

3.09. Inventoried Roadless Areas & Special Areas _____

This chapter describes the affected environment and environmental consequences for Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs) and Special Areas on Tahoe National Forest. IRAs are roadless areas identified in the second Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE II). Special Areas are Forest Plan management area land allocations that include Wilderness, Experimental Forests, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Research Natural Areas (RNA), and Special Interest Areas (SIA). In addition, this section will review the effects of the alternatives on Citizen Inventoried Roadless Areas (CIRAs) identified by the California Wilderness Coalition.

Analysis Framework: Statute, Regulation, Forest Plan and Other Direction

The Forest Service conducted RARE II from 1977 to 1979 studying 11 roadless areas (171,328 acres) on the Tahoe National Forest for their wilderness values. The California Wilderness Act of 1984 designated 25,680 of those acres as the Granite Chief Wilderness. The Forest addressed management direction for IRAs in the 1990 Forest Plan. Information about IRAs on the Tahoe NF can be found in Volume 2 of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Forest Service Roadless Area Conservation Project, November 2000. That information can be accessed at the following website:

http://fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS?fmrs_072591.pdf

In 2001, the California Wilderness Coalition (CWC) completed its own inventory of potential wilderness areas on California public lands. For the purpose of this analysis, these areas will be referred to as citizen inventoried roadless areas (CIRAs). Restrictions on road construction and reconstruction specified in the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule apply only to those areas within agency-identified IRAs. A separate analysis has been conducted to compare the effects of the alternatives on CIRAs. CIRAs located within agency-identified IRAs will not be analyzed separately.

There are three RNAs located on Tahoe National Forest. Research Natural Areas are managed to maintain select vegetative, aquatic, and/or geologic elements in natural conditions. Forest Service Manual (FSM) 4063.3 provides protection against any activities that directly or indirectly modify ecological processes (USDA 2005b). RNAs, established for research and study purposes, are a discrete land area large enough to represent a specific natural ecosystem. RNAs are important because they provide benchmarks for comparison of present and future management of the National Forests and will prove to be an invaluable asset in the future.

The general provisions of the Organic Administration Act of 1897 and the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resource Research Act of 1978 authorize the designation of Experimental Forests. Experimental Forests provide lands for conducting research and development that serves as a basis for the management of forests and grasslands. There are two Experimental Forests located within the Tahoe National Forest.

Forest Plan direction for the North Fork American Wild River is to manage the designated river corridor in accordance with Public Law 95-625, which documents the Congressional designation of the

river. Forest Service direction for proposed Wild and Scenic rivers is to maintain and enhance the Wild and Scenic River characteristics and manage the same as designated Wild and Scenic Rivers. Four river corridors within the Tahoe NF have been recommended for designation as Wild and Scenic Rivers (W&S Study Report, May 1999). Proposed Wild and Scenic River corridors include sections of Sagehen Creek, Canyon Creek, North Yuba River, and the Lower South Yuba River. Management policy for the four proposed Wild and Scenic rivers is guided by FSM 2354.21, which directs the Forest Service to “manage wild and scenic river study areas to protect existing characteristics through the study period and until designated or released from consideration.”

There are seven Special Interest Areas (SIAs) on the Tahoe National Forest. Special Interest Areas are established to protect , and where appropriate, foster public use, study, and enjoyment of areas with scientific, scenic, historical, geological, botanical, zoological, paleontological, or other special characteristics. Management direction for each SIA is contained in the 1990 Tahoe National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan).

Effects Analysis Methodology

Assumptions Specific to Inventoried Roadless Areas and Special Areas

- All of the unauthorized routes and Maintenance Level 1 roads being considered for motorized use are currently available for motorized use because nothing prohibits such use. The effect of this motorized use is part of the existing situation.
- Granite Chief Wilderness is not affected by the proposed action or any alternative as motorized activity is prohibited in that area under all alternatives.
- No unauthorized motor vehicle routes within RNAs would be added to the NFTS in any alternative.
- No unauthorized motor vehicle routes in designated Wild and Scenic River corridors would be added to the NFTS in any alternative
- No vehicle class changes are proposed in designated Wild and Scenic Rivers in any alternative.

Data Sources

- Tahoe National Forest Land and Resources Management Plan (Forest Plan)
- Tahoe National Forest Geographic Information Systems layers (GIS)
- Appendix G of the Forest Plan FEIS
- Two Westside Rivers Wild and Scenic River Study Report, FEIS, 1999

Roadless and Special Area Indicators

The following indicators are used to identify effects that may occur in IRAs and/or Special Areas as a result of implementing the No Action Alternative and action alternatives:

Roadless Area Characteristics: the following values or features often characterize Inventoried Roadless Areas (66 Federal Register 9, January 12, 2001; p. 3245):

- **High quality or undisturbed soil, water, and air:** These three key resources are the foundation upon which other resource values and outputs depend. Healthy watersheds catch, store, and safely

release water over time, protecting downstream communities from flooding; providing clean water for domestic, agricultural, and industrial uses; helping maintain abundant and healthy fish and wildlife populations; and are the basis for many forms of outdoor recreation.

- **Sources of public drinking water:** National Forest System lands contain watersheds that are important sources of public drinking water. Maintaining these areas in a relatively undisturbed condition saves downstream communities millions of dollars in water filtration costs.
- **Diversity of plant and animal communities:** Roadless areas are more likely than roaded areas to support greater ecosystem health, including the diversity of native and desired non-native plant and animal communities due to the absence of disturbances caused by roads and accompanying activities. Inventoried Roadless Areas also conserve native biodiversity by serving as a bulwark against the spread of non-native invasive species.
- **Habitat for threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species and for those species dependent on large, undisturbed areas of land:** Roadless areas function as biological strongholds and refuges for many species.
- **Primitive, Semi-Primitive Non- Motorized, and Semi-Primitive Motorized recreation opportunities:** Roadless areas often provide outstanding dispersed recreation opportunities such as hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, Nordic skiing and canoeing. While they may have many wilderness-like attributes, unlike Wilderness, mountain bikes and other mechanized uses are often allowed.
- **Reference landscapes:** Knowledge about the effects of management activities over long periods of time and on large landscapes is very limited. Reference landscapes of relatively undisturbed areas serve as a barometer to measure the effects of development on other parts of the landscape.
- **Natural appearing landscapes with high scenic quality:** High quality scenery, especially scenery with natural-appearing landscapes, is a primary reason that people choose to recreate.
- **Traditional cultural properties and sacred sites:** Traditional cultural properties are places, sites, structures, art or objects that played an important role in the cultural history of a group. Sacred sites are places with special religious significance to a group. Traditional cultural properties and sacred sites may be eligible for protection under the National Historic Preservation Act. However, many of them have not yet been inventoried, especially those that occur in IRAs.
- **Other locally identified unique characteristics:** IRAs areas may offer other locally identified unique characteristics and values. Examples include uncommon geological formations, valued for their scientific and scenic qualities, or unique wetland complexes.

CIRA Values: Citizen Inventoried Roadless Areas (CIRAs) were identified by the California Wilderness Coalition for their values as potential additions to the National Wilderness Preservation System. The effects on CIRAs will be disclosed in the alternatives by using the roadless and wilderness characteristics identified above.

Wilderness Characteristics: The principal wilderness characteristics as described in Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 1909.12 that follow are generally, but not necessarily, listed in order of importance or desirability (USDA, 2007).

- **Natural:** ecological systems are substantially free from the effects of modern civilization and generally appear affected primarily by forces of nature. Effects of modern civilization include:
 - § The presence of non-native species that alter the composition of natural plant and animal communities (such as non-native plants, animals, fish, livestock, invertebrates, and pathogens).
 - § Developments that degrade the free-flowing condition of rivers and streams (such as dams or other water diversions and impoundments).
 - § The presence of light pollution that degrades night sky quality and night sky quality related values.
 - § The presence of pollutants that degrade water quality and the health of ecosystems, plant communities, and plant species that are rare or at risk.
- **Undeveloped:** The degree to which the area is without permanent human improvements or human habitation. A measure of undeveloped is the level of human occupation and modification including evidence of structures, construction, habitations, or other forms of human presence, use and occupation.
- **Outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation:** The area provides solitude or primitive and unconfined types of recreation including a wide range of experiential opportunities such as: physical and mental challenge, adventure and self-reliance, feelings of solitude, isolation, self-awareness and inspiration. Solitude is the opportunity to experience isolation from sights, sounds, and the presence of others from the developments and evidence of humans. The opportunity to experience isolation from the evidence of humans, to feel a part of nature, to have a vastness of scale, and a degree of challenge and risk while using outdoor skills are measures of primitive and unconfined recreation.
- **Special features and values:** The area provides other values such as those with ecologic, geologic, scientific, educational, scenic, historical, or cultural significance. Examples include unique fish and wildlife species, unique plants or animal communities, connectivity, potential or existing research natural areas, outstanding landscape features and significant cultural resource sites.

Experimental Forest Values: Experimental Forest values on the Tahoe National Forest (TNF) are related to their suitability as areas for research on the effects of forest management on wildlife and impacts to water quality, timing, and yield.

Wild and Scenic River Values: For a river to be eligible for Wild and Scenic River designation it must be free-flowing and, with its adjacent land area, must possess one or more outstandingly remarkable values (Federal Register 1982). Outstandingly remarkable values are specific to each river segment and may include cultural, ecologic, fish, geologic, historic, scenic, recreation, wildlife or other special and unique features (USDA 1991b).

Research Natural Area Values: RNA values are specific to individual RNAs and may include selected aquatic, geologic or vegetation elements.

Special Interest Area Values: SIA values are specific to each SIA and may include unique botanic, cultural, geologic, scenic, historic and memorial features.

Roadless and Special Areas Methodology by Action

The effects of each alternative are described below according to five actions common to all alternatives:

1. **Cross-country Travel:** Prohibition of cross country motor vehicle travel is included in all alternatives except Alternative 1 (no action).
2. **Additions to the NFTS:** The amount unauthorized routes proposed as additions to the NFTS within IRAs vary by alternative.
3. **Establishment of Motorized “Open Areas”:** No “Open Areas” are being proposed for establishment within IRAs or special areas in any alternative
4. **Changes to the Existing NFTS:** includes changes to vehicle class and season of use on the existing NFTS. Impacts caused by changes to vehicle class and season of use on the existing NFTS are described generally by alternative.
5. **Amendments to Forest Plan:** Not applicable to IRAs or special areas.

Inventoried Roadless Areas: Affected Environment

Tahoe National Forest has eleven IRAs totaling 171,328 acres (Tahoe NF, GIS data), excluding private lands located within the IRA boundaries. The names and acres of each IRA are listed in Table 3.09-1.

Table 3.09-1. Inventoried Roadless Areas – Tahoe National Forest

Bald Mountain (extends onto the Humboldt-Toiyabe NF)	5,834
Castle Peak	15,738
Duncan Canyon	9,253
East Yuba	10,805
Granite Chief (Granite Chief Wilderness acreage included)	31,297
Grouse Lakes (Grouse Lake vehicular closure included)	19,271
Lakes (Basin) (extends onto the Plumas NF)	557
Middle Yuba	7,884
North Fork American River (NFAR Wild River included)	43,374
North Fork of the Middle Fork American River	11,257
West Yuba (extends onto the Plumas NF)	16,058

The character and amount of roads, private land and motorized trails varies greatly between the listed IRAs. Castle Peak and Duncan Canyon IRAs both inherited roads through land purchase or exchange that were built while those lands were in private ownership. Middle Yuba IRA contains extensive private land

parcels that are accessed by roads. East and West Yuba IRAs contain some primitive 4WD routes, as well as several NFTS and unauthorized motorcycle trails. The North Fork American River IRA has one road accessing private land and two minor unauthorized routes within the IRA boundary. Each of the Inventoried Roadless Areas is described in more detail below.

Bald Mountain IRA

The Bald Mountain IRA is located east of the Sierra Nevada Range on Sierraville Ranger District. Approximately 1,061 acres of this IRA has been established as a Research Natural Area (RNA). A small portion of the IRA is in private ownership near the northern boundary of the area.

Recreation use is low and consists mostly of hunting, hiking, and OHV use. There are a number of unimproved roads, trails, and dispersed recreation locations within the area. The primary attraction of the area is the good hunting which may be found there.

In the Forest Plan, the Bald Mountain IRA was allocated to the following Management Prescriptions; #5 Research and Botanical (15%) and #13 Timber an Range (85%). Table 3.09-2 shows the mileage of roads and trails in the Bald Mountain IRA by category.

