

Appendix A – Forest Plan Direction and Travel Management Criteria for Designation of Roads, Trails and Areas (36 CFR 212.55)

Forest Plan Direction

The Helena National Forest Plan (Forest Plan, USDA Forest Service 1986, as amended) provides management direction for the project area. The Forest Plan divides the Forest into management areas (MAs) – each with different goals, resource potentials, and limitations. Management areas are not single, contiguous units; they consist of many individual pieces, each classified with one of the specific management area prescriptions.

Forestwide goals, objectives, and standards are found in Chapter II of the Forest Plan (pp. II-1 to II-36). The Plan also provides goals for each of the 14 management areas (MAs). These MAs are described in Chapter II of the Forest Plan.

The Forest Plan includes direction for road and trail management and provides important guidance for this project. Forestwide direction that is applicable to this project includes:

- Goal 15 (Forestwide II/2) – develop and implement a road management program with road use and travel restrictions that are responsive to resource protection needs and public concerns
- Objectives, Facilities (Forestwide II/6) – transportation facilities such as roads and trails will be constructed, managed, and maintained to cost effectively meet the Forest land and resource objectives and visitors’ needs. The Forests transportation system will be coordinated and integrated with public and private systems to the fullest extent possible...soil and water conservation practices will be applied...to ensure that Forest water quality goals will not be degraded
- Forestwide Standards, Facilities - Road Management (Forestwide II/31-32) – the criteria to be used for road, trail or area restrictions are safety, resource protection, economics, conflicting uses, facility protection, public support, land management objectives.

Management areas within the Blackfoot Travel Planning Area include: A1, L1, L2, M1, N1, P1, R1, T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, W1, W2, and other lands. Table A- 1 includes a description of each, and the management goals included from the Forest Plan. These goals, standards and guidelines for each of these management areas would be followed for this project; where there are differences or clarifications needed, these are discussed as part of the alternative descriptions in chapter 2 and in the resource-specific section in chapter 3 (i.e., there may be a need for Forest Plan amendments related to trails within the R-1 (proposed research natural areas) and N-1 management areas (undeveloped land for dispersed recreation). Chapter 3 of this document provides a summary of how Forest Plan direction for each of these management areas (as well as Forestwide direction) would be met for each alternative, by resource. The project record provides additional detail on how management area-specific goals, standards and objectives apply to this project.

Table A- 1. Forest plan management area descriptions and goals

Management Area	Description	Management Goal
A-1 (III/3)	These sites are the ranger stations, guard stations, and service sites administered by the Helena National Forest.	Provide and maintain sites or facilities necessary for administering the Helena National Forest.
L1 (III/11)	These lands are within grazing allotments and are generally nonforested consisting of bunchgrasses, sage and other shrubs or sparsely forested areas with Douglas-fir or ponderosa pine as the dominant species. Slopes vary from 10 percent to greater than 60. This management area contains inclusions of elk calving areas, hiding cover, and summer range, but excludes identified elk winter range.	Maintain or improve vegetative conditions and livestock forage productivity. Optimize livestock production through intensive grazing systems, while maintaining other resource uses.
L2 (III/12)	This management area is land which is both identified big game winter range and within existing grazing allotments. The land is generally nonforested with bunchgrass, sage and other shrubs or sparsely forested areas of Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine. The area is usually at lower elevations in the foothills and has slopes from 10 to 60 percent. The area provides thermal and hiding cover on identified winter range.	Maintain or improve range vegetative conditions and forage production for livestock and elk.
M-1 (III/5)	These areas are nonforested and forested land where timber management and range or wildlife habitat improvements are currently uneconomical or environmentally infeasible. The area is scattered throughout the Forest and is found at all elevations and slopes ranging from 10 percent to over 60 percent. The parcels range in size from 20 to 500 acres.	Maintain the present condition with minimal investment for resource activities, while protecting the basic soil, water, and wildlife resources.

Management Area	Description	Management Goal
N-1 (III/8)	<p>This management area consists of three proposed research natural areas (RNA) identified on the Helena National Forest to meet Regional targets. Forest Plan Table 11-2 on page 11-8 lists the Forest RNA targets. The three proposed areas fill 18 of the 26 targets. Target ecosystems not yet represented by a proposed RNA are: PSME/VAGL (Douglas-fir/blue huckleberry), PSME/CARU (Douglas-fir/ pinegrass), mLA/VAGL (subalpine fir/blue huckleberry), STCO/BCGR (needle and thread/blue grama) , RHTR/AGSP (skunkbrush/bluebunch wheatgrass), RHTR/FEID (skunkbrush/Idaho fescue), beaver ponds, thermal springs. As more target ecosystems are identified on the ground, more RNAs could be proposed and added to this management area.</p> <p>The three areas on the Helena--Red Mountain, Granite Butte, and Kingsberry Gulch--typify important ecosystems in southwestern Montana.</p>	<p>Provide areas for research, observation, and study of undisturbed ecosystems that typify important forest, shrubland, grassland, alpine, aquatic, and geologic types on the Helena National Forest.</p>
R1 (III/24)	<p>This management area consists of large blocks--greater than 3,000 acres--of undeveloped land suited for dispersed recreation. These Lands include Mount Helena, Trout Creek Canyon, Indian Meadows, Nevada Mountain, Camas Lakes, and Silver King/Falls Creek. The Silver King/Falls Creek area has been identified by the USGS as having a high potential for oil and gas. These areas provide opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized recreation and are characterized predominately by natural or natural appearing environment where there is a high probability of isolation from man's activities.</p>	<p>Provide a variety of semi-primitive and primitive nonmotorized recreation opportunities. Provide for maintenance and/or enhancement of fishery, big game, and nongame habitat grazing allotments, visual quality, and water quality.</p>
T1 (III/30)	<p>This management area consists of lands available and suitable for timber management with varying physical and biological environments as determined by soil, slope, aspect, elevation and climatic factors. Vegetation varies from ponderosa pine on the drier sites to spruce in the more mesic sites with nearly all slopes represented. Although this area consists primarily of suitable forest land, there are inclusions of nonforested and nonproductive forest lands. This area includes some small ponds and marshes that are considered unique to this part of Montana.</p>	<p>Provide healthy timber stands and optimize timber growing potential over the planning horizon.</p> <p>Emphasize cost- effective timber production, while protecting the soil productivity. Maintain water quality and stream bank stability. Provide for dispersed recreation opportunities, wildlife habitat, and livestock use, when consistent with the timber management goals.</p>

