

Motorized Travel Plan

Draft Environmental Impact Statement Ashley National Forest Duchesne, Daggett, and Uintah Counties, Utah and Sweetwater County, Wyoming

Lead Agency:	USDA Forest Service
Cooperating Agencies:	State of Utah, Duchesne, Daggett, Uintah Counties and State of Wyoming, Sweetwater County
Responsible Official:	Kevin Elliott 355 North Vernal Avenue, Vernal UT
For Information Contact:	Kris Rutledge, Project Leader Ashley National Forest 355 North Vernal Avenue, Vernal UT 84078 (435) 781-5196
Website Information:	http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/ashley/ (Travel Plan Revision)

Abstract: The purpose of this project is to improve management of public summer motorized use by designating roads and motorized trails and limiting dispersed camping to areas up to 150 feet from those designated roads and trails on the Ashley National Forest (hereafter referred to as the **Forest**). This will include changes to current vehicle use designations, and road or trail closures and additions to the travel system.

This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) serves to disclose and compare the effects of implementing the alternatives and gives the public an opportunity to participate in the design of the designated motorized system. Five alternatives are evaluated including the No Action alternative which would allow unrestricted motorized travel to continue. This alternative serves as a baseline for comparing the effects of other alternatives. The four action alternatives vary in terms of the mileage of designated motorized routes, the number of routes with seasonal restrictions, and the classification of vehicle routes (e.g. full-size vehicle road, 50" or less trail, or motorcycle trail). The mileage of designated motorized routes varies from 1,436 miles of open road and 214 miles of motorized trail in Alternative C to 1,346 miles of open road and 96 miles of motorized trail in Alternative D. Alternatives B and E have the most miles of designated routes affected by seasonal restrictions. Alternative B is the preferred alternative. All alternatives meet the purpose and need and address the significant issues to varying degrees.

Reviewers should provide the Forest Service with their comments during the review period of the draft environmental impact statement. This will enable the Forest Service to analyze and respond to the comments at one time and to use information acquired in the preparation of the final environmental impact statement, thus avoiding undue delay in the decisionmaking process. Reviewers have an obligation to structure their participation in the National Environmental Policy

Act process so that it is meaningful and alerts the agency to the reviewers' position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978). Environmental objections that could have been raised at the draft stage may be waived if not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement. *City of Angoon v. Hodel* (9th Circuit, 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Comments on the draft environmental impact statement should be specific and should address the adequacy of the statement and the merits of the alternatives discussed (40 CFR 1503.3).

Send Comments to:

Kris Rutledge
Ashley National Forest
366 North Vernal Avenue,
Vernal UT 84078
(435) 781-5196

Date Comments Must Be Received:

45 days after the Notice of Availability of this
Draft EIS is published in the *Federal Register*

Project Website:

http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/ashley/projects/travel_management

SUMMARY

The Ashley National Forest proposes to update the current motorized travel plan by designating a system of roads, trails, and open use areas consistent with federal regulation 36 CFR 212.51 from the Travel Rule released on November 2, 2005. The area affected by the proposal is all National Forest System land within the Ashley National Forest administrative boundary (with the exception of the High Uinta Wilderness). This project was initiated because the Forest recognized a need for improving management and enforcement of motorized use – off-highway vehicle (OHV) use in particular. There has been unanticipated growth in OHV use since the 1986 Ashley National Forest Land and Resource Plan was written. Forest monitoring of motorized use, known conflicts and impacts, and enforcement issues form the basis of the need for change. A desired result from this project is to provide ample motorized recreational opportunities that minimize the potential for user conflicts and resource impacts, and to create a system that can be maintained over time with the resources available to the forest. The forest intends to meet these objectives, but biophysical, fiscal, and socio-political realities necessitate that progress will occur incrementally over time. A route network that has evolved over many years cannot be instantaneously transformed to meet all idealized objectives. The proposed actions represent practical and substantial measurable progress towards the desired ends.

The current differences of policy between Ranger Districts may increase confusion as to what legal use is as well. On the Forest using a vehicle off forest system roads and/or trails is prohibited (36 CFR 261.50) with the exception of two travel areas totaling 111,805 on the Vernal Ranger District. These areas are depicted with a cross hatching on the current travel map and will be referred to as the “**hatched travel areas**” within this document. Within the hatched travel areas motorized vehicles are allowed on designated routes and established, undesignated routes as long as resource damage is not occurring. Although users tend to stay on well-established routes, the lack of designation has created a management problem. Both visitors and managers find it difficult to distinguish between an established, undesignated route and a newly created, undesignated route. Furthermore, recognizing an established, undesignated route where “resource damage is not occurring” is more challenging to interpret and identify. As a result, enforcing the current travel map within this hatched travel areas is problematic; newly created routes are prolific and increase every year. Because travel on non-system roads within the hatched travel area is permitted those non-system routes will be referred to as “**undesignated**”. Non-system routes outside of the hatch travel area but still on the Forest will be referred to as “**unauthorized**”. Since the 1980s, motor vehicle use has changed from primarily jeep travel to a mix of passenger car, truck, ATV, and motorcycle use, and more recently utility terrain vehicles (UTVs), and the desire for motorized trail access has increased. Over the past few decades the availability and capability of motorized vehicles, particularly off highway vehicles (OHVs) and sport utility vehicles (SUV’s) has increased tremendously. In the Uintah Basin growth in OHV use has increased 616% over eleven years (Division of State Parks and Recreation and State of Utah Tax Commission, Department of Motor Vehicles 2009). This level of growth in OHV popularity was unforeseen during the development of the current Travel Management Plans. With more use has come a stronger desire for motorized trails both during the summer for recreational riding and during the fall to facilitate access to camps and hunting areas. Many of the routes used today are not part of the Forest transportation system, thus do not receive maintenance funding. Over time, as these routes deteriorate due to lack of maintenance, access becomes more difficult particularly for vehicles.

The Travel Rule provides policy for ending this trend of undesignated route proliferation and enables management of the Forest transportation system by changing the policy across the Forest to allow motorized travel only on those designated roads and trails shown on the travel map.

The Forest needs to 1) Provide safe access for motorized recreational uses; 2) reduce user conflicts; 3) improve undesirable resource conditions occurring from summer motorized vehicle travel on unauthorized routes; and 4) reduce disturbance of wildlife species through the management of road densities in areas of concern.

To help develop the Proposed Action the Forest worked closely with the public, County, State, and other federal agencies to develop the Proposed Action. Meetings, workshops and field trips were planned throughout the spring, summer, and fall of 2007. Two Notices of Intent (NOI) to prepare Draft Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) were published November 9, 2007. These NOIs included Flaming Gorge and the Roosevelt/Duchesne Ranger District in one EIS and Vernal Ranger District in a separate EIS. At the time of the publication of the NOIs it was believed that the EISs would be completed on differing timelines. Since the publication of the NOIs the EISs have been combined into one document to facilitate effects analysis and to allow additional analysis time for the Resource Specialist. All comments received were reviewed and categorized by issue.

Six resource areas which had significant issues or areas of high concern were identified during scoping.

- Recreation – effects of motorized travel management to user groups, retaining dispersed camping opportunities, safety, cost, and enforcement
- Soils and Water – effects of motorized travel to soil degradation and water quality
- Wildlife – affects of motorized travel and roads to disturbance, habitat loss and fragmentation, and the effects of that on threatened, endangered and sensitive species, management indicator species, migratory bird species, and big game species.
- Wilderness Potential - effects of roads and trails on the undeveloped character of potential wilderness areas.
- Economics – effects OHV trail availability and dispersed camping opportunities may have on communities near the Forest.
- Heritage - direct and indirect effects of motorized travel to heritage resources.

In addition to the Proposed Action the Forest and cooperating partners developed three alternatives to address the issues and meet the project purpose and need. All alternatives, including the No Action Alternative are summarized below.

Alternative A (No Action) While this alternative does not meet the project purpose and need, it is required to be analyzed to serve as a baseline for comparing the effects of other alternatives. Under this alternative travel management would continue under the present course of action, summer motorized travel would be guided by the current travel plans for the Flaming Gorge Ranger District (map dated June 27, 2005), the Vernal Ranger District (map dated June 27, 2005) and the Roosevelt/Duchesne Ranger District (map dated June 27, 2005).

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative) This alternative responds to the need to provide wheeled motorized access to dispersed recreation opportunities and to provide a diversity of wheeled motorized recreation opportunities. The Proposed Action would provide a system of designated roads, motorized and non-motorized trails and respond to direction provided in the Forest Plan, as well as meet current law, regulation, and policy.

The alternatives that were developed as a result of scoping include:

Alternative C - This alternative responds to issues raised by motorized user groups and County governments. The intent of this alternative is to maximize opportunities for motorized travel by

addressing the need to better accommodate current motorized use as well as anticipated future motorized uses.

Alternative D - This alternative responds to issues raised by non-motorized users relative to a need for more non-motorized opportunities and conservation groups with concerns about road densities, water quality, fragmentation, and protection of critical habitats for wildlife. It addresses associated concerns with noise and safety related to motorized and non-motorized uses in the same area by adding greater emphasis to protection of potential wilderness area and Inventoried Roadless Area characteristics, as well as increased protection of biological and physical resources. This alternative designates the least miles of motorized road and trails compared with the other alternatives. Alternative D was developed to address environmental issues particularly protection of wildlife habitat connectivity through reduction of road densities, and the emphases of non-motorized recreation opportunities.

Alternative E - This Alternative recognizes the importance of decreasing road densities but limits those areas to specific areas of resource concern, such as sensitive land types, rather than across the districts as in Alternative D. This alternative also attempts to meet the increasing demand for motorized roads and trails in areas that could support such use. This alternative would increase road densities in some areas while reducing it in others. This alternative would require increased mitigation to reduce impacts from motorized use in order to retain or increase such uses.

Based upon the effects of the alternatives, the responsible official will decide

- Which roads and trails to add or remove from the existing Travel Management Plan?
- What type of motorized uses to allow on these roads and trails?
- What design features are necessary to minimize adverse environmental impacts associated with changes in travel management designations?
- Whether to designate roads or trails specifically for dispersed camping access?
- How management parameters (such as safety and cost) should be balanced with recreation opportunities.
- What monitoring is to be included to evaluate project implementation?
- What if any changes are to be made to the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum?

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page	<i>i</i>
Summary	iii
Table of Contents	vi
Chapter 1. Purpose of and Need for Action	1-1
1.1 Document Structure	1-1
1.2 Introduction	1-1
1.3 Background.....	1-2
1.4 Purpose and Need for Action.....	1-3
1.5 Management Direction	1-6
1.6 Project Objectives	1-6
1.7 Project Scope	1-7
1.8 Proposed Action.....	1-10
1.9 Decision Framework.....	1-10
1.10 Public Involvement.....	1-11
1.11 Issues	1-11
1.12 Other Related Efforts.....	1-18
Chapter 2. Alternatives, Including the proposed action	2-1
2.1 Introduction.....	2-1
2.2 Common Features of Action Alternatives	2-1
2.2.1 Features Common to all Action Alternatives.....	2-1
2.2.2 Standards, Maintenance, and Construction.....	2-5
2.2.3 Project Design Features	2-6
2.2.4 Monitoring and Evaluation	2-7
2.2.5 Mitigation Measures	2-8
2.3 Alternatives Considered in Detail.....	2-10
2.3.2 Alternative A - No Action.....	2-11
2.3.3 Alternative B – Preferred Alternative	2-12
2.3.4 Alternative C –.....	2-18
2.3.5 Alternative D –.....	2-23
2.3.6 Alternative E –	2-28
2.4 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Study	2-33
2.5 Comparison of Alternatives	2-34
Chapter 3 – Affected Environment and Effects Analysis	3-1
3.1 Recreation Resources	3-1
3.2 Soil and Water Resources	3-53
3.3 Wildlife Resources	3-75
3.4 Wilderness Potential.....	3-122
3.5 Economics	3-138
3.6 Environmental Justice	3-142
3.7 Heritage Resources	3-143
3.9 Short-Term Uses and Long-term Productivity	3-152
3.10 Unavoidable Adverse Effects	3-152
3.11 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment	3-153
3.12. Cumulative Effects	3-154
3.13 Other Required Disclosures.....	3-157
CHAPTER 4. Consultation and Coordination	4-1

References R-1
Glossary G-1
Appendix A: Tables of Route Proposals and Changes to Existing Travel Map..... A-1
Appendix B: Project Design Features B-1
Appendix C: Wilderness Potential: Proposals and Effects by Alternative A-1
Index I-1

This page intentionally blank

CHAPTER 1. PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

1.1 Document Structure

The Ashley National Forest has prepared this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant Federal and State laws and regulations. Specifically, this includes the 2005 Travel Rule (36 CFR Part 212 (as amended in 2008), 251, 261, and 295)), the 1986 Ashley National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan), the 1990 Vernal Travel Map Revision, and the 1995 Roosevelt/Duchesne and Flaming Gorge Ranger Districts Travel Management Plans. This EIS discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that could result from the proposed action and alternatives. The document is organized into four chapters:

- *Chapter 1. Purpose and Need for Action:* This chapter includes introductory information, background on the history of off-highway vehicle management within the project area, the purpose of and need for the project, the scope of the project, and the Forest Service proposal for achieving that purpose and need. This section also details the decision framework for this project, how the Forest Service informed the public about the proposal and issues that emerged regarding the proposed action.
- *Chapter 2. Alternatives, including the Proposed Action:* This chapter provides a detailed description of the agency's Preferred Alternative as well as four alternative methods for achieving the stated purpose. These alternatives were developed based on issues raised by the public and other agencies. This section contains tables comparing key elements of the alternatives and concludes with a summary table of selected environmental effects associated with the alternatives. A preliminary description of how the alternatives comply with the Forest Plan is also included in this chapter.
- *Chapter 3. Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences:* This chapter describes the environmental effects of implementing the five alternatives, including the no action alternative. This analysis is organized by the 14 issues that arise from four resources chosen by the deciding official to be analyzed in depth.
- *Chapter 4. Consultation and Coordination:* This chapter provides a list of preparers and agencies consulted during the development of the environmental impact statement.
- *Appendices:* The appendices provide more detailed information to support the analyses presented in the environmental impact statement.
- *Index:* The index provides page numbers by document topic.

Additional documentation, including more detailed analyses of project-area resources, may be found in the project planning record located at Forest Supervisors Office, Ashley National Forest, Vernal, UT.

1.2 Introduction

There is a nationwide awareness within the Forest Service of the harmful effects of indiscriminate off-road travel. This awareness led to the 2005 Travel Rule in the Federal Register: 36 CFR Parts 212, 251, 261, 295 "Travel Management; Designated Routes and Areas for Motor Vehicle Use"

(hereafter referred to as the Travel Rule). The Travel Rule requires designation of roads, trails, and areas open to motor vehicle use, and prohibits use of motor vehicles off the designated system, as well as use of motor vehicles on routes and in areas inconsistent with the designation. The Travel Rule also recognized that revised regulations were needed to provide national consistency and clarity on motor vehicle use on National Forests, while at the same time recognizing the need to make road and trail designations at the local level. National Forests in Utah believe that coordinating policy at the state level strikes a balance between national direction and the need for local designations.

In accordance to the Travel Rule, the goal of this project is to improve management of public summer motorized use, through the review of the current Roosevelt/Duchesne Ranger District, Vernal Ranger District, and Flaming Gorge Ranger District Travel Management Plans; make revisions to current road and trail designations as needed to meet changing conditions (36 CFR 212.54); and incorporate consistency in travel management practices with other Utah Forests. This includes limiting dispersed camping to within 150 feet of designated routes, and where appropriate, within specified time periods (36 CFR 212.51(b)). Winter snowmobile use is not addressed in this project.

Most of the routes proposed for designation exist on the ground, although not all are currently part of the Forest Transportation System. The exception is where new construction would increase safety or provide better motorized access to an area. Once the Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) is published, summer motorized use will be allowed only on routes designated on the map.

National direction for travel management, specifically off-road use of motor vehicles on federal lands, is provided by Executive Order (E.O.) 11644 (February 8, 1972) as amended by E.O. 11989 (May 24, 1977). Forest Service rules at Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, part 295 codify the requirements in E.O. 11644 and E.O. 11989.

Although the Ashley National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan 1986 (Forest Plan) is undergoing revision, the current Forest Plan provides the framework for the Ashley National Forest Travel Management Plan until a new plan is signed and in place.

1.3 Background

Currently, there are three travel plans for the Forest: the Vernal Range District Travel Map EA that was last revised in 1990, and the Flaming Gorge and Roosevelt/Duchesne Travel EAs that were signed in 1995. There are differing management policies between the Ranger Districts which can lead to confusion and misunderstanding as to the policies.

Since the 1980s, motor vehicle use has changed from primarily truck or jeep travel to a mix of passenger car, truck, all terrain vehicles (ATV), and motorcycle use (and more recently the side-by-side utility vehicles (UTVs)). In addition to the increase in type of vehicles used, the desire for motorized trail access has also increased. Over the past few decades, the availability and capability of motorized vehicles, particularly off highway vehicles (OHVs) and sport utility vehicles (SUV's) has increased tremendously (see section 2.2.1 *Types of Routes and Definitions* for definitions of vehicles). In the Uintah Basin, growth in OHV use has increased 616% over eleven years (Division of State Parks and Recreation and State of Utah Tax Commission, Department of Motor Vehicles 2009). This dramatic increase in popularity and growth in OHV use was unforeseen during the development of the current Travel Management Plans.

The increase in OHV numbers has created a stronger demand for motorized trails, both during the summer for recreational riding, and during the fall to facilitate access to camps and hunting areas. Many of the routes used today are not part of the Forest Transportation System, thus they do not

receive maintenance funding. Over time, as these routes deteriorate due to lack of maintenance, motorized access becomes more difficult.

Motorized dispersed camping is an important recreation activity on the Forest and many areas are heavily used for this activity.

1.4 Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of this project is to improve management of public summer motorized use by designating roads and motorized trails and limiting dispersed camping to areas up to 150 feet from those designated roads and trails on the Ashley National Forest (hereafter referred to as the **Forest**). This will include changes to current vehicle use designations, and road or trail closures and additions to the travel system.

This analysis will designate the vehicle type, the season of use, road closures, and dispersed camping opportunities available on the Forest. (Vehicle type of use includes street legal, 4-wheel drive, all terrain vehicles (ATV), or mixed use which includes street legal and ATVs on the same route.)

Need for the Ashley National Forest Travel Management Plan

The Forest needs to improve the management of the road system and clarify those roads open for public motorized travel.

The current system of roads and motorized trails evolved from historic use and forest management activities, thus the system was never designed with an eye towards current recreation and access needs. As a result, the current system is often confusing in terms of what is and is not allowed. The current Travel Plan does not effectively manage motorized travel or provide sufficient sustainable motorized recreation opportunities. It lacks motorized loop and connectivity attributes that are sought by many OHV users. In certain cases it encourages motorized use on poorly selected routes or fails to provide clear direction as to where and when motorized use is allowed. This can result in the intentional or unintentional use and proliferation of unauthorized routes and does not always serve visitors well.

