

# DRIVING FORCE

DECEMBER 2007



## Off-Road News

### Eastern Lawmakers Move to Deny OHV Access to 24 Million Acres in Western States

Members of the House Natural Resources Committee met to consider legislation that would set aside an unprecedented 24 million acres of public lands in the Northern Rockies. This land would be designated as "wilderness" and by definition, motorized recreation would be strictly prohibited in these areas.



This proposal has been reintroduced numerous times over the last 12 years. While the bill has bipartisan support, the sponsors of the measure and a vast majority of the co-sponsors are from eastern states. The breadth and magnitude of lands affected by this bill has turned this issue into an east-west debate. During the hearing, congressional members representing the affected states expressed their vehement opposition to the bill. In addition, representatives from the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management testified on the administration's opposition to the measure. While it is safe to assume that the bill, as written, will not become law under the current administration, this could change in the future depending on which party controls Congress and the White House.

Within that context, the SAN supports compromise approaches on wilderness areas that balance the need to preserve access to appropriate motorized recreation while protecting some of our nation's natural wonders.

## "It Was a Very Good Year"

### Efforts By SAN Members Score Legislative Victories Across the Country in 2007

The cooperative efforts of both automotive hobbyists and members of the specialty-equipment industry who participate in the SEMA Action Network (SAN) continue to score numerous legislative victories across the country. In 2007, SAN acted on a broad range of legislative and regulatory issues critical to vehicle hobbyists which led to the overhaul of existing statutes and created brand-new programs to safeguard and expand the specialty-equipment aftermarket. The SAN's efforts have also resulted in the defeat of several adverse and poorly formulated measures.

"With the eyes of government firmly focused on our hobby, lawmakers continue to introduce new legislation that impacts the automotive specialty aftermarket," said Steve McDonald, SEMA's vice president of government affairs. "Our successes in 2007 once again demonstrate the benefits and importance of active hobbyist involvement across the country."

#### 2007 Program Updates:

**SEMA Action Network—Canada:** The SAN broadened its legislative advocacy activities to include the Parliament of Canada and the provincial governments. Canadian automotive hobbyists, car clubs and related businesses can now join this influential grassroots lobbying effort by registering online at [www.semasan.com](http://www.semasan.com). Canadian enthusiast groups face identical challenges. SEMA is confident that by working with its Canadian-based members and hobbyist groups, the industry's voice can be added to the debate to help legislators identify reasonable and responsible solutions to the array of issues affecting the automotive hobby.

**State Legislative Caucus:** After strong recruitment in 2007, the State Automotive Enthusiast Leadership Caucus, a bipartisan group of state lawmakers with a passion for automobiles continues to grow in numbers and influence. The Caucus currently lists 230 state legislators in all 50 states. The common goal of the Caucus is to support the motor-vehicle hobby by raising its profile in state legislatures and in the public's eyes. Many of these legislators are working in state capitals to protect the hobby by amending existing motor-vehicle laws and creating new pro-enthusiast programs. The Caucus is being supported by SEMA's Government Affairs Office.

#### State Legislative Victories:

**Arizona New Car Exemption:** SAN-supported legislation that would allow the state to adopt rules exempting new vehicles from the emissions inspection program was approved by the state legislature and signed into law by Governor Janet Napolitano. The emissions exemption applies to new vehicles for the period before the sixth registration year after the initial purchase or lease.



**Arkansas Street Rods/Customs:** SEMA-model legislation to amend the vehicle titling and registration classification for street rods and create a classification for custom vehicles was signed into law by Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe. Under the new law, kit cars and replica vehicles will be assigned a certificate of title bearing the same model-year designation as the production vehicle they most closely resemble.

**Arkansas Historic Vehicles:** Facing opposition from the SAN, legislation was withdrawn that threatened to amend the state's current law governing historic or special-interest vehicles to require

Continued on page 2 ►



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



## AMX-tasy

**1980 AMC Spirit AMX**

**Owner:** David Macy  
Toledo, Ohio

I have always had a thing for AMC cars, including my latest toy—an '80 Spirit AMX. My connection with AMC began in 1969 when I met an AMC employee in Cleveland, Ohio. Needless to say, I was hooked right from the start.

