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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Wayne National Forest single track request

Happy Saturday Ms. Neuenfeldt,

I hope your weekend is going well and that you're planning to take time off to be with family and friends before the new year!

I'm writing to request that Wayne National Forest develop single-track trails for enjoyment by area motorcyclists. I got started late in life with off-road motorcycling three years ago at age 49 and have been enjoying it immensely as a way to clear my head, challenge myself a little, develop skills that make me a better adventure motorcyclists, build new friendships and serve as a healthy workout activity. I'm able to get to Wayne 1-2 times a month during the season, and pepper that with trips to Perry State Forest and a few private enduro and dual sport events.

Wayne is so much fun for folks like me with dirt/enduro/ds-style motorcycles, and I'm glad that we share so many of the trails with ATVs, SxSs and the occasional big bike - I think that's a testament to the multi-use ethos of the park. The long, flowing main corridor is perfect for newbies just getting their dirt feet wet and developing skills with relatively faster runs. It's a great confidence-booster.

Yet there is always a safety concern on those trails because they are bidirectional and contain vehicles too wide for one to safely pass in many places. It's actually kind of terrifying to come around a flowing corner and face an ATV also in the groove coming the other way. Other trail systems with unidirectional paths don't have this safety concern. The other aspect is that by making the trails so flowy and multi-use, we have unfortunately also taken much of the challenge out of Wayne. Long Ridge trail is a great place to develop one's more technical skills because it's much less traveled and thus technical, but it still is a bidirectional trail that sometimes sees wider vehicles on it, and warrants the same cautions. There are also always the worries of accidentally getting off-trail and being stopped by a putative ranger - let's be honest, Wayne had some very aggressive rangers in the past who seemed to delight in ticketing or even impounding motorcyclists that found themselves off-trail while looking for something more technical. It would be safe to say that I rarely ride Wayne on the weekends anymore because the traffic exceeds my risk tolerance, and always worry about accidentally doing something out of turn. Unfortunately my work schedule makes that ever more difficult.

I think a great solution could be to develop new or parallel unidirectional single-track trails made specifically for motorcycles. I don't think that would be considered exclusionary given that the rest of the trail system is so inclusive, and I'd be willing to bet that you'd get a lot of volunteer assistance to help carve and mark the new trails. It would also reduce the traffic on the main corridor for ATVs and SxSs.

In either case, thank you very much for your openness to input whichever way this turns out. Wayne National Forest is a gem of a public space and I'm grateful that riders like me are able to enjoy it creatively. I believe the more options we have, the more people will get off their darned phones and computers and realize how good Ohioans have it when it comes to shared multi-use spaces.

Happy Holidays/Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

- Scott McCrory