



# The SLO 4-Wheeler



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## An Empty Passenger's Seat

A Tribute to my favorite co-pilot — Theresa Michelle Robertson  
*Written by George W., Editor*  
 On November 4th, Theresa Robertson and I became officially engaged when I gave her the engagement ring that she had been waiting literally months for. We had ordered the custom ring in late July and one delay after another delayed its delivery to November 3rd. Its a special set containing her birth stone, sapphires, as well as the standard diamonds. The result was a beautiful set with four sapphires on each ring with small diamonds in between the sapphires. The engagement ring also had a large diamond flanked on the ring sides by two smaller diamonds in additions to the sapphires and small diamonds. She loved it and immediately went to show her sister who was in a nearby building. Unfortunately Theresa only got to wear the engagement ring for five days and the wedding band once just to see how it looked. On November 10th at 10:00 AM she was struck by a brain aneurism while cleaning her apartment and talking with her youngest sister on the phone. She was rushed to Twin Cities hospital and then flown to Cottage Hospital in Santa Barbara in hopes of

the specialists there being able to stabilize her. The outlook was bleak and the CT Scan taken the next morning confirmed it. She would not recover. Her family and I laid her to rest on Friday, November 18th.  
 Theresa wasn't into off-road wheeling. She had gone with me twice on Las Chiches. The first time North to South when it was totally dark. The words that escaped her mouth at the beginning of the Trail at Five Points, which are not printable here, as the tail lights disappeared up into the fog showed that it wasn't a good idea. When we got to the rocks for a snack, she asked to wait before she got out; she was shaking. The second time was at dusk going from south to north and that experience was different, she got through it without getting too nervous. But the idea of any of the tougher local trails or the Rubicon was out.  
 Instead she found she loved putting around the Central Coast back roads to see the country side, sites and seasonal things, like the spring wild flowers, that make our area so great. Each Saturday or Sunday we went for a drive was usually well planned ahead of time and had a specific purpose. Whether it was going over High Mountain from Arroyo



Grande, Nacimiento-Fergusson Road or Foxen Canyon Road. Some of you may have even met her on some of the club runs that stayed on the road. Some of the trips did not involve the Jeep, but still involved the same ideas. We would pack my ice chest with a few sodas and bottles of water along with some snakes and maybe a sandwich for each of us or some snack that she had prepared specially for the

*(Continued on page 4)*

## 2011 SLO 4-Wheelers Officers

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 Carrizo Plains Land Use ..... Randy P.

Newsletter submittals by the weekend after the meeting to George W.

# Trip Report: Oceano Dunes Report

by Frank S.

*NOTE: All photos are his photos.*

On Thurs., Oct. 13, the State Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicles Recreation Commission met in Grover Beach at the Ramona Garden Center. It was the staging area for an all-day informational tour of the Oceano Dunes to familiarize the commission with the on-going controversial aspects threatening the closure of the dunes.

The public was invited, so I attended **with my '47 Jeep**. There was only one other civilian jeep, the rest were State Park vehicles. The State Parks Dept. had 13 full size 4WD SUV's, a rescue vehicle, and at least 1 pickup. I wasn't sure if I could get away with driving my '47 jeep, as I have no seat belt and my roll bar was in Morro Bay. I taped a red lumberyard flag to my CB antenna and strung along with the convoy. Most of the group, about 50 people, were park officers, the entire commission of 6—a local lawyer, a geologist, a biologist, a botanist, and more. There were mayors, local city council members and other local officials. How many general public people, I'm not sure, as you had the option of riding in any one of the SUV's. There were a half dozen who seemed to be involved with the local dune wars. The good news was I didn't hear any anti-vehicle comments during the day, which ended about 2:30 pm. The only negative was a group of about 3 people with signs that said, "The beach was not meant for vehicles." They were waiting for us on the beach.

The group made at least a dozen stops at various locations along the beach and in the dunes. They gave talks on various subjects at each location. They covered the vegetation, geology of the formation of the dunes, plovers, county property, oil co. property, private property, state and state-leased property, studies being made and the results, Arroyo Grande Creek and Lagoon, and a multitude of others. I must say it was very informative and interesting and was more good information than my brain could absorb. They did an



excellent job.

Halfway through the tour we stopped at the south end fence for lunch.

**There's a walk-through spot in the fence to access a boardwalk which goes from the beach, over a bridge that crosses Oso Flaco Lake and ends at a toll gate and parking lot.** Tourists drive their cars to the parking lot and pay \$5 per person to walk to the beach. **Interestingly enough, it's all part of the OHV property.**

As we were walking the boardwalk back to our vehicles, one guy came up beside me and was asking me all about my Jeep. He asked if he could ride with me for awhile. I said, "You can drive it if you like." I found out later that he was Kane Silverberg, one of the six commissioners from Sacramento. He thoroughly enjoyed driving the jeep for the rest of the trip through the dunes and down the beach. He was the envy of his peers, and many pictures were taken of the jeep with the various dignitaries. And after some manipulating with his camera/phone, he told me, "Well, you're all over the internet now."

