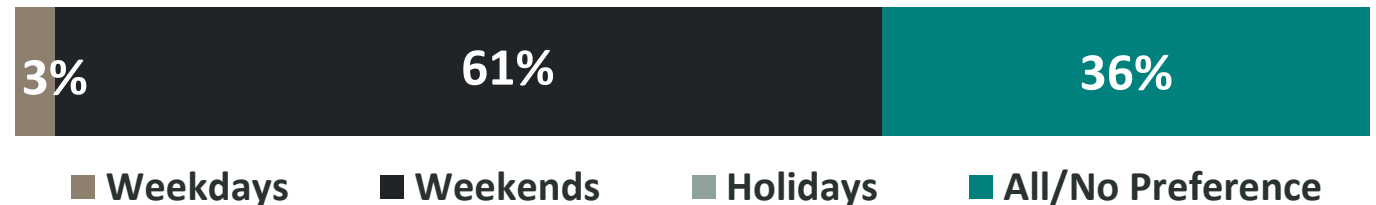
On average, how many hours do you prefer to ride?



When you ride, how many people are typically in your group?



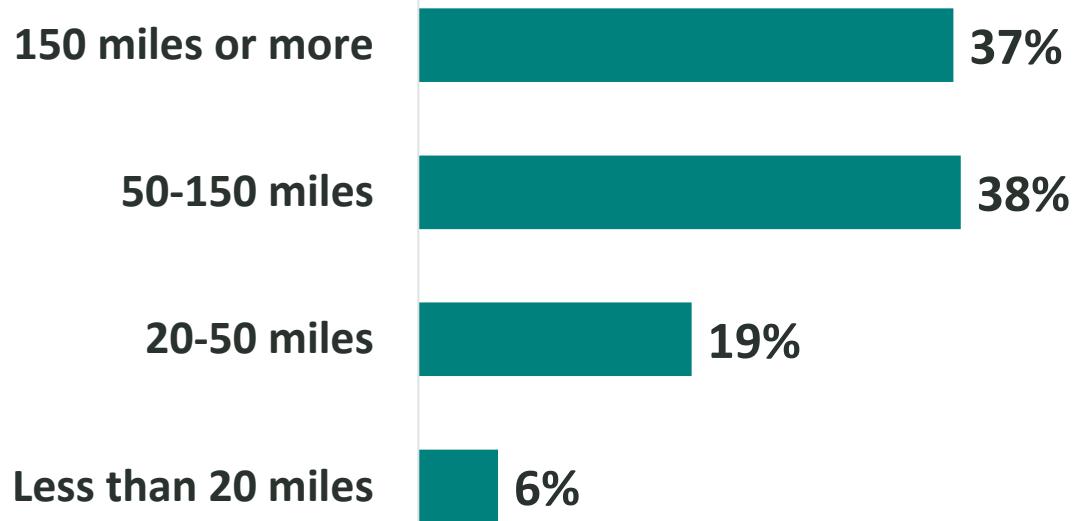
When do you primarily ride?