The current differences of policy between ranger districts may increase confusion as to what legal use is authorized as well. On the Forest, using a vehicle off forest system roads and/or trails is prohibited (36 CFR 261.50) with the exception of two travel areas totaling 111,805 acres on the Vernal Ranger District. These areas are depicted with cross-hatching on the current travel map and will be referred to in this document as the “**hatched travel areas**”. Within the hatched travel areas, motorized vehicles are allowed on designated routes and established, undesignated routes as long as resource damage is not occurring. Although users tend to stay on well-established routes, the lack of designation has created a management problem. Both visitors and managers find it difficult to distinguish between an established, undesignated route and a newly created one. Furthermore, recognizing an established, undesignated route where “resource damage is not occurring” is more challenging to interpret and identify. As a result, enforcing the current travel map within these hatched travel areas is problematic; newly created routes are prolific and increase every year. Because travel on non-system roads within the hatched travel area is permitted, those non-system routes will be referred to as “**undesignated**”. Non-system routes outside of the hatch travel area, but still on the Forest, will be referred to as “**unauthorized**”.

The Travel Rule provides policy for ending this trend of undesignated route proliferation and managing the Forest transportation system by changing the policy across the Forest to only allow designated roads and trails or areas shown on the travel map as open to motorized travel.

The Forest needs to: 1) Provide safe access for motorized recreational uses; 2) reduce user conflicts; 3) improve undesirable resource conditions occurring from summer motorized vehicle

travel on unauthorized routes by the public; and 4) reduce disturbance of wildlife species through the management of road densities in areas of concern.

Changes in technology, growth in the Uintah Basin and increased ownership of ATVs has increased the demand for roads and trails on the Forest

Motorized use has a long history on the Forest and is a legitimate and appropriate way for people to enjoy the National Forest in the right places and with proper management. As stated above, motor vehicle use has changed since the 1980's in both type and amounts of use. With the increased popularity in OHV use, the demand for motorized OHV routes has also grown exponentially. This demand has created specific issues for the Forest due to constrained budgets for maintenance of designated routes and the proliferation of undesignated or unauthorized routes over time.

As the overall miles of unauthorized and undesignated roads and trails increase, the overall quality of the transportation system declines since a smaller proportion of roads and trails are managed and maintained. In addition, because system routes were developed historically for different purposes, the design and location of routes often do not serve today's recreation needs. Examples where the current situation is not adequately serving visitors would include motorized roads and trails that dead-end at closure boundaries. Such situations invite illegal trespass into closed areas and are difficult to enforce. On the other hand, a well-designed and managed loop trail would offer a more desirable and higher quality experience for the motorized user and reduce the potential for violations.

In order to provide a sustainable OHV recreation experience, the Forest must develop a system of roads and trails that can support such use over time, offer a variety of opportunities for various skill levels and vehicle types, be enforceable, and reduce the damage to resources that unmanaged motorized use can cause.

Motorized use of undesignated roads and trails and of non-motorized trails is contributing to conflicts between motorized and non-motorized use

As motorized and non-motorized use has increased on the Forest, conflicts among the different uses have increased. Conflict is not necessarily an inherent incompatibility among different uses, but rather is attributable to one person's behavior interfering with the ability of another person to achieve their desired goals. Often times, the person creating the conflict is not even aware that his/her activity or behavior is causing concern for others. Conflict comes in many forms and is particularly prevalent during the hunting season when a large number of both motorized and non-motorized visitors are recreating on the Forest.

Creating a designated system of motorized routes offers the opportunity to reduce conflict between motorized and non-motorized use particularly during the hunting season, reduce trespass onto adjacent private land, and improve coordination between motorized use and permitted special uses.

Motorized use of undesignated routes is contributing to resource damage

Currently, wheeled motorized vehicle travel by the public is not permitted off system routes, with the exception of the hatched travel areas on the Vernal Ranger District. However the number of unauthorized routes across the Forest continues to grow each year.

The exact mileage of unauthorized and undesignated routes existing on the Forest is unknown and obtaining a complete inventory of all unauthorized and undesignated routes is not considered reasonable due to the extensive number of routes over the entire forest and the exorbitant cost and amount of time that would be associated with such an inventory. In addition, the Travel Rule does not require such an inventory. However, the use of air photography can give a reasonable estimate to the miles of undesignated routes.

In 2000, analysis of 1995 digital orthophotos and infra red photography was used to digitize features that looked like potential motorized routes not already on the Forest transportation road dataset. The features were then attributed through interviews with knowledgeable field personnel. All the features in this dataset are not necessarily routes that are currently used by motorized vehicles, and routes that did not appear on the orthophotos and infra red photography (under tree canopy, or created since the photos were taken) were not included in the inventory. Some of the routes included may have been closed and reclaimed (including revegetated and/or have barriers installed) but have evident scars, while other features were never actually roads (perhaps scars from pipelines or other developments, etc). Additional routes inventoried since 2000 have also been included in this analysis.

From this data, and using field knowledge and public comments, we made assumptions on which of the undesignated or unauthorized routes continue to receive public motorized use. While use of this dataset will not fully represent the current condition, it does represent the best data available for this analysis.

The miles of unauthorized routes indicated by the data is approximately 373 miles in the Roosevelt/Duchesne District, 480 miles in the Flaming Gorge District, and 583 miles in the Vernal Ranger District, of which 368 miles are considered "undesignated" within the hatched travel area. These routes often lead to compaction and rutting through wet meadows and across riparian areas, which in turn increases sedimentation into streams by channeling drainage and run-off which affects water quality. Trampling of vegetation by vehicles disturbs sensitive soils; damages riparian, meadow, and alpine areas; and increases compaction, which prevents native plants from thriving and increases water run-off. Noxious weeds are often spread along these unauthorized routes as weeds often thrive in disturbed areas. Noxious weeds have the potential to change native plant communities. Because these unauthorized routes are not a part of the maintenance inventory schedule, resource damage and the spread of noxious weeds can continue to worsen over time.

Successfully managing a designated system of motorized routes offers the opportunity to reduce resource impacts on wet meadows, water resources, and steep slopes, as well as limit the introduction and spread of noxious weeds. Creating a designated system of motorized routes also offers the opportunity to improve the long-term sustainability of routes by focusing maintenance dollars on priority routes.

Motorized travel is contributing to wildlife disturbance

All forms of forest-based recreation cause some wildlife disturbance. However, motorized recreation has the potential to cause a greater disturbance to wildlife, largely due to the fact that motor vehicles can cover a large area in a short period of time. The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies noted in a 2005 letter to the Chief of the Forest Service that, "unregulated and illegal use of OHVs has emerged as a significant threat to certain wildlife habitats and to the quality of hunting and fishing experiences." Fragmentation, harassment, and unintentional disturbance of wildlife occur from vehicle use along roads and motorized trails.

Currently, there are approximately 435 miles of Forest system roads and 13 miles of Forest motorized trails within the Flaming Gorge Ranger District; 451 miles of designated roads, 87 miles of designated motorized trails, and 368 miles of established, undesignated routes in the hatched travel areas in the Vernal Ranger District; and 562 miles of Forest system roads and 39 miles of Forest motorized trails within the Roosevelt/ Duchesne Ranger District. The numbers of routes are increased through the use and development of unauthorized routes. Species of concern in the project areas include (but are not limited to) Threatened, Endangered, Sensitive, Management Indicator species, and Neotropical Migratory Bird species (see the Wildlife Resource, and Aquatic Species Resource Reports available in the Project Record for a full list of species under each category).

Creating a designated system of motorized routes offers the opportunity to reduce wildlife disturbance by limiting motorized travel to designated routes, establishing seasonal restrictions on routes, and closing routes that potentially fragment especially important wildlife habitats.

1.5 Management Direction

This analysis tiers to Forest Plan standards and guidelines, and the Travel Rule. This document also follows Forest Service Manual direction where applicable and the Forest Recreation Site Facility Master Plan and Recreation Niche recommendations.

The Forest Plan establishes long-term management direction for the entire Forest and provides a framework for travel management planning. Key objectives for this analysis include Forest Plan goals, objectives, standards and guidelines and are listed in section 1.6 *Project Objectives*. Specific resource management direction is provided in *Chapter 2 section 2.2.1 Management Actions and Requirements*, in each resource section in Chapter 3 of this EIS, as well as in the Specialist Resource Reports available from the Project Record. Forest management goals define the direction of Forest-wide management. The objectives further define and specify the management activities to be accomplished. The standards and guidelines define and specify the conditions to be maintained or achieved through the management activities. Should conflicts occur between standards and guidelines, the conflict will be resolved in favor of the direction which produces the greatest degree of multiple use value.

The Travel Rule requires designation of those roads, trails, and areas that are open to motor vehicle use and prohibits the use of motor vehicles off the designated system as well as use of motor vehicles on routes and in areas that is not consistent with the designation (36 CFR 261.13). The Travel Rule also recognizes the potential need to revise current designations to meet changing conditions (36 CFR 212.54) and sets up the criteria for designation of roads and trails that will be used in this travel management plan including: effects on natural and cultural resources, public safety, provision of recreational opportunities, access needs, conflicts among uses, maintenance and administration, and availability of resources for the maintenance and administration (36 CFR 212.55).

While the responsible official may include in the designation the limited use of motor vehicles within a specified distance of certain forest roads or trails for the purposes of dispersed camping or retrieval of game (36CFR 212.51 (b)), the Forest Service Manual directs the Regional Forests to coordinate these designations to promote consistency within states and among adjoining administrative units (FSM 7715.74 (3)(2009)). Regional Foresters for National Forests within the State of Utah have decided to restrict dispersed camping to 150 feet from designated routes. Utah State government, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and National Forests within the State of Utah have agreed to not allow use of motor vehicles for off road game retrieval.

1.6 Project Objectives

This action responds to the goals, objectives, standards and guidelines outlined in the Forest Plan, direction from the Travel Rule, and Forest Service Manual (FSM) direction. The following are a list of objectives for this travel management plan.

1. Provide a diversity of sustainable road and trail opportunities for experiencing a variety of environments and modes of travel consistent with the National Forest recreation role and land capability (FSM 2353.03(2)). This would include providing motorized access needed to accommodate roadside dispersed camping, access to hunting and fishing areas, and access to trailheads.

2. Maintain a variety of Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) classes to provide activities from roaded natural to primitive (Forest Plan Record of Decision 1986, p.7) (ROD).
3. Manage dispersed recreation at Forest standard service level as identified in FSM 2300 in Management Areas B, D, E, F, G, H, I, K, L, N, N1, P and R (Forest Plan p. IV-17). Manage at less than Standard Service Level for Management Area A (Forest Plan, p. IV-17).
4. Manage dispersed recreation use to avoid resource deterioration, improve economic efficiency and provide for public safety (Forest Plan, p. IV-17).
5. Administer, protect and develop the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area (NRA) in a manner to best provide for: 1) public outdoor recreation benefits; 2) conservation of scenic, scientific, historic, and other values contributing to public enjoyment; and 3) such management, utilization, and disposal of natural resources as in his [Secretary of Agriculture] judgment will promote or are compatible with, and do not significantly impair the purpose for which the recreation area is established (Forest Plan, p.A-1)
6. Within the NRA provide a high quality, varied recreation experience, encourage utilization of resources where compatible with recreation and provide to the safety and enjoyment of the user (Forest Plan, p. A-1, A-2).
7. Provide areas and opportunities for all types of recreation user experience. Separate identified conflicting recreation uses (Forest Plan, p.IV-18).
8. Manage the habitat of all threatened, endangered, or sensitive plant and animal species to maintain or enhance their status (Forest Plan, p.IV-30).
9. Manage deer and elk habitat to support populations at State objective levels as defined by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) management plans.
10. Assure adequate access to public and private lands (36 CFR 212.55(c)).
11. Comply with national legislation pertaining to cultural resource management and prevent damage to any significant cultural site (Forest Plan, p.IV-20).
12. Manage vegetation to enhance the riparian ecosystem (Forest Plan, p.IV-46)
13. Provide for public safety.
14. Provide for adequate maintenance and administration of designations based on availability of resources and funding to do so.
15. Provide safe drinking water and comply with the Clean Water Act, whether the source is a natural or developed water supply (FSH 2532.02, 2).
16. Soil resource management must be consistent with the Forest Service goal of maintaining or improving long-term soil productivity (NMFA) and soil hydrologic function (FSH 2509.18-2.2).
17. Provide consistency of use on roads that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

1.7 Project Scope

Key to this Travel Management Plan is an understanding of the limitations regarding what this project does and does not include. These limitations are necessary to focus on the most urgent problem (areas where management of summer motorized use is not being effective) and allow this project to be completed in a timely manner.

What this Travel Management Plan includes:

- Focus is on managing summertime public, motorized travel. Over-snow vehicle use is not included.
- Focus is on access to those dispersed camping areas which are appropriate in location to minimize resource damage. In order to be consistent with other National Forests in Utah, dispersed camping has been restricted to 150 feet from a designated road or trail. The current travel plan allows dispersed camping up to 300 feet from a designated road or in the case of the Vernal hatched area 300 feet from an existing, undesignated route.
- Focus is on deciding the location of routes open to public motorized use, the class of vehicle appropriate for each route, and the timing of use (e.g. seasonal restrictions)
- Focus is on analyzing the changes needed to the current National Forest system of roads and motorized trails as identified in the Forest Transportation Layer. System roads and trails are numbered routes that have been determined to be necessary for management of the National Forest and are eligible to receive maintenance funds.

What this Travel Management Plan does not include:

- This project does not address over-snow winter motorized travel. The issues, environmental effects, and geographic areas associated with motorized winter travel are quite different compared with motorized summer travel. Addressing motorized winter travel along with summer motorized travel would lengthen the planning process significantly and would divert time and resources away from the most urgent need, which is eliminating unrestricted motorized use during the summer.
- This project does not include a complete inventory of non-system routes, thus it is entirely possible that additional routes exist that could be considered for inclusion in the Forest transportation system. The Travel Rule requires the motor vehicle use map to be published annually with changes made as needed. The fact that some routes may not be included in the system being designated this year does not foreclose the opportunity to consider these routes in subsequent decisions.

The geographic scope of this Travel Plan includes approximately 1,126,419 acres of the 1,400,265 acre Ashley National Forest. This includes portions of 12 of the 14 Management Areas (MA) on the Forest within the Roosevelt/Duchesne, Vernal, and Flaming Gorge Ranger Districts. The 273,847 acre High Uinta Wilderness Area is outside the scope of this analysis (for a complete description of the MAs see Forest Plan pp. IV-5 thru IV-13).

Flaming Gorge Ranger District is split into three separate pieces; the Green River corridor portion out of the National Recreation Area (NRA); the Goslin Mountain area to the north and east of the NRA; and the NRA itself. The entire unit lies on the north slope of the Uinta Mountains and stretches from the Forest eastern boundary westward to a common boundary with the Uintah-Wasatch-Cache National Forest. The portion of the Flaming Gorge District outside of the NRA has nine MAs totaling 152,558 acres (for detailed description of the district outside the NRA and those MAs in this portion see Forest Plan 1986 pp. IV-65, IV-66).

Within the NRA, there are three separate and distinct MAs totaling 190,050 acres. The NRA is comprised of two distinct sections; the Green River Basin and the Uinta Mountains. The Green River Basin extends northward from the state line into Wyoming and is a desert area characterized by rolling hills underlain by sandstone and shale that weather to erosive soils. Vegetative cover is sparse and rainfall is low. The Uinta Mountains portion of the NRA is a

plateau underlain by resistant quartzite that has been deeply incised by the Green River and its tributaries (for detailed description of the NRA and those MAs see Forest Plan 1986 pp. IV-61, IV-62)

The portion of the travel plan within the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area must comply with Public Law 90-540. This legislation directs the Secretary of Agriculture to “administer, protect, and develop the FGNRA in a manner to best provide for: 1) public outdoor recreation benefits; 2) conservation of scenic, scientific, historic, and other values contributing to public enjoyment; and 3) such management, utilization, and disposal of natural resources as in his judgment will promote or are compatible with, and do not significantly impair the purpose for which the recreation area is established”.

Vernal Ranger District is located in the southeast corner of the Forest and lies on the southeastern end of the Uinta Mountain range and is approximately 341,420 acres. The District’s northern edge stretches along the crest of the Uintas from the Whiterocks River drainage eastward to the Forest boundary on Diamond Mountain and approximately 13 miles west of the Colorado state line. The unit is primarily in Uintah County, Utah; however, a small portion of the Unit also is within Daggett and Duchesne Counties.

The Vernal Ranger District incorporates portions of Management Areas a, b, d, f, g, h, k, and n. It includes Ashley, Dry Fork, Crush Creek and Little Brush Creek drainages (for a more detailed description see the Forest Plan pp.1V-72 through 1V-74).

The Roosevelt\Duchesne Ranger District North Unit is bordered by the Vernal Ranger District on the east, the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest on the north and west, and forms the south boundary of the Forest adjoining the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation. This Unit lies mostly in Duchesne County, Utah. However, the extreme southeast corner of the unit is in Uintah County, Utah and a small area on the west edge lies in Wasatch County, Utah. This district includes eight (MAs) totaling 500,615 acres (for detailed description of the district and MAs see Forest Plan 1986 pp.IV-79 though IV-87).

The Roosevelt\Duchesne Ranger District South Unit has traditionally been considered as a separate unit of the District. It is physically separated from the rest of the Forest and has different physical and vegetative characteristics. The unit predominantly borders the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation on the north, public land administered by the BLM on the east, predominantly private land on the south, and adjoins the Uinta National Forest on the west. The southwestern corner of the unit lies in Utah and Wasatch Counties with the majority of the unit falling in Duchesne County Utah. This unit has five MAs totaling 204,286 acres (for detailed description of the district and MAs see Forest Plan 1986 pp.IV-92 though IV-83).

Roads and trails under the jurisdiction of other entities (such as state and counties) are not analyzed in this document, but are shown on maps of the alternatives. These routes have been included in the maps to show how routes are connected to each other. Previous travel decisions made through site-specific project analysis are considered part of the existing Travel Management Plan and are included in Alternative A, the No Action Alternative. The administrative scope includes analysis of existing designated National Forest System (NFS) roads and trails where revision may be necessary to meet changing conditions (36 CFR 212.54), and unauthorized routes proposed for use by the public or resource specialists. The administrative scope also includes construction, reconstruction or re-routing of trails and roads as necessary to accommodate designation changes and provide protection of resources. **Full implementation of a selected action alternative would not occur until all federal legal requirements, regulations, consultations, and mitigation is met.**

Specifics of the administrative scope of the proposed action are described below under section *1.9 Decision Framework*.

1.8 Proposed Action

The action proposed by the Ashley National Forest to meet the purpose and need is to create a designated system of routes for motor vehicle use and eliminate motorized travel on existing, undesignated routes in the hatched travel area on the Vernal Ranger District.

Changes are being proposed to the current Forest system of roads and motorized trails. These proposed changes are described in detail in Chapter 2. Some new road or motorized trail construction may be necessary to improve the transportation system or to respond to evaluation findings. However, the majority of the routes proposed to be designated exist on the ground, though some may not currently be part of the National Forest transportation system. Likewise, some roads that currently are on the Forest transportation system are proposed to be closed or converted to motorized trails. As the final designated road and motorized trail system is implemented, sections of designated routes will need to be reconstructed to improve sustainability and mitigate resource damage. Under the proposed action the designated road and motorized trail system would total 1,705 miles (including administratively closed roads). This is approximately 118 miles more than the current Forest transportation system. This system would include 44 more miles of motorized trail and 74 additional miles of open road. This alternative would also eliminate approximately 328 miles of existing, undesignated routes.

