

**LACKAWANNA COUNTY**  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
for an  
**ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLE (ATV)**  
**FEASIBILITY STUDY**

May 2022

This project is an undertaking of Lackawanna County and funded with a grant from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) utilizing ATV Management Restricted Account Funds.

Project Contact: Lackawanna County Department of Planning and Economic Development  
123 Wyoming Avenue, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Scranton, PA 18503  
Brenda Sacco, Director

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The following Request for Proposals (RFP) details Lackawanna County's desire to create a feasibility study for All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) and other motorized recreational pursuits within Lackawanna County, including, but not exclusive to, Lackawanna County's land holdings.

With a variety of our other open space project proposals underway, Lackawanna County has decided that the time is right to investigate the feasibility of motorized forms of recreation, such as ATV use. To do this in the most effective and practical way possible, Lackawanna County has been awarded a grant from the Pennsylvania Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), which will actively participate in this study.

Motorized recreational activities are growing in popularity both locally and on a national scale, and the demands and need for places for ATV enthusiasts and others with similar hobbies to pursue their sport needs to be addressed in a sensitive, responsible, and comprehensive manner.

There are many issues that exist concerning this form of recreation, encompassing environmental, economic, legal, and landowner concerns. The successful consultant will be expected to determine what these pertinent issues are, investigate each one fully, and propose a means of addressing those issues.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

Lackawanna-Luzerne Open Space, Greenways, and Outdoor Recreation Master Plan, completed in 2004, proposed numerous types of recreational amenities that could be developed on Lackawanna County lands, including parks, trails and conservation areas.

One of those proposals was for ATV trails and a Motorsports Park, which was based on community input gathered at several public meetings. Those meetings were attended by many ATV enthusiasts, who lamented about the lack of areas where motorized use was allowed and revealed a growing recreational pursuit among many residents of Lackawanna County.

However, before ATV trails or a motor-vehicle recreation facility can be developed anywhere in Lackawanna County, there are many factors that must be taken into consideration and more closely investigated.

A key part of this feasibility study will be to determine what type of outlets are most desired by ATV enthusiasts and balancing that with practicality and all other considerations that must be taken into account, which are listed in this Request for Proposals.

### **III. SCOPE OF WORK**

#### **Overview**

The vision for this study is to identify and investigate all possible land areas that may be amenable to motorized uses in Lackawanna County; identify those specific areas that are most conducive to recreational motorized uses; propose several ways in which motorized uses can be incorporated in those areas; thoroughly research and pinpoint any and all problems that would be associated with implementing motorized use on lands; and outline the costs of developing motorized facilities and their short-term and long-term maintenance, as well as future potential owners.

#### **The Study should include:**

- A. Executive Summary - The purpose of this element is to provide a short and succinct summary of the trail study findings to illustrate the vision, goals and findings of the trail study. The executive summary can be graphic in nature and used as a marketing/public outreach document for the trail effort.
- B. Introduction and Context - The purpose of this element is to describe the community or region and how this trail meets the needs of the public.
  - 1. Provide a vision statement for the trail.
  - 2. State the study purpose and goals.
  - 3. Describe the surrounding community(ies); including demographics, other trails and recreational resources.
  - 4. Provide general mapping of the study area.
  - 5. Identify any boundaries or limitations of the study.
  - 6. A general description of how the project fits into the context of existing State, regional, county or local planning efforts (e.g., Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan, Community-wide Comprehensive and Land Use Plan, Watershed or Rivers Conservation Plan, County Greenway Plan, Downtown Revitalization Plan, Long Range Transportation Plan, community surveys, etc.)
- C. Public Participation - The study must include a public input process that will engage the community through the development of the study. Special attention should be given to

involve impacted property owners and impacted local municipalities. The study should include a summary of the public input efforts and results.

