



DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

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**OHMVR COMMISSION MEETING
Palmdale, CA 93551**

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STAFF REPORT: Education, Interpretation, and Outreach Program
STAFF: Donna McGuire, Education and Interpretation Program Manager
SUBJECT: 2018 Interpretation and Outreach Program Report

Summary

The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division provides an active, progressive statewide education, interpretation, and outreach program to inform the public about safe, lawful, and responsible off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation. The 2018 Education, Interpretation and Outreach report focuses on new programs and projects, ever-popular programs, and partnering for events with other state park units to reach a broader audience.

Dedicated interpreters, rangers, seasonal park aides, and volunteers engage the public during in-park education and interpretation programs and conduct outreach at a variety of venues that include OHV events, sports events, county fairs, community events, safety fairs, youth events, school programs, and career fairs.

Discussion

The year 2018 marks the 10th anniversary of the OHMVR Division's Education, Interpretation, and Outreach Program. The SVRA programs and the statewide education mobile program continue to flourish and expand with a variety of opportunities for the public to learn about safety, lawful OHV operation, and protection of California's resources. This report will cover some highlights of the 2018 interpretive programming offered statewide by the SVRAs and the Division.

In January of 2018, the statewide outreach team based in Sacramento collaborated with Park Operations and the Division of Boating and Waterways to participate at the International Sportsmen's Expo Youth Fair. The Youth Fair is a specifically designed area occupying four exhibit buildings at Cal Expo to provide activities for youth and families to explore outdoor recreational activities while learning about safety and resource protection. The OHMVR Division staff featured the remote control Jeep program, a fun way for youth to learn about the Tread Lightly! principles of recreating responsibly and environmental stewardship. These principles are applicable to just

about any outdoor experience. Another eye-catcher is the hands-on wildlife discovery program with skulls, scat, fur, and taxidermy specimens to explore characteristics of mammals that lead to discussions about ways children can help protect wildlife. In addition to getting up close and personal to a black bear pelt, making animal tracks using kinetic sand with rubber molds was a big hit. To simulate an off-highway riding experience, youth put on safety gear and surely looked cool as they practiced all-terrain vehicle (ATV) riding skills on a simulator. After one ATV riding experience, a dad commented, "We received some TLC here." The Youth Fair provided a playground of fun to educate thousands of people about outdoor recreational opportunities, how to recreate safely, and ways to protect the environment.



Carnegie SVRA and Hollister SVRA staff partnered with Carnegie Forever to host a booth at the Oakland Supercross on February 3rd. State Parks interpreters shared information about recreational opportunities in parks, including hiking, camping, and off-highway motor vehicle recreation. Kids were excited to receive stickers, maps, and Tread Lightly! goodies. It was fun to see so many of Carnegie's regular visitors outside the park and answer questions about park resource projects and new riding opportunities.

Oceano Dunes SVRA started the summer off with a new Shoreline Jr. Ranger program. The SVRA is a unique recreation area as it is located along the coast of California. The interpretive staff teamed up with the park's skilled lifeguards to educate kids about recreational safety and the natural and cultural resources in the park. Parents were interested bystanders and appreciated the education their kids were receiving, and the kids had a blast!



Prairie City SVRA staff collaborated with the Dirt Diggers North Motorcycle Club for a way to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Hangtown Motocross Classic. The result was to develop a temporary museum with a shared exhibit booth at the 2018 Hangtown races in May. The Dirt Diggers and State Parks brought out memorabilia that included posters, stickers, newspaper articles, and vintage bikes from previous races to create the museum. This historic display brought in visitors, both young and old. Many of them talked about their racing

adventures at the Hangtown event. The Dirt Diggers North Motorcycle Club and the off-highway community loved this joint venture. The temporary museum spurred the idea that when Prairie City SVRA builds a visitor center, there should be an area dedicated to the history of the Hangtown Motocross Classic, off-highway recreation in California, and a center to collect oral histories of riders to preserve the past.

