

Inventoried Roadless Areas and Roadless Characteristics

This section describes the affected environment for inventoried roadless areas, designated wilderness resources, and wilderness proposals of the California Wilderness Coalition (CWC). It will describe the area potentially affected by the alternatives and existing resource conditions within that area. Measurement indicators (listed below on this page) are used to describe the existing conditions for the Modoc National Forest. The measurement indicators will be used in the analysis to quantify and describe how well the Proposed Action and alternatives discussed in chapter 2 meet the project objectives of managing uncontrolled motor vehicle use and address resource concerns.

Analysis Framework: Modoc LRMP

The *Record of Decision for the Modoc LRMP* states,

Nineteen roadless areas totaling (approximately) 201,600 acres, identified by the 1979 Road Area Review and Evaluation, were released for other multiple uses by the California Wilderness Act of 1984. Approximately 59,440 acres of the 201,600 acres are assigned to Management Prescription 4, Semi-Primitive Non-motorized Management (SPNM). The SPNM prescription will be applied to 23,013 acres of timberlands (See ROS maps for locations). Management by this prescription will retain the values necessary to meet the preservation objective while still providing options to meet the other objectives of the environmental agenda.

Another IRA was added after the LRMP ROD was signed making the total on the forest 20 IRAs. This is the Mill IRA, is 314 acres and is included in this analysis.

Effects Analysis Methodology

Data Sources

- Route inventories collected in Step 1 of the Travel Management project
- Existing Inventoried Roadless Area records within the Modoc National Forest GIS databases
- Citizens' Proposed Wilderness Area GIS data submitted by The Wilderness Society

Analysis Methodology

The analysis of effects on roadless characteristics was a simple GIS analysis displaying the Inventoried Roadless Areas and the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal with the current road system, along with the various alternatives discussed in this EIS.

Measurement indicators

Measurement indicators for this analysis are the miles of route additions.

Affected Environment and Existing Condition

The Modoc NF has 20 Inventoried Roadless Areas. Of these, most are roaded. No unauthorized roads are being proposed to be added within MDF Inventoried Roadless Areas under any action alternative. Every one of the areas designated by the CWC as potential roadless areas, are roaded. The mileage proposed to be added in Alternatives 2, 4, and 5 in the Citizens' Proposed Wilderness Areas is very small, especially compared to the existing NFTS roads that are already

in place. Alternative 4 does not include any of the unauthorized roads recommended for removal by the CWC.

Table 3-162 below displays the Inventoried Roadless Areas. The table provides the area size and system road mileage of the current transportation system, with proposed additions by alternative. The table also shows the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) class. The ROS class is the type of experience a visitor can expect. The Modoc LRMP ROS map displays four classes: Roaded Natural, Semi-Primitive Motorized, Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized, and Semi-Primitive Wilderness.

Table 3-162. Proposed Unauthorized and Existing NFTS roads in MDF Inventoried Roadless Areas

Inventoried Roadless Area	ROS Class	Acres	Existing System Road Miles	Alt 1 Miles of Unauthorized Roads	Alt 2 and 5 Miles Added	Alt 3 Miles Added	Alt 4 Miles Added
Bear Camp Flat	RN	2,477	6.44	0	0	0	0
Big Canyon	SPNM	6,615	3.20	0	0	0	0
Burnt Lava Flow	SPW	8,387	.90	0	0	0	0
Callahan Flow	SPNM	6,574	6.25	0	0	0	0
Crane Mountain	RN	1,255	.27	0	0	0	0
Damon Butte	RN	25,022	50.85	0	0	0	0
Dobie Flat	RN	15,078	28.88	0	0	0	0
Dry	SPNM	7,726	1.33	0	0	0	0
Hat Mountain	SPM	9,475	25.64	0	0	0	0
Knox Mountain	SPM	5,976	13.22	0	0	0	0
Lavas	SPM, RN	25,864	37.74	0	0	0	0
Mill	RN	315	1.04	0	0	0	0
Mount Bidwell	SPM	11,657	18.17	0	0	0	0
Mount Hoffman	SPNM, RN, SPW	9,780	2.35	0	0	0	0
Mount Vida	SPNM, RN	7,770	5.99	0	0	0	0
Parsnip	SPNM	8,485	5.57	0	0	0	0
Powley	SPNM	6,268	.26	0	0	0	0
Sears Flat	SPM	12,957	19.51	0	0	0	0
Soldier	SPNM	10,095	4.63	0	0	0	0
Steele Swamp	SPM	18,958	26.39	0	0	0	0
Total*		200,734	258.63	0	0	0	0

