



# OFF-HIGHWAY MOTOR VEHICLE RECREATION COMMISSION 2022 PROGRAM REPORT



Serving California for 50 Years!



#### **OFF-HIGHWAY MOTOR VEHICLE RECREATION COMMISSION**

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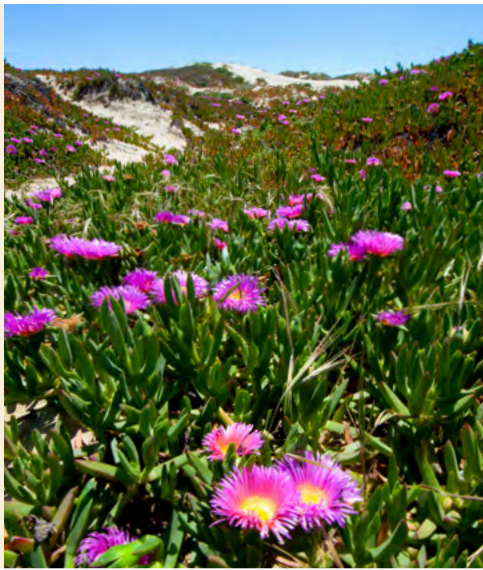
#### **CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS**

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## California State Parks Mission Statement

To provide for the health, inspiration, and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state’s extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.



## OHMVR Mission Statement

The Mission of the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division is to provide leadership statewide in the area of off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation; to acquire, develop, and operate state-owned vehicular recreation areas; and to otherwise provide for a statewide system of managed OHV recreational opportunities through funding to other public agencies. The OHMVR Division works to ensure quality recreational opportunities remain available for future generations by providing education, conservation, and enforcement efforts that balance OHV recreation impacts with programs that conserve and protect cultural and natural resources.



## OHMVR Division Vision Statement

The OHMVR Division will assure ongoing access to a wide variety of high-quality OHV recreational opportunities through our commitment to prudent resource management, outdoor recreation, community education, and environmental stewardship.

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Figure 1. Hollister Hills SVRA, Upper Ranch Adventure Track.

# Message from the Chair



Figure 2. Commission Chair, Patricia G. Ureña

## **CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF OHV RECREATION IN CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS.**

It is an honor and pleasure to provide this OHMVR Commission Program Report, especially during these challenging times when courage and resilience require strong leadership and direction. This extensive report was authored by OHMVR Division staff during the COVID-19 pandemic that we never thought or imagined would stall our nation and our state. The Program Report provides important information that reflects the work that has been completed during this reporting period, which has not been an easy one with this continued pandemic, fires, and other natural disasters. Our OHMVR Commission was challenged to move to online meetings using Zoom, not being able to tour or have face-to-face conversations with our public while dealing with crucial issues.

Under the direction of California State Parks Director Armando Quintero, we look to him for guidance and his knowledge and wisdom. Our OHMVR Deputy Director Sarah Miggins and her staff push forward to open our State Vehicular Recreation Areas (SVRAs) safely. They do the work necessary to sustain and protect our natural environment, so off-highway vehicle (OHV) enthusiasts can enjoy all we offer.

As the largest public OHV recreation system in the United States, the OHMVR Commission and staff take enormous pride in setting standards for others to follow. Those standards have been developed by public and staff input and others who want to ensure that OHV recreation remains dedicated to championing the right causes for those we represent and all Californians. Our Commission is committed to the mission that two Assembly members developed, an OHV enthusiast and an environmentalist, who sought to pair OHV recreation and environmental conservation through the 1971 Chappie-Z' Berg OHV law. The OHMVR program has come a long way since then.

We celebrated the 50th Anniversary of State Park's OHMVR Program with celebrations hosted throughout California in 2021. Our partnership with the California Outdoor Recreation Foundation (CORF), directed by our former Commissioner Paul Slavik, was well represented by our volunteers and partners. The Commission and the Ad Hoc Committees they serve have provided valuable meeting information and allowed us to ascertain new ideas such as rider diversity, our users, and a new marketing campaign. This campaign, entitled "The New Faces of OHV," discusses safety, education, and respect for riding, including protection, conservation, and many other causes that have come before us. Hopefully, this marketing campaign will give us a different look at our diversified riders and users.

We value our SVRAs as sacred for those who want to enjoy the freedom and experience of riding while experiencing the majestic trails at our beach, dunes, and desert recreation areas. We saw empty showrooms at dealerships during this pandemic because everyone needed the outdoors to reunite with families safely. At this point, we know how valuable our parks and SVRAs are to us.

We were excited to see the OHMVR Program sunset eliminated with the passage of Senate Bill 249 in 2017. This bill allows us, the OHMVR Commission and Division, to plan, acquire, develop, conserve and restore lands in SVRAs. The OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program allows other agencies to implement OHV programs throughout the state. These partnerships are what make the OHMVR Program strong. The Grants Program also provides funds to protect our lands with law enforcement, public safety, education, restoration, and ground operations programs.

As you read this report, you will see many changes and challenges we are currently working on. The OHMVR Commission and Division are committed to funding these changes and challenges through the OHV Trust Fund in the most transparent way. We hope you enjoy this report and find ways to volunteer, serve your community, be a proactive partner, and provide positive public input. We will only be successful if we all work together and learn more about our state, federal and local recreation areas. This comprehensive report is full of detail and pictures that tell a thousand stories.

On behalf of the OHMVR Commission and as your Chair, I want to thank the OHMVR Division staff, OHV partners, and volunteers who worked tirelessly on this well-written report. Enjoy and have fun riding!

¡Aqui estamos para servir!

Sincerely,

**Patricia G. Ureña**  
*Commission Chair*



Figure 3. OHV recreation is a priceless shared experience that brings friends and families together to enjoy the great outdoors.

# Message from the OHMVR Division Deputy Director



Figure 4. Deputy Director Sarah Miggins during Ocotillo Wells SVRA's flat-tailed horned lizard demography survey.

## LOOKING BACK ON A 50 – YEAR RIDE

I joined the California Department of Parks and Recreation's (State Parks or the Department) OHMVR Division team in 2020 as communities and workplaces dealt with the impacts of the COVID-19 global pandemic. I was impressed at how the staff adapted, problem solved, and delivered critical services for the visiting public during this very challenging time. So many people sought respite in safe outdoor spaces. Staff were also engaged in quite contentious and emotional public hearings regarding the future operations at Oceano Dunes SVRA. These are challenging moments for all of us, and there were no answers to these complex issues right away. I knew that there was much to be learned as we tried to address the differences. Like OHV recreation, people do not just become an OHV-er without practicing the trails or track.

One of the priorities presented to me by the OHMVR Division and its partners was to sustain the OHV story by commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the OHV program in 2021. As we learned of new COVID-19 event protocols, these celebrations were relegated online until it was safe to gather in person together. Fortunately, the Division joined California Outdoor Recreation Foundation (CORF) and many other friends at Hungry Valley SVRA on October 9, 2021. We had a great time sharing our OHV heritage. Looking back on any time in history is always a reflective moment and the opportunity to appreciate the view.

My initial focus following this special event has been ensuring that our collaborations are mutually beneficial and taking the time to learn from community partners as we seek to expand OHV lands due to the recent passage of [Senate Bill 155](#). It provides \$29.8 million to State Parks for investments in OHV projects at Carnegie SVRA and funding for new property acquisition for OHV riding in California.

While being partnership-centric, it is also essential for the OHMVR Division to offer unique learning experiences through safety and education programs while responding to recent demographic changes. Riders of today are much younger and new to the OHV experience. In addition to these focus areas, the Division must highlight what OHV recreation provides for the millions of individuals and families visiting state vehicular recreation areas. Finally, we must recruit new organizations, individuals, and perspectives to the table to learn about nature-based investments and vice-versa.

When I accepted the position, I did not underestimate the challenges ahead and was determined to continue the groundwork with those that set the pace from the past. I continue to be firmly committed to the work and success of the OHMVR Division. I have been a part of the OHV effort for over two decades. I recently was a member of the California OHMVR Commission and a State Parks partner, providing work crews and coordinating OHV volunteers as an OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements recipient with [Southern California Mountains Foundation](#) (SCMF) and



[American Conservation Experience](#) (ACE). These organizations continue to serve on various trails and dunes projects throughout the state and federal lands. I was so pleased to meet a former ACE member at Ocotillo Wells SVRA that is now an environmental scientist. I hope to meet many more corpsmembers serving as State Parks' natural resource leaders. As the late and longtime Golden Gate National Recreation Area General Superintendent Brian O'Neill said, "if you don't involve the community, it is a missed opportunity."

Several components are driving (no pun intended!) the success of the OHMVR Program.

### **Some of these drivers include:**

- Continuous engagement with teams of State Park employees with various professional backgrounds and scientific disciplines, such as land-use planners, natural resource managers, environmental educators, scientists, land-use attorneys, law enforcement, communications marketing, and accounting.
- Consistent engagement with the California OHMVR Commission, stakeholders from the OHV and conservation communities, OHV industry experts, and California Natural Resources Agency partners.

Another component critical to the success is the OHV Trust Fund that ensures OHMVR Program activities happen.

Finally, the OHMVR Grant and Cooperative Agreements Program provides financial assistance to local, state, and federal agencies, nonprofits, and educational institutions. Since its inception, the Division has granted more than \$740 million for restoration, ground operations, acquisition and planning, law enforcement, and safety education projects in California.

These drivers and components of the OHMVR Program provide long-term and sustainable social, environmental, and economic benefits throughout the state. OHV capital from user fees, taxes, and monies spent in local economies surrounding OHV recreation is returned and multiplied through the OHMVR Program's activities.

The recreational demand experienced during COVID-19, coupled with critical health and social events addressing racism at all levels of society, has illuminated how the outdoor sector is integral on various fronts, whether socially, economically, or politically. Conversations on why diversity and inclusion were sparked when members of the California OHMVR Commission and community joined online to specifically discuss current events. They organized monthly to identify the faces of OHV to discuss equitable access for all. I strongly believe that these are the kinds of conversations that help improve and inform the future of recreation and conservation on public lands. We have partnered with two universities to gather input from our visitors and launched an integrated marketing and communications campaign to highlight the conservation efforts of the Division with a focus on our diverse and responsible riders.

Fortunately, the OHMVR Program and OHV Trust Fund are generated by OHV enthusiasts. The newest generation is on the rise, which directly impacts OHV recreation funding in a good way. For instance, those funding sources improve wildlife habitat, management, and other conservation aims linked to OHV recreation.

As we charge into the next decade, the OHMVR Division continues to build on the original vision. We have embraced better practices through SB 249 while granting our partners \$30 million to \$35 million annually to protect the state’s most treasured OHV landscapes.

Leaders must continue to be relevant to outdoor and recreation enthusiasts by providing various experiences in nature. No matter what that is – it will make a long-lasting impression and connection. We will continue to adapt to the possibilities as more alternatives come available, including e-OHV. Most importantly, we will protect California’s unique natural and cultural resources.

Let us move forward together,

**Sarah Miggins**  
*OHMVR Division Deputy Director*



Figure 5. 2020 King of the Hammers with OHMVR Law Enforcement.

From Left to right: Josh Bernadas – Park and Recreation Specialist, OHMVR Division; Brian Robertson- Retired Division Chief, OHMVR; Callan McLaughlin- Superintendent II, OHMVR Division; Luke Ware- Supervising State Park Peace Officer, Ocotillo Wells District; Al Chavez- State Park Peace Officer, OHMVR Division; Todd Lewis- AGPA, OHMVR Division; Ric Hanson- State Park Peace Officer, Diablo Range District; Scott Struckman- Supervising State Park Peace Officer, Diablo Range District; Cameron O’Quinn- State Park Peace Officer, Gold Fields District; Sarah Miggins- Former OHMVR Commission Chair, OHMVR Division; Mike Smittle- State Park Peace Officer, OHMVR Division; Steve Schory- Superintendent II, OHMVR Division; Janessa Sederquist- State Park Peace Officer, Northern Buttes District; Carl Ulrich- State Park Peace Officer Lifeguard, Orange Coast District; Niall Gow- State Park Peace Officer, OHMVR Division; Sam Allsop- Retired Desert Division Chief; Jon Brandt- State Park Peace Officer, OHMVR Division.



Figure 6. Sarah, Director Quintero and Commissioner Diane Ross Leech at Carnegie SVRA.



Figure 7. Planting trees at Prairie City SVRA on Earth Day 2022 with volunteers.



Figure 8. Celebrating 50 years with the next generation of riders and California State Parks' employees.



Figure 9. Sarah and Chair Ureña at Heber Dunes SVRA.



# Executive Summary

As required by Public Resources Code (PRC) Section (§) 5090.24(h), Duties and Responsibilities of the Commission, this Program Report is submitted by the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Commission to inform the Governor and Legislature of the progress and developments in the State's OHMVR Program. The Commission shall:

Prepare and submit a program report to the Governor and appropriate policy and fiscal committees of each Legislature house on or before January 1, 2022, and every three years after that. According to this subdivision, the report shall be submitted in compliance with [Section 9795 of the Government Code](#). The Commission shall adopt the program report after discussing the contents during two or more public meetings. One of the public meetings shall be held in northern California, and one shall be held in southern California. The report shall address the status of the Program and off-highway motor vehicle recreation, including the following:

**Report Requirement 1:** A summary of the process, standards, and plans developed according to this chapter.

**Report Requirement 2:** The condition of natural and cultural resources of areas and trails receiving state off-highway motor vehicle funds and resolving conflicts of use in those areas and trails.

**Report Requirement 3:** The status and accomplishments of funds appropriated for restoration under [paragraph \(2\) of subdivision \(b\) of PRC §5090.50](#).

**Report Requirement 4:** A summary of resource monitoring data compiled and restoration work completed.

**Report Requirement 5:** Actions taken by the Division and Department since the last program report to discourage and decrease trespass of off-highway motor vehicles on private property.

**Report Requirement 6:** Other relevant program-related environmental issues that have arisen at state vehicular recreation areas since the last program report, including, but not limited to, actions that are undertaken to ensure compliance with federal and state Endangered Species Acts, local air quality laws, and regulations, federal Clean Water Act, and regional water board regulations, or permits.

This Program Report is an overarching document that touches on all aspects of California's Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation program (OHMVR Program or the Program). The Program facilitates the accommodation of OHV and related non-motorized recreation. It also supports environmental stewardship, education, and law enforcement efforts associated with OHV recreation.

## Report Organization

- Chapter 1 provides an overview of the OHMVR Program, the OHMVR Commission, and Division duties and responsibilities.
- Chapter 2 describes the OHMVR Division and SVRA natural and cultural resource management programs, plans, and restoration projects. It includes content to meet Report Requirements 2 and 4.
- Chapter 3 discusses the OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program (Grants Program), Restoration and Ground Operations Grant project highlights, and other content for Report Requirement 3.
- Chapter 4 describes the OHMVR Public Safety Program, Law Enforcement Grant Project highlights, and content to meet Report Requirement 5.
- Chapter 5 provides an overview of the OHMVR Interpretation and Education and Winter Recreation Programs.
- Chapter 6 discusses other relevant environmental issues that arose since the 2017 Program Report to meet Report Requirement 6.



Figure 10. OHMVR Deputy Director Miggins (left) and State Parks Director Quintero (right) at the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the OHMVR Program on December 22, 2021.



Figure 11. 2019 OHMVR Commission tour and camping on iconic Rubicon Trail with Commissioner Ed Patrovsky, BLM Manager Jane Arteaga, Commissioner Paul Slavik and Commissioner Sarah Miggins.



# Chapter 1: OHMVR Program Overview

## Introduction

California State Parks' OHMVR Program entered its 50th year in 2021, and there is much to celebrate. On October 3, 2017, the Governor signed Senate Bill 249, making the OHMVR program permanent. This legislation strengthened the Program and balanced natural and cultural resource protection, and maintained high-quality OHV recreation for the public.

California is recognized as a leader in managing OHV recreation as a sustainable activity. For 50 years, State Parks have established management practices that reduce or prevent damage to the environment from OHV activity. By actively managing OHV areas and partnering with other local, state, and federal land managers, these practices have been applied to a statewide system of OHV recreation opportunities where visitors can fully enjoy California's spectacular outdoors.

The OHMVR Program is carried out through two primary components. The first component is the nine State Vehicular Recreation Areas (SVRAs) that provide motorized recreational opportunities on approximately 145,000 acres of State Parks owned and managed lands dedicated to OHV recreation and related uses. The SVRAs are managed to ensure public safety, protect sensitive natural and cultural resources, and mitigate conflicts between various recreation user groups.

The second component is the Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program (Grants Program), which provides financial assistance to local, state, and federal agencies, Native American tribes, nonprofits, and educational institutions. Along with the SVRAs, OHV recreational opportunities on federal and other lands are an essential element of the OHMVR Program and comprise approximately 80 percent of the OHV recreation in California. This critical financial assistance enables these federal agencies to implement sustainable, environmentally responsible OHV recreational opportunities. Funds are also available to counties and local communities affected by OHV uses and impacts that require management, regulatory action, education, or law enforcement. Since 1974, the Grants Program has awarded over \$740 million to recipients for OHV-related activities, including restoration, law enforcement, safety, and education for OHV recreation.

In addition to the Grants Program, the OHMVR Division is also responsible for the motorized portion of the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). The RTP is an assistance program of the Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration. The RTP provides funds to California to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses.

California State Parks works to ensure that quality recreational opportunities remain available for future generations by providing education, conservation, and enforcement efforts that balance OHV recreation impacts with programs that conserve and protect cultural and natural resources.

The OHMVR Program is supported entirely by user fees and taxes, with no direct state General Fund support. The OHV registration fees, SVRA entrance fees, and a fuel tax pay for the Program. OHV recreation is a family-friendly activity, often shared by many generations in one family.

Furthermore, OHVs provide a means for those with mobility challenges who cannot experience nature and outdoor spaces through non-motorized recreation. Participants share a love and appreciation of the outdoors, enjoy connecting with nature through OHV recreation and other non-motorized recreation, and some volunteer their time to conservation projects in their favorite recreation areas.

## Legislation

In 1971, by enacting the Chappie-Z'berg Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Law (the OHV Law), the Legislature addressed the growing use of motorized vehicles off-highway for the registration and operation of these vehicles. The OHV Law also provided funding for administering the OHMVR Program and facilities for OHV recreation (California Vehicle Code (CVC) § 38000 et seq.).

The OHV Law was founded on the principle that “effectively managed areas and adequate facilities for the use of OHV and conservation and enforcement are essential for ecologically balanced recreation” (PRC § 5090.02 (b)). The Law required maintenance and oversight to allow sustainable OHV use consistent with sound environmental stewardship.

In 1982, these principles were expanded upon by enacting the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Act, which has been amended numerous times and is now referred to as the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Act of 2003 (OHMVR Act) (PRC § 5090.01 et seq.).

As articulated in the OHMVR Act, the legislative intent is that existing OHV areas be expanded, added to, and managed to sustain areas for long-term motor vehicle recreation. The OHMVR Program supports motorized off-highway access to non-motorized recreational opportunities. The OHMVR Act requires the OHMVR Program to have equal priority with other programs administered in the State Park System.

Through the OHMVR Act, the Legislature created a separate division within California State Parks, the OHMVR Division, which administers and manages the OHMVR Program.

In 2007, Senate Bill (SB) 742 was introduced by Senator Steinberg and co-authored by Assembly Member Wolk. Enacted in 2008, SB 742 made several significant changes that enhanced the OHMVR Division’s ability to meet its goals. In addition to other changes, SB 742 modified the Commission’s makeup and responsibilities, increased funding to the OHV Trust Fund, and adjusted grant funds allocation. It also extended the OHMVR Program sunset to January 1, 2018, the most extended in the OHMVR Program’s history. The bill received strong bipartisan support from the Assembly and the Senate as it passed through the Legislature by a vote of 114-5.

In 2017, Senator Allen introduced SB 249, that revised various provisions of the Act, including permanent reauthorization of the OHMVR Program within California State Parks. The bill also sought to strengthen the Program’s environmental protection and conservation measures, including:

- Prepare and implement management and wildlife habitat protection plans (WHPPs) in existing and new SVRAs.

- Post all plans, reports, and studies related to OHV recreation developed by the Division on the Department’s website.
- Update the 2008 Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines (Soil Standard) to establish a generic and measurable soil conservation standard by December 31, 2020. Review and update that standard when deemed necessary.
- The Department shall monitor each SVRA annually to determine whether soil conservation standards and the objectives of WHPPs are being met to protect natural, cultural, and archaeological resources within SVRAs.
- The Division shall take other specified measures to protect natural and cultural resources within SVRAs.
- The bill extends the Act’s provisions indefinitely.

This bill, authored by Senator Allen, was informed by a collaborative effort of representatives from California State Parks, the OHV community, environmental organizations, and Member and Committee staff. This broad coalition achieved a balance between maintaining opportunities for OHV recreation and protecting cultural and natural resources. Governor Brown signed the bill into law on October 3, 2017, Chapter 459, Statutes of 2017.

## Program Goals

The goals of the OHMVR Program are consistent with the Legislature’s intent as recorded in PRC §5090.02(c):

1. Existing off-highway motor vehicle recreational areas, facilities, and opportunities should be expanded and managed consistently with this chapter to maintain sustained long-term use.
2. New off-highway motor vehicle recreational areas, facilities, and opportunities should be provided and managed under this chapter to sustain long-term use.
3. The Department should support motorized recreation and motorized off-highway access to non-motorized recreation.
4. When areas or trails, or portions thereof, cannot be maintained to appropriate established standards for sustained long-term use, they should be closed to use and repaired to prevent accelerated erosion. Those areas should remain closed until they can be managed within the soil conservation standard or closed and restored.
5. Prompt and effective implementation of the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Program by the Department and the Division of Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation should have equal priority among other programs in the Department.
6. OHV recreation should be managed according to this chapter through financial assistance to local governments and joint undertakings with agencies of the United States and federally recognized Native American tribes.





Figure 12. OHMVR 50th Anniversary logos.

## OHMVR Commission

The OHMVR Act established the Commission (PRC § 5090.15 et seq.) to provide a public body of appointed members having expertise in various areas related to off-highway recreation and environmental protection. The Commission is dedicated to reviewing and commenting on Program implementation, encouraging public input on issues and concerns affecting the OHMVR Program, considering and approving general plans for SVRAs, and providing advice to the OHMVR Division.

## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Per PRC § 5090.24, the Commission has the following duties and responsibilities (summarized):

- Be fully informed regarding all governmental activities affecting the program.
- Meet at least four times per year at various locations throughout the state to receive comments on the program’s implementation. Establish an annual calendar of proposed meetings at the beginning of each calendar year.
- Before beginning each grant program cycle, the meetings shall include a public meeting to collect public input concerning the program, recommendations for program improvements, and specific project needs for the system.
- Hold a public hearing to receive public comment regarding any proposed substantial acquisition or development project at a location near the project.
- Upon the request of any owner or tenant, consider any alleged adverse impacts occurring on a person’s property from the operation of OHVs whose property is in the vicinity of any land in the system. The Commission will recommend to the Division suitable measures to prevent any adverse effects and suitable measures for restoration of the property.
- Review and comment annually to the Director on the proposed budget of the OHV Trust Fund expenditures.
- Review all plans for new and expanded local and regional vehicle recreation areas that have applied for grant funds.

- Review and comment on strategic plans periodically developed by the Division.
- Every three years, prepare and submit a program report to the Governor and the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of each house of the Legislature.
- Make other recommendations to the deputy director regarding the OHMVR program.

## APPOINTMENTS TO THE COMMISSION

PRC Section 5090.15 (summarized).

- The OHMVR Commission consists of nine members. The Governor appoints five members and is subject to Senate confirmation. The Senate Committee on Rules appoints two, and the Speaker of the Assembly appoints two.
- Commission nominees shall have expertise in or represent one of the following interests: (1) Off-highway vehicle recreation, (2) Environmental protection, (3) Motorized access to non-motorized recreation, (4) Law enforcement, (5) Environmental restoration, (6) Health and safety, (7) Rural landowners or residents, (8) Biological or soil specializations, and (9) Public-at-large.
- The OHMVR Commission has the same duty, power, purpose, responsibility, or jurisdiction as the State Park and Recreation Commission for SVRAs.

## 2022 OHMVR COMMISSIONERS



Figure 13. Commission Chair, Patricia G. Ureña.

### Chair Patricia Ureña

Appointed by Governor Brown in 2018, Commissioner Patricia Ureña has worked with the City of El Centro Community Services Department since 1982 and serves as the Recreation Supervisor that oversees the aquatics division and all sports and facility programming. She has been instrumental in spearheading fundraising and organizing volunteers for special events. She is the Director of the El Centro National Youth Project Using Mini-bikes (NYPUM) program. This program works with youth ages 10-17, teaching and certifying them in motorcycle safety riding lessons, desert survival tips, and working with youth experiencing challenges in school.

### What I love about OHV Recreation and the OHMVR Program

I enjoy living so close to our desert because of the many riding areas I can explore and relax in while riding my quad or motorcycle. Getting outdoors is important because I feel released from the pressures at work while embracing the majestic views from a high mountain area. You can sit and hear your heartbeat and the wind travel through your helmet and get some fierce exercise while riding around these wonderful trails.

I love the OHMVR Program because while we can enjoy OHV trails, we also experience nature at its best. The program works to protect, educate and teach people to be safe while visiting,



Figure 14. Commissioner Urena and son, Robert at Gordons Wells during the annual Glamis Clean Up event.

riding, or exploring our trails. It is important to understand our natural environment and, more importantly, to protect it from being damaged or destroyed by inexperienced riders. When you become an OHV rider, you bond with a large community of OHV enthusiasts, and those friendships are everlasting.

My family and the youth I train in motorcycle safety mostly ride at the Superstition Mountains, Ocotillo Wells, and Heber Dunes. These riding sites are only about 15 minutes to a half-hour away from El Centro. Part of riding is enjoying an outdoor cooked meal and taking in the fresh air. At night, you can see the stars and almost touch them. There is so much history to teach these young riders and life lessons, and I hope that they take what they have learned to the next generation.

My favorite OHVs are off-road motorcycles and then my quad. I always tell beginner riders that you can ride anything if you can safely ride a motorcycle. I love riding

a motorcycle because you need to have good balance, a good eye to read the terrain quicker, and a much faster ride. I usually use my quad to haul medical equipment, water, and food when going on a buddy ride with kids. So, the outdoors is very important to me because it bonds families together. You get the opportunity to learn more about camping, fishing, boating, hiking, and visiting SVRAs and what they have to offer. I use my outdoor experiences to teach youth how to fish, camp, ride safely, cook outdoors, etc. Teaching youth how to survive outdoors gives them an upper hand in dealing with daily living. The skills they acquire will be useful in securing a fun and exciting ride for them and their families. OHMVR Programs like these are important to California because we need to educate OHV riders early and help them understand how important these programs are for future generations.



Figure 15. NYPUM participants riding at the Superstition Mountains.



Figure 16. NYPUM Rodeo at Ocotillo Wells SVRA. Kids doing the hot dog snatch on motorcycles.



Figure 17. Vice-Chair Kimberlina Whettam.

## Vice-Chair Kimberlina Whettam

Assemblyman Anthony Rendon appointed commissioner Whettam in February 2019. A native Californian and third-generation Los Angeles resident, Woodland Hills has been home for Commissioner Whettam for the past sixteen years. With encouragement from her adventurous parents, she grew up exploring the outdoors on foot, Jeep®, boat, camper, and motorcycle. She has instilled her love of nature, the outdoors, and adventure in her two children, who share her enthusiasm for exploring California’s amazing terrain.

### What I love about OHV Recreation and the OHMVR Program

Outdoor and recreational adventures are my life. My earliest and most fond memories are of the great outdoors with my family. My parents only took us on outdoor holidays. My Dad took us motorcycle riding, “Jeeping,” hiking, and backpacking. My mom and grandmother took us to National and State Parks. We were taught from a young age that “the family that rides and plays together stays together,” which we have found to be true. I have carried this forward with our kids and my siblings, and we still get outside and play.

We were raised riding at Gormon (Hungry Valley SVRA) and camping and playing at the Oceano Dunes. I started riding a motorcycle at five years of age. By 12 years old, I was old enough to mow lawns in the neighborhood to save money that my Dad matched to purchase my first bike, the “big” XR200. I was ready to move up in size, and boy, I loved that steel 1980s bike! I love to get outside to play, relax, burn up excess energy, dream, enjoy the beautiful scenery, explore, play with family, expose friends and family to the joy of playing outdoors, and have fun.

The OHMVR program has created some of the best playgrounds with developed and undeveloped camping sites, maintained trails with signage and maps, restrooms, conservation, restoration, and public safety through law enforcement. Growing up riding in Gormon, the park became a dream after the OHMVR Program took effect and money poured in to establish an incredible



Figure 18. Commissioner Whettam and her dirt bike.



Figure 19. Commissioner Whettam with young riders.

park. Backbone is one of my favorite trails! We love to ride and camp from Hungry Valley SVRA to the National Forest in the Eastern Sierras, enjoying off-road vehicles, mountain biking, playing with water toys, hiking, etc.

I love riding because it quickly takes my full attention and reduces my stress. It is challenging and fun, all at the same time. There is nothing more important than me getting outside. It is where I go to remain healthy in mind, spirit, and body. The great outdoors puts me in my place because I feel how small I am in comparison.

The OHMVR Program is an incredible program that provides a safe and welcoming place for families to camp, ride, and play outdoors. I can only hope to see expansions of this program throughout the state, including some urban areas that could allow for electric bike use. I would also love to see new multi-use parks developed with buffer zones that allow traditional off-road recreation, buffered by e-bike riding, mountain bike riding areas, and buffered by conservation areas. These are, in my opinion, compatible uses. SVRAs provide access to the diverse areas within this beautiful state, provide diverse recreational opportunities, and preserve open recreational areas to play alongside managed conservation. What a beautiful combination -- what's not to love?



Figure 20. Commissioner Tina Brazil.

### **Commissioner Tina Brazil**

I fell in love with the outdoors when I was young. My sister and I rodeoed in junior and high school. We spent time riding trails together and with friends. We would hunt with our Dad and spend a lot of time in the mountains. Now my husband and I love to ride our ATV and motorized bicycles on our off-highway state parks and in the areas where we love to hunt. We love being outdoors together and as a family. I believe that spending time outdoors is essential to your well-being physically and mentally. It lets you relax and be thankful for your surroundings and the people who love it as much as you do!



Figure 21. Commissioner Ted Cabral.

### **Commissioner Ted Cabral**

Appointed by Governor Brown in 2013, Commissioner Cabral is a native Californian currently residing in Petaluma. His passion for motorcycles began when his parents opened a motorcycle dealership in 1969. As a young man, he learned the value of land stewardship while developing a love for the outdoors when he spent time on his family's ranch near Tomales Bay.

#### **What I love about OHV Recreation and the OHMVR Program**

As a native Californian, I was fortunate to be raised in western Sonoma County during a period when free-range parenting was acceptable. I

spent most of my youth roaming the area looking for frogs, snakes, and other forms of wildlife. Every day was an adventure!

I was introduced to motorcycles by my Dad and his friends. Watching them ride their dirt bikes was a mesmerizing experience and left a lifelong impression. One time after watching them ride, I decided it was time to take the training wheels off my bicycle to graduate to a motorcycle sooner. I snuck into our garage, somehow found the proper wrench, and off they came! I jumped on that old Schwinn, then coasted it down the hill in front of our house, and haven't stopped riding on two wheels. Over the years, our weekends turned into big family adventures. We enjoyed many days riding dirt bikes and traveling around California with friends in our secondhand motorhome. Looking back, it was an incredible childhood that I would not trade with anyone. Those youthful experiences created a lifelong passion for the outdoors and OHV recreation.



Figure 22. Commissioner Ted Cabral on an outdoor adventure.

As time passed, advancing age and many medical issues began to take a toll. Multiple Sclerosis (MS) diagnosis came as a shock, and my youthful invincibility seemed to disappear overnight. I constantly worried about the disease and found myself in a state of depression. Luckily, I overcame many of the symptoms of MS by changing my lifestyle, focusing on a health-supportive diet, and practicing many forms of exercise. I physically felt better, but my depression would still hang over me like a dark cloud. Not wanting to live that way, I decided it was time to go back to what made me happy - outdoor recreation. It became my savior! As my mental health improved, so did my physical being. I felt whole again and now understood how people facing issues such as mine could benefit from my experiences.

During that period of my life, I also provided public oversight on a Sonoma County watershed committee for the Petaluma River Basin. This appointment allowed me to get my feet wet in our government planning processes and sharpen my skills on public oversight's critical and often overlooked function within our democracy. Many years later, I was fortunate to be appointed to California's OHMVR Commission by Governor Brown, where I have proudly served for three terms.

Wide-eyed and full of ambition, I charged into my appointment with several goals. The first was to improve communication between government agencies. The second was to advocate for continued motorized recreation access focusing on disabled and elderly access. The third was to stand tall against the political machine that has taken over our system.

Based on results, I was somewhat successful on the first two, but that darn political machine left me feeling like the Tank Man at Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989.

This report is my last official duty as part of the OHMVR Commission. It is extremely important to acknowledge the most pleasant surprise of this journey, the dedicated and professional staff at California's OHMVR Division. The relationships we have built are strong, and I respect them

deeply. Unfortunately, these awesome people get blamed for many of the OHMVR Program’s issues. Most of these issues stem from decisions that players in the above-mentioned political machine make. I have witnessed the look of utter frustration on the faces of the OHMVR Division staff many times. Usually, after putting their heart and soul into a project only to have it change or disputed at the last minute by political pressure.

In closing, I have some requests. For public members, please respect the OHMVR Division staff even if you disagree with the direction they must take. Instead, focus on relationship building with staff, Commissioners, and the political representatives for the area where you live. It is my view that our community’s biggest need is to improve our political profile.

If you are part of the political process and reading this, please remember that you work for *all* the citizens of California, not just your ideological and financial supporters. Your actions are divisive and can be discriminatory towards disabled and elderly recreationalists. Motorized vehicles allow these people to access the same type of recreation as an able-bodied person. Perhaps spending some time educating yourself about this quality program that offers managed motorized recreation while providing funds and direction for strict environmental protections would be helpful to reduce any preconceived notions you may have.



Figure 23. Commissioner Tom Lemmon.

### **Commissioner Tom Lemmon**

Appointed by the Senate Rules Committee and ProTem Senator Toni Atkins in January 2020, Commissioner Lemmon is a native Californian. He currently resides in San Diego with his wife Karen of over 25 years and daughter KT who shares her parents’ passion for the outdoors. Commissioner Lemmon is a desert rat by birth, raised in Ocotillo Wells. His exposure and participation in the off-road community span five decades before green stickers, site maps, or road signs.

### **What I love about OHV Recreation and the OHMVR Program**

There is a story that I have shared often about how I was personally affected by park closures. Honestly, I was bitter at first, but because of rearview mirror time,



Figure 24. Commissioner Tom Lemmon having fun in the desert.



Figure 25. Commissioner Tom Lemmon (Left), and Daughter KT (Right) spend time together.

I can look back decades and understand that targeted closures help protect sensitive habitats, endangered wildlife, archaeologically and culturally significant places, as well as native flora and fauna. I am grateful that the off-road park's managers had vision and forethought. It turns out I enjoy that as well - it creates added value to the Off-Road experience.



Figure 26. Commissioner Edward Patrovsky.

### **Commissioner Edward Patrovsky**

Appointed by the State Senate in January 2013, Commissioner Edward Patrovsky developed his passion for the outdoors, hiking and riding his dirt bike in the Angeles National Forest as a teenager. After graduating from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, Patrovsky worked as a firefighter for the United States Forest Service (USFS). This experience led to many years of employment as a Park Ranger at several of our country's National Parks, including the Grand Canyon, Rocky Mountain, and Sequoia-Kings Canyon.

### **What I love about OHV Recreation and the OHMVR Program**

Growing up in Los Angeles, the public lands of the Angeles and San Bernardino National Forests were my perfect escape from the pressures of adolescent growing pains. When I was 17, I bought a small motorcycle and explored the Jeep trails and fire roads in these forests. I also began to hike and backpack into more remote areas, fishing for wild trout in some streams. Returning from these outings, I felt recharged. I developed a love for nature which later led to a varied career, first as a Professional Whitewater River Guide, then as a Ranger for the National Park Service, and later the United States Bureau of Land Management (BLM). It was gratifying to be charged with protecting some of the same Public Land resources that I love. Our country is very fortunate to have millions of acres of Public Lands that citizens can enjoy for their various recreational pursuits. With mutual respect for other recreationists and the land itself, our Public Lands will continue to offer a high-quality recreational escape from the pressures of modern society.



Figure 27. Commissioner Patrovsky enjoying river rafting.

Nine years ago, I was appointed as a member of the OHMVR Commission. Serving on this volunteer body has been a good ride. I especially enjoy listening to the varied experiences and viewpoints of the members of the public who appear before the Commission. During my career in Public Lands Management, I have worked with a more dedicated group than the State Parks OHMVR staff. I especially support the Grants Program, funded by OHV registration fees and a pro-rata share of the State Gas Tax. This OHV Trust Fund is intended to give back to OHV recreationists and the public. The Grant Administrators annually award millions of dollars from the OHV Trust Fund to public



agencies and selected nonprofit groups to operate and maintain riding areas, rider education, safety, and restoration of OHV impacted areas. Law enforcement grants help public agencies patrol riding areas and protect private property from trespass, which these agencies would otherwise have not fully funded. I have been fortunate to see first-hand positive results of these OHV Grants on public lands administered by the USFS and BLM.

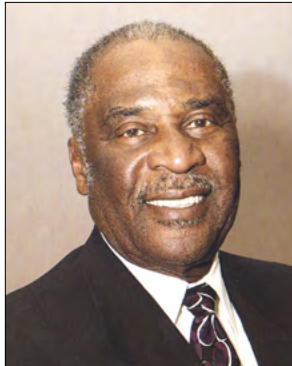


Figure 28. Commissioner Tommy Randle.

### Commissioner Tommy Randle

Governor Brown appointed commissioner Randle to the California State Parks Commission, where he served for eight years. Governor Newsom appointed Mr. Randle in 2021 when his term with State Parks expired. Open spaces have remained a positive influence in his life. The passion for Commissioner Randle is the ability to admire, participate, and encourage others to take advantage of all the outdoor activities California has to offer. He wants to make sure that anyone who wants to take advantage of the many outdoor activities available in California can and will be encouraged to do so.

### What I love about OHV Recreation and the OHMVR Program

I have enjoyed the outdoors on public lands for many years. In some instances, however, I was not aware of which public land I was standing on until I became a Parks and Recreation Commissioner in San Dimas, California. After my Commission expired in San Dimas, I became a California State Parks Commissioner for many years, and now I am a California State OHMVR Commissioner! As the new OHMVR Commissioner, I now realize the many benefits that the outdoors offers that I was not aware of before becoming a Commissioner. I would often go to the park and read, walk, or run, but OHMVR has opened a completely new adventure for me. Although I do not ride a motorcycle or other off-road vehicle, I enjoy watching others as they enjoy the many services the OHMVR Division continues to provide.

Some of my golfing friends have motorcycles and have encouraged me to ride with them - but I do not have a motorcycle or any other vehicle of this nature. My 4-year-old grandson, who lives in California, will know about all these benefits because he enjoys many outdoor activities! The OHMVR Program is a must-have and a must-use facility for the many participants who have, are and will continue to enjoy the many outdoor spaces and venues provided for their recreational use. As the newest OHMVR Commissioner, I am laser-focused on improving the greatest adventure presented to humanity -- the ability to continue to utilize our outdoor spaces for recreational use, whether alone, with family, or just for shared enjoyment!



Figure 29. Commissioner Randle (left), Susan (right), and grandson (front).



### **Commissioner Diane Ross-Leech**

Appointed by Speaker of the Assembly Anthony Rendon in August 2020, Commissioner Ross-Leech is a native Californian passionate about environmental stewardship. Commissioner Ross-Leech has been an avid outdoorswoman from an early age – hiking, camping, canoeing, backpacking, skiing, snowshoeing, and bird watching throughout California and the West.

### **What I love about OHV Recreation and the OHMVR Program**

Figure 30. Commissioner Diane Ross-Leech.

From an early age, I have been drawn to the great outdoors. My sister’s biology teacher inspired me, who took her class (and her little sister tagging along) on a camping field trip to Point Reyes National Seashore. From then on - I was hooked! My high school experience further ingrained my love of the outdoors, primarily through my participation in a six-month Wilderness School, which included backpacking in the Panamint Mountains and Death Valley, and a summer scholarship to the Outward-Bound Program in the Colorado Rockies.

