



ORV Watch Kern County
<http://www.orvwatchkerncounty.com>

661-878-7838

March 11, 2013

Folks:

We support Ridgecrest Field Office's request for OHV grant funds this year. Restoration, law enforcement efforts, and education are vital to promote and insure responsible, sustainable recreation. We came away from our recent meeting with Mr. Symons, the new Field Manager, convinced that he is a hands-on leader who truly wants to address critical issues facing the Ridgecrest BLM field office. At the same time, we see the scope of the problems facing him to be critical and complex, both practically and legally.

While funds are limited in the face of a daunting array of BLM projects, we are puzzled as to why there are no plans included in the grant request to sign and restore BLM parcels south of Highway 58 in the Tehachapi Mountains. These sites, despite widely publicized complaints from the public, have been largely unmonitored and neglected. Illegal off-roading continues to proliferate unabated in this WEMO area. The Pacific Crest Trail winds through several BLM parcels which are largely degraded by lawless dirt bike activity. Gamble Springs, Burham Canyon, and Tylerhorse Canyon are suffering breathtaking destruction from illegal dirt bike intrusion.

Google Earth images reveal unrelenting destruction of public lands in Kern County by illegal off-roaders. From Hwy 178 to Hwy 138 there are 243 documented OHV Tracks and 177 OHV activity points through the Pacific Crest Trail, many of which lie in Tehachapi Mountain BLM parcels.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/60447938@N07/>

We ask that the grant request be amended to include signage, restoration, monitoring, and installation of barriers to rein in illegal OHV activity in the Tehachapi Mountains.

Sincerely,
ORV WATCH KERN COUNTY
Steering Committee
Jan Alford
Diana Palmer
Jon Rogers
Sandi Tardiff