Table 3.09-2. Roads and Trails in the Bald Mountain Inventoried Roadless Area

Road and Trail Category	Season of Use	Miles
Cross country travel (acreage open to motorized use: 4,490)		
Unauthorized routes	Not Applicable	3.6
Closed NFTS roads receiving some motorized use		1.2
NFTS Roads open to all vehicles	All Year	4.6
State, County or other jurisdiction roads	All Year	0.8
NFTS Trails open only to non-motorized users	All Year	1.8
Total Motorized Open to Public		10.2

*Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

Castle Peak IRA

The Castle Peak IRA is located along the crest of the Sierra Nevada between Castle Peak on the south and Mt. Lola on the north. The area is characterized by sparse vegetation, high elevations, steep, rocky terrain, and shallow soils. Nearly one-half of the area is in private ownership. The primary private landowner conducts timber management activities on their property. Logging has occurred on private lands in the White Rock area. No major mining activity has occurred in the area and there is little mineral potential. Several timber sales have been completed in the area.

Castle Peak and its surroundings are among the most scenic areas on the Tahoe National Forest. This is due to the rugged topography, presence of vistas of lakes, rock outcrops, etc. The IRA is popular for hiking in the summer and sees heavy cross-country skiing and snowmobile use in the winter.

Most of the IRA is open to OHV use on designated routes only. The general lack of OHV routes, however, contributes to low use except for snowmobiling in winter. There are several non-motorized trails through the area, including a portion of the Pacific Crest Trail, but few roads.

In the Forest Plan, this IRA was allocated to the following Management Prescriptions; #3 Dispersed Motorized Recreation (93%) and #11 Winter Recreation (7%). Table 3.09-3 shows the amount of roads and trails in the Castle Peak IRA by category.

Table 3.09-3. Roads and Trails in the Castle Peak Inventoried Roadless Area

Road and Trail Category	Season of Use	Miles
Cross country travel (acreage open to motorized use: 15,738)		
Unauthorized routes	Not Applicable	9.3
Closed NFTS roads receiving some motorized use		.8
NFTS Roads open to all vehicles	Open Year Around	3.4
NFTS Roads open to all vehicles	Seasonal Closure	0.5
NFTS Trails open to high clearance trail vehicles	Open Year Around	1.1
Roads/trails on private land	Open Year Around	3.6
NFTS Trails open only to non-motorized users	Open Year Around	14.8
NFTS Trails open only to hikers and equestrians (No mountain bikes allowed)	Open Year Around	6.9
Total Motorized Open to Public		18.7

*Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

Duncan Canyon IRA

Duncan Canyon IRA is situated in eastern Placer County on the American River Ranger District. It includes portions of the State Game Refuge that encompasses recreation facilities located at French Meadows Reservoir.

The major feature of the area is the rugged Duncan Canyon. Red Star Ridge forms the eastern and southern boundary of the area while Little Bald Mountain and Sunflower Hill mark the western boundary. The northern boundary is the French Meadows – Soda Springs Road. One section (640 acres) near Sunflower Hill is in private ownership. In 1979, the Erickson Lumber Company constructed a road under special-use permit to access their lands. The company plans to conduct timber management activities on their lands.

Hunting, fishing and hiking are the principal recreation uses of this area. The Tevis Cup Loop passes through the area along Red Star Ridge. This trail is used for an annual endurance ride and run. The main attraction is Little Robinson Valley located in the western portion of the IRA.

In the Forest Plan, this IRA was allocated to the following Management Prescriptions; #2 Dispersed Non-Motorized Recreation (7%) and #15 Visual and Timber and (93%). Table 3.09-4 shows the amount of roads and trails in the Duncan Canyon IRA by category.

Table 3.09-4. Roads and Trails in the Duncan Canyon Inventoried Roadless Area

Road and Trail Category	Season of Use	Miles
Cross country travel (acreage open to motorized use: 8,641)		
Unauthorized routes	Not Applicable	4.1
Closed NFTS roads receiving some motorized use		4.8
NFTS Roads open to all vehicles	All Year	0.1
NFTS Roads open to all vehicles	Seasonal Closure	0.2
NFTS Trails open to motorcycles	Seasonal Closure	0.5
NFTS Trails open to motorcycles	All Year	11.2
State, County or other jurisdiction roads	All Year	0.0
NFTS Trails open only to non-motorized users	All Year	2.5
Motorized Open to Public		20.9

*Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

East Yuba IRA

The East Yuba IRA is located on Yuba River Ranger District, bordering Plumas National Forest in the Lavezzola Creek drainage. The western boundary is roaded from the “A” Tree Road through Cowell Mine into Empire and Lavezzola drainages. The eastern portion of the area is accessed by OHV routes that receive heavy use.

The Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail crosses the northern portion of the area. There are numerous routes constructed for mining during the past 100 years. Active prospecting and exploration occurs within the IRA, such as at the Four Hills Mine located in the northeast portion.

In the Forest Plan, this IRA was allocated to the following Management Prescriptions; #3 Dispersed Motorized Recreation (48%), #13 Timber and Range (20%), and #15 Visual and Timber (32%). Table 3.09-5 shows the mileage of roads and trails in the East Yuba IRA by category.

Table 3.09-5. Roads and Trails in the East Yuba Inventoried Roadless Area

Road and Trail Category	Season of Use	Miles
Cross country travel (acreage open to motorized use: 10,193)		
Unauthorized routes	Not Applicable	9.4
NFTS Roads open to highway legal vehicles only	All Year	0.0
NFTS Trails open to high clearance vehicles	Seasonal Closure	3.4
NFTS Trails open to high clearance vehicles	All Year	14.5
NFTS Trails only open to motorcycles	All year	14.5
Roads/trails on private land	Not Applicable	1.0
NFTS Trails open only to non-motorized users	All Year	0.9
NFTS Trails open only to hikers and equestrians (No mountain bikes allowed)	All Year	1.6
Total Motorized Open to the Public		42.9

*Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

Granite Chief IRA

The Granite Chief IRA is located adjacent to the western watershed boundary of Lake Tahoe on the Truckee and American River Ranger Districts. The total acreage of Granite Chief IRA within Tahoe NF is 31,297 acres. The California Wilderness Act of 1984 designated 25,680 acres of this IRA as the Granite Chief Wilderness.

The area is used primarily by hikers, fishermen, and hunters. The major attractions of this area are high, rugged granitic cliffs and broad glaciated valleys found in the northern portion of the IRA. The numerous streams distributed throughout the area provide opportunities for hiking, camping, and sightseeing. The abundance of game and non-game animals also attracts a large number of visitors. Portion of a State Game Refuge extend into the area and consists of all of Picayune Valley, Little American Valley, and the west slope of Mt. Mildred.

In the Forest Plan this roadless area was allocated to the following Management Prescriptions; #1 Wilderness (74%), #2 Dispersed Non-Motorized Recreation (18%), #5 Research and Botanical (2%) and #13 Timber an Range (6%). Table 3.09-6 shows the amount of roads and trails in the Granite Chief IRA by category.

Table 3.09-6. Roads and Trails in the Granite Chief Inventoried Roadless Area

Road and Trail Category	Season of Use	Miles
Cross Country Travel (acreage open to motorized use: 1,930)		
Unauthorized routes	Not Applicable	0.3
Roads/trails on private land	Not Applicable	0.7
Trails open only to hikers and equestrians (No mountain bikes allowed)	All year	51.7
Total Motorized Open to Public		1.1

*Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

Grouse Lakes IRA

Grouse Lakes IRA is located in western Nevada County on the Yuba River Ranger District. The area includes numerous lakes and streams that are the focus of public recreation use. Over one-half of the Grouse Lakes is in private ownership. The primary owner is Sierra Pacific Industries. The company conducts timber management activities on their lands.

Dispersed recreation (hunting, fishing and hiking) is the primary use of the area. The majority of the area prohibits motor vehicle use, with a few exceptions. One exception is a small segment of the Meadow Lake jeep road which passes through a portion of the motor vehicle closure area. The area south of Fordyce Creek is open to OHV use with moderate to heavy use of Red Mountain and Signal Peak jeep trails.

In the Forest Plan this roadless area was allocated to the following Management Prescriptions; #2 Dispersed Non-Motorized Recreation (90%), #3 Dispersed Motorized Recreation (7%) and #13 Timber an Range (3%). Table 3.09-7 shows the mileage of roads and trails in the Grouse Lakes IRA by category.

Table 3.09-7. Roads and Trails in the Grouse Lakes Inventoried Roadless Area

Road and Trail Category	Season of Use	Miles
Cross country travel (acreage open to this motorized use: 6,081)		
Unauthorized routes	Not Applicable	3.3
Closed NFTS roads receiving some motorized use		.2
NFTS Roads open to highway vehicles only	All Year	0.0
NFTS Roads open to all vehicles	All Year	5.3
NFTS Trails open to high clearance trail vehicles	All Year	9.1
Roads/trails on private land	Not Applicable	2.7
NFTS Trails open only to non-motorized users	All Year	27.2
Total Motorized Open to Public		20.5

*Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

Lakes Basin IRA

The Lakes Basin IRA is situated on both the Plumas and Tahoe National Forests. The portion of the IRA on the TNF is very rocky and sparsely vegetated. The southern boundary follows a jeep road from the vicinity of Oakland Pond to Snake Lake then extends westerly to the private lands near Hawley Lake. These private lands form the western boundary.

The Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) passes through the area near the administrative boundary between the Plumas NF and Tahoe NF. OHV use occurs on several jeep roads adjacent to the area, but overall the steep terrain of the TNF portion limits recreation use.

In the Forest Plan, this IRA was allocated to Management Prescription #3 Dispersed Motorized Recreation (100%). Table 3.09-8 shows the amount of roads and trails in the Lakes Basin IRA by category.

Table 3.09-8. Roads and Trails in the Lakes Basin Inventoried Roadless Area

Road and Trail Category	Season of Use	Miles
Cross country travel (acreage open to motorized use: 557)		
Unauthorized routes	Not Applicable	0.1
NFTS Trails open to high clearance trail vehicles	Open Year Around	0.4
NFTS Trails open only to hikers and equestrians (No mountain bikes allowed)	Open Year Around	2.0
Previously decommissioned roads	Closed	1.8
Total Motorized Open to Public		0.5

*Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

Middle Yuba IRA

The Middle Yuba IRA is situated on the Middle Yuba River, primarily on the Yuba River Ranger District. There is a small portion on the eastern edge in the Sierraville Ranger District. The entire IRA is located within an area of alternate land ownership pattern. Over 40 percent of this area is privately owned. Most of the private land would be receive intensive timber management activities. The area is also included in cost-share supplements.

There are some active mining claims in this area. There is abundant evidence of historic mining throughout the area, such as mineshafts, buildings, primitive roads, and tailings. Mining activity continues today, particularly placer mining. Recreation use of the IRA includes fishing and river use associated with suction dredging, sluicing, and panning for gold.

In the Forest Plan, this IRA was allocated to the following Management Prescriptions; #3 Dispersed Motorized Recreation (76%) and #13 Timber and Range (24%). Table 3.09-9 shows the mileage of roads and trails in the Middle Yuba IRA by category.

Table 3.09-9. Roads and Trails in the Middle Yuba Inventoried Roadless Area

Road and Trail Category	Season of Use	Miles
Cross country travel (acreage open to motorized use: 7,884)		
Unauthorized routes	Not Applicable	4.8
Closed NFTS roads receiving some motorized use		1.2
NFTS Roads open to highway legal vehicles only	All Year	0.6
NFTS Roads open to all vehicles	All Year	6.6
NFTS Trails open to high clearance trail vehicles	All Year	0.7
State, County or other jurisdiction roads	All Year	0.1
Roads/trails on private land	Not Applicable	15.4
Total Motorized Open to Public		29.4

*Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

North Fork American River IRA

The North Fork American River IRA is situated on both sides of the North Fork of the American River. The North Fork of the American Wild River corridor is included within the IRA. The area extends from the western forest boundary near Giant Gap to approximately 1½ miles east of Heath Springs, and is located with the American River, Truckee, and Yuba River Ranger Districts.

Hiking, fishing, and hunting are the primary recreation uses for the area. The main attractiveness of this area is the North Fork American Wild River, which is protected under the Wild River Act. Other areas include the high-elevation lakes in the Loch Leven area, which are sensitive to heavy, extended use by man. National Forest System lands surrounding the area are primarily managed for vegetation management.

In the Forest Plan, this IRA was allocated to the following Management Prescriptions; #2 Dispersed Non-Motorized Recreation (48%), #3 Dispersed Motorized Recreation (17%), #5 Research and Botanical (2%), #6 Wild River (17%) and #13 Timber and Range (16%). Table 3.09-10 shows the mileage of roads and trails in the North Fork American River IRA by category.

