

CORVA

CALIFORNIA OFF-ROAD
VEHICLE ASSOCIATION

www.corva.org

OFF-ROADERS IN ACTION

Public says: "No More Wilderness"

by Ron Schiller

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to everyone that attended Tuesday night's wilderness meeting in Trona. The turnout was overwhelming. The meeting room was far too small to accommodate the crowd of more than 300 people who finally got in. Two side rooms were used to contain the overflow but it was very difficult for them to see the presentation or hear the discussions. Unfortunately, some people were unable to get into the building and left.

The meeting was sponsored by Searles Valley Minerals and was opened by company representative, Arzell Hale who requested that people be respectful and that discussion be limited to areas that affect the local community. Mr. Hale was followed by Mr. Jim Fairchild who showed satellite photos of Johnson Valley followed by satellite photos of Slate Range and Great Falls Basin proposed wilderness areas. Mr. Fairchild went on to explain that the Marine Corps would likely be taking Johnson Valley for military training and that the displaced use would result in the Slate Range and Great Falls Basin looking like Johnson Valley if they were not designated as wilderness. However, Mr. Fairchild failed to recognize that Johnson Valley is a BLM (Bureau of Land Management) designated "OHV Open Area" with unrestricted OHV use area where cross-country travel is encouraged and that Slate Range and Great Falls Basin are BLM designated BLM Limited Use Areas where motorized travel is strictly limited to designated roads and trails. For Mr. Fairchild to compare the two areas and imply that Slate Range and Great Falls Basin will become a defacto open area is misleading and irresponsible.

Next on the agenda was Ryan Henson, Policy Director for the CWC (California Wilderness Coalition), and Laurel Williams, another CWC representative. They made a presentation on their organization's view of the issue and offered to respond to questions and comments from the audience. It was most surprising to hear them admit that the reason for a lot of this proposal is to stop mining, particularly around Cerro Gordo. They indicated that they do not want to restrict anyone's access and asked people to look at their large maps to show them any roads they want to be cherrystemmed to allow motorized use.

After the CWC presentation, Chris Horgan from Stewards of Sequoia provided a short talk about motorized access and the importance of organizing opponents of the proposed wilderness legislation. Chris also distributed pro-access buttons and literature. Mr. Hale then opened the meeting for comments and questions for the CWC representatives. The comments received from the audience were overwhelmingly in direct opposition to any more designated wilderness. In response to a number of questions, the CWC representatives repeatedly stated that they wanted to keep the roads open for use. In response to the question regarding CWC's willingness to include language in the text of the bill that would acknowledge all roads and legislatively ensure that they would be available for use in the future, they refused to commit. In response to the question of their willingness to support language in the bill that would provide a 150 foot setback along all routes cherrystemmed into the wilderness, again, they would not commit. The problem is that CWC cannot ensure the public of anything in the bill because once it is introduced by Senator Feinstein, it's out of their hands. However, a commitment from CWC to support more wilderness boundary setback from the existing roads and trails and legislative language ensuring continued motorized use of those trails would go a long way toward it actually being included in a wilderness bill.

In conclusion, the meeting went very well. It's unfortunate that the facility was inadequate for the large unanticipated attendance. Nevertheless, arrangements for a similar meeting are being pursued and hopefully we will have a meeting in Ridgecrest in a facility with plenty of room for everyone to participate in the meeting. Finally, thanks again to everyone who took the time to attend and especially to Arzell Hale and Searles Valley Minerals for their thoughtfulness in sponsoring a meeting for the public.

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WHAT IS CORVA?

The California Off Road Vehicle Association (CORVA) is a varied group of outdoor recreationalists who are extremely active in promoting the positive aspects of vehicular access on public lands and protecting that right.

The group is composed of the owners of "Green Sticker" vehicles such as ATV's, motorcycles, 3-wheelers, trials bikes, and dune buggies, as well as "street legal" 4x4 vehicles, dual sport motorcycles, baja and desert racers.

The main purpose of CORVA is to have fun! We also work with the land managers for responsible off-highway vehicular access and recreation opportunities. Secondly, we educate our membership on the constantly changing rules and regulations and promote conservation, clean-up and trail maintenance projects.

We participate in lobbying activities in both Sacramento and Washington DC. We work closely with the State Department of Parks and Recreation providing input to the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) program from the users' standpoint. We provide a valuable resource to land managers in the form of dedicated OHV enthusiasts who believe in using our public lands responsibly.

