

INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL NEGOTIATION  
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA



# NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PLANNING:

CHALLENGES, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND  
BEST PRACTICES FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT



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# Part I. Introduction

## Background

The USDA Forest Service is engaged in travel management planning for National Forests and Grasslands across the country, in accordance with the travel management rule.<sup>1</sup> This travel management planning effort is bringing important and enduring impacts for motorized and non-motorized recreation, which in turn may influence tourism and local community economic development. The results of these planning efforts also influence conservation of natural and cultural resources in our forests.

Numerous issues and challenges have arisen during these planning processes. Many of those challenges were anticipated, and guidance and other resources provided.<sup>2</sup> This report seeks to build on, not duplicate, this past guidance – providing additional lessons learned from the experiences of motorized and non-motorized recreationists, conservationists, and Forest Service staff who have been involved in the many travel management planning efforts.

## What is Travel Management Planning and what is the Route and Area Designation process?

On June 8, 2006, then Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth approved the agency's schedule for implementation of the Travel Management Rule. The schedule guides efforts to designate those roads, trails, and areas of on National Forests and Grasslands that are open to motor vehicle use. The intention is to use a collaborative travel planning process emphasizing public involvement and coordination with state, local, and tribal governments.

The Forest Service's web site<sup>1</sup> provides this concise summary of what is required by the rule:

- Requires each national forest or ranger district to designate those roads, trails, and areas open to motor vehicles.
- Designation will include class of vehicle and, if appropriate, time of year for motor vehicle use. A given route, for example, could be designated for use by motorcycles, ATVs, or street-legal vehicles.
- Once designation is complete, the rule will prohibit motor vehicle use off the designated system or inconsistent with the designations.
- Designation decisions will be made locally, with public input and in coordination with state, local, and tribal governments.
- Designations will be shown on a motor vehicle use map. Use inconsistent with the designations will be prohibited.

As stated in the Travel Management Rule, the need for travel management planning arose from the need to provide access for motorized users in a way that protects National Forests' natural resources, including soil quality, water quality and wildlife habitat.<sup>2</sup> A designated system of roads, trails, and areas for motor vehicle use is needed

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/ohv/index>, accessed Dec. 11, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> The rule states that *"the magnitude and intensity of motor vehicle use has increased to the point that the intent of E.O. 11644 and E.O. 11989 cannot be met while still allowing unrestricted cross-country travel"*

in Forests to sustain natural resource values, enhance opportunities for motorized recreation experiences, address needs for access, and preserve areas of opportunity for non-motorized experiences.<sup>3</sup>

## Why is travel management planning an issue for National Forests and stakeholders?

Travel management planning occurs at the intersection of two competing values: increasing demands for quiet recreation and conservation (habitat, water quality protection, and other ecosystem services) and increasing demand for and use of motorized recreation. Both of these demands are associated with economic benefits and development. Former Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth identified unmanaged outdoor recreation, particularly the unmanaged use of off-highway vehicles, as one of the four major threats to sustained forest health<sup>4</sup>. Given the high stakes perceived by motorized users, quiet recreationists, related economic interests, environmental advocates, and cooperating agencies, conflict is natural and inevitable. Rather than attempting to avoid conflict, actions need to be taken that will address the requirements of the rule without bringing unnecessary controversy and additional conflict.

## Goal of Assessment

The goal of this assessment is to offer specific recommendations to Forest Service personnel as they work to complete travel management planning throughout the national forest system. We also hope that this report will provide value and guidance to those citizens who are engaged as members of the public in these planning processes.

Drawing on lessons from individual projects, our report identifies key issues and challenges that are common to travel management planning efforts. These challenges are synthesized from extended individual discussions with 51 leaders in travel management planning as well as input provided through an online survey from 40 of those leaders and 27 others, for a total of 78 participants. The discussions with leaders were balanced among those who are primarily advocates for motorized access and recreation, those who are primarily advocates for conservation and quiet recreation, and experienced Forest Service and other agency personnel. The individual discussions and online survey were intended to help us understand as completely as possible the entire range of experiences of participants in the travel management planning process and to suggest ways of improving that process.

Some of our recommendations reflect specific suggestions from one or more participants, some may seem like common sense, and most also reflect “best practices” in the field of dispute resolution and collaborative problem-solving. Regardless of its origin, each recommendation reflects our internal synthesis and judgment that it may help to address

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(*Travel Management Rule, 68264-68265*).

<sup>3</sup> “The clear identification of roads, trails, and areas for motor vehicle use on each National Forest will enhance management of National Forest System lands; sustain natural resource values through more effective management of motor vehicle use; enhance opportunities for motorized recreation experiences on National Forest System lands; address needs for access to National Forest System lands; and preserve areas of opportunity on each National Forest for nonmotorized travel and experiences” (*Travel Management Rule summary, 68264*).

<sup>4</sup> Dale Bosworth. We Need a New National Debate, Izaak Walton League, 81<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention, Pierre, SD. July 7, 2003. <http://www.fs.fed.us/news/2003/speeches/07/bosworth.shtml>

one or more challenges in travel management planning.

Our assessment focuses predominantly, though not exclusively, on the process of travel management planning, with a heavy emphasis on issues relating to effective and authentic public involvement. This is a direct reflection of where the individual discussions with opinion leaders led us. Few participants suggested specific travel management solutions, even when asked. But all participants wanted to discuss the process and their perspectives on what was or wasn't going well and how the process could be improved. The participants and their specific concerns and suggestions are the single most important reason for why our recommendations focus less on specific solutions and more on the overall process.

### **Guidance for Using This Assessment**

We want to acknowledge from the start the enormous challenge faced by Forest Service personnel as they follow the rule and attempt to address often competing demands for increased motorized access and recreation, on the one hand, and increased environmental protection and quiet recreation on the other.

The nature of the issues and the need for change consistent with the travel management rule means that some people will be left unsatisfied. Your Forest may already be using many or even all of these recommendations and yet may still be having difficulty. Following best practices does not guarantee that you will find consensus. It does not guarantee that people will be happy. It especially does not mean avoiding conflict; in fact, surfacing real issues and differences is important when facing changes that will occur during travel management planning. However, following best practices does mean that your decisions will be well-informed and that people will have better understanding of the issues, the concerns of all parties and, perhaps most importantly, a better understanding of why decisions are made.

Similarly, our report does not attempt to please everyone. If someone held out a particular Forest as an example either of a successful or unsuccessful process, it is possible that somebody else had a different experience of that process. We could not directly verify each situation; however, we did send a complete draft of this report to each person we talked to and asked for corrections if inaccuracies were seen. Because this report is based on so many individual perspectives, it is possible that you resonate with some, all or none of the perspectives and situations described.

We also want to make clear that there are shared responsibilities for travel management planning. Members of the public have very real rights, but also responsibilities, such as taking responsibility for making sure they understand the rule, understanding the scope of decision making, and being willing to listen to other perspectives. We argue that it is important to reach out and build relationships with differing interests. The National Forests and Grasslands that report the most success are generally those where participants have taken time to understand the needs, concerns and interests of all parties and worked to address them.

We also note that our recommendations form a body of "best practices" that may not all apply to your specific travel management planning situation. National Forests and

Grasslands face different challenges and need to respond accordingly. Your National Forest or Grassland may have already completed or nearly completed the process, and so few or none of the recommendations may be applicable to your situation. Also, you may not be able to implement all of these recommendations at the outset. Because travel management planning doesn't end with the completion of a motorized vehicle use map, we hope the recommendations and "best practices" may still provide useful guidance for subsequent efforts, such as implementation, monitoring and enforcement, or even prove useful for entirely different public engagement efforts.

A few of our recommendations may seem to conflict with each other. For example, the suggestion to consider reducing the scope of the plan may work in some circumstances, but may seem to conflict with the recommendation to complete an inventory of baseline conditions, including unauthorized routes. Clearly, you will need to exercise your judgment in how you apply these recommendations.

Many of our recommendations may seem to overlap with each other. We purposely sought to tease out individually discrete recommendations, so that the connection between each recommendation and specific, distinct concerns is clear.

We have heard from many of you how hard Forest Service personnel and members of the public have worked on these issues. We have heard how passionate many of you are about recreating in and protecting the National Forests and Grasslands. We thank the Forest Service for its willingness to take a hard look at experiences to date and to offer us an opportunity to make this independent assessment. We thank the many participants in the study for their willingness to talk with us at length about their experiences, interests and concerns. We hope this assessment will prove helpful to Forest Service personnel and citizens alike who seek to learn from past and ongoing experiences.

## **Organization of Assessment**

We've organized the Report into nine broad categories of challenges and recommendations.

To synthesize these lessons into a more accessible form, this Report provides several summary guides for future travel management planning efforts:

1. Guidelines for Compliance with FACA (page 38);
2. Key Principles for Successful Collaboration (page 39);
3. Guidelines for Effective Conflict Resolution (page 40);
4. Travel Management Planning Best Practices: Principles and their Supporting Practices (page 89);
5. An Example of a Travel Management Planning Process Using Best Practices (page 90).

Lastly, the resources and tools section includes helpful websites, case examples and, where possible, important contacts for further information.

## Part II. Assessment Method

The U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (USIECR),<sup>5</sup> a program of the Morris K. Udall Foundation, was established to provide independent conflict resolution services to federal agencies. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) entered into an agreement with the USIECR who then contracted with the University of Virginia's Institute for Environmental Negotiation (IEN) to undertake an independent national travel management assessment in late 2008. Consulting with the USIECR as well as the USFS, IEN developed an assessment method of telephone discussions with up to 60 people who a) have participated in travel management planning, and b) could provide valuable insight into the challenges and lessons learned. An initial core group of 12 opinion leaders was identified with assistance from the USIECR and the USFS. A protocol for the individual discussions was tested on these 12, and each of the 12 was asked to provide names of others who met the same criteria of experience with travel management and ability to provide insight. People were selected for these discussions to represent a broad range of interests and experience in National Forests and Grasslands. Also, to cast a wider net beyond the personal discussions, the IEN developed a written survey that had both quantitative and qualitative components. Each participant in the personal discussion was invited to complete the survey online as well as encouraged to invite *three other people* who had experience with travel management and insights to offer.



Photo Courtesy of A. McInerney

From September through November 2008, the IEN assessment included the following:

### Individual discussions

Eighty-seven people identified by various interest groups and the Forest Service were invited through emails and phone calls to participate in the assessment. From these invitations, 51 people agreed to conduct private telephone discussions. A list of participants may be found in Appendix 1.

The 51 participants represent a broad range of interests in National Forests and Grasslands: 14 off-highway motorized recreationists; 13 conservationists; 13 Forest Service staff; 4 independent facilitators; 3 non-motorized recreationists; 3 local public officials. One participant requested to be unaffiliated with any interest group.

These categories do not necessarily reflect the true depth or breadth of interests represented during the discussions. Some participants rejected the idea of being labeled, as they believed that they had significant multiple interests and experience beyond that label. For example, many of those included in the conservationist group noted that they engage in multiple forms of recreation in National Forests and Grasslands, and many of those labeled as recreationists noted that they consider themselves to be conservationists.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ecr.gov/>

The questions that served as a guide for the unstructured discussions may be found in Appendix 2.

### **Online Survey**

A total of 67 people completed the online written survey. Twenty-seven of these also participated in individual discussions. The remaining 40 respondents were invited by discussion participants. The survey and results can be found in Appendix 3.

The 67 participants represent a broad range of interests in National Forests and Grasslands: 21 environmental or conservation interests; 20 motorized vehicle recreationists; 13 US Forest staff; 7 non-motorized recreationalists; 4 US government officials; 1 local government official; 1 state government official.

In the assessment below, we offer an analysis based upon what was heard from participants during both the telephone discussions and online survey. We take no position concerning participant perspectives on the rule, its intent or its implementation. However, IEN is analyzing and synthesizing themes that emerged during the discussions, using its own expertise as independent analysts and practitioners in environmental conflict resolution to formulate recommendations for ways to improve travel management planning.

Much of our analysis concerns the collaborative aspects of travel management planning which necessarily involves addressing a multitude of inherent conflicts. Our focus on collaborative approaches is not about trying to either make conflict go away or to resolve conflict simply for the sake of reducing tensions. Rather, collaboration is a way of building understanding between diverse and often opposing perspectives and, through this increased understanding, determining if there are ways to meet some or all of the diverse needs.

During the individual discussions, participants were asked if they knew of specific solutions to challenges in any Forest that could be helpful to others. If a solution was mentioned during the discussion, we have included it in the relevant section of the report. And if a particular Forest was praised for a practice or process or solution, we included that reference as well. To facilitate further learning and networking around these positive examples, we have included in Appendix 10 the contact information for people who are willing to serve as a resource for others.

It is interesting to note, however, that few participants were able to think of specific solutions that fully satisfied advocates for increased environmental protection and advocates for increased motorized access. Some participants indicated that successful travel management planning could best be gauged less by specific decisions than by the process by which people were engaged. Where people reported that their concerns and suggestions were heard, and agency staff used high quality data in a fair-minded manner, even if they didn't get everything that they desired, they were still likely to feel more positive about the outcome. Thus, although a few specific ideas for solutions are included, the focus of this assessment is on effective travel management planning.

## Part III. Principle Challenges and Recommendations

### Overarching Challenge: Independence, Coordination, and Complexity of the National Forest System

An overarching issue that emerged from discussions with participants is the complexity of working within a large system consisting of 193 million acres in 155 National Forests and 20 National Grasslands, each of which has its own recreational, cultural and natural resource histories and pressures. The sheer enormity of the system, coupled with the diverse issues and challenges faced across the system, makes the task of achieving consistency in travel management planning very difficult. Yet, Forest and non-Forest participants both expressed a desire for greater consistency between Forests. Many groups participate in multiple travel management planning efforts, sometimes even across state lines. Their hope and expectation is that travel management planning would be similar in different Forests. When they encounter planning processes that involve a substantially different scope and approach, they report confusion and frustration. Increased consistency of processes could lead to important joint learning among Forests.

Another aspect of this overarching issue is that the complexities of travel management planning are experienced not only between Forests, but within Forests. Some Forests, for example, approach travel management planning on a Forest-wide level while others approach it on a District or watershed level. Most participants were well aware of the trade-offs: a Forest-wide approach may lead to efficiencies in the planning process but may compromise the specificity needed for different Districts.

With this tension in mind, following are the eight major challenges and recommendations for each challenge.

“Travel management planning is about designing an ecologically sustainable transportation system that can be monitored and enforced; it’s not about just designating routes for motorized vehicles.”

- Study participant

## 1) The Challenge of Interpreting the Travel Management Rule

Many participants reported that the language of the Travel Management Rule itself poses problems. Beginning with its title, many reported that the phrase “travel management” fails to convey the broad impacts of a Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) to conservationists or non-motorized recreationists. Many also described a lack of understanding among stakeholders about the general requirements and implementation of the rule. Because of this, some participants noted that their most important role in travel management planning is simply to help educate stakeholders about the rule, its intent and implications for all forms of recreation. Simply inviting stakeholders to participate in a travel management process is not sufficient. In one Forest, people didn’t understand the need for travel management planning and failed to understand that it was mandated by a national rule. Also, participants suggested that without appropriate explanation most people will not understand how travel management planning is for all recreational purposes, and will have little motivation for participating in the planning process. One participant stated that the public does not understand what travel management planning is, not realizing the full impact of travel management decisions on recreation activities in National Forests.



Photo Courtesy of A. McInerney

**Interpretation of Rule:** Some participants report differences of interpretation between stakeholders as well as between stakeholders and agency staff over the intent of the rule. A strictly literal interpretation of the rule had led some to the conclusion that the rule’s key purpose is to produce a MVUM with minimal direct impacts or implications for non-motorized recreationists or conservationists. This interpretation has direct consequences for the public engagement process, narrowing both its scope and target public. Another interpretation of the rule has led others to the conclusion that the rule’s purpose is to foster a comprehensive plan for all Forest recreation, ensuring that the impacts of motorized use are effectively minimized and managed. Similarly, this very different interpretation has equally direct consequences, leading to a public engagement process that may be broader, more complex in the range of issues discussed, and, possibly, inherently more contentious.

Some participants suggested that several Forests took the more literal interpretation of the rule in the interest of just getting the MVUM done, thereby purposely avoiding the more difficult path of a broader public planning process, which requires more resources and time. One participant noted that the rule was originally described as a way to address *unmanaged* cross-country travel. Another participant noted that public trust is directly related to the extent that the rule is used to manage recreation as opposed to simply restricting access. The more the Forest Service is seen as *managing* recreation, the more public trust will be built.

Generally, stakeholders observed that broad interpretation and implementation of the rule is decided at the Forest level. A wide range of responses is observed at the Ranger District level, with some focused broad recreation planning and others focused on just producing a MVUM.

Many online survey participants also identified the failure to comply with the rule as a difficult challenge in travel management planning. Subpart A of the rule, the identification of the minimum necessary road system, was frequently mentioned as being ignored by the Forest Service during travel management planning. One respondent stated, “many Forests are refusing to incorporate Subpart A.” Another respondent observed that the Forest Service “acknowledged their obligation to complete Subpart A of the travel management rule, but elected to not address it.” Several participants view the identification of a minimum road system as central to travel management planning, and the failure to do this step in the process constitutes a fatal flaw.



Photo Courtesy of B. Steinhauer

**Implementation of Rule:** Some participants report that the Forest Service has difficulties in implementing the intent of the rule. Specific instances where participants reported that in their opinion the rule was not followed correctly or was misinterpreted by the Forest staff include:

- failure to identify the minimum necessary road system.
- failure to identify and inventory current conditions.
- failure to engage all of the public impacted by travel management planning.
- excessive or unnecessary closure of dispersed camping opportunities.

There continues to be contention about the final requirements of the rule. While the final text of the rule may not specify these requirements, some participants do perceive these as both a requirement and an important part of fulfilling the *intent* of the rule. The understanding and interpretation of this intent is critically important, as differences in interpretation can lead to costly and time-consuming outcomes such as extended appeals and litigation.

**Perceived Forest Bias:** Some participants suggest the interpretation of the rule, whether literal or broad, reflects a bias of the Forest staff. In fact, a strong finding of the online survey results supports the important perception of bias among Forest Service staff and the role of this bias in determining how the rule is implemented.<sup>6</sup> In many cases this led to a perception of a biased travel management planning process, which often left certain user or advocacy groups feeling disenfranchised.

In some Forests, staff is seen as favoring motor vehicle use, while in other Forests the perceived bias is seen as discouraging motor vehicle use. A few Forests were reported as biased by all sides, but in most instances the Forest was reported as biased in only one direction. Several motorized users believe that the rule is being used simply to limit motorized travel without any consideration of the need for a long-term recreation plan for the Forest.

It is important to note that one bad experience can leave deep, abiding impressions. One trail user expressed strong frustration, even bitterness, when a new District Ranger “used the rule to simply close all trails,” without providing proper documentation by a paper trail. This experience led the participant to believe that few Forest Service personnel are

<sup>6</sup> Appendix 3 Online Survey Results

truly receptive or interested in developing a real partnership for sustainable trails.

On the other hand, a number of conservation advocates report experiences along similar lines, but perceive an advantage offered to motorized routes without sufficient comprehensive travel planning. In one instance, a participant noted with dismay that virtually all unauthorized OHV routes were approved without adequate analysis of their impacts, leaving the participant with the distinct impression of bias toward OHV use. The participant viewed this action as an unfortunate reward for illegal behavior that would only encourage further illegal behavior in the future. Similarly, an online survey respondent commented that the Forest Service's literal interpretation of the rule failed to take into account non-motorized and quiet recreation users.

One participant mentioned an example of more subtle bias. In rural areas, where roads are infrequently traveled, it can be very difficult to differentiate between Level 2 roads (for pickups and 4-wheel drive) and Level 3 roads (intended for more frequent use by passenger cars). A Forest may decide that only Level 3 and above roads will be automatically designated for "mixed use." So if users wish to have additional roads such as Level 2 designated for "mixed use," the confusion over which roads are Level 2 requires additional regulatory analysis and review. This need for additional regulatory analysis and review becomes a barrier that reduces user trust with the Forest Service. This example was given as a demonstration of how a seemingly small decision by the Forest Service can have important impacts and lead to perceptions of bias that impact user trust and willingness to work with the Forest Service.

Lastly, several participants noted that numerous non-motorized recreationists are simply seeking non-motorized experience, and do not want to be relegated to wilderness areas for this experience. For example, many hunters, bikers, hikers and birders would actually prefer opportunities in non-wilderness areas. One participant put it quite succinctly by asking, why should quiet recreationists have to drive two hours just to get to a quiet area? Several participants noted that numbers of quiet recreationists are both increasing and also aging, just like that of OHV recreationists. One District Ranger was described as saying that quiet recreation was adequately balanced with the needs of OHV recreation, because quiet recreation could use the wilderness areas. But quiet recreationists believed this was actually biased, and not at all a "balanced" approach.

**Environmental Analysis:** One participant reported that many Forests are trying to avoid producing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Forests are choosing to only do the less demanding Environmental Assessment (EA), even though it may expose them to lawsuits and consequently cost them more time and money in the long run. That said, in some travel management planning processes an EA is sufficient and an EIS is not required.

## Recommendations and Resources for Dealing with Interpreting the Travel Management Rule

### Recommendation 1.1 Communicate the broad impact and “frame” of travel management planning

For transparency and clarity, a travel management planning process should inform stakeholders that an MVUM will have impacts beyond the motorized recreationist community and that it may also impact non-motorized users and natural and cultural resources. In one Forest, when the travel management planning process was framed as a “transportation-oriented problem,” the quiet recreationists couldn’t understand why they should care. The Forest Service had to “beg” them to become involved, said one staff, and realized they needed to do a better job framing the issue. The Tahoe NF was cited as a good example of how to explain travel management planning, its purpose, and the steps in the process.<sup>7</sup> The executive summary was praised as useful in educating the public at public meetings.

**Shared understanding:** The fact that the rule is still engendering differing interpretations may not be surprising, but it points to the strong need for clarification of the intent or at least the issuance of clarification that would encourage consistency between Forests. There was general agreement among participants that travel management planning needs to be largely conducted at the local level, so that it reflects the conditions of each Forest. But the perceptions of strong bias and differing interpretations of the rule also suggest a need for more consistent messaging and shared understanding between Forests.

### Recommendation 1.2. Clarify the intent of the rule

For clarity and consistency between Forests, the Forest Service’s Washington office may wish to issue a brief clarification of the rule’s intent for the benefit of both Forest Service staff and Forest users.

- **Intent:** Clarification is needed on whether Forests should interpret the rule more narrowly, focusing on producing MVUMs as quickly and expeditiously as possible, or interpret the rule more broadly, to produce a balanced recreation management plan that is reflected in an MVUM, even if it takes longer and requires more resources. Similarly, the Forest Service should clarify if the rule is intended to manage recreation or to restrict access.
- **Minimum necessary road system:** Clarification is needed on whether and when Forests need to identify a minimum necessary road system to serve as a baseline for travel

#### Two Aspects of Current Conditions

In the EIS, Forests may want to distinguish between the “existing direction” (i.e., policy) and “existing conditions” (ground reality), as a change in *policy* can represent a “change” alternative even without any change in the routes.

- Study participant

<sup>7</sup> See Appendices for specific information, and [http://www.ForestService.fed.us/r5/tahoe/projects\\_plans/ohv\\_inv/index.shtml](http://www.ForestService.fed.us/r5/tahoe/projects_plans/ohv_inv/index.shtml)

management planning.

- **Public engagement:** Clarification is needed to make the purpose and need more clear so that non-motorized and quiet users will participate in travel management planning.
- **Current conditions:** Clarification is needed on whether and when current conditions should be inventoried to serve as a baseline for travel management planning.
- **Dispersed camping:** The rule allows for exemptions to cross country travel prohibition for dispersed camping and such exceptions should be made “sparingly”. Clarification is needed on what is meant by “sparingly.” Some Forests are reportedly using the rule to close all dispersed camping opportunities, while some users argue that the rule doesn’t necessarily require this.
- **Travel Analysis:** Clarification is needed on whether a full travel analysis is an important step in the travel management planning process.
- **Decision Level:** Clarification would be helpful on what level, local or regional, of the Forest Service should be making decisions on road closures. One participant felt that road closures are best decided at the local District Ranger level, to enable faster and more agile, flexible responses to road conditions.
- **Protection of Resources:** Clarification is needed on whether the *default* presumption should be for the Forest Service to err on the side of the resource needs rather than on the side of meeting recreational needs.

## 2) The Challenge of Limited Resources

A significant portion of participants noted that challenges of travel management planning frequently arise from limited Forest Service resources, some of which include:

- limited technical resources, such as the ability to conduct an inventory, GIS, or mapping.
- limited time, due to feeling the pressure of a deadline or simply the pressure of getting the MVUM done.
- limited personnel, for everything from conducting inventory, public outreach, meeting coordination and facilitation.



Photo Courtesy of D. Amador

However, funding – which affects all three of the above resources – was frequently cited as the biggest problem. Many non-Forest Service participants recognized that Forests are underfunded. One participant called travel management planning an “unfunded mandate.” Funding problems are widely seen as the reason for inadequate, unsuccessful or unsatisfactory processes. Specific consequences of inadequate funding cited by participants include:

- failure to determine baseline ecological and social conditions and to secure other useful knowledge.
- failure to educate both Forest Service employees and the public about the travel management planning process.
- failure to engage a facilitator to help design and guide difficult discussions.
- failure to engage all relevant interest groups.

Insufficient funding affects nearly all of the other challenges highlighted in this assessment. When funding is limited, Forest staff and (generally sympathetic) stakeholders report that the Forest staff is unable to devote the time required to design and implement a successful process. A small number of Forests have been able to obtain grants to hire independent public participation and facilitation consultants. However, the majority of Forests have relied on their regular staff to complete the travel management planning process. Forest employees are faced with the challenge of completing their regular workload in addition to the work required for travel management planning. Participants do recognize that the Forest employees are overworked, and must juggle multiple demands on their time. Many Forest employees, for their part noted that forest fires and sometimes even beetle damage are a higher priority and take time, staff, and funding away from travel management planning.

“A facilitator is important to create a safe place to talk, to make sure *all* ideas are actually recorded and to help with crowd management.”

- Study participant

75 percent of the online survey respondents listed inadequate resources, including money, technical resources (GIS), and facilitation, as challenges in the travel management planning process. 60 percent listed insufficient time as a challenge. Comments surrounding this issue ranged from sympathetic of the Forest Service’s situation to distressed with the Forest Service’s reluctance to commit necessary resources and funding.

