

SIERRA ACCESS COALITION NEWSLETTER

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Urgent: Butte County Board of Supervisors Meeting September 13

As you may have heard, Butte County asked the Forest Service to commit in writing to Butte County's request for changes to the Plumas NF Travel Management decision. The FS is coming to the County's Sept. 13 board meeting in Oroville at 25 County Center Drive to discuss the potential agreements with the County. The Board will vote on joining Sierra Access Coalition and the California Off Road Vehicle Association in litigation.

We need to fill the Board's meeting room with access advocates to hopefully produce a 5-0 vote similar to what happened in Plumas County. Residents from adjoining counties are also encouraged to attend and show support for Butte County residents and for preserving access to public lands. So please spread the word and get people to show up! We know this is a work day and if you are unable to attend, you may want to send a message or make a phone call to your county supervisor. This may be the last chance for Butte County to fight the FS's poor decision.

The agenda should be on Butte's website the Friday before the 13th with the time the FS agenda item will be heard.

<http://www.buttecounty.net/Clerk%20of%20the%20Board/Agendas.aspx>

The unknown's at Butte County are Steve Lambert and Maureen Kirk. If you are represented by either of those, please call or email them letting them know that the County should defend their constituents rights alongside SAC. If you can't make the meeting or even if you want to say what's on your mind, then by all means email or call all the Supes. Contact info is:

<http://www.buttecounty.net/Board%20of%20Supervisors.aspx>

If you don't know what district you are in see:

http://clerk-recorder.buttecounty.net/elections/redist/2011-supervisor_districts.pdf

Lawsuit to be filed in September

SAC has retained an attorney, Greg Gatto of Stoel-Rives in Truckee. He will have a draft of our complaint finished this week and it will be filed after all the litigants approve it. We feel we have several strong points in our lawsuit.

The Plumas NF contains portions of five counties: Plumas, Butte, Lassen, Sierra and Yuba. We are working hard on behalf of SAC members by moving forward on the complaint, with support from others:

- Amy Granat, Managing Director of the California Off-Road Vehicle Association (CORVA) has been a major force in helping SAC with this lawsuit and CORVA will be a co-litigant.

- Plumas County has been very supportive of SAC's position. The Board of Supervisors and the Plumas County Coordination Council have given SAC their full support throughout this process.
- Butte County is considering joining the lawsuit and they are having discussions at next week's Board of Supervisors meeting Sept. 13 in Oroville. ***If you are a resident of Butte County, it's important that you attend the meeting, call or write your supervisor before the meeting to let them you want Butte County to defend your interests by becoming a co-litigant in the lawsuit.***
- Sierra County has some interest in joining, but they are moving extremely slow. If you are a resident of Sierra County, you may want to encourage your supervisor to move quickly because the lawsuit will be filed soon.
- Lassen County has not responded to any of SAC's messages regarding this issue. If you are a resident of Lassen County, you may want to try to get your supervisor involved.
- Yuba County has not shown any interest in the Plumas NF Travel Management Plan.

As always, we need the continuing support of SAC members, local businesses, the counties, and other user groups. We have raised nearly \$40,000 so far.

See www.sierraaccess.com/list_of_donors_1.html, to see a list of people who have generously donated to SAC's Legal Defense Fund. We still need more donations. For a \$25 donation you will receive a free t-shirt. Go to http://www.sierraaccess.com/Note_Cards_and_Donations.html to donate using credit cards or Paypal. Checks can be mailed to SAC, PO Box 944, Quincy CA 95971. SAC is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization so your donations are tax deductible.

This lawsuit is against the Plumas NF Travel Management Plan. However, we believe that if we prevail on our lawsuit it could set precedence on other forests in California. So this is not just a local suit, it has the potential to be very far reaching.

- Many people are joining this lawsuit because they are frustrated and discouraged with Forest Service management and policies across the state and the entire nation.
- People are joining this lawsuit because they want to express their anger and mistrust of the Forest Service.
- Some are joining in an attempt to reduce the extreme environmental groups' control of the Forest Service and let the general public's opinion be heard.
- This lawsuit has become a grass roots effort with potential to make some significant statements for the public.

SAC expects the lawsuit to be filed by the end of September. It has been a long, hard road the past 8 years as we've tried our best to work with the Forest Service. It has been an excruciatingly slow, convoluted, ever-changing government process. We have exhausted all avenues that are available to us to work with the Forest Service, and our only remaining option is litigation. It is unfortunate that good people have to contribute their hard-earned money to a lawsuit to force the Forest Service to be responsive to public needs. But that's the reality. Thank you for your donations to continue the fight for ourselves and for the generations that will follow us. Your donation will strengthen our case.

