

Date February 25, 2012

Senator Mark Udall
328 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Michael F. Bennet
458 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Congresswoman Diana DeGette
2335 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC, 20515

Congressman Jared Polis
501 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Scott Tipton
218 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Cory Gardener
213 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Doug Lamborn
437 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Mike Coffman
1222 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Ed Perlmutter
1221 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Members of the Colorado Congressional Delegation,

Riding **Off-Road** Vehicles on public lands is a popular form of recreation, and when well managed can be highly compatible with the ecological values Americans associate with public lands. For years, though, unmanaged OHV riding has contributed to the deterioration of wildlife habitat. It has damaged soil ecology, caused sediment to run into streams, run wildlife off public land, and intruded on the solitude of hunters,

fishermen, and other recreational users seeking a quiet piece of country.

In order to manage motorized vehicles, the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management are beginning to implement a **consistent set of rules** limiting motorized vehicles to designated routes only. Significantly, these rules prohibit OHVs from traveling cross country, or creating their own trails. This change in policy is a welcome if overdue development.

Enforcing these new rules will be a challenge. One barrier to effective management is the inability of eyewitnesses to identify violators. Colorado requires a visible identification number on all OHVs using public land, but the number is **too small** to see in all but the most favorable situations. Usually, the field officers must rely on a physical description of the offender, which rarely if ever results in any enforcement action.

You, our members of Congress, can help law enforcement **identify OHV violators by requiring the identification numbers on registration decals be more visible in the field**. It's worth noting that OHVs are often moving, sometimes at a distance, and even with more visible identification, seeing them clearly won't always be possible. But many people today carry cameras or smart phones with impressive zoom capabilities. These new technologies present a tremendous opportunity for the general public to assist law enforcement in a way that wasn't possible just a few years ago. Photos can be downloaded. If a registration number can be discerned from the photo, then law enforcement can contact the offender, and the appropriate action can be taken, with a minimum of time and resources expended.

We strongly recommend, therefore, that Congress implement the following changes:

- *Require OHV registration decals that feature a large, bold, **highly visible identification number**.
- *Require that registration decals be **displayed prominently**, preferably on the front and rear of the vehicle.

The purpose of this effort isn't to punish off-road riders, but to strengthen their legitimacy through more effective management. Off-road recreation benefits local economies, and helps support a diverse business spectrum from manufacturing, to travel, to hospitality. Your prompt attention to this matter will help keep off-road riders on the trail and out of trouble.

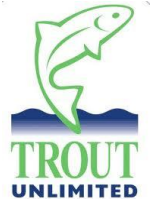
Sincerely,



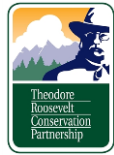
Jim Akenson
Executive Director
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
(541) 398-0091



David Lein
Co-Chair
Colorado Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
719-579-6659



Tom Reed
Director of Off-Road Vehicle Policy
Trout Unlimited
703-522-0200



Joel Webster
Director of Western Lands
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
406-360-3904



Robert Ong
President
Rocky Mountain Big Horn Society
720-201-3791



Bob Hix
Regional Representative
Pheasants Forever
303-743-8957



John Gale
Regional Representative
National Wildlife Federation
303-746-3570



Suzanne O'Neil
Executive Director
Colorado Wildlife Federation
303-987-0400



Gus Rassam
Executive Director
American Fisheries Society
301-897-8616



Mindy Rice
President
Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society
303-297-1192



Eric Nuse
Executive Director
Orion, The Hunters Institute
802-730-8111



Pikes Peak, Four Corners, Front Range and Mesa Verde Chapters
Presidents Hank Cole, Bob Volger, Nihla McCabe, Dan Shier
Colorado Backcountry Horsemen

St. Vrain Archery and Bowhunting Club
Stets Newcomb, President
303-775-3589

Businesses



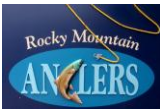
Angling Trade Magazine
Tim Romano, Co-Owner
303-495-3967



Traditional Bowhunters Magazine
T.J. Conrads, Owner
208-383-0982



Front Range Anglers
Bill Leuchten, Owner
303-494-1375



Rocky Mountain Anglers
Jay Zimmerman
303-447-2400



Crystal Fly Shop
David Johnson, Owner
970-963-5741



Scott Rods
Jim Bartschi, Rod Designer
970-249-3180



Grand County Fly Fishing Company
Jeff Ehlert, Owner
970-726-5231



Monic Fishing Lines
Ben Potter
303-530-3050



Wild Trout on the Fly
Mike Miller



Boss Tin, Fishing and Waterfowl Products
John and Lori Unger, Owners
970-731-6740



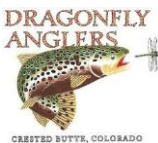
Pins & Fins
Kendall Carson, President
970-669-5103



Rigs Fly Shop and Guide Service
Tim Patterson, Owner
970-626-4460



The Creek Company
Dave Gowdy, Owner
1-800-843-8454



Dragonfly Anglers
Rod M Cesario
1-800-491-3079



Fishpond
Johnny Le Coq, Co-Founder
970-468-7883



Toads Guide Shop
Tim Kenney, President
970-249-0408



Bray Ranches, Private Wildlife Adventures
Robert Bray, Owner
970-327-4779



Highlands Unlimited
Jennifer & Geoff Burbey, Owners
970-247-8443



Rim Rock Outfitters
Monty & Rebecca Elder, Owners
970-675-2619



Beaver Creek Outfitters
Scott Gesell, Owner
218-368-3679



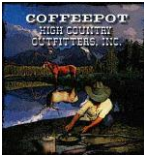
J-Bar-H Outfitters
Jeanne Horne, Owner
1-800-230-4868



Matschee Guide Service
Tim Matschee, Owner
303-864-0547



Crazy Horse Outfitters and Guides
Willie & Caitlin Swanda, Owners
970-731-3641



Coffee Pot High Country Outfitters
Kelley Sanburg
970-209-2628



Red Feather Guides and Outfitters
Arnie Schlottman, Owner
970-524-5054



T Bar M Outfitters
T. Mike Murphy, Owner
970-259-5469

Hooked on Flies
Steve Haupt, Owner

Ice Fishing Colorado
Mark Taylor, Owner
303-269-1565

Winter Park Flyfisher
Jeff Ehlert, Owner
970-726-5231

Rio Grande Angler
Kevin Leggitt
1-877-656-3474

Traditional Archery Products
Gary and Connie Renfro, Owners
303-567-4226

Hodiak Outiftters,
Hodiak (Hody) Ewing, Owner
970-799-3641

Geneva Park Outiftters
Terry Lee Sandmeier, Owner
719-439-4606

The Craig Wild Bunch Guides and Outiftters
Willie White
970-824-9334

Wilderness Adventures
Aaron Laske, Owner
719 587-3057

cc:

Secretary Ken Salazar

Secretary Tom Vilsack

BLM Director Bob Abbey

USFS Chief Tom Tidwell

Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper

Colorado Department of Natural Resources Director Mike King

Colorado Parks and Wildlife Director Rick Cables

New Mexico Senator Jeff Bingaman