

# CHAPTER II. ALTERNATIVES

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes and compares five alternatives considered for the Rocky Mountain Ranger District Travel Management Plan. It defines the differences between each alternative and provides a basis for comparison among options by the public and decision maker.

During scoping the public expressed a desire to see one or more alternatives that were not as closely related to the 1988 Travel Plan as the “Proposed Action”, and that all alternatives are given equal consideration in the decision-making process. In response the agency determined there would be no further reference to a proposed or preferred alternative, and that alternatives would only be designated by a unique number.

## ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED IN DETAIL

Travel management alternatives are displayed on separate maps, with an accompanying table listing type of travel and any restrictions proposed for each road and trail. The text description of each alternative below serves primarily as a summary of the rationale and general features of each alternative.

### Actions Common to All Alternatives

Under all alternatives, exemptions to off road travel as described in 36 CFR 212.51(a) would be allowed. Exemptions include administrative activities such as law enforcement, fire, emergencies, military operations, noxious weed control, certain special use permit provisions, and other official business purposes. All such use would require specific authorization from the appropriate Line Officer, detailing when, where, who, and under what circumstances motorized travel would be allowed.

Under all alternatives, wheeled motorized travel would continue to be allowed for at least part of the year on existing main access roads to trailheads, developed campgrounds, recreational cabins, and other facilities.

Under all alternatives, motorized wheeled vehicle travel off designated system roads and trails for parking or dispersed camping would be allowed within one vehicle (and attached trailer) length as described in the glossary for “off –road / off-trail travel exceptions”. Motorized over-snow travel would be allowed through restricted areas within designated corridors as described in the glossary for “off –road / off-trail travel exceptions”.

Under all alternatives, Benchmark Airstrip would continue to be managed as an open airfield.

Mitigation measures developed by the IDT would be carried out under all alternatives. These measures are listed in Appendix D to the DEIS. The Best Management Practices listed in Appendix G to the DEIS would be applied under all alternatives, and would help mitigate potential impacts of any alternative chosen.

## **No Action Alternative**

### ***ALTERNATIVE 1***

#### **Rationale**

The No Action alternative provides a baseline for estimating the effects of other alternatives and therefore must be considered in detail (FSH 1909.15, part 14.1; 40 CFR 1502.14(d)). In cases such as this, where ongoing programs or management described within an existing plan continue as new plans are being developed, the No Action alternative means no change from current management direction (FSH 1909.15, part 14.1; CEQ's 40 Most Asked Questions, section 65.12, question 3). The 1988 Travel Plan and the 2001 Three-State OHV Decision define travel management that is currently enforced on the ground. This is the existing condition, and it would be carried forward if there were no decision made to change travel management. Therefore it is appropriately considered the No Action alternative. Analysis of current travel management also fulfills a 1989 directive by the Regional Forester to complete additional analysis of the 1988 Travel Plan.

#### **Features**

Under this Alternative the season and type of use currently allowed on existing roads, trails, and areas on the Rocky Mountain Ranger District (RMRD) would not change. Opportunities for motorized travel are widely dispersed throughout the non-wilderness portions of the RMRD and vary in type and season. Non-motorized trails are primarily those that access or adjoin Congressionally designated Wilderness Areas.

## **Action Alternatives**

### ***ALTERNATIVE 2***

#### **Rationale**

In 2002, an interdisciplinary team (IDT) of resource specialists began developing a proposal for travel management on the RMRD, based on the need for change identified through an early scoping effort conducted in late 2000 and through detailed review of all roads and non-wilderness trails on the RMRD. The IDT considered seven criteria on which to assess the need for change on roads and trails throughout the non-wilderness portion of the RMRD: wildlife and fish habitat protection, conflict between uses, erosion control, safety, facility/resource protection, wilderness protection, and noxious weed spread. The IDT also identified and proposed corrections to travel management restrictions and ownership that were shown erroneously on the existing 1988 Travel Plan Map.

Based on field visits and knowledge of on-site conditions acquired during 2002/2003, the IDT determined that some modifications were needed to correct errors in and improve the Proposed Action. Because the majority of these modifications were minor corrections or changes that did not alter the basic characteristics of the Proposed Action, the decision was made to carry the new, modified alternative forward for detailed analysis in place of the Proposed Action. This modified alternative is now referred to only as Alternative 2, in accordance with the Forest Supervisor's direction as described above. The original "Proposed Action" that was provided to the public for comment is retained in the Alternatives Not Considered in Detail section of the DEIS, along with the rationale for not carrying it forward for detailed analysis.

### Features

In general, Alternative 2 would continue to allow seasonal use of ATVs on some trails in the Badger-Two Medicine area and in a few areas elsewhere on the RMRD. This alternative would also allow seasonal motorcycle use on some trails in the Badger-Two Medicine, Birch-Teton, and Sun River areas. Alternative 2 would prohibit motorized use on most trails in the Dearborn-Elk Creek area. Snowmobile use would be restricted more than in the past, but would continue to be allowed seasonally in some portions of the Badger-Two Medicine, Birch-Teton, Sun River, and Dearborn-Elk Creek areas. A few non-system motorized trails temporarily authorized under the 2001 OHV Decision would be retained for motorized travel; most would be closed to motorized use. Opportunities for motorized travel would continue to be dispersed widely across the non-wilderness portion of the RMRD, although motorized travel by wheeled vehicles and by snowmobiles would be restricted more overall than under the 1988 Travel Plan. Alternative 2 features the greatest mileage of wheeled motorized trails and greatest acreage of snowmobile opportunity of the four action alternatives.

## **ALTERNATIVE 3**

### Rationale

Alternative 3 is based largely on comments submitted by the public requesting that travel management on the RMRD emphasize traditional foot and horse travel and eliminate motorized travel on trails.

