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3.06 TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

This section examines the extent to which alternatives respond to transportation facilities direction established in the Forest Plan. The Forest Plan transportation facilities direction was established under the implementing regulations of NFM) and the National Forest Roads and Trails Act (FRTA). The NFTS consists of roads, trails, and airfields. The NFTS provides for protection, development, management, and utilization of resources on the National Forests. Other routes on the Forest are not currently part of the NFTS. Transportation facilities considered in this analysis include roads and trails that are suitable for public motor vehicle use. This analysis considers changes needed to the NFTS to meet the purpose and need of this analysis. Decisions regarding changes in the transportation facilities must consider: 1) providing for adequate public safety, and 2) providing adequate maintenance of the roads and trails that will be designated for public use. This analysis focuses primarily on these two aspects of the NFTS.

Analysis Framework: Compliance with the Forest Plan and Other Regulatory Direction

Direction relevant to the proposed action as it affects transportation facilities includes:

Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 212 (36CFR212) is the implementing regulation for the FRTA and includes portions of the Travel Management Rule published in the Federal Register on November 9, 2005. Part 212, Subpart B provides criteria for designation of roads and trails. Providing safe transportation facilities and considering the affordability of maintaining the transportation facilities are two of the criteria used in this analysis.

Forest Service Manual Sections 2350 and 7700 contain agency policy for management of the National Forest Transportation System (NFTS). The policy requires the development of trail management objectives (TMOs) and road management objectives (RMOs). The TMOs and RMOs document the purpose of each trail or road. The purpose for the trail or road sets the parameters for maintenance standards needed to meet user needs, resource protection and public safety. Forest Service Handbook 7709.58 describes the maintenance management system the Forest Service uses and the maintenance standards needed to meet road management objectives (RMOs) for the road system and include considerations for public safety.

Regional Forester's letters, file code 7700/2350, dated 08/26/06 and 06/20/07 contain procedures National Forests in Pacific Southwest Region will use to evaluate safety aspects of public travel on roads when proposed changes to the NFTS will allow both highway Legal and non-highway Legal traffic on a road (motorized mixed use).

The California Vehicle Code (CVC) regulates the use of motor vehicles in California, including motor vehicles used on the National Forests. The CVC sets safety standards for motor vehicles and vehicle operators. It defines the safety equipment needed for highway Legal and non-highway Legal vehicles. It also defines the roads and trails where non-highway Legal motor vehicles may be operated.

Travel Management Rule (36 CFR 212, 251, 261 and 295): The alternatives in this EIS are designed specifically to implement the requirements of the November 5, 2005, rule for travel management; Designated Routes and Areas for Motor Vehicle Use. In particular, it addresses the requirements of 36 CFR § 212, Subpart B, Designation of roads, motorized trails, and motorized areas which states in part "Motor vehicle use on National Forest System roads, on National Forest System trails, and in areas on National Forest System lands shall be designated by vehicle class and, if appropriate, by time of year by the responsible official on administrative units or Ranger Districts of the National Forest System."

The Forest Plan provides Motor Vehicle Travel Management direction (Appendix C) for all motorized travel. Every acre of the Stanislaus National Forest treated by the Forest Plan fits into either the Closed or Restricted categories.

Effects Analysis Methodology

Public Safety – 36CFR212.55 requires public safety be considered when designating roads, trails and areas for motor vehicle use. The proposed additions and changes to the NFTS have been evaluated for the effects on public safety. Where highway and non-highway Legal use was proposed on the same road, a Motorized Mixed Use/Combined Use analysis was conducted (project record). Motorized Mixed Use is defined as the “*designation of an NFS road for use by both highway-Legal and non-highway Legal vehicles*” (FSM 7705). Combined Use is defined as “*In addition to Section 38025 and after complying with subdivision (c) of this section, if a local authority, an agency of the federal government, or the Director of Parks and Recreation finds that a highway, or a portion thereof, under the jurisdiction of the authority, agency, or the director, as the case may be, is located in a manner that provides a connecting link between off-highway motor vehicle trail segments, between an off-highway motor vehicle recreational use area and necessary service facilities, or between lodging facilities and an off-highway motor vehicle recreational facility and if it is found that the highway is designed and constructed so as to safely permit the use of regular vehicular traffic and also the driving of off-highway motor vehicles on that highway, the local authority, by resolution or ordinance, agency of the federal government, or the Director of Parks and Recreation, as the case may be, may designate that highway, or a portion thereof, for combined use and shall prescribe rules and regulations therefore* (California Vehicle Code, Division 16.5, Chapter 1, Section 38026). Refer to the project record for specific mixed use and combined use analysis on each road or trail reviewed.

Motorized mixed use (MMU) on passenger car roads was evaluated under Combined Use standards, as defined under the California Vehicle Code (Division 16.5, Chapter 1, Section 38026). The Combined Use evaluations required a more thorough analysis of issues. Mitigation options for each road were determined from existing factors and identifying those items that would be detrimental to public safety from the mixed motorized traffic.

All high clearance routes considered for new OHV use designations underwent a mixed use analysis. Each analysis evaluated current use, past crash histories, right-of-way issues, road maintenance practices and general topography. These issues were combined to determine the probability and severity of crashes between highway legal and non-highway legal vehicles on the particular route.

Existing unauthorized routes were identified for continued use where no resource conflicts or mitigations were needed, where they provided loop opportunities, reduced user conflicts, or provided access to destination sites. These routes would be added to the trails system for continued management.

Affordability – 36CFR212.55 requires consideration of the need for maintenance and administration of the designated NFTS. Costs for the NFTS include costs for needed maintenance work that has not been completed for various reasons (deferred maintenance) and costs of maintenance that should be performed routinely to maintain the facility to its current standard (annual maintenance). Additional costs may be associated with proposed changes to the NFTS (implementation costs). These costs may be for improving unauthorized routes that will be added to the NFTS, proposed safety and resource improvements, changing maintenance levels, bringing trails up to standard, and closing routes to use by motor vehicles.

