

# The www.COHVCO.ORG Advocate

SPRING 2018

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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.

**COHVCO is proud to be a partner of the Off Road Business Association**





# The COHVCO Advocate

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# What's In It for Me?

*By Matt Hiller*  
*Chairman, COHVCO*



We all get bombarded by solicitations every day— many asking for contributions and/or membership. If you are like me, and assuming you take time to even consider the proposal, you'll find yourself pondering: How do I benefit? What do I get? Why should I Join?

In a world of fewer and fewer motorized trails and roads on public land, more proposed wilderness areas, and constant pressure from special interest groups demanding that "their" land be reserved for only "quiet use", the support of COHVCO and its advocacy allies like Trails Preservation Alliance (TPA) is more important than ever.

When did you last read the federal register? How long has it been since you browsed all the land use legislation being brought up by your state or federal representatives? Fact is, almost no one can keep up with all the latest legislative developments relating to motorized access, and without being plugged into the land use info stream, we can be blindsided on a regular basis.

But it doesn't have to go that way. Local advocacy groups like COHVCO and TPA can be your eyes and ears. You cannot watch every bill introduced by our legislators in Denver and DC, but we can. And that is exactly why you should stop and consider before you delete that next email or letter asking for your financial support.

In order to achieve their goals, Anti-Access special interests are counting on you and I being caught asleep at the wheel. Their lawyers and lobbyists know that much of what they advocate becomes a legal reality before the motorized community even knows it was proposed. All of a sudden, your favorite riding/jeeping/snowmobiling areas get closed with nothing more than a stroke of some government bureaucrat's pen or an

amendment to an innocuous bill at the State House.

By supporting COHVCO, you get professional representation. We have a full-time government affairs specialists/lobbyist, who has a law degree and a trained eye that can identify potential problems for OHV users in proposed legislation. Not just anyone can do that. Our lobbyist knows what to look for and how to counter these perils with amendments or suggestions to kill legislation before it gets out of committee.

Jerry Abboud, our lobbyist (and COHVCO's President) has done this for more than 3 decades. He knows all the movers and shakers in the Legislature and knows how to get their cooperation when a bill needs fine tuning.

At the State House they know and respect COHVCO largely because of the work done there by Jerry.

But Jerry isn't alone in defending your access rights. We also have Scott Jones, a lawyer and land use legislative expert who keeps a close eye on what the US Congress is up to – in much the same way Jerry rides herd on the CO State Legislature.

Scott is a licensed attorney and member of the bar in several states. He specializes in Land Use law and nothing else.

Most importantly, Scott is well connected in Washington and represents the interests there of COHVCO, TPA, ORBA and other OHV trade and advocacy groups. Scott regularly meets with members of Congress and other officials in DC. And like Jerry, he is known to be a force to be reckoned with by the anti-access interests.



In addition to Scott and Jerry, COHVCO and TPA have consultants and volunteers who are looking out for your interests. We have a dedicated group of volunteer Board members who support our two legal and legislative experts with fundraising, legwork/research, promotions and anything else they need to get their jobs done. This team not only brings a passion for the sport (we all are OHV enthusiasts) but our business, government and non-profit management skills contribute to the mission as well.

So the next time that membership/financial support letter arrives in your mailbox, Stop before you delete it. Think about just how much

representation and protection your donation helps pay for. A membership or donation is a bargain when you consider what it buys in terms of protecting our sport.

I want to thank each and every one of you who have supported COHVCO and TPA. in years past. With your support, I hope we can continue the Organization's good work for another 3 decades.

Matthew Hiller  
Chairman of COHVCO Board of Directors  
[www.cohvco.org](http://www.cohvco.org)  
[www.coloradotpa.org](http://www.coloradotpa.org)

## Mind The Signs

Not all routes are open to all vehicles. Follow the Motor Vehicle Use Maps (MVUMs) and signage for the area and ride only on trails open to and wider than your OHV. Almost all trails in Colorado are subject to seasonal restrictions and closures. Many trails are also multi-use, yield to the appropriate users. Call the responsible agency before making plans to ride in an area.

### Trail Sign

**RAINBOW TRAIL 273**

OPEN TO

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

CLOSED TO

- 

Signs are secondary to MVUMs and Travel Maps

### Area Sign

Arkansas River Recreation Area  
TRAVEL RESTRICTED AREA  
The following methods of travel must remain on designated routes

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### Multi-Use Yield Sign

### Road Sign

**BADLAND ROAD 14**

OPEN TO

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

SEASONAL CLOSURES

NOV 15 TO MAY 15

LESS THAN 1/2 OF ROAD

STAYTHETRAIL.ORG

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 970-887-9337



# US Forest Service NEPA Streamlining

*By Scott Jones, Esq*

*COHVCO, Vice President & Head Counsel*

The US Forest Service recently closed a public comment period seeking input on how they could streamline the functioning of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). We welcomed such an open review of USFS policies and procedures, as many of the guidance documents and requirements used in planning are simply out of date or they relate to challenges that were basically resolved years ago. While the scope of this comment period would be limited by the fact the Forest Service cannot directly amend NEPA (an act of Congress), we are hoping that this effort will form the foundation for review and updating of NEPA by Congress.

In my opinion, the first question asked in any planning effort has to be “How do we allow managers to address these challenges in a faster and more cost-effective manner?” In many ways, the current NEPA process directly conflicts with this objective.

The implications of streamlining are huge for the OHV community. NEPA review can make or break off road recreation and is often THE major factor in closing or keeping open OHV roads and trails in an area. With that in mind, I want to highlight some of the issues that COHVCO and our allies addressed in our comments - as some of these could be game changing for motorized recreation.

First, according to the proposal, Travel Management Orders must be updated completely by the President or Forest Service. Bear in mind that these Orders were originally issued in 1972 by President Richard Nixon, 4 years before the passage of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA).