Hungry Valley SVRA and the Sacramento outreach team worked with the Los Angeles County Sheriff and Los Angeles County Parks to provide the annual Youth Recreation Day at Castaic Lake State Recreation Area. The Police Activities League (PAL), run by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office, helps underprivileged children in Los Angeles and brought about 80 kids for a day of recreation fun on October 27th. The kids had an opportunity to ride an ATV, kayak, or paddleboard, and operate the remote control Jeeps on an obstacle course. In addition, the kids rotated through stations to learn about nature and State Parks' careers. The ATV simulator was a huge hit—almost as much as actually riding one! Poser, the snake, was also a big hit with the kids.



At Hollister Hills SVRA, the year 2018 marks the fourth year of the annual Holiday Hayrides. The evening program started in 2014 and gathers interest and popularity every year. With hundreds of Christmas lights helping to set the holiday cheer, the festively decorated flatbed trailer complete with hay bales transforms into the perfect interpretive mobile center. The hayride extravaganza travels through the park along the main road and stops at each

of the five camp-grounds to pick up visitors. Modeled after a traditional parks' campfire program, staff highlight the park's history through storytelling, facilitate games, and all sing Christmas carols.

Ocotillo Wells SVRA continues to reach thousands of visitors with pop-up mobile exhibits throughout the park. The majority of the 2018 field contacts came from these engaging displays set up at popular destinations with interpretive staff. Since the visitors tend to recreate at the park on a monthly, sometimes weekly basis, staff updated existing programs and created brand new ones, such as one called "Rattlin Bones." "Rattlin Bones" is about the adaptations of the park's wildlife revealed by their skeletons to survive the harsh desert environment. Through a game, interpreters relate



a safety message by advising visitors about how to keep their own skeletons safe while recreating. The message is clear. "Use the proper safety gear and follow the Tread Lightly! principles. "Rattlin Bones" has become one of the park's visitors favorite displays. Ocotillo Wells staff are exploring ways to expand the program with additional content about safety and incorporating more of the Tread Lightly! principles.

A tradition enjoyed throughout California is to celebrate the beginning of a new year by hiking a favorite trail with family and friends. At Heber Dunes SVRA; however, young OHV riders and their families don their safety gear, rev their engines, and cruise over to the park's staging area for the Annual Family Ride. In 2018, the El Centro NYPUM group accepted the invitation to ride along, so mini bikes joined the ATVs for the annual ride. This group of enthusiastic mini bike riders and their leaders were just beginning to have an impact. By the end of 2018, El Centro NYPUM had done everything from providing an after ride BBQ to helping staff the park booth at the Mid-Winter Fair, the Children's Fair, and the Heber Fall Festival, as well as hide eggs for "Extravaganza," the park's spring egg hunt. NYPUM was not alone in its volunteer efforts. The Ambassador Club from Heber Elementary School District and a small group of interested parents also offered ideas and assistance. By year's end, it was the "Year of Community Connections" for Heber Dunes SVRA's community outreach programs. Community outreach enabled a group of like-minded individuals to discover the positive effects of sharing common interests, attitudes, goals, and a feeling of fellowship with others. This is something we should all celebrate!



During the last ten years, the OHMVR Division's statewide interpretation and outreach program has grown extensively. Dedicated staff developed a broad menu of traditional and innovative interpretive programs that are relevant to many audience types, from the OHV community to underserved youth. These dynamic programs are content rich and incorporate strategies of audience engagement to be meaningful, enjoyable, and memorable.



The OHMVR Division’s interpretation program is effective, strong and will continue to educate the people of California about recognizing the importance of safe, responsible recreation and value environmental protection for sustainable OHV recreation.

Unit	Total Interpretive Contacts	Venue/Event Resulting in Most Contacts 2018
Heber Dunes SVRA	9,561	Mid-Winter Fair and Fiesta
Ocotillo Wells SVRA	70,561	Mobile Park Programs
Hungry Valley SVRA	3,148	Fiesta Days
Oceano Dunes SVRA	108,924	Butterfly Grove Roving
Hollister Hills SVRA	11,476	San Benito County Fair
Carnegie SVRA	1,702	Visitor Appreciation Day
Prairie City SVRA	4,954	Hangtown Motocross Classic
Clay Pit SVRA	980	4x4 Demo Day
OHMVR Division HQ	68,336	California State Fair
Total Statewide 2018 Interpretive Contacts: 279,642		

Commission Action

For information only.

Attachments

None