CALIFORNIA OFF-ROAD VEHICLE ASSOCIATION

Volume 26 Issue 5 January 2014



OFF-ROADERS IN ACTION

Congressman Cook Preserves Recreation Access in Johnson Valley (Cont. on page 10)

by Steve Kuehl, Past CORVA President

Congressman Paul Cook (CD8 – California) was instrumental in preserving recreational access to about half of lands known as the Johnson Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Area, managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

In a very unusual set of circumstances that led up to a far different process than had been expected, the four leaders of both US Senate-House Armed Services Committee offered



language in an agreement on a portion of the 2014 National Defense Appropriations Act ("NDAA") that resolved the fate of Johnson Valley.

Although there had been some initial discussions about a proposed expansion in early 2008, the Department of the Navy published a legal "Notice of Intent" to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement on October 30, 2008. This set the stage for a legally defined process to move these discussions forward to a formal proposal.

Most of the motorized access groups formed a committee to disseminate information and discuss ideas that were vital to retaining Johnson Valley for public access. This group hired a professional presence in Washington DC who proved vital to interests concerned about the process. Some in this group had retained an attorney to help guide them and represent them in the legal process.

Since that date, all types of; businesses, individuals, and groups participated in this process. Most all had a common goal of retaining public access to the 189,000 acre Johnson Valley. There were many administrative and political moves made by both those for (USMC) and against the proposal.

Proactive Advocacy (Continued on page 11)

by Amy Granat, Managing Director

When considering advocacy strategies, a complex evaluation needs to be done to determine how proactive measures can be taken to protect both our State Vehicular Recreation Areas and motorized access throughout California.

CORVA saw the benefit of proactive planning some years ago. Our most recent example is working with the Attorney General's office to intervene on the lawsuit filed against Ocotillo Wells and State Parks by PEER. Our attorney, Jesse Barton, has successfully argued in court on other cases

against PEER, and has experience dealing with the anti-OHV rhetoric alleged by anti-access groups. To protect our history and heritage of off-road recreation in Ocotillo Wells going back more than 30 years, CORVA has intervened in a proactive capacity, in cooperation with State Parks, in a manner to crush their case before the lawsuit gets too much traction in the court, rather than waiting to see what happens. As a community we can't afford to wait. We have to strike and strike hard.

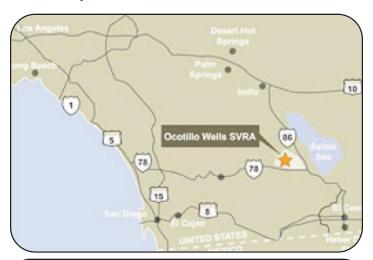
"Dedicated to protecting our lands for the people, not from the people."

Managing Director's Report

by Amy Granat

Latest CORVA News

CORVA won an important victory this past month. Earlier in 2013, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) filed suit against California State Parks to stop current operations at Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area. CORVA consulted with our attorney, Jesse Barton, and at his recommendation filed for intervenor status in the Superior Court of California. CORVA's demurrer supported State Parks and alleged to the court that the suit filed by PEER had no legal viability and must be dismissed by the court. Judge Timothy Frawley ruled in favor of State Parks and CORVA on December 12th, 2013 and upheld the right of State Parks to continue operations at Ocotillo Wells SVRA in the same manner enthusiasts around the state have enjoyed for over 30 years.



CORVA's efforts paid off in defense of Ocotillo Wells, and Off-Roaders will have continued access.

In a community that has seen so many attacks against offroad recreation, CORVA is very pleased to share this victory with all motorized enthusiasts in California. Thanks to our attorney and with the support of our members, CORVA is dedicated to striking back and hitting hard when off-road recreation is attacked. Court procedures allow PEER to refile their complaint within 20 days if they find additional arguments to be considered, and should that occur CORVA and our attorney stand ready to file another court action to ensure this suit is permanently stopped. We ask for everyone's support to continue our proactive strategies by joining us at www.corva.org and donating to our legal fund.

For over 40 years CORVA has been dedicated to keeping public land open by advocating of off-road access, educating off-road enthusiasts, and representing off-road interests with governmental agencies. CORVA has worked tirelessly to defend all types of off-road and off highway vehicular recreation including the initiation of many legal efforts aimed at protecting the rights of off-roaders to access and enjoy the deserts, mountains, and coasts of California.

You can always make a donation to help keep us there, "On the ground and running!" Thank you for your support.



