Challenges to Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Management in Arizona

History of OHV Program

The OHV decal program was established in 2009 and created what is recognized as the Department's current "OHV Program"

- Prior to 2009, OHV's were relatively rare, and mostly utilized by hunters. The Department's OHV enforcement was directed almost entirely towards cross-country travel and habitat damage

- The decal program was initiated by the OHV community in 2009 to provide funding for creating OHV trails, OHV enforcement, and mitigation of damage from OHV's

- Requires the Department to maintain 7 full-time officers dedicated to OHV enforcement

- Enforcement focus expanded to include safety laws (helmets etc.), equipment, decal and registration
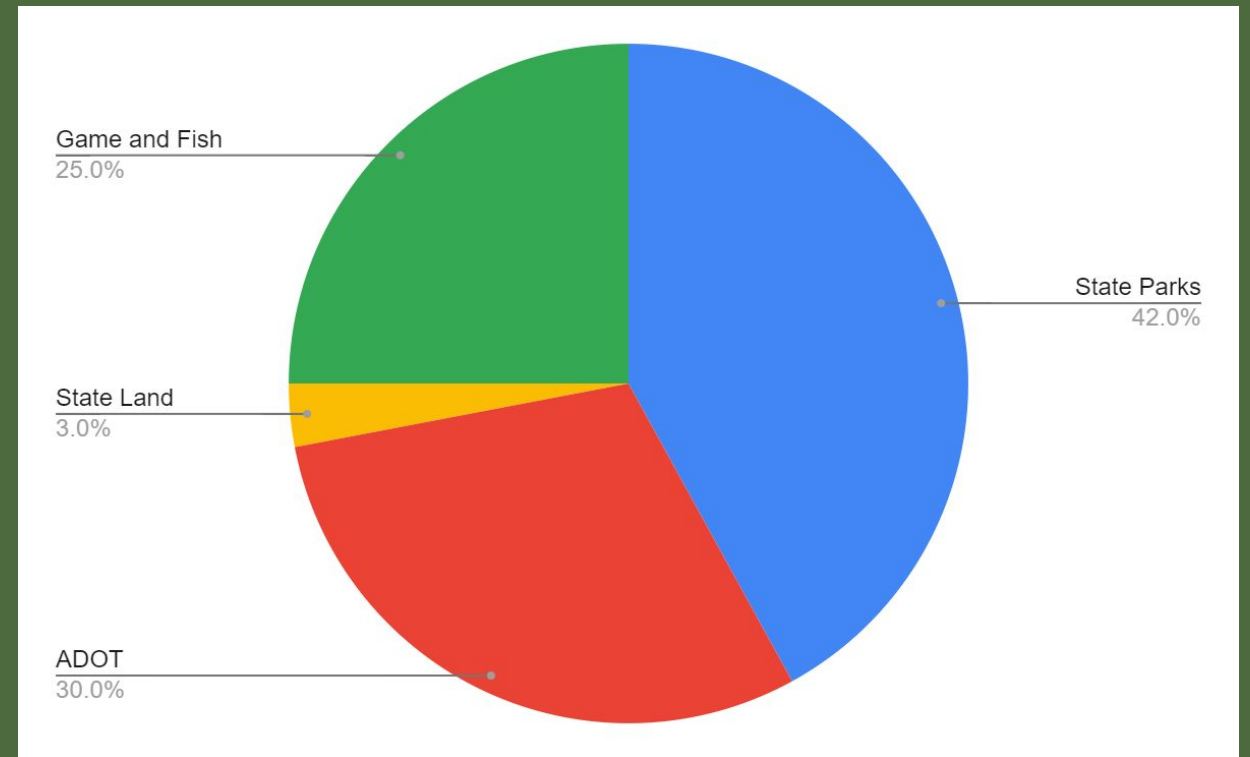
- Non-resident decal established in 2019

OHV Decal Revenue Distribution

An OHV decal costs $25

Approximate amount each agency receives per decal:

- Game and Fish $6.12
- State Parks $10.50
- State Land $0.88
- ADOT $7.50

ARIZONA STATE PARKS & TRAILS

- Receives 42% of funding from OHV decal
- Provides grants up to $30K/year for OHV law enforcement per agency
- Provides grants for OHV trail development and damage mitigation
- Provides grants for OHV information and education

ADOT - Motor Vehicle Division

- Receives 30% of OHV decal revenue plus administrative costs (deposited into HURF) and distributes the remaining 70% into the OHVRF to be split between the remaining three agencies
- Provides license plates, titles and resident OHV decals
- Maintains motor vehicle record database

Arizona State Land Department

- Receives 3% of OHV decal revenue

- Allows for OHVs (with the OHV decal) to cross state trust lands

- Provides funding for OHV damage mitigation, historical and cultural clearance compliance, and funding enforcement of OHV laws on state trust lands

Arizona Game and Fish Department

- Receives 25% of OHV decal revenue

- Funding divided between OHV law enforcement and OHV education

- Funds seven officers dedicated to OHV enforcement statewide

- Funds OHV education program (teaching safe riding)

