



Clear Creek Management Area Monthly Bulletin January—February 2007

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NEPA News

EA CA-190-07-12. Middle Oak Flat
Brush Removal. Approved 12/06/06

DNA CA-190-07-14. BLM T-104
Reroute. Approved 01/09/07

DNA CA-190-07-15. Salinas Ramblers
Motorcycle Club Quicksilver.
Approved 01/09/07

EA CA-190-07-16. Timekeepers
Motorcycle Club Wild Boar & Piglet.
Pending

EA CA-190-07-17. BLM R002-Larious
Fence. Approved 01/09/07

OHV Grant Application Update

The 2007 Grant Applications have been approved for the Hollister Field Office. Grants are for law enforcement, conservation, and restoration. Remaining non-CESA grants will be heard the end of January.

Asbestos Alert

The risk of exposure to airborne asbestos exists year-round in the CCMA. Reduce exposure to dust by spacing vehicles, avoiding dry dusty conditions, and keeping windows up while driving. Children are most at risk to exposure. Learn more about the recent Asbestos Risk Assessment at: www.epa.gov/region09/noa/clearcreek.

BENITOITE: State Gemstone of California

Benitoite, one of the world's rarest and most beautiful of gem minerals, was signed into law as the Official State Gemstone of California on January 1, 1986. As a transparent blue gemstone, it is in fact rarer and far more precious than diamonds, emeralds and/or rubies. The earth's only known source of gem Benitoite is situated in the rugged and remote region of San Benito County known as Clear Creek.

The faceted blue Benitoite gemstones have an intense, vivid and fiery brilliance indistinguishable from the finest Ceylonese sapphires. Cut benitoites also have a color dispersion and light-reflective quality higher than that of the most splendid of diamonds. Great care must be taken in the cutting, setting and wearing of gem benitoites. Properly set with gold as a pendant, necklace or earring stone, Benitoite serves as lovely and elegant jewelry.

First discovered in 1906 by prospector J. M. Couch, and later identified and described as a new mineral species in the classic geology dissertation by Berkeley Professor George Louderback in 1907, blue gem Benitoite occurs in association with the equally rare minerals of neptunite, joaquinite and jonesite. The largest known flawless cut Benitoite is a magnificent violet-blue stone weighing 7.83 carats, and is on display at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C.

