

OPDMD Allowed Uses and Operating Requirements *for* ***DNR-Managed Recreation Facilities and Trails***

This document is to be used in conjunction with the DNR's Policy, [PO011-003: OPDMD USE DEPARTMENT MANAGED RECREATION FACILITIES AND TRAILS](#).

In determining whether a particular OPDMD can be allowed on a specific DNR recreational facility or trail as a reasonable modification, DNR shall consider the following assessment factors:

- i) The type, size, weight, dimensions, and speed of the device;
- ii) The facility's volume of pedestrian traffic (which may vary at different times of the day, week, month, or year);
- iii) The facility's design and operational characteristics (e.g., whether its service, program, or activity is conducted indoors, its square footage, the density and placement of stationary devices, and the availability of storage for the device, if requested by the user);
- iv) Whether legitimate safety requirements can be established to permit the safe operation of the OPDMD in the specific facility; and
- v) Whether the use of the OPDMD creates a substantial risk of serious harm to the immediate environment or natural or cultural resources, or poses a conflict with State or Federal land management laws and regulations.

Recreation trails on DNR-managed lands are often primitive in nature and may contain a variety of terrain and natural obstacles. Trails may have surfaces that vary greatly and contain a wide variety of conditions and features including, but not limited to:

- Very fine, loose, or soft soils
- Loose rocks or gravel
- Steep grades, some that exceed 25%
- Abrupt edges
- Drop-offs or steps
- Bench-cut steep side slopes
- Varying sizes of designed features and/or natural trail obstacles such as rocks, roots, branches, and vegetation debris, some exceeding 12" in height and/or width
- Water crossings with fords, stepping stones, narrow boardwalks, puncheons, culverts, or bridges with abrupt edges or steps
- Water diversion structures such as water bars or grade dips
- Switchback or climbing turns
- Varying trail surface width, as narrow as 6"-12"
- Year-around muddy or wet areas
- Standing water after rain events

Recreation facilities conditions range from primitive to moderately developed and have a wide variety of ground surfaces and obstacles.

Many trails may be much wider at entrance points and narrow considerably along the way or as the terrain changes. Trail conditions may change abruptly and without notice. Temporary obstacles may occur on trails at any time due to environmental conditions.

DNR makes no claim that its recreation trail and/or facilities are designed, maintained, or managed for OPDMDs.

TRAIL DEFINITIONS

Non-motorized trails – Designated recreational trails, managed and maintained by the department and may include the following uses:

- Hiking/Mountain Biking/Horseback Riding
- Hiking/Mountain Biking
- Hiking/Horseback Riding
- Hiking only

Natural Area Trails – Designated “low impact public use” non-motorized trails managed and maintained by the department that occur on lands within Natural Areas, including Natural Resource Conservation Areas (NRCAs), Natural Area Preserves (NAPs), and Scenic Areas. As defined in RCW 79.71.030, “low impact public use” includes public recreation uses and improvements that do not adversely affect the resource values, are appropriate to the maintenance of the site in a relatively unmodified natural setting, and do not detract from long-term ecological processes (RCW 79.71.030).

Motorized/Multiple-use trails – Designated recreational trails that are managed and maintained for both motorized and non-motorized uses that include the following combinations:

- Motorcycle/ATV/4x4/Hiking/Mountain Biking/Horseback Riding
- Motorcycle/ATV/4x4/Hiking/Mountain Biking
- Motorcycle/ATV/Hiking/Mountain Biking/Horseback Riding
- Motorcycle/ATV/Hiking/Mountain Biking
- Motorcycle/Hiking/Mountain Biking/Horseback Riding
- Motorcycle/Hiking/Mountain Biking

Specialty Use – Designated recreational trails designed and managed for a specific type of use or combination of uses.

- Challenge trails-designed to provide challenge opportunities for a specific use.
- Hiking/Accessible trails-trails that provide a higher level of access such as for a wheelchair on a pedestrian trail.

