



# Off-Roaders in Action

## 2017, volume 1

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DEDICATED TO PROTECTING OUR LANDS **FOR** THE  
PEOPLE, NOT **FROM** THE PEOPLE.

# PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Diana Mead, CORVA President

Things look different when your feet are on the ground.

I am in my early 60's (how did that happen?) and have always had what I call a people conscience. Some call it "caring", others "wearing your heart on your sleeve". I feel there is "rightness" to acknowledging that those closest to the issue have a more intimate understanding of the topography.

The closer we are to an event, the richer our story. The media and historians share our story in direct proportion to our relationship to the issue. At least, they should. The visitors to Carnegie SVRA, know the park and its many benefits to our community. The expansion area will benefit a broader community of off highway motorized recreationists. As we have reached out to these future visitors to the park, we have grown our pro expansion stakeholder base.

Conversely, our adversaries have also grown their stakeholder base, if not in numbers, in value. These folks though, except for a couple of neighboring properties, are stakeholders only in the sense that they are "bought". They have little to no, feet on the ground experience in either OHV, or in Carnegie State Vehicular Recreation Area. They are powerful in the way that only money, and political clout, can deliver.

In the past few months we have gained ground at Carnegie, Ocotillo Wells, and a small private track in Brentwood California. There are common reasons for these "wins". There is no substitute for science and the facts, for one. Popular opinion, the size of the

voice, is another. Although we have all heard poor science and made up facts carry the day, when we do our homework, keep our message clear, and educate our stakeholders, the chances of that happening are minimized. Definitely, the chances of those adversary wins leading to winning the war, are much slimmer.

Each of us is biased. Our needs influence those biases.

There are people in N. Dakota camping in sub zero temperatures. They are stakeholders. They say they are fighting for their right to clean water. Their adversaries are not generally dependent on the Dakota environment. It is not their home. Both sides state facts. Here in California, we read stories, slanted in the direction of the storyteller. AND we form opinions. AND many share and speak out based on those opinions.

In our home state, there is the tunnel project. Does the citizen whose drinking water comes from the Delta have a more relevant voice than the farmer in the valley? Or will science and process, lead California?

In this new year, I hope for each of us that we can explore and try to understand those who have opposing views or make opposing choices. That said, we are entitled to our choices, we may even choose our own set of facts, but things sure look different when our wheels are on the ground.



# A NEW ERA IN WASHINGTON

Amy Granat, Managing Director

Change is in the air as the new administration takes its place in Washington DC. There is excitement and uncertainty, as federal agencies face incoming leadership with very different priorities than they've seen in the past few years. For off-road enthusiasts this may signal the start of good things to come, and CORVA is ready for whatever lays in store in regards to land use policy changes.

Through our connections in Washington and California, CORVA is finding one of our greatest contributions as a preface to change lies in educating officials about the contributions off-roaders make with managing and maintaining sustainable environmental conditions on public land. We mistakenly assume that agency personnel know about adopt-a-trail programs, OHV stewardship organizations, trail work parties and all the volunteer efforts undertaken by off-roaders on federal and state land. But the reality is that these activities still remain a secret except to those in our own community. We need off-roaders to start publicizing their efforts and sharing their accomplishments with others online and in newspapers. We have a real opportunity now to change the conversation about the importance of OHV access and management, and become known as 'the good guys' we've really always been.

We are expecting much to change with upper management in the federal government, but it may be some time until we see any changes with on-the-ground policies. While the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior will change, along with the office of the Chief of the Forest Service, career line officers will stay in their positions and continue to administrate our federal lands in California. We are excited, we are anticipating and we are open to working with everything the new administration has to offer, but we also have to be patient as policies evolve.

We encourage people to keep the lines of communication open with those that manage their favorite areas. Numerous groups around the state have made real progress reopening trails closed to Travel Management or Resource Management Plans, as well as keeping trails open that would otherwise be closed due to a severe lack of maintenance dollars in federal budgets. Groups like: Stewards for the Sequoia, Sierra and Stanislaus National Forests, Friends of the Rubicon, Central Coast Motorcycle Association, San

Bernardino Adopt-a-Trail Program and many other great volunteer groups active around the state illustrate the successes OHV groups can have when they work together with land managers and help maintain their favorite trails. CORVA supports these local groups and appreciates all their hard work, and they support CORVA as we deal with state and regional land use managers protecting and promoting off-road rights to access.

A cautionary note: we are all proud to live and/or recreate in California, but state government is not taking well to the possibility of change in federal management. Both the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have close relationships with Governor Brown and Secretary of Natural Resources John Laird. *California state government is insisting that priorities, including adherence to climate change regulations, continue to hold a high priority in land use plans regardless if that priority is abandoned by the federal government.* People often wonder if federal agencies have to comply with state law, and the truth is federal entities do not have to comply with state regulation with a few notable exceptions in regards to water law. But they can choose independently to adopt the priorities important to state officials, and that's exactly what these agencies have done in years past and will likely continue into the future.

It is also important to note that environmental organizations around the country are gearing up to object to any policy changes they feel violate existing environmental law. They will not appreciate the new administration abandoning treasured environmental priorities and projects including Wilderness designations. That may mean many of the changes and corrections we, as off-roaders, have been waiting to see might be delayed as these policy 'corrections' are challenged in court. We certainly live in interesting times.