Los Angeles County Residents Your Help Is Needed

CORVA agrees that an OHV park in LA County is needed and is viable. LA County's proposed OHV park in the Littlerock area needs our help. There are a few protesters in the adjacent, but separated area that do not support the park. Unfortunately the few, less than 10 people, are vocal and have generated approximately 100 protest letters to the County Supervisors. We need all CORVA members who live in LA

County, to send letters of support to the LA Board of Supervisors in support of this proposed OHV opportunity in LA County, to counter the opposition. A simple letter saying that you support the Littlerock OHV Park is all that is needed. Letters can be sent in care of Robert Ettleman at:

rettleman@parks.lacounty,gov.

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. Secondarily, 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."

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Harry Baker

First of all, thank you for your thoughts and prayers on the loss of my father. I apologize for not having an article in the last ORIA, but the timing and the things that needed to be done in Montana did not lend themselves to writing an article. I'd also like to offer my heartfelt sympathies to the families of the members who passed last year. CORVA is a family and we feel your loss.

Late Breaking News

Johnson Valley: Is the glass half full or half empty? The Marines have concluded their quest to expand into the Johnson Valley OHV Area. Congress has acted to give the Marines 78,993 acres as exclusive military use, closed to public entry, set aside 53,231 acres as shared use and designate 43,431 as the Johnson Valley Off Highway Vehicle Area. The Marines will control the shared area during their maneuvers and the BLM will manage the shared land during the rest of the year. The Hammers are mostly within the shared area with the high speed race course of KOH and Courses A and B of motorcycle and truck racing mostly in the exclusive military use area. Aside from changes to recreational use of Johnson Valley, the biggest impact of the expansion will be on the residents and businesses in the Johnson Valley area with the addition of year round military action in the exclusive use area, now only a few miles away. I encourage everyone to continue to enjoy the recreational opportunities that Johnson Valley affords and to support the businesses in the surrounding communities.

Ocotillo Wells: The judge ruled in favor of the State, and CORVA, as an intervener, in the lawsuit brought against State Parks, by PEER, et al. The judge did allow the plaintiffs 20 days from the ruling on December 12, to amend their writ. Should that happen CORVA will continue with our legal challenge.

The proposed OHV park in Littlerock continues to gain momentum. There was a good discussion at the Desert Advisory Council meeting about encouraging Los Angeles County to move ahead with the project. Additionally, there is a possibility that the footprint of the proposed park could be expanded into an area of adjacent land managed by the BLM, should the park plan reach fruition.

There has been quite a bit of discussion about the Off Highway Division of State Parks proposed East Kern (Onyx Ranch) acquisition. The property is in the Jawbone, Dove Springs area and is intermixed with land managed by the BLM. This checker-boarding creates a challenge to how all of the land will be managed in the future. The land that the Off Highway Division has been authorized to acquire from the private owner will be a State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA). The details of how the land, including that currently managed by the BLM, will be managed, and where, when, and how activities will be allowed will be detailed in the management plan, which will be the next step after the purchase is finalized. CORVA supports the acquisition of this private land for public use, and we, as well as other recreationalists need to be involved in the planning process to ensure the best possible outcome.

The Family Fun Day event is scheduled for March 15th at the new group camp on Gold Hill Road in Hungry Valley. During permitted events, this is an exclusive use area with built in BBQ's, tables, an amphitheater and ramadas. It is located about 3 miles north of Aliklik, (our traditional area) and it can be reached from Smokey Bear Road (gravel) on the South or Gorman Road (paved) on the North.

Please join us this month in Ocotillo Wells for the Truckhaven Challenge on January 11th. Come for a day or for the weekend. I hope to see you there!

2014 will see new opportunities and new challenges; nothing is static in the off road world. CORVA will continue to support public lands for public use by whatever means necessary: legal, legislative, on dirt, and off. We will be involved and active and we hope that you will join with us to ensure our mission is accomplished.

As always, I encourage you to follow our website and our Facebook page for the latest updates, there's always something new happening. If you want to have CORVA board members speak to your group or attend your event, please let me know.

Thank you all. CORVA appreciates your support, your activism, your enthusiasm and your friendship.

Help CORVA Fight For You!

Donate on Page 8.







PRE-REGISTER IN NOVEMBER ONLINE AT WWW.CORVA.ORG OR PAY AT THE EVENT SITE!

