

DRIVING FORCE

NOVEMBER 2005



OFF-ROAD NEWS

House Passes Endangered Species Reform Bill

Off-roaders cleared a key hurdle in reforming the Endangered Species Act (ESA) as the House of Representatives approved legislation to update the 30-year old law. Sponsored by House Resources Committee Chairman Richard Pombo (R-CA), the Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act of 2005 (TESRA) passed on 229-193 margin. The bill is a product of years of hearings and scientific research and would place the focus on species recovery while also giving local communities incentives to cooperate with federal rules. The SAN has made passage of the ESA reform bill a legislative priority. The existing law has eliminated access to millions of acres of land, including many roads and trails responsibly enjoyed by off-highway (OHV) enthusiasts, while providing little benefit for species.

Among the changes included in the bill is the replacing of critical habitat programs with proactive species recovery plans. In drafting recovery plans, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service must set criteria for how the species could be taken off the list; establish site-specific guidelines to achieve delisting; provide time and cost estimates; and where needed, acquire "specific areas that are of special value" to the species. The current law does not specify any time frame in developing recovery plans.

The reform measure also contained language which would provide financial incentives equal to fair market value to private property owners if development on the property would harm an endangered species. In having to consider the financial implication of land designation, the federal government would be required to prioritize decisions regarding species protection. Supporters of the measure beat back an amendment on the House floor which would have removed the landowner provisions. During the debate, Pombo commented that 90 percent of endangered species are on private property and should be involved in any attempt to reform the ESA.

The bill also calls for the use of the best available

➤ Continued on page 3 ➤

Montana State Senator Gets Behind the Wheel of Newly Formed Caucus

While most people his age are just settling into their careers, Montana State Senator John Brueggeman is already a seasoned veteran. In 2000, at the age of 21, he was elected to the Montana House of Representatives where he served on the Appropriations Committee. In 2003, he was re-elected to the House of Representatives and was also elected Majority Whip, making him the youngest person of any state in the U.S. to serve in a legislative leadership role. Today, after his election to the Senate in 2004, the 26-year old Brueggeman serves on the Senate Finance and Claims, Transportation, Agriculture, and Long Range Planning Committees. If all of this wasn't enough, he is currently pursuing a degree at the University of Montana, and recently accepted a position as the statewide Campaign Coordinator for U.S. Senator Conrad Burns.



Montana State Senator
John Brueggeman

As both an automotive and motorcycle enthusiast, Brueggeman uses the little free time he has riding and working on custom motorcycles. It is this obsession which helped pair him with SEMA as the sponsor of SEMA-model custom vehicle legislation during the 2005 legislative session, which was ultimately signed into law and was a major victory for Montana hobbyists. Seeing the enthusiasm and energy he had for the hobby, Brueggeman was chosen to be chairman of the newly formed State Automotive Enthusiast Leadership Caucus. The Caucus, sponsored by the SEMA Government Affairs office, is a bi-partisan group of state lawmakers with a love and appreciation for automobiles. In November, Brueggeman, as well as other members of the Caucus from around the country, will attend the 2005 SEMA Show in Las Vegas, and see first-hand the scope and size of the automotive hobby and the aftermarket industry. In preparing for this event, we sat down with the new Chairman and ask him a few questions.

Q: We know that you are an avid automobile and motorcycle enthusiast. Tell us about your vehicles and your personal interest in the hobby.



I've been interested in everything mechanical since I was a kid. The things I imagined became reality with Legos and couldn't get enough motors, gears or pneumatics. I started riding at a young age and earned a motorcycle endorsement for my driver's license by 15. I remember sitting in the coffee shop with my dad hearing stories from his biker buddies about putting blower belt assemblies on bikes before anyone had heard of an open primary drive. In college I worked for a CNC machine shop while studying engineering which gave me a great understanding of manufacturing and boosted my cad/cam skills. I also took the time to get my 6G certification for TIG

➤ Continued on page 2 ➤

Montana

Continued from page 1

welding stainless tubing as 304's my metal of choice.

