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Park Directive CHIS-006b

To: All Channel Islands National Park Personnel
From: Superintendent, Channel Islands National Park
Subject: Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV) Policy

INTRODUCTION

A variety of vehicles are utilized within Channel Islands National Park in order to meet the park's mission, which includes natural resource management, education, public safety, maintenance, and other purposes. Many of the roads located on the islands are unimproved and certain areas are not accessible by road vehicles. Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTVs) are used within the park for a variety of purposes in order to reach difficult or remote areas. This Standard Operating Procedure was developed in order to ensure the safety of vehicle operators and to ensure minimal impact to the environment and visitor's experience.

I. PURPOSE

Park drivers, which include NPS employees, volunteers and cooperators who are operating utility terrain vehicles (UTVs) in the park are exposed to hazards that are unique and that are not routinely encountered in an urban setting. Island drivers face narrow, winding, dirt roads; adverse weather and road conditions; wildlife; aircraft; and visitor foot traffic. This program is intended to reduce and prevent impacts to park visitors and resources, reduce UTV accidents and thereby reduce associated injuries and property damage.

This policy establishes an effective UTV Driving Program that takes a pro-active approach to reducing UTV accidents. It outlines the necessary and appropriate uses and locations for UTVs use to enhance the margin of safety for a variety of driver skill/experience levels. This policy applies to all individuals who are authorized to operate government UTVs in the performance of their work. Government UTVs are vehicles owned, leased, rented, or otherwise acquired for official purposes. Skills and competency training in the operation of specialized equipment such as heavy equipment, forklifts, motor vehicles off road vehicles (ATV's), emergency vehicles, etc. are not covered in this guideline. Road closures apply to all vehicle operators, regardless of affiliation, if they are permitted to drive on NPS property.

II. DEFINITIONS

A Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV), also known as a Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle (ROV), is defined as a motorized off-highway vehicle designed to travel on four or more tires, intended by the manufacturer for use by one or more persons and having the following characteristics:

- A steering wheel for steering control
- Non-straddling seating
- Minimum top speed of 30 mph
- Gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) no greater than 3750 lbs (1700 kg)
- Less than 80 inches (2030 mm) in overall width, exclusive of accessories
- Engine displacement equal to or less than 1,000 cc
- Identification by means of a 17 character PIN or VIN

They are comparable to All Terrain Vehicles (ATV's) in their uses. They generally have side by side seating with restraint systems and rollover protection systems. These vehicles can weigh more than 1,600 lbs and haul upwards of 1,000lbs in the bed/cargo area. UTVs have the ability to drive on 4 wheel drive roads and off road.

All UTVs require a valid state driver's license to operate.

III. OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of an effective UTV safety program is to educate drivers of the necessity to be pro-active and to drive UTVs safely in the island environment. The objectives of this park-wide program are:

- To reduce individual injuries and property damage related to UTV operations;
- Define appropriate use of UTVs.
- Establish procedures for obtaining UTV privileges for driving on any of the islands.
- Describe UTV driver etiquette.
- Describe maintenance care requirements and responsibilities.
- To re-enforce driver safety awareness in and out of the workplace.

Appropriate Use of UTVs:

Government UTVs are utilized on the islands to facilitate the park mission. Resource monitoring, research, facility maintenance, campground patrols, visitor and resource protection response and patrols as well as visitor services all rely to a degree on UTV use. Although the UTVs are maintained to assist drivers in accomplishing their field work, those work plans and goals are secondary to maintaining an adequate margin of safety during island vehicle operation. UTVs further the park mission by decreasing visitor impact from large four wheel drive vehicles. In addition, this cuts down on noise and dust pollution near high visitor use areas.

Non-NPS owned UTVs are used on NPS lands within Channel Islands National Park by park cooperators, which includes other government and non-government agencies, for a variety of missions and purposes when approved by the Superintendent. All non-NPS owned UTV use and operation will be held to the standard of this POLICY. Outside entities may use their own policies as long as they meet or exceed the standards outlined in this POLICY.

UTV Driver's Certification:

- A valid state issued driver's license is required.
- Prior to taking the UTV/ROV Basic Driver course, participants are required to take the Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association's (ROHVA) E-course. The course may be found at <http://www.rohva.org/>.
- Participate in and pass the UTV/ROV Basic Driver safety course, taught by a certified ROHVA Instructor.
- Drivers must retake the UTV/ROV Basic Driver Course every 2 years (24 months) from the date of their last course.
- Training will be coordinated and conducted by the Channel Islands National Park ATV/UTV Coordinator on an "as needed" basis. Priority will be given to those employees who require use of UTVs as part of their job as determined by employee's supervisor.

