

§ 420.1

43 CFR, Subtitle B, Ch. I (10-1-07 Edition)

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AUTHORITY: 32 Stat. 388 (43 U.S.C. 391 *et seq.*) and acts amendatory thereof and supplementary thereto; EO 11644 (37 FR 2877).

SOURCE: 39 FR 26893, July 24, 1974, unless otherwise noted.

**§ 420.1 Objectives.**

The provisions of this part establish regulations for off-road vehicle use on reclamation lands to protect the land resources, to promote the safety of all users, to minimize conflicts among the various uses, and to ensure that any permitted use will not result in significant adverse environmental impact or cause irreversible damage to existing ecological balances.

**§ 420.2 General closure.**

Reclamation lands are closed to off-road vehicle use, except for an area or trail specifically opened to use of off-road vehicles in accordance with § 420.21.

**§ 420.3 Adjacent lands.**

When administratively feasible, the regulation of off-road vehicle use on Reclamation lands will be compatible with such use as permitted by recreation-managing agencies on adjacent lands (both public and private).

**§ 420.4 Enforcement.**

The provisions of this part will be enforced to the extent of Bureau authority, including entering into cooperative agreements with Federal, State, county, or local law enforcement officials.

**§ 420.5 Definitions.**

As used in this part, the term:

- (a) *Off-road vehicle* means any motorized vehicle (including the standard

automobile) designed for or capable of cross-country travel on or immediately over land, water, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or natural terrain. The term excludes: (1) Nonamphibious registered motorboats; (2) military, fire, emergency, or law enforcement vehicles when used for emergency purpose; (3) self-propelled lawnmowers, snowblowers, garden or lawn tractors, and golf carts while being used for their designed purpose; (4) agricultural, timbering, construction, exploratory, and development equipment and vehicles while being used exclusively as authorized by permit, lease, license, agreement, or contract with the Bureau; (5) any combat or combat support vehicle when used in times of national defense emergencies; and (6) "official use" vehicles.

(b) *Bureau* means the Bureau of Reclamation.

(c) *Reclamation lands* mean all lands under the custody and control of the Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation.

(d) *Off-road vehicle area* means a portion or all of a specifically designated parcel of Reclamation lands opened to off-road vehicle use in accordance with the procedure in section 420.21.

(e) *Off-road vehicle trail* means a specifically delineated path or way varying in width which is designated to be used by and maintained for hikers, horsemen, snow travelers, bicyclists and for motorized vehicles.

(f) *Official use* means use of a vehicle by an employee, agent, or designated representative of the Federal Government who, with special permission from the Bureau of Reclamation, uses a vehicle for an officially authorized purpose.

(g) *Organized Event* means a structured, or consolidated, or scheduled meeting involving 15 or more vehicles for the purpose of recreational use of Reclamation lands involving the use of off-road vehicles. The term does not include family groups participating in informal recreational activities.

[39 FR 26893, July 24, 1974, as amended at 44 FR 34909, June 15, 1979]

**Subpart A—Operating Criteria**

**§ 420.11 Requirements—vehicles.**

Each off-road vehicle that is operated on Reclamation lands shall meet the following requirements:

(a) It shall conform to applicable State laws and vehicle registration requirements.

(b) It shall be equipped with a proper muffler and spark arrestor in good working order and in constant operation. The spark arrestor must conform to Forest Service Spark Arrestor Standard 5100-1a, and there shall be no muffler cutout, bypass, or similar device.

(c) It shall have adequate brakes and, for operation from dusk to dawn, working headlights and taillights.

**§ 420.12 Requirements—operators.**

(a) In addition to the regulation of part 420, operators shall comply with any applicable State laws pertaining to off-road vehicles; if State laws are lacking or less stringent than the regulations established in this part, then the regulations in part 420 are minimum standards and are controlling.

(b) Each operator of an off-road vehicle operated on Reclamation lands shall possess a valid motor vehicle operator's permit or license; or, if no permit or license is held, he/she shall be accompanied by or under the immediate supervision of a person holding a valid permit or license.

(c) During the operation of snowmobiles, trail bikes, and any other off road vehicle the operator shall wear safety equipment, generally accepted or prescribed by applicable State law or local ordinance for use of the particular activity in which he/she is participating.