### Features

Key features of this alternative are that all system trails would be closed yearlong to all motorized travel, all non-system trails would be closed to all motorized travel, and cross-country (off-trail) snowmobiling would be prohibited yearlong in all areas. Under this alternative, existing main access roads to trailheads, developed campgrounds and other facilities, and recreational cabins would be kept open for wheeled motorized travel. Short spur roads (less than 300-feet long) that access dispersed campsites off main access roads would also continue to allow motorized travel. All other side roads would be closed yearlong to motorized travel. Snowmobiling would be allowed only on designated main access roads, such as the Benchmark Road and the North Fork Teton Road, to allow access to recreational cabins or other facilities. Mechanized travel, such as bicycles and game carts, would continue to be allowed on trails that are currently open to such use. Alternative 3 features the least mileage of motorized travel of the four action alternatives.

## **ALTERNATIVE 4**

### Rationale

Alternative 4 is based both on comments submitted by the public requesting greater separation of motorized and non-motorized travel, and on efforts by the IDT to identify areas in which to focus motorized loop opportunities and other areas in which to emphasize enhancement of other resources. In identifying areas in which to restrict motorized travel, the IDT attempted to choose areas in which more than one resource (e.g. wildlife habitat, wilderness/roadless characteristics, traditional travel, etc.) might benefit. In identifying areas in which to focus motorized loop opportunities, the IDT looked for areas in which the existing infrastructure could support a specific type of motorized use, in which loops existed or trail mileages were sufficient to create a reasonable motorized recreational opportunity, and in which other resources could be appropriately protected or impacts of motorized travel

mitigated. The IDT also attempted to provide a mix of recreational opportunities throughout various geographic areas of the RMRD.

### Features

Under this alternative, a trail loop allowing ATV use would continue to be allowed in the Badger-Two Medicine area. This loop would be limited to a few main access trails. Limited ATV opportunities would continue to exist on a few other trails adjacent to main access roads elsewhere on the RMRD. Travel on trails by motorcycles would continue to be allowed on a few main access trails in the Badger-Two Medicine area (including trails open for ATV travel), south of the Sun Canyon area, and in the Benchmark area. Wheeled motorized access for disabled hunters would be allowed on specific roads in the Sun River and South Fork Teton areas. Cross-country snowmobiling would generally be restricted to the same areas where motorized access would be allowed during the summer. Areas for cross-country skiing and other non-motorized winter travel would coincide with the areas emphasized for non-motorized travel during the summer. This alternative emphasizes a large network of non-motorized trails in areas identified by the public and resource specialists. Alternative 4 features less mileage of motorized travel than Alternatives 1 and 2, and more mileage of motorized travel than Alternatives 3 and 5.

## **ALTERNATIVE 5**

### Rationale

Alternative 5 was developed by the IDT in response to consultation with the Blackfeet tribal government and to address cultural issues in the Badger-Two Medicine area. The National Forest and the Blackfeet Indian Reservation share a common boundary in this area, and the Blackfeet retain specific reserved rights in the area in accordance with the 1895-96 agreement with the U.S. Government. Approximately 70% of the Badger-Two Medicine area has been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as a Traditional Cultural District.

### Features

Under this alternative, motorized wheeled vehicles would not be allowed on any roads in the Badger-Two Medicine area, including the Pike Creek, Lubec Lake, Dog Gun Lake, Palookaville, and Mowitch Basin roads. The Theodore Roosevelt Memorial parking area and access to the Summit Campground and Summit trailhead would remain open to motorized vehicles. All system trails in the Badger-Two Medicine area would be closed yearlong to motorized travel. Most non-system trails would be closed to use, although a few would be adopted as non-motorized trails. Snowmobiling would be prohibited in all areas, including all roads. Mechanized modes of travel such as bicycles and game carts would be allowed on trails currently open to such use.

In the area south of the Badger-Two Medicine area (i.e. south of North Fork Birch Creek) travel management would be the same as described under Alternative 4. Alternative 5 features fewer miles of motorized travel than any of the alternatives except Alternative 3. It provides for a limited amount of motorized recreation on a smaller system of motorized trails located in the southern two-thirds of the RMRD.

## **MITIGATION COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES**

The Interdisciplinary Team developed the mitigation measures listed in Appendix D to be used as part of all the action alternatives. These mitigation measures would be applied to all alternatives to minimize, reduce, rectify, eliminate, avoid, and/or compensate for some of the impacts to resources discussed in Chapter III (40 CFR 1508.20). Also, the Best Management Practices listed in Appendix G will help mitigate potential impacts.

## **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED STUDY**

Federal agencies are required by NEPA to rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives and to briefly discuss the reasons for eliminating any alternatives that were not developed in detail (40 CFR 1502.14). Public comments received in response to the Proposed Action provided suggestions for alternative methods for achieving the purpose and need. Some of these alternatives may have been outside the scope of travel management, duplicative of the alternatives considered in detail, incorporated into alternatives considered in detail, or determined to be components that would cause unnecessary environmental harm. Therefore, a number of alternatives were considered, but dismissed from detailed consideration for reasons summarized below.

### **2002 “Proposed Action” for Travel Management.**

In 2002 the Forest Service issued a proposal to change travel management in the project area. Field reconnaissance by the ID Team, and comments from the public made it apparent that some corrections were needed, because the “proposed action” had some errors in mapping, and field inspections showed conditions on the ground were different than originally thought. Consequently, the ID Team decided to develop a “modified proposed action” to carry forward into detailed analysis, and to drop the original “proposed action” from further consideration.

### **Discard proposed action and start over.**

Some people did not like the proposed action. They said that the proposal should be dropped and a new proposal developed which prohibited motorized use on all trails, and only allowed motorized use on approximately 120 miles of existing roads. In response to this public comment, the ID Team developed Alternative 3 that restricts motorized travel on all trails, and allows motorized travel on the existing main access roads.

Based on field inspections after the “proposed action” was developed, the ID Team developed a “modified proposed action” that will be carried forward as an alternative. The modified proposal represents a viable action to correct travel management problems in the project area since implementing the 1988 Travel Plan. The original “proposed action” will not be analyzed in detail.

### **Develop the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail as a non-motorized route.**

There were two alternatives suggested to develop the CDNST as a non-motorized route. One suggestion was to develop an entirely new route along or near the Continental Divide in the Badger-Two Medicine area that would be non-motorized. The other suggestion was to

make the currently marked “interim” CDNST route through the Badger-Two Medicine area a non-motorized trail and adopt it as the officially designated location of the CDNST.