Management Area	Description	Management Goal
T2 (III/34)	<p>This management area occurs where big game winter range and timber values are present. Most of the area is in lower elevations, below 6,000 feet. Vegetation varies from ponderosa pine on the dry south aspects to spruce in the riparian portions of the management area. Although this area consists primarily of forested lands; there are inclusions of grassland interspersed throughout.</p>	<p>Provide for the maintenance and enhancement of big game winter range. Harvest timber on a programmed basis, consistent with big game winter range values. Emphasize cost-effective timber production, while protecting the soil productivity. Maintain water quality and streambank stability. Provide for other resource uses where compatible with timber and big game winter range management goals.</p>
T3 (III/38)	<p>This management area consists of lands that have primary forage, resting, and security characteristics that provide important spring and summer requirements for all big game species. These lands also supply the habitat needs of a wide variety of nongame forest dwelling wildlife. In addition, lands within this management area contain productive timber sites available and suitable for timber management. The variation in elevation, topography, slope, and aspect, in addition to the often abundant surface water (seeps, springs, etc.) make these areas rich in species diversity and total numbers within species groups. This area also has inclusions of small grassland parks.</p>	<p>Maintain and/or enhance habitat characteristics favored by elk and other big game species. Provide for healthy timber stands and a timber harvest program compatible with wildlife goals for this area. Emphasize cost-effective timber production, while protecting the soil productivity.</p> <p>Maintain water quality and stream bank stability. Provide for other resource objectives where compatible with the big game summer range and timber goals.</p>
T4 (III/42)	<p>This management area is productive timberland within the sensitive viewing area of many major travel routes, use areas, and waterbodies. Vegetation varies from ponderosa pine on the drier sites to spruce in the moistest areas. Nearly all slopes and aspects are represented. Most of the area is suitable forest land, but there are some inclusions of nonforested and nonproductive forest land.</p>	<p>Maintain healthy stands of timber within the visual quality objective of retention and partial retention. Provide for other resource uses as long as they are compatible with visual quality objectives. Emphasize cost-effective timber production, while protecting the soil productivity. Maintain water quality and stream bank stability.</p>
T5 (III/46)	<p>This management area consists of suitable timber stands interspersed with natural openings, generally with existing livestock allotments. Forage is provided by natural meadows and transitory range. It encompasses lower elevations and dry sites usually on the fringes of native grasslands.</p>	<p>Increase production and quality of forage. Manage timber sites cost effectively. Provide for healthy stands of timber and timber products consistent with increasing quality and quantity of forage. Emphasize cost-effective timber production, while protecting the soil productivity. Maintain water quality and streambank stability. Provide for other resource uses that are compatible with the other goals.</p>

Management Area	Description	Management Goal
W1 (III/50)	This management area contains a variety of wildlife habitat ranging from important big game summer range to big game winter range. It has a variety of physical environments including riparian, calving or fawning areas, and hiding cover. All slopes, aspects and elevations are represented as well as a variety of vegetation ranging from grasslands to densely timbered areas.	Optimize wildlife habitat potential, including old growth, over the long term. Provide for other resource uses, if they are compatible with wildlife management goals.
W2 (III/53)	This management area consists of riparian and other lands that have forage, resting, and security characteristics provide important spring, summer, and fall requirements for all big game species. Range allotments are in parts of the area. The variations in elevation, topography, slope, and aspect make these areas rich in species diversity.	Maintain and/or enhance habitat characteristics favored by elk and other big game species during spring, summer, and fall. Provide habitat diversity for nongame wildlife species. Provide forage for both big game and livestock. Provide for other resource objectives as long as their uses are compatible with the wildlife and livestock objectives.

Forest Plan Amendments Relevant to the Blackfoot Travel Plan

Amendment 12, January 1996. Deletes Kingsberry Gulch as a proposed Research Natural Areas (RNA) and adds Indian Meadows and Cabin Gulch as new proposed RNAs.

Kingsbury Gulch was reviewed on the ground and was determined that it did not represent the ecological conditions needed to complete the natural areas system and where human disturbance is not evident for the past 50 years. Cabin Gulch and Indian Meadows met the selection criteria for RNAs and contain the habitat types listed in the Forest Plan.

Amendment 14, May 1996. Provides interim direction to protect habitat and populations of resident native fish outside of anadromous fish habitat in (Eastern Oregon, Eastern Washington, Idaho and) Western Montana.

The interim direction—the Inland Native Fish Strategy—applies except where PACFISH or the President’s Plan [Northwest Forest Plan] apply. The direction is in the form of riparian management objectives, standards and guidelines, and monitoring requirements. The standard and guidelines apply to an array of resources: timber, roads, grazing, recreation, minerals, fire/fuels and general riparian area management; watershed and habitat restoration, and fisheries and wildlife restoration. It identifies priority watersheds and identified watershed analysis as a prerequisite for determining which processes and parts of the landscape affect fish and riparian habitat.

Amendment 16, July 1997. Adds Indian Meadows and Cabin Gulch as new Research Natural Areas and deletes the Kingsbury Gulch RNA. In addition, one area, Granite Butte is proposed for designation.

The associated management area designation changes were identified and changes in the Forest plan wording or chapters II and III were identified. In particular, it added a recreation standard that states, “Dispersed motorized recreation such as ATVs, OHVs, and over-snow vehicles will not be allowed. Area closures are recommended.”

Also, Establishment reports have been prepared for each designated area.

Amendment 19, October 2000. Changes Forest Plan forestwide management standards for locatable minerals (Forest Plan page II-27) as a result of the decision made from the Final Rocky Mountain Mineral Withdrawal EIS.

The amendment adds acres withdrawn on the Lincoln Ranger District to Appendix Q of the Forest Plan.

Amendment 20, January 2001. Off-Highway Vehicle Record of Decision and Plan Amendment for Montana, North Dakota and portions of South Dakota.

The amendment restricts yearlong, wheeled motorized cross-country travel with a few specific exceptions. Subsequent site-specific planning would result in designation of road and trails for their appropriate use.

Forestwide Forest Plan Standards Relevant to the Blackfoot Travel Plan

Forestwide Forest Plan standards for each resource that are relevant to travel management planning are identified in the following forest plan consistency tables. Those standards not applicable to travel management planning have not been included. Each resource report addresses Forest Plan consistency.

Table A- 2. Forestwide forest plan standards and consistency determinations

Recreation Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
1. New campgrounds and other developed recreation facilities, such as boat ramps or picnic areas, will generally not be constructed. Continue to maintain existing developed sites, but emphasize providing dispersed recreation opportunities. Removal of existing sites may be necessary, in some cases, due to site deterioration or excessive maintenance cost.	The Blackfoot Travel Plan does not include any proposals for new developed recreation facilities. Dispersed recreation opportunities would be enhanced through implementation of either action alternative.
2. Encourage ski-touring trail development by locating and marking additional trails and by encouraging the private sector to develop trails.	This Blackfoot Travel Plan does not propose new cross-country ski trails.
3. Complete a Recreation Opportunity Guide (ROG) for each Ranger District, to make recreation opportunities more visible to the public.	Forest ROGs have been replaced with website information about recreation opportunities.

Recreation Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
<p>4. A specific Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST) route will not be identified prior to approval of the comprehensive plan being prepared by the Forest Service and the Secretary of Agriculture's Advisory Council. Once the comprehensive plan is approved, the management direction will be incorporated further in this plan. Based on the Comprehensive Plan, a more detailed analysis will be completed to show trail segments, objectives and specific route locations. The legislation authorizing the CDNST specifically intended that the trail would not adversely affect or preclude the application of normal management practices on lands adjacent to or within the trail corridor (both public and private). It is not the intent of the legislation that a separate "management plan" be developed for the CDNST, but to provide for the development and management of the trail as a management practice which is integrated into the overall prescription for the land through which the trail passes.</p>	<p>A Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan was approved in 2009. The Helena National Forest does not have a separate management plan for the CDNST. The location of CDNST segments on the Helena Forest are based on travel plan decisions.</p>
<p>5. Emphasize "Pack-In Pack-Out" use in dispersed recreation areas and in wilderness to reduce resource impacts and management costs.</p>	<p>The Blackfoot Travel Plan does not propose any changes to the "pack-in-pack-out" system.</p>
<p>6. Provide information to users of remote areas and wilderness about potential conflicts with humans and bears and proper camping methods to avoid such conflicts.</p>	<p>The Blackfoot Travel Plan does not address dissemination of public information regarding potential conflicts between humans and bears.</p>

Forestwide Cultural Resources Standard	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
<p>1. The Forest will undertake a systematic program of cultural resource inventory, evaluation, and preservation aimed at the enhancement and protection of significant cultural resource values, as prescribed for Federal Agencies by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR 800. Cultural resource sites evaluated as significant will be preserved in place whenever possible. When such resources are threatened by project development, an effort to avoid or minimize adverse impact by project redesign will be made. When avoidance is judged by the Forest Supervisor to be imprudent or infeasible, the values of the site will be conserved through proper scientific excavation, recordation, analysis, and reporting. An inventory survey for cultural resources will be made for all significant ground-disturbing activities. Forest inventory efforts will be focused in three areas including: a. Areas where specific project activities, such as timber sales, road developments, range improvements, or mineral development activities, result in significant ground disturbance.</p>	<p>Completed National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 process for the Blackfoot Non-Winter Travel Plan project- inventory, evaluation of significance, evaluation of project effect, State Historic Preservation Office and Tribal consultation. Particular consideration given to cultural resources listed on the National Register of Historic Places.</p>