1. At a minimum the process must include:
    - a. Hold 5-6 meetings with the County's steering committee for this project.
    - b. At least two general public meetings must be held. One meeting should include local elected officials.
    - c. Conduct 15-20 Key Person interviews
    - d. Engage Local ATV Enthusiast Groups
  2. Summarize public participation process and findings.
- D. Physical Inventory and Assessment - Site information must be mapped and analyzed to determine lands suitable for ATV use.
1. Prepare detailed mapping of proposed trail corridor or trail alignment(s) at an appropriate scale, including:
    - a. Physiographic Features
    - b. Natural Features
    - c. Cultural Features
    - d. Utilities
    - e. Environmental Hazards
    - f. Tax Parcels
- E. Analysis/Feasibility –
1. Identify parcels and corridors in Lackawanna County that are potentially suitable for ATV use. The preference is to utilize current County property.
    - a. Consultant would work with the County and steering committee on the approach to identifying parcels worthy of evaluation.
    - b. Analyze priority parcels and reach out to those property owners to determine interest.
    - c. Determine positive and negative impacts.
    - d. Identify parcels with highest potential for ATV use.
- F. Prepare a Trail Concept Plan - The conceptual plan should illustrate the vision for the County's feasible ATV riding areas/corridors and potential alternatives that builds upon the physical inventory mapping, analysis and feasibility.
- G. Management/operations strategies - The purpose of this work element is to estimate the level of effort and costs associated with establishing, operating and maintaining the conceptual riding areas. As well as, provide an evaluation of the most appropriate entity(ies) to implement the plan.
- H. Implementation Matrix - This portion of the study should summarize the study's recommendations and implementation strategy into specific action steps. Each step should identify responsible party(ies), time frame for beginning implementation, associated costs, potential funding sources, and any additional notes.

**Consultants should recognize that:**

1. ATV use is increasing among Lackawanna County residents, and across varied demographic and socio-cultural lines.
2. Presently, the only place in which ATV use is legal is on two (2) separate and privately-owned and operated facilities; or on private property, where the property owner gives riders express permission to ride on his/her property. Many ATV riders also ride along and/or across power lines and utility companies' rights-of-way.

With that in mind, one objective of this study should be to find areas that are easily accessible to ATV enthusiasts and that are owned by individuals or *entities* that would not object to, or at least consider allowing, some form of motorized use on their property.

Ideally, these spots would be in areas that are at least one mile away from residential developments and/or where little objection is expected.

3. The consultant would also need to determine how strong an objection there would be to recreational motorized use in these areas and offer suggestions to deal with any resulting public outcry.
4. Large, abandoned coal mining lands in Lackawanna County have become the place of choice for those with ATV's, motorcycles, and dirt bikes to ride, despite the fact that this use is not permitted and can be dangerous, since these areas are environmentally damaged, and the riders are, in fact, trespassing.
5. A majority of ATV enthusiasts prefer trail riding to riding in an enclosed area, such as a track, and appear to be more interested in having trails that traverse through scenic wooded areas. These areas tend to be private property, state forests and gamelands, or protected trails, on which motorized use is not allowed.
6. A growing problem is the habit of ATV enthusiasts to sometimes cut through residential areas, using municipal streets, sidewalks and/or private yards to access wooded areas.
7. Many people travel to Lackawanna County to pursue forms of motorized recreation, some even coming from neighboring states. This suggests that perhaps the establishment of formal ATV areas could positively contribute to local economies by providing safe, regulated areas where this hobby can be freely enjoyed without fear of harassment or legal implications.

**Lackawanna County expects this Feasibility Study to include:**

- The involvement of private landowners throughout Lackawanna County in this effort. Currently, much of the land used by ATV and other motor vehicle enthusiasts is privately owned. This has led to tension among the enthusiasts, who frequently trespass on these lands, and the respective landowners. The consultant should investigate different ways of bringing both parties to the table to rationally discuss the issue and formulate a solution that will be amenable to both sides.