**Here's a few facts I picked up on during the tour:**

- In 2010 there were over 2 million visitors to the Oceano State Park.
- From the Mile 2 marker north you must be street legal.
- From a spot just north of the Grand Ave. onramp and towards Pismo, no offroad vehicles are permitted. Cars only, for people who **don't want to deal with offroaders.**
- There are a considerable number of concessionaires on the beach, i.e., vehicle rentals, Humvee rides, quad training, food, drink, ice, service to empty your holding tanks, towing, etc. Obviously you **can't dump your black or gray water on the sand, but you can't even drain your drinking water tank on the beach.**
- The State Park rangers also conduct a training program for quads and they have the quads for you to **learn on....age 6-14 free, 14-16 is \$150, or free if you can give them the VIN# of your own green sticker vehicle.** Even old people can take lessons there.



the others the day before, during the dune tour. Only one speaker spoke on our behalf. He represented CAL 4WD and he did a good job. The other speakers were so bad I felt sorry for them. They talked about things like where the clams went and how good they used to taste. One guy who lives on Pier Ave. complained that he washes his car one day and the next day he can write his name on the car with his finger because it is so dusty. I guess when you buy a house next to the largest dunes on the West coast, you'll experience some dust. One speaker was down right nasty. All in all, it was a 2-hour CSPAN event.



- A new State OHV Park is being built in Madera County.
- According to a BLM representative, **it's not illegal to drive from BLM land onto private land if the private land isn't posted or fenced.**

On Friday morning, Oct. 14 at 9am, the regular business meeting of the OHMVR Commission began and lasted until 10:40 am, followed by public comments regarding the business meeting. Then the comment period pertaining to the beach and dune closure battle began. I sat through about 8 speakers before I had to leave due to a lunch date with our President Eric. **Although I didn't speak, I did get all my points across to the commission and**



*(Continued from page 1)*

expedition. We would also pack some camera gear as the trips usually involved going to see something specific like one of our area missions, scenic vistas or some other points of interest.

As I would drive she would fish out bite size bits of cheese, crackers, drinks or other snack and hand me the bite size pieces as I was able to grab them between shifting and steering. Sometimes we would actually stop and have a picnic along the way or at our destination. More than once there was an accidental drop of some snack; I'll probably be finding some of them each time I clean the Jeep for quite a while.

We visited a lot of places while traveling around the back roads. They included: Black Mountain Radar Station, the club was on Pine Mountain that day and we radioed them to let them know where we were

- Missions San Miguel, San Antonio (and the Hacienda), Santa Ines (the town is spelled different than the mission, which is in Solvang), La Purisima Concepcion, Carmel and San Juan Bautista
- Bryson-Hesperia and Playto off Inter-lake Road
- Adelaida Road
- Indian Valley
- Santa Rosa Creek Road and Old Creek Road
- Parkfield, Parkfield-Coalinga Rd and Vineyard Canyon Road
- Pozo multiple times to her brother's place
- San Ramon Chapel east of Sisquoc on Foxel Canyon Road
- See Canyon Road and Prefumo Canyon Road
- Shell Creek Road from Shandon to Highway 58 for the wild flowers

And most of the roads from the coast to the Carizzo Plains north of San Luis Obispo We even drove a rental car, a monochrome Crown Victoria, three times into Manhattan through Times Square to a parking garage. We found out that car was great for Manhattan, specially when we wore our sun glasses as jaywalkers got out of the way and traffic cops seemed to give us a priority, I guess we looked official.

There were also many places we wanted to visit but hadn't yet. The missions in Soledad, Santa Barbara and Ventura among many other places.



Of course there was so much more to her and our relationship than this, but I'll miss these good times in the Jeep and it will be hard to see anyone else in the passenger seat for quite a while. Rest in peace sweetheart.

Theresa Robertson  
Born in September 1959  
Pasted on in November 2011.



# Four-Wheeling Good for Families, Easy on Environment



*Salt Tram out of Saline Valley Saline Valley from Salt Tram Station*

When most laymen think of four-wheeling, their thoughts unfortunately are rarely positive. You know the criticism: We tear up the landscape. Scare away the wildlife. Pollute the environment. And burn through gas like there's no tomorrow.

How often have you heard those? How have you responded?

