



*"Our mission is to upgrade and maintain  
a safe and efficient road system"*

**TO:** Essential/Emergency Services and News Media

**FROM:** Grand Traverse County Road Commission

**DATE:** April 18, 2023

**SUBJECT: ROADKILL**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Traverse City.

Picking up roadkill has always been a necessary service that GTCRC 'had just always done' for our community. The process wasn't particularly complex. GTCRC would receive a notification and then collect the carcass using our personnel and equipment. Once collected, the personnel would travel to a remote area (typically a heavily wooded gravel or seasonal road) and place the carcass in the road right-of-way to decompose naturally. Occasionally, local farmers would grant GTCRC permission to use their fields for this public service as well.

In late 2022, the Michigan DNR engaged the GTCRC that they object to this practice near state land and alluded repercussions for GTCRC and its staff for dumping/littering should it continue.

Soon after hearing this concern from the DNR, GTCRC hosted a meeting with the DNR to discuss a path forward not just for areas near state land but countywide. In this 12/15/22 meeting, the DNR advised that GTCRC should only move large carcasses out of the roadway if they pose a hazard to vehicular traffic and then leave carcasses nearby to decompose naturally. When GTCRC staff raised concerns about decomposing carcasses in proximity to residential / commercial areas and the likely influx of related complaints, the DNR remained steadfast. The DNR commented that their office would instruct callers to do nothing and allow carcasses to decompose, to bury carcasses on their property, or to place carcasses in their waste receptacles.

At the conclusion of the meeting, all were in agreement that this matter should be escalated so that all stakeholders (EGLE, DNR, MDARD, CRA, et al.) could align on an acceptable handling of large carcasses and ensure any necessary legislative changes occur. To date, this meeting has not occurred.

The GTCRC has also requested that the DNR provide a formal commitment to not pursue actions against the road commission or its staff for conducting this public service. To date, this has not been granted.

Unfortunately, this leaves GTCRC with a very limited course of action as it relates to roadkill.

The meeting was recorded with permission and is available for viewing here:

<https://onedrive.live.com/?authkey=%21AIXtb%5FG8PPXOYec&id=E9D244334F973A37%21361&cid=E9D244334F973A37>

**When you see road workers, Drive like YOU work there!**

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