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Cover:
High Desert Winter Solitude in Idaho.
Photo courtesy of: Martin Hackworth

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The American Antiquities Act of 1906 authorizes a President to declare federal lands of historic or scientific value to be national monuments. Though the power of the Antiquities Act has been upheld by the Courts, Congress has twice intervened to reduce its scope. But it hasn’t always been used just to create new monuments. Six Presidents have actually reduced the size of existing monuments - albeit on a relatively small scale.

In April of 2017 President Trump signed Executive Order 13792, titled 'Review of Designations Under the Antiquities Act.' This order directed U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke to conduct a comprehensive review of large (greater than 100,000 acres) national monuments created by the Antiquities Act since 1996. As a result, two very large recently created monuments, Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante (both in Utah), are slated to be reduced in size.

A literal reading of the Antiquities Act reveals the phrase “smallest area compatible with proper care and management of the objects to be protected.” In the aforementioned instances this tenet appears to have been ignored. Bears Ears National Monument encompasses some 1,351,849 acres, the nearby Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument some 1,880,461 acres. That’s roughly 6% of Utah. The reasons given for creating restrictive monument designs on this scale are, at least to me, unconvincing.

The current fight over shrinking Bears Ears National Monument could have almost certainly been avoided by more good faith on both sides during negotiations prior to monument designation.
current administration prevails, which I think is likely. To me that seems eminently reasonable for anything designated “public.”

Here’s what’s actually less than great about this. All of the money that is about to be wasted in lawsuits could have much more productively been put to use improving this land for recreation, cultural interests, and reasonable preservation for all stakeholders. But that’s not where we are, and I’m not, if the truth be known, too distraught that for once the shoe is on the other foot.

Now the other side gets to experience, for the first time in a generation, what my constituents feel every time we lose access to public lands due to wholesale closures. Those who thought that their restrictive view of public lands would prevail forever now get to walk a mile in our shoes. The other side also gets to spend a lot of money on lawyers not to advance anything good, but just to attempt to maintain the status quo.

I feel your pain, believe me. But if seeing it from our point of view knocks some of that arrogance that many on the “right” side of this issue possess down a notch or two then perhaps something good may eventually come of it.

To wit: none of you who are screaming about the President “stealing” public lands are in sole possession of concern about responsible stewardship of public lands. The folks that I represent care just as much as you do about protecting our shared heritage. It just happens that we don’t think that the best way to do that is to make sure that as few people as possible can enjoy public lands.

Most of us who actually use public lands, whether they be motorized users, hikers, bicyclists, climbers, boaters and others, have a lot more in common than what divides us. We may disagree on some things, not all insignificant, but I think that we are united by the fact we live in a country with fantastic recreational and cultural resources and that we are all stewards. That ought to be enough for us to talk with each other with respect.

So can we please dispense with the ‘holier than thou’ stuff and get down to the business of taking care of business for our public lands?

6 Ways to Support Sharetrails / BRC

1. Join and renew your membership

2. Sign up for alerts and use the info to contact the agency mentioned

3. Contact your representatives, let them know you support trails

4. Thank the National Forests and BLM agencies in your riding area for keeping trails open

5. Contact BRC if you find changes or closures on your favorite trails (see page 4 for contact information)

6. Add BRC as your charity of choice when shopping on Amazon.Com

(For details, see: http://smile.amazon.com)
HELLO AGAIN Sharetrails members. As I sit here and think about this article that I will write and think about our path into 2018, I feel like we, Sharetrails, are on the right path into this year for making some gains on keeping and opening new trails and access. I could not be prouder of our staff and contractors for the work they do for us every day on the issue of access. We don’t pay them a huge amount of money, and they are not running around in new 2018 vehicles sponsored by Sharetrails.

Looking into 2018 from this seat, I think we, as people who recreate in the OHV arena, will find new opportunities available to us. The President has resized Bears Ears and the Grand Staircase-Escalante monuments in Utah, and this will preserve our ability to recreate in our chosen fashion for years to come. Is there still work to do within these areas to preserve our access to the trails? You bet, as the travel management plans will have to be reviewed and approved. That means we as an organization will have to be engaged and the people on the ground in the area will have to be engaged to ensure OHV recreation is maintained.

In Oregon, we are intervenors in the Ochoco National Forest lawsuit filed by environmental groups who want to stop the addition of more miles of trails. In addition, Paul A. Turcke, a Boise lawyer specializing in Natural Resource and Public Land Law, and out-door motorsports advocate and BlueRibbon Coalition Western representative Don Amador are also involved in the cause in conjunction with area folks who keep an eye on things locally. We need these partnerships to maintain our access in Oregon and in other states.

Looking further into 2018, we will be selecting a new Executive Director as Martin Hackworth will retire in July. Watch for more info on this position if you are interested or know someone who would be a good fit as the leader of Sharetrails. Martin has been a great Executive Director and an excellent asset to our organization. I will be sad to see him.

RIDERS UNITE

is an idea born of a partnership between business, advocacy groups and riders all united to dramatically change the manner in which the Federal Government (and other land use agencies) see OHV interests.

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go, but I wish him and his family all the best in his retirement. I suspect we will hear from him on occasion though, as he has offered to write an article or two and help the office staff with the magazine as needed.

My wife and I started a new adventure in Texas with a job relocation starting January of this year. We are looking forward to this new adventure here and to see what this state has to offer for OHV recreation. Follow us on my Facebook page and our adventures here as we run around the state with the Jeep and other fun adventures.

New adventures and getting out of your comfort zone is at times a good thing. We at Sharetrails try to do that and think of how we can better benefit our members and maintain access for every one of our members. If you have ideas on how we can improve, please feel free to let me know. New adventures and always looking forward to the path you intend to take will get you to the end of the trail faster than always looking behind you. Not that you don’t need to look behind you and see what you have done, but the primary focus should always be going forward.
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ANOTHER YEAR has flown by, and it seems an opportune time to reflect on the first year of the Trump Presidency. You may recall this time last year we tried to predict what might happen in “President Trump, Public Lands & Access.”

We hoped for an orderly and effective transition, but cautioned that “it can take months for key positions to be filled.” That has unfortunately been an understatement. According to the nonprofit, nonpartisan organization ‘Partnership for Public Service,’ of 636 key positions requiring Senate confirmation, only 246 are filled. There still remain 238 positions with no nominee. At the same stage of the Obama first term, 453 appointees had been confirmed. These vacancies are spread across the government, with some notable examples in land management agencies. In the U.S. Department of the Interior, the Solicitor appointee has not been confirmed, and there are no nominees for the Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks, the Director of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, or the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In the U.S. Department of Agriculture, there is still no nominee for the Under Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment, who has historically played a key role overseeing the U.S. Forest Service. It is hard to orchestrate change without a team on the field.

