

# Protecting Public Land **FOR** the People Not **FROM** the People



SPRING 2021

# Off-Roaders in Action

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<b>CCC Overreach</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The Saga of the Alameda – Tesla Expansion Area of Carnegie State Vehicular Recreation Area</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Blueprint for Stealing a State Park</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>State agencies battle over the future of the Oceano Dunes</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Letters to CCC</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Support for the Gallagher Bill</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Letter to the Governor</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>CORVA Land Use Report</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Madhatters</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>What’s happening in Southern California</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Introducing Relations Race Wheels</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Spring 2021</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>VORRA'S 2021</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>I’m Gutted!</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>CORVA Merchandise</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Business Sponsors</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Thank you for your donations</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Board of Directors</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>What is CORVA?</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>On-Going Meetings</b>	<b>47</b>

# CCC Overreach

**KEN CLARKE**

As you may have heard the California Coast Commission (CCC) has ordered an immediate ban of night riding, a closure of the Pier Avenue Entrance to Oceano Dunes, and a ban of vehicles on the Dunes within three years. Currently, we believe State Parks supports Oceano Dunes State Recreation Vehicle Area (ODSRVA) and we are waiting to see which direction they are going to support the future of the park. This decision has hit our communities extremely hard emotionally. This ruling was made March 18th during a special meeting to discuss the Public Works Plan (PWP) which CCC had asked State Parks to develop but now rejects. Instead, staff of the CCC came up with their own plan, which contained the suggestions debated and approved at the March 18th meeting.

How are we going to defend ODSRVA? This is going to be difficult and expensive. The history of abuse by the CCC goes back at least 30 years. During the years since the beginning of the CCC the commission has removed an executive director that had been duly elected and there have been multiple lawsuits concerning property rights and overreach. Some of these cases have even gone to the U.S. Supreme Court where the CCC has been found guilty of violating the 5th and 14th Amendments. There have been at least 3 lawsuits filed at time of publication, with more to follow. These lawsuits will take many years to determine, with each side determined to appeal should they lose at the Trails Court level. Additionally, decisions may be made by a judge

The CCC is a quasi-judicial body which was established in 1972 to protect the California coast from rampant development, which was needed at the time. The CCC is now the single most powerful land use authority in the United States

The CCC is a quasi-judicial body which was established in 1972 to protect the California coast from rampant development, which was needed at the time. The CCC is now the single most powerful land use authority in the United States given the high real estate value of the land in its jurisdiction containing an elevated amount of environmental assets. There are 12 commissioners with six chosen from the General Public and six appointed elected officials from the areas under the commission's jurisdiction. The Commissioners hires their staff of which currently number 164. CCC has a budget of \$33 million for FY 2020-21. CCC controls 1,100 miles of Coastline and up to five miles inland.

who is not as unbiased as we would like. Our other alternative would be legislative action or just having legislators put pressure on the CCC. The best outcome would force reform of the CCC and ensure protection for ODSRVA. No matter which way we go it will be expensive and take years to settle. The OHV community is going to need to form a coalition of everyone involved in our sport. This will include enthusiasts and manufacturers. I assure you that CORVA is looking at all actions that we may be able to take.

Despite not having events in 2020 due to COVID-19; CORVA is growing, and we are in a strong financial state. Our annual meeting will once again be a two-part conference call. The April 26th meeting has already passed, but elections will be held on May 24th at 7:00pm. My second term as President will be up in May. If I am nominated again, I will accept the nomination. We still need a VP of Administration and a Secretary. Please let us know if you would like to take on one of these positions. Beside Board of Directors we need assistance for our Managing Director, and we need someone with experience in marketing to help with our ORIA. If you have legal experience CORVA can use you help.

I would like to thank each CORVA Member for your support. Plus, a big thank you to Off the Grid Surplus for taking over order fulfillment and our online store management. Please remember to call your legislators and tell them what a special place Oceano Dunes State Recreation Vehicle Area is to you and your family.



# The Saga of the Alameda – Tesla Expansion Area of Carnegie State Vehicular Recreation Area

BY AMY GRANAT

**Whenever environmental groups lobby against off-road recreation, the standard argument always includes a statement like; "we don't have a problem with OHV, it just belongs somewhere else". Unfortunately, they cannot ever identify where the 'somewhere else' is on the map.**

Every OHV area in California has seen either lawsuits or significant objections. Just think about the lawsuits filed against Ocotillo Wells by PEER. That lawsuit took 4 1/2 years to resolve and eventually State Parks and the OHV community prevailed. Consider the lawsuit filed years ago by CBD against the BLM and Imperial Sand Dunes, that took even longer to resolve. These areas are located away from housing, away from the coast and away from population centers, yet still see their very existence threatened under attack.

The objection to the Alameda – Tesla Expansion Area of Carnegie State Vehicular Recreation Area is driven by the same people who have the grazing lease in the expansion area and own property adjacent to the SVRA. The Connolly/Garamendi family are wealthy and politically connected and have worked hard within the local community to foster hate against the off-road community. They have alleged off-roaders bring crime and danger to residents. Mark Connolly is an attorney and files the bulk of the lawsuits against Carnegie SVRA and the Alameda – Tesla Expansion Area. He has vowed to continue these lawsuits until

he eliminates OHV recreation from 'his valley'. There is no cost or downside for him to file these lawsuits. But it is costing the taxpayers of California thousands and thousands of dollars to defend the park. But just because this family is wealthy and well connected politically, does not mean they should win this battle and everyday Californians should lose. Should that occur, this would send a clear message to average Californians that wealthy, politically connected individuals can get whatever they want. All they need to do is keep pushing and pushing the issue until state legislators get tired of hearing the problem and decide that giving in to these wealthy politically connected individuals is the right answer. But it is exactly the wrong answer because it makes a mockery to the legislative process.

Off-road recreation is increasing in popularity, and Carnegie SVRA serves both the Bay Area and the Central Valley. The existing park is amazing for motorcyclists, but the expansion area is planned specifically to offer a completely different off-road experience. A full third of the 3100 acres would be a buffer zone, dedicated to conservation and restoration with no motorized travel. The rest of the area calls for 4-wheel drive touring and backcountry camping. For disabled and elderly individuals this is an exciting proposal because there is no existing opportunity for drive-in camping in a rural setting in the greater Bay Area.

Continues on 7 >>

# Blueprint for Stealing a State Park

BY AMY GRANAT

**It is a recipe for disaster: start with an innate disdain for off-roaders, mix in misinformation and lies disseminated through complicit media outlets, and finish up with a large dose of coastal elitism. What this seemingly muddled mess produces is a blueprint for stealing a state park.**

But haphazard as it all may seem, stealing Oceano Dunes SVRA from the off-roading public has been a highly coordinated plan many years in the making. The chief instigators include environmental organizations who love to push their weight around in the halls of the state capitol, commissioners and staff on the California Coastal Commission, local developers and others who seem to have opted to 'hate thy neighbor' rather than 'love thy neighbor'.

But commissioners on the California Coastal Commission together with staff who aid and abet their every move, bear the brunt of the criticism. These commissioners profess to have great compassion for all Californians who want to access the coast, but when deliberating on the future of Oceano Dunes SVRA, they instead portray great condescension and outright animosity to off-roaders who want to preserve their treasured gateway to the California coastline.

Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area includes about 3500 acres total but stands currently between 1100 to 1500 acres for motorized vehicular access, depending on seasonal bird closure and dust mitigation projects. All this noise has been generated by such a small area. Considering how many beachfront hotels with large parking lots exist on the California coastline, and how many celebrity and tech-magnate owned mansions are built on the coastline, it should be an easy decision to allow motorized recreation to continue in this exceedingly small area. The roughly 6 miles of coastal access

that Oceano Dunes SVRA provides currently serves all sorts of communities, including fishing, equestrian, disabled and elderly, families and children. Vehicular access to the beach represents the common thread that brings all these groups together. Equally, all these groups will lose something precious because the California Coastal Commission has chosen disdain over understanding and criticism over cooperation with the community and with State Parks.

