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Mission:

The Mission of the Colorado Off-Highway Vehicle Coalition is to represent, assist, educate, and empower OHV recreationists in the protection and promotion of off-highway motorized recreation throughout Colorado. COHVCO advocates and promotes the responsible use and stewardship of our public lands and natural resources to preserve their aesthetic and recreational qualities for future generations.

Purpose & Objectives:

The purposes and objectives of COHVCO shall be to:

a) unite into one statewide organization all persons, organizations and businesses with an interest in preserving and promoting OHV recreation.

b) promote the safe and responsible use of OHVs.

c) work with federal, state and local governments as well as other organizations in partnership as stewards of the land. prevent closure of existing OHV trails, routes, and roads and to work toward construction of new OHV trails, routes, and roads including the reopening of closed routes and on public lands.

This issue of the COHVCO Advocate is brought to you by the Off Road Business Association.



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Chairman Intro



By Matthew Hiller

I am entering my second year has the Chairman of COHVCO. It is a really an exciting time to be the Chairman of such a great organization. COHVCO is in its 30th year of existence and going strong and building for the future. We have a great active board with a mix of experience and age. This board has made my job supper easy this year; their eagerness to take on projects and come up with new solutions has been great. We are reaching more people and getting more outside involvement. My goal was to make sure every OHV sport has a voice on this board and we have reached that goal. I also wanted to promote COHVCO more and get to more events and talk with the public. I feel reaching more individuals and hearing their concerns is how we better our fight to keep trails open and guarantee no infringements of our rights. We have had some great wins this season and are now getting ready for the upcoming legislative session.

COHVCO has two lobbyists to represent the organization this session at the capital, Jim Bensberg and Jerry Abboud. Along with the work Jerry does at the Capital, he personally reads every page of every bill that is introduced to make sure there is nothing that will impact the states OHV sports or public lands. He has been doing this for 30 years and knows what to exactly to look for and there are few others with his passion. Jerry is COHVCO's founder and one of my mentors. His work in the Colorado OHV industry is amazing and I can't thank him enough for his leadership. Along with the work during the legislative session we are also forming relationships and working to improve our voice in the government locally and on a national level. Scott Jones is COHVCO's full

time legal consultant, who many don't know is one of the most dedicated volunteers the land use industry has. Scott is dedicated to COHVCO and for what the organization stands for. Scott is leading the charge to form relationships all the way to DC and making sure the OHV users have a voice and representation in government. He achieves this by sitting on multiple committees and through the relationships he has formed while completing this work.

I also need to give a shout out for the work done behind the scenes. Guen Hiller has totally revamped the COHVCO website and brought it up to current day standards. Not only does she take care of our website she keeps our membership up and running too. Yes, she is my wife and without her COHVCO or I would not be as successful. We have one board member who has taken in the role of Secretary/ Treasurer and also helps me plan events. The directors name is Keith Douglas and without his dedicated efforts, I'm not sure where I would be on keeping the lights on. There has also been an increase in COHVCO's social media presence with the work of Director Brad Smith. The in-house PR man is Jamie Williams. He helps to make sure we have our raffle vehicle each year and his added experience in the field has helped me too.

Honestly, with the team I have backing me and the positive work COHVCO does, how can I not be excited and looking forward to the next few months to see what great things COHVCO can accomplish.

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Cruising the Shark Tank



Jerry Abboud

COHVCO President and Government Relations Director

What has COHVCO done for you lately?

The service COHVCO provides by way of government relations (politics), as unsavory as it may seem, is a necessity to our hobby. You can't get to the trailhead without it. With that in mind, here is a rundown on 2017's legislative and regulatory OHV "sausage factory" results.

Jim Bensberg, COHVCO's lobbyist, and I reviewed over 700 bills to look for potential harm to motorized recreation from bills whose intention was never t to make life difficult for OHV enthusiasts. We also spent a lot of time reminding those at the State Capitol that the OHV community is a real constituency -- and one that deserves their consideration.

Over the years, we've learned that you need to be the squeaking wheel if you want to get the Legislature's attention. And squeaking served us well during the recent legislative session.

Our effort to create, build support for and pass SB17-100, our most recent legislative success, was probably as much work as any three bills we've run through the legislature. This bill enables OHV clubs and other organizations to continue the good volunteer work on trail maintenance through making insurance (that is required by law) affordable. Without insurance, critical trail maintenance cannot happen.