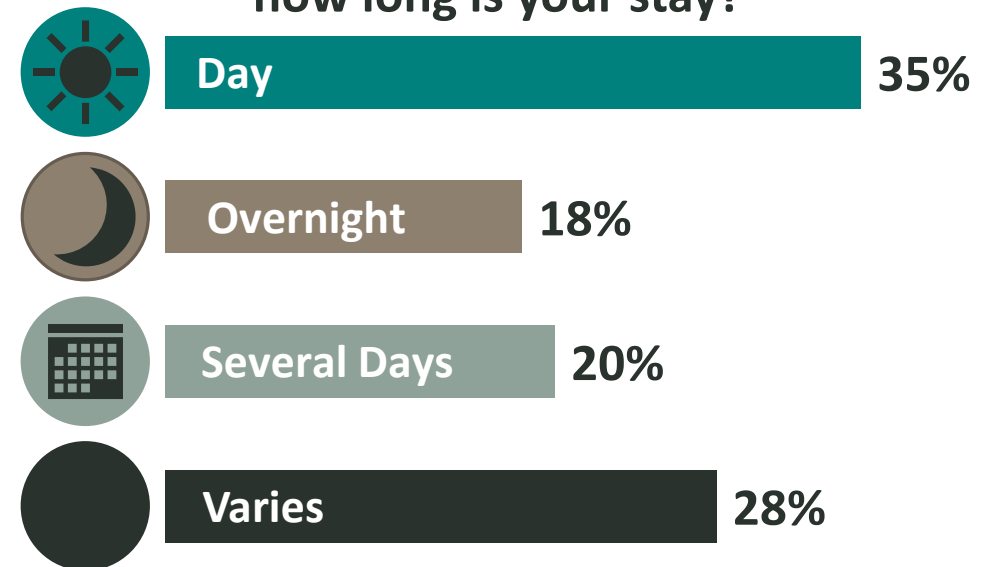
OHV Park Experience

83% Have been to an OHV park or riding area

How far are you willing to drive from your home to visit an OHV park/riding area?

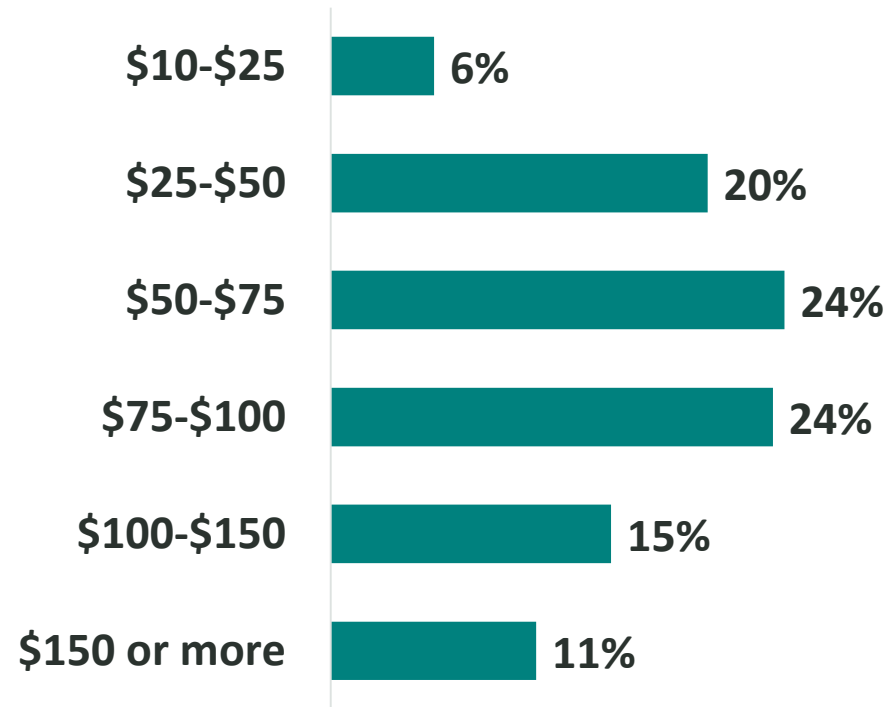


When you visit an OHV destination, how long is your stay?



