

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
HOLLISTER FIELD OFFICE

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

DATE INITIATED: Dec. 16, 2004

CONTROL NUMBER: CA-190-05-04

CASE FILE/SERIAL NUMBER: CA-190-SR05-02

PROPONENT: Timekeepers Motorcycle Club, Inc.

PROJECT: 2005 Wild Boar and Piglet Competitive Motorcycle Enduros in the Clear Creek Management Area

LOCATION:

Clear Creek Management Area, Portions of T. 18 S., R. 11 E., R. 12 E., MBDM

AFFECTED ACREAGE: Total mileage for both events is 154 miles. A portion of the mileage is overlapped on both days and loops, 17 acres.

7.5' QUADRANGLE: Santa Rita Peak, San Benito Mountain, Idria

MULTIPLE-USE CLASS: Limited Use Area

LAND STATUS: Public and Private

SPECIAL DESIGNATION AREA:

San Benito Mountain Research Natural Area, Area of Critical Environmental Concern/ACEC, Serpentine ACEC *Camissonia benitensis* critical habitat

AUTHORITY:

16 United States Codes (U.S.C.) 670g-n, 1241-1249, 1271- 1287, and 4601-6a; and 43 U.S.C. 1181a, 1201, and 1701 et seq.

LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE:

This plan has been reviewed to determine if the proposed action conforms to the land use plan terms and conditions as required by 43 CFR 1610.5.

<u>Name of Plan</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>
Hollister RMP	August 1984, as amended
Clear Creek Activity Plan	1986
Clear Creek RMP Amendment and EIS	January 1999

NEED FOR PROPOSED ACTION:

The Timekeepers Motorcycle Club has submitted a Special Recreation Application and Permit to conduct a two-day competitive motorcycle endurance race on public lands. The event requires special use authorization from the Bureau of Land Management, and as such requires additional environmental review prior to authorization.

ACTIONS COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES

Environmental Protection Measures

Health and Safety:

1. All advertisements, flyers, etc. for the event shall be provided to the BLM-Hollister Field Office and include the following language:

WARNING: Soils in the Clear Creek Management Area contain asbestos, a known carcinogen, which has been determined to be hazardous to your health.
2. Where the course intersects county roads or heavy use areas by the public, signs shall be placed to inform the public that a race is occurring at that location. The race date and times will be written clearly on the signs.
3. The event would be cancelled if the Bureau of Land Management determines the road conditions in the CCMA are too dry or too wet pursuant to Federal Register Notice Vol.5, No.24 [CA-190-98-1610-AF-24-1A].

Air Quality:

1. On routes where heavy traffic occurs, watering may be required to reduce dust to a minimum.

Recreation:

1. Portions of T195 and OR748 were field assessed and will require some repairs before the event primarily providing adequate drainage and reduce existing trenching. Total length is approximately 400 meters.
2. Four additional course trail segments will be assessed in the field, totaling approximately 400 meters in length. Appropriate treatments will be applied if necessary on these segments prior to the event.

Riparian Resources:

1. Riparian areas will be monitored once/year to ensure they are being maintained in proper functioning condition. Riparian degradation will be controlled based upon the cause and degree of damage sustained.

Soils:

1. The permittee shall be required to grade or otherwise repair portions of the course which were adversely impacted as a direct consequence of the event such that travel by the general public, or service vehicles associated with maintenance of rights-of-way, is impeded.
2. Corrective and preventative road fixes over the main road network shall be applied where necessary.

PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES:

Proposed Action:

Activities

On Friday, March 11, 2005 through Sunday, March 13, 2005 the Timekeepers Motorcycle Club is proposing to conduct two days of motorcycle competition for experienced riders and families in the Clear Creek Management Area (CCMA). This event is similar to events that have been permitted in the CCMA since the 1980's. Participants would arrive on Friday, compete on Saturday and Sunday, and depart on Sunday and Monday.

On Saturday, the family enduro also known as the Piglet would run using two loops, shown on Exhibit A. Loop 1 of the Piglet would be 33 miles long and Loop 2 would be 35 miles long with some overlap. On Sunday, the more competitive Wild Boar race would occur shown on See Exhibit B. This race would involve using two loops that are not a part of the Piglet race. Loop 1 of the Wild Boar would be 33 miles long and Loop 2 would be 35 miles long with some overlap. Both events would last no longer than 8 hours per day.

The maximum number of participants competing in this event would be 500. There were 353 participants in the 2004 event, 481 participants in the 2003 event and 329 participants in the 2002 event, and 268 participants in the 2000 event. The 2001 event was cancelled as a result of extreme weather. The 2005 proposed race would begin and end on the private property which is adjacent to the CCMA.

The majority of the group would camp and stage activities on private property. On private property, the camping/staging area would be flagged and defined to prevent

parking in habitat containing the San Benito Spineflower - *Chorizanthe biloba* var. *immemora*. The area would be monitored to assure compliance of use restrictions. In addition to participants there would be about 50 support personnel, family and friends within the confines of the camping/staging areas. Permittee would have one pickup truck and trailer for holding and transporting gas, two tents for sign-ups, provide four portable toilets.

