

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 711

(Senator McKay)

Judicial Proceedings

Environment and Transportation and
Ways and Means

Off-Highway Recreational Vehicle Recreation Oversight Board - Establishment

This bill establishes and provides for the membership of the Off-Highway Recreational Vehicle (OHRV) Recreation Oversight Board, to advise the Secretary of Natural Resources on the operation, acquisition, regulation, and general oversight of OHRV trails and recreation in the State. The board is staffed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and must meet at least quarterly.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: DNR's staffing responsibility is assumed to be handled with existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: The bill does not directly affect local government finances or operations.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law:

Off-Highway Recreational Vehicle Trail Fund

Chapter 700 of 2018 established the OHRV Trail Fund to maintain and construct trails for OHRVs. The special, nonlapsing fund, which is administered by the Secretary of Natural Resources, consists of 50% of the revenue from the excise tax imposed for each certificate of title issued for an OHRV, money appropriated in the State budget for the fund, and any other money from any other source accepted for the benefit of the fund. Any interest earnings of the fund are credited to the general fund.

The fund may be used only to (1) maintain trails for OHRVs on State park land that was purchased or leased by DNR before January 1, 2017; (2) maintain and construct trails for OHRVs on State park land that is purchased or leased by DNR on or after January 1, 2017; and (3) maintain and construct trails for OHRVs on land that is not State park land that is purchased or leased by DNR. Money expended from the fund is supplemental to and not intended to take the place of funding that otherwise would be appropriated for maintaining and constructing trails for OHRVs.

Use of Off-road Vehicles on Department of Natural Resources Property

Statute requires the Secretary of Natural Resources (or DNR) to (1) adopt regulations that govern the operation of off-road vehicles on department-owned or -controlled property and (2) designate areas of department-controlled property for use by the general public for the operation of off-road vehicles, where it is compatible with the character and existing uses of the property. DNR regulations establish (1) registration/licensing requirements for off-road vehicles; (2) equipment and operation standards/requirements; (3) noise level limits; and (4) designated off-road vehicle trails (all in Garrett County). The regulations define “off-road vehicle” as including (1) a four-wheel drive or low-pressure tire vehicle; (2) an automobile; (3) a truck; (4) a motorcycle and related two-wheel vehicle; (5) an amphibious machine; (6) a ground effect or air cushion vehicle; (7) a snowmobile; and (8) a golf cart.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Garrett and Worcester counties; Department of Natural Resources; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 2, 2025
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