Assumptions Specific to Transportation Facilities

1. Changing roads maintained for passenger cars to roads maintained for high clearance vehicles does not present a safety risk when motorized mixed use is not allowed.
2. Roads maintained for high clearance vehicles would remain in the same maintenance category whether or not the vehicle class changes. Maintenance needs for these roads would remain the same, regardless of vehicle use.
3. Public safety will be enhanced by eliminating mixed traffic on those roads converted to trails. Motorized trail eligible vehicle classes are high clearance vehicles (4WD, etc), ATV and motorcycles. Low clearance Highway Legal vehicles are not prohibited on trails but generally do not use trails.
4. The California Vehicle Code (CVC) requires motor vehicles operated on maintenance level (ML) 3, 4, and 5 roads to be highway Legal and be operated by licensed drivers. When roads are designated for combined use, the following additional items are required by CVC for Off-highway vehicles: drivers must be licensed; drivers must have liability insurance; only operate during daytime; have an operational stop light; and have rubber tires. The CVC allows the operation of non-highway Legal vehicles operated by unlicensed drivers on roughly graded roads (ML2). The Stanislaus National Forest considers roads maintained for high clearance vehicles as roughly graded and considers operation of OHVs on these roads to be consistent with state law. Roads maintained for passenger cars are considered highways by CVC, and operation of OHVs on those roads is not consistent with state law. Short stretches of these roads may be designated for combined use where an engineering analysis determines no threat to public safety from this combined use or a line officer determines that safety issues will be mitigated prior to allowing combined use.
5. Motor vehicle use authorized by state law occurs on the NFTS unless Forest specific prohibitions are in effect.
6. Motor vehicle use by special use permit or other permitted activities are outside the scope of this proposal (fuelwood gathering, motorized SUP event, Recreation Residences, mining activities)
7. The Forest Service will bear some cost for maintenance of any route open to motor vehicle use by the public.
8. State law regulating motor vehicle drivers sets the standard of care for the safety of themselves and other users for the NFTS.
9. For cost comparison between alternatives, it is assumed that the maintenance costs are associated with maintaining every mile of road and trail to standard.

Data Sources

1. Infra Database
2. Road maintenance costing spreadsheet 04/16/08 (FY2006 Deferred Maintenance based on Forest Condition Surveys, DM per ML based on March 2008 Miles and Estimate per mile, Miles by Objective ML based on 8 March 2008 Road Core)
3. Stanislaus Forest Road Analysis 1/13/03, revised 4/7/03
4. STF Average Costs for Motorized Route Routine Maintenance/Repair, Oct. 2008

Transportation Facilities Indicators

5. Public Safety
6. Affordability (annual maintenance and implementation cost)

Transportation Facilities Methodology by Action

1. Direct and indirect effects of the prohibition of cross country motorized vehicle travel.

Indicator(s): none

Direct and Indirect Effects from unauthorized use: Resources potentially get damaged from the creation of new routes and new disturbances. Improper location of user created roads and trails can lead to sedimentation from erosion and affect the road bed and trail tread if sediment and erosion dump on to existing transportation facilities. Prohibition of travel off of designated routes will reduce sedimentation and erosion and negative effects to the transportation system.

Methodology: none

Short-term time frame: The 1 year time frame looks at routes over the short-term. It does not provide time for passive recovery on closed routes.

Long-term time frame: The 20 year time frame looks at routes over the longer term

Spatial boundary: forestwide

Rationale: Mixed Use Analysis Guidelines, Regional Costing Guidelines

2. Direct and indirect effects of adding facilities to the NFTS including identifying seasons of use and vehicle class.

Indicator(s): public safety and affordability

Direct and Indirect Effects from additions to the NFTS: additions to the NFTS will not have a negative effect to the transportation system itself. It should be beneficial in terms of forest visitors knowing where to travel and where to recreate. Public safety would be addressed by determining whether additions would improve public safety or diminish it. Affordability would be compared by alternative in terms of cost to maintain the system and implement the decision.

Methodology: evaluation and comparison of maintenance costs for the entire NFTS for both roads and trails by alternative.

Short-term time frame: The 1 year time frame looks at routes over the short-term. It does not provide time for passive recovery on closed routes.

Long-term time frame: The 20 year time frame looks at routes over the longer term

Spatial boundary: forestwide

Rationale: Mixed Use Analysis Guidelines, Regional Costing Guidelines

3. Direct and indirect effects of changes to the existing NFTS including identifying seasons of use and vehicle class.

Indicator(s): public safety and affordability

Direct and Indirect Effects from changes to the NFTS: analysis would focus on how changes to the system would enhance or diminish public safety through changes in use on the road and trail system. Changes in public safety would be analyzed and compared in each alternative.

Affordability would be compared in relation to the baseline of Alternative 2 and determine whether costs to manage the system were increasing or decreasing in each action alternative.

Vehicle class changes vary from converting roads to trails; opening of closed roads; converting closed roads to administrative use only; closing of open roads to public use motorized use; and converting roads from all vehicles allowed to Highway Legal Only. All of these actions improve the safety of the public by providing better management of the resources. Roads would be closed to protect facilities, and private property. Other roads would be opened to access existing NFTS

roads, dispersed sites, or property access. Those roads opened to all vehicles improve trail connectivity, and require a mixed use analysis. Those roads changed to Highway Legal Only vehicles reduce mixed traffic implications and probability of crashes with non-highway legal vehicles.

Methodology: comparison of costs to maintain the NFTS by alternative.

Short-term time frame: not applicable.

Long-term time frame: The 20 year time frame looks at routes over the longer term

Spatial boundary: Forestwide.

Rationale: Mixed Use Analysis Guidelines, Regional Costing Guidelines.

Season of Use: Effects on roads from wheeled over the snow use are analyzed within the alternatives for wheeled over snow use.

Wheeled Over Snow Use: Public safety and affordability are analyzed and compared to the baseline alternative (Alternative 2).

4. Cumulative Effects

Indicator(s): public safety and affordability

Direct and Indirect Effects from all reasonable foreseeable actions: Determine whether any other additional actions identified in Appendix B will affect the transportation system.