Those that have followed the saga of Oceano Dunes SVRA will recognize this recipe for stealing our state park via the decisions made by the Coastal Commission. It may seem that our community is powerless, but that is not exactly true. But we have not yet learned to wield our power correctly. We may be the little guy pushing back against the political monster that is the California Coastal Commission, but every monster has their Achilles heel or their tender underbelly.

One of those sensitive areas lies with political action. We all have politicians who represent us at the state capitol, independent of whether we voted for these individuals. We are constituents and that is all that matters. As an off-road community we need to wield the power of the pen, the telephone and email and learn to contact our representatives often! This one action really does make a world of difference. Staff in legislators' offices are told to keep track of the number of constituents who call and take sides on contentious issues. The environmental community, our opponents in many areas, are much better at contacting their legislators than the OHV community. While we love to post on social media and complain about the decision-making power of politicians in Sacramento, we personally do little to nothing to change the politician's minds and by extension, their votes on issues that are important to our community.

Continues next page >>

<< Saga, from 5

All told, of the roughly 2000 acres that would have trails, the footprint would not exceed 10% to 20% of the acreage. There would be no recreation visible from the street.

Everything about the objection to the development of the Alameda – Tesla Expansion Area of Carnegie State Vehicular Recreation Area is just plain wrong! CORVA has invested our hearts and souls trying to speak for the average off-road family who are not politically connected or wealthy but love their recreation experience.

<< Blueprint, from 6

Unless and until we overcome this fear and/or reticence to be involved, we cannot hope to change the tide against us. But all told, we number in the millions in California which is a number of great consequence and representative of many votes come election time. If we learn to use our power wisely, we can change the future. At this point, we have no choice, it must be done. Don't wait another day, [contact your legislator today!](#)

Find your legislator: <http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov/>



# State agencies battle over the future of the Oceano Dunes

KAREN VALE

**Two California state agencies claim to have control over the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area. The California Coastal Commission and California State Parks have been fighting for years over which agency will decide the future of off-road vehicle use in the area.**

The parent agency for the two, the California Natural Resources Agency, has let the tussle continue for years even though the conflict has cost the state of California hundreds of thousands of dollars and drawn threats of lawsuits.

Staff is recommending Coastal Commission board members vote to phase out off-road vehicle access over the next five years, and close State Park's Pier Avenue entrance. The plan also calls for camping and street-legal vehicles to be limited to an area between West Grand and Pier avenues.

State Parks argues it has legislative authority over the park and that the Coastal Commission has no jurisdiction to ban off-road vehicle usage, based on the Coastal Act and other legislation. State Parks is tasked with protecting the state's natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

The Coastal Commission asserts it has authority over the Oceano Dunes, based on the California Coastal Act. The Coastal Commission plans and regulates the use of land and water in the coastal zone, including "activities that change the intensity of use of land or public access to coastal waters."

The fight began a decade ago when SLO County's Air Pollution Control District (APCD) first claimed it had tied off-road vehicle traffic at the Oceano Dunes State Recreational Area to higher levels of dust on the Nipomo Mesa, including a now-refuted claim that the dust contained dangerous levels of toxic crystalline silica.

In 2018, State Parks entered into a stipulated order of abatement that mandates the state reduce wind-blown dust on the Nipomo Mesa by 50 percent, even though its scientists disagreed with the APCD. State Parks then covered about 200 acres of dune sand with ground cover and orange plastic fencing, which appears to have had little to no impact on dust blowing on the mesa.

Some Coastal Commission members, spurred by false reports about the cause of the dust and its chemical composition, began debating whether the Oceano Dunes State Recreational Area should be partially or completely shuttered.

And while the two state agencies battle for control, a group of off-road enthusiasts is ready to take legal action if either of the state agencies attempts to ban or reduce off-road vehicle recreation at the dunes.

Friends of the Dunes, a not-for-profit corporation that represents approximately 28,000 supporters of off-road recreation, has successfully sued several state agencies, including the Coastal Commission, for failing to follow laws in their oversight of the dunes. In 2020, a judge ordered the Coastal Commission to pay Friends \$252,726 for attorney's fees and legal costs.



However, the Coastal Commission was not required to pay Friends legal costs.

In 1982, the Coastal Commission issued State Parks a coastal development permit in 1982. As part of the permit agreement, State Parks is required to cover any litigation costs.

Ultimately, taxpayers pay the for state agencies' legal missteps.

Last week, Thomas Roth, Friend's San Francisco based attorney, sent a letter accusing the Coastal Commission of bias, overstepping its legislative authority and violating due process.

While the Coastal Commission claims to have authority to reduce or eliminate off-roading at the park, Roth does not agree, a sentiment that is supported by the Coastal Act, the California Coastal Plan and the State Vehicle Recreation Area Act.

In 1975, the dunes were set aside for off-road vehicle recreation as part of the California Coastal Plan, which says off-road vehicle use "shall be permitted."

"The Coastal Commission has jumped the shark," Roth wrote in his letter. "It has no authority to direct State Parks to ban all OHV (off-highway vehicle) at a park expressly authorized for OHV use, especially where that use has lawfully existed for 40 years, and where the use predated even the creation of the Coastal Commission.

"In fact, there is a 'tell' in the language that the staff uses," Roth added. "Staff writes: 'both laws suggest' that closure is allowed. Suggest? The law either allows the CCC to close a park owned, operated and managed by State Parks or it doesn't. It doesn't. The use of the word "suggest" shows that the Coastal Commission doesn't believe its own yarn."

The Coastal Commission also justifies closing the park to support environmental justice, the ability of all races and social economic classes to receive equitable benefits. The Coastal Commission determined the residents of Oceano and Nipomo, who are impacted

by the dust, are largely underprivileged people of color.

"While park users gain a unique form of coastal recreation, it comes at a cost that disproportionately impacts underserved communities," according to the Coastal Commission staff report. "This presents a textbook case of environmental injustice."

In addition to arguing that the Coastal Commission does not have the authority to shutter a state park based on environmental justice, Roth pointed out that the population of the Mesa affected by dust is whiter and wealthier than many of their neighbors. In addition, opponents of the Oceano Dunes recreation area have made comments about the type of people the park attracts, some who fly Confederate flags from their trucks.

"The Commissioners have repeatedly and for years evidenced bias against the OHV community and Friends of Oceano Dunes' users at Oceano Dunes," Roth said in his letter. "The OHV community and Friends cannot get a fair hearing from the Commission because the Commissioners have pre-hearing determined that they want to eliminate OHV use at Oceano Dunes."

As their primary justification for the elimination of off-road vehicle recreation on the dunes, Coastal Commission staff contends that basically the entire park is an environmentally sensitive habitat area (ESHA). However, most of the dunes are sand without any vegetation.

The Coastal Act defines ESHA as "any area in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable because of their special nature or role in an ecosystem and which could be easily disturbed or degraded by human activities and developments."

On Thursday, the Coastal Commission will discuss the future of the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area during a virtual meeting.

# Letters to CCC

## CORVA

### Re: Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area

The California Off-Road Vehicle Association (CORVA) has been advocating for off-road and motorized vehicle enthusiasts at all levels of government for 50 years. In addition to California residents, we speak for thousands of visitors who come to our state to enjoy the unique landscapes we have to offer. One of the most unique, and most prized experiences for our community, above all others, is found at Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area (ODSVRA). On behalf of the California Off-Road Vehicle Association, our thousands of members, member clubs and associated business sponsors, we would like to express our complete opposition to the staff proposal

to phase out off-road recreation at the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area.

CORVA traces its roots back to the area then known as Pismo Beach, where we held our first meeting. Just as every origin story contains reference to a 'sacred place', this area holds an especially important meaning for us as an organization and for our members. We are disappointed that the California Coastal Commission (CCC) staff is calling for the equivalent of its destruction by proposing a loss of access to the area. The material released by staff in preparation for the March 28 meeting is rife with bias and innuendo, conjecture, and hearsay, and in many cases largely lacking in peer-reviewed science.

