

Ravalli County Off Road User Association

www.ravallioffroad.org

November 2016

Calendar of 2016 Upcoming events:

NOTICE: THE BOARD MEETINGS WILL BE THE 1ST MONDAY OF THE MONTH AND THE GENERAL MEETINGS WILL BE THE 2ND MONDAY OF THE MONTH, all meetings to be held at the BRR Groomer Shed, 663 Grantsdale Road Hamilton.

November 7th Board Meeting

November 14th General Meeting: Election of Officers and Potluck: please bring a main dish or side dish to share! Last Meeting of the year.

December 9th Christmas Party see flyer

Will send out a notice for 2017 1st meeting date a couple of weeks before we hold it!

RCORUA ELECTIONS!!

RCORUA By-Laws require that Association Elections occur at the first general membership meeting in November, Monday, November 14th, so we will be electing officers and board members for 2017 at that meeting. Our By-Laws also require that the Board recommend a slate of candidates for election.

The Board's recommendations for 2017 candidates are:

President Elect (will be President in 2018): Bruce Gaul

Treasurer: Members voted to amend bylaws to allow Marsha Waliser to serve another year

Secretary: OPEN

Board Members (vote for four): Kent Hascall, Juli Morgan, Dave Doll & Don Miller

Next Year's President will be Brent Nelson

Nominations for any position will be accepted from the membership at the time of our meeting on **November 14th**. Anyone wishing to nominate someone from the floor should have determined the willingness of the person being nominated to be a candidate.

For members who cannot attend the meeting on **November 14th, 7pm at the Groomer Shed**, proxy votes may be assigned to another member. Proxies must be presented in writing and signed legibly so memberships can be verified (you can print this form and circle the candidates you wish to vote for and date and sign it).

Joint Christmas Party will be held **December 9th at the Elks Lodge 203 State Street** (just south of city hall behind Neff's flooring). Norm and Betty Vercruyssen will be the hosts this year.

It will be a potluck with the clubs furnishing the main meat dishes, plates, cups, napkins and silverware. We will be using the **Elks Dining room and Bar**. **Alcohol or other beverages may not be brought into the building.** More information in inserted flyer along with membership applications.

Notes on other organizations that help keep access open to all, any or all are good to donate to as you can.

National Organizations:

The Blue Ribbon Coalition has changed its name to **Sharetrails/BlueRibbon** and is one of the great organizations that support access for all. Though small compared to the well-funded environmental and preservationist groups, they have done some amazing work over the years.

They are currently doing a Fall Fundraiser to help in the fight to keep “access for all”. If you would like to donate, purchase of an ad in [Sharetrails Magazine](#) or add a donation to their ongoing EBay auction then visit <https://sharetrails.org/contribution-options/> or mail your donation to:

- [Sharetrails.org/BlueRibbon](https://sharetrails.org/BlueRibbon) Coalition
4555 Burley Drive Suite A
Pocatello, ID 83204.
- **The National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC)**
2016 National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council, Inc.
427 Central Ave. West, Great Falls, MT 59404
Ph: 800-348-6487 • Fx: 406-454-9142
trailhead@nohvcc.org

Americans for Responsible Recreational Access (ARRA) was formed to ensure that Americans are not arbitrarily denied the right to responsibly experience and enjoy the public lands that belong to the citizens of the United States. Membership is free and the monthly newsletter is a great way to keep informed

- **Americans for Responsible Recreational Access**
2120 L Street, N.W., Suite 850
Washington, D. C. 20037
webmaster@arra-access.com

Montana Organizations:

- **Montana Trail Vehicle Riders Association (MTVRA)**
P.O. Box 2884
Great Falls, MT 59403
www.MTVRA.com
- **Citizens for Balance Use (CBU)**
P.O. Box 606
Gallatin Gateway, Mont. 59730
406-600-4CBU
www.BalancedUse.org Also, doing a fall fund raising campaign

Bitterroot Community Federal Credit Union has GREAT rates right now! 821-3171

2012 or newer on auto's with a 2.22% and 4% on recreation Vehicles.

If you are looking at that new ATV, snowmobile or truck now is a great time to buy! Costco also has a great rebate on new vehicles thru local dealerships.

