



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.

Omnibus Public Lands Bill: The U.S. House of Representatives could vote as early as next week on a wide-ranging bill that could shut off-highway motorcyclists and all-terrain vehicle riders out of more than 2 million acres of public land. 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, ATV rider and everyone who supports responsible outdoor recreation is urged to immediately contact their Congressional representative and ask them to reject this bill. The measure should be defeated because it unreasonably bans motorized recreation on 2.1 million acres of public land and inappropriately designates it as Wilderness. Also the procedure used for fast-tracking this bill through the U.S. Senate and House 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>

An interview series with the AMA's President and CEO Rob Dingman has been posted to the AMA's website. In it he discusses the challenges, and opportunities, that lie ahead for the motorcycling community. In the first of the three-part series, Dingman discusses how the AMA and the AMA's sister organization the ATVA (All-Terrain Vehicle Association) are fighting to preserve OHV (off-highway vehicle) access to America's public lands. Part two discusses the challenge of excessive sound, and part three (to be released Feb. 11) explains the AMA's comprehensive approach to rider safety, helmet laws and rider education To see the full text of the interviews, go to: www.AmericanMotorcyclist.com and select News.

Motorcycle tariff taken off table in beef trade dispute. The U.S. trade representative has decided against imposing any tariffs on certain motorcycles imported from Europe in a trade dispute over beef. The AMA, its members, the Motorcycle Industry Council (MIC), individual manufacturers, dealers, and others had contacted the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative opposing the idea of possibly imposing a 100 percent import duty on certain European goods -- including motorcycles with engine displacements between 51cc and 500cc.

The proposal was put together in retaliation to the 27-member European Union's continuing import ban on American beef treated with growth hormones. EU officials haven't lifted that 20-year-old

ban despite a World Trade Organization order to end it.

Source: <http://www.amadirectlink.com/news/story.asp?id=564>

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is soliciting funds from state departments of transportation to help fuel the Motorcycle Crash Causation Study. The Transportation Pooled Fund Program is an opportunity to augment federal initiatives by requesting additional monies from states that may have a surplus in certain budget areas. A request is made to the program when researchers find themselves unable to undertake a study because of financial restrictions.

The FHWA is requesting states to contribute a minimum of \$15,000 per year for three years with the desired level of funding at \$50,000 per year for three years. The total required commitment from states is \$1.5 million. New York and Texas have already promised a total of \$225,000, but the solicitation closes March 31, 2009.

In an effort to support this initiative, the AMA is asking individuals to request that their local and state transportation officials contribute to the pooled fund. The solicitation details and a description of the Motorcycle Crash Causation Study can be found at www.pooledfund.org, solicitation number 1221.

New York and Pennsylvania recently announced that the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) has been awarded the contract to run these state's motorcycle safety programs. The MSF programs, which deliver training to more than 100,000 students annually, are also used by the Armed Services to train military personnel worldwide. The MSF is a not-for-profit organization sponsored by BMW, BRP, Ducati, Harley-Davidson, Honda, Kawasaki, KTM, Piaggio, Suzuki, Triumph, Victory and Yamaha. For RiderCourseSM locations, call 800.446.9227 or visit www.msf-usa.org.

Stimulus Bill to include tax incentive to purchase electric motorcycles? An effort is underway to include a tax credit for purchasers of electric vehicles. To comment on the provisions and let legislators know whether or not you believe it's a good idea go to http://action.pluginamerica.org/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=516 to send a letter to your representative.

The AMA recently wrote to the New Hampshire House Transportation Committee in opposition to the proposed on-highway motorcycle exhaust system legislation, House Bill 95. A update on the legislature's website indicates that the bill is "inexpedient to legislate." Quoting from the February 6 House Record: "This bill would create an economic hardship on motorcycle riders and also on the State of New Hampshire with loss of millions on this summer event in the Lakes Region. Also, the bill prohibits adding after market equipment in one place and in another place it mandates adding the after market equipment."

The Motorcycle Industry Council (MIC) also weighed in and requested the proposal be delayed until early spring when a new stationary sound test procedure for on-highway motorcycles will be available. This test procedure, SAE J2825, is currently being finalized and will provide a quick, easy, economical, and science-based tool for accurately identifying motorcycles with excessively loud exhaust systems.