All OHV's Welcome!*

GREAT RAFFLE PRIZES DONATED BY THE OFF ROAD INDUSTRY

POKER RUN - SATURDAY, JANUARY 11™

Registration- Each Vehicle: CORVA Member: \$35,00 / Non-Member: \$45,00

Kids (12 and under) on ATV's/MC- \$20.00

All Prices include one poker hand and 1 raffle ticket / Great prizes for 1, 2nd, & 3rd place Poker Hands / Great prizes for 1, 2nd, & 3rd place in Games

START TIME: 8:00AM / START LINE CLOSES: 11:00AM

ENTER YOUR DOG TO WIN GREAT PRIZES AT THE DOG SHOW

Course length approx. 20 miles / Alternate "difficult routes" for those willing to "GO FOR IT!' / Checkpoints have "games of skill" for more family fun and prizes! / Course closes 4:00 pm!

SEE MAP TO EVENT: corva org



First Aid Kit, Tow Strap, Spare Tire, Fire Extinguisher



BBQ dinner to follow	Poker Run
Trailmasters Club BBQ I	Dinner Menu
Hamburger	\$4.00
Hamburger w/side of chili	\$5.00
Hot Dog	\$2.00
Hot Dog w/chili	\$3.00
Bowl of chili	\$2.00
Bowl of chili	\$2.00

Registration desk will open at 2:00pm Friday afternoon (January 10th) at the event

Camping for the event is located in an easily accessible dirt area adjacent to a large dry wash. Plenty of room for motorhomes and trailers. This is dry desert camping, so no hook-ups. We will however, have portable toilets brought in for those "tenting it"

All proceeds from this event to go to CORVA's Land Use Fund! Need more info?

Email: steve.hewitt@corva.org or call 951-237-0233 CELEBRATING 19 YEARS OF GREAT OFF-ROADING!!!

CORVA Land Use Resources and Public Policy Report

By Bruce Whitcher, CORVA VP of Land Resources and Public Policy

Land Use: Summary

Tahoe National Forest Travel Management Lawsuit Goes to Court

A consortium of off-highway vehicle users recently lost a federal lawsuit that sought to overturn the Tahoe National Forest Travel Management Plan. The plaintiffs plan an appeal.

Johnson Valley

OHV recreation in Johnson Valley received a setback when the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee reported out legislation that embraced the Marine Corps preferred approach (Alternative 6) for expanding into the Johnson Valley Recreation Area in California.

Southern California Forest Plan Amendment Released, Decision to Follow

Forest Service officials today announced the release of the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for a Proposed Amendment to the Land Management Plans for the four Southern California national forests (the Angeles, Cleveland, Los Padres, and San Bernardino).

Ocotillo Wells

Court hearing on the case brought by PEER and the Desert Protection Council against the SVRA is set for December 13. CORVA has filed as an intervener in the case.

Carnegie General Plan

Carnegie General Plan comment period ends December 13. The General Plan includes the concept design for the Tesla addition.

California OHV Grants Program

2013/2014 Grants Program Workshops Scheduled for January 2014.

Secretary Jewell Indicates There Will Be More National Monuments

Secretary Jewell calls on Congress to protect and support nation's lands and waters; Issues first Secretarial Order to establish Department-wide mitigation strategy to ensure efficiency, consistency, conservation in infrastructure development. "We owe it to future generations to act, and President Obama is ready and willing to step up where Congress falls short."

Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) Extended until December 8, 2015.

FLREA provides federal land agencies with the legal authority to collect entrance/user fees at various federal public lands. When the Congress passed the continuing resolution to reopen the federal government, a provision was included that extended the statutory authority for FLREA until December 8, 2015.

Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Update

Our best guess is that Congress will pass a simple one-year extension of the existing transportation authorization moving the expiration date to December, 2015 rather than the current date of December, 2014. This additional one year window will allow for more time to explore alternative funding sources.

Los Padres National Forest Wildness Bill Taking Shape

The California Wilderness Coalition has announced plans to push for a major wilderness expansion in the Los Padres National Forest. Congresswoman Lois Capps is considering elements of Senator Gallegy's wilderness bill as well as Wild and Scenic Rivers proposals. Designated routes of travel would remain open.

Feds Propose Listing Sage Grouse Sub-Population as Threatened, Angering Energy Developers

Federal wildlife officials on Friday proposed to list as threatened populations of greater sage grouse in Nevada and California in an effort to save the struggling species, a decision that promises to pose new challenges for ranching and energy development in the West.

Parks Forward Initiative Continues Public Workshops in Southern California, Invites Public to Participate in Effort to Improve State Parks

The Parks Forward Initiative and the California State Parks and Recreation Commission continues public workshops statewide in October to gather new ideas on how to improve efficiency, create financial sustainability, and better leverage partnerships within California State Parks. (Cont. next page)

WHEN DOES YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRE?

Look on your mailing label to find out.