2016 BUSINESS SPONSORS

ACE BODY & PAINT 1111 US HWY 93 N. Victor Nathan L. Walz	370-9849	MERCHANTS DELIVERY, Inc. 1410 North 1st Hamilton Case Quist merchantsmoving@qwestoffice.net	363-1131
AL'S CYCLE 619 HWY 93 North Hamilton Russ and Kim Englund www.alscycleyamaha.com	363-3433	MILDENBERGER MOTORS P.O. Box 1630 Hamilton Brad Mildeberger	363-4100
BITTERROOT RIDGE RUNNERS P.O. Box 265 Hamilton Dennis Wessels	381-0409	NILES ENTERPRISES 7210 West Lapwai Lane Darby Kent Niles	349-2067
CLIFF REED, Inc. 656 Willow Creek Road Corvallis Cliff Reed	961-3224	PARTS UNLIMITED 1829 HWY 93 North Victor Bob and Sydney Hazeltine partsunlimited@cybernet1.com	642-3403
DJ'S ELECTRIC P.O. Box 18 Hamilton D.J. Lengyel www.djselectric.com	961-1972 or 363-1972	RYE CREEK ENTERPRISES, Inc. DbA BITTERROOT ADVENTURES P.O. Box 877 Darby Brent Nelson www.bitterrotadventures.com	821-4844
DONALDSON BROTHER'S READY MIX, Inc. 477 HWY 93 North Hamilton Charles Donaldson	363-3600	SNOW MOUNTAIN ELECTRIC, Inc. 3039 Redjou Lane Stevensville Steve, Kathy & Kerry Roebke	777-0912
FIVE VALLEY HONDA & YAMAHA 5900 HWY 93 South Missoula Lloyd Eckley Www.fivevalleyhondayamaha.com	251-5900	THE EDGE RESTAURANT & SPORTS BAR / HAMILTON WINE & LIQUOR / QUICKSILVER CASINO 140 Bitterroot Plaza Drive Tom & Tamara Fair	375-0007
HAMILTON POLARIS/KTM 1151 North 1st Suite A Hamilton Mike VanDam-Gen Mgr.	375-9903	THOMPSON DISTRIBUTING 320 South 1st Street Hamilton Brad Thompson	363-3620
HARPERS BITTERROOT VALLEY LES SCHWAB TIRES 4026 HWY 93 North Stevensville Tracy Harper	777-4667	VALLEY BICYCLES AND SKI, Inc. 219 South 1st Street Hamilton Randy & Kerri Leavell	363-4428
JC AND ASSOCIATES 153 West Hills Way Hamilton Carl and Kathy Lieberth	363-7487	VERCRUYSSSEN EXCAVATING, Inc. 300 6th Ave. Victor Norm and Betty Vercruyssen	642-3506
JERRY WESSELS TIRE CENTER P.O. Box 518 Hamilton Dennis Wessels	363-3884		
JONES KORMAN INSURANCE 518 South 1st Hamilton Bryan Jones	363-6583		
LONE PINE / RIVERSIDE CONOCO 504 hwy 93 South / 1987 North 1st Hamilton Steve and Brian Hawkes	375-0536 / 375-0554		
MAVERICK MOTORSPORTS OF MISSOULA 4950 North Reserve Missoula Guy & Terri Sharp & Brent Gyuricza mavmotorsports.com	549-4260		

A big THANK YOU goes to all the sponsors, your continued support and involvement helps the association in its effort to keep the trails open.

Please support our Business Sponsors!

Business Sponsorship runs from Date Paid on a yearly basis!

Many of us who have been involved with the development of the Bitterroot National Forest (BNF) Travel Plan for the past ten years have constantly been amazed at the apparent arbitrariness of choices made by the Agency. In a great many cases, some of these choices appear to be made in response to the screeching of some minority group or other without any consideration of the impacts of those decisions on other forest visitors. Of even more concern is the fact that the Agency rarely presented or discussed factual data or information in their decision making process. Some of these choices made during the development of the BNF Travel Planning process seem to be a classic case of greasing the squeakiest wheels.



Archery hunting is a great sport. Most archery shots are made from less than 50 feet.

To make my case, I will consider one instance of the BNF's choice to create a new seasonal closure as part of the Travel Plan. All of us are aware that many roads and trails in the BNF are closed on October 15 for hunting season. The rationale for these closures is to provide security for elk during rifle season by creating large sanctuary areas where the elk and deer can hide during the season. The need for and effectiveness of these sanctuary areas can be debated, but that's another topic for another time. The BNF Travel Plan creates another season that closes many roads and trails beginning August 31: One and one-half months earlier than the traditional October 15 closure date. The rationale for this new seasonal closure is variously described in the Travel Plan documentation as necessary to "reduce conflicts between motorized and nonmotorized bow hunters" or "reduce conflicts between motorized visitors and bow hunters" or "reduce conflicts between rifle hunters and bow hunters". Altogether, the Travel Plan will apply this new seasonal closure to 41 roads and trails totaling 105 miles – a reduction in public access of 158 mile-months.

I want to be clear that my choice of the early seasonal closure example is not a criticism of the sport of bow hunting. Bow hunting is a marvelous sport that requires exceptional skills and knowledge of the behavior of wildlife. I have chosen this particular example of BNF's arbitrary decision making because quantitative data is publically available on this issue to anyone who is interested in obtaining it.