**You know you're a responsible driver and a good steward of the land. You're also quite proud of your hobby and your fellow drivers. So any criticism tends to cut to the bone. You're inclined to lash out. Don't. The best way to respond to those claims is with the facts. A calm, thoughtful reply will quiet just about anybody. Keep in mind that many people you encounter are neutral on the subject. Use those opportunities to talk up the hobby, also.**

Inform the person that four-wheeling is possible without harming the environment. Responsible drivers adhere to the Tread Lightly principles. You know what they are, so state them:

- T Travel responsibly on designated roads or trails
- R Respect the rights of others
- E Educate yourself: plan and prepare before you go
- A Avoid sensitive areas

D Do your part

**"You see," you can tell the person, "we use our vehicles to help us explore places we could not otherwise. These can be exciting trails; exquisite views of nature, many in the mountains or other challenging places; ghost towns and abandoned mines; and wildlife like you've never seen.**

**"All the while we are respectful of nature. Many times we are camping, hiking, fishing or hunting. We are exploring and experiencing the outdoors, but we do so in a responsible manner. Plus, we often have to buy a pass or license to drive on those lands. Those funds help maintain the property and wildlife."**

Go on to explain how four-wheeling is a **family affair. It's a great time and healthy event that everyone can enjoy. These trips offer a chance to bond with spouse and kids, and teach them to appreciate and respect nature.**

You can add that we use those trips to challenge ourselves and our vehicles. We are always careful and prepare properly before going off-road. By encountering and overcoming those challenges, we develop and hone our driving and survival skills, and build self-esteem in the process. These

trips involve problem solving, team building, and other valuable skills. Camaraderie is strong during the excursions, and we develop friendships that last a lifetime.

**Finally, we don't burn as much gas as people think. Sure, our off-road mileage isn't great, but we're not driving every day. This is just a weekend hobby. And it's usually only one weekend a month.**

Occasionally during an expedition I will poll the group on what attracts them to this type of trip. Repeatedly I get responses like "spend time with friends and family," "the solitude," "beauty and nature," and "exploring history." There's a lot more to going off road, but until you do, you really can't appreciate it. Or understand why we do. That's where you, my fellow enthusiasts, come in. Our hobby needs you to be spokesmen for the cause.

Introduce others to four-wheeling. Take them out for a leisurely drive one afternoon. Show them that an off road driving experience is like none other. Let them learn for themselves the value of our hobby.

Incidentally, you notice that I refer to four-wheeling as a hobby. I do that on purpose. If you call it a sport, people immediately figure there's some competitive nature about it. That creates the image of cars recklessly tearing through the desert or some other sensitive area.

As you can see, there are a lot of positives to our hobby. Make a point to talk up four-wheeling whenever you can. You just may gain a new enthusiast.

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*Returning from the Trout Lake Over 10,000 feet above sea level*



# Go Green in Your Outdoor Recreation

*By Del Albright,  
BlueRibbon Ambassador*

Ok, don't shoot me, but I want to suggest a type of "Go Green" for four-wheeling and other types of motorized recreation. If you're a regular reader of Del Albright, you know I'm not anything related to a "greenie" or anti-access radical protectionist – in fact, I'm the opposite. But something has come over me lately. It's similar to nausea, but there may be something here worth suffering for.

Everywhere I look I see this "Go Green" stuff. What does this mean to us?

Businesses, advertisements, magazines, TV commercials and our esteemed government agencies are constantly getting all warm and fuzzy with this trendy stuff. Heck if I believed all the brainwashing we're being lambasted with today, I might just fit in better with the trendy crowd. But I don't! And, I'm not sure I want to.

I drive an off-road rig that loves to spank rocks. Yea, for sure I stay on the trail and wheel conscientiously; but I'm not about to convert to some ultra radical type dude that claims to be saving the world when in fact they usually do more harm than good. I am an outdoor motorized recreationist who is responsible and ethical.

So what do I mean by "Go Green" with your outdoor recreation? It's really pretty simple; and truthfully, while I can't stand the trendy name, there's some merit here for all of us. But I am NOT talking about the kind of "Go Green" I just saw in a noteworthy 300 page monthly magazine with a movie star on the cover, standing on an iceberg with a baby polar bear looking up at him. How ludicrous is that? I consider it silly to the point of laughable. What kind of an idiot would pose in such a manner!?

Polar bears don't exist in Iceland where the scene was shot. Heck, movie stars don't exist in Iceland for all I

know. And why would a polar bear look to a movie star for help? J But this kiss-a-bug, hug-a-tree, don't eat turkeys because they're our friends kind of trendy mentality has a very strong foothold in our country. It's in our schools every day and some of the big media is on overtime to hype it. It makes me sick – but it's here to stay.