Throughout the process of moving this thing through the Legislature and into law, the hammerheads just kept swimming around us.

Despite resistance from certain special interests, COHVCO was successful in helping to get the bill to the Governor and getting it signed. Chalk one up for the good guys.

But shepherding bills that were beneficial to the OHV community wasn't all we focused on. We also led the charge in detecting and resisting legislation and regulation that might hurt our sport.

Many bills that on their face seem innocuous, have potential for serious harm to our hobby through amendments . Sometimes that is unintentional and sometimes it is done on purpose. In either case, the vigilance of COHVCO Legislative and Gov't Relations staff has been there to protect your interests. The sharks are constantly seeking blood in the water and even bills that seem to be unrelated to OHV use can become a serious threat to the hobby.

For instance, legislative and regulatory threats can come in the form of bills directed toward noise, exhaust emissions, and land use. And they quite possibly use YOUR money to achieve their goals. While they may not have intentionally targeted OHVs – they often end up doing exactly that. And only the trained eye can see it coming sometimes. You have to be alert when swimming in these waters.

During the last two weeks of the session, Parks and Wildlife (CPW – who administer public lands

in CO) ran a bill that was intended to give the agency broad authority to raise fees. We were only told a week before it was introduced. If you don't think COHVCO is a force to be reckoned with, under this bill, every public lands users' fees except - OHV and snowmobiles - were to go through the roof. But these sharks made a point of leaving us alone. Do we taste bad? Perhaps. But even the largest great whites avoid tangling with potential prey that could do them some harm. And CPW KNEW that COHVCO was there to defend your interests.

In the end,CPW's bill died, but it signaled a change in a critical policy position regarding COHVCO and the OHV interests we represent. We have their respect. And with the recent change of management at the CO Dept. of Natural Resources (parent agency of CPW), their door is once again open to us. We've got their attention.

We were clearly treated respectfully in negotiations on SB17-100; they needed and wanted to know what we had planned. And for the first time in 8 years, emails and phone calls from COHVCO were returned by the uppermost levels of management at DNR and CPW.

The new director of Natural Resources actually sat in on a couple of our legislative meetings and paid close attention. Ultimately the Director had DNR support our bill.

Whether for good bad or (in our case good) cruising the shark tank is necessary for our survival. Aren't you glad you don't have to swim with the Great Whites? COHVCO is doing it for you.



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2016 Colorado State Forest Service Health Report

The Real Threat to Our Forests

By Scott Jones, Esq COHVCO, Vice President & Head Counsel

The Colorado State Forest Service recently issued their annual Forest Health report for Colorado and the conclusions of these impacts are staggering especially regarding water quality. The Highlights of the 2016 report are as follows: -8% of ALL trees in the state are dead and the rate of mortality is increasing;

- the total number of dead trees has increased 30% in the last 8 years;
- Research has shown that in mid-elevation forests on Colorado's Front Range, hillslope sediment production rates after recent, high-severity wildfire can be up to 200 times greater than for areas burned at moderate to low severity.
- A 2011 study involved monthly monitoring of stream chemistry and sediment in South Platte River tributaries before and after fire, and showed that basins that burned at high severity on more than 45 percent of their area had streams containing four times the amount of suspended sediments as basins burned less severely. This effect also remained for at least five years post-fire.
- High-severity wildfires responsible for negative outcomes are more common in unmanaged forests with heavy fuel loads than in forests that have experienced naturally recurrent, low-intensity wildfires or prior forest treatments, such as thinning. It is far easier to keep water in a basin clean, from the source headwaters and through each usage by recipients downstream, than to try and restore water quality once it is degraded.

-During 2016's Beaver Creek Fire, which burned 38,380 acres northwest of Walden, foresters and firefighters were given a glimpse into likely future challenges facing wildfire suppression and forest management efforts. These include longer duration wildfires due to the amount and arrangement of heavy fuels. Observations from fire managers indicated that instead of small branches on live trees, the larger, dead fuels in jackstraw stands were the primary driver of fire spread.... "The hazards and fire behavior associated with this fuel type greatly reduce where firefighters can safely engage in suppression operations"

Why does this matter to the motorized community? Too often we are told that motorized recreation is a major threat to forest health and that route closure is needed to protect resources. This type of a position completely lacks factual basis when compared with these threats. There is simply no way motorized usage of any trail network can create 200 times more impact than a moderate intensity wildfire. Land managers should be managing the primary threats to Colorado public lands rather than chasing artificially elevated priorities that will simply never off-set these impacts.

