

SYM

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SACRAMENTO
CVRWQCB

March 24, 2009

Ms. Susan McConnell
Central Valley Regional Water Quality
Control Board
11020 Sun Center Drive, #200
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Dear Ms. McConnell:

I wish to express my support for the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's (CVRWQCB) efforts to address the degraded condition of the Rubicon OHV Trail and the resource impacts that are happening to the lands, waters, vegetation, and wildlife around the trail. As described in the Draft Cleanup and Abatement Order (CAO), El Dorado County's mismanagement and lack of management of this trail has led to many of these problems and measures are needed to stop further degradation and to clean up the unacceptable conditions found on the trail now.

I have been a resident of El Dorado County for over a quarter of a century, and I have visited and recreated in the area of the Rubicon Trail. I strongly encourage the CVRWQB to proceed with issuing the CAO and to require El Dorado County Department of Transportation to meet the requirements and deadlines listed in the draft CAO. Nearly all of the requirements are management practices that the County proposed for management of the trail in the Rubicon Trail Master Plan that was circulated over a year ago, and that was withdrawn by the county at the very moment that it was to be completed.

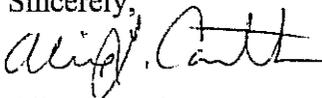
In particular, I feel that it is essential that:

- the Rubicon OHV Trail should be closed to motor vehicle use during the wet period, including when there is snow on the ground. All one needs to do is look on the internet at the photos of 4WDs driving through the snow and causing extensive rutting and damage to the road to realize that use of the road at this time of year is inappropriate and unnecessary (it is not as if these folks need access to homes or businesses). One internet example is www.pirates4x4.com
- that El Dorado County address the need for sanitation and human waste control. It wasn't that long ago that El Dorado County itself recognized the dire conditions along the trail and closed the Spider Lake area to ALL entry into the area.
- that El Dorado County address the indiscriminate camping and other uses that are creating significant impacts off of the trail. Trail users drive off of the trail to access campsites, lunch stops, etc., thus creating new routes, destroying vegetation, adding sediment and oils to the streams, etc. This will require the County to work directly with the Eldorado National Forest, since much of this use is beyond the trail itself.
- the trail should be limited to "street-legal" 4WDs rather than the monster "extreme" vehicles that have come to use (and degrade) the trail more recently.

As recently as 10 years ago, one only infrequently saw 4WDs being trailered up Highway 50 to travel on the Rubicon Trail. Users traditionally drove their 4WDs to the trailhead, went on the trail from west to east, exiting near Lake Tahoe, and then drove home on the major highways. This meant that the trail did not need to accommodate a lot of two way traffic, and the vehicles that were using the trail were limited in how much damage they could do. Now, many of the "rigs" that use the trail must be trailered to the start of the trail, requiring them to return to the same location. Due to this, the trail has widened to satisfy the two-way traffic, or new short by-passes have been created so vehicles can pass each other. Also, these new extreme vehicles are looking for ever more challenge, which has led to users driving off the trail, pulling rocks and other obstacles into the trail, and the creation of "playgrounds" where trail users sit around and watch others cause resource damage, spill their oil, and otherwise abuse the area around the Rubicon Trail.

In summary, I hope that the CVRWQCB will issue a final Cleanup and Abatement Order to El Dorado County and that the County will be required to exercise their responsibility for protecting the lands and waters of El Dorado County for it's citizens and future generations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alice Cantelow". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "A".

Alice Cantelow