



OFF-ROAD BUSINESS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER—FALL 2004

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ORBA'S NEW LAND USE DIRECTOR

Bill Dart, well-known land use advocate, has joined ORBA's team as Land Use Director. Bill's history includes a position with the American Motorcyclists Association as their District 36 Representative, BlueRibbon Coalition (BRC) Public Lands Director and BRC Executive Director. Dart will be working out of his home office in Pocatello, Idaho and will have primary responsibility for ORBA's major role in the Nevada BLM's current land planning efforts. BRC's current Public Lands Director Brian Hawthorne, AMA's West Coast Representative Nick Haris, CORVA's President Ed Waldheim and many other off-road leaders have congratulated ORBA for this valuable addition to its staff.

ORBA & ADVANSTAR

Advanstar Communications recently established an Off-Road Group. The Group publishes "Dirt Sports" magazine for consumers and "Off-Road Retailer" magazine for off-road businesses. They are also putting on the first annual "Off-Road Impact" trade show and Conference in Las Vegas, January 20-22. This conference and show will be the first ever event of this type focused totally on the off-road recreation industry. Many ORBA member companies have signed up to be exhibitors at that show. ORBA staff will be playing a major role in the conference and the show including our "Off-Road Jeopardy" show that will test the knowledge of major off-road race celebrities about off-road issues. ORBA's President will be speaking

at the conference luncheon about the future of the off-road recreation industry. ORBA's Vice President will offer a PowerPoint presentation showing the "Best in the West" OHV areas.

Well known media expert Jim Ryan has been named as the Director of Advanstar's Off-Road Group. At ORBA's October Board of Directors' meeting, Ryan was appointed to fill a vacancy on ORBA's Board. Jim Ryan and Roy Denner, ORBA's President and CEO, are both excited about the prospect of their organizations working together in what they describe as "a perfect marriage."

ORBA PRESIDENT TESTIFIES TO CONGRESS ON ESA



The House Resources Committee, led by Chairman Richard Pombo, heard testimony to examine the impacts of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) on Southern California's Inland Empire. The Inland Empire includes all of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties and a piece of the eastern part of Los Angeles County. It encompasses all of the San Bernardino National Forest and popular off-road recreation sites such as Johnson Valley, Stoddard Valley and Dumont Dunes.

Congressman Pombo opened the hearing by pointing out that the ESA is "broken" and needs to be "fixed." He stated, "During the past ten years, 1,300 species have been listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act and only seven have ever been delisted."

ORBA President Roy Denner joined the mayors of Fontana, Colton and Rialto and a Fontana City Council member in presenting examples of how the Inland Empire has been negatively impacted by the ESA.

Denner cited the Mojave Desert Tortoise as an example of a species listed as "threatened" under the ESA "with very little supporting science and has had a tremendous negative impact on the public use of public lands within the Inland Empire." He pointed out, "Four of the ten million acres of California Desert that are managed by the BLM have been designated as critical habitat for the Tortoise." An analysis by the General Accounting Office shows that over \$100 million of taxpayer money has been spent on attempting to recover the Desert Tortoise, yet not one Tortoise can be shown to have been saved by the efforts.

ORBA's President also described how the popular resort cities of Big Bear and Lake Arrowhead were threatened last year by a forest fire fueled by the underbrush and inaccessible by fire fighting equipment due to trail closures. "Trails that are blocked off to recreation vehicles are also blocked off to fire trucks" said Denner.

Julie MacDonald, Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, testified that 100% of the Agency's Washington budget goes to respond to court orders resulting from lawsuits filed under the Endangered Species Act. She indicated that it would take 10 years of the Agency's current budget to respond to the huge backlog of existing court orders. As a result, no funds remain to actually deal with managing the species in accordance with the ESA. In the meantime, petition after petition, drafted by environmental organizations, are being filed to list new species.

Chairman Pombo closed the Hearing by telling everyone that he is working very hard in Congress to get support for bringing reason back to the ESA. He stated, "Nobody is asking to do away with the ESA. It just needs to be modified to provide species protection in a way that can be managed."

SEMA, 2004

The SEMA show in Las Vegas this year was bigger than ever. The Off-Road Recreation Industry was emphasized by SEMA with all truck, SUV and off-road exhibitors located on the same floor within

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the Convention Center while UROC put on an impressive rock crawling display in the parking lot. Once again, ORBA set up a 20-foot display booth where all ORBA member company names were displayed as ORBA's "Business Honor Roll." A large banner displayed beside the Honor Roll encourages buyers to purchase products from ORBA member companies.



