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Protect Your Right to Ride!



NMOHVA Member Newsletter

February

2011

Upcoming Events

Feb 23-26 - 21st Annual Chile Challenge 4WD Trail Event

Mar 18 - 2011 NM Legislative Session Ends

March 26 - NMOHVA Annual Meeting

See the [NMOHVA Calendar](#) for event details and contacts.

Do you have an event to share? Contact NMOHVA at prez@nmohva.org for a listing in the newsletter.

NMOHVA Representing You in the Roundhouse



NMOHVA advances your OHV interests in New Mexico's annual legislative session. NMOHVA is working with legislators, lobbyists, and other groups so your voice is heard on legislation affecting OHV enthusiasts in New Mexico. NMOHVA President Mark Winscott is spending a lot

of time in the Roundhouse having personal discussions with legislators about the bills which could impact OHV use. Here is a brief outline of the bills that could affect OHV recreation being considered this session:

- House Bill 12 would better define and limit liability for landowners who allow recreational use of their property.
- House Bill 91 seeks to strip \$750,000 from the Trail Safety Fund (the OHV sticker fund) to help pay the state's expected budget shortfall. This is half the current balance of the fund, the money has accumulated over years of collecting fees from us. The Trail Safety Fund is made up entirely from OHV fees that we pay. The law which created it stated it was to be used only for the OHV program.
- House Bill 135/Senate Bill 254 would make operation of OHV's legal on some paved streets and roads in New Mexico.



All of these bills are very important but

HB91 is the most urgent. Losing half of the current fund would cripple the OHV program just as it is starting to make progress. NMOHVA is working to amend House Bill 91 by removing the line item which would seize the OHV fund money.

As these bills move through the legislative process, NMOHVA will keep you informed and tell you what you can do to influence the legislature's action. Watch for NMOHVA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATES and help us protect our OHV recreation.

NMOHVA Files Appeal on Carson National Forest West-side Travel Management Decision

NMOHVA has filed an appeal of a recent Carson National Forest's decision that would close over 300 miles of roads. In December, the Carson announced its decision for Travel Management on the West-side of the Forest. The West-side decision is for the Tres Piedras, El Rito, and Canilion Ranger Districts. The decision is described in the Decision Notice/Finding of No Significant Impact (DN/FONSI). It significantly reduces motorized big game retrieval, and dramatically limits dispersed camping from vehicles. The decision would also add three (yes, that is only three!) miles of motorized trail to the Forest's designated routes. The Carson EA states the three miles were included to 'satisfy' the public's request for ATV trails.

After careful review, NMOHVA decided to appeal the decision. NMOHVA's appeal must be based on the comments the organization submitted on the draft EA. NMOHVA had filed multiple comments exposing the improper process the Forest used to limit the alternatives (the options) considered in the EA.

"We contend the Forest didn't follow the NEPA process for identifying and analyzing alternatives. There were reasonable alternatives suggested by the motorized community that were dismissed without reason," said Mark Werkmeister, NMOHVA Board member, "We filed comments on the range of alternatives artificially limiting the consideration of more motorized trails and now we are appealing their decision."



This is the third appeal of a Travel Management decision filed by NMOHVA in the last four months. NMOHVA recently won an appeal of the Mountainair Ranger District (Cibola National Forest) Travel Management decision and the entire EA was sent back to do over. An earlier appeal of the Jicarilla Ranger District Travel Management EA was denied. All of the appeals to date have been written by the Board of Directors. Not one penny of the Access Defense Fund has been spent on these efforts to ensure that money is available to challenge appeal decisions in court if

necessary.

"These appeals are a lot of work. We would rather spend the effort working with the Forests to maintain and expand motorized recreation. They ignored our comments and the regulations, we have no other choice but to appeal," said Werkmeister.

Appeals are reviewed and decided at the Region 3 office of the Forest Service in Albuquerque. Region 3 oversees all the national forests in Arizona and New Mexico. The Forest Service has 45

days to review and reach a decision on the appeal.

Why is NMOHVA Asking for My Mailing Address?

The short answer to the question is to help us better serve our members.

The long answer is that some members have only supplied an e-mail address. As time passes, we can't always stay in communication because they have changed their (*non-forwarding*) e-mail address. When that happens we can't find them to ask for a new email address. We can't send newsletters and have no way to alert them to threats to our recreation or remind them to renew their membership.

We have found that our members want us to stay in touch with them. We can better do that by having a physical mailing address for you. 'Snail mail' gets forwarded, e-mail doesn't! The bottom line is NMOHVA can do a better job for you if we have both a physical address and a valid e-mail address.

Thanks for your understanding and support,

Mark Winscott, President

PS: Our policy is the same as it always has been. NMOHVA never has and never will sell any member information. That includes your mailing address and your email address. We will never provide your personal information, your mailing address or your email address to anyone or any organization without your personal approval.

There is Such a Thing as a FREE LUNCH! (at the Annual Meeting)

NMOHVA's Annual Meeting will be held Saturday, March 26th at Sandia BMW in Albuquerque. The Annual Meeting is a great way to personally meet your Board of Directors and fellow motorized enthusiasts. During our business meeting from 9:00-12:00, we will review the past year, elect/re-elect members of the Board, and listen to your ideas on what you want NMOHVA to focus on for the coming year. After the meeting, a free lunch will be served.



Want to be where the action is? Join the team that makes NMOHVA happen. Consider joining NMOHVA's Board of Directors. We will be electing a Vice-President, Treasurer, and two At-Large Board members at the annual meeting. Please contact NMOHVA President Mark Winscott (prez@nmohva.org) if you want to know what is involved in being a Board member.

[Atomic Moto](#) has donated a \$25 gift certificate we will be giving away as a door prize. A free lunch, door prize swag, and a chance to meet your Board and fellow members...that is WAY MORE than just a free lunch! Don't forget to mark your calendars now!

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