A final note as we move into this New Year; CORVA is dedicated to working with off-roaders of all kinds. The off-road family is very large and quite varied, but we all have a couple of important things in common. We highly value our access to public land, and we use motorized vehicles to access public land. Please treat your fellow hunters, rockhounds, and houndsmen as members of our extended family and when you see them enjoying public land greet them as friends!

# CORVA LAND USE REPORT JANUARY 2017

by Bruce Whitcher, VP Land Resources and Public Policy

## LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY UPDATE

- Election update –Trump appointments to federal agencies
  - Federal legislation update
    - Feinstein introduces California Desert Protection and Recreation Act
    - Clear Creek bill
  - California OHV Division Update
    - California State Parks Transformation team
    - Carnegie Update – Final Plan Adopted, litigation to follow.
  - BLM and Forest Service updates
    - Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan – Phase I completed, Phase 2 (County renewal energy plans will be next)
    - WEMO - West Mojave Plan - Final Supplemental Plan delayed
    - Forest Plan Revisions for Sequoia, Sierra, and Inyo National Forests
    - Draft Revised Forest Plans released in May 2016
    - Travel Management Subpart C, Over Snow Travel, update
- 

## TRUMP'S CABINET

### From ARRA Washington Newsletter

The President-elect has almost completed the selection of his cabinet though we are still waiting to see who he wants to be the next Secretary of Agriculture. This is important to us because the U.S. Forest Service comes under the Department of Agriculture. In due course there will be a new Chief of the Forest Service as well, but that selection must wait until the new Secretary is in place.

Other specific appointments of interest to us include the nomination of Montana Rep. Ryan Zinke as the next Secretary of the Interior. The Zinke selection was somewhat of a surprise. Of importance to the President-elect was the fact the Rep. Zinke was one of his earliest supporters in the Congress. Rep. Zinke has served only one term in the House of Representatives but prior to that he served as a state senator in the Montana Senate and also had a 23-year career as a Navy SEAL. In time there will also be a new Director of the Bureau of Land Management. At this stage there is little information available as to who will replace the current director, Neil Kornze.

Elaine Chao, former Secretary of Labor under President George W. Bush, is the President-elect's nominee to be the next Secretary of Transportation. Since the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) comes under the auspices of the Transportation Department, we very much care about who the leaders are of this department. There is a lot of speculation that a massive infrastructure program will be launched during the Trump Presidency, and Secretary Chao will have a major role in shepherding this program through the Congress. Of course, it helps that she is married to Mitch McConnell, the Senate Majority Leader. Our focus will be to make sure that RTP is not adversely affected by any program initiatives.

### First One-Hundred Days of the 115th Congress

The new Congress convened on January 3rd. In addition to swearing in new members and working out committee assignments for the 115th Congress, confirmation of Presidential nominees is a high priority for the Senate. Also facing both houses is the issue of appropriations for FY 2017. Before the 114th Congress left town in December, it passed a short-term continuing resolution that will expire on April 28th. But even before turning to that issue, the House and Senate must deal with the contentious issue of the expiring debt ceiling set for March 16. This will be an early test issue on how the Trump Administration and the Republican controlled Congress can manage a controversial legislative issue. At this stage, it's impossible to handicap how this will all play out except to say that March 16th isn't that far off.

Continues, page 8 »

# CORVA NORTHERN JAMBOREE

We had a great Northern Jamboree this year! Thanks to the East Bay Hi-Tailers, Escarabajo Off-Road Club, Merced Runabouts and Modesto Ridge Runners for all their hard work.

Frank Raines Regional Park, Patterson, California, October 2016. The above mentioned clubs have been hosting the N. Jamboree for over 40 years. The event has evolved over the years to an inclusive of all types of OHV's.

On-the-ground conditions were perfect this year, as a few days of light rain made ground preparation and terrain ideal for the events. The jamboree started out with Bingo on Friday night hosted by East Bay Hi Tailers. Let's all remember how fun this game can be with a great caller and some alcohol!

Saturday offered organized activities for kids, including a kids costume contest, and off-road games throughout Frank Raines Park. These included the Egg Carry, Wiggle Worm, Pumpkin Carry, Mouse Hunt, Barrel Loop and more. Although there was no wheel to wheel competition, each class had plenty of good natured pushing of the envelop. Drivers made the trip down to the registration area to purchase more tickets, to try, (just one more time), to beat the fast time. The competition among Class A, Buggies was especially fierce in the Barrel Loop. Enthusiastic quad and motorcycle participants figured out how to carry the egg and the spoon to compete in the Egg Carry. Just picture a long handled spoon with a raw egg in one hand, the other on the handle bars, and trying to get some speed on a bumpy course without losing the egg!

To begin Saturday evening's activity, children dressed in their Halloween costumes and went from camp to camp in the park

parading and gathering candy. East Bay HI- Tailers prepared a delicious dinner, and over 120 people enjoyed dining together in the hall.

After dinner, awards were given to winners of the day's events, and then the much-anticipated Escarabajo sponsored Halloween Costume Contest commenced. Groups, Couples and Individuals get very creative each year. The Green Acres couple, Cry Babies, Planet of the Apes, some nuns and priests were all on display. Everyone enjoyed the music from the DJ, and dancing continued into the evening.

