



FOREST SERVICE ANNOUNCES PROPOSED CHANGES FOR UPPER TELLICO OHV TRAILS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 9, 2008

Steve Lohr, Tusquitee District Ranger, today announced proposed changes in the 39.5 mile Upper Tellico OHV Trail System. The proposal calls for maintaining approximately 24 miles of trails, upgrading five miles of Davis Creek Road for street-legal vehicle use, and closing and restoring 11 miles of other trails. Lohr states, "Many of the trail segments that are popular for high-challenge rock-crawler opportunities are heavily eroded, have high potential for contributing sediment to nearby streams, and are therefore proposed for closure and rehabilitation."

The agency would construct about one mile of new OHV trail to preserve loop routes on existing OHV trails and correct water quality problems. In addition, seasonal closure of the entire system from January 1 to March 31 would be continued to prevent rutting and excessive sedimentation during winter wet and freeze-thaw periods. Temporary closures would be implemented after high rainfall events to prevent excessive erosion.

Lohr continues, "No decisions have been made at this point and the proposed action is just a starting point for additional dialogue among all interested parties and a beginning of the formal environmental analysis process." For the next 30 days the Forest Service will be inviting public comment on this proposal, which may be found on the following website:

<http://www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc/nepa/tusquitee/tellico.htm>

Interested parties are also encouraged to attend a public open house scheduled for Saturday, June 28 from 1-4 PM at First Baptist Church in Murphy. Individuals may learn more about the proposal and submit their own comments.



For more information, please contact:

Candace Wyman, Upper Tellico OHV Project Coordinator

Tusquitee Ranger District

123 Woodland Drive

Murphy NC 28906

(828) 837-5152

or

Terry Seyden, Public Affairs Officer

National Forests in North Carolina

(828) 257-4202