

**Travel Management Proposals
Motorized Route Designation Process
Mendocino National Forest**

Greetings,

You are receiving this scoping notice because you have participated or otherwise expressed an interest in the motorized route designation process on the Mendocino National Forest. Enclosed are several travel management proposals for making minor changes to the Mendocino's existing designated route system. We are asking you to provide us with comments you may have regarding any of the proposals.

These changes are being proposed pursuant to recent changes in travel management and other regulations [36 CFR Parts 212, 261, and 295¹], which require all national forests to restrict motorized use to designated roads, trails, or areas.

For national forests, such as the Mendocino, that have already restricted motorized use to such designated route systems, the regulations allow two options: a) provide public notice that the existing designated system will remain unchanged; or b) work with the public to make needed changes to the existing system. During 2006, Mendocino National Forest worked with stakeholders to examine whether there were affordable improvements that could be made to the existing motorized route system.

In November 2006, we presented for public comment some tentative proposals for needed, affordable changes for consideration at this time. Based upon the comments we received, we modified some of those original proposals. Each of the enclosed proposals describes any modifications from the November version, and includes a brief explanation of the need for the proposal.

We are considering each of these proposals separately, on its own merits, because none of them depend on any of the others for its justification. However, we will consider any overlapping environmental effects to assure that no cumulatively significant effects are overlooked. We will also consider the criteria for designation of roads, trails and areas, as set forth in 36 CFR 212.55 (see pp. 2 & 3 of this Scoping Cover document).

Please contact us if you have any information that you feel should be considered in deciding whether to proceed with any one or more of these proposals. Although both favorable and unfavorable comments will be considered, we are most concerned with learning of unanticipated potential adverse effects of implementing or not implementing the proposal. If you have information that leads you to believe that any of these proposals would result in undesirable effects on the environment, please let us know:

- Which proposal each of your comments applies to;
- What effects you believe would occur, and where they would occur;
- What aspects of the proposal would cause the undesirable effects, and how;

¹ Refer to Federal Register / Vol. 70, No. 216 / Wednesday, November 9, 2005 / Rules and Regulations / pp. 68287 – 68291.

**Travel Management Proposals
Motorized Route Designation Process
Mendocino National Forest**

- Specific effects of other proposed or approved projects that would combine with the proposal's effects to potentially produce significant adverse effects;
- Any other proposal-specific information that helps us understand your concern;
- If possible, a telephone number at which you can be reached for any necessary clarification of your concerns.

Please provide your comments by August 3, 2007. To comment or obtain further information, please contact me via one of the following:

- U. S. Postal Service:
Attn: Mike Van Dame
Mendocino National Forest
825 North Humboldt Avenue
Willows, CA 95988
- Email: mvandame@fs.fed.us
- Telephone: (530)934-1141

Thank you,

Mike Van Dame
Forest Planner &
Route Designation Team Leader

Date

TITLE 36--PARKS, FORESTS, AND PUBLIC PROPERTY

CHAPTER II--FOREST SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

PART 212_ TRAVEL MANAGEMENT--Table of Contents

Subpart B_Designation of Roads, Trails, and Areas for Motor Vehicle Use

Sec. 212.55 Criteria for designation of roads, trails, and areas.

(a) *General criteria for designation of National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas on National Forest System lands.* In designating National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas on National Forest System lands for motor vehicle use, the responsible official shall consider effects on

Travel Management Proposals
Motorized Route Designation Process
Mendocino National Forest

National Forest System natural and cultural resources, public safety, provision of recreational opportunities, access needs, conflicts among uses of National Forest System lands, the need for maintenance and administration of roads, trails, and areas that would arise if the uses under consideration are designated; and the availability of resources for that maintenance and administration.

(b) *Specific criteria for designation of trails and areas.* In addition to the criteria in paragraph (a) of this section, in designating National Forest System trails and areas on National Forest System lands, the responsible official shall consider effects on the following, with the objective of minimizing:

- (1) Damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, and other forest resources;
- (2) Harassment of wildlife and significant disruption of wildlife habitats;
- (3) Conflicts between motor vehicle use and existing or proposed recreational uses of National Forest System lands or neighboring Federal lands; and
- (4) Conflicts among different classes of motor vehicle uses of National Forest System lands or neighboring Federal lands.

In addition, the responsible official shall consider:

- (5) Compatibility of motor vehicle use with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account sound, emissions, and other factors.

(c) *Specific criteria for designation of roads.* In addition to the criteria in paragraph (a) of this section, in designating National Forest System roads, the responsible official shall consider:

- (1) Speed, volume, composition, and distribution of traffic on roads; and
- (2) Compatibility of vehicle class with road geometry and road surfacing.

(d) *Rights of access.* In making designations pursuant to this subpart, the responsible official shall recognize:

- (1) Valid existing rights; and
- (2) The rights of use of National Forest System roads and National Forest System trails under Sec. 212.6(b).

(e) *Wilderness areas and primitive areas.* National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas on National Forest System lands in wilderness areas or primitive areas shall not be designated for motor vehicle use pursuant to this section, unless, in the case of wilderness areas, motor vehicle use is authorized by the applicable enabling legislation for those areas.

**Travel Management Proposals
Motorized Route Designation Process
Mendocino National Forest**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.