A number of people deserve special recognition: Roy Hoagland and his daughters have run the Barrel Loop for about 20 years, which illustrates his dedication to the Northern Jamboree and CORVA. We are proud to recognize the winners of the

50/50 Prize, (otherwise known as the Bill Salmon Raffle), Carla Fain (nun) and Don Reud (preist), (Escarabajo) who donated their half of the prize back to CORVA. We had two original art pieces donated by Crystal and LeAnn, the daughters of Basil Platt, a valued member of the East Bay Hi-Tailers and Escarabajo, who passed away suddenly in August. Roy ad Bev Haley created the painting display and ran the raffle.

Adding together all the t-shirt sales, raffle tickets, vehicle registrations and dinner proceeds, the Northern Jamboree donated over \$3,500 to CORVA. Congratulations to Debi Campbell and her team for another wonderful Northern Jamboree. We had a great time, and invite everyone to join us in 2017, the weekend before Halloween, for the Northern Jamboree.



# CORVA FIELD REPORT

By Doug Varner

On Friday November 4, 2016 I attended a California State Parks Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation commission meeting in Holtville, Ca.

On the agenda for this meeting was a report by the Kern County Sheriff's Office on the Pacific Crest Trail. Sergeant Fred Wheeler and Sergeant Steve Williams representing the Kern Sheriff's Department presented their report on the Pacific Crest Trail to the OHV Commission and the public in attendance. The Sheriffs gave a very detailed report on their OHV trespass Investigation and Hiker Survey. Attached is a copy of their 15 page report. In short, the investigation shows "motorized trespass on the Pacific Crest Trail in Kern County in negligible". Some of the reports of trespass on the Pacific Crest Trail were false. The conclusion of the Sheriff's Survey of Pacific Crest Trail hikers found that "hikers and off-highway vehicle recreation can coexist harmoniously and peacefully".

The eight members of the OHV commission then made their comments to the public. All eight members made positive comments on the Kern Sheriff's report. Commissioner Ed Patrovsky stated that he had taken a tour of the area a few years ago with main complainer of OHV activity in this area of the Pacific Crest Trail. He admitted that he was

"taken in" by the reported "freeway like conditions of OHV activity on the Pacific Crest Trail." He now realizes from the Sheriff's report and our work that the initial reports of trespass were exaggerated. Commissioner's Slavic and Lemmon both felt some type of action should be taken against the individuals making false claims of OHV use on the Pacific Crest Trail.

Finally Commission Chairman Ted Cabral stated that the agenda of this public meeting had been made public for sometime. The agenda had been emailed to all of the interested parties in the topic of trespass on the Pacific Crest Trail. Commissioner said he found it telling that parties that were so eager to report "freeway" like conditions of Off-Road vehicles on the Pacific Crest Trail would not appear for a public hearing and comment on the report by the Kern County Sheriff's Department.

We must continue to tell our off-road friends and guests to avoid the Pacific Crest Trail. Kern Sheriff's, BLM Rangers, US Forestry Rangers, and California State Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Police will continue to patrol the Pacific Crest Trail.

View this article on the CORVA website:  
<http://corva.org/news/4390493>





## PROPOSED BY-LAW AMENDMENT

**Change the name for business membership from "Affiliate Membership" to Business Sponsors starting with Article IV, Section 1.B:**

Current Language:

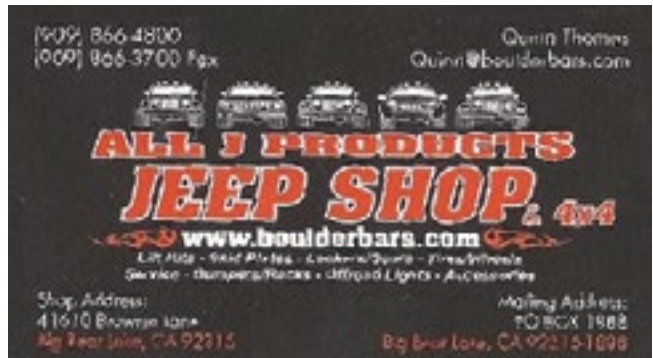
**Affiliate Membership**

Affiliate Members are representatives of manufacturers, wholesalers and dealers of vehicles, accessory equipment, services and/or parts for off-road vehicles who are current in their dues. Affiliate Members shall be recognized as Supporting Members of the Association.

Proposed Language:

**Business Sponsors**

Business Sponsors are representatives of manufacturers, wholesalers and dealers of vehicles, accessory equipment, services and/or parts for off-road vehicles who are current in their dues. Business Sponsors shall be recognized as Supporting Members of the Association.



## President Obama and New Monument Designations

The current occupant of the Oval Office is not leaving town quietly. Just prior to the New Year, President Obama exercised his authority under the Antiquities Act of 1906 by declaring as National Monuments an additional 1.65 million acres of public lands in Utah and Nevada. The Utah declaration runs counter to the wishes of the Utah congressional delegation and at the very least, is very controversial in the state. The Utah Public Lands Initiative (UPLI) as proposed by Reps. Bishop and Chaffetz was an attempt to address the Bears Ears public lands issue short of a presidential declaration. ARRA was a strong supporter of the UPLI approach. At this stage it appears that President Obama's declaration makes the UPLI a moot issue, but we are hoping Reps. Bishop and Chaffetz will come up with a new plan. The Gold Butte National Monument in Nevada was done at the behest of outgoing Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid, (D-NV) and would appear to be less controversial than the newly created National Monument in Utah.

