



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Spotted Bear
Ranger District
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P.O. Box 190340
Hungry Horse, MT 59919

File Code: 1950

Date: October 1, 2007

Dear Interested Party,

The Flathead National Forest's first Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) is now available to the public. The creation of the Spotted Bear Ranger District MVUM has been a year long process and is the result of interaction with you and many other interested citizens over the past months. The MVUM displays the roads and trails that are designated open for motor vehicles on the Spotted Bear Ranger District. Use of motor vehicles off of designated motorized roads and trails is prohibited.

Under the 2005 Travel Management Rule, each National Forest is required to establish a designated system of roads and trails for motorized use. The benefits of a designated system of roads and trails include improvement of motorized and non-motorized recreation experiences and enhanced protection of habitat, and aquatic, soil, and air resources.

The map is legal documentation displaying the roads and trails that are open to public motor vehicle use. If a road or trail does not appear on the MVUM it means that it is not open to motorized vehicular use. It will be the public's responsibility to reference the MVUM to determine designated routes open for motor vehicle use. The MVUM will be reviewed and updated annually, to correct mapping errors or discrepancies, and reflect any new motorized travel decisions.

There are no changes to where motorized vehicles are permitted on the Spotted Bear Ranger District. No open roads or trails have been closed and no closed roads or trails have been opened as a result of the rule requiring these maps.

Under specific situations of dispersed camping along open designated motorized roads, some limited motorized access to dispersed campsites within 300 feet of the road is allowable. Such access is allowed only on the most direct route to the dispersed campsite and must not result in any resource damage. The conditions under which motorized travel to dispersed campsites may occur are detailed in text boxes on the MVUM.

The motor vehicle use map is black and white with no topographic features, and does not provide much detail. It is not a stand alone map and is best used in conjunction with a Forest Visitors Map or other topographic map. It is not an appropriate map for recreation orientation use (hunters, hikers, etc.). The map only shows open roads and trails. Note that some roads are only open seasonally and these roads with the dates they are open are shown in a table on the map.



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Other existing National Forest maps that show roads, trails (hiking, mountain biking, horse, and motorcycle), recreation sites, etc. are also available at ranger stations throughout the Flathead Forest. These maps show terrain and location features in much greater detail than the MVUM.

The MVUM is free to the public. The MVUM is available on the website:

http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/flathead/nepa/trav_mngmt.shtml

Sections of this map can be printed from your home computer. If you do not already have a copy of Adobe Reader, you can download a free copy from the Adobe website:

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

To obtain a paper copy of the Spotted Bear District MVUM, please visit any of the ranger district offices in Spotted Bear, Hungry Horse, Whitefish, and Bigfork or the Forest Supervisor's Office in Kalispell.

The project specific analysis that began April 2007 on the Bruce Creek, Alpine 7 and Napa Point Trails of the Southern Swan Crest on the Swan Lake and Spotted Bear Ranger Districts continues. The Districts propose closing the Bruce Creek and Napa Point Trails to motorized use, and closing the Alpine 7 Trail to motorized use from its intersection with Bruce Creek south to the Napa Point Trail. These trails are currently open to motorcycle use. Comments were received on this proposal until May 4, 2007. Analysis work on this project was set aside the past few months because of the changed workloads due to the many fires on and adjacent to the Spotted Bear Ranger District. We hope to have a decision on this project by December 2007 and the MVUM will be updated if the decision authorizes any changes to existing motorized access.

As we move forward with implementing the 2005 Travel Management Rule, we look forward to working with you and all interested individuals and groups. Hungry Horse and Glacier View Ranger Districts will be conducting a review of motorized travel routes starting in October 2007 and plan to have a completed MVUM by September 2008. Swan Lake and Tally Lake Ranger Districts are completing data collection and mapping in 2008 and are scheduled to issue their district MVUMs in September 2009.

Please contact Dale Luhman or me at 406-758-5376 for further information about the Spotted Bear MVUM, or the Bruce Creek, Alpine 7, and Napa Point Trails Project.

Thank you for your interest in these projects.

Sincerely,

/s/ Deb Mucklow

DEB MUCKLOW
District Ranger