Forestwide Cultural Resources Standard	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
<p>b. Large areas where substantial development impact is anticipated, such as oil- and gas-planning areas.</p> <p>c. Areas where formal archaeological surveys may provide management data that are broadly applicable to ecologically similar areas and which will facilitate the development of predictive models capable of addressing issues of cultural site density, distribution, and significance. The Forest will encourage scientific research by privately funded universities as a means of acquiring additional inventory and interpretive data. Such projects will be coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Cultural resource site information is exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. Following Forest Supervisor written approval, site locational data may be released on a need-to-know basis to consultants, universities, or museums. Discovered cultural resources will be evaluated in relation to published Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) criteria for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places. Cultural resource sites determined eligible will be nominated to the National Register. The Forest will coordinate cultural resource issues and concerns with the appropriate Native American groups to ensure that Forest management activities are not detrimental to the protection and preservation of Native American religious and cultural sites, treaty rights, and religious and cultural practices. The Forest will enhance and interpret significant cultural sites for the education and enjoyment of the public when such development will not degrade the cultural property or conflict with other resource considerations. Known significant cultural resource sites on the Forest will be protected from inadvertent or intentional damage or destruction. Portions of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail are on the Helena Forest. Some interpretive signing has been placed along the trail. Normal management practices can still access land adjacent to or within the trail corridor, however, project activities will be conducted to minimize disturbance to the cultural site.</p>	

Forestwide Big Game Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
<p>1. On important summer and winter range, adequate thermal and hiding cover will be maintained to support the habitat potential.</p>	<p>Standard is met. Thermal cover and hiding cover are present throughout the project area and should not be affected as a result of project implementation.</p>

Forestwide Big Game Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?															
2. An environmental analysis for project work will include a cover analysis. The cover analysis should be done on drainage or elk herd unit/area basis.	Standard is met. The cover analysis is completed at the elk herd unit scale.															
3. Subject to hydrologic and other resource constraints, elk summer range will be maintained at 35 percent or greater hiding cover and areas of winter range will be maintained at 25 percent or greater thermal cover in drainages or elk herd units.	Standard is met. Thermal cover and hiding cover should not be affected as a result of project implementation. There are new construction routes proposed in hiding cover; however, new routes should be designed such that thermal and hiding cover will continue to function accordingly.															
<p>4. Implement an aggressive road management program to maintain or improve big game security. To decide which roads, trails, and areas should be restricted and opened, the Forest will use the following guidelines developed with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (MDFWP). The Forest visitor map will document the road management program.</p> <p>4a. Road management will be implemented to at least maintain big game habitat capability and hunting opportunity. To provide for a first week bull elk harvest that does not exceed 40 percent of the total bull harvest, roads will be managed during the general big game hunting season to maintain open road densities with the following limits.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="293 1050 862 1325"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="293 1050 480 1182">Existing Percent Hiding Cover (according to FS definition of hiding cover) (1)</th> <th data-bbox="480 1050 708 1182">Existing Percent Hiding Cover (according to MDFWP definition of hiding cover) (2)</th> <th data-bbox="708 1050 862 1182">Max Open Road Density</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="293 1182 480 1220">56</td> <td data-bbox="480 1182 708 1220">80</td> <td data-bbox="708 1182 862 1220">2.4 mi/mi (2)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="293 1220 480 1257">49</td> <td data-bbox="480 1220 708 1257">70</td> <td data-bbox="708 1220 862 1257">1.9 mi/mi (2)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="293 1257 480 1295">42</td> <td data-bbox="480 1257 708 1295">60</td> <td data-bbox="708 1257 862 1295">1.2 mi/mi (2)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="293 1295 480 1325">35</td> <td data-bbox="480 1295 708 1325">50</td> <td data-bbox="708 1295 862 1325">0.1 mi/mi (2)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p data-bbox="293 1325 862 1377">(1) A timber stand that conceals 90 percent or more of a standing elk at 200 feet. (2) A stand of coniferous trees having a crown closure of greater than 40 percent.</p> <p data-bbox="293 1444 862 1556">The existing hiding cover to open road density ratio should be determined over a large geographic area, such as a timber sale analysis area, a third order drainage, or an elk herd unit.</p>	Existing Percent Hiding Cover (according to FS definition of hiding cover) (1)	Existing Percent Hiding Cover (according to MDFWP definition of hiding cover) (2)	Max Open Road Density	56	80	2.4 mi/mi (2)	49	70	1.9 mi/mi (2)	42	60	1.2 mi/mi (2)	35	50	0.1 mi/mi (2)	Two out of 8 herd units currently meet Standard 4(a) and only those same two would continue to meet Standard 4(a) under all action alternatives. This situation would be addressed in a separate <i>Forest Plan</i> amendment; see appendix F for more details regarding the existing standard and the proposed amendment.
Existing Percent Hiding Cover (according to FS definition of hiding cover) (1)	Existing Percent Hiding Cover (according to MDFWP definition of hiding cover) (2)	Max Open Road Density														
56	80	2.4 mi/mi (2)														
49	70	1.9 mi/mi (2)														
42	60	1.2 mi/mi (2)														
35	50	0.1 mi/mi (2)														
4b. Elk calving grounds and nursery areas will be closed to motorized vehicles during peak use by elk. Calving is usually in late May through mid-June and nursery areas are used in late June through July.	Standard is met. Elk calving grounds and nursery areas have not been mapped as these areas tend to be discrete and at times variable. While no specific closure dates are proposed, if any nursery grounds or calving areas are identified during this and subsequent projects, they will be protected according to the standard.															

Forestwide Big Game Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
4c. All winter range areas will be closed to vehicles between December 1 and May 15. Exceptions (i.e., access through the winter range to facilitate land management or public use activities on other lands) may be granted.	This plan proposes seasonal restrictions on routes throughout the planning area.
4d. At restricted roads, trails, and areas, signs will be posted which tell: (1) type of restriction; (2) reason for the restriction; (3) time period of restriction; and (4) cooperating agencies.	This will occur during the implementation phase of the project.
4e. Roads that will be closed will be signed during construction or reconstruction telling the closure date and the reason for closure.	This will occur during the implementation phase of the project.
4f. Enforcement is a shared responsibility. Enforcement needs will be coordinated with the MDFWP.	Travel planning meetings with FWP resulted in coordination discussions between both agencies. Implementation of the travel plan will be coordinated with FWP post decision and prior to and during implementation.
4g. Opened Forest roads will normally have a designed speed of less than 15 miles per hour. Exact design speeds will be determined through project planning. Loop roads are not recommended and will be avoided in most cases.	Posting of speeds will occur during project implementation. Some loop trails will be adopted to avoid pioneering of new trails. No loop roads are proposed.
4h. The Forest Road Management Program will be developed in conjunction with MFWP and interested groups or individuals. The Road Management Program will contain the specific seasonal and yearlong road, trail, and area restrictions and will be based on the goals and objectives of the management areas in Chapter III of the Forest Plan.	Standard is met. Travel planning meetings were conducted with FWP. See meeting notes and alternative descriptions.
4i. Representatives from the Helena Forest and MFWP will meet annually to review the existing Travel Plan.	This will occur during the implementation phase.
5. On elk summer range the minimum size area for hiding cover will be 40 acres and the minimum size area on winter range for thermal cover will be 15 acres.	Standard is met. Hiding cover is mapped only where it occurs in 40-acre patches or more. Thermal cover is mapped only where it occurs in patches of 15 acres or more.
6. Montana Cooperative Elk-Logging Study Recommendations, in Appendix C, will be followed during timber sale and road construction projects.	Standard is met. The applicable sections of the Recommendations include (1) Road Construction and Design; (2) Road Management; and (3) Area Closures During the Hunting Season. Several roads are proposed for closure or application of a seasonal restriction to improve elk habitat. See the alternatives descriptions.
7. Inventorying and mapping important big game summer/fall and winter ranges will continue.	Standard is met. The Helena National Forest Wildlife Staff continue to work with Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Area Biologists to update our big game range maps.
8. Any proposed sagebrush reduction programs will be analyzed on a case-by-case basis for the possible impact on big game winter range.	Not applicable.