These National Monument declarations by President Obama will place political pressure on the incoming President to do something to reverse these executive orders. It's too soon to know whether Mr. Trump will be inclined to take such action, but one thing is certain, National Monument declarations are going to be a hotly debated issue within the new Administration and in the 115th Congress. Revising the Antiquities Act is going to be a high priority for some members of Congress beginning with Rep. Rob Bishop (R-UT), the Chairman of the House Resources Committee. ARRA intends to support legislative efforts to roll back these recent Monument designations.

## California State Parks Transformation Team

In February 2017, the Transformation Team will complete its twoyear term and release a final progress report. Although the work of the Transformation Team is ending, the Department is committed to continuing these important reforms and further innovation. Highlights include:

- Continue Fiscal Improvements
- Create New Path to Park Leadership — Previously, only individuals from state parks law enforcement could serve as the Department's top leaders.
- Modernize Fee Collection
- Foster Partnerships
- Restructure

- Maintain Services at State Parks — A onetime increase of \$12.6 million State Parks and Recreation Fund and \$4 million from the Environmental License Plate Fund to maintain existing service levels throughout the state parks system. This proposal will allow the Department to continue implementation of recommendations of the Parks Forward Commission and the Legislature.

The Budget sustains the current level of service at parks for the upcoming year, although a longterm structural shortfall remains.

## CARNEGIE UPDATE – FINAL PLAN ADOPTED, LITIGATION FOLLOWS

### Lawsuits to Challenge Off-Road Expansion

Legal challenges to the state's approval of the expansion of off-road vehicle use are in the works by Alameda County and Friends of Tesla Park.

Plans to expand off-road vehicle recreation use into the 3000-acre Tesla site in eastern Alameda County received unanimous approval of the California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission in October. The land is adjacent to the Carnegie Off-Road Vehicle Park. The Commission, part of the state Department of Parks and Recreation, met in Sacramento.

On Tuesday, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors authorized litigation against the California Dept. of Parks and Recreation regarding the Carnegie State Park Recreation Area General Plan Revision. The suit will officially be filed next Monday. The suit will challenge the adequacy of the final environmental impact report. Friends of Tesla Park planned to file a separate lawsuit on Nov. 23.

The topic of the expansion and potential lawsuits arose during the meeting of the Altamont Open Space Advisory Committee last Friday. The committee is comprised of representatives from Alameda County, Livermore, the Sierra Club and Pleasanton. It was established to administer funds raised through fees paid at local landfills.

The committee had authorized sending a letter to the California Department of Parks and Recreation to make the department aware that there are funds available to purchase property in the area.

The letter stated, "The proposed Expansion Area for the Carnegie State Vehicular Recreation Area is within the East Alameda County Open Space Acquisition Area under the Altamont Landfill Settlement Agreement. On September 16, 2016, the Altamont Landfill Settlement Agreement Open Space Committee (Open Space Committee) representing the East Alameda County Acquisition Area (City of



Livermore, Alameda County, and the Sierra Club) made a determination that the proposed Expansion Area is a high priority for potential acquisition if it became available. Currently, there is approximately \$12 million available in the Open Space Fund to acquire open space land in East Alameda County."

The letter noted, that if the proposed Expansion Area were to become available for acquisition, then the Open Space Committee would consider a grant application for use of the Open Space Fund to acquire a permanent easement over the properties or to acquire them in fee title.

Liz McGuirk, Chief Deputy Director of the department, replied in a letter, "I appreciate your reaching out to express your interest in the Alameda-Tesla property. The department does not currently have authority to dispose or sell real property. This authority, not including special legislation, is granted to the Department of General Services." Government code establishes a process for disposal or sale of real property.

During public hearings on plans to expand the Carnegie Off-Road Vehicle Park into the Tesla area, objections have included the likelihood of motor vehicle damage to rare and endangered plants and animals, impact on Native American and other historic sites, substantial air and water pollution, increased incidence of Valley Fever and opposition by neighboring ranchers and other residents concerned about noise, dust and traffic.

In support of the expansion, off-road organizations pointed out that the State owns the existing Carnegie off-road site and Tesla, and has previously approved the concept of the expansion. They complain that Carnegie is too small and crowded for the number of riders that use it and that there are no other nearby places to practice their sport. They contend that their fees and taxes helped pay for the land and expansion, and that off-roaders are responsible stewards of the land.

### **Sam Farr's Clear Creek Bill HR 1838**

This bill, which would reopen the Clear Creek Management Area in San Benito County, to recreational use, received a committee hearing but has not passed by the senate. With Farr replaced by Jimmy Panetta during the last election, the future of the bill remains uncertain. Congressman Panetta's web site does not include any information on this topic.

### **Feinstein Desert Conservation and Recreation Act**

(Via Jeremy P. Jacobs, E&E News, Jan 6, 2017)

Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) introduced legislation yesterday that would expand protected areas in the California desert and establish 142,000 acres as permanent recreation areas for off-road vehicles.

Her "California Desert Protection and Recreation Act" would create five new Bureau of Land Management wilderness areas spanning 230,000 acres.

Feinstein's [legislation](#), which she said is the culmination of a decade of working with interest groups, would also permanently establish five existing BLM areas for off-highway-vehicle, or OHV, use. In sum, the areas would cover 142,000 acres of desert.

"I've worked with off-roaders for years because I believe their use of the land should be protected just as it is for conservation purposes," Feinstein said in a statement. "I gave them my word that I'd fight for them and I intend to do so."

Recreational motor vehicle groups immediately applauded the legislation.

