

# Off Highway Vehicle Riders in the Crowsnest Pass Area of SW Alberta

Source: Prescott, S. (2017) *Analysis and Valuation of Off Highway Vehicle Use in Southwestern Alberta*.  
Thesis: Department of Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology, University of Alberta. 181 pp.

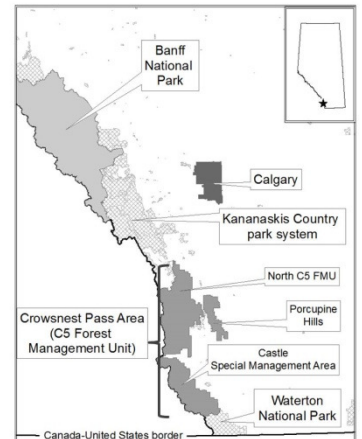


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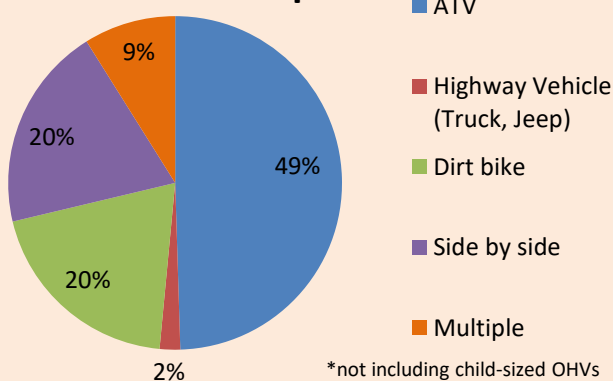
**RESOURCE ECONOMICS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIOLOGY**  
FACULTY OF AGRICULTURAL, LIFE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

## What happened?

- A research project was conducted as part of a Master's degree
- From May to September 2014, 601 people were interviewed in person
- Individuals were surveyed throughout the C5 Forest Management Unit located in southwestern Alberta, which includes:
  - The Porcupine Hills
  - The North C5 Forest Management Unit
  - The Castle Special Management Area
- In April 2015, 222 people responded to an additional online survey



## What kinds of OHVs did households use on a typical trip?\*



## Where were interviewed OHV riders from?

### What were their characteristics?

- 98% from Alberta
- 45% from either Lethbridge, Calgary, or Medicine Hat
- 6% from the Municipality of the Crowsnest Pass
- **Age distribution:** Very comparable to the Alberta average
- **13 years:** Average years spent riding in Crowsnest Pass Area
- **1.5X:** Average household incomes of surveyed households were 1.5x higher than the AB average

## How long do people stay? How much do people spend?

Trip Length	Percent of surveyed OHV riders for whom this is a 'typical trip' length
Day trip	22%
Weekend Trip	46%
Week Trip (4-7 days)	23%
Greater than 7 day trip	9%

- 50% of people take 5-27 trips per year
- 11,000: A conservative estimate of the number of OHV trips made to this area from May-October 2014
- 402: Average number of round trip kilometres travelled from home to a staging area
- \$7.1 million: Estimated overall expenditures by OHV riders from May-September
- \$4.4 million: The estimated proportion of those expenditures spent in the local area

## How do OHV riders think the area should be managed?

- 23% think it is acceptable to have separate, exclusive riding areas for motorized and non-motorized vehicles
- 50% are in favour of some type of fee for use system if fees go towards local trail stewardship
- 69% believe that “there is inadequate enforcement of OHV abuses, so violators have little incentive to obey laws”
- Environmental views were mostly similar to average Albertans
- One difference: Interviewed OHV riders were less likely than most Albertans to believe “...humans are severely abusing the environment” and that “...we will soon experience a major ecological catastrophe”

## What economic benefit do OHV riders receive for an average trip?

### Background

- Using economic modelling techniques, a value can be estimated for how much benefit OHV riders obtained beyond the amount of money they have spent on this activity
- This value can be more useful than expenditure information in **socio-economic impact analyses** - while money not spent on one activity will likely be spent on another activity, the benefit received to a particular person from a particular activity is unique
- **Does not account** for either positive or negative interactions between OHV riders and other land users

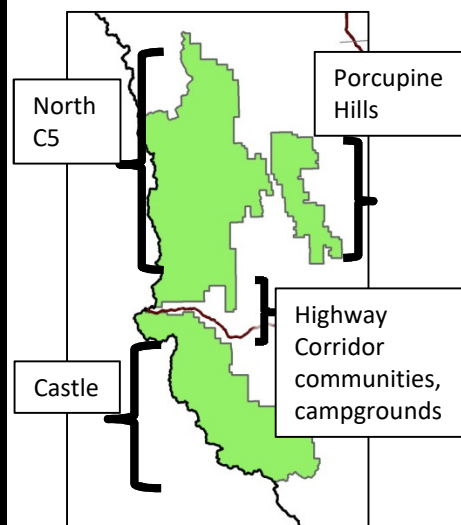
### Results

- **\$2.8 million** of estimated benefit to OHV riders from access to OHV riding areas in this area from May-September 2014

## Why do people choose to visit a particular staging area?

- **Staging area:** the location where someone leaves the highway to enter a trail; may or may not be a camping area
- Statistically significant variables for choosing to stage at an area were:
  - Located closer to home
  - Having more km of trails close to the staging area entrance
  - Having large ranges of elevation on the trails near the staging area

## Where did surveyed individuals ride OHVs?



Area	Percent of trips staged within this area
Porcupine Hills*	7%
North C5	27%
Highway Corridor Campgrounds	24%
Highway Corridor communities (e.g. hotels)	14%
Castle Special Management Area	27%

\*May be an underestimate of total OHV use in this area

## How much could changes to staging areas affect OHV riders?

- Modeling examined the potential effects to OHV riders of limiting access to these areas (a frequent type of analysis in these studies)
- Results indicate that for most surveyed OHV riders, the highway corridor campgrounds were the most important sites

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