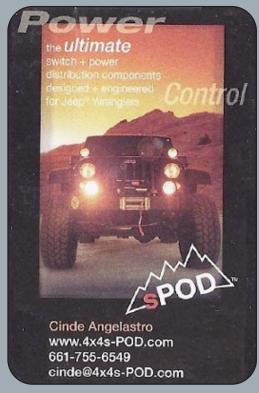
Land Use: Full Report

Tahoe National Forest Travel Management Lawsui

A consortium of off-highway vehicle users recently lost a federal lawsuit that sought to overturn a Tahoe National Forest plan that limits off-road use in the forest.

On November 22nd, Judge John A. Mendez of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California delivered a lengthy oral ruling, siding with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which oversees the forest service, and denying Friends of Tahoe Forest Access in its attempt to preserve and expand access for off-highway vehicles.

The case was monitored closely by both off-road four-wheel drive enthusiasts and environmentalists who believe the recreational activity should be curbed in the interest of protecting the ecological integrity of the forest.



The Wilderness Society, the Mother Lode Chapter of the Sierra Club and other environmental groups joined the law-suit as an intervenor and argued through their attorney, Greg Loarie, that there is no way to adequately protect a forest while allowing motor vehicles to travel all over the forest without restriction.

The Pacific Legal Foundation filed suit in July 2012, claiming the forest service engaged in a "draconian denial of public lands access" that entailed what it believed was the unnecessary closure of more than 800 miles of roads and trails that have been used for decades.

"We [filed] this lawsuit to stop the U.S. Forest Service from illegally padlocking vast areas of the Tahoe National Forest and blocking the public from enjoying responsible recreational use of public lands," said PLF attorney Brandon M. Middleton.

Middleton and the plaintiffs said the procedure by which Tahoe forest officials arrived at their designation was flawed and lacked transparency. Apparently, Mendez disagreed.

Those close to the case anticipate an appeal will be filed imminently. Many of the people who comprise Friends of Tahoe Forest Access are from Nevada County, which harbors a strong community of four-wheel enthusiasts. David C. Wood, of Chicago Park, said via the Pacific Legal Foundation website that the forest service is robbing many residents of the freedom and choice to pursue their recreational activities.

"We're just a bunch of volunteers and recreationists who love the outdoors and feel blessed to be able to get out there and visit in an environmentally responsible way, but now that is being denied," he said.

"We volunteer hundreds of hours yearly to clear trails so that all who follow us can enjoy them."

FLREA

From ARRA newsletter

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) was set to expire on December 8, 2014. In anticipation of that expiration, discussions occurred in the relevant committees in the House and the Senate about the need to reform the program. FLREA provides federal land agencies with the legal authority to collect entrance/user fees at various federal public lands. When the Congress passed the continuing resolution to reopen the federal government, a provision was included that extended the statutory authority for FLREA until December 8, 2015. The ostensible purpose of this extension is to provide Congress with more time to reform the program.

We are pleased that FLREA was extended for another year. ARRA has long supported this program because we feel that reasonable fees collected for the use of recreational areas is appropriate so long as the revenue collected goes towards managing the very areas where the fees are collected. Had the program been allowed to expire, undoubtedly many recreational areas would have been closed. With all of the other financial pressures on the federal land agencies, FLREA is needed more than ever.

This is not to say that the program shouldn't be reformed, because it does need to be updated. Having until December, 2015 to complete that task allows for all of us to engage in a more meaningful set of discussions as to the best way to make this program even more effective. (Continued on next page)

SoCal Forests Release Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for Land Management Plan Amendment

Forest Service officials recently announced the release of the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for a Proposed Amendment to the Land Management Plans for the four Southern California national forests (the Angeles, Cleveland, Los Padres, and San Bernardino). Although the Plan Amendment would rezone over 300,000 acres of the Los Padres National Forest as Back County Non Motorized (BCNM). Over 92% of Forest Lands would be zoned either non-motorized or recommended wilderness, up from 40%. No currently legal motorized routes would be closed. The Angeles and Cleveland NF have approximately 40,000 areas of recommended wilderness.

Alternative 2a - The Preferred Alternative

Alternative 2a includes the design criteria and features of Alternative 2, with the following modifications to the land use zones:

- The proposed BCNM land use zone was reduced slightly in the Black Mountain IRA to accommodate the Quail Trail relocation.
- The proposed RW land use zone for the Salt Creek and Fish Canyon IRAs was expanded to include two adjacent undeveloped areas along the abandoned "oil well" road and the Sawtooth/Warm Springs Mountain Road. Also, Forest Service non-motorized trails zoned as BCNM corridors were added back into RW.
- The proposed RW land use zone for Raywood Flat IRA (San Bernardino NF) was expanded to include the area around the South Fork of the Whitewater River while leaving a corridor of BCMUR along road 2S01.
- The proposed RW land use zone along the Cleveland NF Upper San Diego River Undeveloped Area was adjusted to provide a more manageable boundary.

