

Wisconsin County Forests Association

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Rebekah Luedtke
Executive Director

September 22, 2025

Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation & Local Government

RE: SB 339 - Legislation Relating to Increasing UTV Weight Limits

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation & Local Government,

Please accept these comments from the Wisconsin County Forests Association (WCFA) for your consideration when addressing the UTV weight limits proposed legislation, SB 339.

WCFA represents the 30 counties in Wisconsin with County Forest lands established under state statutes §28.10 and 28.11. Collectively, these 30 counties manage over 2.4 million acres of forests, the largest public ownership in our State. Wisconsin's County Forests are working forests, providing essential raw material for our State's \$42 billion forest products industry, plus a suite of other benefits and assets (robust wildlife habitat, ample recreation opportunities and abundant clean air and water).

As the largest trail owner and management entity in the State of Wisconsin, caring for over 1,800 miles of ATV/UTV trails, we feel the decision of adjusting UTV weight limits should not be driven by what machine manufacturers want but by what is best for the resource and with ample input from the dedicated professionals who care for it. To that point, we are kindly requesting the UTV weight limits not be increased any further. I must underscore there are a handful of our member counties who do not support any weights above 2,000 pounds. Letting ATV/UTV manufacturers drive what machine weights should be is no different than a truck manufacturer producing milk tankers well above the legal road weight limits and then expecting the state and county highway departments to increase limits to accommodate the newer tankers.

Furthermore, trail development and maintenance are deeply underfunded. The counties and local riding clubs struggle to properly maintain their trails even at the current limits and trail standards because of lack of adequate funding, ever increasing expenses and having to do more with less. Any increase in the weight limits must be matched with a sufficient increase in trail maintenance funding. Are the manufacturers willing to seek additional funding as well to support the trails?

We would highly encourage that the ATV & UTV registration fee structure be re-evaluated and funding increased to help maintain and improve our existing trails. Furthermore, we request manufacturers work with dealerships to provide written information or publications on what the current statutes are in the State of Wisconsin. This could have potential to mitigate any angst for new machine owners before they realize they are out of compliance with state law.

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It's wonderful that more Wisconsinites are getting outdoors and enjoying our beautiful natural resources and using our trails. We want people out exploring our forests and certainly understand the importance of these riders to local communities and their economy. While we also appreciate the effort to get existing heavier machines into compliance, there is major concern that weight limits will continue to increase without any additional financial support for the trails, and until there are no restrictions for any type of machine using Wisconsin's trail systems. Whatever the outcome of any proposed legislation, we would also ask for a moratorium on any future increases for ten years.

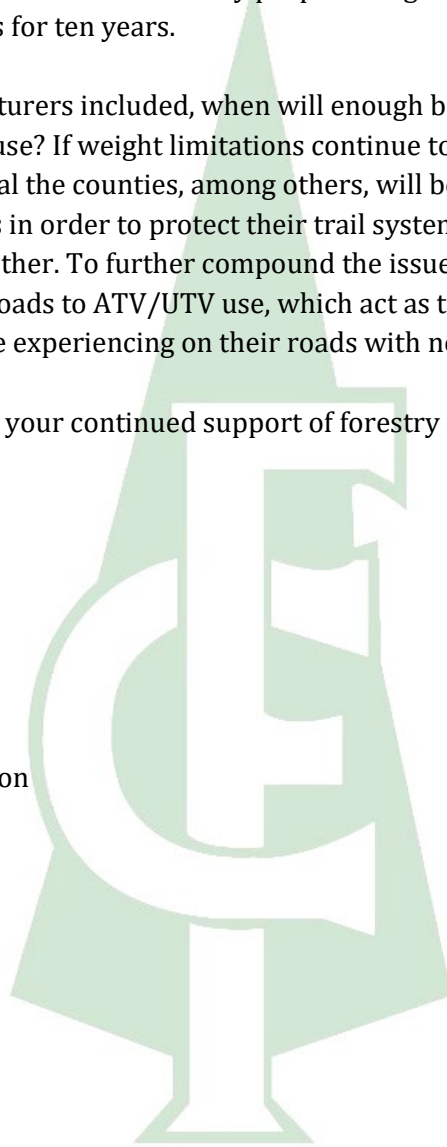
We all must ask ourselves, manufacturers included, when will enough be enough? At what point are bigger machines not really better for trail use? If weight limitations continue to be increased to satisfy demands of manufacturers, there is real potential the counties, among others, will be forced to enact ordinances with lower weights and narrower widths in order to protect their trail systems or get out of the business of ATV/UTV trail management all together. To further compound the issue, we are currently aware that certain townships may look to close town roads to ATV/UTV use, which act as trail connectors, because of the continued negative impacts they are experiencing on their roads with no way to pay for repairs.

We appreciate and thank you all for your continued support of forestry in Wisconsin and of the County Forests System.

Kind regards,



Rebekah Luedtke
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