We are active at all levels of the land management public process with both the BLM and USFS. We do this by commenting on many environmental documents on issues that affect us.

We coordinate with other multiple use organizations such as snowmobiles to horse enthusiasts to protect multiple use rights that we both share. Only together can we fight the extremists. We are,

"Dedicated to protecting our lands for the people, not from the people."

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Jim Woods

Happy 2009? I Think

Well, it looks like 2009 is starting out with a bang. In just the second week of the year, the Senate was ready to pass the Omnibus Land Bill and the house was soon to follow. Altogether this Bill will designate over 2 million acres of land to Wilderness in nine states. In California, this Bill will add 470,000 acres in the Eastern Sierra and San Gabriel Wilderness including the Humboldt-Toiyabe, Angeles and Inyo-Kern National Forests and another 190,000 Wilderness acres in Riverside County including parts of the Cleveland and San Bernardino National Forests and Joshua Tree National Park. This is just the beginning. OHV users along with various use groups will continue to argue for rights to use Johnson Valley, Red Rock State Park and Last Chance Canyon just to name a few. No, this will not be a good year for Off Road access and another reason for us all to stay involved.

As for CORVA, we again forced to move our CORVA Truckhaven Challenge from the Freeman Properties near the Salton Sea to the Ocotillo Wells SVRA. For our new members in 2007 CORVA and the California State Parks were sued by the Center for Bio Diversity (CBD) for trying to hold our event where it had been held for 12 previous years, and we were forced to cancel it. As disappointing as that was, the volunteer team moved the event in 2008 over to the Ocotillo Wells SVRA and did so again this year (January 2009). Ocotillo Wells is a fabulous area, one of the largest OHV areas in California. But off-roaders, especially Jeep and 4x4 users love Truckhaven and want to use the area again.

At certain times throughout the year, the heavy rains created small erosion fingers known as "knotches" that are very challenging – hence the Truckhaven Challenge. The volunteer team marks off a course with both easy and difficult obstacles and one at a time, the participants attempt to conquer that challenge. The area changes yearly – heavy rain fall and the ever-changing flow of flood waters makes each year different. The CBD argues that the wildlife in the area is dramatically affected by our annual event. The State Parks system bought the area and wants to make it a legitimate OHV use area – which would bring in certain regulations and enforcement. CORVA supports regulations, enforcement and responsible OHV use of the area. The CBD wants to close the area. You can understand our "challenge" in trying to find a compromise along with the State Parks leadership.

By the time you receive this newsletter, the 14th CORVA Truckhaven Challenge will be over. We expect a fantastic turnout, as many active Jeep and 4x4 Clubs plan to show their support by attending. The volunteer committee of Geoff Teare, Rick Fisher and Terry Work will provide a report in the March 2009 ORIA. Join me in congratulating them on a successful event. Remember, CORVA and along with the CORVA volunteers, work throughout the year, following all regulations, obtaining permits, providing insurance and focusing on keeping your OHV areas open and available. Please, show your support. If you can, attend the CORVA events in your area. If you can't, please at least renew your membership, make a donation or find a fellow Off-roader to join.

On a final note, with the downturn in the economy, I'm sure you have noticed the vacant buildings in your hometown. Many RV dealers, motorcycle and Off-road shops have been forced to close – permanently. While I was calling our Associates to ask for prizes for the Truckhaven Challenge, I was amazed at the generosity of so many of them. But I am also saddened at those that have closed. These are hard times and we need to stick together, support our friends and allies in our battles. Remember OHV users just like us own most of these shops. On the weekends they enjoy wheeling on our public land. Next time you visit your local OHV store, dealership or supplier let them know you appreciate their support of the OHV community. Support those that donate prizes to OHV events. They need our business and we need to support them and show them we care.

Happy 2009 to you and all your families. Hold on, don't give up, and remember, the ride is not over yet.



CORVA's 2009 Family Fun Days March 14th & 15th California City

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Sunday:

9:00 a.m. POKER RUN
1:00 p.m. Award Ceremony

Saturday Evening:

Dinner 5:30 p.m.
Award Ceremony and
Raffle 7:00 p.m.

Saturday:

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Fun Games for
The Whole Family

Volunteer's Needed!!

If you would like to volunteer.