Methodology: comparison of the alternatives by whether public safety is projected to increase or decrease and whether the system is increasing or decreasing in costs compared to the baseline (Alternative 2).

Short-term time frame: not applicable.

Long-term time frame: The 20 year time frame looks at routes over the longer term

Spatial boundary: Forestwide.

Rationale: Mixed Use Analysis Guidelines, Costing Regional Guidelines.

Affected Environment

The majority of the forest roads in the Stanislaus National Forest were built primarily for timber harvest access between 1950 and 1990, although the higher standard roads were intended and designed for multiple uses including public access. In the 1980s the Stanislaus constructed about 30 miles of new road per year, with a high of 104 miles in 1980. In the 1990s, about 5 miles per year of new road were constructed, and no miles of new road were constructed in 2001 or 2002. The level of timber harvest has declined substantially since implementation of the California Spotted Owl Sierran Province Interim Guidelines in 1993, except during fire salvage operations.

Public use of the road system, however, has grown steadily. In 1950, the nationwide average ratio of recreation to timber traffic on Forest Roads was 10 to 1. In 1975, the ratio was 27 to 1. In 1996, the ratio was estimated at 114 to 1. Approximately 20% of forest visitors who were surveyed in 2003 and 2007 identified driving for pleasure as the primary reason for their visits. When surveyed the visitors felt that road conditions were important to their visit and 65% thought the road conditions were either good or very good when traveling in the General Forest. 87% of the visitors surveyed also felt the road conditions were good or very good when traveling to developed sites or day use areas (National Visitor Use Monitoring Reports, 2004, 2007). Almost all National Forest visitors travel on Forest Service System Roads to access recreation activities, gather forest products, drive for pleasure, or drive through to get to another destination. Roads have opened the Stanislaus National Forest to

hundreds of thousands visitors. They provide access for recreation, research, fish and wildlife habitat management, grazing, timber harvesting, fire suppression, fuels reduction, mining, insect and disease control and use of private land.

The Stanislaus National Forest has about 2,947 miles of NFTS roads. Some roads or segments of roads accessing the National Forest are in county-maintained road systems and under county jurisdiction. Some examples are Dunbar Road, Highland Lakes Road, South Fork/Italian Bar Road, Dodge Ridge Road, Clark Fork Road, and Greeley Hill Road. Roads provide needed access for public use of the National Forest and access to some communities and private land. Tourism is the major segment of the local economy, and recreation on the Stanislaus National Forest is an important component. Recreation is now the dominant use on many Forest Service roads.

In addition to the NFTS roads, other routes are not part of the NFTS. Unauthorized routes originate in different ways. Some are built as temporary roads, often for timber access. Some are user-created routes made by unauthorized OHV use. The exact amount of unauthorized roads is not yet known because the entire Forest has not been inventoried. About 490 miles of unauthorized routes have been currently inventoried: 260 miles of roads and 230 miles of trails. Forest Service policy directs that unclassified roads should be inventoried and either added to the road system, added to the trail system or decommissioned. An estimate of 230 miles of wheeled tracks was found in the 2006 OHV Inventory.

In some areas of the Stanislaus National Forest, new routes continue to be developed by people driving their vehicles off existing roads. After one vehicle leaves a set of wheel tracks, other vehicles sometimes follow, creating an unauthorized route.

The Forest Service designates maintenance levels for the NFTS roads to guide how they are managed. Maintenance level 5 roads are those that are maintained with stable smooth surfaces providing a relatively high degree of user comfort, usually paved roads. Maintenance Level 4 roads are managed to provide a moderate level of user comfort; Maintenance Level 3 roads, usually gravel surfaced, are the lowest level considered suitable for passenger cars. Maintenance level 3-5 roads are considered Highway Legal under the CVC and subject to the Federal Highway Safety Act. Maintenance level 2 (ML2) roads are maintained for high clearance vehicles such as trucks and pickup trucks, and non-highway legal vehicles. ML2 roads are considered roughly graded under the CVC and OHVs are generally permitted to drive on them. Roads which are closed to motor vehicle traffic for a period of at least a year at a time are designated Maintenance Level 1 (ML1) (USDA 2003a). The miles of road by maintenance level are listed in Table 3.06-1 below.

Table 3.06-1 NFTS Roads: Objective Maintenance Level

Objective Maintenance Level	Miles	% NFTS
1-Closed, Basic Custodial Care	372.4	12.6
2-High Clearance Vehicles	2,163.7	73.4
3-Suitable for Passenger Cars	243.3	8.3
4-Moderate Degree of User Comfort	54.4	1.9
5-High Degree of User Comfort	112.9	3.8

Roads may be currently maintained at one level and planned to be maintained at a different level at some future date. The operational maintenance level is the maintenance level currently assigned to a road considering today's needs, road condition, budget constraints, and environmental concerns; in other words, it defines the level to which the road is currently being maintained. The objective maintenance level is the maintenance level to be assigned at a future date considering future road management objectives, traffic needs, budget constraints, and environmental concerns.

The miles of road by surface type are listed in Table 3.06-2, below. Bituminous Surface Treatment denotes chip seal on crushed rock base, and Improved Native Surface denotes spot rock.

The NFTS roads are also categorized by Functional Classification. This classification denotes the amount of area served and connectivity to other roads provided by the road. The highest level roads serving the most area and connecting to other major roads are called arterial roads. Local roads are those serving relatively small areas and often ending in dead ends. Collector roads connect with other arterial or collector or local roads and access moderately large areas. The miles of NFTS road by Functional Classification are summarized in Table 3.06-3.

Table 3.06-2 NFTS Roads: Surface Type

Surface Type	Miles	% NFTS
Asphalt	193.2	7
Crushed Aggregate or Gravel	417.5	13
Bituminous Surface Treatment	17.3	1
Improved Native Material	25.1	1
Native Material	2,275.8	78

Table 3.06-3 NFTS Roads: Functional Classification

Functional Classification	Miles	% NFTS
Arterial	293.3	10
Collector	642.5	22
Local	1,992.8	68
Unknown	0.3	0

The great majority of the roads on the Stanislaus are native surfaced, maintenance level 2, local roads which receive relatively light traffic volumes.