- The proposed RW land use zone for the Cedar Creek Undeveloped Area was expanded to the east (up to the boundary of the Inaja Reservation). The land use zone allocation around the Cedar Creek Road was left as BC.
- The proposed RW land use zone adjacent to the Eagle Peak IRA was reduced slightly to accommodate future trail head development to the Three Sisters area.
- The land use zone for the King Creek Research Natural Area in the Sill Hill IRA was changed to RW.

These modifications are very focused and developed in response to comments on the Draft SEIS and to new information. All other aspects of Alternative 2a are the same as Alternative 2. The preferred monitoring alternative for all four southern California national forests is Alternative B.

This Proposed Amendment to the Land Management Plan is part of the Settlement Agreement approved January 3, 2011, in the case of California Resources Agency, et al vs. United States Department of Agriculture, and Center for Biological Diversity, et al vs. United States Department of Agriculture.

The Final SEIS is not a decision document, and is not subject to public comment. Although the document identifies an agency preferred alternative, the Forest Supervisors may select any of the alternatives considered in the analysis.

The next step for the proposed plan amendments is the predecisional objection process. The objection process gives an individual or entity an opportunity for an independent Forest Service review and resolution of issues before the approval of the plan, plan amendment, or plan revision. The objection period will open in early 2014.

The 60 day objection process starts with the release of a Draft Record of Decision (ROD) for each forest plan. Because the objection process will begin early next year, objections received prior to the publication of the legal notice for the Draft ROD will not be accepted. (Cont. next page)

Contribute to the ORIA! Submit a letter to the editor to voice your opinion.

	I AM DONATING TO:	
Here are the main projects that CORVA is	Legal Fund \$	
involved with at this time. Please cut this	Sierra Pro Access Group \$	
form out and mail with your donation to:	Lawsuit against Forest Service \$	
CORVA	Reopening of Clear Creek Area \$	
1500 W. El Camino Ave. #352	Funding the CA Desert Legal Bills \$	
Sacramento, CA 95833-1945	Ocotillo Wells Lawsuit \$	
	Funding work at: \$	
Name	Other Area: \$	
Address	General Fund (non specific) \$	
City	TOTAL \$_	
	Please make checks payable to COR\	
City State / Zip	· -	

California OHV Grant Workshops Scheduled

It's that time again – time to prepare for the 2013/14 Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program grant cycle. Workshops for the upcoming grant cycle are scheduled for the week of January 13, 2014.

The two-day workshop, one held in Southern California and one held in Northern California, will be two full-day sessions. Please download the agenda from the OHV Grants web site for information on the workshops.

Applicants may attend one or both days of the Grants Program workshop. Although attendance is not required to participate in the Grants Program, the OHMVR Division encourages applicants to attend, as the workshop provides valuable information.

The schedule for the workshops is as follows:

SOUTH

Date: Monday, January 13, 2014

Tuesday, January 14, 2014

Where: Doubletree Inn

222 North Vineyard Avenue Ontario, CA 91764-4431

(909) 937-0900

NORTH

Date: Thursday, January 16, 2014

Friday, January 17, 2014

Where: Lions Gate Hotel

3410 Westover Street North Highlands, CA 95652

(800) 258-5651

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

We have been quietly doing a series of meetings on Capitol Hill to gauge congressional sentiment towards the Recreational Trails Program. We do not want a repeat of the last go around when we were blindsided by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee's decision not to reauthorize the program and had an uphill battle to preserve the program.

The good news is that we are finding strong support in the House and the Senate among Democrats and Republicans alike that this program deserves reauthorization in the next transportation bill. We are encouraged by this show of early support. The wild card issue is the funding mechanism for the next transportation bill. The current method of funding transportation programs through federal excise taxes on gas and diesel fuel no longer raises sufficient revenue to cover infrastructure costs. Since 2008, the Congress has had to transfer more than \$41 billion from the General Treasury Fund to the Highway Trust Fund in order to cover the country's infrastructure needs. At some point in time, Congress

will have to either raise the tax rates on fuel or seek another revenue source because this funding shortfall cannot go unabated. Any mechanism outside of the excise tax regime will have a bearing on how RTP is financed in the future.