Forestwide Big Game Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
9. Occupied bighorn sheep and mountain goat range will be protected during resource activities. Project plans for livestock, timber, or other resource development will include stipulations to avoid or mitigate impacts on their range. Conflicts between livestock and these wildlife species will be resolved in favor of the big game.	Not applicable. Bighorn sheep are not present in project area. Mountain goat habitat will not be affected by this project, action alternatives would reduce motorized access to mountain goat habitat.
10. Moose habitat will be managed to provide adequate browse species diversity and quantity to support current moose populations.	Not applicable; no habitat will be modified.

Forest Wide Threatened and Endangered Wildlife Species Standards	If the standard applies, how is it being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
1. A biological evaluation will be written for all projects that have potential to impact any T&E species or its habitat. All evaluations will address each projects potential to adversely modify a listed species habitat or behavior. If an adverse impact is determined, mitigation measures will be developed to avoid any adverse modification of a listed species habitat or behavior. If all possible mitigation measures do not result in a no affect determination, then informal and/or formal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be initiated.	The analysis of TES species in the Wildlife Specialist's Report serves as the Biological Evaluation for this travel planning effort. A separate Biological Assessment of T&E species will be prepared and submitted to the USFWS for consultation.
2. Grizzly bear—Apply the guidelines in Appendix D to the Management Situation 1 and 2 (referred to essential and occupied prior to 1984) grizzly bear habitat on the Forest (see map in Appendix D). Initiate field studies in undesignated areas known to be used by grizzlies, to determine if the areas should be designated as grizzly habitat. Until sufficient evidence is available to determine the status of these areas, manage them according to Appendix E, Grizzly Management Guidelines Outside of Recovery Areas.	Management Situation guidelines are applied and addressed in project analysis. Coordination with MTFWP is ongoing to evaluate grizzly bear use outside the wilderness and to determine appropriate management levels.
3. In occupied grizzly habitat, to minimize man-caused mortality the open road density will not exceed the 1980 density of 0.55 miles per square mile, which was determined to have little effect on habitat capability.	Open road densities were analyzed for this project and all alternatives are below 0.55 miles per square mile. Action Alternatives decrease road open road densities.
4. Research activity on grizzly bears or their habitat will be reviewed by the Research Subcommittee of the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee.	No research proposals or activities for grizzly bears are anticipated in the near future and coordination would occur for any future research.
5. Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon – Continue working with the MFWP, the USFWS, and the BLM to identify nesting and wintering areas. Identify nest territories and roost sites, and protect both from adverse habitat alteration. [Guidelines for identifying bald eagle habitat are in the Wildlife Planning Records.] Powerlines constructed in bald eagle or peregrine falcon habitat will be designed to protect raptors from electrocution. See Appendix D for bald eagle and peregrine	Monitoring of peregrine falcon eyries and bald eagle nests has been ongoing on the HNF since the late 1980s. Both species have been removed from the endangered species list in recent years. Although this standard no longer applies, neither species is affected by Travel Plan alternatives.

Forest Wide Threatened and Endangered Wildlife Species Standards	If the standard applies, how is it being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
falcon habitat maps.	
6. Gray Wolf – With the USFWS and MFWP, investigate reported gray wolf observations to confirm or deny gray wolf presence. If presence of gray wolf is confirmed, determine if the habitat is necessary for the wolves’ recovery. If the habitat is necessary, coordinate with MFWP and the USFWS to implement the Wolf Recovery Plan. See Appendix D for gray wolf habitat map.	The wolf is no longer listed as a threatened or an endangered species. Effects on wolves and communications with the USFWS and MFWP are discussed in sections on the wolf under Sensitive Species.

Forestwide Threatened and Endangered (T&E) Plant Species Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
1. A biological evaluation will be written for all projects that have potential to impact any T&E species or its habitat. All evaluations will address each project’s potential to adversely modify a listed species habitat or behavior. If an adverse impact is determined, mitigation measures will be developed to avoid any adverse modification of a listed species habitat or behavior. If all possible mitigation measures do not result in a no effect determination, then informal and/or formal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be initiated.	There are no known T&E plant species on the Forest.
7. No known threatened or endangered plants are on the Helena National Forest.	There are no known T&E plant species on the HNF.
<p>8. Species of Special Concern</p> <p>There are habitats on the Forest where the following species of special concern may be found (Plant Species of Special Concern, USDA-FS, 1980):</p> <p>Lemhi penstemon (<i>Penstemon lemhiensis</i>) Howell's gumweed (<i>Grindelia howellii</i>) Missoula phlox (<i>Phlox missoulensis</i>) Cliff toothwort (<i>Cardamine rupicola</i>)</p> <p>Missoula phlox and cliff toothwort have been located on the Helena Forest.</p> <p>Other Plants that are termed rare have also been located on the Helena Forest. They are Klaus' bladderpod (<i>Lesquerella plausii</i>) and long-styled thistle (<i>Cirsium longistylum</i>). Two additional rare plants, Moschatel (<i>Adoxa moschalellina</i>) and Lesser rushy milkvetch (<i>Astragalus connvallarius</i>) are believed to occur on the Helena Forest but currently have no occurrence records.</p> <p>If any of these species are verified on the Helena Forest, appropriate measures, pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, will be taken.</p>	<p>A Biological Evaluation for sensitive plant species and species of special concern is included in the project record.</p> <p>Subsequent to the completion of the Forest Plan, the Regional Forester designated sensitive plant species for the Region, and identified the known and suspected species for each Forest. Regional office direction in 2011 updated the Forest's sensitive species list. That list still includes two of the species listed in the forest plan, Howell's gumweed, and Missoula phlox (now called <i>Phlox kelseyi</i> var. <i>missoulensis</i> instead of <i>P. missoulensis</i>). The other species that are listed in the Forest Plan are not included in the updated sensitive plants list for the Forest or the Northern Region and are not included in specific species searches. On August 26, 2011 the Regional Forester added whitebark pine to the list, stating the sensitive species designation would go into effect 120 days from that date (Weldon 2011a). The Regional Sensitive Species list can be found in the Botany Specialist Report for the project.</p>

Forestwide Management Indicator Species (MIS) Standards (Wildlife)	If the standard applies, how is it being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
<p>1. Populations of wildlife "indicator species" will be monitored to measure the effect of management activities on representative wildlife habitats with the objective of ensuring that viable populations of existing native and desirable non-native plant and animal species are maintained. See Chap. IV, part D Monitoring and Evaluation for specific monitoring requirements. Indicator species have been identified for those species groups whose habitat is most likely to be changed by Forest management activities. The mature tree dependent group indicator species is the marten; the old growth dependent group is represented by the pileated woodpecker and the goshawk; the snag dependent species group is represented by the hairy woodpecker; the threatened and endangered species include grizzly bear, gray wolf, bald eagle and peregrine falcon; commonly hunted indicator species are elk, mule deer and bighorn sheep.</p>	<p>Habitat has been modeled for many of the MIS for which there are potential effects; the documentation is in the project file. Habitat components in the road corridors—primarily snags and logs—will be removed by firewood cutters. This removal is insufficient to influence local population structure or region-wide viability.</p>