The challenges that we faced in 1972 are very different than those we see today, as FLPMA has addressed many of the original challenges very effectively. For instance, the Act has been quite successful at dealing with things like minimizing negative forest impact from recreation. But remember – it was more than 4 decades ago that the Act first took on those challenges.

Fact is, these process has not been substantially updated since 2005. And since 2005, the USFS has basically completed the Travel Management process. Fast forward to today and many forests are now entering the second round of forest planning since the passage of FLPMA. In addressing the minimization criteria, either through updating the Executive Orders or guidance documents, land managers could address the fact that minimizing impacts was never intended to be ongoing. The goal was purposely limited to relate to the objectives in the forest plan.

This kind of recognition would be a major step forward in avoiding the need to minimize all challenges with motorized routes on USFS lands. Remember – perpetual minimization was never the intent of any version of the Act and such an assumption has been specifically rejected by the USFS.

The second major challenge we wanted to address in NEPA Streamlining is the management of Wilderness, Roadless and Wilderness Characteristics areas. This aspect of the process is in real need of reform. Too often these areas are managed under standards and expectations that really have no bearing to conditions on the ground. They fail to recognize the fact that multiple use is actually protected by



statute in these areas until Congress designates these areas as Wilderness under the Act. Under the current construct, motorized recreation is excluded in planning for these areas, because acknowledging their historic presence would create a basic impairment to the successful designation of an area as Wilderness. Motorized recreation may have been occurring in these areas well before the Wilderness Act was ever passed, but this is often overlooked in the process.

Given the numerous reviews of all USFS lands that are being considered for possible inclusion in the Wilderness System, it is doubtful that we will find areas that were missed in the original inventory process - unless they were created by rule making. We are also concerned that these types of administrative designations make it harder to deal with the largest challenge on public lands we may see in our generation - poor forest health that has resulted from the impacts of mountain pine beetles and other invasive species. Remember, Wilderness designation precludes the use of any motorized or power equipment. It is tough to cut down standing dead trees without power equipment.

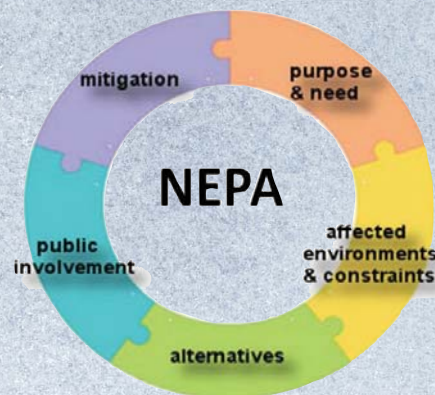
Our third objective for any updated process was to recognize Forest Service partners/programs and to acknowledge the success of many of the state OHV programs. Frequently, we are told that the US Forest Service no longer has trail and road maintenance crews - and that these crews have been lost to higher priorities over the last 30 years. This is simply incorrect. In many western states, most Ranger Districts have one summer motorized maintenance crew and one winter maintenance crew which are supported in large part by partners' efforts through state and local OHV programs.

While these efforts are not directly funded by the US Forest Service, their benefits are hugely important to the OHV community and should be the model for partnership efforts moving forward. These programs have provided significant funding for maintenance and improvements on USFS lands. Examples of that can be seen in the construction and maintenance of things like parking lots. While this kind of facility ends up often being used as a user fee collection

point, it is important that certain user groups be exempted from fees - since their funds and labor have already been used in the construction and maintenance of such facilities. In this tight funding environment, the USFS must be careful to avoid charging existing partners for resources they partnered to build.

Another important part of the construction and maintenance partnerships, is the contribution of clubs. As government funding shrinks, clubs are becoming more critical in infrastructure construction and maintenance. This commensalistic relationship, however, is becoming increasingly difficult. Clubs have provided hundreds of thousands of volunteer hours and without this contribution, the FS would find it nearly impossible to keep up with the construction and maintenance workload. Ironically, the clubs that provide much of the labor are finding it VERY difficult to obtain affordable insurance for these activities.

Many of the clubs that volunteer to work on these projects are under insured. In order to do the work, without liability, they have to be insured. But they are often finding out that their insurer may want \$10,000 or more annually for the kind of insurance needed. In some cases, these clubs are simply acting without understanding that their club insurance may only be providing limited coverage. Others are moving forward with little to no coverage.

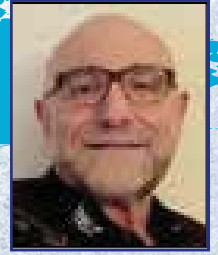


In conjunction with streamlining the NEPA process, the USFS needs to look at some type of limited immunity legislation for volunteer organizations

that are performing stewardship work. Without such reform, volunteer work on public lands may become an unworkable solution to the scarce land management resource problem.



# Legislation to Add Funds to Parks and Wildlife



*Jerry Abboud*

## *Legislation to Add Funds to Parks and Wildlife*

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) is the agency that manages our OHV Program. They are a purely cash funded agency – which means that they support themselves through the fees they charge users of our public lands and waters. And they are facing a crisis.

As the state's population grows by leaps and bounds and more people use public lands, CPW's revenue has remained essentially static. Simply put, the fees they collect have fallen short of what is required to manage public lands while also overseeing hunting and fishing. The solution? Bring in Senate Bill 143, The Hunting, Fishing and Parks for Future Generations Act.

The bill allows the agency to raise license and permit fees when necessary - but only with the oversight of the legislature - making it easier than running fee bills out of nowhere, but not writing a blank check. Hunters and anglers supported the act as did those who enjoy public land shooting ranges.

Why should motorized recreationists care? We should care because hunting and fishing are a big part of the Colorado outdoor experience and should be sufficiently funded to provide habitat without overreaching into too many areas where other recreation takes place.

