



News & Notes

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GOVERNMENT RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

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News & Notes is a monthly publication compiled and edited by the American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) Government Relations Department. Designed to inform motorcyclists of 'rights'-related issues and events around the world, News and Notes welcomes your input. Suggestions and contributions can be sent to Sheila Andrews, AMA Legislative Assistant, by e-mail at sandrews@ama-cycle.org.

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In addition to signing up for our Action Alerts, you can sign up to receive AMA's monthly electronic edition of News & Notes. News & Notes will keep you informed on motorcycle-related issues and events around the world. [Click here](#) and check the "Sign me up for AMA's Government Relations News & Notes" box at the bottom of the page.

All Youth OHV Sales Halted: Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CSPIA) shuts down all sales of youth model off-highway vehicles (OHVs). Citing a law that regulates lead levels in children's products, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has effectively banned the sale of all youth OHVs as of Feb. 10, 2009. The AMA is calling on everyone to take action now to help reverse the potentially devastating effect this could have on OHV recreation. Go to: <http://www.amadirectlink.com/news/story.asp?id=629> to see the full story. To read the AMA's comments to the CPSC visit: <http://www.amadirectlink.com/news/story.asp?id=595>

Omnibus Public Lands Bill (S22): A major wilderness bill that was supposed to be a quick victory for the new congressional majority is now on hold due to a lack of support in the House of Representatives. The measure, Senate Bill 22, also known as the Omnibus Public Lands Bill, is actually a package of more than 160 bills that were melded together to create a single bill of more than 1,300 pages in length.

Every AMA member, off-highway motorcyclist, all-terrain vehicle (ATV) rider and anyone who supports responsible outdoor recreation is urged to continue contacting their senators and representatives and ask them to reject this bill. The measure would ban motorized recreation on 2.1 million acres of public land and inappropriately designate it as Wilderness. The procedure used for fast-tracking this bill through the U.S. Senate and House clearly violates the spirit of open and democratic government. For the full release and a link to a rapid response letter on this issue go to: <http://www.amadirectlink.com/news/story.asp?id=592>

Illinois Bill Would Prohibit Youth Riding: House Bill 3914, introduced by Rep. Mary Flowers (D-Chicago), would make it illegal for anyone under the age of 16 to operate an ATV or off-highway motorcycle

(OHM). Further, the proposed legislation would make it illegal to transport a passenger on an ATV or OHM regardless of whether the vehicle is configured for a passenger. The bill would also require ATV and OHM riders to have a valid driver's license and wear a helmet. This legislation was referred to the Committee on Rules on February 26. The text of HB-3914 is available on the "Rights" page of <http://www.americanmotorcyclist.com>. Additional updates will be posted as they become available.

AMA, others blast pending OHV study as flawed. Nine national off-highway vehicle (OHV) groups, including the AMA, recently sent a letter to the federal Government Accountability Office (GAO) noting that an ongoing GAO study on OHV use is flawed in such a way that any findings will be skewed against OHV use on federal lands.

A principal component of the study is a survey of federal land managers that ostensibly seeks to determine trends in the amount of OHV use, potential environmental and human health and safety impacts and how federal agencies are managing OHV use and enforcing OHV regulations. Managers from the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service received the survey and were asked to respond.

This letter was signed by representatives of Americans for Responsible Recreational Access, the AMA, The BlueRibbon Coalition, Motorcycle Industry Council, National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council, Off-Road Business Association, Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association, Specialty Vehicle Institute of America and the United Four Wheel Drive Associations.

The letter noted that GAO's survey questions ignore ongoing federal management activities and are ambiguous, subjective and lack context. Both the BLM and the USFS are currently engaged in multi-year efforts to improve OHV management by designating which trails are open for motorized use on each unit and forest.

Source: <http://www.amadirectlink.com/news/story.asp?id=600>

The National 4-H Headquarters, in collaboration between National 4-H Council and the ATV Safety Institute, has announced a request for proposals for its 2009 ATV Safety grants. Please contact your local county 4-H office if you are interested in partnering with them to promote ATV safety. The application Deadline is Tuesday, March 24, 2009, 5PM, EST

Information and the grant application can be found at www.atv-youth.org. If you have any questions, contact Sheila Chaconas, 4-H ATV Safety Account Manager, at 301-961-2858.

California bill proposes emissions testing for motorcycles. Recently, California State Senator Fran Pavley introduced legislation that would "amend Section 44011 of, and to add Section 44012.5 to, the Health and Safety Code, relating to air pollution." If passed this legislation would require motorcycle owners in California to get smog checks for their motorcycles once every two years. The law would take effect January 1, 2012 and cover all on-highway motorcycles model year 2000 or newer. A majority vote would be required to pass this new legislation into law and could occur any time after March 28. Visit http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/09-10/bill/sen/sb_0401-0450/sb_0435_bill_20090226_introduced.html to see the full text of the bill. Opponents of the bill say that that it is simply a thinly veiled attempt to levy yet another fee to offset the states record budget deficit and point to last month's raid of the OHV trust fund of \$90 million dollars for non-OHV related expenditures. The bikes potentially affected are in fact the cleanest in the nation, having already been required to meet the stricter CA emissions standards years prior to similar requirements being adopted by the EPA.

