

Comparison of Alternatives

Table 9. Summary of the proposed changes for each alternative and how they compare to where people drive now

Where People Drive Now		Type of Change Proposed	Action Alternative			
No Action, Alternative 1			2	3	4	5
Unauthorized roads and trails, miles	304	Add unauthorized roads and trails to National Forest System miles	91	19	142	83
		Percent change from where people drive now	-70	-94	-53	-73
Forest system roads and trails closed to motorized use, miles	477	Allow motorized use on roads and trails currently closed, miles	261	152	388	311
		Percent change from where people drive now	-45	-68	-19	-35
Forest system roads and trails open to motorized use, miles	4,664	Close roads and trails that currently allow motorized use, miles	2,476	2,966	2,196	2,535
		Percent change from where people drive now	-53	-63	-47	-54
Areas, acres	443,848	Close areas that are currently open to motorized cross-country travel, acres*	821,604	821,644	821,595	821,609
		Percent change from where people drive now	-100	-100	-100	-100
Motorized dispersed camping, acres	17,076	Designate corridors for motorized access to dispersed camping, acres	16,340	0	33,079	11,536
		Percent change from where people drive now	-4	-100	94	-32
Motorized big game retrieval, acres	1,266,910	Designate corridors for motorized access to retrieve big game, acres	16,340	0	1,098,618	370,300
		Percent change from where people drive now	-99	-100	-13	-71

*The forest proposes to close more acres than people are driving on now. In other words, the whole forest will be closed to motorized cross-country travel.

Table 10. Summary of the effects described in detail in chapter 3

Resource		Alternative				
		1	2	3	4	5
Motorized Access and Recreational Opportunities	Roads, miles	5,119	2,290	1,829	2,549	2,231
	Trails, miles	339	262	53	462	305
	Areas, acres	443,848	40	0	49	35
	Seasonal closure dates, number of different	No uniform dates exist	11	4	5	5
	Big game retrieval, acres	1,266,910	16,340 – allowed only during hunting season with a license	0	1,098,618 – allowed only during hunting season with a license	370,000 – allowed only during hunting season with a license
	Dispersed camping, acres	17,076 along roads, but driving off road to camp is allowed on 53 percent of the forest.	16,340	0	33,079	11,536
Conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users of the forest		Tends to happen in particular places rather than forestwide.	Expected to reduce conflicts by keeping motorists on a known, published system.	Expected to reduce conflicts by keeping motorists on a known, published system.	Expected to reduce conflicts by keeping motorists on a known, published system.	Expected to reduce conflicts the most because it also groups motorized activities geographically.
Wilderness		No motorized use is allowed. Negligible disturbance from adjacent land.	No change	No change	No change	No change
Inventoried Roadless Areas		Most motorized use (142 miles)	Reduces routes open to motorized use by 54 percent.	Reduces routes open to motorized use by 71 percent and none allowed on trails.	Reduces routes open to motorized use by 29 percent.	Reduces routes open to motorized use by 52 percent.
Ease of enforcement and compliance		Visitor map serves as guide for motorists; it does not match the forest plan.	Improves by having a single reference; however, the MVUM would be the most complicated.	Improves by having a single reference. The MVUM would be the least complicated.	Improves by having a single reference, the MVUM.	Improves by having a single reference, the MVUM.

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		1	2	3	4	5
Maintenance		Forest cannot maintain the entire route system on an annual basis.	No change	No change	No change	No change
Safety		Route system is safe.	No change	No change	No change	No change
Social and Economic	Jobs and income from motorized use in the forest	Negligible at the scale of the local economy.	No change	No change	No change	No change
	Noise	Most noise occurs on passenger car routes. Noise on high-clearance routes is infrequent enough to be considered negligible.	No change	No change	No change	No change
	Property values	Could increase or decrease values depending on what characteristics people seek in a property.	No change	No change	No change	No change
	Collecting forest products	Allowed with a permit. No permit needed now to collect piñon nuts.	No change for permitted uses. Reduces places people can drive to collect piñon nuts and other plants.	No change for permitted uses. Reduces places people can drive to collect piñon nuts and other plants.	No change for permitted uses. Reduces places people can drive to collect piñon nuts and other plants.	No change for permitted uses. Reduces places people can drive to collect piñon nuts and other plants.
	Environmental justice	No change in motorized-related employment or access to the forest.	No measureable change to minority or low-income populations.	No measureable change to minority or low-income populations.	No measureable change to minority or low-income populations.	No measureable change to minority or low-income populations.