In response, the ID Team decided to carry a portion of one suggestion forward into alternatives by assessing the effects of making the “interim” route non-motorized. Alternatives 3 and 5 consider restricting all motorized use on the currently identified CDNST “interim” route through the Badger-Two Medicine area. Alternatives 1, 2 and 4 consider continuing a mix of motorized and non-motorized travel on the interim CDNST route in the Badger-Two Medicine area.

None of the alternatives consider developing an entirely new route along or near the Continental Divide that would be non-motorized. Likewise, none of the alternatives consider determining where the officially designated CDNST trail in or adjacent to the Badger-Two Medicine area should be located. Both of these issues would be more properly considered under a separate environmental analysis.

### **Assess the Rocky Mountain “Front” as a unique entity, recognizing traditional horse and foot travel.**

There were suggestions that the Rocky Mountain Division is a unique landscape, with a unique heritage inherent to the Western United States. Some people thought that the heritage value of the Rocky Mountain Division as a unique landscape should be addressed as a separate alternative. Other people suggested that traditional horse and foot travel was a part of the “Front’s” heritage in making access challenging and time consuming.

The concept of the Rocky Mountain Division as a unique Western landscape was a recurrent backdrop to comments. In response, the ID Team decided the concept was best addressed as a social issue to be analyzed in detail under all alternatives.

### **The 1988 Travel Plan is “illegal”, and should not be the basis for a proposed action.**

Some people believe that the 1988 Travel Plan is illegal because it was only to be implemented on an interim basis until a better analysis of effects was completed. In their definition, interim does not equate to 16+ years.

There is a long history to the existing 1988 Travel Management Plan for the Rocky Mountain Division. These details are described in the project file as a non-significant transportation issue not addressed in detail. The dispute as to the legality of the 1988 Travel Plan has not been litigated in a court of law, and probably will continue to be disputed in the arena of public opinion until a lawsuit is filed and settled, or until the 1988 Travel Plan is replaced. Since the public has 16+ years experience with travel management under the 1988 Travel Plan, they are familiar with the effects of that type of management. Consequently, the 1988 Travel Plan is an appropriate basis for describing the existing condition (no-action) alternative. It will be easier for the public to evaluate the effects of changes in travel management under different alternatives by comparing it to an alternative they have seen implemented for the past 16+ years.

### **1984 Travel Plan.**

The 1984 Travel Plan was in effect for the project area prior to the advent of the current 1988 Travel Plan. There is a remote possibility that someone could litigate the legality of the current 1988 Travel Plan, and there is a possibility that the plaintiffs could prevail. If a court determined that the 1988 Travel Plan was “illegal” as some people allege, then travel

management would legally revert to the 1984 Travel Plan. There is no benefit to be gained by analyzing the effects of an alternative that is dependent upon a remote possibility for litigation to overturn the current 1988 Travel Plan. Also, it is unlikely that the plaintiffs in a civil suit, or the Forest Service, would desire a return to the 1984 Travel Plan.

**Develop a multiple-use alternative that allows motorized and non-motorized travel on all existing routes with a hierarchy of restrictions.**

Some people suggested that all roads and trails be open to all types of motorized and non-motorized travel that is compatible with the existing width of the roadbed or trail tread. If there were legitimate reasons to restrict 4x4 vehicles on a roadbed, the road would still be open to ATVs, motorcycles, bicycles, horses, and hikers. If there were legitimate reasons to restrict ATVs, then the roadbed or trail tread would still be open to motorcycles, bicycles, horses, and hikers.

This concept is the process used in travel management planning. The agency considered all modes of travel on a road or trail, and proposed only those restrictions that were necessary to protect resources and/or provide a safe and enjoyable recreation experience. There is a misperception that once motorized travel becomes restricted it is never reconsidered. In fact, the Interdisciplinary Team discussed and reconsidered the need for continuing existing travel restrictions, as well as considered the needs for any additional travel restrictions. The ID Team also considered a hierarchy of restrictions, and only proposed restrictions on modes of travel that were necessary to meet management and resource objectives.

**Develop a conservation alternative that eliminates motorized use from all unique and sensitive habitats, vulnerable landforms, Wilderness, and primitive non-motorized areas.**

Some people felt that the best way to protect the unique setting of the Rocky Mountain Division was to eliminate motorized use from all sensitive habitats and remote drainages.

Travel management planning does evaluate effects of all modes of travel on wildlife habitats, highly erosive soil types, sensitive landforms, and designated Wilderness areas. These effects are disclosed for all alternatives considered in detail. Analysis of the Rocky Mountain Division as a Western-heritage landscape was addressed as an issue under all alternatives.

**Develop an alternative that is compatible with the surrounding Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) classification.**

Some people suggested that the ROS classification be the basis for allowing or not allowing motorized use.

There is a misperception about the role of Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) classifications. The Forest Plan establishes ROS settings in broad terms, but does not classify areas for motorized and non-motorized use. ROS classifications of semi-primitive motorized and semi-primitive non-motorized are based on the “existing” travel management for roads and trails within the area. The ROS setting is dependent upon whatever types of travel (motorized versus non-motorized) are allowed on roads and trails. Acreages within ROS classifications would provide a useful comparison between alternatives to show how various options for motorized and non-motorized travel changes the setting. However, ROS settings as established for specific areas by the Forest Plan are not a useful tool to develop travel management options.

### **Develop an alternative that increases opportunities for motorized recreation.**

Enthusiasts of motorized recreation want to see at least one alternative that increases opportunities for their form of recreation, rather than a series of alternatives that restrict or eliminate their form of recreation.

There was little to no public interest in expanding motorized recreation opportunities during scoping of the proposed action. However, a few commentors on the Draft EIS proposed this concept as an alternative. After some discussion by the IDT, this alternative was not considered further. The desire for expanded OHV riding opportunities was expressed in only a few letters out of the hundreds of letters sent in by OHV enthusiasts, indicating no large public support for expansion of OHV riding trails. Most local OHV riders from communities such as Conrad and Cut Bank expressed a desire for the status quo as shown in Alternative 1, and voiced no desire to expand OHV riding opportunities. Many of the riders in organized OHV clubs from Great Falls and Helena told us that they rarely went to the Rocky Mountain Ranger District to enjoy their sport during the summer. On the other hand, the Rocky Mountain Ranger District receives considerable use by horsemen and hikers from around Montana and around the United States, and their letters expressed a strong desire to increase their opportunities for a totally “quiet” trip along existing trails.

