

Judge rules against USFS regarding off-road vehicles

By KCRA-TV

A federal judge has ruled that the U.S. Forest Service failed in its management of forest trails used by off-road vehicles in the Stanislaus National Forest.

U.S. District Court Judge Kimberly Mueller ruled on Friday that the Forest Service didn't minimize damage to the environment caused by the vehicles.

In issuing the ruling, the judge did not order the closing of any specific off-road vehicle trails.

The Stanislaus National Forest is located between Lake Tahoe and Yosemite National Park. The forest has a web of roads, trails and other areas designated as open to off-road vehicles.

Conservation groups took legal action in August 2010 to try to stop the Forest Service's approval of an additional 137 miles of off-road vehicle routes.

The judge ordered a hearing on Feb. 15 to consider remedies for the management plan.