COHV CVHR
Canadian Off-Highway Vehicle Distributors Council
Conseil Canadien des Distributeurs de Véhicules Hors Route

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Scientific Proof Off-Road Vehicle Riding Great Physical Activity for Health-Related Fitness

Toronto, Ontario – The Canadian Off-Highway Vehicle Distributors Council (COHV) reviewed the published results of the final phase of York University's study on the "Fitness and Health Benefits of Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Riding", and is pleased to confirm once more that these finding support what all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and off-road motorcycle (ORM) clubs have been saying all along -- -- that being out on the trails on your ATV or ORM is not only fun but contributes to individual and family emotional and physical well-being.

In order to characterize the health, fitness and quality of life, of people who ride recreational off-road vehicles, Jamie F. Burr, and his team at York University's Physical Activity and Chronic Disease Unit, in its final phase of the study, evaluated the fitness and health of individuals who participated in a six or eight week training program that involved riding all-terrain vehicles (ATV) and off-road motorcycles (ORM) as the exercise stimulus.

The primary purpose of this investigation on the "Physiological fitness and health adaptations from purposeful training using off-road vehicles" was to determine the fitness and health effects resulting from a structured program of off-road vehicle riding in non-habituated riders using all-terrain vehicles (ATV) and off-road motorcycles (ORM). A second purpose was to determine if differences would occur in the training response by vehicle type or riding frequency. The study's scientific results were published in the January 2011 issue of the European Journal of Applied Physiology.

Bob Ramsay, President of the COHV stated that, "The positive results reported in the study prove important health benefits can be achieved by this type of non-traditional physical activity." Ramsay added, "The fact that this type of physical activity can be used to target higher risk rural communities where exercise opportunities are limited, off-road riding certainly represents an attractive unconventional physical activity to help combat preventable disease and premature aging that puts a burden on Canada's health care system."

"In addition to being an increasingly popular recreational activity for Canadian of all ages, this study confirms what we already know, that off-road motorcycle riding is an effective exercise stimulus that results in positive changes in an individual's fitness, health and quality of life," stated Daniel Tessier, President of the Motorcyclists Confederation of Canada (MCC).

All-Terrain Quad Council of Canada (AQCC), President Danny Gagnon stated "This ground breaking, first ever comprehensive, scientific probe of the fitness and health benefits of ATV and ORM recreational riding proves that riding creates sufficient opportunity to positively impact

ORV rider's fitness levels". Gagnon also noted that "Information in this study indicated that 77% of rural Canadian residents have access to off-road vehicles. These finding demonstrate that ATVing is a recreational activity that is appealing, readily available and a great opportunity for rural community residents to increase their physical activity levels".

The COHV and its member companies: Arctic Cat, BRP (*Can-Am*), Honda, Kawasaki, KTM, Polaris, Suzuki and Yamaha are committed to family recreation and healthy, active life styles. We believe that the results of this study are a great resource to be shared with those who question OHVs as a healthy recreational activity.

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Facts

- Vehicle riding took place under the supervision of instructors at a professional off-road riding school. Within vehicle type and riding volume group divisions, riders were further sub-divided into smaller training groups of 4–8 riders based on riding ability. As participants improved their riding skills, groups were adjusted so that the speed and difficulty of terrain were maintained throughout the program at a safe and appropriate level for all participants.

- Participants in this study experienced a decreased in both the percentage of body fat and a reduction in waist circumference, even though there was a small decrease in body mass. This suggests that 6 weeks of off-road riding not only leads to healthy changes in body fat stores but also increases lean muscle mass to offset the weight loss associated with body fat reductions.

- Conclusion: Consistent participation in off-road riding is an effective mode of alternative physical activity for decreasing adiposity (storage of fat), increasing muscle mass and improving endurance in the lower body. Off-road riding is effective for lowering blood pressure and may be a useful physical activity modality to improve metabolic regulation.