Designation of authorized uses of National Forest System roads and motorized trails would include the class of vehicle and, when necessary, time of year the routes are open.

As authorized by section 212.50 (b) of the Travel Rule, previous and pending decisions that allow, restrict, or prohibit motor vehicle use on National Forest System roads, trails, or areas have been incorporated into this travel management decision.

1.9 Decision Framework

The Ashley National Forest Supervisor, the responsible official for this project, has determined that preparation of an EIS is required for a decision on the proposed plan under Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (40 CFR 1500-1508)

Given the purpose and need, the deciding official will review the Preferred Alternative, the other alternatives, and the environmental consequences in order to make the following decisions:

- Which roads and trails to add or remove from the existing Travel Management Plan?
- What type of motorized uses to allow on these roads and trails?
- What design features are necessary to minimize adverse environmental impacts associated with changes in travel management designations?
- Whether to designate roads or trails specifically for dispersed camping access?
- How management parameters (such as safety and cost) should be balanced with recreation opportunities.
- What monitoring is to be included to evaluate project implementation?
- What if any changes are to be made to the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum?

The Travel Rule requires the motor vehicle use map to be updated annually. The decisions made as part of this project do not foreclose the opportunity to consider changes to routes in the future.

1.10 Public Involvement

Between March of 2007 and the publishing of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in November 2007, 26 workshops, open houses, field trips, and meetings were held. The audience at these meetings included the general public, special interest groups, county and state, governments, and other federal agencies. The meetings, open houses and workshops were held in Vernal, Duchesne, Manila, Green River, Lapoint, and Salt Lake City. Field trips were conducted on all the ranger districts. Newspaper articles and press releases were published in the *Uinta Basin Standard*, *Green River Rocket*, *Vernal Express*, and *Salt Lake Tribune*. Radio ads, news articles, the Ashley National Forest Web site, and flyers were used to announce the times and dates of the public events.

The project documents, including the Proposed Action, maps, narratives, summaries, and scoping letters was published on the Forest website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/ashley>, and were available for review at the Flaming Gorge Ranger District, Manila, UT, Vernal Ranger District, Vernal, UT, Roosevelt/Duchesne Ranger District, Duchesne, UT, and at the Ashley National Forest Supervisor's Office in Vernal, UT.

Additional meetings were held in Vernal, Duchesne, and Manila after the publication of the NOI and scoping letters identifying the purpose and need and proposed action were sent out. Approximately 200 comments were received from individuals, advocacy groups, motorized and non-motorized user groups, state, county and federal agencies. All comments received were reviewed and categorized by issue (see section *1.11 Issues* below).

The input from the above meetings and workshops was combined with resource information to develop the Proposed Action.

Major issues were incorporated into the design of three new alternatives. Documents detailing the review of public comments and the development of issues and alternative design are available in the Project Record.

At the time of the publication of the NOIs, Roosevelt/Duchesne and Flaming Gorge Ranger Districts were a separate EIS from the Vernal EIS with an earlier expected publication date. In order to allow additional field time for the Resource Specialists and to provide clarity of potential effects across the Forest the two analysis efforts were combined and the expected publication date for the Record of Decision is in summer of 2009.

Cooperating Agencies

The Forest developed cooperating agency status with the State of Utah and the four counties where Forest land occurs, Sweetwater County, WY, and Daggett, Uintah, and Duchesne Counties in UT. Cooperating agency representatives participated in the review of public comments, identification of issues and alternatives, briefings, and document reviews with the project NEPA Coordinator and Forest Supervisor.

1.11 Issues

Issues serve to highlight effects or unintended consequences that may occur from the proposed action and alternatives giving opportunities during the analysis to reduce adverse effects and compare trade-offs for the deciding officer and public to understand.

The interdisciplinary team separated the issues into two groups: 1) Issues analyzed in depth, and 2) issues not analyzed further.

Issues analyzed in depth were used to formulate alternatives, prescribe mitigation measures, or analyze environmental effects. The following issues were analyzed in depth because of the extent of their geographic distribution, the duration of their effects, or the intensity of interest of

resource conflict. Other issues identified were: 1) outside the scope of the proposed action; 2) already decided by law, regulation, Forest Plan, or other higher level decision; 3) irrelevant to the decision to be made; or 4) conjectural and not supported by scientific or factual evidence.

The CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1501.7) identify and eliminate from detailed study the issues which are not significant or which have been covered by prior environmental review (Sec. 1506.3)”. A list of issues not analyzed in depth and reasons regarding their categorization may be found in the project record.

1.11.1 Issues Analyzed in Depth

These issues were used to formulate alternatives to the Proposed Action, prescribe mitigation measures, or analyze and disclose environmental effects. Indicators are measures used to track the effects of the actions on the issues. Issues analyzed in this section and the indicators for each are provided below. For a background statement for each issue, see Chapter 3 for the corresponding issue.

Efforts were made to address impacts quantitatively. Measurement indicators were developed to gauge the effects of the alternatives on each resource. These indicators are used consistently throughout the document and provide the reader a basis for comparison of the alternatives. At times analysis may not show a discernable difference between alternatives (as in the determination for threatened, endangered or regionally sensitive species, or in a few cases, data were not available and impacts were assessed qualitatively (such as the evaluation of economic effects of travel management). However, due to the level of interest identified during scoping these issues were analyzed in full and are displayed in the *Table 2.5.1 Comparison of Alternatives*.

The Forest identified the following issues during scoping. A summary description of issues and their measurement indicators are as follows:

Recreation Issue 1 (Conflicts): Travel route designations affect opportunities for both motorized and non-motorized recreation activities; the types, amount, and characteristics of the routes affect the experience of the forest user.

Introducing new recreation activities or restrictions into an area could create conflicts. For example, non-motorized users generally seek areas that offer tranquility, away from the noise and dust that could accompany motorized activity, such as OHV use.

Indicators

- Miles of open NFS road by designation
- Miles of ATV trail (restricted to motor vehicles with an axel width less than 50 inches)
- Miles of motorized trails open to all vehicles
- Miles of non-motorized trails
- Changes to Recreation Opportunity Spectrum

Recreation Issue 2 (Limiting dispersed camping): Limiting dispersed camping to 150 feet from designated routes may affect the experience and/or reduce the availability of areas to camp.

Currently dispersed camping may occur any where on the Forest up to 300 feet from a designated road, unless signed otherwise. Dispersed camping is considered an important recreational opportunity on the Forest and limiting motorized dispersed camping to 150 feet from designated

routes may reduce available and desirable sites resulting in crowding and a reduction in the overall experience.

Indicators:

- Miles (or acres) of routes where dispersed camping may occur.

Recreation Issue 3 (Safety): The amount, location, and designation of motorized and non-motorized roads and trails may affect the safety of Forest visitors.

For example, roads that are open to **mixed traffic** (by both highway-legal and non-highway-legal motor vehicles) allow for travel by large vehicles pulling trailers, as well as ATVs operated by inexperienced drivers, such as children over the age of eight who have completed a safety course.

Indicators

- Miles of road allowing mixed traffic

Recreation Issue 4 (Costs): Travel management affects road and trail program costs. Implementing and managing the travel plan will require signing, installing barriers, patrolling and monitoring, mitigation, and maintenance of roads and trails.

The cost of these activities may be prohibitive to adding new routes or routes that would require high maintenance or mitigation costs.

Indicators

- Costs to program management

Soil and Water Issue 1 (Soil degradation): Motorized travel (including access to dispersed camping) in areas of sensitive soils such as meadows and alpine may result in loss of soil productivity detrimental disturbance to soil resources.

Although cross-country motorized travel is currently prohibited, this use continues to occur. Open areas, such as alpine and meadows, which are close to or traversed by motorized vehicles are susceptible to off route use because of their openness. This can lead to resource damage, vegetation damage and spread of noxious weeds.

Indicators:

- Miles of motorized route crossing meadows, alpine, and other open areas.

Soil and Water Issue 2 (Water quality): Water resources may be affected due to increased erosion, degraded soil productivity, compaction, and delivery of sediment into streams.

The type, extent, and location of travel routes on the forest have the potential to adversely affect water resources by contributing to accelerated soil erosion and increased sediment delivery to lakes and streams (Grace III, 2002, Satterlund and Adams, 1992). Wetlands and riparian areas are particularly vulnerable to rutting and damage from motorized traffic. Route proximity to water further increases the likelihood of accelerated stream sedimentation, bank instability, and channel headcutting from travel route related damage. Human use is often concentrated in and near these areas where terrain and gradient often provide the easiest relative access. Water quality can, in turn, be adversely affected by these point and non-point sources of pollution.

Indicators:

- Miles of unpaved motorized routes within 300' of perennial streams and lakes greater than 1 acre.
- Miles of unpaved motorized routes crossing mapped meadow and riparian habitat.
- Miles of unpaved motorized routes encroaching on perennial streams.
- Number of crossings of perennial streams by unpaved motorized routes.
- Miles of unpaved motorized route within source protection zones 1-3 of municipal watersheds
- Miles of unpaved motorized route in 303(d) and 305(b) listed impaired watersheds.

Wildlife Issue 1 (Disturbance): Motorized travel on roads and trails may adversely affect threatened, endangered, and Forest Service Sensitive Species (TES) through displacement due to disturbance.

Indicators:

- Miles motorized roads and trails in known TE or S species habitat.
- Acres of TE or S habitat affected by designated roads and trails.

Wildlife Issue 2 (Habitat Loss, Fragmentation): Designating new or unauthorized routes for motor vehicle use may result in changes to, or loss, of habitat due to construction or maintenance needs (widening the track, surfacing the route) of these routes.

Indicators:

- Miles of designated roads/trails within known TE or S habitat.
- Acres of TE or S habitat affected by roads and motorized trails.

Wildlife Issue 3 (Big Game Habitat and Disturbance): Motorized travel may affect summer and winter big game (elk and deer) habitat and increase vulnerability during hunting season. Roads left open to vehicular traffic may adversely affect use of the area by elk, and to a lesser extent, by deer.

Indicators:

- Density (mile/mile²) of open NFS roads and motorized trails by District within critical habitat (winter range and critical summer range).
- Acres of critical elk and deer winter range affected by motorized travel.

Wilderness Potential: Changes to motorized travel opportunities within inventoried potential wilderness could affect the wilderness potential of the area. (Wilderness potential could be improved, maintained, reduced, or removed.)

Indicators:

- Miles of roads and trails designated for motorized vehicle travel within potential wilderness areas.
- Acres of open travel in potential wilderness areas.
- Relative area available for motorized dispersed camping within potential wilderness.

Economics Issue 1: OHV opportunities on the Forest may lead to economic benefits in Manila and other parts of Daggett County if routes are available that connect communities to those OHV opportunities.

Local government within Daggett County has demonstrated a deep interest in the opportunity to link Manila to the Forest via motorized trail systems. It is believed this linkage could provide an economic opportunity for this small, isolated town, located on the shore of the Flaming Gorge Reservoir. This potential is tied to the increasing popularity of OHV activities.

Indicators:

- Effects to Daggett County and businesses within the county.

Economics Issue 2: Travel Management has the potential to affect overall economics of communities.

Growth in the Uintah Basin and increasing popularity of OHVs has resulted in the increased demand for OHV (all sizes) routes and opportunities. This growth and demand is expected to continue. Over an eight year period ATV registration in Uintah County has increase 616% over eleven years (Division of State Parks and Recreation and State of Utah Tax Commission, Department of Motor Vehicles 2009). While the area receives economic benefits from the full range of recreational opportunities available on the Forest, the growth in OHV recreation has resulted in some local businesses developing or becoming dependent on continued OHV activities for increased profits, or even for their viability.

Dispersed camping on the Forest most commonly includes RV use. Many RVs are sold and serviced in the local communities. There is a concern that reduction in opportunities for dispersed camping will result in fewer people participating and spending on goods and services associated with dispersed camping.

Indicators:

- Effects to overall economics of the area
- Effects to specific business types

Cultural Resource Issue 1: Designating new routes for motor vehicle use may directly result in adverse effects to cultural resources. Effects are a result of motor vehicle use, road construction, and road maintenance on cultural resource sites. Direct effects may occur when cultural resource sites intersect with a designated route.

Indicators:

- Number of cultural resource sites directly affected by designated routes.

Cultural Resource Issue 2: Designating new routes for motor vehicle use may increase access to cultural resource sites resulting in adverse effects, such as vandalism, unauthorized collecting, and increased erosion. Designating new routes also increases the number of cultural resources adversely affected by dispersed camping activities (excavation of fire pits, excavation of latrines, excavation for site landscaping, etc.). Indirect effects may occur when cultural resource sites are within 150 feet of a designated route.

Indicators:

- Number of cultural resources sites indirectly affected by designated routes.

1.11.2 Issues Not Analyzed in Depth

The issues not analyzed in depth are listed below. A complete list of issues not analyzed in depth and the rationale regarding their categorization may be found in the Project Record at the Forest Supervisors Office, Vernal UT.

Access:

Motorized access should be available to all roads, trails, and areas not designated on the Forest Travel Plan.

Response: Allowance of indiscriminant access to unauthorized (also known as user-created, unclassified, or non-system) roads, trails, and/or areas would not meet the purpose and need for the project, or the Travel Rule (36 CFR 212 and 261)

Access to firewood harvest areas may be affected by the location and types of access provided by travel management.

Response: Firewood harvest and any associated need for off-road travel would be authorized in the firewood permitting process.

Access should be available for range permittees, private land owners, mining claimants, and other users who access the Forest under permits and contracts.

Response: Access to accommodate the special needs of range permittees, private land owners, and mining claimants may be permitted under authorities related to those uses (36 CFR 212.51).

Roads providing access to in-holdings and Reserved Lands need to remain open.

Response: These statements relate to existing policy and regulations that the Forest Service is required to follow. Consideration of these items is noted, and is a part of the Travel Management process.

Access should be available for older people or people with disabilities.

Response: Under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, no person with a disability can be denied participation in a federal program available to all other people solely because of his or her disability. Wheelchairs are welcome on all NFS lands that are open to foot travel. Reasonable restrictions on motor vehicle use, applied consistently to everyone, are not discriminatory.

Maintain cross-country access for big-game retrieval in order to reduce physical hardships on the hunters.

Response: Unlimited motorized cross-country access for big-game retrieval is not currently allowed. Hunters are currently limited to motorized travel up to 300 feet off road to retrieve game. Based on the Travel Rule, the Regional Forester, in consultation with Forest Supervisors of Utah and Idaho, have determined that game retrieval will not be allowed on any National Forest lands in Utah and Idaho. Legally tagged game may be retrieved using non-motorized means only.

Law Enforcement and Public Education:

The Travel Management Plan and associated maps should be designed to be easy for the public to understand and reasonable for the Forest Service to enforce.

Response: We agree with this statement and it is an identified need of the travel management plan.

There is a need for increased budget and officers for enforcement of the travel plan.

Response: While the Travel Management plan can not allocate the number of enforcement officers needed or the budget for enforcement, it contains the ability to affect the enforceability of the plan through the planning process. This would include placement of open routes, elimination of off-road game retrieval, and signage. Therefore law enforcement has been addressed in the *3.1 Recreation Resources* section in Chapter 3.

Noxious Weeds:

Changing patterns, location, type, and extent of recreation use and travel management may cause an increase in the spread of noxious weeds.

Response: Forest Plan direction requires projects that may contribute to the spread or establishment of noxious weeds shall include measures to reduce the potential for spread and establishment of noxious weed infestations. These measures are included in the management requirements to be followed with any selected action alternatives.

Given successful implementation of these requirements, adverse effects involving noxious weeds would not be discernible in any alternative. However, the placement of routes may affect the off-road spread of noxious weeds by reducing the opportunities for cross country travel. Therefore noxious weeds have been addressed in the Project Design Features of this document.

Public Rights-of-Way (R.S. 2477):

The analysis should consider roads and trails that qualify as public rights of way under R.S. 2477.

Response: The Forest Service recognizes documented rights-of-way held by State, county, or other local public authorities. This includes rights-of-way under Revised Statute (R.S.) 2477 that have been evaluated by the authorized Forest Service official in order to make an administrative determination of validity; or that have been adjudicated through the federal court system.

Safety:

Improper use and lack of parental supervision of youth on OHV's can cause accidents and human harm.

Response: Consideration of potential dangers and difficulty of trails is part of the assessment process. However, lack of adult supervision of ATV riders, and the age of the rider is a separate issue and part of OHV education efforts beyond the scope of this project. The State of Utah designates the legal age and law governing ATV use. Forest Service roads open to the public abide by those laws and regulations.

Restrict ATV use at Wilderness trailheads in order not to scare horses.

Response: Only three trailheads currently allow mixed traffic and provide access to non-motorized trails.

2005 Ashley National Forest Roads Analysis:

There was no consultation during the development of the 2005 Ashley National Forest Roads Analysis nor did it include county roads or the access needs and rights of residents and permit holders.

Response: The Forest 2005 roads analysis was an internal document which included only Forest Service maintenance level 3, 4, and 5 roads. These roads are open to public

use and are suitable for passenger cars. There is no requirement to seek external comments during the development of internal documents.

A new roads analysis must be completed prior to the completion of the Travel Management Plan.

Response: The Travel Management process does not require utilization of, or even close coordination to the 2005 Roads Analysis in its completion. The baseline for the Travel Management process is the existing travel regulations which were made independent and prior to the completion of the 2005 Roads Analysis.

1.12 Other Related Efforts

1.12.1 Relationship to Other Plans, Decision Documents, and Regulatory Authority

Direction and authority for the proposal come from the NFMA, NEPA, and CEQ, all of which provide general land management and environmental analysis direction. The NFMA requires that all projects and activities proposed and considered be consistent with the Forest's Forest Plan. If a project or activity cannot be conducted consistent with the Forest Plan, it cannot go forward as planned unless the Forest Plan is amended. The Forest Plan Consistency section in Chapter 3 of this EIS documents those components of the various alternatives that would require an amendment to the Forest Plan if selected.

1.12.2 Project Record

This EIS hereby incorporates by reference the Project Record (40 CFR 1502.21). The Project Record contains Specialists' Reports and other technical documentation used to support the analysis and conclusions in this EIS. The use of Specialists' Reports and the Project Record meets provisions of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations to reduce NEPA paperwork (40 CFR 1500.4), to make EISs analytic rather than encyclopedic, and to keep EISs concise and no longer than absolutely necessary (40 CFR 1502.2). The objective is to furnish enough site-specific information to demonstrate a reasoned consideration of the environmental impacts of the alternatives and how these impacts can be mitigated, without repeating detailed analysis and background information available elsewhere. The Project Record is available for review at the Forest Supervisors Office, Ashley National Forest, Vernal, UT.