Car people and bikers are my favorite kinds as they're always looking for ways to improve their vehicles or products. There's nothing I enjoy more than going to shows and talking with the owners and builders as they're still the embodiment of what makes America great. When it comes to cars my favorites are the '65 GTO and the '65 Shelby Cobra. What can I say other than it was a good year. The lines on the '65 GTO have the same straight, square profile as the previous years, but Pontiac started using stacked headlights that year and it was a one-year car. I'm still looking for a GTO project, and a Cobra kit is probably in my future but motorcycles command most of my attention right now. Whether cars or bikes it all boils down to the fact that I still get goose bumps every time I see machined metal or a perfect weld.

Q: SEMA has been fortunate to partner with pro-hobby legislators like you many times in the past on key legislative initiatives. This year you sponsored S.B. 507 in the Montana State Legislature. S.B. 507 was based on SEMA-model legislation to create vehicle titling and registration classifications for street rods and custom vehicles and was signed into law by Governor Schweitzer. How will enthusiasts in Montana benefit from this law?



This is a great bill that people from the hobby and industry will love. We took the SEMA-model bill and tailored it to Montana's situation. There was a lot of clutter in the laws governing

titling and registration of custom cars and after working with the state's Motor Vehicle Division, we all agreed that this could be a great opportunity to simplify our laws and make life a lot easier for everyone involved. When a hobbyist or professional goes to title or register their custom the last thing we want is for the agency to scratch their head about what to do with the vehicle. The process is now clear and simple so people know that whatever they build there will be an easy way to legally put it on the road.

We ended up with a bill that not only included all the great provisions of the SEMA-model bill, but also allowed cars registered as Street Rods to display only one license plate. The hobbyists had been fighting to get this done for years, but always found resistance from regulators. In certifying these cars for non-daily transportation it only made sense that they didn't need both plates and keep their machines as uncluttered as possible. This bill made a big difference for hobbyists and industry members and it's been a lot of fun to talk with these folks since the last session to see how pleased they are with the change. Things like this make the job worth doing.

Q: The SEMA Action Network (SAN), our grassroots hobbyist group, is in constant contact with car clubs and enthusiasts across the country, keeping them up to date on issues that affect their hobby. You were in contact with a number of them on the street rod/custom vehicle bill during this past legislative session. What was it like working with those enthusiasts in Montana?

Best group of people you'll ever work with. They eat, sleep and breathe American muscle. Truly down to earth folks who take great pride in the machines and products they build. From ditch diggers to doctors, they all have the greatest thing in common and in that they're the kind of people I grew up with and idolized at car shows. All the people we worked with in Montana, and I'm sure other states would find the same to be true, are credible folks who present themselves well in committee and when talking with individual Legislators. In a Legislative world that rarely makes sense, it's a breath of fresh air to deal with the kind of people that I prefer to associate with in regular life. They bring a good dose of common sense and understanding about what makes America great to the legislative process.

SEMA is the most dedicated group I've ever worked with and they brought their passion and knowledge to bear with the legislation we sponsored. Steve McDonald and his crew were phenomenal as they organized the hobbyists and professionals in the state to show up at committee hearings and contact their legislators. They took care of the leg work so I could focus on my fellow legislators and the teamwork proved to be a great success. The bill was well regarded by the other members of the Legislature and received strong bipartisan support.

Q: Recently you were chosen to serve as chairman of the newly formed State Automotive Enthusiast Leadership Caucus. Why is it important for legislators like yourself to demonstrate support for the hobby and what do you hope to accomplish as caucus chairman?

The State Automotive Enthusiast Leadership Caucus welcomes the following new members:

California

Assemblymember Alberto Torrico

New Hampshire

Senator Robert Flanders

Virginia

Senator J. Brandon Bell

Delegate Morgan Griffith

Delegate Tom Rust

Delegate Onzlee Ware

For a complete listing of Caucus members, visit www.semasan.com.