"Sen. Feinstein made a commitment to the motorized recreation community to designate and recognize key areas of the California desert as national off-highway recreation areas," Larry Smith, the executive director of Americans for Responsible Recreational Access, said in an email.

"The introduction of the 'California Desert Protection and Recreation Act' today is a big step in that direction," he said.

Feinstein's legislation would also create a nearly 19,000-acre scenic area in Inyo County called the Alabama Hills National Scenic Area, preserving it for recreational use.

Parts of the bill are similar to a bill Feinstein introduced about a year ago that competed with legislation from California Republican Rep. Paul Cook.

Cook's bill would have provided more expansive OHV use, and some environmental groups saw it as insufficiently protective ([E&E Daily, Dec. 7, 2015](#)).

Feinstein's previous bill was more broadly focused on protecting three areas of the Mojave Desert — spanning 1.8 million acres that President Obama designated as the Mojave Trails, Sand to Snow and Castle Mountains national monuments last year ([Greenwire, Feb. 12, 2016](#)).

Cook said in a statement that he will review Feinstein's latest proposal. "I look forward to reviewing the senator's latest draft and will continue working in the House on these crucial desert issues on behalf of my constituents," he said.

Feinstein emphasized that there are still issues that must be addressed and noted that her bill would designate 77 miles of waterways as Wild and Scenic Rivers, and expand Death Valley and Joshua Tree national parks.

"The new desert monuments designated last year form a cornerstone for future desert protection," Feinstein said, "but our work isn't complete."

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# IN THE BATTLE OF DESERT TORTOISE VS. MARINES, THE TORTOISE WINS — FOR NOW

By Tony Perry for the Washington Post

**TWENTYNINE PALMS, CALIF.** — Troops sent to the Marine Corps's sprawling base in the Mojave Desert near here for advanced combat training are warned sternly about an unbreakable rule: no harming the desert tortoises or leaving behind food crumbs that are likely to attract ravens, the arch-predator of tortoises.

To further protect the creatures with the high-domed shells on their backs, certain areas of the base are off-limits. And to prop up the tortoise population on base, the Marines have teamed with UCLA for the past decade to run an on-base hatchery.

Yet a battle is brewing between the Marines and the tortoises — or, really, their environmental advocates — that shows how even a fast-moving fighting force must sometimes give way to some of the slowest creatures on Earth.

The issue is a live-fire exercise set for August to train troops in assaulting an enemy from numerous locations. Similar exercises have been done in the past, but this year's event was to have included recently annexed property that is home to numerous desert tortoises.

The Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs released 35 tortoises from the program after they spent approximately 9 years at the Tortoise Research and Captive Rearing Site. (Lauren Kurkimili/U.S. Marine Corps)

To protect the tortoises from becoming collateral damage as bombs, mortars and artillery are fired and Humvees rumble around, the Marines were planning to airlift more than 1,100 of them away from the area.

But just weeks before the relocation was to begin, the Center for Biological Diversity in Tucson protested that the effort would mean certain death for large numbers of the tortoises, in violation of the Endangered Species Act. The group warned that it would go to court to stop the operation.

As a result, the airlift is on hold, the training exercise has been downsized and federal officials not aligned with the Marine Corps are reviewing the tortoise relocation to judge its impact on the creatures.

"This proposed translocation is a disaster for the already at-risk desert tortoises in the west Mojave Desert," said Ileene Anderson, a senior scientist with the diversity center.

The desert tortoise is found in the Mojave and Sonoran deserts of California, Nevada, Utah and Arizona. An adult tortoise can reach six inches in

height, weigh up to 15 pounds, and live as long as 100 years. The tortoise population in the western Mojave, which includes the Marine base, has declined by 90 percent since the early 1980s, according to the advocacy group Defenders of Wildlife.

Among the causes cited by the group and others for the decline are drought, respiratory disease, a population explosion among ravens, suburban development and increased use of the desert by off-roaders and other recreationalists.

In response to the environmentalists' concerns, the Marines say they have carefully monitored the health of tortoises set to be relocated and will continue to do so through small transmitters on the animals' backs. The Corps has allocated \$50 million for the airlift, environmental assessments, fencing, research and health monitoring of the tortoises through the year 2045.

"We're not just going to throw them over a fence," said Walter Christensen, natural and cultural resources branch manager at the base. Six spots adjacent to the base have been assigned for the relocation, he said. All have sufficient water and food and are far enough away from the tortoises' current homes that they will not try to walk back, he said.

At 1,190 square miles, the Marine base is nearly the size of Rhode Island. Most Marines sent to Iraq and Afghanistan come here for training, under a program known as Mojave Viper.

Faced with the possible lawsuit over the tortoise airlift, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced that it was reviewing its tentative approval of the relocation plan. Since the desert tortoise is listed as a threatened species — a notch below endangered — the service's approval is needed for any such move.

The Marines have reconfigured and downscaled the August training away from tortoise-heavy areas, with fewer tanks and armored vehicles. In addition, no live-firing will be done in Johnson Valley, an area of the base that is central to the dispute.

Training is an everyday event at the base, located 140 miles east of Los Angeles. But the August exercise was meant to be special: It was to be the first time that the Marines used the Johnson Valley property, Marine brass hoped to find out whether the valley would be good not just for large-scale exercises such as this summer's but also for even larger exercises in coming years.

For a decade, the Marines fought environmental groups, local landowners and off-road enthusiasts



over annexing Johnson Valley, which was controlled by the federal Bureau of Land Management.

