



OFF-ROAD BUSINESS ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY—SECOND QUARTER 2008

Off-Road Business Association

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2008 ORBA SUPERSHOW

The ORBA SuperShow's February debut at the Del Mar Fairgrounds definitely was a success all around. Exhibitors and attendees expressed their pleasure with the facility, the layout, and the overall venue.

The grandstands were packed for each of the exciting TrophyKart races. This race was something new to off-road shows and definitely proved to be popular. The freestyle demo, the fashion shows, the Show and Shine, the TrophyKart giveaway and the opportunity to demo KTM motorcycles on the track certainly added to the success and enjoyment of the show.

Del Mar shared that the ORBA SuperShow was one of their best attended shows for this past year. They were most impressed with the fact that the average time spent at the show was double the time of their other events.



TrophyKart getting some air

CALIF. SB 742

Off Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation reauthorization changes the makeup of the Commission

As some of you may already know the recent passage and sign-

ing into law of Senate Bill (SB) 742 dramatically changed the face of the commission that was in charge of that program. SB 742 added two new appointments for the Governor, bringing the total appointments for the Governor to five. The heads of the Assembly and Senate still have two appointments each. More significantly, SB 742 took away OHV Grant approval authority from the OHV Commission and made it advisory only. These changes were made in response to the diversion of almost all of the OHV grants away from traditional operations & maintenance grants to grants that closed areas or restored closed areas.

Don't forget this year's ORBA Sacramento Lobby Day, April 27 and 28! Make your reservations ASAP! For details go to: http://www.orba.biz/lobby_day.pdf

SB-742 not only made changes in the OHV Commission makeup and number, it was required to reauthorize the entire OHV program due to a sunset clause that would have otherwise ended the program at the end of 2007. So, not only was the OHV program extended with SB 742, significant reforms were incorporated to eliminate the fiduciary malfeasance that had been occurring under the OHV Commission.

In recent years there has been less than \$300,000 allocated for on-the-ground projects out of \$18 million. All of the rest of the money went into restoration and conservation projects, and a minimal amount for law enforcement purposes. (*Do we know where the rest of the money went?*)

We were successful in negotiating a ten-year sunset, the longest in the history of the program, as well as increasing fund dollars and earmarking percentages for grant categories. Registration fees were basically doubled to raise more money, but 50% of the grant program is now dedicated to operations and maintenance-type grants to take care of OHV areas, 25% is allocated for conservation and res-

toration projects, 20% for law enforcement, and 5% for safety and education programs

Now that the new law has been signed the commissioners that were aligned with the environmental groups have resigned due to the fact that their subjective control over the allocated dollars to environmental programs has been removed. The commissioners that resigned are Hal Thomas, Judith Anderson and Paul Spitler. We are looking forward to new appointments and moving the program forward. ORBA, along with other OHV groups in the California League of Off-Road Voters, is working with the Governor's office as well as the President Pro Tem of the Senate and the Speaker of the Assembly to recommend applicants interested in being a member of the OHV Commission and working in a fair and objective manner to ensure a positive future for the California OHV program, as well as all California OHV enthusiasts and businesses.

JOHNSON VALLEY OHV AREA

It has been rumored for over a year now that the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC), located in Twentynine Palms, California, is considering expanding into the Johnson Valley OHV Area. Recently an unofficial copy of the Marine's proposal was posted on the AMA D37 website's bulletin board. The proposal contained four action alternatives; all four of those included expanding into a large portion of the highly prized OHV area. ORBA is working with local enthusiast organizations, the Bureau of Land Management and the Marines in an effort to maintain continued OHV recreation in this area. At the same time we understand the need and importance of proper training facilities for the military, especially during a time of war. An official statement from the MCAGCC was released on March 12, 2008 urging patience while the process of figuring out what land the base might actually need to meet the Marine Corps training requirements. If you

would like to see the Marine's press release and ORBA's press release about Johnson Valley OHV Area please visit our website.

GEOTHERMAL NEWS

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) owns a number of parcels within the Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area (OWSVRA) in the southern California desert. Recently they have decided to allow the leasing of some of those parcels for geothermal exploration and possible development. ORBA is working with State Parks employees, the BLM and the geothermal development companies trying to reduce the impact these facilities could have on OHV recreation.

