



December 2012 Newsletter

Plumas County Coordinating Council

The Plumas County Coordinating Council was established by the Board of Supervisors in 2008 through Resolution 08-7514 to coordinate the plans, policies, and priorities of Plumas County with those of federal and state agencies, particularly the United States Forest Service.

The Coordinating Council functions as an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors. The members of the Coordinating Council are:

- Bob Perreault, Chair** - *Plumas County Public Works Director (ex-officio member)*
- Randy Wilson, Vice Chair** - *Plumas County Planning Director (ex-officio member)*
- Sherrie Thrall** - *District 3, Plumas County Supervisor*
- Terry Swofford** - *District 1, Plumas County Supervisors*
- Frank Stewart** - *Counties Quincy Library Group Forester*
- John Sheehan** - *Quincy Library Group Member*
- (Vacant)** - *Plumas County Flood Control Manager (ex-officio member)*

The Coordinating Council normally meets on the first Friday of each month at 1:00 p.m. in the Planning and Building Services conference room at 555 Main Street in Quincy. (Exception: due to the holidays, the next PCCC Meeting is scheduled for January 11, 2013.) Meetings are open to the public.

Examples of items that are normally discussed include OHV issues, FS project updates, forest recreation, project updates, Timber Sale planning, discussions of different policies on Plumas, Lassen, and Tahoe NFs, and other issues that involve both the County and the Forest Service.

Travel Management Subpart A

Of particular importance at the Dec. 7 meeting of the Plumas County Coordinating Council (PCCC), the Forest Service said they will begin planning for Subpart A of the Travel Management Plan next month. This study will look at reducing the miles of main roads in the forest. Terri Simon-Jackson has been named as the Team Leader for the Plumas NF. The Lassen NF did not announce their staff contact. The study is planned to start in January 2013.

The Forest Service states that no decision will come out of the Subpart A process. It will only identify a minimum road system that would be needed for the future. Decisions on individual roads would be made on a project by project basis. At this point, it is not clear whether this will be a process that will allow public input.

At the Dec. 7 PCCC meeting, the Chair stated to the Forest Service that Plumas County officials expected “coordination” during the Subpart A activities, whereas it is the Plumas County position that “coordination” was not practiced during Subpart B. The Chair suggested that National Forest staff and Plumas County officials meet to discuss the Subpart A process before the next PCCC meeting.

SAC is concerned that Subpart A will use the same procedures that were used in Subpart B, which resulted in closing 873 miles of roads and trails on the Plumas NF. The public is now apprehensive regarding what Subpart A will do to the remaining road system. Snowmobilers are also concerned about restrictions on snowmobiles, which is Subpart C. Potential snowmobile restrictions will be the next phase of Travel Management after Subpart A is complete.

- **Travel Management Plan Subpart A to begin in January**
- **Additional road closures to be planned**
- **Snowmobile restrictions will be considered in Subpart C**

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Lawsuit Delayed

We are waiting for Butte County to finish their negotiations with the Forest Service before we move forward with our lawsuit. It is expected that their negotiations will conclude by February 2013. It is difficult to find the patience to wait to file the lawsuit against the Plumas NF because our members are feeling the impacts of the Travel Management Plan, but SAC supports Butte County in their efforts to do what they feel benefits the citizens of their county.

In the meantime, SAC is exploring additional ways of funding our lawsuit. We have paid for our attorney to write our complaint, but we haven't raised enough to pay for all the court proceedings yet.

We have become involved in a variety of ways to support our long-term goal, which is to preserve access to our public lands. We cannot do this without the support of our members. Your name on our membership list is extremely important, and so is your financial support. Sharing SAC's mission with other people is also very valuable, as well as encouraging them to sign up as members.

Thank you all for your support!



Winter County Road Closures

Many County roads are closed during the winter months due to heavy snow.

Plumas County winter road closures can be viewed at: <http://www.countyofplumas.com/index.aspx?nid=1979>

Butte County winter road closures can be viewed at: <http://www.buttecounty.net/public%20works/road%20closures.aspx>

SAC Receives Grant Funds for Trail Maintenance

Sierra Access Coalition has been approved for a RAC grant to do single-track motorcycle trail maintenance, along with partners Ironman Dual Sport, Paradise Ridge Riders, and Plumas Dirt Riders. The grant is for \$14,450, which will fund maintenance of single-track trails on Feather River Ranger District next year.

As a matching contribution to the grant funds, volunteers will monitor the trails throughout the 2013 season and report maintenance needs. A report will be written and submitted to the Forest Service with recommendations for the following year's maintenance.

