



OFF-ROAD BUSINESS ASSOCIATION, Inc.

Meg Grossglass
Media Relations
951-926-1953
951-415-1869

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SENATOR BOXER INTRODUCES WILDERNESS BILL THAT WOULD
OUTLAWS OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES (OHV) RECREATION ON 2
MILLION ACRES OF PUBLIC LANDS AT A TIME WHEN FAMILY OHV
RECREATION IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY MORE POPULAR**

**Bill would also make the use of bicycles and wheelchairs illegal in most areas
as well as diminishing ability to fight fires**

BAKERSFIELD, CA (February 14, 2007) On February 6, 2007 Senator Barbara Boxer introduced S.493 The California Wild Heritage Act of 2007. This act proposes to create approximately 2 million acres of wilderness area. This act would add to the 14.3 million acres of wilderness already designated in the state of California. Once an area is designated as wilderness many uses are prohibited including but not limited to commercial activities, mechanized uses and roads. In other words it takes the definition of public land and makes it moot because the vast majority of the public will not be able to enjoy the land they own. Less than 3% of those who visit and recreate on public lands ever visit a Wilderness area.

By outlawing motorized and mechanized recreation through a Wilderness designation, Senator Boxer is essentially locking American families out of areas that they have historically used for recreation. Areas Boxer has targeted for the exclusive use of a tiny minority of Americans include several areas that are the "Crown Jewels" of California OHV opportunities. Additionally, unlike the new generation of Wilderness bills approved in the last few years that have been developed collaboratively with a broad range of support, this bill is a "Winner Take All" bill that does not enjoy broad support and is for the benefit of a few young adults or affluent Americans who have the time to hike for days. Studies have shown that Wilderness areas are enjoyed primarily by college educated Caucasians, and are seldom used by families or minorities.

"We are disappointed that Senator Boxer has rejected the desires of the majority of Americans, and has instead reverted back to a philosophy of enriching an elite minority that is unwilling to share public lands," observed Off-Road Business Association Land Use Director Bill Dart.

"Wilderness Advocates have an insatiable appetite for locking up public lands for their own selfish purposes, and unfortunately Senator Boxer is more than willing to accommodate this elitism," Dart went on to say. "We can agree that there are many special places that deserve

protection from development, but there are other alternatives that will accomplish those goals without locking out 97% of Americans," Dart concluded.

Wilderness designation also compromises the ability to protect and restore ecosystems and fight wildfires, and severely damages rural community economies that enjoy economic impacts of existing recreation visitor. Wilderness visitors tend to spend less money than virtually every other category of visitors.

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ORBA is a national trade association composed of off-road related businesses united to promote common goals that support the prosperity and growth of the off-road industry.

Meg Grossglass

Media Relations

ORBA Off-Road Business Association
1701 Westwind Drive #216
Bakersfield, CA 93301
direct to Meg 951-926-1953
951-415-1869 cell
Corporate Office 661-323-1464
Corporate Fax 661-323-1487