There have also been a lot of distractions. Some of these reflect the President’s unique style. It is hardly surprising that some big projects or promises have turned out to be more difficult than expected to deliver. The big tussles over healthcare, tax reform, immigration, and diplomacy have not been conducive to progress on public lands management. Of the handful of public lands issues getting attention, the main focus has been on national monuments, energy development, and the perception that a Trump Administration desires to transfer public lands to private interests. Recreation and access seem to be at the distant periphery thus far.

A key theme for this administration is regulatory deconstruction. The President famously issued an Executive Order saying that agencies should eliminate at least two regulations for every new regulation written. Predictable interest in broad reform has included some key environmental laws and regulations, such as the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). History cautions us to have modest expectations in this arena. It is always popular to call for cutting red tape and streamlining the bureaucratic process, but tangible improvement is elusive. Nor does it seem likely that some dramatic rollback will occur. Active recreation management through designated routes and areas seems likely to stay. A more realistic target may be to refine and improve existing regulations, such as those covering the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service travel management. Similarly, possible restructuring of agencies like the U.S. Department of the Interior could implicate recreation management. Where we have been able, we are trying to deliver the message that recreation budgets should be growing and increasingly channeled to the field.

One area of activity and success for the Trump
presidency has been on judicial appointments. His successful appointment of Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court tops any list of his accomplishments, and President Trump has already moved much more quickly and filled significantly more federal judgeships than President Obama. Notable pundits have already proclaimed this to be the most important legacy of the Trump administration. It is possible that President Trump could face several more Supreme Court vacancies, with Justices Anthony Kennedy and Ruth Bader Ginsburg nearing possible retirement at ages 81 and 84, respectively.

Hopefully the Trump administration will soon hit some form of stride, which will include a focus on recreation as a primary use of our public lands. The crazier our world becomes, the more we will cherish our ability to recreate on and reconnect with our public lands. An investment in effective and diverse recreation management can be a success story across regions, demographics, and political boundaries.

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

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Kentuck OHV Trails

Located in the rolling hills near Oxford, Alabama, lies the Kentuck ORV Trail system. With a long history of successful ORV management, this system has four loops totaling twenty-three miles and is open to ATV, motorcycle and mountain bike riders. The trails are open April through December but closed January through March. A five dollar fee is required for each vehicle. This is payable at the trailhead (N33° 31.841' W85° 51.179').

The trailhead features an informational kiosk and fee tube. While there are no designated campsites, camping at the trailhead and on the trail is permitted. Facilities include picnic tables and a pit toilet. I was fortunate enough to spend a couple of nights there in the peace and quiet with beautiful weather.

All trails in this system are wide enough to accommodate ATVs. The interconnecting loops are well-marked and differentiated by color (White, Blue, Yellow and Orange). The majority of the trail system is easy to moderate trail with gentle grades, sweeping turns and fairly smooth surfaces with few obstacles. A few sections are more difficult, with steeper grades, tight turns, sections of rough terrain, rocks and log obstacles.

During my two-day, midweek stay, there were only a couple of other riders in the late afternoon so two-way traffic was not a real concern. Riding these trails with no other traffic was an absolute blast. I could open the throttle nicely on the easy/moderate sections and then a short challenging section would keep me honest and focused on the task at hand. I rode the entire system several times and found the Orange Trail was my favorite. Maybe because I ride a KTM?

I would imagine this system gets pretty busy on weekends and holidays. But there are several other private OHV parks in the Talladega region to accommodate users. And I’m sure the terrain can become quite challenging when wet as the
trail surface is fairly smooth and hard...aka slick!

So if you’re looking for an all-day ride on some superman/superwoman tough trails, Kentuck is probably not on the list. But if you’re looking for a ride that can be enjoyed by all skill levels on two or four wheels, this is a good one.

For more information contact Talladega Ranger District, 1001 North St (Hwy 21 North), Talladega, Alabama, 35160. Phone: (256) 362-2909.


(for digital versions of this map, or to download a GPS/gpx file, visit: https://sharetrails.org/map0122018)
THE OAKLAND MOTORCYCLE CLUB (OMC) has been in continuous operation since 1907 as an organization dedicated to supporting the sport of motorcycling and the comradery of those who love it. The organization is the fourth oldest motorcycle club in the nation. The OMC’s male and female members are a diverse group who own a wide variety of motorcycles, including street, dualsport, and dirt bikes. Total membership, including honorary life and life members, is 76.

The OMC is and always has been an avid supporter of the AMA, the BlueRibbon Coalition, and other motorcycle advocacy groups and clubs, and they understand that the sustenance of the public lands we enjoy is important. The club has a long history of organizing and participating in all types of motorcycling events, including enduros, hill-climbs, track racing, and long-distance tours.

Don Amador, Western Representative for the Sharetrails.org/BlueRibbon Coalition, states, “Over the last 20 years, OMC has taken a lead role in Northern California by hosting a robust support program for OHV advocacy efforts to help keep trails open through grassroots campaigns, legislative efforts, and legal action. The club should be commended for their ongoing commitment to helping protect your right to enjoy motorized recreation on public lands.”

OMC’s longevity is due to its love of the sport and continuing emphasis on friendship, family, and community. OMC members used their own money and labor, and cash from fundraising events, to acquire and build their clubhall. The structure was completed in 1983 and a major expansion was successfully completed in 2006.

The club also sponsors local riders (and some not so local) from time to time, donates frequently to the Girls and Boys Clubs of Alameda and Oakland, and contributes through participation and donations to other charities and motorcycle clubs in crisis.

The Greater Vancouver Motorcycle Club (GVMC) has been a sister club of the OMC since 1978. OMC and GVMC meet every two years at a site approximately midpoint between the

Photo courtesy of Bungee Brent Productions
http://bbproductions.zenfolio.com
two clubs to celebrate their comradery and love for motorcycling and to enjoy a weekend of fun-filled activities. OMC’s Canadian friends sometimes join OMC riders on other rides such as the annual OMC trek to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico.

The following annual events, to which all riders are invited, are sponsored and organized by the OMC:

- **Sheeiron 300 Dualsport**, limited to 500 riders and held in May, continues in most years to reach capacity within a few days of opening. The Sheeiron consistently receives hugely positive reviews from the riders who participate in the two-day run from Stonyford to Fort Bragg, CA, and back.
- **Three Bridge Run**, open to all and held in July, is a one-day ride that enables participants to choose between a traditional route across Bay Area bridges and another designed to avoid the most traffic intensive roads and highways.
- **Jackhammer Enduro**, held in October, is a traditional off-road, one-day event in Mendocino National Forest. Riders are scored based on how closely they meet the required time between checkpoints. Many ride the enduro for the fun and the adventure; some also ride for points toward an annual goal.

All of the club’s activities are strongly supported by the women’s auxiliary group (OMCA), which began 50 years ago as a traditional support group made up of the wives and girlfriends of the original all-male club. While the core club (OMC) has evolved to welcome the growing number of female motorcyclists and more diverse ridership, the auxiliary group has also expanded to welcome female OMC members and to encourage the continuing participation of standing OMCA members, independent of their relationships with riders.

