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Subject: Closure of SVRA Riding Areas at Oceano Dunes.
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My name is Sam Walker. I am a retired Chief from CAL FIRE. I have met or worked with some of you personally during my career. I am also a life long off roader. Today, I want to speak about the issues and proposed closures at the Oceano Dunes SVRA.

I have been going to the Oceano Dunes SVRA with my family and friends for 42 years. My family have many happy memories and experiences that have been handed down through the generations. The off road opportunities at the SVRA are a family and public treasure.

Over the years, we have seen the battles to close the park. We have seen the size of the park constricted from its original form, that was approximately 13,500 acres and allowed vehicle traffic all the way to Devil's Slide, to the current size of 1,500 acres, which is further constricted each year for seasonal Snowy Plover protection. We have seen the homeowners of the residences immediately south of the Pier Avenue gate complain about vehicle traffic despite knowing about the vehicle travel prior to purchasing the properties. These are examples of the long, but consistent pressure to eliminate the off road recreational opportunities at the last open coastal riding area in the State of California.

Now, it apparently has been determined that the off road community contributes to air pollution in the communities east of the park because they reportedly unnecessarily put silica into the air and take it off of the beach with vehicle movement. While I am concerned about air pollution anywhere, I am wondering what scientific studies have been conducted that prove that the off road community is a part of the problem in the communities east of the SVRA. I am also wondering if this is just another attempt to close the SVRA without due process or real justification.

It seems to me that naturally occurring silica has been shifting inland with the wind, as a natural phenomena, everywhere along the west coast of the United States long before, and will continue long after, vehicle traffic is permitted on this section of beach. We see it along State Highway 1 in the city of Seaside to the point where sand must be removed to keep the highway open. We see it on the city streets east of the State Beaches in Huntington Beach and Sunset Beach. We see it at Leo Carrillo and Zuma Beaches in Malibu. We see it in Santa Monica and Hermosa and Manhattan Beaches. Yet, there is no cry of air pollution caused by silica movement in the air in those places.

In association with the recommended closures, what type of air pollution studies have been completed? Specifically, what percentage of air pollution or percentage of increased silica pollution has been determined to be attributable to the off road community's use of the SVRA? Is there quantifiable proof that the situation will be rectified by closures? Is the number of vehicles used on a given day within the park a contributing factor?

If scientific proof has not yet been determined, the SVRA should remain open, in its current form, until directly attributable proof exists.

If there is scientific proof that a specific portion of Oceano Dunes SVRA is directly negatively impacting the air quality for local residents, something must be done to minimize the impact.

However, with 13,500 acres within the State Park area, it would seem to me that there should be some opportunity to reopen another area of the park that would retain, at the least, the current level of off road opportunities.

It has been said that approximately \$243 million in revenue is generated, annually, by the presence of the SVRA . The adverse impact of acreage closure must be considered as a part of this decision. A downturn in the local economy is not to be overlooked. The very people reportedly affected by the pollution could be adversely affected monetarily and have little or no change in air quality.

In the end, I am requesting that, unlike many other areas of the State, where the off road community has been vilified and seen use areas closed with little or no due process, proper study and equal consideration be granted to what is the last legitimate off road use area of its kind in the State. In many ways, like the endangered species that it is, this riding area must be protected for future generations to enjoy as it has been until now. Wasn't that the intent of making the area an SVRA and for paying green (and red) sticker money for our off road vehicles?

Thank you all for your work, dedication and consideration to the goal of maintaining the Oceano Dunes SVRA.

Respectfully,

Sam Walker