

BOUSE OHV (ATV) RIDERS - IMPORTANT ALERT !!

News Bulletin from the Ghost Riders an ATV Club of Bouse, Arizona

The Yuma Field Office of the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has at last done what we have been requesting for a long time, go public with their proposals for motorized access by Off Highway Vehicles (OHV's such as ATV's). This is both a crisis for OHV riders and the opportunity we have been asking for. Unfortunately the BLM has a history of closing public lands to motorized access. If you doubt this just go to your computer and type in your search engine "BLM closures of motorized access".

WHAT'S THE CRISIS?

1. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) plans to **POTENTIALLY** close down BLM trails to OHV's in the Quartzsite, Arizona area.
2. On Feb 7, 2012 at a public meeting in Quartzsite the BLM proposed four alternative plans for managing OHV trails on BLM land in the Quartzsite area. it's called the La Posa Travel Management Plan. It is listed on the Internet under BLM, La Posa Travel Management Plan. It is described on the back of this information sheet.
3. It is being directed by the Yuma, Arizona BLM Field Office, which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior, a branch of the federal government. **WHY ARE WE OHV RIDERS SO ALARMED?**

1. Because no one outside the BLM knows what they intend to do. Their four proposals range from doing nothing to closing practically everything. The public statements by John MacDonald, the Yuma field office Director, sound reasonable and encouraging, but BLM history shows they strongly favor closures.
2. All federal agencies, including the BLM, get their marching orders from Washington DC, and ultimately the White House. Regardless of how reasonable Mr. MacDonald would like to be he takes his orders from Washington.
3. On Sept 30, 2011 BLM headquarters in Washington released their 15 year management strategy statement. It says the BLM wants to protect the special places where Americans **HIKE**, but nothing about motorized access. It acknowledges that outdoor recreation is vital to our quality of life, but the quality of life for seniors and the disabled who could not access the outdoors without 01-IV's is absent! The federal government should also be **asking: "What kind of effect will this action have on the HUMAN BEINGS, especially senior citizens and the disabled!"**
4. The public has only 30 days from Feb 7, 2012 to be heard from. We must submit comments by March 6, 2012!

We are encouraging everyone who cares about this issue to act immediately! Please tell the BLM you don't want our trails closed to OHV's because to do so would deny access to most of us. Most of us are too old or disabled to strap on a back pack and walk into the desert. Every year there is news of people who tried that and died.

WE CONSIDER OURSELVES ENVIRONMENTALISTS. We want the desert and it's wildlife and treasures protected both for our use and our children. The desert around Quartzsite already has hundreds of thousands of acres which are protected. These include 665,000 acres in the KOFA Wildlife Refuge which is a few miles south east of Quartzsite. The official webpage of the Barry Goldwater Proving Ground states that it consists of 2.7 million acres of relatively undisturbed Sonoran Desert. The range is a few miles south west of Quartzsite. The BLM's 24,000 acre New Water Mountains Wilderness is a few miles east of Quartzsite. The Cibola National Wildlife Refuge is south west of Quartzsite. West and north west of Quartzsite is the Colorado River Indian Tribes Reservation. Quartzsite is already surrounded by protected land.

WE KNOW BECAUSE WE HAVE SEEN IT. Wildlife has adapted and there is wildlife all over the place. Wildlife survived the construction of Interstate 10 and for the most part they have adapted to OFIV's. Most of us are only here a few months of the year and out in the Desert only a few hours a week. According to the EPA it is pesticide use which threatens most of the species in La Paz County where Quartzsite is located.

WE ARE NOT POWERLESS. Most of us are members of the largest voting bloc in America, mature people aged 65 and older. We helped build this country and today's public officials are standing on our shoulders. And we vote. We vote by the largest percentage of any group and there are lots of us. In politics the voters win and those who don't vote lose. Our battle now is almost as simple as that. If we act we will be heard. If we don't we won't. We must make Washington understand that denying us access is terribly unfair and risks a backlash from seniors, the disabled and others.

(Over)

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

The BLM has described it's four proposed actions approximately as follows:

- Alternative A.** Take no action. Do not establish any designated routes. Continue present policy.
- Alternative B.** Establish a designated route network that maximizes motorized access.
- Alternative C.** Establish a designated route network that is in between Alternatives B and D.
- Alternative D.** Establish a designated route network that maximizes the protection of natural, wildlife, cultural and scenic resources. (This is the closure or highly restrictive alternative. If everything is closed it is protected, and for all practical purposes denied to us).

The BLM has asked that we submit our comments on their forms, identify routes by number which are important to us, and explain why it is important for that route to stay open. We are going to try to do that, but this is almost an impossible task as many of the trails have no markers out in the desert. We don't know the number of many of the trails, and no one is familiar with all the trails. These comment guidelines from the BLM actually disqualifies many of us from commenting in any meaningful way. If we limit our input to what BLM has requested **it can only be a weak response which BLM can use to justify anything they want to do.** Many of us ride the desert every week or so and seldom know the number of the trail we are on. **IN ORDER TO BE EFFECTIVE WE MUST NOT LIMIT OUR COMMENTS JUST TO THE BLM. WE MUST ALSO DIRECT THEM TO THE PEOPLE WHO UNDERSTAND OUR FRUSTRATION AND CONCERN. Those people are our elected representatives, especially the President of the United States.**

WE MUST LAUNCH A CAMPAIGN IMMEDIATELY. We must send as many letters and emails as possible to the White House and to our other elected officials telling them that anything except a plan in between Alternative B and Alternative C will deny seniors and the disabled access. That's not the American way to treat it's senior citizens and the disabled.

We need to bring this to the attention of the merchants and locally elected officials in Quartzsite, and even Parker and Blythe, and ask for their support. Most of them are ready to do anything they can, but we need to let them know how urgent it is to act now.

Letters, emails, telephone calls, telegrams and any other communication device can be used to contact our elected officials, **and by all means, include the President of the USA whether you agree with his politics or not.**

Contact your family and friends. Ask for their support. Ask them to use **Face Book** to post our messages and ask them to ask their Face Book friends to also write or email the White House and their elected officials their objections to anything in the **BLM La Posa Travel Management Plan** which potentially denies access to seniors or the disabled. Try to get everyone to pass this message along to as many people as possible.

All names and addresses are easily found on the Internet. Just type in your search engine: "federally elected officials". You will find mailing addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers.

The President of the United States, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC 20500
Dear Mr. President:

The Honorable Ken Salazar, Secretary, Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20240
Dear Mr. Secretary:

The Honorable John Thune, United States Senator, SD511, Washington, DC 20510 (South Dakota senator)
Dear Senator Thune: (This is an example - please contact your own elected officials back home)

Thank you for your support.

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