Local snowmobilers also expressed a desire for the status quo, and did not propose any additional riding areas be opened for their use. Consequently, the IDT determined that there would be no benefit in analyzing this alternative in detail.

### **Develop an alternative that alternates use periods between non-motorized and motorized travel.**

Commenters on the Draft EIS suggested alternating use periods, by weeks, months or seasons for motorized and non-motorized activities. One person suggested a permit fee be assessed for such uses.

This concept does have some merit, but it also has disadvantages. After some discussion by the IDT, the alternative was not analyzed in detail. There are many problems with enforcement of this type of management. One day its open to motorized travel, and the next day its not open. Visitors would get confused. Travel plan maps would become more difficult to interpret by all of the various people visiting the area. Visitors would find it more difficult to plan a trip during the period of time when the area offered the type of experience they were seeking. It would be more difficult for people to reschedule planned outings if they encounter unexpected changes in family or business obligations. People could be forced into making decisions to take trips during inclement weather (rain or snow) because that is the only time the area is open to them.

Charging fees to use National Forest System lands is quite controversial. A fee system works best when there are only one or two parking lots to concentrate visitors to assure that everyone is contacted and treated equally. Many people believe they already pay enough in taxes to support public lands, and that many of our citizens do not have the financial means to pay additional fees to enjoy public lands.

## COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

This section provides a summary of the effects of implementing each alternative on the Rocky Mountain Ranger District, outside of the designated wilderness lands. Information in the table is focused on activities and effects where different levels of effects or outputs can be distinguished quantitatively or qualitatively among alternatives.

**Table II-1.  
Comparison of Alternatives**

BTM map zone is the Badger-Two Medicine area. BCS map zone is the remainder of the Ranger District (south of Birch Creek).

FEATURE	MAP* ZONE	ALT. 1	ALT. 2	ALT. 3	ALT. 4	ALT. 5
<b>AIR / WATER / SOILS:</b>						
Air: Miles of motorized roads and trails	All zones	517	392	88	239	171
Water: Miles of roads and trails within 100 feet of perennial streams	BTM	<u>72.9</u>	<u>73.3</u>	<u>73.8</u>	<u>73.4</u>	<u>73.3</u>
	BCS	<u>176.7</u>	<u>178.4</u>	<u>177.2</u>	<u>178.4</u>	<u>178.6</u>
	Total	249.6	251.7	251.0	251.8	251.9
Water: Number of GIS indicated stream crossings	BTM	<u>180</u>	<u>180</u>	<u>182</u>	<u>196</u>	<u>178</u>
	BCS	<u>449</u>	<u>449</u>	<u>449</u>	<u>433</u>	<u>449</u>
	Total	629	629	631	629	627
Soils: Miles of roads and trails crossing landtypes with sensitive soils	BTM	<u>93.8</u>	<u>94.2</u>	<u>94.3</u>	<u>94.4</u>	<u>94.3</u>
	BCS	<u>152.5</u>	<u>154.8</u>	<u>149.4</u>	<u>154.7</u>	<u>154.8</u>
	Total	246.3	249.0	243.7	249.1	249.1
<b>HERITAGE RESOURCES:</b>						
Traditional Cultural District - potential adverse effects - Winter: acres of motorized use open to public. (Percent of TCD @ 89,376 acres; rounded/nearest whole number)	BTM	41,836 (47%)	23,300 (26%)	0 (0%)	11,697 (13%)	0 (0%)
	BCS	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Traditional Cultural District - potential adverse effects - Non-Winter: miles of motorized trail/road open to the public. (Percent of total open to motorized use @ 122 miles rounded/ nearest whole number)	BTM	122 (100%)	98 (80%)	6 (5%)	43 (36%)	6 (5%)
	BCS	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Traditional Cultural District beneficially affected: Winter: number of acres of winter motorized use reduced. (Percent of TCD @ 89,376 acres rounded/nearest whole number)	BTM	0 (n/a) (0%)	18,537 (21%)	41,836 (47%)	30,139 (34%)	41,836 (47%)
	BCS	0 (n/a) (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