It's important to note that when searching for ways to increase revenues, the Legislature did not include increasing the OHV registration and other motorized recreation fees in this bill. In exempting our fees, they acknowledged the decades of support we have provided for all public land users - including wildlife management, to bicycling, to fishing. They agreed with us that we have done our share and more. Yes, they are now showing appreciation for what we have done for the past three decades to promote sustainable recreation in the state.

Under SB143, in order to raise our fees, CPW will require the support of the users and full permission through legislation. OHV fees cannot be raised by government fiat.

Without this bill, we could have seen more efforts to divert money from our OHV programs to support wildlife and parks - something that has been stopped many times in the past. And although those efforts were not initiated by nor supported by CPW, some environmental groups saw them as an opportunity to defund motorized recreation and steer our fees to their own priorities.

In sum, when the Governor signs the bill that has passed both houses, we can all be a bit prouder of what we have accomplished and rest easier about the possibility of our OHV funds being misappropriated.



# Colorado Off Road Championship Series (CORCS) Season Starts with a Bang

*by Brad Smith, COHVCO Director*

George Pennington and his dedicated crew of volunteers, with the outstanding support from the Aztec Family Raceway crew, kicked off the 2018 Colorado Hare Scramble season. The union of CORCS and Aztec families laid in an off road track filled with sand washes, sand whoops, motocross jumps and some tight twisty sections to challenge the traditional motocross enthusiast, as well as hard core endurance racing fans.

CORCS races are as much a family reunion, as it is a very competitive hare scramble racing series. Hosting 7 events in the 2018 racing season, the CORCS family consists of motorcycle racers on the smallest 50 cc machines to the blazingly fast pros, as well as the smallest quad racers and to the ripping pro quads. Many families arrive at the race site on Friday night more for the BBQs and the story telling, than for the race prep.

The 2018 season kicked off with a record setting number of entries. With the first race kicking off at noon on Saturday and the final quad finishing at 5 pm on Sunday, 513 racers got the season started with bang. The pits were filled with friends, family mothers, daughters, fathers and sons smiling from ear to ear from the spirit of friendly competition.

Find more information on this race series:

<http://www.corcs.net/untitled.html>  
<http://www.aztecraceway.com/az/>

Advocate





# Motocross and Hare Scramble Racing Back in Pueblo?

*by Brad Smith, Director, COHVCO*

The Pueblo Motorsports Park has gone through numerous challenges over the past years and has been host to drag racing, road racing and motocross. Due to some safety concerns of years past, racing has been vacant from the park. Recent efforts have brought drag racing back, but what about motocross?

Pueblo resident, owner of F.A.F Graphics and founder of Southern Colorado Motocross Promotions, Jeff Greenwood is leading the charge to bring motorcycle racing back to PMP. Jeff has had a decorated career as a professional motocross racer with Colorado State Championships and Colorado Rider of the Year awards, as well as, success outside of Colorado in many other races. Jeff is a long time resident of Pueblo and has lived there for 37 years. As many off-roaders in the area, we have ridden the extensive trail network throughout PMP. Jeff being one of the frequent riders there, wondered what it would take to get sanctioned motorcycle racing back into the park.

Jeff began the leg work to get the track back up and running with the goal of hosting a couple of events per year initially. A technical feasibility plan has been submitted to and approved by the City of Pueblo, the first hurdle has been cleared. Jeff's is on track to get the appropriate licensing and insurance to bring motocross back to PMP. The goal for 2018 is to host a Sports Riders Association of Colorado (SRAC) motocross event and the goal for 2019 is to host an SRAC and a Colorado Off Road Championship Series (CORCS) hare scramble race.

For more information on racing in Colorado, go to:

<https://www.rcscmotorsports.com>

<Http://www.fafgraphics.com>

<http://www.corcs.net>

<http://sraonline.org>





# House and Senate Legislation Would Restrict Availability of Unsafe Fuel for Motorcyclists

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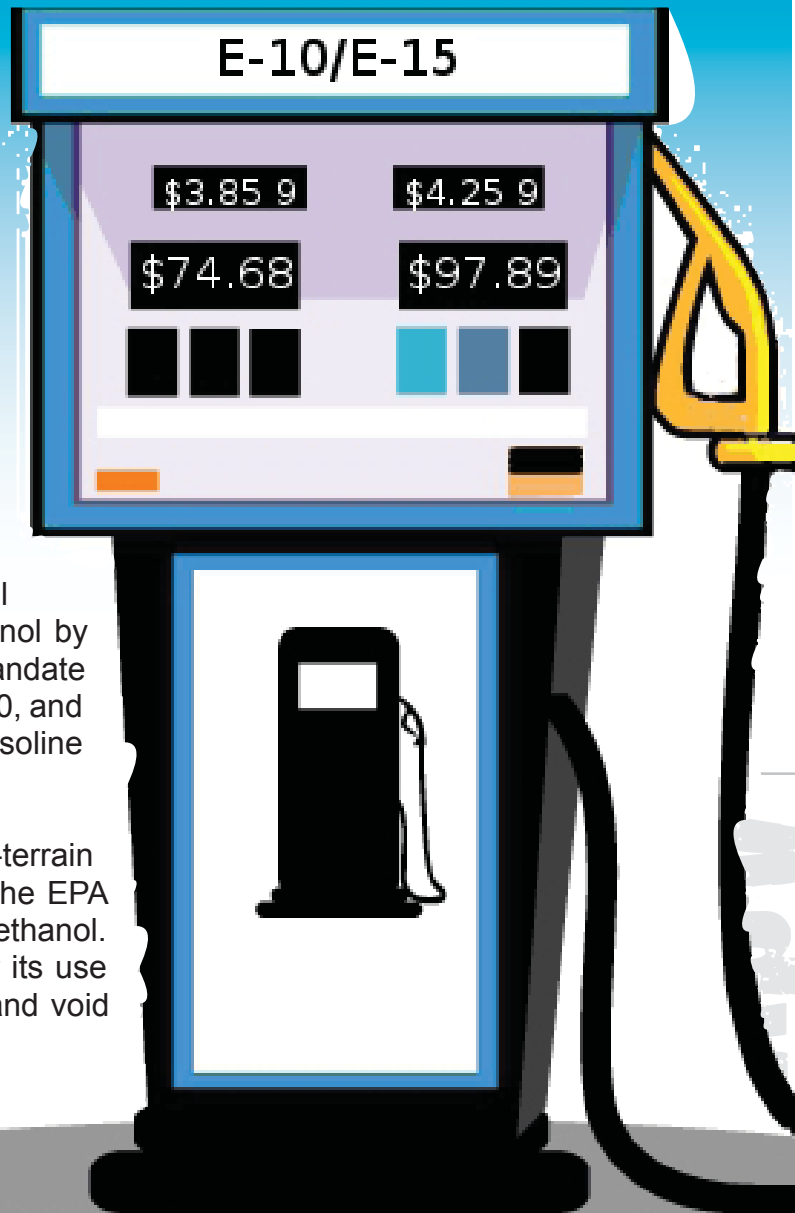
U.S. Rep. Peter Welch (D-Vt.) and Sen. Tom Udall (D-N.M.) introduced the “Growing Renewable Energy through Existing and New Environmentally Responsible Fuels Act” (the GREENER Act) in the U.S. House (H.R. 5212) and Senate (S. 2519). The American Motorcyclist Association supports these bills.