I am so fortunate to be a native Californian, enjoying our diverse landscapes and natural beauty up and down our great state! I have traveled all over the state with friends and family to my favorite places, including:

- Backpacking in the John Muir Wilderness and the Trinity Alps
- Camping at McArthur Burney Falls and the Blue Lakes in Mokelumne Wilderness
- Kayaking at Elkhorn Slough and Lake Tahoe
- Birding in San Pablo Bay and Consumnes River Preserve near Sacramento
- Rock climbing in Joshua Tree National Park



Figure 31. Commissioner Ross-Leech cross country skiing.



Figure 32. Commissioner Ross-Leech enjoying day hiking.

- Snowshoeing at Mount Rose Tahoe Meadows
- Cross-country skiing at Lake Van Norden
- Downhill skiing at Northstar and Alpine Meadows

And most importantly, visiting Carnegie, Oceano Dunes, and Hollister Hills SVRAs.



### Commissioner Roger Salazar

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 75 years.

### What I love about OHV Recreation and the OHMVR Program

Figure 33. Commissioner Roger Salazar.

It is no stretch to say that off-roading runs in my blood. My grandfather purchased his first Willys Jeep for his ranch in Texas when my father was a newborn. My Dad would take me out on the Rubicon Trail in his CJ5 in the 70s and 80s. I learned to drive in a Jeep, and there have been a Jeep and other off-road vehicles in the Salazar family for more than 70 years.

One of the things I love about the OHMVR Program is that off-road recreation is something Californians from all walks of life, ethnicities, and socio-economic backgrounds can enjoy together. We could not afford expensive sporting events or theme parks when I was growing up. My parents’ idea for recreation under a limited budget consisted of camping, hiking, and



Figure 34. Commissioner Roger Salazar on the Rubicon Trail.



Figure 35. Commissioner Roger Salazar in Moab, Utah.

“Jeeping.” For the price of a full tank, we could get out to explore the wilderness using off-road trails and enjoy our own “rides.” I also found that off-roaders are the ultimate conservationists. OHMVR parks and programs allow off-roaders to enjoy the outdoors while supporting conservation, trail clean-ups, and protecting the environment.

These days I get out to the trails to explore places of extreme beauty and take in views that would not be possible to access without an off-road vehicle. I enjoy the challenge of getting to those places and the serenity that comes with natural beauty. I love the Rubicon Trail and enjoy visiting Big Bear, Ocotillo, Death Valley, the Lost Coast, and trails on the Stanislaus Forest.

The OHMVR Program is important because it helps us balance public access to off-highway motor vehicle recreation areas and protect the environment. Californians have shown we can do both without sacrificing either.

## **OHMVR COMMISSION STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH**

SB 249 (2017) required the Department of Parks and Recreation to convene a stakeholder process to develop recommendations to create a more diverse OHMVR Commission. The Department prepared a report in 2020 to describe the process and recommendations for the Governor and Legislature to modify Commission membership to better reflect California’s diversity and those who utilize California’s OHV recreation areas.

The stakeholder group members included representatives from the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee; Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee; Environmental & Energy Consulting; Cal Wild; California Native Plant Society; Defenders of Wildlife; Environmental CA; Southern California Mountain Foundation; Cal EEC; Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commissioners; California Off-Road Vehicle Association; Blue Ribbon Coalition; Quiet Warrior Racing; American Sand Association and American Motorcycling Association.

The Commission re-visited some participants from environmental organizations in the stakeholder process to get their perspective on how SB 249 has been implemented within the OHMVR Division and Commission.

The Commission also reached out to our federal agency partners – the United States Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) liaisons -- to get their perspective on major environmental and climate change threats. They also asked the federal partners about emerging resource management issues, impacts on road and trail management work, and how the OHMVR Grants Program is helping them to tackle these challenges.

The environmental organizations contacted the OHMVR Commission and provide their perspective on OHV recreation. In conversations, the organizations expressed interest in other stakeholder processes, especially in future OHV areas, and suggested early upstream involvement of diverse stakeholders, Native American tribes, resource agencies, and a “least conflict” of high natural resource values approach. Some areas of concern include:

- Enforcement for areas closed to OHV use.
- Auditing OHMVR Grantees to ensure compliance.

- Effectiveness of riding area closures.
- Use of fire breaks that become unofficial OHV trails.
- Noxious weed control in riding areas.
- Suggesting the OHMVR Division partner with the California Department of Forestry (CalFire) on post-fire response and restoration.
- Concerns about holistic management of federal, state, and private lands in the desert to prevent severe environmental damage.
- More robust travel management planning and enforcement.

## **OHMVR Division**

The OHMVR Division provides technical assistance and funding to nine SVRAs throughout California and supports local, state, and federal OHV recreation areas through technical help and professional guidance. Per PRC § 5090.32, the Division has the following duties and responsibilities (summarized):

- Planning, acquiring, developing, conserving, and restoring lands in SVRAs.
- Management, maintenance, administration, and operation of lands in the SVRAs.
- Provide for law enforcement and appropriate public safety activities.
- Implement all aspects of the OHMVR Program.
- Ensure program compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Division 13, commencing Section 21000) in SVRAs.
- Provide staff assistance to the Commission.
- Prepare and implement management and wildlife habitat plans for lands in, or proposed to, SVRAs, including new SVRAs. These plans shall be developed considering statutorily required state and regional conservation objectives. However, a plan shall not be prepared in any instance specified in subdivision (c) of §5002.2. Upon completing a full environmental review, trails may only be added or included as components of existing trail systems when developing or updating plans in SVRAs.
- Conduct, or cause to be conducted, surveys, prepare or cause to be prepared, and studies necessary or desirable for implementing the Program.
- Recruit and utilize volunteers to further the objectives of the Program.
- Prepare and coordinate safety and education programs.
- Provide for the enforcement of Division 16.5 (commencing with CVC §38000) of the Vehicle Code and other laws regulating the use or equipment of OHVs in all areas acquired,

maintained, or operated by funds from the fund. However, California Highway Patrol shall have responsibility for enforcement on highways.

- Provide for the conservation of natural and cultural resources, including appropriate mitigation.
- Post all plans, reports, and studies related to OHV recreation developed by the Division on the Department’s website.
- Report on any closure implemented under §5090.35 at the next Commission meeting following the closure and complete other duties as determined by the Department’s Director.

## Program Funding

Majority of monies deposited into the OHV Trust Fund:

- Fuel taxes from gasoline consumed during OHV recreation on public lands
- OHV registration fees
- Entrance fees generated at the SVRAs
- \$1 million transfer from the State Park and Recreation Fund each Fiscal Year
- Interest and miscellaneous income

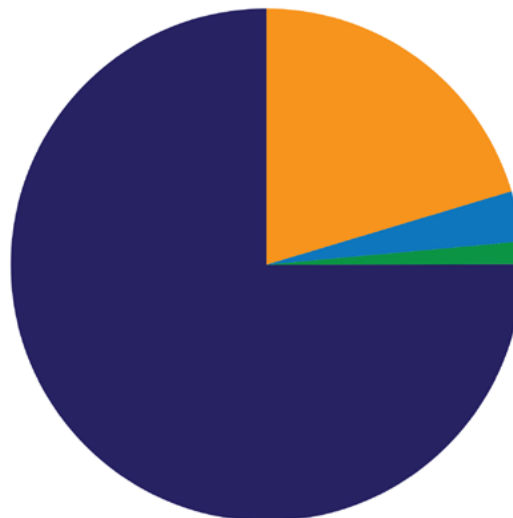
## OHV TRUST FUND

The funding model for the OHMVR Program is based on users funding the Program through gas taxes and registration fees rather than relying on SVRA entrance fees. Entrance fees collected at the SVRAs are kept at a reasonable level to promote OHV enthusiasts’ use of the managed recreation opportunities and not create a barrier for low-income visitors.

**Table 1. Fiscal Year 2020-2021 OHMVR Program Trust Fund Receipts**

**Total Receipts \$77,652,661**

■ Fuel Taxes	\$58,265,966
■ OHV Registration Fees	\$15,818,091
■ SVRA Revenue	\$2,471,166
■ Miscellaneous	\$1,097,437



## Fuel Taxes

**Table 2. Fuel tax totals per year**

Fiscal Year	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Amount	\$68,655,813	\$67,749,634	\$66,947,839	\$65,003,574	\$58,265,966

Fuel taxes represent up to 75 percent of annual income to the OHV Trust Fund. Fuel tax transfers were once calculated based on statewide studies that estimated the total gallons of gasoline burned during OHV recreation. Legislation passed in 2007 (SB 742) established that future transfers would be based on the percentage of fuel taxes transferred in 2007. In 2011, legislation was passed that reduced these transfers by \$10 million annually (Revenue and Taxation Code § 8352.6).

The amount of fuel tax transferred to the OHV Trust Fund is directly proportionate to the amount of fuel purchased in California; the more gasoline purchased by Californians; the more gas tax revenue transferred to the OHV Trust Fund. According to the California Board of Equalization, the amount of gasoline sold has increased over the last few years, suggesting the amount of gas purchased in California depends on the price of gas and more significant economic factors. Fuel Tax revenue declined in the fiscal year 2020/2021 due to Californians driving less during the COVID Pandemic quarantine and related closures.

## OHV REGISTRATION FEES

Another source of income to the OHV Trust Fund is fees paid to register vehicles operated exclusively off-highway. This registration is commonly referred to as a “Green Sticker or Red Sticker.” With the passage of SB 742 in 2007, OHV registration fees were doubled from \$25 to \$50 for a two-year registration. OHV and environmental organizations supported this 100 percent increase in registration fees. In 2009, the OHV registration fees were raised another \$2 to bolster the portion of the fees directed to the California Highway Patrol (CHP). OHV registration fees transferred to the CHP have no restrictions on OHV recreation or enforcement uses. As of 2017, OHV registration fees are currently \$54 every two years. Of this amount, \$33 is directed to the OHV Trust Fund, and the remainder is distributed to CHP (\$10), the Department of Motor Vehicles (\$7), and cities/counties (\$4) (CVC Sections 38225 and 38230).

**Table 3. Breakdown of OHV registration fees by type**



# 1971



# 2021

## 50th Anniversary and OHMVR Program Milestones

### 1950

**1953** First Jeepers Jamboree runs on the Rubicon Trail.

### 1960

**1968** Honda motorcycle sales exceed one million.

### 1970

**1970** Assembly Bill 2235 (Chappie) created the Snowmobile Trust Fund.

**1971** Chappie-Z' Berg Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Law.

**1972** OHV Gas Tax Act was enacted.

**1974** Pismo Dunes SVRA was created (renamed Oceano Dunes SVRA) as the first SVRA in the State Park System.

**1974** First OHV Grants were awarded to local governments.

**1975** Hollister Hills SVRA opened.

**1976** Ocotillo Wells SVRA was created.

**1977** OHV Grants authorized for federal agencies.

**1979** First OHV Grants were awarded to BLM and USFS.

### 1980

**1980** Hungry Valley and Carnegie SVRAs opened.

OHMVR Office and Division Chief position created.

**1981** Clay Pit SVRA opened.

Hungry Valley, Carnegie, and Ocotillo Wells SVRAs General Plans were adopted.

Ocotillo Wells SVRA opened.



- 1982** OHMVR Division and Commission were created.  
Pismo Dunes SVRA (later renamed Oceano Dunes SVRA) opened to the public.
- 1985** OHV registration fees increased from \$15 to \$20.
- 1986** Safety and Education Grants authorized.
- 1987** ATV training required.  
Wildlife inventories, wildlife habitat protection plans, and soil loss standards established for state-owned OHV recreation lands.
- 1989** Prairie City SVRA opened.  
ATV helmet law enacted.

## 1990

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- 1991** Prairie City SVRA General Plan was adopted, and Oceano Dunes SVRA General Plan was amended.  
The Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines were adopted.
- 1994** OHV registration fees increased from \$20 to \$21.  
OHV Fund was renamed the OHV Trust Fund.
- 1997** Non-emission compliant OHVs issued red sticker registration.
- 1998** Nonresident OHV Use Permits are required for all out-of-state unregistered OHVs.

## 2000

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- 2000** OHV Stakeholders Roundtable was created.
- 2001** Hollister Hills SVRA General Plan amended.
- 2002** OHV Act of 2003 was enacted.
- 2003** OHV registration fees increased from \$21 to \$25.
- 2004** 1991 Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines revised.
- 2005** Law passed prohibiting OHV operation in federal and state wilderness areas.
- 2006** Parents can be cited for allowing their children under age 14 to operate an ATV without supervision or a safety certificate.
- 2007** Senate Bill 742 (Steinberg) was enacted.  
OHV registration fees doubled from \$25 to \$50; Heber Dunes SVRA opened.
- 2008** Renz Property at Hollister Hills SVRA opened.
- 2009** OHMVR Division Strategic Plan published.  
OHV registration fees increased from \$50 to \$52.

## 2010

- 2011** Heber Dunes SVRA General Plan adopted.
- 2011** Commission Program Report published.
- 2012** Clay Pit SVRA General Plan adopted.  
OHMVR Program celebrates its 40th Anniversary.
- 2013** ROV Helmet Law enacted.
- 2014** Eastern Kern County, Onyx Ranch SVRA opened.
- 2014** Commission Program Report published.
- 2015** Hudner Ranch at Hollister Hills SVRA opened.
- 2016** Carnegie and Prairie City SVRAs General Plan updates adopted.  
Mudstone Ranch at Hollister Hills SVRA opened.
- 2017** Senate Bill 249 (Allen) permanently authorized State Parks' Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Program.  
  
Senate Bill 159 (Allen) permanently authorized the OHV Trust Fund, the \$33 fee for OHV registration, and the \$7 service fee.  
  
The Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 (Senate Bill 1) redirected millions of new gas tax revenue to State Parks, including the Division of Boating and Waterways and the OHMVR Division.
- 2018** Senate Bill 249 redirected the OHMVR Division Deputy Director's duties, allowing seamless integration of SVRAs within State Park districts.
- 2019** The California Air Resources Board amended the 1999 red sticker regulation and eliminated red sticker identification for competition-labeled motorcycles and ATVs, beginning with 2022 models.

## 2020

- 2020** April 2020 -- California State Parks closes all State Parks and Beaches to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including SVRAs. Most parks, beaches, and SVRAs reopened from Fall 2020 to January 2021.
- 2021** The OHMVR Division celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the OHMVR Program.  
  
The OHMVR Division celebrated the inaugural OHV Safety Week events in May and October that will run annually.  
  
Green and red sticker identification fees increased to \$54 for biennial stickers.

**Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission**

# **Resolution**

## **Recognizing the 50th Anniversary of the California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Program**

WHEREAS, the California State Parks, Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Program was established in 1971 by legislation co-authored by two state legislators, Gene Chappie, an off-highway recreation enthusiast and Ed Z'berg, an early supporter of protecting California's natural resources; and

WHEREAS, AB 2342 "The Chappie-Z'berg Off-Highway Vehicle Act of 1971" was signed into law on December 22, 1971, by Governor Ronald Reagan; and

WHEREAS, the Chappie-Z'berg Law was founded on the principle that responsibly managed off-highway vehicle (OHV) use was better for the environment than unmanaged activity; and

WHEREAS, the Mission of the OHMVR Division, established in 1982, is to provide leadership statewide in the area of OHV recreation; to acquire, develop, and operate state-owned vehicular recreation areas; and to otherwise provide for a statewide system of managed OHV recreational opportunities through funding to other public agencies; and

WHEREAS, the OHMVR Division works to ensure that quality OHV recreational opportunities remain available for future generations by providing for education, conservation, safe use, and enforcement efforts that balance OHV recreation impacts with programs that conserve and protect cultural and natural resources; and

WHEREAS, the OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements program has provided millions of dollars in financial assistance for well-managed off-highway vehicle recreation in the State of California through grants to cities, counties, districts, federal and state agencies, educational institutions, federally or state recognized Native American Tribes, Certified Community Conservation Corps, and nonprofit entities; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission recognizes 2021 as the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Program, and encourages all related agencies, groups, associations, and persons to recognize and commemorate the 50th Anniversary by any and all efforts to highlight and honor the history, significance, contributions, and achievements that went into the development of the OHMVR program and its contribution to the people of California and the nation.

**August 6, 2020**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sarah Miggins, Chair  
OHMVR Commission




  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian E. Robertson, Division Chief  
OHMVR Division

Figure 36. OHMVR Commission Resolution recognizing 50th Anniversary of the OHMVR Program.

## **50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AND CALIFORNIA OHV SAFETY WEEK**

State Parks celebrated 50 years of providing the public with high-quality and environmentally sustainable OHV in California's spectacular outdoors in 2021. In August 2020, the OHMVR Commission passed resolutions recognizing 2021 as the 50th Anniversary of the OHMVR Program and California OHV Safety week, held the third week in May.

### **50TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT**

The OHMVR Division celebrated 50 years of the Program at Hungry Valley SVRA's Quail Canyon Motocross Area on Saturday, October 9, 2021. This event was part of the yearlong celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the signing of the 1971 legislation that created the funding for managed OHV recreation. The law was co-sponsored by OHV enthusiast Senator Gene Chappie and environmentalist Senator Ed Z'berg and signed by Governor Ronald Reagan on December 22, 1971. Since that time, over \$540 million in grants, managed by the OHMVR Division, were awarded to our federal and local partners, funding acquisition and development, resource protection, safety and education, and law enforcement for OHV recreation. This legislation also allowed the creation of nine SVRAs located throughout the state. It has also allowed the Department to focus on natural and cultural resource protection in the SVRAs and its partners through the grants process.

Based on the theme of "OHV Recreation: Past, Present, and Future," participants enjoyed lunch, exhibits of vintage OHVs and interpretive displays, and a presentation by a National Youth Project Using Minibikes. Speakers included CORF President Paul Slavik, Great Basin District Superintendent Russ Dingman, OHMVR Division Deputy Director Sarah Miggins, and representatives from other OHV organizations. CORF recognized OHMVR Division Executive Secretary Vicki Perez with an award for her dedication and support of the program.

State Parks is honored to have worked with the California Outdoor Recreation Foundation (CORF), which has supported the OHMVR Division's 50th Anniversary and its ongoing Safety Week activities throughout the year. This partnership allowed us to reach out to people who played a role in supporting State Parks' OHMVR Program and OHV recreation in California.

### **CELEBRATING THE SIGNING OF THE OHV LAW AT THE STATE CAPITOL**

Off-highway enthusiasts and California State Park employees headed to the west steps of the State Capitol in Sacramento on December 22, 2021, to commemorate a historic, final event in the yearlong celebration of the OHMVR Division's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. On this date and near this spot, back in 1971, Governor Ronald Reagan signed the Chappie-Z'berg Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Act into law, which created the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division within California State Parks.

State Parks employees and representatives from OHV recreation nonprofit groups came from California to participate. The attendees heard speeches from Director Armando Quintero, OHMVR Division Deputy Director Sarah Miggins, OHMVR Commissioner Roger Salazar, CORF President Paul Slavik, CORF board member Amy Granat, and a discussion of OHV recreation in California by Tom Bernardo from the OHMVR Division.



Figure 37. Members of the Los Angeles Police Department's National Youth Project Using Minibikes receiving prizes for their participation at the 50th Anniversary event in October 2021.



Figure 38. Attendees of the OHMVR Division 50th Anniversary event at the State Capitol.

Capping the event's historical significance was signing a fundraising agreement between the new partner, CORF, and the OHMVR Division. Director Armando Quintero and CORF President Paul Slavik signed the agreement. The Foundation will continue with its primary goal to support the OHMVR Division with OHV safety education. This partnership includes collaboration between federal, state, and OHV nonprofit organizations to help sponsor statewide Safety Week and Outreach Programs. CORF was instrumental in making the May and October Safety Weeks a success by developing an online method for registering to take free OHV safety classes offered by the Specialty Vehicle Institute of America.

**FIRST ANNUAL CALIFORNIA OHV SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK**

OHV Safety Awareness Week is an integral part of the OHVMR Program 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, commemorated throughout 2021. In October 2020, the OHMVR Commission passed a resolution dedicating the third week of May (Northern California) and October (Southern California) to promote and focus on safe and responsible OHV practices.

The OHMVR Division and partners launched the inaugural OHV Safety Awareness Week on May 15-23, 2021. The theme for the event was “Know Before You Go,” to educate riders about how to prepare for a safe and fun outing. Topics included simple actions like riding rules, routes, trail difficulty ratings, filing a riding plan, required safety equipment, riding with others, and knowing riding limits to promote safety in California’s extensive OHV areas and trails. Messaging incorporated Tread Lightly!® principles that encourage resource stewardship and awareness to protect natural and cultural resources make these places special.

State Parks collaborated with [Tread Lightly!® Initiative](#), [California Highway Patrol](#), [Outdoor Recreation Foundation](#), [ATV Safety Institute](#), and [Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association \(ROHVA\)](#) to provide a mix of safety messages and activities during OHV Safety Awareness Week. Programs consisted of park interpretive programs, in-person events (with COVID-19 safety guidelines), and social media platforms. The ATV Safety Institute and ROHVA teamed up with the Division to provide free ATV and ROV training on the [California Outdoor Recreation Foundation](#) website.

Below are safety tips that the OHMVR Division shared during the OHV Safety Awareness Week for new and experienced riders:

**Learn the Rules of Riding:** Laws specific to operating OHVs on public lands. Learn about them by visiting your outdoor destination’s website before leaving home and taking a training course.

**Scout Your Route:** Each OHV area has diverse geology for riders to explore in their motorcycle, ATVs, dune buggies, or 4x4s; learn about the various trail experience levels and terrain to avoid emergencies.

**Be Prepared:** Know which supplies you need for a successful ride. Be prepared with a first aid kit, extra water and food, maps, a tool kit, and fuel.

**File a Riding Plan:** Tell a responsible person back at camp or home where you are going and when you plan to return. Ask that person to notify local law enforcement if you do not return on time.

**Use Required Safety Equipment:** Know which gear is required for your type of recreation to prevent injury. Always wear protective gear, including a safe, well-fitting helmet.

**Never Go Alone:** Always ride with at least one other person, preferably in groups of three riders. If one rider is hurt, someone can stay with the rider while the other gets help. Never move an injured rider.

**Tread Lightly:** Know where to ride, and ride only on designated routes and trails. Be sure to check ahead for open trails. Remember, wildlife has the right-of-way.

**Know Your Limits:** Know the rules, your skill level, and how to maintain your vehicle. Only ride at speeds at which you can always maintain control. Do not ride faster than your talent and never operate a vehicle under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Keep your speed under 15 mph when riding near campsites or groups of people.

## OHV User Experience Survey

As part of the 2022 OHMVR Commission Program Report, the Commission wanted to receive the public's feedback and ideas about their current motorized and non-motorized recreation experiences in California. They also wanted to know the public's thoughts about the future of OHV recreation and the OHMVR Program. The Commission launched an online user experience survey in December 2021 using the Survey Monkey platform. The survey was advertised on the State Park's OHMVR webpage and emailed to people who had signed up to receive OHMVR Commission meeting news. The survey received over 800 responses in less than one month. This section describes the survey findings and offers a snapshot of the OHV user experience in 2021.

Additionally, State Parks kicked off a scientific survey of OHV users with detailed demographic information, where people recreate, and the economic contributions that OHV recreation makes to local communities. This survey began in 2021 and is anticipated to be completed in 2023.

### DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

The Commission asked for participants' zip codes to see where they reside. Figure 37 The figure below shows the concentration of OHV users around major California metropolitan areas like Sacramento, San Jose, Fresno, Los Angeles, and San Diego. Many people also live in Central Valley. Respondents also live in nearby states like Nevada, Utah, Oregon, Washington, and Arizona. North Carolina was also represented in the survey.

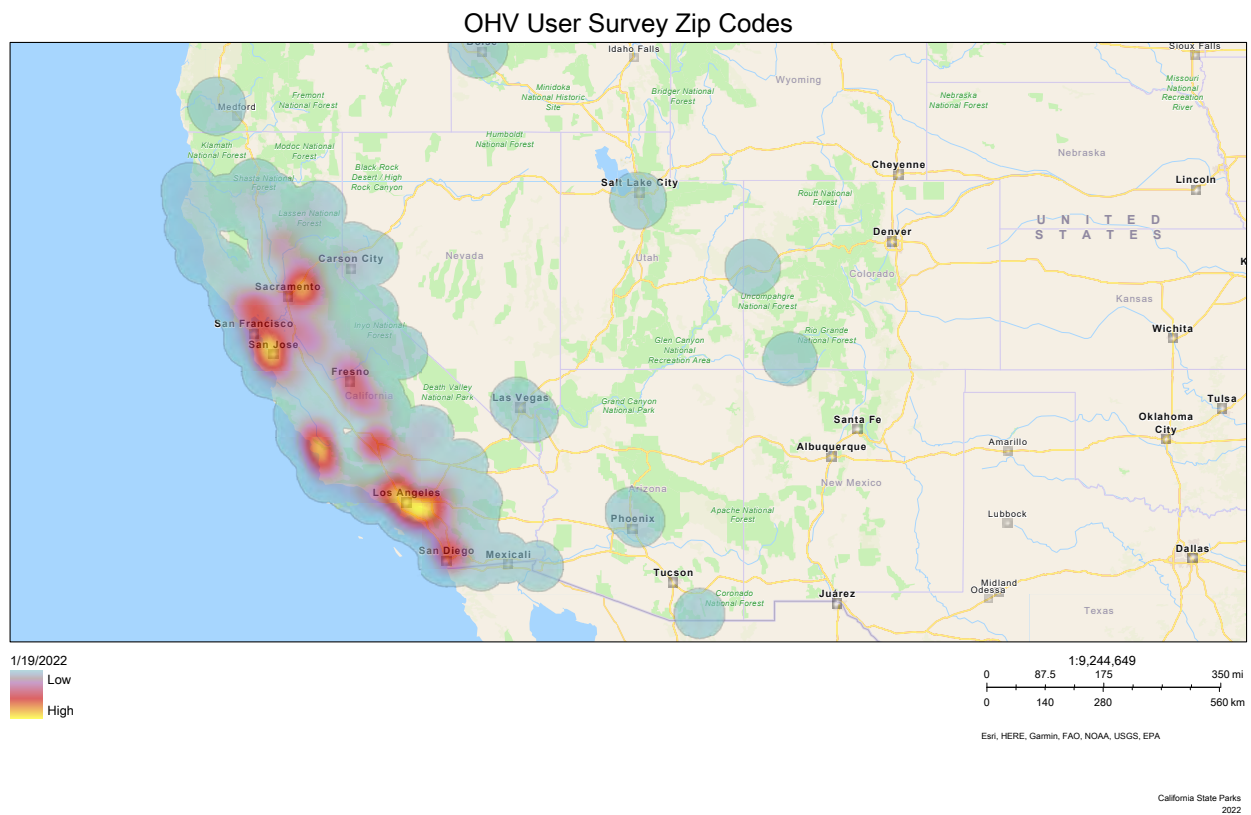


Figure 39. Heat map showing concentrations where survey respondents live.





“It means raising my kids to be responsible adults and use good judgment. It means good clean fun in the fresh air. It means bonding with family and friends over a campfire. It means exploring places and expanding your mind because you can visit areas that you would never dream of normally. It means staying fit through the most rigorous all-day exercise of riding a dirt bike. It means contributing to keeping our forests in a clean and revered state of well-being. It means learning how to be responsible and think for yourself through the skills you attain. It means managing stress through healthy avenues of exercise and nature.” - SURVEY RESPONSE

## WHAT DOES OHV RECREATION MEAN TO YOU?

*Family, friends, freedom, quality time, quality of life, tradition, community, environment, nature, stress relief, mental health, and affordable recreation.*

This survey question provides individuals that participate in outdoor recreation with the opportunity to share their thoughts, feelings, and opinions about what outdoor recreation means to them and why they feel it is important. Many of the responses were deeply tied to a sense of tradition, community, freedom, mental health, and an appreciation for California’s beautiful outdoor landscape. The participants in this survey shared that many of their favorite moments were tied to affordable recreation with family, friends, and members of their community that share a similar love for the great outdoors and California’s beautiful state parks. Other participants highlighted how OHV outdoor recreation has provided them with a sense of purpose and given them a way to de-stress during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has been difficult for many people. Respondents also spoke about how OHVs provide easier mobility for people with disabilities and people who use wheelchairs. Accessibility to remote areas within the California State Parks system for people with disabilities and people who use wheelchairs would not be possible without this form of recreation and transportation.

Many responses also included language that suggests how important it is to respect the environment and maintain the natural landscape they are riding their OHVs on and around. For many survey participants, outdoor recreation and the ability to experience the outdoors in their greatest capacity is not possible without OHVs. Recurring themes identified throughout many responses related to family, quality time, and tradition are deeply rooted within the OHV recreation community and support the passion, love, and essentiality echoed by individuals who chose to participate in this survey.

“Responsible off-road recreation has been a huge part of my life and my family’s lives for decades. Enjoying OHV is our connection to conservation and land management of which we are very proud.” - SURVEY RESPONSE

“OHV recreation is a priceless shared family experience that helps me, my family, and friends maintain appreciation, respect, and reverence for our treasured open spaces. Myself, my kids, and grandkids make lifelong memories of regularly riding motorcycles in our ohv, BLM, and national forests. It’s a regular source of inspiration, meditation and fun as well as a great way to meet new friends and get high quality exercise.”

- SURVEY RESPONSE

## HOW DO YOU WANT TO SEE THE OHV RECREATION PROGRAM GROW AND DEVELOP IN THE FUTURE?

*Expansion, growth, development, education, closures, accessibility, community, regulation, politics, environment, nature, fund allocation, money management, grant funds, environmentalists, misconceptions, maintenance, and dirt bikes.*

This survey question allows individuals who participate in outdoor recreation to share what steps they feel should be taken to foster the growth and development of the OHV Recreation Program. Many responses referenced the ongoing closures and limitations that the SVRAs are facing. Some participants feel that the closures and complications are tied to politics, mismanaged funding, and environmental misinformation. To grow and develop the program, participants think that providing the public with information that dispels any negativity surrounding OHV recreation would benefit all parties involved in the decision-making process. Educational opportunities for new riders have also been proposed as this form of recreation continues to grow and expand. Participants would like to see leadership within California State Parks ensure that SVRAs can keep up with the growing demand for OHV recreation. Continuous closures and reductions render the growth and development of trails and riding areas impossible. The development of more trails and the expansion of riding areas are present in most responses.

Some responses also mentioned the consideration of nuanced protection for trails and riding areas being categorized by vehicle type based on size and environmental impact, considering that Jeeps and side-by-side vehicles can create more effects than dirt bikes. Proper fund allocation and effective money management were also common points of interest. Many participants feel that OHV funds are being used for projects that do not give back to the

“I want the leadership at Cal Parks to understand the importance of OHV recreation both sociologically and economically. The demand for OHV recreation opportunities continues to increase and is critical that Cal Parks takes the lead in ensuring that the SVRAs are able to meet the demand.”

- - SURVEY RESPONSE

“Common sense management. We can take care of the environment and have OHV recreation. This seems to be politically driven and it’s sad to see all the closures at the beach when studies are showing the science is flawed that the state is using. OHV funds are literally being used to shut the dunes down. And that is miss appropriation of funds by the state. It makes me not even want to pay my tags.” - SURVEY RESPONSE

OHV community, which is disheartening and frustrating. Some participants see the registration sticker program (Green or Red Sticker registration) as practical. Still, they are not confident that funds going into the program are being used to help the growth and development of OHV recreation. To see this change, it might be worth providing education on the sticker program and how funds from the sticker will guarantee the success of the OHV program and OHV recreation was proposed.

#### OTHER INTERESTING SURVEY DATA

- Most respondents (61%) stated that they belong to an OHV club or organization
- A majority (90%) of survey responses indicated that they do not rent OHVs.

#### What types of OHVs do you use?

Answer Choices	Responses
Other (please specify)	4.98%
Snowmobile	5.47%
Dune Buggy or Sand Rail	12.88%
Jeep	27.58%
All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV)	35.48%
Recreation Off-Highway Vehicle (ROV, Side-by-Side)	36.94%
Four-wheel drive truck or Sports Utility Vehicle	45.32%
Dual Sport Motorcycle, Motorcycle, Dirt Bike	69.14%

Table 4. Survey responses of peoples OHV use.

When asked what types of vehicles they used, most people responded that they used Dual Sport Motorcycles or Dirt Bikes, followed by four-wheel-drive vehicles, ROVs, and ATVs (see Table 4).

## What kind of outdoor recreation do you participate in?

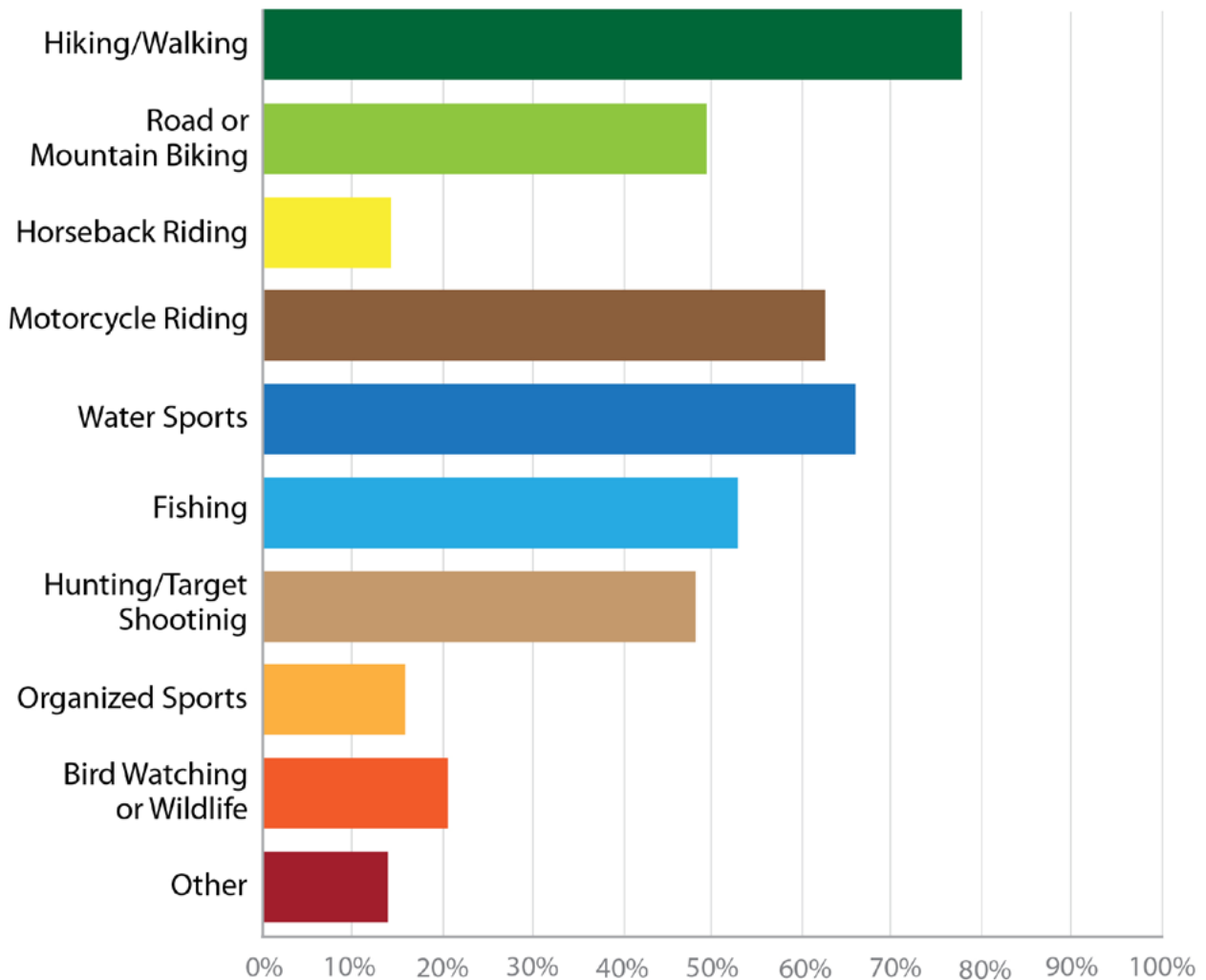


Table 5. Forms of outdoor recreation that were asked in the OHV user.

### WHAT OTHER FORMS OF RECREATION DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN?

Most of the survey respondents stated that they participate in other forms of outdoor recreation, with hiking, walking, motorcycle riding, and water sports being popular selections (Table 5). Many people (74%) also noted they use an OHV to access non-motorized recreation.

## HAVE YOU VOLUNTEERED TO WORK ON PUBLIC LANDS? IF SO, WHAT WORK DID YOU DO?

Many people (66%) said they volunteered to work on public lands. Responses were given in open text format. Popular responses were trail building, repair, maintenance, fence building and repair, trash pickup, tree planting, work at SVRAs, USFS, BLM OHV areas, and beach and desert clean-up. Other notable responses were volunteering for search and rescue operations, cleaning up after fires, campground maintenance, and public education.



Figure 41. Visitors enjoying a ride at Oceano Dunes.

## Chapter 2: OHMVR Resource Management Programs

Chapter 2 describes the natural and cultural resource management programs of the OHMVR Program and at State Vehicular Recreation Areas. This chapter includes the following OHMVR Commission Program Report Requirements per Public Resources Code (PRC) §5090.24. (h).

**Report Requirement 1:** A summary of the process, standards, and plans developed according to this chapter.

**Report Requirement 4:** A summary of resource monitoring data compiled and restoration work completed.

### OHMVR Program Natural and Cultural Resources Program Overview

Protecting California’s most valued natural and cultural resources and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation are central to the mission of California State Parks. The OHMVR Division provides balanced OHV recreation for long-term use. The OHMVR Division conserves and improves cultural and natural resources at each State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA) through adaptive management programs, such as implementing the Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan (WHPP) and the Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines under PRC Sections 5090.35(b) (1), 5090.35(c), and 5090.43. Cultural resources afford a high resource preservation and protection level to comply with PRC Sections 5024, 5024.1(g), and 5024.5. The OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program projects also have the same natural and cultural resource conservation and improvement objectives (see chapter 3, OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program).

Effective January 1, 2018, SB 249 amended the OHMVR Program (commencing with PRC §5090), enhancing several requirements for managing and reporting the health of SVRA natural and



Figure 42. Environmental Scientists at Hungry Valley SVRA.

cultural resources. The first part of this chapter describes the new legislative requirements, State Parks' processes and methods to meet them, and the management plans described above. It also describes statewide OHMVR Division resource management programs implemented at SVRAs, an overview of cultural and natural resources at SVRAs, resource management programs, a summary of monitoring data, restoration programs, and other relevant program information.

## Statewide Management Plans

### WILDLIFE HABITAT PROTECTION PLAN

Ongoing monitoring efforts are essential for understanding, conserving, and improving the condition of the natural resources of an SVRA. The type of monitoring conducted can be specific to determine the condition of an individual sensitive species or broad to assess an entire ecosystem's health. The Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan (WHPP) includes a baseline inventory of plant and animal species and plant communities identified within the SVRA. Soil types will be covered in the Soil Conservation Plan for each SVRA. The WHPP also implements an annual monitoring program and makes recommendations for managing the SVRA to sustain biodiversity.

State Parks developed WHPPs at each SVRA to assist resource managers in maintaining and protecting current wildlife populations and their habitats. All SVRAs, except for Onyx and Clay Pit, currently have an existing WHPP, developed in the 1990s and updated or revisited in 2010. Onyx Ranch and Clay Pit SVRAs have implemented their draft WHPPs until these plans are revised, approved, and finalized.

As a direct result of the passage of SB 249 in October 2017, WHPPs have taken on additional significance and scope. The following is a summary of the legislative changes for WHPPs:

Requires preparing a WHPP that conserves and improves wildlife habitats for each SVRA.

- Changed the standard from “viable species composition” at each SVRA to “conserve and improve habitat” at each SVRA.



Figure 43. A deer mouse.



Figure 44. Juvenile desert tortoise.

- Requires the OHMVR Division to compile, review, and periodically update an inventory of wildlife populations.
- Requires the WHPP to be developed considering statutorily required state and regional conservation objectives.
- Requires WHPP to apply the best available science.
- Requires annual monitoring to determine whether the objectives of WHPPs are being met.
- Requires WHPPs to provide opportunities for public comment, including but not limited to written comments and public meetings.
- It no longer authorizes modification of the natural environment to enhance the recreational experience.
- Requires OHMVR Division to provide for the conservation of natural and cultural resources, including appropriate mitigation.
- Requires the anticipation and prevention of accelerated and unnatural erosion and other impacts from OHV recreation.
- Requires the OHMVR Division to take the steps necessary to prevent damage to significant natural and cultural resources within SVRAs.