The fun of owning an AMC started with a '69 Rebel Sedan and over the years it was followed up by a trio of Gremlin Xs ('71, '72 and '74). Then came the '75 Hornet Sportabout and a Pacer Wagon. One might say that my interest in AMC's was more of an addiction.

With influence from a local AMC club, my wife and I began rallying and auto crossing. Our car of choice was another recent acquisition, a '70 AMX. The car was an export model that was originally shipped to an Air Force Captain in Germany. After some time, the car made it back to the States and into my hands.

That car gave me some great memories, including a few amazing trips down the dragstrip. One night at the Milan Dragway, I spoiled the evening for a few unsuspecting Camaros owners as they learned the hard way how much power my AMX truly had.

As life and family responsibilities grew, it was time to sell the AMX. It was one of the hardest things I have ever done. Even my son was upset by my decision. Some 20 years later and entering retirement, it was time renew my passion with AMC and replace the one that I sold. This is when I found my latest project: an '80 Spirit AMX—one of only 865 made during the last year of production.

Since retiring, my wife and I have driven thousands of miles participating in countless car shows. Although AMC's have not been produced in over 20 years, it's great to see many of them at the shows and other events. This past October I even took my AMX for a few passes down the local dragstrip. It brought back some fond memories, and unfortunately there were no Camaros around to beat...again.



## ANOTHER YEAR IN THE BOOKS

◀ Continued from page 1

that these vehicles be at least 30 years old and pay a \$25 registration fee. Under current Arkansas law, historic vehicles are only required to be 25 years old or older and historic-vehicle owners are only required to pay a \$7 registration fee.

### California Annual Inspection:

SAN-opposed legislation that threatened to require annual Smog-check inspections for vehicles 15 years and older was defeated. The bill also would have required that funds generated through the additional inspection fees be deposited into an account which can be used to scrap older cars.



### California Gas Guzzlers:

SAN-opposed legislation to establish a progressive surcharge tax on newly purchased "gas guzzlers" was defeated. The surcharge on a new vehicle would increase to \$2,500 based on the volume of carbon emissions. Collected funds would be used in part to underwrite discounts for hybrids and electric cars.

### Connecticut Composite Vehicles:

SAN-supported legislation to exempt composite vehicles from emissions inspections was signed into law by Connecticut Governor M. Jodi Rell. Under current Connecticut law, composite vehicles are those constructed from the component parts of two or more motor vehicles of different model years or vehicle types.

### Delaware Street Rods:

SEMA-model legislation to amend the vehicle titling and registration classification for street rods was introduced in Delaware. Under the bill, a street rod is defined as an altered vehicle manufactured before 1949. Importantly, replica street rods would be assigned a certificate of title bearing the same model-year designation as the production vehicle they most closely resemble.

### Florida Street Rods/Customs:

SEMA-model legislation to amend the vehicle titling and registration classification for street rods and create a classification for custom vehicles was signed into law by Governor Charlie Crist. Under the new law, a street rod is defined as an altered vehicle manufactured before 1949 and a custom as an altered vehicle at least 25 years old and manufactured after 1948. Importantly, kit cars and replica vehicles will be assigned a certificate of title bearing the same model-year designation as the production vehicle they most closely resemble.



### Georgia Inoperable Vehicles:

A version of SEMA-model legislation has been introduced in Georgia to exempt certain owners or occupants of municipalities from ordinances or land-use regulations that prevent automobile collectors from pursuing their hobby. Junked, wrecked or inoperable vehicles, including parts cars, stored on private property are only required to be maintained out of ordinary public view.



