



# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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*July 15, 2003*

***In Reply Refer To:***  
9260 (CA-913) P

EMS TRANSMISSION: 07/15/03  
Instruction Memorandum No. **CA-2003-049**

To: All Field Offices

From: State Director

Subject: State Policy on Use and Possession of Assault Weapons

The State of California has in recent years issued amendments to the 1989 California Assault Weapons law, and in 2000 changed the definition of "Assault Weapons" to include specific items instead of make and model. As a result of these changes, this office has received requests to address the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) current policy regarding the use and possession of these weapons on BLM-administered public lands.

In 1989, the State of California enacted legislation restricting the possession and use of firearms defined as assault weapons. The Governor approved this legislation, titled the Roberti-Roos Assault Weapons Control Act of 1989, on May 24, 1989. It was coded into the California Penal Code and became effective January 1, 1990. This law places restrictions on the use and possession of assault weapons in the State of California. Among other things, the law requires that persons owning a firearm defined as an assault weapon, must register it with the California Department of Justice before January 1, 1991. The law also places conditions on uses of legally registered assault weapons, including the following:  
Chapter 2.3, 12285, (c) (6) "While on publicly owned land if the possession and use of a firearm described in Section 12276 or 12276.1 is specifically permitted by the managing agency of the land."

In accordance with this provision, BLM-California's policy for the use of assault weapons is:

Persons have the permission of the BLM to possess and use firearms, including lawfully registered assault weapons, on BLM-administered public lands except when prohibited by other applicable laws and regulations.

This policy is consistent with the U.S. Forest Service's policy for Region 5.

Our responsibility for public safety, property, and resource protection can be met using Federal laws and regulations. BLM Law Enforcement Officers should continue to enforce appropriate Federal laws and regulations related to the use and possession of firearms as needed.

Questions related to this subject should be directed to the Acting Special Agent-in-Charge, Ross Butler, at (916) 978-4450.

**Signed**  
**Mike Pool**  
**State Director**

Authenticated  
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Records Management