## Recommendations and Resources for Dealing with Limited Resources

### Recommendation 2.1 Develop partnerships to leverage resources

For inclusivity and commitment to quality, Forests should consider developing partnerships with other stakeholder groups to leverage resources for all aspects of travel management planning. This could include technical and financial assistance, education, monitoring, and implementation. One recreationist noted with admiration that it is “amazing what some Forests are able to do with very little resources and funding.” Both the Eldorado NF and Stanislaus NF were cited as examples of Forests that are expanding their resources by working closely with a volunteer “Friends of” group and by seeking alternate funding through grants. A word of caution was also provided that, in developing partnerships, the Forest Service should be balanced in its approach to avoid the perception of bias.

Several participants reported that building partnerships with state agencies is important, and can be extremely useful for educational outreach and enforcement. In Idaho, for example, the Forest Service reported to have developed successful partnerships at different levels:

- The local County Sheriff’s office for cooperative monitoring and enforcement.
- A state-level interagency group that is leading the education outreach effort. This interagency group led a state agency to hire three regional education specialists specifically tasked to educate OHV users through brochures, campaigns, school visits, and workshops.

### Recommendation 2.2 Consider accepting technical assistance from credible stakeholders

Numerous non-Forest Service participants discussed how they and others stand ready, willing and able to assist the Forest Service with technical aspects of travel management planning. Some talked about how they have already provided technical assistance to the Forest Service. However, some expressed disappointment that their offers of assistance seem to fall on deaf ears. This apparent unresponsiveness tends to feed the perception that the Forest Service is strongly biased against their involvement in travel management planning even when their inclusion might be helpful to mitigate the strain on Forest Service resources. Specific types of assistance that user groups have provided, or are willing to provide, include:

- Gathering data on current conditions.
- Gathering and/or providing GIS data for current routes, for Forest Service verification.
- Joint field trips for mutual education.
- User education.
- Road and trail maintenance.
- Road and trail monitoring.

Certain conditions need to be in place to ensure quality and lack of bias in user group data. The most important of these are conducting the data gathering effort as joint fact-finding exercises, so that the data and the process by which it is gathered are viewed as legitimate. The Forest Service has a responsibility to ensure the data is accurate and non-

biased. The Forest Service has certain technical requirements for the data, so partners should check with the Forest Service before doing data collection. It is important to note that data gathered on non system routes does not mean that the route will become a part of the Forest Service system, but that the data is used to understand the current conditions.

### Recommendation 2.3 Leverage funding

One participant suggested that if the Forest has a commitment to travel management planning, it will find a way to leverage and expand its limited resources.

- Several states, such as California, Oregon, Washington and Idaho, collect user fees for OHV licenses that are then fed back into a grants program. Some of this funding might be tapped for the travel management planning process, including user education, signage, monitoring and enforcement. Forests that are located in states without this funding source, however, may have to be more creative in their efforts to leverage resources.
- In Wyoming, the Forest Service applied for funding from the State Trails Department Sticker Registration Fund. It also obtained a grant from the Wyoming Department of State Trails to collect GIS data on trails, which funded 50% of a GIS position for two years just for the travel management project.

### Recommendation 2.4 Consider outside facilitation

Numerous participants noted the importance of providing expert, impartial facilitation for helping user groups find common ground and develop mutually acceptable alternatives. For a successful facilitation process the Forest Service has to first identify the decision space, which will then guide public participation. A facilitator can be useful in helping to create a safe and productive place to talk. As an independent and impartial party, a good facilitator makes sure that all the concerns and ideas are recorded, all groups are offered an equal chance to provide their views, and ensures that the crowd does not become intimidating or prevent some from participating. The use of an impartial facilitator also allows Forest Service staff to be available to answer questions and take an active role in planning rather than process management.

#### Working with Outside Facilitators

In the **St. Joe Ranger District of the Idaho Panhandle NF**, one participant noted that a facilitator was able to help citizens get started with travel management planning by developing helpful ground rules, such as the requirement for 70% agreement to make a decision. In Wyoming, the **Bridger Teton NF** enlisted the assistance of the Teton Sciences Schools, which successfully hosted and moderated a major public education forum.

While some groups stated that they benefited from facilitation assistance provided by USIECR and other professional facilitators, one suggested that professional services may be too expensive and local universities may be able to provide a more cost-effective alternative.

### 3) The Challenge of Time

Many participants reflected on the pressures of time that frustrate Forest Service personnel and user groups alike. Time pressures were attributed to three principal factors: limited funding, limited staff, and the scheduled completion date of 2009. Insufficient time was sometimes blamed for the inability of the Forests to address conflicts and concerns of different user groups. Frequently, participants reported that Forests lacked time to build the meaningful relationships necessary for a collaborative effort. One participant commented that a “hurried time frame ... makes collaborative planning very difficult.”



Photo Courtesy of J. Kramer

Many participants expressed frustration at not knowing the Forest’s specific timeline for the planning effort, and not understanding the different phases of the effort. In one instance, a state was reportedly unable to comment on a draft EA, creating unnecessary hard feelings.

In another instance, a small working group comprised of users from several different groups was disbanded after only a handful of meetings because the District Ranger believed that the group was not making enough progress. A participant in the group felt that, if given more time, the group would have been successful in resolving conflicts between different user groups. In another instance, a participant observed that Forest Service staff believed that their jobs were at stake if the route and area designation process was not completed quickly. This same participant felt that this pressure became a justification for taking shortcuts, such as not completing an inventory before public comment.

Participants also expressed concern over “stop and go” planning processes, when a flurry of activity is followed by a period of inactivity, sometimes for a period of many months. In such instances, participants express frustration at not knowing what is happening. This can cause uncertainty and suspicion on the part of the public, which can prevent or reduce their trust and confidence in the Forest Service. In one Forest, there was a two-year gap between the last public meeting and the release of the EIS and alternatives, which to date has still yet to be officially released after being pushed back. A participant from this Forest noted that the time frame greatly disrupted any continuity in the process. In another Forest travel management planning took seven years. A participant noted that long public participation processes can lead to burnout and that some members of the public will eventually just stop participating.

### Recommendations and Resources for Dealing with Time Pressures

Effective travel management planning cannot be done overnight, especially when there are competing interests at stake. User groups have varying needs and even varying levels of desire to work together to create routes that will protect resources and work for everyone. Consensus building requires time to identify and invite appropriate user groups, to educate participants about current conditions and goals for the future, to

build relationships, and to develop alternatives that meet diverse recreation needs while protecting natural and cultural resources.

### **Recommendation 3.1 Clarify, communicate and respect the schedule**

For transparency and clarity, it is critical to clarify the overall planning schedule. The simple act of clarifying and communicating the overall timeline for the planning process, with periodic updates on a specific schedule, especially during periods of inactivity or interruptions, would go a long way toward building appropriate expectations and trust with user groups. Specifically, stakeholders want to know how long the process will last, at what points they will be involved, how their involvement will be used, and how the decision will be made. Stakeholders should be provided with both the appropriate documents and the specific time frames for comment.

### **Recommendation 3.2 Consider an extension on the deadline**

Some participants suggested that the scheduled completion date of 2009 is not fixed in stone, and that Forests can and should seek an extension when the planning process would benefit from more time. The scheduled completion date of 2009 should not be used as a reason, they said, to compress the process to the point that its value is compromised. Of course, decisions to extend the deadline need to be balanced against the need to complete travel management planning in a timely manner.

### **Recommendation 3.3 Consider limiting the substantive scope**

Some Forests have been able to limit the scope of the travel management planning effort by excluding mining claims, firewood gathering and livestock grazing, all of which can be managed through the permitting process. Another option for narrowing the scope is to not include winter use in Forests that have few issues with winter use. Some Forests have reported that if they limit the scope to summer use only, and do not focus on winter travel, they will have more time and resources to focus on motorized and non-motorized recreation. Several participants expressed concern, however, that winter plans are equally important especially where they impact native wildlife.

### **Recommendation 3.4 Consider limiting the geographic scope**

Some participants also suggested that Forests attempting to do travel management planning Forest-wide tend to be less successful, as they encounter more conflict, experience greater difficulty with public engagement and take longer. They suggested that a far more successful strategy is to focus on District-level planning. And, to further limit the scope, the District could decide to concentrate on areas open only to motorized travel. One online survey respondent suggested limiting the scope of motorized travel to reflect the funding available for signage, maintenance and enforcement. Another participant suggested the use of geographic zones to concentrate uses and enforcement efforts to ensure a fiscally responsible plan. On the other hand, participants concerned with ecological planning stressed that Forest scale planning is a better approach for ecological reasons.

## 4) The Challenge of Understanding and Documenting Current Conditions

Inadequate data gathering, such as information on use and condition of trails, was listed as a challenge in travel management planning by 75 percent of online survey respondents

Travel management planning combines both scientific and social knowledge. Scientific knowledge generally represents a strength of the Forest Service staff, assuming they have the time and tools to gather this knowledge. Scientific knowledge includes data about the Forest's existing conditions – conditions of natural and cultural resources, of roads and trails, and trends in varying uses – as well as projected impacts of the varying uses on those conditions. Social knowledge, however, generally represents a challenge for Forest Service staff, as this is not often the focus of their training. Social knowledge includes an understanding of “1) public values and beliefs about natural resources and roadless areas; 2) the collaborative environment and citizen-government relationships; and 3) lifestyles.”<sup>8</sup> Both types of knowledge are essential to successfully educate and engage the public in a meaningful travel management planning discussions about striking an appropriate balance between protection of Forest resources and appropriate recreation.



Photo by Lisa Philips. Courtesy of Wildlands CPR

Because of these different types of knowledge required, among other reasons, travel management planning is inherently complex. Forest staff must integrate data from multiple sources during the decision-making process. In numerous instances, participants reported that baseline data about current ecological conditions and travel routes has been problematic. Examples cited include inaccurate maps of existing routes and conditions at the start of the planning process; showing routes that are not in use; not showing unauthorized routes; not showing existing routes that have undergone NEPA analysis in the past; and the use of 1950s and 1960s base maps. Numerous participants underlined the importance of figuring out which roads actually exist. In one Forest, a user said “people were blown away by how many roads were actually there.” Another user commented that the failure to ground-truth data is a huge disservice to the public. In one Forest, according to one participant, the Ranger believed that there was no funding to do a field verification of the road system. The Forest is in the “strange position of proposing to designate roads that don’t even exist!” It was reported that some Forests did not intend to collect additional baseline data.

Additionally, participants commented that some Forests did not provide adequate information to make an informed decision about potential geographic conflicts between trails and natural or cultural resources. When such conflicts occurred participants sometimes were unaware of why particular routes were being closed.

Some Forests reportedly do not have the staffing or technical capability to conduct comprehensive data collection. When this occurs the absence of adequate baseline data about roads and resources can lead stakeholders to question the credibility of the planning process.

<sup>8</sup> “Roadless Area Conservation: National Forest System Lands in Idaho, Socioeconomic Specialist Report,” by Cynthia Manning, Keith Stockmann, Mike Niccolucci, Chris Miller, John Russell, and Krista Gevert. June 2008.

In some cases, user groups have organized to provide GPS data to the Forests on existing routes and user-created routes. In one Forest, a County obtained cooperating agency status based on its expertise in local, social and economic conditions. With 9,000 miles of roads to cover, the County's natural resource team, using their own time and gas, drove every road possible and assessed road conditions and impacts. The Forest used this data to make case-by-case decisions on the roads. The County's work created a new GPS layer, adding roads not on the Forest Service layer and eliminating roads that didn't exist. Based on its work, the County is creating its own alternative for the EIS, and is also incorporating this alternative into its land use plan. However, in some Forests, even when provided data that meets Forest Service standards, some participants claimed that the staff lacked the ability to properly evaluate and incorporate the data. In some instances, too, the lack of documentation of current conditions was perceived as a way for the local Forest or District to achieve its own agenda, whether increasing or reducing motorized vehicle use.

## Recommendations and Resources for Understanding and Documenting Current Conditions

### Recommendation 4.1 Inventory and document current conditions

Most participants viewed the documentation of current conditions as critical for informed decision-making. While documentation of current conditions may not be a literal requirement of the rule, many suggested that it is nevertheless impossible to consider the factors that are required by the rule without understanding those conditions. On the other hand, participants did not want the need for documentation to be used as an excuse for prolonging the process unnecessarily.

#### OHV Groups Trained to Collect Data

In one Forest, an OHV group was instrumental in collecting data for the Forest, creating teams to fill in data about existing routes and their conditions. A key part of this effort was that teams were trained to collect GPS data according to US Forest Service standards. Also, teams were accompanied by a surveyor to gauge the use of trails.

- Given the increased use of computerized mapping systems, and the flexibility and service these provide, numerous participants said data should ideally be mapped with ArcGIS software so that it may then be compared with topographic and orthographic maps and other imagery to assess and understand the impacts.
- Participants have stressed the need to collect data on the unauthorized routes - their location, condition, and impact on the surrounding environment. Although this is not required, it aids in the understanding of current conditions. It is also important to have citizens prioritize routes (e.g., favorite routes, loop routes, scenic routes, and special destinations)

## Recommendation 4.2 Build understanding through collaborative learning and fact-finding

Some participants described experiences where conflicts that threatened to unravel a process were resolved through collaborative learning and joint fact-finding. This practice could be appropriate as part of the initial scoping for travel management planning as well as later in the process.

A number of participants stressed that the best strategy to obtain data is a collaborative pre-scoping information gathering, in which the Forest engages the public at the very outset to understand which routes are important to which communities and why; which routes provide access to specific attractions; which routes provide better experiences than others; which routes involve a lot of conflict, which do not; and which routes are causing significant resource impacts. This can take many shapes and forms, but the key is to engage the public early in a fully collaborative pre-scoping to ensure that all appropriate information is gathered.

Participants requested that data on current conditions be provided to the public in clear ways, to ensure a thorough understanding of existing conditions. One way to ensure clear understanding is to seek input from the public about what data would be useful, and in what format.

Similarly, participants repeatedly suggested that user groups be given opportunities to assist the Forest Service in a variety of ways:

- providing existing GPS data and/or collecting new GPS data on routes and resources.
- assessing current conditions.
- conducting joint field visits to build mutual understanding.

The following are specific ideas suggested by participants:

- **Public meetings** have been used successfully as a means for jointly mapping data on existing conditions and routes, both authorized and unauthorized. Meetings can be used to identify routes with little use, routes that have been abused, routes that are of greatest importance to different users, and routes that have impacts on other uses and resources. There are a variety of ways of presenting data. For example, some Forests have used posters with pictures of natural resource impacts to illustrate the damage from users. Maps have also been used to display cultural heritage locations and natural resource inventories.
- **Joint mapping** should be done in a way that invites all users to feel valued and contribute information they deem important. Several participants independently noted that maps should show only two key elements: all current routes (distinguishing between authorized and unauthorized routes), and all proposed routes. Minimizing the use of multiple colors or symbols may make the map easier to read. One participant noted that using GIS layers does not ensure readability. Maps need to be readable by the average citizen with sufficient labels so that they can be understood.

- **Joint data collection:** Numerous participants suggested that user groups are often ready and willing to help the Forest Service gather data for the planning process. Some groups may already have data they are willing to share. Many groups are willing to do extensive field work that the Forest Service does not have time or resources to do. Assuming a level of trust, as well as oversight and verification, training for user groups and joint data collection may provide a viable alternative to leverage limited Forest Service resources.
- **Joint research:** One participant suggested that planning efforts can benefit from research on current user conflicts. This kind of research lends itself naturally to mutually collaborative learning about the history of use within the Forest and what people generally – and different users in particular – value about the Forest. This data can help reduce misunderstandings and misperceptions of the values and goals of different user groups.
- **Cultural and natural resource data collection:** In addition to collecting data on user created trails, data must be collected about the Forest’s natural resources, ecological impacts, and critical physical and cultural areas. Various groups have worked with the Forest Service to collect natural and cultural resource data to supplement the Forest Service data. These data are important for determining if there are any current conflicts with trails, and to designate areas that future trails should avoid.
- **Website:** The known system routes can be posted on the Forest’s website. The web is an important vehicle for engagement, allowing posting of key documents, promoting input and exchange, and generally supporting travel management planning. If coupled with a method for public comment on the posted routes, this can be another valuable method of collecting data on routes.
- **Joint field trips:** Another strategy used by some Forests is to work with user groups who have GPS data, or access to GPS data collection instruments, and who are willing to collect GPS points for unauthorized trails. This has been particularly beneficial at building relationships among competing user groups.

**For Win-Win, Have The Conversation  
With All Sides**

*Paraphrase from one participant*

“Motorized users have been saying, we want loops, loops!’ So the District proposes *half* of the trail –a 50% solution –trying to make both sides happy. But it was like dividing Solomon’s child. So now the trail is *unenforceable* because it was designed poorly!

“What if, instead, the District had said, ‘Let’s have the conversation with both sides, let’s try to talk this through. What if we put a loop over here where it doesn’t damage a resource?’ Then it might have been possible to make trade-offs and *both sides* might have been able to get something they could live with.”

## 5) The Challenge of Public Involvement

Public involvement has been a significant challenge for many Forests throughout their travel management planning. This is not surprising, as controversy is bound to arise when decisions are made concerning use of public lands. Some Forests struggle with how best to engage the public in travel management planning, finding it particularly challenging to strike a balance between openness and transparency and needs of specific different interest and user groups.



Photo Courtesy of J. Kramer

Some participants criticize public engagement strategies as formulaic, and not tailored to meet the needs of the specific Forest or District. One participant reported that travel management planning was more about following instructions – i.e. “for show” – than the actual substantive outcome. Another participant described one Forest’s approach as “fairly typical” in that it created a Proposed Action and the public, in turn, was “very unhappy,” thinking the decision was already made without public participation and that the public meetings were just for show.

**Perceived Bias:** As discussed under Challenge 1 regarding interpretation of the rule, many travel management planning participants reported that Forest staff devoted more attention to a single interest, whether that be motorized or non-motorized. In a high-stakes setting this perceived bias, whether or not it is true, is also a critical factor during public involvement. Any perception of bias may be seen as favoritism and could prevent people from participating or trusting the process.

One participant reported that some Forest staff stereotyped user groups, failing to fully understand their goals for a sustainable trail system. In another Forest during mapping exercises, participants were not given a color to designate non-motorized use, so there was no opportunity for discussion of issues related to non-motorized uses.

33 percent of the online survey respondents provided comments suggesting Forest staff bias towards one particular user group, fairly evenly distributed between non-motorized or motorized users. Respondents perceived bias in both the scope and process of travel management planning. One survey respondent stated that “the Forest Service staff have exhibited a bias against motorized recreation.” Alternatively, another survey respondent commented that the Forest Service “focused on motorized travel and did not actively reach out to the non-motorized users early on in the process.” Ultimately, this perceived or real bias discredited the Forest Service’s reputation.

**Conflict:** Forest Service staff and user groups, alike, report that travel management planning can become polarized. One participant noted that “more times than not organizations have a need for a perception of conflict to survive.”

Given the high stakes perceived by motorized users, quiet recreationists, related economic interests, environmental advocates, and cooperating agencies, conflict is natural and inevitable. It is equally natural, although not inevitable, that Forest Service staff would prefer to avoid conflict. Not surprisingly, participants reported that this happens with

some frequency, with predictable results. 35 percent of online survey respondents listed the Forests' inability to reconcile competing values as a challenge in travel management planning.

One Forest Service staffer observed that the Forest Service has historically viewed conflict as bad and to be avoided at all costs. A travel management participant commented that people nearly have to come to blows for Forest Service staff to acknowledge or deal with a conflict. Another participant noted that "conflict is not inherently bad," and "how you deal with it can be incredibly healthy and productive." This participant also noted that the longtime "Decide, Announce, Defend" paradigm of the Forest Service is no longer useful. Three reasons were suggested by a number of participants, including Forest Service staff, for perceived difficulties in managing conflict productively:

1. Some staff lack knowledge of what constitutes effective collaboration.
2. Staff that is good at solving technical problems may have trouble addressing "wicked problems"<sup>9</sup> that require substantial sensitivity to relationships and values.
3. Some Forest Service personnel view science as the only way of understanding a resource, and any role for traditional ecological knowledge as a kind of put-down of their professional training.

**Collaboration:** A number of participants provided examples of processes where collaboration was either ineffective or not present at all. In one Forest, over the course of 18 months, recreationists were invited to comment but no local government officials were included. At the end of the effort, the Forest issued a decision that closed about 90% of the trail network. Local governments were "up in arms" because they hadn't been included in the process, and other constituents and recreationists were distressed that their comments were either ignored or not considered. Attempts by the Forest to explain its proposal were viewed as "half-hearted."

*Drawing on participant discussions, the following are **characteristics commonly found in ineffective collaboration**:*

**A. Ineffective public meetings:** Large public meetings were reported as a common way that Forest Service staff engages the public. However, this is not necessarily the most effective way to gain public input. "It's not decision by decibels" as one participant put it. Several participants commented on the hostile, and sometimes threatening, environment at large public meetings. Many felt uncomfortable attending so they stopped participating in the process. One participant reported that it appeared even Forest Service personnel were intimidated.

Sometimes, at large public meetings people feel uncomfortable expressing their points of view because of the level of intensity of other participants. Some people feel too intimidated to share their own perspective when it is seen as speaking out against their neighbor. It was also reported that some groups may rally their members to attend a public meeting simply to bolster their numbers, but are not

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<sup>9</sup> "Wicked problem" is a phrase used in social planning to describe a problem that is difficult or impossible to solve because of incomplete, contradictory, and changing requirements that are often difficult to recognize. Moreover, because of complex interdependencies, the effort to solve one aspect of a wicked problem may reveal or create other problems." *Excerpt from Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wicked\\_problem](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wicked_problem)*

provided with accurate information about the issues and process, and so cannot participate in a meaningful way.

**B. Lack of inclusivity:** If one interest group is forgotten, left out, or ignored, participants report that the process was unfair because it lacked inclusivity. In one Forest, one user group asked to be included in travel management planning, but reported that the Forest did not include them. In another Forest one user group reported its exclusion from the process because the Forest did not recognize that they had a legitimate stake in travel management planning. There is concern that some Forest Service staff consider announcing and holding a meeting sufficient outreach. County government officials, adjacent property owners, and Native American tribal leaders were cited as groups who may be left out of the discussion, if not actively pursued or individually approached.

**C. Inability to interact productively with other parties:** Some participants noted the importance of being able to share concerns with other groups. In one Forest, a stakeholder group felt “burned” because it was never allowed to raise concerns, never shown where existing roads were open, and was consequently pushed into an unnecessarily adversarial position with other users. This group had prepared a proposal that they thought was balanced and entered into the process willing to collaborate and compromise. However, the group was never allowed to present their ideas or to have meaningful discussion with other groups. Instead, only two modes of response were allowed – either agree or disagree with one user group. This group was asked to participate by the Forest staff but believed that their presence was desired only for show, not for real collaboration.

Environmentalists and recreationists actually share the same desire for designated trails, succinct loops, and signage.  
- Study participant

In terms of specific meeting formats, some participants cited the “open house” as a format that was inherently un-collaborative, in the sense that it doesn’t allow people to hear others’ concerns or build understanding and relationships among users. One participant reported that the open house format “instantly galvanizes the public to take sides.” Another participant reported that the Forest Service refused to answer questions during an open house.

Participants who knew of other options usually described the open house format as good for a very specific purpose – e.g., gathering information from individual users – but inappropriate for other purposes such as sharing information among users, finding common ground, developing win-win options, and building relationships. An independent facilitator stated that the first meeting with the public should never be an open house, as often times the public are fearful and uninformed at the beginning of the process.

**D. Conflict and hostility:** In situations that were considered un-collaborative, some participants reported that Forest staff was either unwilling or unable to address the hostility at meetings, or unwilling to create a more collaborative process. One participant noted that different interest groups who are often stereotyped as adversaries actually share more in common than is assumed. This participant

found that both environmentalists and motorized recreationists share the desire for designated trails, succinct loops and signage. The difficulty encountered, according to this participant, is that the Forest staff has consistently told groups they cannot do this, creating unnecessary conflicts.

**E. Lack of transparency:** Many participants considered the lack of transparency as a form of non-collaboration. This occurs any time that the Forest Service fails to communicate with user groups, fails to share or provide information requested, and fails to provide a rationale for its decision. For example, some participants reported that they were unaware of why particular routes were being closed when conflicts between trails and natural or cultural resources occurred. Several online survey respondents suggested increased transparency in the process as a way to improve citizen involvement. Their comments specifically mention transparency in the response to public comments, communication with user groups, and process timeline.

“Collaboration is extremely time consuming... a [worthwhile but] slow, painful process with one step forward and two back.”  
- Study participant

**Missing opportunities to build relationships among the parties:** Several participants spoke of missed opportunities for relationship building that could lead to innovation, cooperation, and consensus. Most users would rather see the Forest staff foster common ground than conflict, and encourage the discovery of shared, rather than differing, values in the Forest. In fact, one participant listed a host of benefits from mutual learning through joint meetings:

- User groups can be sure they are hearing the same message from the Forest Service.
- User groups can learn from each other.
- User groups can explore and discover options and solutions that can work for all.
- The Forest Service can avoid charges of favoritism and bias.

**Inadequate acknowledging, tracking and responding to public concerns:** Distrust and disaffection isn't always born from one experience, but sometimes from years of feeling that offers, requests, and needs are not heard. For example, one participant claimed that offers to conduct scientific research, rerouting, trail maintenance, self-policing, monitoring, or raising funds have been rejected, some believe because of direction from higher levels. This behavior has led the group to believe that the “culture of the Forest Service is to not listen to input from real people, because the culture isn't changing at higher levels.”

Nearly 40 percent of the respondents to the online survey listed “acknowledgment” of their issues by the Forest Service as a major challenge. These participants believed that their comments were misrepresented, lumped together, or completely dismissed. Specific problems reported by participants include unresponsiveness to requests for detailed information on specific routes, lack of documentation of the decision process for each route, and lack of documentation of public comments and public meetings.

In one Forest, a participant described a collaborative process that ended with no feedback from the Forest Service on how or whether the public input actually influenced the proposed action. When the final action was published, some participants wondered

why they had participated, as they had no indication of having any influence on the final action.

