



DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division
1725 23rd Street, Suite 200
Sacramento, California 95816
Telephone: (916) 324-5801 • Fax: (916) 324-0271

Armando Quintero, *Director*

**OHMVR COMMISSION MEETING
Sacramento, CA**

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STAFF REPORT: Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division Resources Update – Soil Conservation Plans at SVRAs

STAFF: Ryan Miller, Environmental Scientist

SUBJECT: Soil Conservation Plan Development for SVRAs

Summary

2020 Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines Background

As required by legislation from Senate Bill 249, the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division (OHMVRD) together with the California Geological Survey and the Natural Resources Division (NRD) completed the review and update of the 2008 Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines. The purpose of this document is to define the standard by which SVRAs, and applicable OHV grant-funded projects, manage OHV facilities while additionally providing guidelines and management considerations with the intent of reducing erosion and sedimentation. The review, initiated in early 2020, found the Soil Conservation Standard to still be an effective measure of compliance, but updates would benefit the Guidelines portion of the document. Written into the Guidelines as part of the 2020 update was the requirement for SVRAs to draft Soil Conservation Plans (SCPs). OHV grant funded projects with ground-disturbing activities are required by CCR §4970.06.3 to provide SCPs specific to a proposed project area.

Soil Conservation Plans at SVRAs

While SCPs have previously been drafted at some SVRAs, updated SCPs that reflect changes from SB 249 were necessary to address PRC 5090.39(a). For example, SB 249 requires the use of Best Available Science and the opportunity for public comment for any plans and monitoring programs. The updated SCPs are intended to demonstrate how an SVRA complies with the Soil Conservation Standard by implementing an adaptive management framework that consists of performing assessments of OHV roads, trails, and facilities, implementing maintenance actions, and monitoring the outcome of the actions taken. As such, each SCP for a given SVRA will have the following main components:

- Preamble or introduction and background: All relevant SVRA background and environmental setting information such as geology hydrology, and history. This section also includes a brief overview of the park's management units.
- Assessment of OHV facilities: Describes methods, timing, and scope of assessment work including the strategy for gathering initial assessment data for roads, trails, and other OHV facilities at SVRAs that lack this information.
- Maintenance and management strategies: This section aims to address how the park is managed with respects to ensuring compliance with the Soil Standard, including typical maintenance routines, timing of maintenance activities, and scope of routine maintenance.
- Monitoring: Discusses how SVRA staff verify effectiveness of management actions and maintenance activities through various monitoring strategies or programs.
- Compliance reporting: Describes what maintenance actions were taken in a given year, what the results of monitoring programs suggest, and an Action Plan for the coming year.

SCP Development Process

OHMVRD initiated the development of SCPs in March of 2021. The Division is currently working with representatives from all nine SVRAs to develop SCPs. A core working group consisting of representatives from OHMVRD, California Geological Survey, and Natural Resources Division meet monthly with resource staff representatives from individual SVRAs to produce a working draft SCP containing the elements described above for each SVRA. Working draft SVRA SCPs are anticipated to be completed within the first half of 2022. These finished working drafts will undergo peer review and will have comments documented and incorporated into the SCPs. Peer reviewed draft SCPs will be submitted to the OHMVRD for approval and to the Department to ensure best available science principles were applied within the SCP. Final draft SCPs will then be made available for public comment at subsequent OHMVR Commission meetings in 2022.

Commission Action

For information only.

Attachments