CHAPTER 2. ALTERNATIVES, INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

2.1 Introduction

This chapter describes and compares the alternatives considered for the Ashley National Forest Travel Management Plan. This chapter is presented in three sections:

Common Features of Action Alternatives: Describes features that are associated with development and assessment of all alternatives. This section provides common definitions of terms utilized in the assessment process, project design features (PDFs) and Best Management Practices (BMPs), description of road and trail standards, and an outline of monitoring and evaluation methods.

Description of the Alternatives: Provides a detailed description for each alternative, including the No Action alternative. This section also presents the alternatives in comparative and map form, sharply defining the differences between each alternative and providing a clear basis for choice among options by the decision maker and the public.

Comparison of Alternative Effects: Describes differences among the alternatives in terms of response to issues and environmental effects, thus providing a clear basis for comparison among options by the decision maker and the public. This section summarizes information found in Chapter 3 of this Draft EIS.

2.2 Common Features of Action Alternatives

This chapter presents a range of reasonable alternatives (40 CFR 1502.14). It describes and compares the alternatives in terms of their environmental impacts (*Chapter 1 section 1.11*), and their achievement of objectives (*Chapter 1 section 1.6*). The alternatives present a range of analysis options (40 CFR 1502.14). Some of the information used to compare the alternatives is based upon the design of the alternative (i.e., street legal vehicle use only versus mixed traffic which includes street legal vehicles and ATVs on the same route). Some of the information is based upon the environmental impacts of each alternative (i.e., the miles of roads within 300 feet of a perennial stream).

The ID Team developed and analyzed in detail five alternatives, including the No Action and Preferred Action alternatives, in response to issues raised during scoping (Section 1.10 - Public Involvement). The alternatives are detailed below by a description of proposed designations for District, followed by a summary for the Forest. In the following text and tables describing the alternatives, all numbers are estimates based on the best information currently available from the geographic information system (GIS). Miles are approximate and have been rounded to the nearest whole number for summations; individual roads may be represented to the nearest tenth of a mile for comparison reasons. Corrections and adjustments will occur as needed during further environmental analysis and during project implementation. We caution reviewers to judge the difference between alternatives based on site-specifics and substance rather than on summary statistics. The distribution and location of routes across the landscape is more important and meaningful than simply quantifying the mileage of the alternatives.

2.2.1 Features Common to all Action Alternatives

The Proposed Action and each action alternative contain management requirements and project design features (PDF) designed to protect resource uses and values. The alternatives also contain

monitoring requirements to ensure the design features are effective and the Purpose and Need is being met.

Travel management is the administrative process of designating the types of use allowed on routes and areas. Ground-disturbing activities associated with this process are limited to the application of stated project design features necessary to minimize or avoid adverse environmental effects or provide for public safety. These required PDFs are found in *Section 2.2.3*. While this EIS makes decisions on travel route designations, the actual authorization of routes from a non-motorized to motorized use, or unauthorized routes being added to the designated motorized route system would require application of the PDFs before they are formally authorized and displayed on the motor vehicle use map for public use.

All existing undesignated routes within the Vernal hatched travel area that are not designated with the implementation of an action alternative would be considered "unauthorized" and would be restricted to non-motorized travel.

All unauthorized routes would be restricted to non-motorized travel. No areas would be open to cross-country motor vehicle use, but limited motorized access for dispersed camping would be permissible within 150 feet of designated roads and designated motorized trails where getting to the site would not involve:

- Crossing alpine or meadow areas;
- Crossing a live stream;
- Camping within 100 feet of a water body such as a lake or live stream (this does not include reservoirs).
- Camping within ¼ mile of a developed campground.

Any site specific exceptions to the above regulations would be posted on the ground.

In the interest of consistency and ease of interpretation of the travel regulations, routes will be designated as follows:

The Vernal Ranger District and the Flaming Gorge Ranger District roads south and east of Highway 44 will generally be open from May 1 through December 19 unless otherwise designated. Motorized trails will be open from June 15 through November 19 unless otherwise designated. There would not be any seasonal restrictions on the rest of the district unless otherwise designated.

The season of use is shorter for motor trails than roads. This is due to the fact that trails are generally of lower standard and remain wet later into the summer. As such, they are more susceptible to surface damage from motorized use early in the season.

Land types in the Flaming Gorge Ranger District not included above are generally different than those areas included above and seasonal closures would be implemented on a case-by-case basis according to location and resource concern.

Land types in the Roosevelt/Duchesne Ranger District vary to a greater degree than the area discussed above and seasonal closures would be implemented on a case-by-case basis according to location and resource concern.

Types of Routes and Definitions

All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) and ATV Trails: The common use of the term "ATV" includes motorized vehicles less than 50 inches in width, traveling on three or four low pressure tires, having an unladen dry weight of 800 pounds or less, having a seat designed to be straddled by the operator, and designed for or capable of travel over unimproved terrain. However, at times in this document, certain motorized trails may be referred to as "*ATV trails*". In this scenario, the term ATV trail includes routes open to both ATVs and motorcycles.

Cross-country Motor Vehicle Use: Motorized travel is considered cross-country when a motorized vehicle (except motorized over-snow vehicles on snow) leaves a designated road or a designated motorized trail.

Designated Route: Roads and trails identified by the agency where the appropriate type and time period of use is specified. Any routes or areas not designated for motorized use are restricted to non-motorized use.

Hatched Travel Area: Two travel areas, totaling 111,805 acres, on the Vernal Ranger District currently allow motorized vehicle travel on designated routes and established, undesignated routes, as long as resource damage is not occurring. These areas are depicted with cross hatching on the current Travel Map. For reference purposes throughout this document, these areas will be referred to as the "*hatched travel area*".

Mixed Use Road or Mixed Traffic Use: Designation of a National Forest System road for use by both highway-legal and non-highway legal motor vehicles.

Motorized trails, OHV trails, or ATV trails are routes available for Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs) as well as non-motorized users. They include trails available to all OHVs, and those available specifically to All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs), and motorcycles. Trails are generally engineered to a lesser degree than roads, or not at all, are narrower, have less of a clearing width and are maintained to a different level. One generally feels closer to nature on a trail than on a road.

Motorized trails fall into three categories:

1. Motorized trails for vehicles with widths less than 50 inches. These routes are available for ATVs and motorcycles as well and non-motorized users.
2. Motorized trails for all vehicles. These routes are available for larger OHVs including the side-by-sides, and 4-wheel drive vehicles as well as the smaller ATVs and motorcycles and non-motorized users. These routes are also appropriate for larger vehicles pulling trailers to access dispersed camping sites.
3. Special Designation Trails - Motorized trails for OHVs. These routes are available for larger OHVs including the side-by-sides, and 4-wheel drive vehicles as well as the smaller ATVs and motorcycles and non-motorized users. These routes are narrow and require high clearance vehicles and may not be appropriate for pulling trailers on.

Non-motorized trails are routes available for hikers, bicyclers (except in Wilderness) and horseback riders. Use by motorized wheelchair is allowed when feasible within the defined trail-bed. Routes restricted to non-motorized use are closed to motorized use administratively.

A Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) reflecting the revisions to travel management would replace the current Travel Management Maps and would be displayed at the Roosevelt/Duchesne, Vernal, and Flaming Gorge Ranger Districts, as well as the Forest Supervisors Office. Maps would be available free of charge at all District offices and on the Forest web page.

National Forest System (NFS) Road: A forest road other than a road authorized by a legally documented right-of-way held by a State, county or other local public road authority. These roads may be classified as open, closed, or seasonal.

NFS Street Legal Road: Refers to NFS roads defined above that are restricted to vehicles that are currently registered and licensed for legal highway use.

Roads are defined as a motor vehicle travelway for vehicles over 50 inches wide. Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs such as ATVs and dirt bikes) operated by licensed drivers and registered as street legal vehicles are also legal, as prescribed in Utah law. Unlicensed drivers may not operate

motor vehicles on NFS roads, unless the road is designated as “mixed use.” Hikers, bicyclers, and horseback riders are encouraged to travel safely along road edges.

Roads fall into one of three categories:

1. **Undesignated routes** are not NFS roads and occur within the “hatched travel area” on the Vernal Ranger District. These routes are not included in a forest transportation atlas. These include roads also known as unclassified, user created, unplanned, non-system, and undetermined roads. These roads are restricted to non-motorized use in all action alternatives, unless they are proposed for designation to motorized use.
2. **Unauthorized routes** are not NFS roads and occur outside the Vernal Ranger District hatched travel area. These routes are not included in a forest transportation atlas. These include roads also known as unclassified, user created, unplanned, non-system, and undetermined roads. These roads are restricted to non-motorized use in all action alternatives, unless they are proposed for designation to motorized use.
3. **Designated roads** include roads wholly or partially within or adjacent to NFS lands needed for long-term motor vehicle access, including State roads, county roads, privately owned roads, NFS roads (see below), and other roads authorized by the Forest.

Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV) also known as side-by-sides vehicles, SxS, RUV (Recreational Utility Vehicles) MUV (Multi-Use Vehicles). Any recreational motor vehicle other than an ATV or motorbike capable of travel over unpaved roads, traveling on four low-pressure tires of 20psi or less and with a width of less than 74 inches, maximum weight less than 2,000 pounds. Utility type vehicles do not include golf carts, or vehicles specially designed to carry disabled persons.

Management Actions and Requirements

Designated motorized routes would be identified on the Forest MVUM using nationally directed uniform standards. Road number signs identifying those routes open to public travel would be posted on the ground to the extent practicable. Designation of travel routes and areas would follow requirements in 36 CFR Parts 212, 251, 261, and 295. It is believed that changing the current policy from “open unless signed or mapped closed” to “designated roads only are open” would make management of these roads less difficult and reduce confusion.

State Statutes: All Forest roads would be available for registered and licensed ATV and motorcycle use per state statute (State Bill 181). State statutes governing operating off-road vehicles apply to all alternatives. Regulations regarding noise emissions and mufflers are also governed by the state.

Limit motorized access to dispersed camping within 150 feet of designated routes on most areas of the Forest as long as it does not result in resource damage such as rutting, fording of streams, crossing wet meadows, creating new unauthorized routes, spreading noxious weeds, or similar resource degradation. Areas available for dispersed camping will be identified on the MVUM and exclude the following areas:

- Within 100 feet of a live stream;
- If access to camping area would involve crossing an alpine area;
- If access to camping area would involve crossing a wet meadow;
- If access to camping area would involve fording a live stream;
- Within ¼ mile of a developed campground;
- Within a known cultural resource area of concern.

A designation for a road or trail includes all terminal facilities, trailheads, parking lots, and turnouts associated with the designated road or trail. The designation also includes parking a motor vehicle within one vehicle length from the edge of the road surface when it is safe to do so

and without causing damage to NFS resources (Proposed Washington Office Directive FSM 7716.1).

Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) operation for general travel would not be allowed off any designated motorized route.

Undesignated routes would be restricted to non-motorized use after implementation of the selected alternative.

All areas and routes on the Forest are open to non-motorized use (by foot, mountain bike, or horse), unless prohibited for administrative reasons such as safety.

Mountain bikes would be permitted on all roads and trails outside the High Uintas Wilderness, unless otherwise posted.

Hiking and horseback riding would be permitted anywhere on the Forest, unless otherwise posted.

Exemptions to off-road travel as described in 36 CFR 212.51(a) would be allowed under all alternatives. Exemptions fall into three categories: emergencies, administrative activities, and activities allowed under special use permits. Examples of emergency exemptions include fire, law enforcement, and search and rescue activities. Administrative activities include noxious weed control, wildlife management, and vegetation management (timber, fuel reduction). Activities allowed under special use permits include firewood gathering, wildlife research, livestock operations, access to private lands, leased lands, permitted occupancy land and permitted use lands, and outfitter-guide operations associated with assigned campsites. This last category of exemptions allowed under special use permits requires specific authorization from the appropriate Line Officer, detailing when, where, who, and under what circumstances motorized travel is allowed.

Emergency closures may continue to be issued on a temporary basis by the deciding official based on a determination of considerable adverse effects pursuant to CFR 212.52(b)(2). This includes public safety, considerable adverse impacts to soil, vegetation, wildlife habitat, or cultural resources. The agency can maintain this closure until the effects are mitigated and measures are implemented to prevent future recurrence.

Non-system routes that are not displayed on the Motor Vehicle Use Map would be closed and stabilized, reclaimed, or obliterated as funds allow. Further site-specific environmental analysis is not needed to close the route but may be conducted to determine the appropriate method of closure.

Route maintenance and reconstruction: For all action alternatives (B-E), maintenance and/or reconstruction may be needed on designated routes to improve their sustainability. Site-specific environmental analysis would be conducted prior to any route reconstruction. Basic maintenance would occur on all routes designated as part of the Forest transportation system and would not require additional analysis. BMPs would be used to control erosion and runoff on all designated motorized routes. These practices include, but are not limited to; waterbars, culverts, dips, and drainage ditches to control flow.

2.2.2 Standards, Maintenance, and Construction

Road and trail standards vary depending on intended use. Standards allow for a range of route conditions from primitive to high standard. Improvements that may be required to bring individual roads or trails up to standard largely consist of light reconstruction or routine maintenance. Road and trail maintenance, required by Forest Service Manual direction would continue as available funding is allocated by Congress. In all action alternatives, portions of some

roads and trails would require reconstruction or relocation in order to meet standards. Some Alternatives would require limited new construction which would consist of short “connector” segments, tying existing roads or trails together. PDFs found in *section 2.2.3* cover some of the standards that would be used in construction and relocation. New trails or roads would be designed to meet the trail or road standards as defined by the USDA Forest Service Standard Specifications for Construction of Trails, EM-7720-102; or the FSH 7700 Roads USDA Forest Service Handbook for roads. Site-specific environmental analysis would be conducted prior to any route construction. BMPs would be used to control erosion and runoff on all designated motorized routes. These practices include, but are not limited to; waterbars, culverts, dips, and drainage ditches to control flow.

2.2.3 Project Design Features

Forest Plan standards and guidelines apply to all alternatives. Best Management Practices (BMPs) addressing soil, water, and noxious weeds would be applied to the maintenance of travel routes and to route closures. BMPs would also be applied to any route construction (Alternatives B, C and E only).

- Forest User education and enforcement of the new travel management regulations would occur. User education would include public meetings, and brochures describing the new travel management policy and use of the MVUM.
- The Forest would follow National direction for signing and maps. The Forest Service has developed a standard national format for motor vehicle use maps (MVUM). These maps will be available at local Forest Service offices and, as soon as practicable, on Forest Service web sites.
- **Newly Designated Roads and Trails.** Newly designated roads and trails would be subject to the following project design features. A Newly designated road or trail is defined as a route designated on a previously unauthorized or closed system road that would now be open to public travel; or a non-motorized trail designated as motorized. Newly designated roads or trails will not be authorized or placed onto the MVUM until on the ground assessments are made and all applicable PDFs are implemented.
 1. **Cultural Resources.** The Forest Archaeologist will conduct a cultural resources survey and evaluation, and receive concurrence from the Utah and Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office. Concurrence requires that no impacts would occur to cultural resource sites, or impacts would be mitigated to acceptable levels. Although most routes have been inventoried and cleared for use, a Programmatic Agreement or Memorandum of Agreement may be used to ensure all cultural resource requirements have been met.
 2. **Plants.** A rare plants survey and evaluation would be completed, and enact necessary protection measures so that no unacceptable impacts would occur to rare or sensitive plants, or impacts would be mitigated to acceptable levels.
 3. **Animals.** A survey, evaluation and consultation for threatened, endangered, and sensitive animals would be completed. Enact necessary protection measure so that no unacceptable impacts would occur, or mitigate impacts to acceptable levels where possible.
 4. **ATV Trail Condition Assessments.** Qualified personnel complete an ATV Trail Condition Assessment on all new ATV routes to identify problems, recommend corrective measures and to establish a baseline for future monitoring.

5. **Route Standards.** Design roads and trails to meet minimum road or trail standards as defined by the Forest Service Handbook FSH section 7700 for roads, or the Forest Service Standard Specifications for Constructions of Trails (EM-7720-102).
6. **Trail Rerouting.** Reroute trails where water management structures cannot function or be properly maintained, where trails cross soils or sites poorly suited for motorized use, or to avoid impacting other sensitive resources (such as cultural sites).
7. **Trail Reclamation.** Reclaim abandoned trail segments by physical closure, installation of water management structures, and pulling available slash over the abandoned trail.
8. **Trail Construction.** Standard trail construction will follow the specifications required from EM-7720-102.
9. **Water Management Structures.** On all new motorized trails, construct and maintain water management features (such as waterbars, grade dips, culverts, sheet drains, check dams, ditches, or bridges).
10. **Reclaim unauthorized roads accessed by newly designated motorized trails.** Reclaim all unauthorized roads which originate off the newly designated motorized trails by signing or physical closure such as installation of water management structures, de-compacting the abandoned travel way, and pulling available slash over the roadway.
11. **Trail Improvement.** When rerouting a poorly located trail segment is not feasible, improve the trail surfaces so it will support use without unacceptable resource impacts. Improvement techniques include replacing or capping unsuitable soils including fills with geotextiles, gravel, corduroy, wood matrix, puncheon, porous pavement panels, or matting.
12. **Fish Bearing Streams.** All stream crossings on fish bearing streams will meet the Regional Aquatic Organism Passage Guidelines. Qualified personnel will review and concur on all stream crossings to verify if the stream is fish bearing, provides passage, and protects and maintains habitat.
13. **Weeds.** Include measures to prevent the spread of noxious weeds such as: use of weed-free gravel or soil, use of weed-free hay or straw and prompt re-vegetation of areas of disturbed soil. Treat identified noxious weed sites as appropriate.
14. **Public Safety.** Qualified personnel will complete assessments to determine measures needed to provide for safe use.
15. **Soil and Water Conservation practices.** Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 2509.22 will be used as the BMPs to meet the water quality protection elements of the Utah Non-point Source Management Plan.

2.2.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

The goal of travel plan monitoring is to determine how the travel plan is or is not working, and to help identify changes needed in travel management or monitoring methods. Monitoring and evaluation tell how travel management decisions have been implemented (called “implementation monitoring”) and how effective the implementation has proven to be in accomplishing the desired outcomes (called “effectiveness monitoring.”).

Not all distinctive variables can be monitored. Monitoring has administrative costs to the agency and is contingent on future funding, so a selection of a monitoring item in the Record of Decision for the Travel Plan represents a statement of management intent to fund the implementation of that monitoring item in the future.

2.2.5 Mitigation Measures

The Forest Service also developed the following mitigation measures to be used as part of all of the action alternatives.

Rare Plants

The five mitigation measures below will help reduce the risk to Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, and Sensitive plant populations and their habitat from the invasion and expansion of noxious weeds and invasive species.

1. During motorized trail construction and road obliteration activities, all off-road and maintenance equipment is required to be free of noxious weed seeds when moving equipment into a new area and/or moving between areas that are known to contain noxious weeds. Use federal form B6.35 – Equipment Cleaning.
2. Use certified weed-free straw and mulch for all projects conducted or authorized by the Forest Service on National Forest System lands. If state-certified straw and/or mulch is not available, the Forests should require sources certified to be weed free using the North American Weed Free Forage Program standards or a similar certification process.
3. Certified “weed-free” seed mix is required for areas that are seeded.
4. Avoid weed-infested areas for use as staging or parking areas.
5. Complete post-project surveys to document infestations and to allow treatment of noxious weeds in areas of disturbance.