In 2013, after intervention by Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), a deal was cut by Congress: 107,000 acres of Johnson Valley will be designated exclusively for use by the Marine Corps, another 50,000 will be shared between the Marines and civilians. The August exercise is to include sections of both, as well other areas of the base.

The Marines insist they need to use the property to devise a training exercise in which three large infantry groups can practice assaulting a common target, each using artillery, mortars and air power. Without the Johnson Valley area, the corps has no base large enough for such an exercise, officials said.

At the crux of environmentalists' concerns was a tortoise relocation done in 2008 at the Army's Fort Irwin, which is east of Twentynine Palms. That program was suspended after only a year when it was learned that about 30 percent of the relocated tortoises had died.

"It was a debacle," Anderson said of the Fort Irwin program.

To the Center for Biological Diversity, that experience shows that relocation is a dreadful strategy and that the Marines' plan, which would involve many more tortoises, needs further scrutiny.

The Marines assert that the Fort Irwin deaths are misleading. Brian Henen, a civilian ecologist at the Twentynine Palms base, said the mortality rate of the tortoises that were moved was the same as that of tortoises that were not relocated, suggesting the

main cause was a drought that decreased water and forage. Federal officials, who did an investigation of the Fort Irwin deaths, also concluded that the deaths most likely were attributable to the drought. Environmental groups disputed the finding.

Brian Croft, a wildlife biologist and division chief with the Fish and Wildlife Service, has sympathy for both sides in this dispute. His agency has dealt with numerous problems related to the moving of tortoises, including ones caused by solar projects and a community college expansion next to the Twentynine Palms base.

"From everything we know from studying translocation, as long as it's planned properly, it can be done without increasing the mortality rate of the animals," Croft said.

The Fish and Wildlife Service expects to decide in September whether the Marines can go ahead with the airlift, Croft said.

Jennifer Loda, the Center for Biological Diversity's attorney for amphibian and reptile issues, said she hopes the final decision will leave the desert tortoises undisturbed. The tortoise's ancestors lived in the Mojave Desert thousands of years before the Army and Marine Corps arrived, she noted.

"They have an inherent right to be here. They have the same right as we do."

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View this article on the Washington Post: <http://wapo.st/291pkCA>

# CORVA MERCHANDISE

CORVA accepts donations for all merchandise listed below.

Although your donation is not tax deductible, they are one way CORVA raises funds to continue to fight for Off-Road recreation access. When you promote CORVA by wearing a shirt or hat, displaying stickers, etc. you are helping spread the word to your fellow off-roaders. Show them you support CORVA – Order Today!

Just fill in the items you want, mail the form with your check and we will get your order processed quickly. Once we have received your order, we will send you a confirmation email so you will know when your items have shipped. All orders, other than stickers, are sent via US Priority Mail.

*T-Shirts are available in sizes Small, Medium, Large, XL, XXL and XXXL. Please indicate desired size in the space provided.*



## CORVA Merchandise Order:

- CORVA T-Shirt (Shirt size: \_\_\_\_\_) \$20.00
- CORVA Cozies (set of two) \$10.00
- CORVA Trucker Hat \$20.00
- CORVA Stickers (new) - Small \$2.00
- CORVA Stickers (new) - Medium \$2.00
- CORVA Stickers - Large \$10.00
- T-Shirt and Hat Combo (Shirt size: \_\_\_\_\_) \$26.00
- Gift Pack Combo #1 \$40.00  
(Incl. 1 trucker hat, 2 coffee cups, 2 cozzies and 1 sm sticker)
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# SHERIFF'S SURVEY OF PACIFIC CREST TRAIL HIKERS FOUND THAT "HIKERS AND OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE RECREATION CAN COEXIST HARMONIOUSLY AND PEACEFULLY"

CORVA Field Representative Doug Varner

On Friday November 4, 2016, I attended a California State Parks Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation commission meeting in Holtville, Ca.

On the agenda for this meeting was a [report by the Kern County Sheriff's Office](#) on the Pacific Crest Trail. Sergeant Fred Wheeler and Sergeant Steve Williams representing the Kern Sheriff's Department presented their report on the Pacific Crest Trail to the OHV Commission and the public in attendance. The Sheriffs gave a very detailed report on their OHV trespass Investigation and Hiker Survey.

In short, the investigation shows "motorized trespass on the Pacific Crest Trail in Kern County in negligible". Some of the reports of trespass on the Pacific Crest Trail were false. The conclusion of the Sheriff's Survey of Pacific Crest Trail hikers found that "hikers and off-highway vehicle recreation can coexist harmoniously and peacefully".

The eight members of the OHV commission then made their comments to the public. All eight members made positive comments on the Kern Sheriff's report. Commissioner Ed Patrovsky stated that he had taken a tour of the area a few years ago with main complainer of OHV activity in this area of the Pacific Crest Trail. He admitted that he was

"taken in" by the reported "freeway like conditions of OHV activity on the Pacific Crest Trail." He now realizes from the Sheriff's report and our work that the initial reports of trespass were exaggerated. Commissioner's Slavic and Lemmon both felt some type of action should be taken against the individuals making false claims of OHV use on the Pacific Crest Trail.

