CLARK COUNTY
OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE RECREATION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATION TO URGE THE DESIGNATION OF THREE OFF-
HIGHWAY VEHICLE AREAS THROUGH FEDERAL LEGISLATION

February 19, 2019
Background

• 6/19/18 BCC established the OHV Recreation Advisory Committee

• Committee has met 1 x month since August 2018

• Open public process; all meetings have been conducted under NV Open Meeting Law
Background

• Purpose of the committee is to make recommendations to BCC regarding OHV recreation in Clark County.

• Committee is comprised of 10 members representing OHV interests.

• Recommendation presented today was unanimously approved by the OHV Advisory Committee at its January 16, 2019 meeting.

• Committee deliberations have included:
  o Desire to protect existing OHV areas in federal legislation & offer parity with disposal, wilderness, ACECs, and other designations
  o Desire to identify new areas that can offset the loss of access due to other designations
Recommendation

- Support the establishment of three OHV Recreation Areas near Nelson Hills, Laughlin and Sandy Valley through federal legislation.

- Require BLM travel and transportation planning and recreation management planning be completed within two years of the date the bill is signed into law.
Nelson Hills

• 1998 - BLM designated Nelson Hills/Eldorado Valley as a Special Recreation Management Area by BLM in ’98 Resource Management Plan
  • For competitive off-road events subject to FWS Biological Opinions to protect desert tortoise habitat

• Maximum of nine events per year on existing courses between 11/1 - 2/28 within parts of the recreation area that are designated critical habitat
Nelson Hills

• Heavily used for casual and organized OHV events for decades

• BLM existing route inventory
Nelson Hills

Concerns we’ve heard:

• This area was designated by the FWS as desert tortoise critical habitat in 1994
  o Correct and in 1998 the BLM designated the Nelson Hills/Eldorado Valley as a Special Recreation Management Area for competitive off-road events in accordance with applicable FWS Biological Opinions to protect desert tortoise habitat
  o Area has been used extensively for casual and organized OHV recreation since 1998
  o The proposed designation through federal legislation would make permanent its current use as an OHV area.
  o The designation would be subject to NEPA & ESA consultation and applicable FWS Biological Opinions

• This area includes lands with wilderness characteristics and proposed Eldorado Wilderness expansion
  o This was a BLM planning analysis and desk top exercise
  o The planning exercise was not intended to result in de facto wilderness areas; wilderness can only be designated through an act of Congress
  o This area was proposed by BLM to be managed at a Prescription Level Three - management to emphasize other multiple uses over wilderness characteristics
  o Potential Remedy: remove lands with wilderness characteristics/proposed Eldorado Wilderness from the proposed Nelson Hills OHV Recreation Area
Nelson Hills

Concerns we’ve heard:

• This area includes Keyhole Canyon ACEC
  o Area of significant natural and cultural significance
  o Potential remedy: remove lands designated as Keyhole Canyon ACEC from the proposed Nelson Hills OHV Recreation Area

• This area is too close to Irebeta Peaks & Eldorado Wilderness
  o Wilderness designations do include a buffer area
  o BLM travel and transportation planning and recreation management plans will minimize impacts
Laughlin

• 1998 - BLM designated as a Special Recreation Management Area

• Heavily utilized for casual and organized OHV use

• July 2018 Laughlin Race and Event Environmental Assessment
  - Finding of No Significant Impact
Laughlin

Concerns we’ve heard:

• This area includes proposed Hiko Canyon ACEC
  o Identified in the 2018 Draft BLM Resource Management Plan amendment; never completed
  o Proposed remedy: remove the proposed Hiko Canyon ACEC from proposed Laughlin OHV Recreation Area

• This area includes proposed Granite Springs ACEC
  o Identified in the 2018 Draft BLM Resource Management Plan amendment; never completed
  o Proposed remedy: remove the proposed Granite Springs ACEC from the proposed Laughlin OHV Recreation Area

• This area is close to Proposed Bridge Canyon Wilderness
  o Wilderness designations do include a buffer area
  o BLM travel and transportation planning and recreation management plans will minimize impacts
Sandy Valley

- New area for permanent OHV recreation; currently multiple use
- 40,754 acres

Concerns We’ve Heard:
- This area is too close to the desert tortoise large scale desert translocation site
  - Translocation area is currently protected and not directly impacted by this proposal
  - Existing geological barrier why the western edge of the LSTS has not been fenced
  - Designation as an OHV Recreation Area will require various environmental planning processes and will result in protective measures that will ensure various biological and cultural resources are protected, when necessary
Additional Review

• Proposed Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Areas would remain BLM-administered lands

• Designation action would be subject to:
  o National Environmental Policy Act
  o Endangered Species Act
  o National Historic Preservation Act
  o Archeological and Historic Preservation Act
  o Archeological Resources Protect Act
  o Many of these laws require consultation with other resource agencies; Native American Tribes; and cooperating agencies through a legally-required public process
• BLM Recreation Management Plan
  o Public process
  o Subject to NEPA & FWS Consultation

• BLM Travel and Transportation Planning
  o Public process
  o Subject to NEPA and FWS Consultation
  o Will result in designate routes for OHV use

• BLM Special Recreation Permits for organized events
• Remove lands designated as Keyhole Canyon ACEC from the proposed Nelson Hills OHV Recreation Area

• Remove lands with wilderness characteristics/proposed Eldorado Wilderness from the proposed Nelson Hills OHV Recreation Area

• Remove the proposed Hiko Canyon ACEC from proposed Laughlin OHV Recreation Area

• Remove the proposed Granite Springs ACEC from the proposed Laughlin OHV Recreation Area
Questions