Please email katherine.kelsey@corva.org or jim.arbogast@corva.org

CORVA Land Use Resources and Public Policy Report

By Bruce Whitcher

CORVA VP of Land Resources and Public Policy

- **Johnson Valley**

CORVA submitted some excellent comments on the BLM has published the Notice of Withdrawal and Segregation required to study the Johnson Valley area for use by the Marines. If you sent comments, thanks!!

The draft EIS will probably be published in early 2009 and the comment period will close in 2011. We continue to request that any expansion of the base be toward the East into the Look Sheephole Valley and the Cadiz Dunes wilderness area.

- **Keyesville**

BLM will be holding route inventory meetings for the Bakersfield area in mid February. These will review routes in the Keyesville area near Lake Isabella and across the State. Watch for announcements.



- **Clear Creek Management Area Management Plan Revision**

BLM published scoping comments related to the proposed CCMA Area plan revision. The revision is designed to update the management plan for the area to include new considerations such as asbestos exposure. BLM will now prepare alternatives for a draft EIS. We will be submitting comments on this important DEIS. The Record of Decision is anticipated in 2009.

Look for an update on Clear Creek soon. BLM usually starts sending out publicity on the proposed alternatives before they are actually published as the EIS.

- **Red Rock State Park General Plan Update**

The Red Rock General Plan update has been under development since 2006. It is designed to update the plan to include expansion of the park that has occurred with the addition of areas such as Last Chance Canyon and Nightmare Gulch. We anticipate public meetings to discuss the plan update in the next few months. Look for announcements, OHV use is certain to be affected.

The first in a series of public meetings was held and was attended by CORVA representatives. OHV enthusiasts were the largest group present. The first public meeting to discuss alternatives will be held in Spring 2009. Stay tuned for further developments on the Red Rock General Plan.



- **OHV Grant workshops were held January 13 and 15.**

A new timeline for the OHV grant application process has been set. http://ohv.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1164

Activity Date	• Application materials available on Website. The second Monday in January
	• Preliminary Application filing on the first Monday in March
	• Public review and comment period: March through April
	• Application final filing date the first Monday in May
	• Application results posted first Monday in June

- **Forest Service Route Designation**

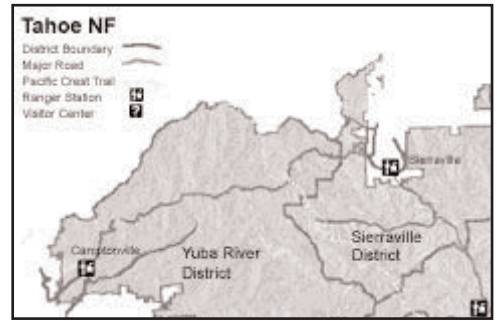
Tahoe National Forest DEIS

December 26 marked the deadline for comments on the Tahoe DEIS. The CORVA Comments Project led to formation of a very knowledgeable group of Tahoe enthusiasts who worked extremely hard to submit high quality comments on this important DEIS.



One of the major issues identified by the group was the unexplained elimination of 2400 miles of trail. We feel very strongly that the Forest Service must perform an analysis and conduct public review of any trails they plan to close. I'd like to thank the members of our hardworking group.

Kyra, California Off-Road Vehicle Association,
 Amy Granat, California Trail Users Coalition,
 Martin J. Ward, Friends of Tahoe Forest Access
 Jacquelyne 'Bebe' Theisen, Friends of Greenhorn
 Nancy Troutner, Grass Valley 4 Wheelers
 Don Spuhler, California Association of 4 Wheel Drive Clubs
 Jerry Fouts, American Motorcyclist Association
 David C. Wood, Rick White, WeBilt Four Wheel Drive Club
 Adam Batchelder, Nevada County Woods Riders
 Wade Tuma, High Sierra Motorcycle Club



Draft Environmental Impact Statements have been issues for Plumas National Forest and Modoc National Forest. The deadline for comments is February 11. We anticipate the release of several other Travel Management DEIS's in the near future.

Wilderness Bills

National Landscape Conservation system Bill due for vote January 11
 Senate Bill S. 22, that includes 150 public lands measures including the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) Act., is expected to come up for a vote. This depends in part on whether or not Congress is able to successfully deal with the President's Economic Stimulus Package. This is a major bill that will have significant effects on OHV recreation. Please send letter of opposition to your congress people.

Proposed Desert Wilderness bill taking shape

The California Wilderness Coalition (CWC) has been holding meeting with representatives of US Senator Feinstein to establish new wilderness areas in the California Desert. At this stage we have a chance to provide input that can help determine boundaries and preserve important routes. We have a very experienced and qualified group working on this issue, but they need your help.