- The identification of any municipalities and/or zoning regulations that would be affected by a proposed facility and what any effects would be, i. e. increased traffic, possible violations of traffic laws, etc.
- A listing of the benefits and detriments to those communities, as well as to the general surrounding areas.
- The identification of environmental concerns, such as the effect of motorized vehicles on surrounding plants and animals, wildlife habitats, and any streams, creeks, wetlands, etc., that may be located on sites identified as feasible for motorized recreation, proposing solutions and listing all necessary/required permits/approvals.

This identification/listing should be done according to the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory, (PNDI), to identify any possible conflict with ecological or geological resources of special concern monitored by DCNR's Bureau of Forestry.

- A detailed examination of financial concerns, pertaining to both the development of motorized recreational sites, as well as their upkeep and maintenance. The consultant should consider costs of site construction, patrolling, insurance coverage, yearly operational costs, such as trail grooming, erosion controls, trail reconstruction, and any other pertinent issues to ensure a safe and well-kept area.
- A physical and numerical analysis of the necessary and desired components for safe, legal and environmentally friendly motorized recreation, (i.e. width of trails, desired minimum trail lengths, minimum age requirements, noise control, air pollution concerns, etc.)
- A comprehensive overview of the different types of the existing motorized recreational facilities -- park-like areas with trails, challenge courses, etc.; challenge/event areas; and trail systems.
- Suggestions for the location and size of any necessary trail heads and accompanying facilities, i.e., first aid station, rest rooms, utilities, etc.
- An assessment of the types of emergency services that would be needed for any future motorized sites that are developed and how they could be incorporated into future facilities.
- A calculation of the social and environmental costs associated with site selection and development.
- An investigation of the hindrances to private facility ownership and possible solutions to that, as well as options for public ownership of any developed motorized sites on both county and state levels.
- An analysis of the economic effects, both beneficial and detrimental, that developing motorized recreational sites will have on local economies.
- An overview of the area's existing infrastructure and any impacts the development of recreational motorized facilities may have on it.
- Suggestions on how this feasibility study can be incorporated into the bi-county Open Space Master Plan that is now being developed by Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties

- Maps showing the location and ownership of sites throughout Lackawanna County that can/should be considered for motorized recreational use. *Utility lines and rights-of-way should also be included on these maps, with special demarcation for those utilities willing to grant ATV access.*
- A listing of all adjacent and neighboring property owners to those sites that are identified as possible motorized recreational areas.
- An outline of conflict management methods between different types of trail users/outdoor enthusiasts and motorized vehicle recreation participants.

#### **IV. INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED BY LACKAWANNA COUNTY TO THE SUCCESSFUL CONSULTANT**

- A. Lackawanna-Luzerne Open Space, Greenways, and Outdoor Recreation Master Plan
- B. Lackawanna Luzerne Regional Comprehensive Plan & Long-Range Transportation Plan

#### **V. PROPOSAL DETAILS**

- A. Describe how and by whom the work will be managed so that there is adequate coordination and discussion with Lackawanna County and other interested and affected agencies.
- B. Demonstrate experience completing similar types of planning projects
- C. Prepare a Staff Organization Chart identifying the responsible principal and other consultants, engineers, planners or technicians who will participate in the work.
- D. Identify associated firms/subcontractors who will participate as part of the Consultant's team and describe their qualifications (participation by local firms is encouraged).
- E. Include a fee schedule, segregated by each specific budget category and task, as well as billing rates by category of personnel.
- F. Include a schedule of proposed work, including communication with Lackawanna County and progress reporting.
- G. Agree to provide 5 hard copies and 2 digital versions of the final work product

#### **VI. PROPOSAL EVALUATION**

Each consultant's proposal will be evaluated based upon the submission of the following information:

- A. The price to complete the Scope of Work
- B. Technical skill and experience in dealing with recreational projects of this size, type, and complexity.
- C. The Consultant's creativity and flexibility
- D. Experience and knowledge in dealing with environmentally disturbed land and other topographic diverse land, such as abandoned coal mine land.