**Hawaii Exhaust Systems:** SAN defeated a Hawaii bill to ban vehicles equipped with an exhaust system “that has been modified to make more noise or sound than the vehicle made when manufactured.” The measure would have allowed law enforcement

officers to seize and impound a vehicle upon making a subjective determination that the vehicle was in violation.

**Idaho Replicas:** A SAN-supported bill to create a registration classification for replica vehicles was approved by the Idaho House of Representatives, but not considered by the Senate before the Legislature adjourned for the year. Under the bill, a replica is defined as a vehicle made to replicate any passenger car or truck previously manufactured, using metal, fiberglass or composite materials. Replica vehicles would be required to look like the original vehicle being replicated but may use a more modern drivetrain. Replica vehicles would only be required to meet federal safety and emissions standards in effect for the year and type of vehicle being replicated.

**Illinois Inoperable Vehicles:** SAN-opposed legislation that would have further restricted the ability of Illinois vehicle hobbyists from maintaining inoperable vehicles on private property was defeated. The bill sought to redefine “inoperable motor vehicles” to include vehicles incapable of being lawfully driven on state highways in full accordance with Illinois vehicle laws. The bill would also have expanded the definition of inoperable vehicles to include dismantled and unlicensed vehicles. Under current law, localities may authorize fines and disposal of inoperable vehicles on public and private property.

**Indiana Antique Taxes:** SEMA-supported legislation to provide an exemption from the excise surtax for motor vehicles licensed and registered as antiques was approved by the House, but not considered by the Senate before the Legislature adjourned for the year. Indiana law defines an “antique” as a motor vehicle or motor scooter that is at least 25 years old. The county surtax is generally applied at a rate of between \$7.50 and \$25 annually for each motor vehicle registered in the county depending on the age and value of the vehicle.

**Iowa HID Headlamps:** SAN persuaded Iowa legislators to reject legislation that would have prohibited the operation of motor vehicles equipped with high-intensity discharge (HID) headlamps. The bill ignored the fact that HID headlamps that meet applicable photometry standards are not prohibited by federal law.



**Iowa Antique Use:** SAN-supported legislation that would amend the state’s current law governing antique motor vehicles to permit their occasional use for up to 1,000 miles per year was approved by a subcommittee, but not given full committee consideration before the Legislature adjourned for the year. Under current Iowa law, use of antique vehicles is strictly limited to exhibitions or educational purposes.

**Kentucky Inoperable Vehicles:** A Kentucky bill that would have overturned existing hobbyist protections for inoperable vehicles, includ-

ing parts cars that are stored out of ordinary public view on private property was defeated. The existing law was enacted in 2005 with the support of the state’s hobbyist community and based on SEMA-model legislation. The bill threatened to reverse the existing law without giving it a chance to work by allowing local governments to impose more restrictive standards against project cars.

**Maryland 25-Year Rolling Exemption:** A SAN-supported bill to exempt vehicles more than 25 years old from the state’s mandatory biennial emissions inspection and maintenance program was introduced but not considered by the Maryland Legislature. Existing law in Maryland only exempts vehicles manufactured before the 1977 model year from emissions inspection.

**Maryland “Show Class” Vehicles:** Maryland lawmakers introduced but did not consider SAN-supported legislation to create a new “show class vehicle” registration classification. Under the bill, “show class” is defined as a vehicle that has decorative features or alterations and is used primarily for transportation to and from shows, repair facilities, parades, holiday or weekend activities or similar uses. These vehicles would be limited to 5,000 miles per year but would be exempt from specific equipment requirements and the use and inspection of emission controls.

**Massachusetts Exhaust Noise:** After being stalled by SAN for the last several years, a bill to ban the sale or installation of “an exhaust system which has been modified in a manner which will amplify or increase the noise emitted by the exhaust” remains pending in Massachusetts. The measure does not supply law enforcement with a clear standard to enforce, allowing them to make subjective judgments on whether or not a modified exhaust system is in violation.

