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July 2014 Newsletter

Plumas NF Lawsuit filing delayed



Sierra Access Coalition and the California Off-Road Vehicle Association have signed up with Pacific Legal Foundation (PLF) to provide representation in the lawsuit against the Plumas National Forest Travel Management Plan. The Directors of the two organizations, Corky Lazzarino and Amy Granat, will also each be named as individuals in the lawsuit. We anticipate others will join the lawsuit before the complaint is filed.

However, in a recent development, our attorney had emergency heart surgery. He will be off work for several months. But he expects to have our lawsuit filed well before the end of the year. We wish him well in his recovery.

The Plumas National Forest Travel Management Plan Decision was signed in 2010 by Forest Supervisor Alice Carlton. The decision was appealed by several parties including Plumas County, Butte County, the California Off-Road Vehicle Association, Jeanne Burroughs, Wayne Johannson, Phyllis Taddei, Misty Banchio, Steve Burroughs, Sierra Access Coalition, and the Wilderness Society. After a lengthy process, the Forest Service categorically denied all the appeals.

Following the denial of their appeals, Plumas and Butte Counties continued efforts to try and resolve matters. Both Counties conducted several meetings with Forest Service officials in an attempt to come to agreements on the issues that affect the citizens of their counties. Although there appeared to be some minor progress in project specific matters (including reclassification of some roadway segments for OHV use) and education efforts, there has been no progress in the important matters of "process," especially in the matter of "coordination."

Details regarding the lawsuit are confidential at this point. We will keep our members informed, when details can be released.

SAC wants to thank all our supporters. It has been a long road, and since we have never been involved in a lawsuit before, we didn't know it would take so long. But the lawsuit will be filed by year's end.



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Tahoe Basin Snowmobile Planning Begins

The Forest Service held a meeting at Lake Tahoe February 1, 2014 to begin planning on Subpart C of the Travel Management Plan, which will restrict snowmobile use on the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU).

Representatives from Sierra Access Coalition, California Off-Road Vehicle Assoc., Friends of Independence Lake, and the California-Nevada Snowmobile Assoc. attended the meeting. Also at the meeting was the [Snowlands Network](#), who are proponents of non-motorized winter recreation such as cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.



The Snowlands Network argues that snowmobiles are noisy and have high emissions. This is not the case, especially with newer models of snowmobiles. They are very clean, quiet, and meet State and Federal emission standards. This fact was pointed out to the Forest Service by the snowmobile groups.

It is extremely important to be involved in the LTBMU planning, because the process the Forest Service decides to use for restricting snowmobile use at Lake Tahoe will be the model that will be used across the nation for restrictions on other National Forests. It has the potential to affect your riding areas in Lakes Basin, Bucks Lake, Little Grass Valley, La Porte, Lake Davis, and other favorite areas on the Plumas National Forest.

Snowmobile Rule Comments Due 8/4/14

Snowmobilers, you are next on the chopping block!

Snowmobiling is soon facing restrictions on public lands.

- On June 18th, the U.S. Forest Service released a Proposed Rule that would govern Over-Snow Vehicle use on the National Forest Service lands. The Winter Wildlands Alliance successfully sued the Forest Service, alleging their failure to manage snowmobiles. This resulted in a new Proposed Rule.
- The Proposed Rule recognizes that OSVs are very different from other types of motor vehicles. Snowmobiles travel on the snow rather than directly on the ground and have different environmental impacts.
- Snowmobile trails provide many recreational opportunities - not just for snowmobilers. Cross country skiers and snowshoers also benefit from the trails.
- Snowmobiling is generally limited to only a fraction of the forest, while backcountry skiers and snowshoers generally have access to the entire forest. This gives the non-motorized groups 'access to it all' and discriminates against the snowmobilers.



SAC will be filing comments with the Forest Service on this significant proposed rule. Please let us know your concerns so we can add them to our comments.

For additional information on the official release see:

[Use by Over-Snow Vehicles \(Travel Management Rule\)](#) in the Federal Register.

<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2014/06/18/2014-14273/use-by-over-snow-vehicles-travel-management-rule>

We encourage you to submit comments to:

U.S.D.A Forest Service,
Attn: Joseph Adamson
1400 Independence Avenue, SW,
Mail Stop 1125, Washington, DC 20250-1125
Re: RIN 0596-AD17/Use by Over-Snow Vehicles