Regular OMC meetings are held every Wednesday evening at 8 p.m. Guests and prospective new members are always welcome! All we hope for is that you bring a motorcycle and a sense of humor! Every year, members are encouraged to participate in the development of the annual club riding and event calendar, which includes select rides hosted by other area motorcycle clubs and AMA District 36.

The Oakland Motorcycle Club sincerely welcomes any and all active people who love the sport of motorcycling and seek the company of good people who share in that spirit. Thanks are extended to the BlueRibbon Coalition and other advocacy groups for their effective support of what we all love.
...TO PROVIDE AN EMAIL ADDRESS. Email is a much quicker and far less expensive method of contacting our members than paper mail. Less money in overhead means more money for keeping trails open. Please contact our Membership Director, Mary Jo Foster at maryjo@sharetrails.org and update your membership account with your current email, or update your email online at: sharetrails.org/myemail.

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Martin Hackworth
Executive Director
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Voice of the BlueRibbon Coalition
The overlapping of different types of management criteria on the same lands and with different alternatives is downright confusing and does not make sense for anyone who is not very familiar with the area in question. This makes it difficult for the general public to understand and comprehend commenting with specific and substantive remarks. This makes it very easy for anti-access folks (whose hobby is to close off lands) and well-funded special interest groups to have a perceived and noticeable advantage when it comes to comments like this. My hobby is recreation, not bleeding over pages and pages of documents and trying to line-item each road, trail, or area that I feel like will be closed off to me no matter how I like to enjoy my public lands. I know the areas much better than anyone who will look at a spreadsheet or summarize reports to try and make everyone happy. That is why I comment and I feel very small in the process. Yet it is also my livelihood, specifically the areas surrounding Pahrump, Nevada. And I can’t get my like-minded friends involved because they are intimidated by the process, a process they don’t really understand.

This first paragraph makes a great case for the writer’s views, that the process itself is overly burdensome even to an interested and motivated observer. This is an inarguable point and establishes immediate credibility.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC): Specific to ACECs I have an ongoing Special Recreation Permit (SRP) in areas that are slated for ACEC. One thing I know is that we are responsible stewards of the land and are helping to keep it clean and promote education of ‘tread lightly’ and explaining good land use etiquette. I have been told by a number of people that no commercial operation is allowed in ACECs so that I would not even be grandfathered in. Though most of the areas that are slated for this designation south of Pahrump are in no way in any need of further protection, enforcing current laws would protect the resources that are critical. Blanket designations based on old data of specific environmental concerns is not going...
to solve a problem that needs education and enforcement to solve. ACECs need clearly set criteria and goals to justify implementation and to measure remediation progress. However, I think a better and more specific look at these areas is needed and not after a blanket designation change to a much more restrictive management plan.

The author’s concerns are clearly stated. The concerns over pending action and potential impacts are related by a completely clear line of reasoning. Some of these concerns are speculation and hearsay but that is minimal. No fair-minded person would think that any of the concerns expressed are unreasonable.

One Bureau of Land Management (BLM) representative said to me, “You don’t have to worry about lands slated for disposal. Do you know how few of these parcels ever get sold?” I don’t know this information and if this is the case then why try and sell off our public lands in the first place, especially areas I enjoy? Whether lands are sold, used for energy projects, or whether the designation restricts or forbids OHV recreation it is a loss of area available for my primary activity. In all of my years I have never seen areas “opened” up to OHV recreation after being closed.

Once again, the relationship between proposed action and potential impact are clearly stated. These are concerns that we all share and are not in any way unreasonable.

Drop Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC): Through the use of ‘Wilderness Study Areas’ (WSA) many years ago all of the lands that qualified as true U.S. Wilderness Areas have been designated as such. The areas left, though largely pristine, are NOT wilderness. They have survived and will continue to survive in the designated state in which they already exist. Specific to the routes in these areas they either have historic use or routes have been developed by the increased need for recreation. The areas on all maps slated for LWC are basically small chunks of land with routes (corridors) in them. Managed properly as a ‘limited use areas’ (only signed and existing routes stay open) these areas will stay pristine, allow access, and not reduce recreation opportunities. There is already more than a million acres of officially designated ‘Wilderness’ in southern Nevada.

He presents clear articulation and excellent points. Again, this is a very reasonable argument that counters the prevailing narrative.

Without a proper route inventory it is very short sighted to complete a Resource Management Plan (RMP) that does not have a specific plan or agenda to be updated to reflect the changes that a route inventory might create and then having the ability to do a proper Travel Management Plan (TMP). However, I was told proper route inventories do not exist for many of the areas I inquired about because of a lack of funding, not from a lack of local support and input because we have over the past eight years submitted many routes to be added to an...
Everything in Jimmy’s comments is demonstrably true and makes a compelling case for the writer’s point of view. The world is invariably an imperfect place and the more one is able to illustrate this (in any process) the more one is able to make an argument for greater fairness on their side of an issue.

Proactive Planning for SxS Recreation on Federal Lands

RECREATIONAL OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES (ROVs) or Side-by-Sides (SxSSs) are becoming increasingly popular and are the fastest growing segment of the powersports market.

With that increased popularity comes the responsibility for land agencies and their OHV partners to look for opportunities to designate and sign legal routes for SxS recreation in areas where that use is appropriate and sustainable.

A good example of that proactive management is the SxS trail program at the Chappie-Shasta Off-Highway Vehicle Area managed by the BLM’s Redding Field Office in Northern California. Over the last several years, the BLM has worked to improve SxS recreation in the area with enhanced trail signing, trail improvements, and installation and/or maintenance of soil erosion structures.

Those efforts to enhance legal SxS routes have resulted in many trails that now provide looped touring opportunities with varying degrees of challenge and scenic views.

SxS users should consider a trip to the Chappie-Shasta OHV Area if you are looking for new trail adventures. The unit has a very cool staging/camping area at the base of Shasta Dam. Make sure you have current registration for any vehicles when you cross the dam. The guards will check for a valid driver’s license and current registration.

You can also access the Copley Mountain OHV Staging area via the Iron Mountain Road from Highway 299 about one mile west of the Redding city limits.

The agency should be commended for their continued commitment to excellence. Sharetrails.org /BRC urges other federal and state land agencies to be sure and review their trail programs to assess if SxS recreation can be included on the unit.
FOR OVER THREE DECADES Rocky Mountain ATV/MC (RMATVMC) based in Payson, UT, has been providing a plethora of products to the off-road community. Plethora is, in fact, the perfect word to describe the mountains of product available through RMATVMC by either visiting their store or their website. If you look up ‘plethora’ in the dictionary it’s these folks waving at you.

Rocky Mountain ATV/MC was established back in 1985 as a one-person operation in a small warehouse by CEO and Founder, Dan Thomas. Initially RMATV/MC was known principally for tires and wheels. Expansion, in terms of inventory and size, followed rapidly. Today the state-of-the-art Payson facility currently exceeds 226,000 square feet and encompasses warehousing, shipping, product design, development, and marketing of just about everything related to motorcycles and ATVs as well as some things that are probably not. They really do have everything. And thanks to some of the most impressive logistics technology I've ever laid eyes on they can find it and ship it to you really fast.