**Massachusetts Street Rods/Customs:** SEMA-model legislation to create a vehicle registration classification for street rods and custom vehicles and provide for special license plates for these vehicles was approved by the Massachusetts Joint Transportation Committee. The bill defines a street rod as an altered vehicle manufactured before 1949 and a custom as an altered vehicle at least 25 years old and manufactured after 1948. The bill allows kit cars and replica vehicles to be assigned a certificate of title bearing the same model-year designation as the production vehicle they most closely resemble.

**Minnesota Off-Road Trucks:** SAN helped defeat a bill that sought to restrict modified 4x4 trucks to minimally maintained roads and to the area specifically designated for their use. The legislation defined



4x4 trucks as four-wheeled motor vehicles manufactured to operate on public roads and subsequently modified with special tires, suspension or other equipment.

**Montana Exhaust Noise:** SAN-sponsored legislation to permit vehicles with modified exhaust systems that do not emit an excess of 95 decibels as measured by SAE test standard J1169 was signed into law by Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer. Under the SAE standard, a sound meter is placed 20 inches from the exhaust outlet at a 45-degree

Continued on page 4 ►

## ANOTHER YEAR IN THE BOOKS

◀ Continued from page 3

angle, and the engine is revved to three-quarters of maximum rated horsepower. The highest decibel reading is then recorded.

**Montana Collector Items:** SAN-supported legislation that would clarify that collector vehicle owners must pay only a minimal one-time registration fee was signed into law by Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer. Under Montana law, collector vehicles must be more than 30 years old and not used for general transportation.



**Nevada Replicas:** A version of SEMA-model legislation to create a registration category for replica motor vehicles was signed into law by Governor Jim Gibbons. Under the bill, replicas are defined as vehicles manufactured after 1968 to resemble vehicles manufactured before 1968.

Replicas will be exempted from all emissions-inspection requirements applicable to other vehicles in the state. Registration as a replica vehicle will be open to 100 such vehicles each year and use will be limited to occasional transportation and other hobby-related activities.

**New Jersey Historic Vehicles:** SAN-supported legislation to allow historic vehicles to be used for pleasure driving one day per week remains pending in the New Jersey Legislature. Under current law, owners of

## Federal Issues:

**Wilderness Areas:** President Bush signed into law a compromise measure to designate 300,000 acres in Northern California's Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake Mendocino and Napa Counties as wilderness. Although off-highway vehicle (OHV) use is traditionally restricted in wilderness areas, the SAN-supported compromise provides for approximately 79,000 acres to be set aside as recreation management areas for off-road vehicles. The measure also provides for the use of "cherry-stem" roads within the wilderness areas to allow continued motorized access to existing roads and trails.



The U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill to create a 106,000-acre wilderness area in Washington's Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. The SAN-opposed bill would close existing roads and trails. The SAN is urging members of the U.S. Senate to support an alternative approach that would set aside 13,000 acres to allow the continued use of these routes. The SAN supports a balanced approach in preserving access to appropriate motorized recreation areas while continuing to protect some of our nation's natural wonders.

properly registered historic motor vehicles are permitted to operate them solely for exhibition and educational purposes. In order to be designated as historic, a vehicle must be at least 25 years old and owned as a collector's item.

**New York Street Rods/Customs:** SEMA-model legislation to create a vehicle titling and registration classification for street rods and custom vehicles was introduced in both the New York Assembly and Senate, but not considered in committee before the Legislature adjourned for the year. The bill defines a street rod as an altered vehicle manufactured before 1949 and a custom as an altered vehicle at least 25 years old and manufactured after 1948. Under the bill, kit cars and replica vehicles will be assigned a certificate of title bearing the same model-year designation as the production vehicle they most closely resemble.



**New York Grille Guards:** SAN again defeated legislation to prohibit the use of grille guards attached to a motor vehicle's chassis in New York. The measure relied on unsubstantiated claims that grille guards create the potential of greater harm to other vehicles in

the event of a collision and obstruct airbag sensors, rendering the airbags useless in an accident. The bill sought to require owners of vehicles currently equipped with grille guards (including those purchased with this equipment from a dealership) to remove these guards.