Funding Levels and Road Management Capabilities

In the past decade, road maintenance capabilities have declined. The Forest Roads Analysis (2003) had identified three key reasons for the decline: 1) decline in timber harvest related road maintenance, 2) decline in budget, and 3) decline in staffing. Results of this decline in maintenance include loss of access on some roads, declining level of service on some roads, increasing soil erosion and sedimentation, and loss of infrastructure investment. Regional average costs per mile to maintain each operational maintenance level (ML) were developed and applied to the local forest road system to calculate the estimated total cost as shown in Table 3.06-4. (RO communication DM per ML based on 8 March 2008 Miles and Estimate per Mile-project record)

An estimate of the total deferred maintenance for roads on the Stanislaus National Forest is \$96,965,742 (Provided by the Regional Office). Note this number is based on a national random sample of deferred maintenance needs done in 2007. It is not statistically valid at the National Forest level; however it can be used as an indicator of maintenance needs for the existing road system. A variety of funding resources are used to maintain roads and trails: grants, appropriated dollars, volunteer work, adopt-a-trail, and adopt-a-road. In Table 3.06-4, the average annual maintenance costs and accomplishments are displayed. "Annuals needs" in this table assume that every mile of road will be fully maintained to standard. Not every road is maintained every year nor needs maintenance every year. The Forest averages \$375,000 annually for road maintenance. The remaining funds needed for road maintenance are derived from other funding sources such as grants, special use permits, project contracts requiring maintenance activities within the project contract, etc.

The average costs per mile were derived from condition surveys completed on a randomly selected sample of roads. Work items from the condition survey were input into the IWeb database. This data was then extrapolated to the entire subset of roads by maintenance level to determine the average cost per mile. This random sample was completed in 2007, and the miles were determined by the base inventory as reported in IWeb database in March 2008. Not every mile of road maintained will have the same costs. In some cases, minimal maintenance is needed. Not every mile of road requires

maintenance every year. Maintenance activities are generally focused on routes receiving higher use, such as the primary connector routes of ML3, ML4 and ML5. In other situations, more costly maintenance may be needed.

Priorities for road and trail maintenance are established annually in a maintenance plan. Maintenance level 3-5 roads and key Maintenance level 2 (arterials) receive the highest priority. These roads receive the most traffic on the Forest and provide key access to recreation facilities such as campgrounds, boat launches, resorts, skiing, and administrative offices. They are the backbone of the transportation system. Not every mile of road needs maintenance every year. Roads that are needed for other uses such as private property access, fuels reduction projects, and salvage and Forest Health projects are maintained by those who use the road. Some roads have been “adopted” and are maintained under a special use agreement. As the Forest moves through completing other project analyses, a closer look at the transportation system is conducted and unneeded roads are closed, decommissioned, or restored. From averaging the last five years of road reports, only 86.6% of passenger car roads were maintained to standards. High clearance roads were only maintained at a 1.3% level.

Table 3.06-4 Estimated Annual Maintenance Costs by Maintenance Level

ML	Current (miles)	\$/mile	Maintained ¹ (miles)	Annual Spent \$	Annual Needs \$
1	372.4	\$225.00	0	NA	0
2	2,163.5	\$543.33	27.2	NA	\$1,175,494
3	243.3	\$10,870.00	27.72	NA	\$2,644,671
4	54.4	\$14,106.67	14.32	NA	\$767,366
5	112.9	\$14,106.67	54.44	NA	\$1,592,643
Total	2,946.5	NA	123.70	\$370,000	\$6,180,174

¹ Average annual from Road Accomplishment Reports 2004-2008
ML - Maintenance Level

Environmental Consequences

Alternative 1 (Proposed Action)

DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS

1. Cross Country Travel

Motorized vehicle travel off NFTS routes by the public would be prohibited except as allowed by permit or other authorization. Parking is allowed within one vehicle length off of NFTS routes unless otherwise prohibited.

Public Safety: Public safety will not be increased or decreased by implementation of a cross country travel prohibition.

Affordability: No changes in costs to maintain the transportation would occur. Increased costs for signing would be a one time expense. Annual maintenance of the signs would be needed.

2. Additions to the NFTS

This alternative includes 157.39 miles of unauthorized routes would be added to the NFTS as trails. Appendix I (Route Data) shows the specified vehicle class, season of use and required mitigations.

Public Safety: Additions to the NFTS should enhance public safety through routine maintenance of trails. Trail maintenance addresses such issues as limbing, solid trail tread, and site distance as needed. Trail signs would show trail difficulty, as well as direction of travel.

Affordability: Funding sources would vary from grants to volunteer work through the Adopt-a trail program. Appropriated dollars would average \$10,000 annually for motorized trail maintenance.

Annual costs for trail maintenance if every trail was maintained to standard would be about \$230,534 (Table 3.06-8).

3. Changes to the Existing NFTS

Vehicle Class Changes

Vehicle class changes would occur on 623.28 miles of NFTS roads including: opening 67.96 miles of closed roads; converting 5.42 miles of closed roads to administrative use only; closing 45.98 miles of open roads; converting 93.59 miles of roads from Highway Legal only to all vehicles; and, converting 400.49 miles of roads from all vehicles to Highway Legal only. This alternative also converts 63.06 miles of the 623.28 miles of NFTS roads to trails.

Public Safety: Public safety is addressed through increasing the miles of road for highway Legal only vehicles, reducing mixed use. Roads changed to mixed use were analyzed using “Guidelines for Engineering Analysis of Motorized Mixed Use on National Forest System Roads”. Additionally, motorized mixed use on roads considered highways under California state law were assessed for combined use under the California Vehicle Code 38025 and R5 Guidelines (Mixed Use Analysis, project record, RO RF letter June 2007). Crash histories were reviewed for all roads with changes proposed, from reports submitted by the California Highway Patrol. This alternative provides the second highest risk to public safety with regards to mixed or combined use of traffic on roads.