- E. Evidence of sensitivity to and understanding of the methods for managing the environmental, social and recreational issues that evolve during the study process.
- F. The Consultant's understanding of Lackawanna County's requirements and its plan for meeting those requirements.
- G. The Consultant's approach and methodology for developing the Feasibility Study and the proposed administration of the work which will keep Lackawanna County advised of progress, maintain a schedule, and adhere to the project budget.
- H. The Consultant's schedule to complete the Scope of Work
- I. Evidence of familiarity with and experience in using GIS as a tool for data management, analysis, and land use planning.
- J. The Consultant's method of involving Lackawanna County and other key entities.
- K Client references that substantiate the Consultant's experience in the varied disciplines needed for this project.
- L. The use of regional sub-consultants as part of the Consultant's team is encouraged but not mandatory.
- M. Evidence of experience dealing with non-profit organizations and local, state, and federal government funding programs.

## **VII. SELECTION PROCESS AND SCHEDULE**

- A. Five (5) copies and thumb drive/digital file of each proposal shall be submitted to Lackawanna County Department of Planning and Economic Development, 123 Wyoming Avenue, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Scranton, PA 18503 no later than **3 PM on Tuesday, June 21, 2022.**
- B. **Questions relating to the RFP shall be submitted in writing by email, to: Sandra Opshinsky, [opshinskys@lackawannacounty.org](mailto:opshinskys@lackawannacounty.org), by Wednesday, June 15, 2022.**
- C. The County reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to select the proposal that it determines to be in the best interest of Lackawanna County.
- D. Proposals will be evaluated and selected Consultants may be invited to discuss their proposals and answer questions regarding the same at Lackawanna County's discretion.
- E. It is Lackawanna County's intent to select the best qualified proposal, based on the evaluation of consultant responses to this RFP. After evaluation of the services offered by all Consultants responding to this RFP, Lackawanna County will negotiate a contract with the Consultant whose Proposal is found to be most advantageous to Lackawanna County, and at a compensation that Lackawanna County determines to be fair and reasonable. Should Lackawanna County be unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with the Consultant considered to be the most qualified, Lackawanna County reserves the right to negotiate with one or more of the other responsible

Consultants considered to be qualified or, at the discretion of Lackawanna County, to reject all Proposals.

- F. The consultant must meet the minimum insurance requirements as described by the County. – The Vendor shall meet or exceed ALL insurance requirements set forth by the County. Any additional insurance requirements of participating or cooperative parties will be included as subsequent Attachments and shall require mandatory compliance.
- G. **INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR** - It is understood and agreed that the Vendor shall not be considered an employee of Lackawanna County. The Vendor shall not be within protection or coverage of the County's Worker's Compensation insurance, Health Insurance, Liability Insurance or any other insurance that the County from time to time may have in force and effect.

Note that, although price is a very important factor in the bid evaluation process, Lackawanna County shall not be bound to the lowest bid.

The County of Lackawanna encourages the participation of Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) and Women Business Enterprises (WBE) for this project.

#### **VIII. LIABILITY FOR COSTS**

Each Consultant receiving this RFP agrees that all costs related to the preparation and submission of the RFP, including the costs of trips that the consultant may make to visit properties or be interviewed by Lackawanna County, will be paid for by the Consultant and are not the responsibility of Lackawanna County.

#### **IX. PROPERTY INFORMATION**

Information and data contained in the Lackawanna-Luzerne Open Space, Greenways, and Outdoor Recreation Master Plan, Lackawanna Luzerne Regional Comprehensive Plan & Long-Range Transportation Plan, and GIS Database to be provided to the chosen Consultant is proprietary in nature and belongs exclusively to Lackawanna County. Therefore, the use of the information and data for any purpose unrelated to this ATV Feasibility Study and related services is strictly prohibited.