The “Voice Of The BlueRibbon Coalition” Returns!

BRC Legal Opens Trail 38

Federal Plan Threatens OHV Access In Nevada

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LETTERS & SUPPORT NEEDED!

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Over 1000 Jeeps line up every year and travel several miles up and down the sandy beach at Daytona Beach during the Jeep Beach Sunday morning parade, giving on-looking crowds a thrill and showing off beautiful Jeeps of all colors.
AS I CONTEMPLATE the things that have changed around us, I realize that some things have not changed. The BlueRibbon Coalition (BRC) has been around for over two decades now and it’s still fighting for public access on our lands. These lands can be dry, wet or snow covered, and BRC is there for the public to ensure they have access to recreate with their chosen modality. Some of us have multiple ways that we recreate out there, and that makes it even more important to be a BRC member. If you are reading this though, you know that already.

The BlueRibbon Coalition was formed in 1987 by Clark Collins when he was told that recreationists were not politically significant and that, by implication, Wilderness was more important than motorized access to public lands. How much has that changed over the two and a half decades that BRC has been around? I think it’s changed a lot, as we have had thousands of meetings with political officials to fight for OUR access on public lands since Clark dreamed of this organization. We have influenced hundreds of decisions by asking our members to write letters or emails to their elected officials and public land managers.

During the last two and a half decades, BRC has been involved and partnered in many legal actions that have kept public lands open. Granted, we have not always gotten the exact win we wanted, or would have liked, but usually these are compromises driven by court actions.

Two and a half decades ago, we did not have the internet and social media that we have today to communicate with our members. In those days, BRC would ask members to write letters to elected officials, and that is still important today, as a hand written letter has a powerful impact with our elected officials. An email to them is great, but the personal hand written letter is so much better. Even with all the social media and the fast pace of events in today’s world, however, it is a great pleasure to bring back our printed newsletters and the magazine that you now have in your hands.

For the next two decades, I know that BRC will be leading the charge to keep OUR public lands open for our members and users. Who knows what will change in the way that we communicate with our members, but we are re-dedicated to bringing our members printed communications as well.

Until next time, thanks for your support, and let’s go have fun!

BRC Founder,
Clark Collins

by Todd Ockert
BRC President
WHERE CAN YOU find a mix of these unique ingredients: 1) break-dancing off-road loving Latinos from Miami; 2) arm-wrestling landuse guy against a Cornhusker from Nebraska; and 3) campfire stories of the Alaskan tundra? Oh, did I mention over a thousand Jeeps on the beach? Jeep Beach! That is where; and nowhere else in the world. And boy have they set records as an event in the jeeping world.

2014 marked the 11th anniversary of this famous event put on by the Mid-Florida Jeep Club (MFJC), in Daytona Beach, FL. A totally family-oriented Jeep Club, which the MFJC folks organized just to bring family and friends together, young and old, built and not-yet-modified. They are a non-profit club with strong ties to supporting charities and landuse organizations.

Jeep Beach is their one huge event each year that raises donations to the Boys and Girls Club of Volusia County, FL, and the BlueRibbon Coalition – the national trail-saving champions of responsible recreation.

Del Albright, Director of Operations, was nearly speechless last year when the club donated $30,000 to BRC! “This could not have come at a better time. BRC depends on supporting clubs and individuals, and wow, Jeep Beach just plain knocked our socks off!”
We thank each and every member of the Mid-Florida Jeep Club, all their supporters and partners, and all the attendees who made this such a huge, record-breaking success; you have made a tremendous impact to our efforts."

Over 1300 Jeeps paraded down and back on the Daytona Beach; more than 2700 Jeeps hit the obstacle courses built by the club in the Daytona Speedway Infield; hundreds of happy wheelers invaded the host hotel; and someone counted over 8000 folks (spectators, vendors, participants, club members, etc.) hanging around for the fun on Speedway day.

So what about the unique ingredients? Well, a large chunk of the attendees are Floridians, but the farthest away participant came from Alaska. Many Californians were there, and we all shared stories and tall tales, all week long. And, well, between the social gatherings at the host hotel, Hooters, and Lucky’s Bar and Grill, there were some dancing “without the stars” as well as impromptu arm-wrestling contests, all in fun.

