

STEWARDS OF THE SEQUOIA

Division of CTUC non profit 501c3
PO Box 1246
Wofford Heights CA 93285

November 27, 2017

Director Lisa Mangat
California State Parks
1416 Ninth Street
Sacramento CA 95814

Dear Director Mangat,

On August 2, 2017 we sent a letter addressed to you personally about the need for your oversight regarding concerns of the now **four year temporary closure** of the Nightmare Gulch route in Red Rocks State Park to **historic designated** motorized use.

We received a long awaited November 14, 2017 response not from you but from Officer Brian Ketterer who again provides no documentation or justification for the continued closure of the historic Nightmare Gulch motorized route. He makes nebulous claims about future studies and thanks us for wanting to help. The same type of blow off Red Rocks Park Director Dingman has been giving the public via email numerous times over the course of the past four years.

In his letter Officer Ketterer is mistaken about the Ridgecrest Roundtable Meeting of July 27, 2017. Staff would not address concerns raised by the public regarding the Red Rocks Canyon State Park's Nightmare Gulch motorized closure. I was stopped from speaking after only two questions and less than three minutes by OHMVR Director Mat Fuzie who said the meeting was not the proper forum for my questions about Nightmare Gulch even though it was an agenda item, and Tehachapi District Director Russ Dingman refused to answer my questions regarding providing documentation of any issues on Nightmare Gulch that required a closure.

As we detailed in our prior August 2, 2017 letter to you the State Parks response to our Public Records Act request contained considerable documentation none of which justified the continued closure of Nightmare Gulch to motorized use. Officer Ketterman states that natural cultural and hydrological updates and studies are now needed to determine the most appropriate and timely reopening of this designated route.

We would then ask you-

1. Please provide the documentation justifying the need for the Nightmare Gulch closure to historic designated motorized use and the need for studies.
2. Why has it taken four years to consider starting studies of Nightmare Gulch route closure?
3. Do you find it appropriate for State Parks to keep a route closed for four years under a temporary closure order?
4. How does this closure comply with CEQA?
5. Do you find it appropriate to close a route and then wait 4 years to begin analysis of the issue?
6. Do you support Tehachapi District Director Russ Dingman repeated statements that closure orders and associated documentation are internal documents that cannot be provided to the public?

Your personal oversight is needed.

We would hope the Director of State Parks can take the time to look into why her staff appear to be trying to use a four year old temporary closure order to keep a route closed to historic motorized use indefinitely without justification or following proper procedure and have repeatedly turned away volunteers offers to help with any mitigation work necessary to lift the temporary closure. We look forward to timely personal response from you.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

Chris Horgan
Executive Director
Stewards of the Sequoia
Division of CTUC 501c3 non profit
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CC: Brian Robertson, OHMVR
Joe Rodriguez, Ridgecrest Geargrinders
Jeremy Rowell, Bakersfield Trailblazers
Ed Waldheim, Friends of Jawbone
Amy Granat, CORVA
Lorelie Oviat, Kern County Planning
Supervisor Mick Gleason
Congressman Kevin McCarthy
CA Senator Jean Fuller
Mark Cave, California Four Wheel Drive Association

"Since being founded in 2004, Stewards of the Sequoia continues to be the largest on-the-ground organization of volunteers in the Sequoia National Forest. Our crews have maintained over 3100 miles of trails and have planted hundreds of trees in reforestation projects. We represent in excess of 3000 members whose activities include camping, hunting, fishing, hiking, mountain biking, motorized recreation, boating, windsurfing, rock climbing and horse riding"

Promoting Responsible Recreation & Environmental Stewardship