



Briefing Note

To: Sturgeon County Council
Copy: Peter Tarnawsky, Stephane Labonne
From: Trevor Duley, Senior Advisor Intergovernmental Affairs
Date: July 10, 2017
Subject: AAMDC Pembina River Zone Meeting (July 17, 2017 10:30 AM)

Summary:

At the time of this briefing, the only Resolution being presented to the Pembina River Zone on July 17th is from Parkland County pertaining to Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Fees.

A similar resolution was presented at the April 10th Pembina River Zone by Parkland; it is anticipated Mayor Shaigec will request the previous resolution be rescinded and the revised resolution be considered for adoption at the July 17th Meeting.

Background:

- Recreational OHV use on public and private lands has been a complex policy issue for years, in specific regards to liability, environment, competing land-uses, enforcement, and availability of areas to recreate responsibly.
- Responsibility for OHV regulation is separated across multiple stakeholders, including individuals and non-profit organizations, as well as several Provincial Ministries/Agencies.
- Parkland County has introduced a Resolution which seeks that:
 - The AAMDC request the Province create a permitting/fee structure for OHV registrations to be allocated towards designated OHV areas, including their maintenance, enforcement, and education;
 - The Province exempt some non-recreational OHV users from the fee;
 - The Province amend legislation to consolidate OHV recreation management within a single Provincial Department or Agency; and
 - The Province develop and introduce enhanced liability protections to protect public and private landowner interests where OHV activity occurs.
- This resolution is not any different in terms of intent than the one that was passed in April; there were some minor grammatical errors with the 'Whereas/Therefore Be It Resolved' clauses that have since been revised. It has also been further clarified that any revenues received from OHV fees would go specifically towards trail maintenance and enforcement, as opposed to 'General Revenue.'

Recommendation:

Sturgeon County Administration is recommending that Council support this Resolution at the Pembina River Zone, and at the Fall AAMDC Convention (should be approved at the Zone Meeting in July).

In some respects, the Resolution may impact some MDs and Counties more than others—notably those that have significant portions of Crown Land and/or Industry trail infrastructure. Although concrete statistics are non-existent, it is believed that illegal OHV activity on private lands (i.e. agricultural properties) has increased in recent years, and that if designated trails become less accessible, illegal activity could increase.

Although some stakeholders may see a permitting fee as an additional 'tax,' if the revenues go towards trail maintenance/designation, enforcement, and education for responsible use, they may see value in this approach.