

News Release

**USDA Forest Service
Bridger-Teton National Forest
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Bridger-Teton Hosts Travel Planning Public Workshops in May

Jackson, Wyo. —How will off-highway vehicle use be managed on the north end of the Bridger-Teton National Forest (Jackson, Buffalo, and Big Piney Ranger Districts)? A series of public workshops are scheduled in May to begin answering this question. Last November, the Forest Service published a new rule regarding management of off-highway vehicles. The new rule requires designating a system of roads and trails where motorized vehicle use would be allowed and requires local planning in collaboration with the public to help design the designated system. The May workshops are the first step in the local planning process, which will result in production of a motor vehicle use map by the summer of 2008.

The current travel map for the north end of the Bridger-Teton National Forest was completed in 1987 prior to the technological advances that transformed ATV and motorcycle use on the Forest. Unmanaged motorized use is causing concerns about trail proliferation, wildlife disturbance, soil erosion, damage to wet meadows, noxious weed spread, and conflict with those seeking quiet recreation. Motorized users are increasingly seeking legitimate places to ride or to access favorite campsites and are frustrated by a system of roads and trails that was not designed to meet their needs. Thus, the goal of the travel planning process is to identify specific changes needed to the current system of motorized roads and trails to reduce resource impacts, provide a viable road and trail system to meet public and forest management needs, and improve the ability to enforce travel restrictions.

The May workshops will be held at a variety of locations in western Wyoming and will focus on specific areas where motorized use is currently unrestricted. Facilitated small group discussions will be used to help identify how people currently use each area, what the concerns are, and desirable attributes of a designated motorized system. All interested parties are encouraged to attend. The dates, locations, and times are:

Tuesday May 16—Moran (school) 6 pm
Focus Areas—Blackrock/Togwotee Pass

Wednesday May 17—Jackson (First Interstate Bank building) 6 pm
Focus Areas—Gros Ventre Corridor/Shadow Mountain

Thursday May 18—Wilson (Elementary school) 6 pm
Focus Areas—Phillips Ridge/Fall Creek Corridor/Granite Creek

Tuesday May 23—Dubois (Headwaters building) 6 pm

Focus Areas—Togwotee Pass/Gros Ventre Corridor

Wednesday May 24—Pinedale (Public Library) 6 pm

Focus Areas—Hoback Basin/Upper Gros Ventre Corridor

Thursday May 25—Rock Springs (White Mountain Library) 6 pm

Focus Areas—Hoback Basin

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

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