Table 3.09-10. Roads and Trails in the North Fork American River Inventoried Roadless Area

Road and Trail Category	Season of Use	Miles
Cross country travel (acreage open to motorized use: 15,562)		
Unauthorized routes and	Not Applicable	1.2
Closed NFTS roads receiving some motorized use		1.1
NFTS Roads open to highway legal vehicles only	All Year	0.1
NFTS Roads open to all vehicles	Seasonal Closure	0.1
NFTS Roads open to all vehicles	All Year	1.1
NFTS Trails open to motorcycles	All Year	2.3
NFTS Trails open only to hikers and equestrians (No mountain bikes allowed)	All Year	0.0
Roads and trails on private land	All Year	3.1
Total Motorized Open to Public		9.0

*Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

North Fork of the Middle Fork of the American River IRA

The North Fork of the Middle Fork of the American River IRA is located in Placer County on the American River Ranger District between Mosquito Ridge and the Foresthill Divide. The area is characterized by steep and rugged canyons and the major attraction is the North Fork of the Middle Fork of the American River.

Only 500 acres are in private ownership. Mining has been an important activity in the area since the early days of the Gold Rush and numerous active mines are located in the area. Recreation use is low and primarily involves hunting, fishing, and hiking. Virtually all of the area is open to OHV use, but the steep topography and lack of many roads limits use.

In the Forest Plan, this IRA was allocated to the following Management Prescriptions; #3 Dispersed Motorized Recreation (90%) #5 Research and Botanical (2%), #7 Wildlife (5%) and #8 Visual (3%).

Table 3.09-11 shows the amount of roads and trails in the North Fork of the Middle Fork American River IRA by category.

Table 3.09-11. Roads and Trails in the North Fork of the Middle Fork American River IRA

Road and Trail Category	Season of Use	Miles
Cross country travel (acreage open to motorized use: 11,175)		
Unauthorized routes	Not Applicable	1.2
Closed NFTS roads receiving some motorized use		.1
NFTS Roads open to highway legal vehicles only	Open Year Around	0.0
NFTS Roads open to all vehicles	Seasonal Closure	0.3
NFTS Roads open to all vehicles	Open Year Around	1.1
NFTS Trails open to motorcycles	Seasonal Closure	2.3
NFTS Trails open to high clearance trail vehicles	Open Year Around	0.6
NFTS Trails open to motorcycles	Open Year Around	12.5
NFTS Trails open only to hikers and equestrians (No mountain bikes allowed)	Open Year Around	0.0
Total Motorized Open to Public		18.2

*Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

West Yuba IRA

The West Yuba IRA is situated north of Downieville and west of Craycroft Ridge in the Rattlesnake Creek drainage; portions of this IRA are located within Plumas National Forest.

The main attractions to the area are the stream bottoms and mountain peaks that create a variety of scenery. Hunting, hiking, and fishing are the primary recreation uses of the area. OHV use is also a very popular recreation activity on the existing network of roads and trails located within the IRA. National Forest Systems lands surrounding the West Yuba area are primarily managed for timber production, and heavily prospected and mined for valuable minerals.

In the Forest Plan this roadless area was allocated to the following Management Prescriptions; #3 Dispersed Motorized Recreation (30%), #13 Timber and Range (30%) and #15 Visual & Timber (40%). Table 3.09-12 shows the amount of roads and trails in the West Yuba IRA by category.

Table 3.09-12. Roads and Trails in the West Yuba Inventoried Roadless Area

Road and Trail Category	Season of Use	Miles
Cross Country Travel (acreage open to motorized use: 16,058)		
Unauthorized routes	Not Applicable	9.4
Closed NFTS roads receiving some motorized use		1.8
NFTS Roads open to all vehicles	All Year	6.0
NFTS Trails open to high clearance trail vehicles	All Year	8.2
NFTS Trails open to motorcycles	All Year	9.7
Roads/trails on private land	Not Applicable	0.6
Total Motorized Open to Public		35.7

*Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

Inventoried Roadless Areas: Environmental Consequences

In the following section, each IRA will be listed and environmental consequences described for the action alternatives. Tables showing differences between the action alternatives are only included for those IRAs with substantial changes between alternatives. The effects of the No Action Alternative will be described first for all IRAs.

Alternative 1 (No Action)

Direct and Indirect Effects

Cross Country Travel: The No Action Alternative could reduce roadless character in each IRA because cross country travel by motor vehicles would be allowed to continue on 98,309 acres of IRAs currently open to motorized use on Tahoe NF. Motor vehicle travel is already prohibited on 73,019 acres of lands being managed for primitive and semi-primitive non-motorized recreation use within the affected IRAs. Under Alternative 1, 46.7 miles of unauthorized routes and 11.3 miles of closed NFTS roads would continue to have some motor vehicle use in Inventoried Roadless Areas.

Increased noise generated by motor vehicles and more evidence of human activity due to cross-country travel with continued route proliferation would alter the following roadless and wilderness characteristics:

- High quality or undisturbed soil, water and air would be degraded.
- Sources of public drinking water would be at higher risk.
- Diversity of plant and animal communities would be diminished.
- Habitat for threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate and sensitive species and for those species dependent on large, undisturbed areas of land would be degraded.
- Primitive and Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized recreation opportunities would be adversely impacted.
- Natural appearing landscapes with high scenic quality would be adversely impacted.
- Natural ecological systems would be adversely impacted.
- The degree of undeveloped characteristics as measured by the level of human modification would be adversely impacted.
- Outstanding opportunities for solitude as measured by the opportunity to experience isolation from the evidence of humans would be adversely affected.

Additions to the NFTS: No direct or indirect effects would occur in IRAs because no unauthorized routes would be added to the NFTS under Alternative 1.

Establishment of Motorized “Open Areas”: No direct or indirect effects would occur in IRAs because no motorized “Open Areas” would be established under Alternative 1.

Changes to the NFTS: No direct or indirect effects would occur in IRAs because no changes would be made to the NFTS or to the existing closures under Alternative 1.

Amendments to the Forest Plan: No direct or indirect effects would occur in IRAs because there would be no Amendment to the Forest Plan under Alternative 1

Cumulative Effects

This alternative would contribute towards negative cumulative effects in IRAs because additional future route proliferation would adversely affect the roadless and wilderness characteristics within those areas.

Action Alternatives - Proposed Management Actions

Direct and Indirect Effects

The following section describes how proposed motor vehicle route additions and changes to the NFTS identified in the action alternatives could affect roadless and wilderness character within IRAs. Generally, motor vehicle use has an adverse effect on overall roadless and wilderness character. Conversely, reducing the amount of motorized use within an IRA would have a positive effect on roadless and wilderness characteristics. All routes under consideration for motorized use in IRAs are currently available to motorized use. The effect of this motorized use is already part of the existing situation. Prohibiting motorized use on these routes would improve overall roadless and wilderness character within

IRAs. Each action alternative analyzed in this FEIS would improve roadless and wilderness character of IRAs by reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motor vehicle use.

The statements listed below summarize the overall effects each action alternative would have on the roadless and wilderness character of IRAs located on Tahoe National Forest.

Cross Country Travel: Cross country travel would be prohibited on a total of 171,328 IRA acres (98,309 acres of proposed prohibition) in all the action alternatives. This prohibition would serve to stop proliferation of unauthorized routes and would prohibit use on all unauthorized routes not proposed for addition as motor vehicle routes to the NFTS. It would also prohibit use on all closed NFTS roads not being re-opened that are currently receiving some motorized use. The mileage of routes open for motor vehicle use (NFTS and unauthorized) would be reduced considerably from the existing situation. Alternatives 3 and 4 would add zero miles of unauthorized routes, while Alternatives 2, 5, 6 and 7 would prohibit use on 36.9 (79%) to 43.1 (92%) miles of available unauthorized routes. Roadless and wilderness characteristics would improve over time as unauthorized routes passively restore to natural conditions.

Additions to the NFTS: Within IRAs, there are only a few road segments being proposed for addition to the NFTS in the alternatives to provide access to dispersed recreation sites from existing NFTS roads. Four action alternatives would increase the mileage of NFTS motorized trails within affected IRAs. The majority of routes proposed for addition are existing short spurs accessing dispersed recreation sites adjacent to existing NFTS routes. The impact these additions would have on roadless and wilderness characteristics are explained in the effects analysis for each IRA.

Establish Motorized “Open Areas”: No motor vehicle “Open Areas” are being proposed for establishment within IRAs in any of the action alternatives; therefore, there is no effect on the IRAs and this will not be addressed under each IRA.

Changes to the NFTS: Alternatives 2, 5 and 6 would change the class of vehicles allowed on short sections of a few NFTS roads in IRAs from highway legal vehicles only to open to all vehicles. Those changes would be implemented through a combination of motorized mixed use and changes in vehicle class allowed. These proposed changes would not impact roadless and wilderness characteristics of the IRAs.

Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would impose wet weather seasonal restrictions on all native surface roads and motorized trails. Seasonal restrictions would improve the following roadless and wilderness characteristics: 1) High quality and undisturbed soil, water, and air resources; 2) Quality of water resources in the upper watersheds that become sources of public drinking water; 3) Opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized and primitive recreation opportunities during the closure period; and 4) Outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Reopening of Maintenance Level 1 (ML 1) roads will not be addressed in the individual IRAs since there are no ML 1 roads being opened in any IRA except the West Yuba IRA, where it will be addressed in more detail. Alternative 5 is the only alternative that would reopen a ML 1 road within an IRA

Amendments to Forest Plan: Not applicable to the individual IRAs; therefore, this will not be addressed under each IRA.

Cumulative Effects

Each of the action alternatives would improve the roadless characteristics of IRAs by allowing motorized use on fewer miles of roads and trails and by prohibiting cross country travel. There are currently 206.9 miles (NFTS and unauthorized routes) available for public motorized use in the No Action Alternative. The action alternatives would all reduce the total number of miles available to public motorized use. The action alternatives range from 160.3 miles (23% reduction) of routes open for motorized use in Alternative 5, to 149.0 miles (28 % reduction) in Alternatives 3 and 4. The reduction of available roads and eventual natural restoration routes prohibited to use would slowly improve overall roadless characteristics over time.

Table 3.09-13 compares total differences between action alternatives within Inventoried Roadless Areas on Tahoe NF.

Table 3.09-13. Total Roads/Trails/Areas in Inventoried Roadless Areas by Alternative

Action type		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
1. Cross-country travel (Acres)		Prohibited on 73,019 acres Continues on 98,309 acres	Prohibited on all 171,328 acres					
Unauthorized routes		46.7 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
Closed NFTS roads receiving some motorized use		11.3 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
2. Additions to the NFTS	a. Roads added to the NFTS	0.0 miles	0.1 miles	0.0 miles				
	b. Motorized Trails added to the NFTS	0.0 miles	7.6 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	9.8 miles	3.6 miles	6.2 miles
3. Establishment of Motorized "Open Areas"		None	None	None	None	None	None	None
4. Changes to the NFTS	a. Change in Class of Vehicles resulting from approval of mixed use	0.0 miles	0.2 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.2 miles	0.6 miles	0.0 miles
	b. Change in Class of Vehicles resulting from changes in maintenance levels	0.0 miles	0.5 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.5 miles	0.1 miles	0.0 miles
	c. Change in Season of Use	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	113.0 mi.	113.5 mi.	113.0 mi.	0.0 miles
	d. Reopening Maintenance Level 1 Roads	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	1.6 mi.	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
5. Amendments to the Forest Plan		None	None	None	None	None	None	None
Total Mileage Open to Motorized Use		206.9 mi.	156.6 mi.	149.0 mi.	149.0 mi.	160.3 mi.	152.6 mi.	155.2 mi.
Percentage of Existing Routes Open for Motor Vehicle Use		100%	76%	72%	72%	77%	74%	75%

Bald Mountain IRA

Cross Country Travel: Cross country travel by motor vehicles within the Bald Mountain IRA would be prohibited on an additional 4,490 acres (5,834 total acres) in each action alternative. This prohibition would stop the proliferation of new unauthorized routes within the IRA. The prohibition of motorized cross country travel on existing unauthorized routes and NFTS routes that are still receiving some motorized use would reduce the total mileage of roads and trails available for motorized use. Each action alternative would reduce the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use from 10.2 miles to 5.3 miles. The prohibition of cross country travel would benefit the roadless area and wilderness characteristics of Bald Mountain IRA by stopping the proliferation of unauthorized routes and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use. Opportunities for semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities would be reduced in all action alternatives.

Additions to the NFTS: There would be no roads or trails added to the NFTS within the Bald Mountain IRA in Alternatives 2, 3, 4, 5 or 7. Alternative 6 would add two very short spur trails (D_560-20a, D_560-20b) accessing dispersed recreation sites. These NFTS trail additions total 114 feet in length. The addition of these trails to the NFTS would have little effect on the naturalness of the immediate area or the overall roadless characteristics due to their short length and pre-existence. Overall roadless characteristics would improve under all action alternatives as motor vehicle use would be prohibited on 3.6 miles of unauthorized routes and 1.2 miles of closed NFTS roads still receiving motorized use.