Another participant described a process as particularly non-transparent. Every aspect of the process was difficult, requiring a FOIA request even for basic information. Important information – such as how data was collected, maps with existing conditions, maps of critical habitat – was not openly shared or made available to the public.

In another Forest, a group now considering litigation reported that its comments were misrepresented – some of their comments were lumped together with comments from other groups, and some of their comments that didn't cite a specific route were outright dismissed. In this instance, the participant indicated that the Forest staff had good intentions and wanted to be responsive, but simply felt too stressed for time, cut corners, and consequently failed to be properly responsive

**Lack of sideboards at outset:** In some Forests, participants reported that “sideboards”<sup>10</sup> - requirements that are not negotiable - were not established, resulting in the public being unclear on what issues were or were not subject to public review. A frequent refrain from participants was the request that the Forest Service clarify its sideboards at the beginning, before seeking public input, so that it can explicitly tell the public which issues are open or not open for discussion.

Many believe that without sideboards, the public is apt to have incorrect expectations about the process and the outcomes. These false expectations lead to long-term issues and the potential for future litigation.

In one instance, a participant noted that the Forest Service attempted to set its sideboards by asking for public consensus. According to the participant, this strategy was ineffective, resulting in unnecessary conflict and time lost. The participant considered it an abrogation by the Forest Service of its federal statutory responsibility to make decisions that will protect national cultural and natural resources.

**Unclear roles and decision process:** In some cases the role of the public in impacting the Plan was not explicitly defined. This can create confusion and conflict between opposing user groups and between users and the Forest staff. Online survey respondents suggested that there should be clear ground rules and expectations surrounding the decision process. One participant noted the need for “clear understanding of the parameters for their involvement and adequate time to engage and respond to citizens.”

## Recommendations and Resources for Public Involvement

### Recommendation 5.1 Work to develop collaborative solutions

In the best examples of travel management planning cited by participants, again and again success and mutual satisfaction by all users seemed to hinge on the fact that efforts were made to engage all the users from the beginning and to find solutions that all users could live with. In Forests where one recreation use was favored – or viewed as favored – and where the other uses were not fully engaged in a collaborative effort, the inevitable

<sup>10</sup> Examples of sideboards could include areas of the Forest where protection of cultural or natural resources prohibit any recreational activity. Or a sideboard could include the possibility of trails abutting or running through private property.

the need to sacrifice either personal values or protection of natural resources. Collaboration may not always result in common ground or a satisfactory resolution of issues. However, without some effort to build understanding, which is often most effectively achieved through collaborative approaches, there is little chance that mutual common ground will be discovered or that interesting and innovative approaches will be found to resolve differences or satisfy diverse needs. (See page 40 for information on effective conflict resolution.)

Some participants voiced concern over how to have meaningful collaboration without requiring a FACA-chartered group, or how to have meaningful participation within the perceived confines of FACA. Agencies can participate in advisory groups, can seek and receive advice from groups, and can even decide to adopt their recommendations without necessarily violating FACA. It is the role of the agencies to determine if FACA applies. Agencies may avoid convening groups due to exaggerated FACA fears or group results may be successfully challenged if FACA should have been applied but was not. With any group, documenting activities and making group interaction as transparent and public as possible will help avoid actual or perceived unfairness and allow those within the process to function effectively.<sup>11</sup> (See page 38 for information on compliance with FACA.)

The following are specific suggestions for ways to develop collaborative solutions, suggested by participant experiences:

- **Consider a wide range of collaborative processes for engaging the public, and identify the best process for the situation:** Collaboration can take many forms, as described by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2.org) spectrum for public involvement. The simplest forms of engagement are aimed at informing the public, such as through strictly informational public meetings and open houses. The next step in the ladder of collaboration is to consult the public, such as through focus groups, surveys or more interactive public meetings. Moving into more complex forms of collaboration would be to involve the public more extensively through workshops. The most complex collaborative processes - and the ones requiring the greatest commitment of resources and time - are those where decisions will be made collaboratively, such as advisory committees, consensus-based stakeholder groups, and even facilitated negotiation.
- **Form a “Collaborative Alternative Team:”** Two participants cited the Inyo National Forest in California as an example of a model collaborative approach. One noted that this experience demonstrates that when stakeholders are brought together, they are likely to be successful. In this Forest, the Supervisor reportedly provided

<sup>11</sup> Adapted from Dukes, E.Franklin, and Firehock, Karen. Collaboration, A Guide for Environmental Advocates, (Charlottesville, Virginia, University of Virginia, The Wilderness Society and National Audubon Society, 2001.)

### Screening Process for User Alternatives

In one Forest, a screening process was created for user group proposals. During this screening, the Forest staff would educate the user group about the planning process, and help the group identify its best possible “additions and subtractions” to the route system. This screening process helped improve the quality of user group proposals, and also resolved issues lingering from the previous mapping effort. The participant noted an important lesson learned is that **when people understand**, they may not agree with the Forest constraints or restrictions but **are at least receptive and able to accept them.**

*-Study participant*

staff support and a “Collaborative Alternatives Team” was convened by a local conservation district. The team was an intensive, professionally facilitated effort to develop a collaborative alternative. Participants were promised that, if they were able to agree on an alternative, the Forest Service would give it serious consideration. The Forest Service also held numerous meetings spread over 200 miles, including both small and large towns, to help educate and involve interested parties at each stage of travel management planning. It also put a link on its website for information about Route and Area Designation. The new site provided background information about travel management planning; outlined the process; provided links for other documents and a glossary of terms; provided contact information; posted where meetings were being held; and gave regular updates on the process. Local newspapers also reported on the process and publicized upcoming meetings. One of the participants noted that the Team was successful because they agreed that “it’s not about winning or losing, but about the need to create a system that protects land and satisfies everyone’s needs.”

**Collaboration May be More Likely to Succeed When...**

1) A good balance of opportunities for both motorized and non-motorized recreation already exists. When recreational opportunities are imbalanced, the parties may become more entrenched, polarized, and less willing to collaborate.

2) The hard work has already been completed - i.e., routes have already been determined and now the decision is whether to designate single or multi-track.

*-Study participant*

- **Encourage or enable partners to initiate their own collaborative effort:** A County in Idaho initiated its own pre-scoping effort, by creating the Bonneville Trails Committee of motorized and non-motorized users (snowmobile and ATV riders, equestrians, hikers, and others). This committee examined the map, route by route, and successfully recommended the designation for each route.
- **Give a specific time frame for the development of a proposal:** One participant described the process used by the St. Joe Ranger District in Idaho as a good example of how to engage the public in an early collaborative effort. The participants reported that the Interdisciplinary (ID) Team, in the end, was surprised to discover significant agreement with the collaborative group. The collaborative process included the following steps:
  - conducting focus groups to explore the level of interest in the issues and in a collaborative effort;
  - identifying all local user groups to participate;
  - convening a collaborative group that committed to developing a proposal in seven months, meeting two times per month, and agreed to try to compromise, as well as agree to disagree;
  - providing the environment for a collaborative effort with the Forest Service stepping back into a resource role – providing maps, logistics, website for notes, and a facilitator;
  - providing a facilitator who helped the group listen to each other and work through their differences;
  - providing clear sideboards at the beginning.
- **Form Multi-stakeholder Work Groups:** Work groups can be a productive method

for developing collaborative solutions. One participant suggested that it may be helpful to have different interest groups work separately, for example splitting them into a motor vehicle group and a non motor vehicle group. With the sideboards clearly identified so that all groups have similar expectations, ask the groups to develop their proposed motorized and non motorized routes/areas. After the groups have completed their work, discuss what the two groups have in common, not in common, what they can live with, and what they cannot live with. By hearing these issues, people can begin to understand where other groups are coming from. Then, by building this understanding, they are more likely to work toward finding solutions that will meet each others' needs. Other participants noted that some work groups have benefitted from having the different interest groups work together, side by side, taking one section of the Forest at a time, or even one route at a time, and working to find solutions that are mutually acceptable. Through this approach, groups may finally agree with the plan. If people agree with the plan, they'll follow it.

"It's not about winning or losing, but about the need to create a system that protects [the] land and satisfies everyone's needs."  
- Study participant

- **Discuss one section of the Forest at a time:** In the same Forest planning effort, a participant suggested that another key to success was that the group discussed one section of the Forest at a time – first looking at all the uses within that section, then hearing Forest staff thoughts and proposals, then hearing user thoughts and ideas. Participants worked to agree on what routes should stay, be removed, or agreed to disagree. The Forest Service is now developing an alternative based on the ideas and agreement generated from this effort.
- **Hold Listening Workshops:** In the Bridger Teton NF a participant described the successful use of six "Listening Workshops," which were held in communities near unrestricted areas to hear place-based community and user concerns. In small groups, attendees were asked to share comments on the following questions:
  - How do you use these areas?
  - What do you see as desirable attributes of a designated system?
  - What do you see as ways to balance competing interests?
- **Use Focus Groups:** Focus groups can be used to obtain information before the formal process begins. Focus groups are small, representative, and informal, enabling the Forest staff to think through some of the tougher issues before the public process is fully underway. A focus group usually consists of 6-10 people who either represent the same interest or who represent a diversity of interests. With the help of focus groups, Forest staff can better assess demographics to acknowledge where there are differences and where this is common ground. One online survey respondent noted the effectiveness of focus groups in their Forest. The focus groups helped "plan broader public involvement strategies...provid[ing] an excellent forum for what works and what doesn't from a bureaucratic viewpoint."
- **Use Small Group Discussions at Public Meetings:** To foster collaboration and eliminate the opportunity for grandstanding, one participant suggested that

– instead of a public forum – engage people around small tables with maps and information about the process and issues. Smaller groups allow more people to mark on maps, contribute to the process, and hear different opinions on the issues.

- **Offer Public Education Forums:** A variation on an open house, the public education forum offers a panel of speakers who can talk about how they view and try to respond to travel management. Panel members are drawn from conservation groups, agencies such as Fish and Wildlife, motorized recreation groups, quiet recreationist groups, local OHV business people, and any other group associated with the forest. This format helps educate stakeholders about the interests and goals of different groups in a non-threatening, educational manner.

- **Avoid Note Cards or Use Note Cards With Great Caution:** Many people expressed the need to curb “grandstanding” at public meetings. At some Forests note cards were used for participants to record their questions. Some benefits of using note cards are that the Forest staff can physically document the public’s questions and address more questions than otherwise could have been answered. Using note cards can also control “grandstanding” and provide a way for people to participate that may not feel comfortable asking questions in front of a large crowd. There are some disadvantages to using note cards, too. People may feel overly controlled, and may view it as a method to prevent participants from hearing each other, learning how each other feels, and having a real discussion. In at least one instance reported by a participant, the use of note cards created resentment and anger among the public. If note cards must be used, the Forest staff must acknowledge that they cannot answer all questions and provide an explanation for why – such as, there is not enough time to address every question, or there is not an answer to every question. And the staff must also develop and announce a system to provide feedback to those questions that went unanswered.

#### Forests Learning From Each Other

One participant observed that some Forests seem to be learning and adapting their processes from each other. Lessons from the **Eldorado NF**, for example, seem to be influencing and improving the process in the Plumas NF. In the Eldorado NF, the Forest Service is described as going out of its way to be available to stakeholders, offering several public meetings and open houses early in the process, and ensuring that all stakeholder groups know about the meetings. Now, in the Plumas NF, the same participant describes the Forest Service as willing to listen, hear concerns, and seek mutually acceptable solutions that at least “meet them half-way”.

## Recommendation 5.2 Make the process transparent

When people put significant time and effort into giving input, regardless of whether the outcome incorporates their suggestions, they want to know their time was valued. A key practice for both transparency and fairness is clearly articulating the process. This includes outlining when comments can be made, timelines and deadlines for each stage of the process, and roles and responsibilities (i.e., who’s doing what, when, and why). Even if the final

#### Reported Example of Clear Process

The Tahoe NF website was cited as a good example of a Forest that clearly laid out its travel management planning process. (See [Appendix 4](#) for specifics)

outcome doesn't meet a participant's hopes, a clear and fair process provides an important measure of process satisfaction and legitimacy.

The following are specific suggestions for ways to make the process transparent, suggested by participant experiences:

- Specify exact timing: When possible, the Forest should specify the exact timing for different stages of public involvement and comment. This is particularly important when parties need to plan in advance how they will participate in multiple travel management planning efforts.
- Use the web as a communication tool: The Bridger Teton NF was commended for its effort to provide complete transparency by putting all findings and maps on its website.

### **Recommendation 5.3 Engage the public as early as possible**

Many participants suggested that the best approach is to involve the public in pre-scoping information gathering, and then develop a "proposed action." Similarly, many of the online survey respondents listed early and continued communication with stakeholders as a key to successful citizen involvement. Pre-scoping can be as simple as thinking through what information currently exists, but can also include learning about current conditions – such as which routes are important to which communities, which routes have lots of conflict, and which routes have resource damage.

### **Recommendation 5.4 Seek diverse and inclusive participation**

Public involvement is most useful when all the populations that recreate in the forest and are concerned with the future of the Forest are well represented. These population groups include conservationists, off-highway vehicle recreationists, non-motorized recreationists, quiet recreationists, Tribal communities, hunters, equestrian riders, local business owners, and property owners. This does not mean that all populations need to be equally represented at all times. It does mean that Forest staff should be aware of these groups and should have a strategy for ensuring involvement, not only by each category, but the diversity of views within each group. It may be necessary to seek out interests who are underrepresented at public meetings.

Groups that need to be included fall into several categories:

- 1) Groups immediately or indirectly impacted by the decisions (motorized recreationists, quiet and non-motorized recreationists, conservationists, cultural or natural resource preservation groups, local governments, tribes);
- 2) Those who can block or appeal a decision;
- 3) Technical and other experts who can inform or assist the decision process (GIS, ArcGIS, facilitation, others).

Examples of public outreach that have been used include online list serves, contacting all organized groups that have an interest in the Forest, placing news releases in local

papers, and posting news releases on the Forest Service website. It also is important to go to the different groups, to meet on their turf, and to encourage members to come to the Forest Service office. These meetings are an opportunity to learn who can help carry the message about travel management planning to others.

In situations where there are no organized groups, it may be important to find and work with individuals who are connected to other users. In one Forest, the hunter groups were not as organized as the motorized and conservation groups so the typical avenues for communication were not present. One participant suggested that the Forest Service should attend local hunting conferences and conventions to reach the hunters.

“Public involvement is not a box to be checked off. The agency must always learn how to hear and clarify issues.”

- Study participant

### **Recommendation 5.5 Be adaptable and use the range of tools available for public engagement**

A collaborative process needs to be designed to address the specific conditions of the Forest and stakeholders. There is not only one way to do travel management planning. There are highly polarized situations in which the Forest staff should consider different options. When meetings become too hostile, meetings as usual won't necessarily work.

For example, some Forests have found it successful to start their public meetings in smaller communities. This gave them a chance to conduct the meetings in smaller, less challenging circumstances and allow the Forest staff to become well versed on the concerns and questions that will be raised in larger and potentially more contentious settings. One participant praised the Cibola NF for tailoring its public engagement to each district's population and geography.

In several Forests, staff reportedly met individually with groups numerous times to educate them about the issues and constraints and to explore options. These one-on-one meetings need to be held with all groups, equally, and are important to help groups come to understand the process and decision constraints.

### **Recommendation 5.6 Provide the public continual feedback and clear rationale for decisions**

Many participants asked for a more concrete paper trail so they could see how their and other comments were incorporated into the alternatives and if they were not incorporated, the reasons why.

Several participants gave different ways that citizen comments can be acknowledged. These methods include full documentation, sorting and tracking of all comments on spreadsheets from presentations, emails, and individual one-on-one meetings and phone calls. Otherwise it is easy to lose what might be useful ideas. One participant cited the Bridger Teton NF as a good example of systematic tracking and continuous feedback that contributed to a successful process. Drawing on this experience, the participant suggested the following protocol for tracking public comments and enabling the public to contribute to the development of alternatives:

- Catalog and group issues together by significant issues grouped together.
- Distribute the list to District Rangers for review and additional comments, with

line officer “sign-off.”

- Identify significant and non-significant issues.
- Collect written comments from public meetings and record on spreadsheets.
- Ask for input to develop alternatives that the Forest Service can use in response to the issues.

Another strategy used in this same Forest that others may wish to consider was the use of targeted public field tours. The Forest offered field tours to three different contentious locations, providing vans for transportation and hand-drawn maps of possible alternatives. The field tours attracted a great diversity of users and led to productive conversations among them. Following these field tours, fewer and fewer people reportedly showed up at workshops until, at the final DEIS workshop, not one person showed. This was considered a sign of tacit support for the process and final decision.

Another important consideration in documenting comments is that, as reported by one Forest, a significant 85% of the comments were received through the internet. This suggests that consideration should be given to developing easy ways to receive and categorize written internet comments.

Participants also discussed the need to have follow-up to public questions. When questions arise that cannot be answered, a recommended practice is to record the questions and check for clarification from the person who is asking the question. For frequently asked questions or answers that might benefit other people, it would be helpful to include the questions and answers in the next public meeting, newsletter or email communication.

Even when participants do not support a decision, providing feedback and a clear rationale for the decision gives participants a measure of satisfaction that the process was at least fair. One participant cited the Eldorado NF as an example of a responsive process. What is striking about this example is that, while the group believed that the decision was too restrictive, it did not feel “locked out” of the process because the Forest staff listened and provided feedback on its decision process. As a result, the group thought that it was still worthwhile to be involved in the process.

Participants stressed that communication should be continuous throughout travel management planning. Feedback is a critical practice that demonstrates to citizens that their input was valued. By taking time to help the public understand its final decision, the Forest Service builds relationships, trust, and a willingness among the public to help or participate again in the future.

### **Recommendation 5.7 Establish clear scope and “sideboards”**

Again and again, participants made this recommendation, noting that the public wants the Forest Service to make important decisions about the scope of travel management planning – before it approaches the public for input. The public wants to know the environmental, habitat and

#### Examples of Good Sideboards

One participant cited the **St. Joe Ranger District of the Idaho Panhandle NF** as a good example of a Forest that established clear sideboards. (See [Appendix 4](#) for more.)

Another participant complimented the **Bridger Teton NF** Supervisor for being very upfront about certain sideboards, or areas that had been closed and would remain closed. The Supervisor explained in a clear presentation that each Forest is different and then described the values attached to this Forest.

“special places” constraints. There was broad recognition that different Forests will have different needs: some may need a very limited scope for travel management planning while others may have a far broader scope.

For example, based on the specific needs of the Forest, some travel management planning may restrict public discussion to specific geographic areas of the Forest, or specific types of recreation, or specific seasonal uses. One participant said the Forest staff needs to be able to say “No” – realizing its own limitations, and specifying how it’s going to do something in phases. Another participant emphasized that sideboards help the public because they identify where roads cannot go because of natural resource impacts and characteristics of desired roads.

By defining a clear scope and identifying clear sideboards in advance, the Forest staff will not ask the public to do things outside their capacity, for which they don’t feel qualified, and the public can understand how decisions are being made.

### **Recommendation 5.8 Establish clear decision criteria, and communicate this to the public**

Participants suggested that the Forest Service develop a clear decision protocol, and find different ways to communicate this process to participants from the outset. Although the process may need to change as issues gain prominence or fade away, all participants seemed to understand this need for flexibility. All advocated that the Forest staff clarify and communicate its decision criteria and process. Emails, website, flyers, one-on-one discussions, and presentations at meetings are all ways that the process may be communicated to the public.

Decision criteria could be developed that reflect the criteria for designations listed in the travel management rule. Some decision criteria may include:

- **Physical:** what are the impacts of each route on soil, water, habitat?
- **Cultural:** what are the impacts of each route on tribal, local, cultural issues?
- **Fiscal:** what number of miles of routes can the Forest afford to staff in terms of repair, monitoring, enforcement?

Numerous participants noted that different Forests currently use different ways of rating roads to assess their recreational value and their impact on natural resources. Some use checklists, while some have developed indicators that enable a comprehensive assessment and ranking of each road. Establishing a clear rationale is particularly important when such differences exist among nearby Forests. Finally as part of the decision-making protocol, another participant noted that it is particularly important to explain clearly the legal rules for comments.

### **Recommendation 5.9 Develop a user-friendly process**

Travel management planning is full of technical jargon that is not easy for everyone to understand. When releasing information about travel management planning, it is essential to reduce the jargon. Use a “jargon and acronym alert” and explain the process in language that is easy for everyone to understand.

This does not mean “dumbing it down” when it comes to complex issues. Instead, the Forest Service should provide accessible but comprehensive materials for citizens to learn about travel management planning so they can successfully participate. Some of the participants in our study explained that their Forest developed a user-friendly website that provided background information on travel management planning, posted where meetings were being held, and gave regular updates on progress.

Maps can be used to highlight all the environmental and habitat constraints in the Forest. With the motorized trails on the map too, the public can use the maps to see if their suggested routes would affect any of the constrained areas. The maps help citizens to make informed suggestions. People are also able to better visualize the trails that will or will not be feasible. One participant noted that the Cibola NF used a productive interactive process with maps and color-coding for different uses. The mapping exercises built relationships and added substance about what was special and who used what.

#### Example of Praised Indicators

Two participants praised the indicators developed by the **Mt Home Ranger District of the Boise NF**. The full set of indicators can be found in the EA (page 31),<sup>1</sup> and include the following:

- Effects to Wildlife, Water, Fisheries, and Non-Motorized Recreational Opportunities
  - Motorized/ Non-Motorized Influence Zone (acres)
  - Percent Motorized Influence Zone in “E” Travel Management Area
  - Number of Watershed with Route Density less than 1 mile/ mile<sup>2</sup>
  - Total Routes in RCAs (miles)
  - Total Density of RCAs (miles/mile<sup>2</sup>)
  - Number of Undeveloped Motorized Route Stream Crossings
- Effects To Road And Trail Maintenance And Administration
  - Est. Annual Cost of Maintaining NFS Road and Trail on the District

### Recommendation 5.10 Encourage relationship building

Most participants expressed that better understanding and relationships among users lead to more creative solutions – resolving current conflicts, preventing future ones, and building partnerships for the future health of the Forest.

One participant described how a facilitator encouraged him to meet with other users outside the meetings. Taking the suggestion seriously, the participant decided to “cross party lines” and met with other users individually, discovering they did not share the views of their most vocal representatives. This discovery led to new bridges and new understanding among parties, and finally to unexpected positive outcomes for all. As a result of the new understandings, participants began to actively negotiate with each other, sharing baseline needs and interests, and collaborating toward a win-win outcome. Collaboration bred more collaboration. Once a few were willing to collaborative, others were willing to join in. Collaboration, once started, encouraged more collaboration and better outcomes for all.

Many people expressed the power of joint field visits for user groups led by the Forest staff. Some field trips were open to anyone with an interest in the Forest. Some reported

that visits to sites damaged by overuse led to better understanding of the need to designate motorized routes. Working with citizens to visually confirm conditions and explore options for solutions builds credibility and trust among citizens. One participant noted that there was some sense of collaboration during field trips.

Collaboration, once started, encourages more collaboration and better outcomes for all.

Many local OHV groups and quiet recreation groups are working with the Forest Service to set-up trail maintenance days. While OHV and non motorized groups may provide both labor and funding for clearing trails, the Forest Service helps to coordinate what trails are worked on and, in some Forests, works side-by-side with the users. The trail maintenance groups are an effective way to understand citizens' desires for the Forest and build relationships between the Forest Service and citizens who recreate in the Forest. Some OHV users who participated in trail maintenance workshops said that they subsequently put forth more effort in maintaining trails.

One Forest established "satellite" recreation groups that brought together different users in collaborative discussions on the sidelines, thereby enabling groups to develop personal relationships.

Efforts to bring groups together can also lead to unusual and model solutions. In one Forest, where quiet recreationists do not pay to use or repair trails, the hikers joined together with back-country horseman and local loggers to chain-saw through down trees and clean up trails.

#### **A Case Cited for Good Involvement and Feedback: BLM Royal George Office, Colorado**

"This office was one of the very few offices that took [travel management planning] very seriously and went for it. They had good staff who listened to everyone, collected their own data and drew conclusions. [BLM] identified 40 VIPs in their community who they thought they should talk to and did one-one-one interviews.

"The 40 VIPs then identified another 100 people who were sent surveys. Then constituency groups were identified and field trips were set-up with these groups. [BLM] set up a non motorized interest group field trip and said 'we don't know what to do here', and this would lead to an honest discussion out in the field because people felt comfortable talking and knew they were not going to be argued with."

"If [BLM] had done a max-mix group, they would not have had an honest discussion. [BLM] did not take conservation groups to places that interested them, they took them to OHV places and said 'we don't know what to do here; we don't know what to do about resources. We can't contain the use, what should we do?' Then they did the same thing with the OHV groups."

"[BLM] shared interim conclusions and alternatives in a public meeting with a slide show which included a discussion of how GIS was used to create algorithms for different choices, wildlife species, soils, etc. So people could understand that [BLM] really gave this a lot of thought, and that there were reasons for their choices. [BLM] did not dumb it down and people really appreciated it!"

## Recommendation 5.11 Build partnerships with user groups

Several participants noted that different user groups are frequently able and eager to assist with trail maintenance, signage, and user education. Sometimes different user groups are even willing to work together for trail maintenance and signage.

One participant noted that the Forest Service needs to collaborate with citizen groups because it may not be able to accomplish its goals without the resources and support of citizen groups. Citizen and user groups have resources – funding, research, data, labor that they are willing to bring to the table. But the Forest Service needs to provide the leadership and coordination for this collaboration to happen.

In one instance where groups felt that they were heard – even though their desired outcomes weren't fully achieved – a participant reported that the groups have become motivated to become trail stewards and are seeking ways to become more involved in trail maintenance and monitoring.

## Recommendation 5.12 Consider dedicating personnel to public involvement

Numerous participants noted the importance of ensuring that someone has enough time to manage the public involvement process. Some Forests have dedicated in-house personnel for this task. Others have reassigned personnel from one District to another, or one Forest to another, explicitly for the purpose of helping to manage the travel management planning process and the extensive requirements of public involvement.

One Forest was able to assemble a group of six employees to work full time on travel management planning. Along with the Forest Supervisor, they were all trained in public participation. Additionally, the Forest was able to hire an independent facilitator to guide the process and conduct a preliminary assessment.