No direct effects exist on the transportation system from changing vehicle use from all use allowed to highway legal on almost 400 miles of roughly graded roads. Some improvements would be needed for increased sight distance through additional brushing (estimated at \$650 per mile) and additional signing (estimated at \$620). Of the 400 miles of proposed vehicle class changes, 65.8 miles of passenger car roads would be reduced to roughly graded roads for high clearance vehicles. This reduces annual maintenance costs needs by \$928,174. An estimated \$1,000 per mile would cover costs to remove extra signage and replace route ID markers on each road. Also, the publication of the Motorized Vehicle Use Map is estimated at \$30,000, for data entry and map publishing. These additional costs are not funded through special allocations, and would be added expense to the already decreased road maintenance budget.

Affordability: approximately 63 miles of road are converted to motorized trails, reducing the deferred maintenance backlog and reduction in overall annual maintenance needs. 65.3 miles of Maintenance level 3 roads are being changed to Maintenance level 2, reducing annual maintenance level costs by \$674,332. The total system maintenance cost is being reduced by \$41,549.

Season of Use

Public Safety: Implementing a seasonal closure will increase public safety through closure of roads that are unsafe to travel due to adverse weather conditions such as snow and ice, muddy clay roads. The public will know when road conditions are considered safe to travel on through the implementation of the Motor Vehicle Use Map. Winter closures will ensure that all users will be restricted to the same closure times, dependant on elevation. Seasonal closures will also protect transportation facilities from use during inclement weather when increased rutting, erosion, and compaction would occur from vehicular use.

Affordability: No increased costs to the transportation facilities are due to implementing a seasonal closure other than the annual production of the Motor Vehicle Use Map (Table 3.06-8). Reduced maintenance costs would be realized from reduced vehicle use during the wet season. Wet weather closures will ensure suitable drying has occurred on native surfaced roads, although access will be delayed during the drying period.

Public Safety: Because no mixed use would be occurring with the prohibition of Highway Legal vehicles on the wheeled over snow use routes (snow trails), the risk of crash between higher speed vehicles such as 4WD jeeps and ATVS is significantly reduced.

Affordability: No change to the cost of the management or maintenance of transportation facilities implementing this alternative.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Slightly higher cost to the maintenance of the transportation system due to signing to provide for public safety.

Alternative 2 (No Action)

Under this alternative the agency would take no affirmative action (no change from current management or direction) and cross country travel with continued use of unauthorized routes would occur. It would include only existing closures and would not include any restrictions on motorized dispersed recreation access. The Travel Management direction would not be implemented and no MVUM would be produced. Unauthorized routes would continue to have no status or authorization as NFTS facilities.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS

1. Cross Country Travel

Motorized vehicle travel off NFTS routes by the public would continue.

Public Safety: Road uses would continue unchanged. New routes would continue to be created. Forest visitors would not know which routes were approved for use and could travel on unsafe, user created roads and trails.

Affordability: The absence of a prohibition of cross country travel does not affect Transportation Facilities costs. Maintenance costs would remain unchanged.

2. Additions to the NFTS

No routes would be added to the NFTS.

Public Safety: No change from the existing condition would occur. Use would continue on the NFTS.

Affordability: If 95.3 miles of NFTS trails were maintained, the cost would be \$69,611.

3. Changes to the Existing NFTS

Vehicle Class Changes

No changes are made to the NFTS and existing closures and restrictions based on current Forest Orders (see Table 2.02-7).

Public Safety: Mixed use would continue on most all Level 2 roads. Public safety would not increase or decrease with this alternative. Current management plans would continue to guide management of the project area. No changes would be made to the current NFTS and no cross country travel prohibition would be put into place. Public safety risks could be increased during cross county travel off the roads and trail corridors. Unauthorized routes would continue to be unregulated, and overall road and trail density could increase. This alternative provides no change in mixed or combined use routes, thus no direct change to public safety.

Affordability: This alternative provides the baseline costs for maintenance of the transportation system. If every road were maintained to standard, the cost would be \$6,180,174. Maintenance costs would continue as they are now with no change in management. No MVUM would be produced, so

added costs to publish the map would not be anticipated. Deferred maintenance costs would also continue as no changes to the road system are recommended.

Season of Use

Current forest restrictions would remain in effect (see Table 2.02-7). No changes in cost to transportation management of facilities would occur.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Cumulative effects would be a static road maintenance program, but fewer roads managed efficiently. Without publishing a MVUM map, understanding of designated routes for motorized traffic by public users will not occur.

Alternative 3 (Cross Country Prohibited)

Alternative 3 responds to the administration and resource issues by prohibiting cross country travel without adding any new facilities to the NFTS. This alternative also provides a baseline for comparing the impacts of other alternatives that propose changes to the NFTS in the form of new facilities (roads and trails). None of the currently unauthorized routes would be added to the NFTS under this alternative.

Alternative 3 would not change the use of the NFTS and would not add any miles to the NFTS. Under this alternative the agency will prohibit cross country travel eliminating continued use of unauthorized routes. It would include seasonal closures on routes with existing closures and prohibit motorized access beyond existing NFTS routes.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS

1. Cross Country Travel

Motorized vehicle travel off NFTS routes by the public would be prohibited except as allowed by permit or other authorization. Parking is allowed within one vehicle length off of NFTS routes unless otherwise prohibited.

Public Safety: Travel would be confined to the NFTS of roads and trails. The public would know where to travel and what type of vehicle could be used.

Affordability: No change in costs to maintain the transportation system would occur.

2. Additions to the NFTS

Same as Alternative 2.

3. Changes to the Existing NFTS

Same as Alternative 2.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Cumulative effects would be a static road maintenance program, but fewer roads managed efficiently. However, publishing a MVUM will enhance the public education of where motorized use can occur.

Alternative 4 (Recreation)

DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS

1. Cross Country Travel

Motorized vehicle travel off NFTS routes by the public would be prohibited except as allowed by permit or other authorization. Parking is allowed within one vehicle length off of NFTS routes unless otherwise prohibited.

Public Safety: By prohibiting travel off of designated routes, the public will not travel on unauthorized routes, reducing the risk of traveling on unmaintained, and user created routes which may be poorly located.

Affordability: The prohibition of cross country travel does not affect Transportation Facilities costs.