Continues on 26 >>

## JARED MACLEOD

### Re: Comments for California Coastal Commission March 18 meeting (ODSVRA)

Dear Commissioners,

Following years of preparation and direct coordination with the California Coastal Commission, California State Parks released their draft Public Works Plan (PWP) in December 2020. Per the deadline, the PWP was delivered as promised by State Parks to the CCC. Rather than this Commission taking the opportunity to discuss and evaluate the Oceano Dunes PWP at your March 18 meeting, you have taken the drastic action to instead move forward with a vote on your Staff's recommendation for the 5 Year Phase out of

OHV at Oce ano Dunes SVRA.

In an effort to appease the CCC, State Parks went to pain staking measures to assure that the PWP had directly addressed each of this Commission's concerns and demands. This was done at the expense of State Parks offering no actual benefit to the OHV users and campers of the Park in the PWP, but instead drastic new reductions and restrictions imposed to the Parks current operations.

This Commission's intention to phase out OHV at ODSVRA is nothing less than an overreach of power, a violation of statutory mandate, a total dismissal of the PWP and a huge slap in the face to California State Parks and Director Quintero.

Continues on 25 >>

## ED STOVIN

### Letter to CCC

I am commenting on the proposed action at Oceano Dunes by the California Coastal Commission on behalf of the San Diego Off-Road Coalition. Some of our member travel to Oceano Dunes SVRA to enjoy recreating in vehicles on the beach and in the dunes. We treasure the chance to do this and strongly encourage the commission to allow this activity to continue indefinitely. We understand the California Coastal Commission will be looking at granting an operating permit for Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area this week. I would like to encourage the commission to grant this permit. Please look at data concerning Oceano Dunes SVRA. California has 280 state parks. In a recent study, Oceano Dunes SVRA was the [eighth most visited park](#). State studies show over 1.3 million visits take place in Oceano Dunes each year. This is a staggering number for this small park. Most visits are with motorized vehicles. Stopping vehicles there would alienate a huge group of California residents.

In a [State Parks study](#) Data shows that people come

from all over the state and beyond to recreate at Oceano Dunes SVRA. The greatest number come from the central valley (to escape the oppressing summer heat) Many of these guests are an underserved population who truly value driving on this beach. Many come and rent ATVs for the day. For many underserved people, owning OHVs is simply too difficult, but renting and driving at Oceano is entirely possible.

State environmental law applying to SVRAs is far stricter than other state parks. I understand that California State Parks continues to do an outstanding job managing Oceano Dunes SVRA. They go to great lengths to protect species, air quality and a host of other resources. If the park is closed to vehicles, the strict laws that apply to the area will go away and the much looser general parks rules will come. It is very possible that a wide variety of resources will suffer if vehicles are removed.

California has 840 miles of coastline and this small stretch is the only place in the state we can legally operate an OHV on the beach. Please allow us to continue to do so at Oceano Dunes SVRA.

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## DIANA MEAD

### Letter to CCC

This communication is meant to be a comment on Oceano Dunes PWP.

Retain camping at the 1000 vehicles and conduct the study as needed. Reduction in capacity will not reflect current use for study and will likely result in further reductions.

Removing concessionaires, especially the OHV

rentals, in addition to potentially limiting access for underserved populations, will compromise safety. These rental concessions, have requirements for safety gear (which they also supply) and instruct on safe operation of their OHV's. A newbie, borrowing from a friend will not have the same advantage and could too easily get hurt or hurt another visitor.

The Coastal Commission is blatantly seizing State Parks authority and negating State Parks stewardship of this, our first SVRA. While I suspect I am "preaching to the choir," the PWP as drafted seems to be another effort to compromise with this renegade CCC.

I use the word compromise, because I believe the intent is there. "Compromise" assumes there are at least two willing parties, both of whom accept they will get some of what they want and will lose some too. Many agreements are reached this way, although winners and losers tend to be labeled. Business models suggest that "collaboration" is the better process to reach agreement, but again at least two willing parties are necessary to collaborate.

The California Coastal Commission has made it very clear that they have one agenda. No OHV at a California State Vehicle Recreation Area. There will be no compromise (been there, tried that), no collaboration which would demand a level of respect that is clearly lacking, and the appeasement that is the PWP, has been shoved aside in favor of a voluminous tax payer funded document created by CC staff.

My comment is that the CCC has no statutory authority over State owned property. The PWP should be drafted to match the environmental needs of this particular park, and the stakeholders who are directly impacted by the implementation of the PWP.

Thank you for your consideration.



“ My name is Steven. I specialize in residential home loans for real estate purchase and refinances. If you are looking for a licensed mortgage professional in California, I am located in Redlands, CA.



STEVEN BURNS  
LOAN OFFICER | NMLS# 178540







AB 232

# Support for the Gallagher Bill

## MERCED RUNABOUTS AND EAST BAY HI TAILERS

Assemblyman,

The members of our off road club request your support of the Gallagher Bill, AB 232. Many of our members are retired and have the time to travel to Arizona, Nevada and Utah to recreate. This is simply adjusting California's long-held policy of reciprocity for OHV registrations vis a vis other states. Until last year every state that had an OHV registration system would honor the registration from residents of other states when they visited to recreate in their state. Last year Arizona, Utah and Idaho began changing their policies and began to require any non-resident of their state to first obtain an out-of-state OHV visitor permit for their vehicle before they could operate an OHV in the state. In other words, they are dropping the reciprocity that has ALWAYS existed

for motor vehicle registrations between states. A California OHV registration (green sticker) will no longer be accepted as legal in those 3 states. This bill will simply change California's OHV statute to continue to allow reciprocity ONLY for residents of those states that recognize CA OHV registration as legal in their state. Visitors from states that do not recognize the CA green sticker will be required to purchase a CA OHV Visitor Permit in order to operate their OHV in CA. Visitors from states that continue to recognize the CA OHV registration will continue to be able to operate in CA with only their home state OHV permit.

Respectfully submitted,

Merced Runabouts Off-Road Club and the East Bay Hi Tailers

# Letter to the Governor

DIANA MEAD

Dear Governor Newsom,

We have noticed that the Sierra Club is urging you do the “right thing” and declare a nonexistent park, to exclude off highway motorized vehicle use. To say this is disingenuous is downplaying the consequences to any actions you might take in making such a declaration.

The acreage the Sierra Club is arbitrarily calling “Tesla Park”, is a 3000+ acre parcel owned by California State Parks, acquired with the expressed intention of expanding Carnegie State Vehicle Recreation Area, with funding from the Off Highway Motorized Vehicle Recreation trust fund. This property was not acquired through force but through a voluntary sale from property owners to the State. Willing sellers and a willing buyer, performed a transaction that was not a secret to the local stakeholders.

Secondly, let’s talk a bit about our State Parks investment in this project. Over the 20 plus years since acquisition, State Parks, again with OHVMR Funds, mitigated (1.2 million dollar price tag) a SF Water District mess created with the Hetch Hetchy development. State Parks has rehabilitated the tailings left behind by a turn of the 19th century mining operation. Wildlife and indigenous sites have been cataloged and are protected today just as they are in the currently operating portion of the park. The water sources on the property now must meet the stringent State Parks protections. In the past they have been labeled “agricultural”. We are certain the Sierra Club is clear on the difference in those designations.

There remains work to be done to ensure the safety of future public access. Much of this work is

outlined in the Carnegie SVRA General Plan, which went through a robust, lawful public comment period before approval in 2016. Ensuring sustainable public access, motorized or other means, requires a significant ongoing maintenance budget. This kind of funding is allocated in the General Plan.

We encourage you to consult with State Parks and perhaps, those of us who are very invested in the expansion of this SVRA, before acting on public pressuring from a respected, albeit uninformed, organization. Quite honestly, this has turned into a “not in my backyard” tantrum, disguised as an environmentally concerned effort.

California State Parks and the OHMVR Division in particular, is required by statute, to meet higher standards than any other established park entity in California. It defies logic to declare State Parks somehow “unfit” and shift ownership of this property to an unknown entity all to “protect” it from a single activity enjoyed sustainably at nine State Parks this very moment.

Thank you, Governor, for taking a moment to read this correspondence. We too, hope you will do the “right thing”. Support our State Parks and the Californians who visit them.

