

# STEWARDS OF THE SEQUOIA

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

August 3, 2018

Kathleen Amann, Deputy Director of Parks  
California State Parks  
1416 Ninth Street  
Sacramento CA 95814

Re: Nightmare Gulch Temporary Five Year and Counting Closure

Dear Deputy Director Amann,

Thank you for your letter of July 17th, 2018 on behalf of Director Mangat, in response to our letter of November 27 of last year.

We would like some further clarification-

1. Please provide higher resolution copies of the photos shown on your Nightmare Gulch Trail Condition Inventory pages.
2. When were these photos taken?
3. Has State Parks identified any mitigation measures that could be taken to fix the primitive Nightmare Gulch route so it can be reopened?
4. Being 5 years into the temporary closure, why has State Parks not identified the data sets needed in order to determine how to fix the route?
5. Please provide OHMVR staff names who took part in your Nightmare Gulch Assessments.
6. Are you saying the OHMVR agrees with your 5 year temporary closure of the route?
7. Why did State Parks wait 4 years to determine the issues with Nightmare Gulch shown on the Nightmare Gulch Sensitive Resources Draft 12/2017 and Route Condition Inventory Nightmare Gulch July 2017 that you provided to us in your recent letter? Are these all the issues?
8. What regulation requires an existing designated route, such as Nightmare Gulch, to remain closed until a new Red Rocks Park Plan is completed?
9. The current 3/1/17 temporary closure order, as well as the prior 2013 closure order, are both for public safety and natural resource protection. The orders say nothing about cultural resource issues. When was the cultural issue identified? Are the cultural issues on the trail tread? Is the route harming the cultural sites?
10. Why has State Parks repeatedly turned away volunteers over the past 5 years, who offered to help fix the public safety issues on the route?
11. When will State Parks identify what needs to be done to fix the washouts on the route?
12. What are the criteria that State Parks uses to determine when a primitive 4x4 route is unsafe? What constitutes a primitive 4x4 route according to State Parks?
13. Would the route be safe for smaller motorized vehicles such as dirt bikes or quads?
14. What type of work is needed to repair the washouts on the route?
15. Have there been any accidents or injuries on the route due to the washout areas, that would indicate a public safety issue?
16. We understand State Parks has been grading other primitive 4x4 routes in Red Rocks, which has changed the routes to street car level. What process has State Parks completed to change the routes from primitive 4x4 to street car routes? On what basis has State Parks removed the challenge from the primitive routes, which the 4x4 public prefers and for which they are designated?

17. Since State Parks has road grading equipment and manpower to grade other roads, why hasn't State Parks used them to fix the washout public safety issues on Nightmare Gulch?
18. Why did it take State Parks seven months to respond to our prior letter?
19. Why were none of your "Route Condition Inventory of Nightmare Gulch" pages from June of last year that you provide in your letter of 7/17/18, provided to us under our Public Information Request of July of last year?
20. Why did it take over seven months to respond to our letter?
21. How does the five year temporary closure of Nightmare Gulch comply with CEQA?

Director Dingman previously told me several times that all documents regarding Nightmare Gulch were confidential including all the documents that we subsequently received from State Parks under our Public Information Request. It seems very convenient that State Parks now claims cultural issues which are truly y confidential by law, especially when that is not one of the reasons given in any of the closure orders.

Thank you for your attention in this matter. Please let me know when we can expect your response to the above clarification.

Sincerely,

Chris Horgan  
Executive Director  
Stewards of the Sequoia  
Division of CTUC 501c3 non profit  
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CC: Brian Robertson, OHMVR Division Chief  
Ted Cabral OHMVR Commissioner  
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  
Steve Williams, Kern County Sherriff

*"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 3300 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"*

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