

News Release

**USDA Forest Service
Bridger-Teton National Forest
P.O. Box 1888
Jackson, WY 83001**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: April 28, 2008

CONTACTS: Mary Cernicek (307) 739-5564

Bridger-Teton Hosts Travel Planning/OHV Informational Public Workshop

Jackson, Wyo. – The Bridger-Teton National Forest is hosting a Draft Environmental Impact Statement Informational Open House regarding the Off-Highway Route Designation Project for the North Zone Bridger-Teton National Forest, on Tuesday, May 6th, 2008 from 4:30 to 8:00pm in the Ordway Auditorium of the Teton County Library in Jackson, Wyoming.

The Bridger-Teton National Forest is proposing to improve management of public summer/fall motorized use by designating roads and motorized trails in certain areas of the Bridger-Teton National Forest where motorized use is currently not restricted. On the Bridger-Teton National Forest, there are 255,830 acres that currently allow unrestricted motorized travel. These areas are located on the Buffalo/Togwootee, Gros Ventre/Shadow Mountain, Phillips Ridge, Snake River Range/Munger Mountain, and Hoback Basin/Granite Creek areas. This project will result in publication of a motor vehicle use map by summer of 2009. Once the motor vehicle use map is published, motor vehicle use will only be allowed on designated routes.

Off-highway vehicle (OHV) use within portions of the Bridger-Teton National Forest is not being managed in a manner consistent with the 1990 Forest Plan direction and the 2005 National Forest Travel Management Rule or in a manner consistent with resource protection, public safety and enjoyment by all forest users. Unrestricted motorized use is causing resource damage, wildlife disturbance, and conflicts with non-motorized users, particularly during the fall hunting season. As a result, specific project objectives are to (1) Designate roads and motorized trails to meet essential public needs, improve the quality of the system, and reduce conflicts, (2) Reduce resource impacts, and (3) Improve the ability to maintain routes and enforce travel regulations.

Throughout 2006 and 2007 a series of workshops and field trips were held to gather input from the public regarding the development of a proposed OHV Route designation system. This input was combined with resource information to develop an initial proposal. The initial proposal was then refined to develop a proposed action to begin the formal environmental analysis process. Seven major issues emerged from input provided by the public and resource specialists that led to the agency development of five alternatives that respond to the issues and meet the project purpose and need. The five alternatives and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be on display at an Informational Open House at the Teton County Library on May 6th. District Rangers and resource specialists will be available to discuss the alternatives and the alternative process. The public is encouraged to attend this open house event to gain additional knowledge, learn of the Travel Plan/OHV Route Designation process and how to comment on the DEIS and the current five alternatives.

For more information, contact David Wilkinson at the Jackson Ranger District at 739-5544.

-###-