On the other hand, while the "Green" movement has some wacko, stupid stuff going on, there are several things that we can and do agree with. A lot of these things we were promoting before even they were. Perhaps we just need to capitalize on this naming the idea as "going green" the way the average citizen seems to be accepting it.

The concepts that DO make sense to me and that many responsible outdoor recreation groups have been promoting for years include: 1) conserving our resources; 2) cutting back on waste; 3) keeping our outdoors clean; 4) reducing air and water pollution; 5) keeping our watersheds, creeks and lakes clean; 6) curtailing outlaw behavior and illegal off-trail travel; and 7) leaving behind a legacy and sport that our children and grandchildren can enjoy.

Now let's explore how this applies to motorized recreation. In the very first place, we insist on common sense in how we apply our sport to our changing world. We "ain't going away" so the closure enthusiasts had best find more reasonable approaches to their radical agenda. And those approaches better be things we can wrap our arms around. We are here to stay, and our chosen form of outdoor recreation is just as viable and reasonable as any other. So I'd like to offer just three simple things we can all do

First, let's get everyone to stay on the trails; get rid of the outlaws; and educate the uniformed to be respectful of our freedoms and opportunities. We can all learn to be more patient and for sure, to read the rule book before jumping into the game. Obey the law and be smart.

Second, let's make sure our rigs are well-maintained and don't pollute (land, water or air). Tighten up the leaks; fix the muffler; and clean up any fluid spills. Take special care when crossing creeks – make sure you're not polluting with leaking lubricants. This has as much to do with being a good American as any "Green" propaganda.

Third, clean up your camp site, pack out your waste, and even pick up the trash of other idiots. Stop to pick up cans and trash when you see it. Respect our environment while enjoying your rig and the challenge of the trail. Leave it better than you found it.

This all boils down to adopting your own code of ethics – how you relate to your world while enjoying your sport. In no shape or form do I suggest we should not be able to slap the cobs to the afterburner or spin a few tires here and there. But I do suggest that we must be cognizant of our scarce resources and how so many more of us are getting into off-road recreation every year. We can't tear up the landscape and expect it to be there for those behind us.

So the idea of "Go Green" with your outdoor recreation to me is more about taking care of what we love to see and do. These are things that can make a difference in the big picture. And heck, rather than fight them, why not show them how our code of ethics and common sense can keep motorized recreation alive and well forever?

*The BlueRibbon Coalition is a national recreation group that champions responsible use of public and private lands, and encourages individual environmental stewardship. It represents over 10,000 individual members and 1,100 organization and business members, for a combined total of over 600,000 recreationists nationwide.*

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The United Four Wheel Drive Associations also acts as your voice to keep 4x4 roads and trails open so that we can continue enjoying four wheeling in the great outdoors.

<http://www.ufwda.org/>



A varied group of outdoor recreationists who are extremely active in promoting the positive aspects of vehicular access on public lands and protecting that right.

<http://www.corva.org/>



SLO 4-Wheelers is also a member club in the California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs (CA4WDC) If your not a member, check it out,

<http://www.cal4wheel.com> or ask Suzy



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# SLO 4 WHEELERS

PO Box 2271  
Atascadero, CA 93423-2271



**We're on the web:**

<http://www.slo4wheelers.org/>

## Upcoming Events / Runs

In addition to this list, keep your eye on the club email list and web site:

<http://www.slo4wheelers.org/>

for last minute events or spur of the moment runs.

Friday December 2nd — After Meeting Run-San Luis Obispo Christmas Parade-

This Event is a lot of FUN. Decorate your rig and/or slap on a couple strings of lights and come join Us. Any updates, follow up info will be posted thru the clubs email list. Line up at 6:00- inspection 6:15. Parade starts at 7:00.

more info "Rules" SLO City Rules City of S.L.O. has some guidelines we must adhere to. Please read if attending.

Wednesday December 7th — SLO 4-Wheelers Christmas Party

2011 - NOTE, General meeting will be at party  
SLO 4 Wheelers Christmas Potluck Dinner/Party will be held at Santa Margarita Community Center. Starting at 6:00 with appetizers & setup, dinner starting approx. 7:00. The club will provide meat, bread and sodas. Suggested for the potluck: last names ending in A-L bring: salad or side dish M-R appetizers S-Z dessert. There will be a raffle -and we would welcome prizes for the raffle donated by club members. Bring a \$10 gift to participate in the gift exchange game. Lots of fun! We will also be collecting non-perishable food items for the food bank.

Please RSVP with the number in your party so we will know how much meat to purchase.

If you have any questions or events,

local runs, not so local runs you would like to do, coordinate and/or participate in, please contact the SLO-4-Wheelers Events Director.