Water Resources

For unauthorized routes that would be designated as NF routes the potential for adverse travel-related effects to soil and water resources can be reduced by following standards and guidelines regarding trail and road location, construction and maintenance found in Forest Service handbooks 2509.22 (chapter 10), 2309.18 (chapters 3, 4, 10 and 20), 7709.57 and 7709.58.

Other site specific mitigation can include: seasonal closure of routes in areas prone to seasonally wet soils, rerouting sections of motorized trail which traverse meadows and wet soils, use of bridges or hardened fords at stream crossings, and in areas with fine-grained substrate (prone to erosion) surfacing OHV trails 200 feet either side of perennial stream crossings with gravel.

Wildlife

Lynx

New roads and trails and reconstruction proposed under these alternatives are few, and have been located where possible away from forested stringers and ridgetops. General maintenance of roads and trails on the Forest usually does not include brushing the roadsides, unless it poses a hazard. Therefore, the alternatives would comply with the intent of the standards and guidelines in the LCAS and the NRLMD. In the event that location of these new roads/trails and reconstruction changes, the following mitigations should be followed to help in maintaining habitat connectivity for lynx. These mitigations are guidelines within the LCAS and the NRLMD.

- Locate trails/roads away from forested stringers.
- Minimize building of roads directly on ridgetops or areas identified as important for lynx habitat connectivity.

Goshawk

New roads and trails and reconstruction proposed under these alternatives are few, but may also cause noise disturbance in the immediate vicinity of these areas during the construction and/or reconstruction phase. Construction and reconstruction activities would only be for a short duration, thus displacement would only be temporary if it does occur. However, to comply with the guidelines in the Goshawk Amendment to the Forest Plan and to minimize effects to goshawks within the PFA, the following mitigation would be applied for any new road/trail construction or reconstruction within the PFA of an occupied goshawk territory.

- Construction of new roads/trails or reconstruction of existing roads/trails within the PFA of an occupied goshawk territory should be restricted between March 1 and September 30, unless the biologist determines that there would be no adverse effects to goshawks. The biologist will be consulted prior to construction or reconstruction of any road or trail proposed under the action alternatives

Sage Grouse

There are no new roads/trails proposed within sage grouse habitat, however there are a few routes that may need maintenance or reconstruction. Reconstruction of roads or trails proposed under these alternatives is few, but may also cause noise disturbance to sage grouse in the immediate vicinity of these areas. Reconstruction activities would only be for a short duration, thus displacement would only be temporary if it does occur. However, nesting birds could abandon nests and breeding may be disrupted if reconstruction occurs within breeding/nesting habitat during that critical time period. Therefore to avoid nest abandonment and disruption to breeding the following mitigation should be applied reconstruction activities of roads/trails within sage grouse habitat that is within 2 miles of an active lek.

- Reconstruction activities of roads/trails within sage grouse habitat that is within 2 miles of an active lek should not occur between March 1 and June 15, unless the biologist determines that there would be no adverse effects to sage grouse. The biologist will be consulted prior to reconstruction of any road or trail proposed under the action alternatives.

Cultural Resources

Mitigation measures are intended to reduce the adverse effects to a site, or to offset the adverse effects on one site by acting to achieve beneficial effects to another site elsewhere, or to collect scientific data allowing interpretation of a site. Mitigation measures could include closing routes, recovering archaeological data by excavating sites, avoiding sites, or providing public education products that provides in depth information about the resources that will be affected. Numerous mitigation measures are available and the Forest is required to consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer and concerned tribes to determine appropriate mitigation plans.

During the review process for the proposed alternatives, some routes were located in areas with so many cultural resource concerns that they were dropped from consideration in all alternatives because the anticipated mitigation measures would have been unfeasible or unattainable.

Cultural Resource Site Monitoring

Another mitigation option is to monitor sites with anticipated indirect effects. This mitigation option will be adopted for the cultural resources sites with anticipated effects from the proposed

alternatives. Ashley National Forest will select a sample of sites eligible for the National Register of Historic Places that are within 30m (100feet) of designated routes to be monitored periodically to determine if adverse effects related to travel route designation are occurring. If the condition of a particular site is found to have significant deterioration due to travel route designation, mitigation of the adverse effects will be conducted.

2.3 Alternatives Considered in Detail

Over 1200 route changes were proposed during scoping. In order to track each proposed route or route change each proposal was given a unique number that was used to track that particular proposal throughout the process. The number was used to identify which district the route was on followed by three numbers randomly assigned to that proposal.

- Flaming Gorge Ranger District proposals start with the number “1” followed by three numbers.
- Vernal Ranger District proposals start with the number “2” followed by three numbers
- Roosevelt/Duchesne Ranger District North Unit proposals start with the number “3” followed by three numbers.
- Roosevelt/Duchesne Ranger District South Unit proposals start with the number “4” followed by three numbers.

(i.e. 1001 was the first proposal assigned an identifier on the Flaming Gorge Ranger District, 2040 was the fortieth proposal assigned an identifier on the Vernal Ranger District). The proposals in each district were assigned the identifier randomly and not according to status or ranking.

Individual proposals and changes to the current travel map are included in this document and can be viewed in tabular form in Appendix A: *Tables of Route Proposals and Changes to Existing Travel Map*. The alternatives are also shown visually by proposal number and location on 15 individual maps included with this document. The 15 maps are organized by the three existing ranger districts on the Forest and by each of the five identified alternatives.

2.3.1 Proposals common to all action alternatives

The number of proposals and type of route change and mileage totals are summarized by Ranger District below. The routes mentioned below are also included in each alternative discussion as a part of the analysis. For a detailed list of proposals and rationale of consideration see Appendix A.

Flaming Gorge Ranger District

Administratively close five routes totaling eight miles. The rationale for these closures includes concerns for safety and the closure better reflects existing actual use. Non-motorized use of these routes would be permitted.

Eliminate mixed use from four routes totaling 2.5 miles. These are short routes that require trailering of ATVs to access. This would provide consistency with adjacent use, reduce confusion over accessibility, and increase enforceability of these routes.

Open three administratively closed routes, totaling one mile, to mixed use traffic to access fishing and dispersed camping opportunities.

Add mixed use to five NFS roads totaling seven miles. This is consistent with adjacent use and will reduce confusion over accessibility and increase enforcement of these routes.

Designate 12 unauthorized routes, totaling five miles, for motorized use to access fishing and dispersed camping, add connectivity to adjacent BLM routes, or create OHV access from selected developed campgrounds.

Change use on a portion of one non-motorized trail to motorized, totaling 0.2 miles. This would reflect actual use and create a safe pullout and parking area for both motorized and non-motorized trails.

Restrict camping from May 15 through October 1 within ¼ mile each side of Sheep Creek, beginning at the Sheep Creek bridge on FS road 218 (approximately 200 yards from the junction of FS road 218 and State Highway 44) and ending ¼ mile upstream from Palisades Day Use Areas.

Vernal Ranger District

Change use on seven motorized trails to non-motorized trails, totaling 15 miles. These routes were identified as having severe resource damage and/or user conflicts, or were receiving such minimal use as to be difficult to locate on the ground.

Administratively close five NFS roads totaling 4 miles. These routes were identified as having severe resource damage, or were receiving such minimal use as to be difficult to locate on the ground.

Remove mixed traffic from one road totaling 0.5 miles. This would provide consistency with adjacent use, reduce confusion over accessibility, and increase enforceability of these routes.

Add mixed use to six NFS roads totaling 34 miles. This would create connectivity to numerous OHV routes and provide access to Forest from state and BLM roads that allow OHV use.

Change use of four OHV trails to trails open to all vehicles, totaling three miles. This would better reflect existing actual use and provide access to dispersed camping areas.

Designate 71 existing undesignated routes in the hatched travel area, totaling 15 miles, as motorized routes. These routes access areas with a strong history of dispersed camping.

Designate five unauthorized routes totaling 0.4 miles. These routes access areas with a strong history of dispersed camping.

Roosevelt/Duchesne Ranger District

Administratively close three NFS roads totaling two miles. These roads are receiving such minimal use as to be difficult to locate on the ground.

Change use on one motorized trail to non-motorized, totaling 0.6 miles. This would reduce resource damage and increase safety.

Remove mixed traffic from one NFS road totaling 0.1 miles. This is consistent with adjacent use and will reduce confusion over accessibility and increase enforcement of these routes.

Add mixed traffic to four NFS roads totaling one mile. This would reroute OHV traffic off of one motorized trail, reducing resource damage and increasing safety by avoiding a particularly dangerous section of trail. In addition, this designation would provide OHV access from a designated campground and provide consistency with adjacent allowed use.

2.3.2 Alternative A - No Action

This alternative is required by NEPA and serves as a baseline for analyzing effects (40 CFR 1502.14). No Action means one of two things: either (1) that the Proposed Action does not occur, or (2) that there would be no change in current management (FSH 1909.15(14.2)). Because the Forest has existing Travel Management Plans, the No Action Alternative in travel planning would

mean “no immediate change.” Travel management would continue under the present course of action, summer motorized travel would be guided by the current travel plans for the Flaming Gorge, Vernal, and Roosevelt/Duchesne Ranger Districts (all maps dated June 27, 2005).

This Alternative would retain approximately 1,587 miles of open NFS roads and motorized trails, including approximately 988 miles of road allowing mixed traffic. Off road dispersed camping access and game retrieval would continue to be allowed up to 300 feet from designated routes.

The 111,805 acre hatched travel area on the Vernal Ranger District would remain open to motorized vehicles on designated routes and existing, undesignated routes as long as resource damage was not occurring. Finding the resource damage and restricting travel on these routes is difficult at best, as there is no complete inventory of the existing, undesignated routes as mentioned in Chapter 1. However, using analysis of digital orthophotos and infra red photography, it is estimated that approximately 368 miles of existing, undesignated routes are present in the Travel Area. Within these areas, travel impacts may be concentrated, but as described in *section 1.4 Purpose and need for Action*, the extent is unknown. Visual observation by Forest field personnel have identified that the number of motorized routes is continuing to increase on a yearly basis.

As with all alternatives, cross-country motor vehicle use is not allowed on the Forest unless meeting specific exemptions outlined in 36 CFR 212.51(a) and described in *subsection 2.2.1* above.

Under the present course of action, the Forest would likely make periodic changes in travel management to correct identified resource problems or public safety issues on a case-by-case basis. Implementation of Forest Plan Standards, Guidelines, and Objectives would continue on a site-specific basis when resource concerns are identified. The Travel Plan would evolve, as it has since 1995, as the Forest continues to meet Forest Plan direction and respond to problems through site-specific analyses, decisions, and actions. Due to the combined requirements of the final motor vehicle management rule and Forest Plan direction to address resource and public safety issues, the No Action Alternative cannot be defined as “no change” over the long term.

Changes to travel management under the No Action Alternative would be incremental and piecemeal, in response to site-specific problems. Whereas under the action alternatives, response would be comprehensive in the form of a revised Travel Management Plan for the Forest that: restricts dispersed camping to within 150 feet of a designated route; eliminates the hatched travel areas on the Vernal Ranger District that allow motorized vehicles on established, undesignated routes; eliminates the ability to drive off-road up to 300 feet for game retrieval; and prohibits use of motor vehicles off the designated system.

Summary of

Alternative A - Summary of Forest Totals:

Highway:	73 miles
Open Road for street legal vehicles only:	297 miles
Open Road allowing mixed traffic:	988 miles
Undesignated Routes in Travel Designation Area:	386 miles
Motorized Trail:	139 miles
Non-motorized trail:	766 miles
Administratively Closed Forest Roads:	90 miles

2.3.3 Alternative B – Preferred Alternative

This alternative was proposed by the Forest to meet the purpose and need for a revised Travel Management Plan as described in Chapter 1 and was released as the Proposed Action with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in November 2007. Public comments received during

scoping were directed at this alternative. There have been some changes to this alternative since its publication, with most changes due to completion of field surveys and verification of current conditions. The resulting alternative is the Preferred Alternative.

This alternative responds to the need to provide wheeled motorized access for dispersed recreation opportunities and to provide a diversity of wheeled motorized recreation opportunities. The Preferred Alternative would provide a system of designated roads, motorized and non-motorized trails, and respond to direction provided in the Forest Plan. In addition, this action would meet current law, regulation, and policy. It addresses the possible economic opportunities available to Manila, a small isolated town, located on the edge of the Flaming Gorge reservoir, through development of routes from that community to the National Forest.

This alternative recognizes the importance of dispersed recreation across the forest. It would designate multiple short unauthorized and undesignated routes that currently access those areas where dispersed recreation (i.e. fishing and camping) is occurring. The majority of these routes occur within: 1) the hatched travel area, where motorized use of existing undesignated routes is currently authorized; and 2) along the Flaming Gorge reservoir, where access of fishing and dispersed camping areas has created numerous unauthorized routes. Within this alternative, several undesignated and unauthorized routes would require mitigation prior to appearing on the MVUM. This alternative attempts to reach a compromise of uses between the motorized and non-motorized forest users.

Alternative B is consistent with Forest Plan Standards and the implementation of Forest Plan Standards, Guidelines, and Objectives would continue with this alternative.

This Alternative responds to the Forest needs identified in *section 1.4 Purpose and Need* and *subsection 1.11.1 Issues Analyzed in Depth* through the following actions:

- Increase miles of motorized routes to accommodate OHVs over 50 inches.
- Create longer ATV routes that connect to or are in close proximity to smaller communities.
- Designate dispersed camping opportunities that allow ATV access from the camping area to ATV trail.
- Increase the number of loop routes of varying distances.
- Consider alternative routes that may require new construction, but access a desirable destination, if the proposed or current route is unsafe or not available due to resource concerns.
- Identify dispersed camping opportunities by designating routes that access sites greater than 150' from current NFS roads and trails.

This Alternative would retain approximately 1,613 miles of open designated roads and motorized trails, including approximately 1,108 miles of road allowing mixed traffic.

Flaming Gorge Ranger District:

On this district, approximately 411 miles of designated roads (open and seasonally open) would be available for public motorized use, including Highways 191 and 44. Approximately 326 miles of these roads would be open to mixed traffic use. Alternative B would designate and manage 18 miles of trail for vehicles less than 50 inches. Two miles of trail would be designated and managed for all vehicles primarily for access to the NRA for fishing, day use and dispersed camping. See Table 2.3.1 - *Flaming Gorge Ranger District: Alternative B: Proposed Changes to Current Condition*, at the end of this subsection for a detailed description of changes from Alternative A (Current Condition) and the corresponding rationale for inclusion.

Vernal Ranger District:

On this district, approximately 427 miles of designated roads (open and seasonally open) would be available for public motorized use, including Highway 191. Approximately 365 miles of these roads would be open to mixed traffic use. Alternative B would designate and manage 71 miles of trail for vehicles less than 50 inches. Twenty-nine miles of trail would be designated and managed for all vehicles, primarily for access to dispersed camping areas. See Table 2.3.2 *Vernal Ranger District - Alternative B: Proposed Changes to Current Condition*", at the end of this subsection for a detailed description of changes from Alternative A (Current Condition) and the corresponding rationale for inclusion.

Roosevelt/Duchesne Ranger District:

On this district, approximately 549 miles of designated roads (open and seasonally open) would be available for public motorized use, including Highway 191. Approximately 478 miles of these roads would be open to mixed use. Alternative B would designate and manage 40 miles of trail for vehicles less than 50 inches. Twenty-two miles of trail would be designated and managed for all vehicles, primarily for access to dispersed camping areas. See Table 2.3.3 *Roosevelt / Duchesne Ranger District - Alternative B: Proposed Changes to Current Condition*, at the end of this subsection for a detailed description of changes from Alternative A (Current Condition) and the corresponding rationale for inclusion.

Table 2.3.1 - Flaming Gorge Ranger District - Alternative B: Proposed Changes to Current Condition

**FLAMING GORGE RANGER DISTRICT
ALTERNATIVE B: Proposed Changes to Current Condition**

Action Taken	Current Condition Type of Designation	Proposed Designation	No. of Routes	Miles
Administrative Close:	NFS street legal use only road	Administratively closed	3	4
	NFS mixed use road	Administratively closed	2	0.3
Routes selected for administrative closure were identified as having severe resource damage, or receiving such minimal use that they were hard to locate or not identifiable on the ground.				
Open Administrative Closed Roads:	Administratively Closed Road	NFS mixed use road	6	4
	Administratively Closed Road	Motorized trail	1	1
Routes selected would primarily be to provide access to fishing and dispersed camping along the Flaming Gorge NRA. Some routes would be selected to provide for an OHV loop, connectivity with other designated routes, or increase safety by providing an alternative route off a heavily-used, mixed use road.				
Add Motorized Use:	NFS street legal use only road	NFS mixed use road	17	15
	Non-motorized trail	NFS mixed use road	1	0.2
Routes selected to add mixed use traffic would create connectivity to numerous OHV routes and provide Forest access from adjacent state and BLM roads that allow OHV use. Route selected for change of use from non-motorized to motorized mixed use would be to provide safe parking at trailhead and hunting access.				
Reduce Motorized Use:	NFS mixed use road	NFS street legal use only road	4	3
	Motorized trail	Non-motorized trail	1	4
Routes selected for change to street legal only were identified to provide consistency with adjacent use, reduce confusion over accessibility, and increase enforcement of these routes. Route selected for change from motorized trail to non-motorized was identified as having resource damage and safety concerns.				
New Construction:	New construction	Motorized trail	2	1
Proposed new routes would be to increase safety by removing vehicles off of Hickerson Park road and to provide connectivity with other routes.				
Designate Unauthorized Route:	Unauthorized route	NFS street legal use only road	5	1
	Unauthorized route	NFS mixed use road	96	47
	Unauthorized route	Motorized trail	13	9
	Unauthorized route	Open dispersed camping area	1	78 acres
The majority of the routes selected would be to access the Flaming Gorge NRA for fishing, day outings, and dispersed camping. Most of these routes are less than 0.5 miles in length.				