Changes to the Existing NFTS: There are no changes proposed for the class of vehicles allowed on existing NFTS roads in any of the action alternatives. Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would impose wet weather seasonal restrictions on all NFTS routes in the IRA. These seasonal restrictions would serve to improve the following roadless area and wilderness characteristics: 1) High quality and undisturbed soil, water, and air resources; 2) Quality of water resources in the watershed that are sources of public drinking water; 3) Opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized and primitive recreation opportunities during the closure period; and 4) Outstanding opportunities for solitude. Seasonal vehicle closures would negatively affect Semi-Primitive Motorized opportunities because motor vehicle access would be limited to open periods.

Cumulative Effects: All of the action alternatives would improve the roadless characteristics within Bald Mountain IRA by prohibiting motorized cross country travel on all 5,834 acres and reducing the amount of motorized access on the existing network of motorized routes. All of the action alternative would reduce the miles available for motorized use from 10.2 miles to 5.3 miles. Overall, roadless area characteristics would improve over time as unauthorized routes passively restore to natural conditions.

Castle Peak IRA

Cross Country Travel: Cross country travel by motor vehicles within the Castle Peak IRA would be prohibited on 15,738 acres in each action alternative. The prohibition of motorized cross country travel on existing unauthorized routes and NFTS routes that are still receiving some motorized use would reduce the total mileage of roads and trails available for motorized use. Alternatives 3 and 4 reduce the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use from 18.7 to 8.6 miles. Alternatives 2, 5, 6 and 7 reduce the amount of motorized roads and trails from 18.7 to 9.6 miles. The prohibition of cross country travel

would benefit roadless area and wilderness characteristics of Castle Peak IRA by stopping the proliferation of unauthorized routes and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use. The prohibition of motorized travel on all unauthorized routes would have a negative effect on opportunities for dispersed motorized recreation.

Additions to the NFTS: There are no roads proposed for addition to the NFTS in any of the action alternatives within the Castle Peak IRA. Alternatives 3 and 4 would not designate any new routes for the NFTS. Alternatives 2, 5, 6 and 7 would add three motorized trails (TKN-J4, TKN-J5 and TKN-J6) to the NFTS totaling approximately one mile within the boundary of the IRA.

TKN-J5 (0.3 mi.) is a trail located in Castle Valley that terminates at “Slab Rock.” TKN-J4 is located west of Andesite Peak with approximately 0.6 miles located in the IRA. The third trail, TKN-J6 enters the eastern side of the IRA for approximately 0.1 miles, and provides access to the eastside of Summit Lake. Each of these routes access existing dispersed recreation sites. All of three trails enter the edges of Castle Peak IRA, and are close enough to Interstate 80 that traffic noise from the freeway is still noticeable. If designated, these routes would have a minor impact on solitude because the noise of motorized vehicles would not be louder than the background noise from the freeway in the immediate vicinity. Additionally, in Alternative 6, two short spur trails (D_14E08, D_TKN-004) totaling .02 mile in length would be designated to provide motor vehicle access to dispersed recreation sites.

By designating those preexisting routes, there would continue to be minor effects to the high scenic quality landscape of the IRA due to vegetative disturbance and compaction at turnaround points. The majority of the Castle Peak IRA would remain a good candidate as a reference landscape because proposed changes to the NFTS are on the periphery of the IRA.

Changes to the NFTS: There are no changes to the class of vehicles allowed on existing National Forest System roads in any of the alternatives. However, Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would impose wet weather seasonal restrictions on all native surface roads and motorized trails. These seasonal restrictions would improve roadless and wilderness characteristics values for: 1) High quality and undisturbed soil, water, and air resources; 2) Quality of water resources in the upper watersheds that become sources of public drinking water; 3) Opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized and primitive recreation opportunities during the closure period; and 4) Outstanding opportunities for solitude. The seasonal closure of NFTS routes would have negative effects on opportunities for semi-primitive motorized experiences.

Cumulative Effects: All of the action alternatives would improve the overall roadless character of the Castle Peak IRA by prohibiting cross country motorized travel on 15,738 acres and thereby reducing the mileage of routes available for motorized use by approximately 60 percent. Alternatives 2, 5, 6, and 7 reduce the miles open for motorized vehicles from 18.7 to 9.6. Alternatives 3 and 4 would prohibit use on all of the trails unauthorized for motorized use in this IRA. Overall, roadless area characteristics would improve over time as unauthorized routes passively restore to natural conditions.

Duncan Canyon IRA

Cross Country Travel: Each action alternative would prohibit cross country travel by motor vehicles on all 9,253 acres within the Duncan Canyon IRA. Prohibition of cross country travel, in each of the action

alternatives, would reduce the total amount of roads and trails available for motorized use from 20.9 to 12.0 miles. The prohibition of cross country travel would benefit the roadless area and wilderness characteristics of this IRA by stopping the proliferation of unauthorized routes and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use.

Additions to the NFTS: There would be no additional roads designated within the Duncan Canyon IRA in any of the action alternatives. Alternatives 2, 4 and 5 would add one short motorized trail segment (D_88) to the NFTS, and Alternative 6 would add two motorized trails (D_88, D16E10). Those trails would be added to provide access to dispersed recreation sites. The addition of a few hundred feet of routes to the NFTS would have little effect on the overall roadless characteristics of the IRA due to their short length and pre-existence.

Changes to the NFTS: There are no changes to the class of vehicles allowed on existing NFTS roads in the Duncan Canyon IRA in any of the alternatives. Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would impose wet weather seasonal restrictions on all native surface roads and motorized trails (11.3 miles). Those seasonal restrictions would improve the following roadless areas characteristics: 1) High quality and undisturbed soil, water, and air resources; 2) Quality of water resources in the upper watersheds that all become sources of public drinking water; 3) Opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized and primitive recreation opportunities during the seasonal closure period and 4) Outstanding opportunities for solitude. The seasonal closure of NFTS routes would have negative effects on opportunities for semi-primitive motorized experiences.

Cumulative Effects: All of the action alternatives would improve the roadless character of the Duncan Canyon IRA by prohibiting cross country motorized travel on 9,253 acres and thereby reducing the mileage of routes available for motorized use by approximately 40 percent. Each action alternative would reduce the number miles open for motorized vehicles from 20.9 to 12.0 miles. Alternatives 3 and 4 would eliminate use on all of the trails unauthorized for motorized use in this IRA. Overall, roadless area characteristics would improve over time as unauthorized routes passively restore to natural conditions.

East Yuba IRA

Cross Country Travel: Cross country travel by motor vehicles would be prohibited on 10,805 acres in each action alternative within the East Yuba IRA. This prohibition would also reduce the total amount of roads and trails available for motorized use. Alternatives 3 and 4 would reduce the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use from 42.9 to 33.5 miles. Alternatives 2, 5, 6 and 7 would reduce the amount of motorized roads and trails from 41.8 to 35.4, 36.8, 35.0 and 34.6 miles respectively. The prohibition of cross country travel would benefit the overall roadless area and wilderness characteristics of the IRA by stopping the proliferation of unauthorized routes and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use. The prohibition of cross country travel would eliminate use of all unauthorized routes in this IRA and would have a negative effect on opportunities for dispersed motorized recreation.

Additions to the NFTS: Alternatives 3 and 4 would not make any additions to the NFTS within the East Yuba IRA. Alternative 2 would add 18 motorized trails (1.8 miles) and one road (124 feet) to the NFTS. Alternative 5 would add 20 motorized trails (3.3 miles) to the NFTS. Alternative 6 would add 18

motorized trails (1.5 miles) to the NFTS. Alternative 7 would add 4 motorized trails (1.1 miles) to the NFTS. Alternatives 5, 6, and 7 would not add any roads to the NFTS. Out of the 20 motorized routes, six of the longer routes are discussed below.

Route YRN-11 would be added as a motorized trail open to high clearance trail vehicles in Alternatives 2, 5, 6 and 7. This trail provides access to a dispersed recreation site near Spencer Lake. This trail would have a slight effect on roadless character within the IRA because it is a short segment (0.2 mi.) that closely parallels an existing NFTS route.

Routes YRN-5a and YRN-5c would be added as motorized trails open to high clearance trail vehicles in Alternatives 2, 5, 6 and 7. These routes provide access to a remote, well-defined dispersed recreation site off the Gold Valley four-wheel drive trail. Vehicle access tends to be by motorcycles and jeeps used by anglers, jeepers, and hunters. Eliminating motor vehicle access to this dispersed site would force individuals to utilize less desirable locations along the trail in the event they want to camp. The addition of these routes to the NFTS would have slight effects on roadless character because they are relatively short segments which access dispersed recreation sites.

Route YRN-4 would be added as a motorized trail open to high clearance trail vehicles in Alternatives 2, 5, 6 and 7. This trail, which is accessed from the Big Boulder four-wheel drive trail, is a historic mining route. The trail provides access to a scenic vista and has historically received heavy motorcycle use. Addition of this route would have a slight effect on roadless character because it is a short segment that stays relatively close to an existing NFTS route.

Route YRN-007 would be added as a motorized trail open to high clearance trail vehicles in Alternatives 2 and 5. This trail provides access to an old mine used for dispersed recreation. Only a short segment of YRN-007 enters the IRA along its eastern boundary. Since only the very end of the route is located within the IRA boundary there would be minimal effects to roadless area characteristics.

Route YRN-9 would be added as a motorized trail open to high clearance trail vehicles in Alternatives 2 and 5. This trail is very faint on the ground. This trail is longer and affects the roadless character more because it is in the heart of the IRA and ventures farther from existing motorized system routes. It reduces the opportunities for solitude in a band along the trail because of the noise from the motorized vehicles. It would also retain a band of semi-primitive motorized character in that part of the IRA.

Alternatives 2, 5 and 6 would add 14 trail segments that provide motor vehicle access to dispersed recreation sites within the IRA. The other action alternatives would have a negative impact on opportunities for semi-primitive motorized recreation by prohibiting motor vehicle access to identified dispersed recreation sites.

Changes to the NFTS: There are no changes in the class of vehicles allowed on existing NFS roads in any of the alternatives. Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would impose wet weather seasonal restrictions on all native surface roads and motorized trails. These seasonal restrictions would improve the following roadless areas and wilderness characteristics: 1) High quality and undisturbed soil, water, and air resources; 2) Quality of water resources in the upper watersheds that are sources of public drinking water; 3) Opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized and primitive types of recreation; and 4) Outstanding opportunities for solitude during the closure period. Seasonal closures would have a negative effect on opportunities for semi-primitive motor vehicle experiences.

Cumulative Effects: All of the action alternatives would improve the overall roadless character of the East Yuba IRA by prohibiting cross country motorized travel on 10,805 acres and reducing the number of trails with motorized use. The addition of motorized trails to the NFTS would continue to have minimal effects on roadless character because they are short segments of motorized trails that stay relatively close to an existing NFTS route. None of the motorized trails added to the NFTS in Alternative 2, 5, 6 and 7 would have substantial effects, but in a cumulative fashion they would contribute to a reduction in roadless character in the IRA. Alternatives 3 and 4 would provide for the greatest improvement in overall roadless character because no motorized trails are proposed to be added to the NFTS in those alternatives. Overall, roadless area characteristics within this IRA would improve over time as unauthorized routes passively restore to natural conditions

Table 3.09-14 displays the acres available for cross country travel and miles of roads and trails available for motorized use in the East Yuba IRA for the range of action alternatives.

Table 3.09-14. Miles of Roads/Trails/Areas in East Yuba Inventoried Roadless Area by Alternative

Action type		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
1. Cross-country travel (Acres)		Prohibited on 612 acres Continues on 10,193 acres	Prohibited on all 10,805 acres					
Miles of unauthorized routes open to motor vehicle use		9.4 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
2. Additions to the NFTS	a. Roads added to the NFTS	0.0 miles	124 feet	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles.	0.0 miles
	b. Motorized Trails added to the NFTS	0.0 miles	1.8 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	3.3 miles	1.5 miles	1.1 miles
3. Establishment of Motorized “Open Areas”		None	None	None	None	None	None	None
4. Changes to the NFTS	a. Change in Class of Vehicles resulting from approval of mixed use	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.01 mi.	0.01 mi.	0.0 miles
	b. Change in Class of Vehicles resulting from changes in maintenance levels	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
	c. Change in Season of Use	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	29.0 mi.	29.0 mi.	29.0 mi.	0.0 miles
	d. Reopening Maintenance Level 1 Roads	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
5. Amendments to the Forest Plan		None	None	None	None	None	None	None
Total Miles Open to Motorized Use*		42.8 miles	35.3 mi.	33.5 mi.	33.5 mi.	36.8 mi.	35.0 mi.	34.6 mi.