Bob Vancourt of Ironman Dual Sport and Corky Lazzarino of SAC met on 12/18/12 with Deb Schoenberg at Feather River Ranger Station to discuss details. We hope this is the beginning of a collaborative partnership between the user groups and the Forest Service.

When we demonstrate that we are willing to help take care of the trails we use, we believe that the Forest Service will be more likely to designate additional routes for public use.

The RAC Committee funded one year of the two year grant request. However, Deputy Forest Supervisor Laurence Crabtree said he is fully supportive of this project and he will find money to fund it. So we are hoping this will become an annual effort on the part of the Forest Service and the user groups.

Bob Vancourt will be coordinating with volunteers to work on the trails. If you are interested, contact Bob through his website at www.ironmandualsport.com

The project will start in spring 2013. We will let you know more details in early spring. And we hope to see you out on the trails!



OHV and RAC Grants Fund Campground Improvements

This year, several campground improvements have been completed by the Forest Service and volunteer groups.



Snake Lake Campground—A RAC grant and a State OHV grant funded improvements at the Snake Lake Campground. Two campsites past the main campground, which have historically been designated as an OHV staging area, were improved by adding picnic tables and fire rings. Also local horse clubs, with a RAC grant, teamed up with the Forest Service to build an equestrian section behind the restrooms at the main campground. Corrals were constructed, roads were built with gravel surfacing, and there will be new tables and fire rings at the new sites. Next year construction will be completed on a ramp to help disabled riders get onto their horses. Thank you to Donnal Nichols, Diane Uchytel, Feather River College, and all the volunteers who donated their time to this project. The Forest Service road crew and fire crews provided clearing and earthwork. Mt Hough District Recreation personnel coordinated the work along with engineering personnel.

Meadow Camp—State OHV Funds were also used to construct a new toilet at Meadow Camp, outside of Meadow Valley on Deanes Valley Road.

Jackson Creek Campground—At the Jackson Creek Campground, which is currently closed, State OHV Funds were used to remove the old restroom building. SAC volunteers are working with the Forest Service in an effort to get this campground reopened. OHVs and Equestrians are not allowed in most developed Forest Service campgrounds and the new parking restrictions make it very difficult to camp safely at dispersed sites in the forest. The Jackson Creek Campground is an excellent choice for people who camp with their green sticker vehicles and horses.



Meadowview Campground—This campground, at the top of Doyle Grade, has been improved using State OHV funds to install bear boxes for campers to store their food. Grant funds also paid to drill a well.

Crocker Campground Negotiations

The Crocker Campground in Clover Valley along the Beckwourth-Genesee Road is a favorite for OHVers. [\(click here for a map\)](#) However, there will soon be no legal access in and out of the campground for green sticker vehicles. The Travel Management Plan closed the road over to Lake Davis to green sticker vehicles, and the planned paving of the county road in Clover Valley will make that road illegal for OHV use. The project is funded by the Federal Highways Administration. SAC objected to this situation since OHVers have very limited camping options available to them.

SAC spent several weeks negotiating with the Forest Service, Plumas County, and Federal Highways Administration. We believe a solution has been found. The Forest Service has agreed to build an alternate OHV route out of the campground that will let green sticker vehicles (quads, motorcycles and side-by-sides) travel to the end of the pavement in Clover Valley, heading towards the Clover Valley Ranch and other points north. The trail can also be used by mountain bikes and equestrians.



The Forest Service has made it a priority to do the environmental analysis for the new route and said they would begin their field work in August 2012. If an agreement had not have been reached with SAC, the funding for the multi-million dollar paving project would have been at risk. So we are pleased that the project will move forward and that the Forest Service is working with the OHV community to preserve access to the few campgrounds that still allow access for OHVs.

The Crocker Guard Station, pictured above, is 100 years old.

Mt. Hough/South Park Trails Proposal

The area known as “South Park”, which is generally located between Chandler Road and the Cascades on Spanish Creek is being proposed as a non-motorized trail system to be set aside for bicycles, equestrians, and hikers.



In an effort to balance land uses, Ranger Mike Donald has been working hard to create a new motorized trail system on Mt. Hough, from the railroad tracks above Chandler Road northwest, to Crystal Lake, Taylorsville, east to Grizzly Ridge and down Grizzly Ridge to Squirrel Creek. The trail system can be accessed from the Quincy side of Mt. Hough as well as from the Taylorsville side. The long-term vision for the trail system is to connect it to Lake Davis, which would be an amazing ride.

SAC volunteers flagged in a new trail location on [Grizzly Ridge](#) for quads and motorcycles. This trail will have incredible views of American Valley, Sierra Buttes, Genesee Valley, Mt Lassen and many points east. It feels like you’re on top of the world and can see forever. We know OHVs, hikers, equestrians, and bicyclists will enjoy the new trail.