(d) No person may operate an off-road vehicle:

(1) In a reckless, careless or negligent manner;

(2) In excess of established speed limits;

(3) While under the influence of alcohol or drugs;

(4) In a manner likely to cause irreparable damage or disturbance of the land, wildlife, vegetative resources, or archeological and historic values of resources; or

(5) In a manner likely to become an unreasonable nuisance to other users of Reclamation or adjacent lands.

**Subpart B—Designated Areas and Permitted Events**

**§ 420.21 Procedure for designating areas for off-road vehicle use.**

The Regional Director shall, to the extent practicable, hold public hearings to obtain interested user groups, local populace, and affected Federal, State, and county agencies' opinions for opening or closing an area or trail in a manner that provides an opportunity for the public to express themselves and have their views taken into account. The Regional Director may act independently if he/she deems emergency action to open or close or restrict areas and trails is necessary to attain the objectives of the regulations of this part.

(a) Regional Directors shall designate and publicize those areas and trails which are open to off-road vehicle use in accordance with § 420.23.

(b) Before any area or trail is opened to off-road vehicle use, the Regional Director will establish specific regulations which are consistent with the criteria in these regulations.

(c) The Regional Director will inspect designated areas and trails periodically to determine conditions resulting from off-road vehicle use. If he determines that the use of off-road vehicles will cause or is causing considerable adverse effects on the soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitat, or cultural or historic resources of particular areas or trails of the public lands, he shall immediately close such areas or trails to the type of off-road vehicle causing such effects. No area or trail shall be reopened until the Regional Director determines that adverse effects have been eliminated and that measures have been implemented to prevent future recurrence. The public shall be notified of restrictions or closure in accordance with § 420.23.

[39 FR 26893, July 24, 1974, as amended at 44 FR 34909, June 15, 1979]

**§ 420.22**

**§ 420.22 Criteria for off-road vehicle areas.**

(a) Areas and trails to be opened to off-road vehicle use shall be located:

(1) To minimize the potential hazards to public health and safety, other than the normal risks involved in off-road vehicle use.

(2) To minimize damage to soil watershed, vegetation, or other resources of the public lands.

(3) To minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats.

(4) To minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to ensure compatibility of uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors.

(5) In furtherance of the purposes and policy of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Pub. L. 91-190, 83 Stat. 852).

(b) Areas and trails shall not be located in areas possessing unique natural, wildlife, historic, cultural, archeological, or recreational values unless the Commissioner determines that these unique values will not be adversely affected.

**§ 420.23 Public notice and information.**

Areas and trails may be marked with appropriate signs to permit, control or prohibit off-road vehicle use on Reclamation lands. All notices concerning the regulation of off-road vehicles shall be posted in a manner that will reasonably bring them to the attention of the public. A copy of any notice shall be made available to the public in the regional office and field offices where appropriate. Such notice, and the reasons therefore, shall be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER together with such other forms of public notice or news release as may be appropriate and necessary to adequately describe the conditions of use and the time periods when the areas involved in an action under these regulations are to be (a) opened to off-road vehicle use, (b) restricted to certain types of off-road vehicle use and (c) closed to off-road vehicle use.

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**§ 420.24 Permits for organized events.**

Regional Directors may issue permits for the operation of off-road vehicles in organized races, rallies, meets, endurance contests, and other events on areas designed for each event. The application for such an event shall:

(a) Be received by the Regional Director at least 60 days before the event;

(b) Provide a plan for restoration and rehabilitation of trails and areas used, and demonstrate that the prospective permittee can be bonded for or deposit the amount that may be required to cover the cost;

(c) Demonstrate that special precautions will be taken to:

(1) Protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public; and

(2) Minimize damage to the land and related resources.

(d) Application fees (in amounts to be determined) as authorized by section 2 of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (78 Stat. 897), as amended, shall accompany all applications.

**§ 420.25 Reclamation lands administered by other agencies.**

(a) Off-road vehicle use will be administered in accordance with Executive Order 11644, by those Federal and non-Federal agencies which have assumed responsibility for management of Reclamation lands for recreation purposes.

Specifically:

(1) Reclamation lands managed by the National Park Service, the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, and other Federal agencies will be administered in accordance with regulations of those agencies.

(2) Reclamation lands managed by non-Federal entities will be administered in a manner consistent with both part 420 and applicable non-Federal laws and regulations.

(b) Public lands withdrawn, but not yet utilized for Reclamation purposes, will be administered by the Forest Service or by the Bureau of Land Management in accordance with regulations of those agencies, but consistent with Reclamation requirements for retaining the land.