
HOUSE BILL 1537

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Representative Barkis

Read first time 01/23/25. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to expanding access to funding from the multiuse
2 roadway safety account for eligible cities and for the Washington
3 state departments of natural resources and fish and wildlife for
4 maintenance and guidance of motorized recreation on green dot roads;
5 amending RCW 46.09.540; creating a new section; providing an
6 effective date; and declaring an emergency.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that the green
9 dot roads system has existed for more than half a century and has
10 been a vital network for on and off-road recreational travel. While
11 in the 1980s almost 1,000 miles of green dot roads came under the
12 jurisdiction of what are now the departments of natural resources and
13 fish and wildlife, insufficient funding has meant that the roads have
14 not been sufficiently maintained over time.

15 (2) The legislature finds that cities or towns that have enacted
16 ordinances that authorize the travel of wheeled all-terrain vehicles
17 on their roadways should be eligible for funding assistance to
18 promote safety, signage, education, and enforcement of laws relating
19 to the operation of wheeled all-terrain vehicles within their
20 jurisdictions.

1 (3) The legislature, therefore, intends to expand access to funds
2 in the multiuse roadway safety account under RCW 46.09.540 by making
3 the departments of natural resources and fish and wildlife eligible
4 for interagency transfers from the department of transportation for
5 certain purposes and by making certain cities and towns eligible to
6 apply for grants.

7 **Sec. 2.** RCW 46.09.540 and 2021 c 333 s 720 are each amended to
8 read as follows:

9 (1) The multiuse roadway safety account is created in the motor
10 vehicle fund. All receipts from vehicle license fees under RCW
11 46.17.350(1)(r) must be deposited into the account. Moneys in the
12 account may be spent only after appropriation. Expenditures from the
13 account may be used only for grants or interagency transfers
14 administered by the department of transportation to:

15 (a) (~~Counties~~) Local governments to perform safety engineering
16 analysis of mixed vehicle use on any road within (~~a county~~) the
17 jurisdiction;

18 (b) (~~local~~) Local governments to provide funding to erect signs
19 providing notice to the motoring public that (i) wheeled all-terrain
20 vehicles are present or (ii) wheeled all-terrain vehicles may be
21 crossing;

22 (c) (~~the~~) The state patrol or local law enforcement for
23 purposes of defraying the costs of enforcement of chapter 23, Laws of
24 2013 2nd sp. sess.;

25 (d) (~~law~~) Law enforcement to investigate accidents involving
26 wheeled all-terrain vehicles; (~~and~~)

27 (e) (~~during the 2021-2023 biennium grants may be made to~~
28 ~~counties~~) Local governments to (i) enhance or maintain any segment
29 of a road within the (~~county~~) jurisdiction in which the segment has
30 been designated as part of a travel or tourism route for use by
31 wheeled all-terrain vehicles; and (ii) purchase, print, develop, or
32 use educational brochures or mapping technology that aids in the
33 safety and direction of users of wheeled all-terrain vehicle routes;
34 and

35 (f) (i) The departments of natural resources and fish and
36 wildlife, during the second year of each fiscal biennium, with
37 respect to roads that are comanaged by the agencies and which are
38 open for use by wheeled all-terrain vehicles, for the purposes of:

1 (A) Mitigating impacts to road surfaces caused by wheeled all-
2 terrain vehicles on public roadways authorized for wheeled all-
3 terrain vehicle travel;

4 (B) Erecting signage to identify the designation of public
5 roadways as either open or closed to wheeled all-terrain vehicles,
6 depending on whether the roadway has been authorized for wheeled all-
7 terrain vehicle travel; or

8 (C) Purchasing, printing, developing, or using educational
9 brochures or mapping technology that aids in the safety and direction
10 of users of wheeled all-terrain vehicle routes.

11 (ii) The department of transportation must limit the interagency
12 transfers to the departments of natural resources and fish and
13 wildlife under this subsection (1)(f) such that a minimum of \$80,000
14 is available to be allocated for grants to eligible local governments
15 during the biennium.

16 (2) The department of transportation must prioritize grant awards
17 in the following priority order:

18 (a) For the purpose of marking highway crossings with signs
19 warning motorists that wheeled all-terrain vehicles may be crossing
20 when an ORV recreation facility parking lot is on the other side of a
21 public roadway from the actual ORV recreation facility; and

22 (b) For the purpose of marking intersections with signs where a
23 wheeled all-terrain vehicle may cross a public road to advise
24 motorists of the upcoming intersection. Such signs must conform to
25 the manual on uniform traffic control devices.

26 (3) Prior to an interagency transfer to either the department of
27 natural resources or the department of fish and wildlife, the county
28 or counties in which the proposed project will take place must first
29 submit a letter of support to the implementing department and to the
30 department of transportation.

31 (4) For the purposes of this section, "local government" means:
32 (a) A county; or (b) a city or town that has approved the operation
33 of wheeled all-terrain vehicles on roadways within its jurisdiction.

34 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. This act is necessary for the immediate
35 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of
36 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes
37 effect July 1, 2025.

--- END ---