



News from the Forest Service

Edited on: October 27, 2007

Wet Weather Travel Restrictions

Representatives from the Coconino National Forest, the Kaibab National Forest and the Arizona Game and Fish Department have developed a plan to provide reasonable motorized access during wet weather conditions, especially during hunting seasons, in order to achieve game management objectives while protecting roads, natural resources and providing public safety in Game Management Units 5A, 5B, 6A, 6B and 7 on the Coconino National Forest and Game Management Units 7, 8 and 9 on the Kaibab National Forest. It was determined there is a need to facilitate effective lines of communication between the Coconino National Forest, the Kaibab National Forest and the Arizona Game and Fish Department regarding implementation of temporary wet weather road and area management strategies.

Triggers for such road and area closures and communication will include, but are not limited to, fall rains, early season snowfall, or abnormal monsoon activity. While temporary restrictions are in effect, Coconino National Forest, Kaibab National Forest and Arizona Game and Fish Department staff will regularly communicate regarding current conditions, needs for additional restrictions or the lifting of restrictions.

The backbone system of roads that remain open are the most suitable for travel during wet conditions and are strategically located to provide reasonable access to the forest.

Signs reading, "Entering wheeled motorized restriction area. Use only roads and trails on official map," along with a second sign displaying a map showing open routes in the area are posted at strategic access points on the forest.

The new travel policy is a proactive step to protect roads and soils during the times when they are most susceptible to damage.

"In 2004 and 2005 there was more damage than should be tolerated, and we need to do something to reduce that," said Stu Lovejoy, stewardship staff office for the Kaibab National Forest. "The new wet weather travel policy is a proactive attempt to protect roads and soils during the times when they are most susceptible to damage."

The wet weather travel restrictions will be implemented in a similar way to fire restrictions and area closures. Based on conditions on the ground, the forest supervisor will issue an official order which restricts use to those roads that are most suitable for travel. The restrictions will be lifted as soon as conditions allow. Just as with fire area closures, wet weather travel restrictions will likely not have to be implemented annually.

"Besides the damage to the forest that occurs following very wet weather, we also have drivers getting stuck in the mud and having to call for help from towing companies to have their vehicles extricated," Lovejoy said. "We had to find a solution to this problem."

For further information please feel free to contact Blue Ridge Ranger Station at (928) 477-2255 or visit [Http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino)

Welcome

Please help me in welcoming two new employees to the Mogollon Rim Ranger District and our community. Matt Paciorek reported for work on October 15th as our Timber Management Officer and Barbara Garcia reported on October 28th as our Wildlife Biologist.

Matt comes to us from southwest Montana, where he was a Pre-sale Forester, involved in the design of timber sales and analysis of fuel reduction projects. Matt graduated from Northern Arizona University in 2000 and was anxious to return to northern Arizona. Matt has been involved in forestry, recreation, and fire fighting duties since 1999. His recent involvement in stewardship contracting and timber appraisals are skills needed with our growing timber program on the Coconino National Forest. Matt will reside at the Blue Ridge Ranger Station while he looks for a home in the Blue Ridge area.

Barbara also comes from the Beaverhead/Deerlodge National Forest in Montana where she has worked as a Wildlife Biologist since 2000. Barbara has been involved in many projects that the Coconino National Forest is also currently working on including travel management, fuels and timber, livestock management, and recreation. Barbara has worked with many organizations such as the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation on projects of interest to both the Forest Service and RMEF. Barbara's husband Robert is also taking a job on the forest as the Range Conservationist on the Peaks Ranger District in Flagstaff. Barbara and Robert will live at the Happy Jack Ranger Station while they get to know the area and decide where to locate for the long term.

Mindee Roth, District Ranger



Some Thoughts from the Regional Forester Fiscal Year 2007 Accomplishments

Our former Regional Forester, Harv Forsgren took some time before he recently left his position in Region 3 to reflect on our efforts and celebrate many accomplishments throughout Arizona and New Mexico, I thought you might be interested to know some of these.

- Within the framework of our Central Priority, we treated more than 240,000 acres to reduce threats to communities and restore ecological health using a variety of funding and treatment methods.
- Some 154 rangeland NEPA decisions were signed, putting Region 3 well ahead of all other Regions in meeting agency commitments to Congress.
- Arizona and New Mexico forests have completed evaluations that will provide the social and economic foundation for forest plan revisions and are on the way to completing ecological sustainability assessments.
- Nearly 8,850 acres of noxious weeds and invasive plants were treated.
- With limited resources, we substantially exceeded our targets for land adjustments, helping to secure public access and conserve open space.
- Some 21,729 acres of Threatened and Endangered species habitat were enhanced.
- Many forests engaged in public involvement and collaboration efforts in travel management planning, which should result in quality decisions in the upcoming year. The Cibola National Forest published the first Motor Vehicle Use Map in the Region. The Region developed guidelines to assist forests in the travel management process.

Happy Thanksgiving to all of you from all of us at the Mogollon Rim Ranger District!

Jean Gilbertson, Editor