



United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
Lewis and Clark National Forest

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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AVOID ROAD AND TRAIL DAMAGE

Forest Service officials from Belt Creek and White Sulphur Springs Ranger Districts are reminding wheeled-vehicle recreationists that even though it feels like spring, National Forest System roads and trails in the forest remain wet and snow covered. Recent snow and rain continue to keep roads and trails wet and prone to rutting and other resource damage.

Local Trail Riders Associations are joining with the Forest Service to ask that users practice restraint and not drive on forest roads and trails until weather and ground conditions permit. Recently, Montana Trail Vehicle Riders Association president, Russ Ehnes, offered these words for those using the road and trail systems on National Forest System lands, "Everyone who uses our National Forests has some impacts on the environment, and it's our responsibility to be aware of our impacts and to minimize them. Those of us who ride ATVs, motorcycles and four wheel drives have to make ethical choices when it comes to riding on wet roads and trails. Even though the trails might be legal to ride, we can create ruts that help move soil off the trails where it can enter streams. It can also cause the need for heavy maintenance on these systems. Our clubs do thousands of hours of volunteer trail maintenance along with the maintenance conducted by the Forest Service every year, but people who ride on trails and roads that are too wet can undo much of that work in just a few hours. Summer is just around the corner, so we want all OHV riders to practice restraint, ride ethically and responsibly."

Call local ranger district office staff for information on road and trail conditions prior to visiting the forest. For specific trail/road questions and riding opportunities, call John Metrione, at the Belt Creek District office near Neihart, 406-236-5511.

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