Forest Wide Snag Standards	If the standard applies, how is it being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
<p>To keep an adequate snag resource (standing dead trees) through the planning horizon, snags should be managed at 70 percent of optimum (average of 2 snags per acre) within each third-order drainage.</p>	<p>The effects of travel management on dead trees are discussed in detail in sections on <i>Snags</i> and MIS and TES species dependent on snags and logs. All effects will be indirect, stemming from the access that open roads give to firewood cutters and magnified currently by the ongoing bark beetle epidemic.</p>
<p>Management areas other than T-1 should be the primary source for snag management. However, if adequate snags cannot be found outside of T-1, then the following numbers and sizes of snags should be retained in cutting units, if available. In units with snags, keep a minimum of 20 snags and 10 replacement trees per 10 acres, if available. If 20 snags are not available, then any combination totaling 30 should be left, by the following dbh classes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 snags and 6 replacement trees from 7-11 inches 5 snags and 3 replacement trees from 12-19 inches 2 snags and 1 replacement trees 20+ inches <p>In units—except those of pure lodgepole—without snags keep a minimum of 30 wind firm trees per 10 acres, if available, by the following dbh classes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 trees from 7-11 inches 7 trees from 12-19 inches 2 trees from 20+ inches <p>If wildlife funds are available, a third of the replacement trees should be girdled or otherwise killed to provide snags, by the following dbh classes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 trees from 7-11 inches d.b.h/ 	<p>See sections on <i>Snags</i> for a discussion of how travel management is likely to indirectly affect snag distribution. These guidelines are essentially inapplicable to this travel planning effort.</p>

Forest Wide Snag Standards	If the standard applies, how is it being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
<p>2 trees form 12-19 inches d.b.h. 1 tree form 20+ inches d.b.h.</p>	

Forestwide Fisheries Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
<p>1. Maintain quality water and habitat for fish by coordinating Forest activities and by direct habitat improvement (see Forest Wide Standards for riparian).</p>	<p>Standard applies. Fish habitat conditions would be maintained or improved by closing high risk roads and removing stream crossings. Unclassified routes added to the system would show improvements as they would not receive annual maintenance.</p>
<p>2. Instream activities should allow for maximum protection of spring and fall spawning habitats.</p>	<p>Standard applies associated with cumulative effects related with road improvements as part of road maintenance program. Any work in streams as a function of road upgrades would require coordination with the state to ensure spawning habitats are not adversely affected. Roads and existing crossings identified under the roads analysis are designed to improve and stabilize road drainage to minimize risk of sediment delivery into the stream system.</p>
<p>3. Structures installed within streams supporting fisheries will be designed to allow upstream fish movement, especially to spawning areas.</p>	<p>Standard applies as related to cumulative effects associated with road improvements under road maintenance program. All work within streams is closely coordinated with fisheries and MFWP to ensure spawning habitats are accessible and are not adversely affected by sediment.</p>

Forestwide Noxious Weeds Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
<p>1. Implement an integrated weed control program in cooperation with the state of Montana and County Weed Boards to confine present infestations and prevent establishing new areas of noxious weeds. Noxious weeds are listed in the Montana Weed Law and designated by County Weed Boards.</p>	<p>The Helena National Forest has an integrated weed program that includes weed treatment on regular basis. The Montana State Law and County Weed Board lists are used to prioritize weed species. A list of weeds found in the project area, along with their state and county status, is included in the Noxious Weed Specialist report for the project. The weeds FEIS and Record of Decision are in the references for the Noxious Weed Specialist report in the project record.</p>
<p>2. Integrated Pest Management, which uses chemical, biological, and mechanical methods, will be the principal control method. Spot herbicide treatment of identified weeds will be emphasized. Biological control methods will be considered as they become available.</p>	<p>The Integrated Pest Management program is discussed in the Noxious Weed Specialist report.</p>
<p>3. Funding for weed control on disturbed sites will be provided by the resource that causes the disturbance.</p>	<p>The Noxious Weed Specialist and the Economics reports for the project discuss costs of weed treatment.</p>

Forestwide Revegetation Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
1. Seeding will be done in a timely manner on disturbed areas, to prevent erosion and to achieve best revegetation results.	Table 5 of the DEIS addresses road closures and decommissioning. Road closures would be at the 3S level and decommissioning at the 4 level, both of which would involve seeding. Other ground disturbance expected from implementation of the project would be from new road and trail construction. The project Botany Specialist report includes a design feature to require seeding if needed around newly constructed routes.
2. Seeding mixtures of native plants (naturally occurring) should be used, if practical, in all revegetation projects greater than two acres. On smaller disturbances, the responsible official may authorize the use of exotic species.	The Botany Specialist report includes recommended native seed mixes in Appendix B.
3. Seeding guidelines, based on elevation, soil type, parent material, habitat type, and reasonable cost, are listed in Appendix F.	Seeding guidelines would be used for all restoration.

Forestwide General Watershed Guidance Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
1. Coordination with the State of Montana, as required by the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1323), concerning stream channels and water quality protection is detailed in the Cooperative Agreement to Implement the 208 Program on National Forests in the State of Montana. The agreement is in FSM 2563.11, R.O. Supplement.	Coordination would occur as needed.
3. A project which causes excessive water pollution, undesirable water yield, soil erosion, or site deterioration will be corrected where feasible, or the project will be re-evaluated or terminated.	These effects are not anticipated for this project except where improvements are being made to the current condition.
5. Practices in the Soil and Water Conservation Practices Handbook (FSH 2509.22) developed cooperatively by the State Water Quality Agency and the Forest Service will be incorporated, where appropriate, into all land use and project plans as a principal mechanism for controlling non-point pollution sources and meeting soil, State water quality standards and other resource goals.	All appropriate permits will be obtained prior to implementation for controlling non-point pollution sources and meeting State water quality standards and other resource goals.
7. An environmental analysis, following the process in FSMs 2526 and 2527, will be made for all management actions planned for flood plains, wetlands, riparian areas, or bodies of water prior to implementation. This analysis will determine the short- and long-term adverse impacts and mitigating measures associated with the planned management actions.	Any new ground-disturbing activities involved with removing culverts from streams may have short-terms adverse impacts to floodplains, wetlands, riparian areas, or bodies of water beyond current levels, but this disturbance would be far outweighed by the long-term beneficial impacts of returning the stream to its natural course.

Forestwide Soil Guidance Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
<p>1. In accordance with NFMA, RPA, and Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act, all management activities will be planned to sustain site productivity. During project analysis, ground-disturbing activities will be reviewed and needed mitigating actions prescribed.</p>	<p>Most of the proposed activities will take place on lands dedicated to transportation uses. New roads or trails will be constructed with appropriate mitigations to reduce impacts to soils such as soil erosion and compaction. The National Forest Roads and Trails Act of 1964 authorize the Forest Service to establish and maintain a network of roads and trails on National Forest System Lands. The Forest Service has the authority to withdraw lands from vegetation production and related soil productivity on National Forest for dedication to road and trail corridors for transportation and access uses. Helena National Forest Plan guidance to sustain soil productivity when planning management activities would not be applicable to this decision to open, close or create new travel routes.</p>
<p>2. Areas of decomposed granite soils will be identified and erosion control measures planned prior to any ground disturbing activities.</p>	<p>Alternative 2 does not move in the direction outlined in the Helena National Forest's Plan when managing for preservation of Granitic soils. Areas with Granitic soils have not received emphasis for road closure and decommissioning and erosion control efforts. However, action alternatives would not result in an increase of routes open to wheeled motorized use occurring on Granitic soils.</p>
<p>3. To reduce sedimentation associated with management activities, the highly sensitive granitic soils, which cover about 20 percent of the Forest, will have first priority for soil erosion control.</p>	<p>New roads or trails will be constructed with appropriate mitigations to reduce impacts to soils such as soil erosion and compaction. Erosion control on transportation routes will take place on all routes through the application of erosion control BMPs.</p>

