

Clancy-Unionville and North Big Belt Mtns Travel Map

Helena National Forest

Updated Version Published October 2008

Travel management provides for a variety of motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities while addressing resource concerns. After extensive planning and public involvement, the Helena National Forest continues to implement travel management decisions in the Clancy-Unionville and North Big Belt Mtns areas. These maps reflect those travel management decisions including year-round and seasonal closure of some roads, seasonal openings of other roads that have been historically closed, a 300' travel allowance off designated routes, and a designation of areas for snowmobile use. To avoid confusion, please remember that travel is restricted to designated roads and trails.

The travel plan decisions continue to be implemented through incremental actions, including engineering review and designation of dual-use routes, placement of signs, new construction, maintenance, watershed improvement projects, enforcement and monitoring. These activities may be adjusted based on the periodic evaluation of monitoring findings, current resource needs and management priorities.

Because these decisions and management activities are relatively new, the Forest has focused efforts on informing and educating users of the changes. This year we will continue to promote awareness and will actively enforce the travel management decisions to ensure management objectives are met. For additional travel information on Helena National Forest lands not included on these maps please see other forest visitor maps.

STAY ON DESIGNATED ROADS AND TRAILS

This travel map shows designated roads and trails (routes) that allow motorized use. Most designated routes have signs or markers indicating designated use. If a road or trail does not have a sign or marker consult this map to see if it is shown as a designated route, if it is not on the map then it is a closed route.

Cross-county travel by motorized, wheeled vehicles is prohibited yearlong on all lands administered by the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. Additionally, some existing roads and trails have been closed through travel management. The purpose of these restrictions is to protect riparian areas, wetlands, crucial wildlife habitat, threatened or endangered species, soils and vegetation, aquatic resources, and/or to reduce user conflicts.

Why are road and trails closed and why are some modes of travel restricted on public lands? The reasons are not always well-understood, especially when you encounter restrictions or closures unexpectedly. Here are the reasons:

Wildlife Habitat Protection - Many closures protect critical areas of big game animal habitat. Such sensitive areas may include winter ranges, calving grounds or security areas. Some routes are closed only seasonally. These are often open to vehicle use at other times of the year when animals are less likely to be disturbed.

Water Quality and Erosion Control - Some routes (roads or trails) shown as open may be temporarily closed in wet weather to prevent rutting and erosion. Such closures reduce damage to the road surface and reduce the amount of sediment washed into streams. Sediment is a serious threat to trout spawning and rearing grounds. These temporary closures may be accomplished by closing permanently installed gates or with temporary signs or barriers. Road and trail maintenance costs are substantially reduced when routes are closed during wet conditions.

Public Safety - Many routes receive frequent traffic, others are located on steep hillsides or are slippery when wet, and some have logging truck or other heavy equipment use. In some specific cases certain kinds of travel are prohibited to insure user safety. Even so, you should use caution on every route.

Conflict of use - In some cases it is necessary to restrict one or more types of travel to resolve problems between conflicting use. Additionally, restrictions are also implemented to provide a unique recreation setting or experience for forest visitors. As an example, some trail enthusiasts may not want to travel on routes used by motorized vehicles. Every attempt was made to provide a variety of recreation experiences, both motorized and nonmotorized.

Wilderness Areas - Some areas are given special protection by federal law. For example, you may not possess or operate any motorized or mechanized equipment within an area classified by law as wilderness. Additional restrictions may also apply in wilderness or other designated nonmotorized use areas.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

Temporary closures or restrictions may be established when use might be hazardous or resource damage would occur. Public notice of temporary controls will be available at Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, or Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks offices having jurisdiction of the areas or routes. These areas/routes will be posted on the ground and or gated when controls are in effect.

Game retrieval - You may not travel off designated travel routes on National Forest lands or Bureau of Land Management lands to retrieve downed game. Contact the appropriate Forest Service office for restrictions of adjacent National Forest lands not covered by this plan. Consult Montana hunting regulations for game retrieval provisions on state and private lands.

Other routes not shown on map - Some routes on National Forest lands may not be shown on this map. These routes are closed yearlong to motorized use, except for snowmobile use in designated open snowmobile areas.

During forest fire season - Montana fire season, on both state-owned and federal lands, is from May 1 to September 30. You are required to have a shovel and bucket when lighting camping or warming fires in areas other than designated, improved campgrounds. Motorcycles and pack-trains must carry a shovel and bucket unless traveling on federal or state highways or paved public roads. When operating a power saw you must have an eight-ounce liquid-chemical or one-pound dry-chemical fire extinguisher and a shovel in your immediate possession. The saw must have a screen-type spark arrester installed. All vehicles must be equipped with baffle-type mufflers and tail pipes or serviceable Forest Service-approved spark arresters.

Snowmobiles - State law prohibits the operation of snowmobiles on plowed public roads. If you need to cross a plowed road, do so directly at a place with good sight distance. Designated areas are available for off-route travel for snowmobiles. Groomed snowmobile routes are closed to wheeled vehicles over 50 inches wide.

Legal Mandates

Pursuant to Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations 261.50 (a) and (b), the following restrictions are in effect on the Helena National Forest within the Clancy-Unionville Area and North Belts Area. Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations, Subpart B, Section 261, Subsections 261.54, 261.55 and 261.56, apply to areas and routes (roads and trails) described on and within this Travel Map based on the Clancy-Unionville Area travel order H-06-22 effective September 29, 2006 and the North Belts Travel order H-05-14 effective October 11, 2005 and until otherwise extended or rescinded.

Violators of these Prohibitions are punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000 for an individual or \$10,000 for an organization, or imprisonment for not more than six months imprisonment, or both. [16 U. S. C. 551, and 18 U. S. C. 3559 and 3571]

Your Responsibility for Safety - Travel on roads or trails is subject to the obvious and inherent hazards associated with the type of travel and changing natural conditions. Individuals must be responsible for having proper skills, equipment, knowledge, and assuming the inherent risks.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS:

Helena Forest Supervisor's Office: (406) 449-5201
 Townsend Ranger District: (406) 266-3425
 Helena Ranger District: (406) 449-5490
 Lewis and Clark County Sheriff: (406) 442-3441
 Broadwater County Sheriff: (406) 266-3441
 Meagher County Sheriff: (406) 547-3397
 To Report Violations: TIP-MONT 1-800-847-6668