### The Fish Lake National Forest used the Four E approach: Engineering, Education, Law Enforcement, and Evaluation.

- **Engineering:** Using the MVUM, signs are posted along all routes, both open and closed. Entrance signs tell the public they are entering a travel-restricted area. The Forest also created its own Travel Map that provided more details of the Forest and routes.
- **Education:** Using the media (radio, newspaper, etc.), the public is educated about OHV travel. Signs are posted along trails to help people navigate in accordance with the MVUM map. Trail Maintenance Work days also allows the Forest Service to talk with people to find out what is and isn't working.
- **Law enforcement:** LEOs are supported by Forest Protection Officers, Forest Service Employees, and wildlife biologists who can give out maps, talk about open versus closed routes, and can also call in reports of illegal behavior. Trail hosts from motorized vehicle clubs carry maps to help educate and explain the routes and restrictions to other riders.
- **Evaluation:** Seasonal trail rangers complete a first hand study of the Forest's conditions, taking notes, photographs, and completing formal write-ups of damage. At the end of each season, findings are evaluated and records of impacts made, which then influence the next year's work.

## Guidelines for Compliance with FACA

[www.partnershipresourcecenter.org/resources/training/collaborative-training/faca-summary-guide.pdf](http://www.partnershipresourcecenter.org/resources/training/collaborative-training/faca-summary-guide.pdf)

For FS collaborative efforts to remain compliant with the FACA and the General Service Administration's current Federal Advisory Committee Management regulation, remember that-- In collaborative efforts, FS Planners may

- Meet with a number of persons or groups collectively to obtain their individual views and opinions
- Share or exchange facts or information with individuals or groups
- Meet with and participate in groups not organized, managed, or controlled by the agency that regularly come to agreement on advice and recommendations they share with the agency (such groups may be organized by the public or may be organized by a contractor)
- Meet with groups made up of elected officials from the Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments (or their designated employees with authority to act on their behalf) to discuss and come to agreement on matters for which they have cooperative responsibilities

In collaborative efforts, FS Planners may NOT

- Solicit consensus, agreement, or a common point of view from the public in a meeting that the agency manages or controls

NOTE: Language Sets Expectations for Public Meetings that the Agency Manages or Controls

*Be clear that in public meetings controlled and managed by the agency that the goal of the meeting is to exchange facts or information and listen to opinions. Indicate that the agency cannot ask for agreement or consensus. Keep in mind that the individuals attending a meeting do not constitute a "team."*

## Key Principles for Successful Collaboration

These elements are adapted primarily from Judith Innes, "Evaluating Consensus Building", in *The Consensus Building Handbook* [full ref. on web]; and Bill Leach, "Public Involvement and Facilitation Assistance," Center for Collaborative Policy, Sacramento State University, Oct. 2004.

### Principles for Preparation

Successful collaborative processes generally share the following conditions at the outset:

1. Clear purpose and goals. The effort must be driven by a well-defined purpose that is real, practical and shared by the group. The convener's purpose and goals need to be offered up front, while recognizing that group members may have additional goals as well.
2. Clear structure and process. It should have well-defined decision rules and process rules that are supported by and, when possible, developed by the members. What are member roles, rights and responsibilities? How will the process be run? How will any decision or recommendations be determined, and how will they be used? What happens in the absence of agreement?
3. Sufficient resources to conduct the process. Ensure sufficient funding for various startup costs such as retaining skilled facilitators or conducting situation assessments or public outreach. On the individual participant level, success requires that agencies and organizations earmark funding to support consistent staff attendance and participation.
4. Inclusion and effective representation. It includes representatives of all relevant and significantly different interests. At the same time emphasize the importance of having the right mix of participants to ensure compatible personalities and a diversity of skills and resources.
5. Collaboration capacity among staff and participants. Convening staff and other stakeholders are urged to seek out training for participants in communication, outreach, leadership, and collaborative problem solving skills.

### Principles for Conducting Collaboration

1. *Early involvement and sufficient time.* Interested parties can be involved early and have sufficient time for effective consensus-building. During high-stakes conditions, participants are more satisfied when involved in pre-decisional scoping activities, rather than simply commenting on fully formed policy proposals. Successful public participation takes time. Refrain from judging collaborative processes prematurely.
2. *High quality knowledge and monitoring and evaluation capacity.* Effective processes incorporate high quality information. Conveners should solicit both expert knowledge and local knowledge. Provide information to help participants achieve common understanding, and design suitable protocols for monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of the process.
3. *Cultured conflict.* Follows principles of civil discourse while at the same time encouraging challenges to assumptions. Civility does not mean the absence of conflict or disagreement; candor should be encouraged in order to ensure that all views are represented. It does mean that participants listen to one another, take each participant's perspectives seriously, and attempt to address the concerns of each participant.
4. *Sustained dialogue.* Seeks consensus only after discussions have fully explored the issues and interests and only after significant effort has been made to find creative responses to differences. Help participants distinguish between positions or demands and the actual needs and interests that underlie those positions – the "why".

## Guidelines for Effective Conflict Resolution

Effective conflict resolution means being able to use differences in ways that strengthen rather than divide. Seek principled and productive use of conflict to build healthy relationships and make effective decisions. You should prepare for conflict in three ways:

- A. Preventing unnecessary conflict - by building strong relationships within and outside of any working group or community, based upon clear and shared understanding of roles, purposes, and meeting processes, so that destructive conflict is less likely to occur;
- B. Preparing for conflict - by anticipating that differences will occur, and devising legitimate ground rules and processes for handling such differences when they come up; and,
- C. Transforming conflict - by developing the capacity (shared knowledge, skills, and commitment) to resolve conflict as it occurs.

### A. Preventing Unnecessary Conflict

Four elements are fundamental for collaboration and building consensus:

1. Develop clear purposes and goals;
2. Ensure appropriate representation and understanding of roles;
3. Design and conduct effective meetings; and,
4. Build consensus for public decisions and public work.

### B. Preparing for Conflict

Healthy groups prepare in advance the ways in which they will address conflict. Taking time to develop shared expectations for ways in which you will make conflict productive will ensure that you are not wasting time fighting one another unnecessarily. The key steps in developing a covenant (a statement of your group's aspirations and ground rules) follow:

1. Establish the need for a group covenant;
2. Educate and inspire;
3. Begin with a vision for the group's highest aspirations for working together;
4. Articulate specific behaviors to support those aspirations;
5. Promote full participation;
6. Be accountable;
7. Evaluate and revise.

While conflict can be hard, everyone can improve their ability to handle conflict. Ways that individuals can develop their own skills include:

- Come to meetings prepared to listen and learn;
- Take training in conflict mediation;
- Bring in an outside facilitator or mediator to train your group;
- Ask for opportunities to observe a mediator or facilitator at work.

### C. Transforming conflict

By effectively addressing emotions and engaging in principled negotiation, any group will be able to make conflict productive rather than destructive. Principled negotiation includes the following components:

1. Focus on interests, not positions;
2. Separate people from the problem;
3. Invent options for mutual gain;
4. Develop objective criteria.

## 6) The Challenge of Leadership and Commitment

Leadership was an issue raised by participants as it relates to giving Forest staff appropriate direction, staffing and commitment to undertake travel management planning for successful outcomes. In addition, several online survey respondents cited Forest Service commitment as a challenge.

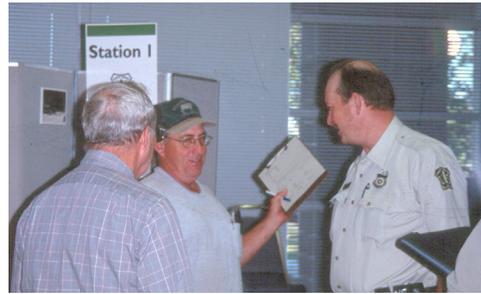


Photo Courtesy of A. Little

In one Forest, a participant reported that the lack of leadership led to a lack of field verification of roads. In another, lack of leadership reportedly led to the absence of adequate staffing for the project. In another, a participant noted that it led to the lack of proper documentation of decision-making. In other Forests, participants pointed to lack of leadership as the reason for the lack of effort to work with user groups to build partnerships for maintenance, monitoring, and implementation.

In some Forests, leadership was reported lacking at the Supervisor level, in others at the District Ranger level. In some, without Supervisor support, District Rangers and staff may not feel compelled to make travel management planning a priority, and therefore the process suffers.

At least one participant suggested that leadership is lacking because Forest Service personnel have a technical orientation, and would greatly benefit from training in collaborative decision-making and collaborative planning processes.

### Recommendations and Resources for Leadership and Commitment

#### Recommendation 6.1 Provide stronger leadership skills and commitment

Participant discussions highlighted the need for the Forest Service to provide leadership, which they thought could make or break a process. One respondent listed the “public perception of [Forest Service] commitment” and “history of working with stakeholders” as keys to successful public involvement.

In one Forest the District Ranger was able to set a positive environment for the travel management planning by taking a personal interest in the success of the process. Participants attributed the success of the process to the District Ranger’s commitment. Another participant also underlined the importance of the District Ranger attending every meeting as important for success.

One participant suggested that the Chief issue a clarification indicating a commitment at the highest levels to this process, to help Supervisors also make the appropriate commitment to undertake the travel management planning in the best possible way. Commitment leads to creative solutions, creative funding, and listening to the public. Without commitment, funding is limited, conflicts entrenched, and public engagement difficult. With commitment comes a focus on engaging the public, a willingness to spend

time developing new partnerships, a desire to explore mutually beneficial projects, and perseverance in leveraging available resources. Also, with commitment and direction from the highest levels, Forest may seek ways to learn from and to achieve consistency between different travel management planning efforts.

## 7) The Challenge of the Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM)

To comply with the travel management rule, Forests must create a printed map of routes, formally called the Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM). These maps only show the network of motorized trails and roads open to the public. Both trail users and Forest staff commented that the MVUMs are often vague and difficult to read. Twenty-nine percent of online survey respondents listed producing trail maps that are clear and easy to follow as a challenge difficult to overcome.

Many people reported that MVUMs are inadequate, and cannot be used for navigation. Some people consider them useless because they lack many features helpful for navigation: intersections with non-motorized trails, topographic lines, private lands, hydrological information such as creeks, and roads and trails not open to the public. To underline this problem, one participant noted that users in one Forest now need three different maps for just one excursion.

Some participants suggested that the original intent of the rule was to simplify the process by requiring an MVUM. But they report that a non-navigational MVUM makes it more difficult for users to ensure that they are using the correct routes. Some participants believe that the willingness to take the amount of time needed or to collect data required to create a truly useful MVUM are significant challenges or barriers.

### Recommendations and Resources for the Motor Vehicle Use Map

#### Recommendation 7.1 Develop a supplementary navigational map in conjunction with the MVUM

A supplementary map, an innovation sometimes referred to as a “Tween Map,” provides a greater level of navigation detail. These maps are in color, have topographic lines, label private land, rate trails for skill level, and provide additional symbols to distinguish land rights, camping grounds, picnic areas, political boundaries and non-motorized routes.

#### Cherokee National Forest: Motor Vehicle Use Map

*Excerpt from:*

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/cherokee/mvum/mvum.shtml>

“The map is legal documentation displaying the roads and trails that are open to public motor vehicle use. The map will be reviewed and updated annually. The Cherokee NF map is available at USDA Forest Service Offices.... The motor vehicle use map is black and white and does not provide much detail. It is not an appropriate map for recreation orientation use (hunters, hikers, etc.). The maps only show open roads....Existing national forest maps that show open and closed roads, trails (hiking, biking, horse), recreation sites, etc. are available for public use. These maps show much greater detail than the motor vehicle use maps do.”

#### Example of Good Travel Map

The **Fishlake National Forest** in Utah, was praised for its color “Travel Map” that features shaded topographic lines, streams, canyons, campgrounds, roads, trails, and other landmarks. It also developed an area “Gooseberry ATV Map” that provides scale, topographic and hydrologic information. (See [Appendix 9](#) for sample area map)

## 8) The Challenge of Enforcement

A repeated concern expressed by stakeholders is that the route and area designations shown on a MVUM are only as good as the enforcement, and in particular the enforcement of limits on motorized travel. It's important to note that all types of participants, motorized, non-motorized, conservationists, and Forest Service staff, expressed this same concern about enforcement.



Photo Courtesy of J. Cook

Two dimensions of concern exist. The first is that motorized users may unintentionally violate restrictions if there is insufficient signage or the Motor Vehicle Use Maps are not clearly written and readily available. The second concern has to do with people who knowingly violate the rules, both causing harm and bringing unwarranted criticism of lawful riders.

Participants, including Forest Service staff, recognized that Forests simply do not have sufficient law enforcement officers, given the amount of acreage, numbers of trails and areas open to motorized use, and the growing numbers of users. Many expressed frustration that travel management plans were being created without sufficient or even any consideration of this limiting factor. Some participants noted that their user groups were angry that the Forest was planning for failure rather than success by creating plans that failed to consider the Forest's enforcement capabilities. Other participants noted that some Forests were planning for success by fostering partnerships that would lead to greater user education and prevention.

### Recommendations and Resources for Enforcement

#### Recommendation 8.1 Improve enforcement through collaboration

One possibility mentioned by participants is to expand enforcement through collaboration with other agencies and parties. With as little as a camera and note pad to document where pictures were taken, Law Enforcement Officers (LEOs) can collect field data about conditions and behavior, which can be used to review the effectiveness of a plan and influence future decisions. Numerous participants also cited ways user groups can assist with enforcement. For example, an ATV group is "patrolling trails" in one Forest.

In one Forest, collaboration between the Forest Service and state agencies helped to establish guidelines for trail patrol volunteers. The volunteers worked under a limited mandate from the state government to report violations to the Forest Service law enforcement officers.

One participant suggested that the Forest Service develop a vision for how to implement and communicate new enforcement strategies. Language that highlights interagency cooperation rather than simply stating that the Forest staff will be working with the state, for example, can foster greater cooperation.

OHV participants often noted that a universal complaint is that "one bad apple spoils

the box.” Because the law enforcement officers cannot be everywhere, one “bad actor” can easily make everyone look bad. On the other hand, conservationists cite studies that show that a significant percentage of motorized users knowingly violate the law. Good enforcement, then is a shared interest by both motorized and non-motorized recreationalists, and is an area for potential collaboration that offers largely untapped promise.

## Recommendation 8.2 Create high-quality signage

Numerous participants noted that the need for enforcement is, to some extent, directly related to how well users are able to know where they are and to navigate the trails. The importance of good signage cannot be understated, and some participants noted that the importance of signage will become even greater if the non-navigational MVUM becomes the new user map.

Vandalism of signs is a serious issue, as signage may be the only way for users to locate themselves on the map. One participant highlighted the need for establishing a system-wide understanding that a route is closed unless clearly posted as open.

One participant complimented the Brock Creek Trail in the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest for its efforts to establish excellent signage, with good markers at trail heads, and at parking areas, and a good map system that includes both mileage and emergency exit points.

Participants suggested that state agency personnel who are already out in the Forest can be asked to monitor resource impacts and enforcement. Similarly, participants suggested that law enforcement officials (LEO) in the field can also be asked to provide documentation on trail and resource conditions.

### Example Cited for Good Interagency Collaboration

<http://www.idaho-ohv.org>

Idaho Forests have developed an interagency relationship with the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Idaho Department of Lands, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation to create the Idaho Off-Highway (OHV) Public Information Project.

The group has put together an OHV Recreation Guide for Idaho’s State and Federal Lands that provides information for: Forest Service Travel Plan Maps, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Maps, suggested OHV riding areas on National Forests in Idaho, and other sources for OHV trail maps and riding opportunities. The website also provides information about registering vehicles for off-highway use, how to use ATVs during hunting season, riding safety,

## 9) Specific Technical Challenges

**Wood Gathering and Hunting:** In several Forests, participants mentioned the specific challenge of allowing motorized use in areas that are being closed to motorized use for traditional activities such as wood gathering and removing big game from the Forest.

### Recommendations and Resources for Technical Challenges

#### Recommendation 9.1 Offer flexibility for traditional uses

It may be worthwhile to explore ways through permits or other mechanisms to enable limited access to specific areas for traditional uses. Some participants feel strongly that an effort should be made to allow limited and specific access for traditional uses such as wood gathering and big game removal, and that if mechanisms are tailored to the specific situation they could be acceptable to others. On the other hand, some groups would clearly oppose such exceptions if they opened the entire forest to cross-country travel.

## Part IV. Participant Suggestions for Making this Report Useful in the Field

### Commitment and Direction from Headquarters

- Seek the Chief's endorsement of the recommendations.
- Engage one or two former Forest Service Chiefs in a system-wide discussion and specifically in meetings at Forests experiencing difficulty with travel management planning. Present the study recommendations.

### Enable Forests to Do It Right

- Evaluate past processes where obvious disenfranchisement has occurred, and, with the Chief's endorsement, enable the process to be reopened and fixed.

### Disseminate Widely

- Present findings: fight for an audience, and follow-up.
- Send a link for this study to each and every Forest Service employee.
- Put it on the Internet, linked to the FS page.
- Create Executive Summary with hyperlinks to sections of the report.
- Have the entire report available in one single PDF; also have different sections of the report available in PDF.
- Create a searchable PDF with links to different report sections.
- Have a short version and a long version.
- Create a list of influential people and get it to them.
- Share with multiple agencies who have the same issues.
- Invest some time to find out which state agencies are involved, in each state. If there's a "roundtable" of state agencies, share it with the roundtable so it gets to all agencies.

### Conduct Regional Discussions and Training

- Conduct a series of regional multi-stakeholder workshops to review and discuss the study findings. Invite the top four recreation specialists from the Supervisor's office, and the top four representatives from the motorized community, quiet recreation community, conservation community and from each perspective important in that Forest.
- Use the Report in any training in collaborative decision-making and collaborative planning.
- Have UVA join the Forest Service for regional workshops to disseminate results and implications.

## Appendix 1: Index of 51 Assessment Participants

*Don Amador*, Blue Ribbon Coalition, Western Field Representative, Eldorado, Inyo, Mendocino, Plumas, Shasta Trinity National Forest(s), California, Region 5

*Julie Bain*, Forest Service, Natural Resource Planner, Santa Fe National Forest(s), New Mexico, Region 3

*Corey Biggers*, International Mountain Bicycling Association, Montana, Member, Gallatin National Forest(s), Montana, Region 4

*Kathy Bond*, Private Practice, Facilitator, Dixie, Cibola National Forest(s), Colorado, Region 2

*Nancy Brunswick*, Forest Service, Team Leader, Cibola National Forest(s), New Mexico, Region 3

*John Buckley*, Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center, Executive Director, Stanislas National Forest(s), California, Region 5

*Trish Clabaugh*, Forest Service, Region Coordinator, Tongass, Chugach National Forest(s), Alaska, Region 10

*Jeff Cook*, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, Trails Coordinator, Boise, Caribou, Clearwater, Idaho Panhandle, Salmon, Sawtooth, Payette National Forest(s), Idaho, Region 1 & 4

*Russ Ehnes*, NOHVCC and Great Falls Trail Bike Riders Association, President, Louis and Clark National Forest(s), Montana, Region 1

*Troy Elmore*, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, OHV Program Manager, Boise, Caribou, Clearwater, Idaho Panhandle, Salmon, Sawtooth, Payette National Forest(s), Idaho, Region 1, 4

*Larry Fisher*, US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution, Mediator, Arizona, Region 3

*Richard Fuller*, Citizen participant, St. Joe National Forest(s), Idaho, Region 1

*Joe Gallagher*, Forest Service, Regional Coordinator, Trail Travel Management, OHV travel management coordinator, Motor Vehicle Map Team, All of region 4 National Forest(s), Utah, Region 4

*Don Garringer*, Forest Service, Supvry Forester, Idaho Panhandle National Forest, Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District National Forest(s), Idaho, Region 1

*Glenn Graham*, Colorado OHV Coalition, Member, All of Colorado's National Forests National Forest(s), Colorado, Region 2

*Laurel Hagen*, Wildlands CPR, Utah Coordinator, Ashley; Dixie; Manti-La Sal National Forest(s), Utah, Region 4

*Susan Hayman*, Private Practice, Facilitator, Dixie, Cibola, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest(s), Idaho, Region 4

*Mike Hayward*, Wallowa County, Oregon, County Commissioner, Wallowa Whitman National Forest, Oregon, Region 6

*Josh Hicks*, The Wilderness Society, Outreach Coordinator, Colorado, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Nevada, California, Oregon, Washington, South Dakota

*Eric Hunt*, SD Off Highway Vehicle Coalition (SDOHVC), President, Black Hills National Forest, Buffalo Grasslands, Kentucky National Forest(s), SD, Region 2

*Jodi Kramer*, Forest Service, Public Affairs Officer/Writer Editor/Admin. Asst. KIPZ Revision Team, Idaho Panhandle National Forest(s), Idaho, Region 1

*Darren Linn*, Arkansas OHV Conservation Assoc., President, Ozark, Ouachita National Forest(s), Arkansas, Region 8

*Alett Little*, Forest Service, Team Leader, Ouachita National Forest(s), Arkansas, Region 8

*Leslie Lovejoy*, Friends of the Routt Backcountry, Member, Routt National Forest(s), Colorado, Region 2

*Cynthia Manning*, Forest Service, Regional Social Scientist, National Forests and Grasslands in Montana, Northern Idaho and North Dakota, Region 1

*Chuck Mark*, Forest Service, District Ranger, Idaho Panhandle National Forest, St. Joe Ranger District, Idaho, Region 1

*Paul McFarland*, Friends of the Inyo, Executive Director, Inyo National Forest(s), California, Region 5

*Austin McInerney*, Center for Collaborative Policy, Facilitator, Inyo National Forest, Tahoe National Forest, Stanislaus National Forest, Shasta Trinity National Forest National Forest(s), California, Region 5

*Linda Merigliano*, Forest Service, Wilderness Recreation Manager, Bridger - Teton National Forest(s), Wyoming, Region 4

*Stephen Nielsen*, Utah Shared Access Alliance/Utah 4-Wheel Drive Association, Dixie, Manti-La Sal, Uinta National Forest(s), Utah, Region 4

*Matt Norton*, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, Staff Attorney, Forest and Wildlife Advocate, Superior, Chippewa National Forest(s), Minnesota, Region 9

*Rob Potts*, Forest Service, Forest Planner, Santa Fe National Forest, New Mexico, Region 3

*Randy Rasmussen*, American Hiking Society, Recreation Policy Specialist, Deschutes, Mt. Hood, Rogue River, Siskiyou, Siuslaw, Wallowa - Whitman, Willamette, Umatilla National Forest(s), Oregon, Region 6

*Max Reid*, Forest Service, Travel Planner, Fishlake National Forest(s), Utah, Region 4

*Adam Rissien*, Wildlands CPR, Montana Off-Road Vehicle Coordinator, Bitterroot, Beaverhead National Forest(s), Montana, Region 1

*Karen Satre*, Routt Powder Riders Colorado Snowmobile Association, Member, Routt National Forest(s), Colorado, Region 2

*Karen Schambach*, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, CA Field Director, El Dorado National Forest(s), California, Region 5

*Vera Smith*, The Wilderness Society, Recreation Planning Program Director, All of Colorado's National Forests National Forest(s), Colorado, Region 2

*Gordon Spingler*, Black Feather Motorcycle Group, Member, Cibola, Carson National Forest(s), New Mexico, Region 3

*Joanne Spivack*, NMOHV Alliance, New Mexico State Contact, Cibola, Gila, Santa Fe National Forest(s), New Mexico, Region 3

*Deidre St. Louis*, Forest Service, Off-Highway Vehicle Program Manager, Nation wide National Forest(s), Washington DC, Region National

*Donna Stevens*, Upper Gila Watershed Alliance, Program Assistant, Gila National Forest(s), New Mexico, Region 3

*Mark Story*, Memphis Motorcycle Club, Treasurer, Holly Springs National Forest(s), Mississippi, Region 8

*Jack Terrel*, Florida Trail Riders, Project Coordinator, Ouachita Forest, Florida, Region 5

*Cyndi Tuell*, Center for Biological Diversity, Conservation Advocate, Cibola, Gila, Lincoln, Prescott, Tonto National Forest(s), Arizona, Region 3

*Stan Van Velsor*, The Wilderness Society, ORV Campaign Coordinator, Angeles, Cleveland, Eldorado, Inyo, Klamath, Lassen, Los Padres, Mendocino, Modoc, Plumas, Sequoia, Sierra, Stanislaus, Shasta - Trinity, Six Rivers, San Bernardino, Tahoe National Forest(s), San Francisco California, Region 5

*Dick Walton*, Pryors Coalition [www.PryorMountains.org.](http://www.PryorMountains.org), Member, Defacto Leader, Cluster National Forest, Beartooth District National Forest(s), Montana, Region 1

*Jack Welch*, Blue Ribbon Coalition, President, Bridger - Teton National Forest(s), Colorado, Region 2

*Mark Werkmeister*, New Mexico Off Highway Vehicle Alliance, President, Cibola, Santa Fe National Forest(s), New Mexico, Region 3

*Gary Zimmer*, Ruffed Grouse Society, Senior Regional Wildlife Biologist, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest(s), Wisconsin, Region 9

Note: One participant chose to remain anonymous

Assessment participants were from all over the nation, from a diverse range of National Forests and Grasslands, and from varying levels of involvement with Travel Management Planning.

To ensure equal representation in our assessment, we grouped participants into general categories that represent their main interest or major role in the Travel Management Planning Process. Many of the participants had more than one interest or role and therefore this chart was used only for determining participant numbers. Many thanks to those who shared their time and stories with us.

Participants by Region		Participants by General Interest	
Region 1	7	Off highway vehicle recreationist	14
Region 2	8	Conservationist	13
Region 3	10	US Forest Service	12
Region 4	10	Facilitator	4
Region 5	7	Non motorized recreationist	3
Region 6	2	Local public official	3
Region 8	3	Note: One participant choose not to be affiliated with one particular interest group	
Region 9	2		
Region 10	1		
National level	1		

## Appendix 2: Discussion Question Guide

The following are questions used to guide confidential discussions with individual participants in the study.

