

CARNEGIE

State Vehicular Recreation Area

GEARED FOR THE FUTURE



Winter 2011

Our mission at Carnegie State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA) is to provide sustainable high-quality off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation opportunities for our visitors through the use of sound resource management practices. As a state agency, California State Parks has an obligation to comply with current laws and regulations. By following the laws and regulations we will ensure continued OHV opportunities into the future. Carnegie SVRA will begin implementation of various improvement projects throughout the SVRA. These projects will help to protect the future of the park, the long term sustainability of the recreation opportunities, as well as the natural resource values of the area.

SRI Is Open!

On Saturday, January 8th Carnegie SVRA fulfilled our promise to reopen SRI Loop Trail. SRI was closed in August of 2009 due to the Corral fire and extensive off-trail use.

At the time of the closure park users voiced their concerns about losing riding space. Carnegie staff heard their concerns and shaped park policy accordingly. This type of partnership will continue as we look to future projects.

Carnegie staff used the opportunity to improve drainage and repair



erosion. Work in the area began last winter and included resurfacing the hill and fertilizing and planting native grass seed. This winter's rains made things nice and green, which helps stabilize the hillside.

On opening day supervising ranger Gary Hughey led the first riders on a tour of the new trail. Over the next couple of hours several dirt bikes and a few ATVs added their tracks as a "seal of approval". Riders shared a big thumbs-up as they left to enjoy the rest of the park. Rangers spoke with each user to explain the new rules in the area: absolutely no off-trail riding or a citation will be issued and the area closed.



2011 Special Events

March 19 and 20

Skip's Amateur Hillclimb

April 8, 9 and 10

Skip's Pro Hillclimb

Contact information:

1-888-244-7547

skipsatc@sbcglobal.net

www.skipspromotions.com

April 30

Red sticker season ends



SRI Loop is now a trails-only area and has been redesigned to allow OHV recreation while minimizing environmental impacts. Staying on-trail is important not only to keep this area open, but also for the future of OHV recreation. When all park users respect the environment and use park resources responsibly it will help to keep Carnegie open and make possible the opening of new riding areas.



views - are all about. Yeah, ok, I know the hillclimbs and challenging riding are a big part of the fun here, but I'm not up to that yet.

I'm an interpreter, but I only speak one language. It's the language of Carnegie's natural and cultural history. Interpretation is

another way of saying education, but we try hard to make interpretation fun, hands-on and engaging.

Riding off-trail in the SRI Loop area is strictly prohibited and may result in citation and ejection from the park. Park staff will be monitoring this area closely to ensure compliance. If off-trail riding occurs, as it did on January 21st (see photo above), the area will be closed. Protect this area and keep it open by always staying on the designated trail.



As always, Carnegie staff welcome your comments and suggestions about the SRI Loop Trail and the park in general. ■

Interpreter's Corner

Maybe we've met at the State Parks booth during a hillclimb. Or maybe you've seen me at the Information Station by MotoMart? My name is Elise, and I've been hard at work learning about Carnegie's plants, animals, and history so I can share it all with you. I've even been out on an ATV a few times, so I can get an idea of what the best parts of Carnegie - the trails and beautiful

You may have seen a few new panels in the park. See if you can find one on history, a few on the work on SRI, the one about Bunkhouse, and one on the Corral Fire. There will be more coming.

We have some fun new things for kids. If you come by the Information Station or special event booth I'll have our Junior Ranger program booklet full of puzzles and games that help kids learn about the park. The kiosk has a great coloring book for younger kids.

We have the Litter Getters program which rewards kids for helping keep the park clean (Psst! Stickers!) During special events we have a table

for coloring and some neat rubber stamps with Carnegie animals on them. At up coming events we'll also have the "Whose Scat is That?" game and a few new skulls to look at. Interpreters like the icky stuff. Or at least I do.



Livermore schools have been keeping me busy visiting kindergarten and first grade classes to talk about animals. I've been taking Rufus with me. Rufus is our stuffed bobcat. I call him Rufus because his scientific name is *Lynx rufus*. He loves meeting the kids and helping them learn about local animals and the importance of parks. Once in a while I also visit a third grade class and talk about local history. Did you know Tesla was California's first commercial coal mine?

If you see someone hanging out with a bunch of skulls and a stuffed bobcat or owl, stop by and say hi. I also have lots of information on great places to ride, future special events, and the latest on what's going on in the park. ■



Bird Surveys

The winter bird surveys are underway! Twice each year park environmental scientists count the number of birds and bird species at over 100 different places in the park. The goal is to make sure the bird populations are strong and healthy. Since 2003 over 120 bird species have been identified in the park.

Of particular interest this winter are the sightings of several northern harriers in the Kiln Canyon area. Northern harriers have been threatened by agricultural development in the central valley and it's exciting to see them find a winter home here at Carnegie.

When you are out and about, see if you can spot this medium-sized brown raptor flying overhead. It can be distinguished from the red-tail hawk by a white rump patch.



Other cool birds we have seen this winter include the California thrasher, greater roadrunner, and golden eagle. The winter surveys will continue until February so if you see people walking around with binoculars looking in trees and bushes you'll know what they are up to. ■



Soil Evaluations

The annual soil evaluations are complete! This past summer the park trails team was busy taking a close look at the surface of each and every trail at Carnegie for signs of erosion.

OHMVR Division regulations require the park to do an annual evaluation of all of our trails for soil standards. The goal is to give the trails a "check up" and make sure the dirt isn't leaving the trail.

Dirt can move by wind and rain and it's important to the plants and animals to keep the dirt in place. If too much dirt has moved, then the trail is closed and repaired and given time to rest. We rate the soils that make up the trail tread to guide us in what needs to be done.

Please help by obeying all signs and remaining on established trails at all times. ■



Superintendent's Message

Joe Ramos, Sector Superintendent

The phrase “May you live in interesting times” was originally thought to be an ancient Chinese curse, with the thought that “interesting” was synonymous with challenges and a lack of tranquility. Although the origin of this phrase is now in question, one thing is certain: at Carnegie, we do indeed live in interesting times! And yet, I don't view the challenges we are facing as a curse. Rather, I see them as yet another way that the Off-Highway community has risen to the challenge, worked to clear our good name, and bonded together under the heat and pressure of battle.

And make no mistake about it: we are indeed in a fight. A fight to preserve our chosen form of outdoor recreation not only for ourselves, but our children, and future generations to come.

I'm proud of the way all of you have responded to these interesting times. Proud of Deputy Director Daphne Greene, Chief Phil Jenkins, District Superintendent Bob Williamson, District Planner Jennifer Buckingham and many others who worked countless late night hours in response to the recent lawsuit and provided leadership, clarity and calm to those in the field. Proud of the Legal Counsel from the Attorney General's Office who worked so diligently to present our case in court. Proud of the staff at Carnegie, the Twin Cities District, and OHV Division headquarters that rose to each and every challenge and deadline in order to keep our gates open. Proud of the support and leadership demonstrated by Dave Pickett, AMA District 36 and Don Amador, Blue Ribbon Coalition. And last, but certainly not least, I'm proud of you.

Because it is you, our park users, who will ultimately have the final word in the story of Carnegie. It was you who rallied together at Carnegie and elsewhere in support of your park. It was you who continually stepped forward and asked us how you could help. It was you who helped us protect Corral Hollow Creek. And it will be you who helps us as we move forward with our efforts at erosion control, watershed protection, and trail usage. While you may not be as familiar with these topics as you were with the creek, they are nonetheless just as important. So important in fact, they were mentioned in the Corral Hollow Creek lawsuit.



So how can you help? It's as simple as staying on designated trails and out of closed areas. In the weeks and months to come, park staff will be working hard to sign new trails, mark and close unauthorized trails, and survey and repair those trails that do not comply with soil standards. Closed trails and areas will be signed and designated by a small pillar core fence, with hay bales behind it to catch soil and runoff. We need everyone's help to stay off of the closed trails and not simply ride around the fence or barriers.

When all is said and done, it's as simple and as complex as that. At the end of the day, I have enough optimism and faith in our riders that I believe we will move successfully into the future despite any challenges thrown our way. I believe that we will develop an expectation from all riders that off-trail riding will not be tolerated from anyone—not our riding buddies, not other park riders, not anyone. The best success will come from our users and riders. The trail you save will be the area you save which will be the park you save.

I'm proud to be the Superintendent at Carnegie. I live in interesting times, and I couldn't ask for a better group of people to work with and to work for. I look forward to meeting each and every one of you in the park at some point. Let us know your thoughts, ideas, comments and concerns. By continuing to build on the partnership between park staff and park users, the best is yet to come. ■