Finally Commission Chairman Ted Cabral stated that the agenda of this public meeting had been made public for sometime. The agenda had been emailed to all of the interested parties in the topic of trespass on the Pacific Crest Trail. Commissioner said he found it telling that parties that were so eager to report "freeway" like conditions of Off-Road vehicles on the Pacific Crest Trail would not appear for a public hearing and comment on the report by the Kern County Sheriff's Department.

We must continue to tell our off-road friends and guests to avoid the Pacific Crest Trail. Kern Sheriff's, BLM Rangers, US Forestry Rangers, and California State Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Police will continue to patrol the Pacific Crest Trail.

-----  
You can view the report at: <http://bit.ly/2jxtlBr>



## The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) Update

With the release of the BLM's Final Land Use Plan Amendment last Fall, Phase 1 of the DRECP has been completed. The plan will continue to move forward using a phased approach.

In Phase I, BLM completed the Land Use Planning Amendment (LUPA) component that designates development focus areas and conservation areas on public lands. The benefits of finalizing the public lands component include:

- Providing certainty to local governments, stakeholders and the public with respect to development and conservation on public lands
- Providing additional time and opportunities for the state and federal agencies to work on Phase II activities (see below)
- Facilitating implementation of the Durability Agreement that provides mechanisms to achieve project mitigation on public land
- Ensuring conservation protection for recreation, cultural scenic and other natural resource values in the California Desert Conservation Area, which was a major theme of comments received on the draft DRECP

In Phase II, the agencies will engage with the counties to better inform decisions on best options and timing for proceeding with the other components related to private lands. Several of the counties in the DRECP area are finalizing land use planning processes that include, or are focused on, renewable energy development. The goal of county engagement will be to better align renewable energy development and conservation at the local, state and federal level. This dialogue will allow the REAT agencies to explore opportunities for a tailored, county-by-county approach in addition to making improvements to the overall plan.

## Release of final West Mojave Plan (WEMO) delayed

The DRECP Record of Decision has been signed and the West Mojave Plan will now be subject to the restrictions of the DRECP.

The West Mojave Plan's preferred alternative would designate approximately 10,000 miles of route as "open" to off road vehicles, but this seems unlikely due to the more restrictive DRECP that places a 1% "disturbance cap" on most of the California desert.

The DRECP sets aside large areas of BLM lands for conservation purposes and has the potential to

restrict the use of many of the "limited use" areas, known as "L" lands.

## US Forest Plan Revisions for Inyo, Sequoia, and Sierra National Forests

These Forest Plan Revisions were due out last fall. Draft documents have been released with Alternative B listed as the preferred alternative. Alternative B does not call for any reduction in the semi primitive motorized opportunity, although there may be changes to the boundaries of areas classified as Semi Primitive Non-Motorized .

The Forest Service recently released their Wilderness Evaluation and Inventory process for the three Forests. CORVA submitted over 17 pages of comments on the draft wilderness evaluation pointing out that the majority of areas being evaluated did not meet the definition of wilderness. Only the Inyo National Forest will receive wilderness additions.

The Pacific Crest Trail, however, will receive a one mile wide corridor, one half mile from the center line. Although this designation would not close any designated roads, non-system motorized trails, especially those in the Piute region of Sequoia, could only be designated taking into account effects on the PCT.

## Travel Management Subpart C – regulation of over snow vehicle use

### Lassen NF Over Snow Vehicle Designation Delay

According to the [Snowlands Network website](#):

"The Forest Service has requested a two-year delay in completing the five OSV Use Designation projects so that additional environmental analysis may be done. Since the completion date was agreed upon as part of the lawsuit settlement, the plaintiffs (Snowlands, WWA, CBD) must agree to the delay. We are currently in negotiation with the Forest Service on the new completion dates and intermediate milestones. We think that in requesting the delay, the Forest Service is acknowledging that the environmental analysis done so far as part of the OSV planning has been inadequate. Lassen is the first national forest to issue a final environmental impact analysis and record of decision for OSV Use Designation, so it is important that the Forest Service carry out their planning effort for Lassen correctly."

The Lassen NF is required to respond by December 21, 2016 to SAC and the others who objected to the Forest Service's OSV decision.

Continues next page »

## State OHV Division

Grant applications for 2017 are due in early March.

