



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest Service  
Southern Region

# Traveling *Ozark National Forest* the **Backcountry**



... a guide to suggested off-highway vehicle routes

## Learn the state laws.

Off-highway vehicle (OHV) use is rapidly increasing on public lands in Arkansas. Many miles of forest roads offer unlimited enjoyment for responsible OHV enthusiasts. Providing safe, enjoyable recreation opportunities is a priority for forest managers. For your safety, for the safety of other visitors, and for the health of the forest, please *Tread Lightly* on the land. See *Tread Lightly* guidelines in this publication.

### Arkansas State Regulations:

All off-highway three and four-wheeled all-terrain vehicles must be registered with the Arkansas Department of Revenue. Upon registration, the OHV will be assessed and the owner will be charged a “one time” fee of approximately \$10 for title, registration, and a decal that will be placed permanently on the OHV. Call your local revenue department (one located in each county) for specifics about Arkansas motor vehicle and transportation Laws and State Highway Commission Regulations 27-20-201 through 27-21-109.

### Arkansas State Requirements:

- Persons less than 12 years of age are prohibited from operating OHVs unless accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older.
- Operating an OHV at speeds greater than reasonable is prohibited.
- Headlights and taillights must be utilized when operating an OHV between one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise.
- Each OHV must have a muffler in good working condition and be equipped with an approved spark arrester. (Should come from the factory meeting this requirement.)
- When two or more OHVs are operating together on a road, they should be operated in single file.
- All OHV operators must comply with applicable Arkansas state laws governing the use of motor vehicles.
- Operators are prohibited from operating any vehicle while under the influence of alcoholic beverages or narcotics.

### Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Regulations :

The following regulations apply ONLY to Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AG&FC) owned or leased Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) such as Gulf Mountain, Cedar Creek, Point Remove, and Gene Rush. The AG&FC does not allow OHVs on state-owned WMAs EXCEPT to those people who can prove permanent disability and have received a Mobility Impaired Program card from the Game & Fish Commission. These AG&FC OHV permits are not applicable to Forest Service land and do not entitle the rider to go off roads or trails or on closed roads.

## Practice responsible off-highway vehicle riding.

The Ozark National Forest is home to some of the most rugged and scenic terrain in Arkansas. Open Forest Service roads and trails provide access to some of these scenic places. Other portions of the forest can only be accessed by hiking or horseback riding.

Off-highway vehicle (OHV) use on national forest land is a favorite form of recreation and is increasing in popularity. Over the last 10 years, there has been a significant increase in the numbers and varieties of OHVs using the forest, including three- and four-wheelers, dune buggies, dirt bikes, and sport utility vehicles. Other forms of recreation, such as hiking and horseback and mountain bike riding, are also on the rise across the forest. There are over 95 miles of designated multi-use trails on the Ozark National Forest at Huckleberry Mountain, Mill Creek, and Moccasin Gap. Forest personnel continue to develop other trails. These routes may change as the forest identifies roads that are no longer needed and could be converted to trails.

Many national forest roads and trails are shared by various groups, as well as other vehicle traffic. Please use caution and courtesy when encountering another visitor. An OHV's ability to accelerate and maneuver quickly can be exhilarating, but can pose problems on trails shared with hikers, horseback riders, mountain bike riders, or other OHV riders. Anyone can ride fast, but it's the skilled rider who can ride slowly over challenging terrain with minimal impact to the ground. Skill and common sense,

not speed, will help you get there smoothly, safely, and in style. During hunting seasons, please be considerate of others sharing the forest with you. Reducing speed and noise levels helps diminish potential controversy between hunters and OHV riders. This should make each outing more enjoyable.

## Where are off-highway vehicle enthusiasts allowed to ride?

This publication provides information on suggested travel routes, which are a combination of roads and trails that are open to the public. For your safety, we suggest you avoid hard surface routes and areas with mixed types of traffic.

The general forest area is closed to OHVs, as well as roads and trails that are closed by earthen mounds, gates, signs, or other reasonable barriers. This is nothing new—it has been the forest policy since 1986. The renewed emphasis is toward enforcement of the current policy.