Rampart: A Front Range OHV Gem

Troy Mcbain, COHVCO Board Member

Rampart Range is an OHV paradise in the Pike National Forest, located just 35 miles southwest of Denver. With nearly 150 miles of designated trails, Rampart has terrain and challenges for every rider to enjoy. Over 60 miles of the trails are dedicated single track, and plans are in place for an additional 30 miles of motorcycle trails. There are approximately 90 miles of trails for ATVs under 50 inch width, and a beginner practice loop area. New maps are being published and will be available soon through local retailers, rampartrange.org, and the Avenza map store. Coming up this year, Rampart will be hosting several Work Parties, two Poker Runs with prizes, and the Awesome Autumn Dual-

Sport Ride. To stay up to date on events and trail conditions, visit our Facebook page. All of the trail maintenance and events are facilitated by the Rampart Range Motorized Management Committee in conjunction with the USDA Forest Service. If you would like to participate in the planning and preservation of the area for OHV use, please visit us at our monthly meetings. The committee meets on the 4th Thursday of every month except November and December at the Fay Myers Clubhouse in Greenwood Village at 7pm.

2017 Rampart Events

Work Party Events Schedule

Saturday May 20th – Sponsored by Vickery Motorsports

Sunday June 25th – Sponsored by Fay Myers Motorcycle World

Sunday August 6th – Sponsored by Performance Cycle of Colorado

Sunday August 27th – Sponsored by Grand Prix Mortorsports

Sunday October 8th - Sponsored by RRMMC

Ride Events Schedule

Spring Poker Run – Sunday June 11th

Fall Poker Run – Sunday September 10th

Awesome Autumn Dual-Sport Ride - Saturday September 23rd - Sunday September 24th

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CliffNOTES & A STATE

This section is designed to highlight various issues where COHVCO, TPA, CSA and their partners and local clubs are defending public access to public lands. This glance at the issues is not an exhaustive list of the issues we are involved with, but rather is highlighting issues of statewide importance or interest. Many local issues have been favorably resolved with recent efforts but are not listed here due to space limitations. We have identified the user groups most directly impacted by each issue with a logo next to each issue.

RECENT WINS

1. State Legislation providing increased protections to clubs performing land stewardship activity on public lands – NEW While this issue has not been completely passed into law at the time of this update, the Proposal has moved through committee in both houses with strong support from Legislators and we anticipate favorable votes of both houses of the Legislature in the near future. SB17- 100 provides an increased level of negligence protections and removes several contracting requirements related to state grants for clubs performing land stewardship activities on public lands. Many clubs were not able to cost effectively obtain insurance required for OHV grants. This Legislation makes it easier for clubs to get insurance at reasonable rates and continue the great work for the benefit of the public.

2. BLM Planning 2.0 withdrawn- NEW

The Bureau of Land Management recently developed а planning process that governed how much of their local planning process (Field Office Resource Plans and similar) would proceed. The Organizations expressed serious concerns regarding the lack of public input surrounding the development of the Proposal and about the imbalance of resource protection in the plan with multiple uses. While citizen inventory for Wilderness and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern would be much easier to submit, public time to respond to these proposals was seriously limited. Several Field Offices moving forward under the new planning rule were proposing major closures and only brief public comment opportunities. This would have been a serious burden multiple on Congressman **Tipton** uses.

championed a resolution of nonsupport for the BLM Planning Rule in the US House and this resolution has passed both the House and Senate (supported by Sen Gardner). We anticipate signature of the Resolution by the new President. Hopefully a far more balanced rule can be developed in the future.

LAWSUITS

1. Bear Creek Trail

This lawsuit was served on the Forest Service and Colorado Springs utilities by the Center for Biological Diversity and others seeking exclusion of trails in the vicinity of cutthroat trout habitat in the Bear Creek watershed outside Colorado Springs. This suit sought a blanket exclusion of trails from areas adjacent to streams with genetically pure greenback cutthroat







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trout. COHVCO and TPA have intervened and making sure the best resolution for motorized recreation is obtained. Terms of settlement have been reached that would permit new trails to be created in the area and close the habitat area to all threats. TPA and COHVCO are working to insure the closures are applied per the terms of the agreement with the submission of a notice of intent to sue if the terms of the settlement agreement are not complied with. The motorized community has also been working with the USFS and El Paso County to develop trails in the area that are outside the watershed. We are hoping that construction of these trails should be completed early this summer after several unexpected issues arose which

delayed completion of the project last summer.