*Includes State, County and private jurisdiction roads in all alternatives. Alternative 1 includes unauthorized routes and closed NFTS roads still receiving motorized use.

Granite Chief IRA

Cross Country Travel: Cross country travel would be prohibited on the entire 31,297 acres of the Granite Chief IRA in all action alternatives. Most of this acreage is within Wilderness or management areas that already preclude the use of motor vehicles. The remaining 1,930 acres of this IRA would be prohibited for cross country travel in the action alternatives. On NFS land, only 0.3 miles of unauthorized routes exist within the IRA. These routes would no longer be available for motorized use in the action alternatives. The prohibition of cross country travel would benefit the roadless and wilderness characteristics of the Granite Chief IRA by preventing the proliferation of unauthorized routes and by eliminating motorized use on the only existing motor vehicle route in the IRA.

Additions to the NFTS: There are no roads or trails proposed for addition to the NFTS in any of the action alternatives.

Changes to the NFTS: There are no proposed changes in class of vehicle or season of use on NFTS roads or trails in any of the action alternatives.

Cumulative Effects: Each action alternative would improve the roadless and wilderness character of the Granite Chief IRA. The heart of Granite Chief IRA is a congressionally designated wilderness that precludes motorized use. The only possible negative impacts to roadless characteristics would be if cross country travel were allowed in parts of the IRA that are not wilderness or that currently prohibit motor vehicle use.

Grouse Lakes IRA

Cross Country Travel: Cross country travel would be prohibited on all 19,271 acres of this IRA in each of the action alternatives. The prohibition of cross country would reduce the total amount of roads and trails available for motorized use. Alternatives 3 and 4 reduce the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use from 20.5 to 17.1 miles. Alternatives 2 and 5 reduce the amount of motorized roads and trails from 20.5 to 18.3 miles. Alternatives 6 and 7 reduce the amount of motorized roads and trails from 20.5 to 18.1 miles. The prohibition of cross country travel would benefit roadless and wilderness characteristics within Grouse Lakes IRA by stopping the proliferation of unauthorized routes and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use. The prohibition of motorized cross country travel in this IRA would have a positive effect on opportunities for dispersed non-motorized recreation.

Additions to the NFTS: Alternatives 3 and 4 would not make any additions to the NFTS. Alternative 2 would add 4 motorized trails (1.2 miles) and 2 roads (199 feet) to the NFTS. Alternative 5 would add 6 motorized trails (1.2 miles) to the NFTS. Alternative 6 would add 6 motorized trails (1.0 miles) to the NFTS. Alternative 7 would add 3 motorized trails (1.1 miles) to the NFTS. Refer to Table 3.09-15. Two of the longer routes that are in Alternatives 2, 5, 6, and 7 are discussed below.

Trail YRS-F1 consists of several short spurs accessing dispersed recreation sites along the Fordyce Jeep Trail within Grouse Lakes IRA. The effects to roadless character would be limited due to the short length of the routes and their close proximity to the existing motorized trail. The routes do extend the motorized influence into a wider band along the Fordyce Jeep trail. This would result in slightly more

impact on opportunities for solitude and other experiences related to semi-primitive non-motorized recreation.

Another motorized trail (YRS-G3), approximately one-mile in length would also be added to the NFTS north and east of Baltimore Lake, in Alternatives 2, 5, 6, and 7. Adding this motorized trail would have negative effects to roadless character because it is separate from, and beyond, the Fordyce Jeep Trail. Adding this route to the NFTS would affect opportunities for solitude because of noise from motor vehicle use. Likewise there is a band of influence along the motorized trail where the ROS opportunities would be semi-primitive motorized rather than semi-primitive non-motorized. The natural appearing landscape and high scenic quality is only slightly affected due to the continuing existence of the motorized trail.

Changes to the NFTS: There would be no changes to the class of vehicles allowed on all existing NFTS routes in any of the action alternatives. Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would impose wet weather seasonal restrictions on all native surface roads and motorized trails. These seasonal restrictions would improve the following roadless area characteristics: 1) High quality and undisturbed soil, water, and air resources; 2) Quality of water resources in the upper watersheds that are sources of public drinking water; 3) Opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized and primitive recreation opportunities and 4) Outstanding opportunities during the closure period. Seasonal restrictions would negatively affect opportunities for semi-primitive motorized experiences.

Cumulative Effects: Each of the action alternatives would improve roadless characteristics within Grouse Lakes IRA through the prohibition of cross country travel across 19,271 acres and reducing the mileage of roads and trails available for motorized use. Overall, roadless area characteristics within this IRA would improve over time as unauthorized routes passively restore to natural conditions.

Table 3.09-15. Miles of Roads/Trails/Areas in Grouse lakes Inventoried Roadless Area by Alternative

Action type		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
1. Cross-country travel (Acres)		Prohibited on 13,190 acres Continues on 6,081 acres	Prohibited on all 19,271 acres					
Miles of unauthorized routes open to motor vehicle use		3.3 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
Closed NFTS roads still receiving some motorized use		.2 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
2. Additions to the NFTS	a. Roads added to the NFTS	0.0 miles	199 feet	0.0 miles	0.0 mile	0.0 mile	0.0 miles.	0.0 miles
	b. Motorized Trails added to the NFTS	0.0 miles	1.2 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	1.2 miles	1.0 miles.	1.1 miles
3. Establishment of Motorized “Open Areas”		None	None	None	None	None	None	None
4. Changes to the NFTS	a. Change in Class of Vehicles resulting from approval of mixed use	0.0 miles	0.01 mi.	0.0 miles				
	b. Change in Class of Vehicles resulting from changes in maintenance levels	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
	c. Change in Season of Use	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	14.4 mi.	14.4 mi.	14.4 mi.	0.0 miles
	d. Reopening Maintenance Level 1 Roads	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
5. Amendments to the Forest Plan		None	None	None	None	None	None	None
Total Miles Open to Motorized use*		20.5 miles	18.3 mi.	17.1 mi.	17.1 mi.	18.3 mi.	18.1 mi.	18.1 mi.

*Includes State, County and private jurisdiction roads in all alternatives. Alternative 1 includes unauthorized routes and closed NFTS roads still receiving motorized use.

Lakes Basin IRA

Cross Country Travel: Each action alternative would prohibit cross country travel by motor vehicles on 557 acres within the Lakes Basin IRA. The prohibition of cross country travel would benefit roadless area and wilderness characteristics of the Lakes Basin IRA by stopping the proliferation of unauthorized routes and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use. The prohibition of motorized travel on all unauthorized routes would have a negative effect on opportunities for dispersed motorized recreation.

Additions to the NFTS: There are no roads or motorized trails proposed for addition to the NFTS in any of the action alternatives in this IRA.

Changes to the NFTS: There are no proposed vehicle class changes on NFTS roads in any of the action alternatives. Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would impose wet weather seasonal restrictions on all native surface roads and motorized trails. These seasonal restrictions would improve the following roadless area characteristics: 1) High quality and undisturbed soil, water, and air resources; 2) Quality of water resources in the upper watersheds that are sources of public drinking water; 3) Opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized and primitive recreation opportunities and 4) Outstanding opportunities for solitude during the seasonal closure period.

Cumulative Effects: All action alternatives would serve to improve the roadless characteristics of the Lakes Basin IRA by prohibiting cross country travel on 557 acres and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use. No unauthorized routes are proposed for addition to the NFTS within this IRA in any of the action alternatives. Overall, roadless area characteristics within the Lakes Basin IRA would improve over time as unauthorized routes passively restore to natural conditions.

Middle Yuba IRA

Cross Country Travel: Cross country travel would be prohibited on all 7,884 acres of this IRA in each of the action alternatives. The prohibition of cross country motor vehicle travel would reduce the total amount of roads and trails available for motorized use from 29.4 to 23.4 miles for each alternative. The prohibition of cross country travel would benefit overall roadless area and wilderness characteristics of the Middle Yuba IRA by stopping the proliferation of unauthorized routes and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use. The prohibition of motorized use on all unauthorized routes in this IRA would have a negative effect on opportunities for semi-primitive motorized recreation.

Additions to the NFTS: There are no roads or motorized trails being proposed for addition to the NFTS in any of the action alternatives for this IRA.

Changes to the NFTS: Alternatives 2, 5 and 6 would change the class of vehicles allowed on all NFTS roads within this IRA from highway legal vehicles only to open to all vehicles (total .6 mi.). The change in vehicle class allowed would not have an effect on roadless area characteristics of this IRA. Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would impose wet weather seasonal restrictions on all native surface roads and motorized trails. These seasonal restrictions would improve the roadless areas characteristics for: 1) High quality and undisturbed soil, water, and air resources; 2) Quality of water resources in the upper watersheds that are sources of public drinking water; 3) Opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized

and primitive recreation opportunities and 4) Outstanding opportunities for solitude during the closure period.

Cumulative Effects: Each of the action alternatives would improve the roadless character of the Middle Yuba IRA by prohibiting cross country travel and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use within the IRA. No motorized trails would be added to the NFTS within this IRA. Overall, roadless area characteristics within this IRA would improve over time as unauthorized routes passively restore to natural conditions.

North Fork American River IRA

Cross Country Travel: Each action alternative would prohibit cross country travel on 43,374 acres within the North Fork American River IRA. This prohibition would reduce the total amount of roads and trails available for motorized use from 9.0 to 6.6 miles in each action alternative. The prohibition of cross country travel would benefit overall roadless area and wilderness characteristics within the IRA by stopping the proliferation of unauthorized routes and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use. The prohibition of motorized use of all unauthorized routes in this IRA would have a negative effect on opportunities for dispersed motorized recreation.

Additions to the NFTS: There are no roads or motorized trails added to the NFTS in this IRA in any of the action alternatives.

Changes to the NFTS: Alternatives 2, 5 and 6 would change the class of vehicles allowed on all NFTS roads within the North Fork American River IRA from highway legal vehicles only to open to all vehicles (total .1 mi.). The change in vehicle class allowed would not have an effect on roadless area characteristics of this IRA. Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would impose wet weather seasonal restrictions on all native surface roads and motorized trails. These seasonal restrictions would improve the roadless areas characteristics for: 1) High quality and undisturbed soil, water, and air resources; 2) Quality of water resources in the upper watersheds that are sources of public drinking water; 3) Opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized and primitive recreation opportunities and 4) Outstanding opportunities for solitude during the closure period.

Cumulative Effects: Each of the action alternatives would improve the roadless character of the North Fork American River IRA by prohibiting cross country travel on 43,374 acres and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use. The IRA remains intact with high levels of primitive to semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunities that maintain the high quality roadless characteristics in each action alternative. Overall, roadless area characteristics within this IRA would improve over time as unauthorized routes passively restore to natural conditions.

North Fork of the Middle Fork of the American River IRA

Cross Country Travel: Each action alternative would prohibit cross country travel on 11,257 acres within the North Fork of the Middle Fork American River IRA. This prohibition would reduce the total amount of roads and trails available for motorized use from 18.2 to 16.9 miles in each action alternative. The prohibition of cross country travel would benefit roadless area and wilderness characteristics within the IRA by stopping the proliferation of unauthorized routes and reducing the amount of roads and trails

available for motorized use. The prohibition of motorized use on all unauthorized routes in this IRA would have a negative effect on opportunities for dispersed motorized recreation.

Additions to the NFTS: There are no roads or motorized trails proposed for addition to the NFTS in any of the action alternatives.

Changes to the NFTS: None of the action alternatives proposes changes to the vehicle class allowed on NFTS routes within the North Fork of the Middle Fork American River IRA. Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would impose wet weather seasonal restrictions on all NFTS routes. These seasonal restrictions would improve the following roadless area characteristics: 1) High quality and undisturbed soil, water, and air resources; 2) Quality of water resources in the upper watersheds that are sources of public drinking water; 3) Opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized and primitive recreation opportunities; and 4) Outstanding opportunities for solitude during the closure period.

Cumulative Effects: Due to the very steep topography of the area, only 1.2 miles of unauthorized routes and .1 miles of closed NFTS roads are currently receiving some motor vehicle use. Those routes would be prohibited to motor vehicle use in each of the action alternatives. Overall, roadless area characteristics within the North Fork of the Middle Fork American River IRA would improve over time as unauthorized routes passively restore to natural conditions.

West Yuba IRA

Cross Country Travel: Each of the action alternatives would prohibit cross country travel by motor vehicles on the entire 16,058 acres within the West Yuba IRA. Alternatives 3 and 4 would reduce the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use from 35.7 to 24.4 miles. Alternatives 2, 5, 6 and 7 would reduce the amount of motorized roads and trails from 35.7 to 28.0, 30.2, 24.5 and 27.4 miles respectively through the prohibition of motorized use on several miles of unauthorized routes. The prohibition of cross country travel would benefit overall roadless area and wilderness characteristics of this IRA by stopping the proliferation of unauthorized routes and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use. The prohibition of motorized use of all unauthorized routes in this IRA would have a negative effect on opportunities for dispersed motorized recreation.