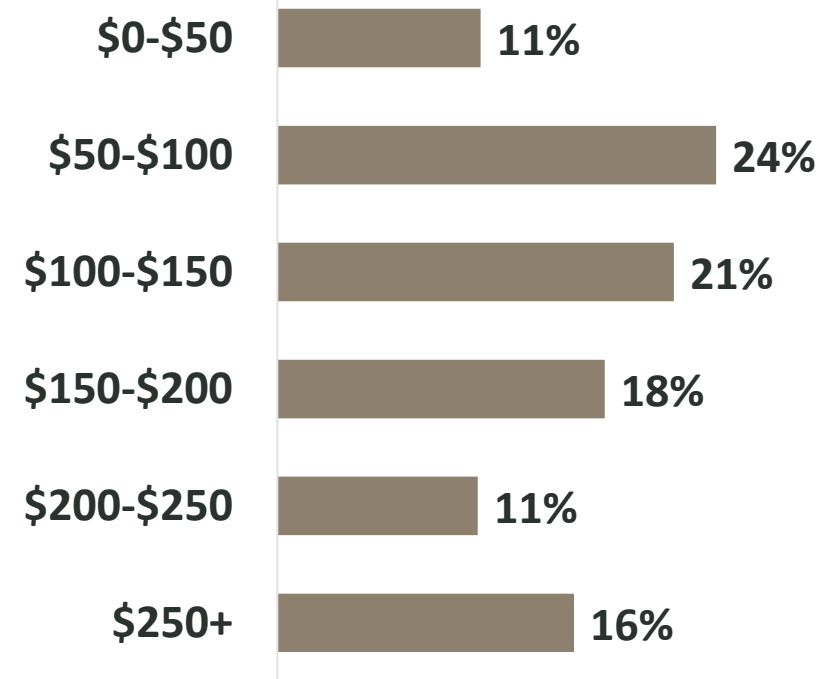
Spending on OHV Destination Trips or Events

Amount typically spent on [fuel](#)



Average Fuel Expenditure ~ \$82.69

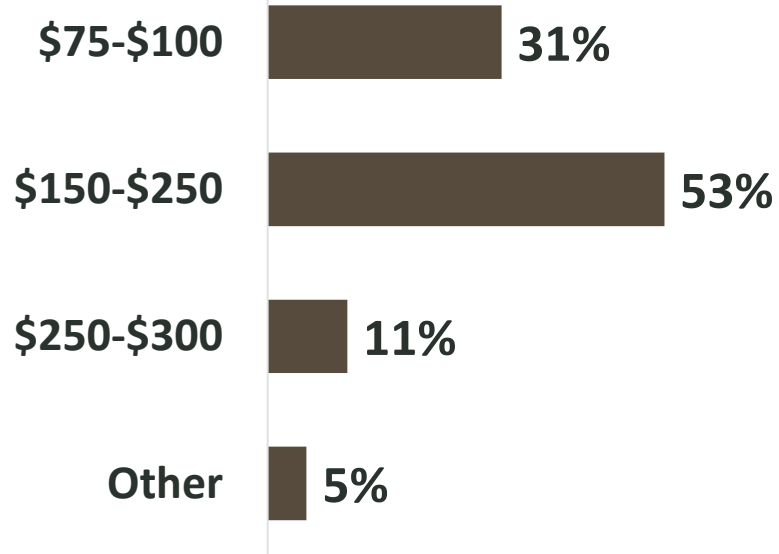
Amount typically spent on [other expenses](#)