FEATURE	MAP* ZONE	ALT. 1	ALT. 2	ALT. 3	ALT. 4	ALT. 5
Traditional Cultural District beneficially affected (non-winter): miles of motorized trail/road reduced. (Percent of total associated motorized trails @ 122 mi. – <b>miles &amp; percent rounded to whole number</b> )	<b>BTM</b>	0 (0%)	<b>25 (20%)</b>	<b>116 (95%)</b>	<b>78 (64%)</b>	<b>116 (95%)</b>
	<b>BCS</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>
Potential effects to historic or prehistoric properties: number of NRHP-eligible or unevaluated sites <b>in existing motorized routes</b> that may require mitigation. <b>Includes post-DEIS info</b>	<b>All zones</b>	<b>89</b>	6	<b>30</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>53</b>
	<b>BTM</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>BCS</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
Potential benefit to historic or prehistoric resources: miles of road or trail where types of use are reduced; numbers of sites where type of use will be reduced. <b>Reflects new information after DEIS</b>	<b>All zones</b>	0 miles 0 sites	125 miles <b>4 sites</b>	429 miles <b>9 sites</b>	278 miles <b>4 sites</b>	346 miles <b>6 sites</b>
	<b>BTM</b>	<b>0 sites</b>	<b>1 site</b>	<b>2 sites</b>	<b>1 site</b>	<b>2 sites</b>
	<b>BCS</b>	<b>0 sites</b>	<b>3 sites</b>	<b>7 sites</b>	<b>3 sites</b>	<b>4 sites</b>
Effects to potentially undiscovered cultural properties: linear miles of field survey required for Section 106 review.	<b>All zones</b>	<b>78 +/-</b>	<b>78 +/-</b>	<b>78 +/-</b>	<b>78 +/-</b>	<b>78 +/-</b>
<b>RECREATION:</b>						
Number of categories of travel restrictions.	<b>All zones</b>	24	18	9	19	19
Summer – Motorized ROS	<b>BTM</b>	<b>83,280 ac. (21%)</b>	<b>72,350 ac. (18%)</b>	<b>10,900 ac. ( 3%)</b>	<b>33,520 ac. ( 9%)</b>	<b>10,900 ac. ( 3%)</b>
	<b>BCS</b>	<b>130,140 ac. (33%)</b>	<b>109,120 ac. (28%)</b>	<b>52,570 ac. (13%)</b>	<b>76,150 ac. (19%)</b>	<b>76,160 ac. (19%)</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>213,420 ac. (54%)</b>	181,470 ac. (46%)	63,470 ac. (16%)	109,670 ac. (28%)	87,060 ac. (22%)
Summer – Non-Motorized ROS	<b>BTM</b>	<b>46,240 ac. (12%)</b>	<b>57,170 ac. (15%)</b>	<b>118,620 ac. (30%)</b>	<b>96,000 ac. (25%)</b>	<b>118,620 ac. (30%)</b>
	<b>BCS</b>	<b>132,040 ac. (34%)</b>	<b>153,060 ac. (39%)</b>	<b>209,610 ac. (54%)</b>	<b>186,030 ac. (47%)</b>	<b>186,020 ac. (48%)</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>178,280 ac. (46%)</b>	210,230 ac. (54%)	328,230 ac. (84%)	282,030 ac. (72%)	304,640 ac. (78%)
Winter – Motorized Area	<b>BTM</b>	<b>65,910 ac. (17%)</b>	<b>43,580 ac. (11%)</b>	<b>0 ac. (0%)</b>	<b>30,550 ac. ( 8%)</b>	<b>0 ac. ( 0%)</b>
	<b>BCS</b>	<b>247,135 ac. (63%)</b>	<b>160,095 ac. (41%)</b>	<b>415 ac. (0%)</b>	<b>98,855 ac. (25%)</b>	<b>98,850 ac. (25%)</b>
	<b>Total</b>	313,045 ac. (80%)	203,675 ac. (52%)	415 ac. (0%)	129,405 ac. (33%)	98,850 ac. (25%)

FEATURE	MAP* ZONE	ALT. 1	ALT. 2	ALT. 3	ALT. 4	ALT. 5	
Winter – Non-Motorized Area	<b>BTM</b>	<b>63,610 ac. (16%)</b>	<b>85,940 ac. (22%)</b>	<b>129,520 ac. (33%)</b>	<b>98,970 ac. (25%)</b>	<b>129,520 ac. (33%)</b>	
	<b>BCS</b>	<b>15,045 ac. ( 4%)</b>	<b>102,085 ac. (26%)</b>	<b>261,765 ac. (67%)</b>	<b>163,325 ac. (42%)</b>	<b>163,330 ac. (42%)</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	78,655 ac. (20%)	188,025 ac. (48%)	391,286 ac. (100%)	262,295 ac. (67%)	292,850 ac. (75%)	
Summer – Motorized Roads / Trails	<b>BTM</b>	<b>203 mi. (30%)</b>	<b>145 mi. (23%)</b>	<b>5 mi. ( 1%)</b>	<b>68 mi. (11%)</b>	<b>1 mi. ( 0%)</b>	
	<b>BCS</b>	<b>314 mi. (47%)</b>	<b>247 mi. (40%)</b>	<b>83 mi. (13%)</b>	<b>171 mi. (27%)</b>	<b>170 mi. (27%)</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	517 mi. (77%)	392 mi. (63%)	88 mi. (14%)	239 mi. (38%)	171 mi. (27%)	
Summer – Non-Motorized Roads / Trails	<b>BTM</b>	<b>17 mi. ( 2%)</b>	<b>48 mi. ( 8%)</b>	<b>186 mi. (30%)</b>	<b>125 mi. (20%)</b>	<b>190 mi. (31%)</b>	
	<b>BCS</b>	<b>138 mi. (21%)</b>	<b>182 mi. (29%)</b>	<b>340 mi. (56%)</b>	<b>256 mi. (42%)</b>	<b>258 mi. (42%)</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	155 mi. (23%)	230 mi. (37%)	526 mi. (86%)	381 mi. (62%)	448 mi. (73%)	
Trailheads providing: immediate access to “quiet” trails only.	<b>BTM</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	
	<b>BCS</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	
	no immediate access to “quiet” trails.	<b>BTM</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
		<b>BCS</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
	choice of “quiet” or motorized trails.	<b>BTM</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
		<b>BCS</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
Recreation & Access Opportunities: Highway vehicle roads.	<b>BTM</b>	<b>17 mi.</b>	<b>11 mi.</b>	<b>6 mi.</b>	<b>11 mi.</b>	<b>1 mi.</b>	
	<b>BCS</b>	<b>105 mi.</b>	<b>89 mi.</b>	<b>82 mi.</b>	<b>86 mi.</b>	<b>86 mi.</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	122 mi.	100 mi.	88 mi.	97 mi.	87 mi.	
ATV trails and roads.	<b>BTM</b>	<b>96 mi.</b>	<b>66 mi.</b>	<b>0 mi.</b>	<b>50 mi.</b>	<b>0 mi.</b>	
	<b>BCS</b>	<b>64 mi.</b>	<b>33 mi.</b>	<b>1 mi.</b>	<b>28 mi.</b>	<b>28 mi.</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	160 mi.	99 mi.	1 mi.	78 mi.	28 mi.	
Motorcycle trails and roads.	<b>BTM</b>	<b>90 mi.</b>	<b>68 mi.</b>	<b>0 mi.</b>	<b>7 mi.</b>	<b>0 mi.</b>	
	<b>BCS</b>	<b>143 mi.</b>	<b>119 mi.</b>	<b>0 mi.</b>	<b>44 mi.</b>	<b>44 mi.</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	233 mi.	187 mi.	0 mi.	51 mi.	44 mi.	
Horse/Hike/Bicycle trails and roads.	<b>BTM</b>	<b>17 mi.</b>	<b>49 mi.</b>	<b>186 mi.</b>	<b>125 mi.</b>	<b>192 mi.</b>	
	<b>BCS</b>	<b>138 mi.</b>	<b>181 mi.</b>	<b>340 mi.</b>	<b>256 mi.</b>	<b>256 mi.</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	155 mi.	230 mi.	526 mi.	381 mi.	448 mi.	

