

# **NEWS RELEASE**

## **USDA Forest Service -- Northern Region**



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **FOREST SERVICE ISSUES OHV REMINDER TO HUNTERS**

“I ask all hunters and other off highway vehicle (OHV) users to please stay on existing roads and trails across national forest lands,” said Gail Kimbell, Forest Service Regional Forester. Cross-country driving is not allowed on national forest lands in Montana, on the Custer National Forest in South Dakota, or on the Dakota Prairie Grasslands in North and South Dakota.

The January 2001 policy states vehicles must stay on existing roads and trails. Kimbell notes this policy also prohibits driving off roads and trails to retrieve game. “This effort is to help stop the spread of noxious weeds, control erosion and protect fragile soils while preserving the natural quality of areas without trails or roads,” Kimbell said. Driving cross-country significantly contributes to these management concerns.

Kimbell suggested vehicles stay off routes narrower than the vehicle. “This becomes a safety issue for people where motorized vehicles are not expected. If a single-track trail is open to motorized use, then a motorcycle can use it, but an ATV or pickup shouldn’t be there,” she said.

“We encourage folks to check locally to get the most current information and obey the posted signs,” Kimbell said.

The ban on cross-country or off-road, off-trail driving applies to the Beaverhead-Deerlodge, Bitterroot, Flathead, Gallatin, Helena, Kootenai, Lewis and Clark, and Lolo National Forests in Montana; the Custer National Forest in Montana and South Dakota; and the Dakota Prairie Grasslands in North and South Dakota.

National Forest or Grassland Offices have additional, free information regarding this requirement and current travel information.

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