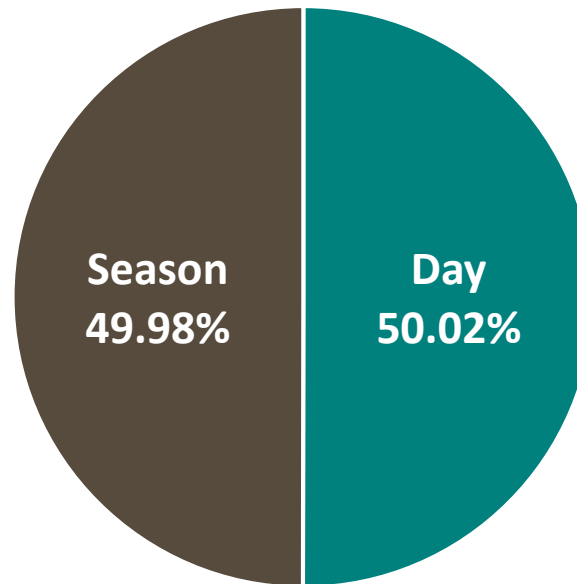
Average Other Expenditures ~ \$145.75

OHV Park Pass Preferences

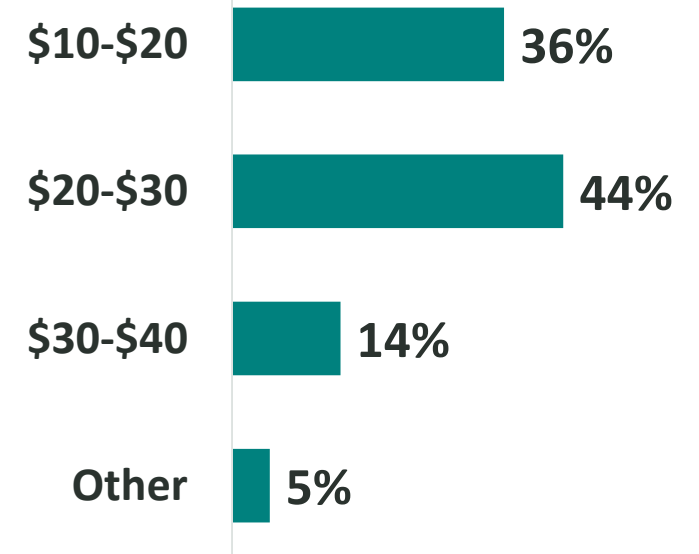
What is a fair price for a season pass?



Would you prefer a day pass or a season pass?



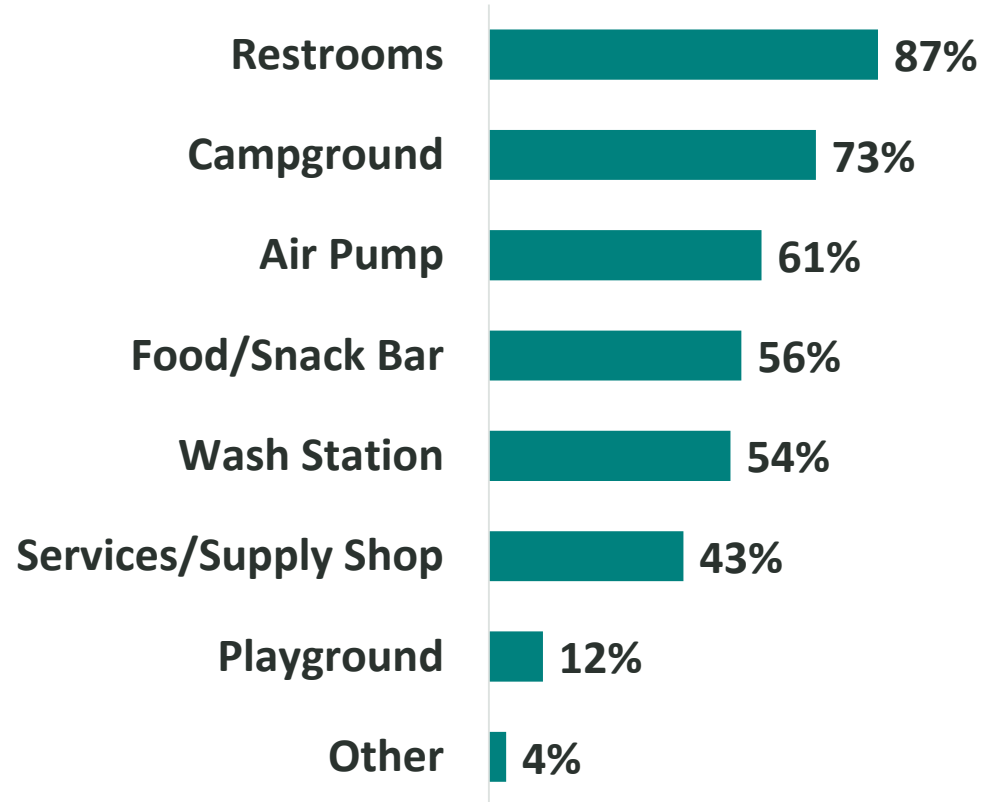
What is a fair price for a day pass?