The new CWC wilderness proposal includes about 20 new wilderness areas and National Park expansions within Inyo, San Bernardino, Imperial, and San Diego Counties. New wilderness areas proposed by the California Wilderness Coalition within Inyo County include Slate Range and Great Falls Basin north of Trona, Malpais Mesa in the Inyo Mountains around Cerro Gordo extending to the Saline Valley Road, Wild and Scenic River designation for Surprise Canyon, other areas in the northern Panamint Valley, and areas in north Death Valley National Park.

If enacted by Congress, this proposal would eliminate many traditional uses such as equestrian endurance rides, mountain biking, and vehicle access for such activities as gem and mineral collecting, spring wildflower viewing, and family back-country touring and picnic outings. In addition, this proposal would eliminate mineral exploration and new mining in the future.

If you are familiar with routes in these areas please contact me at bruce.whitcher@corva.org

CORVA NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Here are the main projects that CORVA is involved with at this time. Please cut this form out and mail with your donation to:

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D37 Save Johnson Valley Fun Ride Report

by Ed Stovin

AMA D37 had an event in Johnson Valley (Cougar Buttes) in December to raise awareness about the Marines intention to expand the 29 Palms base into Johnson Valley. I decided to go to help our cause and represent CORVA. There was an open comment period that allowed the public to tell the Marines how they feel about loosing such a great riding area. D37 laid out a number of routes for a variety of vehicles and skill levels to enjoy. The cost of the event? Write a comment letter. I showed up late Friday night and camped out by the rocks at Cougar Buttes. Saturday morning I wondered over to the big tent to see what was going on. I didn't come with any more expectations than to help the cause by being there and participating. Upon entering the tent I saw D37 people working signup, off-roaders all around and a table in the back with Jim Woods and Meg Grossglass behind, showing people how to write comments. Meg saw me and asked if I was there to ride or help, so I spent the next six hours helping people write comments. The sample comments there were quite good. They challenged the Marines to show why the expansion is needed and and asked them to study or assess many aspects of the action. Over 300 comments were collected on Saturday, making it an extremely productive event. Also helping people write comments were Jeff Leonard and Michele Kupelian. Oh, did I mention the weather? It was cold and the wind was blowing really hard all day and night. After the crowd died down, Jeff and I decided to ride one of the loops. We chose the hardest motorcycle loop and were rewarded with a great, challenging ride. Did I mention that Jeff can handle a motorcycle? He also gets an award for roughing it by sleeping in a tent in all that cold wind.

Saturday night I hung out in Jim Woods heated trailer for a while, then headed over to the big tent for the raffle and to hear people speak. I am sure the gentleman from the Marines was more than a little apprehensive to be there, but was received with a very warm round of applause.

Johnson Valley is used for observed trials events, motorcycle and car races, rock crawling events, movie filming and a host of other activities. This threat represents one of the biggest potential losses to OHV we have seen. Lets hope a reasonable resolution to this threat can be found.

New Column
Letter to the Editor
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EDUCATIONAL NEWS

BY DAN EGER

A New Year - Are You Ready?

The New Year is a great time to take care of those things that you don't normally think of but really should be examined at least once a year. Take for instance your first aid kits. The one in your house, the ones in your cars, the ones in your day packs..... They should all be examined at least once a year. Replace any supplies that you have used thru the year. Take a moment to think, was there something that wish you would have had in there? Add it. Make sure what's in there will not expire until next year (2010!). While you are at it check the batteries in all of your safety equipment around the house.

How long has it been since you have even thought about the smoke detector? Review you emergency contact information. (doctors phone numbers, your medical information card in your wallet) Did you know that if you call 911 from your cell phone that they have to spend a good chunk of time verifying your location? Think about programming your local police and fire department numbers in to your phones. Get yourself set up for the year to come. There may be a few minutes this year that you will be glad you took a few hours to be prepared for.