The legislation would cap mandated ethanol content in the nation’s fuel supply at 9.7 percent and require the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to prioritize the use of cellulosic biofuel ahead of other biofuels when determining volumes below blend wall levels.

In other words, the bill would stop the federal government from forcing E15 fuel (15 percent ethanol by volume) into the market. Capping the ethanol mandate helps ensure the availability of safe fuels, such as E10, and a continuing place in the market for ethanol-free gasoline (E0) for older motorcycles.

None of the estimated 22 million motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles in use in the United States is certified by the EPA to operate on fuel containing more than 10 percent ethanol. Inadvertent use of E15 in vehicles not designed for its use can damage fuel system and engine components and void manufacturer’s warranties.

Tell your representative to support H.R. 5212 and your senators to support S. 2519. Send a prewritten message by following this link to the AMA web site and filling out the “Take Action” form.  
<https://cqrcengage.com/amacycle/app/write-a-letter?0&engagementId=450933>





# King of the

*By Keith Douglas*

This is a little bit different type of article for the COHVCO newsletter. A large number of us who enjoy the off-highway motorized experience here in Colorado also enjoy off-road competitions. This article is about King of the Hammers, an off-road racing event held in early February each year in Johnson Valley, east of LA in southern California's Mojave Desert, and my experiences at the event.

King of the Hammers is a week-long hybrid of desert racing and rock crawling. In 2007 a group of off-roaders whose playground was Johnson Valley, an area known as "the Hammers" decided to have the classic challenge of who was better and faster. Let's race for beers by running all the trails in the Hammers. JR Reynolds took home the bragging rights at that first event, and a new racing venue was born.

In its short history King of the Hammers (KOH) has grown at an astonishing rate. Every year "Hammertown," the central area of the event, is laid out in Johnson Valley, where no town exists 11 months out of the year. Streets of sand and other infrastructure are created and as race week approaches, tens of thousands of competitors, vendors and fans converge on Hammertown. KOH has very quickly become one of the bigger off-road events in the world. As the years went by, multiple race days and types of racing have been added. Some refer to KOH as the Burning Man for Gear Heads. The 2018 edition had motorcycles racing early in the week. The bikes were followed by UTV side by sides (SXSs) on Wednesday, Everyman Challenge (featuring only slightly less radical off-road buggies) on Thursday, and the big headliner Ultra4 4400 Unlimited class race on Friday. These extreme buggies have evolved into very unique machines that can fly across the desert at 120 miles an hour one minute, then immediately crawl up difficult rock sections at 2 miles an hour. Durability and the ability to finish KOH have become the elusive goal. Historically only a small percentage, less than 25%, makes it to the finish. 2017 saw a higher percentage of finishers than usual, so the KOH organizing committee basically said, that won't happen again, and made changes for 2018 to make it more difficult.

2018 was my second trip to KOH. In 2012 I traveled cross country from North Carolina, where I was living then, with a group of friends. We were all just spectators. Like most first timers I was immediately overwhelmed by the quality of vehicles competing, as well as the variety of vehicles just cruising around. Vehicles of every size and description were there in 2012, but the one that stood out for me that year was the Jeep JK. The JK had been recently released by Jeep and it was interesting to see not only how many JKs were there, but the level of customization that a number of them had for such a new vehicle. A true testament to how vibrant the aftermarket business and off-roading is in the West. An East Coaster, Erik Miller,



# Hammers

2018



Ben Swain and Jaime Erickson celebrate finishing the 4400 Unlimited event.



from Maryland beat the western locals in the 4400 Unlimited class that year. A solid axle buggy beat the independent front suspension buggies - one of the many ongoing debates on what works best for this type of competition. Creativity and innovation have been hallmarks of the event from the very beginning as competitors from all over the world look for that hard to find advantage.

Going back to KOH in 2018, I was amazed how much the event had grown. Hammertown is bigger and more vibrant. Vendors from all the aftermarkets are there for all the events, motorcycles, SXSs, 4X4s, and racing equipment. If you get tired of watching the competition, you can walk around Hammertown and see all the new equipment, buy next year's wardrobe, and just take in the variety of people and vehicles there. The evenings have trail rides, competitions, and friendship around the campfires – KOH is much more than just a competition.

My wife went this year for the first time (she has a sister article to this one giving her perspective on the event). The main draw was our son-in-law, Aaron Henry, competing in his second KOH in the UTV SXS event. Our daughter, son, daughter-in-law and friends from around the U.S. made it to the 2018 event to support Aaron. Most of them were second timers, so you know they had fun the first time!

