



DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division

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## OFF-HIGHWAY MOTOR VEHICLE RECREATION COMMISSION

Kings Beach, CA

June 12, 2025

**STAFF REPORT:** Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division – Environmental Program Update

**STAFF:** Scott Soares, Senior Environmental Scientist, Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division

**SUBJECT:** Overview of SVRA Soil Conservation Plans

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### Summary

In 2017, Senate Bill 249 (Allen) directed the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division to review and update the 2008 Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines by 2020. The updated 2020 Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines defines the Soil Conservation Standard<sup>1</sup>, or the standard to which off-highway vehicle (OHV) facilities<sup>2</sup> are managed with respect to soil erosion, and provides monitoring methods, design considerations, and other strategies to meet the Standard. While the Standard itself did not change during the 2020 review, substantial additions and restructuring occurred in the guidelines. The 2020 Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines requires a Soil Conservation Plan for each State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA). The Soil Conservation Plan describes how the SVRA ensures compliance with the Soil Conservation Standard.

### Discussion

Public Resources Code (PRC) §5090.35 (*et seq.*) describes environmental requirements for the SVRAs. Specifically, PRC §5090.35(d) requires SVRA staff to monitor OHV facilities annually to ensure compliance with the Soil Conservation Standard. The Soil Conservation Plan (SCP) is the document used by SVRA staff to outline a monitoring and management program that describes how the park unit will meet the Soil Conservation Standard.

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<sup>1</sup> Off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation facilities shall be managed for sustainable long-term prescribed use without generating soil loss that exceeds restorability, and without causing erosion or sedimentation which significantly affects resource values beyond the facilities. Management of OHV facilities shall occur in accordance with Public Resources Code, Sections 5090.02, 5090.35, and 5090.53.

<sup>2</sup> Facility: An OHV trail, track, road, corridor, SVRA, open-ride area, staging area, parking area (excluding structures).

The Soil Conservation Standard does not focus on soil health or quality at SVRAs but instead emphasizes soil retention through the implementation of management actions that prevent accelerated erosion from OHV facilities. Accordingly, the intent of the SCP is to ensure consistent monitoring, management, and maintenance of OHV facilities to identify and address potential erosion issues.

SVRA staff develop SCPs that are tailored to site-specific conditions at each SVRA, consistent with the approved General Plan, and compliant with statutory requirements. SCPs comprise three main components: 1) an assessment of existing road and/or trail conditions, 2) a monitoring plan, and 3) a description of the routine road and trail maintenance that occurs throughout the SVRA. To ensure compliance with the Standard, SCPs utilize the adaptive management framework through setting measurable goals and objectives, monitoring the progress towards achieving those goals, and adjusting management as necessary to make improvements.

#### Development and Review Process Overview

The OHMVR Division, with support from the Department's Natural Resources Division, adopted rigorous development and approval procedures for SCPs. Headquarters staff work closely with SVRA staff to develop SCPs consistent with the 2020 Guidelines and the Department's Best Available Science standards. After internal reviews conclude, the draft SCPs are made available to the public for review and comment for one month pursuant to PRC §5090.39(a)(2). All public comments received are reviewed, documented, and, if warranted, adjustments to the draft are made prior to finalizing the draft. Once the Department certifies the SCP utilizes the best available science, the SCP is approved by the OHMVR Division, and the SVRA implements the plan.

SVRA staff submit to the OHMVR Division an annual Compliance Report and Action Plan by the end of September to report on Soil Conservation-related activities, completed maintenance, and monitoring results.

Status

<b>SVRA</b>	<b>Status</b>
Heber Dunes	Completed May 2025
Prairie City	Completed May 2025
Ocotillo Wells	Addressing Public Comments
Onyx Ranch	Public Comment Period
Hungry Valley	Ready for Public Comment
Oceano Dunes	Internal Review Draft
Clay Pit	Internal Review Draft
Carnegie	Working towards a complete draft
Hollister Hills	Working towards a complete draft

**Commission Action**

For information only

**Attachments**

None