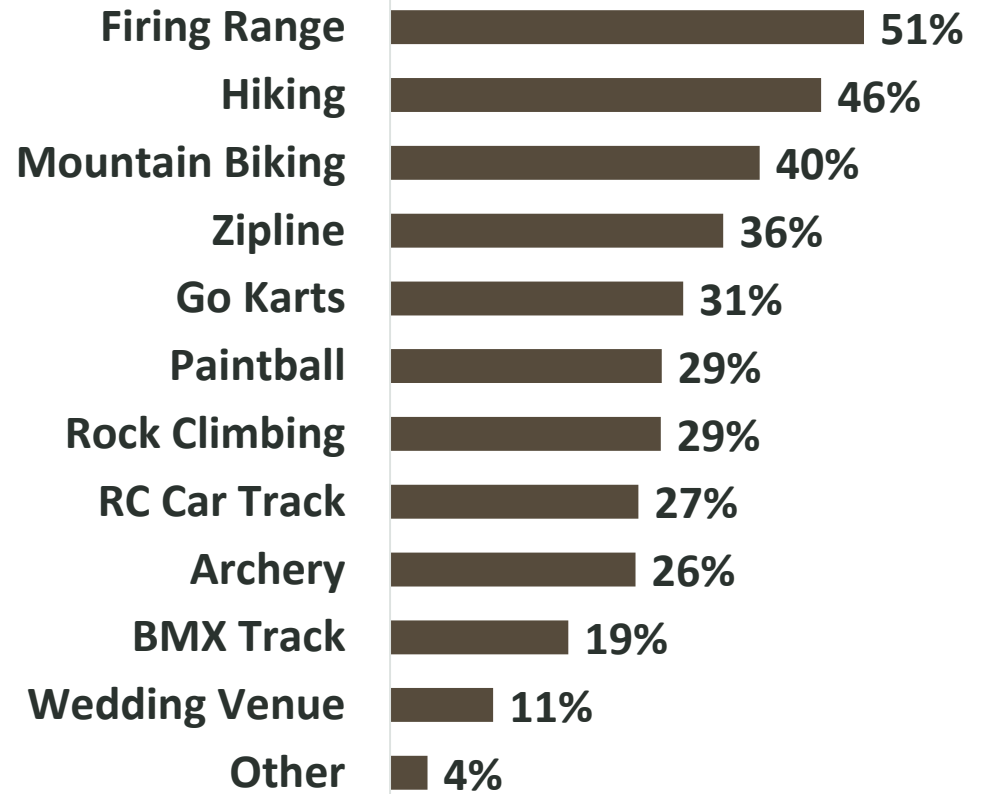
Other considerations: discounts for local riders and in-state vs. out-of-state riders, separate prices for riders vs. passengers, family pass options.

OHV Park Amenities and Activities

Facilities/Amenities



Other Activities



Trail Accessibility

Would you support regulated, limited OHV use to access other towns and/or trail systems?

95%

5%

Would you like to see community connector trails from an OHV riding area to other local amenities (e.g., fuel, food, lodging)?

96%

4%

■ Yes ■ No

Key Findings (So Far)

- Majority in favor of OHV park
- Most are current riders with years of experience
- Biggest concerns among those not in favor: environmental damage, noise, and trespassing
- Potential benefit from visitor spending & economic development
- Strong support for trail accessibility/connectivity
- Take local riders and residents into consideration