Jeep Beach celebrates the passion of off-roading and family fun. In reality, it’s more about the Jeeps and hugs….yes, hugs. It’s the camaraderie; tire-kicking; walks on the beach; Jeep talk; and sharing the love we have for our sport and our rigs. And you can’t get away from the smiles and laughs. Jeep Beach brings the spirit of what we love to life.

Naturally the event has all the makings of a successful off-road adventure – huge, well-supported raffle, obstacle course for all levels of drivers, beach parade of Jeeps, fun dinners and social gatherings, landuse talks and campfire stories. Pre-registrants get in for only $75 and the vendor shows alone are worth the price of admission.

BFGoodrich Tires and Rugged Ridge
were the Title Sponsors this year, giving the event a nice boost in exposure and support.

Richard Winchester of BFGoodrich Tires made the comment, “This is the kind of club BFGoodrich loves to support because these folks are tuned into the enjoyment of our sport, but also to landuse and keeping trails open.”

Al Azadi, President of Omix-Ada, Rugged Ridge, said, “Jeep Beach is an incredibly well done event benefiting two great charities, and Rugged Ridge is proud to help out as a Title Sponsor so folks will continue to have places to enjoy jeeping.”

“I am so lucky to have such a great club in support of this event and my objectives for making Jeep Beach the huge success it has become,” said Milli Rice, Jeep Beach Event Director. “We work out issues together, as a team, and find better ways to keep building on our accomplishments. “

Watching Milli work behind the scenes is a treat in itself. Her club and “team” meetings are friendly, business-like and to the point! She gathers input from her team, and puts the best ideas to work to make the event the huge success it is. Milli provides leadership that makes events happen right!

The real “wheeling” takes place on Saturday in the Infield with the club-constructed obstacle course. Using chunks of concrete, big rocks, tons of dirt, and massive pipe culvert pieces, the club puts together several lanes of fun, from mild to wild. You can play in the roly-poly bumpy dirt hills, or lock it up and climb some slippery concrete slopes that will bring a pucker if you miss the line!

Jason Martin, club president and hard-working volunteer commented that, “All we do is for the sport, for our families and friends, and for the fun of Jeeping. We are also so proud to be able to funnel our passion towards supporting the Boys and Girls Club as well as the BlueRibbon Coalition.”

Just for fun, the club also provides the fun of a Photo Scavenger Hunt; Meet and Greet; Cruise-In and so much more. Yes, this is a Jeep only event, and you can pretty much bet you’ll not see a bigger collection of Jeeps in one parking lot like you do on Saturday during the obstacle course in the Speedway. Jeep Beach is a unique and marvelous addition to the sport of four-wheeling. Put it on your bucket list. Check out the whole package at: http://www.jeepbeach.com.

More on BFGoodrich Tires at: http://www.bfgoodrichtires.com

More on Rugged Ridge at: http://www.ruggedridge.com/

Boys & Girls Club of Volusia County: http://www.bgcvfc.org/

BlueRibbon Coalition, Champions of Responsible Recreation: http://www.sharetrails.org
ONE OF MY many jobs at BRC is as Membership Manager. As such, I occasionally get the questions, “Why should I join the BRC? What are the benefits? What do I get?”

With a BRC membership there are two types of benefits, tangible and intangible. The tangible benefits are the easy ones to describe, a membership card, a member handbook, etc.

But it is the harder-to-describe, can’t-pack-them-into-a-box intangible benefits that are the most valuable.

The most important of these is a NATIONAL voice that speaks for YOU against further road, trail and area closures and other threats to recreation. This includes a Legal Action Team that has in the past and will in the future take the battle to the courts when necessary.

You also get ownership of BRC. With every membership comes voting rights. You help decide who will sit on our Board of Directors, you vote on any major changes to our Bylaws or Articles of Incorporation. You are BRC. Your participation and support is our lifeblood.

Your support helps to make sure our website is available to everyone, member or not. Our website

by Mary Jo Foster
BRC Administrative Director
provides valuable knowledge. The website provides not only up-to-date information on what is going on with access issues, but with our online Advocacy Tools and Email Alert System, provides the information and tools to make a difference.

Knowledge is power; our website and mailings give you the opportunity, information and skills to influence the decisions that are made regarding your access. I can’t put that in a box and mail it to you.

I also hear, “But I am not a joiner – I will donate, but I don’t want a membership.” That’s okay; there is a place for you, too. As a BRC Supporter, you can support our work without becoming a member. Let us know that is what you prefer, and we won’t bother you with membership offers.

