



Legislation Text

File #: 14-1222, **Version:** 1

Sheriff's Office recommending that the Board approve and accept with thanks and authorize the Chair to sign the Letter of Understanding for a donation of a Chrysler Jeep Wrangler Rubicon Mark A. Smith edition 4 x4 from Chrysler Group LLC for the Sheriff's Off-Highway Vehicle program in memory of Mark A. Smith.

Fiscal Impact/Change to Net County Cost

There is no Change to Net County Cost. The vehicle is donated free of charge.

Background

This donation of a 2015 Jeep Wrangler Rubicon Mark A. Smith edition 4 x4 from Chrysler Group LLC is being made to the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office in honor of Mark A. Smith, a Georgetown native, who was instrumental in making the Jeeper's Jamboree a renowned event and the Rubicon trail a worldly attraction for El Dorado County.

In 1952, Mark and a small group of Rotarians and friends met at his home to share a dream that might help the depressed economy of the Georgetown Divide. "JEEPERS JAMBOREE," a name born in jest, became the beginning of a legend.

Mark made a tremendous impact on the El Dorado County economy. Whereas the Rubicon Trail has been a historic route; it was Mark Smith, who took the Rubicon Trail to be recognized as the crown jewel of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and which came to be known throughout the world.

Mark, a world-class adventurer and 4x4 motorsports pioneer who organized the first gathering of Jeep owners for an off-road trek along the torturous Rubicon Trail over the Sierra Nevada, died June 9, 2014 at age 87. He was a legendary outdoorsman who was widely credited with launching 4x4 off-roading as a sport more than 60 years ago and popularizing Jeeps as recreational vehicles.

After settling in Georgetown in 1951, he worked with the local Rotary on a plan to bring visitors to the rugged El Dorado County community by promoting Jeep riding as a means to boost the economy.

In 1953, he launched the Jeepers Jamboree, which drew more than four dozen 4x4 vehicles and 155 revelers for camping and driving along the Rubicon Trail, an old wagon route between Georgetown and Lake Tahoe. The annual event draws enthusiasts from all over the world in Jeep Wranglers - and Jeep-like Toyota Cruisers and British Land Rovers - that crawl over granite slabs and boulders to Rubicon Springs.

In 1982, he founded Jeep Jamboree USA to promote the activity nationwide as family-friendly, off-road adventures for Jeeps only. He stepped down as "Jeepmaster" and a board member of the Jeepers Jamboree in 1992 and served as a consultant and ambassador for the Jeep division of Chrysler Corp.

A Marine, he was an intrepid individual who embodied the rugged qualities of a Jeep 4x4. Besides

test-driving Jeep prototypes on the Rubicon Trail for Chrysler, he traveled to many countries to introduce new vehicles and search out off-road trails. He conducted training for law-enforcement agencies and U.S. Military Special Forces and designed driving courses for off-road testing.

Another testament to his adventurous spirit was in 1978-79 when he organized a 20,000-mile expedition of Jeep CJ models that traveled from Tierra del Fuego at the southernmost tip of South America to Prudhoe Bay, Alaska. He led the group through the infamous Darién Gap - a 100-mile gap in the Pan American Highway formed by dense jungle and swampland in Colombia and Panama - in 30 days. In 1987, he led the Camel Trophy event, a 1,000-mile off-road drive across largely uninhabited territory along the coast of Madagascar.

Chrysler Group LLC is donating this vehicle for use by the Sheriff's OHV Rubicon program in memory of a man who created the sport of off-roading, and a community of jeepers.

Reason for Recommendation

This donation will enhance the Sheriff's Office OHV Unit's program with the addition of another vehicle to its current inventory without the additional expense of having to purchase one.

Clerk of the Board Follow Up Actions

1. The Clerk of the Board to obtain the Chair's signature on the Letter of Understanding.
2. The Clerk of the Board to send the fully-executed Letter of Understanding to the Sheriff's Office.

Contact

Undersheriff Rich Williams

Concurrences

County Counsel, Risk Management