## **WHPP UPDATE PROCESS**

State Parks formed a working group with OHMVR Division, SVRA, and Natural Resource Division staff to develop a WHPP framework document to guide the revision, update, and development of WHPPs for the nine SVRAs, spanning 145,000 acres within the State Park System. The working group formed in 2018 and held 13 workshops and more than 30 coordination and working meetings – including onsite meetings at Carnegie, Prairie City, Hollister Hills, Oceano Dunes, and Hungry Valley SVRAs – to ensure the framework met staff needs and statutory requirements. OHMVR Division and Natural Resource Division technical staff, State Park leadership, SVRA natural resource staff, managers, and District superintendents reviewed and provided feedback on the framework. The final framework document was approved in April 2021. The working group created specific objectives to update the WHPP for each SVRA. These objectives demonstrated how each plan meets statutory requirements:

- Use updated inventories of wildlife populations to prepare a wildlife habitat protection plan to conserve and improve wildlife habitats (PRC §5090.35. (c)(1)).
- Identify rare or endangered plant and animal species and their supporting habitat for sensitive area consideration (PRC §5090.43 (b)). Incorporate objectives that target the protection, conservation, and improvement of natural resources within SVRAs.
- Incorporate consideration of statutorily required State and regional conservation objectives for existing and new SVRAs (PRC §5090.32. (g)).



- Develop and incorporate an annual monitoring program that assesses whether the objectives of the WHPP are being met (PRC Sections 5090.13 and 5090.35. (d))
- Incorporate the best available science (PRC §5090.39. (a)).
- Incorporate public comment into the development process (PRC §5090.39. (a)).

## WHPP ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

With the passage of SB 249, Section 5090.14 was added to the PRC to define adaptive management more accurately within State Parks' OHMVR Program:

“Adaptive management” means to use the results of information gathered through a monitoring program or scientific research to adjust management strategies and practices to conserve cultural resources and provide for the conservation and improvement of natural resources.

Adaptive management has been the foundation and guiding force behind SVRA monitoring programs and an integral part of updating the WHPP. Adaptive management is inherently linked to the application of the best available science. The WHPP working group also established the principles, structure, and importance of the adaptive management process and its relation to the management of natural resources.

Revised WHPPs will define the adaptive management approach that guides resource management decisions at their respective SVRAs. In general, adaptive management will use an iterative process at SVRAs to address natural resource assessments, identify management objectives, implement management actions, develop and implement a monitoring program, and evaluate and adapt management based on monitoring results. Each revised WHPP will cover the next five years and include projects expected to occur within that time. Some projects may not be known during the revision process; however, the revised WHPP will explain how adaptive management is incorporated into all projects.



Figure 45. Environmental Scientist monitoring at Carnegie.

## WHPP BEST AVAILABLE SCIENCE GUIDELINES

The Natural Resource Division developed Best Available Science Guidelines (2021) and a formal review process to meet PRC §5090.39(a) requirements. The guidelines define the minimum standard for scientific information and clarify “Best” and “Available” science. These guidelines also provide a set of principles, a taxonomy of the sources of scientific information (e.g., peer-reviewed literature, unpublished technical reports, expert opinion), and criteria for peer review. See Appendix B for Best Available Science guidelines. SVRA resource staff include documentation demonstrating how they applied the guidelines with their draft WHPP upon review by OHMVR and Natural Resource Divisions. The review team then used the guidelines as review criteria to make this determination.

## PUBLIC COMMENT REQUIREMENTS

Senate Bill 249 includes specific requirements to ensure that the public reviews these plans, provides written comments, and attends public meetings. Each SVRA will allow the public to review and provide written comments on their Revised WHPPs. See Appendix B for the WHPP public review process.

## WILDLIFE POPULATIONS AND INVENTORY UPDATE

Senate Bill 249 amended PRC §5090.35(c)(1) that required the OHMVR Division to:

Compile and, when determined by the Department to be necessary, periodically review and update an inventory of wildlife populations and prepare a wildlife habitat protection plan that conserves and improves wildlife habitats for each state vehicular recreation area. By December 31, 2030, the Division shall compile an inventory of native plant communities in each state vehicular recreation area to inform plan updates.

Given their close relationship in identifying resources management goals, the OHMVR and Natural Resources Divisions agreed to assess and update the inventory, where necessary, for the wildlife populations and the SVRA WHPPs. Thus, each SVRA must incorporate a wildlife population and inventory update as part of the WHPP update process.

The 2021 WHPP framework outlines how each plan will meet the mandate and provides guidance for updating wildlife populations and inventories, including desktop research and field assessment. The desktop research part consists of using the California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (CDFW) [California Natural Diversity Database](#), United States Fish and Wildlife Service’s (USFWS) [Information for Planning and Consultation](#) (IPaC), the California Native Plant Society’s (CNPS) [Rare Plant Inventory](#), and other available natural resources databases to update the SVRAs’ species lists and occurrence data. Field assessment updates of the wildlife inventories and populations include using species information gathered during the past ten years of standard field assessments and survey methods conducted as part of the SVRAs’ WHPP and resources programs to update existing data. SVRAs will conduct wildlife inventories and population updates as part of every WHPP update cycle for a minimum of five years.



Figure 46. Clay Pit SVRA.

In addition, the OHMVR Division collaborates with SVRA resource programs to expand and improve each park's monitoring efforts. An example of this ongoing effort includes using recording equipment and software programs to detect and evaluate bird and bat calls and increase species detections and classification rates. With these continued efforts, the OHMVR Division will provide an updated wildlife population and species inventory for each SVRA to manage the natural resources at these parks.

## **HABITAT MONITORING SYSTEM**

The OHMVR Division developed the Habitat Monitoring System (HMS) in conjunction with the original WHPP. The HMS program encompasses all monitoring aspects, including survey design and implementation, data capture and management, and statistical analysis and reports. Annual reports interpret and summarize the past year's monitoring efforts that environmental scientists and managers use to make informed decisions about an SVRA's habitat management need and comply with statutory requirements. The HMS program consists of peer-reviewed standardized scientific protocols that meet the specific needs of the SVRA. Additionally, the program can accommodate new technology, survey, and analysis methods to provide the information managers need to make informed decisions.

The OHMVR Division utilizes consultants to compile, analyze, and summarize monitoring data from SVRAs and provide a peer review of the statistical models, interpretation, and conclusions described in annual HMS reports for each monitoring section. The consultants bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the OHMVR Program, with backgrounds in federal and state environmental and regulatory compliance; land use planning; water and air quality; vegetation and stormwater management; avian, bat, herpetology, and small mammal studies; geological surveys; and cultural resource management. The consultants also train Division and field staff in their respective fields and assist with developing survey protocols.

## HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA

In 2021, Hungry Valley SVRA completed its 25th consecutive year of Habitat Monitoring System (HMS) reporting. This extensive program includes monitoring vegetation, herpetofauna, birds, bats, small mammals, and large mammals. In 2021, Hungry Valley SVRA added 11 new monitoring plots in areas of the park that were either not previously monitored or of similar habitat to the original plots. The resources staff added these new plots to have better comparative data for similar habitat types and collect data from parts of the park that have never been monitored. The 11 new plots were added in the Oak Woodland Natural Preserve, 2015 Acquisition, Egget Property, Sterling Canyon, East Freeman, Quail Canyon Special Event Area, and near Tatavium, Mesa, and Pronghorn trails.

## OCOTILLO WELLS SVRA

Ocotillo Wells SVRA has improved its HMS-Natural Resources database to allow better data entry, ensure quality data, and provide reports on the data collected. In addition, historical monitoring data has been added to the database to ensure that all data is housed in one system that is easily accessible and allows for better comparisons and assessment of trends throughout the years.

## ONYX RANCH SVRA

In 2018, habitat monitoring plots for annual monitoring were generated using a generalized random tessellation stratified design. As part of this design random monitoring plots were selected to ensure they were stratified and spatially balanced across habitat types. In these plots, vegetation, avian, reptile, and small mammals are monitored. A subset of these plots are used for Mojave ground squirrel and large mammal monitoring. Three plots, both in trail and non-trail areas were selected in four main vegetation alliance or alliance combinations. These three plots did not include wetland and riparian areas due to limited locations. Several habitats in the eastern section of the park, in the area that allows for OHV use, were selected for generating monitoring plots. These habitats include creosote and bursage scrub, desert wash and terrace, lower Mojave woody scrub, Joshua tree woodland, blackbrush scrubland, and meadow and seep or desert riparian. This aforementioned protocol resulted in 21 monitoring plots. In 2021,



Figure 47. Flat-tailed horned lizard at Ocotillo Wells SVRA.



Figure 48. Mojave ground squirrel at Onyx Ranch SVRA.

the fifth year of large mammal monitoring, landscape photo monitoring, and trail photo monitoring. It was the third year of reptile, spring avian, bat, and amphibian monitoring and the second year of winter avian and vegetation monitoring.

## **NATIVE PLANT COMMUNITY INVENTORIES**

Per Senate Bill 249, Wildlife Habitat Protection Plans must consider state and regional conservation goals (PRC §5090.32 (g)) and require SVRAs to compile an inventory of native plant communities by December 31, 2030 (PRC §5090.35(c)(1)). The OHMVR and Natural Resources Divisions implemented the Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program (or VegCAMP) to meet these requirements.

VegCAMP was created when the State Legislature required CDFW to develop and maintain a vegetation classification and mapping standard. The CDFW developed the State Vegetation Standard, based on the National Vegetation Classification Standard, in collaboration with state resources departments, including State Parks, federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private entities. The State Vegetation Standard is the best available science regarding classifying and organizing vegetation communities and is considered the “industry standard” within California. It is used in wildlife and plant conservation, fire management and analysis, development and planning, climate change analysis, invasive species monitoring, and hydrology and watershed studies. Much of the State has been mapped using the State Vegetation Standard. For more information and maps, visit the [CDFW VegCamp website](#).

OHMVR and Natural Resources Divisions’ staff lead the effort to map vegetation communities at the SVRAs using VegCAMP. Additionally, CDFW VegCAMP staff provided guidance, training, and peer review during the field sampling and mapping. Half of the SVRAs completed mapping in 2021 (Clay Pit, Prairie City, Carnegie, Hollister Hills, and Heber Dunes SVRAs). The other half (Oceano Dunes, Hungry Valley, Onyx Ranch, and Ocotillo Wells SVRAs) will complete theirs in 2022. The resulting classifications and maps will be incorporated into each SVRA’s WHPP.

Data and analysis methods include field sampling, data analysis, desktop mapping using aerial imagery, and a finished map field accuracy test. Field sampling and data analysis began in spring 2021. By the end of 2022, all nine SVRAs will have complete maps and vegetation community inventories. This information will supply valuable habitat data for resource managers and a standard baseline for future reference. Each map and inventory will be updated as necessary and the WHPPs every five years.

## **SOIL CONSERVATION STANDARD AND GUIDELINES**

Senate Bill 249 required the OHMVR Division to review and, if necessary, update the 2008 Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines by December 31, 2020.

Off-highway vehicle recreation facilities shall be managed for sustainable long-term prescribed use without generating soil loss that exceeds restorability without causing erosion or sedimentation, which significantly affects resource values beyond the facilities. Management of OHV facilities shall occur in accordance with Public Resources Code, **§5090.2**, 5090.35, and 5090.53.

Managers of SVRAs and OHV facilities receiving monies from the OHV Trust fund must ensure their OHV facilities are maintained to meet the [2020 Soil Standard](#). Compliance requires that the best available science practices be incorporated into OHV management. These practices are specific to the management activity, should evolve, and requires management activities to be evaluated over time using robust information and data to inform soil conservation management activities.

The purpose of the review and update was to ensure the Soil Standard used a generic and measurable standard founded in the best available science and subject to public review. The update occurred in consultation with the United States Natural Resource Conservation Service, United States Geological Survey (USGS), USFS, BLM, CDFW, and the California Department of Conservation (PRC **§5090.35** (b)). These state and federal partners formed the Consulting Agency Review Committee for the 2020 Soil Standard update.

The OHMVR Division assembled a multidisciplinary team composed of environmental scientists and engineering geologists, the California Geologic Survey (CGS), and the Department's Natural Resources Division. The team developed a survey to gather public feedback on the 2008 Soil Standard. The survey was sent to OHMVR Grants Program recipients from the past three years, the OHMVR Commission email listserv (comprised of stakeholders and interested persons), Department of Natural Resources staff, and state and federal consulting agencies. The team received significant feedback with more than 220 comments. Major themes included:

- A clear explanation of the intent and application of the Soil Standard, including compliance and assessments
- Additional technical resources, guidance documents, and practical examples to help implement the Soil Standard and project design
- Updates to the Best Management Practices Manual

Per the review findings, the Guidelines were updated for clarity, use, and account for technological changes in vehicles used for OHV recreation. The 2020 Guidelines were designed as a step-by-step guide to assist SVRAs and applicable OHV Trust-funded projects in incorporating the best available science into their management. It included references to peer-reviewed research data, agency-published technical reports, information obtained from systematic inventory and monitoring data, and professional expertise and experience.

State Parks presented a revised draft to the Consulting Agency Review Committee for review and feedback. A final draft was posted for public review and comment before being approved on December 30, 2020.

## **STORM WATER MANAGEMENT PLANS**

A Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) is designed to guide park staff to implement a storm-water program. The purpose is to define expectations and direction for those responsible for developing and implementing the stormwater program. Elements outlined in an SWMP may include training or site-specific structural and non-structural Best Management Practices (BMPs) intended to reduce or eliminate pollutant discharges from SVRAs. The SWMPs have six minimum control measures: public education and outreach; public involvement and participation; illicit



Figure 49. Oceano Dunes.

discharge detection and elimination; construction site runoff; post-construction runoff; pollution prevention; and good housekeeping.

An SVRA's SWMP may also include management goals and activities for maintaining OHV trails and facilities to meet the park's water quality objectives. SWMPs come in various forms throughout the OHMVR Division. Carnegie and Oceano Dunes SVRAs operate under the California State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) Water Quality Order No. 2013-0001 DWQ and the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit No. CAS000004 for waste discharge requirements for stormwater discharges from small municipal separate storm sewer systems. This permit was adopted on February 5, 2013, as a non-traditional permittee. This permit regulates stormwater discharges from municipal storm sewer systems (MS4s). MS4 is defined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a:

conveyance or system of conveyances (including roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, manufactured channels, or storm drains): (i) owned or operated by a state, city, town, borough, or county (US Environmental Protection Agency, 2012).

MS4 permits prescribe a stormwater program to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable. This program intends to protect the park's natural resources, improve water quality, and meet the NPDES and the Clean Water Act requirements. Many State Parks, including SVRAs, fall under the MS4 permit category throughout California and must develop and implement a program. The SWMP and related management programs and plans provide an adaptive management framework for SVRAs to protect water quality.



Figure 50. Interpretive panels at Oceano Dunes SVRA teaches the public how to protect water resources.

## STORM WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN AT OCEANO DUNES SVRA

Since 2018, Oceano Dunes SVRA has produced informational notices, interpretive panels, and brochures as part of the education requirement of the SWMP. Topics include the Storm Water Management program, how you can protect water quality, covering riparian areas and coastal dune scrub, eliminating illicit discharges, RV dumping, trash, and pet waste cleanup.

## STATEWIDE COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS AND CONSULTANT CONTRACTS

The OHMVR Division works with academic institutions and government agencies for technical assistance with monitoring and habitat restoration, while volunteers and stakeholder groups assist with resource protection projects. These relationships also provide learning opportunities for students.

OHMVR Division and SVRA environmental scientists are part of the larger scientific community studying species and habitat health and implementing adaptive management techniques for restoration and resource management. Environmental scientists collaborate with many professional organizations such as the California Native Plant Society, the National Audubon Society, Institute for Bird Populations, and California Invasive Plant Council to share their work and ideas. Moreover, several local chapters of these organizations also volunteer at SVRAs to help with species counts and habitat restoration projects.

## INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Ocotillo Wells SVRA has been a sitting member of the Interagency Coordinating Committee (ICC) since 1994, whose responsibility is to determine state and federal policy on flat-tailed horned



lizards (FTHL) management, research protocols, and protection status. Ocotillo Wells SVRA staff provides comments and peer review for ICC committee publications, monitoring program design, and management policies.

## **WORK WITH STATE UNIVERSITIES**

Several academic institutions work closely with SVRAs to provide technical assistance with monitoring programs and peer review of data and reports. For instance, the Biological Sciences Department at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo (Cal Poly), works with Oceano Dunes SVRA staff to evaluate existing methods and protocols to monitor the park's birds and small animal populations. In addition, Cal Poly professors hold workshops on these topics with OHMVR Division management and environmental scientists. Students from California State University (CSU) San Diego, CSU Sacramento, and CSU Monterey work with environmental scientists to implement erosion control BMPs on trails and assist with habitat restoration work. These programs allow students to gain practical skills and knowledge in their field of study while Districts have access to subject matter experts, enthusiastic interns, and new technologies.

## **CONSULTING SERVICES**

The OHMVR Division hires consultants to review reports and data, train staff, and provide technical assistance regarding local, state, and federal regulatory compliance. The consultants have diverse experiential backgrounds ranging from academia, the public sector, and private companies and are experts in their field of study. Consultants have a wide range of tasks, including:

- Assess existing habitat monitoring programs and make recommendations.
- Assist SVRAS in developing programs that meet their specific management needs.
- Provide a review of statistical models, interpretations, and conclusions described in monitoring reports and WHPPs.
- Provide regulatory compliance and specialized training.
- Review projects and prepare related environmental documents.
- Assist the OHMVR division in developing policy and compliance with local, state, and environmental regulatory mandates.
- Review the OHMVR Grants Program applications to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and CEQA requirements.

Consultants also support program-level planning documents such as Habitat Conservation Plans for permit compliance, trail management, restoration plans, interagency agreements, and other legal documents.

## **Cultural Resources Program Overview**

All Districts have a team of specialists like Cultural Resource Managers, Tribal Liaisons, and Archaeologists who review proposed projects, conduct surveys, monitor projects, and consult

with tribes. The Department’s Northern and Southern Service Centers provide archaeological support and CEQA review and assist with tribal consultation. The Cultural Resource Division also supports tribal affairs and reviews proposed projects and plans. SVRAs may also hire cultural resource firms to conduct resource studies, historic District evaluations, and cultural resource management plans.

The State Historic Preservation Office reviews and approves projects in compliance with PRC §5024 and 5024.1(g). These code sections require state agencies to take several actions to preserve state-owned historical resources under their jurisdictions. These actions include evaluating resources for the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) eligibility and California Historical Landmark (California Landmark) eligibility, maintaining an inventory of eligible and listed resources, and managing these historical resources to retain their historic characteristics. Since the last Program Report, Carnegie SVRA has applied to the California Register of Historical Resources for the Tesla Mine Complex. Prairie City SVRA also investigated whether the Capital Dredging Company complex might be considered a historic district under the National Register or the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register).

## **CULTURAL RESOURCE INVENTORIES**

Conducting cultural resource inventories is a critical tool for SVRAs to identify cultural resources on land under its ownership and occur in compliance with PRC §§ 5024 and 5024.1(g). The state laws and the results of the cultural resource inventories that have been conducted in Onyx Ranch, Clay Pit, Prairie City, Carnegie, Hollister Hills, Ocotillo, and Oceano Dunes SVRAs were discussed in 2011, 2014, and 2017 OHMVR Commission Program Reports. Since the last report, Hungry Valley SVRA recorded archaeological sites in the park and conducted a new cultural resource inventory on the 2014 Acquisition area.

After completing a cultural resource inventory of an SVRA, State Park archaeologists evaluate the significance of known resources according to the National Register and the California Register criteria (California State Parks, 2021). If cultural resources are determined to be eligible for listing in one or both registers, they are designated as “historical resources.” State agencies have a high level of resource preservation and protection of historical resources, including avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating adverse project impacts in compliance with CEQA. Refer to the SVRA sections below for updates on their cultural resource management programs.

## **TRIBAL CONSULTATION**

California State Parks conducts ongoing Native American consultation to ensure the identification, protection, and preservation of Tribal Cultural Resources in SVRAs. In compliance with CEQA guidelines, Executive Order B-10-11, Senate Bill 18, the California Natural Resources Agency Tribal Consultation Policy, and State Parks Departmental Notice [2007 Native American Consultation Policy and Implementation Procedures](#), the OHMVR Division, SVRAs, and the State Park Service Centers work with the State Parks’ Tribal Liaison on all consultation matters. All Districts have a trained employee who is a liaison with the Native American community to engage in ongoing consultation.



Figure 51. Tribal consultation at Ocotillo Wells SVRA during an archaeological survey.

State Parks staff conduct extensive outreach and consultation with Native American tribes and individuals during planning and project implementation. Consultation practices follow Departmental Notice 2007-05, which outlines the policy of State Parks to engage in open, respectful, ongoing consultation with appropriate California Native American tribes in the proper management of areas, places, objects, or burials associated with their heritage, sacred sites, and traditional cultural properties or cultural traditions in the State Park System.

For instance, during the general plan revision process for Hungry Valley SVRA, tribal representatives helped identify culturally sensitive areas to avoid or mitigate future SVRA development. Likewise, at Prairie City SVRA, the United Auburn Indian Community met with park staff on a Road and Trail Management Plan for the unit. When projects occur at SVRAs, staff work with interested Native American tribes early in the project planning phase to develop avoidance and minimization measures or mitigation efforts and serve as Native American monitors during project implementation.

Consulting with tribes is critical in complying with archeological resource protection laws such as the National Historical Resource Preservation Act, Archeological Resource Protection Act, and CEQA. For example, Ocotillo Wells SVRA archaeologists work with the Tribal Most Likely Descendant (MLD) of the area as a crucial part of the decision-making process to protect sensitive archaeological resources and mitigate the threats OHV traffic can pose.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> California State law invests the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) with authority to designate a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) when Native American human remains, and any associated grave goods are inadvertently discovered outside of a dedicated cemetery. The NAHC defines an MLD as the most likely descended culturally affiliated, California Native American tribe or Native American descendent that may recommend to the owner or the person responsible for the discovery work means for treatment or disposition, with appropriate dignity, of the human remains and any associated grave goods, under PRC §5097.98(a)).

## *SUMMARY OF SVRA CULTURAL RESOURCE PROGRAMS*

### **CARNEGIE SVRA**

Diablo Range District hired a new associate state archaeologist position in March 2020, which enabled the District to increase cultural resource monitoring and expedite project implementation at Carnegie and Hollister Hills SVRAs.

Carnegie SVRA monitors its cultural sites for damage or impacts weekly. No changes to cultural resources have occurred since the last program report. Wildfires at the park create one of the biggest concerns with protecting cultural resources-- it has burned several times since 2017 and twice in 2020 alone. Cultural resources risk exposure and damage from fires. Surveying and monitoring sites for fire damage have increased in recent years. There are numerous historical artifacts such as bricks, pottery, china, terra cotta, and other construction materials surrounding the original area of the SVRA. Fortunately, the fires and fire suppression efforts did not damage any cultural resources.

The lack of vegetation due to fire has led to an increase in visitors collecting and moving artifacts. The 2016 Carnegie SVRA General Plan recommended that staff participate in an annual cultural sensitivity training, which the District implemented. This training teaches park staff what to look for in the landscape, guidelines to address visitor collecting, and what to do if visitors turn in artifacts. Although this training is best conducted in person, it was held virtually in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Carnegie SVRA has an ongoing CASSP program where trained volunteers help monitor important sites that park staff cannot visit as often. The CASSP volunteers have not reported any site damage since 2017.

Carnegie SVRA staff routinely consult with Native American tribes per CEQA requirements, State and Department policies. Part of this consultation is about identifying, recording, and protecting cultural sites in the park. The cultural program aims to increase consultation and Memorandums of Understanding with Native American tribes for the tribe's gathering, access, and ceremonial practices.

In 2020, the cultural resource staff evaluated seven park infrastructure projects, including sign placements and a new power pole installation. Of these projects, only one needed a historical resources review (per PRC §5024 and 5024.5) as the project occurred within a historic site. Cultural resource staff surveyed and monitored the site to ensure it had no impact on resources. Additionally, no projects required tribal consultation as they were routine maintenance or occurred in historical sites.

Carnegie SVRA developed educational content for programs and public outreach about the park's prehistoric and historic landscape. For instance, interpreters created a video series on the Carnegie Brick and Pottery Company and the Tesla Mining Company. These videos are intended for young children and inform them about the park's history where they ride. Check out the following videos: [Carnegie Brick and Pottery Video on Facebook](#), [Carnegie Brick and Pottery Video on Flipgrid](#), [Tesla Coal Mining on Flipgrid](#).



Figure 52. Volunteers plant trees at Carnegie SVRA.

## **HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA**

Diablo Range District cultural resource staff continually monitor the SVRA for impacts on the numerous cultural sites near and close to their riding trails. This monitoring is done yearly per the park's general plan.

SVRA interpreters regularly update and install interpretive panels near several key sites to inform the riders about the scenery around them. Wayside panels give essential context to the many buildings, such as the schoolhouse that the public sees in the landscape. Diablo Range District cultural and interpretive staff regularly consult with local tribes on interpretive projects. Together, they created two pamphlets and panels that discuss Native Americans' land use through time and the role of archeologists. They also developed a self-guided Junior Ranger Activity Book aimed at young children.

District cultural staff collaborate with local Native American groups to incorporate traditional Native fire and land management fire practices into the landscape. SVRA staff is also working on a Memorandum of Understanding with respective tribes for gathering rights and ceremonies.

During the 2020 work year, the SVRA engaged in six projects to improve cultural interpretation and public safety during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Only one needed a historical resource review of these six projects due to a safety gate placed near a sensitive cultural site. With the help of cultural resource staff, there were no impacts or effects on the site.

## **HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA**

In November 2020, archaeologists recorded, tested, and mitigated a small prehistoric site at Hungry Valley SVRA. The field crew consisted of consultants, the Department's Cultural



Figure 53. 6,000-year-old agave oven at Hungry Valley SVRA.

Resources Division, Southern Service Center, members of the Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, and Great Basin staff.

Last fall, the site was discovered when the trail crews groomed the Freeman Trail. The area in question is a prehistoric “roasting pit,” or “oven,” used to bake the ever-present agave or yucca plant. Agave is harvested carefully with digging sticks, and the heart of the plant is roasted for two to three days in an earthen pit to make them edible. Agave hearts have the consistency and taste most compared to baked yams and were a significant part of the diet for many Native Americans from Southern California, across the southwest, and deep into Mexico.

Part of the testing program for this location will include a “starch residue” test to confirm that it was used for agave. It may consist of radiocarbon tests and micro-constituents, which sample soil run thru a series of fine mesh examined by microscope for seeds and other items. Shovel

test units (pits) and auger testing were also done. A department-certified drone pilot mapped the site using an aerial drone, flying over the site and taking high-resolution photos. These will be incorporated into GIS, define the boundaries, and locate other features.

After completing the lab work on the feature using a form of radiocarbon dating called Accelerated Mass Spectrometry, data showed dates ranging from 300-6,000 B.P. (before the present). As a 6,000 year-old artifact, this is one of the few dated features in the entire region that dates to the middle Holocene, making this the oldest roasting feature (oven) in Southern California and Nevada. Further work is ongoing, and staff is working on a preservation plan.

## OCEANO DUNES SVRA

Oceano Dunes SVRA and Pismo State Beach have a long history of human habitation and land use. Cultural resources include prehistoric, historical, and contemporary sites and artifacts. Several people with different professional backgrounds work as a team to protect cultural resources and educate the public, including archaeologists, historians, curators, environmental scientists, maintenance workers, interpreters, and public safety staff. Archaeological duties include investigating cultural sites, monitoring projects, researching, writing technical studies, environmental compliance, and acting as the tribal liaison for the District with Native American groups and individuals. Visitor services, resources, and maintenance staff help by monitoring sites and erecting barriers to protect them. The interpretation staff collaborates with local Native American groups and archaeologists to prepare educational materials and content.

## EDUCATING THE PUBLIC ABOUT NORTHERN CHUMASH CULTURE

For many years, the Oceano Dunes District has hosted outdoor field trips along the Oceano Lagoon for local third-grade students. These field trips incorporate a hands-on learning approach to understanding the Northern Chumash Native American culture and the natural resources around the Oceano Lagoon. When schools around the nation began closing to in-person learning due to COVID-19, staff began brainstorming ways to share this content.

Interpretive staff collaborated with the District's tribal liaison and Northern Chumash tribal representatives to create educational videos aligned with the school curriculum. The series comprises short videos that teachers can incorporate into their class studies. Videos are posted on the District's [YouTube Channel](#) and [Flipgrid](#). These videos complement their lessons and live programs, giving students background knowledge for deeper discussions during these programs. Oceano Dunes District offers a PORTS Program (Parks Online Resources for Teachers and Students) on these same topics, available on Wednesday mornings. Additionally, interpreters hosted a [home learning program](#) on this topic for students.

During November 2020's Native American Heritage Month, the District posted an [interview](#) with Northern Chumash community members developed in collaboration with tribal members for an exhibit in the Oceano Dunes District Visitor Center. Upon request of Tifhini (Northern Chumash) Chairwoman Mona Tucker, interpreters converted the interview into an accessible digital format. This interview has been shared across social media platforms and throughout the Northern Chumash community.

## OCOTILLO WELLS DISTRICT

Ocotillo Wells District's work consulting with the Tribal Most Likely Descendant (MLD) of the area has been crucial in the decision-making process to protect sensitive archaeological resources and mitigate the threats OHV traffic can pose. Some examples of projects include:

- Approving concepts for palm restoration projects that help sustain the fragile desert ecosystem.
- Determining the most appropriate way to fence sensitive sites.
- Assisting with fence expansion efforts.
- Serving as a tribal monitor for portions of the ongoing geothermal seismic exploration project on private inholdings within the park.

Collaboration with tribal nations provides cultural resource managers with guidance on resource protection, such as collecting and curating artifacts, performing residue testing, and dating. After proper analysis and recordation are conducted, artifacts are stored and curated at the Imperial Valley Museum. The SVRA MLD has advised the SVRA to keep artifacts together to allow tribal members and interested community members to view and learn about the objects and their culture.

## SITE MONITORING AT OCOTILLO WELLS SVRA

Archaeological site monitoring is an integral part of a cultural resource specialist's work, especially at a busy park like Ocotillo Wells SVRA. When managing 85,000 acres, many fences or signs need attention, and there is a constant stream of projects to maintain facilities and trails. Between 2017 and 2020, the cultural resources team monitored 76 individual projects. Projects were internally generated through a project review system and externally generated from special event permits and scientific permits. As most projects take place on previously disturbed ground, anything new of archaeological significance is rarely found. However, some monitoring projects have shown evidence of farms and homesteads that used to occupy the land now managed by the Ocotillo Wells District.

## OCOTILLO WELLS SVRA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Cultural resource staff continually survey the park to locate and record items modified by humans in the past and hike through what seems like an endless expanse of desert. Surveying also helps facilitate special event permits, internal projects, and ongoing maintenance. In 2016, cultural staff started to survey the highest used special event areas, such as campgrounds, to help streamline the review process for events. This effort eventually morphed into a push to thoroughly survey every mapped and named trail within the trail system. Each trail was assigned a buffer corridor on either side of the trail, and then cultural staff surveyed the corridor to locate and record all cultural resources.

With over 60 mapped trails, this has been a significant accomplishment. Over the years, the District received help from Southern Service Center archaeologists to survey large sections of the trail. Internally, Ocotillo Wells SVRA has supplemented two to four cultural resource staff, depending on staffing levels. The trails project was finalized in 2021. The SVRA conducted a systematic pedestrian survey of 84 miles of trail (equivalent to 4,000 acres), identified 221 new isolates<sup>2</sup>, and located 93 new sites.



Figure 54. Surveying trails at Ocotillo Wells SVRA.

<sup>2</sup> An isolate is an area where a few artifacts are found (such a place where a person made tools and left behind rock shards) that contribute information about a culture, period, or function.



The data collected from those new sites and isolates were then submitted to the South Coastal Information Center and managed within the District’s cultural resource databases. Once the data is entered into GIS databases, the information can be presented on a map. It has helped immensely with the project review process. Visually understanding the spatial relationship between artifacts, sites, and park infrastructure allow staff to make decisions quickly to protect cultural resources effectively.

## **OCOTILLO WELLS DISTRICT CULTURAL RESOURCE TRAINING**

Starting in late 2018, the cultural resources staff held cultural overview training for new employees. This training is a helpful and effective way to introduce the cultural resources program, the general history of the area, and what employees should do when encountering artifacts in the park. It integrates the “why” and “what we do,” resulting in a better understanding between disciplines.

Cultural resources staff held multiple sessions for maintenance and trails staff from Ocotillo Wells and Heber Dunes SVRAs, and eventually expanded to include public safety and interpretive staff. After the presentation, there is a hands-on portion where employees can pick up and look at artifacts within the training collection. Most of this collection came from visitors, and by the time they turn it in, SVRA cultural staff usually lack the necessary data to return it to its original context.

## **PRAIRIE CITY SVRA**

The most familiar landforms at Prairie City SVRA are large piles of rock cobbles or dredge tailings deposited from past dredge gold mining activities. In 2004, States Parks purchased 211 acres at the northern portion of the SVRA, known as the Yost property. It was incorporated into the Prairie City General Plan in 2016 and was identified as part of the OHV route and trail use area. In 2018, SVRA staff started work on a road and trail management plan to design the park’s trail system, including the Yost area.

The OHMVR Division hired an archaeological firm to research the historical land uses in the Yost area. The tailing piles, dredging ponds, and ranching materials left behind were intriguing, and the SVRA wanted to ensure it protected significant cultural resources before implementing a trails system here. The firm investigated whether the property might be considered a historic district under the National Register or the California Register.

Prairie City SVRA, like much of the surrounding region, was actively mined for gold and later sand and other aggregates. Although the remains of earlier placer mining operations are not present, Prairie City SVRA displays the remains of bucket-line dredging operations of the Capital Dredging Company, which operated from 1927 to 1952 in the western portion of the present-day SVRA. The Yost property was used primarily for cattle ranching after 1952. Intermittent sand and aggregate mining occurred here from 1958 until 2012. While much of the dredging operations are intact, the firm found that it did not meet the requirements for registration as a historic District.



Figure 55. Tailing piles, part of the Capital Dredging Company Diggings on the Yost section of Prairie City SVRA.



Figure 56. Park staff supplied loaner safety gear such as helmets, goggles, and gloves to UAIC members during the event.

This analysis gave State Parks a wealth of information about gold-dredging activities in the park, especially how it connects to the Sacramento region. Interpretive staff will use the report to develop interpretation for riders who enjoy the trails and create educational materials and programs for interested public and schools.

## ENGAGING TRIBES IN OHV RIDING AND SAFETY TRAINING

Members from the United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC) came out to Prairie City SVRA to enjoy a day of riding, food, and fun. The park was excited for such an opportunity to have a day with the tribe. Many members brought out their OHVs, such as dirt bikes, ATVs, and side-by-sides. Park staff helped by providing loaner safety gear such as helmets, goggles, and gloves to members and children alike.

After a great morning of riding, UAIC provided lunch and a raffle for its members. State Park Interpreter Peter Ostroskie and Law Enforcement Ranger Dave Harte taught an ATV Safety Institute class to some children in the afternoon. Some people enjoyed a little bit of competition over at the All-Star Karting track and Big Time Speedway, one of the concessionaires at Prairie City, hosted UAIC in the evening. Even having one of the members ride the opening lap at the September 11, 2001, tribute race!

## SVRA Natural Resource Monitoring Programs

This section describes SVRA natural resource monitoring programs and highlights monitoring data and findings.

### AVIAN MONITORING

Birds can be one of the most important indicators of the health of any habitat or ecosystem. Thanks to their broad ranges and ability to occupy different ecological niches, birds interact with

their environments on many different levels. Additionally, birds are among the most studied and understood taxonomic groups globally, given their diurnal (daytime) nature and relative ease of spotting. These factors make bird population and data easy to compare land population data with larger trends and population information. California boasts some of the world’s most prolonged avian population trend monitoring and data gathering programs and the largest and most popular migratory route – [the Pacific Flyway](#).

For these reasons, collecting and analyzing bird population information is a valuable resource tool that can inform the health of habitats, ecosystems, and the potential impacts of land use like recreation. Understanding birds and their populations is a valuable tool that public land managers must consider when managing properties.

## **NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY AND INSTITUTE FOR BIRD POPULATIONS CONTRACT**

In September 2016, the OHMVR Division contracted with the National Audubon Society (Audubon) and the Institute for Bird Populations (IBP) to improve SVRA avian monitoring programs. The contract was updated and renewed in 2020 with IBP through December 2023.

The first contract analyzed and summarized previously collected bird survey data and compared it to regional bird populations and SVRA land-use trends. The consultants and SVRA staff prepared detailed reports evaluating each SVRA’s data trends and provided specific management goals and actions to effectively manage park habitat and avian resources.

In addition, IBP utilized new approaches to measure disturbance effects from OHV recreation using Autonomous Recording Units (ARUs). The ARUs are self-contained audio recording devices that record ambient noise, including singing birds. A pilot study was conducted at Carnegie SVRA that distributed ARUs over forty-four survey plots throughout the riding and non-riding areas of the SVRA. The goal of the pilot study was to provide SVRAs with another option for collecting and analyzing survey data and comparing the effectiveness of the units and programs to trained surveyors. If proven to be sufficient, ARUs would provide SVRA resource staff more flexibility since they are not dependent on the availability or presence of trained avian specialists to conduct field surveys. Instead, they could capture recordings and send the audio files to an avian specialist for analysis. The study proved that ARUs are a viable field survey alternative for the SVRAs and could provide more defensible and consistent data for their avian monitoring program.

In January 2020, IBP installed ARUs at SVRAs and provided additional avian support. Much like the first contract, the scope focused on improving existing SVRA avian monitoring and resources programs. The current contract with IBP was especially valuable as the COVID-19



Figure 57. Automated recording units used at Prairie City SVRA.

pandemic hit. Because of the ARUs and planning and coordination efforts in the spring of 2020, staff could conduct annual surveys at their parks with COVID-19 restrictions. Typically, avian surveys require two individuals, a trained surveyor and a recorder. The ARU deployment only needed a single untrained person.

The ARU program and collaboration with Audubon and IBP scientists enable State Parks resource staff to gather data more efficiently to evaluate bird populations at the SVRAs. If the program continues to prove successful, managers will have more time and resources to devote to improving habitat and ecosystem health at the SVRAs.

## *Avian Monitoring Program Highlights*

### **CARNEGIE SVRA**

Over 135 bird species have been identified within the park, including special status loggerhead shrike, horned lark, and tricolored blackbird. Localized nest surveys are conducted before all projects occur in the park, and nests are avoided if found. Since 2015, 60-point count locations have been surveyed annually. In 2018, ARUs were deployed as a potential alternative method for monitoring bird populations at Carnegie SVRA. This study involved deploying the ARUs at locations where staff previously collected data. The study found that the ARUs are comparable to human point counts under low to moderate wind conditions; however, human annotation of the recorded data is more effective than relying on software for analysis. Carnegie SVRA environmental staff will continue to look for ways to incorporate the ARUs into the habitat monitoring program.

IBP studies found little evidence of near-term (five-year) declines in bird populations due to OHV use within the park. However, many species were less abundant in areas with greater OHV trail cover. More time is required to determine if near-term data trends in abundance indicate longer-term processes that may be occurring. Fortunately, Carnegie's current study design provides data that can be used to determine which species are significantly declining and may inform which actions land managers may take to stabilize the local abundance of decreasing species in the future.

### **CLAY PIT SVRA**

In 2019, Audubon and IBP analyzed three years of Clay Pit SVRA's bird monitoring data. They compared species richness, diversity, and abundance survey results where OHVs are allowed and in non-OHV areas. The analysis found that several species were more abundant in the OHV use areas than in non-OHV use areas in winter and spring surveys. Only one species, the red-winged blackbird, was significantly less abundant in OHV areas. Their findings concluded that there was little difference in bird richness and diversity between OHV and non-OHV use areas.

### **HEBER DUNES SVRA**

Avian surveys occur twice a year at Heber Dunes SVRA, once in the spring and fall. Spring surveys allow for observations of spring migratory birds as they pass the area, while fall surveys sample fall migrants and residential birds.



Figure 58. Bird boxes at Hungry Valley SVRA.

### **HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA'S BIRD BOX SURVEYS**

Eight Western Bluebird boxes and four American Kestrel boxes were installed throughout the park in 2020 to provide additional bird nesting habitat for native cavity-nesting species. Bird boxes were monitored once per month to check for the presence of nesting birds. Bluebird boxes are registered, and all nesting activity is reported to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Nest Watch program. Similarly, Kestrel boxes are registered, and all nesting activity is reported to the American Kestrel Partnership. While nesting birds did not use bird boxes in 2020, birds will discover and use them eventually.