Being named chairman is the greatest honor of my legislative service. There's no organization I'd rather be involved with. It's very close to my heart and I look forward to working with the SAN to help recruit legislators from across the U.S. and organize them in to a political juggernaut for the rights of enthusiasts. With increased attention from the media on our industry and the considerable

growth it's a great time to develop and mobilize our friends.

Threats are everywhere. I've seen bad legislation attempted every session and some of it had more traction than deserved. Any constituent can come up with an idea no matter how off the wall and some legislators will run with it to pacify their base. I've had folks ask me to carry mandatory mud flap legislation for every vehicle on the road because they got a rock chip in their paint or window. This person's perspective had no understanding of custom or classic cars, and though I told them no, another legislator submitted the bill and we had to fight it last session.

Many opportunities are emerging. In my experience we've done a great job mobilizing enthusiasts to protect their rights and industry, but in some cases we're only scratching the surface. SEMA has a great name and reputation, and though many car clubs haven't become involved in the regulatory struggle, an offer from an organization with this much clout will be met with direct action from the hobby. As I look across the

➤ Continued on page 3 ➤

rural landscape of Montana and see the impressive number of hobbyists and professional car builders it's clear that there's a lot of the same political muscle we can flex in every state if we only make sure they're aware of what SEMA does and how to help.

Q: Many would say that America has a love affair with the automobile. People have tinkered with, restyled, restored and modified their vehicles since the car was invented. However, it has become increasingly difficult for enthusiasts to continue to pursue these activities. How important is it to protect the automotive hobby given the range of governmental efforts to limit what enthusiasts can do with their cars?

If we're doing our job well there shouldn't be a hobbyist in America turning wrenches to comply with any agency's latest regulatory whim. Unchecked, creeping regulation will take us off America's roads. Of the total vehicles on the road we're a small minority and most of the laws written and regulations proposed are intended for a broad brushstroke over the entire automotive landscape and may not reflect the specific needs of our specialty vehicles and equipment.

Every new trend in the market will create a safety or regulatory issue in someone's mind. Spinners are a great example of the regulatory reaction to new products. Read any given issue of *Driving Force* to see that SEMA's been busy fighting bans on this and other issues in nearly every state. The bottom line is there are people who don't understand us, may not like us, and wouldn't miss us if we were gone. Building a vigilant core of legislators who have a passion and understanding for the auto enthusiast way of life is critical to preserving our rights in a changing world.

Q: Is there any proactive legislation you would like to see introduced to protect the rights of hobbyists?

Plenty. We've got a lot of work ahead of us as we fight to grandfather the rights of enthusiasts in law across the US. From tires to suspension to exhaust, the opportunities to solidify our rights are as numerous as the products SEMA members produce. The Street Rod model bill from SEMA is a huge progressive step forward in the states that make it law, but we have to keep looking for the next big opportunity. Industry is always a few steps ahead of government and we need to use this to our advantage by passing laws that reflect a future we want. The explosive growth in the import tuner market is producing a new opportunity and adding a great new army of allies. Insofar as it's appropriate, SEMA must also weigh in on issues that affect the businesses of all sizes across the states. Capital Gains, Income and Business taxes, workforce development, and health care are all issues we need to be actively working to bolster our presence while making our member's businesses more productive and hobbyist's lives better.

Q: What advice do you have for those involved in the hobby who want to take an active role in protecting their rights as auto enthusiasts?

1. Get involved with SEMA. 2. Contact your legislator. I can't stress enough the importance of contact with your elected officials. From my experience and in discussions with my colleagues, whenever a constituent calls or writes it's taken very seriously. As a Legislator, if I get a lot of feedback or interest in a bill, I will follow what the district is saying. If a hobbyist or business person contacts their representatives and ensures their point of view is heard it directly equates to legislative results. Make sure the hobby group or car club's you're involved with are organized and ready to mobilize in support/opposition of legislation affecting their interests. The great thing for folks involved in SEMA is Steve McDonald and company watch every state for opportunities and threats and will let groups know if they need to get involved. The easy

Off-Road News

Continued from page 1

scientific data in determining species' status. Other features of the bill include enhancing the role of state and local governments in the decision making process and increasing the openness and accountability of the agencies involved in the designation process.