FEATURE	MAP* ZONE	ALT. 1	ALT. 2	ALT. 3	ALT. 4	ALT. 5
Hiker-only trails.	BCS only	5 mi.	6 mi.	7 mi.	7 mi.	7 mi.
Disabled hunter only 4x4 road	BCS only	0 mi.	0 mi.	0 mi.	11 mi.	11 mi.
Wheelchair-accessible trails (existing, or proposed)	BCS only	0.5 mi. existing	0.5 mi. existing	0.5 mi. existing	0.5 mi. existing 4.0 mi. proposed	0.5 mi. existing 4.0 mi. proposed
Projected changes in recreation use levels between 1995 and 2025 are the same under all alternatives. down-hill skiing = + 1%      primitive camping = -4%      backpacking = -12%      horseback riding = -5%      fishing = +8% x-country skiing = +74%      developed camping = +5%      hiking = 0%      OHV driving = +1%      hunting = -9% snowmobiling = -15%      bicycle riding = +1%						
Undetermined Roads & Trails:	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> Total	<b>30 mi.</b> <b>52 mi.</b> 82 mi.	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Adopted as system road or trails.	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> Total	n/a	<b>6 mi.</b> <b>40 mi.</b> 46 mi.	<b>4 mi.</b> <b>38 mi.</b> 42 mi.	<b>5 mi.</b> <b>40 mi.</b> 45 mi.	<b>5 mi.</b> <b>40 mi.</b> 45 mi.
Closed to use (decommissioned).	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> Total	n/a	<b>24 mi.</b> <b>12 mi.</b> 36 mi.	<b>26 mi.</b> <b>14 mi.</b> 40 mi.	<b>25 mi.</b> <b>12 mi.</b> 37 mi.	<b>25 mi.</b> <b>12 mi.</b> 37 mi.
Potential cumulative effects on mix of motorized / non-motorized recreation opportunities in eastern Montana is similar under all alternatives. Alt. 1      Alt. 2      Alt. 3      Assume 25% additional      Assume 75% additional <u>No Change</u> Least additional      Most additional <u>restrictions on other NFs.</u> <u>restrictions on other NFs.</u> <u>restrictions.</u> <u>restrictions.</u> <u>Mix in eastern-Montana</u> Percent of roads open to vehicles.      72%      72%      72%      70%      60% Percent of trails open to OHV travel.      36%      35%      31%      27%      9% Percent of area with Motorized ROS in summer.      64%      63%      62%      48%      16% Percent of area with Motorized ROS in winter.      69%      68%      66%      52%      17%						
<b>ROADLESS / WILDERNESS:</b>						
Bear-Marshall-Scapegoat-Swan IRA: Highway vehicle roads.	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> Total	<b>7 mi.</b> <b>19 mi.</b> 26 mi.	<b>4 mi.</b> <b>12 mi.</b> 16 mi.	<b>0 mi.</b> <b>3 mi.</b> 3 mi.	<b>4 mi.</b> <b>12 mi.</b> 16 mi.	<b>0 mi.</b> <b>12 mi.</b> 12 mi.

FEATURE	MAP* ZONE	ALT. 1	ALT. 2	ALT. 3	ALT. 4	ALT. 5
OHV trails and roads.	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> Total	<b>111 mi.</b> <b>154 mi.</b> 265 mi.	<b>89 mi.</b> <b>105 mi.</b> 194 mi.	<b>0 mi.</b> <b>0 mi.</b> 0 mi.	<b>22 mi.</b> <b>38 mi.</b> 60 mi.	<b>0 mi.</b> <b>39 mi.</b> 39 mi.
Horse/Hike/Bicycle trails and roads.	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> Total	<b>15 mi.</b> <b>117 mi.</b> 132 mi.	<b>37 mi.</b> <b>159 mi.</b> 196 mi.	<b>128 mi.</b> <b>272 mi.</b> 400 mi.	<b>104 mi.</b> <b>226 mi.</b> 330 mi.	<b>130 mi.</b> <b>225 mi.</b> 355 mi.
Snowmobile open area.	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> Total	<b>47,690 ac.</b> <b>217,240 ac.</b> 264,930 ac. (80%)	<b>26,750 ac.</b> <b>131,590 ac.</b> 158,340 ac. (48%)	<b>0 ac.</b> <b>0 ac.</b> 0 ac. (0%)	<b>14,580 ac.</b> <b>72,420 ac.</b> 87,000 ac. (26%)	<b>0 ac.</b> <b>72,420 ac.</b> 72,420 ac. (22%)
Ski / Snowshoe only area.	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> Total	<b>54,470 ac.</b> <b>13,130 ac.</b> 67,600 ac. (20%)	<b>75,410 ac.</b> <b>98,780 ac.</b> 174,190 ac. (52%)	<b>102,160 ac.</b> <b>230,370 ac.</b> 332,530 ac. (100%)	<b>87,580 ac.</b> <b>157,950 ac.</b> 245,530 ac. (74%)	<b>102,160 ac.</b> <b>157,950 ac.</b> 260,110 ac. (78%)
Sawtooth IRA: Highway vehicle roads. OHV trails and roads. Horse/Hike/Bicycle trails and roads. Snowmobile open area. Ski / Snowshoe only area.	<b>Entirely in BCS</b>	4 mi. 21 mi. 4 mi. 15,040 ac. (100%) 0 ac. (0%)	3 mi. 22 mi. 2 mi. 15,040 ac. (100%) 0 ac. (0%)	3 mi. 0 mi. 23 mi. 0 ac. (0%) 15,040 ac. (100%)	3 mi. 22 mi. 2 mi. 15,040 ac. (100%) 0 ac. (0%)	3 mi. 22 mi. 2 mi. 15,040 ac. (100%) 0 ac. (0%)
Deep Creek “further planning” area: Highway vehicle roads. OHV trails and roads. Horse/Hike/Bicycle trails and roads. Snowmobile open area. Ski / Snowshoe only area.	<b>Entirely in BCS</b>	8 mi. 43 mi. 18 mi. 42,560 ac. (99%) 160 ac. (1%)	6 mi. 39 mi. 18 mi. 25,870 ac. (61%) 16,850 ac. (39%)	0 mi. 0 mi. 61 mi. 0 ac. (0%) 42,720 ac. (100%)	6 mi. 1 mi. 55 mi. 0 ac. (0%) 42,720 ac. (100%)	6 mi. 1 mi. 55 mi. 0 ac. (0%) 42,720 ac. (100%)
Recommended Wilderness areas: Highway vehicle roads. OHV trails and roads. Horse/Hike/Bicycle trails and roads. Snowmobile open area. Ski / Snowshoe only area.	<b>Entirely in BCS</b>	0 mi. 9 mi. 51 mi. 49,180 ac. (88%) 6,580 ac. (12%)	0 mi. 0 mi. 60 mi. 12,500 ac. (22%) 43,260 ac. (78%)	0 mi. 0 mi. 60 mi. 0 ac. (0%) 55,760 ac. (100%)	0 mi. 0 mi. 60 mi. 0 ac. (0%) 55,760 ac. (100%)	0 mi. 0 mi. 60 mi. 0 ac. (0%) 55,760 ac. (100%)
Consistency with adjacent BLM ONAs (1=most consistent, 3=least consistent)	<b>All zones</b>	3	2	1	1	1
Consistency with adjacent Nat'l. Forests Summer -- (Yes/No) Winter -- (Yes/No)	<b>All zones</b>	No No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes Yes	Yes No