Member or Supporter, the choice is up to the individual. In closing, thank you to all of our members and supporters.

### Mission

**The BlueRibbon Coalition champions responsible use of public lands and waters for the benefit of all recreationists by educating and empowering its members to:**

- Secure, protect, and expand shared outdoor recreation access and use
- Work collaboratively with natural resource managers and other recreationists
- Educate the general public, media, elected officials, and other decision makers on recreation and access issues
- Promote equitable and responsible natural resource management
- Affect the political and administrative process
- Support recreation on, and promote respect for, private property
- Encourage appropriate enforcement of the law

### Vision

**The BlueRibbon Coalition is the leading national coalition of organizations, businesses and individuals that:**

- Provides leadership in responsible use
- Promotes balanced resource conservation
- Is recognized by the general public, the media, and elected officials as the leader in promoting common sense and an equitable approach to recreation and access issues

### Values

- Tolerance
- Equity/Fairness
- Equal Access Opportunities
- Resource Ethics
- Shared Use
- Common Sense
- Cooperation
- Honesty/Integrity
- Resource Stewardship
- Education
- Responsible Use
- Heritage/Culture
- Respect
AS THE SNOW clears this spring, Wyoming riders will again enjoy the opportunity to traverse Trail 38 on the Bighorn National Forest, thanks to the Inyan Kara Riders-BlueRibbon Coalition (BRC) legal effort. Trail 38, a 4.5 mile section of rare Wyoming single-track, was closed in the Spring of 2012 through a Tongue District Ranger letter purporting to change the Trail’s designation to non-motorized. Following unsuccessful outreach and correspondence to the Forest Service, local riders contacted the BRC to evaluate their options. On August 6, 2014, the BRC Legal Team filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District of Wyoming, alleging that the non-motorized designation of Trail 38 violated federal laws and regulations. Rather than answer the complaint the Forest Service withdrew its designation, and Trail 38 reverted to its earlier motorized status.

"We are pleasantly surprised by the Forest Service’s quick and decisive choice to avoid protracted litigation," said J.R. Riggins, a named plaintiff in the suit and leader of the Wyoming riders’ effort. "Cynics sometimes think that litigation is an expensive exercise in symbolic futility, but our ability to resume summer trips on Trail 38 serves as a tangible reminder that a well-designed courtroom effort can make a difference on the ground," Riggins observed.

Since 1997, the BRC Legal Program has appeared across the nation to fight recreation closures and defend pro-trail agency decisions. Many cases involve defense against attacks from anti-access groups. Some, like Trail 38, are efforts to go "on offense" and establish or restore access opportunities which has occurred at least 14 times. The BRC Legal Program total investment in access is at 1.7 million dollars spent and counting.

The plaintiffs in the Trail 38 effort were represented by Paul Turcke of Boise, Idaho, who has been lead counsel for BRC since the Legal Program’s inception, and local counsel Harriet Hageman and Stacia Berry of Hageman Law in Cheyenne. These lawyers previously joined forces to represent recreation interests in support of the State of Wyoming’s challenge to the 2001 Clinton-Gore Roadless Rule. The parties to the suit have reached an initial agreement on a settlement, which is undergoing final approval by federal government officials.
THE BLUERIBBON COALITION Legal Program is unique in the public lands arena. Yet many folks are unaware of the Program, have forgotten some of its key attributes, or can’t name one of its accomplishments. What better occasion for a reminder than this reinauguration of the BlueRibbon Magazine? Even some rambling lawyers can shoot for 140 characters or less, so what better way to recap BlueRibbon Legal than a Top Ten list?

(10) FILL A VOID
Clark Collins and Adena Cook founded BlueRibbon Legal in 1996 when they heard a land manager say, “the other side will sue us, you won’t. Sorry, we can’t build that trail.” Through the Legal Program we call the anti’s bluff and offer a few of our own. We are a constant force to be reckoned with.

(9) INFORM AGENCIES
The Legal Program offers on-demand, skilled professionals to create a culture of “access law.” We help land managers and other agency personnel better understand their practical, administrative, and legal challenges from a pro-access perspective.

(8) INFORM USERS
Access enthusiasts have good intentions, but often lack technical knowledge, legal experience, or empowerment against the bureaucracy or rich preservationists. Over the years we have “raised the game” of the access community.