2. Pike /San Isabel MVUM challenge-

The first suit was filed on January 31, 2011 by anti-access plaintiffs including The Wilderness Society, Quiet Use Coalition, Wildlands CPR, and Center for Native Ecosystems and Great Old Broads for Wilderness regarding the Pike and San

Isabel Forests. COHVCO and TPA intervened with the Forest Service to defend this lawsuit. which could impact every MVUM that has grandfathered existing routes. These defense expenses are being born solely by Colorado OHV advocacy groups. This case seeks to remove any trails that predated NEPA and were grandfathered in the creation of PSI MVUMs. This lawsuit has been settled - more information is available on next steps in the usage and concerns section.

Recreational usage issues and concerns:

1. UFO BLM Resource Plan - NEW

The BLM Uncompanyer Field Office is developing a new resource management plan for the Field Office. While the UFO has been providing balanced recreational opportunities for an extended period of time, the

Organizations submitted extensive comments regarding major expansions of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and Wilderness Characteristics areas in the Proposal. The Organizations are hopeful these concerns can be resolved and the UFO will continue to provide the high quality multiple use recreational opportunities it has provided in the past.

2. State Trails Strategic plan-NEW

The Organizations were heavily involved in CPW processes regarding the development of a new strategic plan for the State Trails Program. This Project was recently completed and clearly identified that all trails in the state will be held to a single standard in terms of review and analysis for funding from the Program. This is a good thing.







When the US Forest Service served notice on Dec. 12, 2012 that all motorcycle access would be curtailed in the Jones Park trail system in El Paso County, local riders were stunned. A trail that had been pioneered by motorcyclists some 60 years prior was closed by order of the Pike National Forest District Office and there was no appeal to be had.

COHVCO affiliated riders club perseveres to reopen closed trail



An out of state group of so-called environmentalists, the Center for Biological Diversity, a "national group using science, law and creative media to protect the lands, waters and climate that species need to survive," had filed a Notice of Intent to sue the Forest Service in order to protect the unique habitat of the allegedly endangered Greenback Cutthroat Trout (the designated State Fish of Colorado) in the Bear Creek watershed, heart of the Jones Park/Cap'n Jacks multipurpose trail. Rather than use their considerable taxpayer funded legal staff to fight this proposed threat from the Arizona based CBD, the Forest Service decided to cave to CBD's pressure and closed the creek basin to motorcyclists.

Meanwhile, bicyclists, hikers and equestrians still enjoyed unfettered access to the area. But, local activists from the Colorado Motorcycle Trail Riders Association, with support from the Trails Preservation Alliance, COHVCO and other allied motorized interests, protested this unequal treatment of recreation interests both publicly and privately.

The task of undoing the draconian measure enacted by the Forest Service was complicated by the overlapping jurisdictions of land management agencies. Two access points are controlled by the City of Colorado Springs Parks Department. Surrounding the city trails is Forest Service land. The heart of the Bear Creek watershed and trail system belonged to the Colorado Springs Utilities company and comprised nearly 1,200 acres of choice, recreational mountain property. Subsequently, the CSU property was deeded to El Paso County by the City Council, but not before strict limitations were imposed on the future use of Bear Creek, a source of water for Colorado Springs residents. Part of the 1,200 acres reside in Teller County, to add to the complexity of the equation. Additionally, the USFWS was charged with protecting the non-native fish, and, the State Historical Preservation Office had to be consulted, as well.

As a response to motorcyclists' protests, and the threat that all recreationists would be banned from this popular area to protect the supposedly endangered fish, the Utilities company convened a series of stakeholder meetings to address the needs of all concerned, including the Sierra Club. Both TPA and CMTRA representatives actively participated in the monthly meetings and pressed a motorized agenda. It was a grueling process as only government bureaucrats can devise. Ultimately, the process proved fruitful and motorized activists were rewarded with a publicly

funded reroute of the trail to avoid travelling near the creek and any contact with the imported trout. Bear Creek, we are told, is the only site on earth where genetically pure Greenback Cutthroat Trout exist, even though they were considered extinct in 1937.