### **OCEANO DUNES SVRA'S WESTERN SNOWY PLOVER AND LEAST TERN NESTING PROGRAM**

Oceano Dunes SVRA is an important breeding site for two special-status ground-nesting birds—the California least tern (state and federally listed as endangered) and the western snowy plover (federally listed as threatened). Some employees hold a specific permit with the USFWS to monitor and manage these birds. Responsibilities include conducting population surveys, locating and monitoring nests, erecting and monitoring seasonal fence and nest closures, and monitoring nests and chicks. This program also prepares annual reports for the USFWS and CDFW.

Western snowy plover and California least tern breed at Oceano Dunes SVRA from March to September. Oceano Dunes SVRA continues to be an important breeding site, and approximately 300 acres of the park are closed to the public during the birds' breeding season. Oceano Dunes SVRA Resource staff intensively monitor these two species' nesting and fledgling success seven days per week. The Resources team tries to locate every nest within the park. Since 1998, Oceano Dunes SVRA staff attempted to band and search for all chicks that hatch from the site to track their movement and survival. In addition, Oceano Dunes SVRA management efforts include:

- Maintaining the six-foot “no-climb” fence that surrounds the 300-acre closure.
- Enhancing nesting habitat with driftwood, wood chips, and least tern shelters (for added protection from predators and the elements).

- Predator management.
- Monitoring and enhancement of beach invertebrate communities.
- Educating park visitors.
- Enforcement of resource protection regulations.

This program has gathered important information on breeding activity, factors influencing breeding success and chick survival, and changes in adult breeding populations.

Environmental scientists analyze the monitoring data and trends and adapt management actions to improve the nesting program. Thanks to these monitoring and management activities, Oceano Dunes SVRA has documented stable and growing breeding populations and chick survival trends thanks to these monitoring and management activities. These efforts help recover the least tern and snowy plover while keeping OHV use and other recreational opportunities available to the public. The District employs up to eight seasonal snowy plover and least tern monitors each year. New staff is often recruited from California Polytechnical Institute (Cal Poly), San Luis Obispo, when they graduate. The SVRA also hired several graduates from other parts of the state or country.

## 2020 LEAST TERN BREEDING STATISTICS

In 2020, there were an estimated 35-42 least tern breeding pairs, higher than the previous two years (30-33 pairs) and compared to a minimum average of 41 (range=23-48) pairs in the 13 years from 2005-2017. Breeding pairs at Oceano Dunes SVRA decreased after a near-complete breeding failure in 2017, with only seven juveniles produced due to skunks' high egg and chick predation. Subsequently, several SVRA banded terns expected to nest at the park relocated to nearby sites in Santa Barbara County in 2018-2019 for breeding (information from 2020 is not available from other sites for this report). In 2020, staff documented a minimum of 12 banded birds with known origins as breeding at the park, with all of them banded as chicks and fledged from the SVRA.



Figure 59. Adult (left) and juvenile (right) least tern.

There were 48 known nesting attempts in 2020, 47 from the Southern Enclosure and one in the open riding area. The hatching rate for known location and unknown fate nests was 78.3% (36/46), below the average of 83.7% during the previous 15-year period 2005-19. Of the remaining 12 nests, two had an unknown fate (not known if hatched or failed), four were abandoned, four failed with unknown cause, one was depredated, and one failed due to wind.

Sixty-three chicks hatched, and of these, 57 were color-banded to an individual. Thirty-eight chicks (35 banded, three unbanded) are

known to have fledged (seen when 21 days old or older), for a fledging rate of 60.3% and an estimated 0.90-1.09 chicks fledged per pair. This rate compares with an average for the previous 14-year period 2006-19 (banding chicks to individuals began in 2006) of 47 juveniles produced per year, a 74.7% chick fledging rate, and 1.04-1.19 chicks fledged per pair.

## 2020 SNOWY PLOVER STATISTICS

There was a minimum of 190 breeding snowy plovers (110 males and 80 females), compared to 214 in 2019, a decrease of 11.2%. Staff documented 87 banded birds with known origins as breeding, with 89.7% (78/87) banded as chicks and fledged from the SVRA. There were 226 known nesting attempts in 2020, including 12 identified only by detecting brood (unknown nest location). Of the 214 nests from known locations, 128 (59.8%) were in the Southern Enclosure, 39 (18.2%) in Oso Flaco, 24 (11.2%) in the Fore dune closure, 22 (10.3%) in the open riding area, and one (0.5%) in Pawprint revegetation area. Of the 197 nests with known location and fate, 142 hatched for a nest hatching rate of 72.1%. This rate compares to an average of 74.6% for the previous 18-year period, 2002 to 2019. Fifty-five nests failed, attributed to the following causes: abandoned pre-term (5); abandoned post-term (1); abandoned unknown pre- or post-term (2); wind (13); overwashed by the tide (3); cause unknown (4); unidentified predator (8); unidentified avian predator (12); coyote (1); common raven (3); and northern harrier (3). For all documented nest loss to predation, avian predators accounted for 66.7% (18/27).



Figure 60. Western snowy plover at Oceano Dunes SVRA.

Of the 410 hatching chicks, 250 were color-banded to brood with 32.0% (80/250) fledging, and the fate of the 160 unbanded chicks is believed to be known with 23.1% (37/160) fledging. A total of 117 chicks fledged (seen when 28 days old or older) for a low fledging rate of 28.5%. This rate compares to 27.1% in 2019 and an average rate of 39.2% for the 18 years from 2002 to 2019. One chick fledged per breeding male is the estimated number needed to prevent the population of snowy plovers from declining. The productivity of 1.2 chicks fledged per male should provide for moderate population growth (assuming approximately 75% annual adult survival and 50% juvenile survival) (USFS 2007). In 2020, an estimated 1.06 chicks fledged per breeding male at Oceano Dunes SVRA. For the 18 years (2002-2019), the average productivity was 1.47 chicks fledged per breeding male.

## ONYX RANCH SVRA

Avian monitoring is conducted annually in the spring and winter. In addition to point count surveys, IBP and OHMVR Division staff deployed ARUs at Habitat Monitoring System (HMS) plots in 2019. The ARUs detected 28 species, including 12 species that have not previously

been confirmed from the park's potential species list. The ash-throated flycatcher, Bewick's wren, blue-grey gnatcatcher, Brewer's sparrow, Bullock's oriole, Costa's hummingbird, dark-eyed junco, downy woodpecker, gray flycatcher, house wren, Pacific-slope flycatcher, and white-throated swift were officially confirmed in the park. In 2021, winter avian monitoring detected 17 species; spring avian monitoring detected 31 species, including four new species – the cactus wren, hermit thrush, LeConte's thrasher, and the western wood-peewee.

## **PRAIRIE CITY SVRA**

Prairie City SVRA conducts annual point counts surveys to monitor avian diversity and richness at 43 sites across the park. Initially, the primary objective of the analysis was to determine the impact of OHV recreation use areas on bird populations. The results indicate no statistically significant difference in species diversity or richness between OHV use and non-OHV use areas. Instead, there was a substantial increase in diversity or richness correlated with the presence and complexity of vertical habitat regardless of OHV use. The western zones of the park contain all the cottonwood/willow and coyote brush scrub habitat. The eastern area consists primarily of annual grassland, disturbed annual grassland, and blue oak woodland vegetation types. The woodier vegetation of the west provides greater vertical complexity with more habitat niches. Since the last Commission report, several restoration efforts and new tree and shrub planting additions in the eastern portion may have reduced the diversity gap observed in the 2018 analysis.

Over the past several years, multiple volunteers helped complete the avian point count surveys, but experts were not always available every year. This method resulted in slightly different data collection methodologies or reduced survey efforts. Prairie City renewed the contract with Audubon and the IBP to improve the avian bird count methodology. Part of the previous contract included an analysis of the effect of trail cover on select species during the winter and spring using five years of avian data. The study concluded that the percentage of trail cover itself did not appear to cause population declines in species and that disturbance may happen when a trail is initially constructed. With the onset of COVID-19, Prairie City and IBP staff have relied on ARUs as "virtual" experts. In the future, Prairie City staff plan to set up long-term sampling stations at each HMS site with the additional possibility of tracking vehicle use per IBP's recommendation.

## *Bat Monitoring*

### **HEBER DUNES SVRA**

Bat monitoring began in spring 2019 using acoustic bat detectors. Resource staff conduct surveys in the spring and fall (using acoustic bat recorders to record for an entire month). Acoustic monitoring stations were placed at three locations identified as the most likely to have bat activity, two of which are associated with potential drinking sites. Recordings occurred at dusk, and the microphone detected recorded sounds of sonar waves. Resource staff sent the recording data to a consultant who analyzed the information and provided the results and a brief monitoring report.



## HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA

Hungry Valley SVRA began conducting acoustic bat surveys in 2015. In 2020, Hungry Valley SVRA staff completed acoustic bat surveys three times per year. Acoustic surveys capture species diversity from multiple seasons and catch migratory and non-migratory bat species. Bats are monitored using Wildlife Acoustics SM4BAT acoustic recording devices and ultrasonic microphones that record the ultrasonic frequencies of bat calls. In 2020, acoustic surveys detected 15 bat species. The Oak Preserve exhibited the highest diversity of the six acoustic sites, with 11 of the 15 different species detected there. Four species- Pallid Bat, Townsend's big-eared bat, Western mastiff bat, and Western red bat- are California Species of Special Concern. Since beginning the bat monitoring program, 2020 yielded the highest number of species detected.

In 2020, three sets of two back-to-back, 4-chambered bat boxes (from Bat Conservation and Management) were installed throughout the park near water sources and were monitored once per month for bat presence. The newly installed bat boxes provide additional roosting habitat, and all had bat occupants at some point during the year. Staff confirmed bat occupancy by visually verifying bats or detecting guano on the predator guard below each bat box. Continued acoustic monitoring throughout the year, coupled with bat box monitoring, will aid in determining the presence of bat species and the habitats they are utilizing throughout the park. In 2021, bat acoustic monitoring definitively detected 11 species. Four additional species were likely but were identified with a lower confidence level. Therefore, staff took a conservative approach in only confirming the presence of species we felt confident in identifying.

Additionally, a protocol for active monitoring through mist netting has been developed for use starting in spring 2021. Bat boxes set up throughout the park were utilized by bats as roosting habitat. Nighttime emergence surveys, mist net surveys, and acoustic surveys will be conducted at bat box sites to determine species presence and monitor those important roosting sites.

## OCOTILLO WELLS SVRA

Monitoring bats within Ocotillo Wells SVRA occurs at four locations -- either drinking locations or potential flight pathways twice a year in spring and summer. Staff monitor bats using SM2, SM3, or SM4 acoustic bat detectors (specialized monitoring devices) with microphones mounted on PVC poles adjacent to them. Then, the data is analyzed through an OHMVR Division contract using Kaleidoscope software. Since 2015, bat monitoring has detected 18 bat species within the SVRA, of which seven are considered federal or state special status species.



Figure 61. Bat box at Hungry Valley SVRA.

## ONYX RANCH SVRA

A consultant conducted acoustic bat monitoring in 2019, followed by park staff in 2020. State Parks used Wildlife Acoustics SM4 devices at five locations near water sources to monitor bats. Each unit is placed 10-12 feet above the ground, mounted on a painter's pole, and the microphone cord is wrapped around the pole to reduce noise interference. Passive acoustic surveys are done for two weeks throughout the year. The data is analyzed using the auto-identification software of Sonobat 4.4.5, and a subset is manually vetted by park staff and sent to an experienced bat biologist for confirmation.

Previous surveys have detected 11 different species, including the pallid bat, western red bat, hoary bat, big-brown bat, California myotis, western small-footed bat, long-eared bat, Yuma myotis, evening bat, spotted bat, and the Mexican free-tailed bat. Continued monitoring of bats throughout the park in different seasons is necessary to confirm if other potential species are onsite. In 2021, bat monitoring detected ten species, including one new species — fringed myotis.

## BAT HOUSE INSTALLATION

In 2021, two four-chamber bat houses were installed near a spring in Kelso Valley to provide additional roosting locations. The bat houses were placed back-to-back on a pole 11 feet off the ground. The bats have access to different temperature options for roosting by providing two bat houses facing opposite directions.

## *Small Mammal Monitoring*

### CARNEGIE SVRA

Rodent surveys are conducted using Sherman traps and mark-recapture methods for population estimates. Past surveys have detected the California pocket mouse, San Joaquin pocket mouse, the deer mouse, desert woodrat, and Heermann's kangaroo rat.



Figure 62. Desert woodrat at Carnegie SVRA.



Figure 63. Deer mouse at Heber Dunes SVRA.

## HEBER DUNES SVRA

Small mammal surveys occur twice a year, once in the spring (April) and fall (October), at four plots in Heber Dunes SVRA. Sherman traps are used to live capture grain-seeking small mammals with a mixture of seeds and peanut butter. Traps are checked in the morning and set in the afternoon for three trap nights. Each plot has traps set in a line, with the two center plots set with 50 traps and the two outer traps having 25 traps. Trapped individuals are identified to species, sexed, weighed, and measured each morning. Each mammal is given a unique mark with a permanent marker to distinguish recaptured individuals.

## OCEANO DUNES SVRA

Small mammal monitoring has been conducted since 2014 through a contract with Cal Poly. Oceano Dunes SVRA Resource staff have been working closely with Dr. Francis Villablanca, a professor from Cal Poly, who has provided technical assistance and consultation on small mammal monitoring methods. Dr. Villablanca has helped update, refine, and standardize Oceano Dunes SVRA's small mammal study design to conform to experimental design principles. Small mammal monitoring has been conducted through capture-mark-release-recapture on standardized live-trapping plots within the SVRA.

All study plots have been repeatedly sampled, though some time series are longer than others. The purpose is to understand native small mammal abundance, distribution, and habitat use. The data and analyses inform 1) use of the open riding areas by small mammals, 2) effect of open riding area closure and plant restoration on small mammal abundance and diversity, 3) multi-year, species, and plot specific, survivorship and population size dynamics, and 4) dispersal propensity by species. Small mammal diversity and movement can be a proxy for the health of the wildlife habitat within the park. This program would not be possible without the volunteer assistance received from several Cal Poly students, resulting in a beneficial relationship between Oceano Dunes SVRA and the University.

According to the 2021 Draft Oceano Dunes Biodiversity Management Plan, Since 2014, the essential findings have shown the following: 1) Small mammal species distribution is consistent



Figure 64. Environmental Scientists at Oceano Dunes SVRA during small mammal monitoring.



Figure 65. Heermann's kangaroo rat at Oceano Dunes SVRA.

with the theory of island biogeography, and there is a significant relationship between island size and species diversity; more species are found on larger vegetation islands than on smaller islands; 2) Dispersal between habitat islands has been documented in all species, though deer mice and Heermann's kangaroo rats show the highest rates of traveling through the ORA [open riding area]; 3) Species diversity and abundance are lowest on plots that sample the ORA; some ORA plots have diversity and abundance of zero; and 4) Across the entirety of the study plots, the most common species are deer mice and Heermann's kangaroo rat, which are generally associated with the lupine/mock heather alliance. The other three most common species (Monterey big-eared wood rat, California mouse, and California pocket mouse) are associated with the willow/wax myrtle habitat. (California State Parks & California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Jan. 2021, p. 9)

## **ONYX RANCH SVRA'S MOHAVE GROUND SQUIRREL MONITORING**

Annual Mohave ground squirrel (MGS) presence monitoring is conducted annually between March 15th and May 15th. Great Basin District staff collaborated with the CDFW's Mohave Ground Squirrel Technical Advisory Group to develop protocols for monitoring the species. Four habitat monitoring sites were selected based on habitat and slope. MGS preferentially uses blackbrush scrublands and Joshua tree woodlands habitats in flat or mildly sloped areas. A transect of five cameras spaced 150 meters apart at each of the four habitat monitoring sites was set up.

Resource staff installed cameras for two sessions of five full days. There is a minimum break of three weeks between sessions to capture post-mating season variability in surface activity. Staff bait cameras with birdseed and peanut butter powder to attract the species to the camera view. The photos are reviewed, and the number of MGS photo occurrences is recorded. Incidentally, other diurnal species are recorded during the monitoring period.

In 2018, MGS was detected at four locations in the park. In 2019, one site had a possible species detection, but there were not enough photos of the individual to confirm. Reports from other MGS monitoring efforts in the region are consistent with the results in the park. In 2019, there were little to no species detections from other regional survey efforts. Cattle grazing also impacted the survey efforts of MGS, and staff removed the birdseed bait containers from the cattle's view at three of the camera locations. In 2021, MGS was detected at nine camera locations and one additional camera location incidentally outside the survey across three habitat monitoring plots. These findings show an increase from no MGS observations in 2019.

## **OTHER SMALL MAMMAL MONITORING**

In 2021, small mammal monitoring confirmed the presence of nine species, including one new species for Onyx SVRA. These include the California pocket mouse, long-tailed pocket mouse, Merriam's pocket mouse, chisel-toothed kangaroo rat, desert woodrat, southern grasshopper mouse, canyon mouse, deer mouse, and the little pocket mouse.



Figure 66. Mountain lion image at Carnegie using camera trapping.

## *Large Mammal Monitoring*

### **CARNEGIE SVRA**

While conducting nocturnal surveys, staff detected black-tailed deer, bobcats, coyotes, black-tailed jackrabbit, and Audubon's cottontail. American badger, three owl species, and common poorwills, a nocturnal bird, have also been observed. Mountain lions have only been detected using camera traps.

In the spring of 2017, staff at Carnegie SVRA and consultants deployed a series of motion-activated cameras, referred to as camera traps, across Carnegie SVRA to capture images of mountain lions that live in and around the park. This study aims to use camera trapping to model mountain lion occupancy at Carnegie SVRA and use the results of this data to guide management and future decision-making. Staff at Carnegie want to identify mountain lion movement corridors throughout the park to manage the species better. The first round of data analysis was performed in 2020, indicating that Corral Hollow Road, the two-lane county road used to access Carnegie SVRA, influenced mountain lion occupancy at Carnegie. No mountain lions were detected on cameras placed within one kilometer of the road. The study also found that mountain lions more readily occupied the non-OHV area of the park but that one camera in the OHV area did regularly detect mountain lions. Along with mountain lions avoiding Corral Hollow Road, this suggests that greater human activity influences how mountain lions occupy the area. This study also confirms that Carnegie SVRA functions as a movement corridor for mountain lions in the Diablo Range, despite motorized recreation that occurs.

### **HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA**

During the 2021 large mammal photo survey at ten different sites, approximately 194 large mammals were photographed, comprising ten different species. At each of the ten sites, anywhere from one to seven species were recorded. Species included black bear, black-tailed jackrabbit, bobcat, brush rabbit, California mule deer, coyote, desert cottontail, gray fox,

mountain lion, and striped skunk. The natural spring at the Bear Pond camera site dried up completely during late fall 2017 (after large mammal monitoring was complete) and is still dry in 2021, resulting in minimal wildlife use. Therefore, for the 2020 large mammal monitoring season, two new camera sites were added at Bailey Ranch Trail and the Oak Preserve. In 2021, the staff decided to no longer monitor the Bear Pond and instead added sites that had not been previously monitored.

## **ONYX RANCH SVRA**

Large mammal presence monitoring began in 2016 and is completed each year in June or July. Reconyx wildlife cameras with infrared motion detectors are set up at water sources to run 24 hours a day for two weeks. The photos are then reviewed, and the number of individuals, number and type of species, and the number of species occurrences are recorded. A time-gap interval of 10 minutes defines a new species occurrence. In 2021, large mammal presence monitoring detected seven large mammal species, including one new species – the American Black Bear.

## *Reptile and Amphibian Monitoring*

### **CARNEGIE SVRA**

Aquatic resources at Carnegie SVRA include the ephemeral Corral Hollow Creek and its seasonal drainages and 25 other water bodies comprised of stock ponds and sediment retention basins in riding and non-riding areas. Depending on pond characteristics and seasonal rainfall, these water bodies can hold water into the late spring. Various special status amphibian species occur at the SVRA, including the California red-legged frog (CRLF), California tiger salamander (CTS), foothill yellow-legged frog, and western spadefoot toad. Western pond turtle, a special status aquatic reptile, also occurs at Carnegie SVRA and may be detected during aquatic monitoring. Other species regularly encountered include coast range newt, western toad, aquatic garter snake, and Sierra tree frog, also known as Pacific chorus frog. Surveys are typically conducted



Figure 67. California red-legged frog at Carnegie SVRA.



Figure 68. Western spadefoot toad at Carnegie SVRA.

twice in the spring at known water bodies in the park to monitor aquatic species. This timing allows for the detection of juvenile amphibians with little to no risk of egg mass presence (egg masses could be harmed by dip netting).

The western spadefoot toad is a nocturnal amphibian that has been found at Carnegie SVRA and about which little is known. This species chooses to breed in rain puddles in the floodplain and the ephemeral Corral Hollow Creek instead of the various ponds in the SVRA. They can transform from eggs to juveniles in as little as 30 days. This strategy allows them to avoid competing with other aquatic species for resources and avoid predators such as the California tiger salamander. Each winter since 2015, focused surveys were conducted in Original Carnegie. If a toad is detected in the pools, Carnegie staff will close the area to recreation for a limited time.

## **HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA**

Amphibian surveys are performed at Hollister Hills SVRA annually to determine the presence or absence of specific amphibian species. There are up to 70 seasonal water bodies within the unit, although the number of waterbodies sampled varies yearly based on rainfall levels. Two federally listed amphibians are present at the SVRA, California red-legged frog and California tiger salamander. Both species are known to breed in several water bodies throughout the unit. Depending on the rainfall received, dipnet surveys typically occur between April and May.

Eight waterbodies were sampled on May 13, 2020. The results of the dipnet surveys are typical given the rainfall totals from Water Year 2020. Additional surveys for the red-legged frog in the North Canyon watershed should have been undertaken to confirm the results of this survey but were not due to COVID-19 restrictions. This season, five different amphibian species were sampled across the eight basins: California Red-Legged Frog (CRLF), California Tiger Salamander (CTS), Aquatic Garter Snake, Pacific chorus frog, and California newt. A sunfish was recorded at Lodge Lake. During this sampling effort, the western toad and pond turtle were neither spotted nor dip netted.

State Parks surmise that red-legged frog breeding occurred late in the season or not at all, given rainfall patterns. Waterbodies did not begin to fill until mid-March, rendering a short window for successful breeding to occur. The early rains in late November through December favored tiger salamander breeding. The lack of rainfall after that limited tiger salamander breeding sites drastically. These surveys confirmed that American bullfrogs are still not present at the park. There is, however, the potential for bullfrogs to be introduced by park visitors. Only perennial water bodies, such as Lodge Lake, would support bullfrogs. Resource managers will continue to monitor their presence.

## **LODGE LAKE SURVEYS**

The reported presence of bass and the confirmed presence of sunfish concerns park resource managers due to their impact on native amphibian populations. The perennial nature of Lodge Lake will make it challenging to control the fish population. Night visual encounter surveys should occur outside breeding season to understand if CRLF uses Lodge Lake for upland habitat. Not finding Pacific chorus frog or CRLF suggests that the fish found in this survey potentially impact native

amphibian breeding. Cattails and tule are encroaching dramatically at two water bodies sampled this season. Excessive amounts of emergent vegetation can be detrimental to habitat quality within waterbodies. Emergent vegetation at the Area 5 Gabion pond and the Office Basin will be thinned during the summer months to prevent the waterbody from being choked out.

### *BIRD CREEK FISH SURVEYS*

In 2020, Bird Creek’s permanent reach (near an SVRA-appropriated water diversion for stock watering) was surveyed once in early summer and late fall by OHMVR Division environmental scientists. Despite the dry rain levels, this 1/4-mile-long spring-fed reach of Bird Creek continued to flow throughout 2020. However, no fish have yet recolonized this reach. For native fish to naturally recolonize this reach, they must migrate via the San Benito River. While unsuccessful colonization attempts by at least three other native fish species have been documented in the lowest reach of Bird Creek since the end of the multi-year drought, no such recolonization by any species was observed there during the spring 2020 survey. That flowing reach of the stream was devoid of fish in May. It is believed to have dried entirely in summer/fall as expected and was similarly observed late in the 2018 and 2019 seasons.

### **HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA**

In 2020, resources staff initiated the monitoring of Blainville’s Horned Lizard. The CDFW recognizes this lizard as a Species of Special Concern, and little is known about their habitat requirements and home range. Resources staff captured, sexed, measured, weighed, photographed, and released horned lizards. Staff also collected weather data, microhabitat characteristics, elevation, and GPS coordinates at each capture location to monitor horned lizard presence and habitat usage throughout the park. Incidental lizard captures indicated that the species is widespread throughout Hungry Valley SVRA and is successfully reproducing, as evidenced by several small hatchlings found. All horned lizard data was submitted to the California Natural Diversity Database to monitor this species of special concern. In 2021, staff found 32 individual horned lizards.

Although reptiles are commonly found throughout the park, amphibians have only been detected at one plot during recent herpetofauna surveys in 2021. Frogs, toads, and salamanders have



Figure 69. Blainville’s horned lizard.

been previously documented, but recently only frogs and toads have been observed both firsthand and in large mammal monitoring photos. Therefore, a special study is needed to gauge their current status.

### **OCEANO DUNES DISTRICT**

Surveys for federally listed species use the USFWS protocols. Since 2017, staff has surveyed CRFL populations. The Draft HCP prescribes management actions for the CRLF that may include habitat enhancement and control of invasive plants and animals. The



BMP recommends that future management and restoration projects at Arroyo Grande Creek and lagoon and the Oso Flaco Lakes Complex minimize impacts on the CRLF. It also recommends controlling invasive species like the American bullfrog in these areas. The CRLF has been recorded within the Arroyo Grande Creek Estuary, Oso Flaco Lake, and Little Oso Flaco Lake.

## **OCOTILLO WELLS SVRA'S FLAT-TAILED HORNED LIZARD MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

OHMVR Division environmental scientists play a crucial role in managing flat-tailed horned lizard (FTHL; *Phrynosoma mcallii*) populations at Ocotillo Wells SVRA. This species has a limited range, found only in southwestern Arizona, southeastern California, and adjacent portions of Sonora and Baja California Norte, Mexico.

Since 1994, Ocotillo Wells SVRA has been a member of the FTHL Interagency Coordinating Committee (ICC), a voluntary conservation working group composed of nine federal and state agencies, including agencies in Mexico. As part of the cooperative agreement among members of the ICC, Ocotillo Wells SVRA conducts annual FTHL population surveys and research to bolster the understanding of its unique ecology.

The working group developed the Rangewide Management Strategy in 1997 (updated in 2003), one of the factors cited by the federal and state wildlife agencies to not list the FTHL as threatened or endangered. Projects at Ocotillo Wells SVRA incorporate guidance from the 2003 update of this management plan to protect flat-tailed horned lizards.

Ocotillo Wells SVRA conducts annual population surveys for the FTHL as part of an agreement as ICC members. There are two types of surveys Ocotillo Wells SVRA utilizes to collect data and monitor trends: occupancy and demography. Resource staff direct occupancy surveys on 79 randomly scattered plots throughout the park from May through August, with each plot surveyed six times. The survey is complete at the end of an hour or when a flat-tailed horned lizard is found. Occupancy surveys give a better understanding of the distribution trends of the lizard within the park. Demography surveys are conducted in September on two plots for two weeks each. The time spent on these plots allows for a more detailed look at immigration, emigration, recruitment, birth rate, and mortality. These surveys provide the FTHL population census data and estimate range-wide trends at each plot. Staff submits data for both surveys to the ICC, whose statisticians analyze the information for modeling and projection of the lizard population throughout its range. Ocotillo Wells SVRA has seen an upward trend in FTHL populations since 2014, with 2020 as a record-setting year with the most flat-tailed horned lizards observed in both occupancy and demography. FTHL tends to be a “boom or bust” species; the population increase noted since 2014 matches local rainfall trends.



Figure 70. Juvenile flat-tailed horned lizard at Ocotillo Wells SVRA.

In 2015, the California Fish and Game Commission accepted a petition to consider listing the FTHL as endangered. At the end of 2016, the Commission decided not to list the species as endangered based on the analysis and recommendation provided by the CDFW staff. The FTHL remains a species of special concern in the state.

Since 2018, 474 occupancy surveys have been conducted each year on 79 randomly scattered plots throughout the park, with each plot surveyed six times, and demography surveys are conducted on two plots for two weeks each. Ocotillo Wells SVRA has been observing an upwards trend in the FTHL population since 2014 due to a consistent increase in rain. A record high was set in 2020, with the most flat-tailed horned lizards observed in both occupancy and demography. Of the 79 occupancy plots, 68 were positive for an FTHL (86%).

### **OCOTILLO WELLS SVRA REPTILE MONITORING**

Ocotillo Wells SVRA uses a pitfall trapping protocol adapted from USGS to monitor reptiles in the park. As of 2020, there are 13 plots within the SVRA, including the Truckhaven area, each with a permanent pitfall trapping array consisting of seven pitfall buckets. Sampling occurs annually in fall (April) and summer (August) for three trapping days per plot each season. Each morning, captured individuals are identified to species, measured, weighed, and marked with a permanent marker to note the incidence of recaptures.

### **ONYX RANCH SVRA**

Since 2019, staff has conducted reptile monitoring annually in the spring between March and May through visual encounter surveys with 10 meter wide transects. Two transects are surveyed for 30 minutes each at every HMS plot. Each plot is surveyed when reptiles are most active, between 8:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. The species, sex (if known), age (adult or juvenile), and microhabitat for each reptile observed are recorded. Twenty-two reptile species have been confirmed in the park so far.

In 2019 and 2020, a consultant, with assistance from park staff, monitored amphibians monitoring at five water locations throughout the park. The goal was to verify which potential amphibian species were utilizing waterbodies in the park. Spotlight surveys were conducted with binocular scanning and visual and auditory searches. The western toad and the Pacific chorus frog were observed at the park. In 2021, reptile monitoring confirmed the presence of ten species, and amphibian monitoring detected two species. Amphibian monitoring was done at six water locations in the park, and surveys were not completed at Water Canyon Creek because it was dry. The Pacific chorus frog was found at Mack Meadow Pond, Dennison Pond, and Schoolhouse Meadow Pond. The Western toad was found at Tank Pond.

### **PRAIRIE CITY SVRA**

Visual pond surveys for the non-native American bullfrog were conducted in spring 2015. The purpose of the survey was to determine the presence and location of this species within the park. Bullfrogs were observed in the Coyote Creek waterway, including drainages, sediment



Figure 71. Clay Pit SVRA Drainage Management Area's pond and central drainage canal.

basins, and creek segments. They were observed in the large seasonal pond at the north end of the park, the cottonwood-lined pond near the entrance road, and several other locations.

While native to the United States, the bullfrog is invasive in California. In California, the American bullfrog has contributed to the decline of many native animal populations, including some frogs, turtles, and snakes, by either outcompeting or preying upon them (California Herps. com 2013). High populations of bullfrogs could lead to the reduction of species richness and diversity in the park wetlands. Because of this, bullfrog monitoring and discussions about eradication measures continue.

### *Aquatic Species Monitoring*

#### **CLAY PIT SVRA VERNAL POOL MONITORING PROGRAM**

The most recent surveys of listed vernal pool branchiopods occurred during the 2012 Clay Pit SVRA General Plan process. However, OHMVR resource staff are drafting an Interagency Agreement with the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) to resume annual surveys during the winter 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 seasons. CDWR, who still owns the rights to mine and inundate the property, has resource staff with the necessary USFWS permits required to survey the SVRA's vernal pools and other aquatic features. As part of the Interagency Agreement, CDWR staff will train SVRA resource staff to survey large, listed branchiopods, including vernal pool fairy and tadpole shrimp. It also provides the required field hours to obtain their permits for future surveys.

#### **HEBER DUNES SVRA**

Surface water resources and riparian lands near Heber Dunes SVRA, preliminarily investigated in 2016, were more thoroughly surveyed in 2019. These surveys arose because SVRA visitors access the South Alamo Canal, just beyond the east and south boundaries of the unit, for fishing. Though this activity occurs on an occasional to frequent basis, it was not reviewed or



Figure 72. Environmental Scientists conducting fish surveys at the South Alamo Canal located within Heber Dunes SVRA.

considered in the unit's General Plan. OHMVR Division staff conducted surveys to determine the assemblages of fish species in the canal and assess any potential native resources impacted by the ease of access the SVRA allows its visitors. The land and facilities of some, if not all, of these engineered waterways are owned by Imperial Irrigation District (IID), which has not posted any rules or prohibitions concerning public access.

## **OCEANO DUNES DISTRICT**

Arroyo Grande Creek and its lagoon provide sometimes-tenuous sensitive habitat for several fish species and other aquatic animals in Oceano Dunes SVRA. These aquatic species, including the federally listed tidewater goby (endangered) and steelhead (threatened), frequently are negatively impacted by water quality and availability. The greatest threat to these species and habitats appears to be local water management activities, especially excessive local groundwater withdrawal (for agricultural irrigation) and the occasional need to manipulate the lagoon, sandbar, and riparian areas under local flood management priorities.

CDFW recommends that all monitoring ensure consistency with protocols identified in the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) 2016 California Coastal Monitoring Plan. Management actions to protect these species include limiting vehicle crossings, posting signs, and fencing areas. State Parks will close Arroyo Grande Creek to vehicle crossings during deep- and high-flow conditions. In conjunction with the 2019 Stormwater Management Plan, Oceano Dunes SVRA also uses educational and interpretive signage to inform the public about potential water quality and aquatic habitat threats and discourage behaviors that could affect aquatic species.

The Draft HCP recommends that State Parks prepare a Tidewater Goby Management Plan to address park operations, exotic pest species, aquatic and upland habitat management, water quality, and mosquito control (where applicable). This plan will also benefit steelhead trout. In addition, State Parks will also study impacts associated with a vehicle creek crossing, fish migration, and outmigration. Oceano Dunes SVRA and OHMVR Division staff have conducted quarterly fish surveys in aquatic habitats since 2003.

## PRAIRIE CITY SVRA

Consultants or other resource management staff have conducted past studies on vernal pool tadpole shrimp and vernal pool fairy shrimp at the park. In 2016, resource staff received the training necessary to obtain scientific collection permits from the USFWS to prepare for future studies. Prairie City SVRA staff also use the vernal pool area for outreach and educational programs such as the annual Vernal Pool Tour.

### *Special Status Invertebrate Monitoring*

Oceano Dunes SVRA staff and consultants recorded seven special status insects in or around the SVRA and Pismo State Beach. These insects include the Oso Flaco patch butterfly, Oso Flaco flightless moth, globose dune beetle, obscure bumblebee, and the sandy beach tiger beetle.

Since 1997, Oceano Dunes Resource staff have monitored the overwintering monarch butterfly populations at Pismo State Beach, adjacent to the SVRA. Other insect surveys have been conducted sporadically at the SVRA for over 30 years. In 2020, Oceano Dunes SVRA completed a Monarch Butterfly Management Plan at Pismo State Beach in consultation with academics and the Xerces Society.

Oceano Dunes SVRA staff have maintained a vigorous vegetation restoration program within the SVRA since 1989. Most of the revegetation efforts were made as part of the air quality management plan; however, the 170 acres permanently closed off to OHV recreation also benefit invertebrate species with additional habitat. The CDFW postulates that continuing restoration efforts using native vegetation would also help invertebrate species (California State Parks & California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Jan. 2021, pp. 10-11).

### *Vegetation Monitoring and Management*

## CARNEGIE SVRA

Vegetation surveys are conducted at SVRAs at least once a year throughout the riparian habitat. Rare plant surveys are conducted annually, and surveys target recorded rare plant locations and areas where projects will soon occur to ensure adequate protection. Localized botanical surveys are done before ground-disturbing projects, and large-scale inventory efforts are made twice every several years to ensure the vegetation list is updated. This survey is especially poignant after fires, such as the Tesla Fire of August 2015, when certain fire-following species occur for a relatively short period before going dormant within the seed bank again.



Figure 73. Collecting native seeds for propagation in the District greenhouse.

In 2021, Carnegie SVRA was the first SVRA to implement the VegCAMP protocols. The same year, staff identified and mapped native grasslands in the park's 5,000 acres using a fine-scale mapping effort to establish a baseline dataset to help measure the health and potential impacts on the native grasses.

## **DUNES DISTRICT'S VEGETATION MANAGEMENT RESTORATION PROGRAM**

The restoration program was established in 1989 to protect the natural and cultural resources found within the park. The program is vital to preserving habitats and protecting the unique flora and fauna in the park. Oceano Dunes SVRA staff use various restoration methods, including sand stabilization to prevent soil and habitat loss, weed abatement, and revegetation in areas where native vegetation has been displaced or lost by sand encroachment or invasive weeds. Staff monitor vegetation to evaluate the effectiveness of the projects.

Each year, park staff work with California Conservation Corps members to revegetate and stabilize various sites within the park. Before installing plants and spreading native seed, park crews blow certified "weed-free" straw over the project area and use a sheep's foot attachment to punch the hay into the sand. The straw provides wind protection for the plants, niches for the seed to land and germinate, and organic matter collects moisture from the marine layer. In areas not accessible to heavy equipment, crews dig the straw into the sand.

## **OCOTILLO WELLS SVRA**

Vegetation and the cover it provides in the Sonoran Desert is an essential component of the overall habitat health in Ocotillo Wells SVRA. Perennial vegetation protocols were modified from the National Park Services' Sonoran Vegetation survey protocol. Surveys are conducted twice a year in the spring (March) and fall (October). The cover is measured through transect surveys. Resource staff identify the plant species and cover length that crosses the transects. In 2018, Ocotillo Wells SVRA expanded vegetation monitoring into the Truckhaven area.

## **OCOTILLO WELLS SVRA'S SENSITIVE VEGETATION MONITORING**

A sensitive vegetation monitoring protocol was developed in 2020, with field efforts commencing in 2021. The current focus of the protocol is three sensitive species: desert ironwood, honey mesquite, and Orcutt's woody aster. The aim is to identify and map individuals throughout the park and conduct a basic health assessment to inform resource staff on the distribution and health of these populations throughout the park. Surveyors note height, damage (if any), fauna on or near the vegetation, and proximity to OHV tracks. Other health attributes recorded are overall health, new growth, canopy diameter, basal circumference, dune area (specific to mesquites), and surrounding vegetation. Once surveys of the initial target species are complete, additional species may be added to the protocol.

Sensitive vegetation monitoring is performed annually to gather information on the distribution and health of these species throughout the SVRA. Sensitive species within the park will be surveyed and mapped using ArcGIS Collector. Plant physiognomy will also be collected and used to monitor population changes over time.



Figure 74. Wildflowers at Onyx Ranch SVRA.

### **ONYX RANCH SVRA**

Resource staff conducts vegetation monitoring annually at the 21 HMS plots in the spring when vegetation is at or near peak phenology. Vegetation monitoring protocols follow the California Native Plant Society relevé sampling technique. Each plot’s location, habitat, and vegetation composition are recorded. Each plot is 30m<sup>2</sup>; the same plots are monitored annually. Every species in the plot is recorded, and the percent cover is estimated. Data from this vegetation monitoring provides insight into the composition of vegetation communities in the park and the ratio of native and non-native plants and aids in establishing a species list. Continued monitoring will allow State Parks to detect and respond to changes.

Over 450 vegetation species have been confirmed in the park by the relevé surveys and the surveys done by consultants for the Acquisition Environmental Impact Report. In 2019, vegetation monitoring added 12 new species to the park’s species list. In 2021, vegetation monitoring detected 59 species, including four new species -- celery-leaved buttercup, Panamint cymopterus, desert marigold, and alkali mariposa lily.

In 2021, the average vegetation percent cover was not significantly different between trail and non-trail areas. The average total vegetation percent cover for all plots combined was less in 2021 than in 2019 due to the difference in precipitation. 2019 was a super bloom year that received 6.12 inches of rain, while 2020 received 3.28 inches and 2021 received 2.48 inches. Plots, on average, had a lower percent cover of non-native species in 2021. Many of the non-native species present in 2019 were annuals, but these species did not sprout in 2021 due to the lack of precipitation. The species list from 2021 was updated to reflect the added species and any nomenclature and special status changes.

### **ONYX RANCH SVRA’S LANDSCAPE PHOTO MONITORING**

In high-use and habitat restoration areas, staff conduct landscape photo monitoring bi-annually (January and August). There are currently twelve landscape photo monitoring locations for Onyx Ranch SVRA. Landscape photo monitoring aims to detect and inform resource managers

of vegetation cover, erosion, and trail expansion changes throughout the park. In 2021, trail and landscape photo monitoring documented no significant erosion effects this year.

## **PRAIRIE CITY SVRA'S NORMALIZED DIFFERENCE VEGETATION INDEX STUDIES**

Since 2014, Prairie City has had multispectral aerial imagery flown every two years in the spring. Using this imagery, Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) analyses were performed using ArcMap 10.4 to measure vegetation cover changes between years. NDVI measures the amount of near-infrared light versus red light reflected off terrain. Plants absorb red light during photosynthesis, and the leaf structure reflects infrared. A healthier, denser plant will absorb more red light and reflect more infrared than a dead, spindly plant resulting in a higher NDVI value. Bare ground, buildings, and water absorb and reflect light differently from plants and can be separated during analysis. The NDVI analysis can monitor vegetation health and cover change over time.