- Funds Information outreach

Primary OHV Management Issues

Public Safety

- Speed (newer machines capable of high speeds)
- Helmets
- Riding double, accidents

Education - New users have a lack of knowledge of laws/rules in the outdoors

Cross Country Travel and Wildlife/Range Habitat Damage

- Road proliferation and widening
- Damage to wet, fragile soils
- Damage to livestock tanks, meadow habitats

Riding Ethics - Many OHV users are not conscientious of others, nature etc…

Primary OHV Management Issues

Damage/Interference With Livestock Operations

- Frequent disturbances at waters
- Cutting fences
- Damage to roads
- Leaving gates open

Volume - The sheer number of OHV's on the landscape

Dust - High speeds create a lot of dust, exacerbated by drought

- PM 10 issues in Maricopa and Pinal Counties
- Dust around houses/camps

Noise - Machines designed for performance/racing feel and sound, loud exhaust etc.

- Most have CVT transmissions which make machines operate at high RPM's regardless of speed which increases noise level

Primary OHV Management Issues

Numerous Rental Companies

- Providing machines capable of competition level off-road racing to people who have never sat in one before
- Renters from states and countries that don't have public land or conservation mindsets/understanding
- law enforcement has minimal impact at changing culture due to nonresident nature of users

Human Nature - People seem to be wired to drive fast and spin donuts in these machines

Advertisements from Manufacturers - what they portray as proper use

GO ALL-OUT ON OFF-ROAD

Say goodbye to your limits with machines that make all-out possible, no matter what limits you want to push. Engineered to last, the 2022 Performance lineup is ready to get after it on the terrain you used to dream about. Don't hold back, get behind the wheel today.

CAN-AM WORLD

> Discover Maverick X3

Primary OHV Management Issues

Difficulty Getting Good Data

- Accidents
- Road Proliferation
- Total Number of Resident Decals Sold (declining revenue doesn't match amount of use)
- Injury Data

Primary OHV Management Issues

Limited Funding - (Not Tied to General Fund)

	Total OHV Decal Revenue		Total Fuel Tax Revenue		Comb. 2020	Comb. 2021
	2020 Total	2021 Total	2020 Total	2021 Total		
ADOT	$1,009,664	$858,418	------------	------------	$1,009,664	$858,418
ASPT	$1,413,529	$1,201,785	$1,658,408	$1,074,658	$3,098,937	$2,276,443
AGFD	$824,558	$701,041	$983,115	$626,884	$1,807,673	$1,327,925
ASLD	$117,794	$100,148	$140,450	$89,554	$258,244	$189,702