2. Additions to the NFTS

This alternative includes 181.72 miles of additions to the NFTS. Appendix I (Route Data) shows the specified vehicle class, season of use and required mitigations.

Public Safety: By adding trails to the NFTS which describe difficulty, location, vehicle class, and season of use, the public will know where to recreate and what skills they need to ride on these trails.

Affordability: Adding these trails increases trail maintenance costs by \$207,497 (Table 3.06-8) if every trail were maintained every year.

3. Changes to the Existing NFTS

Vehicle Class Changes

Vehicle class changes would occur on 371.32 miles of NFTS roads including: opening 101.83 miles of closed roads; converting 2.47 miles of closed roads to administrative use only; closing 10.66 miles of open roads; converting 99.76 miles of roads from Highway Legal only to all vehicles; and, converting 145.76 miles of roads from all vehicles to Highway Legal only. This alternative also converts 99.86 miles of the 371.32 miles of NFTS roads to trails.

Public Safety: Roads analyzed for motorized mixed use was assessed for compliance with the California Vehicle Code (see project record- Mixed Use Analysis Report). Crash histories were reviewed for all roads with changes proposed, from reports submitted by the California Highway Patrol. This alternative provides the highest risk to public safety with regards to mixed or combined use of traffic on roads.

Affordability: Direct effects include the improvements to 146 miles of road. The improvements would cover additional brushing (estimated at \$650 per mile) and additional signing (estimated at \$620). In addition, 65.8 miles of passenger car roads would be reduced to roughly graded roads for high clearance vehicles, reducing road maintenance costs by \$679,517.

An increase in \$102,913 in road maintenance dollars would occur (Table 3.06-8). An estimated \$1,000 per mile would cover costs to remove extra signage and replace route ID markers on each road. Also, the publication of the Motorized Vehicle Use Map is estimated at \$30,000, for data entry and map publishing. These additional costs are not funded through special allocations, and would be added expense to the already decreased road maintenance budget.

Alternative 4 is the most expensive to implement and maintain (Table 3.06-8).

Season of Use

Same as Alternative 1

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Higher cost to the maintenance of the transportation system due to signing to provide for public safety and trail maintenance.

Alternative 5 (Resources)

Alternative 5 responds to the administration, private property, recreation and resource issues by limiting additions to the NFTS and increasing restrictions that would reduce conflicts and provide additional resource protection. This alternative would limit motorized recreation opportunities

(including those accessing dispersed recreation activities) by providing greater protection for forest resources.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS

1. Cross Country Travel

Motorized vehicle travel off NFTS roads and NFTS trails by the public would be prohibited except as allowed by permit or other authorization. Parking is allowed within one vehicle length off of NFTS routes unless otherwise prohibited.

Public Safety: By prohibiting travel off of designated routes, the public will not travel on unauthorized routes, reducing the risk of traveling on unmaintained, and user created routes which may be poorly located.

Affordability: No changes in costs to the transportation facilities are incurred with the implementation of a cross country travel prohibition.

2. Additions to the NFTS

This alternative includes 31.51 miles of additions to the NFTS. Appendix I (Route Data) shows the specified vehicle class, season of use and required mitigations.

Public Safety: This alternative increases public safety through the reduction of motorized mixed use. 441 miles of road change to Highway Legal Only, increasing public safety from Alternatives 1 and 4.

Affordability: No changes in road maintenances would occur. Changing the use would not change the maintenance level and they would continue to be maintained as roughly graded roads. Trail maintenance costs would increase by \$38,648 over Alternative 2 (Table 3.06-8). An estimated \$1,000 per mile would cover costs to place extra signage and replace route ID markers on each road. The publication of the MVUM is estimated at \$30,000 for data entry and map production. These additional costs are not funded through special allocations, and would be added expense to the already decreased road maintenance budget.

3. Changes to the Existing NFTS

Vehicle Class Changes

Vehicle class changes would occur on 531.39 miles of NFTS roads including: opening 11.66 miles of closed roads; converting 5.42 miles of closed roads to administrative use only; closing 59.03 miles of open roads; and, converting 441.10 miles of roads from all vehicles to Highway Legal only. This alternative also converts 21.51 miles of the 531.39 miles of NFTS roads to trails (the mileage overlaps with the other changes described above and shown in Chapter 2).

Public Safety: 441 miles of roads are changed from All Vehicles to Highway Legal Only, which eliminates the possibility of mixed traffic on routes. This alternative increases public safety through the reduction of motorized mixed use.

Affordability: Direct effects include the change in use of 441 miles from all vehicles allowed to travel on these roads to Highway Legal Only allowed with no change in road maintenance costs. These roads would continue to be managed as roughly graded for high clearance vehicles.

An estimated \$1,000 per mile would cover costs to place extra signage and replace route ID markers on each road. Also, the publication of the Motorized Vehicle Use Map is estimated at \$30,000, for data entry and map publishing. These additional costs are not funded through special allocations, and would be added expense to the already decreased road maintenance budget.

Season of Use

This alternative provides the maximum amount of protection to transportation facilities and public safety through seasonal closing of roads and trails to the public during inclement weather. Travel is allowed when roads are usually fully open and free from snow. Roads at mid elevations are dried out and not as subject to rutting and erosion as during the wetter periods of the year.

Reduced maintenance costs would be realized through fewer repairs of road rutting and erosion from vehicle use during the wet season. Wheeled over snow use would be prohibited except where allowed by permit or other authorization.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Cumulative effects would be a static road maintenance program, but fewer roads managed efficiently. However, the publishing of the MVUM map will enhance the public education of designated routes for motorized traffic by public users.

Summary of Effects Analysis across All Alternatives

The transportation system remains too extensive to fully maintain all the roads. Alternatives 2 and 3 would not change current management of the road system. Alternatives 1, 4 and 5 change vehicle use which either improves public safety or improves recreation opportunities.

1. *Direct and indirect effects of the prohibition of cross country motorized vehicle travel.*

The prohibition of cross country travel does not affect the transportation facilities.

