

March 21, 2010

P.O. Box 518
Kilnville Ferndale, CA 95536

Lieutenant Steve Knight
Humboldt County Sheriff's Office
826 4th Street
Eureka, CA 95501

Dear Lieutenant Knight,

Thank you for your letter of February 8 regarding your office's application for an Off-Highway Vehicle Grant and soliciting the public's support and comments. It's good to hear that efforts to provide and enhance especially law enforcement and public safety and information and education on environmental and conservation concerns are still being pursued.

At our local Centerville Beach, the four-wheelers continue to determine when and if we can enjoy the beach peacefully and safely. Riders can be divided into the responsible operators, who are not a safety or environmental problem, and the "hot shots" who are. There seem to be more of the latter. These are the ones who frequently drive too fast, come too close, drive into environmentally fragile areas, and wind up disturbing and sometimes endangering not only people but resident plants and animals and damaging the dunes and cliffs. And then there's the noise, the diesel exhaust, etc.,...all of which interfere with the safe use and enjoyment of an otherwise beautiful natural area.

Our great preference would be to have the beach in its natural state, with no motor vehicles. If this is not possible (and we realize this is not the point of your current efforts), the next best thing would be to have in effect – and enforced – regulations that would allow access to responsible drivers and impose sufficiently heavy penalties for irresponsible use to be an effective deterrent. This would involve signage and, most importantly, stepped-up enforcement – well beyond what is possible given current budget restraints. This is why the grant money is so important.

The above is the basis for our letter of April 2, 2009, when your office was in the application process for a similar grant. Since then the situation has only worsened: more four-wheelers, more environmental destruction, less opportunity for people to walk on the beach safely and enjoyably. So it has become even more critical to have the beach patrolled and regulations enforced. Even better, save this wonderful beach from the off-road vehicles.

Thank you so much for your efforts in pursuit of this grant and for your work in making and keeping our beaches beautiful and safe. It is all very much appreciated.

Sincerely,



Jesse Blacksmith
Sharon Phillips