

## **Appendix C**

### **General Comments on OHV Use**

No qualitative analysis has been conducted. Comments were grouped by topic for ease of comprehension.

## Comments

In response to the question:

Are there any other comments you would like to make about OHV use on your district?

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### Depreciative Behavior:

- ◇ Biggest problem: keeping OHVs on roads and trails.
- ◇ Larger issue: Commercials on TV/media promoting “extreme” experience—promote bad behavior (Hummer commercial).
- ◇ We have extremely limited resources and no LEO. Illegal OHV use continues to be a growing problem on district. Resistance from locals to follow regs. because there has been no enforcement for decades. Areas with illegal trails suffer from benign neglect—serious resource damage is likely.
- ◇ 4WD vehicles going off established routes—We are signing designated routes and closing new routes created ASAP. We are rehabilitating any new routes to prevent them from becoming established.

### Education:

- ◇ Public calls Forest Service OHV "OHV parks." They stress trails-only. "OHV parks" is a state term that means a free-for-all. Need to educate on that.
- ◇ In my opinion, it is essential that the land managers establish an education campaign at the manufacture and sales levels so that resource values may be established among OHV users.
- ◇ Have to educate them [the new participants]. Problem--State doesn't want to help with funding. Write ticket for “no Green Sticker”--check every bike/OHV.
- ◇ Staging areas--great place to meet people and contact them, set up information and talk to people. In their management of OHV, the 3 Es (a management tool) 1) Education: can't expect much if we don't educate the public, 2) Engineering: put signs up where they are visible, legible, in good place/produce good route plans, and 3) Enforcement: if no compliance with 1 & 2, use enforcement to manage recreation works well.
- ◇ OHV users are confused about (or don't care about or support) the rules and managers are frustrated trying to interpret and implement the rules. When the 3E approach is successfully (and fully) implemented, both users and managers are much happier with the program. We have had several successes with this on the [named] District, [named] National Forest.

**Funding:**

- ◇ Need to find allocated Forest Service funds, not rely on state (amounts go up and down; 2 years without any funding).
- ◇ Need money! So much potential, but no money or personnel. Grants don't help.
- ◇ OHV does not get enough support and resources to effectively manage OHV use. Funding relies too much on state funds. Not enough valid OHV opportunities.
- ◇ Give us more money so we can do our jobs better.
- ◇ Lack of funding. Application for funding is cumbersome. Changes in state program. Didn't apply for funds due to 20% Forest Service charge for overhead. Funding is up for maintenance; "cranked up" details needed by state—makes it hard to participate in application process. Contributing more recreation money to apply than getting back. Forest Service dollars are more flexible, but both are dwindling.

**Land Issues:**

- ◇ Area needs to be large enough to support use—less land is available and shrinking allocation--compromising quality to meet demands ("saddle time" less—What else do they do with their day?)
- ◇ Private land issues.
- ◇ Too many people at trail access points is also due to limited parking and trailheads. They need to apply for snow parks (need at least one). Middle of public survey needs assessment to determine best use of land. It's also feedback for future planning in Region 5.
- ◇ Soil Erosion—in the short term, we repair damaged areas and rehab them ASAP. In the long term, we are trying to improve trail routings to reduce steep grades and problem areas.
- ◇ Dangerous mines—we have an active mine closure program.

**Law Enforcement:**

- ◇ Low fines for infractions—are they accurate? Are they effective? Should they be raised?
- ◇ More users and less people on Forest Service end to deal with issues. They [users] can be out there running amok. Not just "Recreation's problem." Need to internally share enforcement. Other Forest Service personnel "pass the violators by," so users think their behavior is OK.
- ◇ Need more cooperation from county sheriffs to enforce. County receives money; no emphasis on help in drinking, riding in areas without helmets.

**Limitations:**

- ◇ Above mileages are not totally accurate. Best guess estimates. To get more accurate count would [require] lots of time and review of old records, etc.

**Maps:**

- ◇ Need professionally produced OHV maps to encourage proper use—district by district and one forest-wide.

**Policy:**

- ◇ 22 years of intensive management using state funded grants for development, operations and maintenance. Largest summer program.
- ◇ Currently receiving Green Sticker money. Have for 20 years. Without it, wouldn't have OHV opportunities that we do. Without funds can't provide the level of service/ keep up trails. OHV recreation, without funds, should be closed.
- ◇ I believe that it is very important to designate OHV routes as closed unless signed open.
- ◇ Too much micromanagement at staff levels.
- ◇ More restrictions in each area (more consolidation).
- ◇ More areas being closed outside of district. People come there from closed areas.

**Politics:**

- ◇ Understand need for survey, some factors cannot be quantified--political considerations--private landholders near forest where owners feel OHV lowers land values can make problem for OHV. Those active in the environmental community use influence to reduce funding. Manager can be managing OHV well, but still be opposed to it.

**Process:**

- ◇ Most difficult: Lack of continuous loops. Burdensome NEPA requirements—hard to get anything done—leads to a choppy route system which invites people to make their own.

**Regulations:**

- ◇ Middle of route inventory—mileage gone up significantly (still in progress).

**Use Levels:**

- ◇ OHV use is increasing with the closures in the desert and San Bernardino National Forest.
- ◇ New trend: preloaded trailers from Southern California rented and brought up.
- ◇ Websites: on abandoned mines/ghost towns ecotourism.
- ◇ Geocaching—lots of that.
- ◇ Day-use shift ([named] district—people driving in from [town named], etc.)
- ◇ OHV use seems to be growing at an exponential rate, land managers have a responsibility to establish sustainable opportunities and close areas where resource damage is occurring.
- ◇ It is a growing sport.
- ◇ Increase in demand (30%) in OHV sales from local shops.
- ◇ Recreation customer seeking extreme challenges--Forest may or may not provide those opportunities. Customers look at websites for information.
- ◇ Inexperienced drivers in difficult terrain—we sign the commonly used winter route to warn drivers that it is difficult and not a through route.

**Other:**

- ◇ OHV use on the district: 90% of use not causing impacts. If can take care of that other 10%, we will be in good shape.
- ◇ He recognizes use numbers are low due to lack of OHV opportunities on the district. But, even though small in comparison to other RDs, provides an important/unique niche that's special: OHV touring for nearby urban populations. Touring for scenery-where folks can take their SUVs and cruise at 20-30 mph and enjoy sights.
- ◇ We do not have a big program on district but does cause an inordinate amount of effort to enforce regs. per visitor than other programs.
- ◇ Most OHV is focused here. Because [a root disease is] found on districts north of here.
- ◇ OHV is minor component of recreation use and, therefore, a minor problem.
- ◇ OHV use is a valid and fun recreational pastime--we need to support it while minimizing damage.
- ◇ Cattle conflicts—no current solutions. We just repair damage as we can.
- ◇ Soil erosion/compaction—We receive state funding for conservation and prevention of erosion problems. We do monitoring and repairs as needed.
- ◇ Small program, limit routes, mostly Level II roads behind locked gates--1.5 miles of single track trail.
- ◇ Impact from fire in Southern California.