

DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

MOTORIZED VEHICLE USE  
ON THE ROGUE RIVER-SISKIYOU NATIONAL FOREST

*Douglas, Klamath, Jackson, Curry, Coos, and Josephine Counties in Oregon  
Del Norte and Siskiyou Counties in California*

September 2011

Lead Agency: USDA Forest Service  
Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest

Responsible Official: Scott Conroy  
Forest Supervisor  
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**Abstract:**

On November 9, 2005, the Final Rule for Travel Management; Designated Routes and Areas for Motor Vehicle Use (Travel Management Rule) was published in the Federal Register. This affects 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 212, 251, 261, and 295. These rules became effective in December 2005. The Rule revises several regulations to require identification of roads, trails, and areas for motor vehicle use on National Forests and National Grasslands.

**Highlights of the Travel Management Rule:** each National Forest or Ranger District will designate those roads, trails, and areas open to motorized vehicles; designation will include class of vehicle and, if appropriate, season of use for motor vehicle; once the designation process is complete, the rule will prohibit motor vehicle use off the designated system or use that is inconsistent with the designations; and decisions are to be made locally, with public input and in coordination with state, local, and tribal governments.

The Travel Management Rule provides better opportunities for sustainable motorized recreation and access to the National Forest System; better protection of natural and cultural resources; increases public safety, and reduces use conflicts. Former Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth prioritized actions to keep America's forests and grasslands healthy by restoring and rehabilitating damaged areas. One of four main ways is to manage impacts of motorized recreation vehicles by restricting use to designated roads, trails, or areas.

The *purpose* for this action is to implement the Travel Management Rule. Motorized use is popular and an important form of recreation for many individuals, families, and groups. A designated and managed system is *needed* to provide this use. Increased demand for motorized use, lack of designated areas and routes, and the inconsistent direction contained in the Forest Plans, has led to resource damage and social impacts, user conflicts, and safety concerns.

The Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest (RRSNF) began the first steps of the designation process in spring of 2006 and is targeting completion in March of 2012. The Proposed Action is being carried forward in accordance with the Travel Management Rule (36 CFR Part 212 Subpart B). In accordance with the Rule and following a decision on this proposal, the Forest would publish a Motorized Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) identifying all Forest roads, trails and areas that are designated as open for motor vehicle use by the public across the approximately 1.8 million acres of National Forest System lands in southern Oregon. The MVUM shall specify the classes of vehicles and, if appropriate, the times of year for which use is authorized. The MVUM would be updated and published annually and/or when changes to the Forest's transportation system are made. Future decisions associated with changes to the MVUM may trigger the need for documentation of additional environmental analysis.

**Highlights of this Supplemental EIS:** the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for Motorized Vehicle Use on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest (RRSNF) was dated November, 2009. The Record of Decision (ROD) for the FEIS was signed on December 3, 2009. Shortly thereafter, issues were raised through the appeal process that ultimately resulted in the withdrawal of the December decision and the beginning of a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) that will address issues raised during the appeal process requiring additional analysis or clarification. The major changes are focused on the following areas related to motorized vehicle use:

- clarified Purpose and Need statement;
- clarified dispersed camping;
- incorporated general cross-country travel closure into alternative 2;
- updated mitigation measures;
- revised analysis for issues related to
  - Water Quality
  - Soils
  - Potential Wilderness and other undeveloped areas
  - Natural Occurring Asbestos
  - Aquatics
  - Botany
  - Wildlife
  - Air Quality
  - Environmental Justice and Civil Rights disclosure
  - invasive pathogen (*Phytophthora lateralis*);
- added Wild and Scenic Rivers analysis; and
- map corrections.

The purpose of the DSEIS is to clarify issues, expand on analyses, provide additions, changes and corrections that are responsive to issues brought forth from an appeal of the FEIS; in addition, issues were identified internally as requiring modification.

This DSEIS document is designed to supplement the existing 2009 FEIS document by adding information and analysis to Chapter I (Purpose and Need), Chapter II (Alternatives), and Chapter III (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) to address matters identified above. In some cases (as noted), it will replace certain sections of these FEIS chapters. This supplemental process will then allow the latest and most complete information and analysis to include the 2009 FEIS concurrent and integrated with the 2011 supplemental information and analysis.

Comments:

This DSEIS is made available for a 45-day Comment Period, under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1506.10). The Forest Service will accept written, electronic and oral comments beginning on the day following date of publication of the notice of availability (NOA) in the Federal Register. This day is scheduled to be October 7, 2011. The Forest Service will respond to substantive comments received in an appendix to the Final EIS. **Send comments to:**

**Scott Conroy, Forest Supervisor:**  
**C/O David Krantz, Project Lead**  
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**3040 Biddle Road**  
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**FAX (541) 618-2149**

Email responses to: [comments-pacificnorthwest-rogueriver-siskiyou@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-pacificnorthwest-rogueriver-siskiyou@fs.fed.us)

**Important Notice:**

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who only submit anonymous comments will not have standing to object to the subsequent decision pursuant to 36 CFR Part 215. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets.

Reviewers should provide the Forest Service with their comments during the review period of the DSEIS. This will enable the Forest Service to analyze and respond to the comments at one time, and to use information acquired in the preparation of the Final SEIS, thus avoiding undue delay in the decision-making process. Reviewers have an obligation to structure their participation in the National Environmental Policy Act process to that it is meaningful and alerts the agency to the reviewer's position and contentions; Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978). Environmental objections that could have been raised at the DEIS stage but are not raised until after completion of the Final EIS may be waived or dismissed by the courts. City of Angoon v. Hodel, 803 F.2d 1016, 1022 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1986) and Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Comments on the DSEIS should be specific and should address the adequacy of the statement and the merits of the alternatives discussed (40 CFR 1503.3).

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