Not only does Rocky Mountain ATV/MC carry accessories and parts from hundreds of well-known suppliers but they have more than a half-dozen in-house brands including Primary Drive, Lexx, A.R.C., Rider Cargo, QA Parts, Neutron, and Attack Graphics.

One thing that has unexpectedly impressed me every time I’ve visited the Payson facility is the amount of research and development that goes on there. From state-of-the-art scanning and 3-D CAD capabilities to a large and modern machine shop capable of cranking out both prototypes and limited production runs for some parts, they’ve got...
the ability to imagine, design, produce, market, and ship a product completely in house.

In addition to their home facility in Payson, Rocky Mountain ATV/MC just recently added a 65,000 square foot distribution center for the Southeastern U.S. located in Winchester, KY, which is my hometown. I used to ride my bicycle right by the place where their warehouse is now located when I was in middle school, which was a while ago. But I digress....

Most of you reading this will not be particularly surprised that Rocky Mountain ATV/MC is a large supplier of just about everything relevant to motorcycles and ATVs and can ship to just about any domestic address in just a few days. Similarly, it will also come as no surprise that Rocky Mountain ATV/MC’s prices are extremely competitive and their customer service is first rate. None of this is a secret because of their impressive web presence (https://www.rockymountainatvmc.com), attendance at and support of a wide variety of events, and a well-deserved industry-wide reputation for excellence. These are flat-out good folks who also run a first-rate business.

What you may not know is that Rocky Mountain ATV/MC is a Sharetrails/BRC Partners for Access member that provides major support for our organization and for access issues in general. Indeed, these folks have ponied up a lot to support our sport and to defend access. Please keep that in mind when you are shopping for parts and accessories.
WE WERE JOINED on this trip by Mike and Laura Trout and Mike Collins (no relation). My brother Dan and his wife Mary and Vance Tuller and Donna Krysiak also joined us, but are unfortunately not in any of the included photos.

In July of 2016 some friends of my wife and I from Washington joined us for a month of camping and ATV riding in Wyoming. I was really impressed with the diversity of the trail system, the maps available from Wyoming State Parks (http://bit.ly/wyoparks-maps) and the signage on the ground. We spent the whole month in the Big Horn area located in North Central Wyoming just east of Dayton.

Many of the trails were challenging and a lot of the Jeep roads shown on the map were fun on ATVs. Wyoming OHV permits are required and, from our experience, regularly checked. We purchased ours at the Bear Lodge Resort near Burgess Junction (phone number 307-752-2444), but you can call Wyoming State Parks at 877-996-7275 to get the permits in advance or I’m sure they are available online as well. We started our month at the Bear Lodge Resort and their RV sites were really reasonable. There is lots of dispersed camping available, however, and the U.S. Forest Service has an excellent RV dump at Burgess Junction.

While at one of our dispersed campsites a forest ranger stopped at our camp with an ATV in the back of his truck. He checked our OHV permits and we took this opportunity to ask him about trail conditions. During our visit I was surprised when he said how impressed he was with the BlueRibbon Coalition (BRC). He said BRC had challenged a proposed trail closure sometime back and he joined up right away. He told us that he encourages any OHV riders he encounters to join as well. When I told him that I was the Founder of BRC, you can imagine his surprise. We learned that he was responsible for the trail system in the entire Big Horn area and we got a lot of good information from him about the trails.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words so I’ll let the photos tell the rest of the story...
Rita Collins on trail #220.

Clark Collins crosses some rocks on trail #430.

Our group on trail #125.
As Many Of You are probably aware, Sharetrails.Org/BlueRibbon Coalition (BRC), in partnership with the fine folks at Klim (www.klim.com), hosted a raffle for Riders Unite to raise much needed funds to defend recreation access. The raffle item was a custom build CRF 450 RX generously donated by Honda Motor Corporation (www.honda.com) and lovingly customized by off-road legend Jimmy Lewis. The drawing took place at Klim headquarters in Rigby, ID, on December 20, 2017. The lucky winner was Craig Connor of East Moriches, New York. Craig tells us that he is into "mountain biking, adventure motorcycle riding, dirt bike racing and trail riding." He also does a bit of 4-wheeling on occasion. "I like to ride with my military brothers as well as friends I have met through this great sport," he told us.

"I heard about Sharetrails.Org/BRC through watching some Jimmy Lewis videos on YouTube," Craig continued. "His collection of videos led me to the Tour of Idaho video in which Jimmy and Martin explained and rode the Tour of Idaho Trail. The video itself made the Tour of Idaho number one on my 'to do' list and also brought me together with Sharetrails.Org/BRC. After exploring their website, I signed up as a member and the rest is history.

"I read about the raffle in the Sharetrails Magazine (issue #010) and immediately went to the website and purchased some chances to win. I didn’t think I had a chance to win, as I’m not a luck blessed guy. To have won a bike that my hero Jimmy Lewis himself help build is epic to say the least!

"I have been serving in our armed forces for 27 years now and defending our freedoms both overseas and at home. As Americans we seem to be losing more and more rights to enjoy public lands the way we choose. So as I do in the military, an organization like Sharetrails.Org/BRC does for our rights in defending, fighting, and educating governmental organizations to continue keeping
our sport alive. Without the long hours Martin and his team put in, we would be losing ‘ground’ literally every day.

“I think as Americans we should have the right to use public lands responsibly and be able to co-exist with other users. I think that we as ‘motorized recreation users’ get a bad rap when in fact [this is] just an uneducated perception. We are as interested in environmental impact and stewardship as other public land users, and should not have our access continually [threatened].

“I’d like to ask that like-minded people, who’s passion is motorized recreation, to please support organizations like Sharetrails.Org/BRC so that they can keep our land access available and our sport alive.”

We’d like to give a special thank you to all the fine folks at Klim, Honda, and all the generous companies that provided custom add-ons to make this bike and raffle really stand-out. Thanks also to all the folks who participated. As our Executive Director Martin Hackworth stated, everyone who participated is a winner because the funds raised with this raffle will help keep recreational trails and areas open to the public.

More about this great event is available on the raffle website (sharetrails.org/crf450rx), or watch the video of the actual drawing at Klim headquarters (bit.ly/CRF450RX-Raffle).

The list of custom add-ons on the CRF 450 RX raffle bike:
IMS Fuel Tank ● IMS Core Foot Peg’s ● Pro Circuit T-6 Exhaust System with Spark Arrestors ● Pro Circuit Suspension ● Acerbis Radiator Shrouds ● Acerbis Hand Guards ● Acerbis Chain Guide ● Acerbis Skid Plate ● Flexx Handle Bars ● Scotts Steering Damper ● BRP Top Clamp and Bar Clamps ● Shorai Lithium Battery ● DDC Rear Sprocket, RK Chain (Not installed) ● Trail Tech Side Stand Kit (Not Installed) ● Trail Tech Radiator Fan Kit ● Motion Pro Rev2 Throttle Kit ● Kenda Parker Tires ● Rekluse Clutch ● Seat Concepts Seat Cover ● Attack Graphics

ALL YEAR ROUND,

We Support Motorized Access to Public Lands.
THE IDAHO DEPARTMENT of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) touches the lives of nearly every Idahoan with unique programs, educational classes, and by providing diverse recreational opportunities.