**New York Historic Fees:** SAN-supported legislation to provide that historical vehicle owners only pay a one-time registration fee of \$23 was not considered in committee before the Legislature adjourned for the year. The reduced registration fee would be available to owners of historical vehicles operated as an exhibition piece or collector's item and used for club activities, exhibits, tours, parades, occasional transportation and similar uses. Under current New York law, a historical motor vehicle is either a vehicle manufactured more than 25 years ago or one which has unique characteristics and which is determined to be of historical, classic or exhibition value. The \$23 one-time fee would replace the current annual fee of \$23.

**New York Spinners:** SAN again defeated legislation to prohibit the operation of motor vehicles equipped with spinner hubcaps in New York. The bill would have subjected vehicle owners to fines of up to \$750 for a third or subsequent violation. The measure also ignored the fact that custom wheels are not prohibited by federal law; manufacturers are required to notify the federal government of a safety problem or defect related to motor-vehicle equipment within five days of becoming aware of such issue; and spinner hubcaps have no proven detrimental effect on motor-vehicle safety.



**Pennsylvania Emissions Exemption:** SAN is supporting a bill to exempt vehicles driven less than 5,000 miles in the previous 12 months from emissions inspections. Under the measure, the vehicle must be owned by one individual for at least one year.

**Texas Emissions Exemption:** SAN-opposed legislation that would have repealed the state's 25-year rolling emissions exemption was

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SUPPLEMENT

## DECEMBER 2007 SAN CLUB EVENTS

### CALIFORNIA

**December 2, California Speedway**  
4th Annual Toys for Tots Charity Car Show  
Sponsor: Team Transport  
Information: [www.t4tcarshow.com](http://www.t4tcarshow.com)

**December 2, Tustin**  
Pomona Swap Meet & Car Show  
Information: [www.pomonaswapmeet.com](http://www.pomonaswapmeet.com)

### FLORIDA

**December 1, Jacksonville**  
Supper Saturday Car and Truck Show  
Sponsor: North Florida Car Show Association  
Information: 904/730-8056

**December 2, Fort Myers**  
21st Annual Beach Party & Car Club  
Sponsor: Torquer's Car Club  
Information: 239/574-7159

**December 9, Venice**  
5th Annual Mopar Car Show  
Information: [LXPG1@aol.com](mailto:LXPG1@aol.com)

**December 15, Miami**  
Hot Import Nights  
Information: [www.hotimportnights.com](http://www.hotimportnights.com)

**December 16, East Palatka**  
Putnam County Fairgrounds 3rd  
Sunday Car Show  
Information: [www.floridaswapmeet.com](http://www.floridaswapmeet.com)

### GEORGIA

**December 1, Forrest Park**  
2nd Annual Santa Cruise  
Sponsor: GA Street Rod Association  
Information: 478/932-1043 or  
[abadmojo13@aol.com](mailto:abadmojo13@aol.com)

**December 2, Camilla**  
1St Annual Camilla Chevrolet Benefit  
Car & Truck Show  
Information: [www.confetticarshow.com](http://www.confetticarshow.com)  
or 866/539-3178

### HAWAII

**December 1, Honolulu**  
Hot Import Nights  
Information: [www.hotimportnights.com](http://www.hotimportnights.com)

### MARYLAND

**December 1-2, Timonium**  
East Coast Indoor Nationals  
Information: [www.eastcoastindoornat.com](http://www.eastcoastindoornat.com)

### SOUTH CAROLINA

**December 7-8, Mt. Pleasant**  
Carolina's Open Car Classic and Hot Rod Run  
Sponsor: Cripple Dog Hot Rods  
Information: [www.crippledog.com](http://www.crippledog.com)  
or 843/529-2499