Diana Mead, a concerned off road enthusiast, resident of Concord, CA

CC: California State Parks and Recreation, Director Quintero

California Department of Natural Resources, Secretary Crowfoot

OHMVR Division of State Parks, Deputy Director, Sarah Miggins



March 2021 - June 2021

# CORVA Land Use Report

## Oceano Dunes Update

The Coastal Commission board members voted to phase out off-road vehicle access over the next 3 years, and close Oceano Dunes' Pier Avenue entrance in 18 months. The plan also calls for camping and street-legal vehicles to be limited to an area between West Grand and Pier avenues.

The CCC staff report called for a vote at the March 18th meeting to add conditions to Coastal Development Permit 3-82-300 that would phase out OHV use at the SVRA over 5 years. During the March 18th meeting deliberations, the commissioners reduced the phase out period from 5 years to 3 years and reduced the closure of the Pier Avenue entrance to 18 months. The Coastal Development permit was originally approved in 1982 and has been amended 5 times to allow continued operation of the SVRA.

Car camping will be allowed between Grand and Pier Avenues above the high tide line but not south of Pier Ave. the Pier avenue entrance would be permanently closed effective July 1 2021.

According to the Coastal Commission plan, no motor vehicles will be allowed into the SVRA after Jan 1 2024 other than the new camping area and all fenced areas will be closed to entry after Jan 1 2024. The Park would remain open until Jan 1 2024. Exactly how the park would be managed between July 1 2021 and Jan 1 2024 remains unknown. The staff report suggested a phased closure to OHV use of one mile of beach per year beginning at the southern end of the park.

In addition, Parks was informed that the PWP needs extensive revisions and that some elements were not feasible, such as a southern access through the Phillips 66 refinery, improvements at the Oso Flaco campground or eliminating the proposed establishment of a 40-acre trail system at the southern end of the park. Any reduction in the size of the Plover/Tern enclosure sites were rejected. The seasonal enclosures will need to be made permanent at 300 acres for the main enclosure.



## Oceano Dunes SVRA and Pismo State Beach entering phase II of three-phased reopening plan on Friday, February 19

### Day use outdoor areas of park units currently open to the public remain open with modifications and COVID-19 guidelines

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – California State Parks today announced the reopening of campgrounds for existing reservation holders and new reservations within San Luis Obispo County. The reopening of campgrounds includes a limited number of sites within Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA) and Pismo State Beach (SB) beginning Friday, February 19.

As State Parks increases access to state parks and beaches, it is critical that Californians continue to recreate responsibly in the outdoors as the pandemic is far from over. Visitors are advised to stay local, wear a face covering, practice physical distancing and avoid gatherings with people outside the immediate household. Also, please plan ahead as some park units and campgrounds remain temporarily closed due to the pandemic, wildfire and weather-related impacts.

“Public health, the safety of visitors and the protection of natural resources continues to be a priority across the State Park System,” said California State Parks Director Armando Quintero. “While State Parks is reopening access across the system, it is doing so with modifications and COVID-19 guidelines. It is up to every single visitor to follow our new health guidelines, employ safe practices and protect natural resources to prevent any future restrictions.”

To find the availability of campsites within San Luis Obispo County, please [visit the park unit webpage](#) of your planned outdoor recreation or visit [ReserveCalifornia.com](https://ReserveCalifornia.com).

As expected, the Center for Biological Diversity sued the State of California for violation of the Endangered Species Act related to nesting terns and snowy plovers in an effort to keep the SVRA closed. California DPR has not commented on this pending litigation, however the SVRA opened on Feb 19 as planned.

Pismo State Beach and Oceano Dunes SVRA are managed in compliance with the General Development Plan, which provides direction and guidance for park purpose, broad land use planning uses, and program-based goals and guidelines. The 1975 General Development Plan was amended in 1982 and 1994 and predates the California Coastal Act of 1976.

The existing Coastal Development Permit (CDP) A-4-82-300-A5, issued in 1982 for the entry kiosks and perimeter fencing projects, currently serves for compliance with the California Coastal Act and has been amended five times to accommodate additional projects and actions.

The proposed PWP will supersede the 1982 CDP and provide compliance for existing and future park management activities and select improvement projects with the California Coastal Act. The PWP will be consistent with the existing General Development Plan.

In a related development, the San Luis Obispo county APCD approved DPR’s Annual Report and Work Plan (AWRP) . This is a critical step that DPR must meet. Unfortunately approval of the AWRP was conditional on implementing dust control measures on an additional 90 acres of the SVRA, which includes closing the acreage to both camping and OHV use.

Continues on 21 >>

# Madhatters

Like all clubs and organizations during the pandemic, the Madhatters were challenged with how to keep our club active and the membership engaged. Over the past 12+ months, we have continued our monthly club meetings via Zoom, keeping everyone engaged and in touch. We even had a virtual Christmas party last year!

The pandemic has not kept us down, just fueled us to keep going. We are a very active club that tries to

We welcome all off-road enthusiasts (from stock to buggies) to join us in the fun and challenge of off-roading. We currently have 37 active families; this includes some lady drivers too. Our club has two 4800 teams and two UTV teams that race King of the Hammers, with pit crews staffed by club members. While we are open for rigs of all makes and models, we do make sure that they follow the Cal 4 Wheel Safety Guidelines. Our families have Jeeps, Toyotas, Broncos and even a couple of Suzuki Samurai's.

In October, as a club we organize our runs and events for the upcoming year. This gives everyone a chance

The Madhatters are affiliated with the California Association of Four-Wheel Drive clubs and CORVA. When renewing their annual dues, our membership has the option to include a CORVA membership as well.

get out 1-2 times each month. Last year we made it to the Rubicon, Barrett Lake and Slickrock, enjoying great turnouts at all the runs that took place.

Established in 1978, the Madhatters 4x4 Club of Northern California is a family-oriented group. Our membership consists of families in Nevada (Gardnerville/ Carson Valley/Las Vegas), Placerville, Pollack Pines, Foresthill, Hawaii and all over the Bay Area. Our Club President, John Allen, is just starting his 4th two-year term. John successfully keeps our club rolling, providing many opportunities for members to get out and wheel. There is no "I" in our membership; we roll together as a family unit.

to participate and plan their time accordingly. Not everybody is retired yet (smile). Our membership determines what the club does, and members have the opportunity to serve as a Trail Boss and run the trails of their choosing. In years past, we have even organized club runs to Moab for Easter Jeep Safari, to the Panamint/Death Valley area for Thanksgiving or spring break and up to the North Coast of California.

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well. We strongly support and practice the “Tread Lightly” concept and support legislation to preserve off-road access to State and Federal lands. The Madhatters participate as a club in Cal 4 Wheel’s Winter Fun Fest and Sierra Trek events.

The Madhatters 4x4 Club also maintains two adopt-a-trail projects. One is the Wentworth Springs section of the Rubicon, and the other is the Winch Hill 5 section on Fordyce. We also assist on other trail projects with Friends of Fordyce and Rubicon Trail Foundation. Last August, with the help of Friends of Fordyce, the Forest Service, other clubs and individuals -- we were able to hold a large work party on Fordyce to address some pressing repair issues. With rock trailers donated by Cal 4 Wheel and Rubicon Trail Foundation, we fixed all the areas with multiple loads of rock and screen. After a solid day of work, 60+ able-bodied men and women enjoyed a

well-deserved Taco Bar!

Our club utilizes a Groups.IO group email service to allow members to easily organize and coordinate club events. Not only does this service facilitate communication between members, it also allows us to communicate upcoming runs to potential members and guests. We encourage everyone interested in our club to subscribe to this group email. This enables them to easily join club runs and quickly meet club members. We have found this to be an invaluable tool in maintaining and growing membership, as well as generating good turnouts at our sanctioned club events, especially with the COVID restrictions over the past year.

Please visit our Facebook page at: [Madhatters 4x4 Club of Northern California](#). We can be reached there with any interest or questions.



# What's happening in Southern California

ED STOVIN

Down in Southern California there are a few things

going on. If you like to camp in State Parks, like Anza Borrego Desert State Park, they are floating the idea to charge a \$20 per night fee for primitive camping in places where they supply restrooms and fire rings. This seems a little pricey given that the BLM nearby charges \$6 per night for camping with similar amenities (McCain Valley) and the Cleveland National Forest charges \$7 per 24hr period. We heard other State Parks are talking about similar fees and we are wondering if it is the State trying to raise more money to pay for Covid related expenses.

