

#ReformOHV

What – SB 249 (Allen)

SB 249 is an act to reform California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle recreation and repair, reduce, and prevent OHV damage to California’s natural and cultural resources.

California’s OHV Program was last reauthorized 10 years ago. Over the past decade, it has become clear that the next reauthorization of the program would need to include improved natural resource management techniques, improved oversight of the program by the Department, and increased funding for projects that repair lands damaged from motorized recreation. Senator Allen introduced SB 249 to do just that.



Unauthorized hill climb damage visible from the Pacific Crest Trail, Kern County CA

Why

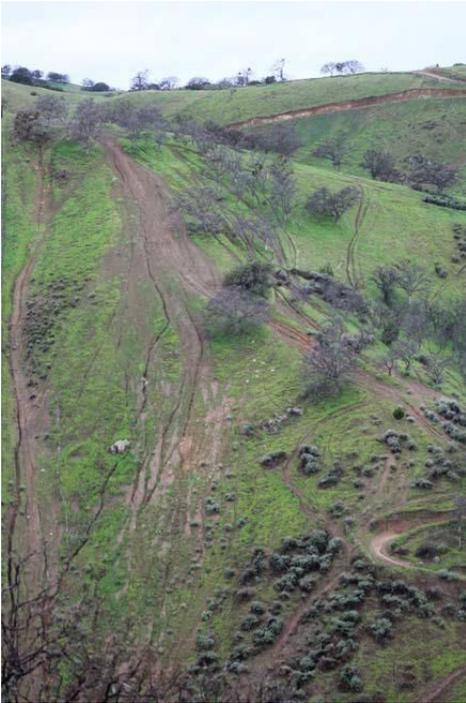
Off-highway vehicle damage is outpacing California’s ability to repair and regulate its use. OHV damage is widespread and easily seen on State Vehicle Recreation Areas (SVRAs), federal lands, and even private lands. Much of the damage is due to inadequate enforcement, poor area management and restoration, and too many riders seeking riding challenges in areas unauthorized for motorized recreation.

Today, OHV parks are expanding while failing to consistently follow wildlife habitat protection plans or undertake meaningful natural resource monitoring, repair, and restoration.



Impacts from illegal riding. In this image taken from Carnegie State Vehicle Recreation Area; only the horizontal trails are legal. Even in areas designated for “Trails Only Riding,” SVRAs cannot adequately control riding or close and restore damaged areas quickly enough to prevent further environmental damage.

Analysis of the Carnegie SVRA wildlife habitat protection plan (WHPP) shows a failure to adhere to the WHPP adopted in 1990, and a statistically significant reduction in species abundance and diversity in OHV Riding areas compared to non-OHV Riding areas.



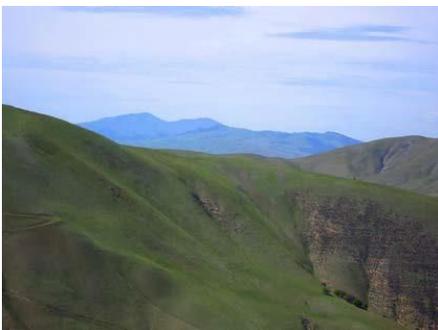
Above: Illegal riders flagrantly disregard restoration and protected wilderness areas. (Juniper Flats in San Bernardino County).

Left: Vertical hill climbs create dangerous instability, erosion, and permanent environmental degradation. State Vehicle Recreation Areas (SVRAs) and other OHV riding areas use best management practices (BMPs), but BMPs do not eliminate environmental impacts and are not mitigation measures. Damage from OHV use is continuous and repeated.

How

SB 249 provides important OHV reform, focused on three key areas:

- ✓ **Greater Environmental Protection** - SB 249 improves transparency and clarifies commonsense steps to protect our sensitive cultural and natural resources. The science and understanding of conservation continuously changes, and managing OHV recreation needs to change with it.
- ✓ **Better Value for Our Dollars** – The OHV Program enjoys a substantial 100% surplus (\$117.5m in 2017/18) and yet illegal riding and resource damage continues to be a serious problem. SB 249 calls on the State to do a better job enforcing laws and protecting natural and cultural resources on state, federal and private lands, and modifies Restoration Grants requirements to incentivize more funding going to projects that repair areas damaged from OHV activity.
- ✓ **Accountable Management** - SB 249 clarifies State Parks organization and management to improve efficiency and transparency. It seeks to have the entire State Parks network serve as a unified system providing a variety of recreation opportunities while protecting what we all love about California.



Untouched Tesla property slated for OHV expansion.



Nearby Carnegie SVRA – a view of Tesla's fate.

#ReformOHV | Vote Yes on SB 249!