

# Ravalli County Off Road User Association

[www.ravallioffroad.org](http://www.ravallioffroad.org)

**October 2014**

## **Calendar of 2014 Upcoming events:**

The rides listed on the Calendar are hosted by a club member and are not "club sponsored" rides unless they are stated as such.

**October 1st Board Meeting 6 PM at the Groomer Shed**

**October 14th General Meeting at the Groomer Shed. A desert social will be held after the meeting.**

**October ? Travel Plan to be released?**

**November 5th Board Meeting 6 PM at the Groomer Shed**

**November 11th General Meeting 7 PM at the Groomer Shed: Elections of Officers for the 2015 year. Potluck before the meeting at 6 PM, Guest Speakers will be the Bitterroot National Forest Supervisor Julie King, along with Deb Gale and Monte Monroe.**

**December 13th Christmas Party: Ravalli County Fair Grounds Art Building 6 PM. Joint with the Bitterroot Ridge Runners, more in the next newsletter.**

Elections of Officers is November 11, 2014 Please plan on attending.

The Association will elect new Officers and Board members for 2015. As our current President-Elect, Juli Morgan will serve as President for 2015. RCORUA By Laws require the current Board of Directors to recommend a slate of candidates for 2015. Nominations for Officers and Board members will also be taken from the floor at the November 11 meeting.

To vote or hold an office you need to be a paid member..At the present time, the Board of Directors offers the following candidates for consideration by the membership:

**President Elect** Lisa Jessop

**SECRETARY** : Kathy Transue

**TREASURER** : **No candidates at this time.**

**BOARD MEMBER (vote for four):**

**Brent Nelson**

**Don Miller ?**

**Dave Doll**

**Mike Jeffords**

**Marsha Waliser**

Any member who would like to investigate the possibility of being included as a candidate for any office should contact Dan Thompson at 531-3103 or John Transue 369-2909



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A great value as it reaches hundreds of individuals each month. Your business is listed each month in the newsletter and on the web and once a year your business card (if provided with your sponsorship dues) is included in the newsletter! Please send a card to the club or email Marsha with a scanned card or colored layout at: [mwaliser2292@gmail.com](mailto:mwaliser2292@gmail.com) . Or if you want your web address listed in the newsletter and on our web site you can email Marsha or Kathy T. [kathy.transue@gmail.com](mailto:kathy.transue@gmail.com)

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

**Christmas Party December 13th Mark your calendar!**

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**Business Sponsorship runs from  
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**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.**

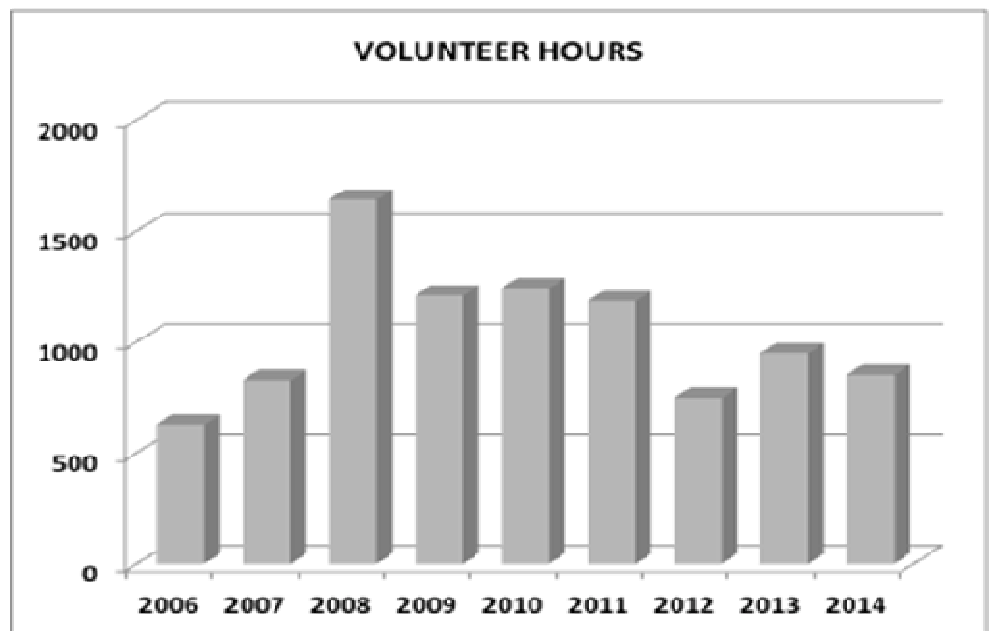
# VOLUNTEER REPORT

Every year, based upon the Forest Service's fiscal year that ends September 31, RCORUA provides a report of our volunteer activities for that fiscal year. During this last fiscal year (2013-2014), 42 individuals reported a total of 852 hours of volunteer time and \$3,906 in incidental expenses. RCORUA tabulates our volunteer hours by category, and the totals by category are shown in the table.

