

Position Statement of Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists
Regarding Proposed Trail Development
Along the Minnesota River

February, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

It is the position of Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists (MORC) that the Minnesota Valley trail from the vicinity of old Cedar Avenue to the former Bloomington Ferry Bridge trailhead be designated, developed, and preserved as a single natural surface multi-use trail. The only needed improvements to the trail are bridges, culverts, and boardwalks, to provide environmentally acceptable stream and natural drainage crossings. Some minor re-routing and surface maintenance work may be required to minimize rutting, erosion, and pothole formation in the trail surface.

Improving and maintaining the existing natural surface trail would have almost no environmental impact on the Minnesota Valley Wildlife Refuge, and would require far fewer public resources than a paved recreational trail. We believe that a natural trail would be more appropriate for the Refuge, and more in keeping with the nature-focused activities of the users of this entire area. The area is also subject to periodic severe flooding, and any asphalt, graded gravel, or crushed limestone surface would require frequent and expensive re-building, with associated trail closures and adverse effects on the Refuge. We urge the DNR and public authorities to consider natural surface trails for other trail segments that are similarly prone to frequent flooding.

The members of MORC stand ready to assist all governmental authorities by volunteering their time and labor to help design, improve and maintain a natural surface multi-use trail in this area of the Minnesota River Valley.

Reed Smidt, President
MORC/IMBA