Spectators would not be encouraged through pre-event promotion. Some camping would occur at Oak Flat Campground, staging areas 1-6, Jade Mill, and on the left (north) side of R001. The permittee would bring in additional toilets to supplement facilities at Oak Flat Campground if needed. Participants would be instructed to take their trash home. Play riding in Oak Flat Campground/staging areas would be prohibited on Saturday and Sunday by participants and their families. Disqualification from competition may occur as a result of inappropriate activities or non-compliance of permit conditions. Dogs would be controlled in campgrounds/staging areas at all times.

Course

The proposed 2005 course was developed in consultation with BLM staff to avoid and reduce the number of stream crossings, sensitive resources, and conflicts with private landowners. The course segments were reviewed carefully and in order for the event to use several trails BLM would perform any necessary repairs to these routes.

Riders would traverse the course individually, staging from private property. The two Piglet loops total 68 miles on both public and private lands with one gas stop at about 35 miles out from the start. The two Wild Boar loops total 86 miles with one gas stop at about 45 miles out from the start. Both courses would be located along routes open for off-highway vehicle (OHV) use. Participants would be briefed on the importance of not deviating from the proposed course to protect sensitive resources along routes.

Some of the Piglet riders also ride the Boar, but the vast majority of the competitors ride only one of the events. Competitors would navigate the course individually, starting with 5 riders per minute for the Piglet and up to 4 riders per minute for the Boar. The piglet event starts from the Jade Mill site on Saturday and the wild boar event starts from the Oak Flat Campground on Sunday.

Gas Pit Stops / Checkpoints

Two fueling stops would be located on public land. One at Indian Hill staging area, and one at Staging Area two. Gas would be contained stored in DOT (Department of Transportation) approved containers provided by participants. Common containment practices to minimize the potential for a release or spillage of substances to the environment would be employed. Refueling would occur at sufficient distance from streams that any accidental spills would not enter surface waters. Prior to disbursement of gas on the site, all equipment would be inspected to be sure they are free of leaks. Fire extinguishers would be available on site. All fuels would be removed from the site upon completion of construction activities.

There would be nine checkpoints along the course. Participants would receive a score written on a card that the rider carries. They would also be able to check their time against official race clocks monitored by the event sponsors. Several members of the Timekeepers club would be stationed at each of these checkpoints.

Monitoring

Prior to the event, the HOFO would identify routes and/or intersections located near RTE (rare, threatened, or endangered) plants and animals, cultural sites, and/or stream crossings where a monitor would be stationed to make sure riders stay on the course, and record any impacts to sensitive resources. Photos would be taken at each of these sites prior to, during, and after the event to assess potential impacts to these sensitive resources. These sites would be staffed by BLM personnel, volunteers, or members of the Timekeepers Motorcycle Club.

The Permittee understands and agrees to the following actions which may be implemented as a result of extreme weather conditions.

- (1) In the event of severe seasonal storms and/or natural disasters, the HOFO may enforce a partial or full emergency closure on roads or trails which are saturated with moisture to the point where vehicle traffic causes ruts or bogs leading to increased erosion. Once the area has been closed a field inspection would be completed prior to reopening, and daily thereafter to determine suitability of road conditions. When recorded field observations show that road and trail surfaces have not dried sufficiently to allow traffic without damage to the surface, the area shall remain closed.
- (2) As soon as possible after the conditions warrant a full or partial closure, the permittee would be notified of which roads and/or trails or entire CCMA have been closed and the event is cancelled.
- (3) One week prior to the event, the Permittee shall periodically check with the HOFO to see if any current weather conditions may warrant a partial or full closure of the CCMA and cancellation of the event.

Health and Safety

The permittee would furnish BLM with a First Aid and Safety Plan. The permittee would organize and provide qualified personnel who would be equipped with first aid equipment, communications, and transportation to assist accident victims without delay. BLM would serve as a backup in emergency situations.

To prevent potential visitor accidents and ensure the safety of participants, there would be several checkpoints and flagman would be stationed at major road intersections. Sweep riders from the Timekeepers would ride the course to assist disabled or injured participants as appropriate. The Timekeepers would provide first aid as well as having

first aid personnel at their base camp. All participants would sign an asbestos notification sheet as well as a liability waiver.

Within one week prior to the event, the BLM would take an air sample to determine whether or not conditions or high air sample results would warrant cancellation of the event or a closure would be taken prior to the event. The permittee would arrange for one or more participants in the event to wear a BLM supplied air sampler.

Sound Testing

Sound testing would be conducted by the members from the Timekeepers Motorcycle Club and a BLM Law Enforcement Ranger. AMA rules strictly prohibit allowing anyone to ride the event with a non-compliant muffler/spark arrestor. AMA enduro rules also require promoter to conduct a sound test during the event to keep participants from changing exhaust systems before the start. Sound levels must meet California limits.

Bonding/Fees/Post Use Report

Prior to the event, the permittee would furnish BLM with a Reclamation Bond in the amount of \$500.00. Additionally, the permittee would estimate the number of competitive users and submit a check computing a user fee of \$4.00 per person per day. Also included in this check would be the \$80.00 non-refundable application processing fee. Fifteen days after the completion of activities, the post use report would be submitted with any outstanding user fees. In the event that a refund is due, it would be sent to the permittee within 60 days of BLM receiving the post-use report.