Forestwide Minerals Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
<p>1. The 1964 Wilderness Act stipulates that effective December 31, 1983, no further mineral entry would be permitted in existing wilderness areas. This includes leasing for oil and gas, applying for patent on existing claims, and staking new claims. However, citizens' right to enter public land for prospecting or working valid existing claims is unchanged.</p>	<p>Standard applies. There are no unpatented mining claims in the Scapegoat Wilderness Area, thus there is no possibility of mineral entry for hard rock mineral development. Wilderness areas are congressionally unavailable for mineral leasing.</p>
<p>2. Areas withdrawn from mineral entry should be reevaluated every five years in accordance with Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) to determine if the withdrawal is still necessary. (See Appendix Q.)</p>	<p>Standard does not apply. The analysis area does not have any areas withdrawn from mineral entry.</p>
<p>3. Access for development of locatable and leasable minerals will be allowed on a case-by-case basis. Access should be directed toward minimizing resource impacts and be coordinated with other land uses.</p>	<p>Standard applies. Mineral project proposals submitted as a Plan of Operation are evaluated and resources impacts are mitigated to the extent possible through the NEPA process, and through negotiation with the mineral proponent. 2810 Mineral Project files and documentation of their administration are located at the Lincoln Ranger District and at the Helena Supervisors' Office.</p>

Forestwide Locatable Minerals Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
1. Consistent with the Mining and Mineral Policy Act of 1970, continue to encourage the responsible development of mineral resources on National Forest lands. Concurrently, require mitigation measures to protect surface resources.	Standard applies. See #3 Minerals General Standard above.
2. Provide guidance to miners and prospectors for planning reclamation and to minimize environmental damage.	Standard applies. See #3 Minerals General Standard above.
3. Increase I&I efforts through publicizing the appropriate laws, regulations, and policies, to reduce cases of non-compliance from lack of knowledge of mining rules.	Standard applies. See #3 Minerals General Standard above.
4. Increase compliance inspections commensurate with mineral activities.	Standard applies. See #3 Minerals General Standard above.
5. When every reasonable attempt has failed to correct mining operations that are unnecessarily or unreasonably causing or threatening to cause irreparable injury, loss, or damage to surface resources, the Forest Service will seek judicial relief.	Standard applies. See #3 Minerals General Standard above.
6. Maintain a liaison with local mining industry and mining associations. Cooperate with Federal and State agencies which administer mineral laws.	Standard applies. See #3 Minerals General Standard above.
7. Following mineral development the Forest Service will require reclamation of surface disturbance to prevent or control on- and off-site damage. Reclamation includes, but is not limited to: a. Control of erosion and landslides. b. Control of water runoff. c. Isolation, removal, or control of toxic materials. d. Reshaping and revegetation of disturbed areas. e. Rehabilitation of fisheries and wildlife habitat.	Standard applies. See #3 Minerals General Standard above.

Forestwide Saleable Minerals Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
1. Common variety mineral permits will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be issued only if consistent with the management area goals.	Standard applies. There are currently no active sale permits in the Travel Plan area. Applications for mineral material sales permits are discretionary and are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Forestwide Seismic Exploration Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
1. An environmental analysis will be completed for each application. A prospecting permit will be issued on a case by case basis and will contain stipulations designed to coordinate surface resource values. The following apply where	Completed National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 process for the Blackfoot Non-Winter Travel Plan project- inventory, evaluation of significance, evaluation of project effect, State Historic Preservation Office and Tribal consultation.

Forestwide Seismic Exploration Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
<p>appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Water quality and quantity: Stipulations may be issued to limit activities within 100 feet of all streams, lakes, springs, and ponds. b. Threatened and endangered species habitat: Stipulations will be issued to protect threatened and endangered species by limiting activities during critical periods, and protecting important habitat elements. c. Nongame habitat: Stipulations may be used to limit surface use as a coordination and/or mitigation measure for species listed in State of Montana, Species of Special Interest and Concern. (The State species list is part of the Wildlife Planning Records.) d. Big game habitat: To protect key areas for big game (i.e., winter range, summer concentration habitats, calving areas, lambing areas, big game travel routes, etc.), stipulations may be used during critical periods. e. Archeological and Historic Resources: Proposed seismic survey work which may impact identified cultural and paleontological resources will be required to skip portions of the work or to relocate survey lines around known resource areas. Other resource threatening work will be required to fully comply with the Antiquities Act of 1906 and other related Acts pertaining to cultural resources. f. Special Uses, Leases, and Permits: To protect authorized special uses, leases, and permits, include stipulations to restrict occupancy by timing and location on a case-by-case basis. g. Fire: Seismic work during periods of high fire danger may not be allowed. To prevent wildfire, stipulations may be included to restrict timing and location of seismic operations. Stipulations may also be used to specify procedures and firefighting equipment required by seismic crews. h. Land Stability and Erosion: Surface occupancy stipulations may be used to prohibit occupancy on lands subject to mass wasting and on slopes 60 percent and greater. i. Recreation: To accommodate concentrated recreational areas (i.e., picnic grounds and campgrounds), stipulations may be used to restrict seismic activities by location and timing. 	<p>Particular consideration given to cultural resources listed on the National Register of Historic Places.</p>

Forestwide Road Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
<p>1. Road construction and reconstruction will be the minimum density, cost, and standard necessary for the intended need, user safety, and resource protection.</p>	<p>Where short segments of road or motorized trail are identified, they will be designed to current standards as set forth in Forest Service handbook and manual direction FSM 7700, FSH 7709.55 and FSH 7709.56 and will be in compliance with the</p>

Forestwide Road Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
	Streamside Management Zone Law 77-5-301 (2001), Water Quality Best Management Practices for Montana Forests (2001) (BMPs) and the USDA National Best Management Practices for Water Quality Management on National Forest Land (April 2012) SMZ and BMP documents are included in the project record.
2. Forest development roads will not be constructed without an approved Area Transportation Analysis. Other road construction will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.	This Travel Planning Effort in accordance with Forest Service handbook and manual direction FSM 7700 and FSH 7709.55 is considered to be an Area Transportation Analysis and the new segments of roads are being approved as part of this process. They will be constructed in compliance with the SMZ law and BMPs both of which can be found in the project record.
3. Forest Specialists representing soils, watershed, and fisheries shall identify potential soil erosion, water quality and fisheries problems and provide input to the development of road design standards. Mitigating measures which will be considered in developing these standards include but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reestablishing vegetation on exposed soils. b. Protecting the road surface through surface stabilization techniques such as dust oil or gravel, especially on decomposed granitic soils. c. Preventing downslope movement of sediment with the use of slash windrows below the fill slopes near stream crossings, baled straw in ditches and catch basins at culvert inlets. d. Reducing soil disturbance in or near streams by diverting clear water around culvert installation sites, especially in important fisheries streams. e. Controlling the concentration of water flow by insloping, outsloping and using minimum grades at stream crossings. 	Consultation with specialists as well as with state and local agencies when necessary are a standard practice when new road construction is considered on National Forest lands. The following items would be considered and addressed in accordance with the SMZ and BMPs as part of any future design package: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reestablishing vegetation post construction b. Surface stabilization techniques c. Sediment concerns d. Soil disturbance near streams e. Water flow concerns and necessary slopes to accommodate flow
4. Short-term local roads will be used for one time road access needs.	There are no short-term local roads identified in any of the alternatives.
5. Coordinate transportation planning and road management with State and local agencies and owners of intermingled land.	The Forest is in the process of obtaining the necessary easements or already has them in place. Consultations with state and local agencies take place as part of this process when necessary.