The accompanying Table presents data for selected recreational groups for Montana residents who do their thing in Ravalli County. Since the non-wilderness portions of the BNF are very nearly coincident with the

County's boundaries, these data also apply to the BNF. The data in this Table for snowmobile and OHV use were taken from reports issued by the University of Montana Bureau of Business and Economics

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY	#PARTICIPANTS /YEAR	ACTIVITY DAYS/YEAR	SPENDING /DAY	SPENDING/ YEAR
Resident Snowmobiling	3,103	12	\$108	\$4,021,456
Resident OHV	10,343	65	\$37	\$24,875,516
Resident Elk Bow Hunting	1,236	7.8	\$87	\$838,750
Resident Deer Bow Hunting	1,236	6.75	\$72	\$600,696
Totals	15,918			\$30,336,417

PARTICIPATION AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS FOR SELECTED GROUPS IN RAVALLI COUNTY

Continued on page 5

Research (BBER) for the year 2013. The data concerning bow hunting was developed from Montana FWP's hunter survey data available from FWP's website. Montana non-resident contributions are not included because nonresident data is not available by County from the BBER reports. Spending in this table only includes trip-related expenses (fuel, food, lodging, etc.) and does not include the purchases of durable goods (machines, rifles, clothing, etc.). Restrictions on the data presented were made to ensure an "apples-to-apples" comparison of activities. Other recreational activities that utilize roads and trails in the BNF are not included in this table because economic data for these activities are not available. However, these other activities are significant. From the 2012 BNF NVUM report, it is estimated that about 32,000 annual visits per year are to "drive for pleasure"; 4,800 bicycle on roads and trails; and 16,800 travel in the BNF to "view natural features".

There is no reliable current data indicating what proportion of bow hunters use OHVs in pursuit of their game. The only data available is from a 2006 FWP survey that concluded that about 25% of all hunters employed an OHV during hunting season. Since the popularity of OHVs in general has dramatically increased since 2006, the proportion of hunters who utilize OHVs in one way or another is probably much higher than 25%, but there is no quantitative modern data to support that speculation. Using the 2006 data, it would be fair to say that **at least** 25% of the estimated 2,472 bow hunters (618 motorized bow hunters) use an OHV during the course of their activities and the remainder, some 1,854 bow hunters, could be considered to be "nonmotorized".



There are many good ways to navigate the Forest during bow season.

So here we have it: The BNF Travel Plan will close 105 miles of roads and trails for an additional one and one-half months to more than 64,000 Forest visitors in order to placate the squealing of, at the very most, 1,854 nonmotorized bow hunters. They propose to do so on the basis of "public comment" without consideration or discussion of readily available factual data and information. Talk about arbitrary and capricious decisions!

In the BNF Travel Plan documentation, the BNF alleges, without any documentation whatsoever, that rifle hunters complain that bow hunters chase the elk into sanctuary areas prior to rifle season thus making elk inaccessible to rifle hunters. The BNF places the entire responsibility of this "chasing" hypothesis on motorized bow hunters, and proposes to close 105 miles of roads and trails early to accommodate alleged rifle hunter complaints. This is an entirely implausible proposition: Does the BNF really claim that a tiny group of 600-or-

so motorized bow hunters, spread out over 800,000 acres of National Forest land, are going to "chase" very many elk anywhere?

The above analysis was accomplished by an ordinary citizen. The data used in this analysis is easily available to anyone, including the BNF. But the BNF has chosen to ignore the factual data and information and base their decisions on "public comments" from a few small minority groups. Commonly, these "public comments" come from groups outside Ravalli County who derive their funding from out-of-state environmental foundations. It is sad – and alarming – to realize that Forest Service officials are so eager to please environmental extremists and so reluctant to fact check their claims with data that is readily available.

www.ravallioffroad.org



Our mission is to bring together on and off highway enthusiasts to enjoy, promote and protect responsible Off Highway Vehicle Use and other recreational activities.

Have you joined the RCORUA Facebook site yet! Many of our members post pictures of rides on it and also use it for listing when they are going on rides. This is a Private site, you have to be a member of the club to view or post. Send a "Friend" Request to Cuthbert J. Twillie aka Pete Elmer (with a red ATV as FB profile photo), Pete will confirm you are a member in good standing (dues paid) and then add you.

Our web site at www.ravallioffroad.org has photos, a calendar of events, ride info, the newsletters and much more. You can email your photos, ride information or other items to: kathy.transue@gmail.com Log on often to see what is happening!

Pennsylvania has a new riding area that encompasses more than 7,000 acres! Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area has hundreds of miles of trails for OHV recreation. Their Website is www.aoatrails.com. Some states see the value of OHV recreation!