



P.O. Box 1872  
Canyon Country CA. 91386-1872  
888-540-7263  
www.americansandassociation.org

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Nicole Nicholas Gilles

March 25, 2013

California Department of Parks & Recreation  
OHMVR Division  
PO Box 942896  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

**RE: SUPPORT – Bureau of Land Management El Centro Field Office Grants and Cooperative Agreements Application, California Parks and Recreation: Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division.**

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to you today on behalf of the American Sand Association and our support of the Bureau of Land Management's El Centro Field Office request for grant funding. Following are my comments:

G12-01-09-G01 – ISDRA Ground Operations

We feel the BLM's proposal to fund maintenance contracts, maintenance labor, and sign purchasing in support of the OHV recreation program at the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area (ISDRA) is significant for visitors. Having trash removal and vault toilet maintenance is needed for the amount of people who visit the area. It is essential to have vault toilet maintenance in the ISDRA as it decreases the amount of waste in the desert and helps protect wildlife. Sand removal is also a critical part of maintaining the ISDRA. Often times, sand must be removed from the roadways and campgrounds constantly so that visitors, law enforcement and emergency medical services can have access to the area.

G12-01-09-L01 – El Centro Field Office Law Enforcement

It is important that visitors to the ISDRA have a safe recreation experience. This grant will assist the ECFO in managing OHV recreation by funding the hours necessary for OHV enforcement, education and outreach to the millions of visitors to the area. In addition, it will help fund Rangers on holiday weekends who assist with law enforcement and essential emergency services. We also feel that the equipment portion of this grant is important to enhance the emergency services aspect of the visitor experience.

G12-01-09-S01 – ISDRA Education

The ASA believes that the more educated visitors are to an area, the safer their recreation experience will be. The BLM's map of the ISDRA is an effective tool to educate visitors on the current closures, CA OHV rules and regulations, GPS coordinates to popular destinations and general information. This comprehensive tool is a must for every ISDRA visitor.

G12-01-09-S02 – ISDRA Safety

It is imperative that visitors have access to OHV non-law enforcement park rangers, emergency medical and rescue (EMS) supplies, a functioning rescue buggy and the training necessary to assist

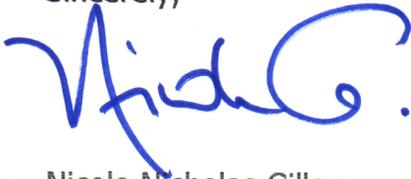
April 2, 2012

visitors in providing emergency medical and rescue services. This grant funding will fulfill these important services.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund the El Centro Field Office grant request for the full amount. The ISDRA is one of the largest off-highway vehicle recreation areas in the nation with the least amount of funding. The assistance you provide to this program is essential in order to ensure the safety of the millions of people who recreate in the 160,000 acres of the ISDRA.

Feel free to contact me should you have any questions. I can be reached at (760) 996-8983.

Sincerely,



Nicole Nicholas Gilles  
Executive Director