

Carson National Forest

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News

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Travel Management Scoping Process Begins

Taos, N.M., February 2, 2009—The Carson National Forest has distributed the proposed actions for the Travel Management Rule, which starts the scoping period in the NEPA process.

Unmanaged recreation, including the effects of unmanaged off-highway vehicles (OHVs), was identified as a major threat to national forest resources. In November 2005, the Forest Service published a travel management regulation for use of motor vehicles on national forest system lands.

The Travel Management Rule provides a national framework for local forests and districts to use in designating a sustainable system of roads, trails, and areas for motor vehicle use. The rule's goal is to secure a wide range of recreation opportunities while ensuring the best possible care of the land. The Proposed Actions focus on needed changes to the existing motorized transportation system on the districts. The actions do not propose any changes to non-motorized travel such as hiking, horseback riding and bicycling nor does it apply to snowmobiling.

Highlights of the proposed actions specific to the Carson include the following:

- Eliminating cross-country motorized vehicle use on the Canjilon, El Rito, Tres Piedras and Camino Real;

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- Increasing the miles of trail designated for motor vehicles 50 inches or less in width on the Questa and Canjilon ranger districts;
- Using a combination of parking adjacent to designated roads, corridors and motorized access routes to provide access to dispersed camping and big game retrieval;
- Having additional seasonal restrictions for habitat and soil and water protection on most ranger districts; and
- Opening and closing roads resulting in nearly 2,012 miles of road open to all motor vehicles.

The proposed actions are based on previous public involvement efforts and from hundreds of comments the forest received in the past few years. The proposed actions are a balance between the public input and expert knowledge of where motor vehicle use can occur without damaging the forest resources. Although these proposed actions are limited to the Carson National Forest, forest officials have coordinated with the adjacent Santa Fe National Forest, Rio Grande National Forest, the Bureau of Land Management field offices, city and county governments and local landowners.

People who are interested in receiving more information and commenting on the proposals can access the forest's Web site at http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/carson/recreation/travel_mgmt. A computer disk is also available containing the maps.

Hard copies of the maps are also available at district offices, the forest supervisor's office and libraries in the vicinity of the Carson National Forest.

People are encouraged to review the proposals and comment. The comments will then be used to identify significant issues related to the proposals and alternatives might be developed to help address those issues. Comments would be most effective if received by February 28, 2009. Final decisions are expected to occur this summer with implementation in October 2009.

Comments can be sent to:
Carson National Forest
Travel Management Proposed Actions
208 Cruz Alta Road
Taos, NM 87571

or faxed to 575-758-6213

Or emailed to carson_trvl_mgt@fs.fed.us . Emails should include “CNF Travel Management” in the subject line. Additional questions can be asked of the Travel Management team Paula Coté or Jack Carpenter at 575-758-6200.

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