Our best guess (yes, we do guess at times) is that Congress will pass a simple one-year extension of the existing transportation authorization moving the expiration date to December, 2015 rather than the current date of December, 2014. This additional one year window will allow for more time to explore alternative funding sources. Our challenge is to make sure that strong congressional support for preserving the Recreational Trails Program continues at the same time Congress grapples with the overriding issue on how to pay for an aging transportation infrastructure system.

Obviously, this will be an issue on which you will be hearing more from us in the coming months and maybe years. In the meantime, we want you to know that we are actively engaged on this issue.



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New Los Padres Wilderness?

Proposed Wilderness Areas and Wild and Scenic Rivers of the 24th & 26th Congressional Districts

A map of the proposed wilderness expansion is available on the California Wilderness Coalition website and may be found at: www.calwild.org/wilderness maps.

The proposal, made by the California Wildenress Coalition, includes the Black Mountain PWA, (Proposed Wilderness Area), Machesna Mountain PWAs, Santa Lucia Wilderness PWAs, Garcia Wilderness PWA's, Carrizo Plain National Monument PWA's Wind Wolves Preserve, and San Rafael PWAs. Piru Creek Wild and Scenic River, Salinas River WSR, Chumash PWAs, Dick Smith PWAs, Condor Ridge PSA, Matilija PWAs.

In 2011, a court ordered review of National Forest lands in the four Southern California National Forests by the Forest Service found no lands on the Los Padres were capable, available, or suitable for wilderness.

CORVA is carefully studying this new and extensive wilderness proposal.

Congressman Cook, Johnson Valley (Cont. from pg 1)

In July of 2012, Kim Carpenter attended a public forum of two candidates vying for the newly created Congressional District 8. Just prior to the forum between the top two vote getters in the primary, Ms. Carpenter approached candidate Cook and asked some point blank questions about his stance on the Johnson Valley issue. From this very initial discussion was a stage set of forming a strong relationship with the person who was eventually elected: Paul Cook.

Perhaps the pivotal moment was when Kim worked with a past president of CORVA (Steve Kuehl), who brought his experience and a concept of a tour of Johnson Valley with the newly elected congressman in December of 2012. A similar concept of a tour worked very well in the day when then Senator Pete Wilson was given a tour of the then East Mojave Scenic Area, and the tour sealed his opposition to Senator Alan Cranston's Desert Protection Act.

This tour set the wheels in motion for the newly elected congressman to introduce a legislative proposal that was a compromise between what the USMC desired while retaining the safety and continued access of those who visit Johnson Valley.

Cook's proposal sailed through two house committees and on the floor of the House in a bi-partisan manner. The proposal was rather simple: keep public access to Johnson Valley for 10 months out of the year, and allow the USMC to train in the area for the two months out of the year they required for their mission.

Although the House voted to pass in its NDAA, the US Senate had its own version that was reported to it by the Senate Armed Services Committee in June of 2013. This version did not contain any language about fate of Johnson Valley.

During the summer the motorized recreation group met many times and attempted to shepherd information to key decision makers and worked closely with Cook's staff to provide support for whatever the Congressman needed to move his legislation towards becoming the law of the land.

November became the "crunch time" for the Cook proposal. The USMC had been working overtime to lobby the US Senate that their expansion proposal was the only acceptable legislation to conduct their mission. This proposal would have essentially wipe Johnson Valley off the map for public access.

Instead of a normal Senate version of the NDAA and a House version of the same being voted upon by both legislative parties, a somewhat unusual process was undertaken by the leadership of both Armed Services Committees to by-pass the normal rules (utilizing a Conference Committee to settle differences in the versions), creating a group that would make the decision with just four members.

Although the motorized recreation groups met sporadically during November (not in the weekly manner that was essentially followed for 2013), there were efforts afoot by a select few in the group who had their own agenda, to work with Cook as it became clear the normal process of moving legislation would be impossible in late November, all due to the change in Senate rules regarding the use of a filibuster.

Cook was put into the awful position of having to scramble to save what he could from his bill due to the fact that 3 of the 4 members deciding the final NDAA were supporting the USMC proposal that was passed by the Senate Natural Resources Committee in a rushed manner and was in the process of being inserted into the Senate version of the NDAA.

In the end, the House/Senate agreement provided for a permanent loss of 87,697 acres of public lands to the USMC; 53,231 acres of "shared use" (USMC for 60 days, and the balance for public use); and a 43,231 acre area now known as the Johnson Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area.

Although all in the motorized recreation group were grateful for what Cook was able to broker for the public who visits Johnson Valley, there was still a feeling of disappointment that the true compromise (Cook's proposal) was not adopted by the House/Senate Armed Services Committee members who made the final decision.