Additions to the NFTS: Alternatives 3 and 4 would not make any additions to the NFTS. Alternative 2 would add 5 motorized trails (3.6 miles) to the NFTS. Alternative 5 would add 6 motorized trails (4.2 miles) to the NFTS. Alternative 6 would add 4 motorized trails (300 feet total) to the NFTS. Alternative 7 would add 2 motorized trails (2.9 miles) to the NFTS. Refer to Table 3.09-16. Three of the longer routes that are in the action alternatives are discussed below.

Route YRN-M2 would be added to the NFTS as a motorized trail open to motorcycles in Alternatives 2 and 5. Use of the motorized trail would be seasonally prohibited for wet weather in Alternative 5. This motorized trail connects the Downieville single track trail to a difficult four-wheel drive trail. This motorized trail creates a loop to Chimney Rock and Poker Flat. It provides very challenging double black diamond riding (limited opportunities), requiring slower travel (less noise). The motorized trail parallels the Downie River for a short distance and connects challenging four-wheel drive and motorcycle trails along the river. Opening this trail to motorcycle use would have a negative effect on solitude because of

motorcycle noise. Due to the low numbers of users this effect would occur primarily on weekends. The motorized use of this trail is consistent with semi-primitive motorized standards in the Forest Plan. The addition of this existing trail to the NFTS would have a minor negative effect on the overall natural appearing landscape and high scenic quality of the area.

Route YRN-M3b would be added to the NFTS as a motorized motorcycle trail in Alternatives 2, 5 and 7. Use of this motorized trail would be seasonally prohibited for wet weather in Alternatives 5 and 6. The route is an old historic mining trail that requires a high skill level to navigate. It provides loop connection from Downie River to the Castle Rock trails system. Opening this trail to motorcycle use would have a negative effect on solitude because of motorcycle noise. Due to the low numbers of users, this effect would occur primarily on weekends. The motorized use of this trail is consistent with semi-primitive motorized standards in the Forest Plan. The addition of this route would have an effect on the overall natural appearing landscape and high scenic quality of the area.

Route YRN-7 would be added to the NFTS as a motorized trail open to high clearance trail vehicles in Alternatives 2, 5 and 7. Use of this motorized trail would be seasonally prohibited for wet weather in Alternatives 5. This route is a short ¼-mile spur located adjacent to two system routes: the Poker Flat and Texas Flat four-wheel drive routes. Poker Flat is a high value recreation destination associated with this motorized trail. This route continues to a popular vista point. Current use is low. This motorized trail is in the north east corner of the IRA. It has similar effects as described above with other proposed motorcycle trails with there being a slightly higher impact because the width of the trail is greater.

Changes to the NFTS: There are no changes to the class of vehicles allowed on existing NFTS roads in any of the alternatives. Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would impose wet weather seasonal restrictions on all native surface roads and motorized trails. Seasonal restrictions would improve the following roadless area characteristics: 1) High quality and undisturbed soil, water, and air resources; 2) Quality of water resources in the upper watersheds that all become sources of public drinking water; 3) Opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized and primitive recreation opportunities; and 4) Outstanding opportunities for solitude during the seasonal closure period. Opportunities for semi-primitive motorized activity would be reduced with implementation of seasonal restrictions. One Maintenance Level 1 road would re-opened in Alternative 5 totaling 1.6 miles. This route is located on the western edge of the West Yuba IRA west of Poker Flat in the Canyon Creek drainage. Opening this route to motorized use would have a negative effect on solitude because of noise. The re-opening of this existing route would have a minor negative effect on the overall natural appearing landscape and high scenic quality of the area.

Cumulative Effects: Each action alternative would improve the roadless character of the West Yuba IRA by prohibiting cross country travel on 16,058 acres and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use. If added to the NFTS, YRN-M3b and YRN-M2 would affect roadless characteristics, especially opportunities for recreation in a semi-primitive non-motorized setting. The main effect these motorized trails have is the negative effects on solitude from motorcycle noise. Due to the low numbers of users, this effect would occur primarily on weekends. The motorized use of these trails is consistent with semi-primitive motorized standards in the Forest Plan. These motorized trails affect the naturalness for a reference landscape in a very slight way. YRN 7 is a jeep route in the north

east corner of West Yuba which would be added to the NFTS in Alternatives 2, 5 and 7. It has similar effects as described above for the motorcycle trails with there being a slightly higher impact because the width of the trail is greater. Alternative 5 would result in the least improvement in roadless character because four motorized trails would be added to the NFTS and one ML 1 road would be reopened. While the effects to roadless character from adding these routes are not great, the cumulative effects are greater particularly because the proposed motorized trails (not the ML 1 road) are within the heart of the IRA. Alternatives 2 and 7 have greater benefits to roadless character than Alternative 5 because the designated system would have less mileage of motorized routes in the area. Alternatives 3 and 4 would not add motorized trails to the NFTS in the West Yuba IRA and would have the most positive effect for maintaining roadless characteristics in the area. Alternative 6 is similar to Alternatives 3 and 4, except that it would provide opportunities for motorized access to four dispersed recreation sites.

Table 3.09-16. Miles of Roads/Trails/Areas in West Yuba Inventoried Roadless Area by Alternative

Action type		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
1. Cross-country travel (Acres)		Prohibited on zero acres Continues on 16,058 acres	Prohibited on all 16,058 acres					
Miles of unauthorized routes open to motor vehicle use		1.8 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
Closed NFTS roads still receiving some motorized use		9.4 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
2. Additions to the NFTS	a. Roads added to the NFTS	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
	b. Motorized Trails added to the NFTS	0.0 miles	3.6 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	4.2 miles	300 feet	2.9 miles
3. Establishment of Motorized “Open Areas”		None	None	None	None	None	None	None
4. Changes to the NFTS	a. Change in Class of Vehicles resulting from approval of mixed use	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
	b. Change in Class of Vehicles resulting from changes in maintenance levels	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
	c. Change in Season of Use	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	23.9 mi.	29.7 mi.	24.0 mi.	0.0 miles
	d. Reopening Maintenance Level 1 Roads	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	1.6 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
5. Amendments to the Forest Plan		None	None	None	None	None	None	None
Total Miles Open to Motorized use*		35.7 miles	28.0 mi.	24.4 mi.	24.4 mi.	30.2 mi.	24.5 mi.	27.4 mi.

*Includes State, County and private jurisdiction roads in all alternatives. Alternative 1 includes unauthorized routes and closed NFTS roads still receiving motorized use.

Citizen Inventoried Roadless Areas (CIRAs): Affected Environment

The California Wilderness Coalition (CWC) inventory identified approximately 113,474 acres of land on the Tahoe NF as potential wilderness (CIRAs). Approximately 83% of those acres are already located within agency-identified IRAs and are included in the IRA analysis. The additional 17,964 acres (excluding 1,185 acres of private inholdings) of CIRAs being analyzed include dispersed recreation sites, trailheads, and NFTS roads. Approximately 56% of this acreage is included within the Roaded Natural ROS Class, while 30% is identified as Primitive Motorized, and 14% as Primitive Non-motorized. Table 3.09-17 shows the amount of roads and trails in the CIRA's by category.

Large tracts of CIRA acreage outside agency-identified IRAs include approximately 4,400 acres in the Castle Peak vicinity (Castle Peak CIRA); 3,000 acres south of Granite Chief Wilderness (Granite Chief Additions CIRA); 4,500 acres in the Grouse Lakes (Grouse Lakes CIRA) vicinity; 1,100 acres adjacent to the North Fork American River IRA (N.F. American River CIRA); and 5,800 acres adjacent to North Fork of the Middle Fork of the American River IRA (Black Oak CIRA).

Table 3.09-17. Roads and Trails in Citizen Inventoried Roadless Areas (total TNF acreage outside IRAs)

Road and Trail Category	Season of Use	Miles
Cross Country Travel (acreage open to motorized use: 15,472)		
Unauthorized routes	Not Applicable	19.6
Closed NFTS roads receiving some motorized use		6.1
NFTS Roads open to all vehicles	All Year/Seasonal	12.2
NFTS Trails open to high clearance trail vehicles	All Year	2.1
NFTS Trails open to motorcycles	All Year	3.7
Roads/trails on private land	Not Applicable	4.1
Total Motorized Open to Public		47.8

Citizen Inventoried Roadless Areas: Environmental Consequences

Alternative 1 (No Action)

Direct and Indirect Effects

Cross Country Travel: The No Action Alternative could reduce roadless and wilderness character in CIRAs because cross country travel by motor vehicles would be allowed to continue on 15,472 acres of CIRAs currently open to motorized use on Tahoe NF. Motor vehicle travel is already prohibited on 2,492 acres of lands being managed for semi-primitive non-motorized recreation use within the affected CIRAs. Under Alternative 1, 19.6 miles of unauthorized routes and 6.1 miles of closed NFTS roads would continue to have some motor vehicle use in CIRAs.

Increased noise generated by motor vehicles and more evidence of human activity due to cross-country travel with continued route proliferation would alter the following roadless and wilderness characteristics:

- High quality or undisturbed soil, water and air would be degraded.
- Sources of public drinking water would be at higher risk.

- Diversity of plant and animal communities would be diminished.
- Habitat for threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate and sensitive species and for those species dependent on large, undisturbed areas of land would be degraded.
- Primitive and Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized recreation opportunities would be adversely impacted.
- Natural appearing landscapes with high scenic quality would be adversely impacted.
- Natural ecological systems would be adversely impacted.
- The degree of undeveloped characteristics as measured by the level of human modification would be adversely impacted.
- Outstanding opportunities for solitude as measured by the opportunity to experience isolation from the evidence of humans would be adversely affected.

Additions to the NFTS: No direct or indirect effects would occur in CIRAs because no unauthorized routes would be added to the NFTS under Alternative 1.

Establishment of Motorized “Open Areas”: No direct or indirect effects would occur in CIRAs because no motorized “Open Areas” would be established under Alternative 1.

Changes to the NFTS: No direct or indirect effects would occur in CIRAs because no changes would be made to the NFTS or to the existing closures under Alternative 1.

Amendments to the Forest Plan: No direct or indirect effects would occur in CIRAs because there would be no Amendment to the Forest Plan under Alternative 1.

Cumulative Effects

This alternative would contribute towards negative cumulative effects in CIRAs because additional future route proliferation would adversely affect roadless and wilderness characteristics within those areas.

Action Alternatives - Proposed Management Actions

Direct and Indirect Effects

The following section describes how proposed motor vehicle route additions and changes to the NFTS identified in the action alternatives could affect roadless and wilderness character within CIRAs. Generally, motor vehicle use has an adverse effect on overall roadless and wilderness character. Conversely, reducing the amount of motorized use within a CIRA would have a positive effect on roadless and wilderness characteristics. All routes under consideration for motorized use in CIRAs are currently available to motorized use. The effect of this motorized use is already part of the existing situation. Prohibiting motorized use on these routes would improve overall roadless and wilderness character within CIRAs. Each action alternative analyzed in this FEIS would improve roadless and wilderness character of CIRAs by reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motor vehicle use.

The statements listed below summarize the overall effects each action alternative would have on the roadless and wilderness character of CIRAs located on Tahoe National Forest.

Cross Country Travel: Each of the action alternatives would prohibit cross country travel by motor vehicles on the entire 17,964 acres within CIRAs resulting in several miles of unauthorized routes.

Alternatives 3, 4, and 7 would reduce the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use from 47.8 to 22.1 miles. Alternatives 2, 5, and 6 would reduce the amount of motorized roads and trails from 47.8 to 23.2, 23.4, and 23.9 miles respectively. The prohibition of cross country travel would benefit overall roadless area and wilderness characteristics of this CIRA by stopping the proliferation of unauthorized routes and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use. The prohibition of motorized use of all unauthorized routes in this CIRA would have a negative effect on opportunities for dispersed motorized recreation.

Additions to the NFTS: Alternative 3 would not make any additions to the NFTS. Alternative 2 would add two road segments (0.2 miles total) and two motorized trail segments (0.9 miles) to the NFTS. Alternative 4 would add one road segment (0.02 miles total) to the NFTS. Alternative 5 would add two road segments (0.2 miles total) and three motorized trail segments (0.9 miles total) to the NFTS. Alternative 6 would add six road segments (0.6 miles total) and three motorized trails (1.2 miles total) to the NFTS. Alternative 7 would add one trail segment (0.6 miles total) to the NFTS (Refer to Table 3.09-18). Four of the routes proposed for addition in the action alternatives are discussed below.