Our friends from North Carolina competed in KOH in 2017 and made the long cross-county trip again to compete in 2018. In 2017 they had one vehicle in the Everyman Challenge and in 2018 they had two. They compete in Ultra4 races on the East Coast which are part of the Ultra4 nationwide series, and plan to be back to KOH in the future, more determined than ever. The Ultra4 Unlimited 4400 class is the main event on Friday. It now has a special Colorado connection for me. Ben Swain, who competes in the 4400 Unlimited class, moved in a few houses down the street in 2017. It was really exciting to have an Ultra4 buggy and racer right in the neighborhood. Ben finished 23rd in 2017, and followed it up with 24th out of about 100 participants in the 4400 class in 2018. He is one of many competitors from Colorado that go out to KOH every year.

It was fun going out with family and friends, working the pits, and supporting our son-in-law, the NC crowd, and Ben. It provided quite a different experience at KOH from 2012 when I was just a spectator.

If you enjoy off-road racing and are looking for something unique, try KOH. It is an event like no other I have attended. Between multiple days of racing of different types of vehicles, nighttime activities, and the large vendor presence there is plenty to see and do. Most people go in hard sided campers or motor homes because of the cool nights of early February in the desert and the large amount of airborne dust. You can stay in a hotel but the nearest ones are half an hour or more away, and you will miss out on a lot the nighttime fun. Get on the Internet and search for KOH, or visit [Ultra4racing.com](http://Ultra4racing.com). There is an enormous amount of information about past events and what to expect, suggested ways of attending, and pretty much everything you will need to know. There are also a number of events in and around Colorado featuring a lot of the locals if you can't make it all the way out to KOH.

If you do make it to KOH, keep an eye out for the guy in the COHVCO "Save Our Sport" T-shirt. He will be more than happy to talk to you about all the things COHVCO is doing here



in Colorado and on a national level to keep our trails open for motorized use, and might even spend a little time talking about what is happening in Hammertown. Keith Douglas is on the board of COHVCO and currently treasurer. He has been an active off-road enthusiast most of his life and as a past competitor still enjoys being involved in off-road competitions.



*SXSs stage for the start on Wednesday. Each day the start draws a crowd.*



# I Survived My First Trip to King of the Hammers

*by Carol Douglas*

I was standing at the laundry tub, old toothbrush in hand, scrubbing caked-on mud and dust from the treads of my hiking shoes when my husband happened by. “That’s sacred dust!” he cried, half mocking, half serious. The sacred stuff he was referring to came from King of the Hammers, an off-road racing event held in the desert of southern California that I attended for the first time in early February of this year.

I hadn’t been planning on attending King of the Hammers, even though I had heard about it for years from my off-road loving husband, son, daughter, son-in-law, and friends. I am more likely to be found wandering around in a museum than the desert. But we were all together at Christmas this past year and there was lots of excited talk and unbridled enthusiasm about the upcoming event, which my son-in-law was going to compete in for the second year in a row. Also competing was a group we know from North Carolina, where we used to live, plus our new neighbor down the street. All were competing in different classes on different days.

I had many questions. I knew there are no services at King of the Hammers. No electricity, no water, no accommodations other than what you bring yourself. And I was late to the game. How would I get there? My husband was going out days earlier than I would want to go, to help in the pits and otherwise hobnob with his fellow off-roaders. Where would I stay? All the available sleeping space in our group’s compound of rented motor homes and SUVs was already spoken for, including the couch. How would I ever find my way in the desert? Looking at a map, the area, which is in the Mojave Desert, looked like a whole lotta nothin’. How would I keep the buzzards from getting me?

My son Grant was the one who really convinced me to come. “Aw c’mon, Mom, just buy a plane ticket to California, rent a car, and get a hotel room. This is really important to our family.” That did it – I decided to be brave. If thousands upon thousands of other people could safely make their way in the Mojave Desert to King of the Hammers, then surely I could too.

My son-in-law Aaron was the person who got me over the actual logistics hump. Stay in Yucca Valley, he said, that’s the nearest city (45 minutes away). I called two or three hotels in early January, seeking a room, before I found one that had any availability left. I snagged the last room available at the Travelodge at the edge of town. Yucca Valley comes complete with gas stations, restaurants, grocery stores, and even a Starbucks, I’m pleased to report.

Rent an SUV, not a sedan, he said. I rented a fire engine red Honda CRV at the Ontario airport, which turned out to be great for the temporary, bumpy “roads of sand” of King of the Hammers. (I did end up noticing a few sedans there, even a Prius, but I would have worried about getting stuck in the soft sand without an SUV.) The road is well marked, he said. Lots of people will be traveling on it and you won’t get lost. I did most of my driving during daylight hours, but even at night, the turn to King of the



Hammers is indeed well marked. I found it easily on my personal Day One and made the turn into the event with anticipation.

Immediately I was on a sandy road leading into the desert. I drove a couple of miles through a thickening dust cloud (figured I must be getting close) and up to the gates of KOH where they efficiently checked my credentials in a friendly manner and in I went, hoping to find my family's camp in the sea of motor homes, using old-school directions (go .2 miles from entrance, turn left at easy-to-miss little green sign under little bush, go ¼ mile and veer left at handmade sign hidden in another bush, etc.). Never in my life have I seen so many motor homes in one place – thousands upon thousands of them. I did find them, but finding each other over the course of our stay turned out to be tricky, as cell phone coverage was spotty at best.

Over the next couple of days we made the quarter mile jaunt to Hammertown, the temporary “city” that even has street names set up in part of it, to browse the vendors, people watch, hang out, and watch the racers on the big screen TV. I tired quickly of all the male-oriented vendor offerings and decided there was a definite business opportunity for more items that would appeal to women besides T-shirts. But I couldn't stop thinking about how amazing it was that all I was seeing was brought in just for this event – none of it was permanent – and when it was all over, it would all vanish. The desert would go back to looking just as if King of the Hammers had never taken place.