Table 2.3.2 - Vernal Ranger District - Alternative B: Proposed Changes to Current Condition

**VERNAL RANGER DISTRICT
ALTERNATIVE B: Proposed Changes to Current Condition**

Action Taken	Current Condition		Proposed Designation	
	Type of Designation		No. of Routes	Miles
Administrative Close:	NFS street legal use only road	Administratively closed	1	2
	NFS mixed use road	Administratively closed	7	4
	Motorized trail	Administratively closed	12	15
Routes selected for administrative closure were identified as having severe resource damage, or receiving such minimal use that they were hard to locate or not identifiable on the ground.				
Open Administrative Closed Roads:	Administratively Closed Road	NFS mixed use road	6	7
	Administratively Closed Road	Motorized trail	4	9
Routes selected to open would provide connection with other open routes, dispersed camping, and create OHV loop opportunities.				
Add Motorized Use:	NFS street legal use only road	NFS mixed use road	6	40
	Motorized trail	NFS mixed use road	2	1
Routes selected to add mixed use traffic would create connectivity to numerous OHV routes and provide Forest access from adjacent state and BLM roads that allow OHV use. Change from motorized trail to mixed use road would better reflect current use and access of dispersed camping areas.				
Reduce Motorized Use:	NFS mixed use road	NFS street legal use only road	4	6
	NFS mixed use road	Motorized trail	1	1
	Motorized trail	Non-motorized trail	4	12
Routes selected from mixed traffic to street legal vehicles were identified to provide consistency with OHV management off of main road, non-motorized trailheads accessed, and to provide non-OHV dispersed camping opportunities. Reduced use from mixed use road to motorized trail would address the type of adjacent use and resource concerns associated with wider wheel-based traffic. Routes selected for a change to non-motorized use were identified as having severe resource damage, user conflicts, or having minimal use and difficult to locate on the ground.				
Designate Undesignated or Unauthorized Route:	Undesignated route	NFS street legal use only road	1	0.1
	Undesignated route	NFS mixed use road	57	16
	Undesignated route	Motorized trail	35	24
	Unauthorized route	NFS mixed use road	13	2
	Unauthorized route	Motorized trail	12	6
Designation of selected existing routes within the Vernal District hatched travel area would primarily provide access to areas with a strong history of dispersed camping, create connectivity of routes, and increase motorized loop opportunities. Designation of unauthorized routes selected would provide access to areas with a strong history of dispersed camping, or provide connectivity with other routes.				

Table 2.3.3 - Roosevelt / Duchesne Ranger District - Alternative B: Proposed Changes to Current Condition

**ROOSEVELT / DUCHESNE RANGER DISTRICT
ALTERNATIVE B: Proposed Changes to Current Condition**

Action Taken	Current Condition Type of Designation	Proposed Designation	No. of Routes	Miles
Administrative Close:	NFS street legal use only road	Administratively closed	2	2
	NFS mixed use road	Administratively closed	2	1
Routes selected for administrative closure were identified as having severe resource damage, or receiving such minimal use that they were hard to locate or not identifiable on the ground.				
Open Administrative Closed Roads:	Administratively Closed Road	NFS street legal use only road	1	0.3
	Administratively Closed Road	NFS mixed use road	2	2
	Administratively Closed Road	Motorized trail	2	4
Routes selected to open would primarily be to provide connection with other open routes, increase dispersed camping opportunities, or to create OHV loop opportunities.				
Add Motorized Use:	NFS street legal use only road	NFS mixed use road	4	8
	Routes selected to add mixed use traffic would increase motorized opportunities for OHVs, and improve OHV access from campgrounds to other mixed use roads. This would also increase safety on certain routes by directing OHV traffic off of a particularly dangerous section of system trail.			
Reduce Motorized Use:	NFS mixed use road	NFS street legal use only road	3	0.4
	Routes selected from mixed traffic to street legal vehicles were identified to increase enforceability and provide consistency with non-motorized adjacent routes and trailhead or as route crosses Tribal Land that does not allow ATV use.			
New Construction:	New construction	Motorized trail	1	0.2
	Proposal selected for new construction would route ATV traffic off of Tribal Lands.			
Designate Unauthorized Route:	Unauthorized route	NFS street legal use only road	6	1
	Unauthorized route	NFS mixed use road	40	5
	Unauthorized route	Motorized trail	57	20
The majority of routes unauthorized routes selected for designation would provide access to areas with a strong history of dispersed camping, or to provide connectivity with other routes.				

2.3.4 Alternative C

This alternative responds to issues raised by motorized user groups and county governments. The intent of this alternative is to maximize opportunities for motorized travel by addressing the need to better accommodate current motorized use as well as anticipated future motorized use. It addresses the increasing demand for dispersed camping opportunities and the possible economic opportunities available to Manila, a small isolated town located on the edge of the Flaming Gorge reservoir. This would be accomplished through development of routes from the community to the National Forest.

Alternative C does not include all roads and trails that currently exist on the ground as part of the designated system. Since the Forest does not have a complete inventory of unauthorized and undesignated routes, it would be impossible to consider every route. However, routes identified during the scoping period by field personnel and the public as potential motorized routes were considered. Many unauthorized or undesignated roads and trails have sustainability or manageability issues that preclude inclusion as system routes (e.g. erosive soils that prevent the route from being adequately maintained over time; mitigation or reconstruction requirements whose cost outweighs its benefits; routes that would not provide access to a dispersed site, loop opportunity, or vista; and/or routes that would not contribute to a well-designed system that encourages responsible use).

Although Alternative C is consistent with Forest Plan Standards and the implementation of Forest Plan Standards, Guidelines, and Objectives would continue with this alternative; it does less to minimize maintenance costs and protect Forest resources than Alternatives B, D or E.

This Alternative responds to the Forest needs identified in *section 1.4 Purpose and Need* and *subsection 1.11.1 Issues Analyzed in Depth* through the following actions:

- Increase miles of motorized routes to accommodate OHVs over 50 inches.
- Create longer ATV routes that connect to or are in close proximity to smaller communities.
- Create a diversity of routes that match skill levels.
- Increase designate dispersed camping opportunities that allow ATV access from the camping area to ATV trail.
- Increase the number of loop routes of varying distances.
- Consider alternative routes that may require new construction, but access a desirable destination.
- Maintain roads for public use that end at or access private or Tribal lands.
- Identify dispersed camping opportunities by designating routes that access sites greater than 150' from current NFS roads and trails.
- Designate short ATV loop routes around or near some dispersed camping areas.
- Mitigation of resource concerns instead of closing routes where possible. Mitigation may include, but are not limited to hardened stream crossings, hardened or sloping road surfaces, barriers which effectively block or redirect motorized traffic, seasonal closures, and interpretive signs.

This Alternative would retain approximately 1,667 miles of open designated roads and motorized trails, including approximately 1,122 miles of road allowing mixed traffic. The designated hatched travel areas on the Vernal Ranger District would be eliminated and replaced with a designated system of roads and trails.

Flaming Gorge Ranger District:

On this district approximately 457 miles of designated roads (open and seasonally open) would be available for public motorized use, including Highways 191 and 44. Approximately 328 miles of these roads would be open to mixed use (ATV, OHV, trucks and cars). Alternative C would designate and manage 27 miles of trail for vehicles less than 50 inches. Four miles of trail would be designated and managed for all vehicles primarily for access to the NRA for fishing, day use and dispersed camping. See Table 2.3.4 *Flaming Gorge Ranger District - Alternative C: Proposed Changes to Current Condition*, at the end of this subsection for a detailed description of changes from Alternative A (Current Condition) and the corresponding rationale for inclusion.

Vernal Ranger District:

On this district approximately 442 miles of designated roads (open and seasonally open) would be available for public motorized use, including Highway 191. Approximately 359 miles of these roads would be open to mixed use (ATV, OHV, trucks and cars). Alternative C would designate and manage 83 miles of trail for vehicles less than 50 inches. Thirty-three miles of trail would be designated and managed for all vehicles, primarily for access to dispersed camping areas. See Table 2.3.5 *Vernal Ranger District - Alternative C: Proposed Changes to Current Condition*, at the end of this subsection for a detailed description of changes from Alternative A (Current Condition) and the corresponding rationale for inclusion.

Roosevelt/Duchesne Ranger District:

On this district, approximately 555 miles of designated roads (open and seasonally open) would be available for public motorized use, including Highway 191. Approximately 467 miles of these roads would be open to mixed use (ATV, OHV, trucks and cars). Alternative C would designate and manage 37 miles of trail for vehicles less than 50 inches. Thirty miles of trail would be designated and managed for all vehicles, primarily for access to dispersed camping areas. See Table 2.3.6 *Roosevelt / Duchesne Ranger District - Alternative C: Proposed Changes to Current Condition*, at the end of this subsection for a detailed description of changes from Alternative A (Current Condition) and the corresponding rationale for inclusion.

Table 2.3.4 - Flaming Gorge Ranger District - Alternative C: Proposed Changes to Current Condition

**FLAMING GORGE RANGER DISTRICT
ALTERNATIVE C: Proposed Changes to Current Condition**

Action Taken	Current Condition Type of Designation	Proposed Designation	No. of Routes	Miles
Administrative Close:	NFS street legal use only road	Administratively closed	2	4
	NFS mixed use road	Administratively closed	2	0

Routes selected for administrative closure were identified as having severe resource damage, or receiving such minimal use that they were hard to locate or not identifiable on the ground.

Open Administrative Closed Roads:	Administratively closed road	NFS mixed use road	7	4
	Administratively closed road	Motorized trail	1	1

Routes selected to open would primarily be to provide access to fishing and dispersed camping along the Flaming Gorge NRA. Some routes would be selected to provide for an OHV loop, connectivity with other designated routes, or increase safety by providing an alternative route off a heavily used mixed use road.

Add Motorized Use:	NFS street legal use only road	NFS mixed use road	17	8
	Non-motorized trail	NFS mixed use road	2	1
	Non-motorized trail	Motorized trail	4	5

Routes from street legal to add mixed use would create connectivity to numerous OHV routes and provide Forest access from adjacent state and BLM roads that allow OHV use. Routes with change from non-motorized to motorized mixed use would be to provide safe parking at trailhead and provide hunting access. Routes selected for change from non-motorized trails to motorized trail would be to provide connection for lodging and services, and as part of a Manila to Vernal route.

Reduce Motorized Use:	NFS mixed use road	NFS street legal use only road	4	3
	Motorized trail	Non-motorized trail	1	4

Routes selected for change to street legal only were identified to provide consistency with adjacent use, reduce confusion over accessibility, and increase enforcement of these routes. Route selected for change from motorized trail to non-motorized was identified as having resource damage and safety concerns.

New Construction:	New construction	Motorized trail	3	2
--------------------------	------------------	-----------------	---	---

Proposed new routes would increase safety by removing vehicles off of Hickerson Park road and to provide access to lodging and services.

Designate Unauthorized Route:	Unauthorized route	NFS street legal use only road	5	1
	Unauthorized route	NFS mixed use road	99	47
	Unauthorized route	Motorized trail	18	14
	Unauthorized route	Open dispersed camping area	1	78 acres

The majority of the routes selected would be to access the Flaming Gorge NRA for fishing, day outings, and dispersed camping. Most of these routes are less than 0.5 miles in length.

Table 2.3.5 - Vernal Ranger District - Alternative C: Proposed Changes to Current Condition

VERNAL RANGER DISTRICT
ALTERNATIVE C: Proposed Changes to Current Condition

Action Taken	Current Condition	Proposed Designation	No. of Routes	Miles
Administrative Close:	NFS mixed use road	Administratively closed	4	2
	Motorized trail	Administratively closed	3	3

Routes selected for administrative closure were identified as having severe resource damage, or receiving such minimal use that they were hard to locate or not identifiable on the ground.

Open Administrative Closed Roads:	Administratively closed road	NFS street legal use only road	1	1
	Administratively closed road	NFS mixed use road	9	19
	Administratively closed road	Motorized trail	4	9

Routes selected to open would provide connection with other open routes, dispersed camping, and create OHV loop opportunities.

Add Motorized Use:	NFS street legal use only road	NFS mixed use road	10	43
	Motorized trail	NFS mixed use road	2	1
	Non-motorized trail	Motorized trail	1	1

Routes from street legal to add mixed use traffic would create connectivity to numerous ATV routes, provide Forest access from adjacent state and BLM roads that allow ATV use, or provide Forest access from the town of Lapoint. Change from motorized trail to mixed use road would better reflect current use and access of dispersed camping areas. Route selected from non-motorized trail to motorized trail would create a loop and connectivity with other OHV routes.

Reduce Motorized Use:	NFS mixed use road	NFS street legal use only road	1	1
	NFS mixed use road	Motorized trail	1	1
	Motorized trail	Non-motorized trail	4	12

Route selected to change from mixed traffic to street legal vehicles was identified to provide consistency with the non-motorized trailhead it accesses. Reduced use from mixed use road to motorized trail would address the type of adjacent use and resource concerns associated with wider wheel-based traffic. Routes selected for a change to non-motorized use were identified as having severe resource damage, user conflicts, or having minimal use and difficult to locate on the ground.

Designate Undesignated or Unauthorized Route:	Undesignated route	NFS street legal use only road	1	0.1
	Undesignated route	NFS mixed use road	58	16
	Undesignated route	Motorized trail	37	26
	Unauthorized route	NFS mixed use road	13	2
	Unauthorized route	Motorized trail	13	6

Designation of selected existing routes within the Vernal District hatched travel area would primarily provide access to areas with a strong history of dispersed camping, create connectivity of routes, and increase motorized loop opportunities. Designation of unauthorized routes selected would provide access to areas with a strong history of dispersed camping, or provide connectivity with other routes.

Table 2.3.6 - Roosevelt / Duchesne Ranger District - Alternative C: Proposed Changes to Current Condition

**ROOSEVELT / DUCHESNE RANGER DISTRICT
ALTERNATIVE C: Proposed Changes to Current Condition**

Action Taken	Current Condition Type of Designation	Proposed Designation	No. of Routes	Miles
Administrative Close:	NFS street legal use only road	Administratively closed	2	2
	NFS mixed use road	Administratively closed	2	1

These routes were identified as providing access only to administrative or private use sites, or receiving little or no visible use.

Open Administrative Closed Roads:	Administratively closed road	NFS street legal use only road	1	0.3
	Administratively closed road	NFS mixed use road	3	3
	Administratively closed road	Motorized trail	2	4

Routes selected to open would be primarily to provide connection with other open routes, increase dispersed camping opportunities, or to create OHV loop opportunities.

Add Motorized Use:	NFS street legal use only road	NFS mixed use road	5	11
	Motorized trail	NFS mixed use road	1	3
	Non-motorized trail	NFS mixed use road	1	1
	Non-motorized trail	Motorized trail	1	3

Routes street legal only selected to add mixed use traffic would increase motorized opportunities for OHVs, and improve OHV access from campgrounds to mixed use roads. This would also increase safety on certain routes by directing OHV traffic off of a particularly dangerous section of system trail. Route selected from non-motorized trail to NFS mixed road would provide access to historical dispersed camping area. Route selected from non-motorized to motorized trail would create a loop and connectivity with other OHV routes and provide access to a popular hunting area.

Reduce Motorized Use:	NFS mixed use road	NFS street legal use only road	2	0.1
------------------------------	--------------------	--------------------------------	---	-----

Routes selected from mixed traffic to street legal vehicles were identified to increase enforceability and provide consistency with non-motorized adjacent routes and trailhead or as route crosses Tribal Land that does not allow ATV use.

New Construction:	New construction	Motorized trail	1	0.2
--------------------------	------------------	-----------------	---	-----

Proposal selected for new construction would route ATV traffic off of Tribal Lands.

Designate Unauthorized Route:	Unauthorized route	NFS street legal use only road	11	1
	Unauthorized route	NFS mixed use road	41	6
	Unauthorized route	Motorized trail	71	26

The majority of these routes selected would be to provide access to areas with a strong history of dispersed camping, or to provide connectivity with other routes.

2.3.5 Alternative D

This alternative responds to issues raised by non-motorized users relative to a need for more non-motorized opportunities, as well as conservation groups with concerns about road densities, water quality, fragmentation, and protection of critical habitats for wildlife. The alternative addresses associated concerns with noise and safety related to motorized and non-motorized uses in the same area by adding greater emphasis to protection of potential wilderness area and Inventoried Roadless Area characteristics. In addition, this alternative focuses on increased protection of biological and physical resources. This alternative was developed to address specific environmental issues, such as protection of wildlife habitat connectivity through the reduction of road densities.

Alternative D would provide the least miles of motorized road and trail opportunities when compared with the other alternatives. This alternative emphasizes non-motorized recreation opportunities. Alternative D is consistent with Forest Plan Standards and the implementation of Forest Plan Standards, Guidelines, and Objectives would continue with this alternative.

This Alternative responds to the Forest needs identified in (see *1.4 Purpose and Need*) and issues (1.11.1 Issues Analyzed in Depth) through the following actions:

- Reduce road densities by reducing the number of loop and redundant routes. This is important in reducing wildlife disturbance and addressing wildlife needs within critical habitats, such as winter range.
- Reduce user conflicts by reducing or elimination of motorized use in specific areas.
- Reduce the number of dead end routes that terminate in alpine and meadow areas, and/or increase the ease of motorized access into Wilderness.
- Reduce routes that have resource concerns rather than mitigate the concern and continue use.
- Do not designate routes to access dispersed camping areas >150' from the initial route with a few exceptions or are
 - Existing undesignated routes currently within the hatched travel area on the Vernal Ranger District.
 - The areas that have a long history of dispersed camping and the use is not resulting in resource damage at those sites.
- Do not add any unauthorized routes in inventoried roadless areas, unless needed to maintain motorized access to private lands or other special uses such as utilities, power line corridors, range improvements, and culinary water sources.
- Designate non-OHV dispersed camping areas for quiet areas.
- Keep motorized traffic off of dams and spillways.
- Reduce the miles of roads open to the public that end at private lands and may lead to trespass issues.

This Alternative would retain approximately 1,444 miles of open designated roads and motorized trails, including approximately 1,007 miles of road allowing mixed traffic. The designated hatched travel areas on the Vernal Ranger District would be eliminated and replaced with a designated system of roads and trails.

Flaming Gorge Ranger District:

On this district, approximately 402 miles of designated roads (open and seasonally open) would be available for public motorized use, including Highways 191 and 44. Approximately 267 miles of these roads would be open to mixed use. Alternative D would designate and manage nine miles of trail for vehicles less than 50 inches. There would be no additional miles of motorized trail designated and managed for all vehicles for access to the NRA for fishing, day use and dispersed camping.

All but a few of existing unauthorized roads would be restricted to non-motorized travel. No areas would be open to cross-country motor vehicle use, but limited motorized access for dispersed camping would be permissible within 150 feet of designated roads and designated motorized trails as long as it does not result in resource damage. See Table 2.3.7: *Flaming Gorge Ranger District - Alternative D: Proposed Changes to Current Condition*, at the end of this subsection for a detailed description of changes from Alternative A (Current Condition) and the corresponding rationale for inclusion.

Vernal Ranger District:

On this district, approximately 411 miles of designated roads (open and seasonally open) would be available for public motorized use, including Highway 191. Approximately 301 miles of these roads would be open to mixed use. Alternative D would designate and manage 49 miles of trail for vehicles less than 50 inches. Seven miles of trail would be designated and managed for all vehicles, primarily for access to dispersed camping areas.

All but a few existing unauthorized roads would be restricted to non-motorized travel. No areas would be open to cross-country motor vehicle use, but limited motorized access for dispersed camping would be permissible within 150 feet of designated roads and designated motorized trails, as long as it does not result in resource damage. See Table 2.3.8: *Vernal Ranger District - Alternative D: Proposed Changes to Current Condition*, at the end of this subsection for a detailed description of changes from Alternative A (Current Condition) and the corresponding rationale for inclusion.

Roosevelt/Duchesne Ranger District:

On this district, approximately 534 miles of designated roads (open and seasonally open) would be available for public motorized use, including Highway 191. Approximately 439 miles of these roads would be open to mixed use. Alternative D would designate and manage 30 miles of trail for vehicles less than 50 inches. Two miles of trail would be designated and managed for all vehicles, primarily for access to dispersed camping areas.