At Prairie City, staff use NDVI to identify priority areas needing restoration and quantify those projects' success. Pairing NDVI analysis with turbidity monitoring can target vegetation loss and poor water quality areas. NDVI also helps visualize new user-created trails, widening tread in trail-only areas or monitoring the effectiveness of different physical barriers preventing OHV trespassing. Over multiple years, patterns can be inferred if similar trails are created or widened in an area that could signal users' desire for more entertaining routes. Or the opposite, if a route is overgrown, it could signal users are dissatisfied and that trail/area could be restored. This aspect of NDVI will be a planning tool for the Road and Trail Management Plan in areas transitioning from open riding to trails only.

## *Invasive Species Monitoring and Management*

### **HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA'S INVASIVE SPECIES MONITORING**

The park continually monitors for and treats invasive pest plants throughout the unit. Of highest priority are those High Ranked species by California Invasive Pest Council (also known as CAL-IPC), including yellow starthistle, medusahead, and French broom. Other species of local importance that State Parks manage include stinkwort, purple starthistle, poison hemlock, milk thistle, and Italian thistle.

For several seasons, park managers noticed a significant expression of yellow starthistle in an area referred to as the Pig Pond field, which is grazed seasonally by cattle and not subject to motorized recreation. Working with the grazer, the SVRA developed a plan to leave higher amounts of residual dry matter (left from the fall) to help reduce yellow starthistle in the spring. Anecdotally, this strategy has proved successful, and park staff will capture quantifiable data in subsequent years. Also, in the grazed areas of the park, there has been an inconsistent expression of medusahead in several fields (Ridge and Amme fields). Medusahead has been known to occur in the Amme field but is restricted to small patches. The grazer proactively used feed to attract cattle to the patches to help trample the grasses, and resource staff cut and bagged the seed heads to reduce the potential for spread. Resource staff will monitor these fields and adjust management actions as needed.



## HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA'S FERAL PIG DEPREDATION PROGRAM

Feral pigs are descended from the natural crossbreeding of feral pigs and Eurasian wild boars and reside within and in the lands adjacent to the park. Feral pigs can cause significant resource damage from their rooting behaviors, completely tilling an entire hillside in one night. Feral pigs reach sexual maturity as early as seven months and can have offspring up to three times a year with an average litter size of three to six piglets. Hollister Hills SVRA Staff keeps the feral pig population numbers manageable to protect habitat and species health. Incidental observations such as signs of pig damage (rooting and wallowing in ponds) and actual captures have dramatically decreased in the ten years this program has been in place.

## HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Dalmatian toadflax was found in Hungry Valley SVRA in the spring of 2004. Since then, Hungry Valley SVRA has conducted a rigorous program every spring to eradicate this invasive species within the boundaries of the SVRA. Initially, the infestation spanned approximately 1,000 acres. An invasive management plan was put together to combat this exotic species in 2005, and Dalmatian toadflax has been contained in the park's Northern Grasslands Management Area (NGMA). Eradication began with spraying herbicide from an ATV, but this work is now completed by spot spraying the area on foot. The infestation has significantly been reduced, and staff continually monitor the seed's 15-year viability in the ground.

In 2008, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) contacted the park about a park's biological release and test plot. With a permit from the EPA, Hungry Valley SVRA began a test plot using the *Mecinus janthiniformis* (MEJA) weevil on toadflax. The CDFA initially started the project, but it has been transferred to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The MEJA weevil is a stem-boring weevil that eventually reduces the toadflax to a non-flowering plant. Initial results showed that the weevil had spread throughout the toadflax infestation and that reductions in plants' size had been noted.

Between 2014 and 2019, the Dalmatian Toadflax population declined by 99%. Weevil sampling is now complete, and the research has been published in the journal *Biological Control*. Continued



Figure 75. The treatment area in June 2020 showed a dramatic decrease in Dalmation Toadflax.



Figure 76. Dalmatian Toadflax treatment area in May 2008.

herbicide spraying will be used to keep the toadflax population from returning. Herbicide spraying is also used to control Yellow Star Thistle, Russian Thistle, and Pepper Grass. Native plant growth will be actively supported through tree/shrub protection, native hydro-seeding, and a greenhouse plant propagation program using native seeds from within Hungry Valley SVRA. Herbicide spraying has proven successful in combating invasive species. Two of the three weevil release sites burned in 2021 in the Hungry Fire. These sites will be monitored to determine if weevils are still present and if toadflax seedlings return.

## **OCEANO DUNES SVRA**

Many invasive species threaten the dune ecosystem. They include European beach grass, Russian wheatgrass, ice plant, veldt grass, and Cape ivy. Invasive species degrade or eliminate important foredune and dune scrub habitats needed by sensitive plant and animal species such as the California least tern, Western snowy plover, marsh sandwort, beach spectacle pod, and surf thistle. Eradication of these invasive species is done through herbicide application, hand removal, and prescribed burning. These methods have helped transform the dunes back to their natural state.

## **OCOTILLO WELLS SVRA**

Ocotillo Wells District's Invasive Management Plan was developed in 2020. It relies on four phases of management: prevention, early detection rapid response (EDRR), control and management, and education and public awareness. The phased approach provides guidelines to actualize management goals. These phases are not sequential or mutually exclusive and can all be in effect at once.

Ocotillo Wells SVRA has 24 confirmed non-native species within the park, and three stand out: tamarisk, Sahara mustard, and desert knapweed. Tamarisk uses large quantities of water and exudates salt from deeper soil in its leaves, inhibiting the growth of native plants. Since the 2013 treatments of tamarisk, the infestation rate has been mild within the park, and near-complete eradication may be possible; however, re-infestation from neighboring areas is also possible.

Sahara mustard outcompetes native wildflowers in wet years, affecting the wildlife that relies on the native vegetation and reducing the diversity of annual wildflowers. It may be possible to create weed-free zones with control management efforts but eradicating this species throughout the park is impossible. Staff handpicks or use hoes to remove Sahara mustard. Due to its ubiquity, Sahara mustard is mapped based on its treatment, allowing staff to monitor the area and observe how treatment holds up over time.



Figure 77. Desert knapweed at Ocotillo Wells SVRA.

Sahara mustard was opportunistically pulled in 2018 and 2019. Particular attention was paid to areas with high traffic, such as around Blowsand Hill, a popular visitor site, and around the park office. In 2020, mustard was pulled under the new invasive management plan with 8.5 acres treated and mapped on Collector. Staff will monitor treated areas to create weed-free zones in areas of special concern. Desert knapweed was first found in the neighboring park of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park® in 2010 and Ocotillo Wells SVRA in 2020. In response to its rapid spread within the Borrego Valley, an EDRR protocol was developed for Ocotillo Wells SVRA. Areas of high risk, such as high-traveled access roads that lead into the park or washes that originate from Anza-Borrego Desert State Park®, are monitored for the presence of desert knapweed. The invasive is promptly removed if found, and the area is mapped for continued monitoring.

In 2019, an EDRR protocol was created for desert knapweed due to its proximity to the park. Staff located, pulled, and mapped a small population in February 2020 at the side of County Dump Road. The invasive plant was found in the same location and removed on three other occasions. Since then, the area has been surveyed three more times and has been negative for desert knapweed. Thus far, this has been the only site where it has been found within the park. Staff will continue with EDRR efforts to prevent this species from establishing itself in the park.

## **ONYX RANCH SVRA — BUTTERBREDT SPRING INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT PLAN**

In 2018, State Parks contracted with a consultant to prepare an Invasive Species Management Plan at Butterbredt Springs to control the stand of broad-leaved cattail. Broad-leaved cattail is native to California but reproduces and spreads like aggressive invasive plants. A thick, solid stand formed at the Butterbredt spring and eliminated the open water habitat on which wildlife species in this dry environment rely. The management plan included various non-chemical removal methods that could be used to control broad-leaved cattails.

State Parks led a control project in 2018 with the help of an American Conservation Experience (ACE) crew at Butterbredt Spring and Alphonie Spring to maintain open water habitat and biodiversity of plants and animals within the spring area. The ACE crew removed and bundled cattails by hand and bagged the seed heads. Hand removal was done to minimize the impact on non-target

species. In the five full workdays that the crew worked on the project, they removed all the cattails at Butterbredt Spring and half at Alphie Spring. Because cattails are prolific at sprouting, continued control projects are needed to ensure open water habitat is available for wildlife.

## *Grazing Programs*

### **HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA**

Grazing is a historical use of the rangelands in the non-motorized areas of the Renz and Hudner Ranches, and since 1994, park managers have used cattle grazing as a resource management tool. The SVRA's Grazing Management Plan guides activities to support the resource management goals of the program. Since then, the SVRA has worked with a local grazer to develop a holistic, rotational grazing approach to manage the rangelands.

The current objectives of the Hollister Hills grazing program are: 1) enhance and restore native grasslands and oak woodlands, 2) increase habitat diversity within the grasslands and oak savannahs, 3) control and reduce exotic flora, 4) protect riparian values, 5) maintain wetland and pond habitat for breeding amphibians, 6) reduce grassland fuel loading and wildfire potential, along bordering properties. Park resource managers meet with the grazer to develop the year's grazing plan before cattle are brought on-site. The grazing program fluctuates based on when and how much precipitation the park receives. At the end of each season, the grazer and park resource managers tour the fields, identify changes, and how grazing can be used to accomplish those desired outcomes.

Residual dry matter monitoring is the primary means of determining if the grazing plan and associated objectives are met. Resource staff monitors this in the late summer and early fall when conditions are at their driest. The revised Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan will recommend more robust monitoring protocols and yield more tangible results to assess the grazing program's effectiveness.

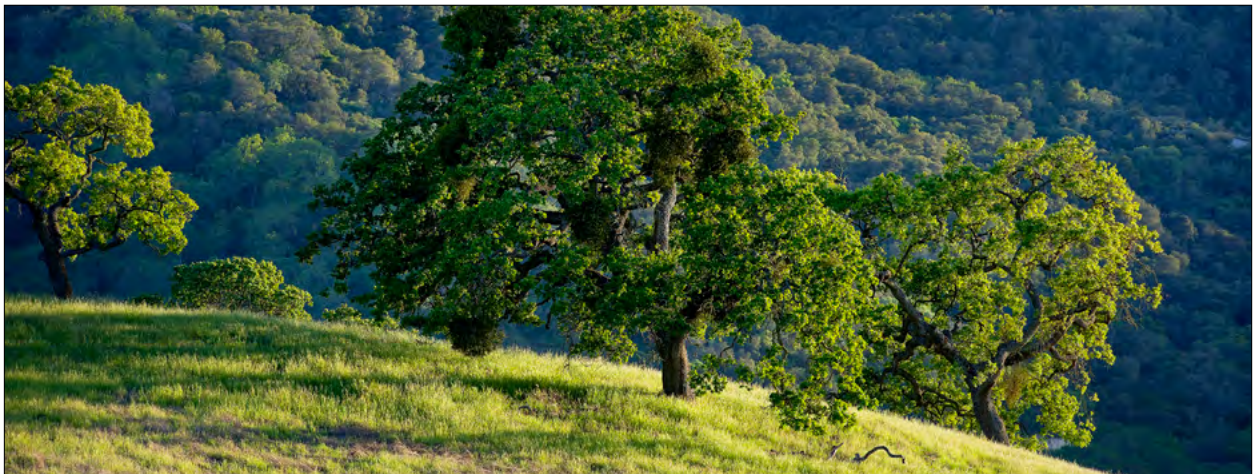


Figure 78. Oak savanna at Hollister Hills SVRA.

## **ONYX RANCH SVRA**

Cattle grazing has occurred for over 50 years at the property that comprises Onyx Ranch SVRA. Previously, BLM and State Parks maintained a grazing lease with ranchers through the Rudnick Common Allotment. State Parks' grazing lease expired in 2018 but continues with a holdover clause on a month-to-month basis. Within the Rudnick Common Allotment, grazing is done on a rest rotation schedule, with each pasture receiving a spring rest period between uses. The lease serves many benefits to Onyx Ranch SVRA, including facility maintenance of historical structures, fire prevention and fuel reduction, and control of non-native plants.

### *Air Quality Monitoring and Management*

#### **HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA'S AIR QUALITY MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

Hollister Hills SVRA has an ongoing 24-hour Particulate Matter 10 (PM10) monitoring program at three locations within the boundaries of the SVRA. One measures the concentration of particulate matter 10 (PM10) in the air coming into the park, and the other two measure the concentration of PM10 leaving the park; PM10 monitoring occurs year-round. Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD) maintains the monitors through a contract. The park receives monthly reports from MBARD that discuss any exceedances. No dust exceedances were recorded in 2019/2020 related to OHV use.

Hollister Hills staff work closely with MBARD if an exceedance is reported and attributable to SVRA operations. Examples of actions taken to reduce dust related to OHV use include trail closures during the summer months, more frequent watering, dust suppressants, and scheduling special events outside the summer months. Hollister Hills SVRA continues to comply with the State Ambient Air Quality Standard of 50 micrograms per cubic meter, average, per 24-hour period.

As per the Dust Management Plan, the park implements a series of management actions to reduce dust emissions from the SVRA. Dust is a management concern all year but is particularly important during the summer months, coincidentally when park visitation is minimal. Park staff wet roads and trails with a water truck during the week, but it becomes a higher priority during the weekends when visitation increases. Tracks, main roads, and some trails are watered frequently during the summer. However, watering only reduces dust for short periods, and during a drought, this action can be misconstrued as wasteful. In early June, the park applied a magnesium chloride dust suppressant to the central park roads and selected trails to reduce water use. This solution is much more effective at reducing dust emissions throughout the summer.

#### **OCEANO DUNES SVRA'S AIR QUALITY STUDIES, MONITORING, AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS**

The Oceano Dunes District implements a program to control and minimize indirect emissions of dust and particulate matter (PM) generated at Oceano Dunes SVRA during periods of intense, persistent winds and subsequently blown downwind of the SVRA and onto the Nipomo Mesa.

To address windblown dust, State Parks has implemented a series of dust control and monitoring measures in the park, which include:

- Native vegetation planting – between 2014 and 2018, State Parks planted almost 50 acres of locally collected native vegetation for dust control purposes. Staff planted approximately 36 additional acres in the open riding area in winter 2018/2019.
- Wind fencing and straw bale array deployment – in 2018, State Parks installed three wind fencing arrays totaling approximately 49 acres and two straw bale arrays totaling about 36 acres.
- Dust and meteorological monitoring – Since 2010, the OHMVR Division has operated and maintained a meteorological tower in the Oceano Dunes SVRA open riding area, referred to as the “S1” tower. The OHMVR Division installed an air quality monitoring station, the Oso Flaco station, in the southeast corner of Oceano Dunes SVRA in 2015. Also, the District maintains up to 20 seasonal monitoring stations with weather and particulate matter monitoring equipment.
- The 48-acre area for foredune vegetation planting was fenced and closed to motorized recreation and camping in 2019. It was planted in February 2020 and included vehicle travel pathways through the foredune area between the shoreline and the open riding area to the east. However, these “alleys” are closed to camping to maintain vehicle circulation.

## **PARTICULATE MATTER REDUCTION PLAN**

The previously mentioned dust control and monitoring measures are currently in place and are expected to continue, subject to modification consistent with legal obligations described here. In May 2018, State Parks entered a Stipulated Order of Abatement (SOA) (Abatement Order; filed May 4, 2018) with the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control Board. Under the SOA, State Parks agreed to implement numerous dust control measures. These include:

- Permanently closing off sections of open riding area to motorized recreation and camping.
- Installing track-out devices at the West Grand Avenue and Pier Avenue entrances to prevent track-out of sand onto paved, public roadways, and
- Preparing a Particulate Matter Reduction Plan.

The SOA was amended on November 18, 2019, and expires on December 1, 2023. As noted above, State Parks already closed off and planted approximately 40 acres of open riding area in the winter of 2018/2019. State Parks released a draft PMRP in June 2019, including an implementation plan specifying that staff will undertake through December 2023.

## **AMBIENT NOISE MONITORING**

OHMVR Division contracted with CSDA Design Group over five years to monitor ambient noise conditions within the nine SVRAs. This contract aims to determine SVRA contributions to ambient



Figure 79. Beach camping at Oceano Dunes SVRA.

noise conditions, model noise generation for defensive planning purposes, and understand and better manage noise related to OHV use at the SVRA.

To accomplish these goals, the contractor will install at least one permanent monitor per SVRA. Some SVRAs, given their size and topography, will have multiple monitors to capture noise throughout the unit. Additionally, the contractor will monitor at least two SVRA special events per year to understand noise generation during high-use or high-intensity events.

This contract will provide several deliverables for SVRA managers. There will be monthly, quarterly, and annual reports presenting modeled noise throughout each SVRA. These reports will also differentiate other noise contributors around the SVRA. For example, a nearby road contributing to ambient noise levels will be discernable. Additionally, the contractor provides a real-time data viewer through a web-based platform. Resource managers can use this platform to explore collected data, listen to current conditions, and review spikes in the data. Lastly, CSDA has committed to training SVRA staff to perform noise monitoring, use equipment, and interpret data.

## **HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA**

Hollister Hills SVRA has had an Ambient Noise Monitoring Program at the boundaries of the SVRA since 2002. Initially, eight locations were monitored multiple times per year to get an accurate baseline of the ambient noise levels. Since then, the program has focused on select areas more sensitive to noise or where noise reduction management practices have been implemented to ensure compliance. The eight noise monitoring locations around the park boundary are still monitored annually to ensure operations at the park comply with noise ordinances.

Four monitoring sessions occurred from October 2019 to September 2020. Noise standards were exceeded at monitoring locations 6 and 7 and were determined to be caused by SVRA activity. At location 6, the Lmax (maximum noise level) was exceeded by two decibels, and this is not the first time it has exceeded acceptable levels. State Parks infer that the exceedance comes from the Middle Field trail in the Adobe Management Unit. Middle Field has a direct line of

sight to the monitoring location, and when traveled uphill, the exhaust of an OHV points directly to the monitor. The exceedance could be caused by either one OHV or a group.

Location 7 is in the Hudner Management Unit and had four exceedances of the Lmax, two of the L1.7, and one at the L8.3. During this monitoring session, park staff observed a large group of recreational off-highway vehicles (ROVs). This group of ROVs passed by the monitoring location many times during the session and caused the exceedances. More consistent enforcement could lower the amount of non-compliant aftermarket exhaust systems. Additional public outreach and education are also needed to inform the public about reducing noise from their OHV. If noise generation continues to be an issue at location 6, a trail re-route might be necessary, but more noise data would need to be collected for this to occur.

## *Soil Monitoring*

### **CARNEGIE SVRA**

Carnegie SVRA has several miles of trails accommodating motorcycles, ATVs, and emergency vehicles. SVRA staff use and improve upon evaluations from the Department's Soil Standard to examine the degree of compaction (static, dynamic, or kneading), water travel (rilling, gullying, slope, berming, or whooping), soil saturation, and erosion prevention along every trail. These evaluations help protect water quality and habitat and ensure visitors have the best riding experience. In 2016, the SVRA transitioned to using Global Positioning System (GPS) equipment to collect the data and Geographical Information System (GIS) software to store the data. SVRA managers use the data to monitor the trail system and plan for rehabilitation projects (see the Black Bear Resource Management Area project in the restoration section below), trail maintenance, and regulatory compliance.

### **HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA'S COLLABORATION WITH THE POINT BLUE RANGELAND MONITORING NETWORK**

Point Blue Rangeland Monitoring Network (Point Blue) biologists approached Hollister Hills SVRA staff in 2015 to begin a long-term rangeland monitoring plan. Their monitoring plan sought to answer questions on a statewide scale regarding soil carbon, bird species abundance, and cover of vegetative species in grazed and ungrazed rangelands.

Point Blue biologists sampled in 2016 and again in 2019 at the park. No apparent trend has been established regarding soil carbon at the park, but their statewide dataset reports that, on average, soil carbon decreased by five percent. Bird species richness positively responded to the end of the severe drought, with the average number of species per point increasing by three from 2016 to 2019. Vegetation composition similarly responded to the end of the drought. Each functional group cover increased across all classes. Likewise, staff noticed increased invasive flora across the unit's rangelands.

Resource management recommendations include maintaining litter-covered soil and ensuring overgrazing does not occur. Litter helps keep the soil cool, supporting microbial life, slowing water runoff, increasing infiltration, and reducing erosion potential. In addition, resource staff will





Figure 80. Visitor enjoying the trails at Hungry Valley SVRA.

protect blue oak saplings with cages to protect them from trampling and browsing as studies show that soils beneath oak canopies are more fertile than those in open grasslands. Finally, staff will keep riparian areas vegetated. The SVRA does not permit grazing in riparian corridors.

## **HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA**

Trail photo monitoring and photo point monitoring results for 2021 indicated no drastic change due to erosion or usage. However, visual surveys of the park indicated that reduction and restoration of repetitive/unused volunteer trails could increase quality habitat and decrease erosion. Implementation of the new Hungry Valley SVRA Soil Conservation Plan in 2022 will require trail assessments and maintenance to lessen soil erosion and trail drainage issues and to maintain compliance with the updated Soil Conservation Standard.

## **ONYX RANCH SVRA**

As part of the trail photo monitoring program, quarterly resource staff monitor twelve sites with a high erosion hazard throughout the park. This program allows staff to detect and respond to changes in erosion over time. Additionally, park staff report and respond to problematic erosion areas as they occur. This quick response is critical following significant precipitation events.

## *Stormwater Management and Water Quality Management*

### **CLAY PIT SVRA'S WATER QUALITY PROGRAM**

Located within the Lower Feather River Watershed, Clay Pit SVRA is within the Lower Feather River hydrologic area and subarea of the Marysville hydrologic unit and the Sacramento Valley hydrological region. Although artificial, the ephemeral drainage entering the northwest is considered jurisdictional water under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code. The drainage area comprises 1,315 acres, including Oroville Municipal Airport, the Table Mountain Golf Course, and surrounding farmland. The SVRA en-

compasses only 18 percent of the area's watershed, yet the entire watershed drains through the SVRAs drainage to an outlet at its eastern boundary. While in the park, the channel meanders slightly, is culverted under two trails, and filters through a rock weir before exiting the property. The remainder of the canal was recently fenced off from OHV access in 2017 to control potential sediment and pollutant issues.

To comply with water quality regulatory requirements and inform future SVRA restoration projects and resource management, OHMVR Division and a consultant designed a study to monitor water entering and leaving the site and assess the effect of future land treatment projects. Additionally, the study was designed to be Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) comparable.

## **PRAIRIE CITY SVRA'S STORMWATER MANAGEMENT**

Stormwater management and restoration are vital components of the natural resource program at Prairie City SVRA. Due to the vegetation removal and mechanical erosion that occurs with the spinning wheels of motorized vehicles, establishing programs to achieve both erosion control and sediment control is vital to staying in compliance with water quality standards.

Restoration and rehabilitation efforts are one component of increasing vegetative cover and limiting the presence of erodible soils. Recontouring of areas prone to rutting and gully erosion is prioritized on the maintenance schedule. Seeding with a hydroseeder and broadcast methods is conducted throughout the rainy winter.

For sediment control, rip-rap channels and energy dissipaters are used throughout the park to slow the rate of high-volume water flows, catch sediment, and limit erosion. Burlap-wrapped straw wattles and silt fences are used in specific areas to help contain and filter.

Twelve sediment basins throughout the SVRA hold and store stormwater and collect sediment before water continues through the hydrologic system. Prairie City SVRA uses sediment material collected from the basins for hillside restoration efforts.

## **HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA'S WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROGRAM**

Hollister Hills SVRA collaborated with CSU Monterey Bay's Division of Science and Environmental Policy faculty and students to establish a Water Quality Monitoring Program. This five-year monitoring program measured the amount of sediment coming in and out of the SVRA's boundaries and attempted to parse out sediment sources and their locations.

Several studies attempted to determine the general nature of the SVRA's watersheds, including measurement of landslide complex movement rates, size of stream bank erosion rates, and surveys of the longitudinal or cross-sectional profiles of streambeds. These studies incorporated trail erosion studies to help calibrate the trail assessment rating system and sediment basin profile surveys using photogrammetry to measure the amount of material captured and stored in sediment detention basins. These monitoring studies successfully established a baseline that SVRA Resource staff use for future monitoring and assessment efforts.

The contracted partnership ended in 2021, but many of the monitoring components developed by CSU Monterey Bay will continue under Hollister Hills resource staff. The yearly reports have indicated that the park's sediment control methods effectively capture most of any erosion generated by the SVRA trail system. The information and data gathered by this effort have led to a more data-driven maintenance schedule and better management of the sediment control at the SVRA.

## *Fire Management*

### **HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA**

Hollister Hills SVRA has taken critical steps in building a fire management program in the last several years. Park staff set up a water truck for use as a water tender and equipped a truck as a type 6 fire engine (built on a pickup truck frame with a medium-duty chassis). These two pieces of equipment are significant components in the park's prescribed fire program and respond more quickly to fires within the SVRA and nearby State Parks.

Prescribed burns provide many benefits to the SVRA's ecosystems. In addition to the ecological benefits, they reduce fuel loading, increase public safety, and decrease the chances of a more destructive wildfire. Park management has stepped up efforts to increase fuel reduction throughout the SVRA by mowing, cutting, and burning. Combined with maintaining clearances around structures, these methods are part of State Parks' efforts to become more fire resilient. California's climate is becoming hotter and drier, which leads to increased fire danger. Fire management will continue to grow as one of the top priorities in land management, and the workload will increase on park staff to meet that challenge.

### **HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA**

In 2021, there were two major fires at Hungry Valley SVRA. The Tumbleweed Fire started on July 4, 2021, and burned approximately 870 acres on the eastern portion of the park. The Tumbleweed Fire took around seven days to contain and mop up. The Hungry Fire started on July 31, 2021, and burned approximately 340 acres on the park's northern portion. The Hungry Fire took around four days to contain. Hungry Valley SVRA Resource Advisors worked with CalFire and Los Angeles County Fire to rehabilitate dozer lines by bringing dozer line berms in and texturizing the dozer lines to minimize erosion. There were several nearby fires, dry/hot/windy conditions, red flag warnings, and local fire closures, including a fire ban in the park starting on July 8, 2021, due to dry conditions.

## *Road and Trail Management*

### **ROAD AND TRAIL MANAGEMENT PLANS**

Road and Trail Management Plans (RTMPs) provide specific guidance and direction for implementing the goals and objectives of the park's approved General Plan. It describes a park's existing road and trail conditions, provides direction for its future management, and includes specific actions for individual roads and trails.

A comprehensive management plan ensures that recreational trail opportunities are made available at their fullest potential while conserving and enhancing the protection of cultural and natural resources. Although planning can be implemented on a single trail basis, park-wide trail system planning remains the preferred and the most effective method. Comprehensive planning also reduces construction and maintenance costs and identifies preferred management actions for balancing resource protection.

The RTMP process analyzes existing conditions, identifies issues and gaps, and makes recommendations to:

- Maximize visitor use and experiences.
- Reduce potential safety issues.
- Minimize impacts on natural and cultural resources.
- Coordinate with local and regional planning efforts.
- Provide access to surrounding public lands.
- Reduce maintenance and management costs.
- Provide an appropriate range of recreational opportunities and associated infrastructure.
- Limit impacts on the natural environment to a level acceptable under CEQA.
- Prioritize roads and trails projects.

The Strategic Planning and Recreation Services Division manages RTMPs in collaboration with SVRAs and Districts. The planning team consists of employees from multiple disciplines (maintenance, public safety, cultural and natural resources, safety training, and support staff) and includes several public involvement and feedback opportunities. Prairie City, Carnegie, and Onyx Ranch SVRAs are currently undertaking Road and Trail Management Planning efforts.

## **HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA**

Since 2013, Hollister Hills SVRA resource staff have utilized an updated Trail Assessment Matrix to complete the Annual Trail Assessment. This matrix was developed in-house to capture trail conditions and sustainability data accurately. The matrix assesses trails based on characteristics of design sustainability and tread condition. The tread condition category contains subcategories such as whoops/break bumps, ruts, rills, compaction, etc. Trail assessment results are combined into an annual report to inform managers of the overall trail system condition and prioritize yearly maintenance.

## **HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA'S TRAIL CREW**

Ongoing maintenance of Hungry Valley SVRA's extensive trail system requires many hours of hard work and eyes all over the park. Ranger and Maintenance staff do a great job of helping the



Figure 81. Damage to peeler pole fencing.



Figure 82. Fencing repaired.

Natural Resources Trail Crew find areas of the park that need to be repaired. The Trail Crew helps repair trails, spray invasive vegetation, re-build broken peeler pole fences, and deter the creation of unsanctioned volunteer trails to improve the habitat of Hungry Valley SVRA. The Trail Crew's most common task is to repair broken peeler pole fencing. Peeler pole fencing is used throughout Hungry Valley to keep riders off public roads and sensitive habitats while directing riders to stay on designated trails. Accidents happen when riders collide with the heavy wooden fencing, damaging resources. The Trail Crew works quickly to re-build the fencing to keep the public safe and preserve the natural resources of Hungry Valley SVRA for many more generations to enjoy.

## **PRAIRIE CITY SVRA**

State Parks' Strategic Planning and Recreation Services Division lead the Prairie City SVRA RTMP. In 2017 and 2018, the Statewide Trails Team trained Prairie City SVRA staff on mapping and inventorying all the roads and signed trails within the park. Then, the staff entered these features into the Statewide Road and Trails Program database. Roads and Trails Program staff then reviewed the data and completed a base map in 2020. Next, Prairie City SVRA staff will develop draft trail concepts, including new trails and trail systems and trails for certain vehicle types (i.e., motorcycle, ATV, ROV, four-wheel drive, and multiple uses). If existing routes have caused erosion or affected sensitive species, these may be re-routed or discontinued. Once completed, the public will have the opportunity to review the draft plan.

The base map will be a planning tool to decide which trails to preserve, modify, or restore when transitioning from "open riding: to a trail-only riding area in the park. Priority projects include designing new roads and trails within the Yost and Ehnisz areas currently closed to recreation. Another priority is developing new routes within the Coyote Gulch area once that area has been restored (See Coyote Gulch section for more information). The cultural survey and biological assessment have been completed for the Yost and Ehnisz areas, and the report will determine any constraints surrounding cultural resources. Once constraints and avoidance areas are identified, the following steps will determine the types of OHV uses and trail corridors within the Yost and Ehnisz areas. A future public meeting will discuss the trail corridors and gather input on trail features. State Parks would like to open the Yost, Ehnisz, and Coyote gulch areas before more

sites are closed for rehabilitation. The project was on hold during the 2020/2021 fiscal year due to staff reassignments for COVID-19 related contact tracing. The project is expected to resume in the 2021/2022 fiscal year.

## **PRAIRIE CITY SVRA'S HILL ROTATION PROGRAM**

The Hill Rotation Program has been implemented to promote balanced and sustainable OHV recreation management. Prairie City SVRA temporarily closes hillsides needing rehabilitation while other areas are open for recreational hill climbs. Hillsides are recontoured with soil material recovered from sediment basins during rehabilitation. Then, burlap-wrapped fiber rolls are placed along the hillside to stabilize the soil. Finally, the hillside is sprayed with a hydroseed mixture of native seed mix, tackifier, mulch, and water. Vegetation is given multiple winter seasons to establish before reopening the area again to OHV recreation.

Prairie City SVRA applies Dust-Off® (magnesium chloride) annually to the main roads to help minimize dust. In addition, this product reduces the reliance on water for dust control and is part of the parks' drought response plan, which is mandated by Executive Order B-18-12.

### *Specialized Training*

## **OCOTILLO WELLS SVRA**

Protecting species like the FTHL requires support and participation from staff and the public. In 2019, Ocotillo Wells SVRA environmental scientists gave an FTHL orientation to train staff on essential skills at the beginning of the survey season. The program introduces District staff to the resource management program. It consists of FTHL survey protocol, introduction to common reptile species at Ocotillo Wells SVRA, basic 4x4 training, navigation, cultural awareness training, and desert safety. Staff enjoyed this training, resulting in higher levels of crew confidence. Ocotillo Wells SVRA staff, in turn, educate the public about how to protect the FTHL and other sensitive plants and wildlife through informal discussions, interpretive programs, signs, brochures, and social media posts.

The District holds a CEQA and project development training for staff from all disciplines. The training focuses on the legal background of CEQA, State Parks' role in environmental review, and how to develop a project scope and concludes with information about the review process. This knowledge base helps all staff understand how to propose and carry out environmentally responsible projects.

## **PRAIRIE CITY SVRA'S ANNUAL WILDLAND FIRE REFRESHER-FIRE SHELTER DEPLOYMENT TRAINING**

Prairie City SVRA hosts many different safety courses with government and nonprofit organizations throughout the year. These partnerships also provide valuable training for State Park staff. For example, the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) provided an annual refresher course at Prairie City on July 27, 2021. The NWCG provides national leadership to enable interoperable wildland fire operations among federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial partners. Click on this [link for a video](#) of this training.

## SVRA Restoration Projects and other Natural Resource Management Programs

### CARNEGIE SVRA—BLACK BEAR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AREA RESTORATION PROJECT

Black Bear Resource Management Area was completed in 2019 and consisted of 27 acres. The restoration area was fenced during construction and took two years to complete. The project increased vegetation, added storm water-friendly trails, and lowered the overall trail length. The Carnegie Advisory Team also helped design the trail. The timing of rain was a crucial component in the project's success. Due to this revegetation attainment, the trail is now open for recreation.

### CLAY PIT SVRA—DRAINAGE MANAGEMENT AREA FENCE INSTALLATION

In 2017, as part of the Clay Pit SVRA Drainage Improvement Project, Clay Pit SVRA staff worked with the USFS and Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board to improve the water quality of the Clay Pit Canal. This intermittent stream bisects the park before draining into a remnant oxbow of the Feather River. The project created an 18-acre vehicle exclusion buffer area around the SVRA's canal and Drainage Management Area.

The exclusion area was the second half of a project that began in 2014, with the installation of two elevated water crossings and a rock weir to improve user access to the site, control stormwater runoff, and help protect water quality downstream. The vehicle exclusion barrier around the Clay Pit Canal prevents the discharge of sediment-laden water, which can deposit harmful amounts of sediment or toxic substances (fuel, oil, coolant, heavy metals) during storm surges that can affect aquatic life. The cessation of riding and OHV-related activity has allowed native riparian grasses and other vegetation to grow around the periphery of the Canal. This vegetated buffer will work as a filter, actively trapping and removing sediment, pollutants, and other toxic substances.



Figure 83. On the Black Bear RMA Project, the CCC crew placed a rock on the trail's edge to prevent erosion.



Figure 84. Black Bear Resource Management Area Restoration Project—straw waddle placement.



Figure 85. Clay Pit SVRA Drainage Management Area Restoration Project.

The project included the installation of approximately 7,500 feet of Peeler-Core fencing around the park's drainage management area to maintain an open natural feel and allow the SVRA's users to access the site on foot. Unlike no-climb or wire fencing, this fencing encourages visitors to access the corridor of cottonwood trees and grasses for relaxation and shade. Additionally, the elevated water crossings established in 2014 were reinforced and left intact to continue visitor access to the southern two-thirds of the SVRA.

SVRA staff will continually monitor the water quality of the Clay Pit Canal during flood events to remain compliant with regulatory agency standards. This monitoring will also detect areas with excess sediment or pollutant runoff and potentially inform future Clay Pit SVRA wildlife restoration and improvement efforts.

## **HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA**

No planned large-scale restoration projects were undertaken in 2020; however, multiple existing restoration sites were planted with plants grown in the native plant nursery. The SVRA's focus has remained on establishing and improving native vegetation cover on the Fremont, Tule Lake, and Lake Road restoration sites in the Lower Ranch Granite Management Unit. SVRA staff maintain erosion control best management practices (BMPs), fill in rills, and reduce sources of stormwater run-off.

SVRA staff planted several hundred oak saplings at the Foothill Restoration site in the Upper Ranch Management Unit. A previously restored hillclimb was breached, and extensive damage occurred just before the COVID-19 shutdown of the unit. Riders broke through multiple fences and rode on the closed hillclimb near the Coyote Drainage Restoration site. The site was assessed, old plastic fiber rolls were removed, small hand-built water diversions were constructed, and the area was covered with the cut brush to protect the disturbed soil. A new wire fence was built to prevent future public access to the site. Resource staff will monitor the Coyote Drainage Restoration Site to ensure the site is secure and prioritize planting to promote soil stabilization in 2021/2022. Staff will continue to plant chaparral species and seed sites in the Lower Ranch Granite Management Unit restoration sites.



## **HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA—VAULT TOILET SCREENS**

In 2020, the Teton Raptor Center reached out to Hungry Valley SVRA staff regarding one of their projects to prevent the entrapment of birds in vault toilet pipes. Vault toilets are pits in the ground, and they have tall vents in the form of cylindrical pipes that are approximately 30 feet tall. The problem is that cavity-nesting birds will investigate the tall pipes and fly in. Once they are in the pipe, they fall into the pit full of human waste. There is no way for them to get out of the pit at the bottom on their own. The Teton Raptor Center created the Poo-poo Project to address the issue. They began manufacturing vented stainless-steel screens that fit on the top of the vault toilet pipes. These screens allow airflow to vent the toilet and prevent birds from entering the open lines; they are very sturdy and are universal on most vault toilets.

After researching the project, Hungry Valley SVRA staff jumped on the opportunity to partner with such a great organization and project. A total of 34 metal screens were installed on vault toilet pipes to prevent birds from becoming trapped. All vault toilet pipes throughout Hungry Valley SVRA are now closed with metal screens, which have successfully prevented birds from entering the lines.

### *Oceano Dunes SVRA*

## **BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PLAN**

In 2020, State Parks began work on a Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) with the CDFW. The BMP intends to describe the unique biological diversity of Oceano Dunes SVRA, the management goals and objectives required to conserve this biodiversity, and the needed actions to achieve these goals. It also provides guidance on the process and procedures for short and long-term management actions. Planning and management will address the potential impacts of park use on vegetation and plant communities, sensitive and protected habitat areas, and wildlife species.

An example of some of the more complex issues to be addressed within the BMP include:

- Arroyo Grande Creek crossing management.
- Endangered shorebird nesting enclosures.
- Assessment of nighttime vehicle activity.

The BMP brings together the expertise and knowledge of the two mission-based resource management agencies to ensure that natural resource management efforts in the District meet all necessary professional standards and best management practices. BMP recommendations include short-term actions and long-term management efforts, including regular agency consultation and collaboration, scientific studies, restoration projects, or formal agreements such as a Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP). The CDFW is currently reviewing the BMP for final approval.

## **DRAFT HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN**

State Parks prepared a Draft Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for the Oceano Dunes District. The HCP is intended to cover federally listed biotic species at Oceano Dunes SVRA and Pismo

State Beach (managed together as Oceano Dunes District), including the western snowy plover, California least tern, California red-legged frog, and tidewater goby. The four federally listed plant species include Marsh sandwort, La Graciosa thistle, Nipomo Mesa lupine, and Gambel's watercress. Several covered species are also listed under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). The HCP's primary purpose is to ensure that management, maintenance, and development activities protect these threatened and endangered plant and animal species consistent with the federal Endangered Species Act (FESA).

The draft HCP was released for public review in spring 2020. As amended, it provides the basis for issuing an incidental take permit (ITP) by the USFWS under Section 10 of FESA. The HCP establishes acceptable levels of incidental take of the covered species that may occur as an unintended result of otherwise lawful activities of park visitors or State Parks staff and describes measures to minimize and mitigate the incidental take to the maximum extent practicable. The conservation element of the HCP also supports the issuance of a FESA Section 10(a)(1)(A) Recovery Permit, which authorizes take that occurs while implementing measures to enhance the propagation or survival of a listed species.

Separately, State Parks will also be applying for "take" authorization from the CDFW for species listed under CESA according to California Fish and Game Code Sections 2081 and 2800 et seq., including Section 2835.

## *Ocotillo Wells SVRA*

### **PROJECTS WITH PARTNERED AGENCIES**

District staff monitor external projects that are proposed in or near the SVRA. In recent years, this has meant that District staff has had the opportunity to work closely with other agencies' staff on project permitting and review. District staff reviewed geothermal exploration lease permits and military clean-up operations, working with partners such as the BLM, Imperial County, the State Lands Commission, and the United States Marine Corps. While it is important for staff to be involved in projects that could impact the SVRA, these joint projects provide great cross-training opportunities. Each agency has different goals and objectives; therefore, finding common ground for success is critical.

