

OHMVR Grants Program February 14, 2008

To: Interested Parties

Subject: Public Participation and Request for Written Input—OHMVR Grant Program Regulations

Dear Interested Individuals and Parties,

Over the past three years, the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division (Division) has made significant changes to the Local Assistance Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program. This program provides funding to cities, counties, and districts, state and federal agencies, Native American tribes, and education and nonprofit organizations to provide for Operations and Maintenance, Restoration, Law Enforcement, Education and Safety projects related to off-highway vehicle (OHV) use in California. As an individual or group who may have an interest in OHV recreation in California, we are contacting you to solicit your input to possible changes to the grants process and to inquire if you may have an interest in participating in a focus group.

In October, 2007, Senate Bill 742 was signed into law. This law made some important changes governing the off-highway motor vehicle recreation program in general, and the Local Assistance Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program (Grants Program) in particular. These changes require amendments to the regulations that govern the Grants Program. The Division welcomes public participation in the process. In fact, SB 742 highlights public input, including focus groups, as an integral part of developing the regulations that govern the grant program.

In an effort to improve the existing regulations and examine changes that may need to be made, the Division is providing a variety of forums by which to gather public input. These include a survey for the last grant application cycle, focus groups, general meetings, an Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Commission meeting, and the Office of Administrative Law public input period.

As we move forward with gathering public input and making any needed changes to the Grants Program, the Division envisions a process that allows for significant public input during development of the regulations in 2008. The grant application process will then begin in January 2009. The timelines and goals may need to be adjusted as the process proceeds and the Division receives public comments, but we will strive to adhere to the following schedule:

1. By February 15, 2008: The Division will have obtained written input from the 2007/2008 grant application cycle survey to evaluate the effectiveness of this cycle.
2. March 2008: The Division will review the written comments and make initial conceptual revisions to the organization, structure, and language of the current regulations and begin the focus group workshops.
3. April 2008: The Division will assimilate comments from the individual focus group workshops, make further revisions to the regulations, and prepare draft final language. One or more combined group workshops will be held during which representatives from the various focus groups will be invited to discuss and make comments on the final draft of the amendments to the regulations.

4. June 2008: Following the combined group workshop(s), the Division will finalize draft regulations for sharing with the general public at the OHMVR Commission meeting at the end of June to receive suggestions, comments, and recommendations from the Commission and the public.

5. July 2008: Following the Commission meeting in June, the regulations will be put in final form and noticed for a 45-day public comment period in accordance with the California Administrative Procedure Act. If substantial revisions are required as a result of the 45-day public comment period, there will be an additional 15-day public comment period before submitting the regulations to OAL for approval. However, the Division hopes the various opportunities available for public input prior to the final submission to OAL will result in a final grant package that is supported by the general public.

6. October 2008: The Division will submit the final regulations to the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) for its review (maximum 30 working days) and approval.

7. November 2008: The Division will adopt final regulations. This will enable the grant application process to begin not later than January 2009.

Thank you in advance for your interest in the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division Local Assistance Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program.

Sincerely,
ALLEN CHANCEY, Manager
Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program