<p>Forestwide Road Management Standards</p>	<p>If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?</p>
<p>1. The Helena National Forest will generally be open to vehicles except for roads, trails, or areas that may be restricted. (See Forest Visitor Map for specific information.) The Forest Road Management Program will be used to review, evaluate, and implement the goals and standards of the management areas in the Forest Plan with regard to road, trail, and areawide motorized vehicle use. This standard was amended based on the 2001 Tri-State Off-Highway Vehicle Decision (see Summary of Forest Plan Amendment 20 at the beginning of appendix A)</p>	<p>In all alternatives, access to the Helena National Forest will generally be open to vehicles except for roads and trails that may be restricted as defined in the road and trail management objective. Regardless of the alternative selected, the Forest Road Management Program will be used to implement the goals and standards of the management areas in the forest plan with regard to road, trail and area wide motorized vehicle use.</p>
<p>2. Road management decisions will be based on user needs, public safety, resource protection, and economics. Most existing roads will be left open. But most new roads will be closed, at least during critical periods for big game. The criteria to be used for road, trail, or area restrictions are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Safety - Restrictions may be necessary to provide for safety of Forest users. b. Resource Protection - Unacceptable damage to soils, watershed, fish, wildlife, or historical/archaeological sites will be mitigated by road restrictions or other road management actions as necessary. Restrictions for wildlife reasons will be coordinated with the MDFWP. c. Economics - Restrictions will be considered if maintenance costs exceed benefits. d. Conflicting Use - Conflicts between user groups (especially motorized vs. non-motorized) may require restrictions. e. Facility Protection - Restrictions may be necessary to prevent damage to administrative sites, special use facilities, or other improvements. f. Public Support - Public concern may necessitate restricting or opening some roads, trails, or areas. g. Management Objectives - Road management will be used to achieve land management objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Safety - This analysis is in accordance with current manual direction FSM 7700 Chapter 7710, which requires when designating NFS roads and trails consideration for public safety, resource protection, economics, and conflicting use. The intended purpose, design criteria and operation and maintenance criteria for each NFS road and trail will be documented and included as part of the transportation atlas as road and trail management objectives. (or something along these lines). b. Resource Protection - All alternatives allow for corrective actions to be taken whenever and where ever damage is occurring. c. Economics - There are no significant changes to economics in any of the alternatives. Maintenance will continue on all roads (at different levels depending on need) regardless of this analysis. d. Conflicting Use - Conflicts requiring engineering input will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. e. Facility Protection - As necessary restrictions would be left in place or put in place to prevent damage to administrative sites, special use facilities or other improvements. f. Public Support - Public concerns would be addressed on a case-by-case basis. g. Management Objectives - Land management objectives are met through using road management under all three alternatives.
<p>3. The travel restrictions will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary to meet the goals and objectives of the Forest Plan.</p>	<p>Travel Restrictions would continue to be evaluated annually and adjusted as necessary</p>
<p>4. Enforcement of the Road Management Program will be a high priority. Weekend patrolling, signing, gating, obliterating unnecessary roads, and public education will be used to improve enforcement. Enforcement will be coordinated with the MDFWP and other State and local agencies.</p>	<p>Law enforcement would take necessary action to enforcement of the road management program.</p>

Forestwide Road Maintenance Standards	If standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
1. Roads will be maintained in accordance with direction provided in FSH 7709.15 (Transportation System Maintenance Handbook) and will be at a level commensurate with the need for the following operational objectives: resource protection, road investment protection, user safety, user comfort, and travel efficiency.	Maintenance dollars are dispersed annually and are generally directed to higher use roads and to specific areas where there is a need identified to prevent resource damage. The funding we receive is never adequate to cover the cost of maintenance to maintain roads to a suitable standard. We do not anticipate an increase in funding and in fact anticipate a decrease in maintenance funding.
2. Assigned maintenance levels will be reviewed annually and revised if management objectives change.	Maintenance levels are constantly evaluated for appropriateness
3. A Forest Road Maintenance Schedule will be prepared annually and be responsive to the long-term needs of the Forest Transportation System.	The Forest prepares a maintenance schedule annually as well as prepares projects in advance in an effort to obtain funding as it come available.
4. Forest specialists representing soils and watershed shall provide input to the road maintenance planning process to verify maintenance standards, identify rehabilitation needs, and designate roads that should be permanently closed for resource protection. Specialists will annually submit capital investment project proposals for major road reconstruction needs.	A cooperative effort is ongoing to maintain roads to standards that ensure resource protection.

Forestwide Trail Standards	If Standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
1. Trail management, such as trail standards, maintenance schedules, funding, trail use, construction, and reconstruction, will follow the guidance in Trails Management Handbook, FSH 2309.18.	All trails approved in the Blackfoot Travel Plan would be constructed and maintained in compliance with existing FS trail standards.
2. Generally, trail maintenance work priorities will be established as follows: a. Priority 1. Activities to correct unsafe conditions relative to management objectives. b. Priority 2. Activities to minimize unacceptable resource and trail damage. c. Priority 3. Activities that restore the trail to planned design standards.	Trail maintenance needs resulting from the Blackfoot Travel Plan decision would be implemented based on these priorities
3. Trail construction/reconstruction will be designed and accomplished to be compatible with the recreation settings and management area goals.	All trails approved in the Blackfoot Travel Plan would be constructed and maintained in compliance with existing FS trail standards.
4. Trails may be abandoned or rerouted when a road changes the character of the trail or when the maintenance cost exceeds the benefit.	No trails would be abandoned under the Blackfoot Travel Plan.

<p>INFISH Standards Columbia River Basin*</p>	<p>If Standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?</p>
<p>Roads Management</p>	
<p>RF-1 Cooperate with Federal, Tribal, State, and county agencies, and cost-share partners to achieve consistency in road design, operation, and maintenance necessary to attain Riparian Management Objectives.</p>	<p>Other Federal, Tribal, State and county agencies would be consulted. The US Fish and Wildlife Service will conduct formal consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act for listed species.</p>
<p>RF-2 For each existing or planned road, meet the Riparian Management Objectives and avoid adverse effects to inland native fish by:</p> <p>a. completing watershed analysis prior to construction of new roads or landings in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas within priority watersheds.</p> <p>b. minimizing road and landing locations in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas.</p> <p>c. initiating development and implementation of a Road Management Plan or a Transportation Management Plan. At a minimum, address the following items in the plan:</p> <p>Road design criteria, elements, and standards that govern construction and reconstruction.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Road management objectives for each road. 3. Criteria that govern road operation, maintenance, and management. 4. Requirements for pre-, during-, and post-storm inspections and maintenance. 5. Regulation of traffic during wet periods to minimize erosion and sediment delivery and accomplish other objectives. 6. Implementation and effectiveness monitoring plans for road stability, drainage, and erosion control. 7. Mitigation plans for road failures. <p>d. avoiding sediment delivery to streams from the road surface.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outsloping of the roadway surface is preferred, except in cases where outsloping would increase sediment delivery to streams or where outsloping is infeasible or unsafe. 2. Route road drainage away from potentially unstable stream channels, fills, and hillslopes. <p>e. avoiding disruption of natural hydrologic flow paths.</p> <p>f. avoiding sidecasting of soils or snow. Sidecasting of road material is prohibited on road segments within or abutting RHCAs in priority watersheds.</p>	<p>Standard applies.</p> <p>a. and b. No new construction of routes is proposed in RHCAs of priority watersheds. Roads decommissioning is planned in RHCAs to minimize the road system impacts to fisheries.</p> <p>c. The Blackfoot Non-Winter Travel Plan is a first step in initiating a site-specific plan for motorized and non-motorized routes. Other actions that meet sub-elements of item c include:</p> <p>New construction of routes or other ground disturbing activities are included in this project will be designed to minimized impacts to watersheds. For reconstruction and maintenance, all design elements are covered via maintenance measures covered under the 1999 Programmatic Biological Assessment for Road Maintenance (MT Bull Trout Level 1 Team).</p> <p>Road management objectives are addressed in the roads INFRA database with no proposals to change these objectives under this decision.</p> <p>Criteria that govern road operation/maintenance are covered under FSM Title 7700, R1 Supplement 46, Chapter 7730 (Operation and Maintenance).</p> <p>Road maintenance requirements, including condition surveys, are covered under FSH 7709.59, Chapter 60.</p> <p>35 CFR 212.52 (b)(2) discusses conditions under which restrictions would be imposed on traffic pursuant to 36 CFR part 261 (B).</p> <p>This element is addressed in the road portion of the Forestwide monitoring plans.</p> <p>Mitigation plans for road failures are not fully addressed under FSH 7709.59. Chapter 60. If a road failure were to occur, part d applies.</p> <p>d. all design elements are covered via maintenance measures covered under the 1999 Programmatic</p>