### TEXAS

**December 1, Weatherford**  
Texas Pythian Children's Home Car Show  
Information: 817/797-1197

**December 15, Marshall**  
Snow-N-Show Toys for Kids Car Show  
Information: 903/926-0714

### VIRGINIA

**December 2, Virginia Beach**  
Joy Fund Show  
Sponsor: Mustang Club of Tidewater  
Information: [www.mustangcluboftidewater.com/show2005.html](http://www.mustangcluboftidewater.com/show2005.html)

Check Out This Early  
January 2008 Event

### MASSACHUSETTS

**January 4-6, Boston**  
34th Annual World of Wheels  
Information: <http://www.autorama.com/casi/boston.htm>

defeated in conference committee. The defeated Senate amendment would have repealed the exemption and replaced it with a provision requiring all vehicles '80 and newer to be tested for the remainder of the vehicle's life.



**Virginia Replica Vehicles:** A version of SEMA-model legislation to create a registration and titling class for replica vehicles was signed into law by Governor Tim Kaine. Under the new law, a replica is defined as a vehicle not fully constructed by a licensed manufacturer but

either constructed or assembled from components. The measure allows these vehicles to be titled under the model year of which the vehicle is a replica and only requires that they meet safety and emission requirements as established for that model year. Replica vehicles titled under this law will be limited to no more than 5,000 miles per year as shown by the vehicle's odometer.

**West Virginia Abandoned Vehicles:** SAN defeated a West Virginia bill that would have further restricted the ability of West Virginia vehicle hobbyists from maintaining inoperable vehicles on private prop-

erty. The legislation sought to redefine "abandoned motor vehicles" to include vehicles or vehicle parts which are either unlicensed or inoperable, or both, are not in an enclosed building and have remained on private property for more than 30 days. Under current law, the abandoned vehicle law applies primarily to vehicles on public property.

**West Virginia Expanded Use:** SAN-supported legislation that would amend the state's current law governing antique motor vehicles to permit their use for "occasional recreational driving" was introduced in West Virginia but not considered by the Legislature. Under current West Virginia law, use of antique vehicles is strictly limited to club activities, exhibits, tours, parades, testing, obtaining repairs and for recreational purposes only on Friday evenings, Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

**Wyoming Street Rods/Customs:** Prior to the Legislature's adjournment, SEMA-model legislation to create vehicle titling and registration classifications for street rods and custom vehicles was approved by the full Wyoming House of Representatives and the Senate Transportation Committee. Due to time restrictions, the bill was not considered by the full Senate and will be reintroduced in 2008. The bill defines a street rod as an altered vehicle manufactured before 1949 and a custom as an altered vehicle at least 25 years old and manufactured after 1948. Under the measure, kit cars and replica vehicles will be assigned a certificate of title bearing the same model-year designation as the production vehicle they most closely resemble.

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For more legislative and regulatory information,  
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**CLUB SPOTLIGHT**

**Caring at Any Age**

**A**t an age when most drivers only modify their cars to show off on the streets, members of the Certified Konceptz car club enjoy displaying their rides to help benefit the community. With members ranging from age 16 to 35, the club enjoys demonstrating to residents of Decatur, Illinois, that through their club's activities, they can be a positive role model for young adults in the area.

Although the club has only been together for a year, they have made the most of that time in giving to charitable causes. Members have attended over a dozen shows for the Ronald McDonald House, as well as a local show called Cancer Stinks to help raise money for cancer patients. During the show, the club was able to help raise \$20,000 for this worthwhile cause.

During the next show season, Certified Konceptz plan on taking this effort one step further by hosting their own car show, the proceeds of which will be donated to the Big Brothers and Big Sisters organization in Decatur. Not bad for a bunch of kids.



*Through their participation in numerous charitable events, members of the Certified Konceptz car club have proven that there is no age limit on caring.*

[www.semasan.com](http://www.semasan.com)

**Club Spotlight**

**December 2007 SAN Club Events**

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

**Off-Road News**

**It was a Very Good Year**

**INSIDE**



**DECEMBER 2007**

**DRIVING FORCE**