FEATURE	MAP* ZONE	ALT. 1	ALT. 2	ALT. 3	ALT. 4	ALT. 5
<b>SOCIAL / ECONOMICS:</b>						
Opportunities to experience lengthy (100+ mi.) “western heritage” trips into Wilderness.	<b>BTM BCS Total</b>	<b>1 route / 1 trailhead 18 routes / 9 trailheads</b> 19 routes from 10 trailheads	<b>1 route / 1 trailhead 24 routes / 9 trailheads</b> 25 routes from 10 trailheads	<b>19 routes / 4 trailheads 36 routes / 9 trailheads</b> 55 routes from 13 trailheads	<b>6 routes / 4 trailheads 33 routes / 9 trailheads</b> 39 routes from 13 trailheads	<b>19 routes / 4 trailheads 33 routes / 9 trailheads</b> 52 routes from 13 trailheads
Potential for conflict between uses. (1=lowest, 5 = highest)	All zones	5	4	1	3	2
Motorized access maintained to recreation residences, resorts, and ski area. (Yes/No)	All zones	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Maintain diversity for local economies (1=most diverse, 3=least diverse)	All zones	1	1	3	2	3
Potential impacts to Blackfeet reserved rights (non-winter): miles open to motorized travel in the 1896 ceded lands, over total proposed. (Percent of total) (GIS figures, rounded)	Entirely in BTM	<u>203.50</u> 248.24 (81.98%)	<u>146.22</u> 221.75 (65.94%)	<u>17.43</u> 195.86 (8.9%)	<u>69.20</u> 221.42 (31.35%)	<u>17.43</u> 193.25 (9.02%)
Meets Tribal vision for management. (Yes/No/Likely)	Entirely in BTM	No	No	Likely	No	Yes
<b>TRANSPORTATION:</b>						
CDNST outside Wilderness: Horse/Hike/Bicycle only in summer.	<b>BTM BCS Total</b>	<b>1 mi. 7 mi. 8 mi.</b>	<b>12 mi. 7 mi. 19 mi.</b>	<b>34 mi. 7 mi. 41 mi.</b>	<b>27 mi. 7 mi. 34 mi.</b>	<b>34 mi. 7 mi. 41 mi.</b>
Open to OHVs during summer.	<b>BTM BCS Total</b>	<b>33 mi. 0 mi. 33 mi.</b>	<b>20 mi. 0 mi. 20 mi.</b>	<b>0 mi. 0 mi. 0 mi.</b>	<b>7 mi. 0 mi. 7 mi.</b>	<b>0 mi. 0 mi. 0 mi.</b>
Ski / Snowshoe only in winter.	<b>BTM BCS Total</b>	<b>19 mi. 7 mi. 26 mi.</b>	<b>15 mi. 7 mi. 22 mi.</b>	<b>34 mi. 7 mi. 41 mi.</b>	<b>15 mi. 7 mi. 22 mi.</b>	<b>34 mi. 7 mi. 41 mi.</b>
Open to snowmobiles during winter.	<b>BTM BCS Total</b>	<b>15 mi. 0 mi. 15 mi.</b>	<b>19 mi. 0 mi. 19 mi.</b>	<b>0 mi. 0 mi. 0 mi.</b>	<b>19 mi. 0 mi. 19 mi.</b>	<b>0 mi. 0 mi. 0 mi.</b>
Roads to evaluate for Mixed Traffic: for ATV use. for motorcycle use.	Entirely in BCS	n/a	31 routes / 29.7 mi. 4 routes / 1.1 mi.	None	26 routes / 19.1 mi. 1 route / 0.1 mi.	26 routes / 19.1 mi. 1 route / 0.1 mi.