### **RESTORATION PROJECTS**

Ecological restoration projects are critical because of the need to balance maintaining an area for OHV riders to recreate safely while supporting a healthy ecosystem. Restoration focuses on repairing the damage in sensitive areas from human activities and returning them to a more natural state. Ocotillo Wells SVRA's projects include the Truckhaven Palm Bowl, Truckhaven Palm flats, and Desert Ironwood Filled Donuts projects. The Truckhaven projects removed volunteer hill climbs and trails and protected and restored two California Palm oases. The Desert Ironwood Filled Donuts project involved filling in "donuts" (ruts) created by OHV riders around ironwood trees.

Ocotillo Wells SVRA has been focusing on restoration projects that require the skills and expertise of multiple fields, allowing opportunities for the Resources Department, Trails Department,



Figure 86. Truckhaven Palm Bowl Restoration.

and Heavy Equipment Operators to work alongside each other. These joint projects provide a better understanding of each other’s specialty and often result in a multi-benefit project.

**TRUCKHAVEN PALM BOWL RESTORATION**

The Truckhaven Palm Bowl project was a cooperative project that included natural and cultural resource staff, heavy equipment operators, and trail staff. The project began with the removal of volunteer hill climbs using heavy machinery. The soil was de-compacted with heavy equipment to encourage new native growth. A barricade was installed to protect the area from future disturbance. Campfire rings were deconstructed, and trash was removed from the site. Five native palms were planted and are regularly monitored and watered.

**TRUCKHAVEN PALM FLATS RESTORATION**

The Truckhaven Palm Flats project, with proximity to the “Truckhaven Bowl” project, also removed volunteer trails using heavy machinery. The focus of this project was to restore and



Figure 87. Truckhaven Palm Flats during restoration.



Figure 88. Truckhaven Palm Flats after restoration.

protect a degraded California Fan Palm oasis. One tamarisk was removed to help protect the potential water source. Additionally, remnants of old campsites and litter were removed from the area. Cultural resource staff and the trails team supported the project. The restoration area was raked to remove signs of human disturbance, and native palms were planted within the site. The project location is monitored and watered regularly.

## **DESERT IRONWOOD FILLED DONUTS PROJECT**

The Desert Ironwood Filled Donuts project filled three OHV created “donuts,” with two around desert ironwood trees and the other around creosote. Donuts are made when OHV riders drive in circles at high speeds. This action causes the soil to become compacted and eroded, leaving tree roots damaged and exposed. It also generates additional safety concerns as the exposed roots can cause visitors to injure themselves or cause damage to their vehicles. Heavy machinery moved soil into the ruts to restore these sites, ranging from six inches to two and a half feet deep. The trails team assisted with raking and provided finer detail work after heavy equipment use was completed. Interpretive panels will be installed to inform the public about the significance of desert ironwoods in desert environments.

### *Onyx Ranch SVRA*

## **RESTORATION PROJECTS**

The Great Basin District trails crew has been working on several projects at Onyx Ranch SVRA, including maintaining existing routes and trails, replacing damaged trail markers, replacing existing fencing to protect sensitive areas, installing new barriers to protect resources, and closing open fence pipes and openings in kiosks throughout the park to prevent avian mortality. Staff work on these projects in collaboration with the BLM, the Friends of Jawbone, the local Audubon chapter, and the grazing lessee.

### *Prairie City SVRA*

## **DESIGNATION OF MANAGEMENT UNITS**

Management units (MU’s) were established at Prairie City in 2020 to provide a structure for implementing and organizing maintenance and natural resource management activities. Delineation of Prairie City SVRA management units was conducted based on vegetation community differences, OHV use type, and the similar regime of routine maintenance and management needs.

Zone 1 MU is dominated by dredge tailings that support annual grassland interspersed with elderberry and cottonwoods. A few signed trails exist in the area and numerous past-user-created trails. The zone is designated as a distributed riding area in the General Plan, meaning visitors may use any existing routes, signed or not, but may not create new ones.

Zone 2/3 MU is an area of rolling hills composed of annual grasslands with two main ephemeral drainages that support riparian vegetation. This area is shifting from “open riding” to a designated

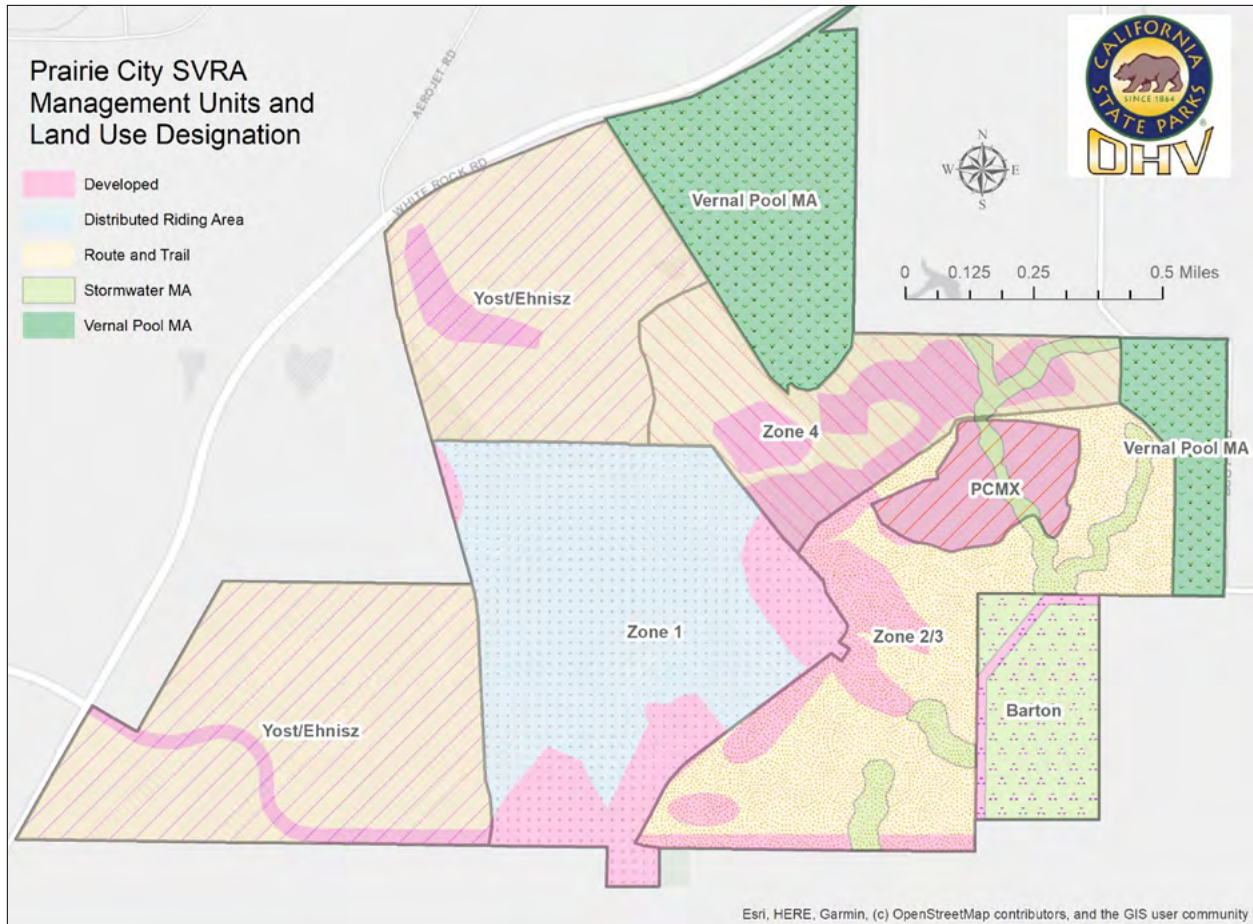


Figure 89. Resource Management Units at Prairie City SVRA.

route and trail system use area. Management activities include stormwater and trail monitoring and possible restoration and new trail design in the future. These two areas may be separated into different MU's once the type and trail design have been identified.

Zone 4 MU includes the northern portion of one of the park's main ephemeral drainages. This 4x4 and ROV vehicles area has a mixture of obstacles, special event facilities, and transitional areas of "open riding" to route and trail systems only. Management activities include stormwater and trail monitoring and possible restoration projects. Future facilities, obstacles, and trail design will be 4x4 and ROV specific.

Yost/Ehnsiz MU is a flat annual grassland with dredge tailings, vernal pools, and cottonwood woodlands. This area is in the process of opening previously closed areas to route and trail system use areas. These sections may be separated into different MU's once use type and trail design has been identified.

Barton MU is designated a stormwater management area and not open for motorized recreation. A tributary to Coyote Creek runs through the center, supporting blue oak woodland surrounded by annual grassland and the occasional vernal pool. A 100' easement abuts the northern and western boundaries.



Figure 90. Prairie City SVRA hosts a mountain bike racing series every summer on Wednesdays.

Prairie City MX Track MU is run as a concession area that operates mostly independently from the rest of the park and hosts a huge event- the Hangtown Nationals MX Race. Other concession areas were omitted as they are small and do not have much that would warrant a distinguished and separate MU. Temporary drainage runs through the middle of the track.

Vernal Pool Management Area MU comprises annual grassland interspersed with vernal pools and is closed to motorized recreation. The MU is broken into subunits: A to the north and B to the east. Both subunits are priority prescribed burn locations as they are heavily infested with medusahead. In spring, the park hosts vernal pools tours for the public. Additional non-motorized recreation facilities may be planned in the future.

### *Restoration Projects*

#### **4X4 MITIGATION PLANTING RESTORATION**

In 2018 before the vegetation improvement project started, there were 235 existing plants in the 4x4 area. During the 2018/2019 vegetation improvement project, 86 plants were introduced, a 27% increase, bringing the total number of introduced plants to a 4x4 area of 321. Staff planted five species of native trees and shrubs, including coffeeberry, hoary coffeeberry, coyote bush, western sycamore, and buckbrush.

Once per week, staff watered plants, monitored the health of plants, and added any other notes about new plantings to a datasheet for each planting area. The sycamore, coyote bush, and both species of coffeeberry proliferated and performed well. The buck brush did not perform well in any planting areas and will not be attempted again. Buckwheat, which has been observed thriving in the 4x4 area, may be planted in the future instead.

#### **COYOTE GULCH AND TEICHERT HAUL EASEMENT**

In 2016, the Major Capital Outlay Erosion Control project started at Prairie City to improve the quality of stormwater discharge leaving the SVRA. The OHMVR Division hired consultants to

collect baseline hydrological and turbidity data supporting preliminary engineering, design erosion control facilities, and develop additional erosion control measures and BMPs. Many BMPs were proposed because of the studies, including detention/sediment basins, bio-filtration swales, check dams, and spray fields. Most designs focused on the Barton Ranch property acquired to provide buffer land to the SVRA and develop water quality improvement facilities.

After discussing the options and project budget, the project team, consisting of Northern Service Center and Prairie City staff, focused on the Coyote Gulch section of Zone 3 for the initial design. The current plan will restore the 43-acre area to the original line and grade and convert the existing channel into an eight-foot-wide vegetated swale. Five raised box culvert crossings will be strategically placed along the stream, and later trail design and use determination will be handled separately through the Route and Trail Management Plan.

A setback occurred in the planning process in early 2020 when the planning team discovered Teichert was initiating the installation of a conveyor belt on their 100' haul easement on the Barton property. The exclusive easement was granted in 2003 - before State Parks purchased the Barton property in 2014 - to transport material from Teichert or Stoneridge Quarry to the Teichert Grant Line Road processing facility. The 100' easement contains a 4ft tall conveyor belt with roads on either side bounded by 6ft fencing, preventing State Park access to most of the Barton property unless it builds a crossing under or over the easement. The two planning teams are currently in conference to mutually redesign projects in this overlap area to meet both parties' needs.



# Chapter 3: OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program

This chapter provides an overview of the OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program, changes to regulations since 2017, Operations and Maintenance, and OHV Restoration Grants under PRC 5090.24 (h)(2) and (3). See Chapter 4, OHV Law Enforcement, for information about the OHV Law Enforcement and OHV Education and Safety Grants Programs. See Appendix B for the legislative codes referenced in this chapter. Since the advent of the Grants Program in 1974, grant recipients have received more than \$740 million statewide.

This chapter includes the following OHMVR Commission Program Report Requirements:

**Report Requirement 2:** The condition of natural and cultural resources of areas and trails receiving state off-highway motor vehicle funds and the resolution of conflicts of use in those areas and trails.

**Report Requirement 3:** The status and accomplishments of funds appropriated for restoration pursuant to [paragraph \(2\) of subdivision \(b\) of Section 5090.50](#).

## OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program Overview

From 2016-2020:

- \$14,138,355 was awarded for OHV Operation and Maintenance grants.
- \$28,717,491 was awarded for OHV Restoration grants.
- \$27,800,000 was awarded for OHV Law Enforcement grants.
- \$6,949,582 was awarded for Education and Safety Grants.

The OHMVR Division manages the Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program (Grants Program), an annual program that supports well-managed OHV recreation in California. The Grants Program supplies financial assistance to local, state, federal, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, conservation corps, and Native Americans for OHV-related activities. The program:

Support(s) the planning, acquisition, development, maintenance, administration, operation, enforcement, restoration, and conservation of trails, trailheads, areas, and other facilities associated with the use of off-highway motor vehicles and programs involving off-highway motor vehicle safety or education (PRC Section 5090.50 et al.).

In addition to the Grants Program, the OHMVR Division is also responsible for the motorized part of the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). The RTP is an assistance program of the Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration. The RTP provides funds to California to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both nonmotorized and motorized recreational trail uses.



The Grants Program has four categories with different funding allocations appropriated by the Legislature:

**Operations and Maintenance:** Fifty percent (50%) shall be expended for the acquisition, maintenance, operation, and planning shall be expended solely for grants and cooperative agreements for projects that restore or repair habitat damaged by either legal or illegal off-highway motor vehicle use.

**Restoration:** Twenty-five percent (25%) shall be expended for projects that provide ecological restoration or repair to habitats damaged by either legal or unauthorized OHV use.

**Law Enforcement:** Twenty percent (20%) shall be available for grants and cooperative agreements to local and federal law enforcement entities for personnel and related equipment.

**Education and Safety:** Five percent (5%) shall be available for grants and cooperative agreements that provide a comprehensive education that teaches OHV safety, environmental responsibility, and respect for private property or provide safety programs.

For more information about the Grants Program, including grant allocations, awards, and other resources, see the OHMVR Division Grants Program [webpage](#) on the California State Park website.

## UPDATES TO GRANTS REGULATIONS SINCE 2017

Since 2017, OHMVR Grants Program staff has made several significant changes to the Grants Program regulations, including amendments to grant application eligibility, eligible project costs, and Grant fund accountability.

**Application Eligibility:** Extended grant application eligibility to include state-recognized Native American Tribes and Certified Community Conservation Corps. These applicants can now apply for education and safety, ground operations, and restoration projects. Additionally, the matching fund requirement for restoration projects was reduced from 25% to 10% of the total project cost, and acquisition projects may now be funded up to a \$1.5 million total cost.

**Eligible project Costs:** Added a “Heavy Equipment” definition to determine eligible costs for this specific, longer life type of equipment and added the requirement, when using project volunteers, to use the California Independent Sector Volunteer hourly time rate to establish a uniform cash value for volunteer time.

**Grant Fund Accountability:** Extended the grant-funded equipment inventory reporting requirement from five years to indefinite (so long as the equipment is still in use), added a certification requirement for nonprofit grantees that protects against conflicts of interest in project funding and expenditures, tightened rules regarding financial audits to ensure complete access to all project records, and added required forms for grantees to use when requesting Grant fund payments and closing out a project.

## PROPOSED REGULATORY CHANGES TO THE GRANTS PROGRAM FOR THE 2022 GRANTS CYCLE

In 2021, the OHMVR Division proposed several updates for the 2022 Grant Program Regulations cycle to improve documentation and review environmental compliance for each grant application. The proposed updates include:

- Updating the Environmental Review Data Sheet.
- Ask the applicant to identify standard measures within their project description to avoid environmental and cultural resource impacts.
- Asking the applicant to describe further what analysis was completed as part of the evaluation to determine potential environmental and cultural resources impacts.
- Refer the applicant to several species tools like the CDFW's [California Natural Diversity Database](#) (CNDDDB), the USFWS' [Information for Planning and Consultation](#) (IPac) tool, and its [National Wetlands Inventory](#) (NWI) when researching the potential impact.
- Asking the applicant to identify if designated critical habitat exists within or surrounding the project site.
- Asking the applicant to discuss how approval of the project would change existing baseline conditions or affects OHV facility operations
- Updating the Habitat Management Program (HMP)
  - Having the HMP Part 1 due at the time of preliminary application.
  - Clarifying that the HMP Part 2 is due at the time of the final application.
  - Removing reference to “in areas open to legal OHV Recreation.”
  - Including impact analysis to cover potential impacts to the OHV Recreation directly helped by the project activities.
  - Adding a description of the justification and analysis used to certify that a proposed project does not contain any risk factors to special status species or sensitive habitats within the HMP Part 1.
  - Attaching CNDDDB, IPaC, and NWI database search results within the HMP Part 1.

By increasing the documentation of the analysis used to evaluate potential project impacts, the Grants Program can better ensure environmental compliance for each grant application. Removing reference to “in areas open to legal OHV recreation” ensures all projects with ground-disturbing activities are fully evaluated if an HMP Part 2 is needed. In addition, supplying the HMP Part 1 during the preliminary application will give the applicant ample time to develop an HMP Part 2, if required.

## **CONDITION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES OF AREAS AND TRAILS RECEIVING OHV FUNDS**

This section describes the condition of natural and cultural resources of areas and trails receiving OHMVR Grants Program funds and resolving conflicts of use in those areas and trails. Applicants to the Grants Program must supply natural and cultural resources compliance documentation as part of the Grants application. Ground disturbing projects funded by the Grants Program have the same resource monitoring and soil conservation requirements as projects at SVRAs.

This section also describes the Operations and Maintenance Grant project highlights from the USFS, BLM, and other nonprofit and partnership groups funded from 2016/2017 through 2020/2021 Grant cycles and resolution of use conflicts.

## **HABITAT MONITORING PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

Through the Habitat Management Program (HMP), applicants identify species of concern in proposed project areas. The HMP identifies monitoring activities, risk analysis, and management action to address issues.

To qualify for funding, applicants with projects involving ground-disturbing activities must implement an HMP. The HMP requires applicants to identify special-status plant and animal species that could be at risk from OHV recreation and monitor for potential impacts on those species. As an adaptive management plan, the HMP includes management objectives and actions to address the risk, success criteria to gauge the effectiveness of each management action, and “triggers” for management change. Once awarded, grantees also report on any management actions taken to monitor results or address concerns raised by the public.

After the project agreement and before the project file can be closed, grantees must supply monitoring results to the OHMVR Division as part of their closing documents. The Division created an internal procedure to assure compliance with this reporting requirement.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW DATA SHEET**

For each proposed project, applicants must complete an Environmental Review Data Sheet. Applicants describe project activities, submit completed environmental analysis documents, and describe potential impacts on wetlands, habitat, threatened and endangered species, and historical and cultural resources.

## **OHMVR GRANTS COMPLIANCE UNIT**

As Senate Bill 249 was approved, State Parks transformed its grants programs by ensuring transparency, accountability, and compliance. It created a firewall system that separated staff who award grants, oversee active grants, and account for grant funds. These changes led to creating a Compliance Unit within the Grants Program. The Compliance Unit has several responsibilities. It oversees the application award process, supplies technical support to grant applicants, develops project agreements, and maintains an inventory of equipment purchased

through the Grants Program. It also conducts project closeout reviews to ensure grant staff complies with state statutes and program regulations. The Compliance Unit confirms that the grants application process is transparent and unbiased. Furthermore, the Compliance Unit ensures that the Grants Unit staff members adhere to State Parks' high standards and are meeting the expectations of OHV and non-OHV constituents.

## **2020 SOIL CONSERVATION STANDARD COMPLIANCE OF LANDS SUPPORTED BY THE GRANTS PROGRAM**

Public Resources Code Section 5090.35 (b)(1) requires the OHMVR Division and the Grants Program recipients to implement a soil monitoring program to ensure compliance with the Soil Standard. Participants in the Grants Program must provide a Soil Conservation Plan as part of the grant application process. For every proposed project after 2022 that involves ground-disturbing activities (excluding Restoration Grants), an applicant must supply a soil conservation plan that addresses how the project will adhere to the Soil Standard. Grants Program recipients must also submit a soil compliance report for each project identified in their soil conservation plan at project closeout. The compliance report must address how the applicant followed the Soil Standard regarding the proposed projects. Applicants typically incorporate trail watch programs with volunteers from the OHV community to help with Soil Standard implementation. In addition, the OHMVR Division contracts with the California Geologic Survey to provide technical expertise to help with the Soil Standard implementation for SVRAs and the Grants Program.

## **Operations and Maintenance Grants Fund Highlights**

### **FEDERAL LANDS**

Since 2016, the USFS has been awarded \$33,828,095, and the BLM was awarded \$12,113,058 in Operations and Maintenance Grants. These grants supply funding to build fences to protect sensitive environments and cultural resources, monitor habitat and soil conditions, maintain roads and trails to reduce sedimentation, and install signs to keep visitors on approved areas and routes. OHV planning grants provide funding to conduct environmental analysis for proposed projects to examine potential impacts on resources.

### **UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE**

There are eighteen National Forests in California with a combined inventory of 40,000 miles of OHV routes. The individual National Forests apply directly for OHV grant funding.

### **LITTLE SUGAR PINE OHV**

The Tahoe National Forest received operation and maintenance funding for a Little Sugar Pine OHV trail system development project through the Grants Program. The Little Sugar Pine's 71 miles of OHV trails incorporate everything from the most accessible trails to those rated as the most difficult. The planned reroute added over nine miles of new sustainably built motorized single-track to this popular and prized riding area. The project also addressed trail segments related to steep, unsustainable grades and drainage features, requiring high maintenance frequencies.

## **BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

The BLM manages over 15,000,000 acres of land in California. These BLM lands accommodate considerable OHV recreation through areas like the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area, Johnson Valley National OHV Area, Jawbone and Dove Springs OHV Areas in Southern California, and Fort Sage, Samoa Dunes, and Chappie-Shasta in Northern California. The individual BLM Field Offices apply directly for OHV grant funding.

## **BLUE OAKS ACQUISITION**

In March 2020, the BLM Ukiah Field Office acquired 1,400-acres of land along State Route 175 in Lake County to supply staging and camping access for the South Cow Mountain OHV Management Area. The BLM Ukiah Field Office applied for an OHMVR Acquisition grant for \$177,416 to partially fund the purchase. According to the BLM Ukiah Office article and acting Field Manager, Ryan Cooper:

This acquisition will allow the BLM to protect and conserve the area for cultural and environmental resources, sustain and enhance current use at South Cow Mountain, and allow for paved access to future camping, staging, and trail opportunities. This acquisition would not have happened without the strong collaboration between the ranch owner, recreation community, California State Parks, and the BLM (Bureau of Land Management, 2020).



Figure 91. Blue Oak Ranch Acquisition, © 2020 Don Amador.

The area offers beautiful views of Ukiah and Lake County, pockets of old-growth fir, several species of oak, willows, over 31 miles of streams, 13 reservoirs, and a habitat for blacktail deer, bear, and wild turkey upland species.

## **NONPROFITS WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH FEDERAL LAND MANAGERS**

Several nonprofit organizations have partnered with federal land managers to apply for OHMVR Division grants directly for the care and protection of natural and cultural resources on federal lands.

### **PLUMAS COUNTY, PLUMAS NATIONAL FOREST, AND SIERRA BUTTES TRAIL STEWARDSHIP PARTNERSHIP**

Through partnerships with the Plumas National Forest and Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship, Plumas County supplies maintenance activities on approximately 60 miles of OHV trails within the Plumas National Forest. Plumas County OHV trails have quickly become a recreation and economic resource for the community of Quincy by attracting visitors and providing opportunities for varying levels of riding difficulty and varied types of users, including ATVs, dirt bikes, 4x4, and side by sides. OHV grant funding has allowed the County to perform regular maintenance on three ranger districts within the Plumas National Forest. Federal employees continued monitoring for problems along the trail where soil resources are affected and then addressed those impacts by installing new drainage dips, hardened crossings, and short reroutes.

### **CENTRAL COAST TRAIL RIDERS ASSOCIATION**

The Central Coast Trail Riders Association (CCTRA), previously known as the Central Coast Motorcycle Association, has supplied volunteer support for the Santa Lucia District of the Los Padres National Forest for many years. The CCTRA currently has a Challenge Cost Share Agreement with Los Padres National Forest for trail maintenance and related activities. The CCTRA occasionally shares its heavy equipment with volunteers on the Mount Pinos Ranger District, who perform trail maintenance in that district. Los Padres National Forest customarily claims volunteer labor provided by their organization as a volunteer match. In addition, the CCTRA provides some specialist support (biologist) and conducts soil condition monitoring on the trail system.

### **KINGSBURG 4-WHEEL DRIVE CLUB**

The Kingsburg 4-Wheel Drive club (K4WDC) works with Sierra National Forest to improve OHV opportunities for the greater public. The K4WDC has been in existence since 1970 and was incorporated in 2018. The club maintains locations and provides volunteer hours on trails and campgrounds in OHV areas in the Sierra National Forest.



Figure 92. K4WDC members work on trails.

## FRIENDS OF COW MOUNTAIN

The Friends of Cow Mountain's (FOCM) mission is to improve OHV recreation at the BLM South Cow Mountain OHV Recreation Area and ensure access for future generations by integrating sustainable design features into the trail system. They envision a trail system maintained to contemporary standards, which provides a unique recreation experience for the community. Since 2017 they have completed multiple projects, including rebuilding two bridges and trail reroutes.



### Potential Images for this grant project:



Figure 93. Whitehorn Trailhead sign for a FOCM project.



Figure 94. FOCM trail work.

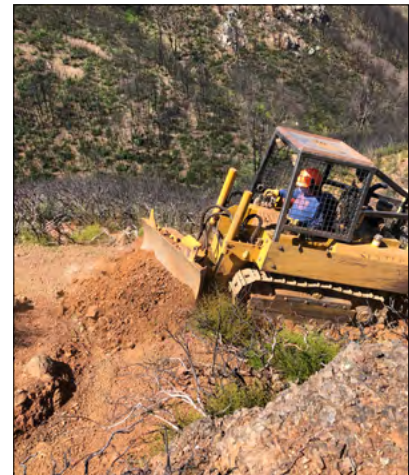


Figure 95. FOCM removal of downed trees.

## LOCAL ENTITIES

Many local agencies also participate in the Grants Program to provide OHV recreation opportunities while caring for natural and cultural resources. Since 2016, \$14,138,355 in operations and maintenance grant funds have been awarded to local agencies.

## CITY OF CALIFORNIA'S OHV PROGRAM

California City is still a premier area for OHV enthusiasts in the East Kern County desert. The City permit system allows OHV riders to ride on 1800 miles of dirt routes with approximately 4500 acres of open riding. The City handles maintaining, signing, and monitoring these OHV riding trails.

Grant funding allows the City to support and sustain these OHV opportunities and maintain Borax Bill OHV Park. This park is the only OHV facility found within the OHV riding area, and its amenities include restrooms, showers, fresh water for RVs, trash, and recycling.

The City also received operation and maintenance funding for a planning project to identify if an RV dump station is feasible and environmentally sound. This dump station will enhance the amenities offered to the OHV visitors, and the City will locate the dump three miles west of Borax Bill OHV Park.

## Resolution of Conflicts of Use

California's population has nearly doubled since the OHMVR Program's start in 1971. Today, more people are heading to rural areas searching for OHV recreational opportunities. At the same time, areas traditionally available for OHV recreation have been shrinking due to the reallocation of land uses as people move from urban communities and land management agencies embark upon the designation of motorized routes. This population movement creates a situation where competition for resources leads to land-use conflicts. Through OHMVR Division programs, recreational conflicts of use are analyzed and resolved to the extent possible. See Chapter 4, Law Enforcement, for more information on the OHMVR Division's efforts to reduce these land-use conflicts.

## Restoration Grants Highlights

The OHMVR Division Grants Program regulations define restoration as "upon closure of the unit or any portion thereof, the return of land to the contours, the plant communities, and the plant covers comparable to those on surrounding lands or at least those which existed before OHV use" (California State Parks, Jan. 2021).

Before SB 742, it was unclear whether restoration planning came under the definition of "restoration." Senate Bill 742 clarified that applicants could use grant funding for restoration planning, defined as "identifying appropriate restoration techniques, strategies and project implementation, including environmental review associated with the project. (PRC Section 5090.50 (A)(v))" This update made it possible to use restoration funds to prepare the required state and federal environmental analysis.

The Public Resources Code requires that 25 percent of the funds appropriated by the Legislature for OHV grants must be awarded to provide ecological restoration to habitats damaged by OHV use. There have not been sufficient qualifying grant requests to distribute all available restoration funding in recent years. Subsequently, Grants Program administrators increased their restoration outreach efforts to agencies, Resource Conservation Districts, and nonprofit organizations. As a result, the number of project applications and amounts requested rose substantially.

## *Federal Lands*

### **RESTORATION IN BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT AND UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE AREAS**

The OHMVR Division has continued its long-standing relationship with federal agencies to repair and restore areas that have been affected by OHV recreation. Over the last five years, the OHMVR Grants Program awarded \$7.66 million to BLM for restoration grants projects and \$7.25 million to the USFS -- the state's two largest federal land managers.

### **USFS RESTORATION GRANTS PROJECTS HIGHLIGHTS**

Restoration projects on USFS lands have restored and protected areas like the Lassen Creek watershed on the Modoc National Forest and repaired unauthorized OHV trails on the



Stanislaus National Forest. The El Dorado National Forest has undertaken a restoration project to study the relation of OHV use with the movement of the California red-legged frog on the Rock Creek Trail system. The Cleveland National Forest received funds to continue a previously funded project, executing the unauthorized route decommissioning approved in the Environmental Assessment. These projects are just a few examples of USFS restoration efforts supported by the Grants Program.

## **BLM RESTORATION GRANTS PROJECTS HIGHLIGHTS**

The BLM Eagle Lake Field Office has recently completed a project encompassing signing, education, and patrolling damaged areas within the Skedaddle Wilderness Study Areas. Similarly, the Grants Program awarded the BLM Ridgecrest Field Office OHV restoration funding to restore 250-340 closed routes in the Red Mountain subregion, the Coso Mountains, and Darwin Falls. The project included vertical and horizontal mulching, construction of water bars, and archeological and biological inventories. In addition, the BLM Arcata Field Office was awarded funds to support restoration efforts in the Eureka Dunes riding area of the Somoa Dunes Recreation Area. The project helps with the Field Office's requirement to maintain two native plant enclosures that total two acres. These enclosures are homes to the Humboldt Bay wallflower, beach layia, and the western snowy plover.

## **IMPERIAL SAND DUNES RECREATION AREA**

The BLM El Centro Field Office (ECFO) applied for a Restoration grant to install and maintain signs around the critical habitat of Peirson's Milkvetch (California endangered plant species and federally listed as threatened and endangered) at Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area (ISDRA). These signs mark restricted motor vehicle access to closed areas and encourage OHV recreation in the appropriate open regions. Through continual active signing and enforcement of OHV closures, the BLM allows the 9,046 acres of milkvetch critical habitat to be restored by natural processes to their original condition before OHV recreation. Soils in the closed areas are also protected to maintain productivity, minimize erosion, and preserve natural dune geomorphologic



Figure 96. Grants Administrator, Maria Olmos, holding a carsonite marker at the correct height. The sign to the right was buried in the sand as the dunes shifted.



Figure 97. Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Milk-Vetch Restoration Area.

processes. This project successfully helped the natural restoration process promote Peirson's milkvetch's survival and recovery. The signing project supports the natural restoration of 35,144 acres of sensitive habitat within the North Algodones Dunes Wilderness closures.

El Centro Field Office first applied for a restoration grant during the 2014/2015 grant cycle. However, the terrain and weather made the restoration project challenging for staff, and they applied for more grants to continue the project. For example, the dunes are constantly changing shape and size due to wind, and some dunes get up to 300 feet high, making it impossible to install permanent fencing and barriers. As a result, maintaining the closed boundary perimeter requires regular monitoring and maintenance. In addition, the BLM ECFO assigned a team

of four personnel and three ROVs for the restoration project. Because of the continuous use and strenuous working conditions, the ROVs needed regular repairs and maintenance, slowing down operations. Furthermore, a four-person crew was insufficient to cover such a vast area of dunes and wilderness.

The 2017 restoration grants project funded more personnel, gear, materials, and the adequate type and number of vehicles to transport the staff and equipment through the dunes to carry out their task. The BLM staff signed 9,046 acres of the milkvetch habitat that frame the borders of the four closures. Although the closed area has an uneven odd/shape and is without fencing, OHV recreationists are aware of the closures, and the majority are respectful of the red closure signs.

### *Other Restoration Grants Project Highlights*

#### **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RESTORATION**

The National Parks Service received restoration grants funds for Death Valley National Park and Joshua Tree National Park. Both projects monitor, identify and prevent unauthorized OHV routes within the park's boundaries. The projects included barricade work, repairing damaged land, and helping to educate park users about the need to Tread Lightly!® and stay on the road within the park. The National Park Service has received \$1.33 million in restoration grants since 2016.

#### **NONPROFIT RESTORATION GRANTS AND PARTNERSHIPS**

Since 2016, the Grants Program has awarded over \$11.5 million to nonprofit organizations and educational institutions for restoration projects on public lands. The BLM and the USFS have also benefited from restoration grant projects conducted by nonprofit partners and educational institutions. Federal land managers are shorthanded in many instances, and priorities are directed elsewhere. State law allows nonprofit organizations and educational institutions to assist restoration efforts with the land manager's approval. New grantees since 2016 include the Post Wildfire OHV Recovery Alliance and the Transition Habitat Conservancy.



#### **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA MOUNTAINS FOUNDATION**

The Southern California Mountains Foundation (SCMF) is a 501 (c)3 nonprofit organization that has partnered with the San Bernardino National Forest (SBNF) in OHV management and education for over 25 years. The SCMF supports the SBNF by supplying OHV interpretive services to the public, trail building, site maintenance, monitoring, and participating in large-scale restoration projects using volunteers and the SCMF Urban Conservation Corps (UCC) program. The SCMF UCC workforce is a development program for young people that teaches skills in conservation-related fields and assists them in completing their high school education.

## SCMF RESTORATION GRANTS PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

From 2016 to the present, the SCMF installed over ten miles of fencing and other barriers and has actively restored over 3,544 acres by seeding, planting, and slashing unauthorized OHV routes to restore natural resources and prevent OHV damage in the SBNF.

The SCMF operates and co-manages three greenhouses (at Big Bear, Children's Forest, and Lytle Creek) in partnership with the SBNF Mountaintop and Front Country Ranger Districts. The SCMF stores native seeds and grows plants to restore areas damaged through unauthorized and decommissioned OHV routes throughout the SBNF.

Using ArcGIS mapping software, the SCMF has inventoried over 800 restored sites. It continuously monitors to maintain restored sites and address new issues. A few of the areas receiving focused restoration attention include:

- Baldy Mesa (Trestles) OHV Area – planted four acres with native plants, seeded over 20 acres, weeded five acres, installed 6.6 miles of new fencing, repaired five miles of border pipe and cable fence, laid 23 miles of slash, and removed five tons of garbage.
- Bee Canyon – installed six new interpretive signs, slashed six miles of unauthorized OHV routes and removed 40 tons of garbage.
- Holcomb Valley – planted several hundred plants and trees on ten-plus acres and seeded three sites.
- Miller Canyon – assisted SBNF in restoring an old user-created staging area due to its proximity to a sensitive riparian area that provides potential habitat to several threatened and endangered species. The UCC crews constructed pipe and cable fencing, installed signage, weeded, raked seed over a 15-acre area, and helped in planting willow trees.
- Cactus Flats – installed one half-mile of new t-post fencing, slashed two miles of unauthorized OHV routes, and seeded ten acres at the staging area restoration site.
- Rattlesnake Mountain – slashed 20 miles of unauthorized OHV routes, seeded five miles, installed fences along new SBNF OHV trails in nine different locations to protect sensitive areas, planted 150 plants and trees in and around the Horse Springs and Big Pine Flats campgrounds, and installed sensitive species informative signs.
- San Jacinto – slashed 1.5 miles of unauthorized OHV routes and installed 800 feet of new t-post fencing.



Figure 98. SCMF greenhouses used to propagate native plants used in restoration projects.



Figure 99. SCMF volunteers raking seeds to restore habitat on an unauthorized route.



Figure 100. Crews are planting at Horse Springs OHV campground to keep riders on an authorized trail.



Figure 101. SCMF volunteers clean native plant seeds to prepare them for propagation.



# Chapter 4: Public Safety

Chapter 4 provides an overview of the OHMVR Division Public Safety Program and information about reducing trespass for Report Requirement 5. This chapter also highlights Law Enforcement and Education and Safety grants awarded for the OHMVR Grants Program and other relevant information.

## **THE OHMVR DIVISION PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAM**

The Public Safety Program provides statewide leadership in OHV-related law enforcement. Emphasis is placed on educating the public about OHV laws and regulations to encourage voluntary compliance. For instance, the OHMVR Division law enforcement team (OHMVR LE Team) staff attend county fairs, youth and career fairs, and other special events to promote responsible recreation and safety. The Remote-Controlled Jeep® Course, developed by the OHMVR Division and used at outreach events, teaches Tread Lightly!® principles, trails use, and respect for private property. The ATV simulator and other interactive activities at outreach events teach safe riding techniques, proper safety gear, and responsible trail use.

The OHMVR LE Team helps the city, County, and federal law enforcement agencies with OHV recreation-related services. For example, staff coordinate with El Dorado Sheriff's Office, Placer County Sheriff's Office, Tahoe National Forest, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, and the El Dorado National Forest to reduce trespass on private lands through increased patrols on the Rubicon Trail during special events and on busy summer weekends. Increased contacts with law enforcement staff help OHV enthusiasts know where it is legal to recreate. Staff also meet with stakeholders and law enforcement agencies around the state to identify issues, encourage cooperation, and facilitate solutions.

The law enforcement team works with Grants Program staff to review law enforcement applications, administer grant site visits and help grant recipients implement their programs. The funds from the law enforcement grant finance equipment and law enforcement positions that help agencies patrol OHV areas in local and federal OHV areas.

## **STATEWIDE OHV LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SOUND TESTING TRAINING CLASS**

The OHMVR LE Team develops curriculum and conducts OHV law enforcement and sound testing training for local, state, and federal agencies that provide OHV recreation opportunities. These classes follow PRC Section 5090.32 and Division 16.5 California Vehicle Code (CVC). The Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST)-certified class applies to the continued professional training required for law enforcement officers and is offered at no cost to the participants.

The six-hour OHV laws class is intended for in-service law enforcement officers and other staff assigned to patrol, supervise, or manage OHV areas, public safety, and educational programs. The OHMVR LE Team has presented courses from El Centro to Eureka for BLM, the USFS, counties, and other municipal agencies' law enforcement officers. These classes are delivered at no cost to local, state, and federal agencies that supply OHV recreation opportunities. Since 2017, the Division has held 20 classes. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic prevented the Division from holding the class in 2020, but classes resumed in summer 2021.

The OHV sound testing class is a six-hour course that consists of instructor presentations and practical exercises. Participants learn the basics of human hearing and the effect of sound in the environment. Students learn to use a sound meter and tachometer to measure sound levels on various OHVs. Graduates of this course are qualified to provide court testimony for sound violations. In addition, class participants can meet other law enforcement staff who work in OHV areas, many of whom will coordinate joint law enforcement efforts at significant special events on California’s public lands.

Since new OHV trends, safety and education goals, legislative changes, and regional issues constantly change, the OHMVR LE Team regularly adjusts the curriculum to meet the needs of its law enforcement agency partners.

### **OHMVR DIVISION LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERSHIPS**

The OHMVR LE Team helps the BLM El Centro Field Office, CDFW, and the CHP during the President’s Day weekend event to provide a safe environment for OHV recreation at Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area. In addition, the Division works in partnership with BLM, the USFS, and the Kern County Sheriff’s Office to ensure OHV enthusiasts are not trespassing and recreating in unauthorized areas, such as lands on and around the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail section in Kern County. The following stories illustrate how the OHMVR LE Team partners with land managers to protect resources, support recreation enthusiasts, and prevent trespass.

### **THE KING OF THE HAMMERS EVENT**

First held on BLM land in 2007 for “bragging rights” amongst friends, the weeklong King of the Hammers event now draws 70,000 spectators annually. Since 2013, the Division has helped BLM at one of the most attended OHV events in the nation. The race is held primarily on BLM lands and extends into the Shared Use Area, where Means Dry Lake is found. The Shared Use Area is jointly run by BLM and the United States Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (USMCAGCC) at Twenty-nine Palms. For ten months out of the year, it falls under BLM jurisdiction, with two months allocated to the Marine Corps for training. To successfully manage an event of this size,



Figure 102. Law enforcement officers on patrol during the King of the Hammers event.