UTV Instructors:

All UTV/ROV instructors will be required to take the Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association (ROHVA) Driver Coach Preparation Workshop and successfully complete all requirements with passing scores prior to teaching the UTV/ROV Basic Driver Course at Channel Islands National Park. Instructors must complete a minimum of two Basic Driver Courses per year and attend at least one UTV/ROV/ATV continuing education workshop to maintain instructor certification.

Island Driving Certification:

Prior to an individual being allowed to use a UTV on the islands, their supervisor must have dispatch complete a Department of Motor Vehicle driver's license (DL) record check. Dispatch will provide, via email or hard copy, the driver's name and DL status to the Island Ranger. Prior to the island drive test, form DI-131 Application for U.S. Government Motor Vehicle Operator's Identification Card will be completed. The DI-131 form will be present for the drive test and subsequently filed in Dispatch. The drive test will also be recorded by the Island Ranger of designee on a Drive Test Log. The drive test log will include each driver's zone (road color) certification level.

Once the individual is certified to drive on the islands they are certified for both islands but must be oriented to the vehicle and island prior to driving a UTV on that island.

All drivers who have been previously drive tested, but have not operated an island vehicle within a three year time period must have a refresher on UTV use and road conditions before any vehicle operation. This will constitute at a minimum, a verbal review of current island driving concerns and procedures. A zone certification will be assigned by the island ranger or designate and corresponding color coded road map will be discussed with the driver.

Procedures for the Island Drive Test:

- Supervisors shall communicate to the certified trainer(s) the need and frequency for an

individual to be drive certified.

- Supervisors shall ensure that applicants fill out and turn in to Dispatch a DMV records check, requested by the island ranger to verify it is clear and valid.
- Supervisor shall ensure for new island drivers, that an orientation to local island driving conditions, hazards, regulations and procedures is reviewed. A copy of this policy shall be reviewed with every new driver.
- A drive “test” checkout date is coordinated with the island ranger.
- Individual drive “test” checkout is conducted on island with the Island Ranger or his or her designee.
- A zone (road color) certification is assigned by the Island Ranger. Modification of the basic road color or zonal driving certification may be made in consultation with the supervisor.
- Driving on The Nature Conservancy (TNC) property is prohibited unless the driver has received an orientation from the TNC Program Director or the TNC Ranch Manager.

Island Driving Etiquette:

UTV operators are responsible for maintaining an awareness of potential adverse impacts on the visitor experience. Operators are expected to adhere to the following basic rules to provide a better visitor experience:

- Reducing speed to a crawl when driving near hikers.
- Driving slowly (no faster than 10 mph) through campgrounds and developed areas.
- Refrain from driving on the pier while the public is present.
- Minimizing vehicle operation in the campground to only those occasions when the campground is minimally occupied.
- Turn off the UTV while talking to visitors.

UTV Standard Operation Procedures:

This policy includes the guidelines for maintenance and safe operation of all UTVs on the islands.

Due to the remote location of these islands, the logistics of establishing and maintaining a fleet of UTVs that will service the needs of all drivers is a constant challenge. To ensure the continued maintenance, safe operation, and minimal wear and tear on the fleet, this up-dated operational policy must be adhered to at all times if you are engaged in operating any island UTV or wish to continue to operate any island UTV. Inappropriate use of an UTV will result in driving privileges of ANY island vehicle being revoked.

1. Before and after any UTV use, the operator is responsible for performing a UTV pre-ride inspection. UTV inspections will include a walk around to check (Report any damage to the Island Ranger or any permanent maintenance island staff immediately.):
 - **Tires and Wheels:** Condition, Tread, Air Pressure, Wheel Lugs.
 - **Controls:** Seat, adjustments, pedals, breaks, gear & drive train selector, ORS, Safety Belts, condition, operation.
 - **Lights:** Lenses & reflectors, illumination.
 - **Oil & Other Fluids:** Oil, Fuel, Coolant, Leaks.