All but a few existing unauthorized roads would be restricted to non-motorized travel. No areas would be open to cross-country motor vehicle use, but limited motorized access for dispersed camping would be permissible within 150 feet of designated roads and designated motorized trails as long as it does not result in resource damage. See Table 2.3.9: *Roosevelt / Duchesne Ranger District - Alternative D: Proposed Changes to Current Condition*, at the end of this subsection for a detailed description of changes from Alternative A (Current Condition) and the corresponding rationale for inclusion.

Table 2.3.7 - Flaming Gorge Ranger District - Alternative D: Proposed Changes to Current Condition

**FLAMING GORGE RANGER DISTRICT
ALTERNATIVE D: Proposed Changes to Current Condition**

Action Taken	Current Condition Type of Designation	Proposed Designation	No. of Routes	Miles
Administrative Close:	NFS street legal use only road	Administratively closed	3	2
	NFS mixed use road	Administratively closed	3	1
	Motorized trail	Administratively closed	1	1

These routes were identified as providing access only to administrative or private use sites, receiving little or no visible use, or redundant in areas of high road density. A more liberal approach in identifying routes for closure has been taken in this alternative than in other alternatives.

Open Administrative Closed Roads:	Administratively Closed Road	NFS street legal use only road	1	4
	Administratively Closed Road	NFS mixed use road	3	2

Routes selected to open would be primarily to provide access to fishing and dispersed camping along the Flaming Gorge NRA. Only those areas having the greatest benefit would be selected in this alternative.

Add Motorized Use:	NFS street legal use only road	NFS mixed use road	5	4
	Non-motorized trail	NFS mixed use road	1	0.2

Routes selected to add mixed use traffic would provide management consistency with other routes, connectivity to other designated OHV routes, and access from adjacent state and BLM roads that allow OHV use. The routes with change of use from non-motorized to motorized mixed use would provide safe parking at a trailhead and provide hunting access.

Reduce Motorized Use:	NFS mixed use road	NFS street legal use only road	4	3
	Motorized trail	Non-motorized trail	2	7

Routes selected for change from mixed use to street legal vehicle use were identified primarily to provide consistency with adjacent use, reduce confusion over accessibility, and provide for non-OHV dispersed camping opportunities. Routes selected for a change to non-motorized use were identified as having resource damage, safety concerns, and redundant in area of high road density.

Designate Unauthorized Route:	Unauthorized route	NFS street legal use only road	1	0.2
	Unauthorized route	NFS mixed use road	12	5

The majority of these routes selected would be to provide access the Flaming Gorge NRA for fishing, day outings and dispersed camping. Most of these routes are less than 0.5 mile in length.

Table 2.3.8 - Vernal Ranger District - Alternative D: Proposed Changes to Current Condition

VERNAL RANGER DISTRICT
ALTERNATIVE D: Proposed Changes to Current Condition

Action Taken	Current Condition Type of Designation	Proposed Designation	No. of Routes	Miles
Administrative Close:	NFS street legal use only road	Administratively closed	1	2
	NFS mixed use road	Administratively closed	9	5
	Motorized trail	Administratively closed	13	14

Routes selected for administrative closure were identified as having moderate to severe resource damage, having multiple illegal routes off route with enforcement concerns, crossing private ground with no right of way, or receiving such minimal use that they are not readily identifiable. A more liberal approach in identifying routes for closure has been taken in this alternative than in other alternatives.

Add Motorized Use:	NFS street legal use only road	NFS mixed use road	6	30
	Motorized trail	NFS mixed use road	2	1

Routes from street legal to add mixed use traffic would create connectivity to numerous ATV routes, provide Forest access from adjacent state and BLM roads that allow ATV use, or provide Forest access from the town of Lapoint. Change from motorized trail to mixed use road would better reflect current use and access of dispersed camping areas.

Reduce Motorized Use:	NFS mixed use road	NFS street legal use only road	10	12
	NFS mixed use road	Motorized trail	1	1
	Motorized trail	Non-motorized trail	7	20

Routes selected to change from mixed traffic to street legal vehicles were identified to provide consistency with adjacent OHV management, opportunities for non-OHV dispersed camping, and address wildlife and other resource concerns. Reduced use from mixed use to motorized trail would address type of surrounding use and resource issues associated with wider wheel-based traffic. Motorized trails selected for non-motorized use were identified as having moderate to severe resource damage, user conflicts, or having such minimal use as to be difficult to locate on the ground.

Designate Undesignated or Unauthorized Route:	Undesignated route	NFS street legal use only road	1	0.1
	Undesignated route	NFS mixed use road	51	10
	Undesignated route	Motorized trail	19	6
	Unauthorized route	NFS mixed use road	7	1
	Unauthorized route	Motorized trail	3	1

Designation of selected existing routes within the Vernal District hatched travel area would primarily provide access to areas with a strong history of dispersed camping, create connectivity of routes, and increase motorized loop opportunities. Designation of unauthorized routes selected would provide access to areas with a strong history of dispersed camping, or provide connectivity with other routes.

Table 2.3.9 - Roosevelt / Duchesne - Alternative D: Proposed Changes to Current Condition

**ROOSEVELT / DUCHESNE RANGER DISTRICT
ALTERNATIVE D: Proposed Changes to Current Condition**

Action Taken	Current Condition Type of Designation	Proposed Designation	No. of Routes	Miles
Administrative Close:	NFS street legal use only road	Administratively closed	3	9
	NFS mixed use road	Administratively closed	3	0.2
	Motorized trail	Administratively closed	3	7

These routes were identified as providing access only to administrative or private use sites; receiving little or no visible use; having moderate resource concerns with wet areas and rutting; or having conflicts with adjacent non-motorized use. A more liberal approach in identifying routes for closure has been taken in this alternative than in other alternatives.

Add Motorized Use:	NFS street legal use only road	NFS mixed use road	2	1
---------------------------	--------------------------------	--------------------	---	---

Routes selected to add mixed use traffic would increase motorized opportunities for OHVs on an existing road, or increase safety by directing OHV traffic off of a particularly dangerous section of system trail.

Reduce Motorized Use:	NFS mixed use road	NFS street legal use only road	5	3
------------------------------	--------------------	--------------------------------	---	---

Routes selected from mixed traffic to street legal vehicles were identified primarily to provide consistency with non-motorized trailheads or short routes that exist in areas where other OHV use is not allowed.

Designate Unauthorized Route:	Unauthorized route	Motorized trail	1	0.1
--------------------------------------	--------------------	-----------------	---	-----

This alternative avoids designation of unauthorized historical dispersed camping routes. However, one route was selected which accesses a borrow pit and provides dispersed camping for group use.

2.3.6 Alternative E

This Alternative recognizes the importance of decreasing road densities. However, the alternative limits those areas to specific locations of resource concern, such as sensitive land types, rather than across the districts as contained in Alternative D. This alternative attempts to meet the increasing demand for motorized roads and trails in areas that could support such use. Alternative E would increase road densities in some areas, while reducing them in others. This alternative identifies additional mitigation to reduce impacts from motorized use in order to retain or increase such uses.

This alternative is consistent with Forest Plan Standards and the implementation of Forest Plan Standards, Guidelines, and Objectives would continue with this alternative.

This Alternative responds to the Forest needs identified in (see *1.4 Purpose and Need*) and issues (1.11.1 Issues Analyzed in Depth) through the following actions:

- Use of alternative routes that exclude areas of resource concern and access the same destination.
- Reduce the number of dead end routes that terminate in alpine and meadow areas, and/or increase the ease of motorized access into Wilderness.
- Mitigation of resource concerns instead of closures where possible. Mitigation may include hardened stream crossings, hardened or sloping road surfaces, barriers which effectively block or redirect motorized traffic, seasonal closures, and interpretive signs.
- Within the potential wilderness designate only those existing undesignated routes currently within the hatched travel area on the Vernal Ranger District. These routes should access dispersed camping areas with a strong history of use.
- Designate dispersed camping areas that can be accessed by both ATVs and areas that restrict ATV travel.

This Alternative would retain approximately 1,592 miles of open designated roads and motorized trails, including approximately 1,086 miles of road allowing mixed traffic. The designated hatched travel areas on the Vernal Ranger District would be eliminated and replaced with a designated system of roads and trails.

Flaming Gorge Ranger District:

On this district, approximately 427 miles of designated roads (open and seasonally open) would be available for public motorized use, including Highways 191 and 44. Approximately 293 miles of these roads would be open to mixed traffic use. Alternative E would designate and manage 23 miles of trail for vehicles less than 50 inches. One mile of trail would be designated and managed for all vehicles primarily for access to the NRA for fishing, day use and dispersed camping. See Table 2.3.10: *Flaming Gorge Ranger District - Alternative E: Proposed Changes to Current Condition*, at the end of this subsection for a detailed description of changes from Alternative A (Current Condition) and the corresponding rationale for inclusion.

Vernal Ranger District:

On this district, approximately 436 miles of designated roads (open and seasonally open) would be available for public motorized use, including Highway 191. Approximately 335 miles of these roads would be open to mixed use. Alternative E would designate and manage 71 miles of trail for vehicles less than 50 inches. Twenty-five miles of trail would be designated and managed for all vehicles, primarily for access to dispersed camping areas. See Table 2.3.11: *Vernal Ranger District - Alternative E: Proposed Changes to Current Condition*, at the end of this subsection for

a detailed description of changes from Alternative A (Current Condition) and the corresponding rationale for inclusion.

Roosevelt/Duchesne Ranger District:

On this district, approximately 550 miles of designated roads (open and seasonally open) would be available for public motorized use, including Highway 191. Approximately 458 miles of these roads would be open to mixed use. Alternative E would designate and manage 39 miles of trail for vehicles less than 50 inches. Nineteen miles of trail would be designated and managed for all vehicles, primarily for access to dispersed camping areas. *See Table 2.3.12:Roosevelt / Duchesne Ranger District - Alternative E: Proposed Changes to Current Condition*, at the end of this subsection for a detailed description of changes from Alternative A (Current Condition) and the corresponding rationale for inclusion.

Table 2.3.10 - Flaming Gorge Ranger District - Alternative E: Proposed Changes to Current Condition

**FLAMING GORGE RANGER DISTRICT
ALTERNATIVE E: Proposed Changes to Current Condition**

Action Taken	Current Condition Type of Designation	Proposed Designation	No. of Routes	Miles
Administrative Close:	NFS street legal use only road	Administratively closed	2	4
	NFS mixed use road	Administratively closed	3	1
	Motorized trail	Administratively closed	1	1

These routes were identified as providing access only to administrative or private use sites, having no easement or right of way across private property, receiving little or no visible use, or redundant in areas of high road density.

Open Administrative Closed Roads:	Administratively Closed Road	NFS street legal use only road	1	0.2
	Administratively Closed Road	NFS mixed use road	6	4
	Administratively Closed Road	Motorized trail	1	1

Routes selected to open would primarily provide access to fishing and dispersed camping along the Flaming Gorge NRA. Some routes would be selected to provide for connectivity with other designated routes or increase safety by providing an alternative route off a heavily-used, mixed use road.

Add Motorized Use:	NFS street legal use only road	NFS mixed use road	10	9
	Non-motorized trail	NFS mixed use road	1	0.2
	Non-motorized trail	Motorized trail	3	3

Routes from street legal to add mixed use would create connectivity to numerous OHV routes and provide Forest access from adjacent state and BLM roads that allow OHV use. Routes with change from non-motorized to motorized mixed use would be to provide safe parking at trailhead and provide hunting access. Routes selected for change from non-motorized trails to motorized trail would be to provide connection for lodging and services, and as part of a Manila to Vernal route.

Reduce Motorized Use:	NFS mixed use road	NFS street legal use only road	4	3
	Motorized trail	Non-motorized trail	1	4

Routes selected for change to street legal only were identified to provide consistency with adjacent use, reduce confusion over accessibility, and increase enforceability of these routes. Route selected for change from motorized trail to non-motorized was identified as having resource damage and safety concerns.

New Construction:	New construction	Motorized trail	3	2
--------------------------	------------------	-----------------	---	---

Proposed new routes would increase safety by removing vehicles off of Hickerson Park road or to provide access to lodging and services as part of a Manila to Vernal route.

Designate Unauthorized Route:	Unauthorized route	NFS street legal use only road	7	1
	Unauthorized route	NFS mixed use road	58	26
	Unauthorized route	Motorized trail	8	11

The majority of these routes selected would be to access the Flaming Gorge NRA for fishing, day outings, and dispersed camping. Most of these routes are less than 0.5 mile in length. Selection of routes in this alternative would have a more conservative approach in identification of only the most sustainable routes, or provide mitigation where possible.

Table 2.3.11 - Vernal Ranger District - Alternative E: Proposed Changes to Current Condition

**VERNAL RANGER DISTRICT
ALTERNATIVE E: Proposed Changes to Current Condition**

Action Taken	Current Condition Type of Designation	Proposed Designation	No. of Routes	Miles
Administrative Close:	NFS street legal use only road	Administratively closed	1	2
	NFS mixed use road	Administratively closed	8	5
	Motorized trail	Administratively closed	10	13

Routes selected for administrative closure were identified as having severe resource damage, crossing private property without easement, receiving minimal use and not identifiable on the ground, incurring substantial illegal OHV activity off route, or only accessing administrative or private sites. This alternative would consider utilization of a higher level of mitigation in order to keep routes open than other alternatives.

Open Administrative Closed Roads:	Administratively Closed Road	NFS street legal use only road	2	11
	Administratively Closed Road	NFS mixed use road	4	6
	Administratively Closed Road	Motorized trail	6	11

Routes selected to open would provide connection with other open routes, dispersed camping, and create OHV loop opportunities.

Add Motorized Use:	NFS street legal use only road	NFS mixed use road	10	43
	Motorized trail	NFS mixed use road	2	1

Routes from street legal to add mixed use traffic would create connectivity to numerous ATV routes, provide Forest access from adjacent state and BLM roads that allow ATV use, or provide Forest access from the town of Lapoint. Change from motorized trail to mixed use road would better reflect current use and access of dispersed camping areas.

Reduce Motorized Use:	NFS mixed use road	NFS street legal use only road	6	7
	NFS mixed use road	Motorized trail	1	1
	Motorized trail	Non-motorized trail	4	12

Route selected to change from mixed traffic to street legal vehicles was identified to provide consistency with OHV management off the main road or non-motorized trailheads that are accessed. Mixed use change to motorized trail would address adjacent use and resource concerns associated with wider wheel-based traffic. Routes selected for a change to non-motorized use were identified as having severe resource damage, user conflicts, or having minimal use and difficult to locate on the ground.

Designate Undesignated or Unauthorized Route:	Undesignated route	NFS street legal use only road	2	1
	Undesignated route	NFS mixed use road	56	15
	Undesignated route	Motorized trail	31	19
	Unauthorized route	NFS mixed use road	12	2
	Unauthorized route	Motorized trail	10	4

Designation of selected existing routes within the Vernal District hatched travel area would primarily provide access to areas with a strong history of dispersed camping, create connectivity of routes, and increase motorized loop opportunities. Designation of unauthorized routes selected would provide access to areas with a strong history of dispersed camping, or provide connectivity with other routes.

Table 2.3.12 - Roosevelt / Duchesne Ranger District - Alternative E: Proposed Changes to Current Condition

**ROOSEVELT / DUCHESNE RANGER DISTRICT
ALTERNATIVE E: Proposed Changes to Current Condition**

Action Taken	Current Condition Type of Designation	Proposed Designation	No. of Routes	Miles
Administrative Close:	NFS street legal use only road	Administratively closed	2	2
	NFS mixed use road	Administratively closed	2	1
	Motorized trail	Administratively closed	1	2

These routes were identified as providing access only to administrative or private use sites, or receiving little or no visible use.

Open Administrative Closed Roads:	Administratively Closed Road	NFS street legal use only road	1	0.3
	Administratively Closed Road	NFS mixed use road	3	3
	Administratively Closed Road	Motorized trail	2	4

Routes selected to open would primarily provide connections with other open routes, increase dispersed camping opportunities, or be designated open as the resource concerns for previous closure have now been addressed.

Add Motorized Use:	NFS street legal use only road	NFS mixed use road	5	12
	Non-motorized trail	NFS mixed use road	1	1

Routes street legal only selected to add mixed use traffic would increase motorized opportunities for OHVs, and improve OHV access from campgrounds to mixed use roads. This would also increase safety on certain routes by directing OHV traffic off of a particularly dangerous section of system trail. Route selected from non-motorized trail to NFS mixed road would provide access to historical dispersed camping area.

Reduce Motorized Use:	NFS mixed use road	NFS street legal use only road	5	3
------------------------------	--------------------	--------------------------------	---	---

Routes selected from mixed traffic to street legal vehicles were identified to increase enforceability and provide consistency with non-motorized adjacent routes and trailhead or as route crosses Tribal Land that does not allow ATV use.

New Construction:	New construction	Motorized trail	1	0.2
--------------------------	------------------	-----------------	---	-----

Proposed route selected for new construction would route ATV traffic off of Tribal Lands that do not allow ATV use.

Designate Unauthorized Route:	Unauthorized route	NFS street legal use only road	13	2
	Unauthorized route	NFS mixed use road	27	4
	Unauthorized route	Motorized trail	41	17

The majority of unauthorized routes selected for designation would be to provide access to areas with a strong history of dispersed camping, or to provide connectivity with other routes.

2.4 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 revision, duplicative of the 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.

2.4.1 Do not allow any motorized routes in roadless areas, and include decommissioning all routes within their boundaries

This alternative responds to issues raised by non-motorized users relative to a need for more non-motorized opportunities. This alternative would not authorize the designation of any new motorized routes, including trails, in the roadless areas and would require the closure of existing designated roads to public motorized access.

On August 12, 2008 The Federal District Court for Wyoming held that the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule was unlawfully promulgated in violation of the National Environmental Policy Act and the Wilderness Act. Current Forest Service direction regarding the treatment of Inventoried Roadless Areas affected by the 2001 Roadless Rule holds that National Forest units take no action that would conflict with the court rulings (USDA 2008). However the Forest recognizes the importance of undeveloped areas and we still have an obligation to consider the effects of the alternatives on the undeveloped character of IRAs as well as potential wilderness areas. The undeveloped character of these areas was evaluated by the methods mentioned below. No new roads were proposed in any alternative; however over 80% of the Forest is within IRA and many of the FS roads existed prior to the 2001 roadless inventory (see the 1995 Travel Maps available in the Project Record). Many of these roads are cherry-stemmed outside of the roadless areas; however a few do occur within their boundaries. The 2001 Roadless Rule did not close or otherwise block access to any of those roads; the final rule merely prohibits the construction of new roads and the reconstruction of existing roads (36 CFR 294). Decommissioning all routes within roadless areas would not meet the purpose and need of this project to better accommodate motorized use and address future growth.

In 2004 Forest Service Region 4 adopted a new protocol for mapping areas to study for wilderness suitability during forest planning. The criteria were more detailed than those found the Forest Service Handbook, and were well suited to using GIS tools to produce and adjust the maps. The naming convention for the inventoried areas included a unique number and a place-named undeveloped area. FSH 1909.12_70 was amended in January 31, 2007, with updated handbook direction consistent with the R4 mapping protocol for undeveloped areas. The handbook directs National Forests to use the term potential wilderness in place of undeveloped in inventories, evaluations, and reports.

