

# News Release



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## *This Weekend*

### The First BMX Facility Sponsored By California State Parks Set to Open at Prairie City State Vehicular Recreation Area

(SACRAMENTO) -- The challenging and exciting world of BMX racing comes this weekend (Saturday, August 24) to the Prairie City State Vehicular Recreation Area and the inauguration of the first BMX race facility sponsored by California State Parks.

The new course is an expansion to a State Park that has been also the home for the last three decades of the nationally known Hangtown Motocross Classic. This prestigious event is held at Prairie City each year in May and is hosted by the Dirt Diggers North Motorcycle Club. Racing superstar Ricky Carmichael captured this year's 34<sup>th</sup> annual running.

"This facility is a welcome addition to the State Park system. The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division, which manages Prairie City, is proud to provide this opportunity," said California State Parks Deputy Director David L. Widell.

"Ask any of the thousands of riders or spectators, the world of BMX racing is truly an exciting sport. It is something to see riders of all ages, especially our youth, both boys and girls, jamming through the dirt on their modified bicycles, trying to capture the essence of their favorite motorcycle motocross heroes. I invite you to come out and see for yourself," he said.

About 100 riders are expected at this weekend's inaugural event. Rider signups take place from 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m., with racing scheduled to begin at 4:30 p.m. The new dirt clay track is located across from the kiosk at the entrance to Prairie City. The track was designed by Eric Dyer of Citrus Heights, a nationally recognized professional BMX racer and a track owner.

BMX, the shortened name given the sport of bicycle motocross when it was born in the early 1970s, continues to grow in both the numbers of participants and spectators.

The American Bicycle Association, the nation's first and largest national sanctioning body serving the sport, sanctions Saturday's races. The ABA boasts nearly 250 sanctioned

tracks and an estimated 60,000 actively racing members in 44 states. The ABA, located in Phoenix, Arizona, is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.

Several different levels of competition have been created by the ABA, each serving as a possible stepping-stone for riders who continue to advance in the sport as they gain more skill and confidence. Saturday's races are at the local level, the true grass roots level where riders compete for trophies and the sheer excitement of BMX racing. The other levels of advancement are district, state, regional and national.

Further information on the races may be obtained by telephoning the Prairie City SVRA Ranger Station at (916) 985-7378, or Eric or Janet Dyer of ABA California District 11 at (916) 722-3047.

Because of its location 20 miles east of downtown Sacramento and its proximity to a burgeoning suburban area, the 836-acre Prairie City SVRA is destined to become the model for future urban OHV parks across the U.S. In addition to the BMX facilities, the State Park eventually will provide a mix of both motorized and non-motorized forms of off-road recreation, world-class motocross tracks, a skateboard park, outdoor rock climbing wall and mountain bike trails.

**Directions:** (From Sacramento) Take Highway 50 East (toward Lake Tahoe) approximately 19 miles to Prairie City off ramp, continue south on Prairie City Road to the dead-end at White Rock Road, turn right and continue past the pit gate to the spectator's gate (approximately 1/2 mile), turn left (south) into the park.

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