DESCRIPTION	HOURS
Forest Clean-Up; trash removal	162
Road & Trail Maintenance	507
Educational Activities	133
Forest Service Meetings	30
Darby Lumber Project	20
<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>	<b>852</b>

Association members were certainly busy with their chain saws and shovels this year, reporting an unprecedented 507 hours clearing roads and trails and cleaning water bars. Keeping forest roads and trails accessible and functional not only benefits RCORUA members, it serves hikers, stock users, and mountain bikers as well.

Our educational program remained strong again this year, with about 400 elementary school children taking part in our in-school program. Thanks to Mike and Kathy Jeffords, Jim and Marsha Waliser, and OHV Ranger Monte Monroe for their continuing contributions to this program.





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**A Little Ole and Lena humor**

A police officer pulls Ole over for speeding and has the following exchange:

Officer: May I see your driver's license?

Ole: I don't have one. I had it suspended when I got my 5th DUI.

Officer: May I see the owner's card for this vehicle?

Ole: It's not my car. I stole it.

Officer: The car is stolen?

Ole: Dat's right. But come to tink of it, I think I saw da owner's card in da glove box when I vas putting my gun in there.

Officer: There's a gun in the glove box?

Ole: Jes sir. Dat's where I put it after I shot and killed da voman who owns dis car and stuffed her in da trunk.

Officer: There's a BODY in the TRUNK?!?!?

Ole: Jes, sir.

Hearing this, the officer immediately called his captain, The car was quickly surrounded by police, and the captain approached the driver to handle the tense situation.

Captain: Sir, can I see your license?

Ole: Sure. Here it is.—It was valid.

Captain: Who's car is this?

Ole: It's mine, officer. Here's da owner' card.

Captain: Could you slowly open your glove box so I can see if there's a gun in it?

Ole: Jes, sir, but dere's no gun in it. Sure enough, there was nothing in the glove box.

Captain: Would you mind opening your trunk? I was told you said there's a body in it.

Ole: No problem. Trunk is opened; no body.

Captain: I don't understand it. The officer who stopped you said you told him you didn't have a license, stole the car, had a gun in the glove box, and that there was a dead body in the trunk.

Ole: Yeah, I'll bet da liar told you I was speeding, too.



## DARBY LUMBER PROJECT STATUS

by Dan Thompson

In 2004, the Bitterroot National Forest acquired eleven sections (11 square miles) of land from the Darby Lumber Company. These sections were part of a “checkerboard” land grant originally awarded to the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1905. These lands have been extensively clear cut and roaded for timber extraction, most recently by the Darby Lumber Company. During the fires of 2000, many of these sections were affected by intense wildfires. In 2007, the Bitterroot National Forest began to think about developing a management plan for these sections. In 2008, RCORUA proposed to evaluate and characterize the road systems on these sections with the intent to determine which roads might be suitable for conversion to OHV loop routes. RCORUA worked collaboratively with the Forest Service to develop a plan and methodology to identify issues of interest to the Forest Service as well as identify potential OHV routes that would be attractive to off-road enthusiasts. The Forest Service also provided training to RCORUA volunteers to assist in the proper identification of road issues.

During the summers of 2009, 2010 and 2011 RCORUA volunteers rode or hiked 91 Darby Lumber roads totaling 73 miles, and provided 417 observations of existing road conditions. All of our observations, GPS tracks, and recommendations were provided in digital form to the Forest Service. Altogether, RCORUA volunteers reported investing nearly 790 hours of volunteer effort. As a result of this effort, RCORUA recommended the designation of five OHV routes ranging in length from 15 to 55 miles.