Source: http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/caljournals/calendars/2009/houcal2009_11.html

Saint Paul, MN: Trail-based recreation enthusiasts welcomed a recent court decision rejecting the Sierra Club's challenge to the 2004 Revised Superior National Forest Plan. The All Terrain Vehicle Association of Minnesota (ATVAM), along with the BlueRibbon Coalition (BRC), both recreation advocacy groups, intervened in the case on the side of the Forest Service. The lawsuit included challenges to the analysis of potential impacts to the Boundary Waters Canoe Wilderness Area, as well as the accuracy of the road and trail inventory used by the Forest Service. The decision ruled in favor of the Forest Service and concluded that the agency had not acted arbitrarily or capriciously in adopting the broad prescriptions of the Revised Forest Plan.

Source: <http://www.sharetrails.org/releases/media/?story=629>

The National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Volume 22: A Guide for Addressing Collisions Involving Motorcycles, has been published by the Transportation Research Board. This guide is part of Report 500- Guidance for Implementation of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Strategic Highway Safety Plan. AASHTO's goal is to move away from independent activities of engineers, law enforcement, educators, judges and highway safety specialists and toward a more coordinated effort. An electronic version can be found at: http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp_rpt_500v22.pdf

County sues to ensure Camp Rock Road access. San Bernardino County is suing the federal government in hopes of establishing its right-of-way on a road crossing federal land between Lucerne Valley and Daggett. The county is seeking to officially establish its ownership of Camp Rock Road, a county-maintained road that covers about 42 miles between Lucerne Valley and Daggett. In April 2003 the county filed an application with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for a "recordable disclaimer," which would establish its right-of-way on the road and give the county a legal record of its ownership. The application has never been processed, so the county is now asking for a court order that would force the BLM to proceed.

Source: http://www.desertdispatch.com/news/county_5313_article.html/road_federal.html

Americans for Responsible Recreational Access (ARRA) recently joined with 25 other recreation groups including the AMA in urging House and Senate leaders to support including \$300 million in funding for local trail projects through the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) in the economic-stimulus package being considered for action in early 2009. The additional funding would be separate from and in addition to regular funding authorized for the program.

To view the ARRA letter, go to: http://www.arra-access.com/arra/economic_stimulus_letter.html. RTP projects are ideal for economic stimulus as a distribution system for the funds is already in place. Many are ready for construction immediately. They are typically small scale (\$50,000 or less). The RTP leverages federal funds with state, local, private and in-kind matches. To send your own letter, visit http://www.arra-access.com/campaign/advocacy_rtp_stimulus

Powersports Industry is greatly troubled by the new Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) lead levels requirements for children's products. The Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA), scheduled to take effect February 10, was intended to apply to children's toys but will also apply to smaller ATV's and motorcycles unless a specific exemption for these products is granted. View the AMA letter outlining its concerns to the CPSC at <http://www.amadirectlink.com/news/story.asp?id=595>. The agency has a number of rulemaking proposals under way intended to provide guidance on the new lead limit requirements. However, the comment deadline occurs after the Act's effective date. Visit the CPSC website at www.cpsc.gov for more information.

The Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) is trying to improve its website so that residents can access information more easily. The RCO creates and maintains opportunities for recreation (motorized and non-motorized) statewide, protects the best of the state's wild lands, and contributes to the state's efforts to recover threatened salmon populations. During the 2005-2007 biennium, the office managed the award of more than \$305 million in grants for more than 1,000 projects. Go to http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=SLIz4panYgZN_2bIG9DAJygA_3d_3d to take the survey.

Trail riders are encouraged by a recent decision on the Mississippi National Forest. Motorcyclists and other off-highway-vehicle users are optimistic their voices will be more clearly heard in the on-going development of a U.S. Forest Service plan that outlines the future use of the Mississippi National Forest. In response to an administrative appeal filed by the Memphis Motorcycle Club (MMC) and the BlueRibbon Coalition (BRC) with the support of the AMA, the Forest Service has withdrawn a Travel Management Plan for the Mississippi National Forest. In a statement, the Forest Service said the move would allow the "consideration of additional analysis to be documented in the project record."

The Forest Service sought to implement the direction of the national 2005 Travel Management Rule, which requires units of the National Forest System to transition to a managed system of vehicle use on designated roads, trails and areas. The September 2008 Mississippi Forests travel plan decision designated approximately 127 miles of roads for off-highway vehicle (OHV) use, as well as approximately 144 miles of motorized trails, but refused to even consider for official designation the hundreds of miles of trails that have previously been created and traveled under prior "open" forest management but never included in the forests' formal transportation system.

Full release: <http://www.amadirectlink.com/news/story.asp?id=587>

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.