Evolution of OHV's

1970's

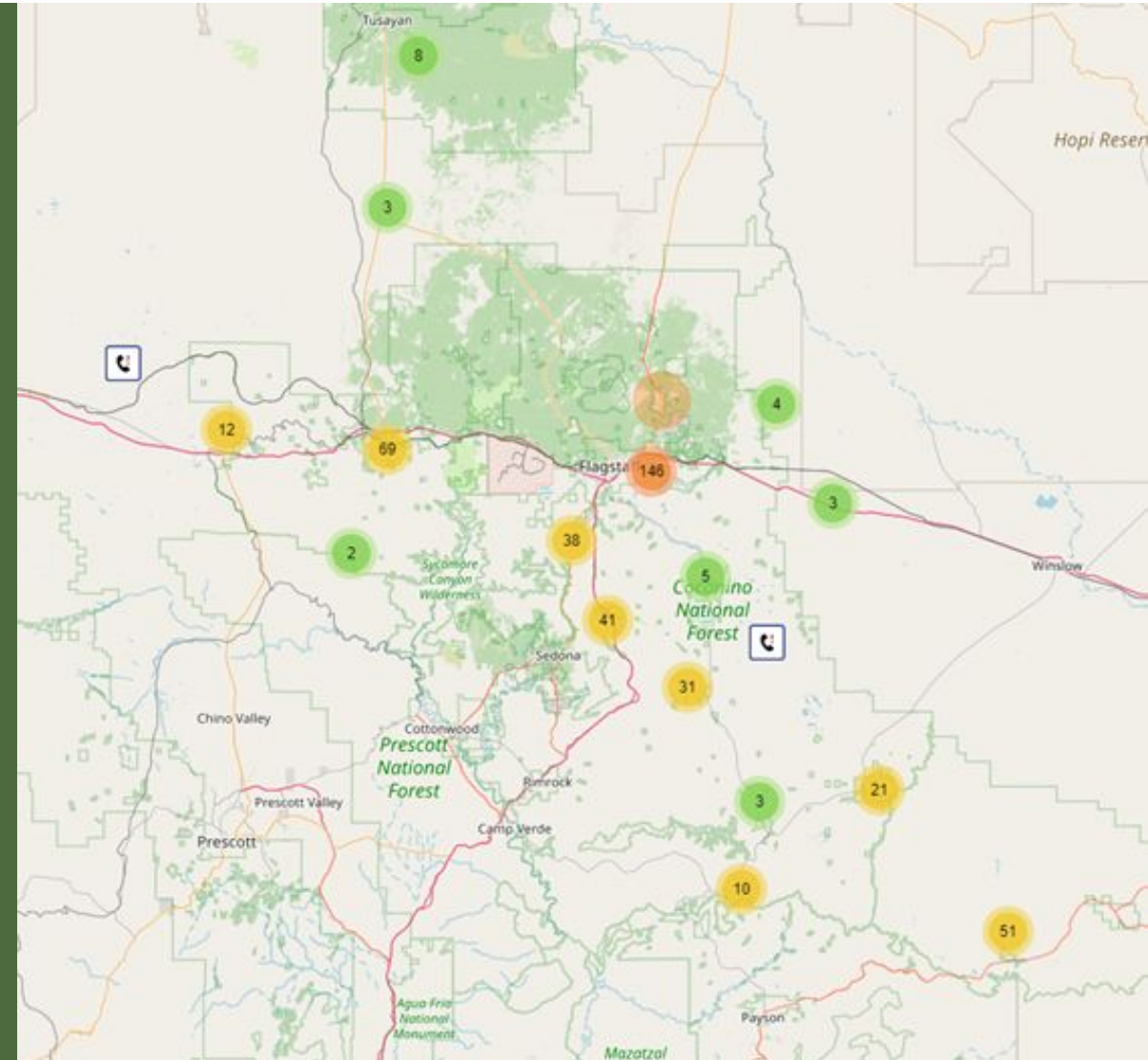89 cc Honda

2022

2000 cc

ARIZONA GAME & FISH

Coconino County Sheriff's Office (A Case Study) OHV Calls for Service

Coconino County, January 1 - September 12, 2020
OHV related calls for service based on keyword search

Call Type	Number
Accident / Collision	97
Disturbing the Peace	92
Medical	18
AOA, ATL, Field Interview, Traffic	121
SAR, Missing/Overdue person, Public/Motorist Assist	53
Trespass, Suspicious Activity	29
All Other	77
Total	487

OHV Safety

OHV Safety

Blue Ridge
(fatality 2020)

OHV Safety

Blue Ridge
(fatality 2018)

DANGEROUS AND DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnmWcFBp_II

This used to be the intersection of 2, two-track roads that livestock operators use to maintain range improvements.

Wildlife Habitat/Range Damage

"OHV track" created by unlawful cross-country travel and subsequently used on a regular basis.

"OHV track" in desert habitat.

Wildlife Habitat/Range Damage

By the end of one weekend, several acres significantly damaged with little vegetation and compaction of soils near campsites.

Wildlife Habitat/Range Damage

Cross country travel and habitat damage commonly encountered near camps (primarily by juveniles)

Wildlife Habitat/Range Damage

Compacted soils and subsequent loss of vegetation and erosion.

Wildlife Habitat/Range Damage

- Propensity for people to drive OHV's through wildlife/livestock waters
- Can break through the seal on the bottom
- Lack of land ethic

Wildlife Habitat/Range Damage

OHV jumping berms designed to provide habitat for migrating waterfowl

Wildlife Habitat/Range Damage

Damage to meadow habitat after summer monsoon rains

This OHV "track" was created in one weekend in January 2014 by unlawful cross-country travel. As of January 2015 two more loops were added.

Described as a "Glamis Camp" or "Cluster Camp", found most weekends from May - September. Note wildlife habitat loss and unlawful cross-country travel affiliated within short distance of the camp.

Wildlife Habitat/Range Damage

Another livestock/wildlife water damaged by unlawful OHV use

Wildlife Habitat/Range Damage

January 2017, two days after rain. Suspects caught cutting new OHV "track". Suspects stated they thought area was an "open riding area".

January 2017, suspects caught building OHV "track" with picks and shovels.

Suspects stated they heard about the "tracks" in this area online. Also stated "dirt was prime for riding" referring to it being wet.

What Can We Do?

Education

- Safe, ethical, responsible operation

Enforcement

- Multi-agency task forces
- Area Patrols
- Successful prosecution, holding adults responsible for juveniles

Engineering/Management

- Log worm fencing, barriers
- Increase OHV only trails, loop trails
- Designated OHV areas, revisit federal travel management plans
- Collecting Data

What Are We Doing?

Education - Working closely with ASPT and AOT

- Creating an educational video for OHV rental companies highlighting important OHV laws and riding ethics
- Created new informational handouts that are being distributed to OHV dealers, rental companies, MVD offices etc
- Looking at alternative ways to reach user groups like YouTube commercials, potential prime time television commercials etc.
- Working with Arizona Office of Tourism - added OHV's into their "Appreciate AZ" campaign

Enforcement

- Creating OHV Enforcement School for other L.E. agencies
- Targeted saturation patrols around the state
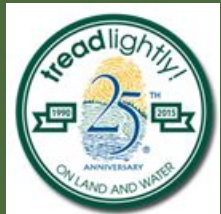- Enforcement by individual officers while on patrol

How to Get More Information

https://www.azgfd.com/ohv/

https://azstateparks.com/ohv

https://treadlightly.org/

Questions