

News Release

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



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: December 27, 2006

CONTACTS: Mary Cernicek (307) 739-5564

Proposal for Designated Road and Motorized Trail System on the North End of the Bridger-Teton National Forest Available for Public Comment

Jackson, Wyo - The Forest Service has released the proposed May 1st to December 1st designated road and motorized trail system for portions of the Buffalo, Jackson, and Big Piney Ranger Districts of the Bridger-Teton National Forest where cross-country motorized use is currently allowed. Areas covered in this proposal include: Blackrock/Togwotee, Gros Ventre corridor, Shadow Mountain, Ditch Creek, Munger Mountain, Phillips Ridge, Mosquito Creek, the North and South Forks of Fall Creek, Granite Creek and Hoback Basin. The proposed system totals 404 miles which is roughly equivalent to the mileage of the current system. However, the proposed system includes more miles of motorized trails and fewer miles of roads.

In November 2005, the Forest Service issued a national rule requiring all wheeled motorized travel to occur on designated routes. The rule prohibits cross-country motorized travel and requires local public involvement to determine what the designated motorized system will look like. The proposal for a designated route system on the North End of the Bridger-Teton Forest complies with the National Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Rule. The purpose is to improve management of motorized use within areas that currently lack a designated route system in order to reduce resource impacts, meet public needs, and improve the ability to maintain routes and enforce travel restrictions.

Release of the proposed designated road and motorized trail system begins the environmental analysis process in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The first step is asking the public to review the proposal and identify issues or concerns. Public comments will be used to identify significant issues so that alternatives can be developed. The Forest Service plans to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the results of the analysis. Buffalo District Ranger Elizabeth Brann noted that the public has offered valuable input over the past six months that was used to help develop the proposal now available. "I recognize that not all of the concerns expressed to date have been addressed and encourage people to stay involved as we develop alternatives that address the remaining issues."

The proposal is available via a link called “North Zone Travel Plan Revision” on the Bridger-Teton National Forest website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/btnf>. Public comments on the proposal are due by **January 29th, 2007**. Written comments can be submitted via mail, fax, or email.

People can view large maps of the proposal by stopping by the Forest Service Supervisor’s Office located at 340 North Cache anytime between 8 am and 4:30 pm, Monday thru Friday. Large maps of the proposal are also available at the Big Piney Ranger District, Buffalo Ranger District, Jackson Ranger District, and Teton County Library. If people need assistance with viewing maps, please call the Jackson Ranger District at (307) 739-5544. Elizabeth Brann said that there are many perspectives regarding motorized use and she looks forward to hearing from people as a motorized system is developed that provides opportunities to the extent possible while respecting the wildlife and resource values that make the Bridger-Teton a special place.

-###-