



**OHMVR COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Kings Beach, CA 96143**

**September 26, 2014**

**STAFF REPORT:** OHMVR Outreach and Training Update  
**STAFF:** Natalie Lohi – OHMVR Outreach & Education Program Manager  
**SUBJECT:** Outreach, Education, and Hands-On Training

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**Summary**

2014 began with a challenge from the State Parks Director to increase our public interaction and win back the trust of the public. This was to be accomplished through the California State Parks 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary campaign and increased attendance at outreach events. The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division stepped up to the challenge in a very big way.

**Discussion**

California State Parks unveiled a 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary exhibit at the California State Fair in July. The OHMVR Division was a large and significant part of this exhibit. We stood out due to our highly interactive displays and very knowledgeable team. Our area was staffed 12 hours a day for the entire 17-day fair. A feat that was only possible due to a division-wide staffing effort that included volunteers. The overall exhibit was visited by 150,000 fair-goers. We were able to keep track of how many of those visitors were actually contacted (at least in the OHV display area). In order to be considered a contact, by our standards, an individual or group must have participated in an activity or engaged in conversation with a staff person. With that in mind, the OHMVR Division outreach team made 90,282 public contacts at the state fair! While this was certainly the highlight of our season, it was just a small part of the overall effort we made to provide outstanding public education and training opportunities.

The Division headquarters outreach team participated in over 25 outreach events this year, so far. (Please see attachment for a list of those events.) Over the years, we have expanded our presence and developed our programs and activities to reach a larger, broader audience. The following numbers reveal how we have significantly increased our connection with the public over the years. Note: ( ) indicate total contacts including state fair.

| <b>2011</b> | <b>2012</b> | <b>2013</b> | <b>2014</b>      |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| 1,646       | 4,173       | 11,186      | 23,859 (114,143) |

Our goal is to provide outreach and education to a broad and diverse audience. We work toward this goal by continuously improving and revising our programs and materials to “custom fit” our audience, thereby ensuring the highest level of public engagement. With the expansion of the program, we are inundated with requests to attend various events. We are careful to choose a variety of venues where we can reach both traditional and non-traditional audiences. For example, we attended the Little League Intermediate World Series (LLWS) this year. This event draws between 20,000 and 40,000 attendees. We staffed an “outdoor ATV skill station.” Other skill stations included representatives from skiing, soccer, mountain biking, and other outdoor recreational organizations. We were able to reach out to OHV enthusiasts to enforce our message with them, but also introduce ourselves to people who knew little, or nothing at all, about the OHMVR Program. We secured a full-page ad in Sportstars magazine and proudly displayed our banners on the baseball field. As exciting as all of this is, it’s just a small part of the equation. We have eight State Vehicular Recreation Areas (SVRAs) that are accomplishing amazing things. Let’s highlight some of these.

Our smallest SVRA, Clay Pit, is getting into the action. ATV classes are being held periodically, and Ranger Todd Jones has gone into the local elementary school to teach Tread Lightly!® programs. Prairie City continues to be the hub of OHV training. Our OHV Training Coordinator, Greg Schumaker, provides and coordinates ATV, dirt bike, and ROV classes for staff, the public, and various state, federal, and local agencies. This is in addition to weekend interpretation booths, and a major outreach effort at Hangtown. Hollister Hills has been blazing the trails in education and community involvement. For the past three years, Interpreter Richard Muñoz, along with the resource staff and others, has been providing a “Science Day Camp” for the local school children. The Hollister school district could not afford to send kids to science camp due to budget issues. So, Hollister Hills developed a program that would cost nothing more than a bus trip to the park each day for a week. Kids learn about geology, biodiversity, water quality and monitoring, and much more. Hungry Valley SVRA proved that we can not only be part of community events, but we can be the best part. The SVRA participated in the 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Fiesta Day Celebration with outreach booths and a float...and they won “Best of Show”! Hungry Valley Interpreter Lora Owens and other staff have worked diligently to win the trust of the local community through numerous classroom presentations, Junior Ranger programs, and some of the best social media interaction in the state. Clearly, the hard work has paid off. Oceano Dunes has the kind of visitation that allows Interpreter Danielle Patterson and outreach staff to reach a broad and diverse audience without ever leaving the park. However, they did venture out recently to attend the Mid-State Fair. They presented an impressive interactive exhibit that included OHV safety, as well as resource management activities and displays. They collaborated with San Luis Coastal Districts to provide a comprehensive state parks experience that resulted in hundreds of official Junior Rangers and 20,000 public contacts! Ocotillo Wells SVRA lived up to its reputation for outstanding interpretive programming again this year. Interpreter Steve Quartieri is particularly proud of the springtime astronomy festival. The “Hot Stars and Heavenly Bodies” astronomy program began with special speakers from JPL Laboratory and the Pomona Observatory. The public was then treated to a rare glimpse of the sun through the SVRA’s solar telescope. When the sun went down, the main event began—stars,