To understand our agency, you need to know our mission: We are innovators in outdoor recreation, committed to excellent service, and resource stewardship. We foster experiences that renew the human spirit and promote community vitality.

Our agency manages 30 State Parks and regional trailways throughout Idaho, including our state’s oldest structure, our longest continuously paved trail, lakefront property with white-sand beaches, and world-renowned fly-fishing destinations. Over 5.5 million people visit these special places each year.

Our agency’s reach and partnerships extend well beyond our park boundaries.

We provide guidance and funding for recreational pursuits in Idaho by managing registration programs and offering safety courses for boats, ATVs, Motorbikes, and snowmobiles. We support motorized and non-motorized boating opportunities in Idaho by helping fund education and enforcement with County Marine Patrols. We supply groomers to County Grooming programs that provide over 5,600 miles of snowmobile trail access annually.

IDPR Trail Rangers keep both state and federal lands accessible for public use by clearing and maintaining over 2,400 miles of trail every year in Idaho.

In addition, the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation oversees 10 unique grant programs that provide over $6 million dollars in funding to cities, counties and agencies statewide each year.
Our trail specific grant programs, the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), Off-Road Motor Vehicle Fund (ORMV), and the Motorbike fund put over $2 million dollars to work in the form of awarded grants towards trail related projects, maintenance, equipment, capital, and access each year.

We are a diverse agency, making a big difference in the lives of Idahoans and visitors to our state.

Idaho’s State Parks and our visitors contribute over $184 million dollars to Idaho’s rural economies every year.

For every dollar Idaho Taxpayers invest in their parks in the form of General Fund support, Idaho’s State parks return $54 to Idaho’s economy.

When you add the economic impact of motorized boating, snowmobiling, and off-highway vehicle use in our state, Idaho’s State Parks and motorized recreation contribute over $1 billion dollars to Idaho’s economy annually.

Recreation Economics: the figures below represent the annual economic impact of motorized recreation pursuits in Idaho and include the purchase of equipment, maintenance, repair, fuel, food, lodging, and other retail.

- Snowmobiling = $197.5 million
- Motorized Boating = $335.3 million
- Off-Highway Vehicle Use = $434 million

Not only are our state parks and motorized recreation programs big economic business, these opportunities provide the backdrop for the lifestyle we’ve come to associate with Idaho and what it truly means to be an Idahoan.

Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation: We’re in the business of making memories and we offer places and programs that enrich lives. In essence, we are Idaho and appreciate your partnership and support.

To learn more about Idaho’s State Parks and recreation programs visit: www.parksandrecreation.idaho.gov

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INVETERATE READERS of Sharetrails Magazine will be in the know concerning my enthusiasm for electric bicycles. Ebikes are the future. Opponents of electric bicycles have about as much of a chance of stopping the ebike tsunami as I have of being the first human to visit Mars by jumping from here to there in a set of Red Ball Jets. It’s not going to happen.

I still marvel at the reaction that invariably follows someone riding my Specialized Turbo Levo Comp 6 electric mountain bike (Sharetrails Magazine #007 and #009) for the first time. Wow! Holy Cow! Are you kidding me? Always accompanied by a smile from ear to ear. If you have not yet experienced an electric mountain bike please do not let another week go by before you head to your nearest bicycle shop for a demo. You’ll thank me, I promise. But don’t go without your checkbook or you’ll end up making two trips.

I’m confident that in the fullness of time electric bicycles will play a pivotal role in crafting a narrative for access that’s fairer to everyone who’s not a preservationist or an elitist. Ebikes remove a significant barrier to getting more folks out onto trails and that’s an often physically painful acclimation curve. Almost anyone with the interest and some motivation can enjoy the outdoors with an electric mountain bike. More trail users means more folks with an iron in the fire when it comes to access advocacy. It also means more people clamoring for quality trails and better maintenance. Win, win, and win.

As I’ve worked with various entities over the past year or so to enact legislation concerning ebike access I’ve encountered a number of folks who either don’t really know what an electric bicycle is or don’t know about the broad range of ebikes out there. With that in mind what follows is a fairly standard set of definitions as to what exactly constitutes an electric bicycle. Please note that this system of classification, though not quite universal, is widely accepted.

Electric bicycles occupy the same categories as regular bicycles, e.g., street bikes, mountain bikes, cruisers, hybrids, et cetera. Like non-electric bicycles they must be fully operable with pedals but may also have an electric motor limited to no more than 750 watts of output. How this motor is used separates electric bicycles into three categories:

**Class 1** – An electric bicycle that is equipped with an electric motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling. Pedal assistance ceases when the speed reaches 20 mph.

**Class 2** – An electric bicycle that is equipped with an electric motor and a throttle that may be used to propel the bike without using the pedals up to 20 mph.

**Class 3** – Like a class 1, but limited to 28 mph and equipped with a speedometer.

My Turbo Levo Comp 6 is a class 1 – the most common electric mountain bike at this time. In every bit of legislation that I’ve been party to crafting or endorsing class 1 electric bicycles are treated just like regular bicycles, i.e., they are permitted everywhere a regular bicycle is permitted.
WITH 2017 IN THE BOOKS as the year of national monument “rightsizing”, it’s important for all of us to realize that 2018 is a unique opportunity to regain ground (pun intended) for motorized recreation on public lands. And for those of us who live in Eastern states now is our time for action.

My primary goal for this year is to lay the groundwork for reopening the Hoosier National Forest in Indiana to motorized recreation. Closed to OHVs since the 1970s, the Hoosier represents the first national forest to practice exclusionists’ policies. And unfortunately, it became a “model of exclusion” for many other Eastern public lands. As an Indiana resident, I will be spending time with our state and national legislators, businesses, and OHV enthusiasts to ensure they know the discriminatory history of the Hoosier NF policy and to gain their support for our efforts. This won’t be fast and it won’t be easy. But, when successful, it will be worthwhile and can become a model to use throughout our Eastern states.

In Kentucky, I will continue to develop our relationship with the Daniel Boone National Forest. Helping to coordinate volunteer efforts and regularly communicating with U.S. Forest Service officials are key to expanding motorized recreation opportunities there. Additionally, I will continue to be a resource to the Kentucky Mountain Regional Recreation Authority and advocate for all forms of motorized recreation. This Authority is working to make Eastern Kentucky an OHV destination by borrowing legislation from West Virginia’s Hatfield-McCoy trail system. Finally, in Kentucky I will continue to work to maintain and reopen county roads which provide excellent opportunities for such routes as the Daniel Boone Backcountry Byway and the Kentucky Adventure Tour (KAT).