- **Chassis & Accessories:** Shocks, Fasteners, Undercarriage, other equipment.
2. If the UTV is having mechanical issues, and is deemed unsafe to drive or is inoperable, the vehicle must be “red tagged.” This means flagging the vehicle so it is obvious that it is not drivable and removing the keys. **The keys will be given to the Island Ranger.**
 3. Before and after any UTV use, the operator is responsible to check and inventory UTV equipment. Report any missing equipment to the Island Ranger or permanent island maintenance staff member.
 4. **Seat belts will be worn at all times by passengers and operators** whenever a vehicle is in use. This is in compliance with state law and agency policy.
 5. **Helmets must be worn at all times by passengers and operators** whenever a vehicle is in use. A helmet must have Department of Transportation (DOT) label and must be full face or three-quarter protection.
 6. Drivers and passengers must wear all appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) whenever a vehicle is in use, including: over the ankle boots, work or other leather gloves, eye protection (goggles or safety glasses), long sleeve shirt, and full length pants.
 7. UTVs will not be driven off the established and maintained roadways. Certain projects and law enforcement, public safety and emergency situations may dictate off road travel, or travel on a closed roadway. These situations will be cleared either by the Superintendent or Chief Ranger. If they are not immediately available then the Island Ranger will decide prior to commencement.
 8. UTVs will not be driven through the campground before 7 am or after 5:30 pm, unless there is an emergency requiring their use. An emergency may be maintenance, natural resource, or public safety related.
 9. There is a zero tolerance policy for driving under the influence of any intoxicating substance. If you are on prescribed or over-the-counter medication, do not drive UTVs if there is a warning on the bottle on the effects of possible increased drowsiness or if it states to be careful while operating a motor vehicle. If you are unsure, contact the Island Ranger before operating a UTV.
 10. Maximum established speed limit is:
 - a. 20 mph on all roads (10 mph near campgrounds or developed areas)
 - b. This is a maximum speed, travel should always be at a rate that road, surroundings and weather conditions warrant.
 11. All vehicle operators must take special care and watch current and predicted weather conditions. Vehicles are not to be operated when it is raining or roads are muddy and slippery. As little as 1/10 of an inch of precipitation is enough to make the island roads impassable. Also, travel under these conditions can severely damage the roadway. The Island Ranger and/or the Permanent Island Maintenance staff will make the determination as to the usability of roads under these conditions. Be aware of wind direction and

velocity. Be aware that UTVs are smaller than trucks and offer less protection to eyes/face in high winds.

12. If spending more than one day on the island, UTV operators are responsible to ensure that the UTV being operated is thoroughly cleaned inside and outside and fueled before leaving the island. If only on the island for several hours, please leave the UTV in the condition it was found or better.
13. UTVs must be refueled if less than ½ a tank. This will comply with RM 9 policy.
14. A UTV may not be loaded in excess of manufacturer's maximum load recommendation. The maximum number of passengers shall never be exceeded and no passenger shall ride on the exterior of the vehicle, to include the cargo area.
15. Operators on SRI must also enter appropriate information on the SRI vehicle use log (road name, destination, and ETR)

IV. PROCESS/PROGRAM

All drivers that use UTVs in the performance of their duties will attend an approved 4 hour defensive driving course every three years and the UTV/ROV Basic Driver Course every 2 years. In addition, all drivers who incur a violation, or a chargeable accident, in a government vehicle will be required to be re-trained at the next available course or lose their driving privileges.

The National Safety Council's "Defensive Driving Course-4 Hours" (DDC-4) will be the park's approved driver safety course, and will be provided to all operators of motor vehicles/UTVs under the control of the park.

If a UTV operator has not driven on the islands in three years, an island driver's orientation must be completed.

Island Driver Certification: There are 3 levels of driver certification: 1. Local Driver (Yellow), 2. Primary-Restricted (Blue), and 3. "Unrestricted" (Green). Vehicle driving privileges will be issued to drivers based on project/mission need. Factors relative to determining island driver certification level include frequency of operation, experience level, driving history or record. Each category may be modified with further restrictions or extensions upon approval by the supervisor and island ranger (or their designee).

Please refer to the CHIS vehicle operation POLICY for road categories and drive permit specifics.

V. NOTES AND EXEMPTIONS

Kubota RTVs

Kubota RTVs have similar qualities to UTVs, although do not meet the requirement for UTV status and therefore does not require the UTV Basic Driver Course to operate. Kubota RTVs are

four wheel-drive, but have only a maximum travelling speed of 25 mph. Kubota RTVs may be operated on Category 1 roads only (yellow) and require a standard defensive driving course and a state issued driver license. An Island operator orientation must be completed in order to operate. Kubota RTVs may be operated without certain PPE if conditions allow. Drivers may operate RTVs without a helmet, goggles, gloves and long sleeve tops, if driving below 10 mph on category 1 roads in ideal weather conditions (light winds, no precipitation, and dry roadways). Over the ankle boots and long pants must always be worn during operation. Seatbelts must be worn at all times during operation.

