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LOCAL/STATE NEWS

Director of off-road vehicle group cited for unlicensed outfitting

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BOISE (AP) -- The director of the BlueRibbon Coalition has been placed on indefinite administrative leave after being cited earlier this month for outfitting without a license in the Sawtooth National Forest.

Bill Dart was placed on leave without pay pending resolution of the charge against him, said Clark Collins, former director of the off-road vehicle group who is serving as acting director in the interim.

"We're taking this very seriously," Collins said on Monday from the organization's headquarters in Pocatello. "Right now, it's a board matter."

Dart did not immediately respond to a telephone request from The Associated Press for comment.

But Collins emphasized that "the plain fact of the matter is that in our legal system he's innocent until proven guilty, and that's pretty much where we're at."

Forest Service spokesman Ed Waldapfel said Dart was cited by enforcement agent Breck Young on Aug. 20 for providing backcountry motorcycle tours for a price to an unknown number of clients.

Waldapfel said the fine is \$250 and could be paid by mail or contested in court. There was no indication on Monday whether Dart would contest the citation.

Jake Howard, director of the state Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board said that if the Forest Service citation stands up the board would likely prosecute Dart for illegal outfitting.

Dart became the coalition's executive director last fall after serving as its public lands director since mid-2002. He replaced Collins, the group's co-founder who has been concentrating full-time on fund-raising and membership development.

Before that, he was an official for the American Motorcyclist Association in California.



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