Table 10. Summary of the effects described in detail in chapter 3

Resource		Alternative				
		1	2	3	4	5
Lands	Access to private property	Provides the most access and keeps access people are accustomed to.	Removes duplicate access. People must have an authorization or their road must be on the MVUM.	Removes duplicate access. People must have an authorization or their road must be on the MVUM. Eliminates motorized access to some properties in inventoried roadless areas (IRAs).	Removes duplicate access. People must have an authorization or their road must be on the MVUM. Allows motorized use on some trails in IRAs for access.	Removes duplicate access. People must have an authorization or their road must be on the MVUM.
		Continuing erosion on some routes, camping areas and cross-country use. Increased erosion from motorized cross-country use.	Continuing erosion on some routes, camping areas and from past cross-country use. Some routes might revegetate over time; however, some routes could erode further over time. No erosion from motorized cross-country use.	Continuing erosion on some routes and past camping areas and cross-country use. Some routes might revegetate over time; however, some routes could erode further over time. Riparian areas are more likely to heal due to the discontinued use of vehicle access to camping areas.	Continuing erosion on some routes and from past cross-country use. Most likely to increase the amount of erosion due to the expansion in motorized camping areas. Some routes could revegetate over time; however, some routes could erode further over time.	Continuing erosion on some routes, camping areas and from past cross-country use. Some routes could revegetate over time; however, some routes could erode further over time. No erosion from motorized cross-country use.

Table 10. Summary of the effects described in detail in chapter 3

Resource		Alternative				
		1	2	3	4	5
Water	Water quality	Water quality varies in the forest; 260 miles of perennial streams are listed as impaired for reasons that could be caused by routes and motorized cross-country travel.	Unlikely to improve water quality.	Most likely to improve water quality.	Most likely to degrade water quality.	May improve water quality.
	Watershed condition	Highest amount of cross-country travel.	Eliminates cross-country travel in motorized areas.	Eliminates cross-country travel in motorized areas and camping corridors	Eliminates cross-country travel in motorized areas, but increases motorized access to camping corridors.	Eliminates cross-country travel in motorized areas and reduces motorized access to camping corridors.
Habitat for fish		The quality of fish habitat varies across the forest. It is not causing a trend toward listing or a loss of viability. Motorized trail in Polvadera Creek is a risk to the Rio Grande cutthroat trout.	Slightly improves the quality of fish habitat across the forest. Protects the core population of Rio Grande cutthroat trout by not proposing the motorized trail in Polvadera Creek.	Slightly improves the quality of fish habitat across the forest. Protects the core population of Rio Grande cutthroat trout by not proposing the motorized trail in Polvadera Creek.	Slightly improves the quality of fish habitat across the forest, but would not protect the core population of Rio Grande cutthroat trout in Polvadera Creek.	Slightly improves the quality of fish habitat across the forest, but would not protect the core population of Rio Grande cutthroat trout in Polvadera Creek.
Habitat for wildlife		The current route system is not causing a trend toward listing or the loss of viability for any species, but most species are not doing as well as they could without as many routes and motorized use.	Improves wildlife habitat and reduces disturbance from motorized use.	Improves wildlife habitat and reduces disturbance from motorized use the most because no driving off routes is allowed.	Improves wildlife habitat and reduces disturbance from motorized use.	Improves wildlife habitat and reduces disturbance from motorized use.

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Resource		Alternative				
		1	2	3	4	5
Nonnative invasive plants		Moderate risk of establishment and spread.	Decrease in the risk of establishment and spread.	Greatest decrease in the risk of establishment and spread because no driving off roads is allowed.	Decrease in the risk of establishment and spread.	Decrease in the risk of establishment and spread.
Cultural resources		Moderate to high risk that cultural resource sites and traditional cultural properties would be damaged.	No adverse effect to cultural resource sites.	No adverse effect to cultural resource sites.	No adverse effect to cultural resource sites.	No adverse effect to cultural resource sites.
Air quality	Health	Health problems from dust from forest not known, but expected to be negligible.	Fewer locations where vehicles would cause dust.	Fewer locations where vehicles would cause dust.	Fewer locations where vehicles would cause dust.	Fewer locations where vehicles would cause dust.
	Climate change	Contribution from forest traffic is negligible.	No change	No change	No change	No change
	Visibility	Good to excellent.	Negligible improvement	Negligible improvement	Negligible improvement	Negligible improvement
Wildfire	Firefighters response time	Varies depending on location of the wildfire.	No change - emergency vehicles are exempt.	No change - emergency vehicles are exempt.	No change - emergency vehicles are exempt.	No change - emergency vehicles are exempt.
	Number of human-caused fires	Average of 32 per year	Slight decrease	Slight decrease	Slight decrease	Slight decrease