In West Virginia, follow up meetings with state legislators on expanding OHV opportunities are likely. Senator Mark Maynard is an OHV recreation supporter and wants to provide motorized access to more WV public lands.

I will be attending Jeep Beach, the Southern Four Wheel Drive Association’s (SFWDA) Trailfest, and the Virginia 4WD Association’s state ride again this year to continue learning more about the issues affecting access for off-road full-size vehicles.

In 2018, I will be promoting the release of the first Backcountry Discovery Route (BDR) in the East. The Mid-Atlantic BDR will connect Damascus, VA, and Lawrenceville, PA, with 1,080 miles of rural roads. The MABDR starts within a day’s ride of the Kentucky Adventure Tour. We will be designing and promoting a connector route between these two which will add up to a 2,000 mile plus route! Fun!
Get the low-down on fine off-highway products reviewed by the staff of Sharetrails.Org/BRC...

PRODUCT: Outrider Pants
MANUFACTURER: Klim
www.klim.com
REVIEWED BY: Martin Hackworth
Executive Director
Sharetrails.Org/BRC

Motorcycle folks, do yourselves a favor and visit, as soon as possible, KLIMs website and check out their new Outrider pants (http://www.klim.com/Outrider-Pant-3719-000?cur=USD&). These are the single best pair of riding pants that I own. I suspect that you may like them as well.

I first laid eyes on a pair of Outriders among some promotional items strewn about the office of KLIM Director of Marketing John Summers. I bought a pair on the spot. Though I own several pairs of armored riding jeans and other casual riding garments, these are the best. They are not meant for racing or extended touring but for casual riding or daily commuting they rock the world.

I have enough purpose-built riding garments to fill a warehouse (ask anyone who’s been in my shop). Virtually every manufacturer in the motorcycle world makes brilliant riding garments for racing, touring, or riding from one end of Idaho to the other on dirt. The soft spot in the industry, at least in my opinion, is casual riding wear, i.e. items that provide adequate protection for a casual ride or daily commute that you can then wear around in style and comfort.

Many years ago I used to ride to work at the University every day in Carhartt double-knee logger pants because they were the beefiest that I could find for daily commuting that I could wear around school without looking like a moto geek. The KLIM Outriders have all of the Carhartt chic in an incredibly functional riding pant. They nailed the concept of stylish and protective casual motorcycle wear.

Outriders feature Nylon Cordura® cotton canvas construction with a plaid liner that’s extremely comfortable and removable D3O® CE level 1 hook and loop hip and knee pads that are easily removable without removing the pants. They are incredibly comfortable and look great.
WE’VE REVIEWED a variety of race radios in *Sharetrails Magazine* over the past couple of years. All of them have been pretty good; indeed the state of the art has advanced a great deal since I first attempted to use a then relatively new PTT motorcycle radio kit to communicate with other riders on the first Tour of Idaho 12 years ago. The kits then were not up to the challenge. Half of the radios didn’t work after just the first day. None of them were working the day after that. But that was then and this is now. These days communications systems for OHVs are as robust as they are plentiful.

PCI Race Radios, known both for being the progeny of Bob “Weatherman” Steinberger and a long, 45 year association with racing at the highest levels, supplies not only race radios but a variety of kits for the entire OHV community. I obtained a set of UV-5R radios from PCI Business Manager Rhiannon Kamo at a KLIM Cow Tag Ride last summer. It took me a while to get an opportunity to use them but I can report that they are as robust and reliable as advertised. They are very similar to other walkie-talkie radios out there but at a bargain price. At $49.95 each these radios are a very good value for the money. The range and feature-set are what you’d expect from radios in this class. Generally speaking, if you are within a line of sight distance with another radio communication is crisp and clear. Beyond that range some breakup begins to occur. Common frequencies are pre-programmed but you can do quite a bit of programming on your own. Even though this particular model of radio is not waterproof it has worked just fine in the rain and snow. The radios are easy to use and largely intuitive if you are at all familiar with radios in this class. The customer service, should you need it, is great.

Whenever we review a radio someone out there with a rack of ham radios lights us up for not talking about licensing. The short answer to the question “Do I need a license?” is yes. There is a longer, more nuanced answer that contains some exceptions to this which a search of the web or of any vendor’s website will answer.
As we Progress Deeper into 2018, I want to share my plans for this year. First, so far this snowmobile season has been challenging due to the lack of snow in the West. I have had little opportunity to ride other than at the Colorado Snowmobile Association’s Convention and Annual Ride in Grand Lake, Colorado. It was great to network with Colorado Snowmobile Association leaders and speakers at the annual meeting.

It is also a year of personal celebration for me. In February 2018 I will have completed fifty years of snowmobiling! I was honored in February with a feature article in SnoWest snowmobile magazine. It has been a great fifty years. I want to thank the snowmobile community and a special thanks to the International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association (ISMA).

My plans for this year are filled with events and opportunities to promote responsible snowmobiling and Sharetrails.org/BlueRibbon Coalition, which started in February with “Take a Friend Snowmobiling Week” (February 10th through the 19th). My local club had a barbeque on Sunday, February 11th. Also, in February the Colorado S&W Adventure Riders Snowmobile Club, of which I am the President, had a week-long adventure ride in Utah. This event was held with the help of the Utah Snowmobile Association (USA). During the week I participated in meetings with local Utah snowmobile clubs and promoting Sharetrail.org /BlueRibbon Coalition.

In March I traveled to the 2018 SAE Clean Snowmobile Challenge in Houghton, Michigan. At this weeklong event I was a judge and spoke at the Awards Banquet. In addition, the Jackson Hole Snow Devils again provided me with a booth at their annual World Championship Snowmobile Hill Climb.

In April and May, I will be holding events with local clubs in the West if we have snow. In June, I hope to be attending the 50th Annual International Snowmobile Congress in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. This major event is always a chance to meet with snowmobile Leaders from across the United States and Canada and to promote Sharetrails.org/Blue Ribbon Coalition.

During the summer and early fall I will be working with the snowmobile community to prepare for the 2018-2019 winter season in Yellowstone National Park and on other issues related to snowmobile access. The on-going battle with the Winter Wildlands Alliance’s effort in the Courts to restrict snowmobile access to our National Forests will continue to be monitored and reacted to by Sharetrails.org /BlueRibbon Coalition as needed.

Starting in October my representation at the fall snow shows will again be a focus. In addition, I plan to attend the annual SEMA show in Las Vegas with its annual North American Motorized Recreation Council (NAMRC) meeting.

I feel this again will be a challenging year for snowmobiling and I will work to increase the snowmobile community’s support of Sharetrails.org/BlueRibbon Coalition.
My Principal Responsibility as Executive Director of Sharetrails/BlueRibbon Coalition is to raise money. Everything else that I do here is subsumed within the obligation to figure ways, each month, to pay the bills. This task is not accomplished without effort. Assembling particle accelerators was easy, our finances are not.