While the public can be comforted that Congressman Cook did the very best he could for public access and safety, they still lost a great deal in the end.

Perhaps who lost the most are the businesses and the residents from Lucerne Valley to Yucca Valley. Their lives will forever impacted by the decision of two from the House of Representatives and two from the US Senate.

Some in the "leadership" group mentioned above want to count this result as a "win", while other members of this group disagree. Perhaps a post on Facebook summarized the opposing view best:

"...a win is when you begin GAINING ground again. Until then, you are still losing, just at a different rate."

The public owes a debt of gratitude to Congressman Paul Cook and his staff. They, again, did the very best job they could have done to retain some access to Johnson Valley. The Congressman had the courage to take on the very institution he served for 26 plus years, the USMC. Cook fought for the public and its access to public lands instead of taking the easy approach of rolling over for the USMC.

Paul Cook is an honorable man who did the job he was elected to do: represent the Congressional district and the views the people he serves in the same.

For his efforts, Paul Cook deserves a salute from each of us.

Proactive Advocacy (Continued from page 1)

We are also filing suit against the Forest Service, with our partners Butte County and Plumas County, and Sierra Access Coalition, who has spearheaded this campaign from the start. The lawsuit asks the court to stand up for the rights of local communities by ruling that federal agencies must coordinate with local governments and and consider their general plans when engaging in land use planning. Rural communities have always supported off-road recreation and motorized access, and standing up with them in court brings in new strength to our land use battle.

This has rarely been done before; having the counties stand beside us gives us another component to our cause. This case will be filed within 2 to 3 months.

The issues facing us in California are different than in many other states because of the predominance of environmental emphasis in politics and the media and the erroneous assumption that OHV recreation harms our land in a manner that can't be managed and/or mitigated, which is patently untrue. Because off-road groups have promoted and employed the same tactics to fight these allegations for years with limited success, we saw the need for reevaluation. Einstein defined insanity as (paraphrasing) doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. CORVA, as off-road advocates, determined that we have to grow and change our tactics by embodying more offensive strategies.

Off-road enthusiasts do not vote in the same way; rather they are free-thinking individuals. We have off-road enthusi-

asts that are Republican, Democrat, Libertarian and everything in between. But it's not the differences that define us, it's the similarities. All Californians deserve and should be guaranteed the right to pursue activities that we enjoy, whether or not anyone else agrees, because to do otherwise is to exhibit a form of discrimination and negative labeling against individuals who enjoy motorized recreation.

Since no one in state or federal government wants to be branded as siding with elements that are promoting discriminatory actions, we have the ability to push for OHV access by enumerating the benefits of the sports we love. Off-road enthusiasts skew younger and more demographically diverse than many other forms of recreation, and all politicians want to be associated with demographic diversity and younger voters.

So quietly, and with a concerted effort, CORVA has been redefining motorized recreation to politicians who may not have supported us in the past in a manner they haven't considered before, showing them how working with us and appealing to motorized recreation enthusiasts can bring them demographics and voters that are important to them. And it's

working, slowly and strategically.

It's also important to understand that we have to work with all politicians with respect, regardless of political affiliation. For the good and future of OHV recreation, personal political alliances or beliefs are irrelevant; it's all about changing the perception of off-road for all politicians.

Try to remember that what you're hearing from media regarding OHV recreation is just noise, plain and simple, and oftentimes includes inaccurate statements. The way to fight back is to make sure people in power, those making decisions, know these allegations that are a lot of noise and lies. We have to paint anti-access groups as the irrational party and take the attention away from the form of recreation in question. We must redirect the attention onto anti-access groups' irrational behaviour and discriminatory actions that hurt children and families who enjoy motorized recreation.

CORVA is an organization that specializes in California, preserving, enhancing, and growing OHV recreation for future generations. We know California politics in and out, so we're redefining off-road recreation as an environmentally sustainable form of recreation that enhances rural communities, brings young people out into nature, is physically and mentally challenging, but also allows older and disabled people access to enjoy the outdoors as well. It's actually a miracle; an amazing, wonderful form of recreation for the entire population! After that, anti-access groups citing erroneous allegations look small and inconsequential when arguing in public.



CORVA NEEDS SUPPORT. We need money to continue with the attorneys we use (who are off-roaders too), and we need millions of Californians as members. When CORVA wins California using a concise and cogent redefining of OHV, then we will go out and win the nation!

That's how we succeed. That's how we achieve our goals.

