

Decision made on travel routes in Tahoe National Forest

Tahoe National Forest Supervisor Tom Quinn has chosen a modified version of one of the alternatives in the Travel Management Final Environmental Impact Statement.

“I have selected Alternative 6 with some modifications. I believe this alternative strikes a balance between providing motorized recreation access and protecting critical natural and cultural resources. This decision recognizes the extensive network of roads and motorized trails that currently exist on the Tahoe National Forest,” Quinn said in a statement. “Although the decision will reduce the amount of motorized opportunities as compared to the existing condition, approximately 83 percent of the forest will be within a half mile of an authorized road or motorized trail.”

The existing National Forest Transportation System of roads and motorized trails for public use in the TNF is approximately 2,400 miles and includes one open motorcycle area, Prosser Pits north of Truckee. With this new decision, the following will be added to the existing motorized system for public use:

- 13.1 miles of roads (346) segments
- 48.9 miles of motorized trails (107 segments)
- 11.4 miles of closed roads will be open for motorized use (13 segments)

Other attributes of the decision include:

- Prohibition of Cross County Travel: Motorized travel will be prohibited off designated roads or motorized trails on 835,800

acres.

- **Open Areas:** 244 acres at Boca, Prosser, and Stampede Reservoirs will be available for highway legal vehicles to access the shoreline of the reservoirs in select, established areas while protecting cultural, aquatic, and other sensitive resources.
- **Seasonal Restrictions:** Wet weather seasonal restrictions will be placed on 1,369.5 miles of road and motorized trails. On the westside of the forest, these restrictions will be in effect from Jan. 1 to March 31 and on the remainder of the forest, from Jan. 1 through April 23.
- **Over the Snow Use:** On the Fordyce Jeep Trail, over the snow use will be permitted on 3.6 miles when 15 inches of snow are present on the ground. In addition, Maintenance Level 3, 4, and 5 roads will remain available for wheeled-over-the-snow use, except for roads on the Truckee District and those roads designated as snowmobile trails.
- **Motorized Mixed Use:** Mixing both highway legal and non-highway legal vehicles will be limited to roads less than 3 miles in length (as per California Vehicle Code 16.5) except that 117 miles of longer segments will be open for mixed use during deer hunting (rifle) season when log hauling does not occur.
- **Lowering Maintenance Level:** Mixed use will be allowed on 122 miles of road previously listed as Maintenance Level 3 (smoother dirt) roads which have been downgraded to Maintenance Level 2 to reflect their existing rougher conditions.
- **Dispersed Recreation Spurs:** Hundreds of short unauthorized road segments are added to provide dispersed recreation opportunities.
- **Protection of Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs):** The

majority of existing unauthorized routes within the IRAs have not been added to the National Forest Transportation System to protect the values of solitude, old forest ecosystems, wildlife habitat, and other resources. With only one congressionally designated Wilderness on the TNF, opportunities for quiet recreation and solitude are limited. A few short trail segments totaling 4 miles, however, have been added to the West Yuba, East Yuba, Grouse Lakes, Duncan Canyon, Bald Mountain, and Castle Peak IRAs that would not adversely affect roadless area characteristics.

The Final EIS and Record of Decision are available online.

For questions, contact the Tahoe National Forest Headquarters, (530) 265.4531.