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Off Road Passage



Old Roads



ATV-only Roads



Mining Hazards



Culm Banks



Overburden



Susquehanna Views

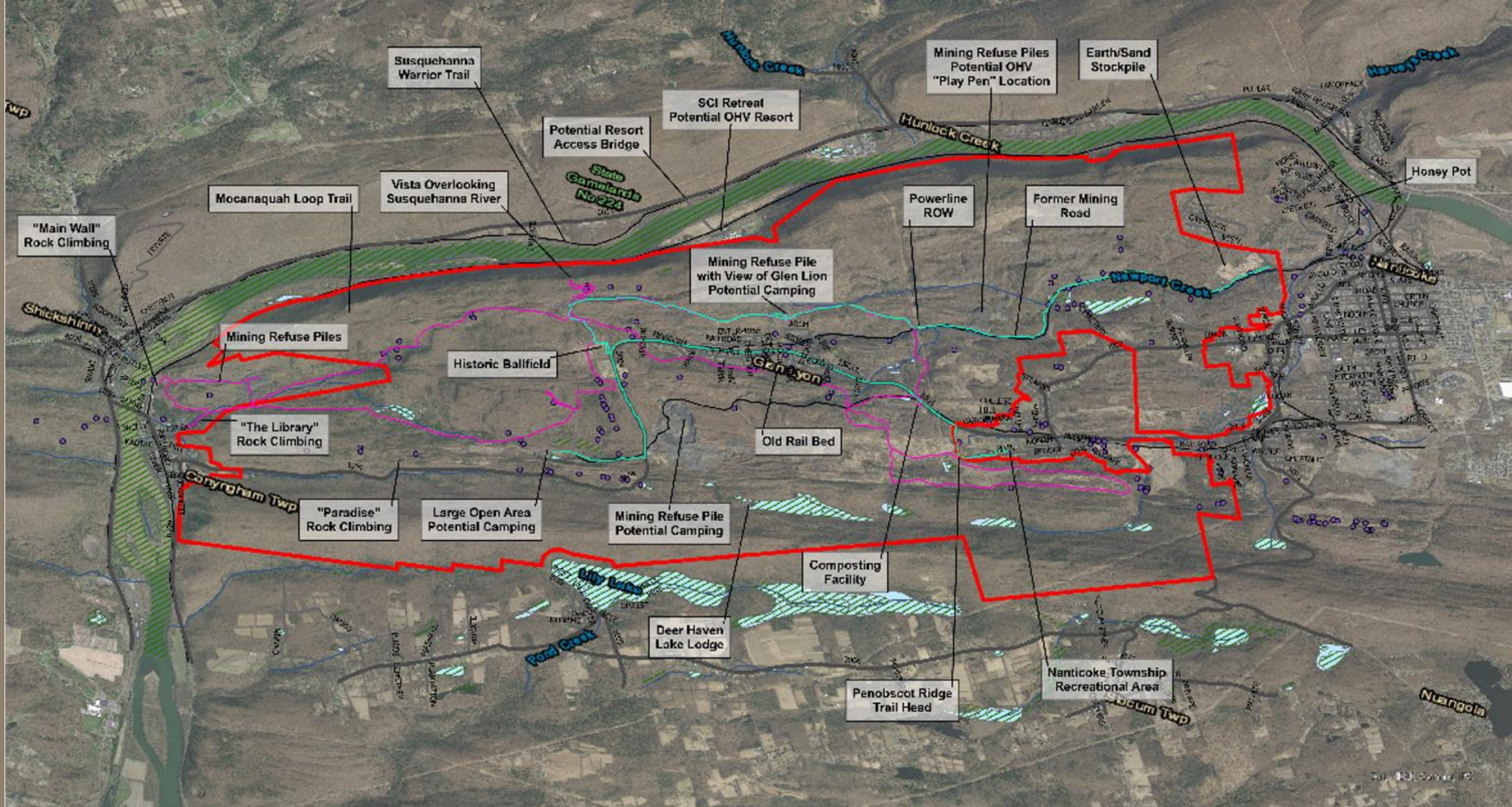


Overlook at Hawaii