Liability Insurance

The permittee would obtain and submit a property damage, personal injury, and public liability insurance policy in the amount of one million dollars to protect the public and the United States. The policy would name the U.S. Government as co-insured and stipulate that the authorized officer of the Bureau of Land Management would be notified 30 days in advance of the termination or modification of the policy. The permittee would indemnify the United States against any responsibility or liability for damage, injury, or loss to persons and property which may occur during the permitted use period or as a result of such use. The BLM would be protected in the liability insurance coverage provided by the Timekeepers Motorcycle Club.

To protect private property, some private landowners may request permittee to include them as a co-insured on their certificate of liability insurance.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE:

The proposed action would not be undertaken as proposed. Existing management and use of the site would continue subject to applicable statutes, regulations, policy and land use plans.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT:

The following elements of the human environment, subject to review specified in statute, regulation or executive order, are not located within the project area: Floodplains, Prime or Unique Farm Lands, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and Wilderness.

Air Quality:

Air-borne emissions of asbestos fibers can be a problem in the Clear Creek Management Area. The proposed action would utilize routes and trails where naturally-occurring asbestos material, chrysotile, is contained in the surrounding soil. When the soil is disturbed, the chrysotile, located in the surface silt layer, is dispersed in the air where it poses a health risk to humans mainly through inhalation. Dynamac corporation provided BLM with air dispersion calculations and analysis of the potential PM10 (particulate matter having an aerodynamic diameter of 10 microns or less) emissions in the local area. The emissions calculations are based on information contained in EPA's AP-42 publication and on a site-specific study conducted by Midwest Research Institute (MRI) (Project No. 7267-L) in nearby McKittrick, California. Using site-specific data from the Atlas Mine area, it is estimated that the maximum 24 hour PM10 emissions rate is 7.2 lbs per vehicle mile traveled (VMT). The average annual PM10 emissions rate is estimated to fall between 3.4 and 5.8 lbs per VMT.

The rules developed to reduce PM10 emissions from anthropogenic sources within the planning unit list unpaved roads and off-highway vehicle activities on Bureau of Land Management lands as subject to the requirements of Rule 403.1.

Cultural Resources and Native American Religious Concerns:

There are no known paleontological or cultural resources within the designated routes of this proposed activity, with the exception of the following resources: CA-SBn-62/H, a multi-component archaeological site with prehistoric and historic features; CA-SBn-64, a prehistoric lithic scatter adjacent to a former mill site; CA-SBn-57, another prehistoric lithic scatter; and CA-SBn-67, a prehistoric lithics site. At site CA-SBn-62/H, the prehistoric attribute is a bedrock mortar outcrop in a stream bed and the historic attributes involve multiple features over several acres. The historic portion of the site has been identified as the Picacho townsite, related to the Picacho mine complex to the west of the site area. Sites CA-SBn-64 and CA-SBn57 have previous impacts by the direct and indirect effects of modern-day camping and OHV staging. Site CA-SBn-67 was a very small lithic scatter which has probably been destroyed due to erosion or illegal collection. In previous events, archaeological site CA-SBn-62/H had been only identified as a small prehistoric site with low probability of impact to the resource. However, through monitoring efforts the site was properly re-identified and re-recorded. Apparently, several trails cut through the site, which initially prompted the monitoring efforts. It is understood that for this event, the Wild Piglet 1 & 2 Loop goes through the CA-SBn-62/H site area and may negatively impact the site and related features, artifacts, etc. In order to prevent any further damage to this resource (particularly the

historic component), all riders and event participants shall stay on the designated course/event routes. In order to avoid damage to all of the archaeological sites discussed above, all event participants will stay on the designated event routes.

Environmental Justice:

In February 1994, Bill Clinton signed Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations", which provides that "each federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations."

No minority communities or low income communities are located within or adjacent to the proposed project areas.

Health & Safety:

The Clear Creek Management Area contains naturally occurring asbestos, which is a known human carcinogen that can put human health and safety at risk from dust inhalation. The BLM has an extensive health and safety plan for employee operations in this area, and either utilizes personal protective gear when dusty conditions prevail or avoids the area until measurable precipitation occurs to reduce dust hazards. While the operation standards cannot be enforced for the public, the BLM encourages the public to minimize exposure to dust by publishing air sample readings and fact sheets on asbestos, by providing information on a 24-hour Clear Creek conditions number, and by signing on the ground.

Prior to any special use authorizations, the BLM conducts pre-race sampling to determine if asbestos fiber levels are within acceptable limits because any vehicle use in dusty conditions can increase asbestos inhalation exposure. Therefore, a sample would be taken within 1 week of the event date. In the event the sample is above the threshold level, the event would be rescheduled or cancelled.

Invasive, Nonnative Species:

Executive Order 13112 requires BLM to detect, control, and eradicate existing populations of invasive weeds and to prevent further introductions of invasive weeds on BLM managed lands. The most threatening and abundant invasive non-native plant species found within the Clear Creek Management Area is yellow starthistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*). This highly invasive species grows up to three feet high and is well armed with spines throughout the plant. Yellow starthistle displaces native vegetation and wildlife, renders grasslands and rangelands uninhabitable to humans and livestock and is toxic to horses. The CCMA has an existing infestation of yellow starthistle (*centaurea solstitiatius*) that is expanding in coverage. Approximately 300 acres on the western

edge of the CCMA are infested by yellow starthistle, including stabilized terraces that support the San Benito evening-primrose.

At one time yellow starthistle was thought to be intolerant of ultramafic soils, such as those in the CCMA Serpentine ACEC, however, ongoing plant surveys indicate the spread of this weed up Clear Creek Canyon on serpentine and sedimentary soils. As a result of the increase in yellow starthistle infestation, rare plant and animal habitat is at risk. Yellow starthistle is most abundant in the oak savannah, stabilized riparian terrace and sedimentary inclusion. Non-serpentine soils are more quickly colonized by yellow starthistle than are chrysotile soils, most likely because non-serpentine soils have more plant nutrients and a deeper organic layer. However, yellow starthistle is found throughout the Clear Creek Canyon on both serpentine and non-serpentine soils. The primary agents for long-distance seed dispersal are road maintenance equipment and the undercarriage of motor vehicles (Bossard, et al, 2000.) Yellow starthistle thrives on disturbed sites. A comprehensive weed management program for the CCMA and surrounding area is currently being developed, and is scheduled for completion in 2005.

Recreation:

The Clear Creek Management Area encompasses roughly 50,000 acres in southern San Benito County. Motorcycle and ATV riding are the most prevalent recreation activities in the CCMA with almost all of the use occurring within the lower six miles of Clear Creek Canyon. While motorcycle and ATV riding are the most common recreational activities, four-wheeled drive vehicles participate in a variety of recreational activities. Several large organized OHV events are conducted annually in the CCMA. These include, Molina Ghost Run 4-wheel drive tour sponsored by California 4-Wheel Drive Association, the Quicksilver Enduro sponsored by the Salinas Ramblers Motorcycle Club, the Wild Boar and Piglet sponsored by the Timekeepers Motorcycle Club, and the Racers Under the Sun, Christian Motorcycle Club.

A combination of regulatory signs, route number signs, directional signs, and fencing is used to direct visitors along the trails identified on the user map. BLM Park Rangers patrol the CCMA, providing visitor assistance and information, and warning visitors about regulatory violations. A BLM Law Enforcement Ranger conducts patrols in the area, warning, citing, and/or arresting regulatory violators as appropriate. San Benito County Sheriff's Department provides additional law enforcement patrols.

Soils:

About three-fifths of the Clear Creek Management Area overlies an asbestos-rich body of serpentine. Surrounding this serpentine body are marine sandstones, shales and conglomerate interlayered with basaltic lavas and associated lenses of chert. Soils developing on serpentine tend to be relatively thin and nutrient poor. In some areas, large expanses of these soils are naturally devoid of vegetated, and are known as serpentine barrens. If undisturbed, some barren slopes can become revegetated over long periods of time, while others will not. Barrens develop a gravel lag, which exhibits

little gullying. If the lag surface is continually disturbed and broken, soil erosion rates exceed soil formation rates by a large enough amount to result in the complete stripping of the soil profile. In addition, many hundreds of miles of roads were constructed in this area over the past 150 years, to provide access to mining claims, to provide hauling or prospecting access, or to support timber harvest operations. Many of these roads were for temporary use and poorly constructed, and because of the width and number, have been identified as the largest contributor to human-caused erosion in the Clear Creek area.

Water Quality:

Waterways in the Clear Creek area have elevated concentrations of heavy metals. In some waterways this is a result of natural conditions, and in others this is a result of mining disturbance and ore processing. In 1998 the BLM conducted a water quality study within the Clear Creek Management Area to determine the magnitude of metals being released into streams from abandoned mercury mines. Baseline samples were collected from areas that were considered to reflect natural conditions, and then additional samples were taken at 15 mines, both on-site and downstream.

Tests for a suite of heavy metals were conducted, using standard EPA testing methods. Five mines were closed to vehicle use and more are slated for closure based upon the results of this study, which showed that at certain mines, exhibited metal concentrations exceeded the ingestion and inhalation screening levels. Ph levels appear to be high enough to preclude cumulative increasing concentrations of heavy metals downstream, but reduction of direct delivery of metal-laden sediments from vehicle disturbance is a BLM priority.

Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species:

The Clear Creek Management Area is home to a variety of rare plants, animals and their habitat. In addition to the federally threatened San Benito evening-primrose, six other special status species occur within the proposed action location. These species are:

Rayless Layia - *Layia discoidea*,
Mount Diablo Phacelia - *Phacelia phacelioides*,
San Benito Spineflower - *Chorizanthe biloba* var. *immemora*,
San Benito Fritillary - *Fritillaria viridea*,
Talus Fritillary - *Fritillaria falcate*, and
Hernandez Blue-curls *Trichostema rubisepelum*

The following special status animal species also occur, or have the potential to occur within the location of the proposed action:

Sensitive, threatened or endangered species habitat occurs within the range of the planned project (Table 1 and Table 2).

Table 1. Federally Threatened or Endangered Species in the Clear Creek Management Area

Species	Legal Status Federal Status/State Status
California Condor (<i>Gymnogyps californianus</i>)	FE/SE CA Fully Protected Species
Bald eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	FT/SE, BLMS CA Fully Protected Species

(FT) Federally Threatened, (FE) Federally Endangered, (ST) State Threatened, (SE) State Endangered

Table 2. Other Animal Species of Concern in the Clear Creek Management Area

Species	Legal Status Federal Status/State Status
Foothill yellow-legged frog - <i>Rana boylei</i> ,	BLMS, SC, SLC
Coast Horned Lizard (<i>Phrynosoma coronatum frontale</i>)	BLMS, SC, SLC
Two-striped garter snake - <i>Thamnophis hammondi</i>	BLMS, SLC
Northwestern pond turtle (<i>Clemmys marmorata marmorata</i>) & Southwestern pond turtle (<i>Clemmys marmorata pallida</i>),	SC, SLC & BLMS, SLC
Golden Eagle (<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>)	BLMS, SLC CA Fully Protected Species
Prairie Falcon (<i>Falco mexicanus</i>)	BLMS, SLC
Sharp-shinned hawk (<i>Accipiter striatus</i>)	SLC
Bell's sage sparrow (<i>Amphispiza belli belli</i>)	SLC
Big-eared kangaroo rat (<i>Dipodomys elephantinus</i>)	SLC

(ST) State Threatened, (SE) State Endangered, (BLMS) BLM Sensitive Species, (SC) US Fish and Wildlife Services Species of Concern, (SLC) California Department of Fish and Game Species of Special Concern

In several areas sensitive plant locations occur proximal to the course; most are either protected by fence or are surrounded by vegetative or geographic barriers. The following locations bisect or traverse through unprotected *Layia discoidea* (LADI) habitat: T138, T145, T170, and T227. In addition, OR062 parallels federally threatened *Camissonia benitensis* (CABE) and LADI habitat. These trails will be corridor fenced to protect the sensitive species habitat. Several locations were identified for pre-and post event monitoring. These monitoring sites are generally stream crossings, and their

condition pre- and post race will help the BLM to address and mitigate for vehicle impacts in these areas.

Wetlands and Riparian Zones:

Riparian communities occur where surface water flows all or most of the year, and include adjacent areas of vegetation that are dependent on water tables at or near the ground's surface. Riparian communities are critically important for aquatic plants and animals as well as for terrestrial wildlife for food, water, shelter, and habitat corridors for travel. The serpentine riparian community within the CCMA supports an unusual assemblage of plant species along Clear Creek, the San Benito River, Picacho Creek, San Carlos Creek, Sawmill Creek, White Creek, and many smaller tributaries that flow into Clear Creek and the San Benito River.

Creeks in the CCMA exhibit varying degrees of quality in riparian habitat. Creek areas in proper functioning condition contain a series of small pools one to four feet deep, connected by a slightly meandering but stable streambed that is not deeply down-cut or altered, and provide habitat for plant species not found elsewhere in the CCMA. Brewer's willow (*Salix breweri*), an uncommon serpentine-restricted species, dominates the overstory, and two low-growing grasses, scratchgrass (*Muhlenbergia asperifolia*) and inland saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*), dominate the ground cover. Interspersed among the willows and grasses are uncommon plants such as shortspike hedgenettle (*Stachys pycnantha*), Hernandez's bluecurls (*Trichostema rubisepalum*), and Guirado's goldenrod (*Solidago guiradonsis*). More common riparian plants in the CCMA include marsh grass-of-Parnassus (*Parnassia palustris*), giant red Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja miniata*), and Van Houtte's columbine (*Aquilegia eximia*). Pools, meandering streams, and productive vegetative growth all serve to slow down flowing water and retain it longer in the soil, trap and hold sediments, reduce the channelization of stream banks, and raise the water table so that water is available to plants farther from the creek.

Special Designations

Serpentine Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

In 1984, the BLM designated approximately 30,000 acres of the New Idria Serpentine Formation within the CCMA as the Clear Creek Serpentine Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). This ACEC is sometimes referred to as the Hazardous Asbestos Area (HAA). Areas of Critical Environmental Concern are areas of concern where special management attention is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards. This Serpentine ACEC was designated because of the health concerns associated with the naturally occurring asbestos within the serpentine soils and because of the unique vegetation and forest types associated with serpentine soil.

Human induced changes within this geologically unique area, and the presence of distinctive plant species associated with the serpentine formation, established the need for special management attention. Human disturbance to the soils and plants in the Serpentine ACEC is a special management concern, because throughout the ACEC, soil formation tends to be slow, and the topsoil shallow. Additionally, plant regeneration is slow, and accelerated erosion from human activities (such as mining, road building and maintenance, and recreation) has negatively affected soil and vegetative resources. Minimizing soil erosion and damage to sensitive plant populations is a management priority. The Serpentine ACEC provides visitors with a variety of recreation experiences. However, due to the high concentrations of naturally occurring asbestos, public health concerns persist over the use of this popular recreation area.

San Benito Mountain Research Natural Area (RNA)

The San Benito Mountain area was designated as an Outstanding Natural Area in the early 1970's, and lies within the larger Clear Creek Serpentine ACEC. In 1996, the BLM designated the San Benito Mountain Natural Area as a Research Natural Area to encourage research and provide protection of the unique conifer forest on and around San Benito Mountain. The ROD (1999) approved expansion of the SBMRNA to 4,082 acres. Vehicle travel is only allowed on the County roads and "ridge route" within the RNA. Cross-country or off-route vehicle travel is not allowed.

The San Benito Mountain Forest is the only forest in the world that supports Jeffrey (*Pinus jeffreyi*), Coulter (*P. coulteri*), and foothill (*P. sabiniana*) pines, and incense cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*) at the same location. The San Benito Mountain population of Jeffrey pine is the only population of this species in the California Coast Range south of northern Lake County (Kuchler 1977, p. 151). In 1986, the BLM started fencing the boundaries of the Research Natural Area easily accessible to vehicle trespass (due to unauthorized OHV use). Continued unauthorized OHV use in the Research Natural Area, primarily on the sparsely vegetated or barren hillsides, adversely affects this unique environment and the values for which it was established. The BLM recently completed an additional three miles of fence to protect the RNA and adjacent Upper Clear Creek Canyon.

Two existing routes that occur within the RNA will be included in the proposed action. These routes are R011, and R013. These routes will be monitored during the event to ensure use remains on existing tread.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES: Proposed Action

Air & Water Quality:

Air and water would be adversely affected in the short-term as a result of this race. Motorcycles could cause short-term dust emissions. Dust clouds, if any, should dissipate within a few hours of the event, particularly since the event date would be in the winter wet months, and frequent light precipitation events are common during this

time of year. Stream crossings would be impacted by motorcycles crossing, causing an increase (over natural baseline levels) of an unknown amount of downstream transport of sediments, and causing rutting immediately adjacent to the stream banks. In the event of high rainfall or snow, the required use of alternate wet weather course(s) would reduce the amount of sediment delivery, because most of the routes utilized along the wet weather course have water control structures in place. However, some rutting on these routes would probably occur. The total impacts to air and water quality could be similar to adverse impacts associated with OHV play and trail use on a normal weekend during the high-use season. The course travels on the main road through the Alpine Mine, but this should not increase downstream delivery of sediments as this main road has been repaired with erosion control structures in place. Since a main element of this event is to reach checkpoints within designated time intervals, it is highly unlikely that participants would be traveling off of the established course.

Cultural Resources and Native American Religious Concerns:

The proposed action should have little to no impact on cultural resources, except for CA-SBn-62/H which will be monitored. Typically, uncontrolled vehicular access has the potential to negatively impact cultural resources by damaging fragile surface and subsurface features or artifacts. However, the proposed action is not the type of event that encourages free-play of vehicles: the participants are required to stay on designated routes to meet the course objectives for time and distances traveled.

Environmental Justice:

The proposed action would not result in disproportionately high or adverse human health or environmental effects on low-income or minority communities.

Health & Safety:

Due to the nature of competitive OHV events, there could be some impacts to human health and safety from vehicle accidents. However, the permittee would furnish BLM with a First Aid and Safety Plan, and the permittee would organize and provide qualified personnel who would be equipped with first aid equipment, communications, and transportation to assist accident victims without delay. In addition, environmental protection measures have been incorporated into all the alternatives to avoid impacts to sensitive resources and human health and safety. Therefore, the proposed action is not likely to impact human health and safety.

Invasive, Nonnative Species:

Post event monitoring for the spread of invasive weeds will occur in the ongoing invasive weed monitoring. No parking in infested areas will occur therefore no increased risk of spreading yellow starthistle is anticipated.

Recreation:

During competitive events there is a potential that other public users of the CCMA would be locally displaced from some popular routes and trails. Access to some trails could be reduced, but flaggers and signs should help to minimize conflicts between participants and non-participants. Additionally, the event is publicized on the Clear Creek hotline, and on bulletin boards in the area, so other users would be able to learn of the event and plan their trip and visit accordingly.

Soils:

Based on the environmental protection measures incorporated into all the alternatives, the proposed action would not impact soil resources in the Serpentine ACEC.

Threatened and Endangered Species:

Currently, the Clear Creek Management area is used as an over flight area by the California condor. Bald eagles winter along open bodies of water in the CCMA area, in particular the San Benito River and the Hernandez Reservoir near the CCMA. Neither species are expected to be affected through the proposed action.

The proposed action would potentially cause a short term disturbance to wildlife species adjacent to the event corridor due to increased noise and and vehicle flow. It is expected that wildlife would resume normal activity patterns in the areas used for the event upon its termination. Impacts to the foothill yellow-legged frog, coast horned lizard, western pond turtle and two-striped garter snake are expected to be minimal due to a winter dormancy period and the environmental protection measures designed to protect habitat.

Based on the environmental protection measures incorporated into all the alternatives, no direct impacts would occur to the threatened San Benito evening primrose, or to BLM-sensitive species including the rayless layia. No endangered animals or their habitat would be affected by this event. Monitoring will be conducted during and after the event to evaluate the sensitive species habitat.

Wetlands and Riparian Zones:

The proposed action would impact some riparian zones along stream/river courses, including the San Benito River. The reduction of course area paralleling stream courses minimizes the potential negative effects of concentrated motorcycle use in these areas. In contrast, perpendicular course crossings, utilized wherever possible, would result in only small spatial disturbance and minimal increase in sediment delivery. No new stream crossings are proposed.

Special Designations:

Serpentine Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

Based on the environmental protection measures incorporated into all the alternatives, the proposed action would not impact the Serpentine ACEC and the values for which it was established.

San Benito Mountain Research Natural Area (RNA)

Based on the environmental protection measures, including temporary corridor fencing and monitoring, there are no anticipated impacts within the RNA.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES: No Action Alternative

Air & Water Quality

No impact.

Cultural Resources:

No impact.

Environmental Justice:

No impact.

Health and Safety:

No impact.

Invasive Weeds:

No impact.

Recreation:

An annual permitted recreation activity which is in conformance with the land use plan would not occur. In addition, fees which are collected from this event are used for recreation site improvements at the site would not be collected/realized by BLM. This valuable source of funding will provide a direct benefit to the recreation users of Clear Creek to print maps and improve existing camping and staging areas. By not permitting the Quicksilver event as well as other similar annual events would result in the loss of about \$2,500 in revenues.

Soils:

No impact.

Threatened and Endangered Species:

No impact.

Wetland and Riparian Communities

No impact.

Special Designations:

Serpentine Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

No impact.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

If event organizers utilized the same route year after year, there could be some long-term effects on the routes and the adjacent stream courses and related riparian habitat. For example, if stream crossings were repeatedly utilized with no hardening structures put into place, consequent sediment delivery in those locations could increase from year to year. Similarly, vegetative diversity and density could be impacted increasingly from year to year. However, courses vary from year to year, and there are relatively few organized events. The concentration of use one or a few days per year for organized events would not be expected to be much different overall than yearly dispersed motorcycle use. Additionally, the BLM is increasingly installing erosion control devices on routes and has a goal to continue to work with event proponents to reduce the number of stream crossings for organized events.

NOTIFICATION

Notification of the proposed action and analysis has been prominently posted in the Hollister Field Office area during its undertaking.

DOCUMENT REVIEW

Environmental Coordinator

Date

Persons/Agencies Consulted:
Hollister Field Office Staff

Preparer(s): Sky Murphy, Environmental Coordinator
Brian White, Clear Creek Project Manager
Lesly Smith, Outdoor Recreation Planner and
Tim Moore, Geologist/Hazmat Coordinator
Julie Anne Delgado, Botanist
Gary Diridoni, Wildlife Biologist
Erik Zaborsky, Archaeologist
Eric Wergeland, GIS support

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
HOLLISTER FIELD OFFICE**

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT/DECISION RECORD
2005 Timekeepers Wild Boar and Piglet Competitive Motorcycle Enduros
Clear Creek Management Area
CA-190-05-04**

DECISION: It is my decision to issue a Special Recreation Permit and approve Timekeepers Motorcycle Club's proposal to conduct a two-day competitive motorcycle races on public lands, as evaluated in the attached environmental assessment. Measures mitigating event impacts are formulated into the attached conditions of approval, incorporated by reference as the decision of the Bureau of Land Management regarding this action. A copy of this Decision Record and attendant conditions shall be in the possession of the permittee during all undertakings approved herein.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI): Environmental impacts associated with the proposed action have been assessed. I conclude that the proposed action will not have any significant impacts on the human environment and is not a major federal action. Preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 is not required.

RATIONALE FOR DECISION: The proposed action does not result in any unnecessary or undue environmental degradation and is in conformance with the Hollister Resource Management Plan (1984), as amended, and with other applicable law, regulation and policy. My decision is based on these findings, as documented in the attached environmental assessment and the FONSI determination above.

COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING: Compliance checks will be conducted for this permits and day-of-event monitoring will be conducted.

MITIGATION MEASURES:

The event course traverses trails T195 and OR 748 which have been identified for repair prior to use for this event. In order for the identified trails to be used for the event, the BLM will perform all necessary trail repairs prior to the event. Additional trail assessments will occur prior to the event, and any additional pre-race route maintenance would be documented in the case file.

The permittee will be required to grade or otherwise repair portions of the course which are adversely impacted as a direct consequence of the event such that travel by the general public, or service vehicles associated with maintenance of rights-of-way, is impeded. Corrective and preventative road fixes over the main road network shall be applied where necessary. If dry conditions warrant watering of trails to reduce dust, the

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL AND ADVISORY:

PROJECT: 2005 Timekeepers Wild Boar and Piglet Competitive Motorcycle Enduros in the Clear Creek Management Area

CONTROL NUMBER: CA-190-05-04

Conditions of Approval

1. Issuance of the permit is dependent on the results of pre-race monitoring. The monitoring must show one of the following:
 - a) There has been a significant amount of rain in the Clear Creek area so that the soils are thoroughly wetted.
 - b) Asbestos fiber air monitoring (PCM method) under simulated race conditions is less than 0.1 fiber per cc for an 8-hour time-weighted average and the sample 30-minute short term exposure level calculations are less than 1 fiber per cc. This pre-race testing should be done as close to the scheduled race date as possible, but not more than three weeks. This item requires the participation of two to three members of permittee's club for approximately 3 hours upon the selected test date.
2. A permit will not be issued when soil conditions are too dry or too wet.
3. Prior to the event, all advertisements, flyers, etc. for the event will include the following language:

WARNING: Soils in the Clear Creek Management Area contain asbestos which has been determined to be hazardous to your health.

