

# Travel Management Rule:

Designated Routes for Motor  
Vehicle Use

# Key Components

- ◆ **Requires designation of roads, trails, and areas open to motor vehicle use by vehicle class** and, if appropriate, by time of year.
- ◆ Provides a **consistent**, national framework for local decisions.
- ◆ **Requires public involvement** and coordination with Federal, state, local and tribal government agencies as well as interested individuals and groups.

# Key Components

- ◆ Prohibits motor vehicle use off the designated system(s), or use that is **inconsistent** with the designations, with the publication of the motor vehicle use map.
- ◆ Motor vehicle use maps will display designated system(s).

# Off-Highway Vehicle Impacts on National Forest Lands

- ◆ Each year, miles of new, unplanned roads and trails are created.
- ◆ Factors such as type of terrain, erosion susceptibility, and vegetation type affect the magnitude of degradation caused by OHV use on Forest lands.

# Examples of impacts

- ◆ Impacts to fragile soils and vegetation
- ◆ Damage to riparian areas and species
- ◆ Recreation use conflicts and risks to public safety
- ◆ Spread of invasive weeds
- ◆ Damage to cultural or historical sites
- ◆ Disturbance to wildlife and its habitat

# Need for Regulation

- ◆ Off Highway Vehicle Use is an appropriate use in National Forests
- ◆ User equipment capacity has increased, allowing users access to areas once only reach on foot or by horse.
- ◆ Nationwide, the number of users have increased from 5 million in 1972 to 51 million in 2000

# Need for Regulation

- ◆ The purpose of the Executive Order 11644 (amended by 1198) can no longer be met while allowing unrestricted cross-country motor vehicle use
- ◆ The Order directs Federal agencies to ensure that the use of off-road vehicles on public lands will be controlled and directed so as to protect the resources of those lands, to promote the safety of all users of those lands and to minimize conflicts among various uses of those lands.

# Need for Regulation

- ◆ ATVs and Motorcycles between 1993 and 2003
  - Sales tripled going from approx. 370,000 to 1.1 million
  - Number of vehicles increased 174% (2.9 million to over 8 million)
- ◆ There is a decrease in available open space outside of public lands.



# Result of Need for Change

- ◆ To address the needs, a new regulation was developed to limit all motorized travel to designated roads and trails.
- ◆ On July 15, 2004 the proposed travel management regulations was published.
- ◆ On November 9, 2005 the final rule was published and became effective December 9, 2005

# Process of Designation

- ◆ Designation decisions will be made at the local Forest or District level.
- ◆ There is no requirement to consider past management decisions.
- ◆ Expectation is to complete the process by 2009
- ◆ Rule applies to NF system roads and trails, and areas on NF system lands.

# Process of Designation

- ◆ Roads under state, county or local public road authority or jurisdiction are not subject to designation.
- ◆ Valid existing rights will be recognized.
- ◆ Designation includes vehicle class and if appropriate, time of year.

# Vehicle Classes

- ◆ The responsible official may establish classes to meet local needs.
- ◆ The following five standard classes may be used:
  - Roads open only to highway-legal vehicles.
  - Roads open to all motor vehicles.
  - Trails open to all motor vehicles.
  - Trails open only to vehicles less than or equal to 50 inches in width.
  - Trails open only to motorcycles.

# Designations by Time of Year

- ◆ Designations may specify time of year.
- ◆ Designate routes and areas in terms of the time of year they are open to motor vehicle use, for example:
  - A designation should provide that Trail 3N1 is open from July 1 through April 30, rather than closed from May 1 through June 30.
- ◆ Time of year designations **must be specific and quantifiable**, so designations can be enforced.

# Exemptions to the Rule Include:

- ◆ Aircraft
- ◆ Watercraft
- ◆ Over snow vehicles
- ◆ Limited administrative use
- ◆ Emergency purposes
- ◆ National defense purposes
- ◆ Law enforcement response
- ◆ Use specifically authorized under a written authorization

# Written Authorizations

- ◆ Use must be specifically authorized in writing (e.g., contract, permit, letter)
- ◆ Existing authorizations (special uses, range, mineral operating plans, recreation site operating plans, etc.) will be evaluated during the designation process to ensure that they include appropriate authorization of motor vehicle use.

# Dispersed Camping & Game Retrieval

- ◆ Limited motor vehicle use off of the designated system solely for big game retrieval and dispersed camping, may be provided in response to local situations.
- ◆ Authority will be used sparingly.
- ◆ For consistency across the Region, guidance will be forthcoming from the Regional Forester.



# Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM)

- ◆ Use map will identify the system of roads, trails, and areas designated for motor vehicle use.
- ◆ Displays motor vehicle classes and if appropriate, time of year.
- ◆ Will cover an entire administrative unit (i.e. Forest or Ranger District)

# MVUM continued

- ◆ Displays open public roads and trails for informational purposes.
- ◆ Publication of MVUM triggers prohibition of motor vehicle use off the designated system.
- ◆ Map is key to enforcement.
- ◆ The Rule Shifts the responsibility to the user to obtain a use map and stay on designated routes.

# Public Participation

- ◆ All interested parties will have the opportunity to participate in the process.
- ◆ Units will work closely with their local communities.
- ◆ Units will coordinate with Federal, state, county, and other local governmental entities and tribal governments.

# Opportunities

- ◆ Enhances opportunities on the National Forests for outdoor recreation and ensures it remains sustainable over the long term.
- ◆ Development of solutions to provide sustainable motor vehicle access and opportunities on both public and private lands.

# Opportunities

- ◆ Partnership with state and county governments, user groups, and others to extend Forest Service resources for road and trail maintenance, construction, education, and rehabilitation.
- ◆ Work with non-profit organizations, like *Tread Lightly!*, or other corporate sponsors to promote responsible OHV use.