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◆ **Hi-Landers 4 Wheel Drive Club**

Kathy Martin — martin4x4@sbcglobal.net or (916) 331-2256

All Checks should be made payable to:
BARRETT LAKE BRIDGE PROJECT

For information concerning the project itself or making donations of time, resources and/or money to the project visit the Barrett Lake Bridge Project page at www.cal4wheel.com/hilanders

Imperial County Supervisors OKs OHV funds for Dunes Trash

The trash service will continue at the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area through this off-road season after the Imperial County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, Jan. 13, approved allocating funds to avoid a stoppage. In a September 18, 2008 BLM news release, District Manager Steve Borchard said, "With costs rising and available funding declining, trash collection simply became a luxury we could no longer afford for our visitors." He continued, "We want to provide a safe, quality recreation experience, so we're asking our visitors to take home their trash so our available funding can be used elsewhere in the Dunes."

The BLM has a \$400,000 contract with Mission Disposal for trash services that expires this month. Supervisor Wally Leimgruber, who represents the dunes area said discussions will continue with BLM to identify possible funding sources for trash service for next season as the Imperial County Board of Supervisors approved up to \$150,000 to extend the ISDRA trash service until the end of the season on May 30, 2009. These funds were made available by the California OHV License Fee program.



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A New President! Now What?
Recreationists Must Unite and Mobilize

By Del Albright, BlueRibbon Ambassador

Recreationists who enjoy the backcountry, waterways, off-pavement trails and SUV exploring have a huge new door of opportunity open to us – as well as a new challenge. The time has never been more critical for us to unite and mobilize to enjoy this new door and meet this new challenge. No matter how you wanted this election to turn out, we have to step up, work together, and mobilize our forces to help this new administration understand our sports and access issues.

Inherent with new Presidents, rotating congress critters, and term limits, we will always be in the game of educating new elected officials. It is our destiny if we are to survive.

I think there are a few steps we can take to ensure the future of our sports, no matter how you view this change in American politics. And one thing is for sure: we can all be proud of the fact that it is America and we can affect change by speaking up and working together. This is not the time to sit by and wait. We must act and help the newly-elected politician at all levels understand that we are the responsible stewards of our public lands and that we deserve access. Here are my suggestions for “now what?”

Step one is to unite our various sports and access interests at every opportunity. Leadership meetings and Summits, intra and inter-state, will help us find new ways to cooperate. Differences must be put aside and past intra-sport conflicts must come to an end. We need an Army now, more than ever. National groups like the BlueRibbon Coalition are an obvious membership for every recreationist in this country because “mixed use” will be an important strategy for keeping trails and riding areas open.

Groups like the North American Motorized Recreation Council (NAMRC) and the new BlueRibbon National Land Use Advisory Council (NLUAC) that facilitate regionalized communication will help us breach gaps in communication and facilitate long-term solutions to local and regional problems, as well as national issues. But no matter who works for us, we all need to be united in our efforts.

Step two is to engage recreationists at all levels to join up and be part of organized recreation. There are millions of us out there waiting for a reason to join up and get involved. This new Administration is the reason. They need us to help them understand who we are and what we stand for.

A quick internet search shows that those who oppose our access outnumber us by well over a million members and hundreds of millions of dollars. Just the numbers for a few key groups are shocking:

The Wilderness Society has over 300,000 members and supporters, with \$60 million bucks in the bank.

The Sierra Club with over 730,000 members and over a hundred million dollars in their kitty.

The National Audubon Society with net assets at the end of 2007 at over \$300 million and tens of thousands of members.

So why do we have so many off-pavement and waterway recreationists who are not members of something? The reality is that our state, regional and national organizations have not yet found the magic formula to engage all these pending members. I think this election changes that. We all now have reasons to jump in with both feet and to engage our friends and fellow recreationists to turn this door of opportunity into one we'll never forget. We have to be the solution with our large organizations and become the empowerment to get others to join the cause. Membership in our standing organizations and clubs is absolutely critical to the survival of responsible recreation.

Step three is to adopt more of our public lands and engage with our state and federal land management agencies. We have to partner up with land management agencies at every opportunity and find ways for us to be involved in the use, management and future of those lands and waterways we love to play on. We need to be at the table when decisions are made, problems are identified, and solutions are implemented.

We have to take “ownership” of our resources. Oh, excuse me, we do own America! Let's not forget that. When it comes to public lands, they are YOUR public lands. So we need to do everything we can to ensure our lands are protected FOR the public instead of FROM the public. (That is the motto of the BlueRibbon Coalition).