(7) INFORM MEDIA
The “liberal media” has lots of excuses to play nearly any issue from a preservationist perspective. Yet good reporters know they need multiple sides to a story, and they have come to trust BlueRibbon Legal as a constant, credible, occasionally entertaining voice on recreation and public lands advocacy.

(6) BUILD STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS
Access advocacy involves a complex blend of grassroots, local communities, small businesses, aftermarket and manufacturing interests, to name just a few. BlueRibbon has helped forge these partnerships over time and give grassroots interests a role in that dialogue.
(5) IMPROVE THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

BlueRibbon is a tax exempt nonprofit, so we have limits on our operations in the political and legislative arenas. But legislation uninformed by litigation is dangerous. Decades in the courtroom trenches makes us uniquely knowledgeable about the risks of the wrong kind of legislation. We can help lawmakers enact laws that work and hold their meaning over time, instead of today’s quick fix that is tomorrow’s coffin for access interests.

(4) STEM ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

We operate lean and mean, and we don’t duck a fight. We don’t win every battle, but land managers and anti-access foes know we are there. They think twice before restricting access. Our continuing presence saves miles and acres from being closed.

(3) RESTORE ACCESS

Inevitably some miles and acres are closed. In the right circumstances, we fight back. Maybe you have ridden a motorcycle on Trail 38, an unguided snowmobile in Yellowstone, a dune rig at the Imperial Sand Dunes, or a PWC at Lake Powell, all due in some part to the efforts of BlueRibbon Legal.

(2) CHANGE THE LAW

Miles and acres are important, but in saving them we’ve had a few occasions to actually improve the legal fabric that defines our rights under the law. We fought nearly a decade, often alone, advancing a jurisdictional view upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court that squelched the anti’s “failure to act” blueprint for suing agencies. And we helped open the courtroom to nonfederal interests through elimination of the Ninth Circuit’s “federal defendant” rule, as lead counsel in a case eventually joined by 37 “friends of the court” supporting our position.

(1) HAVE FUN!

Is it any wonder why “user conflict” always points one direction? Anointing oneself defender of the environment and excluding one’s neighbors is stressful. Our natural treasures must be protected, but they must also be enjoyed. Next time someone wants to close a trail, tell them to lighten up! And support the BlueRibbon Legal Program.

Support BRC Legal

Your support of BRC’s Legal Fund is invaluable. These days, all too many of our opponents would rather eliminate your recreational areas in court. BRC, along with its allies and member organizations, is all that stands in their way...

To make your donation right now, visit: http://bit.ly/brc-legal-fund

or call 1-800-258-3742, ext. 105.

You can also send contributions by mail to: BlueRibbon Coalition; 4555 Burley Drive, Suite A; Pocatello, ID 83202 [be sure to note on your check that this donation is for the BRC Legal Fund].

DONATE TODAY and help us protect your recreational access!

All donations to the BRC Legal Fund are tax-deductable.
IT IS ENCOURAGING that after 15 years of effort by the BlueRibbon Coalition (BRC) and its partners to maintain and improve access to Yellowstone National Park (YNP) in winter is finally in process. The "Final Regulation" was published in the Federal Register on October 22, 2013. This Winter Season 2014-2015 is the first season for implementation of that Rule.

The "Final Regulation", which implements the Record of Decision (ROD) for Winter Use in YNP, is now providing a framework for improved access to Yellowstone.

The Final Rule provides for more effectively managing access for snowmobiles and snowcoaches to YNP, while minimizing impacts on visitors, air/sound quality, and wildlife. The Rule allows for increased access to Yellowstone by snowmobiles in the winter.

Starting in last winter (2014/2015) the Park would permit up to 110 "transportation events" daily, initially defined as one snowcoach or a group of up to 10 snowmobiles, averaging seven snowmobiles per group per season. Up to 50 transportation events may be groups of snowmobiles. At its maximum, up to 500 snowmobiles a day could be allowed in the Park. Management by transportation events is an impact-centric approach designed to minimize the impact of oversnow vehicles (OSVs) on air quality, soundscapes and wildlife rather than focusing solely on the number of vehicles entering the Park.

This new, practical approach to OSV management by "transportation events" is providing greater flexibility for OSV commercial tour operators, rewards future OSV technological innovations, and reduce oversnow-vehicle-caused environmental impacts, all while making the park cleaner and quieter than previously authorized.

