



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DATE:

October 23, 2010

HEADLINE:

REDUCED ATTENDANCE ANTICIPATED IN THE IMPERIAL SAND DUNES THIS SEASON

BODY COPY:

CANYON COUNTRY, CA — As dune season approaches, the slow economy is expected to continue its visible impact on the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area (ISDRA). Fewer visitors means fewer funds collected from the Recreation Permit Sales. These funds pay for emergency medical personnel, pit toilet maintenance and trash dumpster service.

While trash dumpsters will remain available for visitors, the disposal contract is written in a manner that rewards a reduction in trash collection. Another way to put it is “the more we dump, the more it costs.” For this reason, the American Sand Association (ASA) continues to promote “Pack it in, pack it out.” This campaign urges everyone to clean up their camp and transport their trash all the way home. Rob Cohen, ASA member who frequently visits the ISDRA stated, “If we each haul our garbage back home and dump it there, the dumpster funds can be used elsewhere in the ISDRA for a greater benefit to us all.”

For the 3rd consecutive year, The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) continues to outsource the sale and distribution of the weekly and annual permits to Worldwide Environmental Products, Inc (WEP). WEP will manage permit sales, with BLM and Imperial County Sheriff's Office (ICSO) handling compliance enforcement. As in past seasons, visitors are encouraged to purchase their permits prior to arrival at the ISDRA to reduce the long lines in areas of enforcement. Weekly and annual permits are available at a variety of retailers in California and Arizona, as well as online from the ASA web-site.

Despite fee increase considerations from the BLM, permit prices will remain unchanged for the 4th year in a row. They are \$90 for an annual permit and \$25 for weekly permits, unless the permits are purchased on-site (i.e. from in-the-sand vendors, including the Glamis Beach Store). On-site costs are \$120 and \$40, respectively.

Halloween weekend will be the first trip of the season for many visitors, and the dunes will be much different than they were in the spring. As a result of shifting prevailing winds seen over the summer, razorbacks and witches eyes are more common. The hot summer weather leaves less moisture in the sand resulting in extremely soft slip-faces and leeward dune-tops.

As always, visitors are cautioned to watch out for trick-or-treaters moving from camp to camp after dark. The ASA reminds all dune users about the importance of safety at the ISDRA. A free safety DVD called "Take Time Out For Safety" is available from the ASA's web-site <www.americansandassociation.com> with more information.

The recent Mojave Desert Racing tragedy brings us to consider our own sand drags. The ASA encourages everyone attending these areas to be alert while observing; no person should be closer than 75 feet from the vehicles on the course. Repeating this accident in the ISDRA would be nothing short of a true tragedy in many aspects.

The enforcement of basic rules and laws will continue. So, did you know...?

- In all areas of the ISDRA there is a 15 mph limit within 50 feet of camps or clusters of people, including on sand highways.
- You can get a ticket for burning pallets or any wood containing metal hardware or nails.
- It's against the law to empty your gray or black holding tanks onto the ground.
- Citations are being issued to parents of ATV riders who are not ASI safety certified and supervised by a parent or guardian.
- Operating an OHV while under the influence of drugs or alcohol will earn the same DUI that one would receive in a car on any highway.
- Having a properly mounted safety flag is required.

The 2010-11 season promises to return us to the good times we've known from the past. The ASA encourages everyone to "Do the Right Thing" for the dunes by complying with the laws, being safe, purchasing passes before they arrive, and packing their trash home.

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About The American Sand Association:

The American Sand Association is a non-profit organization of approximately 34,000 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 a volunteer organization and it relies 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 the ASA web-site at <www.americansandassociation.org>.