The bill now moves to the Senate where Fisheries, Wildlife and Water Subcommittee Chairman Lincoln Chafee (R-RI) has called for a study of "critical habitat" and the designation of areas set aside for listed species. Chafee has also indicated that the subcommittee is waiting for recommendations from industry and environmental stakeholders who are currently meeting to produce recommendations on an effective program which balances species protection while respecting private property rights. It is anticipated the report will be released in February 2006.

Forest Service to Increase OHV Use in Southern California Wilderness

Following recommendations made by the SAN, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) announced new land management plans for four Southern California national forests which would open up more back country trails to off-highway vehicles (OHVs). The management plan for the Angeles, Cleveland, Los Padres and



San Bernardino national forests allocates an additional 87,000 acres of land that the agency will recommend for wilderness protection. If approved by Congress, that would increase the total wilderness area within the four forests to nearly 1.2 million acres, more than one-third of the parks' combined 3.5 million acres.

The new plans identify approximately 25 percent of the inventoried roadless areas where OHV use will be permitted, but only on a limited number of designated roads and trails. In its comments to USFS, the SAN noted that most of this acreage already had some form of OHV use. The new plans also address so-called "user-created" trails and where appropriate will add these routes to the system. USFS officials stressed that the 25-percent figure does not allow for free reign by OHV users, and details regarding specific trail systems will come at a later date.

Each forest will host several open houses in October to help people learn more about the new plans. Additional information regarding the management plan, including a schedule of open house meetings can be accessed at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/scfpr/projects/lmp/>.

part is then up to the individuals/groups to pick up the phone or write a short note and inform the delegation of their interests. Be proactive and get to know your legislator or a member of the Caucus in your state. If you're in a rural state like mine they're very easy to access. Make the effort to develop a personal relationship. When the pressure's on they'll appreciate having people stand behind them who they trust. When you have an issue later it will pay off in spades as a call from a friend they trust means a lot to a legislator.



**Hey, That's
My Car!**

A Labor of Love...

Owner: Lance Colton
Killeen, TX

In 2004, Army Chief Warrant Officer 2 Lawrence Shane Colton's unit, the Army's 1st Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas, was deployed to Iraq. On Sunday, April 11th, Shane's AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopter was shot down west of Baghdad while protecting a fuel convoy, killing him and his fellow crewmember.



Before deployment, Shane had begun restoring a 1968 Camaro with his then 11-year-old son, Lance.

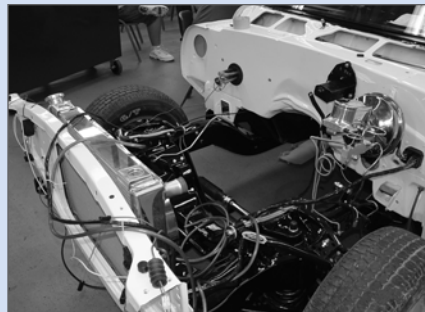
The airing of Shane's story in the *CBS Evening News* "Fallen Heroes" feature moved the principals at SoffSeal, a leading restoration industry manufacturer of replacement rubber products, to pursue the completion of the Camaro restoration. Their motivation? Shane gave his life for his country and it was the right thing to do. With Alex Tainsh of SoffSeal taking the lead, and with the support of the Automotive Restoration Market Organization (ARMO), a SEMA council dedicated to preserving and promoting the automotive restoration industry, the project is becoming a reality.