The 2004 Region 4 mapping protocol was used to complete the Ashley National Forest draft potential wilderness (undeveloped) area inventory in 2005. Earlier roadless inventories were not used to identify potential wilderness areas. A draft evaluation report was last revised in 2008. NEPA direction includes analysis and disclosure of effects to undeveloped character for these potential wilderness areas as well, but this step has not been completed.

The 2005 Potential Wilderness Inventory best represents lands on the Forest with potential for wilderness designation, because it is based on current data and takes into account the effects of all existing system roads. A comparison of the 2001 and 2005 inventories showed that IRAs included areas with low-standard system roads present, and/or adjacent to motorized waterways whereas these areas were excluded from the 2005 Potential Wilderness Inventory. For example, the IRAs in Wyoming are narrow and flanked by the Flaming Gorge Reservoir (heavily used by motor boats) on one side, and are crossed by Forest roads leading to the Reservoir. In the South Unit, the Reservation Ridge Backcountry Byway is included in Roadless; the earlier inventory criteria did not result in removing this route from the inventory. Lands with this level of effects from motorized uses and other management are typically not assessed as having wilderness attributes, and do not meet current potential wilderness inventory criteria.

Therefore this document discusses effects to wilderness potential by Potential Wilderness Area. In recognition of the high degree of public interest in the 2001 Roadless Inventory, we have included an appendix with a set of location maps showing 2005 potential wilderness inventory and 2001 roadless inventory. The appendix also displays analysis for roadless inventory lands and wilderness potential in tabular format by listing proposals that are in either or both inventories, and area analysis for potential wilderness areas.

2.4.2 Restrict dispersed camping to designated sites only

This alternative responds to the issues raised by the environmental community that were concerned that increased demand for dispersed camping on the Forest would cause unacceptable levels of resources damage unless greater managed. This alternative does not respond to the Forest Plan desired conditions of creating opportunities for dispersed camping.

This alternative is not feasible, as it would require the need to sign and map all potential dispersed camp sites and most likely would require the hardening of sites to reduce effects of concentrated use. Designating the sites would lead to an expectation from the public of further maintenance and more facilities would be required to meet the sanitary needs of concentrated camping. The Ashley National Forest has neither the budget nor the personnel to administer such a program.

Development and designation of dispersed camping sites is considered beyond the purpose and need of this planning effort.

2.5 Comparison of Alternatives

This section provides a summary of the effects of implementing each alternative. 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 2.5.1 Comparison of Motorized Roads and Trails Between Districts and by Alternative					
Flaming Gorge Ranger District	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E
Open Road: Street Legal Vehicle	100	85	86	92	92
Open Road: Mixed Traffic	263	326	328	267	293
Motorized Trail- Open to all Vehicles	0	3	4	0	1
Motorized Trail - Open to ATV and Motorcycle	13	18	27	9	23
Non-motorized Trail	128	131	126	135	129
Administratively Closed Forest Roads	29	29	28	39	36
Vernal Ranger District	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E
Open Road: Street Legal Vehicle	109	73	66	93	83
Open Road: Mixed Traffic	281	337	359	301	335
Motorized Trail- Open to all Vehicles	386	29	33	7	25
Motorized Trail - Open to ATV and Motorcycle	87	71	83	49	71
Non-motorized Trail	197	209	207	218	209
Administratively Closed Forest Roads	44	47	21	68	35
Roosevelt/Duchesne Ranger District	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E
Open Road: Street Legal Vehicle	89	79	76	82	80
Open Road: Mixed Traffic	442	457	467	439	458
Motorized Trail- Open to all Vehicles	39	22	30	2	19
Motorized Trail - Open to ATV and Motorcycle	39	40	37	30	39
Non-motorized Trail	442	442	438	442	441
Administratively Closed Forest Roads	18	16	15	35	15

Recreation Issue 1

Travel route designations may affect opportunities for motorized and non-motorized recreation activities.

Figure 2.5.1:
Miles of motorized roads

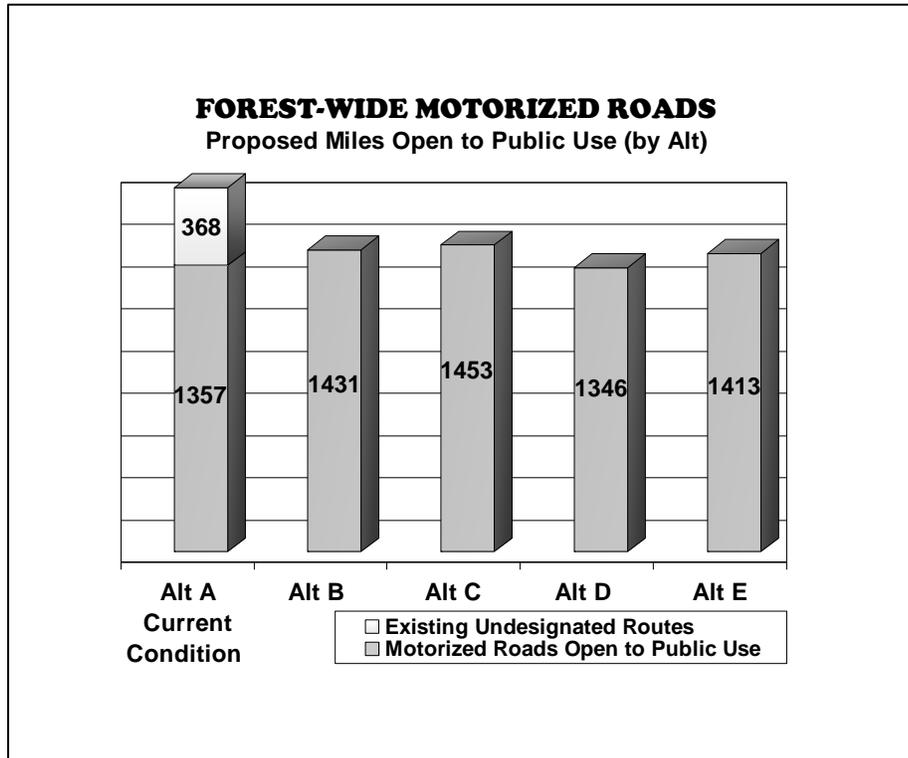


Figure 2.5.2:
Miles of motorized trails

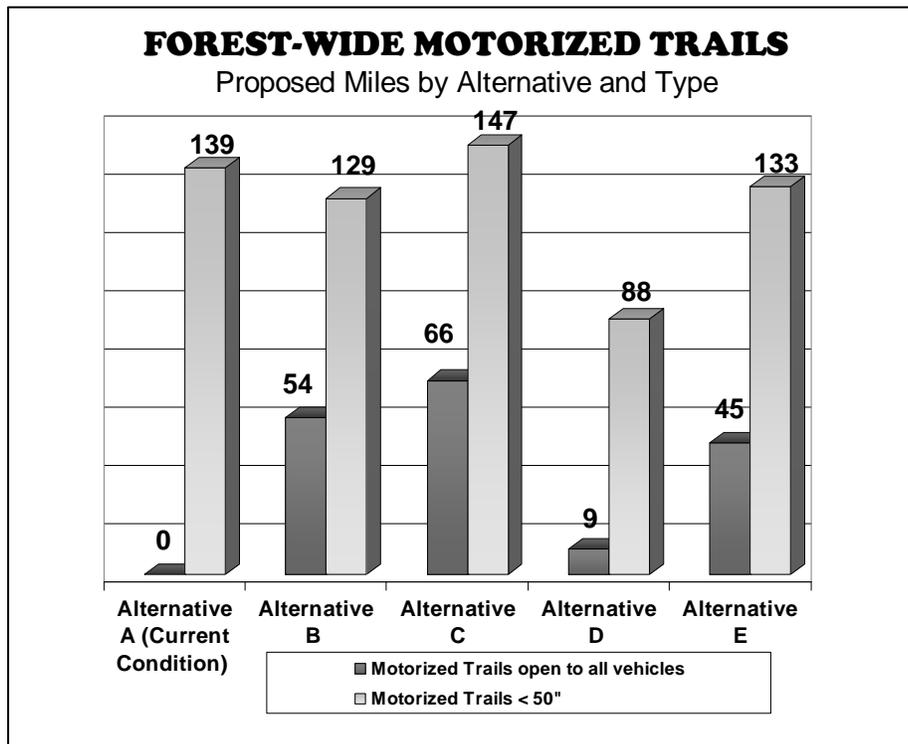


TABLE 2.5.2 COMPARISONS OF THE EFFECTS OF IMPLEMENTING ALTERNATIVES BY RESOURCE ISSUE AND MEASUREMENT INDICATOR					
	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Recreation Issue 1: Travel route designations may affect opportunities for motorized and non-motorized recreation activities.					
Miles of open road and seasonally open NFS road by designation	1725 *1	1431	1453	1346	1413
Miles of ATV trail restricted to motor vehicles with an width < 50 inches	139	129	147	88	133
Miles of motorized trail open to all vehicles	0	54	66	9	45
Miles of non-motorized trails	766	782	771	794	778

Table 2.5.2 Comparisons of the Effects of Implementing Alternatives by Resource Issue and Measurement Indicator					
	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Recreation Issue 2: Miles of Route and Square Miles Area of Potential Dispersed Camping Areas by Recreation Niche Areas					
	232 miles of route = 26 square miles of area	247 miles of route = 14 square miles of area	271 miles of route =15 square miles of area	234 miles of route = 13 square miles of area	250 miles of route = 14 square miles of area
Vast Backyard Recreation Niche Area	879 miles of route = 99 square miles of area	914 miles of route = 52 square miles of area	948 miles of route = 54 square miles of area	859 miles of route = 50 square miles of area	910 miles of route = 52 square miles of area
Rugged Backcountry Recreation Niche	41 miles of route = 4.5 square miles of area	51 miles of route = 3 square miles of area	48 miles of routes = 3 square miles of area	32 miles of routes = 1.4 square miles of area	46 miles of routes = 3 square miles of area
Recreation Issue 3: Travel management may affect the safety of recreationists due to the amount, location and designation of motorized and non-motorized roads and trails.					
Miles of road allowing mixed traffic (includes unlicensed drivers over the age of seven).	988	1135	1167	1009	1093
Recreation Issue 4: Travel management may affect road and trail program costs					
Costs to program management	No change. However, existing maintenance costs are based on budget availability which typically have not kept up with maintenance needs	Estimated increase of \$120,000 over alternative A - based on amount of increased miles of designated roads and trails.	Estimated highest cost increase of all alternatives at. \$150,000 over alternative A - based on amount of designated road and trail miles.	Initial higher increase in costs to complete signage and reflect changes and provide barriers to restrict use. However, this alternative would have the lowest long-run cost with the least miles of roads and trails to maintain.	Estimated increase of \$90,000 over alternative A - based on amount of increased miles of designated roads and trails. May incur higher short run costs that alts. B and C due to closure of routes with signage and barriers.

Table 2.5.2 Comparisons of the Effects of Implementing Alternatives by Resource Issue and Measurement Indicator					
	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Recreation Issue 5 (enforcement): Incorporation of designated routes by themselves will not necessarily accomplish the goals of the Travel Management Plan unless enforcement concerns are considered.					
Enforceability of route designations and closures and development of the MVUM	No change. Existing compliance and enforcement issues would remain, including: lack of clarity in Vernal hatched travel area, adherence to 300 foot rule, and unauthorized use off of designated routes on the Flaming Gorge NRA would continue.	Possible improvements in enforceability as availability of more OHV opportunities may encourage compliance with Travel Plan. Designation of mixed use roads may also discourage use of unauthorized parallel routes.	Possible improvements in enforceability as availability of more OHV opportunities may encourage compliance with Travel Plan. Designation of mixed use roads may also discourage use of unauthorized parallel routes.	Most challenging to enforce with highest amount of closures and fewer available OHV opportunities. Limited dispersed camping opportunities may result in frequent non-compliance as this is a popular in niche areas.	Similar to Alt. D, Alt. E would be slightly more challenging to enforce than Alts. B or C because it accommodates a limited number of dispersed camping areas relative to historical use, and incorporates fewer OHV opportunities. This may result in more frequent incidents of non-compliance.
Soils Issue 1 (soil degradation): Motorized travel (including access to dispersed camping) in areas of sensitive soils such as meadows and alpine may loss of soil productivity and result in detrimental disturbance to soil resources.					
Miles of open motorized route traversing through alpine, meadows and other open land types with sensitive soils					
Alpine	13	18	19	10	18
Meadows and stream corridors	93 ^{*2}	86	87	83	85
Other open areas with sensitive soils	12	13	13	10	13

Table 2.5.2 Comparisons of the Effects of Implementing Alternatives by Resource Issue and Measurement Indicator					
	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Water Issue 1 (water quality): Water resources may be affected due to increased erosion, degraded soil productivity, compaction, and delivery of sediment into streams.					
Miles of unpaved motorized route within 300' of perennial streams	116	95	100	90	95
Miles of unpaved motorized route within 300' of lakes greater than 1 acre	46	62	63	43	53
Miles of unpaved motorized route crossing mapped meadow and riparian habitat	55	47	48	42	46
Miles of unpaved motorized route encroaching on perennial streams	11.1	8.2	8.6	7.5	8.2
Number of crossings of perennial streams by unpaved motorized routes	227	189	200	179	189
Miles of unpaved motorized route within surface water protection zones 1-2 of municipal watersheds	171	145	152	135	147

Table 2.5.2 Comparisons of the Effects of Implementing Alternatives by Resource Issue and Measurement Indicator					
	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Miles of unpaved motorized route within groundwater protection zones 1-3 of municipal watersheds	66.1	66.4	66.7	57.3	66.3
Miles of unpaved motorized route in 303(d) and 305(b) listed impaired watersheds	192	199	202	191	197
Wildlife Issues 1 and 2 (Disturbance, habitat loss and fragmentation) Motorized travel on roads and trails may adversely affect threatened, endangered, and Forest Service Sensitive Species.					
Effects to Threatened and Endangered individuals and populations	No effect to Black-footed Ferret and Yellow-billed Cuckoo May affect, not likely to adversely affect Canada Lynx and Mexican Spotted Owl				
Impact to Sensitive species individuals and populations	No Impact to Trumpeter Swan and Common Loon May impact individuals, but will not likely contribute to a trend toward federal listing or cause a loss of viability to the population or the species for the following species: Bald Eagle, Northern Goshawk, Peregrine Falcon, Boreal Owl, Great Gray Owl, Flammulated owl, Northern Tree-toed Woodpecker, Greater Sage-grouse, Spotted Bat, Townsend's Big-eared Bat, Pygmy Rabbit, and Wolverine,				

Table 2.5.2 Comparisons of the Effects of Implementing Alternatives by Resource Issue and Measurement Indicator					
Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	
Wildlife Issue 3 (big game habitat and disturbance): Motorized travel may affect summer and winter big game (elk and deer) habitat and increase vulnerability during hunting season.					
Density (mile/mile ²) of open NFS roads and motorized trails within critical elk habitat (winter range and critical	0.87	0.89	0.93	0.87	0.91
Acres of critical elk habitat affected by motorized travel. 261,557 acres of critical habitat	915	924	941	917	933
Density (mile/mile ²) of open NFS roads and motorized trails within critical deer habitat (winter range and critical summer range).	0.82	0.86	0.89	0.82	0.86
Acres of critical deer habitat affected by motorized travel. 165,147 acres of critical habitat.	565	577	585	566	578

Table 2.5.2 Comparisons of the Effects of Implementing Alternatives by Resource Issue and Measurement Indicator					
Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	
Potential Wilderness Areas: Changes to motorized travel opportunities within Potential Wilderness Areas could affect its characteristics.					
Total miles of roads and trails designated for motorized travel in each potential wilderness area and each analysis area, with consideration for travel currently allowed on undesignated and unauthorized routes in Alternative A	192 ^{*4}	128	151	85	129
Relative area available for dispersed vehicle camping by alternative	300 ft from designated and existing undesignated routes. Many PWA boundaries are along roads, and dispersed camping from them occurs within the IRA	150 feet off designated motorized roads and some motorized trails.	150 feet off designated motorized roads and some motorized trails.	150 feet off designated motorized roads and some motorized trails.	150 feet off designated motorized roads and some motorized trails.
Economics Issue 1: Travel management may affect the economy of small communities. OHV opportunities on the Forest may lead to economic benefits in Manila and other parts of Daggett County if routes are available that connect communities to those OHV opportunities.					
Effects to Daggett County and businesses within the county	An administratively closed road from Long Park Reservoir to the Forest boundary on the north would be open to mixed 4WD travel under Alternatives B, C, and E. This route, if connected to Manila via other routes crossing BLM and private lands, could bring additional expenditures on services (restaurants, gas, over-night accommodations) to Manila. Though not measurable, this change would be considered a positive economic effect for Daggett County. However, the change would be too small to discern as an economic contribution to the combined county area.				

Table 2.5.2 Comparisons of the Effects of Implementing Alternatives by Resource Issue and Measurement Indicator					
Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	
Economics Issue 2: Travel Management has the potential to affect overall economics of communities.					
Effects to overall economics of the area	All of the action alternatives would prohibit motorized travel on some existing routes where motorized travel is presently occurring. None of the alternatives are likely to change recreational opportunities enough to change number of visitors, or the number of visitors participating in activities that produce higher or lower expenditures in the area as a whole.				
Effects to specific business types	Regardless of alternative, the same types of activities will remain available to visitors. All action alternatives would result in some reduction in routes available for motorized travel. None of the alternatives close enough routes to result in a "shortage" that is likely to discourage people from motorized road or trail travel. This is also true for dispersed camping opportunities. Little change in spending at local businesses is expected due to the implementation of any of the action alternatives, except the potential for businesses in Daggett County discussed in the above section.				
Cultural Resource Issue 1: Designating new routes for motor vehicle use may directly result in adverse effects to cultural resources.					
Approximate Number of Known Eligible*5 Sites Directly Affected by New or Changed Motorized Routes	N/A	35	38	22	33
Cultural Resource Issue 2: Designating new routes for motor vehicle use may increase access to cultural resource sites. Increased access to cultural resource sites may lead to indirect adverse effects, such as vandalism, unauthorized collecting, and increased erosion.					
Approximate Number of Known Eligible Sites Indirectly Affected by New or Changed Motorized Routes	N/A	20	22	14	18

Table 1.2: Footnotes:

^{*1} Amount includes 368 miles of existing undesignated routes contained within Vernal District hatched travel area.

^{*2} Amount includes 10 miles of existing undesignated routes contained within Vernal District hatched travel area.

^{*3} Amount includes 65 miles of existing undesignated routes contained within Vernal District hatched travel area with an undetermined amount occurring in IRA.

^{*4} Amount includes 49 miles of existing undesignated routes contained within Vernal District hatched travel area and within PWA.

^{*5} Includes known sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), as well as sites determined eligible for the NRHP, and sites still unevaluated for the NRHP. Because many of the routes are not yet surveyed for cultural resources, these numbers are likely to increase as identification efforts precede.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK