



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

## **2025 PROGRAM REPORT**

**January 2022 – December 2024**

# OFF-HIGHWAY MOTOR VEHICLE RECREATION COMMISSION

## 2025 PROGRAM REPORT

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### **Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission**

Roger Salazar, Chairperson

Edward Patrovsky, Vice Chairperson

Patricia Ureña

Diane Ross-Leech

Tom Lemmon

Tommy Randle

Shaun Flanigan

Nick Mueller

Kathleen "Kat" Anderson

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### **California State Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division**

Armando Quintero, State Parks Director

Liz McGuirk, State Parks Chief Deputy Director

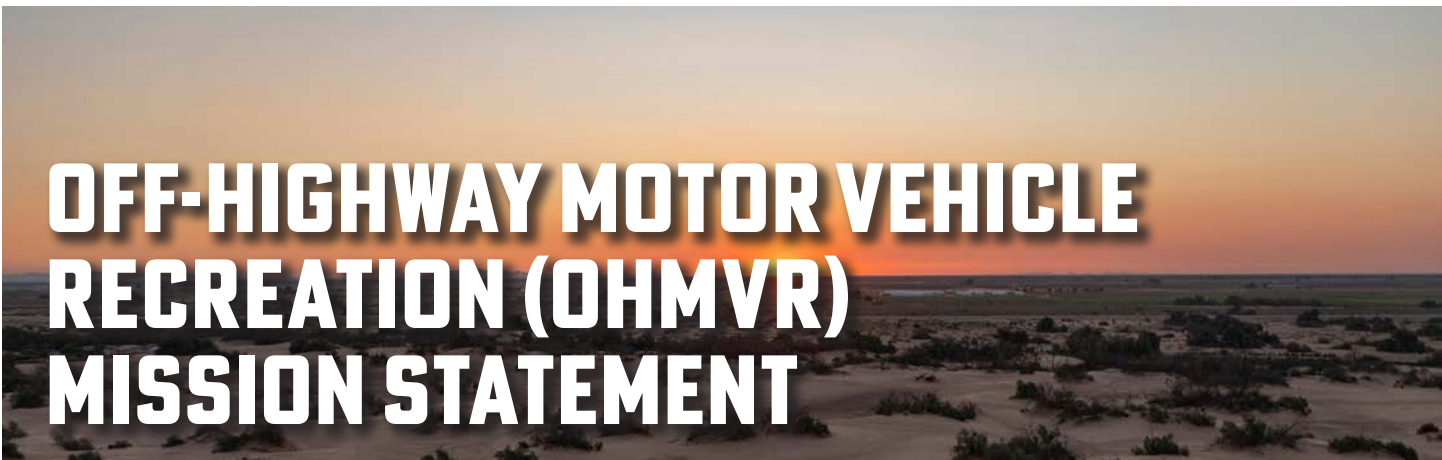
Sarah Miggins, Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Deputy Director

Callan McLaughlin, Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division Chief

A wide-angle landscape photograph of a mountain range in California. The foreground is filled with vibrant yellow and purple wildflowers. The middle ground shows rolling hills and valleys covered in green and brown vegetation. In the distance, a large valley opens up under a clear blue sky.

# 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.

A landscape photograph of a desert or semi-arid region. The foreground is a sandy, sparsely vegetated plain with small, dark shrubs. The background shows a vast, flat expanse under a clear, bright sky.

# OFF-HIGHWAY MOTOR VEHICLE RECREATION (OHMVR) MISSION STATEMENT

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.

A landscape photograph of a desert valley. The foreground is a field of yellow wildflowers. The middle ground shows rolling hills and mountains under a dramatic sky with large, dark clouds and patches of blue.

# 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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**The California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission Tour  
of Prairie City State Vehicular Recreation Area  
November 2023**

*Members of the [California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation \(OHMVR\) Commission](#), as well as State Parks Director Armando Quintero and OHMVR Division Deputy Director Sarah Miggins, toured Prairie City State Vehicular Recreation Area in advance of the commission’s final meeting of 2023. Joining the commissioners in exploring the 836-acre park were staff from the OHMVR Division, members from several Local Conservation Corps, representatives from Parks California Assemblymember Josh Hoover, representatives from the offices of Assemblymember Heath Flora and State Senator Roger Niello, and members of the public.*

# Abbreviations

| ACRONYM         | DESCRIPTION  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>4WD</b>      | 4-Wheel Drive  |
| <b>AB</b>       | Assembly Bill  |
| <b>ACEC</b>     | Area of Critical Environmental Concern                       |
| <b>ASCAR</b>    | Archaeological Site Condition Assessment Report              |
| <b>ATV</b>      | All-Terrain Vehicles   |
| <b>BLM</b>      | Bureau of Land Management                                    |
| <b>BMP</b>      | Biodiversity Management Plan                                 |
| <b>CAL FIRE</b> | California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection        |
| <b>Cal Poly</b> | California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo     |
| <b>CASSP</b>    | California Archaeological Site Stewardship Program           |
| <b>CDFA</b>     | California Department of Food and Agriculture                |
| <b>CDFW</b>     | California Department of Fish and Wildlife                   |
| <b>CDWR</b>     | California Department of Water Resources                     |
| <b>CEQA</b>     | California Environmental Quality Act                         |
| <b>CGS</b>      | California Geologic Survey                                   |
| <b>CHP</b>      | California Highway Patrol                                    |
| <b>CNPS</b>     | California Native Plant Society                              |
| <b>CSU</b>      | California State University                                  |
| <b>CVC</b>      | California Vehicle Code                                      |
| <b>EIS</b>      | Environmental Impact Statement                               |
| <b>EPA</b>      | Environmental Protection Agency                              |
| <b>FIELD</b>    | Farmworker Institute of Education and Leadership Development |
| <b>FTHL</b>     | Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard                                    |
| <b>GIS</b>      | Geographical Information System                              |
| <b>GPS</b>      | Global Positioning System                                    |

| ACRONYM               | DESCRIPTION                                      |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Grants Program</b> | OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program  |
| <b>HCP</b>            | Habitat Conservation Plan                        |
| <b>HMP</b>            | Habitat Management Program                       |
| <b>HMS</b>            | Habitat Monitoring System                        |
| <b>IBP</b>            | Institute for Bird Populations                   |
| <b>ICC</b>            | Interagency Coordinating Committee               |
| <b>ITP</b>            | Incidental Take Permit                           |
| <b>MEJA</b>           | <i>Mecinus janthinus</i> Weevil                  |
| <b>MOU</b>            | Memorandum of Understanding                      |
| <b>MSF</b>            | Motorcycle Safety Foundation                     |
| <b>NAHC</b>           | Native American Heritage Commission              |
| <b>NCCP</b>           | Natural Community Conservation Plan              |
| <b>NEPA</b>           | National Environmental Policy Act                |
| <b>NGMA</b>           | Native Grasslands Management Area                |
| <b>NPDES</b>          | National Pollution Discharge Elimination System  |
| <b>NPS</b>            | National Park Service                            |
| <b>NRD</b>            | Natural Resources Division                       |
| <b>NRHP</b>           | National Register of Historic Places             |
| <b>OHMVR</b>          | Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation             |
| <b>OHMVR Act</b>      | Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Act of 2003 |
| <b>OHV</b>            | Off-Highway Vehicle                              |
| <b>OSV</b>            | Over-Snow Vehicle                                |
| <b>PM10</b>           | Particulate Matter of 10 Microns or less         |
| <b>POST</b>           | Peace Officer Standards and Training             |
| <b>PRC</b>            | Public Resources Code                            |
| <b>RC</b>             | Radio Control                                    |

| <b>ACRONYM</b>       | <b>DESCRIPTION</b>                           |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>RMA</b>           | Resource Management Area                     |
| <b>RMP</b>           | Resource Management Plan                     |
| <b>RMU</b>           | Resource Management Unit                     |
| <b>ROV</b>           | Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle             |
| <b>RTP</b>           | Recreational Trails Program                  |
| <b>SB</b>            | Senate Bill                                  |
| <b>SHPO</b>          | State Historic Preservation Officer          |
| <b>Soil Standard</b> | Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines    |
| <b>SPPOs</b>         | State Park Peace Officers                    |
| <b>SPRF</b>          | State Park and Recreation Fund               |
| <b>State Parks</b>   | Department of Parks and Recreation           |
| <b>SUV</b>           | Sports Utility Vehicle                       |
| <b>SVRA</b>          | State Vehicular Recreation Area              |
| <b>SWMP</b>          | Storm Water Management Plan                  |
| <b>SWRCB</b>         | State Water Resources Control Board          |
| <b>TCRs</b>          | Tribal Cultural Resources                    |
| <b>The Law</b>       | Chappie-Z'berg Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Law |
| <b>USDA</b>          | United States Department of Agriculture      |
| <b>USFS</b>          | United States Forest Service                 |
| <b>USFWS</b>         | United States Fish and Wildlife Service      |
| <b>USGS</b>          | United States Geological Survey              |
| <b>USMC</b>          | The United States Marine Corps               |
| <b>WDRs</b>          | Waste Discharge Requirements                 |
| <b>WHPP</b>          | Wildlife Habitat Protection Program          |

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE OHMVR COMMISSION ROGER SALAZAR



It is an honor to introduce this OHMVR Commission Program Report which was authored by the dedicated staff of the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division and California State Parks.

As chairperson of the OHMVR Commission, it is my belief that it is the task of the Commission and the OHMVR Division to be committed to promoting, securing, and expanding safe and responsible access to off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation across California. After the pandemic that impacted our last triennial report, it has been wonderful for the Commission to get back to that task via in-person meetings, touring our great parks, and having meaningful interaction with the public about the future of off-road recreation in California.

This program report provides important information that reflects the work that has been completed during this three-year reporting period by the OHMVR Commission and Division, which has included hosting safety summits and brainstorming ways to keep everyone safe and sound out on the trails. It has also included work on the OHV Access Project, in which the Commission and Division seek to identify new opportunities for additional OHV facilities in California as mandated by Senate Bill 155 and working with the off-road community and other advocates to figure out ways to keep our parks open and expand existing opportunities.

I applaud California State Parks Director Armando Quintero, Chief Deputy Director Liz McGuirk, OHMVR Deputy Director Sarah Miggins, and OHMVR Division Chief Callan McLaughlin, along with the entire team at State Parks and the OHMVR Division, for doing the hard work of sustaining and protecting, on behalf of off-highway vehicle enthusiasts, the natural environment in the largest public OHV recreation system in the United States. Guided by public input, staff expertise, and partnerships with stakeholders, we remain committed to ensuring that OHV recreation evolves to meet the needs of diverse communities, promotes environmental stewardship, and supports equitable access for all Californians. I also applaud the efforts of the off-road community, whether individuals or groups and organizations that are concerned about overall access; because their concerns and voices play an important role in ensuring we keep focus on the fact that we are here to serve the public and promote opportunities so they and their families can enjoy the parks we oversee.

I take personal pride in the OHMVR Commission working to foster partnerships with off-road enthusiasts, who I believe are also passionate conservationists. We must recognize that the off-road community stands on the front lines of environmental stewardship, playing a vital role in protecting and maintaining trails—not just those under OHMVR jurisdiction, but across all public lands.

By embracing the ‘Tread Lightly’ philosophy—staying on designated trails, leaving no trace, and packing out what we pack in—off-road enthusiasts demonstrate a commitment to preserving the natural environment while enjoying it responsibly. The more our community members embrace their role as stewards of the land, the stronger the balance between environmental protection and the preservation of responsible off-roading will become. Our state vehicular recreation areas (SVRAs) exist for the users and visitors. Working together, we can set a lasting example of how outdoor recreation and conservation can thrive in harmony for generations to come.

This report also covers our progress with the OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program, which allows other agencies to implement OHV programs throughout the state. Expanding outreach and education about these grants and partnerships will make the OHMVR Program even stronger than it already is. The Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program also provides funds to protect our lands through improved law enforcement, public safety, education, restoration, and ground operations programs.

As a lifelong off-roader, California’s incredible off-highway motor vehicle recreation areas are not just places to explore; they are a part of who we are as a community, and I am committed to working with you to ensure they remain open and thriving for generations to come.

As you read this report, you’ll discover the many changes, challenges and opportunities we are addressing. The OHMVR Commission and Division are dedicated to tackling these issues transparently, using the OHV Trust Fund to support the sustainability of our trails and parks.

I encourage you to find ways to get involved—whether by volunteering, engaging with your community, or offering constructive input. Our success depends on collaboration and a shared commitment to learning about and supporting the state, federal, and local recreation areas that we all love.

On behalf of the OHMVR Commission and as your chairperson, I extend my deepest gratitude to the State Parks and OHMVR Division staff, our OHV partners, and volunteers who poured their time and dedication into creating this report. I hope it inspires you to get out there, enjoy our incredible SVRAs and other off-road trails, and continue to be stewards of these treasured lands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Salazar', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Roger Salazar**

*Commission Chair*

# MESSAGE FROM OHMVR DIVISION DEPUTY DIRECTOR SARAH MIGGINS



As we step into 2025, we are excited to release the triennial report covering January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2024. These past three years filled us with gratitude as we began to witness a recovery from the global COVID-19 pandemic. Our daily lives started regaining normalcy, with in-person OHMVR Commission meetings and public in-person tours of Mammoth Bar, Chappie Shasta Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Recreation Area, Prairie City State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA), Oceano Dunes SVRA, and Carnegie SVRA. The Commission also toured two major OHV events: King of the Hammers, the world's largest rock crawling race in Johnson Valley, and the annual Off-Road Expo in Pomona. The OHMVR Division also successfully organized three statewide safety summits, with plans to convene annually.

I acknowledge that our greatest strength lies in the people who work for and with California State Parks. Through our collaboration with the Commission and community, we remain dedicated to being leaders in off-highway (OHV) recreation. The role of the OHMVR Division as an environmental solution to OHV recreation is central to the ethos of State Parks.

In the last three years, we introduced various initiatives, including the implementation of the OHV Access Project which included a statewide outreach effort to gather input on existing SVRAs, State Recreation Areas, and public lands. This allowed members of the public and our federal land management partners to engage with both OHMVR and Strategic Planning and Recreational Services Division leadership, contributing ideas for expanding OHV facilities across the state. We eagerly anticipate the results of this effort and the subsequent plan development.

The OHMVR Division is proud to have increased cooperation with local conservation corps by embedding them in our SVRA operations, installing native plantings, collecting recyclables, flood control, and reducing hazardous fuels. The Grants Unit continues to fund organizations and public land agencies that utilize conservation corps crews on OHV projects. Finally, at the end of 2024, the Division met with the Greater Valley Conservation Corps to help members navigate CalCareers and conducted mock interviews as a training pipeline to careers in State Parks.

## The Best Route through 2028:

- Meeting statewide goals and ambitious targets to protect cultural and natural resources for future generations.
- Establishing partnerships that encourage outdoor access for all.

- Seeking new opportunities for OHV recreation by acquiring lands near urban and rural centers.
- Continuing to provide grants to multiple agencies, nonprofits, and organizations involved in managing and maintaining OHV recreation.
- Providing annual convening focused on OHV safety.

I am proud of our well-balanced program and exceptional team. I am confident the next three years will bring numerous possibilities that we will navigate with vision, leadership, and discipline. I extend my sincere thanks to the OHMVR Commission, Division, and California State Parks.

With gratitude,



## Sarah Miggins

Deputy Director  
OHMVR Division



## King of the Hammers Event in Johnson Valley, CA February 2024

State Parks, OHMVR staff, and Commission members visit the event. From left to right: Chief Interpreter Heather Holm, OHV Interpreter Kevin Schmidt, Interpreter I Michelle Claasen, Interpreter I Don Schmidt, Commissioner Nick Mueller, Commissioner Diane Ross-Leech, Commission Vice Chairperson Ed Patrovsky, Commission Chairperson Roger Salazar, Commissioner Kat Anderson, Commissioner Shaun Flanigan, Commissioner Tommy Randall, Chief Deputy Director Liz McGuirk, State Parks Director Armando Quintero and OHMVR Deputy Director Sarah Miggins.



# 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.

## Program Report

The Commission shall prepare and submit a Program Report to the Governor and appropriate policy and fiscal committees of each house of Legislature beginning 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 OHMVR Division. The Division facilitates the accommodation of off-highway vehicles (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 and program funding.
- Chapter 2 describes the OHMVR Division and state vehicular recreation areas (SVRAs) 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 public outreach, including interpretation and education.
- Chapter 6 discusses other relevant environmental issues that arose since the 2022 Program Report to meet Report Requirement 6.
- Chapter 7 provides an overview of the OHMVR over-snow vehicle program and winter recreation.



*OHMVR Division received a Conservation Partner award at the Southern California Mountains Foundation 30th Anniversary Celebration in Redlands, California - December 2023.*



# CHAPTER 1: OFF-HIGHWAY MOTOR VEHICLE RECREATION PROGRAM OVERVIEW

## Introduction

California State Parks' Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division is recognized as a national leader in managing off-highway vehicle (OHV) and over-snow vehicle (OSV) recreational opportunities. For over 50 years, the Division has 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 recreational opportunities where visitors can fully enjoy California's spectacular outdoors. The OHMVR Division prioritizes natural, cultural, and historic resource conservation and protection, upon which quality recreation ultimately depends. This commitment to balancing OHV recreation with the conservation and protection of natural resources is at the heart of the programs that OHMVRD implements across both state and non-state-owned lands.

The OHMVR Program (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. 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, certified conservation corps, and educational institutions. Along with SVRAs, OHV recreational opportunities on federal and other lands are an essential element of the Program and comprise approximately 80 percent of OHV recreation in California. This critical financial assistance enables these 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 \$800 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. The Program is supported entirely by user fees and taxes, with no direct General Fund support from the State of California. 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 access 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 participate in conservation projects in their favorite recreation areas.

In addition, the State of California also benefits financially from OHV/OSV recreation with millions of dollars generated from taxes and registration fees. Within California, cities and towns of all sizes also financially reap the benefits of year-round off-highway and over-snow recreation. In the fall of 2024, the OHMVR Division received a draft multi-year economic and demographic study conducted by the Sustainable Parks and Recreation Community Initiative in association with the Department of Recreation Administration at California State University, Fresno. *A Study of the Demographics and Economic Impacts of OHV/OSV Users in the State of California* reports data collected from OHV and OSV users of SVRAs, federal lands, including lands under the jurisdiction of the United States Forest Service’s Pacific Southwest Region 5 and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), as well as municipal and private OHV areas.

To estimate the economic impacts of OHV/OSV recreation in California, outputs from each sector were examined as inputs to other sectors of the economy. The resulting model estimates the economic impacts of OHV/OSV recreation in the state on the total value of economic transactions, value added, and employment. The model relied on median spending data as reported by OHV/OSV visitors to avoid the risk of inflating the numbers when using average expenditure figures.

Based on visitor spending data, collected during the 2022-2024 seasons, OHV/OSV recreational users in California:

- Generated a total of \$10 billion in economic output in the state;
- Supported over 58,000 jobs; and
- Generated over \$1.8 billion in tax revenues, including \$515 million in state tax revenues.

*Economic Impact of SVRAs: Visitor Spending*

| <b>Park Name/District</b>                    | <b>Total Impact<br/>(Direct, Indirect,<br/>Induced)</b> | <b>Jobs<br/>Created</b> | <b>Tax Revenue<br/>(Local/State/<br/>Federal)</b> |
|--|---|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Statewise OHV Impact</b>                  | <b>\$10 billion</b>                                     | <b>58,000</b>           | <b>\$1.8 million</b>                              |
| Carnegie (San Joaquin & Contiguous Counties) | \$39 million  | 260                     | \$7 million                                       |
| Clay Pit (Butte & Contiguous Counties)       | \$30 million  | 200                     | \$7 million                                       |
| Heber Dunes (Imperial & Contiguous Counties) | \$18 million  | 130                     | \$3 million                                       |

| Park Name/District  | Total Impact<br>(Direct, Indirect,<br>Induced) | Jobs<br>Created | Tax Revenue<br>(Local/State/<br>Federal) |
|---|--|-----------------|--|
| Hollister Hills (San Benito & Contiguous Counties)              | \$49 million                                   | 360             | \$8 million                              |
| Hungry Valley (Los Angeles & Contiguous Counties)               | \$117 million                                  | 676             | \$20 million                             |
| Oceano Dunes (San Luis Obispo & Contiguous Counties)            | \$379 million                                  | 2,600           | \$63 million                             |
| Ocotillo Wells (San Diego & Contiguous Counties)                | \$800 million                                  | 500             | \$140 million                            |
| Prairie City (Sacramento & Contiguous Counties)                 | \$59 million                                   | 385             | \$9 million                              |
| Mammoth Bar-Auburn SRA<br>(Placer & Contiguous Counties)        | \$7.2 million                                  | 48              | \$1.2 million                            |
| Red Rock Canyon State Park<br>(Kern & Contiguous Counties)      | \$11 million                                   | 73              | \$1.9 million                            |
| Jasper Sears OHV San Luis SRA<br>(Merced & Contiguous Counties) | \$2.8 million                                  | 20              | \$476 thousand                           |

## California OHV History and Legislation

The rise in popularity of OHV recreation in the 1950s and 1960s created the desire for a wide range of recreational opportunities across California's diverse landscape. Unfortunately, there were few OHV areas available to the public. Problems arose from some OHV enthusiasts operating their vehicles in unauthorized areas. In addition, unmanaged OHV recreation created the potential for erosion, affected wildlife and habitat, and created noise, water, and air quality concerns. At times, conflicts arose between OHV recreationists and non-users. Because of the widespread public interest and concerns about OHV recreation, state legislators Gene Chappie (a rancher, 4-wheel drive, and snowmobile enthusiast) and Ed Z'berg (a more progressive legislator from an urban area known for his work on environmental issues) drafted bipartisan legislation to balance the demand for OHV recreation with the need to protect resources.

In 1971, the state legislature passed the Chappie-Z'berg Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Act, and on December 22, 1971, Governor Ronald Reagan signed it into law. It was the first significant legislation to affect OHV recreation in California. It made changes to the California Revenue & Taxation Code and the Vehicle Code, defined what an OHV was, created an OHV identification/registration sticker that cost \$15 and required adequate mufflers, and began establishing a sound level standard for new OHVs, all critical issues at the time. Subsequent bills, some authored by Chappie, would establish a dedicated funding source using a portion of gasoline tax collected and protected in a

trust fund, which created the OHMVR Division and its Division Chief, the OHMVR Commission, an extensive grants program, several safety standards and laws, and provided for the development and expansion of appropriate areas for managed and sustainable OHV recreation.

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 with the enactment of 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 within 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 Darrell Steinberg and co-authored by Assembly Member Lois 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 largest extension in the Program’s history. The bill received strong bipartisan support from the California Assembly and Senate as it passed through the Legislature by a vote of 114-5.

In 2017, Senator Benjamin Allen introduced SB 249 that revised various provisions of the OHMVR 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 requirements to:

- 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.

*OHMVR Commission members met in July 2024 in San Diego. During the meeting, commissioners were briefed on wildfire recovery efforts after the Post Fire affected Hungry Valley SVRA the month prior.*

*From left to right: Kat Anderson, Pat Ureña, Nick Mueller, Chairperson Roger Salazar, Vice Chairperson Ed Patrovsky, Tommy Randall, Diane Ross-Leech and Tom Lemmon.*



- Update the 2008 Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines (Soil Standard) to establish a generic and measurable soil conservation standard by December 31, 2020, and review and update that standard when deemed necessary.
- 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.
- Take other specified measures to protect natural and cultural resources within SVRAs.

The bill 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 Jerry Brown signed the bill into law on October 3, 2017, Chapter 459, Statutes of 2017. The bill extended the provisions of the OHMVR Act indefinitely.

## Program Goals

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

- 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.
- New off-highway motor vehicle recreational areas, facilities, and opportunities should be provided and managed under this chapter to sustain long-term use.
- The Department should support motorized recreation and motorized off-highway access to non-motorized recreation.
- 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.
- Prompt and effective implementation of the OHMVR Program by the Department and the Division should have equal priority among other programs in the Department.
- 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.

## OHMVR Commission

The OHMVR Act established the OHMVR 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 OHMVR Program implementation, encouraging public input on issues and concerns affecting the Program, considering and approving general plans for SVRAs, and providing advice to the OHMVR Division.

## OHMVR Commission Duties and Responsibilities

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

- To be fully informed regarding all governmental activities affecting the Program.
- To meet at least four times per year at various locations throughout the state to receive comments on the Program's implementation and establish an annual calendar of proposed meetings at the beginning of each calendar year.
- Before beginning each Grant Program cycle, to include a public meeting to collect public input concerning the program, recommendations for program improvements, and specific project needs for the system.
- To 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, to 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 and recommend to the Division suitable measures to prevent any adverse effects and suitable measures for restoration of the property.
- To review and comment annually to the State Parks Director on the proposed budget of OHV Trust Fund expenditures.
- To review all plans for new and expanded local and regional vehicle recreation areas that have applied for grant funds.
- To review and comment on strategic plans periodically developed by the Division.
- Every three years, to prepare and submit a program report to the Governor and the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of each house of the Legislature.
- To make other recommendations to the deputy director regarding the OHMVR program.



### OHMVR Commission

*From left to right: Nick Mueller, Shaun Flanigan, Ed Patrovsky, Pat Ureña, Kat Anderson, Roger Salazar and Tommy Randall in Sacramento in November 2023*

## Appointments to the Commission

PRC Section 5090.15 (summarized).

- The OHMVR Commission consists of nine members. The Governor appoints five members whose nominations are subject to Senate confirmation. The Senate Committee on Rules appoints two members and the Speaker of the Assembly appoints two members.
- 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 duties, powers, purposes, responsibilities, and jurisdiction as the State Park and Recreation Commission for SVRAs.

# OHMVR Division Duties and Responsibilities

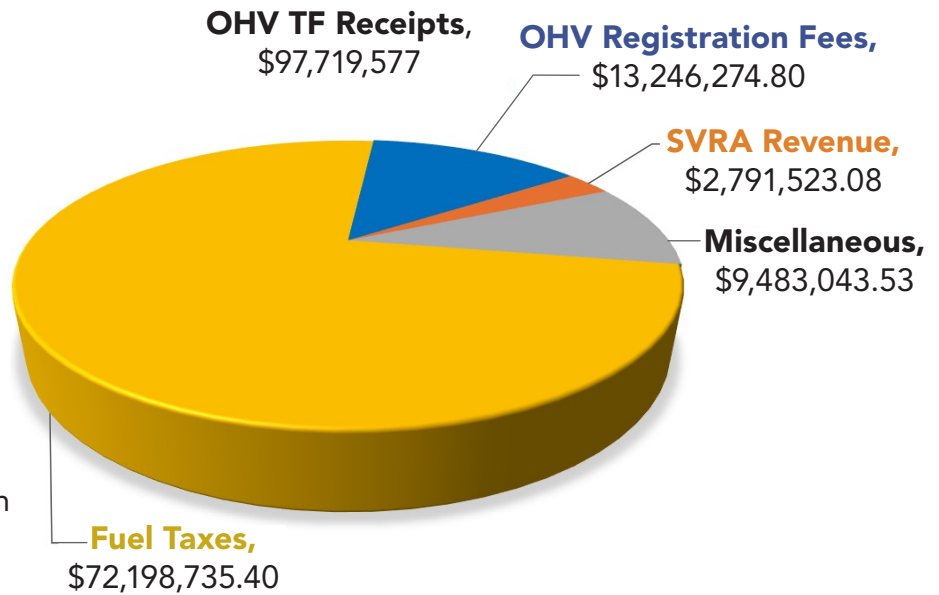
The OHMVR Division provides technical assistance and funding to nine SVRAs throughout California and supports local, state, and federal OHV recreation areas through technical help and professional guidance. Per PRC § 5090.32, the Division has the following duties and responsibilities (summarized):

- Planning, acquiring, developing, conserving, and restoring lands in SVRAs.
- Managing, maintaining, administrating, and operating lands in SVRAs.
- Providing for law enforcement and appropriate public safety activities.
- Implementing all aspects of the OHMVR Program.
- Ensuring program compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (Division 13, commencing Section 21000) in SVRAs.
- Providing staff assistance to the Commission.
- Preparing and implementing management and WHPPs 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.
- Conducting, or cause to be conducted, surveys, preparing, or cause to be prepared, studies necessary or desirable for implementing the Program.
- Recruiting and utilizing volunteers to further the objectives of the Program.
- Preparing and coordinating safety and education programs.
- Providing 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.
- Providing for the conservation of natural and cultural resources, including appropriate mitigation.
- Posting all plans, reports, and studies related to OHV recreation developed by the Division on the Department's website.
- Reporting 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

The 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 SVRAs
- A transfer of \$1 million from the State Park and Recreation Fund each fiscal year
- Interest and miscellaneous income



OHMVR Program Trust Fund Receipts

## OHV Trust Fund

The funding model for the OHMVR Program is based on users funding the Program through gas taxes, registration fees, and 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.

## Fuel Taxes

| Fiscal Year | Amount       |
|-------------|--------------|
| 2021/2022   | \$65,942,719 |
| 2022/2023   | \$67,918,073 |
| 2023/2024   | \$72,198,735 |

Fuel tax totals per year

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 in California the more gas tax revenue is 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



| Type of Registration Fee                       | Cost    |
|--|---------|
| OHV Trust Fund                                 | \$33.00 |
| California Department of Motor Vehicles        | \$7.00  |
| California Highway Patrol                      | \$10.00 |
| Cities/Counties<br>(In-Lieu of Property Taxes) | \$4.00  |

*Breakdown of OHV registration fees by type*

Another source of income to the OHV Trust Fund is fees paid to register vehicles operated exclusively as off-highway vehicles. 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, 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).



# **CHAPTER 2: OFF-HIGHWAY MOTOR VEHICLE RECREATION RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS**

Chapter 2 describes the natural and cultural resource management elements of the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Program (Program) and at state vehicular recreation areas (SVRAs). This chapter includes requirements 1 and 4 of the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Commission Program Report requirements per Public Resources Code (PRC) § 5090.24(h).

## **OHMVR 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’ OHMVR Division. The OHMVR Division provides and manages off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation for long-term use while conserving and improving cultural and natural resources at each SVRA through adaptive management programs, such as implementing the Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan (WHPP) and the Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines (SCSG) under PRC Sections 5090.35(b)(1), 5090.35(c), and 5090.43. These plans have been strengthened over time, including the passage of Senate Bill 249 (Allen) in 2017. Since that time, the OHMVR Division has worked with State Parks’ Natural Resource Division (NRD) and SVRA staff to ensure that resource management at SVRAs is conserving and improving habitat and that there are specific measures in place to ensure soil conservation.

Cultural resources afford a high resource preservation and protection level to comply with PRC Sections 5024, 5024.1(g), and 5024.5. OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program (Grants Program) projects also have the same natural and cultural resource conservation and improvement objectives (see Chapter 3, OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program).

### **Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan**

Ongoing monitoring efforts are essential for understanding, conserving, and improving the condition of the natural resources of a SVRA. The type of monitoring conducted can be specific to determine the condition of an individual sensitive species or can be broad to assess an entire ecosystem’s health. A Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan (WHPP) includes a baseline inventory of plant and animal species and plant communities identified within a SVRA. The WHPP also implements an annual monitoring program and makes recommendations for managing a SVRA to sustain biodiversity. State Parks develop WHPPs at each SVRA to assist resource managers in maintaining and protecting current wildlife populations and their habitats.

As a direct result of the adoption 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.
- Changes the standard from “viable species composition” at each SVRA to “conserve and improve habitat” at each SVRA.
- 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 the 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.
- No longer authorizes modification of the natural environment to enhance the recreational experience.
- Requires the 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.

See PRC § 5090.32, PRC § 5090.35, and PRC § 5090.39 for more information about the requirements of WHPPs.

## Native Plant Community Inventories

Per Senate Bill 249, WHPPs must consider state and regional conservation goals (PRC § 5090.32(g)) and require SVRAs to compile an inventory of native plant communities by Dec. 31, 2030 (PRC § 5090.35(c)(1)). OHMVR and Natural Resources divisions implemented the Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program (or VegCAMP) to meet these requirements. For more information and maps, visit the [California Department of Fish and Wildlife \(CDFW\) VegCamp website](#).

Staff from the OHMVR and NRD lead the effort to map vegetation communities at the SVRAs using VegCAMP. Additionally, VegCAMP staff from CDFW provide guidance, training, and peer review during field sampling and mapping. The resulting classifications and maps will be incorporated into each SVRA’s WHPP. For the reporting period of the OHMVR Commission 2025 Program Report, the vegetation maps for Oceano Dunes, Hungry Valley, Onyx Ranch, and Ocotillo Wells SVRAs were completed.

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 every five years as part of the WHPP update process.

## Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines

Monitoring OHV impacts to ensure soil conservation goals are met is among one of the highest natural resource management priorities for the OHMVR Division. Soil monitoring programs are outlined in the SCSG that are designed for specific OHV facilities to anticipate and prevent accelerated and unnatural erosion to the extent possible. The OHMVR Division is responsible for SVRAs and applicable OHV Trust-funded projects to implement soil monitoring programs to comply with the SCSG.

OHV recreation facilities are 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 PRC § 5090.2, 5090.35, and 5090.53.

Following the passing of Senate Bill 249, the OHMVR Division reviewed the 2008 SCSG in consultation with the United States Natural Resource Conservation Service, United States Geological Survey (USGS), United States Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), California Department of Parks and Recreation's NRD, and California Geological Survey (CGS) to ensure best available science was applied in addition to opportunities for public comment. The review determined that the SCSG was sufficient and therefore unchanged, but it required updating for clarity, use, and new references resulting in the 2020 SCSG.

The 2020 SCSG provide a step-by-step guide to assist SVRAs and applicable OHV Trust-funded projects to incorporate the best available science into their soil monitoring programs. Managers of SVRAs and OHV facilities receiving monies from the OHV Trust Fund must ensure their OHV facilities are maintained to meet the 2020 SCSG. Compliance with the 2020 SCSG is required through a soil conservation plan and subsequent monitoring reports specific to a SVRA or applicable OHV Trust-funded project through use of robust information and data to inform management and evaluate soil conservation practices over time.

With the revision to the SCSG, SVRA soil conservation plans are being updated to reflect the changes. The OHMVR Division is working together with State Parks' NRD in the update process to ensure the best available sciences are applied and opportunities for public comment are made available with the updated SVRA soil conservation plans. Heber Dunes, Hungry Valley, Onyx Ranch, Ocotillo Wells, and Prairie City SVRAs have soil conservation plan drafts ready for public comment while Carnegie, Clay Pit, Hollister Hills, and Oceano Dunes SVRAs are preparing working soil conservation plans that are anticipated to be completed in 2025.

## Cultural Resources Program Overview

All districts have a team of specialists, including cultural resource managers, tribal liaisons, and archaeologists, who review proposed projects, conduct surveys, monitor projects, and consult with Tribes. State Parks' northern and southern service centers provide archaeological support and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review and assist with consultation. The Cultural Resources Division 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.

California State Parks' Office of Historic Preservation 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.

## 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).

After completing a cultural resource inventory of a SVRA, State Park archaeologists evaluate the significance of known resources according to National Register and the California Landmark 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 tribal 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. For more information on tribal consultations, see the 2022 Program Report.

## Cultural Resource Monitoring Programs

State Park archaeologists monitor significant historical resources using Archaeological Site Condition Assessment Report forms and the California Archaeological Site Stewardship Program (CASSP) volunteers' help. CASSP pairs trained volunteers with archaeologists to monitor sites and preserve prehistoric and historic cultural resources at SVRAs. The combined experience brings all parties together and creates a greater understanding and appreciation of the complexities of managing an OHV recreation program in a regulatory environment. These collaborative efforts provide SVRAs with the information needed to make informed management decisions and keep the OHMVR Program sustainable for the long term.

Damage to historical resources can occur from intentional destruction (e.g., construction projects, prescribed burns, looters) or inadvertently caused deterioration (e.g., trail down cutting, erosion, vehicle traffic, and natural causes). An ongoing resource monitoring program ensures staff immediately identifies resource impacts and establishes proper resource preservation measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate effects on the resources.

## Other Programs:

### Storm Water Management Plans

A Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) is designed to guide park staff to implement a stormwater 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 intended to reduce or eliminate pollutant discharges from SVRAs. SWMPs have several minimum control measures: public education and outreach; public involvement and participation; illicit discharge detection and elimination; construction site runoff; post-construction runoff; pollution prevention; and good housekeeping.

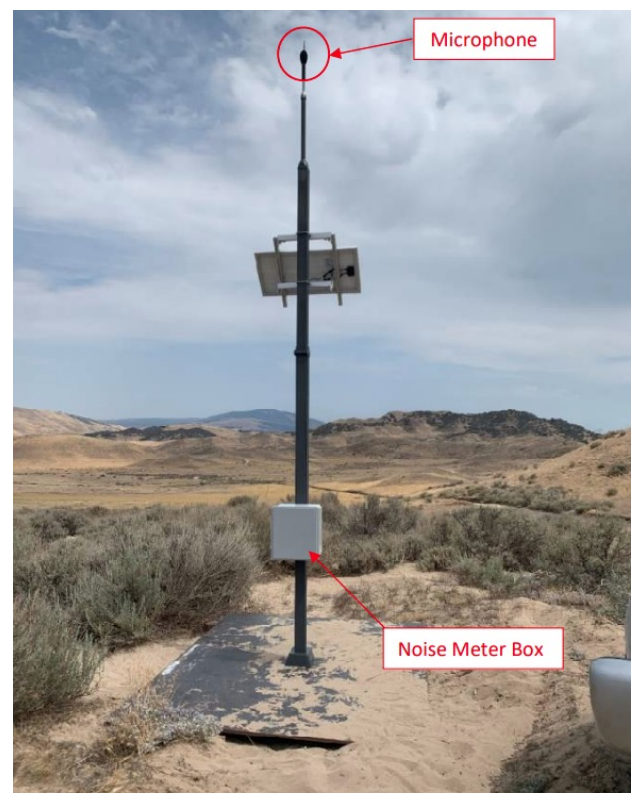
An SVRA's SWMP may also include management goals and activities for maintaining OHV trails and facilities to meet the park's water quality objectives. SWMPs come in various forms throughout the OHMVR Division. Carnegie and Oceano Dunes SVRAs operate under the California State Water Resources Control Board's 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 a 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. Both Carnegie and Oceano Dunes SVRAs have a SWMP.

### Ambient Noise Monitoring Program Update

The five-year SVRA Ambient Noise Monitoring contract with CSDA Design Group is more than half complete. Through the contract, CSDA staff in coordination with SVRA staff placed long-term noise monitors in State Parks' SVRAs. These monitors record ambient noise data (noise that is generated in and around the SVRA) 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Twice annually,



*Example of a long-term monitor site with a microphone, a solar panel, and meter box affixed to a pole.*

CSDA staff visit the SVRAs to collect in-person measurements, often during a busy day or special event, to monitor noise conditions during elevated use periods. These in-person data collection events supplement the long-term monitoring data. The two datasets combine to develop a model of ambient noise conditions generated at a SVRA. The 2022 Program Report discusses in greater detail the process and deliverables of this contract.

The remainder of the contract will continue to focus on data collection to refine each SVRA's ambient noise model. The OHMVR Division will continuously evaluate SVRA noise generation and contributions to ambient conditions to determine compliance with local noise ordinances and reduce or eliminate potential areas of exceedance.

## **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.

The 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, including 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.

### **Work with Academic Institutions**

Several academic institutions work closely with SVRAs to provide technical assistance with monitoring programs and peer review of data and reports. For example, the Biological Sciences Department of 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 unit's birds and small animal populations. The University of California Santa Barbara and San Diego, and the Desert Research Institute also work with Oceano Dunes SVRA staff on the SVRA air quality program. These programs and others 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.

Over the last two years, the Center for Urban Resilience (CUR) at Loyola Marymount University developed a comprehensive engagement management model for the Oceano Dunes SVRA and Pismo State Beach. The goals of this project were twofold: 1) To provide specific tools to better understand the community's needs at these initial locations and 2) To serve as a general model for future projects throughout the state. CUR has a successful history of developing such plans for multiple municipalities by delivering these multimodal reports to key stakeholders. CUR staff is uniquely poised to conduct this work with in-house expertise in social science, survey development, ecology, assessment of recreational activities and needs, plus knowledge of off-highway recreational vehicles and the specialized communities that participate in those sports. The project includes a series of social science tools that focus on key stakeholders and the general community. When conducted and analyzed, the combined pool of information becomes a powerful toolkit for shaping a sustainable management plan. The study will be released by the end of 2024 and on the OHMVR website.

In addition, as mentioned in the executive summary, CSU Fresno's Department of Recreation Administration and Sustainable Parks and Recreation Community Initiative (SPARCI) will release an OHV economic and demographic study by the beginning of 2025, as well. Students collected and analyzed data over multiple years, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the off-road community. This study will also be placed on the OHMVR Division website when finalized.

## 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. 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:

- Assessing existing habitat monitoring programs and making recommendations.
- Assisting SVRAs in developing programs that meet their specific management needs.
- Providing a review of statistical models, interpretations, and conclusions described in monitoring reports and WHPPs.
- Providing regulatory compliance and specialized training.
- Reviewing projects and preparing related environmental documents.
- Assisting the OHMVR Division in developing policy and compliance with local, state, and environmental regulatory mandates.
- Reviewing 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.

## State Vehicular Recreation Areas Natural Cultural Resource Updates



### DIABLO RANGE DISTRICT: CARNEGIE SVRA

[Carnegie SVRA](#) is located in the hills of eastern Alameda and western San Joaquin counties, and is one of nine SVRAs administered by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. Carnegie SVRA has more than 1,300 acres of riding area, over 80 miles of trails, and is a fun, challenging, and scenic place to ride. There are numerous off-highway opportunities for motorcycles, ATVs, 4x4s, and side-by-sides.

The park is characterized by rolling hills, dry rocky washes, and steep, rugged canyons with outstanding opportunities for hill climbs and many scenic views. Carnegie provides a setting for off-highway vehicle users of all skill levels. The hills are divided into two use areas: open riding and designated trails only in Resource Management Areas (RMAs). Roads, trails, and riding areas are two-way.

# 2024 Carnegie SVRA General Plan Update and Final Environmental Impact Report

Carnegie State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA) is a 1,533-acre OHV park managed by the Diablo Range District of California State Parks. The first General Plan for Carnegie SVRA was approved in 1981, and a General Plan Update was prepared in 2016, including the adjacent 3,100-acre Alameda and Tesla Expansion Area. While the General Plan Revision was approved and the EIR certified by the OHMVR Commission in 2016, the Commission rescinded these decisions in 2021 due to several lawsuits. The lawsuits and subsequent legislation requiring that the Alameda and Tesla Expansion Area not be designated as an SVRA resulted in the Department electing to prepare a standalone General Plan Update for the 1,533-acre original Carnegie SVRA.

State Parks started work on the Carnegie SVRA General Plan update in 2022. The Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) were circulated for public review and comment from January 16 through March 1, 2024, and the General Plan and Final EIR were brought to the OHMVR Commission on October 24, 2024, for consideration and action. The OHMVR Commission voted in support of the plan.

## Carnegie Resource Management Plan EIR

A Notice of Preparation of the Carnegie SVRA Resource Management Areas Program Environmental Impact Report was issued in February 2023. The project would implement sediment and erosion controls at Carnegie SVRA through establishment of new Resource Management Areas within the park. State Parks is currently developing the draft Environmental Impact Report.

## Natural Resource Programs

### Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan Update

The Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan for Carnegie SVRA solidified its Goals and Objectives in a way that satisfies the requirements of the monitoring section. With these core sections reaching completion, the draft is expected to be completed by the end of 2024.

### Soil Conservation Plan Update

The Soil Conservation Plan for Carnegie SVRA is currently in development and is anticipated to be completed in 2025.

Carnegie continues to move towards a trails-only riding model, which they hope to implement throughout the park to promote sustainable trails that reduce erosion and improve stormwater runoff.

## Cultural Resources Update

Diablo Range District added two new cultural resource staff members since the 2022 Program Report, a Historian I and Historian III, the program manager.

District Cultural staff responded to the 2023 winter storms caused by heavy rains and flooding of Corral Hollow Creek by recording damage to historic and cultural resources. This documentation was used to update the site records for resources damaged.

In April 2023, Carnegie SVRA hosted a California Archaeological Site Stewardship program (CASSP) workshop to train volunteers to help monitor important sites for impacts.

Cultural staff reviewed seven infrastructure projects during 2023-2024, and through careful planning avoided impacts to cultural resources.

The Tribal Liaison has continued to consult with affiliated tribes to identify tribal cultural resources and avoid project impacts to these resources.

Two tribes currently are working with the Tribal Affairs Program and District Staff to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to share information, allow access to their ancestral lands, and other mutually beneficial activities.

## **Habitat Monitoring Update**

Carnegie SVRA staff monitor for multiple species as part of their Habitat Monitoring Program. That program includes monitoring for: birds, bats, mammals, reptile and amphibians, and vegetation.

### **Bird monitoring**

Avian monitoring continues with annual in-person point count surveys. Rough query shows 97 species from 2020-2023. Notable species would be grasshopper sparrow and Bell's sparrow.

### **Bat monitoring**

Bat monitoring has had technical complications but will continue to troubleshoot to have monitoring in summer and winter using acoustic sampling. The 2022-2023 acoustic deployment only produced static, so no species were able to be detected. The detector was placed outside Lime Kiln Cave. The last documented species occurrence was in the 2016 report from The Wildlife Project, but that largely focused on the Alameda/Tesla property. Detections at Carnegie were at the Lime Kiln Cave and Tyson's basin.

### **Small and Large Mammal Monitoring**

There is no update for the small mammal monitoring initiative. See the 2022 Program Report for more information.

The large mammal trail cameras have remained in-use, but may be moved to answer different questions. The cameras regularly pick up deer, bobcat, gray fox, and feral hogs.

### **Reptile and Amphibian Monitoring**

There continues to be reptile and amphibian monitoring at Carnegie. Dipnetting the sediment basins in Carnegie SVRA in 2024 has documented three species of breeding amphibians (western spadefoot, pacific chorus frog, and California tiger salamander).

### **Vegetation Monitoring**

The general health of elderberry shrubs is visually assessed every few years to monitor the available host plants for the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle. The SVRA has not documented any declining shrubs.

### **Soil Monitoring**

The soil moisture study conducted for Carnegie SVRA in conjunction with Prairie City SVRA concluded in 2022. This study evaluated a set of factors that may contribute to erosion specific to the soil type and moisture content for SVRA trails. This study was designed to assist staff in ensuring proper soil conservation and sedimentation control when implementing Wet Weather Closures at the SVRAs. Soil monitoring for Carnegie SVRA continued as described in the 2022 Program Report.

## Resource Management Area (RMA) Monitoring

Carnegie has continued to implement trails-only riding areas within the park, which was historically open-riding. To date, approximately 53% of Carnegie is managed as “Resource Management Areas” (RMAs), which are areas that are rehabilitated to eliminate erosive or unsustainable trails.

RMAs are monitored weekly during red sticker riding season and every other week during green sticker season. Inspections consist of surveying each RMA for incidences of off-trail riding (OTR), collecting photos of any incidences, and prescribing treatment to repair the damage. Once an OTR is detected, the RMA is closed for at least one week to allow staff to make repairs and to reinforce the “trails only” message. Citations are given to OTR offenders when possible.

## Restoration Programs

### Vegetation management

Since 2022, riparian tree plantings have continued as a component of the Carnegie SVRA SWMP. The watering method for the newly planted trees was reassessed in 2021 and drip-irrigation line is now being used to establish the young trees for the first 3-5 years during the hot summer months. VegCAMP updated in 2022.

### Invasive species monitoring and management

- **Invasive Pigs** – Carnegie SVRA Natural Resource staff and contractor respond to incidental observations of pig damage to maintain low populations numbers in the park.
- **Invasive Plants** – Stinkwort and tree tobacco removal is conducted in coordination with riparian tree planting effort.

### Kiln West Erosion Repair Project

The Kiln West Erosion Repair project was a three-phase rehabilitation project to repair a hillside area that was burned in the 2019 Hollow Fire to prevent potential soil loss and improve the habitat for wildlife. The project involved adding fill to return the hillside to grade, then installing stormwater BMPs on rehabilitated areas after repairs were conducted. The project was completed in fall 2022.

## Other Programs

### Stormwater Program Update

Since 2022, Carnegie SVRA has continued to create educational brochures to help visitors understand how they can protect their riding opportunity and improve water quality by reducing sediments, vehicle parts, vehicle fluids, and trash from stormwater runoff. These brochures are distributed at in-park special events, at the front kiosk and at the drop-in information booth on weekends.

A new interpretive panel was developed in 2022 that describes erosion, its effects on water quality, and how the Resource Management Areas at Carnegie SVRA combat erosion by keeping riders on trails.

### Carnegie Advisory Team Update

The Carnegie Advisory Team reinitiated the monthly meeting series in 2023 after a brief hiatus during



COVID-19. The Carnegie Advisory Team was formed in 2013 to allow public stakeholders and park visitors to provide input on park projects and operations that relate to the user's recreational experience and safety. This meeting gives stakeholders a voice with park staff to present ideas, complaints, and views on current projects, future projects, operations, and public outreach.

### **Specialized Trainings**

Venomous snake handling training, conducted for Carnegie SVRA staff in May 2023.



## **NORTHERN BUTTES DISTRICT: CLAY PIT SVRA**

[Clay Pit SVRA](#) is located in unincorporated Butte County two miles west of the town of Oroville. This 220-acre SVRA provides a fenced open riding area for motorcycle, ATV, and 4x4 recreationists. Clay Pit, a large shallow depression (pit) ringed with low hills, was formed when clay was mined and used in the construction of the Oroville Dam. Originally known as "The Impervious Materials Borrow Area at the Oroville Division" this area was transferred over to the Department of Parks and Recreation in 1981 to be designated as an off-highway vehicle park. Clay Pit SVRA is considered a good destination for beginner and intermediate riders and offers hills to climb, an open riding area, and informal trails. Currently the SVRA contains a limited number of developed facilities, including a paved parking lot, interpretive signs, two shade ramadas with picnic tables, and a vault toilet.

## **Natural Resource Programs**

### **Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan Update**

The [Clay Pit Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan](#) was completed in 2023. The first annual report was submitted in 2024 and is currently under review.

### **Soil Conservation Plan Update**

The Clay Pit SCP is currently in the draft phase and is expected to be completed in the spring of 2025.

## **Cultural Resource Programs**

No relevant cultural resources programs have occurred at Clay Pit SVRA since the 2022 report. See the 2022 Program Report for more information.

## **Habitat Monitoring Programs**

Clay Pit has a plan to expand the monitoring program as identified in the WHPP. There have been extensive efforts to monitor vernal pool fairy shrimp, and vegetation at Clay Pit, in addition to bird surveys.

### **Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp (VPFS) Monitoring**

The most recent surveys of listed vernal pool branchiopods occurred during the 2012 Clay Pit SVRA General Plan process. Clay Pit resource staff drafted an Interagency Agreement with the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) to resume annual surveys during the winter 2021/2022 and those surveys continued during the period of the 2025 Program Report.

In the winter 2022/2023, assessment-level wet-season VPFS monitoring began (wet-season surveys occurring during the rainy months when the vernal pools have water). In the fall 2023, dry-season soil sampling occurred. In the winter 2023/2024, year-two of wet-season sampling occurred.

For winter 2022/2023, a total of 216 aquatic features were sampled using wet season techniques. The federally listed vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*) was observed in 51 features (30%). The non-listed California fairy shrimp (*Lindieriella occidentalis*) was observed in 108 features and the non-listed California clam shrimp (*Cyzicus californicus*) was observed in one feature (63.5%). Of those 216 features 46 were too dry to survey leaving 170 total features surveyed.

In the winter of 2023/2024, a total of 213 aquatic features were sampled. The federally listed vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*) was observed in 160 features. The non-listed California fairy shrimp (*Lindieriella occidentalis*) was observed in 34 features. The results of the survey in 2024 contrast significantly with the results of the survey conducted in 2023. Vernal pool fairy shrimp was observed in 75.1% of features surveyed 2024, while only 23.9% of those same features were observed to be occupied in 2023. In contrast, California fairy shrimp was observed in a significantly greater proportion of surveyed features in 2023 (50.7%) versus 2024 (16.0%). While no reliable conclusions can be drawn from these data alone, it is likely that the timing of the surveys and differences in water year hydrology account for a portion of the differences between the 2023 and 2024 survey results.

In fall 2023, dry sampling occurred (sampling using soil cores during the summer). The samples are still being processed therefore, no results have been provided yet. 247 vernal pool features were surveyed including: Clay Pit SVRA (178) Features, Rabe Road Shooting Range Vernal Pool Management Areas (VPMA, 47 Features), and DWR VPMA's (22 Features) = 247 total features

Of the 247 vernal pool and/or wetland features that were sampled, 178 of the 185 wetland features were sampled at Clay Pit SVRA. An additional 69 of the 94 features from CDFW's Rabe Road Shooting Range and DWR's Thermalito Fore- and After-bays were also surveyed. Off-site survey locations outside of Clay Pit SVRA will be used as controls to compare to SVRA data and evaluate for any potential impacts related to OHV activities. External survey features were selected based on their proximity to the park, soil substrate type, disturbance level, and presence of listed branchiopods or known suitable habitat.

## **Bird Monitoring**

Clay Pit continues to monitor for birds species as reported on in the 2022 Program Report.

## **Rare Plant Monitoring**

Rare plant surveys were conducted at Clay Pit SVRA in spring 2024, led by Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist) Leah Gardner with help from OHMVR and Northern Buttes District Resources staff. These plant surveys are supposed to occur every 5 years to maintain plant inventories and monitor rare plant populations. The last plant survey for Clay Pit was conducted in April 2013 by NRD botanist, Ramona Robinson. The earliest surveys were completed by Roy Martin in 2005 and an initial plant list of 127 species was developed. Leah Gardner used this list and added to it from CNDDDB and Cal Flora creating an updated plant list of 168 species for the 2024 surveys.

A wet spring with late rains pushed survey dates out of March leaving 4 survey days spanning April and May 2024. The survey teams spread out across sample sections that were representative of the entire park and its habitat types, then walked parallel to one another and called out when

encountering a new plant. Each new species was photographed and recorded for documentation. Only one rare plant was found: Valley brodiaea (*Brodiaea rosea* ssp. *Vallicola*) with a rarity ranking of 4.3. It was rather abundant in the northwest portion of the upper terrace bordering Larkin Road. A total of 32 new plant species were found in spring 2024, bringing the potential plant list for Clay Pit to 200 species. Of these 200 species a total of 144 were observed across the survey dates. The majority of plants were observed during the April surveys, but the May dates were also important for late blooming species such as grasses. Given the smaller size of Clay Pit SVRA, the surveys provided adequate representation of the entire site and will not need to be repeated until 2029.

### **Early Detection Rapid Response Monitoring**

Early Detection and Rapid Response surveys occurred simultaneously with the Rare Plant surveys in spring 2024.

## **Restoration Projects**

In the spring/summer of 2022, 2023, and 2024, District staff continued with efforts to conduct foliar herbicide spot treatment of starthistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*). In the spring of 2024, the District began foliar herbicide spot treatment of Medusahead (*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*). In the spring of 2024, the District implemented Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) techniques for new and small populations of invasive plant species. Invasive vegetation treatments are continuing for *C. solstitialis* and *T. caput-medusae*. The populations are being controlled at their current sizes, and annual treatments are still needed to prevent further spread.

EDRR has been initiated during 2024's rare plant surveys. Two new potential EDRR target species were detected during rare plant surveys, River redgum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) and St. Johnswort (*Hypericum perforatum*). Both species were treated and follow up visits and annual monitoring will be used to assess the effectiveness of the treatments and identify new incursions.

## **Other Programs**

### **Training Programs Update**

Clay Pit SVRA is heavily utilized as a training area for multiple agencies and training partners. The fairly flat terrain, and some small hill areas provide a great introductory area for folks learning about off-roading. In 2022, the SVRA was used for an estimated 21 training/education events hosted by a variety of agencies including US Forest Service, CA Department of Water Resources, and other training partners. Use in 2023 was slightly lower with 9 approved events, and to date in 2024, 6 approved training events have been held within the park. In 2023 and 2024 the list of partners utilizing this area expanded as the Army National Guard, and Pacific Gas & Electric requested use of the SVRA for training.

### **Ambient Sound Update**

There is an ambient sound program as part of the greater SVRA-wide program. Data is being collected, and the results will be published in 2025.

### **Road and Trails Update**

Ongoing efforts when needed to repair Peeler-Core fencing surrounding the drainage management area. These repairs are handled as quickly as possible by District maintenance staff to ensure vehicles and riders stay out of these sensitive exclusion areas.



# OCOTILLO WELLS DISTRICT: HEBER DUNES SVRA

[Heber Dunes SVRA](#) is located three miles north of the Mexican border crossing at Highway 7 (Calexico/Mexicali) in Imperial County. Heber Dunes is the most recent addition to the SVRA system of parks. This 343-acre SVRA is especially popular with ATV riders; however, some dune buggies, utility vehicles, and motorcycle riders also visit the park.

Heber Dunes offers a variety of recreational challenges including winding trails through the creosote studded sand dunes, large “fine sand” sand dunes, and dry lake beds with hard-packed clay. Heber Dunes offers other recreational opportunities including shade ramadas with BBQ pits and picnic tables. These amenities make Heber Dunes a popular destination for gatherings for local communities.

## Natural Resources Update

### Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan Update

In 2022, the [Heber Dunes SVRA WHPP](#) was finalized following a series of reviews, including a public comment period. Work on WHPP goals and objectives was initiated following the plan’s approval. Early actions included developing an Early Detection Rapid Response protocol for the park unit, hosting clean-up events, and planning for future projects.

### Soil Conservation Plan Update

A Soil Conservation Plan was initiated for Heber Dunes SVRA in late 2021. The draft document has gone through initial internal reviews and is pending public comment.

## Cultural Resources Update

One cultural resource survey was conducted at Heber Dunes SVRA, covering 34 acres. No new cultural resources were encountered.

## Habitat Monitoring Update

There are multiple monitoring efforts at Heber Dunes SVRA including efforts to monitor birds, bats, small mammals, and vegetation. More information on all of the programs can be found in the 2022 OHV Commission Program Report.

### Avian Monitoring Update

In 2023, avian surveys were conducted in Heber Dunes with autonomous recordings for the first time. Three recording units were deployed at nine points along three transects, with each unit left in place for one week. Recording locations followed three previous avian line transects, each unit started at the southernmost point along the transect and moved to the northernmost point.

In 2024, a draft protocol for annual monitoring of burrowing owls’ presence and absence was developed. Baseline data for burrowing owl land utilization is expected to be established by 2027. For further information, see the 2023 Heber Dunes SVRA WHPP Annual Report, Goal 2 (CO2.1).

## **Bat Monitoring Update**

In 2023, multiple surveys for bat activity were conducted through a contract with the San Diego Natural History Museum (SDNHM). Surveys included acoustic recording, mist netting, and roosting surveys. Acoustic recordings were conducted for two seven-night sessions, one in the summer and one in the fall. Mist net surveys occurred on three different nights, one in summer and two in fall, with each lasting three hours and with five mist nets deployed. Roosting surveys were conducted at park buildings in the fall on one night for approximately two hours.

The acoustic surveys successfully detected nine bat species, while mist net and roosting surveys did not yield any bat or bat habitat observations. Additional data analysis and reporting of monitoring results are anticipated to be provided by SDNHM in a summary report in 2024.

In addition to bat monitoring surveys conducted by the SDNHM, park staff conducted the same acoustic surveys mentioned in the 2022 Program Report. Results from these surveys are fairly consistent with previous years. However, in 2022 the pallid bat was detected for the first time in the summer and in 2023 the silver-haired bat was detected in the summer and fall. Since 2019, bat monitoring has detected 14 bat species confidently, of which six are considered federal or state special status species.

## **Small Mammal Monitoring Update**

No significant changes have been made to small mammal surveys in Heber Dunes SVRA.

## **Early Detection Rapid Response Monitoring Update**

In 2023, a draft Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) protocol was developed and tested at Heber Dunes SVRA. The test survey identified three invasive species: Sahara mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*), puncture vine (*Tribulus terrestris*), and mat sandbur (*Cenchrus longispinus*). Additional refinements are required to the protocol before full-scale surveys can be conducted effectively. For further information, see the 2023 Heber Dunes SVRA WHPP Annual Report, Goal 3 (RO3.1).

## **Restoration Update**

In 2023, the first clean-up event at Heber Dunes resulted in the removal 146.2 ounces of trash collected from a 3.9-acre area. In 2024, two clean-up events will be held, focusing on removing trash and micro trash in 143 acres of athel tamarisk. For further information, see the 2023 Heber Dunes SVRA WHPP Annual Report, Goal 4 (RO4.1).

## **Other Programs**

### **Ambient Sound Update**

Sound data is being collected at Heber Dunes as part of the larger OHMVR Sound Study. The final results from that study are expected in 2025.

### **Road and Trails Update**

In 2024, a trail assessment protocol developed for Heber Dunes SVRA was tested with the goal of establishing baseline conditions on high-use trails and refining the protocol. Trail assessments for the park are expected to occur on an annual basis.



# DIABLO RANGE DISTRICT: HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA

[Hollister Hills SVRA](#) is California State Parks' first SVRA. Located in the Gabilan Mountains, just an hour's drive south of San Jose, this unique park features over 6,800 acres and nearly 200 miles of trails in scenic and varied terrain. Visitors are drawn to the natural beauty of the park's oak woodlands, rolling hills, lush canyons, and seasonal creeks with elevations ranging from 660 feet to 2,425 feet. Hollister Hills SVRA offers numerous off-highway vehicle (OHV) opportunities as well as designated hiking, bicycling, and equestrian trails.

The park straddles the San Andreas Fault. The North American tectonic plate (Northeast side) consists of clay-rich adobe soil with rolling hills covered in grassland and oak woodlands. The Pacific tectonic plate (Southwest) consists of granitic soil with steeper terrain with pine, sage, and chaparral taking root in the sandy soil. The Pacific and North American tectonic plates have been sliding past each other for 30 million years at a current rate of about 1.5 inches per year.

## Natural Resource Programs

### Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan Update

Hollister Hills is in the final stages of completing the Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan. The public meeting took place on August 19, 2024. Hollister Hills SVRA is currently updating the WHPP based on public comment and will be submitting the updated draft to the Natural Resources Division for a Best Available Science Determination (see the 2022 Program Report for more information on the Department's Best Available Science Framework). The document is anticipated to be finalized by the end of 2024.

### Soil Conservation Plan (SCP) Update

The Hollister Hills working draft SCP is almost complete and is currently under review with the District staff. Once the working draft SCP is complete the draft will undergo the internal peer review.

### Cultural Resource Program Update

Hollister Hills SVRA was officially designated as a California Point of Historical Interest in 2022. A commemorative ceremony was held which was attended by Howard Harris's family, including his son, Glenn.

Cultural staff reviewed six infrastructure projects during 2023-2024, and through careful planning avoided impacts to cultural resources. For each of these projects, Cultural staff consulted with tribes to document and avoid impacts to tribal cultural resources.

Through the Tribal Affairs Program, with participation from District staff, has requested to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to share information, allow access to their ancestral lands, and other mutually beneficial activities.

### Habitat Monitoring Programs

Hollister Hills has an extensive natural resource monitoring and management program as reported in previous Program Reports, including monitoring for amphibians, including special-status species.

## Amphibian Monitoring Program

Hollister Hills SVRA is home to breeding populations of two federally and state-listed amphibians, California red-legged frog (CRLF) - (*Rana draytonii*) and California tiger salamander (CTS) - (*Ambystoma californiense*). Protection for both of these species is largely due to the statewide loss of viable habitat. The park's environment provides the type of suitable habitat needed to support populations of both species. To ensure that proper care is taken in managing their success, annual surveys of their known breeding locations and adjacent upland habitats are conducted. Ongoing and consistent monitoring is what is needed to better understand their distributions throughout the park.

In recent years the survey effort for both listed species has increased, which has resulted in more surveys taking place within the same breeding season. All ponds that had historical occurrences of either CRLF or CTS got sampled on average at least 4 times each season over the past four years. The intent of the increased monitoring was to get a more accurate presence/absence record, and to make observations during the different stages of their breeding cycles. With the ponds being visited more frequently, including day and night surveys, the likelihood of missing an observation of either listed species went down. Such an event took place during surveys in both 2023 and 2024, in which ponds that had no observations during the first round of monitoring, later on having positive identifications once they were surveyed again in the same season. There was an added benefit to conducting surveys throughout the breeding season, because it allowed for the use of different kinds of surveying methods. A unique example of a survey method used during the early breeding season for CRLFs, were auditory frog call surveys. These surveys recorded whether or not the distinct calls from the males were heard, helping identify where CRLFs were attempting to breed. A change was made to the auditory frog call survey protocol; observations once made in-person were now being recorded using wildlife acoustic recorders. This change provided more sampling coverage, and accounted for the variable time ranges in which frogs attempt to make breeding calls. As a result there are now seven known confirmed waterbodies in which CRLFs are known to attempt to breed at. There were also two ponds, which historically were known as breeding ponds, resulting in breeding calls being recorded, but later on in the same season not having any tadpoles observed during dipnet tadpole surveys. Monitoring during the different stages of the breeding cycle is also expected to allow Resource Ecologists to identify any potential problems that may be occurring during any specific stage of the breeding cycle.

Other notable events have taken place over the past four years. In 2022, during nighttime visual encounter surveys throughout the Harmony Gate corridor, adult Bullfrogs were found at Woodwardia Basin. This was the first known occurrence of the non-native invasive amphibian species. They were eradicated through numerous gassing efforts in the same calendar year. Night surveys that have taken place since have no longer detected Bullfrogs.

Also, in 2022, when Lodge Lake completely dried up the Blue Gill, Sunfish, and Koi Fish that were previously detected were eliminated due to the water source drying up.

In 2023, at the GP Track Entrance Pond, CTS were detected for the first time in park history.

Also, in 2023, at the Whoop-dee-doo Basin, CRLF were detected for the first time in park history.

## Restoration Programs

Numerous habitat restoration projects were initiated in the granitic lower ranch. They aimed to stabilize the soil and to revegetate the denuded substrate with native plants that match the diversity and richness of the adjacent vegetation communities. A total of 23 acres were closed off

to excluded non system trail OHV riding and soil stabilization work was performed. This was in the form of collapsing and filling ruts and rills to remove the channels that caused flows to concentrate a cut soil and carry it away. Water bars were then made by harvesting soil from the edges of the sites. This allow for soil to stay in place, and eliminated the need for traditional fiber rolls, that are expensive, difficult to install, and require yearly maintenance and replacement. Native seed harvested from the park was then spread out and the entire area was covered with straw. The straw manages to hold moisture longer and keep soil temperatures down. Surrounding Chamise was pruned to get timber slash that was then spread out on top of the straw. This created cover and an organic layer that would cover the soil as it broke down. Potted plants that were propagated in the park's nursery were then planted throughout the site. Planting took place after the first winter rains to allow them to establish and receive water throughout the rainy season. The survival rate increased noticeably when these shrubs were planted early in the season and made it through their first summer.

Other restoration throughout the grassland habitats involved the control and reduction of weed species and the planting of native oak trees and buckeye trees.

Other restoration projects also planted buckeyes and sycamores along the edges of the riparian corridor in the Hudner with the intent to expand the tree line further into the adjacent grasslands.

### **Weed Management Program**

Parks staff have aimed to reduce weed populations throughout the park. The focus has been to aggressively target weed sites within the areas of most interest and of highest resource value. Priority has also been centered around targeting high use areas, frequently traveled road corridors, and material staging areas. Primarily, because all of these location types are well known mechanisms of weed spread. Good timing and a well-coordinated approach are needed in order to continue making noticeable progress.

Through the consistent use of proven management practices, weed management work has become proficient and larger in scale. Examples of such weed management practices include the use of weed whips, in large groups, to trim big fields of weeds low to the ground, to perform repeated entries of brushing work within the same season to stunt the growth of weed plants, to conduct brushing work before the weed plants are able to produce viable seed, the application of different herbicides, and late season hand pulling and bagging of weeds that have already gone to seed.

There has been weed control work at the park's main entrance areas, campgrounds, day-use areas, tracks, and main park road corridors. All of these locations have reduced the presence of weeds by at least 50%. A landscape-scale weed management project was also taken on, totaling 10 acres, controlling all visible weeds throughout a hillside, along the Lower Field Road corridor in the Adobe Ranch. There has been another effort to control weeds at the Quarry, where rock and aggregate full of weed seeds is stored and then later used throughout the park. The cover of weeds at the Quarry has reduced by half over the last four years.

### **Wild Pig Management Program**

Consistent and persistent trapping efforts have greatly reduced and diminished the wild pig population living in the park. The trapping pressure has pushed the wild pigs further away from park boundaries and has reduced their activity during daylight hours. Evidence of their environmental damage, such as rooting and wallowing activities, is much less prevalent. This improved condition is the result of using a variety of trapping techniques concentrated along established routes, and

in areas showing the most recent activity. Trapping techniques include the use of baiting stations around freshly rooted sites, the placement of wildlife cameras to determine the size of the pack, and the movement of traps around to those different locations.

## **Other Programs**

### **Stewardship Grazing Program**

The park's stewardship grazing program continues to effectively balance the cattle grazing operation, while achieving the resource management goals outlined by the program. This is due to the strong working relationship the park has with its lease. The T.O. Cattle Company continues to modify and refine their approach to grazing so that the effects to the surrounding vegetation communities are in line with the desired resource outcomes. Through mindful and consistent rotation of the cattle the land is able to be grazed with high intensity, but for low durations of time. When done so at the correct time, this practice results in the growing season being extended for many grasses and forbes. Ultimately, plants stay greener longer, and there is more quality feed available for consumption.

### **Prescribed Burn Program**

Fire management at Hollister Hills SVRA is continuing to build in pace and scale. The water tender and type 6 fire engine have continued to be maintained and utilized as fire resources within the park. Hollister Hills SVRA has benefited from the Diablo Range District's (District) involvement in Park Operations' Wildfire Forest Resiliency Program (WFRP) through the District's acquisition of a second type 6 engine under this program, which can be utilized district-wide. Parks staff have also benefited from involvement in WFRP by having significant increases in opportunities for experience and training by attending classes and prescribed burns both within the District and throughout the state. Hollister Hills SVRA now has 21 fire-trained staff, which includes three qualified Squad Bosses (two of whom are also Engine Boss trainees), six Squad Boss trainees, and 12 Firefighter type 2s. Prescribed burns are being planned within Hollister Hills SVRA under a CEQA project that covers 655 acres split into 12 burn units. Three of these units have ignition plans for 2024 and may be implemented in 2025. Objectives for these burns include control of invasive plant species such as Yellow Star Thistle, maintaining or increasing native plant diversity, utilizing adaptive management approaches to determine best fire return intervals, and reducing the risk of extreme fire behavior that could threaten ecosystem function, property, and life. The expansion of the fire management program at Hollister Hills SVRA will dramatically increase the overall resilience of the park unit's unique natural features, as well as help protect facilities and visitors from risk of extreme fire behavior.

### **Road and Trail Management Program**

District staff continue to monitor road and trail conditions at Hollister Hills SVRA using multiple techniques including geospatial data collection technologies. A survey was created allowing all park staff and volunteers to document trail issues. This information feeds into web maps that could be viewed and used during planning efforts for trail repairs and hazards.

A new ROV pad was well designed and completed. The new training pad is located in the Upper Ranch, which is ideal so that the 4x4 trails and obstacles are readily accessible without the need to trailer ROVs.

A volunteer mapping effort was undertaken and started in the Adobe Ranch. The goal is to identify and document all of the volunteer trails present. This would allow for a comprehensive restoration plan to be developed. The plan would identify the volunteer trails needing to be removed, and the

best fencing options to use in order to keep riders on trail. The fencing layout would be similar to that of the Renz Ranch. Meaning that fences would form exclusionary bubbles, but are not always so closely bordering the trails. The fencing layout would also be designed in a manner that would allow for sections of the Adobe that dry out faster after rain to be opened, while keeping areas that take longer to dry out stay closed. That way the Adobe Ranch as a whole wouldn't stay closed for long periods of time during the rainy season.

### **Ambient Noise Monitoring.**

Hollister Hills SVRA continues to monitor ambient sound along the park boundaries. The program has been in place since 2002. See the 2022 Program Report for more information.

### **Air Quality Program**

Hollister Hills SVRA continues to work with the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD) to operate air quality monitoring stations. See the 2022 Program Report for more information.



## **GREAT BASIN DISTRICT: HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA**

[Hungry Valley SVRA](#) is located in Tejon Pass, north of Los Angeles and along the Interstate 5 corridor. Hungry Valley SVRA offers 19,000 acres and more than 130 miles of scenic trails for motorcycle, all-terrain vehicles (ATV), dune buggies, and 4x4 vehicular recreation. All levels of OHV operator skills are challenged by the wide variety of terrain and trails at Hungry Valley. Elevations range from 3,000 feet to nearly 6,000 feet. Occasional snowfalls occur during the winter. Summers are most often hot, dry and dusty. The most pleasant times of the year for OHV fun are during the spring and autumn months when temperatures are mild and occasional rain showers make for good traction and reduced dust. Nighttime temperatures often drop below freezing in spring and autumn, as well as during winter.

The wide variety of trails at Hungry Valley provides excitement for both beginner and experienced off-roaders. For experienced OHV riders, challenging trails can be found in the hills and sand washes of the backcountry section of the SVRA. Beginners can enjoy the scenery and relative ease of the trails in the Native Grasslands Management Area. Trails in the adjoining Los Padres National Forest are recommended for experienced riders only.

In 2024, Hungry Valley SVRA announced extensive damage caused by the Post Fire in June. The wildfire burned through large swathes of the park impacting the SVRA's infrastructure and resources in the park and leading to hazardous conditions. The Post Fire burned 10,064 acres within the eastern and southern portions of Hungry Valley, which contains most of the park's off-highway vehicle recreation trails and the Quail Canyon Special Event Area. When the fire initially started, nearly 1,200 park visitors and staff were evacuated safely.

So far, the fire is confirmed to have destroyed or severely impacted:

- The South Entrance Station
- A well pump shed

- Several miles of fencing and trails
- Multiple wayfinding signs
- 2,000-acres of the Native Grasslands Management Area
- Two cultural preserves
- Vegetation that provides habitat within the park and natural boundaries for trails

## Hundreds Joined Forces to Rebuild Hungry Valley State Vehicular Recreation Area

An outpouring of public interest in helping to restore Hungry Valley SVRA turned to action on September 28, 2024 for National Public Lands Day, as hundreds of volunteers poured in from across the state to help heal the park. Park staff registered 231 volunteers in less than 30 minutes. After a welcome from Great Basin District Superintendent Russ Dingman and a safety briefing, volunteers spread out to repair fences, paint restrooms, remove invasive plants, and install a new rock obstacle course.

Volunteers ranged from longtime park visitors such as Coleman, who returned after over a decade to help with the 4-wheel drive practice area, to University of California Los Angeles students who came to give back to a park where they had tested their Bruin Racing Baja Team’s off-road vehicle. Another volunteer, Nate, reflected on how the park offers him peace during mid-week trail drives. At the end of the workday, volunteers received t-shirts and had lunch, generously provided by the California Off-Road Vehicle Association (CORVA) and California Outdoor Recreation Foundation. Hungry Valley SVRA partially reopened by Nov. 1, 2024.

## Hungry Valley SVRA General Plan Update

California State Parks started work on a General Plan Update for Hungry Valley SVRA in 2016 that will guide the future of the SVRA for the next 20 to 30 years. Much has changed in and around Hungry Valley SVRA since the last General Plan was prepared in 1981. The update will address changing conditions, analyze the latest visitor information and data, and incorporate new property added since the last General Plan was adopted.

The Hungry Valley SVRA General Plan has a project website at [www.PlanHungryValley.com](http://www.PlanHungryValley.com) to facilitate public involvement and communication. Interested parties should visit the project website and register to receive email notifications regarding project progress. The planning team is preparing the Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR for public review in winter 2024. State Parks expects to bring the Draft General Plan and Final EIR to the Commission in summer 2025 for consideration and action.

## Natural Resources Update

### Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan Update

Hungry Valley environmental scientist presented the Hungry Valley WHPP at a public meeting on June 10, 2024. The 30-day review period ended on July 10, 2024. The WHPP is expected to be completed by the end of 2024.

### Soil Conservation Plan Update

The Hungry Valley Soil Conservation Plan (SCP) is currently in legal review after being reviewed by the Soils Team. It is anticipated that the SCP will be finalized by early 2025.

## Cultural Resources Update

The Great Basin District hired a new associate state archeologist in September 2022, who has facilitated archaeological investigations and monitoring efforts at Hungry Valley and Onyx Ranch SVRA. District cultural resources staff continuously monitor sites near trafficked OHV trails and surveys areas impacted by fire and seasonal floods. The cultural resources staff often works with staff from natural resources, park maintenance, interpretation, and site stewards to identify and protect archaeological areas. Site records are updated when changes are present, and all newly discovered resources are documented using State Parks forms.

Since early 2023, the cultural resources staff has reviewed and approved eight projects per State and Department policies within Hungry Valley and Onyx Ranch SVRA. The projects consist of park maintenance and operation, habitat restoration, and species monitoring efforts.

The Great Basin District hired an archaeological aide in May 2023 to assist with archaeological survey efforts at Hungry Valley through funds granted by the Cannabis Watershed Protection Program (CWPP). The archaeological aide assisted in over ten archaeological surveys throughout the District, including the CWPP survey of the Tatavium Preserve.

Tribal liaisons for the Great Basin District often consult with local tribes on proposed projects, protection of cultural resources, and interpretive projects. Tribal cultural resources are proposed and often take weeks to years to conclude. The interest by Tribes in State Parks has allowed Great Basin District to establish a memorandum of understanding with the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, which formalizes the collaboration in the management and protection of natural and cultural resources within the Tribe's ancestral lands. Tribal liaison staff are also working to collaborate on signage projects and increase memorandums of understanding with other local tribes.

In October 2023, cultural resources staff members from CWPP and Great Basin District archaeological staff began a cultural resources inventory of the 450-acre Tatavium Cultural Preserve within Hungry Valley SVRA. The inventory resulted from the discovery of two illegal cannabis grow sites within the Park in 2021, including one grow site located within the Tatavium Cultural Preserve on an unrecorded precontact site. After further assessment by CWPP cultural resources staff, it was determined that the unrecorded Native American site had been impacted by the excavation of plant wells and cisterns by the cannabis cultivators.

A cultural resources survey of the Tatavium Cultural Preserve has not been performed since 1980. The recent survey of the Tatavium Cultural Preserve by CWPP resulted in the discovery of 18 new sites and over 20 isolates to date. These sites range from historic-aged fence lines likely associated with ranching to lithic scatters and Yucca roasting pits. Isolated finds typically consist of stone tool flakes or historic-aged tin cans. At least two more five-day rotations are planned for 2024 to record and map newly identified sites, and to update the site records of recorded sites within the preserve, bringing these records up to modern standards. It is also likely that this survey will serve to identify additional illegal cannabis grows, allowing a better understanding of the scope of cannabis cultivation within the park and the impacts of these activities on cultural resources.

## Habitat Monitoring Update

Hungry Valley has created new goals and objectives for the park. While some plots for past monitoring efforts are still actively monitored, the focus has shifted to habitat conservation and improvement objectives that seek to enhance and protect native habitat in the park. The VegCAMP mapping, to be incorporated into the WHPP, is complete.

## **Bird Monitoring Update**

Biannual bird point count surveys occur at 22 plots in the winter and spring. In 2023, 49 bird species were detected in winter and 54 species were detected in spring.

## **Bat Monitoring Update**

Bat acoustic survey methods haven't changed since those reported in the 2022 Program Report. Fourteen species were detected in 2023, including four species of special concern. SVRA staff started mist netting in 2022 to capture bats by hand for identification and data collection. This mist netting effort has focused on the Oak Woodland Natural Preserve.

## **Large Mammal Monitoring Update**

Eight sites were surveyed in 2023. Eleven species were detected in 2023 with the new addition of the spotted skunk to our species list. At each of the eight sites, anywhere from three to seven species were recorded. Species detected included coyote, mountain lion, mule deer, gray fox, desert cottontail, bobcat, brush rabbit, striped skunk, western spotted skunk, black bear, and black-tailed jackrabbit.

Starting in 2022, Hungry Valley began collaborating with researchers from University of California, Davis (UC Davis), Wildlife Health Center, and Mountain Lion (*Puma concolor*) Research Project. This research project is being conducted by UC Davis with support from Hungry Valley SVRA natural resources staff. The purpose of this project is to capture and collar mountain lions so UC Davis can gather movement data within close proximity to major highways in order to better understand habitat connectivity and how it can most efficiently be restored. This project also aims to monitor genetic status and inbreeding depression in at-risk populations as well as contribute to genomics assessments of mountain lion subpopulations in California.

## **Reptile and Amphibian Monitoring Update**

In 2023, 39 individual Blainville's horned lizards were found between April-August 2023. Blainville's horned lizards are a California Species of Special Concern. Amphibian monitoring continued in 2024 in standing and running water in the park.

## **Invasive Species Monitoring**

One of the WHPP goals is to estimate the percentage of toadflax coverage in the infestation area around grasslands throughout the park in an effort to keep coverage at or below a certain percentage once Parks establish a baseline. Weevils have been detected in the toadflax area, but they are not currently managed. A report was published by Link Smith of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, on the "Biological Control of Dalmatian toadflax by the weevil *Mecinus janthiniformis* in Southern California". It highlights the research done on Dalmatian toadflax in Hungry Valley SVRA.

## **Restoration Projects Update**

*(all projects are estimated to be completed by December of 2025 except where otherwise noted)*

- Quail Canyon Well Project – 12 acres
- Garage Installation Project – 0.1 acre
- Hungry Valley Dorm Well Filter System Update Project - 0.1 acre
- Institute of Bird Population Study (IBP) – Peller Pole Install Project (completed)

## Other Programs

### Ambient Sound Update

The Hungry Valley Ambient Sound Project has not detected any ambient sound levels above accepted decibels since the start of the study. The project has been consistently monitoring ambient sound with two semi-permanent sound monitors and in-person semi-annual special event sound monitoring.

## OCEANO DUNES DISTRICT: OCEANO DUNES SVRA



[Oceano Dunes SVRA](#) is located in the southern portion of San Luis Obispo County and is the only State Park that allows public OHV recreation and camping on the beach. Oceano Dunes SVRA represents a significant portion of the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes complex. The Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes complex extends from Pismo Beach south to Point Sal and roughly from State Route 1 to the Pacific Ocean in SLO and Santa Barbara counties. The Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes complex is a relatively intact coastal dune and dune scrub ecosystem varying in width from 2 to 5 miles.

The outer boundary of Oceano Dunes SVRA comprises 3,490 acres, with 2,711 of those acres open to visitor use in some form of public access. Oceano Dunes SVRA offers a variety of recreational activities, including dispersed beach camping, beach play, nature exploration, fishing, horseback riding, ocean sports, and a wide range of educational and safety programs. OHV recreation occurs south of Post 2 within the open riding area (ORA). Both OHVs and street-legal vehicles are allowed in the ORA which consists of roughly 2 miles of beach and approximately 835 acres of dunes. When combining this with the rest of the street-legal vehicle area from Grand Avenue to Post 2, approximately 4 miles of beach and 894 acres are available for vehicles. Nearly 2,596 acres, or almost three-quarters of the SVRA outside the ORA, are restricted from OHV use for resource protection.

## Natural Resources Update

### Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan Update

The District has been working over the past two years to update the Oceano Dunes SVRA WHPP consistent with SB 249 and incorporating the best available science and "SMART" targets. The updated Oceano Dunes SVRA WHPP will be available for public comment through the end of 2024, and after public comments are addressed, will be finalized by the first quarter of 2025. Surveys are ongoing for a number of taxonomic groups including small mammals, large mammals, herpetological resources, shorebirds, terrestrial birds, fish, and rare plants.

### Soil Conservation Plan Update

The Oceano Dunes SVRA Soil Conservation Plan has been updated over the past two years, consistent with the requirements of SB 249. The SCP describes maintenance and monitoring efforts implemented at the Oceano Dunes SVRA to ensure that the SVRA is managed for sustainable, long-term prescribed use. The SCP discusses management actions implemented to reduce impacts associated with aeolian processes within the SVRA and to reduce sedimentation beyond the boundary of the park beyond natural occurring conditions, while providing high-quality recreational opportunities for multiple OHV user groups and non-motorized user groups. This SCP describes

all other soil management and retention activities implemented at Oceano Dunes SVRA and Pismo State Beach that are not well described in other management plans.

## **Cultural Resources Update**

Oceano Dunes and Pismo State Beach have a long history of human habitation and land use. The District encompasses a culturally sensitive area with a high density of documented cultural resources including 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.

## **Habitat Monitoring Updates**

Oceano Dunes SVRA has a robust monitoring program to inform the WHPPs and other management programs. This program includes: monitoring multiple species including shorebirds, insects, small mammals, reptiles and amphibians, vegetation, and fisheries.

### **Shorebird Monitoring Update**

Oceano Dunes 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). See 2022 report for details.

There were an estimated 41-42 least tern breeding pairs in 2023, slightly fewer than the 43-44 breeding pairs in 2022, and similar to the average of 40-43 pairs (range=23-60) in the 17-year period 2005-21. During the 2023 season a minimum of 15 banded birds with known origins were documented breeding at the park, with 14 banded as chicks and fledged from Oceano Dunes SVRA, and one banded as a chick and fledged from Vandenberg Space Force Base (VSFB).

There were 42 known nesting attempts, all from known locations within predator fencing of the Southern Enclosure. Of these, two had an unknown fate (not known if hatched or failed) and three were abandoned. The hatching rate for known location and fate nests was 92.5% (37/40), compared to the average of 85.0% during the previous 18-year period 2005-22.

Sixty-six chicks hatched and of these 38 were color-banded to individual. Thirty-five chicks (30 banded, five unbanded) are known to have fledged (seen when 21 days old or older), for a fledging rate of 53.0% and an estimated 0.83-0.85 chicks fledged per pair. This is below the average for the previous 17-year period 2006-22 (banding chicks to individual began in 2006) of 46 juveniles produced per year, a 71.2% chick fledging rate, and 1.08-1.15 chicks fledged per pair.

There was a minimum of 232 breeding snowy plovers (128 males and 104 females) in 2023, an increase of 12.6% from the previous year. Eighty-nine banded birds with known origins were documented as breeding with 86.5% (77/89) banded as chicks and fledged from Oceano Dunes SVRA.

There were 260 known nesting attempts, including 43 identified only by detection of brood (unknown nest location). Of the 217 nests from known locations, 118 (54.4%) were in the Southern

Exclosure, 18 (8.5%) in Oso Flaco, 64 (29.5%) in the Foredune closure, eight (3.7%) in the open riding area, two (0.9%) in the closed buffer area, three (1.4%) in Eucalyptus Tree North revegetation area east of 6 exclosure, and four (1.8%) in Eucalyptus Tree revegetation area east of 7 exclosure. Of the 208 nests with known location and fate, 118 hatched for a nest hatching rate of 56.7%. This is below the average of 73.8% for the previous 21-year period 2002-22. Ninety nests failed, attributed to the following causes: abandoned pre-term (7); abandoned unknown pre- or post-term (2); vandalism (1); wind (3); over-washed by tide (5); cause unknown (3); eggs removed by staff (2); unidentified predator (7); unidentified avian predator (10); common raven (36); crow (2); harrier (10) and coyote (2).

Of the 391 hatching chicks, 167 were color-banded to brood with 62.3% (104/167) fledging, and the fate of the 224 unbanded chicks is believed known with 56.7% (127/224) fledging. A total of 231 chicks fledged (seen when 28 days old or older) for a fledging rate of 59.1% and is well above the average fledge rate of 37.7% (range=7.4-66.0%) for the 21-year period 2002-22. One chick fledged per breeding male is the estimated number needed to prevent the population of snowy plovers from declining and productivity of 1.2 chicks fledged per male should provide for moderate population growth (assuming approximately 75% annual adult survival and 50% juvenile survival) (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2007). In 2023, an estimated 1.80 chicks fledged per breeding male at Oceano Dunes SVRA. For the previous 21-year period, average productivity was 1.43 chicks fledged per breeding male.

### **Small Mammal Monitoring Updates**

For background information on the small mammal program see the 2022 Program Report. New initiatives include using camera stations in combination with a custom-built Artificial Intelligence (AI) program to identify each photo to small mammal species. This approach is less labor intensive than live trapping, and cameras provide far superior detection of small mammals. With this high detection probability achieved through cameras, data analysis can be streamlined, thus providing management with a more sustainable monitoring method.

### **Reptile and Amphibian Monitoring Updates**

See 2022 Program Report for more information about California red-legged frog and other species.

### **Insect Monitoring Update**

Oceano Dunes Resource staff monitor the overwintering monarch butterfly populations at Pismo State Beach, adjacent to the SVRA. The Pismo overwintering site is one of the largest sites in California. Overwintering monarchs have been observed at this location every year since at least 1990 when approximately 200,000 monarchs were counted. In the 2023-2024 winter season, 16,371 monarchs were counted. In the overwintering season of 2023-2024, eleven wind sensors were deployed by a graduate student from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. By understanding the relationship between wind speed and monarch behavior, Park managers will gain critical insight into managing and preserving Pismo Grove.

### **Aquatic Species Monitoring Updates**

The District monitors the status of fishery and native fish assemblage that occupies the habitats within the park (specifically for tidewater goby and South-Central California Coast steelhead). The objective of fisheries surveys is primarily to determine presence or absence of individual fish species and to ensure visitors and maintenance activities are not impacting the resources. Fisheries surveys have been conducted within Arroyo Grande Creek and Lagoon approximately three to four times per year since 2003 with a report for each survey summarizing results. It is usually possible to gain

information about species' relative abundance, general distribution within a water body, and trends over time.

Fisheries surveys are also conducted at least annually at Oso Flaco Creek within Oceano Dunes SVRA. Historically, tidewater goby had not been known to occur in Oso Flaco Creek until the first such collection in March 2017. A few additional positive collections have been made in some intermittent years since then, including 2023, when successive surveys indicated that at least a couple of individuals had apparently persisted in lower Oso Flaco Creek for several months.

Arroyo Grande Creek and its lagoon provide sometimes-tenuous sensitive habitat negatively impacted by water quality and availability. The greatest threat to goby and steelhead 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.

Management actions to protect these species and HCP recommendations are included in the 2022 report.

### **Invertebrate Monitoring**

Oceano Dunes 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. See 2022 report for monitoring details.

Clamming for Pismo clams was a historic pastime at Oceano Dunes SVRA beginning in the early 1900s and continued to be popular into the 1970s until Pismo clams seemed to disappear. Within the past few years, the Pismo clam population appears to be increasing and in 2022 legal size clams (>4.50") were found by staff and visitors. Today, clamming is quickly becoming a popular activity during low tides and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) wardens and other sources are reporting that clammers are taking their legal limit. Clam surfacing events have also been occurring since 2021. Surfacing events occur when an abundance of clams are found stranded on the surface of the sand. The District is committed to making sure public access can continue while protecting these iconic species. Oceano Dunes District will continue to coordinate with Cal Poly clam researchers, CDFW staff, and other partners in researching clam biology, threats, and surfacing events.

### **Restoration Project Updates**

The restoration program was established in 1989 to protect the natural and cultural resources found within the park. The program is critical for the restoration of coastal dune habitats, prevention of habitat loss and mitigation of elevated dust downwind of the park. All of the plant stock used for restoration projects is grown from seeds and cuttings collected within the park to maintain the genetic integrity of the local flora. The District collaborates with students from the Cal Poly San Luis Obispo Horticulture Department to grow approximately half of the container stock used for the projects, with the remainder grown in the District's nursery facility. Over the past 3 years park staff completed approximately 145 acres of native plantings with 365,000 plants and 1,600 pounds of native seed. Park staff could not complete this work without the assistance of working crews from American Conservation Experience (ACE), the California Conservation Corps (CCC), and the local Resource Conservation District (RCD). Follow up monitoring of planting sites is conducted annually and supplemental planting is conducted as needed.

In addition, park staff conducts rare plant monitoring and management for several State and Federally listed Threatened, Endangered, and California Rare Plant Rank species. Annual surveys are conducted for Federally Endangered Nipomo Mesa lupine and La Graciosa thistle as well as State Threatened surf thistle and beach spectacle pod. Other rare plant species are mapped as they are encountered. See 2022 report for details.

Many invasive species threaten coastal dune habitats. They include European beach grass, perennial veldt grass ice plant, Russian wheatgrass, 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, La Graciosa thistle, beach spectacle pod, Nipomo Mesa lupine, 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.

## Other Programs:

### Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP)

Since 2018, Oceano Dunes 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.

### Ambient Sound Update

There has been sound monitoring at Oceano Dunes for the past several years. The final results of that study are expected in 2025.



## OCOTILLO WELLS DISTRICT: OCOTILLO WELLS SVRA

[Ocotillo Wells SVRA](#) is approximately 85,000 acres of magnificent desert open for OHV exploration and recreation. Outside the boundaries of the park, to the south and east, large tracts of BLM land are also open to OHVs. The western boundary and part of the northern boundary connect with 600,000-acre Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, which is closed to OHV recreation but open to exploration by highway-legal vehicles along established primitive roads.

## Ocotillo Wells SVRA General Plan

Ocotillo Wells SVRA and the BLM El Centro Field Office are developing a joint General Plan for the Ocotillo Wells SVRA/Ocotillo Wells Special Recreation Management Area. This joint planning document will meet State Park's General Plan and BLM land management requirements for a California State Park unit General Plan, a BLM Recreation Management Plan, and a California Desert Conservation Area Land Use Plan Amendment. The latter two plans are federal planning documents. The combined Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement will meet the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. The core team working on the joint plan comprises staff from State Parks, BLM, and

consultants. The planning team is preparing the Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR for public review in 2025, with a possible submission to the OHMVR Commission for consideration and action in 2026.

## **Natural Resources Program Update**

### **Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan Update**

An update to the 2001 Ocotillo Wells SVRA WHPP was initiated in 2022 and is currently underway. District environmental scientists first focused on collecting data for the Natural Resources Assessment, which contains foundational information on the park's resources, prior to developing draft goals and objectives. Remaining updates to the plan's management actions and monitoring plan are in progress.

### **Soil Conservation Plan Update**

An update to the 2008 Ocotillo Wells SVRA Soil Conservation Plan was initiated in 2021. The draft document has gone through initial internal reviews and is pending public comment.

## **Cultural Resource Update**

Since 2022, Ocotillo Wells SVRA has been involved in repatriation consultations with three Tribes regarding a specific group of cultural items. The agreed-upon solution is waiting for implementation in early 2025.

Surveys at Ocotillo Wells SVRA during 2022-2024 have been focused along the ancient Lake Cahuilla shoreline. Lake Cahuilla was an intermittent prehistoric lake occupying the same basin as the current day Salton Sea and was a major draw to Tribes in the area when it was present. Cultural resources staff have surveyed roughly 3,160 acres resulting in the recordation of 192 sites (defined as three or more cultural resources near one another) and 176 isolates (singular cultural resources).

Monitoring slowed a little as the district has surveyed more and streamlined processes. Cultural resources staff members monitored 22 projects between 2022-2024. Internal projects included completed fences, maintenance projects, and biological restoration work. Highlights from externally led monitoring opportunities included a U.S. Geological Survey early seismic detector and continued clean up by Department of Defense contractors.

Cultural resources staff members have been tackling work associated with the SVRA's museum collections. A full inventory of collections the unit holds has been completed and is working to be uploaded to the appropriate internal data systems. Photographing the collection has also been completed. Scope of Collections, emergency, and housekeeping plans are also underway for Ocotillo Wells SVRA.

## **Habitat Monitoring Update**

Ocotillo Wells SVRA has improved its Habitat Monitoring System-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. These efforts include monitoring for bats, small mammals, reptiles, included flat-tailed horn lizard, and vegetation. For more information on all of these programs, see the 2022 Program Report.

## **Bat Monitoring Update**

In 2023, the California leaf-nosed bat and silver-haired bat were detected within Ocotillo Wells SVRA for the first time. Both bat species have ranges which overlap the park but are rare observations. Since 2015, bat monitoring has detected 20 bat species within the SVRA, of which nine are considered federal or state special status species. For further information see the 2022 Program Report.

## **Small Mammal Monitoring Update**

Ocotillo Wells District continues to monitor small mammals at Ocotillo Wells SVRA. No changes have been made to small mammal surveys, and there are no updated findings since the 2022 Program Report.

## **Reptile and Amphibian Monitoring Update**

Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Monitoring and Management Program survey plots fluctuate each year. In 2022, 60 plots were surveyed, followed by the full 79 plots in the subsequent year, and then reduced to 21 planned plots in 2024. However, demography plots have been consistently surveyed since 2022, which strengthens the results obtained from occupancy surveys. The intent is to return to standard monitoring of 79 plots.

Since the historic high in 2020, flat-tailed horned lizard populations have shown an expected slight downward trend, likely due to decreased rainfall, however, since program inception, the overall monitoring trend shows a population increase. Surveys were conducted with the same standards as previous years.

In 2022, reptile monitoring was discontinued at Anza Ditch and Coral Wash plots due to the difficulty maintaining pitfall traps. Reptile monitoring still occurs at 11 plots within the SVRA with one plot in the Truckhaven area. No other significant changes to the survey were made.

## **Vegetation Monitoring Update**

No changes have been made to perennial vegetation monitoring surveys in Ocotillo Wells SVRA, and monitoring is ongoing.

No other plant species have been added to sensitive monitoring efforts and no significant changes have been made to the protocol. See the 2022 Program Report for more information.

## **Restoration Projects Update**

In 2022, approximately 25 acres along Cahuilla Trail were fenced off by Parks staff to protect sensitive resources. In the following year, several volunteer trails which passed through this area were rehabilitated within approximately 50 meters on either side of the fence to restore the area to a more natural state.

In 2022, a project expanded the Barrel Springs fence by about two acres to better protect enclosed resources. As part of the project, the newly fenced area was restored to a more natural state. This restoration involved decompacting soil that had been compacted by vehicles and applying native vertical mulch to enhance soil health and promote natural vegetation recruitment.

The Catshead restoration project aims to reduce the amount of volunteer trails in the area by scrubbing them within 50 meters off designated trails. Restoration efforts include raking, applying vertical mulch, and installing signage which encourages visitors to stay on designated trails. This project has been conducted annually since 2022 and work is anticipated to reoccur annually.

Since 2022, the invasive plant desert knapweed (*Volutaria tubuliflora*) has been observed and treated on six occasions at a known location along County Dump Road, with the most recent observation occurring in March 2024. Other established invasive plants were opportunistically treated since 2022, amounting to roughly eight acres treated.

## Other Programs

### Ambient Sound Update

Beginning in spring 2022, a sound study at Ocotillo Wells SVRA was initiated by the OHMVR Division to better understand ambient conditions, as well as short-term conditions associated with peak visitation. Short-term monitoring provides better understanding of environmental noise sources in comparison to SVRA operations. Noise sources at Ocotillo Wells SVRA vary; however, OHV noise, aircraft flyovers, non-OHV park recreation (e.g., picnicking, camping, etc.), wind, and general ambient noise are commonly identified as sources. Monitoring occurs annually in spring and fall.

### Road and Trails Update

In 2023, a trail assessment protocol was developed specifically for Ocotillo Wells SVRA. The protocol was tested the following year with the goal of establishing baseline data on existing trail conditions. Given the extensive trail system within the park, assessments will be conducted on a rotating basis, with high-use trails prioritized for more frequent assessments.



## GREAT BASIN DISTRICT: ONYX RANCH SVRA

[Onyx Ranch SVRA](#) in Eastern Kern County is the second largest unit of California State Parks' SVRAs. Onyx Ranch is the newest acquisition of the OHMVR Division. It is located in eastern Kern County and adjacent to State Route 14 on the western edge of the Mojave Desert, the SVRA offers over 26,000 acres of scenic and challenging terrain for ATVs, motorcycles, recreational off-highway vehicles (ROVs), and 4x4 vehicles.

Onyx Ranch is surrounded by mostly BLM land that also offers visitors varied and exciting OHV recreation opportunities. Onyx Ranch provides many miles of trails and open riding areas that traverse BLM, State Parks, and private land. Open riding is also available at both Jawbone Canyon and Dove Springs.

Elevations at Onyx Ranch range from 2,200 feet to over 6,400 feet. Occasional snowfalls occur in the winter months. Summers are mostly hot and dry. The most pleasant times of the year for OHV recreation occurs between October and April when temperatures are cool and occasional rains provide for reduced dust and improved traction. Nighttime temperatures frequently drop below freezing in the winter, spring, and fall.

## General Plan

Onyx Ranch SVRA staff members are beginning the process of drafting a General Plan.

## Natural Resources Update

### Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan Update

Onyx Ranch SVRA has created new goals and objectives for the park for the 2024 WHPP. The focus has shifted to habitat conservation and improvement objectives. Specific monitoring for these objectives is expected to begin in 2025 after the WHPP is finalized and implemented. Many of the park's existing monitoring program mentioned in the 2022 Program Report will remain in the Applied Scientific Research section of the WHPP since it informs the park's wildlife and plant species inventories. The Onyx Ranch WHPP is in the final stages of review, with the public comment period ending in October. It is expected that the WHPP will be finalized in early 2025.

### Soil Conservation Plan Update

The Onyx Ranch Soil Conservation Plan (SCP) has gone through legal review and is ready for public review. It is anticipated the SCP will be finalized by the end of 2024.

Beginning in 2022, annual Trail Condition Evaluations were completed in the park to evaluate the condition of designated OHV trails. Trail Condition Evaluations collect data that is used to create maps of trail conditions, water crossings, and locations of unauthorized user-created trails throughout the park. Trail sections are rated green, yellow, or red for trail conditions and sustainability. Ratings are based on the information collected during the evaluations, such as slope, watercourse crossings, drainage features and function, and erosion condition.

In 2023 Tropical Storm Hillary resulted in 4.36 inches of rain to fall in the park in August, resulting in trail damage and an extended closure of Jawbone Canyon Road while repairs were being made on county roads. 2023 evaluations showed 38 locations of unauthorized trails and several "yellow" rated drainage features and one "red" rated drainage feature and trail segment on SC129. These red and yellow rated features were used to prioritize repairs by the district's Heavy Equipment Operator. Red and yellow rated trail segments have since been repaired.

## Cultural Resources Update

The Cultural Resources Management Plan drafted in 2016 informs the park's management of cultural resources. See the 2022 Program Report for more information. Since early 2023, the cultural resources staff has reviewed and approved three projects per State and Department policies within Onyx Ranch SVRA. The projects consist of park maintenance and operation, habitat restoration, and species monitoring efforts.

## Habitat Monitoring Update

Onyx Ranch has a robust monitoring program as part of the Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan (WHPP), and to inform ongoing maintenance of the park. Those campaigns include small mammals, avian, reptile, amphibian, vegetation, bat, landscape photo monitoring, Mohave ground squirrel camera monitoring, large mammals, trail evaluations, and invasive plant Early Detection and Rapid Response monitoring.

### Small Mammal Monitoring Update

Bait stations for Mohave ground squirrel camera traps were updated in 2024 to be made from camouflaged PVC pipe with slits filled with birdseed-peanut butter balls. This new display significantly reduced raven activity at the camera sites compared to the traditional plastic sandwich

container covered in wire mesh display. Other small mammal monitoring was conducted using Sherman traps in 2023 which detected nine species, including one new species for the park (Great Basin pocket mouse, *Perognathus parvus*).

### **Bird Monitoring Update**

In 2023, avian point count surveys detected 17 species in the winter and 30 species in the spring.

### **Bat Monitoring Update**

Acoustic bat monitoring was done in both the fall and spring at six water body locations in the park. Bat monitoring in 2023 detected 6 species and spring 2024 surveys detected 11 species, including 5 species of concern (pallid bat, Townsend's big-eared bat, spotted bat, western mastiff bat, and the western red bat).

### **Large Mammal Monitoring Update**

Large mammal monitoring in 2023 detected six species, which is a decrease from the eight species detected in 2022. There was a presence of cattle at the ponds in Kelso Valley, which had slightly fewer occurrences of large mammals.

### **Reptile and Amphibian Monitoring Update**

Reptile monitoring in 2023 detected ten species. Amphibian monitoring has been done annually since 2019 using visual encounter surveys. Egg masses, tadpoles, and/or juveniles and adults of the western toad and the Baja California tree frog are consistently seen at water bodies in the park.

### **Vegetation Monitoring Update**

Vegetation monitoring following the California Native Plant Society relevé for 2023 detected 112 species, including three new species for the park: chick lupine (*Lupinus microcarpus*), longbeak strephathella (*Strptanthella longirostris*), and serpentine springbeauty (*Claytonia exigua*).

The Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) pilot monitoring program was drafted in January 2023. Surveys will begin by the end of 2024 to detect and respond to new invasive plant spread and propagation. A subset of trails will be monitored annually in high-use areas, areas leading to sensitive habitats, and areas of previous invasive plant treatment. Field surveys involve walking or driving the routes and documenting occurrences of invasive species on the target species list. Tamarisk was removed along SC262 as part of the EDRR program.

### **Photo-monitoring Update**

Photo-monitoring throughout the park continued in 2023. The landscape photo monitoring documented no significant changes.

For more information about the other monitoring efforts, see the 2022 Program Report.

### **Restoration Projects Update**

Tamarisk was removed as an invasive plant species along SC262 as part of the EDRR program. The removal site continues to be monitored and new sprouts are removed as necessary.

Great Basin District staff followed up on the American Conservation Experience's 2018 cattail removal at Alphie and Butterbredt Spring in 2023. Staff removed and bundled cattails by hand and bagged seed heads. Hand removal was done to minimize the impact on non-target species. Cattails were cleared so that ten percent of open water was achieved at each location to benefit wildlife species.

This project was originally completed in 2018 and more information can be found in the 2022 report.

A Sugarloaf access fence was planned in collaboration with Friends of Jawbone to connect with new and/or existing fence lines on BLM property. This project will add fence lines on park property to prevent undesignated user-created trails from accessing Sugarloaf Mountain. An environmental review for this project was completed in 2023 and tribal monitoring is needed for completion of ground disturbing activities. Implementation will occur when tribal monitoring and fence supplies are secured.

The fence extension and vertical mulching project, to be completed by Parks staff, will extend and install fences along routes SC103, SC175, SC176, and LA1 to prevent unauthorized user-created trails. Vertical mulching will be done at select locations to help naturalize the trails, reduce erosion, and aid in rehabilitation. Environmental review for this project finished in 2023 and Tribal monitoring is required for ground disturbing activities. Implementation will occur when tribal monitoring and fence supplies are secured.

The Onyx Ranch fence installation project will install fence lines along SC251, SC176, at the boundary of Jawbone Open Area, and Dennison Pond in Kelso Valley. This project was originally planned for 2023 but environmental and Tribal review caused a delay. Environmental review for this project finished in 2024 and a park's archeological monitor is required for ground disturbing activities. Fence lines have been completed along SC251 and Jawbone Open Area. Project areas along SC176 and near Dennison Pond still need implementation when additional fencing supplies are secured.

## **Other programs**

### **Ambient Sound Update**

CSDA Design Group monitors ambient sound through a contract with the OHMVR Division. Monitoring at Onyx Ranch SVRA began in 2021 with a long-term monitoring station setup continuously in the park. CSDA Design Group performs two additional short-term monitoring visits per year to check for seasonal changes in park use and special events. Surveys done in April 2024 detected no noise exceedances due to OHV activity.

### **Roads and Trails Update**

Great Basin District staff has worked on maintaining existing routes and trails, replacing damaged trail markers, as well as repairing, extending, and/or installing new fences to help keep OHV recreation on designated routes. Many open pipes were inherited when the park was acquired by State Parks and they continue to be capped off to prevent avian mortality as they are found.

### **Mine Closures**

Onyx Ranch SVRA Hazardous Mine Closures is a project in collaboration with the Department of Conservation (DOC) Abandoned Mine Lands Unit. This project will close off access to hazardous mines using culvert gates, tortoise fencing, and horizontal bat gates to reduce the hazard open mines pose to the public. An environmental review was completed in 2023, and Tribal monitoring and park's archeological monitoring is required. This project is being completed by contractors through the DOC and is dependent on the DOC timeline.



## GOLD FIELDS DISTRICT: PRAIRIE CITY SVRA

[Prairie City SVRA](#) is in eastern Sacramento County, 20 miles east of downtown Sacramento and 3 miles south of US Highway 50. It comprises approximately 1,344 acres of state lands, of which approximately 836 acres are currently devoted to OHV recreation. Prairie City is a showcase for OHV recreation and frequented by the local community. The park offers OHV enthusiasts a variety of interesting terrains and trails. Park elevations range from 240 to 350 feet above sea level. OHV recreational opportunities include trails and tracks for motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), four-wheel drive vehicles (4x4 vehicles), recreational OHVs (ROV/SXS/UTV), karts, and quarter midget vehicles.

The park is one of the most specialized units in the California State Park System and is host to many major OHV events. The busiest months at Prairie City SVRA occur October through June. Major competition events include the annual Hangtown Motocross Classic, Prairie City Grand Prix, Lilliputian Hare Scramble, Road to Mammoth Qualifier, and NorCal Rock Racing Ultra4 Stampede. State Park events include the annual Visitor Appreciation Day in October and Headlight Festival in December. Although Prairie City is mainly used for OHV recreation, it provides mountain bikers opportunities to use the park during a ten-race spring series on days when it is closed to OHV activity.

At the westernmost edge of the Sierra Nevada foothills, the Prairie City SVRA landscape consists of terrain that varies from flat, open grasslands to areas containing vernal pools, to rolling hills covered with native blue oaks, which provide habitat for a variety of plant and wildlife species. Much of the western portion of the SVRA includes piles of rock cobbles or dredge tailings, consisting of low mounds (5–10 feet high) of cobbles, silt, and sand, deposited during hydraulic and dredge gold mining operations. In the northern section of the park, there is a reclaimed gravel quarry (“The Pit”) that is generally bowl-shaped. The area containing dredge tailings is characterized by grassland and scattered cottonwood trees. The eastern portion of the SVRA is characterized by rolling hills and a vegetative cover of grassland and oak woodland. Visitors may see a wide range of birds and other wildlife reside in the area. The open grasslands attract golden eagles, red-tailed hawks, kestrels, and an occasional prairie falcon. Oak trees and brushy areas provide shelter for rabbits, quail, wild turkeys, and pheasants. Lewis’ woodpeckers, acorn woodpeckers, and northern flickers can often be seen on the blue oaks. Deer are often seen in the morning or evening hours when they come out to graze, and coyotes are also seen occasionally.

The SVRA includes ancestral lands of the Valley Nisenan Maidu Native Americans. Prairie City SVRA takes its name from the gold rush community that was located just northeast of the present-day park. During the Gold Rush era and until the 1950s, the area was the site of placer mining operations; it was owned first by the Natoma Water and Mining Company and later by the Capital Dredging Company. Today, reminders of that 1850s community include mine tailings and a historical marker, California Historical Landmark #464, which is located at the intersection of Prairie City Road and US 50. After the gold mining days, the area became home to a number of cattle ranches. In the early 1960s, Aerojet purchased the southern portion of the existing SVRA to build and test rocket engines for the US Government. In 1972, Aerojet sold 435 acres of its Sacramento property to Roy and Mary McGill, who established a cycle park. Sacramento County purchased the park in 1975, using funds from the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Cooperative Grants and Agreements program, and purchased an additional 401 acres in 1976. In 1988, the 836-acre park came under the ownership of the OHMVR Division.

# Road and Trail Management Plan

## Prairie City SVRA Road and Trail Management Plan

The purpose of the Road and Trail Management Plan (RTMP) is to provide specific guidance and direction for implementing the goals and guidelines of the 2016 Prairie City SVRA General Plan. The RTMP is a comprehensive planning document that examines the SVRA's existing system of roads and provides specific direction for their long-term construction, maintenance, and management. It considers current and potential public use, park operations, and the protection and enhancement of cultural and natural resources to ensure recreational trail opportunities are available at their fullest potential. Comprehensive trail planning also considers regional recreational opportunities and connectivity and includes extensive public outreach and input into designing new trails and experiences. The planning process began in spring 2023 and will continue through fall 2024.

Visit the Prairie City RTMP [webpage](#) to learn more about RTMP and public participation opportunities. Please send any other project-related questions or concerns to [trails@parks.ca.gov](mailto:trails@parks.ca.gov).

## Natural Resource Updates

### Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan Update

The Prairie City SVRA [Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan \(WHPP\)](#) was approved by the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division in December of 2022 (CDPR 2022). The Prairie City SVRA WHPP Annual Report is used to capture the full natural resources program over the previous year, including adaptive management decisions, project implementation, and monitoring results. In 2023, Prairie City SVRA staff completed GIS-based vegetation cover assessments, conducted special-status plant surveys, developed methods for updating the inventory of reptiles, amphibians, and small mammals, completed trail camera surveys, performed annual roadside vegetation trimming, monitored special events, continued restoration monitoring, and completed wetland mapping. We did not complete widespread invasive plant monitoring or branchiopod surveys in Zone 1 as proposed in the WHPP. Although progress was made, we did not complete the Goose Pond Project or the Coyote Gulch Restoration Project due to delays with funding and contracts outside of Prairie City SVRA staff's control. Some of the monitoring programs and projects have been summarized in this OHMVR Report. The 2023 WHPP Annual Report is currently undergoing final revision at OHMVR Division and will be posted to the park website once completed. The PC WHPP can be found at: [https://ohv.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=31610](https://ohv.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=31610).

### Soil Conservation Plan Update

The Draft 2024 Prairie City SVRA Soil Conservation Plan (SCP) has been completed and is currently undergoing final revisions at OHMVR Division before being posted for a 30-day public review period. The SCP defines protocols for assessment, maintenance, and monitoring efforts to be implemented at Prairie City SVRA. Example programs include road, trail and track monitoring and maintenance, stormwater infrastructure monitoring and maintenance, wet weather closures for the public and during special events, and future projects to improve water quality in the park. The SCP public review period is expected to be held fall/winter 2024.

## Cultural Resource Update

An archaeological survey was conducted by district cultural staff on the Barton Ranch parcel in 2022, which resulted in the identification of several previously unknown archaeological sites. Please refer to the 2022 Program Report for additional information on cultural resources at Prairie City SVRA.

## Habitat Monitoring Updates

Prairie City has a robust monitoring program aimed at informing the Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan, soil conservation plan, and ongoing park operations. That plan includes monitoring for birds, reptiles, amphibians, mammals, and vegetation, including invasive plant surveys.

### Bird Monitoring

Prairie City natural resource staff conducted annual bird point-count surveys and used ARUs at 43 points across the park with help from consultants under the National Audubon Society and Institute for Bird Populations contract (See 2022 report). 2023 was the first year we employed the ARUS for a weeklong monitoring session and results can be found in the 2023 Prairie City SVRA Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan Annual Report posted online. As we continue to accumulate and analyze data under this new methodology, we'll continue to work annually towards meeting the objective from the WHPP to conserve avian diversity in the park.

### Reptile and Amphibian Monitoring

Staff developed methodology to survey aquatic reptiles and amphibians in the park in 2023 which included nocturnal acoustic surveys using ARUs and diurnal and nocturnal visual encounter surveys from the banks of water features. 2024 will serve as the pilot year and the methodology may be adapted based on findings. See 2023 WHPP Annual Report for methodology.

### Mammal Monitoring

Large mammals are annually monitored through the use of trail cameras. In 2023 both baby bobcats and baby coyotes were spotted in the park.

### Early Detection Rapid Response

A pilot Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) program was launched at Prairie City in the spring of 2022 based on the protocols and methodology in the CDPR EDRR Handbook for Invasive Species Management (CDPR 2020) which can also be found in the Prairie City SVRA WHPP Appendix 4 (CDPR 2022).

Target survey areas were chosen based on areas with high levels of visitor traffic, areas of high habitat value or conservation concern, and areas of high economical investment (restoration sites, project areas) and will be surveyed on a scheduled rotation. A list of 29 "surveillance" and 7 "widespread" target species was selected based on habitat availability and feasibility from the California Invasive Plant Council WeedMapper species list for the area surrounding the Prairie City SVRA detection region. Surveys were conducted over the course of 10 days in May and June by Park Environmental Scientists and two volunteers from the [DOD SkillBridge program](#). A total of 11.6 miles of target survey routes and 45.65 acres of target survey areas were completed and six target species were detected and treated. Of the six species detected, two were "surveillance" species and not previously known to occur in the park.

For the 2023 EDRR season, target survey areas remained the same as 2022 with the intention of finishing surveys in areas that were not completed the previous year. One additional target species (*Lepidium latifolium*) was added to the list. Surveys were conducted over the course of 3 days in April, May, and June by Park Environmental Scientists and staff from Natural Resources Division, Gold Fields District, and the Northern Service Center. 5.8 miles of target survey routes and 166.7 acres of target survey areas were completed, and four target species were detected and mapped. One target species population was treated.

EDRR surveys for the 2024 season were currently underway at the time this summary was written. A more detailed summary of EDRR efforts can be found in the 2023 Prairie City SVRA WHPP Annual Report.

### **Special-Status Plant Monitoring**

Prairie City SVRA hosts suitable habitat for 15 rare plant species. Park-wide rare plant surveys began in 2023 with the goal to survey suitable habitat for these species and determine if populations exist in the Park. Survey protocol has been modified from the 2018 CDFW *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities* (CDFW 2018). Surveys were conducted by Park Environmental Scientists as well as staff from Natural Resource Division, Gold Fields District, Northern Service Center, and two student interns from American River College and Sacramento State University.

In 2023, surveys focused on nine target vernal pool species and survey target areas were limited to vernal pool habitat within the park. A total of 32.6 acres were surveyed. One known location of rare species, *Legenere limosa*, that was originally found in 2013 was re-located and re-mapped. No other target species were located. Six new plant species were added to the park-wide species inventory list after the 2023 surveys.

In 2024, surveys for the nine target vernal pool species continued in vernal pool habitat within the park. One target species, *Brodiaea rosea spp. vallicola*, was located and mapped. 12 new plant species were added to the park-wide species inventory list at the time this summary was written. Surveys were ongoing at the time this summary was written.

Rare plant surveys are also conducted prior to annual sediment basin cleanout as required by the 401 permit issued by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. No target species have been identified as a part of these surveys, but annual surveys will continue for the life of the permit.

Known rare plant populations will be monitored to evaluate population health and to help guide management goals and actions. Rare plant surveys will be conducted at least every 5 years to meet Objective 1 of the Prairie City WHPP.

### **Vegetation Cover Monitoring**

See 2022 report on NDVI for background information. Based on the NDVI analysis completed in 2022 there were 394.7 acres of vegetation cover within riding areas outside of facility areas in May of 2022. This result was above the 363 acre-target in the WHPP to conserve natural vegetation and plant communities.

This same monitoring was used to measure the effectiveness of restoration projects to improve vegetation cover within the park. An example project is provided under the Rock N' Roller Restoration and Revegetation Project section and additional information can be found in the 2023 WHPP Report.

### **Ongoing Restoration Area Survivorship and Health Monitoring Update**

See 2022 report on 4x4 Mitigation Planting Restoration for background information. In 2021 and spring of 2022, 61 plants were planted. These included coffeeberry, coyote bush, toyon, redbud, live oak, valley oak, and buckeye on Summit and Oak Hill plant areas. Hardware cloth was added around the root ball of many of these plants with room for root growth to provide some additional rodent protection above ground and below ground. Overall, we lost 13 plants, and an additional 13 plants were browning at the time of the survey. The objective from the WHPP was to plant 50 plants and

maintain 90% of planting annually. In this case, we planted 61 plantings, and we had a survivor rate of 94% which met the objective.

## Restoration Project Updates

Prairie City staff stopped the rotational hillside restoration program as described in the 2022 report. Instead, we complete rehabilitation of unsustainable trails and build new, sustainable trails into projects following the Soil Standards.

Plans for the 4x4 Rock Crawl and Revegetation Project (R&R Project) within Zone 4 of the park began in fall 2021. The plan included the creation of a new rock crawl trail and several stormwater improvements. Project construction was expected to be divided into two phases, however, only phase 1 and the road improvements were completed at the time.

Finally, with the project completed we invited park users to submit names for the new trail. We then sent a poll out on social media and during a public improvement group meeting to vote. There were a lot of fun names suggested but the ultimate winner was Rock N' Roller!

In 2022 Prairie City staff began treating and developing a baseline inventory of widespread invasive plant species within the park. The species of focus are those that are "High Ranked" by California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) and include yellow starthistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), Medusahead (*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*), barbed goatgrass (*Aegilops triuncialis*), and stinkwort (*Dittrichia graveolens*). As the program expands, more target species may be added.

Treatments focus on concentrated populations along high-traffic areas and smaller leading-edge populations with the intention of containing populations and preventing further spread. We practice integrative pest management and management techniques include herbicide treatments, hand pulling, and mowing. Tarping or solarization will be used for the first time in the spring of 2024 to treat an early detection population of *Lepidium latifolium*, and if successful will continue to be a method that we utilize as part of our integrative pest management approach.

Treatments and baseline inventory mapping are ongoing as populations are found.

## Other programs

### Ambient Sound Update

Prairie City SVRA started ambient sound monitoring in 2021 with CSDA (See 2022 report) using two permanent sound monitoring stations and in-person surveys at various times during the year. We use this data to determine SVRA contributions to ambient noise conditions, help understand sound generated during special events, and to model noise generation for defensive planning purposes. Based on the noise model and in-person noise measurements, the noise from White Rock Road traffic is at least 10-12dB higher than the noise from the park.

### Goose Pond Stormwater Improvement Project Update

Prairie City staff are working with Michael Baker International under the OHMVR Division contract to evaluate a project related to stormwater drainage into our sediment basin colloquially known as Goose Pond. The project area is prone to flooding during storm events and staff had several visions on how to fix the problem. We decided to recruit stormwater experts to evaluate our project design and give us feedback and recommendations to improve. Once we have the project design nailed down, staff will complete the environmental review and acquire the proper permits before starting the project.



# CHAPTER 3: OFF-HIGHWAY MOTOR VEHICLE RECREATION (OHMVR) GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS PROGRAM

Since the advent of the Grants and Cooperative Agreement Program (Grants Program) in 1974, grant recipients have received more than \$833 million statewide.

From 2021-2024:

- \$63,985,802 was awarded for Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Operation and Maintenance grants.
- \$29,084,119 was awarded for OHV Restoration grants.
- \$25,200,000 was awarded for OHV Law Enforcement grants.
- \$46,040,284 was awarded for OHV Education and Safety Grants.

## Updates To Grants Regulations Since 2022

The conditions of natural and cultural resources of areas and trails receiving OHV funds has been an area the Grants Program has always worked to strategically address. Applicants to the Grants Program must supply natural and cultural resources compliance documentation as part of any Grants Program application. Every project causing ground disturbing activities and is funded by the Grants Program has the same resource monitoring and soil conservation requirements as projects at SVRAs.

Public Resources Code Section 5090.35(b)(1) requires the OHMVR Division and Grants Program recipients to implement a soil monitoring program to ensure compliance with the Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines (Soil Standard). Participants in the Grants Program must provide a Soil Conservation Plan as part of the grant application process 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.

To qualify for funding, applicants with projects involving ground-disturbing activities must also implement a habitat management program (HMP). A 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, a 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 OHMVR Division created an internal procedure to assure compliance with this reporting requirement.

## OHMVR Grants Compliance Unit Expands Duties

When the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Act of 2003 (Senate Bill (SB) 249) was approved, State Parks transformed its grants programs by ensuring transparency, accountability, and compliance by creating the Compliance Unit within the Grants Program. The Compliance Unit 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 ensuring that the grants application process is transparent and unbiased.

In the past three years, staff members of the Compliance Unit have expanded their duties. The unit team conducts project performance reviews prior to project audits to ensure grant administrative staff comply with state statutes and program regulations. Furthermore, the Compliance Unit ensures Grants Unit staff members adhere to State Parks' high standards and are meeting the expectations of OHV and non-OHV constituents.

## Operations and Maintenance Grants Fund Highlights

### Federal Lands

Since 2021, the USFS has been awarded \$41,375,080, and the BLM was awarded \$11,988,072 in Operations and Maintenance Grants. Operations and Maintenance is split between four project types: Ground Operations, Acquisition, Development, and Planning.

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 (USFS)

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



### Kamook Staging Area

The Sierra National Forest received a grant in 2021 to develop the Kamook Motorized Staging Area within the Miami Motorcycle Riding area within the Bass Lake Ranger District. The project consisted of replacing the existing single-seat toilet with a double-vault toilet structure installed by a CXT precast concrete contractor. The installation of seven day use picnic sites, picnic tables, pedestal grills, and designated parking stalls were also completed as part of the project. The entire site was graded, and drainage functions were installed to direct water and prevent erosion. Barriers were installed around the entire staging area to prevent crossing-country travel within the staging area, concentrating use on the designated road and rail

system were also used to delineate site boundaries and protect developed site features. The Bass Lake OHV crew replaced existing information boards and OHV regulation signs.

## **Bureau Of Land Management (BLM)**

The BLM manages over 15,000,000 acres of land in California. These BLM lands accommodate considerable OHV recreation through areas like the Dumont Dunes OHV Area, Razor OHV Area, Stoddard Valley OHV Area, and El Mirage OHV Area in Southern California, and Rice Canyon OHV Area and South Cow Mountain OHV Management Area in Northern California. Individual BLM field offices apply directly for OHV grant funding.

### **South Cow Mountain OHV Management Area Implementation Plan**

In 2020, the BLM Ukiah Field Office was awarded an OHV Planning Grant (G18 Planning grant) to conduct the initial assessments and pre-scoping work for the South Cow Mountain OHV Management Area (SCMOMA) Implementation Plan. The 2022 planning project focused on the results from the initial assessments, pre-scoping work, and resource surveys from the 2018 Planning Grant and conduct in-depth resource surveys to develop the proposed actions for the SCMOMA Implementation Plan. This planning project will be the final step in the development of the SCMOMA Implementation Plan and will include not only the development of the SCMOMA Implementation Plan, but also the associated Environmental Assessment and Record of Decision.

### **Chappie Shasta Acquisition**

The Redding Field Office manages roughly 250,000 acres of public land across five northern California counties, from Tehama County in the south to Siskiyou County in the north. The Chappie-Shasta Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Area encompasses roughly 52,000 acres and 200 miles of OHV accessible roads and trails between the Sacramento River and Clear Creek. In 2024 the Redding Field Office was awarded an acquisition grant to purchase two privately owned parcels within the Chappie-Shasta OHV area. Purchase of these parcels helped solve the trespass issues on these parcels and will enhance the OHV area and allow for future development. The parcels will be for OHV use within the OHV area. Both parcels have existing trails on them that will improve/maintain motorized access to non-motorized opportunities such as hiking, mountain biking and bird watching.

## **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.



### **American Rivers, Inc.**

American Rivers, Inc. and the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest (HTNF) partnered to complete the overarching Faith Valley Meadow Restoration Project which included the Faith Valley Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Road Operations and Maintenance Project. The project enhanced an OHV road that provides access to a highly used dispersed camping area and to Faith Valley Meadow. It enhanced OHV recreation activities and protected the sensitive natural resources of the meadow, helping the HTNF meet its overall mission of providing exceptional opportunities to experience and enjoy public lands. Forest road 31081 is open to "green sticker" Off-Highway Vehicles. The road runs along the eastern edge of Faith Valley Meadow, parallel to Blue Lakes Road.

The road provides OHV access to the popular dispersed camping area along the edge of the meadow, as well as recreation opportunities including hiking, horseback riding, fishing and wildlife viewing associated with the meadow, river and surrounding area. The road receives a great deal of use by dispersed campers and recreationists.

### **Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship**

Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship (SBTS) has a long history on the trails of Downieville, California. SBTS was founded in 2003 when the trail systems were being threatened to be closed due to lack of maintenance funding available to the Tahoe National Forest. SBTS's success in the last 20 years is based on building community support and relationships with land managers. SBTS currently works on three forests, the Tahoe National Forest, Plumas National Forest, and Lassen National Forest. The SBTS project consists of trail maintenance activities on OHV System Trails located in the Tahoe Forest near the town of Downieville in Sierra County, California. SBTS performs maintenance including but not limited to erosion control, tread repair, logout, brushing, and debris removal on 113 miles of OHV trails in the Downieville Trail System (DTS).

### **Los Padres Forest Association**



In 2022 The Los Padres Forest Association (LPFA) was awarded two grants to complete work on behalf of the Los Padres National Forest, one on the Santa Lucia Ranger District and one on the Mt. Pinos Ranger District. Founded in 1979, the Los Padres Forest Association (LPFA) is an official non-profit 501(c)(3) partner of the Los Padres National Forest. LPFA supports the forest and forest users through boots on the ground projects, including trail maintenance, trash removal, and educational and interpretive services. Their partnership with the

Los Padres National Forest allows them to work together to assist forest users and provide additional support for deferred maintenance of trails and facilities.

### **Local Entities**

Many local agencies also participate in the Grants Program to provide OHV recreation opportunities while caring for natural and cultural resources. Since 2021, \$11,329,981 in Operations and Maintenance grant funds have been awarded to local agencies.

### **Stanislaus County Parks And Recreation Department**

There are two Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) parks operated by Stanislaus County Parks and Recreation Department. Stanislaus County Frank Raines Off-Highway Vehicle Park is a regional park located on Del Puerto Canyon Road in Patterson. The park offers the rugged slopes of California's Coast Range and is functionally divided into three units, separated by several miles of road. The Minniear Area encompasses over 1,000 acres of undeveloped land designed for non-motorized recreation use. The Frank Raines Day Use Area provides picnic tables, barbecues, a themed playground, and a campground to support OHV enthusiasts. There is approximately 750 acres in the lower OHV Park that encompasses the park entrance station, a full hook up campground, recreation hall, restroom/showers, and a group picnic shelter. The types of vehicles used at the OHV park are quads/ATVs, motorcycles, 4-wheel drive vehicles, and dune buggies. There are Novice, Intermediate, and Expert Trails for OHV riding at the park.



La Grange OHV Regional Park is located in East Stanislaus County with approximately 231 acres and offers 147 acres of exciting off-road vehicle park to include a kids track to serve families with youth. There is also semi-developed camping for 15 newly improved paved sites with potable water hook-ups available, undeveloped camping, and restrooms with potable/hot water provided for visitors. The semi-developed sites have barbecues, and shaded picnic shelters and tables are provided throughout the park grounds. Along with OHV use, families can enjoy operating their radio control cars and drones at the site. The OHV park provides for multi-use, as vehicle use at the park includes quads/ATVs, 4x4s, motorcycles, and buggies. Park visitors can also enjoy birding at the park, with a variety of birds seen, including; red tail hawks, woodpeckers, crows, ravens, bald eagles, and sparrows. The park is well kept and in great condition considering the prior use of land, a former quarry before it became a park.

Both sites are supported with ground operation grants for routine maintenance and improvements to the parks and support facilities.

### **County Of San Diego Department Of Parks And Recreation**



The County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) was awarded \$298,870 for a feasibility study to determine a potential location or locations for the County's first OHV park. Approximately two-thirds of San Diego County consists of mountains and deserts in the backcountry area, which is largely undeveloped. This area provides an abundance of land that can be considered for the establishment of DPR's first off-highway vehicle (OHV) park. At the same time, San Diego County open space lands are environmentally sensitive, providing habitat for the largest number of rare and endangered

species within the continental United States. As such, there is an identified need to site an OHV park in an area that is convenient and safe for OHV users and minimizes impacts to sensitive environmental resources. Ultimately, the desired outcome of the study is a prioritized list of potential sites which DPR may then utilize for future development of new OHV facilities. At a minimum, the desired facility will meet the community's needs with respect to OHV recreation demands while protecting the County's significant natural resources.

## **Resolution of Conflicts of Use**

California's population has 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**

### **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 three years, the OHMVR

Grants Program awarded \$8,579,252 million to BLM for restoration grants projects and \$2,590,483 million to the USFS—the state’s two largest federal land managers.

### **USFS Restoration Grants Projects Highlights**

Tahoe National Forest was awarded \$111,623 for a project that protected sensitive riparian habitat and aquatic species that was being damaged by OHV use. This was done by replacing and enhancing boulder barriers and closure signs at a popular entry point for illegal OHV use at Greenhorn Creek.

The Eldorado National Forest was awarded \$90,530 for a Yosemite Toad Hybridization Study. The Yosemite Toad Hybridization Project used a genetic approach to develop a definitive identification of the toad species(s) that occupy the Deer Valley, Indian Valley, and Blue Lakes areas. Identification of the species and their hybrid status allowed the Eldorado National Forest to assess the impact (if any) OHV recreation had on the Yosemite toad population in the project area, identify the locations where impacts to federally protected forms (pure Yosemite or hybrid) was most likely, and evaluate the need for further mitigation measures (e.g., toad underpasses). Perhaps equally important, this work resulted in a genetic assay that can be used in other locations where OHV recreation occurs within toad habitat and the affected species or potential for hybridization are unclear.

### **BLM Restoration Grants Projects Highlights**

BLM Barstow was awarded \$368,910 to complete a Restoration Planning project. The Project involved the field survey, analysis, and review of proposed and potential restoration sites in various areas throughout the BLM - Barstow Field Office. The work completed on the Project was incorporated into the larger cultural database used to guide the BLM and partners in focused restoration in areas with sensitive resource issues or where stabilization or protective measures are needed.

BLM Eagle Lake was awarded \$458,960 for a project within the Skedaddle and Five Springs Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) and the Fort Sage and Rice Canyon OHV areas. The Project also partially fund the BLM Law Enforcement Team to educate, patrol, sign and restore unauthorized routes to protect sensitive species, lessen erosion, discourage off-route travel, prolong the life of the OHV opportunities, and enhance the overall quality of OHV recreation.

## **Other Restoration Grants Project Highlights**

### **Joshua Tree National Park**

Joshua Tree National Park (JTNP) was funded \$920,204 to implement a variety of restoration actions to occur both park-wide and within several focus areas. Project funding supported the implementation of a suite of restoration projects with an overall goal of preventing illegal OHV activities and restoring lands impacted by such within the park.

### **Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority**

The Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority (MRCA) is dedicated to preserving and managing local open space and parkland, wildlife habitat, coastal access, watershed lands, and trails in both wilderness and urban settings, and ensuring access to public parkland and coastal resources in Southern California. MRCA was awarded \$1,213,941 for restoration activities occurring within MRCA properties at Elephant Hill Open Space (located in Northeast Los Angeles), Ritter Ranch (located in Palmdale, California), and Plum Canyon (located in Santa Clarita, California). These activities consisted of monitoring for OHV incursions, signing, installation of barriers to prevent access to non-OHV areas and partnering with local organizations to educate the public on illegal OHV usage and the damage it causes.

## Save Elephant Hill testimonial by Elva Yanez, Board President

*Unauthorized off roading on Elephant Hill exploded after the COVID lockdowns went into effect in 2020 and turned into a 24/7 nightmare of noise, dust and habitat destruction on 110-acres of undeveloped green space in El Sereno, a predominately Latino community located five miles northeast of downtown Los Angeles.*

*Our organization, Save Elephant Hill (SEH), struggled for months trying to get local agencies to pay attention to this situation during the pandemic. When we made contact with the Off Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division (OHMVRD) we were blown away by the positive, proactive response we received. The agency's top leadership made themselves available by offering assistance and helping us understand the OHV landscape as well as the OHMVRD grant resources available to address off roading on the 20 acres of public lands on Elephant Hill.*

*OHMVRD representatives traveled to Los Angeles for a site visit to Elephant Hill and met with community members as well as local law enforcement agencies. There has been nothing but encouragement and support from OHMVRD since the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) applied for and then received a grant to mitigate off roading through ranger patrols, signage and site access improvements. Through a subcontract with MRCA, SEH and local partners are conducting public education about unauthorized off roading as part of a series of community events on Elephant Hill.*

*MRCA's regular ranger patrols are having a positive impact on the off roading situation. There's also a growing appreciation in the community for why Elephant Hill is off limits to vehicles and the multiple open space benefits it provides residents as well as the plants and wildlife that live there. There is also recognition of the importance of collaboration and the complementary roles that local agencies and community-based organizations play in addressing the complexities of unauthorized off roading in an urban context. All of this has been made possible by OHMVRD.*

*To say that Save Elephant Hill is grateful to the agency's leadership and staff is an understatement. The early attention, genuine concern and essential resources made available by OHMVRD to address this complex situation have been nothing less than game changing. We wouldn't be where we are today if not for the OHMVRD. Thank you!*

## Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee



**DESERT TORTOISE**  
PRESERVE COMMITTEE

Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee was awarded \$271,285 for a project to remediate OHV impacts to its conservation lands and perimeter fencing and signs at the Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area (DTRNA) and Expansion Area located in Kern County, California and improve habitat quality for the threatened, endangered and special status species that occur in the project area. This was completed through monitoring and repairing of fence breaks and sign damage, monitoring and removing invasive plant species that proliferate along OHV routes and trails adjacent to the DTRNA and Expansion Area perimeter fencing and within the protected preserve boundaries, restoring habitat for the desert tortoise and other sensitive and special status species through vertical and horizontal mulching, trash clean up, seed collection, and surface stabilization, installing signs to minimize illegal trespass and the use of illegal trails and routes, providing alternative route maps and safe and responsible outreach signs for OHV users using trails around the project area, and providing interpretive and safe and responsible OHV recreation at the DTRNA Interpretive Center.

# Restoration Grants And Partnerships

## Conservation Corps Of Long Beach and the Angeles National Forest



The Conservation Corps of Long Beach (CCLB) constructed and installed “no-dig” OHV barriers and t-post fencing to inhibit illegal OHV usage in the Copper and Powerhouse Fire Burn Scars of the Angeles National Forest. CCLB worked closely with USFS Rangers to construct the OHV barriers, find illegal OHV trails, and implement the barriers, fencing, and vertical mulching. Restoring habitat and maintaining OHV trails provides safe experiences for hikers and OHV users.

Blocking access to illegal OHV trails helps to prevent soil erosion, vegetation damage, and protect indigenous peoples’ culture. This proposed project restored 1-10 acres of sensitive areas and allow OHV users to remain safe and in compliance with the law through these restoration efforts.

### Mono County

Working with multiple land management agencies (Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Inyo National Forest, Bureau of Land Management Bishop Field Office), this project directly restored multiple acres of sensitive habitat identified in each agency’s Habitat Management Program (HMP) and Soil Conservation Plans (SCP). These agencies identified multiple Threatened and Endangered species, congressionally designated Wilderness Areas, and bodies of water that are being negatively impacted by OHV trespass. This project directly addressed these issues through development of mapping/educational tools for OHV users, active restoration and barricading of unauthorized OHV routes throughout the project area on a landscape level. In addition, this project directly restored Leavitt and Lobdell Lake areas where several of these conditions exist, as well as restoring critical habitat for Bi-State Sage-Grouse in BLM managed Long Valley Caldera.

## Total Awards for Restoration Projects by Agency

| Agency                                | FY 21-22<br>(G21) | FY 22-23<br>(G22) | FY 23-24<br>(G23) | FY 24-25<br>(G24) |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Bureau of Land Management</b>      |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Arcata Field Office                   | \$55,120          | \$114,500         | -                 | -                 |
| Barstow Field Office                  | \$443,860         | -                 | \$368,910         | -                 |
| Bishop Field Office                   | -                 | \$589,800         | -                 | -                 |
| Eagle Lake Field Office               | -                 | -                 | \$458,960         | \$263,119         |
| El Centro Field Office                | \$583,075         | -                 | -                 | \$936,386         |
| Needles Field Office                  | \$856,160         | -                 | -                 | -                 |
| Palm Springs South Coast Field Office | \$529,940         | -                 | -                 | -                 |
| Redding Field Office                  | -                 | \$39,968          | -                 | -                 |
| Ridgecrest Field Office               | \$701,060         | \$711,100         | \$781,685         | \$723,000         |

| <b>Agency</b>                           | <b>FY 21-22<br/>(G21)</b> | <b>FY 22-23<br/>(G22)</b> | <b>FY 23-24<br/>(G23)</b> | <b>FY 24-25<br/>(G24)</b> |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ukiah Field Office                      | -                         | -                         | \$87,960                  | \$334,649                 |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>\$3,169,215</b>        | <b>\$1,455,368</b>        | <b>\$1,697,515</b>        | <b>\$2,257,154</b>        |
| <b>United States Forest Service</b>     |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| Eldorado National Forest                | \$90,530                  | -                         | -                         | -                         |
| Inyo National Forest                    | -                         | -                         | -                         | \$219,130                 |
| San Bernardino National Forest          | -                         | -                         | \$797,561                 | -                         |
| Sequoia National Forest                 | -                         | -                         | -                         | \$242,417                 |
| Shasta-Trinity National Forest          | \$15,266                  | -                         | -                         | -                         |
| Stanislaus National Forest              | -                         | -                         | \$288,805                 | -                         |
| Tahoe National Forest                   | \$483,190                 | -                         | \$215,450                 | \$238,134                 |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>\$588,986</b>          | <b>-</b>                  | <b>\$1,301,816</b>        | <b>\$699,681</b>          |
| <b>National Park Service</b>            |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| Joshua Tree National Park               | -                         | -                         | \$920,204                 | -                         |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>-</b>                  | <b>-</b>                  | <b>\$920,204</b>          | <b>-</b>                  |
| <b>Cities/Counties</b>                  |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| El Dorado County CAO                    | -                         | \$76,427                  | -                         | -                         |
| Mono County                             | -                         | \$322,157                 | -                         | -                         |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>-</b>                  | <b>\$398,584</b>          | <b>-</b>                  | <b>-</b>                  |
| <b>Non-Profits</b>                      |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| Central Coast Trail Riders Association  | \$114,507                 | -                         | -                         | -                         |
| Conservation Corps of Long Beach        | \$468,372                 | -                         | -                         | -                         |
| Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee Inc. | -                         | -                         | \$271,285                 | -                         |

| <b>Agency</b>   | <b>FY 21-22<br/>(G21)</b> | <b>FY 22-23<br/>(G22)</b> | <b>FY 23-24<br/>(G23)</b> | <b>FY 24-25<br/>(G24)</b> |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Farmworker Institute of Education and Leadership Development Inc. | \$212,718                 | -                         | -                         | -                         |
| Friends of El Mirage  | -                         | -                         | \$1,182,126               | -                         |
| Friends of Jawbone  | \$1,255,601               | \$1,358,583               | \$1,403,100               | \$1,341,112               |
| Los Angeles Conservation Corps                                    | \$118,521                 | -                         | -                         | -                         |
| Mojave Desert Land Trust  | \$217,608                 | -                         | -                         | -                         |
| Southern California Mountains Foundation                          | \$1,521,351               | -                         | \$2,035,376               | \$2,400,060               |
| Urban Corps of San Diego County                                   | \$224,877                 | -                         | \$305,986                 | -                         |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$4,133,555</b>        | <b>\$1,358,583</b>        | <b>\$5,197,873</b>        | <b>\$3,741,172</b>        |
| <b>Certified Conservation Corps</b>                               |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| Conservation Corps of Long Beach                                  | -                         | -                         | -                         | \$801,993                 |
| <b>Total</b>  | -                         | -                         | -                         | <b>\$801,993</b>          |
| <b>Districts</b>  |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority                   | -                         | -                         | \$1,213,941               | -                         |
| Trinity County Resource Conservation District                     | -                         | \$148,479                 | -                         | -                         |
| <b>Total</b>  | -                         | <b>\$148,479</b>          | <b>\$1,213,941</b>        | -                         |
| <b>Grand Total</b>  | <b>\$7,891,756</b>        | <b>\$3,361,014</b>        | <b>\$10,331,349</b>       | <b>\$7,500,000</b>        |



# CHAPTER 4: PUBLIC SAFETY

Chapter 4 provides an overview of the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (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 by the OHMVR Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program (Grants Program) and other relevant information. In addition, this chapter provides an overview of annual safety summits.

## The OHMVR Division Public Safety Program

The Public Safety Program provides statewide leadership in Off-Highway Vehicle (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 members 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 All-Terrain Vehicle (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 city, county, and federal law enforcement agencies with OHV recreation-related services. For example, staff members coordinate with the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office, Placer County Sheriff's Office, and the U.S. Forest Service's (USFS) Tahoe National Forest, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, and El Dorado National Forest to reduce trespass on private lands through increased patrols along 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. OHMVR LE Staff also meet with stakeholders and law enforcement agencies around the state to identify issues, encourage cooperation, and facilitate solutions.

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

## Statewide OHV Law Enforcement and Sound Test Training Courses

The OHMVR LE Team develops curriculum and conducts OHV law enforcement and sound testing training classes for local, state, and federal agencies that provide OHV recreational opportunities. These classes follow Public Resources Code 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 6-hour POST OHV Law Enforcement course is intended for in-service law enforcement officers and other staff assigned to patrol, supervise, interpret, and/or manage OHV areas. Through instructor presentation and hands-on activities students are provided instruction on:

- The function of the OHMVR Division
- Applicability of California Vehicle Code Division 16.5 Identification and registration requirements
- Equipment requirements
- License, training, insurance, and accident requirements
- Violations (OFF-HIGHWAY, over-snow, on-highway)

The 6-hour POST OHV Sound Testing course teaches participants the basics of human hearing and the effect of sound on the environment. Participants also learn how to use a calibrated sound meter to measure sound levels on a variety of OHVs. Graduates of this course are qualified to provide court testimony for sound violations. Through instructor presentation and practical exercises participants are provided instruction on:

- Basic acoustics and terms
- Sound measuring equipment introduction and use
- Vehicle sound measuring test methods and data collection
- Field sounds testing (events/technical inspection)
- Mufflers and spark arresters
- Basic principals of environmental sound monitoring

The OHV Law Enforcement and OHV Sound Test courses aim to promote consistent application of OHV laws throughout the state. Since January 2022, the OHMVR LE Team has presented 47 courses to over 460 law enforcement officers for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), USFS, California's Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW), Tribal police, counties, and other municipal agencies from Eureka to San Diego.

## **OHMVR Division Law Enforcement Partnerships**

The OHMVR LE Team partners with land managers to protect resources, support OHV recreation enthusiasts, and prevent trespass. As part of OHMVR Division's mission to provide statewide leadership in OHV-related law enforcement, OHMVR Division LE staff routinely assist allied agencies throughout California with new or ongoing challenges in different areas. An example of this cooperation between partners is the directed enforcement in the small rural town of Washington, which has seen an increase in the illegal use of OHVs in town despite legal OHV opportunities being present nearby. The Nevada County Sheriff's Office, California Highway Patrol (CHP), and OHMVR Division have partnered to focus enforcement in Washington on identified high-use days, reducing the number of illegal OHV activities in town.

## Operation Silverwood



OHMVR Division officers from headquarters and state vehicular recreation areas have deployed to the San Bernardino mountains to address illegal OHV activity occurring near Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area (SRA). During the summer of 2022, Silverwood Lake SRA experienced major OHV encroachment issues around the lake,

which inundated experienced Park law enforcement staff. In response to the increased need for law enforcement and to improve public awareness of OHV laws/regulations, Inland Empire District worked with the Law Enforcement & Emergency Services Division and OHMVR Division to coordinate "Operation Silverwood."

Operation Silverwood consisted of a two-day OHV saturation patrol with officers from California State Parks, CHP, San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, California's Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) law enforcement, CDFW, and USFS. Officers worked collaboratively with the common goal of educating the OHV community about current laws and legal riding areas and addressing OHV enforcement issues. State Parks' Office of Communications also participated in the event with staff members onsite available for interviews with members of the media. Operation Silverwood was a huge success and an excellent demonstration of interagency collaboration working to achieve a common goal.

## King Of The Hammers

First held for "bragging rights" among friends on BLM land in 2007, the multi-week [King of the Hammers](#) motorsports competition now draws 141,000 spectators annually to watch approximately 1,000 teams compete in various classes. Racers travel from all over the globe to compete in a mix of wide-open desert and extreme rock-crawling terrain. The 2023 King of the Hammers event generated an estimated total economic impact of \$34.1 million.

The racecourses are primarily located on lands administered by the BLM and extend 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



State Park Peace Officer on patrol during the King of the Hammers event.

(USMCAGCC) at Twentynine Palms. For 10 months out of the year, it falls under BLM jurisdiction, with two months allocated exclusively to the Marine Corps for training purposes.

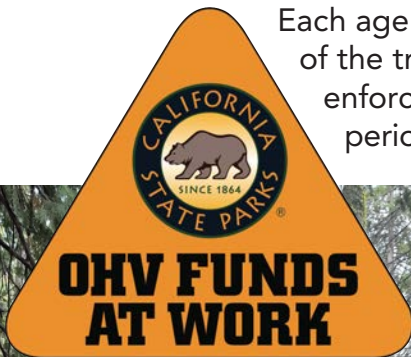
To successfully manage an event of this size, BLM partners with the USMC Twentynine Palms Provost Marshal's office, USMC Conservation Law Enforcement Officers, San Bernardino County Sheriff's Office, San Bernardino County Fire Department, CHP, and the OHMVR Division to supply law enforcement and emergency services.

The OHMVR Division has assisted BLM at King of the Hammers since 2013. In 2024, the OHMVR LE Team provided law enforcement support by deploying nine off-road-capable motorcycle patrol officers, four recreational off-highway vehicle officers, and three support staff for the week. To provide such a robust team, the OHMVR Division recruited State Park Peace Officers from throughout the state, including Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA), Hungry Valley SVRA, Hollister Hills SVRA, Silverwood SRA, Mt. San Jacinto State Park, and OHMVR Division headquarters. OHMVR officers focused on preventing incursions onto the racecourse and into the USMCAGCC, which is not open to use by the public. The extreme conditions of remote desert riding require all officers to possess expert off-highway motorcycle skills and the immense crowds and non-stop nature of the event test even the most experienced officers.

### Rubicon Deployments

The OHMVR Division has been conducting proactive law enforcement deployments on the Rubicon Trail. Law enforcement officers from OHMVR Division along with other State Parks peace officers from various state parks have been working in partnership with other local law enforcement agencies to provide unified patrol efforts along the OHV trail. These agencies include the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office, Placer County Sheriff's Office, Tahoe National Forest, El Dorado National Forest, and the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit through a series of deployments to the Rubicon Trail and the surrounding area.

Each agency has varying responsibilities and jurisdiction related to the segments of the trail. Each agency provides law enforcement personnel to assist with enforcement and education. Most law enforcement patrol efforts are focused on periods of high visitation including weekends, holidays, and during special events.



*Various agencies assisting with search and rescue on the Rubicon.*

The purpose of this long-standing cooperation between agencies is to provide for public safety and ensure the Rubicon Trail and surrounding public lands remain safe and enjoyable places for the OHV community. The results of these efforts can be seen in the overall safety and increased resource protection in areas along the trail.

Since June 2024, over 500 OHV related contacts have been made with the OHV community in 14 deployment days. Consensual contacts are most common, serving to educate and build a positive rapport with the OHV community. Enforcement contacts focus on the influence of alcohol, resource crimes, and vehicle & safety violations.

### **Assisting Placer County Sheriff with Major Search and Rescue Deployment**

On Friday, July 19, 2024, at approximately 3 p.m., a trail user became separated from his group near Rubicon Springs and was reported as a missing person. OHMVR peace officers were on the trail at the time and were part of the initial response. OHMVR assisted Placer County personnel throughout the weekend with search and rescue efforts.

On Wednesday, July 24, 2024, at 8 a.m., the missing person was located at Hell Hole Reservoir, approximately 8 miles from his last known location, and a CHP helicopter transported him to the incident command post at Homewood Mountain Resort. The missing person was reported as being unhurt and in good spirits.

## **Law Enforcement Grant Highlights**

Understanding the need for effective management of OHV use, the OHMVR Division supports, through its Grants Program, efforts to enhance law enforcement capabilities for both illegal and legal OHV activities. Local agencies, the BLM and USFS as well as the OHMVR Division recognize the unique challenges posed by the increasing popularity of OHVs, which, while providing recreational opportunities, can also lead to environmental degradation and safety concerns. Through these annual grants, the OHMVR Division seeks to promote responsible riding practices, ensure compliance with regulations, and protect natural landscapes, ultimately fostering a safer and more sustainable OHV experience for all users. The following are just a few examples of Projects that are supported by the Grant funding.

### **Local Agency**

Plumas County is located in northeastern California, covers 2,613 square miles, and offers over 1.5 million acres of national forest land open to OHV/OSV use year-round. The natural beauty of Plumas County and the variety of recreational opportunities it offers draw thousands of visitors engaged in motorized and non-motorized recreation each year. Plumas USFS estimates that over 72,000 visitors conduct OHV and over-snow vehicle (OSV) activities each year. The Plumas County Sheriff's Law Enforcement program is carried out county-wide. OHV/OSV patrol shifts are conducted by either one or two deputies, depending on location and type of patrol. It is the Sheriff's Office policy to utilize two-person teams while conducting snowmobile operations for safety reasons. Multiple patrols may occur during the same day or weekend in different parts of the county depending on number of activities or special events scheduled.

### **BLM**

Chappie Shasta OHV Area is managed by the BLM's Redding Field Office comprised of 40,000 acres of BLM lands and 21,000 acres of private lands. The primary recreation use in this area is OHV

use on an extensive and diverse road and trail network. This area provides numerous and varied OHV opportunities for motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, utility task vehicles, and four-wheel drive enthusiasts of all skill levels. Law enforcement “zones” can be separated into 4 distinct areas: Copley Mountain OHV Area, Shasta OHV Staging and Campground area, Sacramento River Rail Trail area, and Big Gulch area.

### **United States Forest Service Patrol Districts**

Lassen National Forest extends from Susanville, California, located on the edge of the Great Basin, on the east; to Payne’s Creek, California, just a short drive from the central valley of California, on the west; to Hat Creek, California, located in the shadow of Mt. Shasta, to the north; to Lake Almanor, California, a beautiful recreation lake, to the south. Lassen National Forest encompasses approximately 1.2 million acres of public lands and provides abundant recreational opportunities throughout all four seasons. Winter brings snowmobile adventures throughout the forest, but use is focused through the management of six snowmobile staging areas (Fredonyer, Swain Mountain, Bogard, Ashpan, Morgan, and Jonesville) providing access to approximately 507 miles of designated groomed and ungroomed trails. Loop riding, staging area to staging area, as well as open area riding, is provided by the groomed trail system. Unique high-country riding opportunities are also available on forest lands adjacent to, but not in, Lassen Volcanic National Park as well as the Caribou and Thousand Lakes wilderness areas.

## **Education & Safety Grant Projects**

An additional piece of the OHMVR Division Grants Program aims to bolster OHV-related search and rescue operations, ensuring that teams are equipped to respond effectively to emergencies in challenging terrains. Additionally, the program supports educational projects designed to teach riders safe and responsible OHV usage, fostering a culture of safety and stewardship among enthusiasts. By investing in these critical areas, the Grants Program has significantly contributed to enhancing both the safety of OHV users and the overall enjoyment of outdoor recreational activities for generations.



The Butte County Sheriff’s Search and Rescue (SAR) Team is an all-volunteer auxiliary of the Butte County Sheriff’s Office. The team is one of the busiest search and rescue teams in California, with 124 missions and 13,000 hours of volunteer time on missions and trainings in 2022. The team serves several OHV areas in Butte County, including High Lakes OHV and Jonesville Snowmobile Park in Lassen National Forest. Butte County SAR also responds to OHV-related calls in Plumas National Forest, many from the Four Trees Warming Hut and OHV staging area.

Typical OHV missions involve missing or overdue riders, lost or stuck riders, medicals, accidents and public assists.

Sierra Avalanche Center (SAC) functions as a private-public partnership between the Tahoe National Forest and the 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization known as SAC. The partnership’s mission is to inform and educate members of the public about avalanche safety and backcountry avalanche conditions in the greater Lake Tahoe area. SAC issues a daily avalanche forecast during the winter and collects and shares backcountry snow and weather observations on its website. Additionally, SAC provides free motorized specific avalanche courses to help riders understand how to use the avalanche forecast to stay safe as well as properly use their machines in snow terrain.

## Total Award by Agency

| <b>Bureau of Land Management Agency</b> | <b>FY 21-22 (G21)</b> | <b>FY 22-23 (G22)</b> | <b>FY 23-24 (G23)</b> | <b>FY 24-25 (G24)</b> |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Arcata Field Office                     | \$ 31,502             | \$ 96,479             | \$ 92,924             | \$109,260             |
| Bakersfield Field Office                | \$ 32,081             | \$ 23,628             | \$ 30,731             | -                     |
| Barstow Field Office                    | \$ 339,164            | \$ 415,865            | \$ 310,598            | \$400,962             |
| Bishop Field Office                     | \$ 31,502             | \$ 69,676             | \$ 61,827             | \$58,683              |
| Central Coast Field Office              | \$ 31,502             | \$ 104,295            | \$ 92,925             | -                     |
| Eagle Lake Field Office                 | \$ 31,502             | \$ 31,233             | \$ 30,731             | \$36,334              |
| El Centro Field Office                  | \$ 533,831            | \$ 450,484            | \$ 403,877            | \$510,350             |
| Needles Field Office                    | \$ 123,800            | \$ 138,914            | \$ 124,020            | \$145,722             |
| Palm Springs South Coast Field Office   | \$ 268,252            | \$ 309,493            | \$ 279,502            | -                     |
| Redding Field Office                    | \$ 68,363             | \$ 104,295            | \$ 92,924             | \$144,710             |
| Ridgecrest Field Office                 | \$ 277,632            | \$ 285,961            | \$ 278,117            | \$327,656             |
| Ukiah Field Office                      | \$30,869              | \$ 69,676             | \$ 61,827             | \$66,232              |

| <b>United States Forest Service Agency</b>     | <b>FY 21-22 (G21)</b> | <b>FY 22-23 (G22)</b> | <b>FY 23-24 (G23)</b> | <b>FY 24-25 (G24)</b> |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Angeles National Forest (NF) - Patrol District | \$119,519             | \$120,489             | \$108,258             | \$139,629             |
| Cleveland NF - Patrol District                 | \$99,833              | \$129,272             | \$108,258             | \$139,945             |
| Eldorado NF - Patrol District                  | \$252,078             | \$327,894             | \$365,383             | -                     |
| Humboldt-Toiyabe NF - Patrol District          | -                     | -                     | -                     | \$106,002             |
| Inyo NF - Patrol District                      | \$97,829              | \$129,272             | \$89,592              | \$109,714             |
| Klamath NF - Patrol District                   | \$30,646              | \$27,101              | \$25,625              | \$34,479              |
| Lassen/Modoc NF - Patrol District              | \$73,316              | \$94,154              | \$52,273              | \$41,510              |
| Los Padres NF - Patrol District                | \$92,358              | \$123,108             | \$86,228              | \$113,773             |
| Mendocino NF - Patrol District                 | \$139,685             | \$177,119             | \$144,393             | \$188,520             |

| <b>United States Forest Service Agency</b>                  | <b>FY 21-22 (G21)</b> | <b>FY 22-23 (G22)</b> | <b>FY 23-24 (G23)</b> | <b>FY 24-25 (G24)</b> |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Plumas NF - Patrol District                                 | -                     | \$39,849              | \$49,776              | -                     |
| San Bernardino NF - Patrol District                         | \$112,463             | \$155,644             | \$138,971             | \$155,285             |
| Sequoia NF - Patrol District                                | \$176,392             | -                     | \$137,396             | \$155,285             |
| Shasta-Trinity/Six Rivers NF - Patrol District              | \$19,277              | \$79,372              | \$15,634              | \$20,416              |
| Shasta-Trinity/Six Rivers NF - Patrol District              | \$11,370              | \$14,139              | \$43,577              | \$33,002              |
| Sierra NF - Patrol District                                 | \$147,887             | \$160,319             | \$145,868             | \$133,553             |
| Stanislaus NF - Patrol District                             | \$188,788             | \$207,271             | \$170,285             | \$117,463             |
| Tahoe/Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit NF - Patrol District | \$156,026             | \$207,799             | \$141,190             | \$186,819             |
| Tahoe/Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit NF - Patrol District | \$82,534              | \$107,198             | \$37,294              | \$95,415              |

| <b>Local Agency</b>                   | <b>FY 21-22 (G21)</b> | <b>FY 22-23 (G22)</b> | <b>FY 23-24 (G23)</b> | <b>FY 24-25 (G24)</b> |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Alameda County Sheriff's Office       | \$22,650              | \$37,128              | \$36,206              | \$47,030              |
| Alpine County Sheriff's Office        | \$23,986              | \$37,091              | \$32,263              | \$29,243              |
| Amador County Sheriff's Office        | \$15,793              | -                     | \$12,827              | \$13,695              |
| Calaveras County Sheriff's Department | \$33,425              | \$35,509              | \$33,852              | \$35,894              |
| City of California City               | \$42,427              | \$38,293              | \$28,201              | \$25,264              |
| City of Fresno Police Department      | \$31,844              | -                     | \$17,406              | -                     |
| City of Hesperia Police Department    | \$48,608              | \$39,848              | \$32,693              | -                     |
| City of Simi Valley                   | -                     | -                     | -                     | \$26,868              |
| Colusa County Sheriff's Office        | \$21,256              | \$23,843              | \$23,531              | \$29,059              |
| County of Butte Sheriff's Office      | \$30,893              | -                     | -                     | -                     |

| <b>Local Agency</b>  | <b>FY 21-22<br/>(G21)</b> | <b>FY 22-23<br/>(G22)</b> | <b>FY 23-24<br/>(G23)</b> | <b>FY 24-25<br/>(G24)</b> |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Del Norte County Sheriff's Department                          | \$19,551                  | -                         | \$100,080                 | -                         |
| El Dorado County Sheriff's Office                              | -                         | \$144,611                 | \$100,080                 | \$146,293                 |
| Fresno County Sheriff's Office                                 | \$91,942                  | \$104,197                 | \$100,910                 | \$94,597                  |
| Humboldt County Sheriff's Office                               | \$90,617                  | \$102,369                 | \$93,378                  | \$94,530                  |
| Imperial County Sheriff's Office                               | \$192,962                 | \$37,888                  | \$171,227                 | \$179,109                 |
| Inyo County Sheriff's Department                               | \$52,753                  | \$187,452                 | \$37,300                  | -                         |
| Kern County Sheriff's Office                                   | \$182,102                 | \$35,792                  | \$159,558                 | \$123,823                 |
| Kings County Sheriff's Office                                  | -                         | -                         | -                         | \$25,025                  |
| Lake County Sheriff's Office                                   | \$26,521                  | \$41,137                  | \$35,222                  | \$42,070                  |
| Lassen County Sheriff's Department                             | \$39,731                  | \$111,286                 | \$38,087                  | \$36,184                  |
| Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department - Santa Clarita Valley | \$87,288                  | \$95,610                  | \$71,172                  | \$92,949                  |
| Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department - Palmdale             | \$51,011                  | \$78,305                  | \$57,421                  | \$93,250                  |
| Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department - Landcaster           | -                         | -                         | \$43,661                  | -                         |
| Los Angeles Police Department                                  | \$69,791                  | \$37,888                  | \$30,750                  | \$64,307                  |
| Madera County Sheriff's Office                                 | \$27,588                  | \$42,111                  | \$58,600                  | \$50,055                  |
| Mammoth Lakes Police Department                                | -                         | \$51,177                  | \$38,760                  | \$40,748                  |
| Mariposa County Sheriff's Office                               | -                         | \$24,743                  | \$29,025                  | \$29,965                  |
| Modoc County Sheriff's Office                                  | \$13,589                  | -                         | -                         | -                         |
| Mono County Sheriff's Department                               | \$33,725                  | \$ 36,548                 | \$60,255                  | \$62,510                  |

| <b>Local Agency</b>                                   | <b>FY 21-22<br/>(G21)</b> | <b>FY 22-23<br/>(G22)</b> | <b>FY 23-24<br/>(G23)</b> | <b>FY 24-25<br/>(G24)</b> |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Napa County Sheriff's Office                          | \$29,543                  | \$34,017                  | \$29,997                  | \$32,478                  |
| Nevada County Sheriff's Office                        | \$38,922                  | \$34,409                  | \$29,339                  | \$28,105                  |
| Placer County Sheriff's Office - Auburn               | \$69,494                  | \$119,989                 | \$73,139                  | \$77,124                  |
| Placer County Sheriff's Office - Tahoe                | \$85,914                  | \$77,774                  | \$71,155                  | \$33,095                  |
| Plumas County Sheriff's Office                        | \$50,194                  | \$36,480                  | \$28,486                  | \$32,857                  |
| Ridgecrest Police Department                          | -                         | \$37,422                  | \$43,509                  | -                         |
| Riverside County Sheriff's Department                 | \$57,255                  | \$66,009                  | \$58,319                  | \$53,099                  |
| Riverside County Sheriff's Department - Hemet         | \$65,917                  | \$92,963                  | \$76,549                  | \$38,033                  |
| Riverside County Sheriff's Department - Thermal       | -                         | -                         | -                         | \$31,993                  |
| Riverside County Sheriff's Department - Lake Matthews | -                         | -                         | -                         | \$61,119                  |
| Sacramento County Regional Parks                      | \$19,212                  | \$36,667                  | \$13,799                  | \$10,000                  |
| San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department            | \$193,647                 | \$207,428                 | \$172,263                 | \$179,371                 |
| San Diego County Sheriff's Department                 | \$32,383                  | \$36,828                  | \$24,678                  | \$35,568                  |
| San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department               | \$52,724                  | \$63,086                  | \$46,803                  | \$37,840                  |
| Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office                        | \$50,890                  | \$54,366                  | \$63,600                  | \$64,373                  |
| Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department    | \$42,954                  | \$51,721                  | \$44,895                  | \$47,599                  |
| Sierra County Sheriff's Office                        | \$20,810                  | \$21,468                  | \$21,836                  | -                         |
| Sonoma County Sheriff's Office                        | -                         | \$82,623                  | \$34,752                  | -                         |
| Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department                | \$127,887                 | \$132,451                 | \$116,462                 | \$125,462                 |

| Local Agency                        | FY 21-22<br>(G21) | FY 22-23<br>(G22) | FY 23-24<br>(G23) | FY 24-25<br>(G24) |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Trinity County Sheriff's Office     | -                 | \$19,590          | -                 | -                 |
| Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office    | \$33,731          | \$108,292         | \$40,192          | \$47,729          |
| Ventura County Sheriff's Department | \$66,517          | \$72,957          | \$62,742          | \$69,602          |
| Yolo County Sheriff's Office        | \$111,955         | \$108,523         | \$85,104          | \$26,086          |

## OHV Safety Summit Highlight

In a room filled with over 100 people from across the OHV community, the OHMVR Division facilitated the Third Annual OHV Safety Summit in San Diego on July 31, 2024. The summit, nearly a year in planning, was intended to build upon the success of the previous two meetings held in Sacramento. Many of the participants were part of the original OHV Safety Summit, but 2024's event attracted many from Southern California who were new to the summit.

The OHV Safety Summit has a dual purpose of furthering the mission of the OHMVR Division while promoting the safety of all in the OHV recreation community. There has been a dramatic increase in the number of OHV recreationists since COVID restrictions were put into place during the epidemic. This is primarily because off-road vehicles allowed families to socially distance while enjoying the outdoors. The technology and advanced design of recreational off-road vehicles (ROVs), also known as side-by-sides, have allowed those new to OHV recreation to explore areas that are inaccessible by normal passenger vehicles.

Previous OHV Safety Summits focused on gathering information from across the OHV community about the issues deemed important for further discussion. These summits helped the OHMVR Division identify areas of greatest safety concern and influenced some of the decisions made while planning events for the bi-annual OHV Safety Week. The consensus from both meetings was that the typical OHV user changed considerably since COVID, and there was need to emphasize education and training going forward.

This year, the event opened with remarks from State Parks Director Armando Quintero, OHMVR Deputy Director Sarah Miggins, OHMVR Division Chief Callan McLaughlin, and OHMVR Commission Chairperson Roger Salazar. Participants also heard from DPR staff and speakers from across the OHV community, including Senior Park & Recreation Specialist Katie Metraux, who summarized the latest California OHV economic study, Research Data Specialist II Victor Hernandez, discussing social media statistical analysis, and state park peace officers Jon Brandt, Alex Robertson, and Andy Ahlberg who presented attendees with an overview of current OHV law. Attendees also heard from Captain Chase Pili from the Utah Division of Natural Resources, who explained the operation and effectiveness of the new Utah Online OHV Safety Course.

Afternoon breakout sessions allowed attendees to become part of the movement toward improved OHV safety. The Law, Legislation, and E-motorcycle Group, led by Captain Lauren Shoemaker, Assistant OHMVR Division Chief Jack Gorman, and Sergeant Cameron O'Quinn, discussed topics

ranging from the impacts of e-motorcycles in OHV areas and local communities to OHV laws and enforcement policies across California. State Parks Interpretation & Education Division Chief Heather Holm and Interpreter I Megan Stanley led a group through the process of developing a long-term OHV safety theme to be used by stakeholders in the OHV community. Interpreter I Kevin Schmidt, and Associate Park & Recreation Specialist Paul Hart gathered curriculum ideas for a potential online OHV safety course. Another group was looking into future OHV-related legislation, facilitated by OHMVR Division Chief Callan McLaughlin, Chief Ranger Andy Ahlberg, and Captain Luke Ware.

This event also served as a community workshop of the OHMVR Commission, who met for its quarterly public meeting the following day. The workshop format allowed all the commissioners to participate and interact with OHV community, giving each a better understanding of safety needs and possible solutions moving forward.

OHV Safety Summits hosted by the OHMVR Division continue to offer opportunities for positive engagement with OHV recreation stakeholders, other agencies engaged in OHV activities, and the public. Assistance from the California Outdoor Recreation Foundation, many other OHMVR Division partners as well as OHV community participants from across the state continue to be instrumental in the success of this event. The event also could not have continued success without the assistance and “can do” spirit of all OHMVR Division employees, who remain willing to step up when needed. The Fourth Annual OHV Safety Summit is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 3, 2025.



The OHMVR Commission holds its final meeting and tour of 2023 at Prairie City SVRA. This SVRA is one of nine in the State Park System. Prairie City offers visitors the opportunity to recreate safely with a variety of off-highway equipment, including All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs), side-by-side vehicles like Recreational Off-Highway Vehicles (ROVs) and Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTVs), 4X4 vehicles, dune buggies, and motorbikes with a wide variety of obstacles, tracks, and trails.

Clockwise from left: Environmental Scientists Lora Caldwell and McKenzie Boring share efforts to restore and protect the park’s natural resources. State Parks Director Armando Quintero welcomes tour participants, including members of the Sacramento Regional Conservation Corps, Greater Valley Conservation Corps, and Urban Conservation Corps of the Inland Empire. Xochi Prock and Anthony Bonilla from the Parks Recruitment Office share information about careers. Park Ranger Cameron O’Quinn provides details about law enforcement opportunities in State Parks at the base of three off-road obstacles.

A group of approximately 15 staff members, including men and women of various ages, are posed for a group photo. They are wearing tan or khaki uniforms, some with patches and hats. They are standing in front of a blue banner that reads "PRAIRIE CITY SVRA". The background shows an outdoor setting with other tents and structures.

# CHAPTER 5: OFF-HIGHWAY MOTOR VEHICLE RECREATION (OHMVR) DIVISION PUBLIC OUTREACH

Under California State Senate Bill 742, the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division is mandated to provide public education programs focused on safety, lawful off-highway vehicle (OHV) operation, and provide for the protection of California's resources. Dedicated interpretive staff at state vehicular recreation areas (SVRAs) and the OHMVR Division have made the program successful by exceeding 35,000 contacts annually.

Interpretive staff develop a wide range of traditional and innovative programs relevant to many audience types, from the OHV community to underserved youth. SVRA interpreters and the OHMVR Outreach Team provide content-rich and audience-centered programs at SVRAs, OHV and sporting events, youth events and school programs, and community events including county fairs, safety fairs, and career fairs. In addition to in-person events, interpreters create informative digital media content, communicate using social media platforms, and deliver virtual school programs using the PORTS: Parks Online Resources for Teachers and Students® distance learning program.

Several factors contributed to reduced programmatic numbers between 2022 and 2024. Lingering COVID-19 restrictions from 2020 impacted visitation numbers and the ability of staff to provide in-person programming; 2023 was the first year that SVRAs and OHMVR's Statewide Outreach and Education Programs were able to offer a full range of opportunities for the public post-COVID. Weather proved to be a major factor in the interpretation of contact numbers for 2023, as winter storms, summer monsoons, and a rare hurricane partially or fully closed many SVRAs, particularly Carnegie SVRA and Hollister Hills SVRA, for lengthy periods. In June 2024 the Post Fire burned a significant portion of Hungry Valley SVRA. Despite these impacts and staff vacancies, the OHV interpretive staff throughout the state remain creative and committed to providing high-quality experiences for the OHV community.

## Interpretation And Education Program Highlights

This section highlights the public engagement opportunities and educational content used to reach visitors, schoolchildren, and the public since 2022.



# CARNEGIE SVRA

Park interpreters promote safe riding practices, proper riding gear, and Carnegie's history through pop-up information stations, drop-in Junior Ranger programs, history rides, and outreach booths at special events. A new Junior Ranger geology program was developed with support from the SVRA's environmental scientist, who is also a trained geologist. The interpretive team also provided its first-ever in-park school program to three third-grade classes in November 2023. The program explored animal adaptations with a hike in the creek area of the SVRA using taxidermy, pelts, skulls, tracks, and scat activities to keep 97 students engaged. The interpretive team hopes to continue to grow the in-park school program.

During park closures in 2023 due to massive flooding from atmospheric river events, interpreters created social media videos to keep the public updated about storm damage repairs. Staff also took the opportunity to create and install, near the original cultural Carnegie townsite, four new interpretive panels about the town's industrial history associated with the Carnegie Brick and Pottery Factory. The reopening of the park, in April 2023, was celebrated with a visitor appreciation day supported by the California Off-Road Foundation, Hayward Motorcycle Club, Raintown Off-Road Club, and Riders Recycle.

The interpretive team participated in multiple outreach events. During multiple hill climb events, the Carnegie SVRA interpretive booth communicated information about natural resources, and Tread Lightly® and OHV safety principles, and engaged the public with hands-on craft activities. Community events included the City of Livermore's Trunk or Treat event, The City of Tracy's Parade of Lights, and Sacramento Snake Fest.



# HEBER DUNES SVRA

Interpretation within the park for the 2022 and 2023 riding seasons was limited to static messaging for visitors while the vacant permanent state park interpreter I position was being filled. The messaging included whip and flag requirements for recreational off-road vehicles and OHV Safety Week messaging distribution.

Interpretive staff worked with the City of El Centro's Keeping Youth on Track Education Safety (KYOTES) Mini-bike Program during its sessions utilizing the park's training course. They reiterated safety messaging and the opportunities riding could provide and spoke on various topics ranging from park careers to desert safety.

Heber Dunes SVRA was visited by OHMVR interpretive staff regularly in 2024. Using the mobile interpretation model from Ocotillo Wells SVRA, the team set up pop-up canopies in Heber Dunes to interact with the public during targeted weekends. Staff interacted with 215 visitors in the park. In cooperation with the Ocotillo Wells District Resources team, two cleanup events were organized in conjunction with the park's Habitat Protection Plan.



# HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA

Comprised of a very small, but dedicated group of seasonal employees, the interpretive team at Hollister Hills SVRA conveyed resource stewardship messaging and safe riding principles through youth programs, participation in community events, and outreach booths within the park.

The interpretive team regularly facilitates in-park K-12 school programs and Junior Ranger programs. Staff also present to local schools and libraries, and during local Hollister Hills SVRA events including the STEAM fair, National Night Out, and Kids in the Park. Guided hikes in the nature area and evening programs remain popular. When the park was closed due to storm damage during the winter of 2023, interpretive staff shifted and focused on presenting school-age programs outside the park in area schools and libraries.

Hollister Hills was the only SVRA selected to be part of the new State Parks Adventure Pass program, which provides fourth grade students in California with free access to a select number of state park units. When launched in 2022, 19 state parks, including Hollister Hills, were selected to participate in the program. In spring 2024, the number of state park units expanded to 54. With the help and support of the California Outdoor Recreation Foundation (CORF), a fundraising partner with the OHMVR Division, Hollister Hills SVRA received a grant from Parks California that allowed it to provide fourth graders and their families with free Motorcycle Safety Foundation motorcycle training classes and the related safety equipment. Fourth graders and their families learned the basic skills of riding along with Tread Lightly® principles. Nine families have participated along with a Scouting America (formerly Boy Scouts of America) group.

A separate grant received by CORF in 2023 from the Yamaha Outdoor Access Initiative further enhanced the Adventure Pass program at Hollister Hills by funding the purchase of a new Yamaha 125 motorcycle and additional safety gear for training classes. The grant also funded bus charters for two fourth grade groups to visit the SVRA on a field trip in November 2023.



# HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA

Interpretive staff at Hungry Valley SVRA regularly utilize social media to convey park and riding conditions, safe vehicle operation in different terrain or conditions, safety topics, resource protection, and recreational opportunities. When the park was closed for three months during the winter of 2023, interpretive staff posted park updates and continually engaged the public with a successful series called “Tow Truck Tuesday,” highlighting precarious situations in which OHV users find themselves with the public invited to provide comments on how to avoid or get out of such situations. In 2024, interpretive staff are writing a social media plan for the park to ensure important and key topics are communicated effectively to the OHV community.

Interpretive staff provides roving interpretation on weekends at the SVRA's campgrounds and staging areas, providing safety tips and park information and answering questions. Outreach booths at community events engage 100-300 people each day. These events include the Wind Wolves

Preserve Nature Festival and Frazier Park Holiday Parade and Festival in 2023, the Pine Mountain Club Christmas Parade and the Fiesta Days event in Frazier Park, and the annual Earth Day celebration with the Kern River Parkway Foundation in Bakersfield.

For youth programming, interpretive staff offered Junior Ranger programs both in the park and at the Frazier Park Branch of the Kern County Library. Within the park, K-12 school programs were provided to students from the local area, including Peak to Peak Mountain Charter School and El Tejon Elementary School. In 2023, interpretive staff worked with Frazier Mountain High School's Future Farmers of America (FFA) group to pilot a new program called Mountain Mechanics. FFA students from grades 9-12 learned the basics of vehicle maintenance and road/trailside emergencies during a five-month period. The program proved to be well-received and staff would like to offer the program again.

A volunteer workday was held in September 2024 to repair and restore the eastern and southern areas of the park impacted by the Post Fire, which severely impacted the Park in June 2024. Approximately 200 volunteers spread native grass and shrub seeds, removed invasive mustard plants, made upgrades to the 4x4 practice area, painted restrooms, and replaced damaged fencing throughout the park. Prior to the SVRA's reopening on Nov. 1, interpretive staff engaged the public with social media and provided out of park programs in schools, libraries, and other community venues.

## OCEANO DUNES SVRA



Park interpreters at Oceano Dunes engage with visitors through roving interpretation, educational pop-ups, and themed events. With the resurgence of legal-size Pismo clams surfacing along the shoreline in large numbers in recent years, education through roving interpretation has proven successful in reducing the amount of illegal take of the clam. Small pop-up events within the park allow interpretive staff to connect with OHV enthusiasts about safe riding and proper riding gear and provide fun activities, including a park-wide scavenger hunt. In 2023, SVRA staff participated in several community outreach events, including Law Enforcement Night at the Downtown San Luis Obispo Farmers' Market, the Pismo Beach Clam Festival, and Sheriff's Family Day in San Luis Obispo County.

Interpretive staff host 1,200 to 1,500 third-grade students annually in the park through the Chumash Education program. In 2023 through the support of the Central Coast State Parks Association, school bus fees incurred by teachers for K-12 field trips to the park were reimbursed. In 2024 the interpreters educated 500 K-12 students virtually through the Discovering the Dunes PORTS program.

A wide-angle photograph of a desert landscape. The foreground is filled with low-lying, scrubby vegetation in shades of green, yellow, and white. In the background, a range of mountains stretches across the horizon under a clear, bright sky.

# Ocotillo Wells SVRA

The interpretive program at Ocotillo Wells relied on an enthusiastic team of seasonals to assist with park interpretive programming until the permanent interpreter positions were filled in 2024.

Mobile interpretation pop-ups have proven to be effective, allowing the interpretive team to make public contacts, share safety messaging, and deliver interpretive messages on a variety of topics. In 2023, the main safety messaging focused on the whip & flag requirements for ROVs with information conveyed through posters, signs, flyers, information cards, and creative social media posts. In 2024, a First Day Ride was offered and the popular Night Sky and Scorpion Search programs were expanded.

Interpretive staff provide educational programs to multiple school groups annually. In 2024, interpreters began work with Imperial County Department of Probation's ASPIRE afterschool program. Through the ASPIRE program, the interpretive team was able to work closely with fourth through seventh grade students to cover subjects including desert safety and sustainable recreation. Staff is currently developing a new science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) program to teach students how to calculate a vehicle's approach, breakover, and departure angle and relate that back to vehicle physics.

A photograph of a rolling prairie landscape. The foreground is dominated by a dense field of bright yellow wildflowers. In the middle ground, there are several trees, including a large, leafless tree. The background shows a clear blue sky and distant hills.

# Prairie City SVRA

Prairie City interpretive staff engage the public through educational tours & presentations, Junior Ranger Programs, OHV safety trainings, roving, park-sponsored special events, booths at other special events, and stakeholder meetings.

The park is a popular place for promoter-sponsored events allowing the interpretive team to engage the public with an interactive outreach booth. Park-sponsored events include Safety Week activities and training courses, Visitor Appreciation Day, and the popular Headlight Festival during the holidays.

In 2023, a unique community collaboration for an Eagle Scout project delivered a brand new, portable remote-control crawler course and obstacles. Showcased at the annual Visitor Appreciation Day, the course is used to educate the public about off-road driving techniques and responsibilities. In 2024, new educational opportunities included a Junior Ranger program at Auburn State Recreation Area, a "How to Interpret" presentation for Sacramento State University's Recreation Program, and a joint outreach presence at the Sacramento Snake Festival with Carnegie SVRA's interpretive team. Two college interns gained firsthand interpretation experience over a two-month period as they completed their internships with the park's environmental resources team.

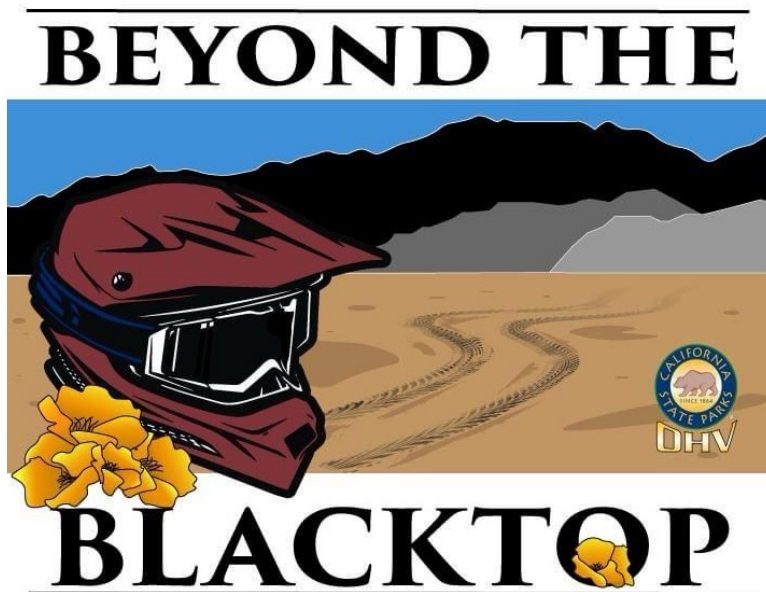
## Statewide Outreach And Education

In 2023, the OHMVR Division's Statewide Education, Interpretation, and Outreach Program (Statewide Outreach and Education) marked its 15th anniversary and its first full year providing public outreach events following COVID-19 restrictions. Through its outreach booth, the Statewide Outreach and Education team continues to encourage youth and families to explore OHV recreation activities while learning about safety and resource protections through popular, hands-on activities like the remote-control crawler course and the furs, scats, and skulls wildlife discovery program.

New additions to hands-on activities in 2023 included utilizing smaller vehicles for the remote-control crawler program when there is limited space available and adding prehistoric skulls to the wildlife discovery program. Several OHV safety-related videos were also produced and shared to get over obstacles.

In 2023, the interpretive team piloted a new K-12 education program focused on OHV recreation and resource management through the PORTS: Parks Online Resources for Teachers and Students® distance learning program. PORTS connects interpreters with K-12 students in their classrooms for a live, interactive virtual field trip. With new interpretive staff added in 2024 the Statewide Outreach and Education program is developing a new middle school and high school-focused PORTS program that will integrate STEM concepts centered around OHV riding principles and sustainable OHV recreation.

The interpretive team continues to actively use social media to communicate safe and responsible recreation messaging. In fall 2024, the team launched the OHMVR Division's "Beyond the Blacktop" podcast series highlighting the history of the sport, resource management principles and efforts within SVRAs, and safe and responsible riding principles.



*OHMVR Division launched its first podcast, "Beyond the Blacktop," on Spotify, Amazon Music, and iHeartRadio in 2024. Each episode will go behind the scenes on wide-ranging topics, from how science informs our work, how critical safety education is, where OHV grants help fund responsible recreation, and how community partners, volunteers, and corpmembers respond to the call and positively impact California lands. Artwork provided by Megan Stanley, State Parks Interpreter I.*



# 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 (SVRAs) 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, the federal Clean Water Act, and regional water board regulations or permits.



## CARNEGIE SVRA

### 2023 Winter Storm Damage Update

During the winter of 2022-23, Carnegie SVRA received over 20 inches of rain, more than twice its annual average. Mudslides impacted the canyon where Carnegie resides, resulting in a 103-day closure of the park while staff worked diligently to assess and repair damaged areas. Major repair work finished in November 2023, but the storms caused so much damage some areas of the park may take several seasons to recover completely.



## HOLLISTER HILLS SVRA

### Stormwater Management and Impacts from the 2023-24 FEMA Storm Events

Winter 2023 brought many storm events that had enough power and precipitation to produce high volumes of water that were greater than what the park's main creek could contain. This caused high flows of water to spill from the Bird Creek channel onto the floodplain. Blockages, created by built-up timber debris, caused the flow of water to divert, undermining and cutting into the adjacent

banks bordering the park's maintenance yard. This caused the flooding of the maintenance building, and nearly the loss of a park residence.

The significant flow was too much to handle for the culvert that conveys creek water underneath the main park entrance road, causing water to back up and begin flowing over the road. This led to the main access road into the park being cut off. The alternate entrance to the park, which is a bridge between the park's maintenance yard and park residences, was destroyed; abutments were scoured out and undermined, causing the bridge to collapse.

North Canyon Creek, in the park's largest watershed, has a series of sediment basins built within its lower reaches. They are meant to pond water, allowing for the capture of suspended sediments being carried by the creek. Scandia Basin, the farthest upstream basin, failed as the high flows during the peak storm events exceeded its capacity. This caused the ponded water to overflow the dam wall, scouring out the material and blowing through the wall. The basin is now open to natural flow and no longer detains water.

Some of the main drag roads within the campgrounds were impacted by either complete failures or adjacent debris flows landing and covering the road. Many of the trails in Adobe Ranch were also impacted and made unsafe by the presence of sink holes, landslides, and washouts. Soils stayed wetter longer than normal and later into the spring. Adobe trails stayed closed for most of the winter and part of spring. Trail repairs were delayed by the amount of time it took soils to dry. Dense vegetation overgrew most of the trails. This resulted in every trail in the Adobe Ranch, Renz Ranch, Hudner Ranch, and Mudstone Ranch needing to be worked by heavy equipment, largely due to the amount of grass that needed to be shaved off the trails. The benefit was that every single trail in all of the ranches was maintained, which is not a normal annual practice. Ultimately, all of these ranches stayed closed until Memorial Day weekend for two straight years.



## HUNGRY VALLEY SVRA

### Post Fire Update

The Post Fire started on June 15, 2024, at approximately 1:45 p.m., in the town of Gorman, close to Interstate 5. The fire burned 10,064 acres of Hungry Valley SVRA. A red flag warning persisted during the weekend. The fire mostly burned the central and eastern sections of the park. Two SVRA structures were destroyed—the south kiosk and well shed. Residents of the park were placed under evacuation order. Approximately 1,200 visitors were evacuated from the park. The fire was contained on June 26, 2024.