Motorcyclists benefit from historic economic stimulus bill. Language that provides a tax deduction for the purchase of a motorcycle has been added to the recent economic stimulus bill. The AMA, in conjunction with other stakeholders, worked diligently to secure the motorcycle provision within the measure.

Specifically, motorcycles are included as "qualified vehicles" in Section 1008 of the legislation. Those purchasing a new motorcycle will be able to deduct the sales and excise taxes on their 2009 tax returns. Prior to the actions taken by the AMA, Harley Davidson and others, the deductions applied only to the purchase of a new car or light truck. Details of the deduction, which are currently being developed by the Treasury Department, will be provided in a future News and Notes.

Source: <http://www.amadirectlink.com/news/story.asp?id=627>

The AMA is looking for Public Service Announcements (PSAs) that have been produced by state motorcyclists' rights organizations and request that links to or copies of PSAs be sent to the AMA for inclusion in a resources library. Recently, at the 12th annual Hoosier Motorcyclist Roundtable, attendees were made aware of eight online PSAs produced by ABATE of Indiana. These videos, and others like them, are excellent examples of what is being done in the field to promote motorcycle safety, awareness, and rider education. Visit <http://www.igot2know.com/index.php?videoid=1752&partnerid=71> to view the videos.

The AMA has announced the creation of three separate one million-dollar endowments for the AMA's Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum, the Association's government relations activities and its amateur racing programs. AMA President and CEO Rob Dingman made the announcement at a press conference preceding the opening of the annual Dealernews International Powersports Dealer Expo in Indianapolis.

"We are very pleased to be able to make these substantial commitments to three of the AMA's most cherished activities: the Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum, the advocacy efforts of our Government Relations Department, and the amateur racing series and championships enjoyed by tens of thousands of AMA members," Dingman said.

Source: <http://www.amadirectlink.com/news/story.asp?id=616>

North Port, Florida: City leaders discuss cancelling an OHV ordinance that prohibits ATV use and camping on city-owned land and private property. North Port's tracts of undeveloped land historically drew many OHV users, but some area residents complained about noise and feared the activity would hurt property values. Recently city commission chairwoman Vanessa Carusone, an ATV rider herself, said the law is flawed and said a group of citizens asked her to propose its repeal. People who break the camping-ATV law repeatedly face up to a \$1,000 fine or 90 days in jail.

Source: <http://www.heraldtribune.com/article/20090303/ARTICLE/903030389>

Ohio: Public forums will help guide future of off-highway recreation. Ohio is one of the most popular states in the country for off-highway vehicle sales and recreation. To identify the issues and needs of motorized users of the state's public trails systems, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Office of Trails will hold meetings in four locations around the state, including one sponsored by the AMA and held near the Association's offices in Pickerington. The meetings will help the Office of Trails as it compiles the standalone Motorized Trails Plan for Ohio, which will provide a vision for the next three to five years that will guide the

Office as it addresses the needs of Ohio's trail users.

Source: <http://www.amadirectlink.com/news/story.asp?id=668>

NAPLES, Florida: Collier and Miami-Dade County officials are considering whether to turn an old airport into an OHV park. The property is mostly located in Collier County and was originally a 13,000-foot runway. Officials think they can create 20 miles of trail for OHVs such as ATVs and dirt bikes. Camping, fishing, piers and possibly an archery range are also being considered.

Source: http://www.palmbeachpost.com/search/content/gen/ap/FL_Off_Road_Park.html

London, England: Motor Cycle Industry Association (MCI) announces Code of Conduct as London launches City-Wide Experimental Bus Lane Access for Powered Two Wheelers. To coincide with the recent opening of London's primary route bus lanes to motorcyclists, the MCI has announced a new Code of Conduct for motorcyclists who will be enjoying the new freedom to use bus lanes. The Code has been developed in partnership with the London Police and is supported by motorcycle riders' groups, the media and motorcycle dealerships.

The Code contains guidance and gives information to motorcyclists about the safe and responsible use of bus lanes. The most important point is that bus lanes are shared road space and are also used by other vulnerable road users such as cyclists.

Source: <http://www.acem.eu/NWSL/news118/buslanes.htm>

France: Motorcycle riders are protesting a new motorcycle specific law that takes effect in April. This law will allow a law enforcement officer to order any motorcycle towed for an inspection to ensure legal conformity. Further angering riders is the fact that the law does not stipulate any requirements for the person inspecting the motorcycle.

After the owner has completed any required "repairs" the bike must again be verified. Adding insult to injury, any owner whose bike is inspected and found to be in compliance will still be required to pay any costs associated with the inspection.

Source: <http://www.motosportsbusiness.com/new-french-motorcycle-laws-protest-nest-pas/>

Championed by the KMA/KBA (Kentucky Motorcycle Association / Kentucky Bikers Association), on March 5 the Kentucky Senate adopted Senate Resolution 86, designating May 2009 as Motorcycle Awareness Month. SR-86 urges all Kentuckians to share the road and keep motorcycle safety in mind as they travel the Commonwealth's streets and highways.

AMA Government Relations *News & Notes* is a monthly service compiled and edited by the AMA Government Relations Staff to keep motorcyclists informed of happenings around the world. We welcome your news & views. Please submit all material to Sheila Andrews, Legislative Assistant, 101 Constitution Ave., NW Suite 800W, Washington, DC 20001; fax (202) 742-4304 or e-mail to sandrews@ama-cycle.org.