The car was moved to Central Texas College where the car was disassembled and the rebuild process was underway. Lance



even lent a hand in the project by helping to remove the front clip. As word of the project spread throughout the aftermarket industry, donated parts began flowing in from across the country. Hobbyists

also got involved as Camaros.net established a website to share the Colton story and help raise funds for the project. With this outpouring of support, a decision was made by ARMO to have the car ready in time to be presented to Lance during the SEMA Show in Las Vegas. The countdown to the November show had begun.



As with any restoration project, there were roadblocks to get through. However, one could not predict that most of the senior class at the college would be called up for active military duty and deployed to Iraq. Given the looming deadline and the desire of those involved to see this project to completion, the industry again rose to the challenge. With the help of another ARMO member, Jim Barber of Classic Automotive Restoration Specialists, Inc. (CARS), the Camaro was moved to Forsyth Tech Community College (Winston-Salem, North Carolina) where over 60 faculty members and students volunteered to complete the project in time for the Show.

Editor's note: As this issue of Driving Force is being sent to the printers, the project has less than three weeks to be completed. Visit www.semasan.com for updated pictures of the Camaro and its presentation to the Colton family.

Special thanks to Alex Tainsh and Gary Anderson of SoffSeal, Jim Barber of Classic Automotive Restoration Specialists, Inc., Camaros.net, ARMO, and the countless individuals and businesses for their continued efforts and contributions to this special project. After the project is completed, remaining funds will go towards a college fund for Lance Colton.



Thanks to all who have sent in or e-mailed us photos. Please continue to send us photos of your trail rides, restorations in progress, rod runs, car shows, charity events and drag races. Kindly submit pictures to: The Driving Force, SEMA, 1575 South Valley Vista Dr., Diamond Bar, CA 91765. You also may send high-resolution digital pictures (minimum resolution of 300 pixels per inch; minimum 5 inches wide) by e-mail to carrw@sema.org.

NOVEMBER 2005 SAN CLUB EVENTS

ARIZONA

November 5, Chandler

2nd Annual 5 & Diner Shiner All-Chevy Show
Sponsor: Arizona Impalas
Information: www.arizonaimpalas.com or
623/792-7508

November 6, Mesa

Karl's Custom Show and Swap
Information: volksworks@cox.net

November 19-22, Scottsdale

8th Southwest Nationals
Sponsor: Goodguys
Information: www.good-guys.com or 925/838-9876

ARKANSAS

November 18-20, Mountain View

2005 Super Cruise
Information: 870/669-0196 or 870/486-2281

CALIFORNIA

November 12-13, Pleasanton

16th Autumn Get-Together
Sponsor: Goodguys
Information: www.good-guys.com or 925/838 9876

November 27, Orangevale

Christmas at the Lake Toy Run
Sponsor: Folsom Roadsters
Information: 916/369-6376

FLORIDA

November 4-6, Gulfport

30th Annual Antique Car Show and Swap Meet
Sponsor: AACA/Florida West Coast Region
Information: www.aaca.org/fwcr or 727/595-7554

November 5, Lake Worth

39th Annual Pioneer Days Car Show
Sponsor: Palm Beach Region-Vintage Auto Club
Information: 561/965-5748

November 12, Sanford

22nd Annual Car Show
Sponsor: Celery City Cruisers
Information: 407/323-8844

November 13, Sarasota

22nd Annual Fall Packard Meet
Sponsor: The Florida Packard Club
Information: flpackardclub@webtv.net or
941/371-0070

November 19, Vero Beach

9th Annual Fall Charity Car Show
Sponsor: Citrus Capital Chapter-VMCCA
Information: 772/581-7496

ILLINOIS

November 5-6, Chicago

Fall Chevy/Vettefest Nationals
Information: 708/563-4300

INDIANA

November 5-6, Richmond

33rd Annual Rod and Custom Car Show
Sponsor: Vintage Wheels
Information: usa1vet@msn.com or 765/962-3605

LOUISIANA

November 19-20, Lafayette

5th Annual Bayou Bug Bash
Sponsor: Cajun VW Club
Information: www.cajunvw.net or 337/394-1231