Some months I need to grow more fingers to plug the holes that keep cropping up in the dike. Membership dues account for less than a third of our operating budget. The rest of the money that it takes to litigate, influence policy, and pay our staff comes from fundraising activities.

Support from businesses comprises a very large and key chunk of the money that keeps our world here spinning. Our business partners, donors, and advertisers directly support your ability to ride on public lands. Some of them are in the powersports industry, others are not. Either way they are doing all of us a favor. Many of these businesses advertise in Sharetrails Magazine which is a terrific way of supporting us, and you, because it’s a win-win, at least is should be.

What I am about to say to you comes straight from me. Though I am confident that everyone who works at Sharetrails/BRC agrees with my thoughts on this matter this message is from me alone. If you use our social media to slag, criticize, or in any way disparage any of our business supporters there is no room for you there. Our Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram feeds are not free-speech zones. They are a useful way for us to communicate with you about things that we think you need to know; edification and even occasional amusement. But these feeds are not platforms for you to criticize those who pony-up to support access. That is simply out of line. Do it and you are gone; no counseling, no trial separation, just gone.

Before I ban anyone from our social media I do them the courtesy of researching their involvement with Sharetrails/BRC. Not surprisingly, none of them, to date anyway, have been members. Very often photos on their feeds indicate that they do enjoy wheeled recreation on public lands but they do so without contributing anything productive, or at least anything that I can see, to those who do fight to help keep access open to public lands. Those folks especially, ought to thank their lucky stars that there are business out there who are willing to do what they will not, namely meaningfully support access. The only appropriate thing to say to our supporters is thank you.

All of our business partners and contributors are tremendous. None of them has ever asked anything of us other than to keep up the good work. I even offered one magazine advertiser a discount to which they were entitled but not taking advantage of and their response was “No, thanks, just keep doing what you do.” You take a swipe at someone like that on our social media, especially when you have contributed nothing, at considerable peril to your continued presence there.

I actually had a conversation a while back with someone who was concerned with a donation that I was chasing from a petroleum company. “You aren’t going to get into business with big oil, are you?” I kid you not. My response was that we should be so lucky. Why would we not accept support from a business that makes nearly every form of wheeled recreation possible? Are you out of your mind? Do you leave nasty-grams on the pump every time you fill up your rig? The mind reels.

My mom, and probably your mom, told us at some point that if you can’t say something nice, you shouldn’t say anything at all. That’s pretty good advice.

by Martin Hackworth
Executive Director
Sharetrails.Org/BRC

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As users of this nation’s public or private trails, Sharetrails.org/BlueRibbon Coalition members likely rely on a variety of mapping technologies for navigation. Being able to visualize where you are, and where you’re going is important. Maps help us gauge distance and direction and help determine elevation and ground conditions. Personally, I feel that having a good map when venturing outdoors is as important as taking water and a first aid kit. I always carry a GPS unit, but having a paper map as a backup provides another level of comfort during an outing. It’s familiar, provides a tactile experience, and it’s fun to know where the heck you are on that piece of paper!

In the past couple decades, the transition from paper to digital maps has been accelerated. We can now carry more ‘maps’ on our GPS or cell phone than would fit in a hundred tightly stuffed backpacks 20 years ago! Additionally, digital maps are dynamic, in that we can change the base from aerial images to a topography, layers can be added, turned on and turned off, and routing between destinations can be accomplished in a couple clicks or swipes on your device. These mapping tools and their information empower us in a variety of ways and can lead to a better understanding of various types of terrain and how we move across it. But have you ever thought about the technologies that make all of this possible?

If you are my age, you probably learned to get a feel for your surroundings with the USGS Topographic Quadrangle Map Series or a state-based gazetteer, like a DeLorme Atlas & Gazetteer book. The government agencies and private-sector firms that created those cartographic products are now driven by geographic information systems (GIS), global positioning systems (GPS), and remote sensing technologies. Collectively, those high-tech geospatial tools make it possible for users to access vast amounts of mapping data from a GPS unit or phone.

Entities obtain spatial data through the use of survey-grade GPS units and GPS-equipped vehicles while satellites, airplanes, and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) are capturing land cover, aerial photos, elevation data, and even thermal imagery. For example, the acquisition of highly-accurate elevation data using LiDAR and aerial photos with a resolution in the range of 3" to 6" per pixel allows us to visualize and evaluate ground conditions like never before.

Keeping this data as up to date is a monumental task, but very critical as things change almost daily. Think about it; new roads are built, boundaries change, land is graded for development, trails are re-routed, sewer lines are installed, and waterways cut new paths across the landscape. A myriad of public and private entities continually track those changes. The features are

**AS USERS OF THIS** nation’s public or private trails, Sharetrails.org/BlueRibbon Coalition members likely rely on a variety of mapping technologies for navigation. Being able to visualize where you are, and where you’re going is important. Maps help us gauge distance and direction and help determine elevation and ground conditions. Personally, I feel that having a good map when venturing outdoors is as important as taking water and a first aid kit. I always carry a GPS unit, but having a paper map as a backup provides another level of comfort during an outing. It’s familiar, provides a tactile experience, and it’s fun to know where the heck you are on that piece of paper!

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then organized as layers, categorized by theme, spatially analyzed, and shared in a digital map format using GIS and web-mapping services.

The value of geospatial technologies, and the underlying data, is realized when you can stand anywhere on this globe and view a map that is centered directly on your current location. Not only can you see the trail you’re traveling, but you can turn on the aerial imagery and see the stand of trees east of the trail just over the ridge. The ridge can be visualized due to the use of hillshading on the elevation data and it is obvious that the last creek-crossing is about three miles away in the valley below the next two switchbacks. Wow . . . you’ve never been there before, but you can see what lies ahead!

A wide array of proprietary and publicly available GIS data makes this possible. It is leveraged to provide the mapping services and downloadable data we so conveniently consume. In most cases, maps for our devices are inexpensive and readily available on the internet in formats that are compatible with our phone and GPS units. It is getting easier to do this everyday and the cost is rapidly diminishing.

Just imagine how handy this has been to Martin Hackworth while laying out and fine tuning the Tour of Idaho or for Jeff Stoess and the compilation of the Kentucky Adventure Tour. The aforementioned mapping resources have been key to their success in putting a line on the map we can follow. Their understanding of an area of interest, coupled with the dozens of map layers they have studied, made both adventuresome routes possible for us to enjoy.

One important thing that goes along with having great maps at our disposal is using them to stay on the defined trail. Part of being a responsible off-road enthusiast is sticking to the route. Please realize that getting off the trail, or traveling cross country where not permitted, gives us all a bad name. You can’t claim to be lost if you have a GPS or map in-hand!
AS THE OVERLAND ENTHUSIAST ranks have grown over the last decade, the number of facepalm-worthy incidents on public lands, and on social media, is at an all-time high.