In addition to the parcels that the BLM has chosen to lease for geothermal exploration, State Parks has also granted a right-of-way permit to Icelandic America Energy, Inc. to drill a test geothermal well on a parcel they own. Construction of the test well is now complete and the testing of the actual geothermal resource is ongoing. The permit given to this company expires March 30, 2008 and all indications suggest that State Parks will approve an extension of the permit.

At a recent scoping meeting one of the anti-access folks referred to off-roaders as "recreational fossil fuel burners." Keeping that in mind and the fact that the BLM has a multiple-use mandate, the OHV community is best served by using the public process these renewable energy projects are required to complete to reduce the impact they will have on recreation. After all, it would be a public relations nightmare for the "recreational fossil fuel burners" to oppose renewable energy projects that could reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and help the environment.

OHV LEGISLATION UPDATE

Utah: There were several bills approved in Utah that ORBA supported, and one that failed. HB 291 addresses safety concerns and directs that riders under 16 be directly supervised by an adult when operating an OHV. SB 181 creates a limited street licensing program for

ATVs with restrictions on use in larger towns and a 45 mph speed limit on public roads. HB-362 would have lifted a cap on fuel sales tax transfer to the OHV fund and increased OHV funding, but this measure failed.

One interesting item was House Joint Resolution 010 telling Congress members from other states to stop proposing Wilderness bills in Utah. Too bad it is only a non-binding resolution!

Arizona: HB 2573—a bill that ORBA supports to create an OHV registration program to fund OHV management—was making good progress through the Arizona legislature and passed out of the House with a strong vote in favor of 43-13. But it quickly ran into problems in the Senate and failed a committee vote after a key supporter was not able to be there and vote for it. The bill isn't dead yet, and it still may be reconsidered.

Idaho: ORBA was involved in getting key amendments made to HB 365, a bill that requires all street licensed vehicles to be compliant with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS). While originally aimed at concerns with the current practice of allowing ATVs and UTVs to be street licensed, it would have also blocked dual sport conversions of dirt bikes. The bill was amended to allow continued owner conversions with a self-certification program to verify that the appropriate safety equipment and lighting has been added. Interestingly, while the bill was aimed at ATV concerns, the bill didn't change current state law language that allows ATVs to buy a license plate.

HB 602 is a bill that would create a new limited license plate for ATVs, UTVs, and dirt bikes to allow use on all county and city roads, but not state highways. This license plate would be in addition to the off-road sticker that is now required to ride on public land roads and trails. ORBA is working with the bill author to amend the language so that all dirt bikes don't have to mount a full size license plate. If bike owners want to ride on public highways, they already have an option to add

street equipment and get a street license plate.

Nevada: While the Nevada Legislature is not in session this year, ORBA is already working with key legislators to get a good OHV registration bill agreed to before the end of the year. ORBA's Land Use Director Bill Dart has attended two hearings held by the Nevada Legislature Public Lands Committee to talk about issues surrounding an OHV bill. OHV opponents have side-tracked and killed bills in the last two legislative sessions with amendments that would have eliminated any kind of OHV program or benefits to the OHV community.

OFF-ROAD IMPACT SHOW

The Advanstar Off-Road Impact Show has been hosting a day of seminars prior to the opening of the trade show itself, and this year Bill Dart was asked to speak to the group about land use issues and trends. While there are always more challenges than we would like to our right to recreate with our motorized toys, there are also positive trends as well, with a huge growth in the OHV Nation in the last two decades. With this, there has been a growth and maturing of organizations and they have better learned how to work with land managers through volunteer programs and collaborative programs. ORBA continues to work towards finding successful strategies and solutions to OHV issues that we can share with others.

NEW MEMBERS:

- TAG Motorsports
 - W.G. Justyn
 - Race401.com
 - Predator Motor Corporation
 - Dirt Alliance
 - Racing For Life Offroad Team
 - Tucker Rocky Distributing
 - Toyota of Escondido
 - Dirt Life Magazine/Sandy Valley Motocross
 - Fiberwerx Offroad Fiberglass/FX Fabrication
 - Ernie's Southern Offroad
 - Eagle Off Road Products
 - Full Tilt TrophyKarts
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