BLM partners with the USMC Twenty-nine Palms Provost Marshal's office, USMC Conservation Law Enforcement Officers, San Bernardino County Sheriff's Office, San Bernardino County Fire Department, California Highway Patrol, and the OHMVR Division to supply law enforcement and emergency services.

In 2018, the OHMVR LE Team helped with law enforcement support by providing six off-road-capable motorcycle patrol officers and three support staff for the week. The focus of the deployment was to provide patrols to prevent incursions onto the racecourse and into the USMCAGCC, which is not open to use by the public. Rangers from Hollister Hills SVRA, Hungry Valley SVRA, Eastern Kern County Onyx Ranch SVRA, Ocotillo Wells SVRA, Angeles Sector, and the OHMVR LE Team also deployed to support this event. The extreme desert riding conditions require all Rangers to have off-road motorcycle skills well above the norm, and the immense crowds and non-stop nature of the event test even the best Officer's skills.

## **PROMOTING SAFETY ON THE RUBICON TRAIL**

With any form of recreation, one should always think about safety—our own and those around us. Safety must be the primary concern for those who recreate along the iconic Rubicon Trail. Through a USFS request, the OHMVR LE Team recently helped spread the message of safe recreation at both the Loon Lake and Lake Tahoe trailheads of the Rubicon Trail. The Rubicon Trail is a challenging and beautiful route through the Sierra. California Native Americans historically used this route between Georgetown and Lake Tahoe, and it became an automobile road following the development of the Rubicon Springs area. Following World War II, the trail became the preferred weekend recreational drive for many individual users and four-wheel-drive clubs.

The trail is managed and maintained through partnerships with multiple governmental agencies, including El Dorado County, Placer County, the El Dorado, Tahoe National Forests, and the USFS Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit. Acting OHMVR Division Chief Callan McLaughlin:

These agencies receive Grant money through the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program for resource management, trail maintenance, law enforcement, and education-related materials. These competitive grants help keep this historic trail open for sustainable recreation.

Over several weekends, OHMVR LE Team members Al Chavez and Neill Gow staffed the Loon Lake trailhead while Ranger Jon Brandt and Interpreter Don Schmidt worked along the Tahoe side of the trail. The team informed users about campfire restrictions, safe camping practices, and safety belt and helmet use. They also offered oil spill kits, safety bandannas, and Rubicon Trail maps to anyone who needed one. Driving this trail makes for a fantastic opportunity for individuals and families to enjoy some time together in a beautiful part of the Sierra Nevada.



## RUBICON TRAIL IMAGES



Figure 103. OHMVR Division Patrol vehicle on the Rubicon Trail.



Figure 104. OHMVR Division Law Enforcement Officer directing vehicle out of a jam.

## ANNUAL DESERT LIFEGUARD TRAINING AT HUNGRY VALLEY STATE VEHICULAR RECREATION AREA

*Story from: Jack Gorman, State Parks Great Basin District*

Hungry Valley SVRA Desert Lifeguard Program aims to make Hungry Valley SVRA a safer place for visitors by supplying staff trained in emergency medical service. In 2020, lifeguards from Channel Coast and Angeles Districts participated in the exciting and innovative program. Desert lifeguard training was held at Hungry Valley SVRA on Wednesday, September 30, and Thursday, October 1. Training consisted of recreational off-highway vehicle (ROV) operations, provided by Hungry Valley's Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association instructors, and emergency medical skill-building exercises by emergency medical services instructors from the Great Basin and Channel Coast Districts. Los Angeles County Fire Department supplied a fire and rescue helicopter to inform lifeguard and ranger staff on the helicopter's abilities and loading and unloading procedures and their services to assist park staff in future emergencies.

### Report Requirement 5: Efforts to Prevent Trespass

The OHMVR program was founded on the principle that “effectively managed areas and adequate facilities for the use of OHVs and conservation and enforcement are essential for ecologically balanced recreation” (PRC Section 5090.02 (b)). Preventing trespass onto private property and other areas close to OHV recreation is essential for the OHMVR Program.

Effectively managed areas and adequate facilities provide people with a legal alternative to trespassing onto private lands and closed areas searching for OHV recreation. The OHMVR Division coordinates with and supplies grant funding to local, state, and federal agencies by teaching the law enforcement class to monitor wilderness boundaries, private property, and other closed areas. These agencies also implement focused enforcement actions to

address specific trespass and wilderness incursion concerns. To reduce violations, the OHMVR Division and its partners use various approaches to educate the public on the importance of respecting closed areas and private property boundaries and the consequences of ignoring applicable laws.

## **2020 AND 2021 LAW ENFORCEMENT DEPLOYMENTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

The COVID-19 Pandemic closed most recreation areas to motorized recreation in 2020. As counties and OHV recreation locations throughout the state began to re-open, the OHMVR LE Team joined the re-opening efforts throughout the state. Completing public safety deployments, resource management site visits, and public outreach is the OHMVR Division's proven three-prong approach for success. The OHMVR Division deployed with staff from two National Forests, the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office, Placer County Sheriff's Office, and the Nevada County Sheriff's Office. The OHMVR LE Team deployed to the Rubicon and Fordyce Trails for regularly scheduled patrols in the summer.

## **OHMVR Division Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program Law Enforcement Funding**

### **IMPACT OF THE OHMVR LAW ENFORCEMENT GRANTS ON LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS**

From 2016 to 2021, the OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program awarded \$27,800,000 in grant funds to local law enforcement agencies to supply financial assistance for protecting life and property related to OHV recreation and motorized access to non-motorized recreation. This grant includes enforcement for both legal and illegal OHV recreation. Grant recipients are often found in rural areas with limited funding, personnel, and equipment needed to assist OHV enthusiasts, protect cultural and natural resources, and prevent trespass on private property. OHV grant funds help local agencies fill the gaps to offer quality services to keep OHV enthusiasts informed and safe. These funds may also support local economies since funds are often spent where they are allocated. For more information, see the [OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements website](#). See Appendix C for the law enforcement grants award amounts and applicants.

## **Law Enforcement and Safety Education Grants Projects Highlights**

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT GRANT REVIEWS**

The OHMVR LE Team helped the Grants team with the preliminary and final reviews of Law Enforcement grants. Throughout the year, the LE Team also completes "boots on the ground" site visits to review the use of OHMVR Law Enforcement Grant dollars by grantees.

## *State and Federal Agencies*

### **MODOC COUNTY**

The OHMVR Grants Program awarded the Modoc County Sheriff's Office funds to buy equipment to provide OHV related enforcement within the jurisdiction of Modoc County. Sheriff's Office Deputies spend 1,000+ hours per year patrolling OHV areas. The eight-person patrol unit covers 26,881,920 million acres, making OHV a priority in the County. With the assistance of the California OHV Law Enforcement Grants program, the Modoc County Sheriff's Office has been able to educate off-roaders and, more importantly, effectively patrol and take corrective actions against willful violators.

### **IMPERIAL COUNTY**

The Imperial County Sheriff's Office (ICSO) with the Imperial County Sheriff's Off-Highway Vehicle Enforcement Safety Team (OHVEST) is the lead agency for law enforcement in the vast OHV use areas of Imperial County. ICSO has formed an Off-Highway Law Enforcement Coalition consisting of Deputies and Reserve Deputies from ICSO. Imperial County Sheriff's Office personnel administer approximately 1.3 million acres of public land. Of the 4,500 square miles encompassing the County, about half (2,500) of those miles pertain to limited and full use of OHV recreation areas. OHVEST focuses its mission on visitor safety, environmental protection, and education.

### **BLM EAGLE LAKE FIELD OFFICE**

The BLM Eagle Lake Field Office was awarded funds for a Law Enforcement Ranger to enforce OHV rules and regulations and monitor for OHV intrusions within the Wilderness Study Areas, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Special Recreation Management Areas, Extensive Recreation Management Area, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Historic Trails and within the Designated Fort Sage and Rice Canyon OHV areas. There are 1,667 miles of OHV routes within the Eagle Lake Field Office California boundaries patrolled.

### **ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST**

The Angeles National Forest covers 70% of the open space in Los Angeles County and receives three million recreational users each year. This National Forest has 270 miles of OHV roads and trails available to green sticker OHV areas. The Angeles National Forest was awarded funds to hire law enforcement officers to patrol high OHV use areas and purchase safety equipment. The National Forest also received funding to buy a utility trailer to transport and store OHV equipment and act as their command center.

## *Nonprofits and Organizations*

### **DESERT GROUP SEARCH AND RESCUE VOLUNTEER, INC.**

The Desert Search and Rescue team (Desert SAR) comprises all volunteers dedicated to providing OHV search and rescue support in the deserts and mountains in East Kern County, South Inyo

County, and northwest San Bernardino County. These areas include the Dove Springs and Jawbone Canyon OHV Recreation Areas and California City, including all OHV areas near the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail to the Trona Pinnacles. The Desert SAR team deploys into their primary response area on all major holidays or events, providing a central point of contact for all medical and rescue needs. They are on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Desert SAR trains all volunteers to a minimum standard of a first responder, with many emergency medical technicians (since an ambulance response time is typically one hour). They serve one of the state's largest geographical OHV riding areas, helping people enjoy the open OHV areas.

## **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA MOUNTAINS FOUNDATION**

The Southern California Mountains Foundation (SCMF) also receives Education Grant Project funding, including:

- Deliver ten or more yearly ATV Safety Institute and Motorcycle Safety Foundation trainings to the public.
- Distribute thousands of educational OHV user map guides, brochures, and other information directly to visitors and OHV users. These items are posted at informational kiosks and booths at major events, trade shows, OHV staging areas, and through its OHV dealer partnerships. Informational booths at Cactus Flats, Miller Canyon, Pinnacles, Baldy Mesa, and Summit Staging areas offer free voluntary sound testing and present riders' information on how to get their OHV equipment within its legal sound limits.
- Deliver 10 to 25 "On the Right Trail" radio-controlled (RC) car presentations to area school groups and the public about the importance of staying on authorized trails.
- Conduct several rider-to-rider educational public outreach rides, where volunteers operating OHVs educate riders onsite by supplying OHV user map guides and other safe and responsible riding information.

## **THE SIERRA AVALANCHE CENTER**

The Sierra Avalanche Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that supports winter recreation, public safety, and education outreach with the USFS in the greater Lake Tahoe area. The organization informs and educates the public about backcountry avalanche conditions and provides free motorized avalanche education classes. The Sierra Avalanche Center submitted an education and safety grant in 2021 to support daily avalanche forecasts.

## **In-Lieu Funding Distributions**

As part of the OHV Registration Fees, the state imposes a four-dollar fee for issuing or renewing identification for each OHV subject to identification (registration) in-lieu of all taxes on value levied for state or local purposes (CVC § 38230). These in-lieu funds are to be used by local agencies to provide OHV opportunities and facilities, including law enforcement efforts. The state distributes in-lieu funds to counties based on how much OHV activity occurs in the county.

Previously, the population of registered OHVs in a county determined the total of in-lieu funds each county would receive, which resulted in some counties with little OHV enforcement needs receiving large amounts of funding based on their high population. By directing funds to counties based on the level of OHV activity, counties with smaller populations visited by large numbers of OHV recreationists are now receiving a fairer share of the available funds (CVC § 38240). Since 2008, over \$32 million has been distributed directly to the counties. A listing of in-lieu distributions to the counties is in Appendix D.

# Chapter 5: Public Outreach and Winter Recreation Program

## OHMVR Education and Outreach Program

In 2008, SB 742 revised the OHMVR Division, including a provision that required the Division to provide education programs associated with OHV recreation. To meet this mandate, State Parks hired Interpreters at SVRAs and the OHMVR Division to develop relevant, integrated programming that gives the public opportunities to learn about safety, lawful OHV operation, and protection of California's resources. The program has grown in popularity over the years and reaches over 150,000 contacts annually.

Dedicated interpretive staff develops a wide variety of traditional and innovative interpretive programs relevant to many audience types, from the OHV community to underserved youth. These dynamic programs are content-rich and incorporate audience engagement strategies to be meaningful, enjoyable, and memorable. SVRA Interpreters and the OHMVR Outreach Team give programs at SVRAs, OHV and sporting events, county fairs, community events, safety fairs, youth events, school programs, and career fairs. In addition to in-person events, Interpreters create informative videos using social media platforms and deliver school programs using the PORTS® (Parks Online Resource for Teachers and Students) program.

While instructing people about safe and responsible OHV recreation and environmental stewardship remains the heart of the OHMVR Program, the interpretive staff teaches science, history, culture, and arts programs aligned with California's Common Core State Standards for grades K-12.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic changed traditional engagement with park users and stakeholders who recreate with OHVs. Interpretive staff in SVRAs pivoted from in-person to digital interpretive content. Even though parks and state facilities had closed to the public during stay-at-home orders, the public still wanted up-to-date information about safety measures in parks, plans for re-opening the SVRAs, and interpretive and educational opportunities for learning about their favorite State Parks.



Figure 105. OHMVR Division Outreach and Education Interpreter with a juvenile desert tortoise at the King of the Hammers event.

Digital interpretive content for the OHV community took many forms throughout 2020 and 2021, including live streams and uploaded video content to Facebook, creation of videos placed on YouTube, PORTS® programs, on-demand, and home learning programs, augmented reality educational platform tools (Agents of Discovery), Flipgrid and Padlet content created for school academic learning. Flipgrid is an international online platform used in classrooms and displays short, informational videos on various educational topics. Padlet is an online bulletin board where information can be posted in videos, educational website links, and various documents.

Virtual programming included Junior Ranger™ Programs, Little Ranger, Mini Ranger, campfire programs, and statewide interpretive special events. The ability of the interpretive staff to uniquely change their program offerings to provide continuous service to the public shows the professionalism of State Park Interpreters in the OHV program and their commitment to engaging the public.

## **INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT SVRAS**

This section highlights the many programs and content Interpreters have used to reach visitors, schoolchildren, and the public since 2017.

### **SCIENCE PROGRAMS**

SVRA staff work with schools to develop curriculum-based science programs about California's diverse ecosystems, wildlife, and habitats. Schoolchildren participate in science camps and programs that span one day to several weeks. Students work alongside scientists to learn about native plant propagation, habitat monitoring, and habitat restoration using hands-on activities. To reach children who may not visit SVRAs, interpreters have worked with schools and organizations to offer afterschool programs that promote environmental stewardship and safe and responsible behavior. These programs engage younger generations in underserved areas to connect youth to nature and the outdoors.

### **CARNEGIE SVRA**

Carnegie SVRA started offering campfire programs in 2019. Families especially enjoyed a program that discussed the local bat population and their relationship to insect management at the park.

### **HEBER DUNES**

Interpretive staff at Heber Dunes SVRA provided outreach to five local schools. Children received a science core-based curriculum, performed lab work, made field studies, and presented reports on the wildlife food chain, desert plants, and animals living at the SVRA.

### **HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA**

Hollister Hills SVRA often receives requests from K-5th grade elementary school teachers for science-based programs. The most requested program is about birds of prey, focusing

on adaptation that makes raptors excellent hunters. Students learn about local birds of prey through various tactile props such as photos, skull replicas, wings, feathers, talons, birdcalls, eggs, and pellets. The program also addresses the delicate web of life and how human activities affect food chains.

Interpretive staff added programs for non-motorized user groups and offered full moon hikes, astronomy sessions, and guided wildflower walks. Staff also used this opportunity to discuss OHV land management practices at the park. Additionally, the interpreters restructured the school group program for the second, fourth, and fifth grades, and the cooperating association helped by providing transportation funding. The curriculum aligned with the new Next Generation Science Standards and focused on the San Andreas Fault line.

Hollister Hills SVRA also developed interpretive panels. Interpreters created and installed various information panels, including:

- Welcome panel for the Nature Area (non-motorized).
- Campground panels (2) in the Upper Ranch (4x4).
- Mudstone Ranch's gate panels (non-motorized) interpret the symbiotic relationship with cattle grazing.

## **HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA**

Hungry Valley SVRA expanded one of its most popular interpretive programs, the Animal Ambassadors. After a short presentation discussing outdoor safety and the importance of snakes in the environment, visitors had an opportunity to hold the snakes in a safe space. Participants also learn about the vital role snakes play in the food web. Hunter (a kingsnake) and Poser (a gopher snake) are native to the park and are the two Animal Ambassadors on staff.

SVRA interpreters and environmental scientists offer science programs to youth from the Los Angeles Police Department's National Youth Project Using Minibikes (NYPUM) program during the West Coast NYPUM Rodeo. The Animal Ambassador program has been popular, and participants also learned about habitat protection, park stewardship, and potential career opportunities in park management.

## **OCOTILLO WELLS SVRA**

Ocotillo Wells SVRA interprets the Colorado desert in many ways. The interpretive staff gives weekly school visits to third-grade classrooms throughout the region. The program's focus is animal adaptations in the desert environment, which is aligned with the third-grade common core curriculum for science and art. During 2017, for example, Ocotillo Wells Interpreters visited 43 schools, with an average of three classes, and reached almost 3,000 students.

The interpretation staff gives many outreach programs at schools in under-served communities. During the one-hour program, students discovered the animals that call the desert their home and the adaptations these animals have developed to survive the extreme summer heat and



lack of water. At the end of the session, the students drew their very own animal, which must have at least two adaptations to help it survive in the desert.

Interpretation staff hosted weekend pop-up programs at popular park destinations. Topics included prehistoric animals of the past, adaptations of desert animals, and astronomy using a solar telescope.

The Geology Daze festival draws hundreds of visitors who have a chance to discover the various geologic forces that have sculpted the landscape, including flash floods, wind erosion, earthquakes, the story of the rock cycle, and compared the geology of the SVRA with other planets.

## **OCEANO DUNES DISTRICT**

Oceano Dunes District developed its own children's Adventure Guide, creating a personal connection to the park's natural, cultural, and recreational treasures. The Adventure Guide has fun activities for children to learn about rider safety, Tread Lightly!® principles, swimming safety, hiking tips, Native Americans, animal track identification, and trash awareness.

Interpretive staff uses interpretive technology in new and exciting ways. Augmented reality coloring sheets help instruct children about Snowy Plovers and Monarch butterflies. Interpretive staff started a new PORTS program called "Discovering the Dunes" that reaches students in classrooms worldwide.

Monarch Butterfly Citizen Science Program -- Tourists, locals, and frequent visitors consider the Pismo State Beach Monarch Butterfly Grove an essential destination on the Central Coast. Recently, district staff, volunteers, and docents took part in a citizen science Public Broadcasting episode, *Our Winter, Masses of Monarchs*, which features the Pismo State Beach Monarch Butterfly Grove. The Monarch Butterfly section runs from 27:15 and through 32:17 and can be seen at <http://crowdandcloud.org/watch-the-episodes/episode-four>.

Camp KEEP (Kern Environmental Education Program, an outdoor science school for 6th graders from Kern County) utilizes the foredunes and shoreline northwest of Fins restaurant to provide hands-on sustainability education programming. On average, Camp KEEP provides education to 3,841 students annually.

## **PRAIRIE CITY SVRA**

Prairie City SVRA offers guided walking tours of vernal pools in the spring to allow visitors to see an area closed to OHV recreation for resource protection. After learning that the vernal pool area provides a buffer to help with noise reduction, visitors felt a deeper appreciation and connection with this resource.

### *Other Interpretation and Education Program Highlights*

## **CARNEGIE SVRA**

Park Interpreters give programs at special events that promote safe riding practices, proper riding gear, and Carnegie's history.

Carnegie SVRA held a volunteer special event for planting trees before the COVID-19 stay-at-home order in March. About 20 volunteers participated, donating 100 volunteer hours and planting over 100 trees. The park held another volunteer event in November with COVID-19 restrictions. This event had a smaller group of 12 volunteers, who donated about 48 hours to open some closed park areas due to fire recovery.



Figure 106. Volunteers plant trees at Carnegie SVRA.

State Park staff updated its website with more information about park facilities. Coordination with the park aides at the park kiosk has also helped bridge the gap with Spanish-speaking visitors through English and Spanish language brochures. Staff also updated interpretive panels near the restrooms and fire safety awareness for the park. Plans include connecting with local schools to create in-person riding tours and Junior Ranger™ Programs.

## HEBER DUNES SVRA

The rediscovery of park resources was the primary interpretive focus in 2017. Everything from designing and funding a “Discovery Barn” to hosting a series of “Beach” hikes moved from dreams to reality. The OHV Junior Ranger™ Program took on new momentum as enthusiastic parents volunteered their time to brainstorm new activities and program ideas. The rediscovery of Heber Dunes by NYPUM El Centro ushered in the new year on an exceptionally high note.

At Heber Dunes SVRA, young OHV riders and their families don their safety gear and cruise over to the park’s staging area for the Annual Family Ride on January 1st. In 2018, the El Centro NYPUM group attended the event, so minibikes joined the ATVs for the annual ride. By the end of the year, El Centro NYPUM had done everything from supplying an after-ride BBQ to helping to staff the park booths at the Mid-Winter Fair, the Children’s Fair, and the Heber Fall Festival, as well as hide eggs for “Eggstravaganza,” the park’s spring egg hunt.

The Ambassador Club from Heber Elementary School District and a small group of interested parents also offered ideas and help. 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.

## HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA

Hollister Hills SVRA celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Clean Wheeling Program, which has remained an integral part of the SVRA’s special events. This event is a great park stewardship program for families and is a collaborative effort between the park staff, off-road clubs, and the Hollister Hills Off-Road Association (HHORA).

## **HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA**

Hungry Valley SVRA and the OHMVR Division Outreach Team worked with the Los Angeles County Sheriff and Los Angeles County Parks to give 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 children for a day of recreation fun on October 27th. The children had an opportunity to ride an ATV, kayak, or paddleboard and use the RC Jeeps® on an obstacle course. In addition, the children rotated through stations to learn about nature and State Parks' careers.

## **OCOTILLO WELLS SVRA**

Interpreters updated existing programs and created new ones, such as "Rattlin Bones." This program 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 informing visitors about how to keep their skeletons safe while recreating. The message is clear -- use the proper safety gear and follow the Tread Lightly! Principles.

Ocotillo Wells SVRA made over 70,000 interpretive contacts in 2019 through outreach at OHV trade shows and field programs. In 2019 the Parks staff partnered with many different agencies and groups to make the visitor experience at Ocotillo Wells SVRA and Heber Dunes SVRA safe and enjoyable. In April, the interpretive staff hosted a campout for the El Centro NYPUM program and supplied two fantastic night-time hikes for the children and chaperones.

Ocotillo Wells District worked with safety coordinators at the Division of Boating and Waterways and the OHMVR Division to debut a safety messaging campaign over the winter holidays. This campaign included bumper stickers, radio spots, and a rack card with helpful safety guidelines.

## **OCEANO DUNES SVRA**

Ocean Dunes SVRA staff created a new Shoreline Junior Ranger® Program. The interpretive staff teamed up with the park's lifeguards to educate children about recreational safety and the natural and cultural resources.

Oceano Dunes SVRA emphasizes safe and responsible riding and protecting the dune environment through "Dunes Safety Day," an event focused on riding and ocean safety, held during the July 4th holiday. Rangers, lifeguards, and interpretive staff answered questions about riding rules and regulations, taught visitors about proper riding gear, and helped ocean users to identify rip currents. The interpretive team introduced the OHV Junior Rangers™ Program, where children learned how to ride safely in the dunes and the importance of respecting the dunes ecosystem.

Interpreters offer the popular Agents of Discovery program and a resource and recreation-themed experience for young children called Little Rangers. Interpreters brought visitors virtually into the park with Agents of Discovery. Usually, a person must be on location to play Agents of Discovery. The app was updated to include options for gameplay at home.

The district has two interpretive trailers that can be towed onto the beach or other locations. Park interpretive staff and volunteers use these trailers for impromptu outreach, onsite information, interpretation, and sales.

Interpretive staff and docents provide guided hikes throughout the district. The Oso Flaco Lake area is a popular location for guided hikes led by local nonprofit organizations, and most guided walks are on existing trails. The School or Park district may conduct school field trips at Oso Flaco Lake and other park locations during the school year, including the Monarch Butterfly Grove and visitor center. During the 2018 school year, approximately 4,000 K-12 students visited the park for field trips.

## *Adapting and thriving during the Covid Pandemic*

### **CARNEGIE SVRA**

Carnegie SVRA was closed for about a month during the statewide stay-at-home order in 2020. During this time, interpretive content turned virtual through videos. Many videos were uploaded to Facebook to connect with the visitors about current happenings, such as trail maintenance and projects with the forestry staff to open certain park areas. Two videos focused on the park's early history, including coal mining and brick making. These videos were uploaded to Flipgrid to share local history with educators. The Brick and Pottery Factory video received many positive reviews from visitors when it was also posted on Facebook. Carnegie SVRA took part in the statewide Great Virtual Halloween Spectacular with other parks from the Mount Diablo District by creating a video about tarantulas.

### **HEBER DUNES SVRA**

Most visitors go to Heber Dunes in the fall through spring due to the extreme summer temperatures. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the interpretive staff from the Ocotillo Wells District played a critical role in distributing bi-lingual COVID-19 safety information to the visitors.

### **HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA**

Interpretation plays a critical role in disseminating information to the public. Interpreters regularly communicate the State Park messaging through social media platforms, in-person communication, and phone. Interpreters worked with visitor services staff to supply accurate information to the public as the COVID-19 pandemic changed the State Park System in unprecedented ways.

Virtual programs became the “new normal” during the pandemic as in-person programs were on hold. Hollister Hills SVRA embraced this new method and completed a total of 12 videos with another four videos in production and plans for four more, such as a stop-animation geology video, a November series on cooking with OHV-related safety messages, and a “spooktober” series of tree preservation messages throughout the park.

Although 2020 found many parks postponing or canceling annual events, Hollister Hills SVRA was able to reorganize and offer two of the fall 4x4 oriented events. In September, the SVRA

offered a self-guided Geocache Bash in which single household units or families could come to the park and participate in the GPS scavenger hunt. In late October, the SVRA staff held the annual “Clean Wheeling” Program event in which the SVRA had 28 participants who drove throughout the Upper Ranch collecting trash.

### **HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA**

Hungry Valley SVRA launched a cell phone-based augmented reality game (via Agents of Discovery) titled “Discover Hungry Valley” to commemorate its 40th anniversary in April 2020. At the park, users could search for challenges and answer questions about safety, the park’s flora, fauna, and history. The game’s avatar, named Secret Agent Sage, is dressed in riding gear, including a helmet, gloves, boots, long pants, and jersey. This game compliments another cell phone app, Geocaching, to encourage visitors to explore the park.

The SVRA saw an increase in visitors, including first-time visitors, in 2020. As a result, interpretive staff launched a “Know Before You Go” campaign to help visitors prepare themselves for riding in the park. Park staff recorded videos of the camping facilities, day-use areas, and some trails to allow first-time visitors to prepare before visiting. This campaign also included safety messaging to help keep the public safe while visiting the park.

### **OCOTILLO WELLS SVRA**

The interpretive team also played a vital role in keeping visitors up to date on the park’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff included social media and web-based efforts, deployed and maintained park signage, made personal contact with visitors, and created new “Radio Rock-o-tillo” content.

### **OCEANO DUNES SVRA**

At the start of 2020, interpretive staff began incorporating PORTS programming into the schedule. The SVRA increased the program topics offered within the district as they developed more digital lessons while adapting to the changes that came with the pandemic. “Discovering the Dunes” is a program available through the PORTS On-Demand Programs for Oceano Dunes SVRA. Interpreters also took part in the PORTS Home Learning Programs with various topics and activities, including reading the famous Dr. Seuss book, “Clam I Am,” at the shore.

The staff used Flipgrid, Padlet, and YouTube to present interpretive programs and content. Staff posted the augmented reality coloring sheets that teach about the Western snowy plover and OHV safety gear. Interpreters included links to the SVRA’s Padlet, Flipgrid, and YouTube channel in program confirmation emails to teachers, during PORTS programs, and on ending slides to Home Learning Programs. Some topics include dune formation, native plant species, native invertebrates, and native mammals.

### **PRAIRIE CITY SVRA**

Using the computer program Skype, an iPad, and a microphone, staff have been able to bring children to the park through the internet to educate them on resources and safety. Park

Interpreters developed a dynamic interpretive program highlighting the Vernal Pool Management Area that discusses how recreation and resource protection go together at the park. Staff talked with the students about engineering, physics, and math connecting all these subjects to the world of OHV recreation. The program has been very popular, providing visitor interest in a multi-disciplinary program focused on resource protection in an SVRA. This program has increased visitor engagement by reaching a larger and more diverse audience.

Prairie City SVRA's interpreter reached 24,300 existing and potential visitors through its official [Prairie City Instagram](#) page, collaborating with staff from multiple program areas in the Gold Fields District. Promoting safe recreation during the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting rare vernal pool ecosystems, and educating visitors on red sticker riding season were just a few topics addressed in these videos and posts.

## Over Snow Vehicle Program

The OHMVR Division serves as the lead agency for the statewide Over Snow Vehicle (OSV) program, a cooperative effort to supply wintertime recreation opportunities throughout California. The OSV program primarily operates under a Cost Share Agreement (CSA) with Region Five of the USFS. More support is provided by various program partners, including county government agencies, volunteer groups, and private contractors. Everyone offers a comprehensive network of 26 trail systems with over 1,700 miles of groomed trails. These trails are primarily used for motorized recreation; however, they are also popular among cross-country skiers, snowshoers, and dog sledgers.

### TRAINING

In 2018, the OSV program updated the training requirements for its grooming tractor operators. Under the new requirements, each operator must complete the Entry Level Snow Grooming course before using a state-owned tractor. In October 2018, the OSV program held a three-day training event for all current operators to bring everyone into compliance. The event was hosted and facilitated by the PistenBully Pro Academy in Reno. Fifty operators from 15 trail systems were in attendance and completed the course. As a result, the OSV program achieved 100% compliance with the new training requirements. Similar events will be held as necessary to maintain full compliance in future years.

### ONLINE TRAINING

The PistenBully Pro Academy recently released



Figure 107. A young person enjoying the snow.

an online version of their Entry Level Snow Grooming course. The OSV program has made this course available to newly hired tractor operators, allowing them to begin learning while awaiting a training event. New operators can use the state-owned tractors with a pre-approved veteran operator upon completing the online course.

## **ADVANCED PRACTICAL TRAINING**

Each season, the OSV program chooses locations to receive Advanced Practical Training. For this course, expert instructors supply hands-on training to a small group of operators using their assigned state-owned tractor on their home trail system. The curriculum, which usually focuses on advanced grooming techniques, is tailored to fit the needs of the local trail system and its operators. Training locations are chosen based on various factors, including operator experience, operator interest, snow conditions, instructor scheduling, and recent technological upgrades.

## **EMISSIONS AND FLEET UPGRADES**

In 2004, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) completed its Tier 4 emissions standards for “non-road” diesel engines. These standards strictly regulate the amount of particulate matter and nitrous oxide emitted from off-highway diesel equipment. The Tier 4 diesel engine standards were phased in between 2008 and 2015.



Figure 108. Snow Groomer at Shasta-Trinity National Forest.

Executive Order B-16-2012 applied these and other EPA standards to California's state vehicle fleets. It required state agencies to retire their high-emissions vehicles through the usual replacement process. As part of the OHMVR Division's plan to follow the order, the OSV program was tasked with retiring its fifteen "dirty diesel" snow grooming tractors. Between 2013 and 2018, the program replaced twelve tractors with Tier 4 compliant equipment. The new Tier 4 grooming tractors have met the strictest EPA requirements.

In recent years, PistenBully (PB) has improved its engine compliance. They developed an improved version of their model PB 100, which supplies the lowest emissions available in the US snow grooming market. In January 2020, the OSV program added two new PB 100s to its grooming fleet. Field operators have been thoroughly impressed by the performance of the new tractors, reporting enough power to keep up with high-demand trails while consistently producing near-zero emissions. In the fall of 2021, the OSV program will replace its final "dirty diesel" tractor with a third PB 100. This replacement will bring the entire OSV program fleet into compliance with Tier 4 standards.

## **SURPLUS GROOMING TRACTORS**

During the fall of 2019, Butte County approached OSV program staff about buying a surplus grooming tractor. The tractor would be used for backcountry search and rescue. A short time later, Lassen County made a similar inquiry. With two pending replacements scheduled for January, it was the perfect opportunity to support local communities with valuable public safety resources. After meeting with OHMVR Division management, the tractors were offered to the counties in February 2020. Both grooming tractors have since contributed to saving multiple lives. Based on the success of these two transactions, the OHMVR Division is considering a similar arrangement for the final tractor retirement.

## **TELEMATICS INSTALLATION IN SNOW GROOMERS**

In December 2020, DGS released Management Memo (MM) 20-06, requiring all state agencies to equip their fleet assets with telematics systems. Telematics systems use GPS technology to track and report all vehicle use activity and collect and store on-board diagnostic information such as odometer readings, maintenance needs, and fuel consumption.

In January of 2020, in anticipation of the impending mandate, the Department management chose the OSV program to pilot the new telematics systems. The program's small fleet and remote locations would enable the Department to test the technology under incredibly challenging circumstances. The telematics devices were added to the OSV program's fifteen snow groomers and tested throughout the 2020/21 snow season. The devices performed exceptionally well, producing accurate data despite the remote conditions.

The telematics data can supply additional benefits beyond mobile equipment management. In the future, the OSV program plans to use the data to create a compressive mapping and environmental monitoring system. This new system will enable the Division to perform extensive ecological analyses and implement mitigation measures more effectively.



## SNO-PARK PROGRAM

The California SNO-Park Permit Program was established under Public Resources Code (PRC) Division 5, Chapter 1.27, effective September 30, 1984, to supply parking facilities for winter recreation. The OHMVR Division administers the SNO-Park Permit Program.

There are currently 18 SNO-Parks throughout the state providing access to snow play, cross-country skiing, dog sledding, and snowmobiling on USFS land from November 1 to May 30 each year. The program is self-funded, using the Winter Recreation Fund through parking permit sales. Ten SNO Parks supply access to recreation for Over-Snow Vehicles (OSV). The Off-Highway Vehicle Trust Fund supports these sites in conjunction with the Winter Recreation Fund, ensuring that the Off-Highway Vehicle Trust Funds only pay for the motorized part of use. SNO-Park permits for the day are \$5.00 and the season permits are \$25.00. Permits are sold online at local vendors and the OHMVR Division office by mail and front counter.

## 2018-2021 HIGHLIGHTS

**SNO-Park enhancements** – The USFS Special Use Permit that allows the OHMVR Division to use the non-OSV-related SNO-Parks requires an annual investment. These funds are used for repairs or improvement projects at the SNO-Park locations. Some important projects have been completed through this process, including ADA enhancements to facilities allowing for a more accessible visit for all recreationists.

## SNO-PARK DAY USE AND SEASON PASS SALES

**Pass sales** – The table below shows day-use passes and season passes sold during fiscal years 2017-2021. Day-use pass sales increased 51% from 2017/2018 to 2020/2021. Season passes increased 46 percent during the same time.

Table 6. SNO-Park Day Use and Season Pass Sales

Pass Types & Revenue	2016-2017	2017-2018	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Day Passes Sold	20,948	34,577	28,125	41,048	24,258
Season Passes Sold	5,193	7,221	7,188	11,143	9,261
Day Use Revenue	\$92,181.40	\$152,150.20	\$123,754.20	\$180,620.80	\$106,742.40
Season Pass Revenue	\$122,067.00	\$169,737.00	\$168,836.50	\$261,899.50	\$217,669.50
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$214,248.40</b>	<b>\$321,887.20</b>	<b>\$292,590.70</b>	<b>\$442,520.30</b>	<b>\$324,411.90</b>



## Chapter 6: Other Relevant Program-Related Environmental Issues at SVRAs

Chapter 6 presents information for Report Requirement 6: Other relevant program-related environmental issues that have arisen at state vehicular recreation areas since the last program report, including, but not limited to, actions that are undertaken to ensure compliance with federal and state Endangered Species Acts, local air quality laws, and regulations, federal Clean Water Act, and regional water board regulations, or permits.

### **Carnegie SVRA General Plan and Environmental Impact Report**

The OHMVR Commission adopted Resolution 03-2016 certifying the Carnegie SVRA Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Resolution 04-2016 approving the Carnegie SVRA General Plan. Since then, there have been three lawsuits challenging the Commission's October 21, 2016, actions. In 2021, the Sacramento County Superior Court issued orders in each case, finding that the 2016 general plan and EIR did not comply with CEQA on specified grounds. The court also ordered suspending all activity associated with implementing the 2016 general plan until the EIR is brought into compliance with CEQA. The OHMVR Commission voted to rescind the 03-2016 and 04-2016 Resolutions on August 27, 2021. California State Parks is currently revising the 2016 General Plan and EIR to follow CEQA.

### **Oceano Dunes SVRA Draft Public Works Plan**

In 1982, the California Coastal Commission (CCC) approved a Coastal Development Permit (CDP 4-82-300) for Oceano Dunes SVRA. The CDP has been amended several times since 1982 and set in motion a 40-year debate over access to and recreation at Oceano Dunes SVRA. State Parks synthesize past and present permitting and provide solutions to this 40-year challenge through the draft Public Works Plan (PWP).

State Parks and the CCC jointly agreed on the idea of a PWP as a practical option to examine future operations and management at Oceano Dunes SVRA. The PWP includes Oceano Dunes SVRA and Pismo State Beach and is a long-range land use management plan for compliance with the California Coastal Act reviewed and approved by the CCC. The PWP allows for a comprehensive permit for large or multi-phase projects and holistically examines future operations and management decisions.

State Parks received significant input and engagement on a wide range of complex management issues associated with operations and potential impacts at these popular, sometimes controversial, jointly managed park units during the two-year-plus PWP planning process. These management issues were related to other regulatory mandates, such as federal and state-recognized sensitive and endangered species and regional air quality. These non-Coastal Act issues are addressed in the PWP, including recommended management actions beyond the Coastal Act's scope to effect comprehensive operational improvement and BMPs.

State Parks prepared a draft PWP in December 2020 to balance these complex management

issues with operational goals such as increasing fair public access to the coast through recreational opportunities, facilities, and low-cost accommodations. The draft PWP also seeks to enhance the preservation of the cultural and natural resources, identify compatibility and actions for Local Coastal Plan (LCP) compliance, and become the District’s long-term management plan. This PWP intends to resolve outstanding and long-standing issues from CDP 4-82-300 (as amended). As directed by its mission and statute, State Parks’ draft PWP proposes a balanced solution to competing mandates to supply continued protection, preservation, and recreational opportunities at these parks for future generations.

The California Coastal Commission reviewed the draft PWP at a Public Meeting on March 18, 2021, along with revisions to CDP 4-82-300, as amended. Due to pending litigation, the Coastal Commission suspended actions to the draft PWP and the existing CDP.

## Sea-Level Rise Strategy for Coastal Resilience

State Parks manages a third of California’s coastline. With 128 coastal park units, including those at Oceano Dunes District, providing coastal access and recreational opportunities to over 50 million people worldwide, State Parks has an obligation and a chance to play a leading role in building California’s resilience to sea-level rise and coastal hazards. Driven by these considerations, State Parks formed an internal multi-disciplinary Sea Level Rise Working Group in May 2018 to develop a [Sea Level Rise Adaptation Strategy](#). The strategy articulates State Parks’ approach to coastal management in an era of sea-level rise and recommends actions and tools to build sea-level rise considerations into existing planning and project development processes. The strategy considers the most recent science, guidance, and adaptation approaches taken by agencies, municipalities, and organizations across California.