John Deere Gator XUV855D

John Deere Gator XUVs meet the minimum requirements to be classified as a UTV with a maximum travelling speed of 32 mph. Operators of this vehicle will be required to complete the UTV/ROV Basic Drivers Course every two years in addition to maintaining other driving requirements. The John Deere Gator XUV855D is generally used for routine activities on category 1 roads in Channel Islands National Park, but is also capable of travelling on some category 2 & 3 roads. John Deere Gator XUV855Ds may be operated without certain PPE if conditions allow. Drivers may operate XUVs without a helmet, goggles, gloves, and long sleeve shirts if driving below 10 mph on category 1 roads in ideal weather conditions (light winds, no precipitation, and dry roadways). Over the ankle boots, and long pants must always be worn during operation. Seatbelts must be worn at all times during operation. Full PPE must be worn for operation on category 2 & 3 roads or if weather or road conditions are less than ideal or if driving over 10 mph.

Other UTVs

Other UTVs, or vehicles that are similar in nature, are subject to review for this policy. Until additional vehicles have been added as an amendment, drivers must comply with the overall UTV Driving Safety Policy.

VI. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Superintendent

The Superintendent shall:

- Ensure that funding is available for adequate training for UTV operator training and vehicle maintenance.
- Define and institute safe driving practices for the park.
- Monitor and verify that drivers and supervisors meet their responsibilities outlined below.

Safety Office

The Safety Office shall:

- Provide overall program direction and coordination of the park's Motor Vehicle Operators program.
- Responsible for providing and coordinating the 4 hour defensive driving training for government operations. This course is required for any government vehicle operator every 3 years and will include a module for off road vehicle operation.

Supervisors

Supervisors shall:

- Ensure that drivers to be drive tested have a valid need and frequent island work schedule which justifies their need to drive on island roadways.
- Ensure all driver applicants have a valid state driver's license, a DMV license check is conducted, a copy of the record is provided to dispatch, and govt. vehicle operation application form is filled out prior to going to the island.
- Ensure that, prior to first time operation of UTVs, drivers will be given training in local conditions, hazards, regulations, inspection requirements, fueling, and other factors that may affect the operation of motor vehicles in their work area.

Island Rangers and Designates

Shall:

- Verify island UTV driver has completed the state DMV driver's license check and government driver application prior to drive test check out.
- Conducts driver "test" checkout for each new island UTV driver and a repeat checkout for any driver who has been inactive for 3 or more years.
- Assigns driver color level certifications to all UTV operators. Certification levels may be further abbreviated or extended after consultation with supervisor depending on need, driver experience and history.
- May temporarily revoke or restrict any vehicle operator for reasons of safety and UTV management.
- Report any accidents or "near miss" incidents.

UTV Coordinator

Coordinator shall:

- Maintain training records of UTV Driver certifications for all park employees.
- Work with park management to provide input and direction for park wide policies and SOPs.
- Maintain records for all UTVs in the park fleet.
- Advise on purchases or additions to UTV fleet.
- Assist with UTV accident and/or incident investigations.
- Assists fleet manager with upkeep and maintenance for all UTVs.
- Ensures that all UTV instructors are up to date with training requirements.
- Schedule UTV trainings with UTV Instructors for park personnel and cooperators.
- Ensures that all UTV operations meet the safety requirements outlined in this policy.

UTV Instructors

Instructors shall:

- Conduct UTV trainings for park personnel and/or park cooperators.
- Conducts a minimum of two Basic Driver Courses annually to maintain instructor certification.
- Attends a minimum of one advanced workshop or continuing education course related to

UTVs to maintain instructor certification.

- Works with UTV Coordinator and assists with other areas as needed.

Drivers

Drivers shall:

- Attend a ROHVA Basic Driver Course every 2 years.
- Attend an approved defensive driving course every 3 years.
- Responsibly operate government UTV in a safe manner ensuring passenger safety, care of government property and park resources.
- Wear all appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) at all times of operation.
- Comply with all island vehicle use policies.
- Report any accidents or “near miss” incidents.

Channel Islands Park Dispatch

Dispatch shall:

- Provide the government driver’s license application for new island UTV drivers.
- Obtain state driver’s license checks from the DMV, provided by the driver or supervisor, to verify applicant’s license is clear and valid.
- File completed original license application after island drive test is conducted.
- Maintain a file of drivers successfully completing DDC-4.
- Maintain a log of all drive tested drivers including their zone level certification.

. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND AUTHORITY

29 CFR Part 1960; Sec. 211(j) Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended [68 Stat.1128]; 40 U.S.C. Section 491(j); 5 CFR Part 930, Subpart A -Motor Vehicle Operators; NPS Director's Order #508; and NPS Reference Manual #508 "Occupational Safety and Health Program.”

NPS Reference Manual 9.



Santa Cruz Island Road Safety Classes



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Santa Cruz Island



Santa Rosa Island Road Safety Classes



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