Route YRS-003B (0.34 miles) would be added to the NFTS as a motorized trail open to high clearance vehicles in Alternatives 2, 5, and 6. Use of this route would be seasonally prohibited for wet weather in Alternatives 5 and 6. The motorized use of this trail is consistent with semi-primitive motorized standards in the Forest Plan. The addition of this existing trail to the NFTS would have a minor negative effect on the overall natural appearing landscape and high scenic quality of the area.

Route TKS-11 would be added to the NFTS as a motorized trail open to high clearance vehicles in Alternatives 2, 5, 6, and 7. The route accesses a well-developed dispersed recreation site located near the Rubicon River. Use of this motorized trail would be seasonally prohibited for wet weather in Alternatives 5, 6, and 7. The motorized use of this trail is consistent with semi-primitive motorized standards in the Forest Plan. The addition of this route would have a minor effect on the overall natural appearing landscape and high scenic quality of the area.

Route ARM-90 (0.3 miles) would be added in Alternative 6 as a motorized trail in order to access an isolated NFTS motorized trail. No resource concerns have been noted for addition of this route which is located in a Roded Natural ROS class

Route D_16TH19-1 (0.4 miles) would be added as an ML2 road in order to access a popular dispersed recreation site. No resource concerns were noted for addition of this route which is located in a Roded Natural ROS class.

Establishment of Motorized “Open Areas”: Not applicable to these areas.

Changes to the NFTS: There is one proposed change to the class of vehicles allowed on existing NFTS Roads 3 and 3-4. A total of .35 mile of these roads within the Granite Chief Additions CIRA would be downgraded from an ML-3 road to an ML-2 to provide OHV users with a connection between road systems open to travel by non-highway legal vehicles. This change would have no affect on overall roadless characteristics.

Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would impose wet weather seasonal restrictions on the majority of native surface NFTS roads and motorized trails. Seasonal restrictions would improve the following roadless area

and wilderness characteristics: 1) High quality and undisturbed soil, water, and air resources; 2) Quality of water resources in the upper watersheds that all become sources of public drinking water; 3) Opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized and primitive recreation opportunities; and 4) Outstanding opportunities for solitude during the seasonal closure period. Opportunities for semi-primitive motorized activity would be reduced with implementation of seasonal restrictions.

Cumulative Effects

Each action alternative would improve the overall roadless character of the affected CIRAs by prohibiting cross country travel on 17,964 acres and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use.

Each of the action alternatives would reduce the mileage of routes available to motorized use by at least 50%. Alternative 4 would protect the most roadless and wilderness characteristics of the affected CIRAs because it would only add one short road segment (0.02 miles) to the NFTS and would implement seasonal use restrictions on 18.0 miles of existing NFTS roads and trails. Alternative 2 would protect the least overall roadless and wilderness characteristics as it would add 1.1 miles of motor vehicle routes to the NFTS and not implement any seasonal use restrictions on motor vehicle use.

Overall, each of the action alternatives would gradually improve roadless area and wilderness characteristics within the affected CIRA acreage over time as unauthorized routes passively restore to natural conditions.

Table 3.09-18. Total Roads/Trails/Areas in Citizen Inventoried Roadless Areas by Alternative

Action type		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
1. Cross-country travel (Acres)		Prohibited on 2,492 acres Continues on 15,472 acres	Prohibited on all 17,964 acres					
Unauthorized routes		19.6 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
Closed NFTS roads receiving some motorized use		6.1 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
2. Additions to the NFTS	a. Roads added to the NFTS	0.0 miles	0.2 miles	0.0 miles	0.02 miles	0.2 miles	0.6 miles	0.0 miles
	b. Motorized Trails added to the NFTS	0.0 miles	0.9 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	1.1 miles	1.2 miles	0.0 miles
3. Establishment of Motorized “Open Areas”		None	None	None	None	None	None	None
4. Changes to the NFTS	a. Change in Class of Vehicles resulting from approval of mixed use	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
	b. Change in Class of Vehicles resulting from changes in maintenance levels	0.0 miles	0.4 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.4 miles	0.4 miles	0.0 miles
	c. Change in Season of Use	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	3.5 miles	18.0 mi.	18.0 mi.	18.0 mi.	0.0 miles
	d. Reopening Maintenance Level 1 Roads	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 miles	0.0 mi.	0.0 miles	0.0 miles
5. Amendments to the Forest Plan		None	None	None	None	None	None	None
Total Mileage Open to Motorized Use		47.8 mi.	23.2 mi.	22.1 mi.	22.1 mi.	23.4 mi.	23.9 mi.	22.1 mi.
Percentage of Existing Routes Open for Motor Vehicle Use		100%	49%	46%	46%	49%	50%	46%

Wilderness: Affected Environment & Environmental Consequences

The Granite Chief Wilderness is the only federally designated wilderness within the Tahoe NF. The wilderness is 24,864 acres, and was part of Granite Chief IRA. The area is managed for primitive ROS recreation opportunities. Motorized vehicle use is prohibited within all federally designated wilderness areas. No motor vehicle routes are being proposed for addition within Granite Chief Wilderness. Three very short road segments accessing dispersed recreation sites (0.1 miles total) within a half-mile of the wilderness boundary are proposed for addition to the NFTS in Alternative 6. The addition of these routes to the NFTS would not have a negative effect on wilderness characteristics (specifically, effects to solitude from vehicle noise) because of their extremely short length and very close proximity to existing NFTS roads. No road or trail segments are being proposed for addition within a half-mile of the Granite Chief Wilderness in any of the other action alternatives.

Experimental Forests: Affected Environment

There are two Experimental Forests located within the Tahoe National Forest: Onion Creek and Sagehen. Onion Creek Experimental Forest is 2,846 acres in size and located south of Mt. Disney and the Sugar Bowl Ski Area. The management emphasis for this area is to continue promoting the tasks of studying the interrelationships between water, plants, soils and climate, as related to water quality, yield, and flow timing. Several roads are located within this Experimental Forest, but recreation and OHV use is not encouraged.

Sagehen Experimental Forest is 7,552 acres in size and located west of State Highway 89, about six miles north of the town of Truckee. The management emphasis for this area is to provide two alternative types of stand structure typified by even-age openings and stands managed to produce and maintain mature forest structure. This area includes one small campground and some designated four-wheel-drive trails. These recreation uses will be monitored for compatibility with the research purposes for this area.

Experimental Forests: Environmental Consequences

Onion Creek Experimental Forest

Cross Country Travel: Cross country travel is currently prohibited within the Onion Creek Experimental Forest and would continue to be prohibited in each action alternative.

Additions to the NFTS: One motorized trail providing access to a dispersed site would be added to the NFTS in Alternatives 2, 5 and 6. This route is less than 0.2 mile in length and use of the route would be consistent with Experimental Forest management objectives. The other action alternatives do not propose this route and therefore would not have any effects on the Onion Creek Experimental Forest.

Establishment of Motorized “Open Areas”: Not applicable to this area; therefore, there is no effect.

Changes to the NFTS: No changes in class of vehicles are proposed in any alternative. Seasonal restrictions would be implemented on all native surface roads and motorized trails during the wet periods of the year in Alternatives 4, 5 and 6. Those seasonal restrictions would be consistent with Experimental

Forest management objectives. No Maintenance Level 1 roads are being proposed for re-opening within this experimental forest in any of the action alternatives; therefore, there is no effect.

Forest Plan Amendment: Not applicable to this area; therefore, there is no effect.

Sagehen Experimental Forest

Cross Country Travel: Cross country travel is currently prohibited within the Sagehen Experimental Forest and would continue to be prohibited in each action alternative.

Additions to the NFTS: Within the Sagehen Experimental Forest there is one motorized trail being considered for addition to the NFTS. Route TKN 001 is included in Alternatives 2 and 5. This motorized trail is about a quarter mile in length and would connect an existing OHV trail to a system road. Without this connection the OHV route ends up being an out and back route which is a less preferable recreation opportunity. The effects from this route on the Experimental Forest are likely to be slight due to the length of the route. Alternatives 3, 4, 6 and 7 would have no effects because no motorized trails are proposed for addition to the NFTS within Sagehen Experimental Forest.

Establishment of Motorized “Open Areas”: Not applicable to this area; therefore, there is no effect.

Changes to the NFTS: No changes in class of vehicles are proposed in any alternative. Seasonal restrictions would be implemented on all native surface roads and motorized trails during the wet periods of the year in Alternatives 4, 5 and 6. Those seasonal restrictions would be consistent with Experimental Forest management objectives. No Maintenance Level 1 roads are being proposed for re-opening within this experimental forest in any of the action alternatives; therefore, there is no effect.

Forest Plan Amendment: Not applicable to this area; therefore, there is no effect.

Designated and Proposed Wild and Scenic Rivers: Affected Environment

Designated and Proposed Wild and Scenic Rivers are managed to preserve their notable values or features (identified as “outstandingly remarkable values”), as part of, or for eventual inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic River System. On the Tahoe National Forest, this management direction applies to those NFS lands within ¼ mile on either side of the North Fork of the American River, which has a “Wild River” designation; and proposed sections of Sagehen Creek, Lower South Yuba River, North Yuba River and Canyon Creek.

There are no proposed additions to the NFTS within the North Fork of the American Wild River corridor, or the proposed corridors along the North Fork Yuba River and Canyon Creek. A total of less than one-mile of unauthorized routes is being proposed for addition to the NFTS along Sagehen Creek and the South Yuba River. Each of the proposed additions (12 spur routes) would provide motor vehicle access to dispersed recreation sites adjacent to existing NFTS routes.

Several of the action alternatives have identified seasonal restrictions during wet-weather periods for motor vehicle routes located within the four proposed Wild and Scenic River corridors.

North Fork of the American River

The North Fork of the American is a federally designated Wild and Scenic River partially located on the Tahoe National Forest. Motor vehicle use is prohibited within the entire “Wild River” corridor (9,455 acres). There are currently no NFTS motor vehicle routes within the river corridor and no proposed additions in any of the alternatives. Management of the Wild River corridor would remain unchanged as a result of this planning effort.

The North Fork American River was designated as a “Wild River” because it is free of impoundments and generally inaccessible by motor vehicles, with watersheds and shorelines essentially primitive, and waters unpolluted. It represents a vestige of primitive America.

Canyon Creek

A thirty-mile section of Canyon Creek was proposed for designation as a Wild and Scenic River. Within this corridor, 28-miles were recommended as a “Wild River” and two-miles as a “Scenic River.” The Canyon Creek Wild and Scenic corridor (4,565 acres) was found eligible for its “outstandingly remarkable” primitive and semi-primitive recreation and scenic values. The proposed Wild and Scenic River corridor includes 5.3 miles of NFTS roads and trails and 2.4 miles of unauthorized motor vehicle routes.

Canyon Creek was recommended as an addition into the National Wild and Scenic River System because of its identified semi-primitive/primitive recreation and scenic values as well as the historic mining values of the area.

North Yuba River

The North Yuba Proposed Wild and Scenic River includes 45 miles of river corridor (14,228 acres) that is eligible for its “outstandingly remarkable” fisheries, heritage resources, vegetation, scenic and recreation values. The river is managed as a “Recreational River” from Yuba Pass downstream to Shenanigan Flats, and as a “Scenic River” from Shenanigan Flats to Wambo Bar. Within this corridor there are currently 13.3 miles of NFTS, and 10.3 miles of unauthorized motor vehicle routes included in the proposed Wild and Scenic River corridor. The river is easily accessible from motor vehicles, as State Highway 49 closely parallels 90 percent of this river segment.

The North Yuba River was recommended as an addition to the National Wild and Scenic River System because of the National significance of the gold mining history and State level significance of the fishery. In addition, the river provides a broad range of recreation opportunities, high scenic quality, and plant values.

Sagehen Creek

The eight-mile corridor (2,451 acres) of proposed Sagehen Creek Wild and Scenic River was found to be eligible for “Scenic River” designation because of its “outstandingly remarkable” ecosystem, geologic, fisheries, unique wildlife, and historic values. The proposed Wild and Scenic river corridor is paralleled by US 89 and NFTS roads. There are numerous dispersed recreation sites located adjacent to Sagehen Creek. Included within the proposed Wild and Scenic River corridor are 9.9 miles of NFTS roads and trails and 4.8 miles of unauthorized motor vehicle routes.

Sagehen Creek was recommended to as an addition into the National Wild and Scenic River System because of its outstandingly remarkable ecosystem values in the form of fens, unique plants, special geologic formations that support the fens, unique water chemistry that supports rare caddis flies, an excellent assemblage of native fisheries, unique wildlife values, and historical logging values eligible to the National Register of Historic Places.