There is a Navy bombing range right next to the BLM's Superstition Open OHV area in Imperial County and the Navy has started a fencing project between the two areas. Before, there were only signs along the border, and not particularly good signs. This has led to regular intrusions into the bombing range. Some of these intrusions have caused the Navy to abort bombing practice. The Navy has told us that they go to a lot of trouble to plan and run bombing practice and having to call off missions wastes taxpayer money and harms the military's readiness. The fence will be three heights of smooth wire with signs and reflectors every eight feet. The fence will go from Huff Road to the east side of Superstition Mountain and is under construction now.

We started hearing reports about a route being closed in Anza Borrego Desert State Park recently. It is called Sandstone Canyon and it branches off Fish Creek. This is a deep, narrow wash that is fun to explore. About halfway through, there is a rockfall that vehicles used to crawl over. People got upset

when the park put signs before the rockfall saying the area behind is closed to vehicles and is State wilderness. Turns out the wilderness part was untrue and that volunteers mistakenly put that sign up. When pressed, the park admitted that they closed the route because a person from State Fish and Wildlife was walking above the end of the dead-end canyon and found evidence that someone had winched a 4X4 up and out of the canyon and had driven across wilderness and into another canyon. The evidence was a steel post driven into the ground, some rope, an Ocotillo tree was run over and a very old, large Ocotillo tree had been cut down, likely with a chainsaw. I personally got to see pictures of the evidence and it is not pretty. When the park was notified of the intrusion, they looked at their map of the area and realized that the trail was supposed to end before the rockfall. There is both paleo (old animal evidence) and archaeological (old human evidence) beyond the rockfall and the park is required to protect those kinds of resources. We don't like closures, but understand agencies have a duty to protect resources.



<< Land Use, from 17

Most of the additional closed areas are an expansion of existing vegetation islands, with two high emissivity areas outside the fenced SVRA. The proposal was reviewed and approved by the SAG, another critical step, who reluctantly approved inclusion of 26 acres outside the SVRA that would be counted as part of the 90 acres.

## Federal Legislation introduced for 2021

### Wilderness Legislation Update

#### HR 2546 - Protecting America's Wilderness Act

We expected reintroduction of wilderness legislation that failed to pass the Senate in 2020 and the bill was reintroduced for 2021.

The U.S. House of Representatives on Friday passed the far-reaching bill to provide new wilderness protections to 1.5 million acres of federal lands — 535,000 acres of which are in California, an area roughly 18 times the size of the city of San Francisco.

The measure also would ban mining around the Grand Canyon and set aside more than 1,000 miles of rivers in California and other Western states from dams and other development.

Approved by the Democratic majority on a 227-200 vote, the bill would be the largest wilderness preservation legislation in 12 years. That is when President Obama signed [The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009](#), which set aside 2.1 million acres of federal land as wilderness. To become law, it still must pass the U.S. Senate. President Biden has said he will sign it if it reaches his desk.

Among the areas slated for new wilderness protections in California are federally owned lands in Redwood National Park, and along the Eel and Trinity rivers in Northern California, the Carrizo Plain in

central California, and the San Gabriel Mountains in Southern California.

Critics of the measure raised concerns that the new protections could have unintended negative consequences, arguing it could limit public access to the land and increase the risk of wildfires in the areas.

Doug La Malfa (R-Calif) stated his opposition to the bill. “We have seen the devastation that wildfires cause in Northern California time and time and time again. So why are we putting more land into this restrictive wilderness category which will make it even more difficult to effectively manage forests and to access them?” he added.

#### H.R. 316 (LaMalfa): Guides and Outfitters Act

**Summary:** This bill would amend the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act to allow the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to issue special recreation permits and fees for off-highway vehicle use on certain federal recreational lands, as defined. This bill is the successor to H.R. 289 of the 2017-2018 Session. Status: as of 2/07/2019 Referred to the House Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry

#### H.R. 403 (Panetta): Clear Creek National Recreation Area and Conservation Act

**Summary:** This bill would establish the Clear Creek National Recreation Area in San Benito and Fresno Counties to promote environmentally responsible off highway vehicle recreation and to support other recreational uses. This bill would direct the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to designate 21,000 acres of land adjacent to Clear Creek as wilderness and would name this area, “Joaquin Rocks Wilderness”. The bill would also reopen the 63,000-acre Clear Creek Management Area for public outdoor recreation, including off-road vehicles and hiking.

Continues on 23 >>



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<< Land Use, from 21

This bill requires BLM to develop a plan including educating visitors about the hazards of asbestos. This bill is a reintroduction of H.R. 1913 from the 2017-2018 Session. Status: as of 2/05/2019 Referred to the House Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands

## House Members Send Letter of Support on BLM Move to President Biden

Freshman Representative and member of the House Natural Resources Committee, Lauren Boebert (CO-03) wrote a letter, endorsed by 22 members of the House to President Biden and reiterated their support for the Bureau of Land Management headquarters in Grand Junction, Colorado. The letter pointed out the agency estimates it will save more than \$2 million in the fiscal year 2021 in lease costs and \$1.9 million salary savings annually based on locality pay. However, a recent media release from DOI shows BLM lost 287 employees or 87% of the 328 positions reassigned by the prior Administration from the bureau’s Washington.

## Deb Haaland has been appointed Interior Secretary

Haaland, the first Indigenous person to be appointed to that position, has been celebrated by

progressives as “a big deal.” When her nomination was announced, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-New York) tweeted, “Historic appointment. A visionary Native woman in charge of federal lands. Unequivocally progressive. Green New Deal champion. Exquisitely experienced.”

Haaland is a supporter of the Green New Deal and has said that she will “move climate change priorities, tribal consultation and a green economic recovery forward,” as [she told the Guardian last year](#). To climate activists, Haaland will not only be able to undo damage from the Donald Trump years, but also move the county forward on climate goals. As interior secretary, she will have jurisdiction over federal lands and can [set policy on things like oil leasing](#).

## Biden said Tom Vilsack will steer U.S. agriculture toward net-zero emissions.

Tom Vilsack has been appointed to his second term to run the Agriculture Department. Secretary Vilsack previously served as Secretary of Agriculture during the Obama administration. President Biden has said that Vilsack will carry out an ambitious agenda that includes “American agriculture being the first in the world to achieve net-zero emissions,” in part by paying farmers for carbon capture.



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Vilsack echoed that sentiment in his remarks, saying that the nation would have an “incredible opportunity” to lead the world in combating climate change and reap “the new, good-paying jobs and farm income that will come from that leadership.”

## OHV Division Update

Welcome news for the OHV Division is the appointment of Sarah Miggins as Deputy Director by Governor Newsom. Sarah has recently served as Chair of the OHV Commission and comes from a background as Executive Vice President of the American Conservation Experience (ACE) which provides crews for many types of trail maintenance and restoration projects, including OHV projects. She also served as Executive Director of the Southern California Mountains Foundation which is active in the San Bernardino National Forest. She has shown considerable aptitude as Chair of the Commission, taking on complex issues such as the Oceano Dunes and the Carnegie Expansion. We look forward to her leadership as Deputy Director of the OHMVR.

## Recent OHMVR Commission Appointments

**Roger Salazar** has been appointed by Governor Gavin Newsom in 2020, Commissioner Roger Salazar brings a lifelong family history of off-roading to the OHMVR Commission. As a boy, he would accompany his father and uncles on trips through the Rubicon Trail and learned to drive on his Dad's 1978 Jeep CJ5. The earliest known photograph of his father is as an infant in front of the Salazar family 1946 Willys Jeep. There has been a Jeep in the Salazar family continuously for nearly 75 years.

**Tina Brazil**, 59, of Turlock, has been appointed to the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission by Governor Newsom. Brazil has been a public safety dispatcher at the California Highway Patrol since 1997.

**Patricia Urena** of Calexico, current chair of the OHMVR Commission has been reappointed for another 4 year term by Governor Newsom.