MARYLAND

November 5, Glen Burnie

2nd Annual Hot Rod Jalopyrama
Sponsor: The Rusty Nuts H.R.G.
Information: <http://jalopyrama.tripod.com> or
410/437-3763

NEW MEXICO

November 12, Truth or Consequences

T or C Veterans Car Show
Information: 505/894-6900

NORTH CAROLINA

November 5, Wilmington

Brits and Battleships
Sponsor: British Motor Club of the Cape Fear
Information: www.bmccf.org or 910/755-6099

OHIO

November 6, Dayton

31st Annual Swap Meet
Sponsor: Buckeye Model A Ford Club
Information: rumbleseat@woh.rr.com or
937/884-7438

TENNESSEE

November 5-6, Franklin

2nd Annual Kris Kringle Invitational Car Show
Sponsor: Bellevue Cruisers
Information: www.bellevuecruisers.com or
615/646-0848

**Check out this early
December 2005 event**

MARYLAND

December 2-4, Timonium

East Coast Indoor Nationals
Information: www.eastcoastindoornats.com
or 410/628-6262

Newly Introduced Legislation

Note: The following state bills are not laws. They were recently introduced and are currently under consideration by the respective state legislatures:

EQUIPMENT

Michigan SB 786: Increases fines for violation of materials or objects obstructing the vision of the driver in a motor vehicle, including window tint. Vehicles must be certified by a law enforcement agency before fines can be paid.

New Hampshire LSR 2120: Requires vehicles to be equipped with a useable spare tire.

MISCELLANEOUS

New Hampshire LSR 2121: Prohibits the use of hand held mobile telephones by drivers.

Attention Car Clubs, Event Organizers and Enthusiasts!

Put SAN on Your Mailing List!

We'd like to know what's going on with SEMA Action Network clubs and enthusiasts across the country; what charity events you're involved in; when and where the rod runs, car shows, trail rides, rallies and tech meetings are held; and what legislative and regulatory issues concern club members and individual enthusiasts.

One of the best ways to keep us abreast of what's going on and what's important to the vehicle hobbies nationwide is for us to receive your club newsletters and updates. Please consider placing SEMA on your mailing list. Send correspondence to: Jason Tolleson, SEMA, 1317 F Street, N.W., Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20004-1105. Or by e-mail at jasont@sema.org.

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For more legislative and regulatory information, check out the SEMA Action Network website: www.semasan.com

Virginia Youth Taking Message to the Streets

By Brooke Anderson
Program Manager, YOVASO

Young people in Virginia are speaking out about one of the biggest issues facing them today. Whether it's distractions, speeding, or running off the road, traffic crashes remain the number one killer of teenagers. Youth of Virginia Speak Out (YOVASO) About Traffic Safety works to educate, encourage, and empower teenagers to be advocates for safe driving. YOVASO provides specialized training, resources, and support to assist high school groups in starting traffic safety initiatives in their schools. YOVASO groups have also presented mock traffic crashes, elementary school projects, traffic safety awareness weeks, and community safety events



The entire idea behind YOVASO is that peer to peer education is the most effective way to

establish safe driving practices among teenagers. Nearly every aspect of YOVASO, including the name, were all designed by youth. Youth work in the YOVASO office in Roanoke, Virginia as interns, and can be youth leaders at the two retreats held each year. Some have even gone on to become regional trainers in various parts of the state while attending college.

YOVASO is currently established in almost fifty schools throughout southwestern Virginia. The program is now expanding into the Tidewater, Shenandoah, and northern Virginia regions. For more information, please visit www.yovaso.org.

www.semasan.com

Virginia Youth Taking Message to the Streets

• Hey, That's My Car!

• Newly Introduced Legislation

• Club Events

• November 2005 SAN

• Wilderness

• Use in Southern California
• Forest Service to Increase OHV

• OFF-ROAD NEWS

• Behind the Wheel of Newly Formed Caucus
• Montana State Senator Gets

INSIDE



NOVEMBER 2005

DRIVING FORCE