The policy in the 1986 Forest Land and Resources Management Plan states: “all areas of the Ozark National Forest are closed to off-highway vehicle use, except open roads and trails (subject to State law), to minimize disturbance, environmental damage, and other user conflicts.”

Areas with restrictions will remain closed to OHV use. CLOSED AREAS INCLUDE WILDERNESS, RESEARCH NATURAL AREAS, DEVELOPED RECREATION AREAS, STREAM CHANNELS, WILD AND SCENIC RIVER CORRIDORS, AND TRAIL SYSTEMS.

The following hiking trails are closed to OHVs: Butterfield, Cove Lake, Horsehead Lake, Mt. Magazine, North Sylamore, Pedestal Rocks, Shores Lake, Spring Lake, Spy Rock, Wedington, and

White Rock trails, in addition to the two national recreation trails, Ozark Highlands and Alum Cove. Most developed recreation areas are closed to OHV use. Visitors are not allowed to drive OHVs around in the campground.

While most OHV riders are very conscientious about the environment, resource damage is still occurring. Increased levels of stream sedimentation have been found, ruts are deepening at stream crossings and on steep hillsides, and vegetation is being lost from some fragile soil types. Trash and other litter is increasing in widespread locations across the forest.

## Ozark National Forest rules and regulations remain the same.

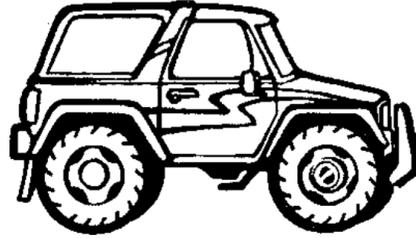
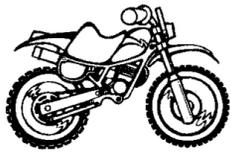
OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES ARE ALLOWED IN SOME RECREATION AREAS, BUT ONLY FOR “ENTRY AND EXIT.” This means that OHVs can be unloaded in the campground and can be driven out of the developed area to recreate and then back to the campsite. RIDING AN OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE AROUND IN THE RECREATION AREA IS NOT PERMITTED. Riding to and from a trail is allowed. Visitors should check the bulletin board where they are camping for specific information regarding the rules at that particular recreation area. If a recreation area is closed to OHVs, the closure sign will be posted at the entrance of the area. Violations of any “CLOSURE TO OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES” on Forest Service land, roads, or recreation areas are subject to fines or penalties in accordance with Code 36 of Federal Regulations.

### Where do you want to travel?

Find the general location on this map, then turn to the maps inside for suggested trail routes and detailed information.

Go to <http://www.fs.fed.us/oof/ozark/recreation/ohv.html> for maps

# OHVs -- TREAD LIGHTLY



National Forests offer areas where you can ride OHVs, including three and four-wheeled ATVs, four-wheel drives, and dirt bikes. Please follow these *tread lightly* tips:

- Travel only on routes designated for OHVs.
- Cross-country travel is prohibited.
- Ride responsibly to protect against erosion.
- Stay on the road or trail. Don't shortcut trails.
- Avoid riding on muddy roads or trails. Resist the urge to spin your wheels.
- Don't harm or harass wildlife!

- Please keep the noise down. Many people go to the forest to get away from noise. Make your machine as quiet as possible.
- Stop when you encounter hikers, mountain bikes or horses to determine the best way to pass.
- Don't harass hunters! Don't drive too close.
- Make sure the spark arrester is working properly. You are responsible if you start a fire.
- Know the operating limitations of your vehicle and your own handling abilities.
- Pack out all trash and litter.

## Types of vehicles covered by this forest policy:

### Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV):

A motorized vehicle intended only for use off paved roads. Vehicles do not generally meet federal equipment and emissions standards, but do have to comply with special noise standards. Term often used to include motorcycles, three- and four-wheeled all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), four-wheel drives and dune buggies. Synonymous with ORV.

### Off-Road Vehicle (ORV):

Any motorized vehicle designed for or capable of cross-country travel on or immediately over land, water, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other natural terrain; excluding registered motorboats or emergency vehicles used during emergency situations.