In recent years, Death Valley in particular has seen a rash of theft and vandalism. Evidently, some people think it’s cool to drive illegally on the salt pan at Badwater Basin and the Racetrack Playa, or to steal fossilized footprints left by prehistoric animals as well as Native American artifacts. Some have even taken to tagging graffiti on rocks. Real cool, bro. Real cool.

I’ve led several groups throughout the furthest reaches of Death Valley, and it boggles the mind that anyone would defile such a magical place.

The latest insult came in late October 2017 when unknown vandals scratched graffiti into the mud bottom of Ubehebe Crater in Death Valley National Park, an area considered sacred to the native Timbisha Shoshone people. And if you’ve been there, you know it’s a bit of a hike down into the crater (and back) where you are in full view of anyone else visiting. This area took more than just a few minutes to despoil, and yet it happened right in plain sight of anyone above who may have been at the viewing area.

To erase this man-made blight on the landscape, the National Park Service had to lay over 600 feet of hose down into the crater so that water could be sprayed over the dried mud floor. The graffiti disappeared and the natural color and patterns of the crater returned once the water dried up. This method was used instead of raking, which would have been faster, but would have further disturbed the area and encouraged invasion by nonnative weeds. All this because of a few misguided individuals.

And that’s just ONE Park. There are others, with similar misdeeds regularly plaguing the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service. And us.

But we have to wonder, is it because people are really that bad and really don’t care? Or is it because they don’t know any better? I’d like to think that it’s because they don’t know any better.

The future of Overlanding, aka off-road recreation, is in doubt if we allow ourselves to lose access to public lands by not policing and educating our own.
Entities like the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service have limited capacity to deal with bad actors in the backcountry. Sometimes it’s just easier to throw up a gate than deal with hordes of unruly people. And while we may disagree, what choice do they have when faced with mobs of jerks?

And while I’m sure that we can all agree that closure isn’t management, we all know that’s where this stuff leads. More people crowded into fewer and fewer areas.

Meanwhile, SEMA in Las Vegas was full of Overland builds again this year.

More and more entities continue to jump on the Overland bandwagon. New Facebook groups, websites, events, and blogs spring up daily. Amazingly, what was once a minor subset of the off-road culture is now mainstream. An army of hungry “Mainstream Overlanders” sprang up somewhere along the way, gobbling up anything with the word ‘Overland’ in the title. This has been an awesome evolution to witness, but we’ve also witnessed this army of new folks attract some negative attention, and some predatory types.

But these Mainstream Overlanders aren’t a problem.

Like all of us they’re just having fun, enjoying the benefits of a free market while following their chosen passion that this fad captures so well: an “overlanding” fad that started out simply as camping or trail-riding.

In the beginning, this budding Overland culture represented the good guys. They were all about ‘Tread Lightly,’ responsible recreation, and the thrill that came with exploring remote, forgotten destinations. It didn’t matter what they wore or what they drove, or if they even took any pictures once they got there. But now over a decade later, this now mainstream community is becoming a target, and a potential liability, as they spread out across the land in search of the perfect campsite or photo op.

It’s up to us to teach new people the right way of doing things, because social media can and will be used against you in a court of law.

Take a look at social media or your local event and it’s hard not to notice the greedy carpetbaggers, “Instafamous” social media narcissists, trust fund punks, faux fraternal groups, and pinky-in-the-air elitists looking to profit by fame or fortune from this fad known as “Overlanding.”

Did I say that out loud? I sure did, because it’s true. And most of these folks have very little to offer beginners in the realm of real knowledge or experience; they’re just there for the money and the ‘Gram.

Make no mistake, we aren’t maligning the many great vendors, manufacturers, innovators, and fellow enthusiasts offering great products from around the world that are valued additions to our community. We are highlighting those who make a habit of setting a bad example and exploiting people who are new to this pursuit.

Today there are innumerable bad role models on social media promoting unsafe, illegal, and
unethical use of vehicles, equipment, and public lands. They're completely resistant to any suggestions, corrections, or cautions either through arrogance or ignorance.

No doubt the BLM and USFS enforcement roles are made easier when these individuals and groups self-incriminate on social media. But if left unchallenged, their dramatization and monetization of this community of interest has potential negative impacts for everyone.

If we support or condone the aforementioned behaviors, we should expect even more locked gates to go up on public land.

As bad practices are glamorized and subsequently emulated, new or less experienced adventurers will eat this up; they will likely mirror this behavior off-highway. And why not? They saw “Overland Hucksters” do it on YouTube, so it must be alright.

These exploitive attitudes and actions may not matter to some reading this. As for me, I want no part of it. ‘American Adventurist’ will not look the other way and neither should you. We refuse to tolerate any individuals or groups perpetuating unacceptable and unsafe practices.

The challenge for all of us today is to set a positive example for new people. And what it takes is ‘Leadership by Example.’ Acta non verba - actions not words.

The future of the community of interest depends on adherence to ‘Tread Lightly’ ethos and a common respect for one another and the environment. It depends on welcoming new people into our hobby and making sure that they learn how to do things right. And it depends on all of us to do the right thing, even if that means being the guy or gal to speak up on the trail when no one else will and say “Hey! Pick up your trash, dude!”

How can you help? Be a good steward of the land, know and follow the rules of where you are, demand that your buddies do the same, and use the T.R.E.A.D. principles:

- **TRAVEL RESPONSIBLY** on land by staying on designated roads, trails, and areas. Go over, not around, obstacles to avoid widening the trails. Cross streams only at designated fords. When possible, avoid wet, muddy trails. On water, stay on designated waterways and launch your watercraft in designated areas.

- **RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS**, including private property owners, all recreational trail users, campers, and others so they can enjoy their recreational activities undisturbed. Leave gates as you found them. Yield right of way to those passing you or going uphill. On water, respect anglers, swimmers, skiers, boaters, divers, and those on or near shore.

- **EDUCATE YOURSELF** prior to your trip by obtaining travel maps and regulations from public agencies. Plan for your trip, take recreation skills classes, and know how to operate your equipment safely.

- **AVOID SENSITIVE AREAS** on land such as meadows, lake shores, wetlands, and streams. Stay on designated routes; this protects wildlife habitats and sensitive soils from damage. Don’t disturb historical, archeological, or paleontological sites. On water, avoid operating your watercraft in shallow waters or near shorelines at high speeds.

- **DO YOUR PART** by modeling appropriate behavior, leaving the area better than you found it, properly disposing of waste, minimizing the use of fire, avoiding the spread of invasive species, and repairing degraded areas.

Let’s make sure that future generations get to visit all these places we love, not just view them from afar, barred by the fences and locked gates that went up on our watch. Because there’s another army clamoring for closure and pursuing litigation to forever lock out the freedom-loving folk. They are well organized and well-funded, their cause reinforced by every bad example shared on social media.

Please consider supporting groups like the BlueRibbon Coalition and Tread Lightly! as they fight the good fight to educate and maintain access for ALL of us whether we choose to go by boots, wheels, or paddles. We’re all in this together.

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