Letter to the Editor

In response to Managing Director, Amy Granat's article, "Fighting the Good Fight":

Dear Amy,

I just read the ORIA article "Fighting the Good Fight", and it's beautiful. I could tell we are kindred spirits, but why not, since we are all members of CORVA!

A little background on myself: I bought my first 4WD when I was 22, but I have been 4-wheeling with my two uncles since I was a teenager. They were both members of the "Hill Toppers Jeep Club", Bill Miller, and Ken Bales.

I also spent 4 years in the U.S. Marine Corps. In my thirties, I stared running, and have done over 70 marathons. I was also a hiker and a mountain climber. In my mid forties, I even joined the dreaded Sierra Club, and took their Wilderness Travel Course. In my early fifties, I developed arthritis in both knees, that ended my running career. While I still climbed a few more mountains, even that came to an end in 2010.

On my 60th birthday I bought myself a Honda 250 dirt bike for riding dirt trails in the desert. Still have my 1991 Jeep Cherokee, and my 4WD Dodge Ram pickup, but I am no longer a Sierra Club member after we departed ways in 2000.

I completely agree with you concerning access to our back country for people like us, who can no longer hike. These environmentalists who want to close off former areas that were roaded either by logging or mining are elitists that think the only way a person can enjoy the back country is to walk there. It may be true there are trails that should be open to hiking only, but I think it is unnecessary to close roads and trails that were historically used for things other than hiking.

As you noted, there are many disabled people who have no way of enjoying the back country without motorized transport to get them there. I was wondering why can't we use the "Americans With Disabilities Act" to help achieve our goals. It seems to me this act is used many times to force small businesses to change their ways, so why not use it to force the environmentalists, and the Forest Service to back off? I think this could be a winner.

Once more, great article.

Sincerely,
John Hunter
CORVA Member, Friends of Ocotillo Wells Member,
USMC Vietnam Tankers Association Member

Response from Amy Granat:

Thanks John, we always love to hear from our members, and it's nice to know that as an organization, we are speaking for all our members. I would like you and everyone else to know that we have included components of the Americans With Disabilities Act and the Federal Rehabilitation Act in our lawsuit against the Plumas National Forest. That lawsuit should be filed in the first couple of months in 2014.

Sincerely, Amy Granat

Cal Sierra ATV Club Makes Significant Contribution to CORVA Legal Success

Cal Sierra ATV Club is based in Sacramento, but has members who travel throughout California enjoying the myriad off-road opportunities the state has to offer. Because of this, the club and its members have an important perspective on the need to protect access to all areas around the state that specialize in providing OHV enthusiasts and their families safe and well managed areas to enjoy.

When Cal Sierra ATV Club heard about the California Off-Road Vehicle Association's decision to intervene early in the legal process, the club contacted CORVA eager to help with the legal opposition. The lawsuit filed by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility against Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area threatened to curtail OHV activity enjoyed by enthusiasts for over 30 years. Because this lawsuit represented an unwarranted attack against off-road recreation, members of Cal Sierra ATV Club immediately stepped forward to make a significant contribution to CORVA's legal fund.

Thanks to the contribution of Cal Sierra ATV Club, CORVA was able to engage the best legal representation, culminating in a win for off-road enthusiasts when the judge dismissed the allegations against Ocotillo Wells SVRA. Cal Sierra ATV Club members and off-road enthusiasts around the state are now able to continue visiting Ocotillo Wells SVRA and enjoying safe and well managed off-road recreation.



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CORVA wishes to express appreciation for a \$100.00 donation by Innovative Housing Opportunities made in the memory of Jim Whitaker. Jim had a passion for responsible off-road riding in the California desert, and in appreciation of the work CORVA is doing keeping the desert open to off-road recreation, Jim's family asked for donations to CORVA. CORVA expresses our sincere condolences to Jim's family and friends.

To donate to help CORVA protect access to public lands, please see the ad at the bottom of page 8.

Thank You

WELCOME NEW LIFE MEMBERS

HOWARD BUSWELL JR.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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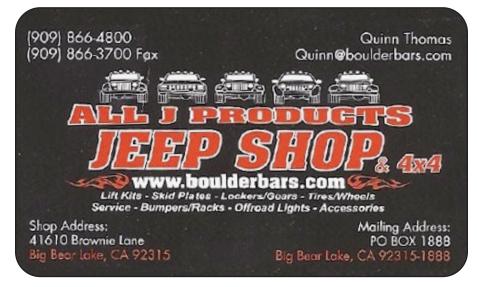
3/9-10 Lobby Days - Sacramento

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May:

5/17 CORVA Annual Meeting



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