

# NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service

## Eldorado National Forest

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### Annual Seasonal Closure of Eldorado National Forest Dirt Roads and Trails Begins January 1

Placerville, CA.....It's time for winter visitors to the Eldorado National Forest to begin thinking about the annual closing of dirt roads and trails that begins on January 1 and extends through March 31.

“This is the first year the annual seasonal closure of dirt roads and trails will go into effect,” said Eldorado National Forest Supervisor Ramiro Villalvazo. “This may be news to some people, however, it shouldn't come as a surprise to the thousands of people who participated in the travel management decision making process that occurred over the past three years.”

This decision only affects dirt roads and trails. More than 600 miles of paved and graveled roads and trails will generally continue to be open during this time period.

“The seasonal closure occurs during the months that have historically been the wettest of the year,” said Villalvazo. “Our intention is to reduce environmental damage caused by rutting and erosion; to reduce damage to drainage structures, such as rolling dips; and to help protect water quality.”

Villalvazo says that the seasonal closure can be extended if wet-weather conditions warrant.

This decision does not affect the roads and trails in the Rock Creek Area of the Eldorado National Forest located near Georgetown. This area has its own wet weather closure procedures which have been in place since 1999. Information about closures in the Rock Creek Area is available on the Eldorado National Forest website: [www.fs.fed.us/r5/eldorado](http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/eldorado).

A free motor vehicle use map that identifies the roads and trails designated for motorized use will be available in early 2009. The map will be available at all Eldorado National Forest offices and will eventually be downloadable from the Forest's website.