

APPENDIX C

Travel Management Evaluation Criteria

A. WILDLIFE CRITERIA

The following dates to protect wildlife and their habitat were developed jointly between the Forest Service and Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks during preparation of the 1988 Travel Plan. These dates have been working well since 1988, and will continue to be applied to the Jefferson and/or Rocky Mountain Divisions as appropriate.

1. Winter Range – [12/1 to 5/15]
2. Elk Calving – [5/1 to 7/1]
3. Elk Security (Hunting Season) -- [9/1 to 12/1] or [10/15 to 12/1]
4. Grizzly Bear Spring Range -- [4/1 to 7/1]
5. Grizzly Bear Breeding Areas – [5/1 to 7/15]
6. Grizzly Bear Denning Areas – [10/15 to 4/15]
7. Lambing Grounds – [4/15 to 7/1]
8. Kidding Areas – [5/1 to 7/15]
9. Road Density – [Yearlong]
10. Elk Sec. & Grizzly Spring Range – [10/15 to 6/30]

B. CONFLICT BETWEEN USES CRITERIA

The Lewis and Clark National Forest will work to achieve a balance of opportunities for different types of uses. Cooperative “multiple uses” of the same trails and roads will be encouraged as the general rule. Prohibitions or restrictions on particular modes of travel will be imposed only for valid resource concerns, or to achieve a balanced mix of opportunities. Signs, recreation maps, and bulletin boards will be used to inform visitors of opportunities, restrictions, and other types of uses that may be encountered. Law enforcement will be used to achieve compliance.

1. Valid need to impose restrictions
(wildlife, watershed, public safety, resource protection, Wilderness).
2. Provide balanced mix of opportunities.
3. Level of use (amount of traffic) causing safety concerns.

C. EROSION CONTROL CRITERIA

Problems with soil erosion can be minimized with proper engineering, surfacing, and drainage of surface runoff. However, some routes may have experienced extensive erosion problems in the past and may require restricted use (both motorized and non-motorized) when they meet the following criteria:

1. No reasonably foreseeable opportunity to correct (reconstruct) problem, or cost of recurrent maintenance to minimize erosion is excessive.
2. Erosion of road or trail base material makes the route unsafe or unusable, and soil damage may occur outside the road prism when travelers try to circumvent the eroded segment of road.
3. Sedimentation problems in streams due to soil loss.
4. Numerous channel crossings with unstable bank approaches that are sloughing into the stream.
5. Damage to fisheries habitat.
6. Sensitive Landtypes (potential for mass wasting; highly erosive).
7. Potential to damage municipal watersheds (O’Brien and Willow Creeks).
8. Type of use (ATV, 4x4, motorcycle, horse, foot) causing excessive erosion problem.

D. SAFETY CRITERIA

Some of our existing routes present safety problems for inexperienced Forest travelers. If the following criteria exist, route restrictions may be considered:

1. Width of travel clearance inadequate for types of travel being allowed.
(trail too narrow for ATVs; low hanging limbs for horsemen; etc.)
2. Number and size of turnouts inadequate for types of travel being allowed.
3. Steepness of route excessive for vehicle capability.
4. Inadequate turning radius around curves.
5. Inadequate sight distance visibility.
6. Outslope angle excessive on roads or trails (this condition increases risk of sliding off during icy or wet conditions).
7. Rugged terrain (rocks, cliffs) increases risk of injuries if types of uses conflict.
8. Excessive downfall potential across routes due to recent fire, windstorm, etc.
9. Past record of accidents shows a safety problem.

E. FACILITY / RESOURCE PROTECTION CRITERIA

Restricting access to these types of facilities or resources should be considered to ensure protection:

1. Special-use sites like campgrounds, residences, radio & TV repeaters, etc.
2. Known archaeological sites or historical sites.
3. Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive plant and animal species habitats.
4. Protecting inventoried Roadless Areas from road reconstruction/construction.
5. Maintaining wilderness characteristics of Wilderness Study Areas.

F. WILDERNESS PROTECTION CRITERIA

To ensure Wilderness protection and non-motorized use in the Wilderness, any route that dead-ends at the Wilderness boundary may be restricted to motorized use. In general, mechanized use (mountain bicycles, game carts, etc.) to the Wilderness boundary will not be restricted for Wilderness protection reasons. Likewise, routes near the Wilderness boundary that provide recreational loop opportunities for motorized use may not be restricted for Wilderness protection reasons.

G. NOXIOUS WEED SPREAD CRITERIA

Cross-country travel by motorized wheeled vehicles was prohibited by a Regional Forester decision in 2001. Likewise, the Forest imposed a special order requiring all stock users to have only certified weed seed free feed. Both of these restrictions helped reduce the potential for noxious weeds to be spread into uninfested areas. To further avoid the spread of noxious weeds into uninfested areas, consider travel restrictions on motorized or non-motorized use if the following criteria exist:

1. Heavy infestations at trailhead facilities.
2. Numerous water crossings where weed seeds can be washed off.
3. Known problem with weed spread along trail corridor.