

OFF ROAD VEHICLE USE Q&A

COASTAL FIRE CENTRE - 2017

Why is the Coastal Fire Centre not implementing an Off Road Vehicle (ORV) closure?

- Topography is the answer
 - Coastal lands for the most part are very steep and rocky
 - In the interior, the topography is rolling grasslands. ORVers have a tendency to travel off of existing roads and strike out across the grasslands.
 - ORVers on the coast typically use Forest Service Roads and constructed trails
- Also, FSRs are heavily used, and fires are reported well
- So far this year, we have had two fires that have been attributed to ORV use on Forest Service Roads.
- Despite the high to extreme fire danger on the coast, we currently have below average fire starts from people's activities in Coastal forested areas.
- So far this year, we have had 65 human caused fires; our 10 year average on the same date is 93.
- We will be watching fire causes closely, and will consider issuing ORV restrictions if conditions warrant them.

If people are using ORVs in coastal back country, what should they do to use them responsibly?

- ORV exhaust systems burn hot enough to start forest fuels on fire.
- Grasses that have cured (no longer green and lush) are very susceptible to ignition when in contact with exhaust systems.
- Grasses and forestry debris can collect along the exhaust system, putting it in contact with hot metal.
- Responsible riders should use well maintained, dirt surfaced roads.
- When stopping, riders should remain on dirt surfaced roads and not stop in grassy or weeded areas.
- If driving through grasses or weed cannot be avoided, drivers should travel slowly and stop often to clean debris from exhaust systems. They should check behind them frequently for smoking debris on the ground.
- ORV users should carry some firefighting tools in their vehicles (i.e. fire extinguishers, shovels, axes or pulaskis).
- A complete report on the risks of ATVs starting forest fires can be viewed at: <http://wildfire.fpinnovations.ca/39/ATVFinal.pdf>

Who can people report irresponsible ORV use to? What fines might apply?

- You can report irresponsible ORV use to the RAPP line (Report all Poachers & Polluters) at 1 877952-7277 or to CrimeStoppers or the RCMP. If possible, include the licence number in your report.
- If the activity causes or contributes to a wildfire, the person responsible may be ordered to pay all firefighting and associated costs.

- The driver could receive a \$575 fine for dropping, releasing or mishandling a burning substance.

What is the fire danger on the coast right now? What could the future hold?

- Currently, the fire danger is high to extreme in most areas of the Coastal Fire Centre.
- There is no significant rain in the forecast for these areas in the foreseeable future.