*Carol and compatriots outside one of Aaron's pit stops*



For spectating during the races, my daughter Allison drove us a short distance to a viewing spot called Chocolate Thunder, where you could stand or sit next to a roped-off area to watch the racers navigate through a steep, rocky crevice. There are no bleachers or seats provided, nor any porta-potties once you're away from Hammertown, so one must plan ahead or be willing to go native, if you know what I mean.

While the crowd was mostly male, there were a fair amount of women there, some families and some young children happily skipping along with their parents. The nature of the event kicks up a lot of minute particles of desert dust, and you'll see people wearing dust masks or bandannas, and sometimes eye protection, even when walking around Hammertown. Indeed, a huge dust cloud hung over the whole area, visible for miles around and growing by the day, since it was not windy the days we were there to blow away the dust. One day, for a break from the dust, my daughter-in-law Kim and I left KOH and went to nearby Joshua Tree National Park, where we spent a lovely afternoon amid the Dr. Suessical-shaped Joshua trees, which I had never seen before.

Not being a technical person who can capably comment on the vehicles, the most impressive thing to me about KOH was how well it was organized. This is obviously a huge undertaking, and I found the staff that puts it on and the volunteers working at the event to be outstanding in their friendliness and helpfulness. I was not sure what to expect or how safe I was going to feel when I arrived, but the whole KOH crowd was friendly and careful when driving their big rigs on the roads in camp. I didn't feel intimidated in my much smaller rented SUV. It didn't take long to realize that if anything were to happen to me, there would immediately be at least six guys or gals on the spot ready to help me out.

The most memorable thing for me was, of course, being there for this occasion with my family. I may have to go back for another year, and get some sacred dust back on my treads again.

-Carol Douglas is married to COHVCO treasurer and director Keith Douglas. She can happily report that the buzzards did not get her on her first trip to King of the Hammers.

## Mile-Hi Jeep Club's 52nd Annual All-4-Fun Event Powered by Bestop

July 28th - Aug 4th, 2018  
**Silverton, Colorado**

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WILL OPEN ON THE [WWW.MHJC.ORG](http://WWW.MHJC.ORG)  
WEBSITE ON JANUARY 1ST, 2018  
Sign up early to reserve your spot!

The All-4-Fun event is a week long 4-wheeling adventure in the Colorado Rockies. It has been called one of the best 4-wheeling experiences in the country. Participants have daily opportunities to enjoy the surrounding mountains and 4x4 roads and trails. Wednesday will be set aside as a day of relaxation and a time to visit with exhibiting vendors. Friday evening is door prize night where each paid registered driver has an opportunity to win a door prize. The proceeds from the All-4-Fun event allows MHJC to continue to make annual contributions to Children's Hospital Burn Camp, Stay the Trail and other land use projects. Primitive camping spaces are available for your tent or RV. There are no electric, water or sewer hookups. However, we will provide access to potable water and portable latrines.

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of Colorado

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# TPA Helps OHV Clubs , Monitors the Pike/ San Isabel Situation & Celebrates Motorized Economic Impact Study

by TPA/Don Riggle

One of the primary missions of the Trails Preservation Alliance (TPA) is to help establish local off-road motorcycle clubs so the clubs can become effective land use and access advocates in their “backyards”. Over the past year, the TPA has provided funds and advice for starting two new motorcycle clubs, one in Salida the other in Montrose.

The Central Colorado Mountain Riders (CCMR) was formed in Salida. The club's mission was set to preserve, maintain and create motorized trail opportunities in the Central Colorado by leveraging cooperation, education, etiquette and stewardship.

The new club already has over 100 members and has adopted 4 sections of trail in the Salida Ranger District and is currently working with the Colorado Trail Foundation (CTF) to adopt a 5th trail, the Continental Divide Trail from Marshall Pass to Razor Creek located in the Gunnison Ranger District. In 2018 CCMR plans to begin implementing a trail sign project. The first of these signs, and the catalyst for the additional signs, will be located in the parking lot at the top of Monarch Pass, the main trailhead for The Monarch Crest Trail. The signage at the Monarch Crest Trail will feature a map of the area and an interpretive sign describing the history of the Continental Divide Trail. A center sign will include a photograph of multiple user groups gathered together along with tips to help users learn to share the trail.

The sign was designed by CCMR members and was made possible through partnering with the USFS, the Colorado Trail Foundation (CTF,) the Continental National Scenic Trail Foundation (CDNST) and the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) along with a group of local horseback riders. Special thanks to Monarch Investments for funds to get the sign project started. Learn more about CCMR at: <http://centralcoloradomountainriders.com/index.html>

In Montrose a new club named WESTCORE was also created by group of local off-road motorcycle riders. The group began informally about 8 years ago teaming up to clear single-track trails of downfall with their own personal equipment and donated time. Motivated by the loss of a local single-track motorcycle trail to the exclusive use of bicycles, the group of motorcyclist decide to band together in 2017, form a club and get more involved with their local land managers to help ensure a fair and adequate allocation of recreational opportunities for motorized users.

The TPA continues to represent motorized user groups in following and monitoring the Pike & San Isabel National Forests, Motor Vehicle Use EIS project (<http://www.psitravelmanagement.org>). The next round of opportunities for the public to provide their comments and GET INVOLVED will be in early 2019 when the Draft Environmental Impact Study (EIS) is expected to be released.



Photo credit: Stephanie Munsell





# ALERT

## UPDATE – Pike San Isabel PUBLIC MOTOR VEHICLE USE EIS

Working drafts of the first two chapters of the United States Forest Service (USFS), Pike and San Isabel (PSI) National Forests Public Motor Vehicle Use, DRAFT Environmental Impact Study (EIS) have been posted to the USFS's project website (<http://www.psitravelmanagement.org/scoping-results/>).