Or send your comments to SAC:
info@sierraaccess.com

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Keep our public lands open

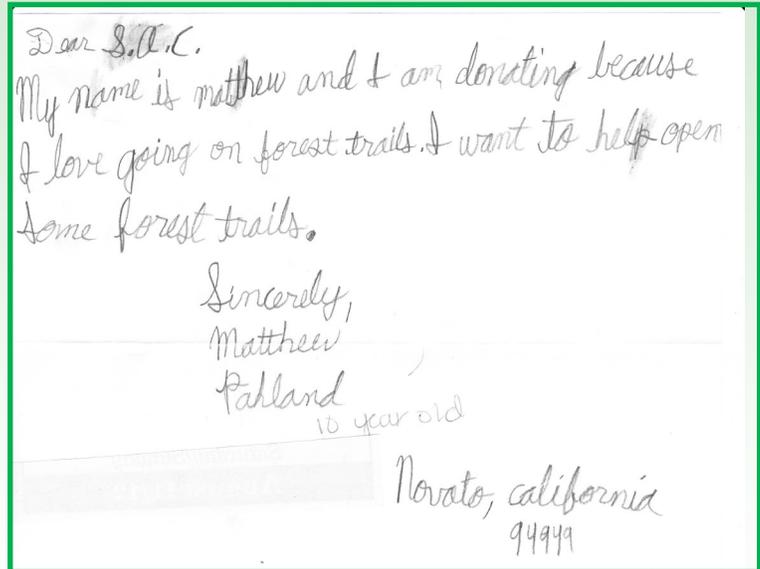
SAC received this letter and donation from 10 yr. old Matthew Pahland of Novato, California.

Thank you, Matthew.

This is a good reminder of why we are working to preserve access to our public lands—for the next generation and beyond.

To donate to SAC, go to

<http://sierraaccess.com/donations.html>



Subpart A: 722 miles of Road Closures Proposed



The Plumas NF is currently working on Subpart A of the Travel Management Plan (TMP). As you will recall, Subpart B of the TMP closed 873 miles of roads and trails in 2010. The Forest Service is now planning new closures, this time main roads, under Subpart A of the TMP. They are proposing 722 miles of additional road closures, which will bring the total up to nearly 1600 miles of roads to be closed so far under the TMP.

Although the Chief of the Forest Service directed all National Forests to “minimize” their road systems”, the Plumas NF appears to be taking an extreme interpretation of what minimize means. Closure of additional roads will essentially destroy our rural way of life because it will impact future logging, firewood cutting, recreation, hunting, and all other uses of our public lands.

Public meetings regarding Subpart A road closures were held in 2013..

Click links below for maps of the proposed road closures, which are shown in red:

For the east side of the forest:

http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5424415.pdf

For the west side of the forest:

http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5424416.pdf

Although the Forest Service states that no actual decision will be made to close roads during Subpart A, the study will make recommendations for future road closures that will be implemented at a later date. However, the Hayden Project near Portola cites “Subpart A” as the authority to close roads. So apparently, Subpart A has already been set into motion.

The final phase of the Travel Management Plan process will be Subpart C, which will analyze restrictions on snowmobile use. [See page 2 and 3 of this newsletter.](#)

The Lassen NF says they already did Subpart A assessments (which are for main system roads) during the Subpart B process of the Travel Management Plan. SAC disagrees, because SAC attended all the Lassen public meetings and there was never any discussion of system roads at that time.

Project leaders for Subpart A are Terri Simon-Jackson for Plumas NF, Chris O’Brien for Lassen NF, and Terry Brennan for Tahoe NF. Information on Subpart A is available on the [Forest Service website.](#)

California Air Resources Board (CARB) and OHV

By Sylvia Milligan, [Recreation Outdoors Coalition](#)

While all of us have been kept busy with forest issues another branch of government is quickly taking over control of the very fabric of our lives. CARB, California's version of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the most dangerous agency in California. The regulations on the red and green stickers are generated from CARB. They have been harassing the diesel engine owners for years and are now working on a new plan to come after all of us that drive any type of fuel vehicle.

A number of us attended the CARB meeting in Sacramento in April and we were appalled at what was said at that meeting. When the meeting was nearly over and a large number of participants had left, each member of the CARB Board spoke. One member told the audience that it is their desire to get all fuel driven vehicles off the highways except for those powered by electricity or cylinders of natural gas.

How is that going to work for you?

One hundred and twenty eight people testified and a number of them told heart wrenching stories of how they have been harmed by the CARB mandates. The Board in essence told them they do not care. They said these people have had a number of years to prepare to be compliant. Did not matter that the economy is bad, the required filters are expensive and do not work on older trucks, that the filters have to run so hot they catch fire easily, that the expense to keep them maintained is exorbitant, or whatever problem the person might have, either get it fixed or get rid of the vehicle. These were all urban board members who have no clue what it is like to live in a rural area. Their response was "Move to the urban area where there are jobs!"

Within the next five years they will be coming out with more mandates that will affect every fuel vehicle. Their goal is ZERO emissions. Proven science shows that the emissions emitted by fuel vehicles are so low that it does not make a difference in the scope of things. Does not matter if you bought a new vehicle that complied currently, you will either bring it up to current standards when they come out or you will be out of compliance. The fines for this are unbelievable.

State Parks and Rec's OHMVR Division in Sacramento is very involved in this issue trying to protect your recreational rights. They are pushing hard to have the restrictions of the red/green tags removed. We wish them luck.

Keep paying attention because the new mandates will affect every one of us.