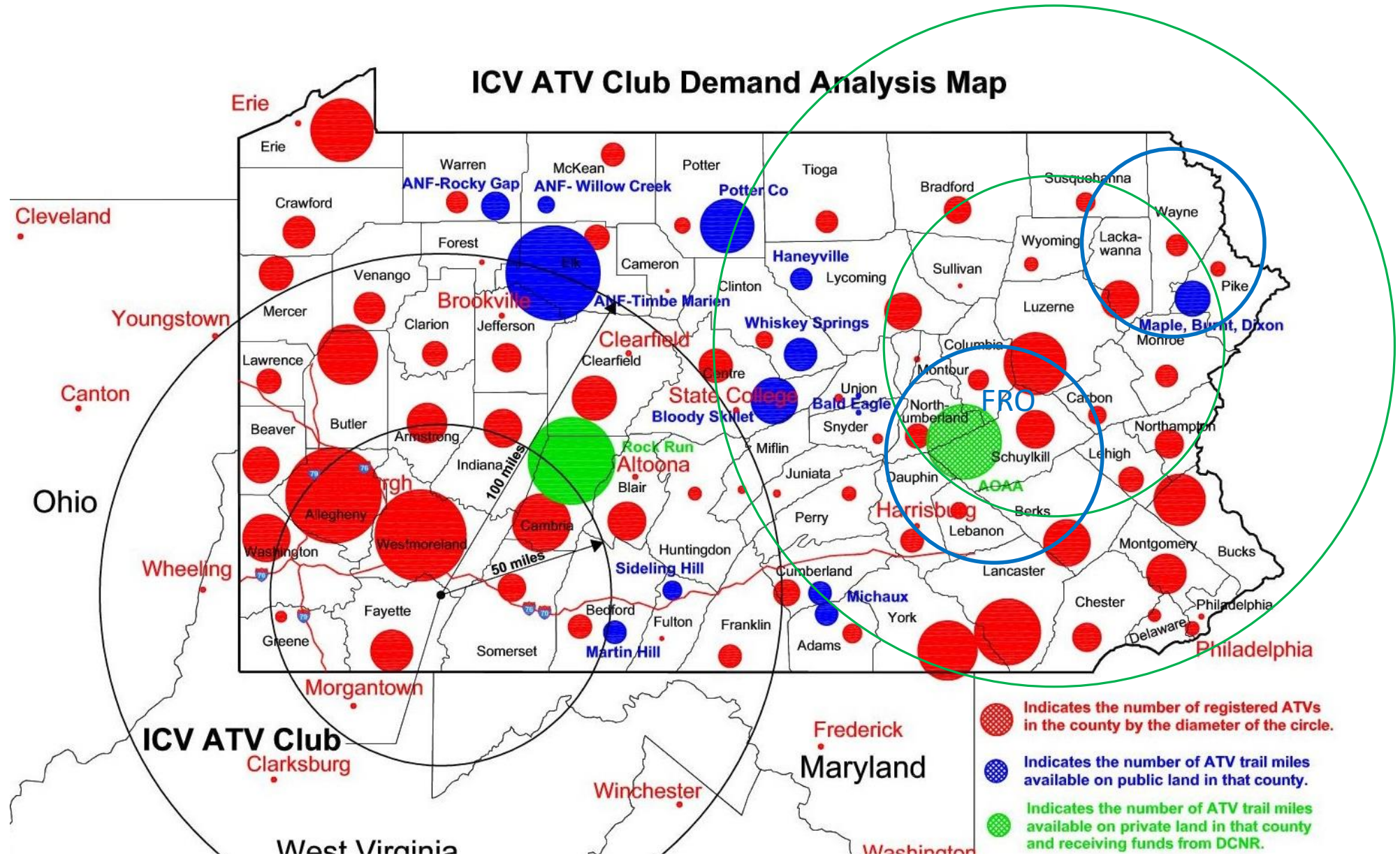


The Library

Prelim. Inventory of Study Area



Sample Demand Map



Luzerne Co. (and NEPA) is a prime location for similar OHV Recreation/Tourism Programs.
PA is poised to become the 'Outdoor Recreation Mecca' of the eastern US!