## Abbreviations

Acronym	Description
4WD	4-Wheel Drive
AB	Assembly Bill
ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
ASCAR	Archaeological Site Condition Assessment Report
ATV	All-Terrain Vehicles
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BMPs	Best Management Practices
Cal Fire	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Cal Poly	California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo
CASSP	California Archaeological Site Stewardship Program
CDFA	California Department of Food and Agriculture

Acronym	Description
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CDWR	California Department of Water Resources
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CGS	California Geologic Survey
CHP	California Highway Patrol
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CSU	California State University
CVC	California Vehicle Code
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FIELD	Farmworker Institute of Education and Leadership Development
FTHL	Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard
GIS	Geographical Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
Grants Program	OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
HMP	Habitat Management Program
HMS	Habitat Monitoring System
IBP	Institute for Bird Populations
ICC	Interagency Coordinating Committee
ITP	Incidental Take Permit
MEJA	Mecinus janthinus Weevil
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSF	Motorcycle Safety Foundation
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NCCP	Natural Community Conservation Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NGMA	Native Grasslands Management Area
NPDES	National Pollution Discharge Elimination System
NPS	National park Service
NRD	Natural Resources Division
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places

Acronym	Description
OHMVR	Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation
OHMVR Act	Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Act of 2003
OHV	Off-Highway Vehicle
OSV	Over Snow Vehicle
PM10	Particulate Matter of 10 Micron
POST	Peace Officer Standards and Training
PRC	Public Resources Code
RC	Radio Control
RMA	Resource Management Area
RMP	Resource Management Plan
RMU	Resource Management Unit
ROV	Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle
SB	Senate Bill
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
Soil Standard	Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines
SPPOs	State Park Peace Officers
SPRF	State Park and Recreation Fund
State Parks	Department of Parks and Recreation
SUV	Sports Utility Vehicle
SVRA	State Vehicular Recreation Area
SWMP	Storm Water Management Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TCRs	Tribal Cultural Resources
The Law	Chappie-Z'berg Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Law
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	United States Forest Service
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey
USMC	The United States Marine Corps
WDRs	Waste Discharge Requirements
WHPP	Wildlife Habitat Protection Program

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# Appendix A:

## OHMVR Commissioners Terms of Office (Appointments 1983 – Present)

Appointing Power	Appointee	Appointed	Term Expired	Period of Service
<b>Governor - #1 Brown</b>	Stephen Casagrande	02/83	01/85	02/83 to 07/85
Deukmejian	Betty Morris	07/85	01/89	07/85 to 04/94
Deukmejian/Wilson	Betty Morris	05/90	01/93	
Wilson	Janette McGarvie	04/94	01/97	04/94 to 10/98
Wilson/Davis	George Galvan	10/98	01/01	10/98 to 01/02
Davis/Schwarzenegger	Robert Chavez	03/02	01/05	03/02 to 05/06
Schwarzenegger	Gary E. Willard	05/06	01/09	
Schwarzenegger	Gary E. Willard	05/09	01/13	05/06 to 01/13
Brown	Erin Hafkenschiel	05/14	05/17	05/14 to 02/16 (resigned)
Brown	Patricia Ureña	03/18	01/21	03/18 to Current
<b>Governor - #2 Brown</b>	Howard Wilshire	02/83	01/84	02/83 to 05/84
Deukmejian	Edward Waldheim	05/84	01/88	05/84 to 05/90
Deukmejian/Wilson	Loren Lutz	05/90	01/92	05/90 to 04/94
Wilson	Donald Amador	04/94	01/96	04/94 to 05/00
Wilson/Davis	Donald Amador	01/96	01/00	
Davis/Schwarzenegger	Michael F. Prizmich	05/00	01/04	05/00 to 02/07 (resigned)
Schwarzenegger	Michael F. Prizmich	05/06	01/08	
Schwarzenegger	Kane Silverberg	07/08	01/12	07/08 to 03/12
Brown	Sarah Miggins	03/18	01/20	
Newsom	Sarah Miggins	03/20	01/24	03/18 to 08/20 (resigned)
<b>Governor - #3 Brown</b>	Martin Coren	02/83	01/86	02/83 to 8/84 (resigned)
Deukmejian	Mark Anderson	06/85	01/86	06/85 to 02/87
Deukmejian	Mark Anderson	02/86	01/90	
Deukmejian	Eugene Chappie	02/87	01/90	02/87 to 05/92 (resigned)
Deukmejian/Wilson	Eugene Chappie	05/90	01/94	
Wilson	Eldon Nobles	07/94	01/98	07/94 to 02/00 (resigned)

Appointing Power	Appointee	Appointed	Term Expired	Period of Service
Wilson/Davis	Eldon Nobles	01/98	01/02	
Davis	Daphne C. Greene	05/00	01/02	05/00 to 04/03 (resigned)
Schwarzenegger	Edward H. Waldheim	11/03	01/06	11/03 to 05/06
Schwarzenegger	Mark D. McMillin	05/06	01/10	05/06 to 3/10
Brown	Ted Cabral	03/13	01/14	03/13 to 01/14
Brown	Ted Cabral	03/14	01/18	04/14 to 01/18
Brown	Ted Cabral	03/18	01/22	03/13 to Current
<b>Governor - #4 Schwarzenegger</b>	Bradley Franklin	07/08	01/12	07/08 to 03/12
Brown	Kevin P. Murphy	03/13	01/16	
Brown	Kevin P. Murphy	02/16	01/20	03/13 to 03/20
Newsom	Roger Salazar	05/20	01/24	05/20 to Current
<b>Governor - #5 Schwarzenegger</b>	Paul Slavik	07/08	01/12	
Brown	Paul Slavik	03/12	01/16	
Brown	Paul Slavik	02/16	01/20	07/08 to 3/20
Newsom	Tina Brazil	05/20	01/24	05/20 to Current
<b>Senate - #1 David Roberti</b>	Michael Bishop	02/83	01/84	02/83 to 03/88
David Roberti	Michael Bishop	01/84	01/88	
David Roberti	Hugh McGuigan	03/88	01/92	03/88 to 01/00
David Roberti / Bill Lockyer	Hugh McGuigan	01/92	01/96	
Bill Lockyer/ John Burton	Hugh McGuigan	01/96	01/00	
John Burton	Paul J. Spitler	01/00	01/04	01/00 to 12/07 (resigned)
John Burton/Don Perata	Paul J. Spitler	01/04	01/08	
Don Perata	Eric K. Lueder	05/08	01/12	05/08 to 06/12
Darryl Steinberg	Teresa Villegas	07/12	01/16	07/12 to 2/16 (resigned)
Kevin de León	Kevin Litwin	04/16	01/20	04/16 to 1/20 (replaced)
Toni Atkins	Thomas Lemmon	01/20	01/24	01/20 to Current
<b>Senate - #2 David Roberti</b>	James Livermore	02/83	01/85	02/83 to 01/89
David Roberti	James Livermore	01/85	01/89	
David Roberti	Paul Golde	01/89	01/93	01/89 to 04/93
David Roberti/ Bill Lockyer	J. Robert Hayes	04/93	01/97	04/93 to 03/97



Appointing Power	Appointee	Appointed	Term Expired	Period of Service
Bill Locklyer/ John Burton	Kenneth R. Nelson	03/97	01/01	03/97 to 01/01
John Burton/ Don Perata	Harold Thomas	01/01	01/05	01/01 to 12/07 (resigned)
Don Perata	Harold Thomas	01/05	01/08	
Darryl Steinberg	Stan Van Velsor	02/09	01/13	02/09 to 01/13
Darryl Steinberg	Edward Patrovsky	01/13	01/17	
Kevin de León	Edward Patrovsky	03/17	01/21	01/13 to Current
<b>Assembly - #1</b>				
Willie Brown	John Motley	02/83	01/84	02/83 to 11/96
Willie Brown	John Motley	01/84	01/88	
Willie Brown	John Motley	01/88	01/92	
Willie Brown	John Motley	01/92	01/96	
Curt Pringle	James Bramham	11/96	01/00	11/96 to 02/00
Antonio Villaraigosa	Judith A. Anderson	02/00	01/04	02/00 to 01/08
Herb Wesson	Judith A. Anderson	01/04	01/08	
John Pérez	Diana Pérez	02/11	01/12	02/11 to 01/16 (replaced)
John Pérez	Diana Pérez	01/12	01/16	
Toni Atkins	Thomas Lemmon	01/16	01/20	01/16 to 01/20 (transfer)
Anthony Rendon	Diane Ross-Leech	08/20	01/24	08/20 to Current
<b>Assembly - #2</b>				
Willie Brown	Marge Sutton	02/83	01/86	02/83 to 02/02
Willie Brown	Marge Sutton	01/86	01/90	
Willie Brown	Marge Sutton	01/90	01/94	
Willie Brown	Marge Sutton	01/94	01/98	
Cruz Bustamante	Marge Sutton	01/98	01/02	
Herb Wesson	John Brissenden	05/02	01/06	05/02 to 03/09 (resigned)
John Pérez	Breene Kerr	02/11	05/14	02/11 to 05/14 (replaced)
Toni Atkins	Eric Lueder	05/14	01/18	05/14 to 10/18 (resigned)
Anthony Rendon	Kimberlina Whettam	02/19	01/22	02/19 to Current

# Appendix B:

## Text Referenced in Chapters 2 and 3

Appendix B provides the associated legislative text referenced in the OHMVR Program Report for Public Resources Code, California Code of Regulations, and the California Vehicle Code.

### Chapter 2: Natural and Cultural Resources Program Legislative Text

The following passages are the WHPP-related legislative text from PRC Section 5090 that requires the OHMVR Division to:

**PRC §5090.32. (g)** Prepare and implement management and wildlife habitat protection plans for lands in, or proposed to be included in, state vehicular recreation areas, including new state vehicular recreation areas. These plans shall be developed in consideration of statutorily required state and regional conservation objectives. However, a plan shall not be prepared in any instance specified in subdivision (c) of Section 5002.2. Trails may only be added or included as components of existing trail systems when developing or updating plans in state vehicular recreation areas upon completion of a full environmental review.

**PRC §5090.35. (c) (1)** Compile and, when determined by the Department to be necessary, periodically review and update an inventory of wildlife populations and prepare a wildlife habitat protection plan that conserves and improves wildlife habitats for each state vehicular recreation area. By December 31, 2030, the Division shall compile an inventory of native plant communities in each state vehicular recreation area to inform future updates. (2) If the Division determines that the wildlife habitat protection plan is not being met in any portion of any state vehicular recreation area, the Division shall close the noncompliant portion temporarily until the wildlife habitat protection plan is met. (3) If the Division determines that the wildlife habitat protection plan cannot be met in any portion of any state vehicular recreation area, the Division shall close and restore the noncompliant portion pursuant to Section 5090.11.

**PRC §5090.35. (d)**, Monitor each state vehicular recreation area annually to determine whether soil conservation standards are being met and the objectives of wildlife habitat protection plans are being met.

**PRC §5090.39. (a)** (1) Any soil conservation standard, wildlife habitat protection plan, or monitoring program required by this chapter, applies the best available science.

(2) All standards, plans, and monitoring programs subject to paragraph (1) shall provide opportunities for public comment, including, but not limited to, written comments and public meetings, as appropriate. (b) Nothing in this chapter relieves the Division from compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, including permit requirements.

PRC §5090 also provides language on conserving and improving natural resources within SVRAs, which further informs the scope and purpose of WHPPs:

**5090.35. (a)** The protection of public safety, the appropriate utilization of lands, and the conservation of natural and cultural resources are of the highest priority in the management of the state vehicular recreation areas. Additionally, the Division shall promptly repair and continuously maintain areas and trails and anticipate and prevent accelerated and unnatural erosion and other off-highway vehicle impacts to the extent possible. The Division shall take steps necessary to avoid damage to significant natural and cultural resources within state vehicular recreation areas.

**5090.35. (f)** The Division shall protect natural, cultural, and archaeological resources within the state vehicular recreation areas.

**5090.43. (a)** State vehicular recreation areas consist of areas selected, developed, and operated to provide off-highway vehicle recreation opportunities. State vehicular recreation areas shall be selected for acquisition on lands where the need to establish areas to protect natural and cultural resources is minimized, the terrain can withstand motorized vehicle impacts, and where there are quality recreational opportunities for off-highway motor vehicles. Areas shall be developed, managed, and operated for the purpose of providing the fullest appropriate public use of the vehicular recreational opportunities present, in accordance with the requirements of this chapter, while providing for the conservation of cultural resources and the conservation and improvement of natural resource values over time.

**5090.43. (b)** After January 1, 1988, no new cultural or natural preserves or state wildernesses shall be established within state vehicular recreation areas. To protect natural and cultural resource values, sensitive areas may be established within state vehicular recreation areas were determined by the Department to be necessary to protect natural and cultural resources. These sensitive areas shall be managed by the Division in accordance with Sections 5019.71 and 5019.74, which define the purpose and management of natural and cultural preserves.

**5090.43. (c)** If the off-highway motor vehicle uses results in damage to any natural or cultural resources or damage within sensitive areas, appropriate measures shall be promptly taken to protect these lands from any further damage. These measures may include the erection of physical barriers and shall include the restoration of natural resources and the repair of damage to cultural resources.

## **Chapter 3: Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program Legislative Text**

### **PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE 5090.50 (B)(1)**

#### **Operation and Maintenance Grants.**

(A) Fifty percent of the funds appropriated by the Legislature according to subdivision (a) of Section 5090.61 shall be expended solely for grants and cooperative agreements for the acquisition, maintenance, operation, planning, development, or conservation of authorized trails and facilities associated with the use of off-highway motor vehicles for recreation or motorized access to nonmotorized recreation.

(B) Guidelines developed to implement this paragraph, pursuant to subdivision (d), shall, at a minimum:

(i) Give preference to applications that sustain existing authorized off-highway motor vehicle recreation opportunities.

(ii) Give additional consideration to applications that improve facilities that provide motorized access to nonmotorized recreation opportunities.

(C) Applications that would affect lands identified as inventoried roadless areas by the Forest Service of the United States Department of Agriculture are eligible for cooperative agreements under paragraph (1) if the application is for a project that does any of the following:

(i) Realigns a forest system road or trail to prevent irreparable resource damage that arises from the design, location, use, or deterioration of a classified route and that cannot be mitigated by route maintenance.

(ii) Reconstructs a national forest system road or trail to implement a route safety improvement project on a classified route determined to be hazardous on the basis of accident experience or accident potential on that route.

(iii) Maintains a road or trail that is included in the National Forest System Roads and Trails on or before January 1, 2009.

(D) Any unencumbered funds under this paragraph shall only be used in future grant cycles for purposes consistent with this paragraph.

## **PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE 5090.50(B)(2) RESTORATION**

(2) Restoration.

(A) Twenty-five percent of the funds appropriated by the Legislature pursuant to [subdivision \(a\) of Section 5090.61](#) shall be expended solely for grants and cooperative agreements for projects that restore or repair habitat damaged by either legal or unauthorized off-highway motor vehicle use.

(B) The division shall develop and implement, in consultation with the Wildlife Conservation Board, a competitive grant and cooperative agreement program, which shall be administered in accordance with this paragraph.

(C) Funds identified in this paragraph shall be available for grants and cooperative agreements for projects that restore or repair habitat damaged by both legal and unauthorized off-highway motor vehicle use.

(D) Eligible projects include:

(i) Removal of a road or trail or restoration of an area associated with the rerouting and subsequent closure of a designated road or trail.

(ii) Removal of roads or trails and the restoration of damaged habitats in any area that is not designated for motorized vehicle use.

(iii) The removal of closed roads or trails, or a portion of a closed road or trail, which will help to prevent off-highway motor vehicle access to closed areas.

(iv) Scientific and cultural studies regarding the impact of off-highway motor vehicle recreation not otherwise required by state or federal laws.

(v) Planning to identify appropriate restoration techniques, strategies, and project implementation, including planning associated with environmental review.

(vi) Restoration projects that generally improve and restore the function of natural resource systems damaged by motorized activities.

(E) Eligible applicants include local, state, and federal agencies, federally or state-recognized Native American tribes, educational institutions, certified community conservation corps, resource conservation districts, and other eligible nonprofit organizations.

## **Best Available Science Guidelines for Wildlife Habitat Protection Plans**

Each SVRA's Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan will address several factors in applying the best available science (California State Parks, 2021, pp. 10-11). These methods include:

- Clear, well-stated, quantitative, and measurable objectives.
- Comprehensive and inclusive treatment of scientific evidence.
- Use information relevant to the management unit, ecosystem type, or ecological issue of interest.
- Clear articulation of the issue timeframe or planning horizon.
- A clear connection between the policy/management question, operational goals, scientific hypotheses, and findings/inference.
- Clear and transparent documentation and use of assumptions, conceptual graphical models, description of methods used, and presentation of summary conclusions.
- Logical and appropriate experimental design, standardized methods, rigorous specification of variables, all informed by conceptual model and expert knowledge.
- Proper documentation of data and analytical tools used in analyses and syntheses.
- Analyses identifying and describing assumptions and uncertainties in the data quantify relationships between the target species, habitat, and potential environmental stressors.
- Data engaged in support of the agency determination are presented in spatially explicit context and format.

- Enables understanding of likely environmental consequences of a proposed policy or management decisions.
- Recognizes limitations of data and knowledge gaps.
- Tools for handling uncertainty and disagreement, including adaptive management and a need to revisit conclusions to address limitations and uncertainties.
- Peer review ensures quality and collects and analyzes information appropriately via scientific methods.

SVRA resource staff include documentation demonstrating how they applied the guidelines with their draft WHPP upon review by OHMVR and Natural Resource Divisions. The review team then used the guidelines as review criteria to make this determination.

## WHPP Public Comment Requirements

SB 249 includes specific requirements to ensure that the public reviews these plans, provides written comments, and attends public meetings. The corresponding statutory requirements consist of the following:

**PRC §5090.32 (m)** Post on the Department’s Internet website all plans, reports, and studies related to off-highway vehicle recreation developed by the Division.

**PRC §5090.39 (a)(2)** All standards, plans, and monitoring programs subject to paragraph (1) shall provide opportunities for public comment, including, but not limited to, written comments and public meetings, as appropriate.

Each SVRA will allow the public to review and provide written comments on their 2021 WHPPs. SVRAs will:

- Provide notice to the public of a 30-day public review and comment period.
- Make the draft publicly available during the public comment period on State Park’s OHMVR Division webpage.
- Include one public meeting to present and receive feedback on draft WHPPs.
- Provide the notice to all known stakeholders and interest groups interested in the 2021 WHPP (e.g., interested persons, conservation groups, adjacent landowners, OHV organizations).
- Within the 30-day public comment period, present the WHPP at an OHV Commission meeting.
- Once the draft WHPP is adopted, post the final document, public comments, and responses to public comments on the respective State Park SVRA webpage.

# Appendix C: Restoration Projects and Law Enforcement Grants funded from 2016/2017 through the 2019/2020 Grant Cycles

## Bureau of Land Management

### BLM - ARCATA FIELD OFFICE

- Active restoration of unauthorized OHV use of nearly two miles of native plant enclosures. Other activities included monitoring, installing fencing and barriers, and scientific and cultural studies. The amount awarded for this project was \$94,000.
- Active restoration and monitoring of approximately two acres of native plant enclosure within the open riding area of Samoa Dunes Recreation Area. Activities included pulling invasive plant species within the native plant enclosure. The amount awarded for this project was \$12,000.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$106,000.

### BLM - BAKERSFIELD FIELD OFFICE

- Close approximately 285 acres of OHV routes within the Bakersfield Field Office jurisdiction. The project included signing and limited monitoring. The total amount awarded was \$66,179.

### BLM - BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE

- Active restoration of approximately 500 acres of unauthorized OHV use in the West Mojave (WEMO) and Northern and Eastern Mojave (NEMO) areas contains 1,335 miles of open OHV routes (528 miles of WEMO and 807 miles of NEMO lands). Monitoring, sign installation, and fencing or barrier installation will also be completed. The amount awarded for this project was \$578,468.
- Restoration planning for designated OHV Recreation Areas of Razor Road, Johnson Valley, Stoddard Valley, and Dumont Dunes Areas. Provide three reports consisting of a biological and environmental condition assessment and a summary cultural resources report to find the location and priority of future restoration and provide clearance for any restoration work to be done in the future. The amount awarded for this project was \$455,000.
- Install fencing, signage, monitoring, barrier construction, and restoration groundwork

such as revegetation, mulching, and earth recontouring in the Coolgardie, Kramer Hills, Harper Lake, and Iron Mountain areas. The amount awarded for this project was \$741,413.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$1,774,881.

### **BLM - BISHOP FIELD OFFICE**

- BLM office-wide OHV Restoration Activities include active restoration of unauthorized OHV use, monitoring, signage, fencing and barriers, and public outreach. The total amount awarded was \$306,667.

### **BLM - EAGLE LAKE FIELD OFFICE**

- OHV route removal, monitoring, fencing, and signing in Tunnison Wild Scenic Area (WSA), Skeddadle WSA, and Fort Sage OHV Area. The amount awarded for this project was \$375,500.
- WSA restoration and signing. The amount awarded for this project was \$116,720.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$492,220.

### **BLM - EL CENTRO FIELD OFFICE**

- Install and maintain signs in the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area to protect the Peirson's Milk Vetch critical habitat. The total amount awarded was \$771,500.

### **BLM - REDDING FIELD OFFICE**

- Restoration projects. The total amount awarded was \$183,050.

### **BLM - RIDGECREST FIELD OFFICE**

- Active restoration of unauthorized OHV use in seven to ten acres of trails and roads in Santa Rosa Flats, Saline Valley, Talc City Hills, and Red Mountain Subregion. Monitoring, signage, fencing or barriers, and public outreach. The amount awarded for this project was \$665,040.
- Restoration work of unauthorized OHV use in Panamint Valley, Santa Rosa Flats, Saline Valley, Talc City Hills, and Red Mountain Subregions, office-wide monitoring, signage, fencing or barriers, and public outreach. The amount awarded for this project was \$596,444.
- Vertical mulching, monitoring, erosion control structures, maintaining barriers, and installing signage in the Red Mountain, Coso Mountain, and Darwin Falls areas of the BLM Ridgecrest Field Office. The amount awarded for this project was \$606,467.



- Restore and camouflage designated closed OHV routes in the limited use areas. The project includes erosion control, barriers, signing, photo documentation, and data collection in the areas within the Red Mountain Sub-Region, Piper Mountains, Sylvania Mountains, Inyo Mountains, White Mountains, the Great Fall Basin, Bright Star, and Malpais Mesa wildernesses and restoration of sites that border wilderness, where there is a multiple-use interface, and are within the Desert Wildlife Management Areas. The amount awarded for this project was \$706,613.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$2,574,564.

### **BLM - UKIAH FIELD OFFICE**

- Active restoration of approximately 22 acres. Passive restoration of approximately 35 acres, monitoring incursions, installing signage, fencing, or barriers. The total amount awarded was \$1,392,131.

**2016-2019 BLM Restoration Projects Total Awarded \$7,667,192**

## **United States Forest Service**

### **USFS - CLEVELAND NATIONAL FOREST**

- This project has two phases. The first phase is to conduct an environmental analysis. The second phase includes earthwork, like chunking, ripping, water bar installation, barrier installation, and signage in the Laguna Place of the Descanso Ranger District. The amount awarded for this project was \$185,880.
- Install pipe-rail barriers, signage, and restoration groundwork, including extreme surface roughening, installing water bars on closed routes, and breaking up compacted soils. The amount awarded for this project was \$837,200.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$1,023,080.

### **USFS - ELDORADO NATIONAL FOREST**

- This project includes the scientific study of the interaction of California red-legged frogs and OHVs on the Rock Creek Trail. The amount awarded for this project was \$72,279.
- This project includes signing, barriers, active restoration, and trail obliteration throughout the Eldorado National Forest. The amount awarded for this project was \$139,628.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$211,907.

## **USFS - INYO NATIONAL FOREST**

- Forest-wide OHV restoration activities include active restoration of unauthorized OHV use, monitoring, signage, fencing or barriers, public outreach, and restoration planning. The total amount awarded was \$192,154.

## **USFS - LAKE TAHOE BASIN MANAGEMENT UNIT**

- Closure and restoration of unauthorized OHV routes. The total amount awarded was \$221,580.

## **USFS - LOS PADRES NATIONAL FOREST**

- Restore natural resource systems open for OHV and motorized use on approximately 15 miles of roads and OHV trails closed to motorized use. Staff will monitor and install signage and fencing, and barriers. The total amount awarded was \$174,420.

## **USFS - MENDOCINO NATIONAL FOREST**

- Active restoration of approximately 15 miles of roads on Leech Lake Road. Staff will remove about 31 culverts, monitor, install signage and fencing or barriers, and update kiosk and educational signage. The total amount awarded was \$414,000.

## **USFS - MODOC NATIONAL FOREST**

- Conduct an environmental analysis, decommission roads, treat noxious weeds, and restore streams and meadows in the Bald Mountain area. The amount awarded for this project was \$668,679.
- Conduct an environmental analysis, surface scarification, barrier installation, and restoration monitoring. The amount awarded for this project was \$198,730.
- Study on the effects of OHV recreation on cultural properties. The amount awarded for this project was \$210,005.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$1,077,414.

## **USFS - PLUMAS NATIONAL FOREST**

- Closure and obliteration of unauthorized non-system routes. The amount awarded for this project was \$101,338.
- Conduct an environmental analysis, decommission roads, and remove unauthorized OHV routes. The amount awarded for this project was \$72,510.
- Close unauthorized OHV routes, install signs and barriers, and patrol. The amount awarded for this project was \$50,344.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$224,192.

## **USFS - SAN BERNARDINO NATIONAL FOREST**

- Protect existing restoration sites and active restoration of 16 acres in Deep Creek Roadless Area, Coxey Roadless Area, Rattlesnake Mountain Restoration Area, Horse Springs OHV Campground, Holcomb I, Holcomb II, Air Curtain Site, Cienega Redonda/Cienega Larga, Miller Canyon Unauthorized Staging Area Restoration, Summit Unauthorized Staging Area Restoration, 2N47 Unauthorized Staging Area Restoration and Delta Way. Activities include site decompaction and erosion control, seed collection and propagation, sow seed and outplant, invasive weed removal, restoration maintenance, monitoring, mapping, barrier placement, and signing. The amount awarded for this project was \$862,885.
- Monitor and maintain existing restoration sites and restore new areas by seeding, plant propagation and out-planting, barrier placement, kiosk, and signage installation. The amount awarded for this project was \$817,253.
- This project has two phases for Holcomb Valley in Mountaintop Ranger District. The first phase is conducting an environmental review. The second phase includes restoring three acres, including seeding, slashing, raking, heavy mechanized chunking and ripping, watercourse and meadow restoration, barrier installation, kiosk, and signage installation. The amount awarded for this project was \$35,834.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$1,715,972.

## **USFS - SEQUOIA NATIONAL FOREST**

- Conduct an environmental review, active restoration on five to ten acres within the Kern River Ranger District, Hume Lake, Western Divide Ranger Districts, monitoring, signing, and public outreach. The total amount awarded was \$424,086.

## **USFS - SHASTA-TRINITY NATIONAL FOREST**

- Within the Parks-Eddy Project Area: Decommission approximately 20 miles of system roads. In addition, staff may decommission about one mile of unauthorized roads once they complete the assessment. Within the South Fork Project Area, prevent access to meadows/wetlands and the Castle Crags Wilderness Area, decommission roads and stabilize streambanks. Like Parks-Eddy, staff may decommission about ten miles of OHV routes within this project area. Monitoring will be completed, along with signage and barrier installation. The total amount awarded was \$380,025.

## **USFS - STANISLAUS NATIONAL FOREST**

- This project includes five acres of active restoration, signing, fencing, monitoring, and public outreach within the Stanislaus National Forest. The total amount awarded was \$279,044.

## **USFS - TAHOE NATIONAL FOREST**

- Barrier and restoration of non-system OHV Routes. The amount awarded for this project was \$371,570.
- Study on the impact of over-snow vehicles on the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog. The amount awarded for this project was \$87,060.
- Conduct an environmental review and obliterate 30 miles of unauthorized OHV routes. The amount awarded for this project was \$145,995.
- Environmental review and monitoring, install barriers and restore unauthorized OHV routes. The amount awarded for this project was \$308,375.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$913,000.

**2016-2019 USFS Restoration Total Awarded \$7,250,874**

## **National Parks Service**

### **DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK NATIONAL PARK**

- Conduct an environmental review along with restoration planning. The project includes restoring three to five miles of damaged OHV tracks within line of sight of the road across five hotspot zones, monitoring, signage and barrier installation, and public outreach. The amount awarded for this project was \$498,000.
- Conduct an environmental analysis and install barriers and signage. Restoration groundwork includes raking, vertical mulching, disguising user-created trails to the line of sight, and planting native vegetation. The amount awarded for this project was \$411,380.
- The total amount awarded for projects was \$909,380.

### **JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK**

- Restoration planning - Create an OHV Restoration Plan with treatment specifications, a routine patrol plan for law enforcement, and written outreach strategies. The amount awarded for this project was \$126,778.
- OHV-related restoration within the jurisdiction of the Joshua Tree National Park. Staff will install fencing and signage and conduct restoration groundwork such as revegetation, vertical mulch, decompaction of tracks, etc. The amount awarded for this project was \$299,250.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$426,028.

**2016-2019 National Park Service Restoration Total Awarded \$1,335,408**

## County

### EL DORADO COUNTY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

- Monitoring, fencing, and restoration work along the Rubicon River. The amount awarded for this project was \$41,395.
- Patrolling, monitoring, and restoration activities along the Sacramento Placerville Transportation Corridor. The amount awarded for this project was \$39,032.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$80,427.

### RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN-SPACE DISTRICT

- Kabian Park restoration project. The total amount awarded was \$395,000.

## Stanislaus County Parks and Recreation Department

- Identify areas to close for restoration within Frank Raines Regional OHV Park, active restoration, installing signs, and monitoring. The total amount awarded was \$90,000.

**2016-2019 County Restoration Grant Total Awarded \$565,427.**

## Districts

### TRINITY COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

- Decommission 4.75 miles of USFS trails, invasive plant species surveys along 25 miles of USFS trails in the Hayfork Creek watershed, installation of signage or physical barriers as appropriate, planting native grass, recontouring or reshaping of banks, and project effectiveness monitoring. The total amount awarded was \$286,666.

### WESTERN SHASTA RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

- Survey for invasive plant populations and evaluate locations for power wash stations. The total amount awarded was \$104,012.

**2016-2019 District Restoration Grant Total Awarded \$390,678.**

## Other Local Entities

### BACK COUNTRY LAND TRUST

- Active restoration of unauthorized OHV use of about 15 acres in Clover Flat. Staff will monitor and install signage and barriers. The total amount awarded was \$146,817.

## **CENTER FOR SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVATION**

- Restoration projects. The total amount awarded was \$604,062.

**2016-2019 Other Local Entities Restoration Grant Total Awarded \$1,176,051.**

## **Nonprofits**

### **DESERT TORTOISE PRESERVE COMMITTEE INC.**

- Restore 4,600 acres of conservation land with unauthorized OHV routes adjacent to Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area, monitoring, signage, fencing, and surveying of Project area. The amount awarded for this project was \$126,180.
- Install fencing along the northern boundary of approximately 300 acres of land adjacent to the western border of the Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area, including sign and marker installation. The amount awarded for this project was \$16,937.
- Install fencing along 600 acres adjacent to the west boundary of the Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area, camouflage-restoration of unauthorized routes, sign, and marker installation. The amount awarded for this project was \$54,865.
- Install fencing along the 330 acres of land next to the southern boundary of Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area, camouflage restoration of unauthorized routes, signing, and marker installation. The amount awarded for this project was \$62,596.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$260,578.

### **FARMWORKER INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INC. (FIELD)**

- Conduct an environmental analysis, restore unauthorized OHV routes, install fencing, and monitor 165 acres of Golden Hills Nature Park. The amount awarded for this project was \$573,203.
- Restore closed OHV routes, install fencing and signs, and mitigate erosion on 116 acres in the Upper Middle Knob OHV region within BLM Ridgecrest. The amount awarded for this project was \$410,017.
- Restore closed OHV routes, stabilize terrain, install fencing, and mitigate erosion on 500 acres within BLM Palm Springs. The amount awarded for this project was \$338,828.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$1,322,048.

### **FRIENDS OF EL MIRAGE**

- Restoration planning and active restoration of about 50 acres of trails and roads in

the 36,000 acre El Mirage subregion. Activities include monitoring, installing signs and fencing or barriers, and public outreach. The total amount awarded was \$1,197,632.

## **FRIENDS OF JAWBONE**

- Active restoration of unauthorized OHV use within the Middle Knob Subregion. Activities include monitoring, installing signs and fencing or barriers, and public outreach. The amount awarded for this project was \$1,287,302.
- Active restoration of unauthorized OHV use of approximately 50 Acres of linear disturbances in the El Pass Mountains Subregion. Activities include monitoring, installing signs and fencing or barriers, and public outreach. The amount awarded for this project was \$1,025,604.
- Restoration activities on the designated closed trails in the Northern and Southern Jawbone Subregion, EP 15 in the El Paso Subregion, and polygons RM29, RM40, RM41, RM42, RM61, and RM 62 in the Rands Subregion within the jurisdiction of the BLM Ridgecrest Field Office. Activities include monitoring, installing signs and fencing or barriers, and ripping. The amount awarded for this project was \$901,041.
- Restoration activities on the designated closed trails in the northwestern section of the greater Jawbone region. Activities included ripping, barriers, fencing, signage and monitoring, data collection, and photo documentation of restoration efforts. The amount awarded for this project was \$872,901.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$4,086,848.

## **PACIFIC COAST CONSERVATION ALLIANCE**

- Scientific research study collecting the occurrence and breeding data on a suite of wildlife species, primarily birds and bats, in proximity to OHV use. The primary focus of this study takes place in the Eastern Portion of Kern County. The amount awarded for this project was \$196,470.
- Research activities in the Jawbone-Butterbrecht Area of Critical Environmental Concern within the BLM Ridgecrest Field Office jurisdiction. This project investigates the status of nesting raptors (eagles, hawks, and owls) and bat populations within the designated area(s). The amount awarded for this project was \$64,685.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$261,155.

## **POST WILDFIRE OHV RECOVERY ALLIANCE**

- Active restoration of unauthorized OHV use of about four acres of decommissioned trails in the Saint John's Mountain area. Activities include installing signage and barriers and public outreach. The total amount awarded was \$36,800.

## **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA MOUNTAINS FOUNDATION**

- 40-acres of restoration work in the San Jacinto, Mountaintop, and Front Country Ranger Districts of the San Bernardino National Forest. Activities include chunking/ripping, mulching/camouflage/rock scattering, plant propagation, planting, seeding, land stabilization, barrier placement, erosion control, monitoring, and signage placement. The amount awarded for this project was \$1,032,560.
- Restoration will be Forest-wide with additional focused restoration in Rattlesnake Canyon, Baldy Mesa - East, Bee Canyon, and Cleghorn Ridge. Activities include maintaining existing restoration sites, repairing new ones, monitoring, installing barriers or fencing, signage, and groundwork for chunking, slashing, mulching, seeding, and planting. The amount awarded for this project was \$985,704.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$2,018,264.

## **THE WATERSHED RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTER**

- Conduct an environmental analysis, restoration implementation activities, erosion control, re-seeding of unauthorized OHV routes, monitoring restoration activity effectiveness, installing barriers, disguising unauthorized routes with slash and boulders, and installing signage identifying unauthorized OHV-use as well as designated OHV routes. The total amount awarded was \$94,990.

## **TRANSITION HABITAT CONSERVANCY**

- Complete at least 150 unique restoration sites consisting of closed routes, incursion, and newly created cross-country tracks within 13 identified management polygons, encompassing 23,040 acres of roadless habitat bounded by legal, designated OHV routes. Activities include installing signs and barriers, patrols, and public outreach. The amount awarded for this project was \$282,142.
- OHV-related restoration activities within the Fremont-Kramer and Black Mountain subregions in the jurisdiction of BLM Barstow Field Office. Activities include installing barriers and signs, kiosks, post and cable fencing, vertical mulching, raking, and monitoring. The amount awarded for this project was \$344,609.

The total amount awarded for projects was \$626,751.

## **URBAN CORPS OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY**

- Conduct an environmental analysis and active restoration of approximately 3.5 acres of open space in Wright's Field Ecological Reserve. Activities include monitoring, installing signs and fencing or barriers, and public outreach. The amount awarded for this project was \$106,741.
- OHV-related restoration project of critical wildland habitat in the Clover Flat area of



La Posta Preserve. Conduct an environmental analysis, install fencing and signage, and the groundwork to include planting, camouflaging unauthorized OHV routes, and implementing erosion control methods. The amount awarded for this project was \$173,237.

The total amount awarded was \$279,978.

**2016-2019 Nonprofit Restoration Grant Total Awarded \$11,507,912.**

**Law Enforcement Grants**

2016-2019 Law Enforcement Grant awards

Applicant	Total Award
Alameda County Sheriff's Office	\$79,046
Alpine County Sheriff's Office	\$72,980
Amador County Sheriff's Office	\$48,459
Butte County Sheriff's Office	\$98,640
Calaveras County Sheriff's Department	\$275,683
City of California City	\$429,097
City of Fresno Police Department	\$79,409
City of Hesperia Police Department	\$99,377
City of Sacramento Police Department	\$96,252
Colusa County Sheriff's Office	\$85,926
El Dorado County Sheriff's Office	\$415,104
Fort Bragg Police Department	\$16,744
Fresno County Sheriff's Office	\$354,165
Humboldt County Sheriff's Office	\$160,030
Imperial County Sheriff's Office	\$820,644
Inyo County Sheriff's Department	\$189,967
Kern County Sheriff's Office	\$715,216
Lake County Sheriff's Office	\$109,159
Lassen County Sheriff's Department	\$138,773
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department	\$580,258

Applicant	Total Award
Los Angeles Police Department Traffic Division Off Road Unit	\$300,453
Madera County Sheriff's Office	\$305,182
Mammoth Lakes Police Department	\$23,832
Modoc County Sheriff's Office	\$62,670
Mono County Sheriff's Department	\$162,406
Napa County Sheriff's Office	\$95,875
Nevada County Sheriff's Office	\$101,384
Placer County Sheriff's Office	\$331,662
Plumas County Sheriff's Office	\$195,690
Ridgecrest Police Department	\$98,005
Riverside County Sheriff's Department	\$374,686
Sacramento County Regional Parks	\$39,494
San Benito County Sheriff's Office	\$24,584
San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department	\$1,012,432
San Diego County Sheriff's Department	\$201,920
San Diego Police Department	\$36,484
San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department	\$203,208
Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office	\$263,321
Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department	\$262,761
Sierra County Sheriff's Office	\$61,843
Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department	\$516,062
Town of Truckee Police Department	\$13,559
Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office	\$246,362
Ventura County Sheriff's Department	\$166,911
Yolo County Sheriff's Office	\$343,385
Yucca Valley Police Department	\$10,897
<b>2016-2019 Total Local Law Enforcement Grants</b>	<b>\$10,320,000</b>

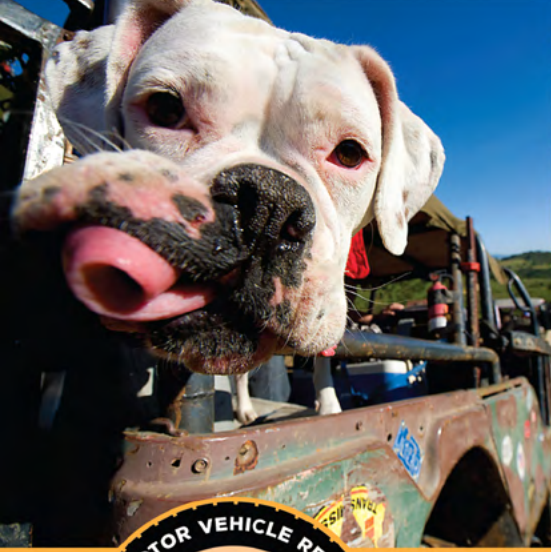
# Appendix D: In-Lieu Fee Allocation of OHV License Fees

Source: State Controller's Office Division of Accounting and Reporting

Allocation of OHV License Fee from 2008 to July 2021

COUNTY	AMOUNT
Alameda	\$206,050
Alpine	\$57,771
Amador	\$76,164
Butte	\$159,968
Calaveras	\$48,467
Colusa	\$675,752
Del Norte	\$3,226
El Dorado	\$1,107,072
Fresno	\$143,321
Glenn	\$4,752
Humboldt	\$34,711
Imperial	\$8,014,668
Inyo	\$10,328
Kern	\$2,108,062
Lake	\$47,607
Lassen	\$296,204
Los Angeles	\$2,281,128
Modoc	\$8,132
Mono	\$277,579
Napa	\$226,438
Nevada	\$510,582
Orange	\$235,319
Placer	\$458,716

COUNTY	AMOUNT
Plumas	\$988,247
Riverside	\$1,543,067
Sacramento	\$117,458
San Benito	\$1,633,008
San Bernardino	\$4,651,495
San Diego	\$826,306
San Joaquin	\$263,474
San Luis Obispo	\$2,325,630
Santa Barbara	\$9,029
Santa Clara	\$282,355
Shasta	\$484,488
Sierra	\$309
Siskiyou	\$211,683
Solano	\$34,026
Stanislaus	\$28,591
Tehama	\$55,169
Trinity	\$135,946
Tulare	\$147,631
Tuolumne	\$321,458
Ventura	\$1,016,059
Yolo	\$8,607
Yuba	\$112,276
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$32,188,328</b>



## CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF OHV RECREATION IN CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS



### CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

Armando Quintero  
Director, California State Parks

Liz McGuirk  
Chief Deputy Director, California State Parks

Sarah Miggins  
Deputy Director, Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division

Callan McLaughlin  
Chief, Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division