**Diane Ross-Leech** – Appointed by Speaker of the Assembly Anthony Rendon in August, 2020, Commissioner Ross-Leech is a native Californian with a passion for environmental stewardship. From an early age, Commissioner Ross-Leech has been an avid outdoorswoman – hiking, camping, canoeing, backpacking, skiing, snow shoeing, and bird watching throughout California and the West.

In 2018 Commissioner Ross-Leech retired as Director of Environmental Policy at Pacific Gas and Electric Company. She has expertise in developing innovative strategies encompassing corporate sustainability, climate change adaptation, endangered species, migratory birds, land resource management and renewable energy. Throughout her career Commissioner Ross-Leech has built strong working relationships with federal and state resource agencies in California and Washington DC, and established a wide network of influential environmental non-profit and energy industry stakeholders.





<< Jared Macleod, from 10

In the spirit of collaboration, I would think that this Commission would recognize the good faith efforts put forth by State Parks, to find compromises and solutions for the longer term sustainability of balanced recreation and natural resource protection at the Park. By this Commission's outright dismissal of the PWP, in favor of your Staff recommended 5 year plan, you are demonstrating your conscious lack of willingness to work with State Parks toward real solutions, in favor of a unilateral decision for this Commission to unlawfully change the designation and uses of ODSVRA.

I find it disgraceful that your Staff believes to hold the moral authority and high ground to dictate the future demise of an entire community. Your staff's recommendation would displace this entire community, destroying businesses and a vibrant local economy depending on this Park, rob healthy recreational opportunities from families and restrict disabled access to the only fully ADA accessible section of California coastline. All in an effort to fit your staff's biased objective to destroy over 100 years of well documented vehicle recreation at the Park. This is what we call gentrification, and it is in fact an intentional act of discrimination. I have heard from staffers that the local families, businesses and community will find ways to adapt to these proposed changes at the Park. This just is not right.

It appears that your Staff has not considered the immediate and long term consequences that this 5 Year Plan will have on the disabled community, residents, businesses, surrounding communities and on affordable recreational opportunities for families all over the state and country. Oceano Dunes SVRA is the crown jewel of the California experience for tourists who travel here from all over the world. Our Park should be serving as a model for how responsible recreation can coexist in balance with natural

resource protection and management.

It is time for this Commission to recognize the many successes the OHV Community has provided through the funding of our incredibly successful endangered species programs and natural resource protections. The Coastal Commission should be working with State Parks and the Off Road community, to build upon these successes, and to model them for use at other coastal State Parks programs. There is much we can do through collaboration and working together, but this would require willingness by this Coastal Commission to not take unilateral action on your staff's recommendation.

I urge this Commission to reject your Staff recommendation for the 5 year phase out of OHV use at Oceano Dunes SVRA. I urge this commission to come to the table and sit down for collaborative discussions with CA State Parks towards further work to develop the PWP.

My family has spent 3 generations growing up on the Dunes, and I would like my young daughter to grow up with these same wholesome family experiences that are so near and dear to our hearts. My family will stand with State Parks to ensure the current recreational opportunities at Oceano Dunes SVRA will be here for generations to come. We urge this Commission to vote NO on the 5 year plan!

Sincerely,

Jared Macleod  
VP, Friends of Oceano Dunes  
VP of Education, California Off Road Vehicle Association (CORVA)



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<< CORVA Letter to CCC re: Oceana Dunes, from 10

Therefore, we must conclude that the proposal is driven by bias against off-road recreation instead of a scientifically based need for closure.

Additionally, we strongly believe that the staff proposal has purposely misrepresented conditions at Oceano Dunes and failed to recognize the extraordinary environmental work the California Department of Parks and Recreation has undertaken in the park. This includes one of the most successful breeding programs for the Western Snowy Plover among all such programs along the coastline of California. The staff report lacks recognition of this success, along with many other successful environmental programs and protections DPR has undertaken at the park in collaboration with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. This is just one example of Coastal Commission staff either excluding pertinent facts or including misleading information masquerading as fact.

As recently as 2012, courts have determined that off-road recreation is consistent with the California Coastal Act and does not violate ESHA, but staff, in the report, have ignored court-settled opinions in favor of recommending biased actions.

Per Section 30240 Environmentally sensitive habitat areas; adjacent developments

(a) Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses dependent on those resources shall be allowed within those areas.

(b) Development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas and parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade those areas and shall be compatible with the continuance of those habitat and recreation areas.

This section calls out Parks and Recreation areas as needing special consideration, equivalent to that for environmentally sensitive habitat. Facilities operated by DPR would fall into this category that requires special consideration with respect to activities that occur within them.

With respect to environmental justice and tribal concerns, we contend that there is an opportunity for meaningful improvement in this area, but to tie these vastly different and unrelated issues solely to the elimination of OHV use is a gross oversimplification.

The staff report states on page 6:

“Park changes that might allow Oceano to capitalize on its beach-fronting location, allowing the community enhanced opportunity for revitalization, including through directly connecting the community to its beach, would bring with it the types of opportunities that help other California beach towns to prosper. Similarly, a Park without OHV use allows for the tribes to access their ancestral and sacred spaces without the noise and habitat degradation that this use brings. In other words, by eliminating vehicular and OHV uses in ESHA, consistent with the Coastal Act and LCPs, there is also the potential to help both the directly inland communities and the five-cities area realize new opportunities for community revitalization and enhancement. Such action would also be consistent with tribal interests and recommendations.”

The above statement is pure speculation and offers no rational connection between the issues of economic revitalization and tribal access and impacts to resources by OHV use. It is difficult to understand what action this paragraph calls for, other than elimination of OHV use. It seems to indicate that economic revitalization of the area will magically occur if OHV use is eliminated.

Later sections of the staff report include a more detailed discussion of various economic impact studies and points out that businesses related to OHV activity may eventually be replaced by those that cater to non-motorized recreation but there is no discussion of the actual economics of how this transition would work. With respect to tribal concerns, the Park presently keeps sites of tribal interest fenced off and protected from adverse effects. Tribal concerns are a valid issue and deserve a more in-depth discussion. It is unclear how tribal members would be better able to visit their sites and sacred spaces simply by eliminating OHV use and taking no other action.

Reading the proposal for ODSVRA, it is clear staff chose to define public access and public recreation opportunities by what they deem politically and/or socially acceptable. Merely reading the way staff callously dismisses the importance of access to motorized recreation enthusiasts, we have concluded that motorized travel is a type of recreation staff does not value. But clearly, statute does not allow the CCC or staff to make judgements of this nature, but in reality, statute clearly acknowledges that members of the public recreate in coastal areas in many ways. The staff report also includes various other misinterpretations of statute to justify their proposal that serve to usurp the authority of DPR to manage parks in accordance with their mission.

Among the harshest provisions of the staff report is the recommendation on page 16 that: “the Pier Avenue entrance to the Park be closed immediately and the natural dune and bluff conditions restored.” There is no supporting analysis for the closure of this access road such as studies of the effects of displacing a large volume of traffic from this route. This recommendation is clearly unworkable and at a minimum requires further study.

At the same time “Staff recommends a new vehicular

beach camping area between West Grand and Pier Avenues, including for ADA vehicle access. Staff recognizes that these unique recreational access opportunities are revered at the Park, including as it is the only State Park in California where such vehicle access and beach camping is allowed.” If Pier Avenue is closed what access would there be to this adjacent area for ADA and non-motorized access? There is no detail of how this would work and apparently it will be left up to State Parks to figure this out. Of course, the CCC will need to approve any additional parking or beach access in the area.

It is unclear with this proposal how the public would obtain access to the entire area of the Park south of Pier Avenue. Without motorized access visitors who wish to engage in water related activities such as surfing, surf casting, and beach walking will have no alternative except to carry all their gear across an expanse of dry sand and as much as several miles down the beach. This will eliminate beach access for all but the youngest and fittest visitors, or those with the resources for equestrian use. Other visitors will need to use the limited vehicular access from Grand Avenue but will not be able to reach areas south of Pier Avenue except using non-motorized equipment. There is some limited access through the community of Oceano via sand trails from Strand Avenue through vacant lots, but there is presently no public beach parking in this residential area. We seriously question the unintended effects closing Pier Avenue without providing any alternative beach access. This action hardly seems consistent with the direction in the LCP or the Coastal Act that indicate a maximum amount of public access should be provided.