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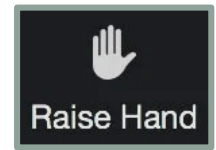
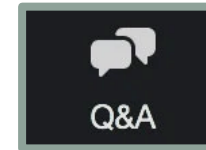
CLOSING



AGENDA

Q&A

- Use Q&A box, “Raise Hand,” or *9
- two-minute limit
- keep comments respectful/courteous
- answers to unanswered items will be posted on www.earthconservancy.org
- EC Contact: e.hughes@earthconservancy.org
- LAIRD Contact: jim@lairdla.com



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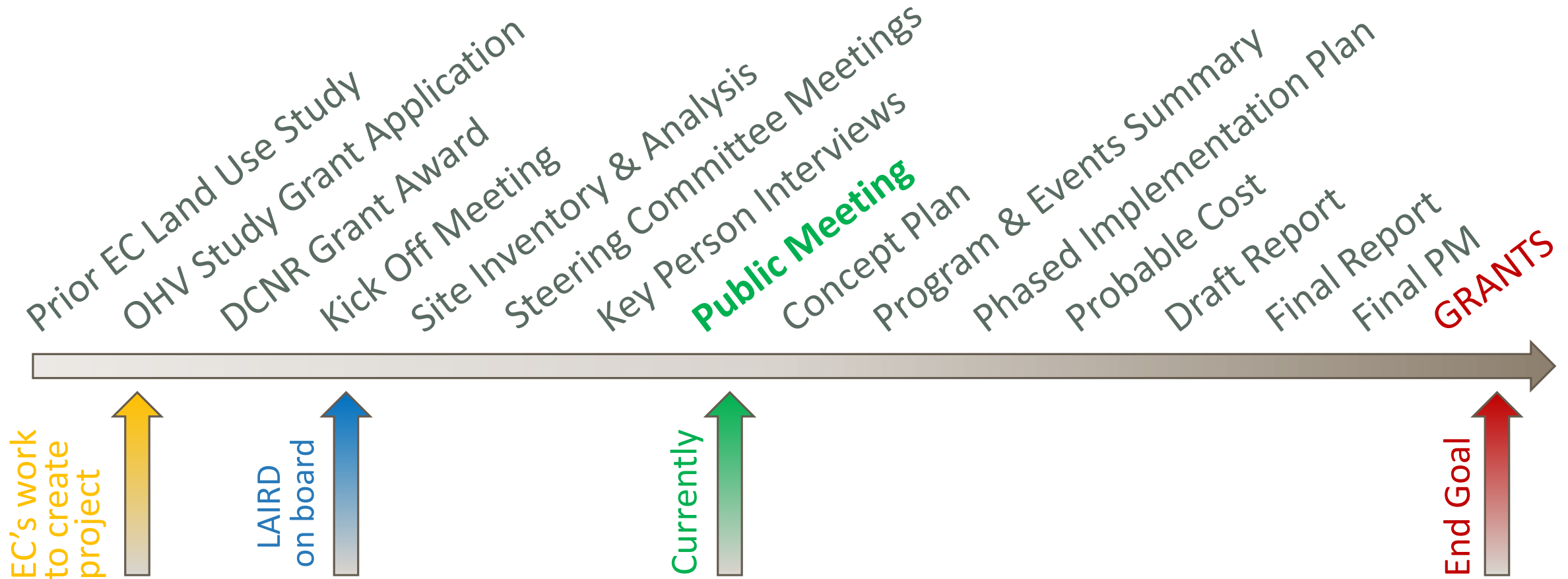
**NEXT
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**THANK
YOU!**



AGENDA

Feasibility Study Tasks & Timeline



OHV Park Financing (How Do We Pay For It?)

- PA DCNR ATV Restricted Fund
- Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funded through Liquid Fuel Sales (funnel through Federal Highways to PennDOT to DCNR)
- Department of Economic Development (DCED) Commonwealth Finance Authority (CFA) and Trails Grants
- Volunteer Corps (allow enthusiasts to build & maintain trails/facilities)
- Major Manufacturer Grants (KAWASAKI, YAMAHA, Polaris, CanAm, etc.)
- Future: Community Conservation Partnerships Program (DCNR's C2P2 Grants)

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Thank You!

- We continue to want your input!
- If you haven't already, take the survey on EC's website at www.earthconservancy.org
- Email us with additional comments:
EC Contact: e.hughes@earthconservancy.org
LAIRD Contact: jim@lairdla.com
- Follow us on Facebook for the latest updates