



# Ashley National Forest - Travel Management

## Decide for Yourself What the Ashley National Forest Travel Plan Has to Offer

After two years of outreach the Ashley National Forest has developed a draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Forest Motorized Travel Plan.

The DEIS presents several alternatives for revising the current travel plan. They are available for review on line at [www.fs.fed.us/r4/ashley/projects/travel\\_management/index.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/ashley/projects/travel_management/index.shtml) or pick up a copy at Ashley National Forest Supervisors Office 355 North Vernal Ave., Vernal, UT



*Managed OHV use will ensure access into the future*

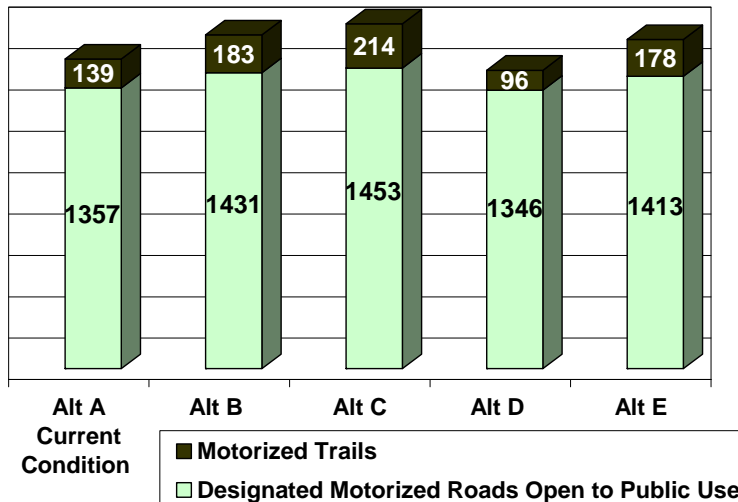


*Unmanaged OHV use can result in resource damage. Areas like this will be closed to motorized use.*

Providing for the long-term sustainability of National Forest system lands and resources is essential to maintaining the quality of the recreation experience in the National Forests for all users. The phenomenal increase in the use of the National Forest for all recreational activities raises the need to manage most types of recreation, including the use of OHV's.

### FOREST-WIDE DESIGNATED MOTORIZED ROUTES

Proposed miles open to Public Use by Alternative



### HISTORY

In 2005, the Forest Service published a new rule for providing motor vehicle access to national forests and grasslands. This rule requires each national forest and grassland to designate those roads, trails, and areas open to motor vehicle use. Designated routes and areas will be identified on a motor vehicle use map.

The Ashley National Forest already has a system of designated roads and trails, with no cross-country travel allowed. This policy has been in place since the 1990's and is on the current travel map and in Alternative A of the DEIS.

The purpose of the current planning effort is to review our travel map and make changes where necessary. Our goal is to find the right balance of motorized and non-motorized opportunities while protecting the natural resources of the Forest. All alternatives would keep over 1400 miles of designated roads and trails open to motorized use; most would add more miles of designated routes compared to the existing travel plan.

**COMMENT PERIOD ENDS July 16, 2009**

**Submit your comments to us! Your feedback is important to this process!**

- Go online [http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/ashley/projects/travel\\_management/index.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/ashley/projects/travel_management/index.shtml)
- Write us Travel Management Plan - Ashley National Forest  
355 North Vernal Ave., Vernal, UT 84078
- Call us 435-781-5196 to speak to Kris Rutledge, Team Leader

## Where We Began

The forest used its existing travel maps and policy as the starting point for travel planning under the new rule.

Throughout the history of the Forest, motorized travel has been managed with a system of roads and trails, as shown on maps provided to Forest visitors. The existing maps are the result of much thought, collaboration, and change over the years, with the most recent direction and assessment completed in the mid-1990's.

This existing direction allowed the forest to focus efforts on

those routes and areas that will be affected by changes under the new rule.

In January of 2007, the Forest Service began the new travel planning effort. Since then, over 20 public meetings, field trip visits, workshops, and other opportunities for public input have been held.

Over 1200 proposals have been received. These proposals as well as your thoughts and comments have been carefully examined and utilized in the creation of the Draft EIS.

## OHV Use on National Forests

More Americans than ever are using off-highway vehicles (OHV's) to enjoy the outdoors.

In Utah, OHV use has increased over 256% between 1998 and 2008. Locally, growth is even higher with the following increases in this same time period.

Uintah County - 479%  
Duchesne County - 590%  
Daggett County - 663%

Impressive advances in motor vehicle technology now allows

OHV's to access new terrain.

New classes of vehicles have been introduced by manufacturers and are growing in popularity.

The magnitude and intensity of motor vehicle use has increased to the point that the existing regulations are no longer adequate. A new plan is needed that addresses current OHV use and is consistent with the 2005 travel management rule.

**"We believe that off-highway vehicles are a legitimate use of the National Forest System. But it's a use that should be managed carefully. That's what our new rule for OHV use on national forestland is all about: providing access that can be used and enjoyed into the future. If we want to sustain that use, then we've got to work together."**

**—Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth (retired)**

## Motorized Camping on the Forest

Current travel management on the Ashley National Forest allows motorized dispersed camping (camping outside of developed campgrounds) up to 300 feet from a designated route.

In order to establish consistency across the forests in Utah, dispersed camping distances will be reduced allowing up to 150 feet from designated motorized roads and trails.

In order to retain popular dispersed camping sites that are more than 150 feet from a motorized road or trail, an access to that site needs to be designated.

The DEIS alternatives include routes for that purpose.

The Travel Plan will not affect non-motorized dispersed camping.

## Key Contact

For more information on the Ashley National Forest Travel Management Plan contact: Kris Rutledge, 435-781-5196, [krutledge@fs.fed.us](mailto:krutledge@fs.fed.us)

## Get Involved

The Forest welcomes and needs your participation in the Travel Management Planning process.

You may also contact the Forest Service directly and schedule a meeting to discuss your interests or concerns.

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## DISTRICT INFORMATION

Flaming Gorge Ranger District - Rowdy Muir, Acting District Ranger, P.O. Box 279, Manila, UT 84046 (435) 784-3445

Vernal Ranger District—Nicholas Schmelter, District Ranger 355 North Vernal Ave, Vernal, UT 84078 (435) 789-1181

Roosevelt/Duchesne Ranger District - J.R. Kirkaldie, District Ranger 85 West Main, P.O. Box 981, Duchesne, UT 84021 (435) 738-2482

## USDA Forest Service National Website

<http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/ohv>

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[http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/ashley/projects/travel\\_management](http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/ashley/projects/travel_management)