- What is your experience with Travel Management Planning and/or the route and area designation process?
  - What has been your role?
  - What geographic area are you involved with?
  - What National Forests?
- At what stage is the route and area designation process for your Forest(s)?
  - When did the process begin (after the 2005 rule)?
  - (If completed) When was it completed?
  - Is the process focusing only on producing a MVUM, or is their approach broader than that? Does it involve an Environmental Impact Statement [under NEPA]?
  - Is it focusing only on summer use or does it also include winter (snowmobile) use?
- Thinking about strategies the Forest Service used to engage the public and users, what strategies and behaviors have been the most effective for encouraging successful community engagement?
- What was the least effective? (Looking for strategies, resources, behaviors & process)
  - Was there a sense of collaboration?
  - What made you or the public feel more or less engaged?
    - Specific strategies?
    - Specific behaviors?
  - Were there adequate or effective opportunities for involvement and different ways to be involved?
  - What might have worked better?
  - Were there any other specific strategies that were helpful in addressing other challenges? (Education, resources, scientific/technology, relationship building/trust building, training, field trips, etc.)
- If you placed your experience on a scale – ranging from unilateral decision making by the agency, with little public involvement, to full collaborative decision-making and partnership (listening carefully to ideas, sharing information, and widespread involvement of a variety of motorized and non-motorized interests) – how would you characterize your experience?
- Are there solutions that other National Forests and Grasslands have used that you think are worthy of consideration?
- Looking over the summary of Social Issues that we emailed you, are there any issues that seem most important to you? [NOTE: ask about the amount of time that was/available for planning]
  - Are there any challenges you feel were not adequately reflected in the summary? (Anything to add or explain?)

*If not already answered, you may ask these questions as well before getting to the last set of questions:*

- In your Forest(s) route and area designation process, are/were there challenges relating to demographics, changing life styles or adjoining property owners?
  - Were there specific strategies or behaviors that successfully addressed these challenges?
- In your Forest(s), were there specific challenges relating to implementation, monitoring, and enforcement?
  - Were there specific strategies or behaviors that successfully addressed these?
- From your experience, can you describe what has gone *well* with the Travel Management Planning process? (We know there have been a lot of challenges and we would like to focus on what is *working* or what would have worked better.) What was your best experience, and why did that work?
- If you could were in charge of the public involvement process, so that it was a script for successfully involving a variety of motorized and non-motorized interests, what would *you* want to do differently? What would you want *others* to do differently?

*Final Questions:*

- We want this assessment to be *useful for you* –Is there anything else that you would be eager for us to address in the Report – anything would really help you and your organization
- How can we disseminate our final study – with lessons learned – to Forests and user groups?
- Do you know of other users we could talk to who have worked on different Plans?
- We also are developing an online survey to supplement this interview with other kinds of questions. Would you be willing to take 10 minutes to complete this survey? And would you be willing to send us the names of other people who might be interested in contributing to the assessment?

## Appendix 3: Online Survey Results

### Summary of Online Survey Responses

67 people responded to the Online Survey, 27 of who also participated in the individual phone discussions. Below are the basic characteristics of the survey participants.

Primary Interest Group*	Count	Number of Travel Management Planning Processes Participated In	Count
Environmental or conservation interests	21	2 to 4	26
Motorized vehicle recreationist	20	5 to 10	17
US Forest Service employee	13	1	15
Non motorized recreationist	7	10 or more	8
Other US government	4		
Local government	1		
State government	1		

\*Note: Nine of those who listed Environmental or Conservation Interests also identified themselves as Non-Motorized Recreationalists. One Motorized Recreationist also identified as Non-Motorized Recreationalist. These interest groups were not double counted.

Primary State	Count	Region	Count
California	12	4	18
Montana	10	5	12
Idaho	9	3	11
Utah	8	1	10
Arizona	6	2	6
New Mexico	5	8	4
Colorado	4	9	3
Wisconsin	3	6	1
Wyoming	2		
Mississippi	2		
Arkansas	2		
Oregon	1		
Nevada	1		

**Online Survey Question:** Choose 3 challenges that have been the most difficult to overcome in Travel Management Planning. (Participants were able to select an unlimited number of choices given and/or supply their own response)

<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Having your issues acknowledged	26	39%
Addressing conflict over closures	24	36%
Reconciling competing values	24	36%
Producing trail maps that are clear and easy to follow	19	29%
Addressing conflict over limited access	18	27%
Encouraging citizen involvement	17	26%
Getting user groups to participate	15	23%
Concerns about setting precedents	14	21%
Addressing concerns over noise and safety	9	14%
Addressing disproportionate funding and skills among interest groups	6	9%
Educating users about safety and trail use	5	8%
Addressing concerns about property rights	4	6%
Keeping opportunities for an aging population and people with disabilities	4	6%
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Failing to comply with the Travel Management Rule	9	20%
Acknowledging concerns about environmental protection	5	11%
Forest Service Bias towards non-motorized or motorized use	4	9%
Addressing concerns over excess motorized use	3	7%
Making the decision process clear, transparent, and accessible to the public	3	7%
Acknowledging concerns of non-motorized recreationalists	2	4%
Addressing concerns about funding and implementation	2	4%
Addressing problems related to user-created trails	2	4%
Producing accurate and complete inventory of existing routes	2	4%
Acknowledging concerns about protection of public land resources	1	2%
Acknowledging historic non-system trails	1	2%
Addressing concerns about enforcement	1	2%
Addressing concerns about level 3 and 4 mixed use road closures	1	2%
Addressing concerns about non-motorized wildlife disruption	1	2%
Addressing concerns about safety	1	2%
Competing priorities leave inadequate time for Travel Management Planning	1	2%
Dealing with dispersed recreational access and site specific project analysis	1	2%
Failing to create a comprehensive recreation plan	1	2%
Failing to work with neighboring forest districts	1	2%

Gaining support for on-going public involvement	1	2%
Inadequate funding and staffing	1	2%
Staff turnover at Forest Service slowing process	1	2%

**Online Survey Question:** Why were the challenges you selected difficult to address? (Participants were able to select an unlimited number of choices given and/or supply their own response)

<b>Difficulty in Addressing Challenges</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Agency did not acknowledge issues/concerns	95	34%
Inadequate data gathered for the Plan (e.g., data on use, condition of trails)	50	18%
Insufficient resources (e.g., money, GIS, facilitation, etc)	50	18%
Insufficient time	41	15%
Not able to get all key users to the table	24	9%
Key decision-maker(s) not at the table	21	7%
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Forest Service bias towards motorized or non-motorized use	22	26%
User groups unwilling to compromise or reconcile values	13	15%
Public was uneducated about the rule or process	8	9%
User groups uneducated about impacts they create	7	8%
Failing to comply with Travel Management Rule	4	5%
FS unwilling to compromise, no checks on Forest Service actions	4	5%
Lack of citizen concern	4	5%
MVUM is not user-oriented/user-friendly	3	3%
Process lacked efficiency or usefulness	3	3%
Process lacked transparency	3	3%
Unclear language in Travel Management Rule	3	3%
Concerns about closures	2	2%
Forest Service reluctant to commit necessary resources and funding	2	2%
Winter use not addressed	2	2%
Difficulty in gathering accurate data	1	1%
Forest Service failed to resolve conflicts	1	1%
Forest Service misrepresents unrepresented user groups	1	1%
Process lacked facilitation	1	1%
Region-specific policies created problems	1	1%
Unbalanced representation of user groups	1	1%

## Online Survey: Respondent Comments

The following are specific comments provided by people who took the Online Survey. Because we wish to offer confidentiality to those people, we have edited these comments to remove details that might identify anyone. We have organized these comments by broad themes, although some comments clearly may apply to more than one theme. Comments were combined and tallied when the response was the same. When appropriate, comments were divided among different themes.

### Online Survey Question: From your experience, what are keys to successful involvement of citizens and stakeholder groups?

65 people provided comments in this section.

#### General

- Provide accurate information. Tell [citizens] what the schedule for requested feedback is, [and have] good maps.
- Accurately capturing concerns, being fair and impartial, and encouraging groups to suggest their own solutions rather than trying to solve it all as an agency.
- ... Until the public recognizes that the Forest Service cannot be all things to all people, we have to balance land uses between many (often conflicting) uses...
- Engage real collaborative processes, frame issue as affecting all users, convince agency to engage in meaningful analysis and comprehensive recreation planning...
- Compelling the Forest Service staff to produce accurate and complete inventory of existing routes.
- [By] reaching out to reasonable members of opposing groups we were able to forge compromises before the actual meetings. When we did get together in the formal meeting process we were finally able to isolate and negate the influence of members that were not willing to work in a spirit of compromise. [We tried] to create something special where nobody won or lost and everybody felt like they not only were able to achieve success for the groups that they represented but also support the other groups and feel like we were able to give back to those that crossed political lines to forge something special.
- ...There has to be a balance of opportunities. Most importantly, the Forest Service cannot lose sight of the resource concerns.
- Local involvement and understanding of why we are attempting to manage use... While implementation of the Travel Management rule is a National Effort it is only going to be successful at the local level. Without that support we will be in court a lot...
- Framing the issue properly, as one of a need to protect our forests for future generations and to ensure a continued flow of ecosystem services necessary for the continued prosperity of human communities near forests.
- Land managers should develop a vision of use for each piece of public land that can be sustained by the land and its eco-system. This vision must address the conflicts of use... Start the "selling" of that vision. I believe the public will be more cooperative toward visionary goal setting than this present political game of who gets what and how much.
- Provide clear relationships between adverse motorized recreational use and road density to the amenity values of intact forests.
- Encourage employees and the public to stay focused on issues rather than positions.
- Gathering users willing to evaluate all the factors surrounding the designation of any given trail. Considerations such as safety, and the possibility of environmental damage should objectively be considered.
- In this arena, our key to success is the rule of law...
- Most citizens will turn out once, and will write checks as long as they see any hope of success. A very few do almost all of the work.
- Do not require lots of time (like long collaborative processes). Make them feel as if their input is being really considered. Find time and resource efficient and non-adversarial ways to collect input from citizens.

#### Early and/or continued contact and communication with stakeholders

Seven responses were about maintaining continuous communication with all citizens and stakeholders.

- ...Have meetings, go to their meetings, mail outs, PSA'S, and at every opportunity have an entire cadre of knowledgeable folks talk ...one on one and beyond. Keep talking, keep explaining, be persistent and consistent with the message ...Just keep talking, use all avenues of media, and then talk some more.
- Organize stakeholder groups and convey necessity of involvement in meetings and process in order to convey concerns to Forest

Service.

- Agency did not do a good job of explaining the need for closures.
- Successful involvement would mean that citizens would have to feel as though they are a part of the process...
- Repeated opportunities to participate in the process with increasingly more refined options on which to work with.
- ...We need to be visiting with our land managers on a monthly basis, building relationships prior to travel planning so we would have input before plans were released for comment. ...
- [Make] the stakeholders aware of upcoming closures. [Have] the time and resources to give the stakeholders the information they need to successfully give input to the forest service planning teams. ...
- [Listen to and acknowledge the stakeholders.] Contact is key – Spread information through large newspapers in urban areas and talk to local TV reporters.... ...We need honesty regarding the true affects of the proposed actions to the public that uses the forest by motorized means.
- .... Scheduling meeting outside of workday.
- Communicate clearly... and be honest.
- Providing time for thoughtful interaction between groups.
- [Have] a forest service ranger or supervisor who is willing to bring stakeholder groups together in a meaningful process, i.e., the outcome is not predetermined and all sides have something to lose or gain...
- Be open-minded. Don't try to have exclusive use of a trail or area, share with all users.
- Involve focus groups to help plan broader public involvement strategies... [Keep] the public informed of your project progress... Keep folks informed on a regular basis... Hold meetings where the public lives, not where they recreate. Hold a variety of forums for public involvement: workshops, open houses and phone calls.
- Clear ground rules, expectations, and decision [making] process.
- Clear understanding of the parameters for their involvement. Adequate time to engage and respond to citizens.
- Clarity on the decision process.
- Establish clear ground rules.
- Make [citizens] feel safe.

#### **Fairly represent all user groups**

Five responses were about the Forest Service ensuring that there is representation of all affected parties, stakeholders and citizens. The responses were also about the Forest Service needing to make sure people know how they will be affected by the decision.

- ... [The process is not advertised as a motorized use plan only, and all users feel they should be engaged in the issues.]
- ...The fix was in from the beginning. Motorized recreation was going to be accommodated to the maximum extent possible. Non-motorized, quiet recreation was never on the table.
- ...If an organized user group refuses to play or attend the process, then another will be invited...
- The key is having a 'fair' playing field. Keys to successful involvement by the citizens is to know the Forest Service regulations better than the Forest Service, write effective scoping comments to properly frame the succeeding analysis, write substantive comments detailing the Forest Service lack of ability to follow NEPA requirements or apply best available science, be willing to go through the pain and agony of the appeal process, and then successfully litigate when the Forest Service ignores all of the above...
- We are outgunned by the anti-OHV groups with paid full time staff and fat bank accounts.

#### **Willingness to listen to concerns**

Four responses were about listening to concerns.

- ... Agency unwillingness to acknowledge issues equally from both sides; politicization of the process; best interests of the resources are ignored; travel plans are not easy to understand especially for the general public; people are naturally interested only in the areas geographically close to them; there is a general sense that the agency doesn't listen to all concerns.
- Do not require lots of time (like long collaborative processes). Make them feel as if their input is being really considered. Find time and resource efficient and non-adversarial ways to collect input from citizens.
- Be certain that the interests of partner groups are adequately addressed and taken seriously.

## **Transparency**

Three responses were about the importance of transparency.

- Have the [Forest Service] do what they say they are going to do. Allow public to be more involved in the process by the [Forest Service] being more transparent and allowing the OHV public to help in the selection of the routes. [The Forest Service] makes decisions from the desk and not from the ground and they are using flawed research to make decisions.
- First, the agency will need to prove that it actually takes public input and is influenced in its decision making by what it hears, rather than what the I.D. Team already decided to do months earlier. Second, instead of marketing the planning process under a generic title of Travel Management Planning, the agency should have held meetings with a more understandable label, such as “Come help plan for which roads and motorized trails stay open, get closed, or have changes in management.”
- Trying to find the ‘transparency’ the FS told us they were going to have.

## **Education**

- ... Field visits.
- [Citizens and stakeholders need to] understand the scope of Travel Management and its impact on non-OHV users.
- ... [The Forest Service] needs to understand the wants and needs of the user groups...
- Having good idea of conditions on the ground. Hosting field trips with diverse interests to talk about specific places on the ground. Focusing on specific places - what makes sense for this place - rather than arguing about pros and cons of motorized use in general.
- Work extensively with Forest Service and other stakeholder groups to construct and maintain designated trail.
- Access to as much information as possible; an honest assessment by the [Forest Service] of the environmental impacts; a willingness of the agency to risk angering access-rights constituents.

## **Forest Service commitment**

- Secure commitment from forest leadership.
- Follow through on our commitments (e.g. making data and maps available on-line).
- Commitment of [Forest Service] leadership.
- Agency commitment to using input from the public.
- Getting the agency to do travel analysis before involving stakeholder groups.

## **Obligation to preserve public land**

- [Forest Service] officials must be truly responsive to their obligation to preserve the land and educate public land users of the importance and the complexities of resource management. In turn, citizens must be willing to see beyond their personal and idiosyncratic uses...
- Positive attitude towards outreach and inclusion by the agency including acknowledgment that the long term care of the resource is the overarching priority.

## **Addressing illegal user-created trails**

- [\*\*\* National Forest] has never designated motorized trails, and has relied upon an “open to cross-country travel” policy to satisfy need for motorized trail. This has led to hundreds of miles of user-created non-system trail, now subject to closure under the Travel Management Rule.
- ...What about addressing conflicts over EXCESS motorized ACCESS, and concerns about OPENING of illegal user-created routes to motorized use? What about addressing opportunities for NON-motorized use?
- ATV users have assumed that the horse and foot trails that they illegally used as motorized routes are motorized routes. We’re getting lots of negative feedback from ATV users that we are “locking” them out when, in fact, we are trying to mitigate damage to horse and foot trails caused over the past two decades. Signing as non-motorized routes was ineffective as signs were removed by motorized users.

## **Use facilitator**

- Good process for public participation - including the use of an experienced facilitator.
- Professional facilitation and the public’s sense that it will be a fair process.

## Online Survey Question: What lessons learned and/or successes would you like to share with others undertaking Travel Management Planning challenges?

57 people provided comments in this section

### Early/Continual Public Involvement

- Three responses were about getting involved early, staying involved, and learning as much as you can.
- Engagement of the public must be continuous and ongoing - preferably through an ongoing working group of some kind.
- The agency must communicate clearly the analytical and scientific basis for their decisions.
- ... Understand who the real affected public is and find ways to address them up front not after conflicts arise.
- Involve politicians early and often.
- In [\*\*\* state] we used the workshop theme to get people to the table. Getting more than the leaders of group to the table.
- Anyone bringing the plan forward to a group really needs to hype it up to get more involvement.
- ... Make sure you comment in every phase of the process...
- ... Use groups to help you design public involvement. Be honest and clear with the public about the challenges you are facing and how you are dealing with them. Seek the public's help in dealing with these challenges... Be clear about the project scope and what you taking on and not taking on...
- [Involve all citizens and stakeholders.]
- Be ahead of the game! Be involved and making relationships way before planning starts. Do not be afraid to stand up for trails and areas you desire. Do not be afraid of the environmental organizations...
- Bring in important media contacts at the start.

### Forest Service Commitment

- Honesty and openness [about] the process are keys to success. If a line officer makes a promise that the process will work a certain way, he/she needs to live up to that commitment.
- Seems this was pushed down from the top and not supported by local officials in the [Forest Service] as well as the community.
- It takes real leadership from district rangers and line officers to make a difference. Advice to [Forest Service] personnel - slow down, take your time, do it right and take all recreation issues into context.
- Travel planning is one of the most important decisions/processes the agencies will undertake. It should be treated by the agency as such.
- The OHV public and small ex-timber communities have learned that the Forest Service is untrustworthy, disreputable and dishonest. The motorized recreationists have been lied to repeatedly and been demeaned by the process. We have been treated with disrespect over and over again. The joy we take in our public access has been misunderstood, and as a group we have been repeatedly insulted, and treated as unworthy of their respect. The bi-weekly phone calls by [\*\*\* Forest] were beneficial. The [\*\*\* Forest] Roundtable is successful because of the Forest Supervisor's support and acceptance. The uncalled for and inordinate interference by Region [\*\*\*] in the forests' plans has been very detrimental...

### Gather Necessary Information

- If you're lacking resource data - gather it!
- You need to be flexible. If you are developing a proposed action with limited on the ground knowledge be flexible enough to make changes when you find out that a road does not exist that you thought did. Start your heritage resource inventories early and use the archaeologists as eyes on the ground to verify condition of routes.
- Accurate and relevant scientific research on ecologic costs of ORV activities and road density (including primitive roads) is crucial in formulating the rationale for a minimum road system. This information needs to be distilled in a concise manner understandable to the interested public and agency staff.
- Get out on the ground as much as possible, so you clearly understand the implications of proposals - this is not a paper exercise.
- Get as much input as possible from as many stakeholders as possible in determining the need for existing routes, or the creation of new routes... Second, limit the scope of your motorized travel plan to funding that will be available to maintain routes to standard, dollars available for enforcement patrols, and funds available for signing and barrier installation... Don't over extend your resources...
- Be sure you have existing direction and existing condition correct before starting. Designating a road that doesn't exist would be a

problem!

- Forest Service failure to properly complete Travel Analysis prior to beginning the travel management proposed action development.

### **Follow Travel Management Rule**

- Do not expect the US [Forest Service] to try to follow either the letter or spirit of the regulations (Executive Order #11644, 2005 Travel Management Rule)...
- ... Only knowledgeable and moneyed publics were able to force the agency to cooperate. Yet the public is asking only that the agency follow the rules!

### **Collaboration**

- Working with Forest Service and other groups has given our organization credibility with [the Forest Service] with regard to our commitment to responsible motorized access...
- Be honest about challenges, look to build partnerships with stakeholder groups to develop alternatives and explain rationale being used to develop alternatives.
- Try to put yourself in your opponents shoes [and] try to understand why they feel the way they do. Then reach out to those that seem more reasonable [and] that understand that they will get more of what they want if they can find a way to give other interests more of what the other interests want. If you can forge agreements with members of opposing interests outside of the formal setting, then when you go into the official meeting you can convert a minority position into a majority.

### **Include all Uses**

- The Forest Service needs to stop excluding over-snow use from travel planning. The writing is on the wall. The agency should get ahead of this before it becomes a problem of the same proportions as summer ORV use.
- The agency should make sure they plan all types of travel.
- The Travel management Planning should be a year round policy, with a consistent message to motorized users...
- Acknowledge the fact that motorized and non-motorized uses are not “fundamentally incompatible”. ...Inappropriate motorized use/citizens rights.

### **MVUM Map**

- Plan on printing your own “Travel Map” as the MVUM will not work. Make that map free and available to the public... make sure every forest officer carries them to the field and get them in the hands of the using public.
- Develop a good travel map to replace the MVUM. Develop a good implementation plan and then stick to it. Don't give up. NEPA is just 10% of the effort, the other 90% comes in implementation
- The current Motor Vehicle Use Maps are a joke. They lack the geographic features to be used for navigation.

### **Transparency**

- Be clear as to use of public involvement.
- The [Forest Service] should make sure that they set clear expectations about citizen involvement and their decision space.
- Set sideboards or ground rules, be clear on process and [be] truthful on what your decision space is.
- Making the decision process clear, transparent, and accessible to the public.

### **Education**

- Learn how NEPA really works, what the rules are, and how you can make the [Forest Service] follow the rules.
- Know the NEPA process and use every available means to ensure the [Forest Service] follows [Council on Environmental Quality], NEPA, and its own [regulations]. Dig deep into the cited literature and expose the corrupted research generally used to 'support' the [Forest Service] analysis and decision... ..

### **Environmental Concerns**

- The [Forest Service] should make sure they communicate the environmental and statutory constraints in the beginning.
- Emphasize the resource being the number one concern, rather than the desires of various user groups.

## Funding

- The general public goes by the concept that if a road or trail shows any use then it is open. It is difficult to sign all closed user created trails and keep signs maintained. Dollars for patrolling are very limited, so it is difficult to manage program...
- [Forest Service] needs to allow adequate time and funding to support public participation and deliberation.

## Other

- Agency needs access to strong process expertise (either internally, or through a third party neutral).
- Where we had success was with working with grassroots enthusiasts on substantive comments and appeals, rallies and protests. We found a way to bypass the Forest Service, which brought us closer to our goals, up to now.
- The public is not the enemy. Be realistic - don't burn out your employees or the public.
- The bigger the project, the more likely the failure. The most successful travel plans that I have seen have only focused on the areas that were open to cross-country motorized use and not the entire National Forest or Ranger District. The decision makers have to be willing to take a look at undesignated routes....
- The process has unfortunately become very political. It makes thoughtful, factual & scientific input a joke. The [Forest Service] will do what it's told to do from the top.
- Do not try to be reasonable and compromise. We made balanced compromise proposals providing for protection of the resources and providing abundant motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities... [The motorized group] got most of what they asked for.
- Complex land use planning and decision-making on public lands needs supporters who are well informed, articulate and committed to preserving the natural environment. Unfortunately, coalitions of individuals or groups may have no effect if the Forest Service does not take its motto of "Caring for the Land and Serving People" seriously.
- The [Forest Service] should make sure they stop being so afraid of the possible controversy, and conduct a scientifically rigorous and defensible planning process.
- The often repeated myth that the personal "values" professed by motorized recreationists are different from those held by quiet recreationists is unsupported and moot in the context of travel planning. This myth has served to oversimplify the issue of user conflicts and any earnest attempt of the exploration of lasting solutions...The agency must lend credence to and explore how ... emerging knowledge can be used to address lasting solutions to user conflicts on national forests. ..
- The agency should not approach travel planning as dividing the pie between motorized and non-motorized interests. They need to conduct travel analysis to create a starting point that does not propose routes that are obviously going to conflict with other forest uses. This creates a starting point that differing interests can agree on more that disagree upon.
- Be prepared to spend years of time and resources and in the end have the forest service alter decisions based on the most vocal group rather than base decisions on science, law, and sound policy.
- The present system is an embarrassment to public service and a waste of the public's time and energy!
- Recognize that there will always be someone in the agency who can find some justification for keeping open every road segment or every OHV route, so it makes it that much harder to find unbiased decision-making.
- The agency should not let those who talk the loudest or make the angriest statements to somehow gain the most amount of Forest Service attention.
- No matter what promises are made by agency reps about timeframes, always double or triple those times and even then you will likely underestimate how long the process will run.
- All the planning in the world will not help inadequate funding for enforcement by the Forest Service.
- I would like to withhold my opinion regarding lessons learned until more units have moved to the final decision stage of the process.
- Dealing with the analysis of dispersed recreational access and the associated limiting timelines to complete site specific project analysis.
- It is a very frustrating process when dealing with all user groups. Too many user groups don't want to do any work, get involved on the ground, don't pay anything for use and want to close everything to motorized [use]...
- Be cautious of the "agendas" (sometimes concealed) of each of the user groups taking part in Travel Management Planning. Sometimes these agendas don't become obvious until late in the process, making some of the early decision making questionable... Learning the values of other user groups whether motorized or non-motorized making decisions much easier to deal with in many cases.
- There are no successes. Every travel planning cycle we lose more trail, forcing us to use the remaining trails that much more heav-

ily, causing more, normal, use-related tread damage to occur thus providing more fodder for those who want to close trails to motorized use...

- Stay on top of EVERYTHING and do not believe what they tell you. If it is something you like get it in writing and have it signed. Keep all information and have it well organized. Persevere.
- We learned not to trust ANYTHING that the Forest Service tells us. Unfortunately, their responses were misleading, and confusing and often inaccurate...
- ...This is a government problem. And actually there isn't much government in the woods... Mostly I learned that the surge of optimism one feels upon being "included" is a rookie moment, for which I feel rueful but unashamed, and which I recognize in others who are enjoying their first flush of participatory ego... The facilitators are the worst.
- So far, it doesn't matter if there is any success for mountain bicyclists in Montana. The wilderness advocate organizations have been able to subvert and overturn every success we achieve.
- Don't trust what you hear, document and follow up.
- Working with the local Forest Service is surpassed only by its ineffectiveness by working with Region [\*\*\*]. Especially, when it comes to undue influence of the Region with the Forests.
- In our area the goal of the Forest Service is to eliminate OHV use of National Forest service lands. The [Travel Management Plan] is a means to accomplish this goal.

