

ATTACHMENT B – South Belts Monitoring Plan



South Belts Travel Plan

I. Closure Effectiveness Monitoring

District	Townsend Ranger District, Helena National Forest
Project	South Belts Travel Plan
Location	Big Belt Mountains, southern portion, MT
Monitoring Item	Closure Effectiveness
Monitoring Objective(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine if applied closure methods are effective at precluding motorized use during the 5/15-12/1, and 10/15-12/1 closure periods on roads or motorized trails. 2. Ensure modifications to Forest road and trail data layers based on project decision and implementation to ensure support for enforceability of decisions.
Method	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1a. Qualitative, field based survey of representative sample of closure sites 1b. Checklist and documentation to record observations of vehicle use. 1c. Comparison of field observations to travel authorizations to determine whether or not vehicle use is authorized 1d. Implement adaptive management approaches if noncompliance is a concern 1e. Incorporate field observations and LEO activities into annual Forest monitoring report. 2a. Modify Forest roads and motorized trail data layers to incorporate decision and any subsequent modifications to the decision. 2b. Prepare and distribute annual free users map/MVUM, correcting any identified errors
Frequency	At a minimum, 50% of all road closures, newly implemented with road closure applied, will be monitored for years one and two after implementation. The data from this monitoring will be used to design decommissioning methods and subsequent years monitoring. Adaptive management will be applied where effectiveness cannot be demonstrated.
Duration	This monitoring will be conducted for the life of the South Belts Travel plan decision as closures are implemented.
Acceptable Variance	High level of compliance is the objective. Response to suspected violations is based on available resources. Permitted, administrative, and emergency uses may continue to occur on closed routes.
Corrective Measures	Gates, or similar signs, and user map are the available tools to implement the closures. Gates have shown to be an effective method of closure.
Data Form and Storage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data will include email descriptions or other forms of internal memoranda. Data can also include Incident Reports and Violation Notices 2. Appropriate Forest roads computer based data layer is the form of data storage for item 2.
Reporting Period	Annually following implementation. Annual free public map (MVUM), gates, and signs are the enforcement tools.
Personnel Needed	Seasonal or Permanent Forest staff.
Responsible Individual	Townsend District Ranger.

II. Spring Breakup Monitoring

District	Townsend Ranger District, Helena National Forest MT
Project	South Belts Travel Plan
Location	Big Belt Mountains, southern portion
Type of Monitoring	Implementation/Effectiveness of spring closures without specific closure periods in preventing damage to forest development roads
Objective	Determine if the spring breakup closure procedures created under the monitoring plan are effective in preventing damage to road surfaces
Methods	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. During initial implementation of travel plan, we will observe road surfaces during spring and early summer and determine if road conditions warrant closure. 2. If conditions warrant, gate is closed and signed, press releases issued to newspaper. 3. Photographs/damage description provided to Forest Engineer of any observed damage.
Frequency	Field based observations during spring breakup period as needed. Any damage reports and photos will be reviewed annually.
Duration	This monitoring will be conducted for the initial 1-3 years following the decision.
Acceptable Variance	No ruts greater than 2" in depth over ¼ mile or more on the following roads: North Fork Deep Creek, Holloway, East Fork Cabin Gulch, Sulphur Bar, Duck Creek, Gypsy Lake, Greyson-Ridge Road, and Grassy Mountain road
Corrective Measures	If ruts occur on a road due to vehicles operating on the road during spring breakup, or if the surface conditions are such that rutting is likely to occur, initiate a temporary seasonal closure order on the road(s). If repeated rutting occurs, reinstitute seasonal closure period for spring breakup.
Data Storage	District to keep a file documenting road damage and communicate as needed with Forest Engineer.
Reporting Period	Annually
Personnel Required	Forest seasonal and permanent staff.
Responsible Individual	Townsend District Ranger.