2. *Direct and indirect effects of adding facilities to the NFTS including identifying seasons of use and vehicle class.*

Alternatives 2 and 3 have no increased costs to implement as no changes are made to the existing NFTS. Annual maintenance will remain the same as will deferred maintenance. Alternatives 1, 4, and 5 will increase annual maintenance costs for increased safety precautions such as installation and maintenance of signing. Alternatives 1 and 4 will reduce maintenance costs for routine road maintenance by reducing the number of miles of higher standard roads to lower standard roads (Table 3.02-6). Alternatives 1, 3, 4 and 5 would require the publication of a Motorized Vehicle Use Map (MVUM), which will require additional administrative expense.

3. *Direct and indirect effects of changes to the existing NFTS including identifying seasons of use and vehicle class.*

Vehicle class changes vary from converting roads to trails; opening of closed roads; converting closed roads to administrative use only; closing of open roads to public use motorized use; and converting roads from all vehicles allowed to Highway Legal Only. All of these actions improve the safety of the public by providing better management of the resources. Roads would be closed to protect facilities and private property. Other roads would be opened to access existing NFTS roads, dispersed sites, or property access. Those roads open to all vehicles improve trail connectivity, but required a mixed use analysis. Those roads changed to Highway Legal Only vehicles reduce mixed traffic implications and probability of crashes with non-highway Legal vehicles.

4. *Cumulative Effects*

The transportation system remains too extensive to fully maintain all the roads. Alternatives 2 and 3 would not change current management of the road system. Alternatives 1, 4 and 5 have changes in vehicle use which either improves public safety or improves recreation opportunities. From averaging the last five years of road reports, only 86.6% of passenger car roads were maintained to standards. High clearance roads

Public Safety

Alternatives 1 and 4 present the greatest risks to public safety, as they contain the most miles where motorized mixed use would occur on roads. Alternative 5 provides the least risk to public safety, with the most miles changed from All Vehicles to Highway Legal Only, which eliminates mixed motorized traffic on the same route. Alternatives 2 and 3 have no net change from the current transportation system. In Chapter 2, Table 2.05-5 compared the alternatives in terms of the actions resulting from the changes to the existing NFTS. Table 3.06-5 displays the NFTS roads maintenance level and vehicle class by alternative. Table 3.06-6 compares the alternatives in terms of maintenance level changes. Table 3.06-7 displays public safety indicator measures by alternative.

Table 3.06-5 NFTS Roads: Maintenance Level and Vehicle Class

ML and Vehicle Class	Alternative (miles)				
	1	2	3	4	5
ML1	294.8	366.8	366.8	263.5	351.7
ML2 Administrative Use Only (ADM)	81.1	45.1	45.1	55.1	80.2
ML2 Highway Legal Only (HLO)	431.1	20.6	20.6	173.5	415.9
ML2 All Vehicles (ALL)	1,377.8	1,734.9	1,734.9	1,674.3	1,232.9
ML3 Highway Legal Only (HLO)	317.1	408.5	408.5	308.9	462.2
ML3 All Vehicles (ALL)	16.5	0.0	0.0	18.4	0.0
total	2,518.4	2,575.9	2,575.9	2,493.7	2,542.9

ML - Maintenance Level

ADM and ML1 are closed to public motorized use

Table 3.06-6 NFTS Roads: Maintenance Level Changes

Change	Alternative (miles)				
	1	2	3	4	5
ML3 (SLO) to ML2 All	65.8	0.00	0.00	65.8	0.00
ML1 to ML2 All	12.7	0.00	0.00	12.7	0.00

Table 3.06-7 Public Safety Indicator Measures

Public Safety Indicator Measures	Alternative (miles)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Roads Changed from ALL to HLO	400.50	0.00	0.00	145.80	441.00
Roads changed from HLO to ALL	93.60	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
Roads changed to trails	64.21	0.00	0.00	102.83	21.51
Unauthorized routes added as roads	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Unauthorized routes added as trails	158.03	0.00	0.00	182.37	31.54
MMU, High clearance roads, high severity crash	49.40	0.00	0.00	48.73	2.88
MMU, High clearance roads, high probability of crash	52.15	0.00	0.00	60.45	0.00
MMU, Passenger Car roads, high severity crash	16.51	0.00	0.00	18.35	0.00
MMU, passenger car roads, high probability of crash	5.17	0.00	0.00	7.10	0.00
MMU, consistent with CVC	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
MMU, not consistent with CVC ¹	16.51	0.00	0.00	18.44	0.00

¹ The mileages listed for MMU, not consistent with CVC, would require further approval or concurrence from the CHP to be consistent with State Law.

Affordability

Table 3.06-8 displays the affordability indicator measures for each alternative. The costs shown are based on estimates for the types of work needed to complete the changes. Costs may include safety enhancements or resource improvements such as increased signage, brushing, surfacing, and washout repairs. The total cost shown includes the estimated annual maintenance costs for roads and trails as well as implementation costs from the Mixed Use and Combined Use Reports.

Table 3.06-8 Affordability Indicator Measures

Affordability Indicator Measures	Alternative (miles)				
	1	2	3	4	5
NFTS Roads (miles)	2,882.30	2,946.50	2,946.50	2,800.70	2,925.00
NFTS Trails (miles)	315.80	95.30	95.30	376.90	148.30
Annual Maintenance					
Roads	\$5,873,000	\$6,180,174	\$6,801,174	\$5,873,000	\$6,180,174
Dispersed Access Trails ¹	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
OHV Trails	\$230,534	\$69,611	\$69,611	\$277,108	\$108,259
subtotal	\$6,103,534	\$6,249,785	\$6,249,785	\$6,150,108	\$6,288,433
Implementation Costs					
Passenger car roads reduced to high clearance road ²	\$93,590	\$0	\$0	\$99,760	\$0
Roads converted to motorized trails ³	\$64,210	\$0	\$0	\$102,830	\$21,510
Trails converted to roads	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Roads removed from the NFTS	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cost of implementing MVUM ²	\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
subtotal	\$187,800	\$0	\$30,000	\$232,590	\$51,510
total	\$6,291,334	\$6,249,785	\$6,279,785	\$6,382,698	\$6,339,943

¹ Dispersed access maintenance costs included in OHV trails

² Assume \$30,000 for MVUM publication costs

³ Assume \$1,000/mile reductions

Compliance with the Forest Plan and Other Direction

The action alternatives 1, 3, 4 and 5 implement the Travel Management Rule by designating those routes for motorized use by type of vehicle and time of year. They also follow Forest Plan direction which states that every acre within the Stanislaus National Forest will be designated in either a Closed or Restricted Category for Motorized Vehicle Travel management.

