

For Immediate Release

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NEW MEXICO PUBLIC LANDS ACTION NETWORK SEEKS TO CURB RECKLESS RIDERS IN NEW MEXICO

New statewide group to partner with local groups and individuals to curtail destruction of public lands by reckless and irresponsible off-road vehicle riders

Albuquerque, NM—Triggered by growing concern over increasing use of off-road vehicles (ORV) by reckless riders on public lands, groups and individuals across New Mexico formed the New Mexico Public Lands Action Network (NM PLAN: www.newmexicoplan.org) to address the growing threat posed to all other public lands users by irresponsible ORV riders.

NM PLAN held its initial statewide organizing meeting in Albuquerque recently and more than 40 ranchers, hikers, private land owners, acequias, land grants, watershed associations, law enforcement and public health officials and others joined forces to promote responsible use of public lands and ensure that the state's ORV-related laws are strongly and effectively enforced.

NM PLAN's statewide director Emily Romero said the group hopes to achieve its goals through education, advocacy and partnerships with local groups.

"Public lands belong to all of us, but along with the privilege of using them for recreation, we also have a duty to use these lands responsibly," Romero said. "It's not right that a small minority of reckless riders are destroying our beautiful landscapes with no regard at all for the rest of us."

Off-road vehicle violations are especially widespread on BLM lands, Romero said. She said that more and more watershed associations are working to prevent damage to riparian areas caused by reckless riders.

Romero said reckless ORV riders also cost taxpayers money in injury-related treatment. She said many ORV accidents result in death and serious injuries requiring long-term care. Often, ORV riders lack the necessary insurance to pay for care, and taxpayers end up footing the bill.

To learn more about New Mexico PLAN, contact State Director Emily Romero at 505-459-4304 or visit the organization's web site at:

www.newmexicoplan.org Please see attached fact sheet for additional information about NM PLAN and the impacts of reckless riding on public lands.