Another important part of the Rule is that four transportation events per day (one per gate) are being reserved for Non-commercially Guided snowmobile access; and Sylvan Pass
continues to be operated in accordance with the Sylvan Pass Working Group Agreement. The Non-commercially Guide access provides snowmobilers a chance to visit their Park without hiring a commercial guide. In other words, on your own terms. Already this winter season many non-commercially guided trips are being taken by hundreds of snowmobilers who meet the requirements of the Non-commercially Guide Program, which include taking and passing the online "Yellowstone Snowmobile Education Certification" course and making an online reservation using the Recreation.gov website. This program is a major victory for snowmobiling!

I want to thank everyone who’s combined effort over 15 years of attending meetings, writing letters, coming to rallies and providing financial support for BRC has helped us to declare VICTORY for continued snowmobile access to Yellowstone National Park!

In addition it was a great honor that SNO WEST Magazine awarded the BlueRibbon Coalition an "Outstanding Contribution Award" at their 40th Anniversary Celebration in West Yellowstone, Montana in February of this year. SNO WEST was a big help in getting the word out on the winter use issue and YNP.

(Note: The Park will open its gates for another winter season on December 15, 2015. Please make plans to enjoy your National Park next winter by snowmobile.)

For additional updates on the Yellowstone issue, visit BRC’s Yellowstone website at www.saveyellowstonepark.com.
AS AVID OFF-ROADERS, we are always concerned about how to effectively fight for “OUR” public lands. Many of us donate hundreds of hours and dollars to these efforts to different organizations. Some of us even join in the fight by becoming board members on different boards to help give direction to these organizations.

We are always looking for the corporate dollars to help in these fights, and most of these corporate dollars are hard to find. Many of our members work for corporate giants though, and I am one of those lucky enough to work for a billion dollar company. Chevron Corporation to be exact. Chevron has a program called Human Kind that gives the employees the ability to donate time to an organization and have Chevron grant $500 per 20 hours donated. To date, I have donated over 120 hours, and Chevron has given over $3000 to BlueRibbon Coalition for my donated hours. You may say that Chevron is a Billion dollar company and they should do this. They do it because they know that their employees enjoy helping non-profits or 501(c) 3s perform their work.

by Todd Ockert
BRC President
Along with this program is a program to match cash donations that employees donate to 501(c) 3's. Chevron has matched the cash donations and paycheck donations that I have given to BlueRibbon Coalition to the tune of over $600 a year. Now that is not much, but we also donate to other Land Use and Access organizations, and Chevron has matched dollars and time for them also.

Chevron is a giving company, and think of that as you go looking for gas. If you work for a large corporation, please take a little time to see if they have a program like this that will donate money for your time and match your cash donations to 501(c) 3s. Every little bit helps in the fight to keep “OUR” trails and public lands open for “OUR” enjoyment and our kids’ future use.

All organizations need our help to keep the fight on for Access, as the anti-recreational groups are very well funded and have large bank accounts to fund their fights to close or restrict our OHV access!

Help Support The Effort To Keep Your Trails & Recreation Areas Open

www.BlueRibbonCoalition.org/donate
1-800-258-3742
MY NAME IS William (Bill) Kaeppner and I’m the newest BlueRibbon Coalition (BRC) board member. I hail from the Mid-West. Though I am new to the BRC board, I am not new to BRC and motorized recreation. Way back in 1973 the Enduro Riders Association was working on the “Little Burr,” a national enduro. As chair/trail boss of the event, I worked with the state informing them about what we were doing. Ohio was one of the first states to pass a new kind of law for public property use. “Closed unless posted open”. Whoever heard of such a thing? No one had. “Public property” and “closed to the public” do not belong in the same sentence. After we found out, we went to the American Motircyclist Association (AMA). That was when we found out there is a structure, national organizations working on national issues. As a club we moved forward with strategies to keep us on the trails for a few years more.

Around 1974 the AMA district 11 competition clubs formed an association. It was soon recognized by the AMA as an RDO. Many of us hoped that it would become an activist association, to work on state issues. We were wrong. For Ohio, we realized, state and regional legislative access issues require dedicated state and regional organizations.

In 1998, Ohio riders and wheelers started OMTA (more on what they stands for, later). To have more clout and get things done for all users, we invited all user types. The acronym was originally to stand for the “Ohio Multi-Use Trails Association.” The focus was eventually narrowed, and OMTA came to stand for the “Ohio Motorized Trails Association.”