Alternative 2 (No Action) does not implement the Travel Management Rule (36 CFR 212, 251, 261 and 295). Specifically, it does not address the requirements of 36 CFR § 212, Subpart B, Designation of roads, motorized trails, and motorized areas which states in part “Motor vehicle use on National Forest System roads, on National Forest System trails, and in areas on National Forest System lands shall be designated by vehicle class and, if appropriate, by time of year by the responsible official on administrative units or Ranger Districts of the National Forest System.”

Table 3.06-9 shows the mixed use road findings and recommendations to comply with the Forest Plan and other regulatory direction. Table 3.06-10 shows the same for combined use roads and Table 3.06-11 for other roads.

Table 3.06-9 Mixed Use Roads

Road	Sec	BMP	EMP	Crash Probability	Crash Severity	Recommendations
01N01 (GPS Pt 230-01N46)	1	6.00	14.50	High	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
01N01 (FR4221-01N01A)	2	25.20	32.20	High	Low	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
01N37		0.00	1.35	Low	Low	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
01S04		1.00	1.60	High	Low	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
01S45Y		0.00	0.04	Low	Low	Dispersed site
01S73Y		0.00	2.00	Low	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
1S1922A		0.00	0.29	Low	Low	Road Closed
02N05		0.00	0.83	Low	Low	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
02N14		0.00	8.05	Low	Low	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
02S02		0.00	7.82	High	High	Verify ROW, Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
02S07		0.00	3.50	Low	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
02S41		0.00	1.60	Low	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
02S68		0.00	1.81	Low	Low	Not Accessible with passenger vehicle
03N26YB		0.00	0.28	N/A	N/A	Road Closed
04N09		0.00	0.62	High	High	Rehab washout, Brushing and Signing
05N01		0.00	6.88	N/A	N/A	Road Closed for Paving, analysis not completed
05N14		0.00	11.76	High	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
06N58		0.00	5.62	High	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
06N62		0.00	1.35	Low	Low	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
07N09	1	0.00	0.40	Low	High	Improve Mixed traffic signing and brushing
07N09	2	0.00	2.80	Low	Low	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
07N09	3	0.00	0.60	Low	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
07N28		0.00	3.23	Low	Low	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
07N49Y		0.00	0.36	Low	Low	Not Accessible with passenger vehicle

Table 3.06-10 Combined Use Roads

Road	Sec	BMP	EMP	Crash Probability	Crash Severity	Recommendations
01S03		0.30	1.20	Low	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and improved mixed traffic signing
01S03		2.00	4.20	Low	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and improved mixed traffic signing
01S03		9.40	10.30	Low	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and improved mixed traffic signing
02S30		2.66	3.82	Low	High	Improved mixed traffic signing
03N01 (1N89-1N05)	5	0.00	0.20	High	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and improved mixed traffic signing
03N01 (1N08-2N10Y)	6	0.00	0.30	High	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and improved mixed traffic signing
03N01(2N14-18EV63)	1	0.00	2.10	High	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
03N01 (2N82 – end of Pavement)	2	0.00	1.40	High	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
04N25		0.00	0.44	High	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and improved mixed traffic signing
07N01		0.00	0.09	High	High	Improved mixed traffic signing
07N05		0.00	0.53	Low	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and improved mixed traffic signing
07N09	4	0.00	4.60	Low	High	Change signs, Surface Maintenance, and Brushing
07N75		0.00	1.84	High	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and improved mixed traffic signing

Table 3.06-11 Other Roads

Road	Sec	BMP	EMP	Crash Probability	Crash Severity	Recommendations
11715A		0.00	0.52	N/A	N/A	No route located
11806A		0.00	0.71	Low	Low	Dispersed site
11808B		0.00	0.03	Low	Low	Dispersed site
21802H		0.00	0.17	Low	Low	Dispersed site
31527C		0.00	0.57	N/A	N/A	Trail
31623G		0.00	0.41	Low	Low	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
31724C		0.00	0.17	Low	Low	Road Closed
31801F		0.00	0.10	N/A	N/A	Not Accessed
31802C		0.00	0.08	N/A	N/A	Not Accessed
31824D		0.00	0.27	N/A	N/A	Trail
31825A		0.00	0.06	N/A	N/A	Trail
31830L		0.00	0.13	N/A	N/A	Trail
31906B		0.00	0.05	Low	Low	Not Accessible
41736B		0.00	0.18	Low	Low	Road Closed
41834J		0.00	0.07	Low	Low	Dispersed site
FR10738		0.00	0.19	Low	Low	Dispersed site
FR2990		0.00	0.28	Low	Low	Signing
FR5034		0.00	0.23	Low	Low	Dispersed site
FR5320		0.00	0.20	Low	Low	Dispersed site
FR5821		0.00	0.28	Low	Low	Signing
FR7356		0.00	0.11	Low	Low	Road Closed
FR8165		0.00	0.05	Low	Low	Signing
FR8291		0.00	0.15	Low	Low	Signing
FR83630		0.00	0.21	Low	Low	Dispersed site
FR8531		0.00	0.25	Low	High	Surface Maintenance, Brushing and Signing
FR8612		0.00	0.16	Low	Low	Road Closed
FR9380		0.00	0.11	Low	Low	Road Closed
FR9584		0.00	0.23	Low	Low	Surface Maintenance for passenger car use
FR9712		0.00	0.03	Low	Low	Dispersed site
FR9723		0.00	0.12	Low	Low	Road Closed
FR9730		0.00	0.10	Low	Low	Dispersed site
FR9782		0.00	0.10	Low	Low	Dispersed site