Outdoor Recreational Access Routes – a continuous unobstructed path designated for pedestrian use that connects accessible elements within a day-use area, picnic area, camping

area, or designated trailhead. Examples include elements such as paths connecting parking spaces to a picnic or camp unit, a picnic unit to a toilet building, parking spaces to kiosks/information signs, or other accessible elements.

Winter Recreational Trails – These are trails or trail sections, on lands managed by DNR, that are used for winter trail sports such as cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, or dogsledding.

ALLOWED USES

Individuals with mobility disabilities that choose to operate OPDMDs at DNR-managed recreation facilities and on DNR-managed recreation trails, do so at their own risk.

It is recommended that persons wishing to operate an OPDMD on DNR managed lands contact the department ahead of the visit for additional information on trail and facility conditions.

Recreation Trails

1. **Non-Motorized trails:** *Only* OPDMDs with *electric powered motors* are allowed; OPDMDs with internal combustion engines are not allowed.
2. **Motorized trails:** OPDMD use is allowed.
3. **Winter Non-Motorized trails:** OPDMD use is NOT allowed on winter groomed or un-groomed trails or trail sections.
4. **Winter Motorized trails:** OPDMD use is allowed on trails or trail sections managed for snowmobile use during the winter recreation season, provided the OPDMD meets the standards required for other motorized winter users.

Recreation Facilities

1. OPDMDs are only allowed on hardened surfaces at recreation facilities that are managed as a travel corridor, path, walkway, or parking area.
2. Except for parking areas for motor vehicles, only OPDMDs powered by an electric motor are allowed at recreation facilities managed and maintained for non-motorized recreation activities.

OPERATING REQUIREMENTS

OPDMDs that are allowed at DNR-managed recreation facilities and on recreation trails must be operated in accordance with the following requirements:

- OPDMDs must have the capacity to safely negotiate the existing terrain, natural obstacles, designed features, and seasonal environment of the recreation facility or trail type that the

operator wishes to access.

- OPDMD operators must stay on designated trails and within designated facilities at all times.
- OPDMD speed shall not exceed 5 miles per hour.
- OPDMDs must not be wider than the path or trail surface, must stay within the path or trail borders at all times, and must allow for the safe passage of other trail users.
- OPDMD use is not allowed off-trail, except in designated open areas with hardened surfaces that are managed for recreation activities.
- The OPDMD operator must not use or operate their device in such a manner that results in damage to the trail, trail surface, or environmental and natural/cultural resources.
- The OPDMD must not be operated in a manner that risks injury to the operator or other trail and facility users.
- OPDMDs shall yield to non-powered users, particularly equestrians and those with pack stock. The OPDMD operator should come to a complete stop and communicate with the rider or other trail or facility user to determine the best way to proceed safely.
- OPDMD operators should use great caution when operating their devices in areas frequented by larger or faster vehicles.
- OPDMDs with internal combustion engines must have working and approved spark arrestors.
- OPDMD operators must meet all the legal requirements for operating their specific device including but not limited to, helmets, safety gear, age requirements, endorsements, and registrations.

Credible Assurance of a Mobility Disability

DNR personnel may request that a person using an OPDMD provide a credible assurance that the mobility device is required because of the person's disability. DNR personnel shall accept as a credible assurance one of the following:

- (i) A valid, State-issued, disability parking placard or card; or
- (ii) Other State-issued proof of disability;

In lieu of a valid, state-issued, disability placard or card, or other state-issued proof of disability, DNR employees shall accept as credible assurance:

- (iii) Verbal representation, not contradicted by observable fact, that the OPDMD is being

used for a mobility disability.

DNR personnel shall not ask an individual using a wheelchair or OPDMD questions about the nature and extent of the individual's disability.

Approved: 10/23/2023

Date

Approved By: Andrea Martin

Andrea Martin, Statewide Recreation Manager