



Nevada Farm Bureau Federation

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Nevada Farm Bureau Testimony
To Nevada Legislative Committee on Public Lands
Friday, April 4, 2008
Winnemucca, NV

Thank you Mr. Chairman, for the record my name is Doug Busselman. I'm the Executive Vice President of the Nevada Farm Bureau. We greatly appreciate the invitation we received to be involved in this on-going discussion regarding possible development of OHV Legislation and we also appreciate this chance to appear before your committee.

Over the past several Nevada Legislative sessions, Nevada Farm Bureau has monitored and participated in legislative discussions on OHV registration and titling.

Early in this evolutionary process, we were primarily interested in the legislative discussions from the perspective as farmers and ranchers who use OHV equipment in our agricultural businesses. Four-wheelers and other equipment have become integral parts of most farms and ranches. This equipment is used as farm equipment and plays an important role in fencing, irrigation, and livestock management activities.

EXHIBIT N - LANDS
Document consists of 4 pages.
Entire Exhibit Provided
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When employed in these types of farming and ranching actions, we believe that this equipment should be qualified as farm equipment and be given the same type of tax and registration treatment as farm equipment.

If the equipment is being used in recreational activities, the equipment should be given equal treatment as other OHV users.

Since the early discussions of legislation for OHV registration and titling, there has been a transformation into other areas, primarily the focus on mechanisms to better manage the use of these vehicles and reduce negative impacts on Nevada landscapes and other natural resources.

Farm Bureau members too have expressed their concerns over inappropriate use of OHV equipment, traveling across public lands and occasionally across private property, without regard to existing trails or the resource damages associated with such use.

Members have also expressed concerns over increased wildfire risk, during extreme dry periods, and OHV travel on rangelands. Because of the high level of attention to spread of noxious and invasive weeds, responsible use of OHV equipment is extremely critical...before entering lands, during the process of use...and following use to make certain that plant seeds picked up in one area do not get spread and planted in another.

Our organization's policy development discussions continue to take place on this issue and our Board of Directors will be evaluating the decision to participate in the multi-interests efforts of the Nevada Responsible Trails Alliance.

We are aware of the concepts that the Nevada Responsible Trails Alliance are advocating and in general terms find those objectives as a sound framework for building reasonable solutions.

Several of our county Farm Bureau organizations, in portions of the state, are already in support of the concepts that this coalition of individuals and groups is working to accomplish.

On a statewide basis, and as official policy of the Nevada Farm Bureau we are not specifically given the direction which would take us into full agreement, but we are deeply interested in a balanced approach, which recognizes and takes into account the legitimate business use of OHV equipment, on federally managed lands for activities such as farming and ranching, as well as other types of essential use of this equipment for management of resources and access to remote areas by utilities and other kinds of commerce-oriented activities.

Nevada Farm Bureau is also very committed to the multiple use of federally-managed lands and in no way wish to have our comments regarding responsible OHV use to be construed as be in support of limited access and use of federal lands.

Before the next Nevada Legislative Session we hope to discuss and deliberate our organizational policy positions, determining how best we can be effective in working to address resource concerns and resource risks from inappropriate use of OHV equipment.

We will keep our members informed and aware of the developments taking shape in your committee as well as the progress being made in an overall context of this issue. Through this increased awareness and attention, those Farm Bureau members who get involved in determining our policy will have the chance to have their say and we will be following whatever direction they provide.