This is where you come in. If you are into outdoor recreation you have to be involved. I tell everyone to join a club. Not just a pretend web club, but a real club. A club is where you
see people and do things together. You do things to support and promote your passion. Getting things done in the real world is like building a building. The individual clubs are the pilings driven into the ground making the foundation stable. The state organizations are the foundation of the building that supports the national organizations. When Clark Collins founded the “Idaho Public Land Users Association” in 1987, it was a state level organization. It was part of that foundation. The BlueRibbon Coalition, founded from that very state organization, would become a force to be reckoned with on the national stage (though some folks took a bit to realize that the group had “gone national”).

BRC battles were and are focused land-use issues (public access to public lands). Western states have big federal holdings. Although those lands might seem local, they were impacted at the national level by federal management decisions. BRC’s work on those cases benefited all of us, but the perception that these were “local issues” remained. Many of us joined BRC to help with the good fight (numbers do matter!). But we have to remember that all federal land issues are national issues. To this day some folks do not see it.

Our homes need regular maintenance to keep them from falling into disrepair. Neglect and disrepair throws away all the work we put into building them up. Keeping up the fight for recreational access is similar.

Some work we must do ourselves, like writing letters and calling our representatives. Some we must pay to get done because we can’t all go to DC. We must support our whole house. Joining and being active members of local clubs is important. Having our clubs support our state organizations as the foundation of our passion and national organizations, that too is important. Joining and supporting national organizations like BRC, AMA, etc — that’s paramount. They are the visible parts of our passion across the country. Those visible parts need our help to keep fighting for our access.
THE TWO HARD-CASE men squinted in the harsh sun of the Black Rock desert, alkali sweat stinging their eyes, facing each other with guns in their hands and killin’ in their hearts. Drinking water was missing; words had been said that could not be taken back; and soon the desert would absorb another dead man who would end up nothing but white, bleached bones. It was 1843 and the westward migration along the Oregon Trail was taking its toll of emigrants.

Today, 170 years later, I stood in a spot that might have been where this gunfight could have occurred. I found no bones, but I did see the skeleton of a Shepherd’s wagon, much like a Prairie Schooner wagon that was used in those same days. The desert tells no tales, but I was tracking these emigrants with the High Rock Trekkers in the name of landuse and conservation. Here is my story.

This annual event is called the Lassen-Apple gate Emigrant Trail Ride that benefits the California Association of 4Wheel Drive Clubs (CA4WDC) and the BlueRibbon Coalition (BRC). Organized and conducted by the High Rock Trekkers 4x4 Club, the trip is led by famous historian, Warner Anderson every July. Warner taught us the difference between a Conestoga Wagon and a Prairie Schooner; we found out how close to boiling desert hot springs can be; we saw names etched in rock walls from the 1800s; and we traced a route in a few days that took weeks in a wagon in those days.

Warner began our adventure by bringing landuse to the table right at his opening remarks. He reminded us to stay on the trails; pack out all our trash; respect public lands and cultural resources; and to set the example for others. I talked to the crowd...
about the importance of being involved and joining organizations like Cal4wheel (CA4WDC) and BlueRibbon Coalition (BRC). Warner told us that we would be good, modern day land stewards, traveling the route that many emigrants followed during a time when the west was just forming.

The 1840s found families, from all over the east, packing up in wagons and migrating west to better lands and a happier future (they hoped). The Applegate family from Missouri took the famous Oregon Trail to the Columbia River and then rode the water to Oregon. Lives were lost, including two children. They knew there had to be a safer, easier, more southern route.

Peter Lassen got involved as well and he established the Lassen Cutoff, of what became known as the California Trail (branching off the Oregon Trail). His route crossed a desolate, lonely, sometimes miserable section of (now) northwestern Nevada, including the Black Rock Desert. That is where I stood; that is where I saw the wagon tracks; and that is where I realized as a modern day traveler with lots of cool gizmos in my Jeep, how on earth did these early pioneers muster the strength and courage to make such an arduous journey?

At any point along the trek, I could taste the salty alkali from my own sweat that made my hat band gross; the heat cooked us relentlessly with no shade in sight most of the time; the odor of minerals wafted from the hot springs we passed; and the desert horizon beckoned well beyond the heat waves. How did they do it?

Warner led our group over 200 miles of 4-wheel drive roads that followed this emigrant route from mid-1800 era. We traveled from Imlay, NV, to Surprise Valley, CA, with some of the best trail and most informative trail time I’ve spent. Oh, did I mention how the High Rock Trekkers also served up every meal on the ride; with some of the best trail grub I’ve ever had the privilege of enjoying?