Per section 30001.5 of the California Public Resources Code, part of the responsibility of the CCC is the following: *“Maximize public access to and along the coast and maximize public recreational opportunities in the coastal zone consistent with sound*

*resources conservation principles and constitutionally protected rights of private property owners.”*

Additionally, section 30001.2 of the Coastal Act recognizes that; “... *electrical generating facilities, refineries, and coastal-dependent developments, including ports and commercial fishing facilities, offshore petroleum and gas development, and liquefied natural gas facilities, may have significant adverse effects on coastal resources or coastal access, it may be necessary to locate such developments in the coastal zone in order to ensure that inland as well as coastal resources are preserved and that orderly economic development proceeds within the state.*”

The above sections acknowledge that some coastal areas may be managed with different criteria because their operations and purposes are critical for the economic wellbeing of residents and communities in California. The intent of this section is to allow the CCC to recognize their inherent importance. Certainly, a valued and widely popular State Park deserves the consideration the above statute allows. Yet nowhere is this represented in the proposal as staff appears to desire above all else that ODSVRA be closed to OHV use.

The importance of ODSVRA cannot be underestimated to the local community. If the proposal as written should be unwisely adopted at the March 18h meeting, responsibility for the resulting detriments to gas stations, restaurants, motels and hotels, supermarkets and all other businesses in the area would fall squarely on the shoulders of the CCC.

It is unconscionable how staff of the CCC appear to easily dismiss the consequences of their proposal by paying little attention to the negative effects it will have to the small cities surrounding ODSVRA and their ability to fund schools and local facilities. The pervasive attitude of “this isn’t my problem” inherent in the document cannot be overlooked.

These are specific areas of the proposal we find significantly inadequate:

1. Page 30 of the ODSVRA Review Report contains an unacceptable amount of conjecture and hypothesis in ‘suggesting’ that the South County Coastal Area Plan, a component of the LUP that was adopted in 1984 calls for limiting riding and access in the La Grande Tract and is reinterpreting components of the plan to support their proposal.
2. There is only one report from the Technical Review Team (TRT) available on the CCC website which, contrary to the ODSVRA Review Report, does not indicate the need for establishing a permanent enclosure area. Rather the one TRT report on the website indicates they did not feel that establishing a permanent enclosure was necessary.
3. With respect to the Arroyo Grande creek crossing, State Parks currently does not allow vehicles to cross the creek when it flows, so Parks seems to have accepted this condition, but reserves the right to study how to better manage the creek crossing, which seems reasonable. In fact, this approach seems more reasonable than an inflexible seasonal closure that was previously suggested at the January 12, 2017 and hearing the CCC approved Condition #5, which was based on recommendations from NOAA Fisheries. In those recommendations, NOAA slightly revises DPR’s operating guidelines with respect to the Creek. Staff’s view at the time was that these recommendations are reasonable steps to address potential problems and are closely related to current DPR actions.

Yet there is no explanation in the 2019 report for the rejection of this recommendation and imposition of a seasonal closure in its place.

4. The LCP clearly carves out the Dunes as an SVRA despite it being in a Sensitive Resource Area.
5. According to statute, the CCC has broad discretion how to manage activity in an ESHA. The interpretation presented in the ODSVRA Review Report is redefining allowable activities to align with the ideological bias presented by staff that support the proposal for eventual closure.
6. The proposal made to reduce numbers of entrants has no scientific basis, and more than when the original numbers were set, which were based on historical use. There are no studies cited to indicate ODSVRA can no longer accommodate the same numbers.

In the proposal calling for closure of ODSVRA, staff of the CCC has redefined, reinterpreted and almost rewritten historical documents to support their viewpoints. It is an attempt by staff to hoodwink the public into accepting what we contend is just a point of view. Citations from court cases involving developers throughout the Review Report mislead the public into equating recreation and public access in a State Park with private for-profit development. The two are not the same, nor should they be presented as such, as it is highly disingenuous. Throughout the report, staff has engaged in the not-so-subtle denigration of the millions of recreationists who visit Oceano Dunes every year by encouraging and repeating propaganda. This behavior is inconsistent with the values of the State of California and is specifically unbecoming behavior by representatives of an agency purported to represent all Californians.

As an organization representing citizens of California, it is abhorrent and alarming to us, that the Coastal Commission would choose to battle against another state agency rather than work together to facilitate solutions. The staff report was obviously prepared over a considerable amount of time, using a considerable amount of taxpayer resources. This

report undermines a highly regarded state agency, ignores the importance of that agency's work and ignores DPR's stated mission to the people of California.

In summary, we believe that this proposal violates the very reason the CCC was created – to insure access to coastal areas to the public. The form of recreation is not up to the CCC to find politically correct.

Public Resources Code section 30320(a) and (b) state the CCC must adhere to the following mandates:

*The people of California find and declare that the duties, responsibilities, and quasi-judicial actions of the commission are sensitive and extremely important for the well-being of current and future generations and that the public interest and principles of fundamental fairness and due process of law require that the commission conduct its affairs in an open, objective, and impartial manner free of undue influence and the abuse of power and authority.*

*It is further found that, to be effective, California's coastal protection program requires public awareness, understanding, support, participation, and confidence in the commission and its practices and procedures. Accordingly, this article is necessary to preserve the public's welfare and the integrity of, and to maintain the public's trust in, the commission and the implementation of this division.*

*...Reasonable restrictions are necessary and proper to prevent future abuses and misuse of governmental power so long as all members of the public are given adequate opportunities to present their views and opinions to the commission through written or oral communications on the official record either before or during the public hearing on any matter before the commission.*

We contend that the proposal for ODSVRA has not complied with the above mandate. Instead, the proposal has ignored the interest of a significant

portion of the public as well as the fundamental principles of fairness and has released a draconian proposal in a manner that is neither open, objective, impartial nor free from influence.

The staff report lacks:

- Public Awareness
- Support
- Understanding
- Participation
- Public Trust

Because the proposal to phase out off-road recreation in Oceano Dunes is neither environmentally necessary nor fiscally responsible, the only conclusion we are left with, is that this recommendation is politically motivated. Therefore, CORVA calls for this proposal to be rescinded and repudiated immediately.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, CORVA, California Off-Road Vehicle Association

Amy Granat Managing Director



# Introducing Relations Race Wheels

**Relations Race Wheels is a company of off-roaders and overlanders who design and manufacture products for OHV recreation.**

Off-roading does not just describe the products they sell, but it is part of the company culture. Like many off-road businesses, Relations developed from personal passion for off-roading, and the realization that many wheels being used off-road were not developed with the durability and functionality needed by off-roaders.

Because of this, their design team has put an enormous amount of effort into delivering functional products coupled with dependable quality in an aesthetically pleasing design. Meeting customer demand has been at the core of Relations Race Wheels products. Customer requests led the company to create a hybrid wheel capable of being used as a true beadlock or standard tire mount. Additionally, they offer protection rings for hardcore wheelers and true beadlocks for those tackling the tough terrain that calls for extremely low tire pressure.

Relations Race Wheels has recently invested heavily in developing their team and machinery in the armor department to build products that meet their high standards. Bringing in design, R&D, and manufacturing in-house has expedited the process from idea to final product, cutting down on lead times, and has eliminated errors from outside sources. Additionally, the company has expanded into 3D scanning and CAD modeling. This led to the birth of our manufacturing department for RRW metal armor products. With an in-house engineer, we are able to go from concept to design at a rapid pace.

During the weekend you can find the crew from Relations Race Wheels wheeling in Johnson Valley or wrenching for teams competing in SCORE, Best of the Desert and Baja. CORVA is proud to welcome Relations Race Wheels as a CORVA Business Sponsor! Check out their entire line at: <https://www.relationsracewheels.com/>

The screenshot shows the Relations Race Wheels website header with navigation links: HOME, SHOP BY PART, SHOP BY VEHICLE, EARN CASH BACK, CONTACT, CATALOG, a search bar, and a shopping cart icon. Below the header are three featured articles:

- UPGRADING YOUR SUBARU CROSSTREK XV FOR OFF-ROADING**  
September 16, 2020  
A white Subaru Crosstrek is shown with a rock slider installed. A "READ MORE" button is present.
- FIVE MODS THAT IMPROVE YOUR VANLIFE**  
A dark van is shown on a dirt road.
- BILLET 6061-T6 ALUMINUM ADJUSTABLE UPPER**  
A collection of aluminum upper control arms and related hardware is shown.