SAC is working with the Forest Service to relocate a few segments of the Grizzly Ridge trail which are near a Special Interest Botanical Area, and a non-motorized area to the east. Ranger Michael Donald is making a genuine effort to find a solution that will be acceptable to all parties.

The road that connects the Brady’s Camp area to the Walker Mine area remains closed to green sticker vehicles. This is a critical connection to the project which has been denied by the FS. However, SAC is continuing to discuss this issue with the FS, which has now been referred to Deputy Forest Supervisor Laurence Crabtree. SAC is asking for green-sticker vehicle use to be legal on this road. The Plumas County Dept. of Public Works has also requested for this road to be open to OHVs.



Above, Devils Postpile on Grizzly Ridge



Left, view from Grizzly Ridge looking over Genesee Valley

Tahoe NF Litigation



Feds are foes to recreational forest access

Friends of Tahoe Forest Access v. U.S. Department of Agriculture

Status: Complaint filed on July 17, 2012. Hearing on The Wilderness Society, et al.'s motion to intervene held Dec. 5, 2012. Awaiting court's order.

Summary:

Pacific Legal Foundation (PLF) attorneys represent Friends of Tahoe Forest Access and other recreational enthusiasts in challenging the United States Forest Service's illegal decision to bar recreational vehicles from hundreds, if not thousands, of miles of roads and trails in the Tahoe National Forest that were previously open to off-road enthusiasts.

The Service's action came through its implementation of the 2005 Travel Management Rule for the Tahoe National Forest.

PLF argues the Service violated the National Environmental Policy Act by failing to adequately analyze the human impacts of prohibiting access to more than 800 miles of formerly accessible trails, failing to conduct a site-specific analysis of the routes at issue, and improperly prejudicing off-road recreation in developing the purpose and need for the regulatory decision.

Friends of Tahoe Forest Access as well as other recreation groups and individuals participated throughout the NEPA process, and are deeply concerned with the outcome of the regulatory decision-making. Several individuals volunteered much time filing the groups' administrative appeal and turned to PLF because they do not have the resources to carry forward the litigation on their own. As these groups consist of individuals and families who enjoy off-road recreation and the outdoors experience, they fear the Forest Service's implementation of the Travel Management Rule will significantly reduce their access to the Tahoe National Forest.

[Click here to watch a video regarding the Tahoe lawsuit](#)

Statewide

CORVA is Working for OHVers—Join CORVA Now!

Calling all off-roaders, hunters, houndsmen, 4-wheelers: This year the California Off-Road Vehicle Association (CORVA) has been there for everyone throughout California, from WEMO to Clear Creek, the Rubicon to Pismo. CORVA will be litigating the Plumas NF Travel Management Plan along with Plumas County, Butte County and SAC. They are supporting us, now they need you - JOIN NOW, DONATE NOW, so CORVA can KEEP OFF-ROAD ON TRAIL in California. Go to www.corva.org to join or send a donation. Donations can be earmarked for SAC's Legal Defense Fund, if desired.

CORVA is a varied group of outdoor recreationists who are extremely active in promoting the positive aspects of vehicular access on public lands and protecting that right.

CORVA is composed of many owners of street legal and "Green Sticker" vehicles such as ATV's, motorcycles, 3-wheelers, trail bikes, and dune buggies, as well as 4X4 vehicles, dual sport motorcycles, bajas, and desert racers. Plus many others



that use access for; hunting, rockhounding, bird watching, fishing and others activities.

CORVA's main purpose is to work with the land managers for responsible off-highway vehicular access and recreation opportunities. Secondly, they educate their membership on the constantly changing rules and regulations and promote clean-up and trail maintenance projects.

CORVA is very active in the political arena and contributes to a lobbyist in Sacramento. They work closely with the State Department of Parks and

Recreation, [Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation \(OHMVR\) Program](#) from the user's standpoint. They provide a valuable resource to land managers in the form of dedicated OHV enthusiasts who believe in responsible vehicular access.

CORVA is active at all levels of the land management public process with both the BLM and the USFS. They do this by commenting on environmental documents on as many issues as possible and maintaining close relationships with personnel in the field as well as the staff.

They coordinate with other multiple use organizations ranging from snowmobiles to horse enthusiasts to protect multiple use rights from the environmental extremists. CORVA is "dedicated to protecting our lands for the people, not from the people."

Sierra Access Coalition on Facebook



Check out Sierra Access Coalition's group on Facebook. The Plumas Dirt Riders Club also has a page on Facebook.

If you have items you'd like us to post on Facebook or on SAC's website www.sierraaccess.com let us know. Email your news or suggestions to sierraaccess@digitalpath.net.