## Online Survey: Responses provided under "other comments"

### Adhering to Letter and Intent of the Travel Management Rule

Many participants mentioned getting the USFS to seriously consider the letter and spirit of E.O. 11644 and the 2005 Travel Management Rule. Comments included:

- \_\_\_\_ Region is not adhering to the Travel Management Rule -- they are ignoring SubPart A.
- Obtaining open and willing Forest Service compliance with [Council on Environmental Quality] planning regulations and with the public participation requirements set forth in the [Travel Management Rule] has been extremely difficult.
- The #1 challenge being played out is ...narrow context in which forests are defining "travel management." Most forests are refusing to incorporate Subpart A of the Travel Management Rule (i.e., identification of the minimum necessary road system) into their current Travel Plans... and fail to recognize how important "quiet recreation" is to local economies and the majority of forest visitors and how designating routes for motorized uses often serves to preclude the agency's ability to meet the larger and growing demand for traditional and quiet recreational opportunities.
- ... One of the key mistakes that agency is making is to pass up the opportunity the Rule represents to become fully dedicated to a comprehensive recreation strategy. Instead, I have seen many units simply trying to complete what they perceive as a "one time" priority and are merely "checking the boxes" to eliminate cross-country travel. ...In our view, the problem is that some units lack commitment of personnel and budget to formulate a wide range of alternatives, within the planning process, that would lead to final travel plans that serve the needs of the public while protecting the environment. ...
- Gaining internal support for on-going public involvement in the planning process (which is to say that it shouldn't just be a box we check off once we think we've met our minimum obligation).
- By far the hardest challenge is dealing with the Forest Service itself. They have been reluctant to follow their own rules, release information, [and] provide accurate timely information. We have severe doubts about their honesty, willingness to be fair, and their intentions to do a fair analysis. We see ever-more evidence that they already know (or have been told) what to do, and they are just using the NEPA process to justify it. ...We are forced to [use the Freedom of Information Act] for any piece of information. The [Freedom of Information Act] officer makes... [difficult] demands on us, like demanding we must prove how we are going to use and share the information.
- Agency acknowledged their obligation to complete Subpart A of the Travel Management Rule but elected to not address it.
- The Forest Service has steadfastly refused to acknowledge/include/analyze the existing conditions of use on the Forest, a clear violation of CEQ 1502.14(d). They have not ONE SINGLE SCRAP of current user data, no intention or interest in gathering any, and only the barest info on current route condition. Again, this data is not wanted/'needed' because it doesn't support their stated intention to reduce [motorized recreation] opportunities.
- For the first year or so, many Region [\*\*\*] and local [Forest Service] staff themselves were confused between Travel Management and the Roadless Rule. It's pretty discouraging when you realize you know more about the project than the people who have control of it and are supposed to be making decisions.

- Agencies too rushed - just doing motorized route designation as opposed to complete recreation planning in an ecological context.

### **Supporting Greater Attention to Environmental Protection**

- Addressing concerns over ecological impacts to wildlife, soils, watershed, and air quality.
- Getting the FS to acknowledge that OHV represents a very small user group relative to other uses, but its impacts on traditional users and the environment is huge.
- Addressing ecological damage and lack of non-motorized constituent involvement as an unsustainable route footprint is “frozen” by the [Travel Management Rule]... [Travel Management] planning isn’t looking at the whole picture. I am discouraged that ecological concerns were not one of the answers above!
- Getting the Forest Service to acknowledge that protection of public land resources was THE important and foremost issue – Only then should the “recreation pie” be “divided” amongst motorized and non-motorized users. Areas once open to motorized use are difficult or impossible to restore. By not acknowledging the issue/importance of resource protection the use of comprehensive data, the FS signaled to the motorized recreation community that motorized users would have most, if not all, of their wishes for motorized routes everywhere.
- Getting motorized users and the FS to comprehend the negative impact of motorized use (noise, damage to unique destruction/fragmentation of habitat, air pollution), on quiet recreation and be truly willing to share public lands by designating quiet as well as motorized recreation areas.
- Ensuring the Forest Service prioritizes environmental concerns as required by the Rule and the Executive Orders.
- Agency focused on motorized travel and did not actively reach out to non-motorized users early on in the process.
- Agency and key decision makers did not recognize that designating motorized routes de facto precludes non-motorized opportunities. Or they did not care.
- Scope of decisions too narrow - non-motorized issues not addressed, ecological issues unknown (lack of data) or cursorily brushed aside.

### **Supporting Greater Attention to Motorized Access**

- Acknowledge the fact that hikers disturb wildlife more than motorized trail bike riders.
- Getting [US Forest Service] to acknowledge need for motorized trails by actually including trails in their planning.
- The [Travel Management Rule] says “manage” OHV which has been broadly interpreted to mean “minimize” OHV. Nowhere in the [Travel Management Rule] does it say, “Use the [Travel Management Rule] process to restrict [motorized] [recreation] by any means possible” but that is what is being done in every forest we have participated in to date.
- Concern that additional closures could lead to more set asides (i.e. Roadless maps still hanging on from the 1970’s even though they are out dated).
- Current proposed action will reduce hundreds of miles of existing singletrack trail used for motorized recreation to less than 20 miles.
- Closure equals reduced opportunity, overuse of remaining lands, and exhibits a misunderstanding of the term “management”. The problems associated with motorized recreation can be managed, but the Forest Service has used closure instead of trying to institute a management plan. There is blindness to the needs and opportunities for those that enjoy off-road recreation.
- People will still use the land - they will not go away. A closure plan is doomed to failure.
- We have a cordial relationship with US [Forest Service] but not one mile of historic nonsystem trail officially acknowledged, never mind adopted.
- The closure of level 3 and 4 roads for mixed use.

### **Perceptions of Bias in the Process (both pro- and anti-motorized use)**

- Addressing personal bias of Forest Service and other government agencies against motorized use.
- Realizing how heavily [Forest Service] has bought into motorized recreation by their incorporation of industry literature (Blue Ribbon Coalition), group think and authorizing motorized use out of proportion to the percentage of motorized recreationists. An implication that an aging population is only interested in motorized recreation as opposed to a number of aging users who still walk and want quiet areas; the assertion that motorized users are families whose ONLY recreation is motorized.
- It was very hard to work with staff that refused to answer questions, or answered with the same response “Outside the scope of this project”. It appears that there are pre-drawn conclusions regarding [the Travel Management Rule], that this whole process was about curtailing motorized access of any kind, and was used as an excuse for closure of trails.

- The biggest challenge I have faced in EVERY [Travel Management Plan] so far is that the Forest Service has a clearly defined goal of reducing motorized recreation opportunities and EVERYTHING they do within the process ‘works backward’ to meet that pre-analysis decision. From lack of including existing routes and trails on the maps to [incorrect] use of data, the entire process has centered not around confining recreation to a designated route system but in dramatically reducing the opportunities available to the motorized recreating public.
- ...OHV Program Manager for Region [\*\*\*] was a Wilderness expert. He was not even neutral about OHV recreation. We discovered he was forwarding anti-OHV propaganda from the environmentalist websites to all the district rangers and [recreation] planners. I have not experienced anything with the National Forest that has encouraged me to believe that they will be fair, professional, or that they can be trusted.
- The [Forest Service] plays politics, “wanting to be the nice guy”, and should be looking to the best land use for our public lands.
- There is nothing in the “due process” rules that prevents the Forest Service from giving equivalent weight to a comment letter written by someone in Florida, who never has and never will visit the area in question and a comment letter written by someone who lives and works an hour away from the area in question and who spends 30-60 days there per year.
- The travel planning process is framed as an off-road vehicle issue by the agency. Although the travel management rule does not required designation of non-motorized trails, these decisions have a profound impact on non-motorized recreation. Without framing it that way, other user-groups are less likely to engage. The process favors motorized recreation.
- Agency seemed determined in many travel planning processes to put motorized use as priority, rather than protection of resources
- Off-road recreation has been victimized by this process. Region has made statements against OHV recreation, and constantly mentioning the 4 threats and including off-road recreation begins that process on a negative note. It’s not about getting a good recreation plan for the Forest Service - it’s about fear of getting sued by powerful exclusionary environmental groups. An overwhelming number of Forest Service staff have exhibited a bias against motorized recreation.
- Agency officials favored the status quo and appeared disinterested in really addressing the issue of competing values. For instance, should fun and recreation for a minority of forest visitors be given equal weight with ecosystem protection, water values, and fun and recreation by a larger majority of forest users who do not ride OHVs, ATVs, dirt bikes, 4WD jeeps, or other motorized uses?
- When the Forest Service “Chain of Command” has an open, stated agenda to close more trails to motorized use, the ONLY viable means of countering that is political and this being an election year proved too much to accomplish much...[US Forest Service], pleading time and funding constraints, decided motorized trail is not an issue for [Travel Management Planning].
- Forest service region [\*\*\*] has a clear and obvious bias against mountain biking. This has resulted in a steady process of ignoring bicycle access issues.
- Bias against OHV use.
- In scoping travel plans, the agency often fails or refuses to acknowledge that such planning will have a direct and profound effect on its ability to address the needs and desires of traditional and quiet recreational user groups.
- [Forest Service] framed it as an OHV issue; other users didn’t realize the impact these decisions will have on their use of the forest.
- No amount of time, meetings, talk, maps, money or data will make any difference if the [Forest Service] does not intend to do a fair and complete analysis. Our first experience, with an [Environmental Assessment], showed the [Forest Service] specialists were routinely corrupting the research, inventing non-existent ‘problems’, and making wild leaps of imagination about ‘resource damage’ for which they had absolutely no supporting data or studies. They wrote the [Environmental Assessment] to support what they wanted in the Proposed Action. The [Environmental Assessment] was not a legitimate analysis. It was just window-dressing for decisions they had already made. They are abusing the intent of NEPA.
- Forests (with the exception of the [\*\*\*] National Forest) are NOT planning for comprehensive recreation needs - therefore it is difficult to attract non-motorized users that are affected by motorized route decisions. [Travel Management Rule] doesn’t require comprehensive [recreation] planning, so it’s mostly not happening. Non-motorized users are left with what shakes out of [Travel Management] planning, and it’s not equitable or ecologically sustainable.
- Internal agency bias.
- It has been difficult to have our issues acknowledged because the FS staffs are often hostile and unreceptive to OHVs. We are getting in the way of what they want to do. We have submitted the same GPS data for two years and the [\*\*\* National Forest] is still refusing to put certain roads and trails on maps of Existing Conditions. -We’ve worked hard to build relationships, but people get transferred and yanked off the project. --The [Forest Service] complains they have no money and will ‘have to’ close trails because of lack of maintenance budgets. Yet those same trails will stay open to everyone else. ... They are making pre-analysis decisions about trails they have never seen.
- The TMR says “manage” OHV which has been broadly interpreted to mean “minimize” OHV. Nowhere in the TMR does it say, “Use the TMR process to restrict [motorized recreation] by any means possible” but that is what is being done in every forest we have participated in to date.

- I have worked on dozens of FS planning documents. In every field except motorized recreation, the FS is pretty easy to get along with. But the FS becomes a government monster when the subject is motor access.
- Forest chose to close almost no roads and few user-made OHV trails by claiming they didn't have time to assess whether or not road segments or trails caused environmental harm... they also claimed closures would require additional site specific NEPA.
- The Region [\*\*\*] policy to ban mechanized (bicycles) from any area that was ever recommended for Wilderness - (not designated) just proposed or recommended.

### **Problems with Forest Service Capacity for Travel Management Planning and Implementation**

- Two people noted that staff turnover in the Forest Service slow[s] the process down unreasonably.
- Internal agency difficulty to have time to focus adequate time on travel planning in midst of competing priorities.
- Addressing questions concerns about our ability to fund and implement the plan once there is a decision.
- Addressing concern that the [Forest Service] will not have sufficient resources for implementation - education, enforcement, maintenance, [or] monitoring.
- Addressing enforcement and safety issues.
- Insufficient funds for adequate patrols prior to the plan has not aided in getting motorized users to recognize that there is a new plan. They prefer to ignore the new management rules as they did any prior travel management plans.
- The reluctance to commit necessary personnel and budget to formulate a wide range of alternatives, within the planning process, that would lead to final travel plans that serve the needs of the public while protecting the environment.
- Refusal to accept OHV uses due to "expected" additional responsibility - no trails means less work and an easier job and we don't have to deal with OHV'ersStaff changes in the middle of the process - used staffers that are unresponsive to questions & concerns of the OHV community. Some staffers were useless as far as information and explanations to the public were concerned.
- There is no funding allotted to it, there are no staffers with OHV management experience. There is hardly any staff qualified to ride ATVs and none qualified to ride dirt bikes.
- It isn't so much that the agency "did not acknowledge issues/concerns" - it was that the agency did not have the capacity or experience to deal with the contentiousness over these issues.
- Forest Service cites lack of time and money to inventory, categorize, process environmental and designate long-existing non-system trails. (Forest in question is currently open to cross-country travel - and has historically never designated or mapped motorized trails.
- There are too many ID Teams across the country who have little to no experience with motorized recreation or little understand of motorized recreationists wants and desires.
- Lack of universal understanding of the amount of time it takes to involve public in meaningful way, do necessary field work, and produce adequate analysis.
- The political climate is not right for us to assert that we have prescriptive rights. There was no time and money to pursue acquiring right-of-ways across private property.
- We are a large forest with a small staff. Implementation and enforcement will be hard to fund and difficult.

### **Families and Seniors**

- Hearing FS and motorized user groups assert motorized use is a family activity/value – the implication being that hiking and quiet recreation are not family activities. That closing some areas to motorized recreation is an attack on family (motorized) recreation.
- "Keeping opportunities for an aging population and people with disabilities" is usually (and inaccurately) "code" for MOTORIZED use. But most Forest users are NOT ATV recreationists. We non-motorized recreationists and conservationists get old and disabled also. We still want quiet non-motorized opportunities and natural resource protection.. Non-motorized recreationists have families too. Children and families need quiet, non-motorized routes and areas in which to recreate.

### **Complexity and lack of understanding of rule and process**

- Internally, we seem to not all be on the same page, or when issues/concerns are acknowledged, solutions come too late. We have placed an internal timeline on ourselves for completion of travel management planning, yet when new aspects or complexities arise and are shared upward, the return message is stay on the timeline. We do the public a huge disservice when we don't adjust our projects to evolving understandings of the complexity of the task. The purpose and need is clear, what is not clear is all the twists and turns one strategy may take. Trying to translate this complexity to the public is daunting to say the least. It comes out whining, or excuse making.
- Public does not fully understand rationale and reasons for undertaking route designation.

- The complexity of this project continues to evolve. Leadership is not keeping up with issues that affect all the national forests and the recreating public. The biggest surprise to hit the recreating public will be the loss of dispersed camping access because we did not initially recognize the impacts of travel management rule on this activity, and when we did, we have not allowed ourselves the extra time to complete the analysis and share the findings [Environmental Assessment, Environmental Impact Statement] with the public.
- Other user group members not familiar with the trails but still voting to close [trails for] motorized [use].
- Folks just didn't understand the importance of what we were doing. Difficult to get the message out and folks to engage at the appropriate time.
- No [one] had ever used the data in this way before. We weren't sure we could either.
- Education is difficult and ongoing. Decision changed the operational parameters for many users. Getting them to understand and abide has and continues to be a significantly challenging hurdle.
- Agency did not do a good job of explaining the need for closures. Some participants wrote that the language the Forest Service used during public outreach did not alert people to the reality of what Travel Management Planning is. This also impeded public outreach.
- Agency did not do a good job of explaining the need for closures.

#### **Process lacked efficiency or usefulness**

- Region [\*\*\*] entirely wasted the first year after the TMR was announced with... internal bureaucratic decisions like creating teams and assigning titles and tasks. Now they are trying to make 'deadlines' by rushing the process...
- Over the course of several years I have lost any optimism about our prospects for access, or any expectation that the excellent people I know in [US Forest Service] can ever be equated with an excellent agency, or workable process. I have struggled with my declining expectations as I watched other fine citizens drop out to pursue more productive endeavors. I am now, as the old joke goes, just hanging around to see what happens next.
- The tide is running toward another explosion of environmental regulation, this time to save the whole planet. The wave of the seventies (EPA, clean air, clean water, NEPA, Endangered Species, wilderness) has rendered the agencies dysfunctional, in that the regulatory kudzu comes without a budget. Never mind [\*\*\*NGOs] the agencies are suing each other. The agencies are being sued for not responding fast enough to previous lawsuits...
- Lack of sufficient facilitation or [Forest Service] advocacy.
- The agency concealed or eliminated key data during the NEPA process, which frustrated and alienated the people who wanted a cooperative relationship.
- Forest Service changes direction mid-stream, then changes back. Timetables were completely unreliable, making allocation of our limited funds to work on this issue ever more scarce.

#### **Unbalanced representation of public**

- Motorized users showed up consistently at public meetings because the meetings were focused on OHV use and vehicle use on roads. Few equestrians, mountain bikers, hikers, joggers, bird watchers, non-motorized folks showed up.
- Key interest group(s) not appropriately involved by the Agency/ lack of attempt to resolve conflicts amongst interest groups by the US [Forest Service].
- Region [\*\*\*] bicyclists are represented by one overworked volunteer organization. Many other groups are represented by professional organizations, and they steer the forest service at every opportunity.
- In addition, in [\*\*\*state], national forests are within huge population centers. Getting the word out about this project has not been what it should be. It then becomes incumbent upon the Forest to represent the folks that are not at the table. Locally, we are doing fairly well with public involvement. Regionally, not so hot.
- Most people do not want to engage in motorized use issues. They do not understand how it affects them.
- Our elderly populations are not being addressed ... in a reasonable manner, everything else is taking precedent.
- Acknowledging the rights of those who have, for decades, used and maintained trails to continue to do so.
- Publics are too spread to easily contact and generally don't have an interest until a trail closure sign appears.
- User participation: our inability to reach the general public of OHV users (24% of \*\*\*state) with the information that [Travel Management Planning] is happening, and why they should care...

#### **User groups unwilling to develop understanding of other interests and work to reconcile competing values**

- These same group members chose to only see things from their particular point of view & not to try to understand things from another point of view.
- Other users did not understand that if open to motorized [users] it is still open to all users and that the motorized do most of the maintenance, have funding available and the trails will perpetuate.
- The wilderness groups have spread so much misinformation about bicycle travel that we are challenged at every meeting to explain who we are and what we represent as bicyclists.
- Nine out of ten Forest Service employees and non-motorized focus group members haven't visited 9 out of 10 trails "on the table". These people have it in their mind that motorized use "destroys the experience" for non-motorized users. That is simply not the case.
- The nature of the process is polemic. To reconcile the differences between interested parties would require Solomon's skill. Some people want all the routes closed because the OHVs are the downfall of western civilization as we know it. Others want all the trails open because they have always been open and it is public land.
- Could not reconcile values.
- Getting some core motorized group members to employ give & take or compromise.
- Persons of various user groups have widely different opinions of what is safe and what is not, as well as what appropriate trail use is.
- Intractable participants.
- The motorized users would not allow the issue of closures to be brought up. Basically they were stonewalling the process.
- The values shared by non-motorized trail users such as a quiet non-motorized experience, doesn't seem to be shared by most motorized users.
- There is a philosophical difference between many of the user-groups about access. This is the single largest obstacle.
- Due to emotions, people's traditions, and sense of place.
- Once again, all the difficulties that I experienced [were] because a few individuals chose to draw a line in the sand with everything on their side of the line. They only participated in compromise when in the end they faced losing more because of their intransigence than if they chose to give & take.
- For various reasons (big game security in particular), access has been reduced for some motorized users making it very difficult for motorized users to accept any additional trails being designated as non-motorized. They feel a sense "loss" if any trail is designated as non-motorized.
- There are sideboards for decision space that some interest groups do not want to accept and this limited citizen involvement.
- Citizen apathy.

#### **Major issues/concerns not addressed**

- Key decision-makers sometimes briefly "acknowledged" our issues/concerns, but apparently did not consider them important, and did nothing about them.
- Noise and safety were not on the [Forest Service] agenda and they would not talk about the conflict of use.
- Only wanted to review work and comment, not discuss.
- Absolutely NEVER did the agency acknowledge that their new Travel Plan made changes to allow drivers of ANY age (e.g. 4 years old!) and that has safety implications. They suppressed the fact that changing to allow unlicensed vehicles is a significant enforcement issue.
- Because over-snow vehicles are excluded from the Travel Management process, the issues of noise and safety are not being addressed when it comes to winter use.
- Because travel planning seems to primarily address motorized use, mountain bike use is completely ignored. But many closures are planned and implemented anyhow.
- Having our issues ADDRESSED, not just briefly, pro forma "acknowledged".

#### **Difficulty in gathering accurate data**

- Difficulty in gathering accurate data. Once inaccurate data is entered forced to do a [NEPA] PROCESS TO CORRECT INACCURATE DATA [caps in original]. Not allowed to put adequate information on free travel map because it then competes with Recreation map which we sell.
- Forest Service failure to properly complete Travel Analysis prior to beginning the travel management proposed action development.

**Lack of checks on Forest Service Actions**

- No control over who comes and goes in the agency.
- I was making decisions that affected the entire Forest Service with no authority to do so.
- The exclusion of over-snow vehicles from the Travel Management process is a HUGE concern to non-motorized winter users and creates many problems.

**MVUM not user-oriented/user-friendly**

- Powers that be would not acknowledge that MVUM as designed would not work for public.
- MVUM as designed by folks “on High” is a useless tool for the public. No one at top would listen.
- The agency seems to be refusing to design a map that will actual be usable by users in the field. Refusing to put streams, landmarks, major highways, towns, etc. on motor vehicle use map, making it impossible for user to navigate with map and actually determine where it is legal to go.

## Appendix 4: General Travel Management Planning Resources

### Example of Clear Guidance for Travel Management Planning:

*From the*  
Southwestern Region

Travel Management Implementation Guidelines Revised June 30, 2008

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/projects/travel-mgt/imp-guide-rev4.shtml>

This website outlines the Forest Service's roles in the Travel Management Planning Process with the intention of providing consistency in understanding TMP, without limiting the flexibility to create an adaptive process. The site covers seven subheadings:

- I. General Principles
- II. Existing Travel Management Direction (Existing Direction)
- III. Motorized Access for Dispersed Camping
- IV. Motorized Big Game
- V. Heritage Resource Travel Management Protocol
- VI. Exempted Uses- Written Instruments
- VII. Limited Administrative Use by the Forest Service

*"A cornerstone of the Rule is local collaboration and decision making. This is particularly important given the diversity of conditions that exist across the Region. The following revised guidelines are intended to complement the Rule's focus on local collaboration and decision making. They are provided for two important purposes: 1) to identify the suite of tools available to meet public interests, consistent with the Rule; and 2) to provide a level of consistency that enhances public understanding, compliance, and ease of enforcement. Consideration of these revised guidelines will provide a common starting point for the dialog that will result in designation of routes and areas open to motor vehicles and other associated management direction, while providing the flexibility to address specific situations on individual units. Consideration of these revised guidelines should result in a suite of local decisions that "feel familiar" to visitors as they recreate on different national forests in the Southwestern Region."*

## Example of Clear Website Overview of Travel Management Planning

*From the*

Tahoe National Forest

### *Tahoe NF OHV Route Designation/Motorized Travel Management Project*

[http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/tahoe/projects\\_plans/ohv\\_inv/index.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/tahoe/projects_plans/ohv_inv/index.shtml)

This website clearly explains OHV Route Designation/Motorized Travel Management Project (Travel Management Planning) in the Tahoe National Forest. Information is laid out by: overview, background, current status, public meetings, mailing list, previous updates, contact information, additional information, and a link to maps.

#### **Overview** (from website):

The Forest Service started a process to designate off-highway vehicle routes for the Tahoe National Forest in 2004 as part of a Region-wide effort. This project has grown over the last few years to incorporate new ideas and revised National direction and now includes all (wheeled) motorized travel.

This project was initiated to respond to the growing use of off highway vehicles. It will help establish a system of routes that offers a fun and challenging experience while protecting sensitive areas. This project will only designate trails, routes, or areas on National Forest System land – not on private land.

At the end of this project:

- Some routes that are currently being used for motorized travel (but are not designated) will be added to the designated trail system;
- Some routes that are currently being used for motorized travel (but are not designated) will be closed to motorized wheeled vehicle use;
- Seasonal restrictions may be placed on some routes and areas;
- Access to dispersed camping sites may change;
- Some routes/roads may be designated for specific types or widths of vehicles;
- Motor vehicle use off designated routes, trails, and areas will be prohibited.

#### **Background**

As off-highway vehicle (OHV) use continues to increase nationwide, the Forest Service has begun a national effort to designate motorized routes. The Tahoe National Forest is in the midst of a five-step statewide process to inventory and catalog OHV routes across the national forest.

This process will not lead to decisions affecting OHV use on private property, but will guide the Forest Service in OHV route management on national forest lands. It will help to identify a route system that offers a fun and challenging experience, while protecting sensitive areas. The entire process is outlined in detail in Appendix B of [Route Designation Guidebook](#), but here is a summary:

A five-step process is being used.

1. Map existing unclassified roads, OHV trails (both National Forest “system” and “non-system” routes) and off-route use areas, and enter the data in Geographic Information System (GIS) and Infrastructure databases. Designate team leaders, compile Forest OHV Management Direction, assemble needed information, identify gaps in data, prioritize, develop action plans, and begin field surveys. **Complete 2005.**

2. Issue temporary Forest Orders prohibiting wheeled vehicle use off of mapped roads, trails, and off-route use areas. Involve the public. **Complete October 2007.**
3. Evaluate inventoried roads, trails, and areas; collaborate with the public in developing proposed systems of roads, trails, and specifically defined areas for use by wheeled OHVs' completed surveys of information and data gaps. Involve the public. Publish maps of proposals by September 2006. **Complete.**
4. Complete analyses and prepare National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents designating all trails and specifically defined areas for wheeled OHV use. Involve the public. **In progress.**
5. Issue Forest Orders to prohibit motor vehicle use off roads, designated trails, and specifically defined areas. Involve the public. Install appropriate signing, publish maps of approved OHV systems for public distribution, and implement any mitigation measures by September 2008.

**Example of Clear Sideboards**  
**From the Idaho Panhandle National Forest**

**St. Joe Ranger District**  
**Travel Management Planning**  
<http://www.fs.fed.us/ipnf/stjoe/travelplan/publicinvolvement/sideboards.html>

**STARTING POINT**

The 1987 Land Management Plan for the Idaho Panhandle National Forests is the foundation upon which the travel management plan will be built. The Forest is currently revising their Forest Plan and released a Proposed Land Management Plan (PLMP) in May of 2006. Even though a decision has not yet been made on the PLMP, the proposed desired conditions and management direction should also be considered during the travel management planning process.