### All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV):

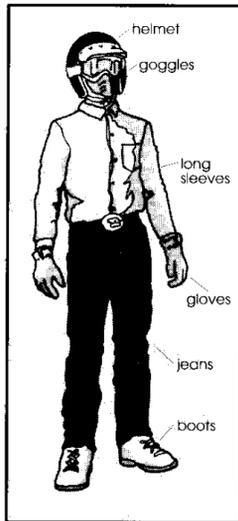
Any motorized, off-highway vehicle 50 inches or less in width, having a dry weight of 600 pounds or less that travels on three or more low pressure tires with a seat designed to be straddled by the operator. A low pressure tire means a pneumatic tire 6 inches or more in width designed for use on a wheel rim diameter of 12 inches or less. The tires utilize an operating pressure of 10 pounds per square inch or less as recommended by the vehicle manufacturer.

The term "all-terrain vehicle" does not include any golf cart, riding lawn mower, or lawn/garden tractor.

## Safety First!

Safety is a primary concern—especially when off-highway vehicles travel high-speed roads, and share the travel way with large trucks and fast moving traffic. Numerous OHV accidents including collisions with vehicles and/or natural obstructions, such as trees or hillsides, are being reported at an alarming rate.

You are encouraged to use the following equipment every time you use your OHV: gloves and a helmet, eye protection, rain gear or cold weather equipment, maps, first aid kit, flashlight, and a fire extinguisher. It is also a good idea to take enough drinking water and snacks to last you in case you have to walk out after a breakdown. Remember, you can ride an OHV much farther in one hour than you can walk in a day.



### Tools You May Need:

Even if you're only planning a short ride, bring along some tools, such as a small tire pump, patch kit, and tow strap. A simple tool may be all you need to keep from walking.

## Road Violation Report

If you witness a violation, record information on this form and submit to a Forest Service official.

### Witness Information

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Vehicle make: \_\_\_\_\_ Model: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Vehicle color: \_\_\_\_\_  
 License #: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 County: \_\_\_\_\_ Road: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of person involved: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of persons involved: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Description of violation: \_\_\_\_\_

Submit to: Ozark National Forest  
 Law Enforcement, 605 W. Main Street  
 Russellville, AR 72801

## We'd like to hear from you...

If you need additional information, please let us know. Our goal is to provide a publication that is helpful to you. Please send your comments to: Ozark National Forest, Recreation Staff Officer, 605 W. Main Street, Russellville, AR 72801.

- I liked the publication.
- I liked the concept and information, but I would like more information on:  
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## Ozark National Forest Administrative Offices

**Forest Supervisor's Office**  
 605 West Main Street  
 Russellville, AR 72801  
 Telephone: 479-968-2354  
[www.fs.fed.us/oonf/ozark](http://www.fs.fed.us/oonf/ozark)

**Bayou Ranger District**  
 12000 SR 27  
 Hector, AR 72843  
 Telephone: 479-284-3150

**Boston Mountain Ranger District**  
 P.O. Box 76, Hwy. 23 North  
 Ozark, AR 72949  
 Telephone: 479-667-2191

**Buffalo Ranger District**  
 P.O. Box 427, Hwy. 7 North  
 Jasper, AR 72641  
 Telephone: 870-446-5122

**Mt. Magazine Ranger District**  
 3001 East Walnut Street  
 Paris, AR 72855  
 Telephone: 479-963-3076

**Pleasant Hill Ranger District**  
 P.O. Box 190, Hwy. 21 North  
 Clarksville, AR 72830  
 Telephone: 479-754-2864

**Sylamore Ranger District**  
 P.O. Box 1279, Hwy. 14 North  
 Mountain View, AR 72560  
 Telephone: 870-269-3228

## Other important numbers:

**Arkansas Game and Fish Commission**  
 Telephone: 1-800-364-4263  
[www.agfc.state.ar.us](http://www.agfc.state.ar.us)

**Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department**  
 Telephone: 501-569-2000  
[www.ahtd.state.ar.us](http://www.ahtd.state.ar.us)



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