

ITEM: 19

SUBJECT: Update on El Dorado County's activities to comply with the Cleanup and Abatement Order for the Rubicon Trail, El Dorado County.

BOARD ACTION: None. Information item only.

BACKGROUND: The Rubicon Trail is an internationally known, historic off-highway vehicle (OHV) route that crosses the Sierra Nevada Mountains from Loon Lake in El Dorado County to Homewood on the west side of Lake Tahoe. The Rubicon Trail ranges in condition from a well-defined dirt road to granite domes and ledges that create moderate to difficult passage for street-legal vehicles and OHVs.

Most of the Rubicon Trail crosses El Dorado National Forest land, with a few shorter segments of the trail crossing private land. El Dorado County manages the Rubicon Trail right-of-way mostly as a non-maintained county road. Many trail users park their vehicles and camp on land managed by the Forest Service or on privately owned land.

In March 2009, the Central Valley Water Board adopted a Cleanup and Abatement Order (CAO) for El Dorado County (County) and the United States Department of Agriculture, Eldorado National Forest to address water quality impacts associated with the Rubicon Trail. The water quality threats identified in the CAO were excessive erosion and sedimentation caused by trail use, oil and fuel spills from damaged vehicles, and human sanitation. The CAO required submittal of quarterly reports, and preparation of a water quality protection plan and a long-term management plan. The County has submitted the reports required to date by the CAO.

Recently, the County requested an opportunity to update the Board on its progress with the CAO and to present its newly released educational video. This information item provides a chance for the County, Board staff, and interested parties to address the Board.

Since the CAO was adopted, the County, with help from the California State Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Division Grant program, has addressed sediment issues by evaluating trail conditions and developing a list of road drainage and road armoring Best Management Practices (BMPs) for use on the trail. The County installed BMPs over one-third of the trail covered under the CAO, and has plans and funding to make trail improvements on the remainder of the trail within El Dorado County. County staff is also working on installation of two bridges

along the trail. This work requires completion of environmental studies by the U.S. Forest Service and it has taken more time than expected.

The County is addressing the human sanitation problem with a combination of facility improvements along the trail, an outreach campaign to raise user awareness of the problem, the distribution of individual waste disposal kits (Wag Bags) and increased law enforcement. The County is addressing automotive spills in a similar fashion with user outreach programs, education, and the distribution of spill kits.

Board staff has inspected the trail numerous times, maintained an on-going dialog with the County and interested parties, and attends monthly meetings where County staff and trail users address trail improvements and planning efforts.

ISSUES

Information item only.

RECOMMENDATION: None.

Mgmt. Review\_\_\_WSW\_\_\_\_\_

Legal Review\_\_\_\_\_

5 August 2011 Central Valley Water Board Meeting  
11020 Sun Center Dr. #200  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670