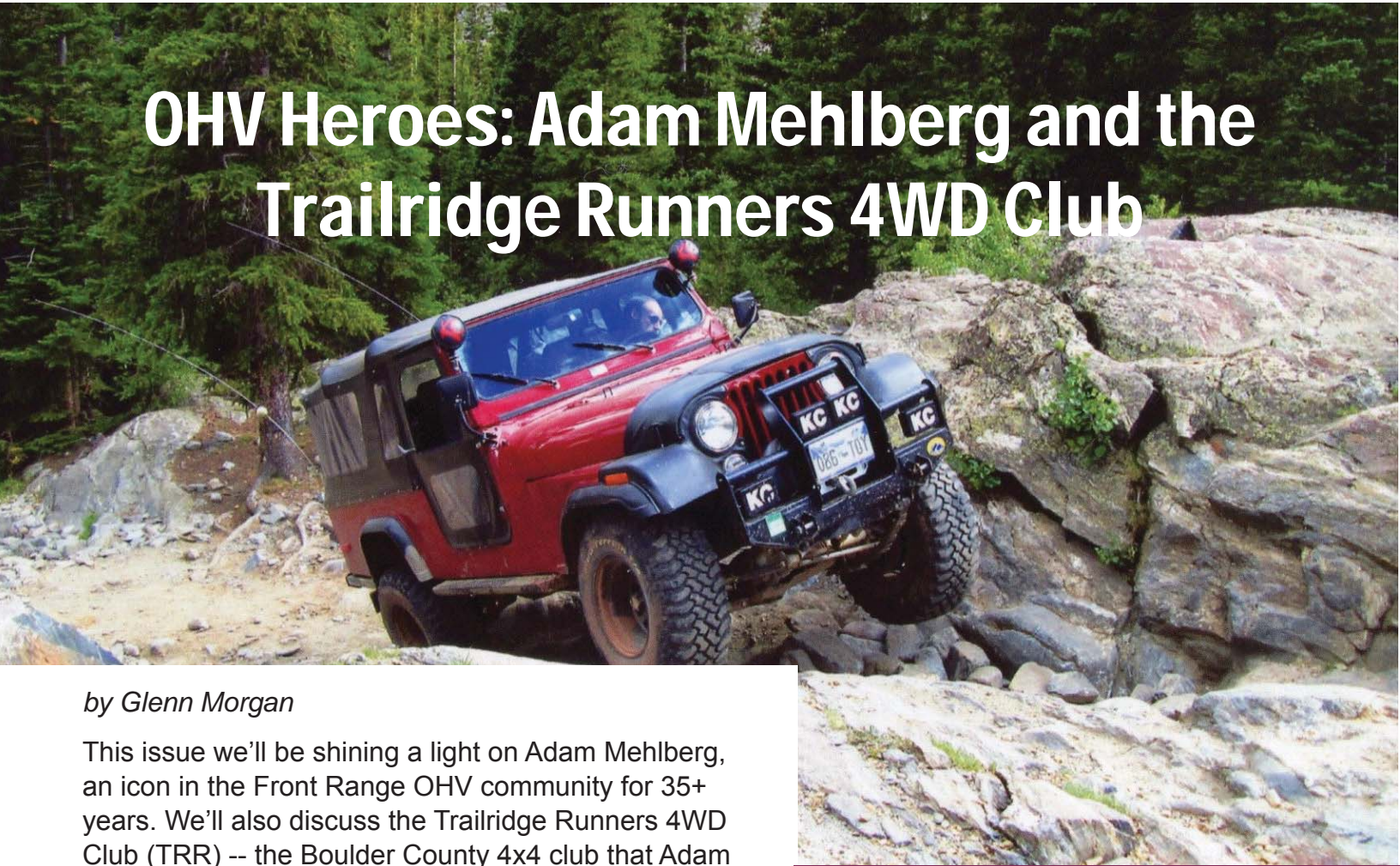
Working drafts of Chapter 1 (Purpose and Need for Action) and Chapter 2 (Alternatives, Including the Proposed Action) are now available for public review. Tabular Summaries or spreadsheets listing each alternative and the recommended action (e.g., close, keep as is, decommission, etc.) for each and every motorized route within the PSI is also provided on the project website ([https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57754b452994ca3f91e9085e/t/5ad62b8e0e2e724d1f5a1752/1523985302218/180417PSI\\_PublicMotorVehicleUSEDEIS\\_DraftActionAlts\\_RoadsTrails.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57754b452994ca3f91e9085e/t/5ad62b8e0e2e724d1f5a1752/1523985302218/180417PSI_PublicMotorVehicleUSEDEIS_DraftActionAlts_RoadsTrails.pdf)).

Enthusiasts and persons interested in preserving public multiple-use and motorized access to roads and trails in the PSI should review these documents and carefully review the different alternatives (A through E) and the associated recommended action(s) for each of their favorite roads, routes and trails. The TPA expects the next public comment period to commence early in 2019 after the entire DRAFT EIS is released for public review and comment. Enthusiasts and person interested in preserving public motorized access are encouraged to begin preparing their written comments now based upon this preliminary information being provided by the USFS.

The TPA and COHVCO will issue additional alerts as more information becomes available. For reference and information, the TPA's previously submitted Scoping Phase comments are available here: (<https://www.coloradotpa.org/2016/09/07/pike-san-isabel-national-forest-travel-management-eis/>)



# OHV Heroes: Adam Mehlberg and the Trailridge Runners 4WD Club



*by Glenn Morgan*

This issue we'll be shining a light on Adam Mehlberg, an icon in the Front Range OHV community for 35+ years. We'll also discuss the Trailridge Runners 4WD Club (TRR) -- the Boulder County 4x4 club that Adam helped found decades ago and we'll showcase their good works for the OHV community. Adam serves as TRR's secretary to this day.

GM: Adam, tell us a little about yourself – your education and how you got involved in the 4x4 hobby.