FEATURE	MAP* ZONE	ALT. 1	ALT. 2	ALT. 3	ALT. 4	ALT. 5
<b>VEGETATION:</b>						
Potential for spread of Noxious Weeds.	All zones	Use levels (not the type of use) will have the biggest effect on the number of new infestations and the increase in size of existing infestations. Since recreational use levels are not projected to increase significantly for the primary modes of travel on the Ranger District, there is no difference between alternatives specific to the spread of noxious weeds.				
Potential to affect sensitive plant species.	All zones	Travel outside prism of existing roads/trails could affect plants.	Decommissioning activities outside prism of two routes could affect plants. Travel by stock or vehicles outside prism of designated roads/trails could affect plants.			
<b>WILDLIFE / FISH:</b>						
<b>Figures for BTM and BCS are percent of range in that area only; total is percent of total habitat on NF lands.</b>						
Percent of seasonal habitat open to snowmobiles:						
Grizzly bear denning	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> <b>Total</b>	25% 29% 28% of NF den hab	15% 18% 17% of NF den hab	0% <1% <1% of NF den hab	10% 9% 10% of NF den hab	0% 9% 8% of NF den hab
Grizzly bear spring	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> <b>Total</b>	59% 43% 47% of NF spr. hab	54% 24% 31% of NF spr. hab	0% 0% 0%	39% 17% 22% of NF spr. hab	0% 17% 13% of NF spr. hab
Elk winter range	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> <b>Total</b>	52% 71% 66% of NF wr	42% 57% 53% of NF wr	0% 0% 0%	33% 47% 43% of NF wr	0% 47% 33% of NF wr
Bighorn sheep winter range	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> <b>Total</b>	46% 73% 73% of NF wr	46% 56% 56% of NF wr	0% 0% 0%	0% 47% 46% of NF wr	0% 47% 46% of NF wr
Bighorn sheep lambing	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> <b>Total</b>	na 81% 81%	na 51% 51%	na 0% 0%	na 43% 43%	na 43% 43%
Mountain goat yearlong/winter	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> <b>Total</b>	22% 40% 37% of NF wr	10% 23% 21% of NF wr	0% <1% <1% of NF wr	3% 13% 11% of NF wr	0% 13% 11% of NF wr

<b>FEATURE</b>	<b>MAP* ZONE</b>	<b>ALT. 1</b>	<b>ALT. 2</b>	<b>ALT. 3</b>	<b>ALT. 4</b>	<b>ALT. 5</b>
Wolverine natal denning	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> <b>Total</b>	26% 23% 23% of NF den hab	20% 11% 12% of NF den hab	0% 0% 0%	3% 6% 5% of NF den hab	0% 6% 5% of NF den hab
Percent of spring habitat more than 500m from open wheeled motorized routes: Grizzly bear spring	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> <b>Total</b>	79% 79% 79% of NF spr hab	87% 85% 85% of NF spr hab	95% 89% 91% of NF spr hab	93% 87% 89% of NF spr hab	97% 87% 90% of NF spr hab
Elk calving	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> <b>Total</b>	90% 85% 86% of NF elk cr	>99% 95% 95% of NF elk cr	100% 96% 95% of NF elk cr	>99% 96% 96% of NF elk cr	100% 96% 96% of NF elk cr
Bighorn sheep lambing	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> <b>Total</b>	na 82% 82%	na 86% 86%	na 99% 99%	na 89% 89%	na 89% 89%
Mountain goat kidding	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> <b>Total</b>	100% 96% 96% of NF kid hab	100% 98% 99% of NF kid hab	100% 99% 99% of NF kid hab	100% 99% 99% of NF kid hab	100% 99% 99% of NF kid hab
Percent of entire area (summer/fall grizzly bear habitat) more than 500m from open wheeled motorized routes	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> <b>Entire</b> <b>RMRD</b>	59% 86% 82%	67% 89% 85%	98% 96% 96%	84% 93% 91%	99% 93% 94%
Percent of lynx habitat open to snowmobiles	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> <b>Entire</b> <b>RMRD</b>	55% 29% 33%	37% 12% 16%	0 <1% <1%	35% 10% 14%	0 10% 9%
Miles of designated over-the-snow routes in lynx habitat	<b>BTM</b> <b>BCS</b> <b>Total</b>	10 2 12	10 2 12	1 2 3	10 2 12	0 2 2
Wildlife habitat connectivity: total number of patches ≥10acres/ number of large patches >1000 acres.	<b>Total</b>	71/21	42/17	2/2	18/6	12/2

## **BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

The Lewis and Clark National Forest Plan (page 2-50, F-1) states that the Forest will “utilize adequate soil and water conservation practices to protect soil productivity and to control non-point water pollution from project activities, using as a minimum, practices specified in any State developed “Best Management Practices”. A project which causes excessive water pollution, undesirable water yield, soil erosion, or site deterioration will be corrected where feasible, or the project will be reevaluated or terminated. Montana State Water Quality Standards require the use of reasonable land, soil, and water conservation practices as the controlling mechanism for non-point pollution. Use of BMPs is also required in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Forest Service and the State of Montana as part of our responsibility as the Designated Water Quality Management Agency on National Forest System lands.

The practices described in Appendix G are tiered to the practices in FSH 2509.22 (Soil and Water Conservation Practices Handbook) and would be incorporated into all project activities. The practices were developed as part of the NEPA process, with interdisciplinary involvement, and meet Forest and State water quality objectives.

## **MONITORING**

Monitoring and evaluation could be used to determine if the physical, biological, social, and economic effects of implementing any alternative occur as predicted. Monitoring may be conducted by sampling a range of projects from the entire Lewis and Clark National Forest as outlined in the Forest Plan on pages 5-6 through 5-17. If the Rocky Mountain Ranger District Access and Travel Management project is selected for monitoring on the Forest, the items listed in Appendix E would be appropriate criteria for evaluating the effects of implementation.

## **FOREST SERVICE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

**In both the DEIS and FEIS**, the Forest Service has not identified a preferred alternative. All of the alternatives are viable options for management of motorized and non-motorized travel in the project area. Any of the alternatives could be selected.

The Responsible Official (the Lewis and Clark Forest Supervisor) may select any combination of access and travel management actions as presented and analyzed within this document. Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 involve a number of independent actions that are feasible to implement. It is possible that public comment may point out a need to modify, add, or delete a particular action from the selected alternative. The Responsible Official could select an alternative and also delete or modify some of the particular actions analyzed in that alternative. Independent actions analyzed in any of the alternatives could also be added to the selected alternative.

It is also possible that the Responsible Official could select some other combination of actions described in this document as the best course of management.

**In the FEIS, the Forest Service preferred alternative is a combination of Alternatives 4, 5, 2, 3, and 1. Each of the alternatives has features that are preferable for social and environmental reasons. No single alternative has more good features than all the others, and no single alternative stands out as the best or “preferred” alternative. During deliberations between the Interdisciplinary Team and Line Officer, it became clear that no one alternative provided the mix of recreational opportunities and resource protection preferred by the agency, and that the public would be best served by the Line Officer selecting specific parts from all of the alternatives.**