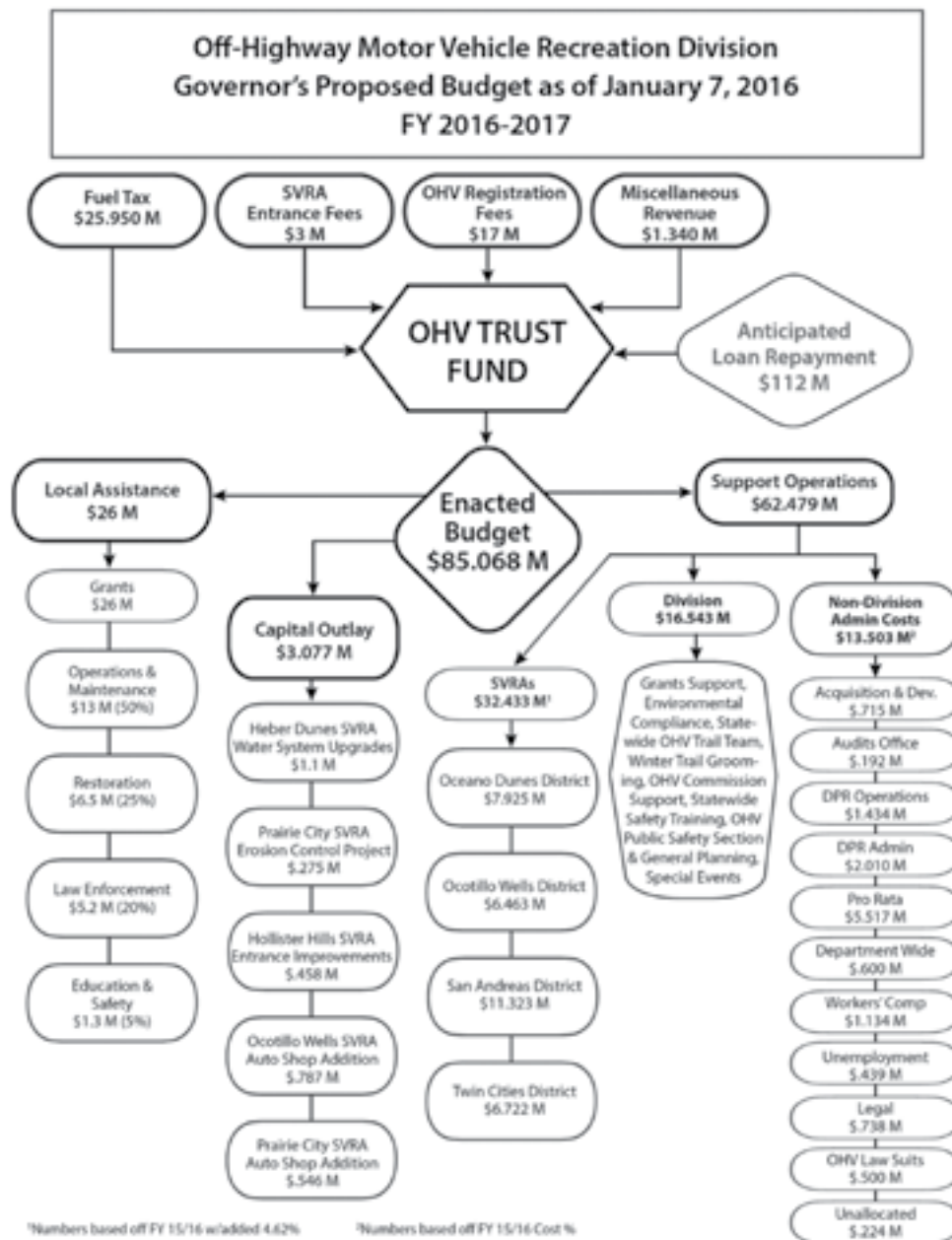
This is a good time to review the OHV Commission, the grants program, and how it works:

### Current OHV Commission

Maria Mowery, and long time administrator with the Division, is presently serving as Acting Division Chief.

Commissioners include the current chairman Ted Cabral, Ed Patrovsky (Senate Pro tem appointment), Kevin Murphy, Paul Slavik, Eric Lueder, and our newest commissioner Tom Lemmon (House speaker's appointment).

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MARCH 25, 2017

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## EVENT INFO

- WHERE:** Hungry Valley SVRA-Gorman, CA  
Registration at Aliklik Campground, Follow signs from either entrance.  
Registration 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Saturday  
Pre-registration available at [www.corva.org](http://www.corva.org)
- When:** Saturday, March 25, 2017  
Rider meeting 9:30 a.m. at Aliklik Campground. Poker Run starts at 10:00 a.m. Last participant starting course 2:00 p.m. Games at check points on Poker Run, Off Road Games at campground, Dinner 5:00 p.m. Raffle 6:00 p.m. and campfire after dinner.
- What:** CORVA FAMILY FUN-POKER RUN (5 CARDS PER HAND)  
CORVA family members: \$20.00 1st hand and registration Non-members \$30.00  
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- How:** POKER RUN-BEST 5 CARD HAND WINS \$1 donation per game ticket to participate in the OHV games at camp.  
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Volume 29 Issue 1

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3rd Wednesday

CORVA Board Conference Call  
4th Monday

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Want to contact CORVA? Send an email to [info@corva.org](mailto:info@corva.org) or call 916-710-1950.

## WHAT IS CORVA?

The California Off-Road Vehicle Association (CORVA) is a varied group of outdoor recreationalists who are extremely active in promoting the positive aspects of vehicular access on public lands and protecting that right.

The group is composed of the owners of "Green Sticker" vehicles such as ATV's, motorcycles, 3-wheelers, trail bikes, and dune buggies, as well as "street legal" 4x4 vehicles, dual sport motorcycles, baja and desert racers, and snowmobiles.

We work with land managers for responsible off-highway vehicular access and recreation opportunities. Secondly, we educate our membership on the constantly changing rules and regulations and promote conservation, clean-up and trail maintenance projects.

We participate in lobbying activities in both Sacramento and Washington DC. We work closely with the State Department of Parks and Recreation

providing input to the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) program from the users' standpoint.

We provide a valuable resource to land managers in the form of dedicated OHV and OSV enthusiasts who believe in using our public lands responsibly.

We are active at all levels of the land management public process with both the BLM and USFS as well as at the county and local levels. We do this by commenting on many environmental documents on issues that affect us.

We coordinate with other multiple use organizations such as snowmobiles to horse enthusiasts to protect multiple use rights that we both share. Only together can we fight the extremists.

We are dedicated to protecting our lands for the people, not from the people.

For more information, contact Amy Granat, Managing Director:  
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