The “Desired Condition” in the Proposed Land Management Plan for Access and Recreation on the St. Joe Ranger District states: Public access is maintained while reducing effects to water resources, water quality, and wildlife habitat. Summer trails offer both motorized and non-motorized opportunities. Motorized trail opportunities are more prevalent in the lower St. Joe drainage while non-motorized opportunities are emphasized in the upper St. Joe River area.

**Current travel management direction on National Forest System roads and trails will be the baseline that the Forest Service will start with in this travel management planning process.**

**SIDEBOARDS**

The travel management planning process involves a broad-based analysis, and due to the short time frame for completion the following sideboards have been developed to illustrate the decision space for the Forest Service Line Officer. These sideboards will be utilized throughout the public involvement process as the Forest Service develops, analyzes and decides upon a travel management plan for the St. Joe Ranger District.

- **We will comply with all federal and state laws, rules and regulations and meet the Idaho Panhandle Forests Plan standards.**
- **New construction or major reconstruction, and user-created trails will not be considered in this designation process.**
  - The environmental effects would have to be disclosed with these proposals in more site-specific analysis. Funding constraints and the timeline for making the travel management decision and producing a MVUM would not allow for such consideration. However, proposals that do not require new construction or major reconstruction and link routes or facilities, create loops, or convert roads to trails maybe be carried forward in this analysis. Other opportunities for new designated routes that do require new construction and/or reconstruction will be recorded and may be considered as opportunities for future site-specific analysis.
- **The following areas have existing special designations and travel management direction will remain the same. However, these special designations and travel management direction will be part of the analysis.**
  - Previous administrative decisions, under other authorities and including public involvement, have restricted motor vehicle use in the following areas.
    1. Mallard-Larkin’s Pioneer Area (nonmotorized trails)
    2. St. Joe River Trail 48 – located in the “wild” portion of the St. Joe Wild and Scenic River (nonmotorized trail)

3. Snow Peak Wildlife Management Area (non-motorized trails)
  4. Grandmother Mountain Area (open to single-track motorized vehicles)
  5. Hobo Cedar Grove Trail (nonmotorized trail)
  6. Hiawatha Trail (nonmotorized, non-stock trail)
- **When designating roads and trails for public motorized access, resource concerns must be considered to reduce effects to wildlife, water quality and fisheries. For example:**
    1. Primary bull trout area in the upper St. Joe
    2. Multiple stream crossings
    3. Wetlands, streamside areas and flood plains (riparian zones)
    4. The amount and distribution of wildlife security areas
    5. Wildlife travel areas on key ridges and saddles
  - **Travel management will be coordinated with adjacent landowners and managers.**
  - **We intend to move forward with proposed actions where we have on-going NEPA projects. Specifically, we want the public to know we are actively planning projects related to access for the Bussel 484 EIS at this time.**
  - **The Northern Regional Office guidance for recommended wilderness is to manage it with a non-motorized recreation emphasis.**
  - **The Northern Regional Office direction is that motorized game retrieval off designated roads and trails will not be considered.**

### **Example of informative website on travel management planning and EIS**

*From the*

#### **White River National Forest**

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/whiteriver/index.shtml>

#### **Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Public Comment:**

[http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/whiteriver/projects/travel\\_management/index.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/whiteriver/projects/travel_management/index.shtml)

#### **Information about current and planned projects and environmental assessments:**

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/whiteriver/projects/>

The White River National Forest has clearly stated on their website information on a supplemental draft environmental impact statement (SDEIS) for citizen review and comment. The website encourages people to submit comments on the website, states when the comment period begins, and when it closes. The SDEIS is posted on the site in PDF format as both the complete document and individual sections. Maps, spreadsheets about alternative routes, responses to comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), and the DEIS are also available for downloading on the site.

# Appendix 5: Public Participation & Collaboration Resources

## Collaborative Problem-Solving Resources

### 1. “Public Participation in Environmental Assessment and Decision making,” Thomas Dietz and Paul C. Stern, Editors, August 2008

A report of the National Research Council, sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Energy, Food and Drug Administration, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Engineering, Institute of Medicine, and National Research Council make up the National Academies. They are private, nonprofit institutions that provide science, technology, and health policy advice under a congressional charter. The Research Council is the principal operating agency of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engineering.

Online purchase: [http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=12434](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12434)

### 2. Collaboration: A Guide for Environmental Advocates, by Frank Dukes and Karen Firehock (UVA, 2001)

Free online access: <http://www.virginia.edu/ien/publications.htm>

The Guide includes best practices for any group working on environmental issues and can be used by agency staff, motorized users, quiet recreationists, and anyone else interested in building collaborative solutions. It includes guidance about when collaboration may be useful and when it may not, how to convene a collaborative group, ways of incorporating science, and how to gauge success.

### 3. Public & Stakeholder Participation - Tools and Resources How to Involve the Public in Transportation Decision Making

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/publicinvolvement/toolsandresources.html>

An excellent site for multiple tools for public participation, including:

- Core values for public participation
- Spectrum of participation levels
- “Hear Every Voice” guidance (designed for MNDOT projects, but an excellent process overview that can be adapted for travel management planning)

### 4. Core Values for Public Participation

Developed by the International Association for Public Participation. This organization offers substantial resources.

<http://www.iap2.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=4>

#### Core Values for the Practice of Public Participation

1. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
2. Public participation includes the promise that the public’s contribution will influence the decision.
3. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.
4. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
5. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
6. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
7. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

**5. Best Practices for Government Agencies: Guidelines for Using Collaborative Agreement-Seeking Processes.** Published by the Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution [now the Association for Conflict Resolution] in January 1997. This short guide is required reading for any collaborative group that has substantial agency involvement. It argues for a well-defined role for agencies and for the independence of mediators or facilitators, even when (or especially when) they are hired by the agencies.

**6. Managing Scientific and Technical Information in Environmental Cases: Principles and Practices for Mediators and Facilitators,** by Peter Adler et al. 2000.

This lengthy (76-page) manual contains both theoretical and practical advice, and is illustrated with many case examples. Available on the web-sites of its sponsors: RESOLVE, Inc. ([www.resolve.org](http://www.resolve.org)), the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution ([www.ecr.gov](http://www.ecr.gov)), and the Western Justice Center Foundation ([www.westernjustice.org](http://www.westernjustice.org)).

**7. Plan-to-Project Working Guide: Engaging in Collaborative Meetings (Reference and Working Planner for USDA Forest Service Professionals),** by Susan W. Halbert. Published by the National 4-H Council for the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, in 1999.

This concise 20-page document is concerned primarily with running fair and effective meetings in situations where conflict is likely. Can be downloaded free at [ocs.fortlewis.edu/Stewardship](http://ocs.fortlewis.edu/Stewardship) by clicking on “How to Plan and Conduct a Collaborative Meeting.”

**8. A Practical Guide to Consensus,** by Jim Arthur, Christine Carlson, and Lee Moore. Published by the Policy Consensus Initiative in 1999. This 72-page guide offers a thorough but concise toolkit to best practices for sponsors of consensus processes. Order at [www.policyconsensus.org](http://www.policyconsensus.org).

The following all provide a mix of case studies, lessons learned about effective collaboration, and typologies of collaborative processes.

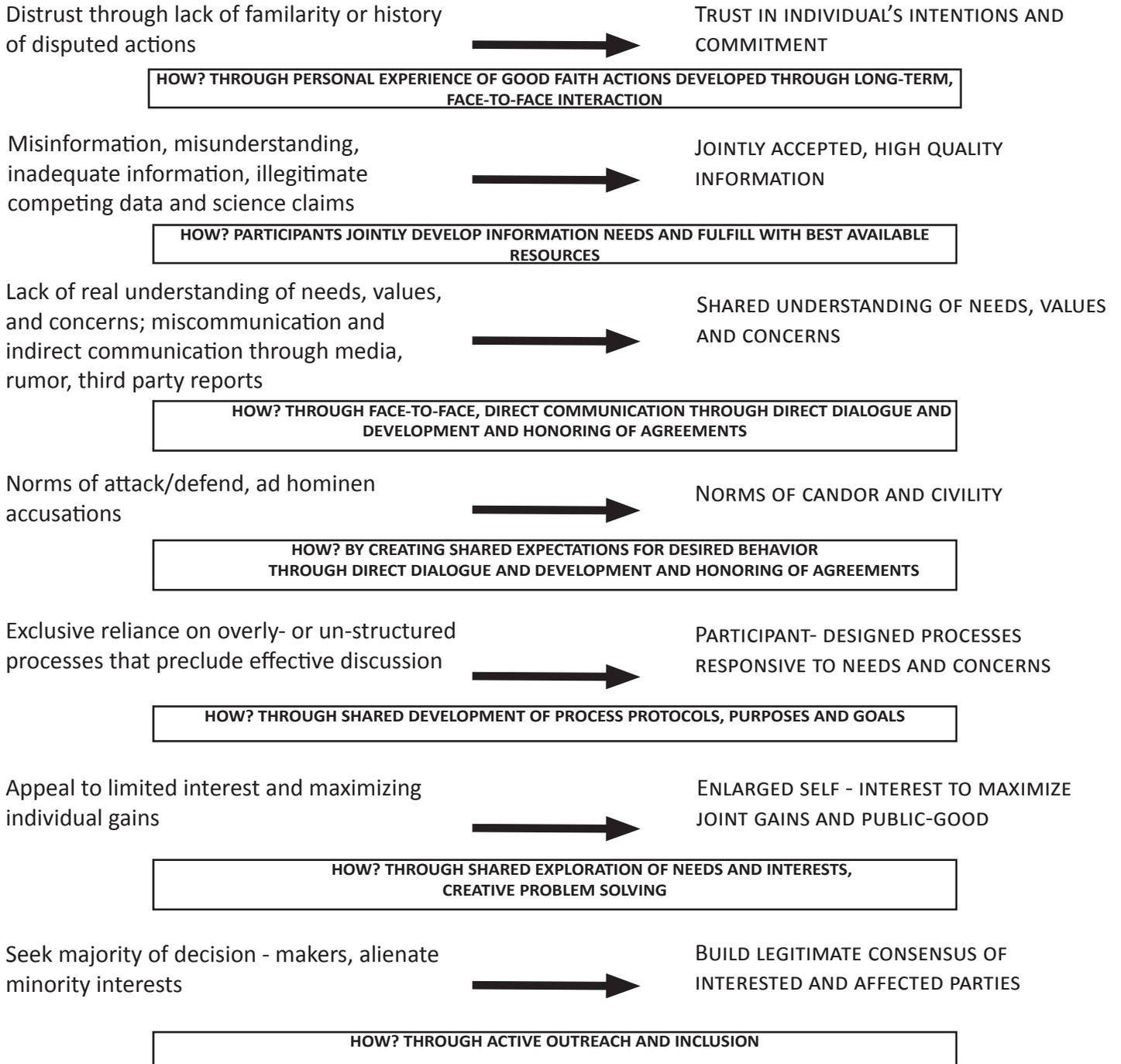
**Beyond the Hundredth Meridian: A Field Guide to Collaborative Conservation on the West’s Public Lands,** by Barb Cestero. Published by the Sonoran Institute in 1999. Order through [www.sonoran.org](http://www.sonoran.org).

**Across the Great Divide: Explorations in Collaborative Conservation and the American West,** by Philip Brick, Donald Snow and Sarah van de Wetering. Published by Island Press in 2001.

**The Ecology of Hope: Communities Collaborate for Sustainability,** by Ted Bernard and Jora Young. Published by New Society Publishers in 1997.

**Making Collaboration Work: Lessons from Innovation in Natural Resource Management,** by Julia M. Wondolleck and Steven L. Yaffee. Published by Island Press in 2000.

# Conflict to Consensus Chart



## Example of Volunteer Recruitment (Building Partnerships)

*From the*

**Tahoe National Forest**

*Volunteering on the Tahoe.*

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/tahoe/volunteering/index.shtml>

Located on the Tahoe National Forest Website is a link to volunteer opportunities in the Tahoe National Forest. The site posts where volunteers are needed, information about who to contact to get involved, and Adopt a Trail programs.

“Working with the Forest Service and fellow volunteers is an opportunity to see what our National Forests have to offer in a way beneficial to both yourself and the forest. The diversity of projects and positions available offers each person a chance to participate in an activity that meets their individual or group interests.”

### **“Why Volunteer?”**

Earn credit towards college with volunteer internships Develop or diversify your job experience and career choices Meet people and form new friendships Self-satisfaction in providing community service.”

### **“What Projects?”**

Projects can range from a single day project to a long term undertaking lasting for several months. What captures your interest? Trail work, campground host, bird surveys, conservation education, fire lookout, Adopt-A-Trail, information receptionist, and wilderness restoration projects are a few examples of what may be available. Other possibilities might include working in the field with biologists, botanists, archaeologists, recreation rangers, and other Forest Service personnel.”

### **“How does this work?”**

Projects and positions will be posted on this web site as coordinators develop them. Review through the choices and either call or email the listed contact to express your interest. Since this page is in the beginning stages of development there are many more opportunities available than is on the site. You can call individual Ranger Districts or the Forest Supervisor’s Office directly or email the forest through the electronic form on the [Contact Us](#) pages. Your information will be passed on to the appropriate project coordinator.”

### **“Background**

Volunteer service in the Forest Service was formalized in the *Volunteers in the National Forest Act of 1972*. This act allowed the Forest Service to legally accept the services of volunteers as individuals or groups. Volunteers are not considered federal employees except for purposes of tort claims and work related injuries. While they receive no pay, expenses for such things as transportation, subsistence and uniforms may be negotiated on a case by case basis.”

“Volunteering in the National Forest can offer valuable experience and life long memories. Give it a try!”

## Example that Facilitates Easy Public Access to Documents

*From the*

**U.S. National Parks Service**

### **Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC)**

“Fostering conservation-based decision-making through consultation, cooperation and communication”

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/>

#### **Overview** (from website):

This site provides access to current plans, environmental impact analyses, and related documents on public review. Users of the site can submit comments for documents available for public review.

The National Park Service prepares a variety of planning and environmental documents to help guide it in managing park resources. These documents can range from site-specific impact analyses on facility locations to broader park-wide plans for future use and management of a park.

This site contains all of the currently active plans and environmental documents for the National Park Service. You can select from the list of specific national parks below, by region or state, or use advanced search feature.

**Example of Transparency: Report of a Collaborative Stakeholder Group Findings  
From the  
Inyo National Forest**

**Collaborative Alternatives Team (CAT) Statement and Findings April 7, 2008:  
[http://www.access-advocates.org/PDF/CAT\\_Proposal.pdf](http://www.access-advocates.org/PDF/CAT_Proposal.pdf)**

Includes:

- Description of the process
- Role of the CAT
- Statement of Findings
- Travel Analysis Criteria
- Analysis of Routes

“With over 5,000 individually numbered routes making up a network of well over 3,700 miles of route, arriving at a sustainable and manageable system of roads, trails and areas for motorized use across Forest land which provides motorized access for everyone presents a significant challenge. To facilitate constructive and substantive dialogue surrounding this issue, the Desert Mountain Resource Conservation and Development District convened a broad group of local stakeholders in early March of 2008. The Travel Management Collaborative Alternative Team (CAT) convened to determine if there are mutually acceptable options for trail routes on the Inyo National Forest that provide for safe and environmentally responsible use.”

**Example of a Charter (Protocols and Ground Rules) for Collaborative Stakeholder Involvement**  
*From the*  
**Inyo National Forest**

**Inyo Forest Travel Management Collaborative Alternatives Team (CAT)**

**Charter and Participant Commitments**

**PURPOSE**

The Inyo Travel Management Collaborative Alternative Team (CAT) is an independent community based body of stakeholders. The primary goal of the CAT is to determine if there are mutually acceptable options for trail routes on the Inyo National Forest that provide for safe and environmentally responsible use. The CAT seeks to minimize conflict between different forms of recreation and between recreation of all types and the environment. CAT recommendations will be based on the best available information available to the group. Recommendations will be submitted to the Forest Supervisor or other entity as appropriate to the implementation of those recommendations. The Forest Supervisor is committed to considering recommendations of all stakeholders and recognizes the unique contributions the CAT could make to the overall consideration of alternatives.

**COLLABORATIVE SCOPE**

Collaboration could include, but is not limited to, discussion of the following:

- Identification of where there is already agreement on routes.
- Discussion of criteria and confirmation to move forward.
- Identification of which routes or geographical areas have potential for collaborative resolution. Prioritize them.
- Discussion of designation of routes within Inventoried Roadless Areas.
- Discussion of specific routes or geographical areas with the intent of finding common ground – developing consensus – and documenting where agreement is reached. Areas/routes of non-agreement are also documented.
- Discussion on any other issues that the group chooses to tackle, where they think there is potential to reach consensus resolution.

**MEMBERSHIP**

Members of the group are by their personal knowledge, association, constituency or organization involved in or related to activities in the Forest described in the Background section. Members have a local perspective, topical, on-the-ground knowledge, and the ability to work collaboratively with people with views different from their own.

**MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- As appropriate act as a liaison and communicate information to and from their organizations.
- Offer the perspective of a good citizen, an independent thinker and trust worthy individual.
- Build trust among all stakeholders.
- Contribute data/information to clarify issues and eliminate false assumptions.
- Will not represent individual views as views of the CAT or make public confidential conversations.
- Work to ensure acceptance and implementation of agreements made by the CAT.

**ATTENDANCE**

Attendance at meetings is important for the continuity of the group. Those unable to fully participate will be asked to re-evaluate their membership.

**DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

Consensus seeking: This is a consensus seeking process. The full group will consider all decisions or recommendations. To determine a degree of consensus, members will note their level of support for items as ranging from Unqualified Support, Strong Support, General Support, Qualified Support, to Fundamental Disagreement. Issues without out a broad degree of support will not move forward as representing the views of CAT. The level of support for various items will be recorded. If an item receives a level of Fundamental Disagreement, the group will be asked to continue working

until it appears a resolution is not attainable, or move on to an area where more agreement is possible. At that time the members will note the nature of the disagreement and make a determination as to the best way to proceed in the particular issue area. Minor and major decisions: Not all decisions will have the same level of impact. Simple voting may be adopted for procedural or non-policy matters. Select decision process in advance: Proposals for action should include the decision process to be used in considering the item. Members are expected to always contribute their best personal thinking, regardless of the initial positions of their sponsoring organizations. Collaboration cannot be effective unless all parties, including sponsoring organizations, are open to modifying their initial positions. Members are responsible for promoting understanding of CAT recommendations by the organizations they represent.

### GROUND RULES

1. Use standing meeting ground rules (see attachment)
2. When discussing the work of CAT, meeting attendees will avoid attributing statements to individuals.
3. Items presented as confidential will not be disclosed in other forums or used in a way to disadvantage any member of the group.
4. Members shall act in good faith in all aspects of this consensus-building process.
5. Members shall communicate their interests and positions.
6. Members shall not engage in personal attacks or stereotyping.
7. Members shall refrain from impugning the motivations or intentions of others.
8. Members shall not make commitments they do not intend to follow through.
9. Members shall act consistently in the CAT and other forums where similar issues are being discussed, including with the press.
10. Members agree to provide requested information to other members or explain the reason why not.
11. Meeting participants attending without an official CAT role will be provided with audience seating and given a specific time in the agenda to address the group.

### STANDING GROUND RULES

There will be continuous opportunities for group discussion. You are asked to subscribe to several key agreements to allow for productive outcomes

**USE COMMON CONVERSATIONAL COURTESY** - Don't interrupt; use appropriate language, no third party discussions, etc.

**HUMOR IS WELCOME AND IMPORTANT, BUT** humor should never be at someone else's expense.

**ALL IDEAS AND POINTS OF VIEW HAVE VALUE** - You may hear something you do not agree with or you think is "silly" or "wrong." Please remember that the purpose of the forum is to share ideas. All ideas have value in this setting. The goal is to achieve understanding. Simply listen, you do not have to agree.

**PARTICIPANTS MAY CHANGE THEIR MIND** - During the course of the session, some participants may change their perspective regarding one or more items. Group members reserve the right to change their mind and not be held to a previous position.

**50-MILE RULE** - Most of the participants have demanding responsibilities outside of the meeting room. Your attention is needed for the full meeting. Please turn cell phones, or any other communication item with an on/off switch to "silent." If you do not believe you will be able to participate fully, please discuss your situation with the facilitator.

**BE COMFORTABLE** - Please feel help yourself to refreshments or take personal breaks. If you have other needs please let the facilitator know.

**SPELLING DOESN'T COUNT** - writing on a vertical surface (like blackboards or flipcharts) actually increases the number of spelling errors – ideas are more important than spelling.

**HONOR TIME** - We have an ambitious agenda, in order to meet our goals it will be important to follow the time guidelines given by the facilitator.

**AVOID EDITORIALS** - It will be tempting to analyze the motives of others or offer editorial comments. Please talk about YOUR ideas and thoughts.

### VOTING

We are not voting unless we say we are voting. Silence is not consent. Decision-making will be clear.

### COMMITMENT TO PROCESS & GROUND RULES

By signing this document, you agree to participate on the CAT in good faith and to work constructively and in conformity with the ground rules and the spirit of the effort.

**Example of a Good Agenda for a First Meeting of a Collaborative Group**  
***From the Inyo National Forest***

**Travel Management Collaborative Alternative Team**  
**Meeting Agenda (March 4, 2008)**

**6:00 - 6:05 Welcome (RC&D)**

**6:05 - 6:30 Agenda Overview and Introductions (Austin McInerny, Center for Collaborative Policy)**

- Why did you come to meeting?
- What do you hope for from this process?

**6:30 - 6:45 Forest Service Perspective & Desire (Jim Upchurch, Forest Supervisor)**

- What is needed / desired from process
- Description of challenge confronting forest management
- Overview of recent California legal challenge against Forest Service on Roadless Areas

**6:45 - 7:15 Process Detail - "How do we do this?" (Austin McInerny, Center for Collaborative Policy)**

- Review of Draft Charter (Handout)
- Membership Roles and Responsibilities
- Decision-Making Process
- Ground Rules

**7:15 - 7:45 Informal Participant Dialogue / Stretch Break**

- Review of Charter - "Is this going to work for you?"
- Discussion to Decide Who is Able / Willing to Participate
- Those Willing to Participate Return to Inner Table

**7:45 - 7:50 Review of Dialogue Outcomes (Austin McInerny, Center for Collaborative Policy)**

- Will Current Composition Provide Range of Interests?
- If "yes", determine meeting schedule / location / needs
- If "no", discuss who is missing and how to move forward or not

**7:50 - 8:10 Overview and Relationship to NEPA Process (Susan Joyce, Forest Service)**

- Status of NEPA document
- Relationship of this discussion to NEPA process
- "Sideboards" that must be considered during this discussion

**8:10 - 8:30 Propose Action and Related Information (Marty Hornick, Forest Service)**

- Overview of Proposed Action
- Inventoried Roadless Areas
- Description of Trails and Roads
- How proposed action can serve as starting point for review

**8:30 - 8:45 Meeting Wrap-Up**

- Review of What Has Been Decided
- Next Steps

**Example of Compilation of Comments from a Collaborative Stakeholder meeting  
From the Inyo National Forest**

**Desires from Collaborative Process  
(as stated by participants at March 4, 2008 meeting)**

- Proper habitat management and access
- Legally sound and sustainable route system that can be further refined on into the future
- Honest discussion
- Local compromise needed
- Retain recreational trail/route network unless environmental damage
- Identify mitigation where necessary
- Discussion resulting in local decisions
- Common ground – “give and take”
- Collaboration – leading to future efforts
- Sustainable economy
- Local decision-making
- Maintain access to historical routes
- Quality and responsible product
- Social and economic impacts must be analyzed
- Solutions that address real impacts/damages
- Solutions that last into the future
- Seeking common ground
- Economic impact disclosure
- Mineral exploration opportunities/routes
- Quick resolution
- Give and take needed
- Wants historical access routes maintained
- Agreement on sustainable route structure
- Route system that reflects law and stewardship needs
- Explanation of reasons for closing routes
- Answer to why any routes need to be closed
- Desire to sit down and talk
- Keep decision local
- Route system that maintains attractive for tourism and generates positive local economic return

# Appendix 6: Communication Resources

## Example of Transparency: Communication of Process and Meeting Schedule From the Dixie National Forest

### Releases Motorized Travel Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Plans Public Meetings Across Southern Utah

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/dixie/news/2008/mtpmtgs.htm>

The screenshot shows the US Forest Service website for Dixie National Forest. The page features a navigation menu on the left with categories like 'About Us', 'Current Conditions', and 'Newsroom'. The main content area displays a news article titled 'Dixie National Forest Releases Motorized Travel Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Plans Public Meetings Across Southern Utah'. The article includes a sub-header, a list of meeting dates and locations (May 27 in Escalante, May 28 in Panguitch, May 29 in Bicknell, June 3 in Cedar City, June 23 in St. George, and June 26 in Salt Lake City), and contact information for Kenton Call. A sidebar on the left provides additional links and contact details for the Dixie National Forest.

**US FOREST SERVICE** Forest Service National Links

## Dixie National Forest

(enter query)

- Dixie National Forest Home
- About Us
- Contact Us
- Current Conditions
- Employment
- FAQ'S
- Fire & Aviation
- Maps & Brochures
- Newsroom
- Passes & Permits
- Projects & Plans
- Publications
- Recreational Activities
- Resources
- Volunteering

[Dixie National Forest](#) > [Newsroom](#) > [2008 News Articles](#) > Dixie National Forest Releases Motorized Travel Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Plans Public Meetings Across Southern Utah

### Dixie National Forest Releases Motorized Travel Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Plans Public Meetings Across Southern Utah

	<p>United States Department of Agriculture <b>Forest Service</b></p> <p>Dixie National Forest 1789 Wedgewood Lane Cedar City, UT 84720</p>	<p><b>For More Information:</b></p> <p>Kenton Call (435)865-3730</p> <p><b>DATE: May 12, 2008</b></p>
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**Recreation.gov** - Your reservation center for passes, camping and other recreational activities

[National Recreation Information Center](#)  
[Dixie National Forest Campground Information](#)  
[Evaluate Our Service](#)

**Dixie National Forest**  
1789 North Wedgewood Lane  
Cedar City, UT 84721-7769  
(435) 865-3700

TTY for the hearing impaired  
(435) 865-3719

**CEDAR CITY, Utah** - Around Memorial Day the Dixie National Forest will make available a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for its Motorized Travel Plan (MTP). The DEIS will be available for public comment for 45 days starting when the Notice of Intent is published in the Federal Register. The plan will be available at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/dixie/projects/MTP>.