One copy of such advertisements/flyers will be provided to the BLM-Hollister Field Office.
4. Where the course intersects county roads or heavy use areas by the public, signs will be placed to inform the public that a race is occurring at that location. The race date and times will be written clearly on the signs.
5. A written notice of the asbestos health hazard will be provided to all event entrants. Each entrant must sign a statement that they have read and understood the asbestos health hazard information. The originals of the signed sheets will be given to the BLM.
6. Letters to private landowners, whose lands may be affected by the event will be notified by certified mail, return receipt requested. A copy of the letter and the signed receipts will be furnished to the BLM-Hollister Field Office. The letter will instruct landowners to notify the race sponsor and the BLM if they object to the course crossing their private land.

7. Vehicle play or washing in the San Benito River or any other streams or creeks is prohibited.
8. The permittee shall designate a field contract representative (FCR) who will be responsible for overseeing compliance with protective conditions and for coordinating compliance with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The FCR must be onsite during all event activities. The FCR shall have the authority to halt all event activities that are in violation of the conditions. The FCR shall have a copy of the decision record and conditions of approval during event related activities. The FCR may be a crew chief or field supervisor, a project manager, or any other employee of the permittee.
9. All vehicles will stay on existing roads and on the predetermined course. Straying from the course will not be allowed. There will be no passing through openings in the brush or barren areas in deviation from the route, and there will be no shortcutting of corners.
10. Roads and trails may not be closed or blocked to general public use unless specifically authorized in advance by BLM.

Should motorcycles break down, they will be moved to the side of the road, but not into any vegetation. Should participants stop to rest, they will pull over onto side roads or areas devoid of vegetation. Any entrant who abandons the event en route will exit the course on open routes of travel.

11. All vehicles associated with event (spectator, support and participant) must meet State and Federal registration and equipment requirements. Vehicles must be registered pursuant to CVC 4000 or 38000, or the laws of the state of residence of the owner, with the appropriate vehicle license plate or registration sticker displayed.

D.O.T. approved seat belts must be worn by all front seat occupants of vehicles originally equipped with seatbelts.

All motorcycles and ATV's shall be equipped with a spark arrestor. The muffler/exhaust must comply with EPA excessive noise standards.

The permittee will insure that the participant vehicles are available for pre-event inspection by BLM, State and/or local law enforcement personnel.

12. Course flagging or ribbon may be tied, clipped or stapled to trees or vegetation, as long as staples are not longer than 3/8". Nailing of signs to trees or vegetation is not allowed. A representative sample of course marking will be provided to the BLM prior to the event.
13. The first aid and safety coordinator will be at the event to direct first aid and emergency rescue procedures. If any death or serious injury occurs in connection with this event, including spectators, participants and bystanders, the permittee shall

notify BLM and other proper authorities immediately. All reporting forms will be filled out and returned within 72 hours. Minor injuries may be reported with the post use report.

14. The permittee is responsible for public health and safety during all phases of the event. This includes, but is not limited to, spectator control, gas stop fire safety, toilet/sanitary facilities and trash pickup and disposal. No pit racing on BLM lands will be allowed.

Littering on public land is prohibited. All trash must be contained in garbage receptacles or bags.

Trash and food items would be carried out by the participants. The permittee would arrange to have a tail vehicle follow the participants and pick up any garbage that is inadvertently left behind.

15. The sale or dispensing of (e.g. redemption of drink tickets) alcoholic beverages on BLM lands is prohibited. Open alcoholic beverage containers are not allowed on or in vehicles on BLM lands.
16. When the event is over, a joint compliance check of the permit area will be made. The permittee and the Authorized Officer shall hold a joint inspection of the permit area to determine if compliance with the terms and conditions of this permit has been completed. The permittee shall perform within 30 days after the event at their own expense any required modifications or additional reclamation work needed to comply with the terms of this permit as conclusively determined by the Authorized Officer. The permittee will be required to grade or otherwise repair portions of the course and/or checkpoints which were adversely impacted as a direct consequence of the event such that travel by the general public, or service vehicles associated with maintenance of rights-of-way, is impeded.
17. Participants would be advised that many other visitors may be encountered along the course, and that proper riding etiquettes shall be observed at all times.
18. The permittee will comply with all conditions contained in this permit unless otherwise approved in writing by the Authorized Officer. Non-compliance with these conditions by the permittee, or any of his agents may at the option of the Authorized Officer result in the cancellation or suspension of the permit or adverse action against the permittee.
19. The permittee shall comply with applicable federal and state laws and regulations issued hereunder, existing or hereafter enacted or promulgated, affecting in any manner construction, operation, maintenance or termination of the permit.
20. The permittee shall confine all activities within the area specifically defined in the permit.

21. All highway **directional signs** for the event will be removed as soon as possible after the event (but not later than **one week**).
22. **Route markings** will be cleaned up within **two weeks** after the event.
23. All related event **trash and litter** will be cleaned up within **24 hours of the event**. The amount of the bond refund will be reduced by \$50.00 for each week the cleanup is delayed.
24. The post use report will be submitted within 15 days after the event.

Advisory

1. Actions other than those explicitly approved by the Bureau of Land Management which result in impacts upon archaeological resources, shall be subject to the judicial proceedings of the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. As property of the United States, no person may, without authorization, excavate, remove, damage, or otherwise alter or deface any historic or prehistoric site, artifact, or object of antiquity located on public lands.