



NATIONAL FORESTS IN NORTH • CAROLINA

USDA FOREST SERVICE, 160A ZILICOA STREET, ASHEVILLE, NC 28801

NEWS • RELEASE

Contact: Terry Seyden 828-257-4202
December 19, 2007

For Immediate Release

Winter Closure for Upper Tellico OHV Area Announced

The U.S. Forest Service announced today a winter closure for the Upper Tellico Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) area on the Nantahala National Forest near Murphy, NC. “It is our goal to maintain a viable Upper Tellico OHV system while reducing sediment, meeting water quality standards and improving brook trout fisheries,” said Forest Supervisor Marisue Hilliard. “The purpose of this January 1 to March 31 closure is to protect water quality in the Upper Tellico River and allow the Forest Service to make repairs to the trail system.”

“Our specialists have identified the winter period as a time when trails are most at risk of damage primarily to the freeze-thaw cycle,” Hilliard added. “The winter closure will also allow for trail repairs and maintenance.”

The Upper Tellico seasonal closure is similar to winter closures already in place at the Wayehutta, Brown Mountain and Badin Lake OHV areas on the National Forests in North Carolina

-more-

The Forest Service also announced a temporary, not to exceed one year, closure on 4.4 miles of the 38 mile Upper Tellico OHV system. This includes Trails 7 and 9 and sections of Trails 2 and 8 where field inspections showed sediment to be reaching the Upper Tellico River and several trail bridges were found to be unsafe for continued OHV use.

In addition to starting work on needed trail repairs, the Forest Service will be working this winter with stakeholders on long range planning for the Upper Tellico OHV area. Funding for the needed repairs will come from a combination of trail user fees, Forest Service appropriations and the volunteer efforts of local OHV organizations.

Forest Supervisor Hilliard noted that “this seasonal closure does not include Trail # 1 and the upper section of Trail # 2 which are also Forest system roads used to access private land.”

For more information, visit the National Forests in North Carolina website <http://www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc> or call the Tusquitee Ranger District in Murphy, NC at 828-837-5152.

###