###

BlueRibbon Coalition is a national recreation group that champions responsible use of public and private lands, and encourages individual environmental stewardship. It represents over 10,000 individual members and 1200 organization and business members, for a combined total of over 600,000 recreationists nationwide. Call 1-800-258-3742 and visit BRC online at www.sharetrails.org. Also visit Del's website at www.delalbright.com

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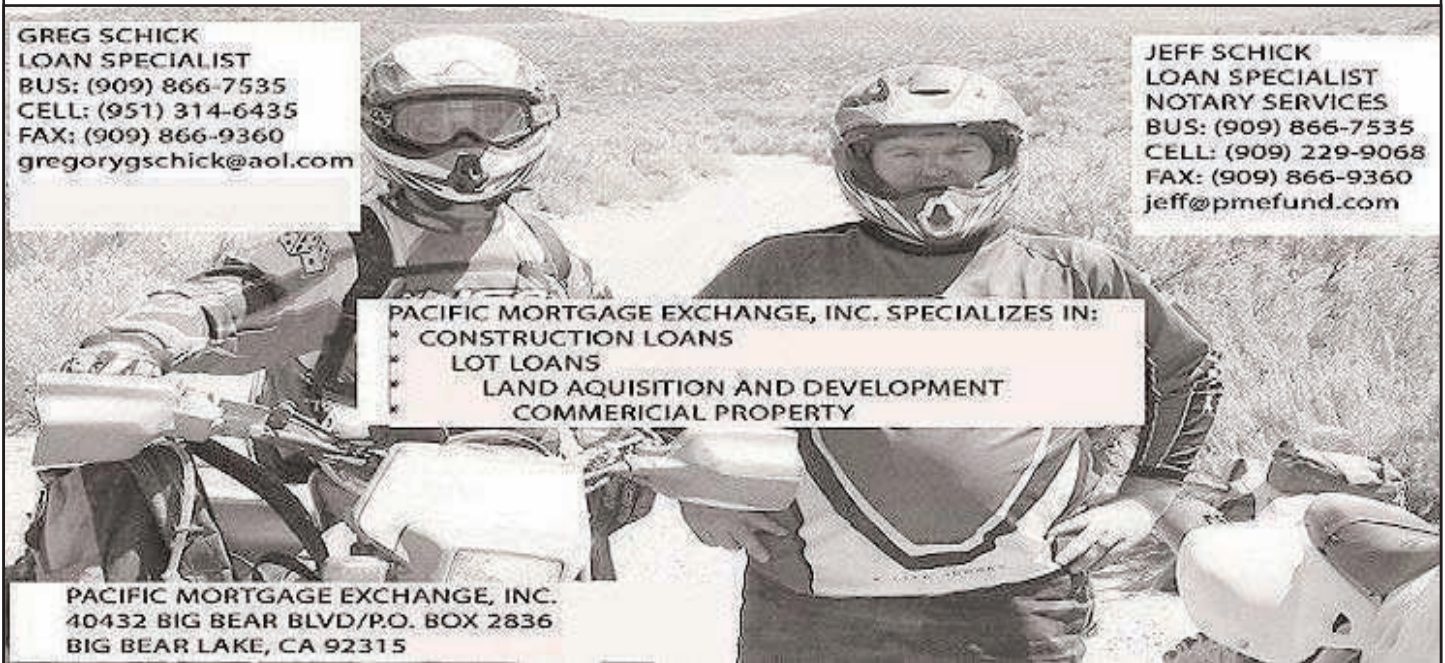
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Johnson Valley

The next Desert Advisory Council (DAC) meeting will be held in Barstow CA on March 20th and 21st, 2009. This meeting will include a tour of Johnson Valley on Friday the 20th. This tour is intended to acquaint the DAC members with the recreation opportunities that are available in the Johnson Valley area. This is the area that the Marines are proposing to acquire for the expansion of the 29 Palms Marine base.

The public is invited to attend this tour but should be prepared to provide their own transportation and lunch for the tour.

Details of where the tour will start and the Saturday meeting will be held are available on the DAC informational web site at:

<http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/info/rac/dac.html>

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2/21-22 Adelanto Grand Prix 2009 Adelanto, CA The first race begins at 7:30 am on Saturday and the races continue throughout the weekend. www.desertvipersmc.com/adelanto

March:

3/14-15 CORVA FAMILY FUN DAYS California City Come enjoy a great time with games on Saturday and a poker run on Sunday. (see the announcement on page 5)

April:

4/25-26 Moose Anderson Days @ Jawbone Canyon Hosted by Friends of Jawbone More info at www.jawbone.org

May:

5/3-4 El Mirage Days Hosted by Friends of El Mirage More info at www.elmirage.org

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