



July 16, 2008

Amy Gibson-Grant
The Ad Council
1203 19th Street, NW 4th Floor
Washington, DC 20036

RE: Smokey Bear "ATV" Wildfire Ad Campaign

Dear Amy:

The BlueRibbon Coalition appreciates your July 15 response to our stated concerns about the Ad Council's ongoing Smokey Bear ATV/Wildfire campaign as featured on *You Tube*. As you know, BRC supports responsible recreational use of public and private lands. Part of that trail ethic is operating your OHV with a functional spark arrester and sound compliant muffler.

BRC supports public service advertisements featuring Smokey Bear and we believe these are important tools to help educate the public about fire prevention and safety. As the Ad Council correctly notes, the use of ATVs has grown rapidly in the past decade. With such growth comes a shared responsibility on the part of users, land managers, and educators.

BRC commends the Ad Council for its decision to develop an educational outreach to ATV users regarding proper use of spark arresters. Such a program should focus on illegal use of non spark arrester exhaust systems on ATVs and/or illegal cross-country travel on highly flammable grasslands or areas with bushy ground cover.

BRC has reviewed the referenced "ATV/Wildfire" articles in your recent response. It appears the ATV fire-starts and alleged fire-starts were linked to illegal exhaust systems or improper use of said vehicle.

In contrast, your aforementioned ATV ad campaign either implicitly or explicitly infers that ATV enthusiasts by simply getting ready to ride their vehicle with compliant spark arrester exhausts - on a designated road or trail- should make the Smokey Bear approved correct decision to "pack up and go home."

After again reviewing the ATV ad, BRC in the strongest manner urges the Ad Council to withdraw the current ad and revise your outreach to focus on illegal or improper use of ATVs on public and private lands.

Smokey Bear has historically warned against "careless" acts against nature. I believe he would approve of our suggested revisions. Thanks for your review of this all too important subject.

Sincerely,

Don Amador
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