In conjunction with the public comment period, the Dixie National Forest will host public meetings/open houses:

- **May 27 - Escalante** - Interagency Visitor's Center, 755 W. Main Street
- **May 28 - Panguitch** - Triple C Arena, Highway 89
- **May 29 - Bicknell** - Wayne County Community Center, 475 S. 300 E.
- **June 3 - Cedar City** - Library in the Park, 303 N. 100 E.
- **June 23 - St. George** - Ramada Inn, 1440 E. St. George Blvd.
- **June 26 - Salt Lake City** - Salt Lake City Hilton, 255 S. West Temple

All the public meetings/open houses will begin at 6:00 pm and end around 8:00 pm. The first half hour of the meeting will be a presentation.

The Motorized Travel Plan will close the forest to cross-country travel and establish a system of designated routes. The DEIS analyzes the environmental consequences of five alternatives. Alternative D has been identified by forest decision makers as the preferred alternative.

"We hope that forest users will come out to our open houses to learn more about the DEIS," said Rob MacWhorter, Dixie National Forest, Forest Supervisor. "The Motorized Travel Plan decision is one of the most important decisions that the forest will make in the near future. We hope to understand the broad public sentiment about the alternatives we are considering for this decision."

Written comments can be emailed to [comments.dixie.motorized.travel.plan@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments.dixie.motorized.travel.plan@fs.fed.us) or mailed to Motorized Travel Plan, 1789 North Wedgewood Lane, Cedar City, Utah 84720 or faxed to (435) 865-3791 (with Motorized Travel Plan in subject line).

For further questions about this important project and public process, please contact [Kenton Call](mailto:Kenton.Call) (435) 865-3730.



## Appendix 7: Education Resources

### Example of User Education: Sharing Resources

*From the*

**Tread Lightly! Program**

<http://www.treadlightly.org>

**Overview** (from website):

**What is Tread Lightly!?** Tread Lightly!, Inc. is a national nonprofit organization with a mission to proactively protect recreation access and opportunities in the outdoors through education and stewardship initiatives.

Tread Lightly! provides outdoor ethics for all types of outdoor recreation-- everything from hiking to hunting to camping, with a special focus on motorized and mechanized recreation-- like four wheeling, motorcycling, snowmobiling, and boating.

Tread Lightly! also offers unique training and restoration programs strategically designed to instill an ethic of responsibility in a wide variety of outdoor enthusiasts and the industries that serve them.

The organization's goal is to balance the needs of people who enjoy outdoor recreation with our need to maintain a healthy environment and it's leading the way to help remedy current recreation issues.

Tread Lightly! is funded by donations from individual members, corporations, dealerships, clubs, retailers, government and others interested in spreading the message of responsible and ethical use of the outdoors. Federal Partners include the National Park Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and Army Corps of Engineers.

**What does Tread Lightly! Do?** Tread Lightly! focuses its programs and efforts in education and stewardship to further the goals of responsible and ethical recreation. Current programs include:

**Tread Trainer™** is a training course designed to train participants in innovative, practical methods of spreading outdoor ethics to the public with a curriculum specifically focused on motorized and mechanized recreation.

**Restoration for Recreation™** is another important element of Tread Lightly! that aims to construct, enhance or restore recreational sites across the country.

**Education Materials:** The organization also produces a multitude of educational pieces for outdoor enthusiasts, hunting educators, advertising agencies, the government and children of all ages.

**Communication Tools:** Tread Lightly! has developed several communication tools including web, television, radio and print public service announcements.

**Tread Lightly! History:** In 1985, the US Forest Service launched the Tread Lightly! program as a means of addressing concerns about the impacts from increasing numbers of visitors to the great outdoors for recreational purposes. In 1990, to maximize the program's effectiveness, management responsibilities were transferred to the private sector, making Tread Lightly! an non-political, nonprofit organization.

**Memorandum of Understanding Between USDA-Forest Service; US Dept of Interior-BLM; Bureau of Reclamation; Department of Army-US Army Corps of Engineers and Tread Lightly! Incorporated**

[http://www.treadlightly.org/files/page\\_text/mou.pdf](http://www.treadlightly.org/files/page_text/mou.pdf)

## Utah OHV Trail Patrol "Safety-Service-Education"

[http://outdoorwire.com/access/education/ut/trail\\_pat/trail\\_patrol.htm](http://outdoorwire.com/access/education/ut/trail_pat/trail_patrol.htm)

### Overview (From Website)

The OHV groups in Utah are inaugurating a new off-highway safety, service and education initiative beginning the summer of 2001. The new Utah OHV Trail Patrol is a volunteer organization which supports and promotes safe and responsible recreational use of off-highway vehicles (OHVs). It consists of a state board, various local units and individual members who use or support the use of motorcycles, ATVs, snowmobiles, 4-wheel drive (4x4) and other motorized vehicles capable of off-highway operations. It has junior (8-17 years of age) and senior members.

### Mission

To set an example and provide service that will promote the responsible, safe and enjoyable use of off-highway vehicles.

### Values

1. We believe recreational use of off-highway vehicles is a legitimate use of public lands.
2. We believe every operator of an off-highway vehicle has the responsibility to do so safely and responsibly.
3. We believe in obeying the laws governing the use of off-highway vehicles.
4. We believe in respecting the rights and privileges of others.
5. We believe in and practice the principles of Tread Lightly.
6. We believe voluntary service is necessary to ensure the future of off-highway vehicle use.
7. We believe safe and responsible use of off-highway vehicles promotes good citizenship, physical fitness and family values.
8. We believe off-highway vehicles provide a mode of transportation that allows people of all ages and abilities to enjoy the great outdoors and to partake of the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual values found there.
9. We believe in having fun.

### Training

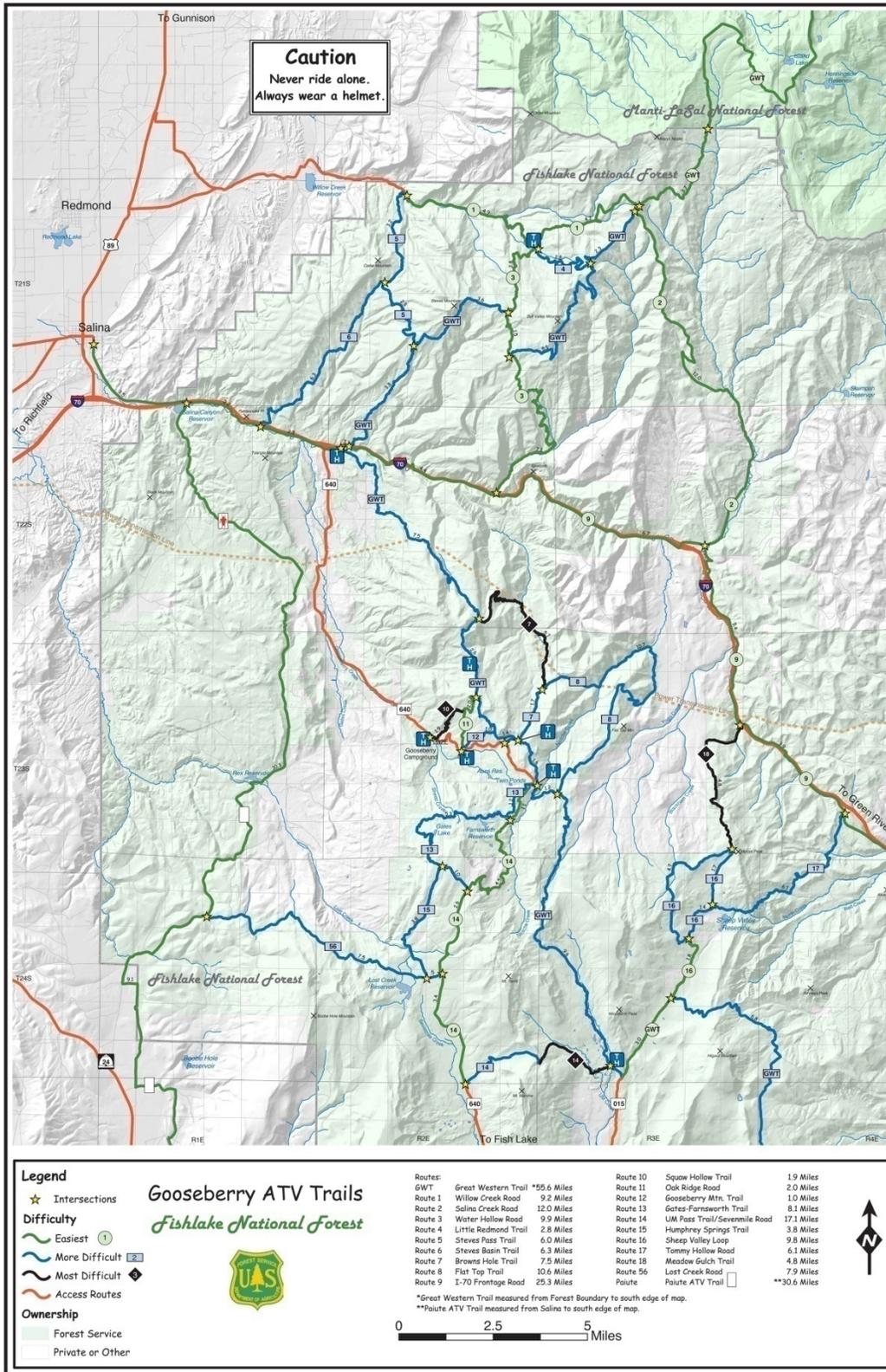
Every member must have 4 hours of orientation training prior to formal certification. This training will include such things as patrol mission and values, organization, duties and responsibilities, OHV laws and ethics, and the unit's relationship with public and private land owners. Upon completion of this training, each member must sign a pledge to conduct themselves in a responsible and ethical manner at all times when acting as a member of the OHV Trail Patrol. Individual members may also receive training and certification in advanced topics such as first aid, trail maintenance and signing, land rehabilitation, good host, law enforcement assistance, emergency machine repair, avalanche, search and rescue and safety education. Members may apply for and be certified by the board as instructors for these training modules.

### Duties

1. Provide information and education to users.
2. Provide assistance to users, i.e. fix flats, call for emergency help, trouble shoot mechanical problems, first aid, water, etc.
3. Identify and report areas damaged by OHVS. Assist in rehabilitation work.
4. Install and maintain signs.
5. Do light trail maintenance.
6. Help maintain other facilities such as cattle guards, fences, gates, restrooms, etc.
7. Participate in search and rescue when requested.
8. Assist in, but do not, do law enforcement.

# Appendix 8: Motor Vehicle Use Map Resources

Example of ATV Travel Map that shows topographic and hydrologic information  
 From the Fish Lake National Forest



## Appendix 9: Websites

Reason Cited	Forest/ Region/ State/ Organization	Contact or Description	Website
<b>Enforcement</b>			
	<b>Wildlands CPR</b>	Six strategies for effective enforcement	<a href="http://www.wildlandscpr.org/six-strategies-effective-enforcement-publication">http://www.wildlandscpr.org/six-strategies-effective-enforcement-publication</a>
<b>Funding</b>			
	<b>California</b>	Recreation Trails Program (RTP)	<a href="http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=24324">http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=24324</a>
	<b>Idaho</b>	The Idaho Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Public Information Project	<a href="http://www.idaho-ohv.org/register.htm">http://www.idaho-ohv.org/register.htm</a>
	<b>Oregon</b>	ATV Grant Program	<a href="http://www.oregon.gov/OPRD/ATV/Grants.shtml">http://www.oregon.gov/OPRD/ATV/Grants.shtml</a>
	<b>Washington</b>	Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program (NOVA)	<a href="http://www.rco.wa.gov/rcfb/grants/nova.htm">http://www.rco.wa.gov/rcfb/grants/nova.htm</a>
	<b>Wyoming</b>	Wyoming Trails – Internal Grant Program	<a href="http://wyotrails.state.wy.us/Grants/Internal.asp">http://wyotrails.state.wy.us/Grants/Internal.asp</a>
<b>Indicators</b>			
	<b>Mt. Home Ranger District of the Boise National Forest</b>	Environmental Assessment Motorized Wheeled-Vehicle Route Designation  Pg. 31	<a href="http://fs.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/_s.7_0_A/7_0_1GH6?ss=110402&amp;navtype=BROWSEBYSUBJECT&amp;cid=STELPRDB5039874&amp;navid=130110000000000&amp;pnavid=13000000000000&amp;position=Project*&amp;ttype=projectdetail&amp;pname=Boise%20National%20Forest-%20Projects">http://fs.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/_s.7_0_A/7_0_1GH6?ss=110402&amp;navtype=BROWSEBYSUBJECT&amp;cid=STELPRDB5039874&amp;navid=130110000000000&amp;pnavid=13000000000000&amp;position=Project*&amp;ttype=projectdetail&amp;pname=Boise%20National%20Forest-%20Projects</a>
<b>MVUM</b>			
	<b>Cherokee National Forest</b>	Motor Vehicle Use Map	<a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/cherokee/mvum/mvum.shtml">http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/cherokee/mvum/mvum.shtml</a>
	<b>Fish Lake National Forest</b>	Motor Vehicle Use Map / Travel Map	<a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/fishlake/">http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/fishlake/</a> <a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/fishlake/maps/index.shtml#mvum">http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/fishlake/maps/index.shtml#mvum</a>
<b>Partnerships</b>			
	<b>Idaho &amp; Utah</b>	Bonneville Shoreline Trails Committee	<a href="http://www.bonnevilleshorelinetrail.org">http://www.bonnevilleshorelinetrail.org</a>
	<b>Bridger Teton National Forest</b>	Teton Science School	<a href="http://www.tetonscience.org">http://www.tetonscience.org</a>
	<b>Idaho</b>	The Idaho Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Public Information Project	<a href="http://www.idaho-ohv.org">http://www.idaho-ohv.org</a>
<b>Public Involvement</b>			
	<b>BLM Royal Gorge Office, Colorado</b>	Royal Gorge Field Office	<a href="http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/rgfo.html">http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/rgfo.html</a>
	<b>Bridger Teton National Forest</b>	Bridger Teton National Forest	<a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/btnf/news/forest_plan_revision/fpr_static_lincs/fpr/2nd_round_agenda.pdf">http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/btnf/news/forest_plan_revision/fpr_static_lincs/fpr/2nd_round_agenda.pdf</a>

	<b>El Dorado National Forest</b>	Public Wheeled Motorized Travel Management	<a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/eldorado/projects/route/index.shtml">http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/eldorado/projects/route/index.shtml</a>
	<b>Idaho Panhandle National Forests</b> Public Participation (Outside FACA)	Charles A. Mark St. Joe District Ranger E-mail: <a href="mailto:cmark@fs.fed.us">cmark@fs.fed.us</a> Office Phone: 208-245-6001	<a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/ipnf/">http://www.fs.fed.us/ipnf/</a>
	<b>International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)</b>	IAP2 Spectrum of Participation	<a href="http://www.iap2.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=5">http://www.iap2.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=5</a>
	<b>USDA Forest Service</b>	USDA Forest Service Collaborative Planning Activities: Compliance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)	<a href="http://www.partnershipresourcecenter.org/resources/training/collaborative-training/faca-summary-guide.pdf">www.partnershipresourcecenter.org/resources/training/collaborative-training/faca-summary-guide.pdf</a>
<b>Route Designation</b>			
	<b>Wildlands CPR</b>	Guide for Designative and Managing Off-Road Vehicle Routes	<a href="http://www.wildlandscpr.org/files/ORV_BMP_2008.pdf">http://www.wildlandscpr.org/files/ORV_BMP_2008.pdf</a>
<b>Sideboards</b>			
	<b>St. Joe Ranger District</b>	Sideboards for decision space	<a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/ipnf/stjoe/travelplan/publicinvolvement/sideboards.html">http://www.fs.fed.us/ipnf/stjoe/travelplan/publicinvolvement/sideboards.html</a>
<b>Signage</b>			
	<b>Ozark-St. Francis National Forests-Brock Creek Area</b>	Maps & Brochures	<a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/oonf/ozark/maps/">http://www.fs.fed.us/oonf/ozark/maps/</a>
<b>Transparency</b>			
	<b>Tahoe National Forest</b>		<a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/tahoe/projects_plans/ohv_inv/index.shtml">http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/tahoe/projects_plans/ohv_inv/index.shtml</a>
<b>Website</b>			
	<b>Bridger Teton National Forest</b>	Projects and Plans	<a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/btnf/projects/">http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/btnf/projects/</a>
	<b>Tahoe National Forest</b>	Tahoe NF OHV Route Designation / Motorized Travel Management Project	<a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/tahoe/projects_plans/ohv_inv/index.shtml">http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/tahoe/projects_plans/ohv_inv/index.shtml</a>
	<b>Region 2</b>	Communities of Interest Guide for Collecting Route Information (Forest Service Intranet)	<a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/ohv/">http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/ohv/</a>

## Appendix 10: Travel Management Planning Best Practices

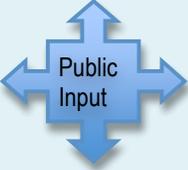
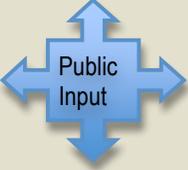
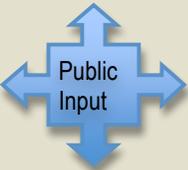
### Principles and their Supporting Practices

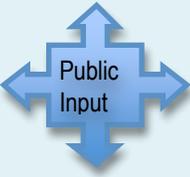
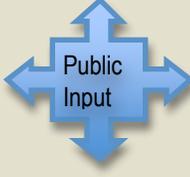
<b>Travel Management Planning</b>	
<b>Guiding Principles</b>	<b>Supporting Practices</b>
<b>Clear Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior to involving the public, decide the purpose and goals, including the substantive and physical scope of the travel management plan and the need for public support.</li> </ul>
<b>Commitment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decide on the level of commitment to public engagement your Forest is willing to provide for conducting the travel management plan, considering the level of internal resources and other priorities. Don't plan a process beyond your capacity to complete.</li> <li>• Don't oversell the process to the public if resources are not available.</li> <li>• Leverage resources to match the type and quality of plan desired. Explore grants and ways that user groups and universities/colleges might help with data collection, mutual education and other process needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Clear Sideboards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior to involving the public, clarify which issues are and are not subject to public discussion and change, and why.</li> </ul>
<b>Clear Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical assistance: Prior to involving the public, decide what issues you really need individual group assistance or input on (gathering data on current conditions, GIS data, other).</li> <li>• Mutual education: Prior to involving the public, decide what kinds of joint mutual education might be important (e.g., field trips with individual groups or multiple groups to understand current conditions and impacts); presentations by different groups or experts in public settings to inform and educate users about the different issues.</li> <li>• Individual advisory input: Prior to involving the public, decide what issues may be best addressed through individual discussions (e.g., discussions with specific property owners whose property adjoins a trail); or collaborative effort among different groups.</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusivity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and include all the interests/groups immediately impacted by the MVUM, those indirectly impacted, those who can block or appeal a decision, as well as technical and other experts who can inform or assist the decision process.</li> </ul>
<b>Transparency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide clear description of process, overall timeline, ways the public can contribute and the specific timeline for their involvement.</li> <li>• Provide this information in different formats for different types of access, e.g. web, news media, emails, flyers, presentations.</li> <li>• Document all comments and track how they are and are not used.</li> <li>• Provide feedback to groups on how their comments were or were not used, and why.</li> </ul>
<b>Responsiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge and thank people for their contributions, in person, in public, in writing.</li> <li>• Provide a timeline for when they can expect opportunities to participate and responses to their participation. If circumstances change, keep people informed periodically about the reasons for the changes and any new schedule.</li> <li>• Provide periodic updates to the public during the periods when they are not being involved, so they understand what is being done behind the scenes.</li> </ul>

# TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS

## *Using Best Practices*

	<b>Key Process Components</b>	<b>Examples</b> (these are invented; real choices may vary considerably)
 <p>Internal</p>	<b>Pre-Planning Process</b>	
	<p>a. Determine goals and desired outcomes</p> <p>b. Determine publics to involve in planning process</p> <p>c. Ensure capacity to plan effectively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) personnel capability.</li> <li>ii) information on current conditions &amp; baseline data.</li> </ul>	<p>a. Sample Goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) "To create an MUVP that has credibility with Forest users and supporters, that provides ecological and safety protection, that is enforceable, and that allows for diverse recreational use of motorized and non-motorized interests."</li> </ul> <p>b. Sample list of publics to involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) motorized users; quiet recreationists (e.g., birders, hikers, horse riders); conservationists;</li> <li>ii) other agencies; localities;</li> <li>iii) user groups; conservation groups; agencies, localities; universities;</li> <li>iv) internal facilitation (staff, but not those working on travel planning).</li> </ul> <p>c. Sample preparation list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) additional staff GIS training; staff training in collaboration skills</li> <li>ii) existing maps and inventories; Contact user groups to see what data they already have, in what format, and what additional data they might be willing to collect. Consult LEOs at front end of process, to identify ways to structure zones to facilitate monitoring and enforcement.</li> </ul>
 <p>Internal</p>	<b>Determine Desired Scope of Plan</b>	
	<p>a. Limit effort to development of an Motorized Vehicle Use Map (MVUM)? Or undertake comprehensive travel planning?</p> <p>b. Include winter (snowmobile) travel?</p>	<p>Sample decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. comprehensive travel planning needed.</li> </ul> <p>Sample decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. both summer and winter MVUM's needed.</li> </ul>
 <p>Internal</p>	<b>Determine desired timeline</b>	
	<p>a. Sufficient time to conduct well-informed, public process.</p> <p>b. If needed, obtain permission for extension on Rule timeline.</p>	<p>Sample Timeline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Working backwards from end date: 18-month planning process that will include 6 public meetings.</li> <li>b. No request for extension at this time.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Determine and Map Current Critical Resources</b></p> <p>Sample Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify natural and cultural resource areas off-limits to particular uses.</li> <li>b. Obtain input from LEOs on enforcement constraints</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Invite participation by relevant tribes, historians, environmental scientists, and others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Develop a user guide in partnership with local user groups</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Explore ways with LEOs to create use “zones” for easier enforcement</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Assess Current Conditions</b></p> <p>Sample Process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Map (as best possible) current authorized designated routes</li> <li>b. Map (as best possible) current unauthorized routes</li> <li>c. Obtain user feedback on at-risk, threatened areas</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Devote initial public meeting to identifying goals, and initiate process of joint fact-finding among user groups and advocates</li> <li>b. Approach nearby community college and university to assist in identification</li> <li>c. Post draft on web site and seek comments from stakeholders</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Establish In-house “Side-boards” and Criteria for Decision-Making</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify and publicize general “sideboards” (issues mandated by regulation or policy that are not subject to change).</li> <li>b. Ensure that these are indeed requirements and not items of agency convenience.</li> <li>c. Identify proposed areas “off-limits” to any use; areas restricted to non-motorized use; areas open to different motorized uses.</li> <li>d. Establish clear criteria for Fiscal concerns</li> </ul> <p>(a-b) Sample Sideboards and Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) MVUP’s will be produced that designate those roads, trails, and areas open to motor vehicles.</li> <li>ii) Motor vehicle use off the designated system or inconsistent with the designations will be forbidden.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Designate areas needing most protection, areas susceptible to damage and needing some protection, areas where no damage is likely <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Consider soils, water, habitat</li> <li>ii) Consider cultural issues</li> <li>iii) Consider fiscal constraints</li> </ul> </li> <li>d. With our personnel and supporting entities we can monitor and enforce <i>[fill in the blank: X areas, X miles of routes, etc.]</i></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Engage Public in Travel Management Plan Development</b></p>
<p><b>NEPA</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Begin formal planning process.</li> <li>b. Communicate (early and frequently) all the ways the public will be involved.</li> <li>c. Explore creative ways to meet differing needs.</li> <li>d. Communicate (early and frequently) the different stages of the process, and the</li> </ul> <p>Samples of ways public can be involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>vi) Mutual education sessions</li> <li>vii) Field trips</li> <li>viii) Individual consultation</li> <li>ix) Focus group (by interest, or by geographic area)</li> <li>x) Collaborative advisory group or work groups</li> <li>xi) Potluck/informal meals</li> </ul>

	<p>stages where the public will have input<sup>1</sup>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Notice of intent</li> <li>ii) Scoping phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Identify issues with public input</li> <li>(2) Develop alternatives with public input</li> <li>(3) Analyze effects of alternative with public input</li> </ul> </li> <li>iii) National Forest Management Act Findings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Determination of significance</li> </ul> </li> <li>iv) Issuance of Draft Proposal (DEA or DEIS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) 45-day Formal Public Comment</li> <li>(2) Formal Public Hearing</li> </ul> </li> <li>v) Issuance of Final Proposal (FEA or FEIS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) 30-day Formal Public Comment</li> <li>(2) Issuance of Record of Decision (ROD)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>xii) Social networking site (e.g., Facebook, Ning)</li> <li>xiii) Project web site</li> <li>xiv) FTP site for large document sharing</li> </ul> <p>Sample of key stages in the process where public input may be most valuable to acknowledge, document and track:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Their issues, concerns and needs</li> <li>ii) Ideas for alternatives</li> <li>iii) Ideas for implementation, monitoring and enforcement</li> <li>iv) Decision criteria or indicators</li> </ul>
<b>Issue Decision of Record</b>	
	<p>Sample distribution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Transmit formally to all state agencies and groups that have expressed interest in the process and plan.</li> <li>ii) Ensure wide dissemination by mail and email, especially among groups and individuals who have participated to date.</li> <li>iii) Ensure adequate understanding among user groups and signage that reaches beyond those groups.</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation, Monitoring, Enforcement</b>	
	<p>Sample strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Build on relationships and partnerships developed throughout the process with user groups, who may later help with maintenance, user education, monitoring and enforcement.</li> <li>ii) Initiate a "Friends of..." group to support implementation.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> A very clear presentation of the NEPA process for the public can be found at:

<http://www.metro-solutions.org/go/doc/1068/117833/>

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