2020 was a rough year in so many ways, and for many of us, riding and driving provided that much needed getaway. But the influx of new users to the community has put a burden on the public lands that are so important to us enjoying our passion.

Because of this, the stewardship efforts and educational activities of [Tread Lightly!](#) are more important than ever. Because CORVA has been a member of Tread Lightly for many years, all our members are entitled to a discounted membership!

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- 10% off the Garmin Overlander all-terrain navigator
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- Eligibility to apply for a Tread Lightly! Stewardship Grant
- Member t-shirt

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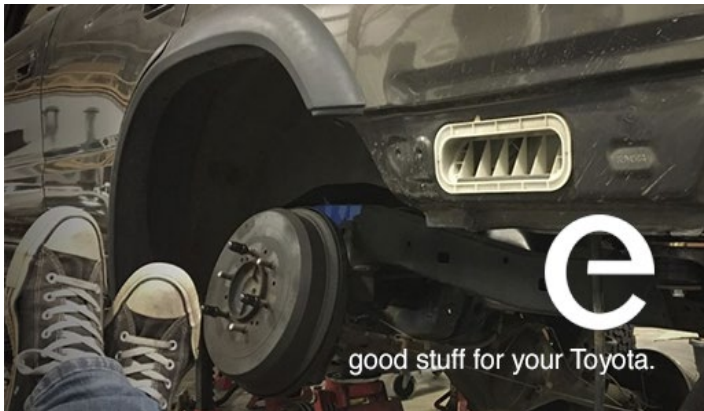
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# Spring 2021

## VINNIE BARBARINO, CORVA SOUTHERN DIRECTOR

**Here it is the middle of March and we've been dealing with Covid for over a year now. I truly hope that you, your family and loved ones have all been safe and healthy during this trying time.**

It really has changed how everyone lives, plays and works. How have I been doing you might ask? Well, I'm staying home a lot but still finding time to get out and enjoy our public lands.

The first week of February was the King Of The

With the Covid vaccinations underway, hopefully it won't be long before we all can get back to normal and getting out there and enjoying our public lands.

Hammers Race. Hammertown was open to anyone that paid the entry fee and had a recent negative Covid test and wore a mask. I opted to take the 10 minute test when I arrived at the lakebed. So there I was sitting in my truck early in the morning sticking that swab way up into my nose to collect a sample and then putting it into the test vial. Once a drop of the solution went onto the test strip all I had to do was wait a few minutes for the results. Negative. In I went to set up camp and join Ken Clarke (CORVA President) at the booth he set up a few days earlier. We were also joined by CORVA board members Jared Macleod and Dave Cundy (and future board member Mike McGarity :) We were fortunate to have space given to us by OffTheGridSurplus. We owe a huge thanks to the Bobby, Josh and all the folks at OffTheGridSurplus. They hosted a 50th anniversary party for CORVA on Wednesday as well as tribute to Steve Gardner who most of you know passed away way too soon. OffTheGridSurplus also stepped up to

take over the CORVA Store operations since Steve's passing. We were there all week in Hammertown accepting donations and telling people how we are one of the best "Land Use Advocates" around. Covid may have slowed off road recreation down but not our advocacy efforts. We are still meeting with land managers, State Parks and the OHV Commissioners all online and making comments when needed.

Ocotillo Wells has opened back up to dispersed camping so my family and I went out there last weekend. It was beautiful with great weather and

warm. It was also the traditional weekend that Tierra Del Sol Four Wheel Drive Club has their "Desert Safari" event. This year, due to Covid and State parks not issuing event permits, they made it a virtual event. Anyone that purchased one of their store items online was entered into their raffle. Since they couldn't have an event in the park, they got permission to set up a tent and booths next to the Jack-In-The-Box restaurant. CORVA was invited to set up our booth outside and greet the store visitors. Everyone socially distanced and wore masks. Two lucky winners won a complimentary CORVA membership and some CORVA Swag. There were many other lucky winners too. Thanks to TDS for recognizing the importance of CORVA's efforts and inviting us.

With the Covid vaccinations underway, hopefully it won't be long before we all can get back to normal and getting out there and enjoying our public lands. Till next time, stay safe and see you on the trail.

# VORRA'S 2021

**VORRA's 2021 season started off with a bang on March 19-21st, at Glen Helen Raceway in San Bernardino, California.**

The season opener was also the first race VORRA has ever held outside of Northern California and Nevada. Luckily, this legendary venue provided a great new experience for VORRA short course racers, as well as some southern California racers who were new to the VORRA series. Overall, a win-win for everyone!

47 racers took the green flag over the course of this two-day race, and even with a little rainy weather, it was still a great time for all with the VORRA family!

The biggest and arguably most fun to watch classes of the weekend were the UTV- production 1000 class and Group T for the trucks. These were some action-packed races all weekend long!

The kids' classes were also a crowd favorite, watching

the 170's battle it out is fun, but also impressive! VORRA's youngest racer, Riley Smallwood, being only 6 years old!

The CORVA Sponsored award for perseverance, went to Cody Vanderveer. Cody was racing #959 in the Production 1000 class. Cody was having a great race, but in-spite of his best efforts, he had a rollover in the 2nd heat of Sunday's race.

Cody was a great sport about his luck at the race and was very appreciative of the C.O.R.V.A. Award. When told of the award, he said it was the best news he'd had all day. He went on saying, "I had so much fun! I love your guy's vibes; I definitely found my favorite series this weekend"!

And that is what VORRA is all about!

All results as well as information on upcoming races, can be found at [vorraracing.com](http://vorraracing.com).





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# I'm Guttled!

BY ED STOVIN

Senator Toni Atkins,

I'm gutted! I just found out that the California Coastal Commission is closing Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area. Although it's far from my house in San Diego, I go there on occasion to ride around the sand dunes and on the beach. I am not the only one who enjoys the park. The last official visitor count was around indicated 1.4 million people visit Oceano Dunes SVRA every year, but now it is believed to be closer to 2 million. People love this park, and they love it with their vehicles. Vehicles have been on this beach since there have been vehicles <http://www.bob2000.com/pismo.htm>

It feels like the CCC has grossly overstepped their authority; they have certainly broken the hearts of countless outdoor enthusiasts. State parks has done an outstanding job managing the area while protecting the resources there. There are 840 miles of coastline in California and these five miles is (was) the only place we could drive/ride on the beach. This makes me really sad, and I have lost faith in State's ability to govern equitably for all its citizens.

Ed Stovin

President San Diego Off-Road Coalition

President Friends of Ocotillo Wells SVRA

Desert Advisory Council Member (With BLM Desert District)

Director California Off-Road Vehicle Association





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We make the process easy too. **Order online at the CORVA Store** 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 are shipped via USPS. You can expect to receive your order quickly, usually no more than a week.

Thank you for helping to support CORVA. Don't forget to order extras to give along with a Gift Membership for all those off-roaders in your family! If you have any suggested items that you might want that are not listed, **send us an email**. We are always looking to promote CORVA!



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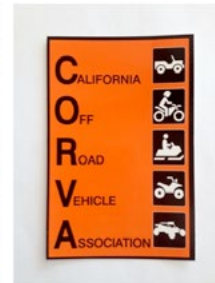
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916-710-1950

# 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:

[amy.granat@corva.org](mailto:amy.granat@corva.org) or  
916-710-1950

## On-Going Meetings

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[www.elmirage.org](http://www.elmirage.org)

2nd Wednesday

### Friends of Jawbone

[www.jawbone.org](http://www.jawbone.org)

3rd Wednesday

### Board Conference Call

4th Monday

## Get in Touch

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

# Off-Roaders In Action

Spring 2021

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