planets, galaxies, and more were viewed by hundreds while information and explanations flowed from the SVRA's astronomers. To end the evening, kids were treated to Junior Ranger programs and hot cocoa. Finally, a look at Heber Dunes: our southern-most SVRA. This small park is doing big things for the community. Interpreter Jamie Mendez has worked closely with the local school district to develop the "After School Junior Ranger's Club." This program consists of mini-lessons tied to state common core standards and includes everything from indoor hands-on activities to nature hikes. Students can participate in this program through ASES—After School Education and Safety Program. Heber Dunes, and all of the SVRAs, are filling a vital need in our local communities and building public relationships that are vital to our Division and the future of OHV recreation. With four months still remaining in the year, OHMVR staff throughout the state have made over a quarter of a million (250,714) public education contacts.

OHV training is an important part of the Division's Outreach and Education Program. Our contract with the Safety Vehicle Institute of America will expire in the spring of 2015. This winter, we will be focusing on the revisions and additions needed to make the current hands-on training program more successful and incorporating those into the new contract. We are also exploring every possible way to update and augment our training fleet. We are still planning to move forward with an OHMVR Division Training Officer position to handle the coordination of this program. We will pilot that position in the near future. Currently, ATV training is occurring at all the SVRAs. Some of the SVRAs are also providing dirt bike and ROV classes. So far this year, the OHMVR Division has provided 136 classes and trained a total of 440 students. With revisions and updates to the training program complete in 2015, we anticipate an increase in training requests, and in usual OHMVR form, we will be ready to step up to the challenge.

Please Note: Official outreach and training numbers for the full 2014 year will be provided at the first 2015 Commission meeting.

### **Commission Action**

For information only.

### **Attachments**

2014 Outreach Events

**Quick List of Outreach Events  
OHMVR Headquarters 2014**

| EVENT                                      | PUBLIC CONTACTS      |
|--|----------------------|
| International Sportsman's Expo             | 7,400                |
| King of the Hammers                        | 3,000                |
| California State Parks Training Conference | 330                  |
| Calstrs Wellness Fair                      | 257                  |
| Calaveras County Fair                      | 3,800                |
| Hangtown                                   | 3,335                |
| El Dorado County Fair                      | 5,300                |
| California State Fair                      | 90,284               |
| Jamboree Vendor Fair                       | TBA                  |
| Niagra Rim Poker Run                       | TBA                  |
| Jeep Jamboree                              | 250                  |
| Sierra Trek                                | 187                  |
| Cantina on the Con                         | 150                  |
| Moonlight Madness                          | 60                   |
| Little League Intermediate World Series    | 880                  |
| Yolo County Fair                           | 5,413                |
| Clay Pit Appreciation Day                  | SVRA Claims Stats    |
| Prairie City Appreciation Day              | SVRA Claims Stats    |
| Carnegie Appreciation Day                  | SVRA Claims Stats    |
| Lucas Oil Off-Road Expo                    | SVRA Claims Stats    |
| Castaic Lake Youth Day Event               | TBA – 10/18          |
| Other                                      | Various SVRA Assists |