Motor Vehicle Use Maps are now available

The Motor Vehicle Use Maps are now available at all Forest Service offices. With the release of the maps, the new plan is officially in effect. The new plan will restrict access to the forest in many ways.

- All motorized travel (cars, trucks, motorcycles, motorhomes, etc) are limited to driving only on “designated routes”.
- Nearly 800 miles of existing roads have not been designated for public use and are no longer available for motor vehicles, including Forest Service vehicles.
- Parking is limited to within one vehicle length from a designated route. This includes parking for camping and firewood cutting.
- Green sticker vehicles are no longer allowed to use the main gravel “maintenance level 3” roads.
- No special provisions are made for the disabled or elderly.
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The maps are free. They are extremely hard to read and you will need another forest map with more detail on it to find your way. The maps are also available online. [Click here to go to the USFS website, then click on "Motor Vehicle Use Maps"](#)

If you have trouble with Law Enforcement Officers, SAC asks you document the incident with information including the officer’s name, location of the incident, date and time, and what happened. Send the information to SAC at sierraaccess@digitalpath.net. We do not encourage the public to travel illegally, but if you are not treated courteously during this transition time we want to know about it.

Mt. Hough Motorized Trail Proposal

The Plumas County Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) has recommended funding a grant to build a motorized trail from the edge of Quincy to Mt Hough and Crystal Lake. This project grew out of negotiations between motorized users, represented by SAC, and non-motorized users. District Ranger Michael Donald facilitated negotiations between the two groups.

The area known as “South Park” located generally between Chandler Road and the Cascade Trail on Spanish Creek is proposed by non-motorized users to be exclusive for non-motorized use (bicyclists, hikers, equestrians, etc) in exchange for a new motorized trail system that is acceptable to SAC and the public. SAC will be proposing the specific trails that the public would like to see for this trail system. If you are interested in submitting some of your favorite trails and roads, or if you would like to be on the committee to work on the proposal, please contact SAC at sierraaccess@digitalpath.net. When we begin work on this proposal, we will notify all SAC members.

Lake Davis Snowmobile Trail Proposal

The Plumas NF has received an OHV grant to enhance snowmobile use in the Lake Davis area. The grant will fund the NEPA and planning for a staging area and proposed groomed trails around Lake Davis. It will also do the required NEPA to reopen the Jackson Creek Campground just east of Cromberg, which would provide a staging area and camping for OHVs and equestrians.

SAC will be working with the Forest Service to propose details for this project. This is another project with potential to increase tourism and benefit the local economy, as well as provide recreation opportunities for local residents. If you are interested in helping on this project proposal, contact SAC at sierraaccess@digitalpath.net. We will notify all SAC members and local snowmobile clubs when the planning process begins.

Travel Management Subpart A and Subpart C

Travel Management Subpart A is the next step in the Travel Management process. However according to Alice Carlton, the Subpart A analysis has been put on hold so the Forest Service can work to mend their relationships with the counties before analysis for additional road closures begins. We will let you know when Subpart A begins, which will affect the main roads in the Plumas NF transportation system. It is expected that a significant number of roads will also be closed during the Subpart A process.

Subpart C involves possible restrictions for Over Snow Vehicles. We will keep you informed as that study evolves.

Plumas County Sheriffs Dept.

Plumas County Sheriff Hagwood will be testifying at a Congressional Hearing on September 19 regarding the Plumas Travel Management Plan.

Sheriff Greg Hagwood has said his department will not enforce the Plumas NF Travel Management Plan. He will not enforce these restrictions which he believes will “cause reasonable people to do unreasonable things”. [Click here](#) to see an article about the Sheriff and the Travel Management Plan. We applaud Sheriff Hagwood for his support of the citizens of Plumas County.

Thank you for your support

Over the past 8 years that we have been working on the Plumas NF Travel Management Plan, your support has been overwhelming. SAC is a grass roots organization and we are now recognized across the state as one of the best groups working to preserve access to public lands.

We plan to have a meeting for all SAC members in the near future. We will notify you of the time and date of that meeting.

If you are not receiving emails from SAC monthly, your email address in our records may not be correct. If you have changed your email in the last 6 or 7 years, we may not have your current address.

Now is the critical time for our group to gather our strength and continue with a lawsuit to preserve access to our public lands.