Simultaneously, at a critical juncture in the ongoing negotiations, Congressman Doug Lamborn (R-Colorado Springs) convened a crucial Town Hall meeting to focus attention on the Forest Service's handling of local trails, highlighting the plight of Jones Park. Rep. Lamborn was responding to pleas from the motorized community in his district.

Fast forward to 2016: after obtaining grant funds from the Colorado OHV Subcommittee, and using existing funding from Colorado Springs and El Paso County, a viable alternative was realized by mapping a reroute of FS Trail 667 to the south of the Bear Creek basin which would once again allow motorcyclists access (no ATVs, due to the narrow width of the trail). After promising completion of the expensive reroute connector, the Forest Service's in-house builders, Trails Unlimited, were unable to finish the project on time or within the contract's budget. Much hand wringing and angst ensued, but stakeholder meetings continued throughout the year and by July 2, 2017, the final link in the trail was complete and motorcyclists enjoyed a grand opening attended by high level officials of the Forest Service, Trout Unlimited, Rocky Mountain Field Institute, Colorado Springs Parks and El Paso County on July 22.

Rarely is it seen that a decommissioned route, such as the Jones Park trail (which served as roadway to the Cripple Creek mining district in the 19th century) is considered for reopening. Once the pious, self-appointed land stewards and all-too-willing land management agencies close ranks, it is usually impossible to achieve renewed motorized access. In this example, we have shown how by sheer determination and perseverance, motorized interests can reclaim an area previously closed, no matter how noble the reason for the previous closure.

(Jim Bensberg is the President of the Colorado Motorcycle Trail Riders Association and is the former Washington, DC liaison for the American Motorcyclist Assn.)

Economic Contribution of MotorizedRecreation in Colorado

COHVCO and TPA commissoned a study to analyze the impact of OHV recreation in the state during the 2014/2015 seasons. The study was conducted by a Lakewood firm, Pinyon Environmental. The results were published last December.

The findings, which were nothing short of astounding, showed that the state of Colorado benefitted from the OHV hobby to the tune of more than 2 billion dollars! Here's an excerpt fom the Executive Summary:

"OHV enthusiasts were estimated to generate \$914 million in direct sales, an additional \$882 million in indirect and induced sales, for a total of \$1.8 billion in total sales (Table ES-2).

Motorized recreation in Colorado is directly or indirectly responsible for almost 17,000 jobs and \$671 million in labor income. The economic contribution is distributed by OHVs (ATVs, UTVs, and dual sport/dirt bikes), snowmobiles, and 4WDs. OHV participants contribute 72.8 percent of total gross sales while snowmobiles and 4WDs contribute 6.6 percent and 20.6 percent, respectively."

If you want to read more about how OHVs impact our state's prosperity, go to:

www.coloradotpa. org/2017/02/20/cohvco-newsreleasestudy-shows-ohvrecreation-contributes-2-3-billionannually-to-colorado-economy/





La Garita Hills, Sauguache Ranger District: Trail and Road Closure Effort Blunted

In 2013, the USFS and BLM put forward a proposal to "restore" about 90,000 acres of dead and dying timberland in the Rio Grande NF, Sauguache Ranger District (and nearby BLM property,) that had been savaged by drought and beetles. The proposal planned on selective timber harvesting in order to eliminate a potential fuels problem created by dead trees.

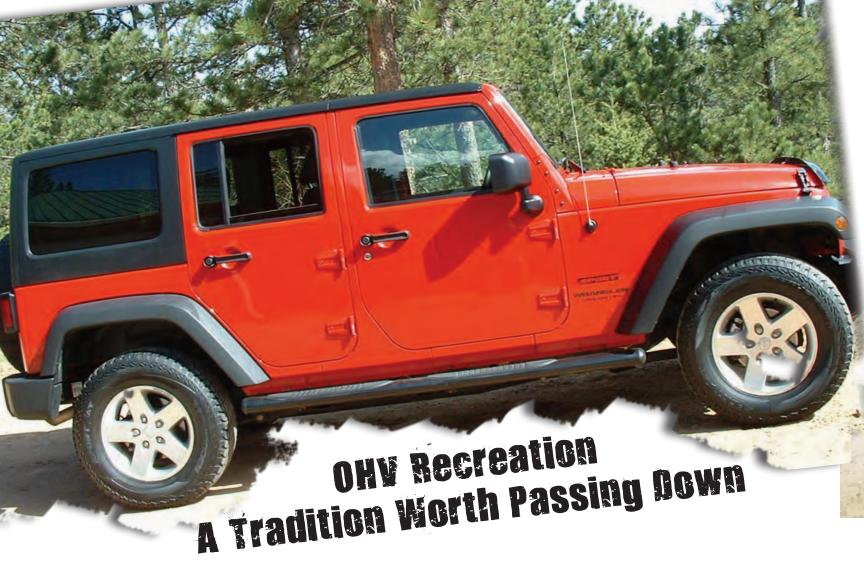
This year, after completion of an Environmental Impact Statement, the USFS and BLM were poised to proceed with their plan. Prior to implementation though, three prominent OHV advocacy groups including COHVCO, The Trails Preservation Alliance (TPA), and the Colorado Snowmobile Association (CSA), got wind of the government's intention to use the restoration project as a pretext to close more than 73 miles of roads and trails to motorized use.

COHVCO VP and head counsel Scott Jones filed a formal objection to the plan, based on the fact that nowhere in the USFS' original proposal for the restoration were there stated intentions to make travel management plan changes as part of the plan.

After review of the proposal and Scott's formal objection, the USFS agreed with the objection and plans to close these trails and roads were dropped.

We want to thank Scott (for COHVCO), TPA, and CSA for having our collective backs on this effort and so many others





By Tanner Ross, Mile Hi Jeep Club

Being an off road enthusiast since the age of seventeen and a third generation Jeeper, motorized trail recreation means carrying on a great family tradition. But that is not the only attraction OHV sports have for me. I also share the more common reasons for being drawn to the sport, such as the adrenaline rush of doing something slightly risky and testing my machine and my skills as a driver.

I suspect these are the same attractions that drew my father and his father to the sport. And that isn't a chain I would ever want to break. The memories made on the trail with my family are just too sweet to forget.

I remember being a child riding along with my father in our Jeep on dusty old trails. I recall thinking to myself that this is what I want to do when I'm older, and have children of my own. This is how I want to spend my summers, enjoying the beauty and challenge of the mountains with family. Off roading prepared me for adulthood in other ways. I recall building my first Jeep with my Dad, an exercise that gave me life skills that I use regularly.

OHV recreation has also taught me to be a good steward of public lands. It has given me a respect for nature that I wouldn't have had if it had not been for my early exposure to the sport. Because of my background in motorized trail recreation, I understand that time, weather, and use take their toll on trails and that without regular maintenance – the trails simply would not be sustainable. Taking part in trail maintenance projects is just as much a part of the sport as rock crawling.

And I've come to understand that I cannot take public land access for granted.

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I have a deep appreciation and respect for the efforts of thousands of land use professionals and volunteers working hard to keep trails open to ALL users – not just the members of an elite group. And as a responsible four wheeler, I understand and support the US Forest Service's motto of "The land of many uses."

OHV recreation and my volunteer work in support of it has literally kept me off the streets. It has given me a purpose and goals. It has given me a sense of accomplishment that few things in my life have. I know that I'm making a difference by putting my passion for the sport to its highest use.

Finally, OHV recreation and volunteerism has built my character by challenging me as a driver, a leader, and a Jeeper. My father always said, "Ninety five percent driver, five percent Jeep." And he was right. The sport has given me the opportunity to challenge myself, express myself, and carry on a sixty-year tradition. It has also provided me with a sense of satisfaction that I am making a difference through my work with Mile High Jeep Club

What more could anyone want from a sport?







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What we do & who we are:

The Trails Preservation Alliance (TPA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with its principal goal focused on preserving the sport of motorized single-track trail riding. The TPA regularly supports all forms of Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) recreation. The TPA acts as an advocate for OHV recreation and takes the necessary actions to ensure that both the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management allocate a fair and equitable percentage of access to trail riding on public lands, educating user groups on trail etiquette, and supporting the establishment and operation of local, off-road motorcycle clubs.

Promotion of the "multiple use" of public lands concept:

The Trails Preservation Alliance is committed to the concept of multiple use of public lands. Going back to the 1950s, the USFS, under the tutelage of Dr. Richard McArdle, formally acknowledged the importance of maintaining a balance between disparate uses of public lands.

In keeping with the USFS moto "The Land of Many Uses," TPA strives to work with state and federal land managers to accommodate ALL users of public lands. With growing demands placed on a finite public resource, TPA works hard to ensure that all users, commercial, agricultural, and recreational, respect the rights of others to use the land in ways that are consistent with the multiple use concept.

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