AM: I got an AS in electronics from Vincennes University in Indiana College and came to Colorado to work for StorageTech as an engineer at their Boulder County campus in 1982. Not long after that, I became interested in off roading and bought myself a 1979 Jeep CJ7.

GM: Had you any experience with OHVs prior to that?

AM: Not much. As a kid in Indiana, I had ridden those 3-wheeled ATVs, go karts and dirt bikes a little. But I had no real experience with real 4-wheeled off-roading.

GM: I remember those 3-wheelers (laughing). They were death traps!

GM: So how did your purchasing your first Jeep evolve into a career of OHV activism and advocacy?

AM: I was living in Longmont at the time and hung out with a small group of 4x4 guys that patronized a small independent 4x4 shop, named "Trailridge Off Road." The operation was pretty informal. The shop had very limited hours as the owner, Joe Pearson, had a full time job. Four by four work and selling parts and accessories was just a part time deal for him. Around 1985, the group of guys formed a little club that borrowed its name from the shop. The club sort of fell apart after a couple of years but was revived around 1988. In 1992 we got more serious and incorporated the club and registered it with the state. We also joined the Colorado Association of 4WD Clubs.

GM: And from those humble beginnings, the club is how large now?

AM: We have 45 families who are dues-paying members. A membership entitles spouses and children to take part as well as the primary member. It really is a family group.



**GM: That leads me to my next question. TRR is a relatively small group, and yet, your club has done more than \$600,000 in trail building, improvement and maintenance on Forest Service land. That's pretty impressive! Of all those projects, which are you most proud?**

AM: I'm particularly proud of our work on Coney Flats and Middle St. Vrain 4WD roads in the Boulder Ranger District. As you know, TRR has "adopted" those trails – so much of the maintenance efforts of the club during the last 25 years have focused on those trails in particular.

GM: Can you tell us a little about the future volunteer plans for TRR? More of the same?

AM: The club will continue what it has done for years. In the past we had done a lot of maintenance on campgrounds. We really saw a need to maintain the 4WD roads that were not getting maintenance. We switched our focus and have become known as the working club by some. In an effort to keep the fun part of our club experience we have been working on more recreational trips instead of so many work projects.

**GM: Makes sense. Let's talk about the relationship between the OHV community and the Forest Service. What is your general outlook for this relationship? Is it getting better or worse?**

AM: I'm optimistic about our relationship. While the motorized recreationists in the state have to learn patience in dealing with our Forest Service partners, we do see progress on a number of fronts. Yes, the government is a slow and bureaucratic partner at times. But we need to stick with them while they try and accomplish our shared goals while staying within the regulations and rules.

GM: What is your biggest point of friction in your relationship with the Forest Service?

AM: Definitely communication. Nothing sets us back like action being taken that comes as a complete surprise to the trail and road users. Once in a while, decisions are made that to affect trail closures without communicating with their maintenance partners. We have to do a better job of keeping the lines of communication open on both sides.

**GM: Any other innate problems with the relationship?**

AM: Well, as you know the Forest Service regularly rotates their staff in and out of certain assignments. If we are working with a Recreation Officer or a District Ranger and they are reassigned, all the history, planning, and agreements made between us and the FS sometimes just goes out the window. We've had to go back to square one in some cases and build a relationship with the new FS folks who'll be working with us. That can set projects back months or even years. The FS' policy on lawsuits brought by anti-access groups is also frustrating. Because of tight and very limited budgets, the FS seems to be too quick to concede when environmental groups bring suit. As you know, most of their budget has been diverted to fighting fires. I know their reasoning is based on the costs of fighting these suits, but I'd like to see them put up more of a fight – perhaps with the support of groups like COHVCO.

**GM: Speaking of frustration and slow progress, what do you think about our chances of getting trails and roads reopened to motorized in Left Hand Canyon (LHC)?**

AM: There is some hope now that LHC motorized is officially on the FS "docket", but I doubt that we'll ever get back access to the extent that we once had it. The lower part of the area will forever be off limits to OHVs due to the reclamation that has been done. Figuring out a way to access the upper areas is the challenge. The other problem is that while all of this is being worked on, hikers and mountain bikers are enjoying the area. When/if motorized gets access again, there will be complaints.



**GM:** I found an your name cited in an issue of Westword - a weekly paper from 1997 that quoted you in an article on the environmentalists' fears that a new Clinton appointee to head the FS Recreation unit would be prejudiced more towards supporting recreation than preservation. It was pretty telling. The environmentalists were fresh off their campaign to severely restrict logging when President Clinton appoints this guy who is looking to accommodate the needs of recreationists – because that is where the money is. And it didn't help that he was an avid skier. Funny thing: The environmentalists were scared stiff that the forests would soon be overrun by these newfangled mountain bikes – or worse – motorized.

**AM:** I only vaguely remember that interview. But it is funny to think that environmentalists consider bicyclists to be a threat. For that reason, the OHV community should be partnering with our MTB brethren. If the environmentalists are successful in banning us from federal lands, they'll turn on the bicycling crowd next.

**GM:** That's exactly what will happen. It's kinda like the old maxim attributed to Ronald Regan, ““Recession is when your neighbor loses his job, a depression is when you lose your job...” It will be a recession when they kick us (motorized) off public lands. But it will certainly be a depression when the bicyclists are banned.



I'm optimistic about our relationship. While the motorized recreationist in the state have to learn patience in dealing with our Forest Service partners, we do see progress on a number of fronts.

**GM:** Finally, what is the future for government land managers? How should they evolve and adapt to the modern urban forests?

**AM:** Dealing with casual users of the forests will be their primary challenge. They don't have the staff to be everywhere and for that reason, the best approach will be to focus on education of these users before they do any damage. The new focus of both the Forest Service and BLM needs to be spreading the word about responsible use of a very valuable national asset.

**GM:** And with that, we'll wrap this interview up. Thank you Adam. And for those that would like to learn more about the Trailridge Runners 4WD Club, go to: <http://trr4wd.com/>



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