Another trail historian and famous four-wheeler, Ed Dunkley (who passed on a few years back) used to tell stories about this trail...
around many a campfire. Many folks remember him talking about what we now figure were about 8000 people, over 1500 wagons that used these routes in 1849 in search of gold. Estimates are rough, but nearly 800 oxen and mules perished just crossing the Black Rock Desert. Ouch!

Some of the sights we saw told a story just in their name alone – Rabbit Hole Springs; Double Hot Spring; Black Rock Desert; Soldier Meadows (Camp McGarry); Massacre Ranch; and High Rock Canyon. And throughout the ride, we were treated to glimpses of critters you don’t get to see often. Wild mustangs, Big Horn Sheep, antelope, Golden Eagles, and a couple of burros were spotted.

One of our stops, Soldier Meadows is now a cool guest ranch (visit them at: www.soldiermeadows.com), but in the gold rush day, it was a winter fort of Camp McGarry, established 1865, as protection for the wagon trains traveling the trail from Sacramento Valley to Silver City, ID. Several of the stone buildings still stand and you can lunch in the shade of giant cottonwood trees.

There are books and internet sites devoted to this history of the Lassen-Applegate Emigrant Trail, but let me tell you, in this weekend trip you need a good pen and notebook to keep up with the interesting facts and stories that Warner Anderson will tell you. Thank goodness he gives you a fact-filled guidebook that you can keep, make notes in, and refer to as you travel along. I was thoroughly impressed with this entire adventure and the High Rock Trekkers.

And oh, by the way, a Conestoga Wagon is a very heavy, covered wagon that could haul up to 8 tons, and was more of a heavy-hauler, and not your typical family wagon. Families used the Prairie Schooner, which basically is covered farm wagon, usually with no suspension. So many emigrants walked the route from east to west – unfortunately, many staying behind, buried in the desert wastelands, lying in unmarked graves.

This fundraising, limited attendance tour is priced (2013 rates) at $275 for adults, $150 for kids (age 7 to 14). All meals are whipped up in first class order by the High Rock Trekkers. All you have to bring is your 4x4, some sleeping/camping essentials, and your camera!

Check out the ride and sign up for next year at: http://highrocktrekkers.com/lassen-applegate/applegate.htm.

Learn more about CA4WDC at www.cal4wheel.com and about BRC at www.blueribboncoalition.org.
BLUERIBBON COALITION
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME__________________________________________________________

ADDRESS__________________________________________________________

CITY_________________________________STATE______ZIP________

EMAIL_________________________________PHONE______________________

Check One:  ❑ Renewal?  ❑ New Membership?

☐ Individual Membership  — One year ($29)
☐ Lifetime Individual Membership ($500)
☐ Additional Donation of $__________________________

Check One:

☐ Individual Membership  — Two years ($58)
☐ Business/Organizational Membership  — One Year ($100)

METHOD OF PAYMENT

☐ Check Enclosed*       ☐ Credit/Debit Card...

*Make check payable to: The BlueRibbon Coalition

Send your application with payment to: The BlueRibbon Coalition • 4555 Burley Drive, Suite A • Pocatello, ID • 83202-1945

For faster processing, visit us online at: www.blueribboncoalition.org/join

or call 1-800-258-4742

FEDERAL PLAN THREATENS OHV ACCESS IN NEVADA DESERT
(BREAKING NEWS — ACTION NEEDED)

THE BUREAU OF LAND Management (BLM) in the Las Vegas area is currently fronting a draft plan that could eliminate or greatly restrict both casual and event-based OHV recreation on approximately 3 million acres in Southern Nevada. The draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) creates an unjustified risk that might preclude "dry washes" from being designated as OHV routes.

The elimination of dry or sand washes from subsequent project level travel management plans could functionally close the desert if they are not capable of being designated as routes, because motorized travel would be "limited to designated roads and trails."

As OHVers know, washes are often the historic backbone of any desert-based route network. Washes can either function as a trail or trails traverse them.

BRC needs your support and your letters to protect these precious recreational resources! To get involved, visit http://bit.ly/nvrmp15 or contact BRC at 1-800-258-3742 for more information.
WINTER OR SUMMER
We Support Motorized Access to Public Lands.