In December of 2013 the Bitterroot National Forest released their proposed action for the Darby Lumber project. This proposed action broke the area into two phases, and the proposed action only dealt with Phase I. The area involved in Phase I included three of our recommended OHV routes and a small portion of a fourth route. The proposed action incorporated one of RCORUA’s recommended routes. This is a loop route about 25 miles long (44 miles from the Sleeping Child parking area) and will be – if it survives the inevitable challenges from neo-environmentalists – a valuable and attractive additional OHV route. Unfortunately, a second recommended OHV route that we call the Crystal Mountain route is not included in the proposed action. This route, in our view, is a “no brainer” since it utilizes a system of existing roads and ATV trails and would only require a connector trail of 500 feet to complete.

On January 21, 2014, RCORUA submitted comments to the Bitterroot National Forest on the proposed Darby Lumber Project. These comments are quite extensive. In these comments, we strenuously urged the Bitterroot National Forest to include the Crystal Mountain route into the project. Subsequent meetings with Darby District Ranger Chuck Oliver and Team Leader Ed Snook were held where RCORUA Board members stressed the importance of including the Crystal Mountain route in the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Darby Lumber Project even *if it means delaying the issuance of the EA*.

During the course of our conversations with Forest Service personnel, it has become clear that one of the reasons the Crystal Mountain route was not incorporated into the proposed action is the lack of technical specialists available to do the necessary evaluations of the route. For example, there is only one trail specialist on the entire 1.6 million acre Bitterroot National Forest, responsible for looking after over 1,400 miles of trails. Similar shortages of biologists, soil scientists, engineers, and foresters are the result of shrinking revenues, shrinking budgets, and realignments of personnel. This is a problem that persists throughout the Agency and is not unique to the Bitterroot National Forest.

It is also likely that forest managers are already receiving objections from neo-environmental groups (specifically the FOB) about designating any OHV routes in the subject area. These groups are no doubt already rattling their legal swords and making vague reference to possible appeals or litigation. In spite of their professed support of converting existing roads to OHV trails, these extremists will always find some excuse to object to any specific proposal to do so.

We do not know when the Darby Lumber EA will be published, or whether or not it will include our proposed Crystal Mountain route. We have emphatically recommended that the EA be delayed until specialists can evaluate the route. If the Crystal Mountain route is not included in the EA, RCORUA will be asking some hard questions from the Agency. Why not? How do you know it’s an unsuitable route? Where are the specialists’ reports?

# Membership Application / Renewal

# 2014

Mail to Ravalli County Off-Road User Association, P.O. Box 72, Hamilton, MT 59840

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Individual & Family Membership runs from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> yearly. Business Sponsors runs from date paid.

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Number of Off-Road Users in the family: \_\_\_\_\_ Referred by: \_\_\_\_\_

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**PLEASE fill out the above form when renewing or for a new membership. Check or fill out all the lines that apply. We are encouraging members that have email addresses to sign up for the emailed version of the newsletter (in color) to cut our expenses. **PLEASE LET US KNOW HOW YOU WANT THE NEWSLETTER SENT TO YOU AND IF YOU WANT ANY EMAIL'S!****

Your privacy is important to us, your information is only used for club purposes and is not shared with any outside entity. Notify us if you do not want your name or picture published in the newsletter or on the website!



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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.

As we come to the end of another motorized season, and prepare for hunting season, I want to reflect on the tragic deaths that have happen this year. There have been five deaths involving people from the Bitterroot Valley riding ATV's, over a dozen deaths in the state involving ATV's as well. We lost people who where as young as ten and up to sixty three or older. All these deaths had one thing in common and that was rider error. Going too fast, not paying attention to the trail, machine too big, or not knowing how to ride properly, or even not wearing the proper gear, such as helmets or boots. Some of those that died this year never were on a ATV before, some may have never taken an ATV safety class. All those things add up to disaster, a disaster that can be minimized by doing just a few things to help protect yourself. Taking an ATV safety class, riding at a proper speed, riding with others, even riding the right size machine can help. I know that wearing a helmet isn't "cool" but then neither is having brain damage "cool". I'm not trying to scare anyone or make anyone stop riding, I'm just want everyone to take the proper precautions when you go out to ride. Take an ASI safety class, wear your safety gear: helmet long sleeve shirt, long pants, over the ankle boots, and most importantly use your common sense. Will doing all this stop all these deaths? No, but it will help prevent most of them. It's up to all of us to ride safe and to help others to be safe as well. Don't become the next victim. Thanks, and I'll see ya on the trail.

Mike Jeffords