



# *American Sand Association*

## ASA Fact Sheet

Updated 11/2005

### **What is the American Sand Association?**

The American Sand Association (ASA) is exactly what the name implies... an association. A "gathering spot" for people of like minds to join together for fun, activism, sharing information and to support one another. The Mission Statement of the American Sand Association is to "Unite, Inform and Mobilize sand-sport enthusiasts across the country to preserve their right to ride."

### **Is the ASA non-profit?**

The ASA is a Section 501c (4) non-profit organization, founded over five years ago. With the exception of a part-time, paid assistant, the ASA is entirely managed and promoted by an eager organization of hard-working people who share a love for the desert and access to public lands. The continued success of the American Sand Association depends heavily on continued monetary support from its members and the surrounding business community.

### **How was the ASA formed?**

In the beginning, the people who started [www.GlamisOnLine.org](http://www.GlamisOnLine.org) and the Chairman of the then new Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area (ISDRA) Technical Review Team (TRT) used the GlamisOnLine internet site as a method of disseminating dune related information out to the general public. Within two years, a lawsuit filed by several extremist environmental groups resulted in the closure of 49,000 acres of the ISDRA and the focus was shifted dramatically -- not by the original organizing group but by the massive influx of people who wanted to join arms against what was happening at Glamis and the Imperial Sand Dunes. Since that time, the ASA has grown by leaps and bounds!

### **What achievements have been made by the ASA?**

Through the support of its members and sand-related businesses, the American Sand Association has been able to pursue various activities that are important to land-access rights. Here are just a few examples of the achievements the ASA has accomplished during the past few years:

- Commissioned a detailed biological assessment of rare and endangered plants at the ISDRA by a first-rate, independent biological firm. This effort has helped to provide real scientific data to counter the non-supportable assumptions and unsubstantiated claims made by environmentalists.
- Petitioned the Department of Interior to de-list the Pierson's Milkvetch, which studies have now shown to be thriving (nearly 2 million plants counted in 2005) in the dunes and is not deserving of a "threatened" status. This is the plant that was used to justify the closing of approximately 49,000 acres of the ISDRA to access by OHVs, all in addition to the 32,000 acres previously designated as a Wilderness Area north of Hwy 78.
- Designed and implemented the first of several public safety education programs at the ISDRA.
- Organized a VIP information program at the Sand Sports Super Shows, which has provided valuable, real and supportable information to local and national politicians, law enforcement representatives and industry leaders. Now numbering over 130, each member on our VIP list receives our ASA newsletters along with a special cover letter each quarter.
- Obtained the endorsement of our programs and goals by several local city governments and their Chambers of Commerce in Imperial and Yuma counties.
- Produced over 100,000 Duner's Survival Kits for distribution by local businesses, at information meetings and by the BLM to visitors of the dunes.
- Support and organize local information meetings in California and Arizona to bring information to every sand sport enthusiast. We distribute a quarterly newsletter to our members and business sponsors, providing information and updates on issues impacting the Imperial Sand Dunes.
- Provided, at no cost, website space and development to the BLM's Technical Review Team (TRT). The TRT is a citizen's panel that advises the BLM on how to spend the Fee Demo Program money collected at the ISDRA.
- Facilitated a first-time-ever meeting between nearly a dozen off-road and public access organizations to produce a unified comment document to the new management plan (RAMP) for the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area.
- Recipient of the Four-C's Award from the BLM, in recognition the ASA's leadership in conservation and recreational safety programs throughout the ISDRA.
- Started the Partners in Dune Safety program with the BLM and Imperial County Sheriff's Office (ICSO), designed to enhance public awareness of the rules and laws that apply to the ISDRA. Assisted in the development of a free, 24-page Safe-Duning brochure.
- The ASA participates in lobbying efforts to solicit legislation and funding of programs at both a state and national level, dedicated to maintaining and expanding OHV access to public lands.

- Joined a coalition of several OHV organizations that have secured the dedicated services of a top-notch, pro-access attorney that has lead to a reduction in our legal costs while assuring dedicated legal expertise and services.
- Helped to facilitate the creation of the United Desert Gateway (UDG), a non-profit organization, composed of local communities in partnership with the BLM, ICSO and ASA, aimed at preserving the integrity and long-term access to open lands within the ISDRA.
- In five short years, membership in the ASA has grown to nearly 23,000 members and over 535 business sponsors.

### **What are the sources of the ASA's Finances?**

Our funds come from annual membership dues from our Supporting Members as well as from our Business Sponsors. Many of our business supporters also assist the ASA by providing or donating copying services, postage, printing services or through the donation of equipment and sand toys for fund-raising raffles. Lastly, the ASA markets a line of merchandise such as shirts, hats, calendars, flags, signs and banners. These funds are primarily used to support our ongoing legal efforts, biological and technical studies, and public awareness and outreach campaigns.

### **What is the future of the American Sand Association?**

The goals of the ASA may have begun with Glamis but do not end there. The possibility exists for the ASA to extend its influence to other public-land access issues. Unfortunately, there are many sand and desert issues and public-land access issues; it is obvious that the Imperial Sand Dunes (Glamis) fight is the ASA's first major battle staged against environmental closures and our stand must be strong and firm. It is clear by the way the environmental extremists are attacking the California desert that Glamis is truly the front line against the loss of public lands. It is obvious that if this battle is lost to the environmental extremists, the domino effect throughout the West will start and will be most devastating.

### **What is The Strength of the American Sand Association?**

The strength of the Association lies in its membership as well as its ability to raise monies to fund biological studies and support our legal efforts. In addition to funding legal battles and scientific studies, the growing strength of the ASA membership can also save our riding areas. It is abundantly clear that it is only through combining forces and spreading factual information that we can win. But legally fighting the environmentalists who use bad science (or no science at all) to shut us out of our public lands is only part of our efforts. We must also fight the negative public opinion that the environmentalists cultivate against OHV enthusiasts. Our Checkered Flag Program and our safety programs are tremendous tools that have already helped raise the general, non-duning public's awareness that the desert is enjoyed by a vast number of lawful, respectful, family-oriented people.

### **Does the ASA promote responsible off-road vehicle use?**

Absolutely. It has been there from the beginning. Without responsible use of our public lands, there would be nothing left for anyone to enjoy. The public safety and awareness programs that are promoted by the American Sand Association – The Safety Bug, Leo the Lizard, the Duner's Survival Kit and the Checkered Flag -- are more than just symbols of all the good things we want in our desert playgrounds; they are proof of our dedication to our sport and an excellent way to positively influence local politicians, legislators and the general public.

### **How can I get more information?**

Please contact volunteer Jerry Canning at (858) 679-1450 or visit our website at:

**<http://www.americansandassociation.org>**

Thank you,

**The American Sand Association  
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