The following efforts have been completed, are currently being addressed, or are scheduled to be completed at Hungry Valley SVRA related to the fire:

- Drone flights have been conducted in the burn area to document post-fire conditions. California State University, Northridge also conducted supplemental drone surveys in the burn area.
- Photo point monitoring sites were visited and photographed shortly after the fire.

- All habitat monitoring plots will be visited and photographed this winter.
- Bird surveys will be conducted in the winter. Vegetation, small mammal, reptile, and bird surveys will be conducted in the spring.
- Bat acoustic detectors were deployed at some sites during the fire and will be deployed again in the fall and winter.
- Game cameras were deployed at some sites during the fire and were deployed in late summer, post fire, for large mammal monitoring.
- A scientific collection permit was issued for DRI to install weather stations and monitor erosion/sediment movement from the first storm post fire.
- SVRA staff members coordinated with the United States Forest Service’s Burned Area Emergency Response team to have it share data on soil burn severity and reports on potential sedimentation and flooding after storm events.
- A PowerPoint presentation about the Post Fire was created for the OHMVR Commission.
- Fencing and barriers were created to close off the burn area from the public to allow for the regeneration of native habitat.
- Hungry Valley SVRA’s archaeologist conducted cultural and historical surveys of the fire break lines created by bulldozers (dozer lines) during the Post Fire.
- Hungry Valley natural resources staff members monitored and facilitated the rehabilitation of fire suppression dozer lines.

# OCEANO DUNES SVRA



## Air Quality Program Updates

To address windblown dust and elevated particulate matter (PM) levels downwind of Oceano Dunes SVRA, State Parks has implemented a series of dust control and monitoring measures in the park, which include native vegetation planting and dust and meteorological monitoring under a Particulate Matter Reduction Plan.

State Parks entered into a Stipulated Order of Abatement (SOA; Case No. 17-01) with the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (APCD) in May 2018. That agreement was amended in 2019 and again in 2022. The focus of the SOA is to reduce particulate matter levels downwind of the Oceano Dunes SVRA, thereby improving air quality for downwind communities. The updated air quality target as per the 2022 amendment of the SOA is to “eliminate emissions in excess of naturally occurring emissions...that contribute to downwind violations of the state and federal PM10 [particulate matter with a diameter of 10 microns or less] air quality standards.”

State Parks has been working with the San Luis Obispo County APCD and the Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) to develop a framework to quantify “emissions in excess of naturally occurring emissions.” The SAG finalized the framework in December 2023. State Parks worked with the Desert Research Institute (DRI) to implement the framework. The results were submitted to the San Luis Obispo County APCD on March 15, 2024.

According to the results, the emissions coming off Oceano Dunes SVRA are NOT in excess of naturally occurring emissions, with the particulate matter of 10 microns or less (PM10) mitigation projects in place. State Parks is currently working with the SAG and DRI on air quality modeling updates and new emissivity measurements; however, initial results indicate State Parks is in compliance with the SOA. More information about the Oceano Dunes SVRA air quality programs is available at <https://www.slocleanair.org/air-quality/oceano-dunes-efforts.php>.

## **Biodiversity Management Plan Update**

In fall 2020, Oceano Dunes District and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife collaborated to develop a Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP). The BMP describes the unique biological diversity of Oceano Dunes SVRA, the management goals and activities required to conserve this biodiversity, the actions needed to conserve this biodiversity, and the needed actions to achieve these goals. For more information about the BMP see the [Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation 2022 Program Report](#).

## **Habitat Conservation Plan Update**

Oceano Dunes District is working closely with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to update and circulate the Oceano Dunes District Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) that will cover six plant and six animal species that are listed or candidate species under the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA). The department released a draft HCP in 2020 and solicited public comments on a draft environmental impact report (DEIR). Since 2020, two species known from Oceano Dunes SVRA, the southwestern pond turtle and western spadefoot, have been listed as candidate species under the act and are being added as covered species under the HCP. In addition to the new candidate species, the HCP is being updated to reflect recent park conditions and new information that is relevant to the management of the covered species. A public draft HCP and updated DEIR should be available for public review in the first half of 2025. In addition, the USFWS will circulate a new environmental assessment for public comment.

The Oceano Dunes HCP covers multiple ongoing activities including all forms of public access and recreation, ongoing maintenance of facilities, ongoing natural resource management activities, and planned future projects that are anticipated within the twenty-five-year term of the HCP. This HCP will provide long-term coverage for continued park operations under the FESA and represents a substantial commitment by the department to conserve endangered and threatened species while providing ongoing public access to Oceano Dunes SVRA.

# CHAPTER 7: OVER SNOW VEHICLE AND WINTER RECREATION PROGRAMS

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 cooperative agreement with Region Five of the United States Forest Service (USFS). Additional support is provided by various program partners, including county government agencies, volunteer groups, and private contractors. These partners work together to provide a comprehensive network of 17 trail systems, 15 sub-systems, 37 trailheads, and 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.

## Environmental Stewardship

The OSV program's Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Plan (MMRP) requires the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division to administer a rigorous framework for environmental oversight and protection. This framework calls for comprehensive monitoring of all groomed trail systems and areas vulnerable to motorized incursions and thorough documentation and reporting of such activities. In the 15 years since the MMRP was established, OSV program staff have gained a wealth of insights on the environmental circumstances and issues present on OSV trails. With

this information in mind, staff members spent the summer of 2023 working with environmental experts to improve and strengthen the procedures and requirements for monitoring and documentation.

Once this process was complete, technical staff members were commissioned to build a customized mapping and data-collection application using ArcGIS Survey123. The new application will allow forest partners to collect and map monitoring-related data real-time from the field using Windows-based tablets. The data will be held in the application while staff members are working offline and be uploaded to the database the next time an internet connection is made. Not only will this project modernize collection methods and eliminate outdated paper forms, it will also provide new tools for the tracking, collection, mapping, and analysis of environmental monitoring-related data.



## Training and Certification



Training plays an essential role in the success of the OSV program. Grooming tractor operators must train for hundreds of hours, both in the classroom and in the field, to meet the OHMVR Division's high standards for trail quality, visitor and operator safety, environmental stewardship, and proper maintenance of state-owned equipment. Before an operator can begin a hands-on mentorship and training, the operator must complete the Entry Level Snow Grooming course. This course is offered bi-annually as part of a three-day training event, which is hosted and facilitated by the PistenBully

ProAcademy in Reno, NV. Between training events, new operators have the option of taking an online version of the course. This option requires some extra support from assigned mentors to ensure the operator is familiar with all topics covered in the classroom.

OSV program partners also require training on the safe and appropriate operation of OSVs. The vast majority of the program's environmental monitoring is conducted on OSVs owned and maintained by the partners themselves. While the State of California has no ownership in these vehicles, it still needs to uphold the highest of standards for environmental stewardship, safety, and trail quality. Each season, a small handful of forests host on-site training clinics which are customized with the state's requirements in mind. Program staff from other forests and partner agencies are invited to attend these clinics free of charge.

## OSV Volunteers in Action

Behind the statewide OSV program is a dedicated force of volunteers whose contributions are indispensable. From trail maintenance to safety to special events, volunteers on OSV trails play a crucial role in providing enjoyable and safe experiences for all visitors. The following are just a few examples of the countless contributions made by the OSV program's volunteers.

**Trail Grooming:** One of the most visible contributions of OSV program volunteers is found in trail grooming operations. In fact, volunteers are responsible for maintaining over a quarter of the OSV program's groomed trails statewide. After completing the requirements for certification, volunteers use specialized equipment to create optimal riding surfaces for winter recreationists to enjoy.

**Hazard Removal & Signs:** Each season, OSV program volunteers spend hundreds of hours removing downed trees, clearing debris, marking hazards and obstructions, and installing signs and markers to guide riders and provide the safest conditions possible. Additional volunteer support is provided on trail systems groomed by USFS personnel. When an extra-large tree or boulder falls on a trail, local volunteers arrive and work tirelessly to get the trail cleared.

**Search & Rescue:** Wintertime search and rescue operations are uniquely complex for a wide variety of reasons. Snow-covered terrain alters the landscape, concealing hazards and increasing the chances of getting lost or disoriented. Additional challenges are created by harsh weather conditions, shorter daylight hours, vulnerability to avalanches, and limited access to remote areas. In order to mitigate these challenges, volunteer OSV enthusiasts undergo extensive training to assist sheriff's departments with search and rescue activities. Many of these volunteers ride the trails continuously each weekend. This enables them to spot emergencies quickly, notify public safety communications operators, and render lifesaving aid immediately.

**Special Events:** Throughout the winter season, volunteer clubs host a wide variety of special events on OSV trail systems. These events give OSV enthusiasts the opportunity to come together and give back to their local communities. Nearly every trail system hosts a “Poker Run,” through which OSV enthusiasts raise funds for local charities, volunteer fire departments, and a variety of other worthy causes. Other popular events include scavenger hunts, group rides for Special Olympics athletes, and even dog sled races.

## SNO-Park Day Use and Season Pass Sales

The 2023-24 SNO-park permit program witnessed strong sales of both day passes and season passes even though California experienced a late snowfall. Day passes were an especially popular option during the season, with over 21,800 passes sold. The revenue from day pass sales alone totaled \$288,393.60, reflecting consistent visitor engagement. This demonstrates a 24% increase in day pass sales from the previous year. Season passes also performed well, with 9,603 passes sold, showing a 11% decrease in season pass sales from the previous year. The decrease in season pass sales can be attributed to the late snow season and irregular snowfall, resulting in more day passes being sold for the season. The revenue generated from season passes was \$361,307.40, indicating strong demand among SNO-park visitors. Combining the revenue from both day passes and season passes, the total revenue for the 2023-24 SNO-Park season reached \$649,701.00.

*SNO-Park Day Use and Season Pass Sales*

| Pass Types and Revenue | 2019-20             | 2020-21             | 2021-22             |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Day Passes Sold        | 28,125              | 41,048              | 24,258              |
| Season Passes Sold     | 7,188               | 11,143              | 9,261               |
| Day Pass Revenue       | \$123,754.20        | \$180,620.80        | \$106,742.40        |
| Season Pass Revenue    | \$168,836.50        | \$261,899.50        | \$217,669.50        |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>   | <b>\$292,590.70</b> | <b>\$442,520.30</b> | <b>\$324,411.90</b> |

| Pass Types and Revenue | 2022-23             | 2023-24             |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Day Passes Sold        | 17,645              | 21,848              |
| Season Passes Sold     | 10,756              | 9,603               |
| Day Pass Revenue       | \$229,999.60        | \$288,393.60        |
| Season Pass Revenue    | \$403,224.01        | \$361,307.40        |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>   | <b>\$633,223.61</b> | <b>\$649,701.00</b> |

# APPENDIX A: OHMVR COMMISSIONERS TERMS OF OFFICE APPOINTMENTS 1983 - PRESENT

| Appointing Power                 | Appointee          | Appointed | Term Expired | Period of Service            |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|--------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Governor - #1</b>             |                    |           |              |                              |
| <b>Brown</b>                     | Stephen Casagrande | 02/83     | 01/85        | 02/83 to 07/85               |
| <b>Deukmejian</b>                | Betty Morris       | 07/85     | 01/89        | 07/85 to 04/94               |
| <b>Deukmejian/Wilson</b>         | Betty Morris       | 05/90     | 01/93        |                              |
| <b>Wilson</b>                    | Janette McGarvie   | 04/94     | 01/97        | 04/94 to 10/98               |
| <b>Wilson/Davis</b>              | George Galvan      | 10/98     | 01/01        | 10/98 to 01/02               |
| <b>Davis/<br/>Schwarzenegger</b> | Robert Chavez      | 03/02     | 01/05        | 03/02 to 05/06               |
| <b>Schwarzenegger</b>            | Gary E. Willard    | 05/06     | 01/09        |                              |
| <b>Schwarzenegger</b>            | Gary E. Willard    | 05/09     | 01/13        | 05/06 to 01/13               |
| <b>Brown</b>                     | Erin Hafkenschiel  | 05/14     | 05/17        | 05/14 to 02/16<br>(resigned) |
| <b>Brown</b>                     | Patricia Ureña     | 03/18     | 01/21        |                              |
| <b>Newsom</b>                    | Patricia Ureña     | 03/21     | 01/25        | 03/18 to Current             |
| <b>Governor - #2</b>             |                    |           |              |                              |
| <b>Brown</b>                     | Howard Wilshire    | 02/83     | 01/84        | 02/83 to 05/84               |
| <b>Deukmejian</b>                | Edward Waldheim    | 05/84     | 01/88        | 05/84 to 05/90               |
| <b>Deukmejian/Wilson</b>         | Loren Lutz         | 05/90     | 01/92        | 05/90 to 04/94               |
| <b>Wilson</b>                    | Donald Amador      | 04/94     | 01/96        | 04/94 to 05/00               |
| <b>Wilson/Davis</b>              | Donald Amador      | 01/96     | 01/00        |                              |

| <b>Appointing Power</b>          | <b>Appointee</b>    | <b>Appointed</b> | <b>Term Expired</b> | <b>Period of Service</b>     |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Davis/<br/>Schwarzenegger</b> | Michael F. Prizmich | 05/00            | 01/04               | 05/00 to 02/07<br>(resigned) |
| <b>Schwarzenegger</b>            | Michael F. Prizmich | 05/06            | 01/08               |                              |
| <b>Schwarzenegger</b>            | Kane Silverberg     | 07/08            | 01/12               | 07/08 to 03/12               |
| <b>Brown</b>                     | Sarah Miggins       | 03/18            | 01/20               |                              |
| <b>Newsom</b>                    | Sarah Miggins       | 03/20            | 01/24               | 03/18 to 08/20<br>(resigned) |
| <b>Newsom</b>                    | Tommy Randle        | 06/21            | 01/24               |                              |
| <b>Newsom</b>                    | Tommy Randle        | 03/24            | 01/28               | 06/21 to Current             |
| <b>Governor - #3</b>             |                     |                  |                     |                              |
| <b>Brown</b>                     | Martin Coren        | 02/83            | 01/86               | 02/83 to 8/84<br>(resigned)  |
| <b>Deukmejian</b>                | Mark Anderson       | 06/85            | 01/86               | 06/85 to 02/87               |
| <b>Deukmejian</b>                | Mark Anderson       | 02/86            | 01/90               |                              |
| <b>Deukmejian</b>                | Eugene Chappie      | 02/87            | 01/90               | 02/87 to 05/92<br>(resigned) |
| <b>Deukmejian/Wilson</b>         | Eugene Chappie      | 05/90            | 01/94               |                              |
| <b>Wilson</b>                    | Eldon Nobles        | 07/94            | 01/98               | 07/94 to 02/00<br>(resigned) |
| <b>Wilson/Davis</b>              | Eldon Nobles        | 01/98            | 01/02               |                              |
| <b>Davis</b>                     | Daphne C. Greene    | 05/00            | 01/02               | 05/00 to 04/03<br>(resigned) |
| <b>Schwarzenegger</b>            | Edward H. Waldheim  | 11/03            | 01/06               | 11/03 to 05/06               |
| <b>Schwarzenegger</b>            | Mark D. McMillin    | 05/06            | 01/10               | 05/06 to 3/10                |
| <b>Brown</b>                     | Ted Cabral          | 03/13            | 01/14               | 03/13 to 01/14               |
| <b>Brown</b>                     | Ted Cabral          | 03/14            | 01/18               | 04/14 to 01/18               |
| <b>Brown</b>                     | Ted Cabral          | 03/18            | 01/22               | 03/13 to 1/22                |
| <b>Newsom</b>                    | Nicholas Mueller    | 08/22            | 01/26               | 08/22 to Current             |
| <b>Governor - #4</b>             |                     |                  |                     |                              |
| <b>Schwarzenegger</b>            | Bradley Franklin    | 07/08            | 01/12               | 07/08 to 03/12               |

| <b>Appointing Power</b>                | <b>Appointee</b>  | <b>Appointed</b> | <b>Term Expired</b> | <b>Period of Service</b>     |
|--|-------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Brown</b>                           | Kevin P. Murphy   | 03/13            | 01/16               |                              |
| <b>Brown</b>                           | Kevin P. Murphy   | 02/16            | 01/20               | 03/13 to 03/20               |
| <b>Newsom</b>                          | Roger Salazar     | 05/20            | 01/24               |                              |
| <b>Newsom</b>                          | Roger Salazar     | 03/24            | 01/28               | 5/20 to Current              |
| <b>Governor - #5</b>                   |                   |                  |                     |                              |
| <b>Schwarzenegger</b>                  | Paul Slavik       | 07/08            | 01/12               |                              |
| <b>Brown</b>                           | Paul Slavik       | 03/12            | 01/16               |                              |
| <b>Brown</b>                           | Paul Slavik       | 02/16            | 01/20               | 07/08 to 3/20                |
| <b>Newsom</b>                          | Tina Brazil       | 05/20            | 01/24               | 05/20 to 07/23               |
| <b>Newsom</b>                          | Kathleen Anderson | 08/23            | 01/24               |                              |
| <b>Newsom</b>                          | Kathleen Anderson | 03/24            | 01/28               | 08/23 to Current             |
| <b>Senate - #1</b>                     |                   |                  |                     |                              |
| <b>David Roberti</b>                   | Michael Bishop    | 02/83            | 01/84               | 02/83 to 03/88               |
| <b>David Roberti</b>                   | Michael Bishop    | 01/84            | 01/88               |                              |
| <b>David Roberti</b>                   | Hugh McGuigan     | 03/88            | 01/92               | 03/88 to 01/00               |
| <b>David Roberti/<br/>Bill Lockyer</b> | Hugh McGuigan     | 01/92            | 01/96               |                              |
| <b>Bill Lockyer/<br/>John Burton</b>   | Hugh McGuigan     | 01/96            | 01/00               |                              |
| <b>John Burton</b>                     | Paul J. Spitler   | 01/00            | 01/04               | 01/00 to 12/07<br>(resigned) |
| <b>John Burton/<br/>Don Perata</b>     | Paul J. Spitler   | 01/04            | 01/08               |                              |
| <b>Don Perata</b>                      | Eric K. Lueder    | 05/08            | 01/12               | 05/08 to 06/12               |
| <b>Darryl Steinberg</b>                | Teresa Villegas   | 07/12            | 01/16               | 07/12 to 2/16<br>(resigned)  |
| <b>Kevin de León</b>                   | Kevin Litwin      | 04/16            | 01/20               | 04/16 to 1/20<br>(replaced)  |
| <b>Toni Atkins</b>                     | Thomas Lemmon     | 01/20            | 01/24               |                              |
| <b>Toni Atkins</b>                     | Thomas Lemmon     | 01/24            | 01/28               | 01/20 to Current             |

| <b>Appointing Power</b>                | <b>Appointee</b>   | <b>Appointed</b> | <b>Term Expired</b> | <b>Period of Service</b>     |
|--|--------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Senate - #2</b>                     |                    |                  |                     |                              |
| <b>David Roberti</b>                   | James Livermore    | 02/83            | 01/85               | 02/83 to 01/89               |
| <b>David Roberti</b>                   | James Livermore    | 01/85            | 01/89               |                              |
| <b>David Roberti</b>                   | Paul Golde         | 01/89            | 01/93               | 01/89 to 04/93               |
| <b>David Roberti/<br/>Bill Lockyer</b> | J. Robert Hayes    | 04/93            | 01/97               | 04/93 to 03/97               |
| <b>Bill Lockyer/<br/>John Burton</b>   | Kenneth R. Nelson  | 03/97            | 01/01               | 03/97 to 01/01               |
| <b>John Burton/<br/>Don Perata</b>     | Harold Thomas      | 01/01            | 01/05               | 01/01 to 12/07<br>(resigned) |
| <b>Don Perata</b>                      | Harold Thomas      | 01/05            | 01/08               |                              |
| <b>Darryl Steinberg</b>                | Stan Van Velsor    | 02/09            | 01/13               | 02/09 to 01/13               |
| <b>Darryl Steinberg</b>                | Edward Patrovsky   | 01/13            | 01/17               |                              |
| <b>Kevin de León</b>                   | Edward Patrovsky   | 03/17            | 01/21               |                              |
| <b>Toni Atkins</b>                     | Edward Patrovsky   | 01/21            | 01/25               | 01/13 to Current             |
| <b>Assembly - #1</b>                   |                    |                  |                     |                              |
| <b>Willie Brown</b>                    | John Motley        | 02/83            | 01/84               | 02/83 to 11/96               |
| <b>Willie Brown</b>                    | John Motley        | 01/84            | 01/88               |                              |
| <b>Willie Brown</b>                    | John Motley        | 01/88            | 01/92               |                              |
| <b>Willie Brown</b>                    | John Motley        | 01/92            | 01/96               |                              |
| <b>Curt Pringle</b>                    | James Bramham      | 11/96            | 01/00               | 11/96 to 02/00               |
| <b>Antonio Villaraigosa</b>            | Judith A. Anderson | 02/00            | 01/04               | 02/00 to 01/08               |
| <b>Herb Wesson</b>                     | Judith A. Anderson | 01/04            | 01/08               |                              |
| <b>John Pérez</b>                      | Diana Pérez        | 02/11            | 01/12               | 02/11 to 01/16<br>(replaced) |
| <b>John Pérez</b>                      | Diana Pérez        | 01/12            | 01/16               |                              |
| <b>Toni Atkins</b>                     | Thomas Lemmon      | 01/16            | 01/20               | 01/16 to 01/20<br>(transfer) |
| <b>Anthony Rendon</b>                  | Diane Ross-Leech   | 08/20            | 01/24               |                              |
| <b>Robert Rivas</b>                    | Diane Ross-Leech   | 10/24            | 01/28               | 08/20 to Current             |

| <b>Appointing Power</b> | <b>Appointee</b>   | <b>Appointed</b> | <b>Term Expired</b> | <b>Period of Service</b>     |
|-------------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Assembly - #2</b>    |                    |                  |                     |                              |
| <b>Willie Brown</b>     | Marge Sutton       | 02/83            | 01/86               | 02/83 to 02/02               |
| <b>Willie Brown</b>     | Marge Sutton       | 01/86            | 01/90               |                              |
| <b>Willie Brown</b>     | Marge Sutton       | 01/90            | 01/94               |                              |
| <b>Willie Brown</b>     | Marge Sutton       | 01/94            | 01/98               |                              |
| <b>Cruz Bustamante</b>  | Marge Sutton       | 01/98            | 01/02               |                              |
| <b>Herb Wesson</b>      | John Brissenden    | 05/02            | 01/06               | 05/02 to 03/09<br>(resigned) |
| <b>John Pérez</b>       | Breene Kerr        | 02/11            | 05/14               | 02/11 to 05/14<br>(replaced) |
| <b>Toni Atkins</b>      | Eric Lueder        | 05/14            | 01/18               | 05/14 to 10/18<br>(resigned) |
| <b>Anthony Rendon</b>   | Kimberlina Whettam | 02/19            | 01/22               | 02/19 to 01/23<br>(replaced) |
| <b>Anthony Rendon</b>   | Shaun Flanigan     | 06/23            | 01/26               | 06/23 to Current             |



# APPENDIX B: TEXT REFERENCED IN CHAPTER 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 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 illegal 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 illegal 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.

# APPENDIX C: IN-LIEU FEE ALLOCATION OF OHV LICENSE FEES

Source: State Controller's Office Division of Accounting and Reporting  
Allocation of OHV License Fee from 2022 to July 2024

| County      | Amount         |
|-------------|----------------|
| Alameda     | \$39,265.67    |
| Alpine      | \$12,157.52    |
| Amador      | \$16,805.24    |
| Butte       | \$26,446.61    |
| Calaveras   | \$10,534.35    |
| Colusa      | \$140,445.03   |
| Del Norte   | \$681.71       |
| El Dorado   | \$217,804.10   |
| Fresno      | \$29,563.88    |
| Glenn       | \$954.99       |
| Humboldt    | \$5,041.41     |
| Imperial    | \$1,654,868.77 |
| Inyo        | \$2,182.34     |
| Kern        | \$432,382.93   |
| Lake        | \$10,020.09    |
| Lassen      | \$61,672.12    |
| Los Angeles | \$438,521.10   |
| Modoc       | \$1,712.25     |
| Mono        | \$56,781.05    |
| Napa        | \$47,835.09    |
| Nevada      | \$107,534.54   |
| Orange      | \$39,702.92    |
| Placer      | \$91,257.79    |

| County          | Amount                |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Plumas          | \$208,816.14          |
| Riverside       | \$316,470.95          |
| Sacramento      | \$24,642.47           |
| San Benito      | \$344,286.53          |
| San Bernardino  | \$967,879.70          |
| San Diego       | \$171,334.53          |
| San Joaquin     | \$58,898.46           |
| San Luis Obispo | \$488,677.89          |
| Santa Barbara   | \$1,907.93            |
| Santa Clara     | \$59,596.39           |
| Shasta          | \$98,841.54           |
| Sierra          | \$47.78               |
| Siskiyou        | \$44,637.39           |
| Solano          | \$6,985.81            |
| Stanislaus      | \$5,576.94            |
| Tehama          | \$11,631.73           |
| Trinity         | \$29,503.10           |
| Tulare          | \$29,697.87           |
| Tuolumne        | \$60,898.83           |
| Ventura         | \$227,134.94          |
| Yolo            | \$1,819.93            |
| Yuba            | \$23,370.05           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>    | <b>\$6,626,828.40</b> |

*Photo of Elephant Hill in El Sereno,  
provided by Martha Benedict*



**Unauthorized off roading on Elephant Hill exploded after the COVID lockdowns went into effect in 2020 and turned into a 24/7 nightmare of noise, dust and habitat destruction on 110-acres of undeveloped green space in El Sereno, a predominately Latino community located five miles northeast of downtown Los Angeles.**

**Our organization, Save Elephant Hill (SEH), struggled for months trying to get local agencies to pay attention to this situation during the pandemic. When we made contact with the Off Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division (OHMVRD) we were blown away by the positive, proactive response we received. The agency's top leadership made themselves available by offering assistance and helping us understand the OHV landscape as well as the OHMVRD grant resources available to address off roading on the 20 acres of public lands on Elephant Hill.**

**OHMVRD representatives traveled to Los Angeles for a site visit to Elephant Hill and met with community members as well as local law enforcement agencies. There has been nothing but encouragement and support from OHMVRD since the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) applied for and then received a grant to mitigate off roading through ranger patrols, signage and site access improvements. Through a subcontract with MRCA, SEH and local partners are conducting public education about unauthorized off roading as part of a series of community events on Elephant Hill.**

**MRCA's regular ranger patrols are having a positive impact on the off roading situation. There's also a growing appreciation in the community for why Elephant Hill is off limits to vehicles and the multiple open space benefits it provides residents as well as the plants and wildlife that live there. There is also recognition of the importance of collaboration and the complementary roles that local agencies and community-based organizations play in addressing the complexities of unauthorized off roading in an urban context. All of this has been made possible by OHMVRD.**

**To say that Save Elephant Hill is grateful to the agency's leadership and staff is an understatement. The early attention, genuine concern and essential resources made available by OHMVRD to address this complex situation have been nothing less than game changing. We wouldn't be where we are today if not for the OHMVRD. Thank you!**

**~Save Elephant Hill testimonial by Elva Yanez, Board President**