South Yuba River

Nineteen-miles of the proposed South Yuba Wild and Scenic River are located on the Tahoe NF. The river corridor was found to be eligible for designation because of its “outstandingly remarkable” scenic, recreational and cultural values. The river segment from Jordan Creek to 0.3 miles below Lang’s Crossing is managed as a “Recreational River”; the next segment to approximately 0.5 miles below the confluence of Fall Creek is managed as a “Scenic River”; and the final segment to the forest boundary is managed as a “Recreational River”. Included within the proposed Wild and Scenic river corridor (3,161 acres) are 5.9 miles of NFTS motor vehicle routes and 2.4 miles of unauthorized motor vehicle routes.

The South Yuba River below Spaulding was recommended as an addition into the National Wild and Scenic River System because of its outstanding broad recreation opportunities and high scenic qualities, water associated recreation activities, and historic values.

Wild and Scenic Rivers: Environmental Consequences

The following section describes how the alternatives affect designated and proposed Wild and Scenic rivers using the following indicator: **Outstandingly Remarkable Values** as identified in the affected environment.

Alternative 1 (No Action)

Direct and Indirect Effects

Cross Country Travel: The No Action Alternative could degrade outstandingly remarkable values in all proposed Wild and Scenic river corridors because it allows the potential for cross country travel across all 24,405 affected acres. Cross country travel with continued route proliferation could reduce scenic, recreational, historic, ecosystem, wildlife, plant and other values across all proposed Wild and Scenic River corridors. The prohibition of motor vehicle use within the 9,445 acres of the North Fork American Wild River would continue.

Additions to the NFTS: There would be no direct or indirect effects on proposed Wild and Scenic River corridors because no unauthorized routes are being proposed for addition as NFTS roads or trails in the No Action Alternative.

Establishment of Motorized “Open Areas”: Not applicable to designated or proposed Wild and Scenic Rivers.

Changes to the NFTS: There would be no direct or indirect effects on proposed Wild and Scenic River corridors because no changes to the NFTS regarding class of vehicle, season of use or reopening of ML 1 roads is proposed in this alternative.

Forest Plan Amendment: Not applicable to designated or proposed Wild and Scenic Rivers.

Cumulative Effects

Alternative 1 would contribute towards negative cumulative effects on designated and proposed Wild and Scenic Rivers because additional future route proliferation would adversely affect the identified outstandingly remarkable values as mentioned in the affected environment.

Action Alternatives

Direct and Indirect Effects

Cross Country Travel: The Action Alternatives could improve the outstandingly remarkable values in all proposed Wild and Scenic river corridors because it prohibits cross country travel across all 24,405 affected acres.

Additions to the NFTS: This is addressed for each proposed Wild and Scenic River corridors.

Establishment of Motorized “Open Areas”: Not applicable to designated or proposed Wild and Scenic River corridors.

Changes to the NFTS: This is addressed for each proposed Wild and Scenic River corridor if there are changes to the NFTS regarding class of vehicle or season of use. There will be no re-opening of ML 1 roads in any alternative.

Forest Plan Amendment: Not applicable to designated or proposed Wild and Scenic Rivers; therefore, there are no effects and it will not be discussed further.

Cumulative Effects

The action alternatives would contribute towards positive cumulative effects on designated and proposed Wild and Scenic Rivers because decreased route proliferation would benefit the identified outstandingly remarkable values.

North Fork of the American River

Cross Country Travel: Cross country travel is already prohibited within the North Fork American Wild and Scenic River. There is no change in any of the alternatives. Continuing the prohibition on cross country travel will maintain or enhance the outstandingly remarkable values of the North Fork American River.

Additions to the NFTS: There are no proposed additions to the NFTS in any of the alternatives. Adding no additional roads or trails to the NFTS in North Fork American Wild River corridor would maintain or enhance the outstandingly remarkable values of the area.

Changes in the NFTS: There is 0.1 mile of native surface road along the edge of the Wild & Scenic River corridor. This road is currently managed as open to all vehicles all year. Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 impose wet weather seasonal restrictions on this road. These seasonal restrictions would be consistent with maintaining the outstandingly remarkable values of the North Fork American River. There are no changes in the class of vehicle and ML1 roads would not be re-opened in this corridor; therefore, there is no additional effect.

Cumulative Effects: Each of the action alternatives would enhance the outstandingly remarkable values associated with North Fork American River by prohibiting cross country travel within the river

corridor. Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would further enhance those values by restricting use of designated motor vehicle routes during the wet weather season.

Canyon Creek

Cross Country Travel: Cross country travel would be prohibited on 4,565 acres within the Canyon Creek river corridor. The prohibition of cross country travel would prevent proliferation of unauthorized routes and would serve to maintain or enhance the outstandingly remarkable values of Canyon Creek. The prohibition of cross country travel would result in a reduction of the total amount of roads and trails available for motorized use

Additions to the NFTS: There are no proposed additions to the NFTS in any of the alternatives. Adding no new roads or trails to the NFTS would maintain or enhance the remarkably outstanding values associated with Canyon Creek.

Changes to the NFTS: There are no changes proposed to the class of vehicles allowed on existing NFTS roads in any of the alternatives. Wet weather seasonal restrictions on all native surface roads and trails would be imposed in Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 which would improve the current water quality conditions. These seasonal restrictions would enhance the outstandingly remarkable values associated with Canyon Creek. There are no ML1 roads being re-opened in this corridor; therefore, there is no additional effect.

Cumulative Effects: Each of the action alternatives would enhance the outstandingly remarkable values associated with Canyon Creek by prohibiting cross country travel and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use within the river corridor. Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would further enhance those values by restricting use of designated motor vehicle routes during the wet weather season.

North Yuba River

Cross Country Travel: Cross country travel would be prohibited on 10,634 acres within the river corridor in each of the action alternatives. The prohibition of cross country travel would prevent proliferation of additional unauthorized routes and serve to maintain or enhance the outstandingly remarkable values of the North Yuba River.

Additions to the NFTS: There are no proposed additions to the NFTS in any of the alternatives.

Changes to the NFTS: Wet weather seasonal restrictions on all native surface roads and trails are proposed in Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 which would serve to improve the current water quality conditions. The class of vehicles allowed would be changed from “Roads open to highway legal vehicles only” to “Roads open to all vehicles” on 3.9 miles in Alternatives 2 and 5 and on 1.9 miles in Alternative 6. The changes in class of vehicles that would be allowed are the result of a mixed use safety analysis. Allowing mixed use would have no impact on identified outstandingly remarkable values. There are no ML1 roads being re-opened in this corridor; therefore, there is no additional effect.

Cumulative Effects: Each of the action alternatives would serve to maintain or enhance the outstandingly remarkable values associated with North Yuba River by prohibiting cross country travel and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use within the river corridor. Alternatives

4, 5 and 6 would further enhance those values by restricting use of designated motor vehicle routes during the wet weather season.

Sagehen Creek

Cross Country Travel: Cross country travel would be prohibited on 2,165 acres within the river corridor in each action alternative. The prohibition of cross country travel would prevent the proliferation of unauthorized routes and serve to maintain or enhance the outstandingly remarkable values identified for Sagehen Creek. The prohibition of cross country travel would result in a reduction of the total amount of roads and trails available for motorized use in each action alternative. Reducing the total miles of routes available for motor vehicle use would enhance the outstandingly remarkable values associated with Sagehen Creek.

Additions to the NFTS: Alternatives 3, 4 and 7 would not include any additions to the NFTS. Alternatives 2 and 5 propose the addition of 3 spur roads to the NFTS totaling 300 feet. The average length of these roads is 100 feet. These roads all come off existing NFTS roads to provide access to dispersed recreation sites. Alternative 6 proposes the addition of 4 roads to the NFTS totaling .1 miles. The average length of these roads is 160 feet. These roads also come off existing NFTS roads to provide access to dispersed recreation sites. No substantial resource concerns were identified for these proposed additions to the NFTS. The designation of these short spur roads accessing dispersed recreation sites would have minor negative effects to the outstandingly remarkable values associated with Sagehen Creek.

Changes to the NFTS: Wet weather seasonal restrictions on all native surface roads and trails would be imposed in Alternatives 4, 5 and 6. Those restrictions would serve to improve the current water quality conditions and therefore enhance the outstandingly remarkable values associated with Sagehen Creek. The class of vehicles allowed would be changed from “Roads open to highway legal vehicles only” to “Roads open to all vehicles” on 2.1 miles in Alternatives 2, 5 and 6. The proposed changes in vehicle class allowed is the result of a mixed use analysis as described in Appendix J. Allowing mixed use identified NFTS roads would have no impact of the rivers outstandingly remarkable values. There are no ML1 roads being re-opened in this corridor; therefore, there is no additional effect.

Cumulative Effects: Each of the action alternatives would maintain or enhance the outstandingly remarkable values associated with Sagehen Creek by prohibiting cross country travel and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use within the river corridor. Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would further enhance those values by restricting use of designated motor vehicle routes during the wet weather season.

South Yuba River

Cross Country Travel: Cross country travel would be prohibited on 3,161 acres within the river corridor in all of the action alternatives. Each action alternatives would reduce the number of miles of roads and trails available for motorized use. The reduction in mileage of routes available for motor vehicle use would enhance the high scenic quality associated with the South Yuba River.

Additions to the NFTS: Alternatives 3, 4 and 7 would not include any additions to the NFTS. Alternatives 2, 5 and 6 propose the addition of 8 spur roads to the NFTS totaling .5 miles. The average

length of these roads is 322 feet. These roads all come off existing NFTS roads to provide access to dispersed recreation sites within the “Recreational River” corridor. These short spur roads accessing dispersed recreation sites would serve to maintain or enhance the outstandingly remarkable values associated with South Yuba River by providing opportunities for motorized access to visitors for enjoyment of the recreation and scenic values associated with the South Yuba River.

Changes to the NFTS: The class of vehicles allowed would be changed from “Roads open to highway legal vehicles only” to “Roads open to all vehicles” on three tenths of a mile in Alternatives 2, 5 and 6. These changes in class of vehicles allowed are the result of a mixed use analysis as described in Appendix J. Allowing mixed use on these existing NFTS roads would have no impact of the rivers outstandingly remarkable values. Wet weather seasonal restrictions on all native surface roads and trails would be imposed in Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 which would improve the current water associated recreation activities values of the South Yuba River. There are no ML1 roads being re-opened in this corridor; therefore, there is no additional effect.

Cumulative Effects: Each of the action alternatives would serve to maintain or enhance the outstandingly remarkable values associated with South Yuba River by prohibiting cross country travel and reducing the amount of roads and trails available for motorized use within the river corridor. Alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would further enhance those values by restricting use of designated motor vehicle routes during the wet weather season.

Research Natural Areas: Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

The Forest has three areas: Lyon Peak/Needle Lake (700 acres) located on the northern boundary of Granite Chief Wilderness, Sugar Pine Point (625 acres) located about 4 miles due south of Cisco Grove just north of the North Fork American River; and Babbitt Peak (1061 acres) located north and west of Babbitt Peak on the Sierraville District. Babbitt Peak was designated for the distinctive and unusual occurrence of Washoe pine and mature stands of mountain mahogany and their significant potential for research and ecological study. Sugar Pine Point was designated for the good examples of the various stages of succession in a mixed conifer forest and the area represents a zone of overlap of ponderosa pine and Jeffrey pine. Lyon Peak was designated for the Mountain Hemlock and several other uncommon plants that provide high potential for research and ecological study. Motor vehicles are excluded from all three of these areas. No changes in management of these RNAs will occur under any alternative. There are no environmental consequences associated with RNAs in any of the alternatives.

Special Interest Areas: Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

The 1990 Forest Land and Resource Management Plan designated 7 Special Interest Areas (SIA). Each area has specific language that may or may not permit some level of OHV use. In general due to the special nature of each of these areas, OHV trails would either be excluded or not encouraged. The Special Interest Areas are: Placer County Big Tree Grove Botanical Area (346 acres), Devils Postpile Geologic

Area (69 acres), Glacier Meadow Geologic Area (84 acres), Grouse Falls Scenic Area (220), Meadow Lake Cultural Area (58 acres), Sagehen Headwaters (79 acres), and Mason Fen (30) acres. If an OHV trail is proposed within a SIA the land management plan direction and land allocation would have to be considered to determine if a trail was allowable and or appropriate. No changes in management of these SIAs will occur under any alternative. There are no environmental consequences associated with SIAs in any of the alternatives.

Summary of Effects Analysis across All Alternatives

This section summarizes the effects analysis for roadless and special areas for each measurement indicator. Table 3.09-19 summarizes the effects analysis for special areas by ranking each alternative based on negative or positive impacts that could occur from proposed management actions. A score of one indicates that the alternative would have the most negative impact to Special Area resources; while a score of seven identifies the alternative that would be most beneficial to those resources.

Table 3.09-19 Summary Table – Special Areas – Tahoe NF

Impact to Special Area Resources	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7
All IRAs, Experimental Forest, W & S Rivers	1	3	5	7	2	6	4