INFISH Standards Columbia River Basin*	If Standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
	<p>Biological Assessment for Road Maintenance (MT Bull Trout Level 1 Team).</p> <p>e. new routes proposed in this travel plan would be constructed to minimize impacts to watersheds or located outside RHCAs.</p> <p>f. Sidecasting of road material < 4" and of snow for snow removal operations are covered under the 1999 Programmatic Biological Assessment for Road Maintenance (MT Bull Trout Level 1 Team).</p>
<p>RF-3 Determine the influence of each road on the Riparian Management Objectives. Meet Riparian Management Objectives and avoid adverse effects on inland native fish by:</p> <p>a. reconstructing road and drainage features that do not meet design criteria or operation and maintenance standards, or that have been shown to be less effective than designed for controlling sediment delivery, or that retard attainment of Riparian Management Objectives, or do not protect priority watersheds from increased sedimentation.</p> <p>b. prioritizing reconstruction based on the current and potential damage to inland native fish and their priority watersheds, the ecological value of the riparian resources affected, and the feasibility of options such as helicopter logging and road relocation out of Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas.</p> <p>c. closing and stabilizing or obliterating, and stabilizing roads not needed for future management activities. Prioritize these actions based on the current and potential damage to inland native fish in priority watersheds, and the ecological value of the riparian resources affected.</p>	<p>This was completed during the Roads Analysis process (Helena NF 2004).</p> <p>a. Road maintenance would be completed all routes added to the roads system, design elements are covered via maintenance measures covered under the 1999 Programmatic Biological Assessment for Road Maintenance (MT Bull Trout Level 1 Team).</p> <p>b. This was completed during the Roads Analysis process (Helena NF 2004) and with the Blackfoot Non-Winter Travel plan.</p> <p>c. This element applies and is addressed in this project by prioritizing roads in need of storage or decommissioning or culverts removed to remove impacts to RHCAs and native fish.</p>
<p>RF-4 Construct now, and improve existing, culverts, bridges, and other stream crossings to accommodate a 100-year flood, including associated bedload and debris, where those improvements would/do pose a substantial risk to riparian conditions. Substantial risk improvements include those that do not meet design and operation maintenance criteria, or that have been shown to be less effective than designed for controlling erosion, or that retard attainment of Riparian Management Objectives, or that do not protect priority watersheds from increased sedimentation. Bass priority for upgrading on risks in priority watersheds and the ecological value of the riparian resources affected. Construct and maintain crossings to prevent diversion of stream flow out of the channel and down the road in the event of crossing failure.</p>	<p>This standard is not directly applicable to the travel plan project</p>
<p>RF-5 Provide and maintain fish passage at all road crossings of existing and potential fish-bearing streams</p>	<p>The project has identified culverts on fish-bearing streams to be removed to improve passage for native fish.</p>
<p>Recreation Management</p>	
<p>RM-1 Design, construct, and operate recreation</p>	<p>Standard applies as dispersed campsites are</p>

INFISH Standards Columbia River Basin*	If Standard applies, how is standard being met, and where in the project file is the documentation?
facilities, including trails and dispersed sites, in a manner that does not retard or prevent attainment of the Riparian Management Objectives and avoids adverse effects on inland native fish. Complete watershed analysis prior to construction of new recreation facilities in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas within priority watersheds. For existing recreation facilities inside Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas, assure that the facilities or use of the facilities would not prevent attainment of Riparian Management Objectives or adversely affect inland native fish. Relocate or close recreation facilities where Riparian Management Objectives cannot be met or adverse effects on inland native fish cannot be avoided.	associated with the current transportation system and they occur within the INFISH buffer. Dispersed campsites in the RHCA will be monitored, if they are found to prevent attainment of RMOs, would be closed and rehabilitated. .
RM-2 Adjust dispersed and developed recreation practices that retard or prevent attainment of Riparian Management Objectives or adversely affect inland native fish. Where adjustment measures such as education, use limitations, traffic control devices, increased maintenance, relocation of facilities, and/or specific site closures are not effective in meeting Riparian Management Objectives and avoiding adverse effects on inland native fish, eliminate the practice or occupancy.	Discussion for RM-1 above applies to RM-2.
RM-3 Address attainment of Riparian Management Objectives and potential effect on inland native fish in Wild and Scenic Rivers, Wilderness, and other Recreation Management plans.	Not applicable to this project.

*These standards apply to all RHCAs and to projects and activities in areas outside RHCAs that would degrade them.

36 CFR 212.55 Criteria for Designation of Roads, Trails and Areas (from 2005 Travel Management Rule (36 CFR Parts 212, 251, 261, and 295)

§ 212.55 Criteria for designation of roads, trails, and areas.

- (a) General criteria for designation of National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas on National Forest System lands. In designating National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas on National Forest System lands for motor vehicle use, the responsible official shall consider effects on National Forest System natural and cultural resources, public safety, provision of recreational opportunities, access needs, conflicts among uses of National Forest System lands, the need for maintenance and administration of roads, trails, and areas that would arise if the uses under consideration are designated; and the availability of resources for that maintenance and administration.
- (b) Specific criteria for designation of trails and areas. In addition to the criteria in paragraph (a) of this section, in designating National Forest System trails and areas on National Forest System lands, the responsible official shall consider effects on the following, with the objective of minimizing:

- (1) Damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, and other forest resources;
- (2) harassment of wildlife and significant disruption of wildlife habitats;
- (3) conflicts between motor vehicle use and existing or proposed recreational uses of National Forest System lands or neighboring Federal lands; and
- (4) conflicts among different classes of motor vehicle uses of National Forest System lands or neighboring Federal lands.

In addition, the responsible official shall consider:

- (5) Compatibility of motor vehicle use with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account sound, emissions, and other factors.
- (c) Specific criteria for designation of roads. In addition to the criteria in paragraph (a) of this section, in designating National Forest System roads, the responsible official shall consider:
- (1) Speed, volume, composition, and distribution of traffic on roads; and
 - (2) Compatibility of vehicle class with road geometry and road surfacing.
- (d) Rights of access. In making designations pursuant to this subpart, the responsible official shall recognize:
- (1) Valid existing rights; and
 - (2) The rights of use of National Forest System roads and National Forest System trails under § 212.6(b).
- (e) Wilderness areas and primitive areas. National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas on National Forest System lands in wilderness areas or primitive areas shall not be designated for motor vehicle use pursuant to this section, unless, in the case of wilderness areas, motor vehicle use is authorized by the applicable enabling legislation for those areas.