



## Prairie City SVRA Improvement Group Meeting Agenda Tuesday, 14 March 2023

**Location:** In-person and Zoom, Meeting ID **936 9989 4153**, Passcode **Ride On**

**Time:** 5:00- 6:00 PM PST

**Attendees:** 26 attendees including, Parks staff, public and non-profit stakeholders

**Prairie City Staff:** Peter Jones, Joleen Ossello, Nick Fox, McKenzie Boring, Taylor Espenshade, Ryan Boeck, Tony Guzman, Steve Gorman, Jesse Stayner

**Gold Fields District or other CSP Staff:** Jim Micheaels

**Stakeholders:** Rose Winn (Cal4NRC), Josh Epstein (Cal4Wheel), Michael Lueders (Valley Outdoors), Amy Granat (CORVA), Brandon Alvarez (TreadLightly!), Stephen McCutcheon (Cal4Wheel), Jared McLeod (Cal4Wheel), Bob Wohlers (Off-Road Safety Academy), John McCready (Cal4Wheel), Keith Mundy (4x4 user)

**Meeting Facilitator:** Nicholas Fox/Joleen Ossello

**Meeting Moderators:** Taylor Espenshade, Joleen Ossello, Nicholas Fox

**Next Meeting Date:** June 2023, day to be determined.

- 5:00 - 5:10** Introduction by State Park Interpreter I, Joleen Ossello
- Welcome and Review of Zoom Features
- 5:10 - 5:15** Project updates from Prairie City Sector Manager, Peter Jones
- New Special Event Entrance (Gate 4)
  - AQMA Asphalt Paving Project
- 5:15 – 5:25** Project updates from Environmental Scientists, Mckenzie Boring and Taylor Espenshade
- Route and Trail Management Plan (RTMP)
  - 4x4 Area Rock Crawl Project
  - Wet Weather Closure (WWC) Policy Review
  - Nesting Bird Season
- 5:25 – 5:35** Outreach and Education from State Park Interpreter I, Joleen Ossello
- Outreach Programming
  - Special Events
  - 4x4 Area Rock Crawl Trail Survey
  - HT Banners
- 5:35 – 5:40** Updates from Maintenance Worker II, Ryan Boeck
- SWECO Trail Work
  - Water Line Repairs
  - Intermediate Track Irrigation
- 5:40 – 5:45** OHV Update from Supervising State Park Peace Officer, Tony Guzman
- ROV Safety Awareness
- 5:45 – 6:00** Public Question & Comment Period

Meeting minutes will be posted on Prairie City SVRAs main webpage at <https://ohv.parks.ca.gov/prairiecity>.



Join us on social media!

# Summary

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## Welcome and Introduction

The purpose of this quarterly public meeting is to engage and solicit feedback with users and stakeholders on current and future park projects and developments.

- Review Zoom features, introduce agenda and speakers.

## Park Updates by Peter Jones, Prairie City Sector Manager

### Folsom Ranch Development and New Event Entrance

- New Scott Road spur to White Rock/Prairie City Road was opened on Thursday, February 16.
- New Gate 4 Special Event Road is completed. The Contractor will be pouring a new form and will be mounting the Park sign from the old Gate 4 entrance as soon as the weather cooperates.
- Parks will be constructing a new fence on either side of the new Gate 4 Road to close off the Vernal Pool Management Area as soon as weather permits.
- The new Gate 4 Special Event Road will be used for the next large event.

## American Quarter Midget Association Paving Project

- Parking area is in bad shape and has lots of cracks and has grass growing through them.
- The cracks will be repaired, and the parking lot will be recoated and sealed. The parking stalls and curbs will also be restriped.
- The project went out to bid and proposals were submitted after a bid walk.
- The project has been awarded and will begin as soon as the weather permits.

## Natural Resource Updates by Taylor Espenshade & McKenzie Boring, Environmental Scientists

### Route and Trail Management Plan Updates- Taylor Espenshade, Environmental Scientist

- RTMP website is live at [https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=31172](https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=31172)
- You can now add your email address to our mailing list on the RTMP website. Any news or updates on the RTMP planning process and information on public input meetings will be emailed directly to your inbox when you sign up for the mailing list.
- We are waiting on contract finalization through HQ. Once the contract is finalized, the consultant can begin work on the plan and public input meetings/workshops will be scheduled.

### 4x4 Rock Crawl Trail Update – McKenzie Boring, Environmental Scientist

- More rocks have been added to the obstacles and road base was added to armor part of the trail. This trail is currently part of the wet weather closure system.

### Update Partial Wet Weather Closures (WWC) – McKenzie Boring, Environmental Scientist

- Started the partial wet weather closures in mid-January after we announced it in the November meeting. More information along with the posted order can be found on the Prairie City Website.
- All closures are announced on social media and an electronic message board and map are provided at the front kiosk to notify visitors of closures upon arrival.

### Nesting Bird Season– McKenzie Boring, Environmental Scientist

- Nesting bird season is Feb 1<sup>st</sup>- Aug 31<sup>st</sup>. We have birds call Killdeer that like to nest in the middle of gravel roads and dirt trails. Please keep a eye out, and if you see one, let us know so we can protect the nest until the chicks fledge! Thanks.