A request has been sent to all ORBA member companies to provide pictures of member facilities and products. These will be assembled into a PowerPoint presentation that will promote member companies at future trade shows.

NAMRC

A meeting of the North American Motorized Recreation Council was held in Las Vegas prior to the SEMA show. Off-road issues having national interest are discussed at the semi-annual NAMRC meetings. At this meeting it was agreed that ORBA President Denner and BlueRibbon Coalition Chairman of the Board Jack Welch would work together to arrange a national lobbying day in Washington, DC for motorized recreation interests nationwide.

CA OFF-ROAD SHOWS

ORBA staff manned booths this year at the Sand Sports Super Show and the Pomona Off-Road Expo. ORBA member company names were displayed and promoted on ORBA's "Business Honor Roll" at both shows. Several companies agreed to become ORBA members at these extremely popular and well-attended shows.

WORLD ATV EXPO

The first-ever "World ATV Expo" was held in Louisville, Kentucky this year. Rick Campbell, publisher of Motorcycle Industry Magazine and ATV Industry Magazine, con-

cluded that Louisville is the place for this type of show. He opened it two days for industry and two days for consumers. This show clearly illustrated the fact that ATV's are used extensively for applications other than recreation. For example, farming, ranching and mining industries use ATV's in many creative ways.

PHOENIX ARIZONA

After a call for help from Sandee McCullen of the Arizona State Association of Four-Wheel Drive Clubs, ORBA sent attorney David Hubbard to the rescue. Hubbard attended a meeting in Phoenix regarding alleged air pollution resulting from OHV use. He feels that this issue will be a problem in all western states if it isn't dealt with early. ORBA will continue to monitor this threat.

ELKO NEVADA

ORBA's President and its new Land Use Director met with Ralph McMullen, the Chairman of the Visitor's Center and Convention Bureau in Elko, Nevada. Ralph described the town of Elko's attempt to make the community a major tourist center. Fantastic off-road trails for four-wheel drive and other OHV's abound in the mountains around Elko. Lands are managed by the BLM, the Forest Service, and NV State Parks. ORBA has pledged to help promote Elko as a world-class OHV area. The BlueRibbon Coalition is teaming with ORBA on efforts in Nevada.

CA OHV LEADER MTG

ORBA's President participated in a California OHV leaders' meeting in Sacramento during October. OHV Leaders, and OHV Lobbyists Pete Conaty and Terry McHale, discussed the OHMVR Division audit promoted by ORBA. They also established positions regarding grant requests presented at the OHMVR Commission meeting the following day.

DAC MTG

During October, ORBA's President attended a meeting of the California Desert District Advisory Council in Laughlin, Nevada. Denner is a Recreation Representative on this Council, whose members are appointed by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior.

DESERT TORTOISE

After two years of pressure from ORBA staff and other OHV leaders, desert area managers from federal agencies from four western states are finally acknowledging that OHV use may not be the major threat to the Mojave Desert Tortoise. They are actually suggesting that Upper Respiratory Tract Disease and raven predation may be causing a more severe impact! Responding to a request from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, ORBA has submitted comments and offered to participate in a proposed raven management program. This has the potential of causing a major change in the movement that has closed millions of acres of land to vehicle use in the name of protecting the tortoise.

On the other side of that coin, Judge Susan Illston, 9th District Court in San Francisco, responded to the OHV community's lawsuit—that asked that the other threats be recognized—by ruling that there will be no more OHV or grazing permits within desert tortoise critical habitat. In addition she has ruled that establishing critical habitat for species is insufficient and that the BLM must develop actual Recovery Plans for the species. The drastically under-funded BLM has no resources available to develop these plans.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

- Sand Sports Super Show
- Sandwinder Sandcars
- Wicked Sand Toys, Inc.
- Nth Degree Mobility
- Butler Auto Repair
- T & J Performance Center
- Crown Industrial Products
- Ironman 4x4 Suspension
- Suck It Up Racing
- Off-Road Superstores
- Verde Powersports
- F&L Racing Fuel
- CL Bryant, Inc.
- Kames Sports
- Howe Performance Power Steering
- California Supertrucks Inc.
- Toy Zone
- Dazon, Inc.
- Rock Crusher - USA