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MARQUETTE—The DNR is reminding snowmobilers of changes to the snowmobile trail signage system on state trails, including the addition of five new sign types and the elimination of 10 sign types used in past years. __PUBLIC__

The changes were implemented based on recommendations submitted by a DNR citizens' advisory workgroup, comprised of motorized trail users, trail maintenance organizations, members of the DNR's Snowmobile Advisory Workgroup and the Michigan Snowmobile Association. Technical support for the workgroup was provided by recreation and law enforcement staff from the DNR and the U.S. Forest Service.

"The changes to the motorized trail signage program are the result of a collaborative process with stakeholder groups and should be a real improvement for trail users," said Ron Olson, chief of the DNR's Parks and Recreation Division. "The sign reductions will result in less clutter along the trails and provide for more consistency statewide."

The workgroup's recommended changes are designed to improve safety on Michigan's 6,400 miles of designated snowmobile trails and provide consistent guidance to the 68 nonprofit organizations that partner with the DNR to maintain the trail system.

"Several of the other snowmobile states, and Ontario, have reduced their trail signs and have seen a reduction in accidents. Our objective is to provide a safe, family-oriented trail system for snowmobiling in Michigan," said Bill Manson, executive director of the Michigan Snowmobile Association.

The following signs have been eliminated and will be removed from state snowmobile trails: Bridge Ahead, Chevron, Deer Crossing, Drift Area, Narrow Bridge, Narrow Trail, Trail Crossing, Truck Traffic, Two Way Trail, Winding Trail

New signs added to state snowmobile trails in 2012 include:

Combination Horizontal Alignment/Intersection (left and right)

• Bright yellow signs with directional arrows give notice of changes in horizontal trail alignment of less than 90 degrees where an intersection occurs within or immediately adjacent to a turn

Private Drives Ahead

• Warn trail users where driveways cross a snowmobile trail

One-Direction Large Arrow (left and right)

• Large yellow, reflective signs (10 x 12 inches) with a black arrow and border give notice of changes in horizontal trail alignment of 90 degrees or more

Next (number of) Miles

• A supplemental sign that may be used below "Private Drives Ahead" sign to indicate how long the stretch of private drives runs

Trail Closed to Wheeled Motor Vehicles Ahead

• Used on state or federal land prior to the point where a designated state snowmobile trail enters private property where the use of wheeled motorized vehicles is prohibited

The DNR will continue to mark 90-degree turns with "sharp turn" warning signs supplemented with a new directional arrow.

For illustrations of the signs that will be used to mark Michigan's snowmobile trails and more information about snowmobiling in Michigan, including trail maps with downloadable GPS coordinates, visit www.michigan.gov/snowmobiling.