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As dune season nears, safety and litter campaigns kick into gear

BODY COPY:

Continuing its mission to unite, inform and mobilize dune enthusiasts, the American Sand Association (ASA) has pledged \$5,000 to aid the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in getting a new program in place in time for the 2007/08 Dune Season. The BLM has introduced the "Take It Outside" program, targeted at young duners. The program is built around trading cards, which will be distributed by Law Enforcement Officers (LEO), EMTs and Rangers at the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area (ISDRA). The idea behind the program is to encourage responsible land use and safe riding practices among the newest duners. The program was developed internally by the BLM staff at the El Centro Field Office.

Additionally, the ASA introduced its "Time Out For Safety" DVD at the recent Sand Sports Super Show. The DVD is targeted at all levels of users, covering the basic rules, duning techniques, emergency contact information and "Tread Lightly" principles.

While our deserts have been graced with cooler temps this September and early October, Halloween weekend marks the traditional start of the OHV season at the ISDRA. A new season that brings dune visitors back to changed dunes. "The prevailing Summer winds come in a southeasterly direction, which differs from the northwesterly wind typical in the fall and winter months," said Bryan Henry, an ASA member and 30+ year duner. "Razorbacks and witches eyes created by these changing winds are more common. The hot Summer weather leaves less moisture in the sand resulting in dunes that are very soft." In addition to the above changed conditions, visitors are cautioned to watch for trick-or-treaters going from camp to camp. In all areas of the ISDRA, there is a 15 mph limit within 50 feet of camps or clusters of people.

In efforts to keep our dunes clean, various Clean-Ups will be conducted throughout the dune season. Last season, these Clean-Ups had unprecedented participation, which is a sign that increased popularity in our sport brings with it an increased awareness in responsible dune use. While the BLM furnishes trash receptacles at all major staging areas, the ASA encourages the continued practice of "Pack It In, Pack It Out."

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About the American Sand Association

The American Sand Association is a non-profit organization of approximately 29,000 members dedicated to preserving the use of public lands for sand sport enthusiasts' use, improving OHV safety and promoting responsible land use. Some local sand sport areas include the Imperial Sand Dunes, Oceano Dunes (Pismo Beach) and Dumont Dunes in California, Sand Mountain in Nevada and Hotwell Dunes in Arizona. The ASA is an all-volunteer organization with no paid staff. We rely on the financial support of sand sport enthusiasts and small businesses. Most of the members are family-oriented, have a rich family history going back for generations enjoying the sand sport; and most have a significant financial investment in their equipment, gear and campers. Additional information can be found on our web site at <www.americansandassociation.org>.