



ATV competitive ride on the Wayne NF nets benefits for children

An All-terrain-vehicle (ATV) competition held on November 5, 2006 drew over 500 riders and raised \$11,438 for charity.



Photograph taken just before the ATV benefit ride starts, with riders lined up as far as you can see.

"I've never seen so many ATV riders in one place," said Bill Scripp, Recreation Technician on the Athens District. "They were packed in behind the starting line and everyone there was pumped up about the event. I was pretty excited too that they had such a good turnout," added Scripp. "For every ATV in that crowd, it was more money for charity and more riders enjoying our trail system."

Scripp and Stan Carte, also a Recreation Technician on the Athens District, both helped with the event. District Ranger Devela Clark was there as well and all three men were pleased at how well the event on November 5th went.

"The ride started out on a brand new section of trail that was completed just in time," said Scripp. "This trail accesses the Wayne from the edge of a private campground and connects to the Wayne's ATV trail system." The campground is owned by Rick Begley and it is located in the Village of New Straitsville. Begley's campground served as the starting point for the event.

"This is the first trail connecting a town to the trail system to date," said Carte. "We think this will be an excellent way to get riders into small towns like New Straitsville to have lunch, fill up with gas, or just take a break from riding to walk around." Carte said the District hopes to do more such connectors with other towns in the area. There are currently 2 trails connecting private campgrounds to the Forest trail system.

The trail took 3 weeks to construct. Scripp said he worked almost every day on the trail during those three weeks. "Rick Begley, the owner of the campground, worked with me and supplied all the gravel for the trail," adds Scripp. Begley also was the owner/operator of the mini-excavator that did the earth work, and was a tremendous time saver in the trail construction.

Clark estimates there were over 500 riders that participated in the event. "It was a fun and safe day for everyone who participated," Clark noted. "Each rider paid to participate. The event is not a race per se," explains Clark, "but is a fun ride based on precise timing and luck. Prizes are awarded but the real winners are the local charities." Clark said the 2006 benefit raised \$11,438 which all went to the Santa Tree Project.

Clark participated in a ribbon cutting at the beginning of the event and received a plaque on behalf of the Wayne National Forest for being one of the sponsors of the event. CJ Verity coordinated the event.

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