## **Outreach and Education Updates by Joleen Ossello, State Park Interpreter I**

### **Outreach Programming**

- Nevada County Woods Riders Annual Banquet, King of the Hammers, Loretta Lynn MX Qualifier, AQMA Club Race, PC Karting Club Race, ROV/ATV Safety Courses for public and agencies, Parks Online Resource for Teachers and Students (PORTS) pilot program by OHMVR Division <https://www.ports-ca.us/PORTSon-demand>, Vernal Poos Tours (Feb-May), OHV Safety Week (4/1-4/9) Public Classes <https://outdoorrecreationfoundation.org/>

### **Special Events**

- Headlight Festival, First Day Hike, Earth Day Celebration at Vernal Pool Management Area (4/23), Hangtown (6/3), State Parks Week (6/17) <https://castateparksweek.org/>

### **Educational Programming**

- Ongoing DBS/ROV/ATV OHV safety classes at ETC for public, state, and county agencies

### **Special Projects**

- ETC Biome Workdays, Field Recruitment, Fleet Repairs, Entrance Banners, Hangtown Banners, 4x4 Rock Crawl Trail Naming Survey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/97ZYQGM>

## **Facility Maintenance Updates by Ryan Boeck, Park Maintenance Worker II**

### **Trails, Tracks and Roads**

- Use of Sweco machine to re-grade Oak Hill MX trail and the Environmental Training Center (ETC) Range A Biome Trail as soon as weather conditions allow.
- 275 tons of sand added to ATV and MX practice tracks.
- Dust Off road application set for May 24, a Wednesday when the park is closed to public use.
- Design and layout for the intermediate MX track complete, next phase is to implement advanced irrigation system to reduce need for water truck between regular maintenance. Trenching and conduit installation to be soon.
- Parking lot at the American Quarter Midget Association (AQMA) Track under contract to be paved as soon as weather permits.
- AQMA lot track lighting serviced.

### **Facilities**

- Interior lighting replaced with ?? in all public restrooms.
- Structural repairs completed on (where?) or how many? shade ramadas.
- Waterline repairs are ongoing.

## **OHV Safety Updates by Tony Guzman, Supervising State Park Peace Officer**

### **Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle (ROV) Safety**

- Increase in questions about what defines (using legislative terms) a recreational off-highway vehicle.
- Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle (ROV) carries a different designation than a Utility Vehicle (UTV) or Side by Side (SxS), by capable operating speed for public safety reasons.
- If exceeds 30mph, no longer a UTV, but an ROV. Requires use of helmet and seatbelt.
- Therefore, newest ROVs with an engine size greater than 1000ccs, under law, are designated as a four-wheel drive vehicle, does not require use of helmet, but also not allowed to operate outside of the 4x4 Area of the park.

### **Safety Courses Strongly Encouraged**

- Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association ([ROHVA](#)) 866.267.2751
- ATV Safety Institute ([ASI](#)) 800.887.2887
- Motorcycle Safety Foundation "DirtBikeSchool" ([MSF](#)) 866.267.2751

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## **Q&A:**

**Q: Is the park management implementing new policies and resource related programming, such as the Wet Weather Closure, to decrease riding days and eventually close the park to OHV recreation?**

**A: Sector Manager, Peter Jones explained that new mandates required by Senate Bill 249 (2017) came as part of the agreement about the OHMVR Program sunset going away. Before SB 249 the OHMVR Program would have a sunset period of 10-20 years and when the time was up the program would need to be reauthorized in order to continue. SB 249 eliminated the sunset and authorized the OHMVR Program to continue indefinitely, but with the removal of the sunset came increased environmental protections at the SVRAs. A couple of examples are the adoption of new Soil Conservation Standards to supersede the 2008 Soil Conservation Standards and Guidelines, and the adoption of new Wildlife Habitat Protection Plans (WHPPs) at each SVRA. We have had these plans which require us to perform different types of monitoring and reporting at the SVRAs for many years, but SB 249 has required the SVRAs to expand on these plans with heightened environmental protection and monitoring. The development and adoption of these new plans is not optional and is instead required to continue to operate SVRAs for OHV recreation while also protecting and making improvements which will be sustainable and ensure ongoing use into the future. The future of PCSVRA is bright and I am proud of the staff that is here and the work and plans we have to improve the park as we move forward. Some of this work includes going through a Road and Trail Management Plan (RTMP) which will help us to build sustainable trails in the Yost and Ehnisz Properties which were purchased for OHV recreation but are not yet opened to the public.**

**B: Amy Granat (CORVA) talked about Carnegie's loss of the Tesla expansion area to OHV recreation and how Prairie City is trying to stay ahead of a situation like that by involving more environmental components of the OHV program early on. She also talked about SB 249 and SB 155.**

**Q: Steve McCutcheon (also general park user) also concerned about resisting activities or access to areas for OHV and the park becoming a nature park.**

**A: Same as above**

**Q: Rose Winn (Cal4wheel NRC) asked if there would be an opportunity for user input as to which trails would be removed/replaced/kept as part of the RTMP process.**

**A: Sector Manager, Peter Jones explained the RTMP public input process for meetings and surveys, explaining that there would be opportunities for public to comment and involvement. Once the contract is finalized, work will begin and include opportunities for and encouragement of public participation. Environmental Scientist, McKenzie Boring mentioned the mobile application, Outerspatial for GPS/mapping component of the public input process. More to come on the Road and Trail Management Plan.**

***Respectfully Submitted on 3/21/2023***

***By J. Ossello, State Park Interpreter I***