*The Total acreage varies from the original LRMP estimates because of improved GIS information.

Alternative 1 does not prohibit cross-country travel, including the use of 8.02 miles of unauthorized routes. No routes are proposed to be added in SPNM areas in any of the alternatives.

The Modoc NF has one Congressionally Designated Wilderness Area, the South Warner Wilderness, containing approximately 72,000 acres. No motorized travel is permitted in this area, and no additions to the transportation system are proposed under any alternative. The Forest also has the Devils Garden Research Natural Area, and three Special Interest Areas (Burnt Lava Flow, Medicine Lake Glass Flow and Glass Mountain Glass Flow) that are managed under the Semi-

Primitive Wilderness ROS Class. In these areas no routes are proposed to be added in any alternative.

This analysis also reviewed the nine areas recommended as the Citizen Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers Inventory submitted by a Coalition of Wilderness Advocates. All but one of these proposed areas (Fandango Pass) are expansions of Forest Service Inventoried Roadless Areas.

The following table displays the Citizen’s Wilderness Proposal. It contains a list of the proposed Wilderness areas, together with a cross walk to the Forest Service Inventoried Roadless Areas.

Table 3-163. Citizens’ Wilderness Inventory

Citizens’ Proposed Wilderness Name	Number of Individual and Separate Units (Area divided by roads or land mass)	Corresponding Forest Service Inventoried Roadless Area Name	ROS Class	Acres	Existing System Road Miles	Alt 1 Miles Added	Alts 2 and 5 Miles Added	Alt 3 Miles Added	Alt 4 Miles Added
Captain Jack	12	Lavas, Dobie Flat, Callahan Flow	SPNM, RN	58,373	55.70	1.02	1.3	0	0
Cedar Mountain	3	Soldier	SPNM, RN	19,840	4.55	2.07	1.03	0	.11
Dry Creek	1	Dry	SPNM, RN	10,755	3.99	0	0	0	0
Fandango Peak	2		RN	8,745	7.85	1.12	0	0	.11
Lost River	12	Steele Swamp	SPM, RN	62,009	35.46	8.64	5.64	0	.72
Medicine Lake	3	Burnt Lava, Mt. Hoffman	SPNM, RN	25,043	19.74	3.34	2.97	0	.14
Mt Bidwell	2	Mt Bidwell	SPM, RN	8,932	5.31	0	.04	0	0
Mt. Vida	3	Mt. Vida	RN, SPNM	13,454	7.95	1.47	1.19	0	.56
Parsnip	2	Parsnip	RN, SPNM	10,655	7.40	0	0	0	0
Powley Creek	1	Powley	SPNM, RN	15,354	19.51	7.49	3.92	0	.06
Signal Rattlesnake	2	Big Canyon	SPNM, RN	32,973	36.39	.82	.17	0	0
South Warner	3	Bear Camp	RN	8,096	5.04	.46	.25	0	.09
Total				274,170	208.89	26.43	16.51	0	1.79

Alternative 1 does not prohibit cross-country travel, including the use of 26.43 miles of unauthorized routes. Under this alternative these routes would continue to be used along with the continuation of travel across the land. They would not be added to the NFTS. There is a total of 208.89 miles of existing NFTS road within the Citizens’ Proposed Wilderness areas. The largest number of roads proposed to be added to the NFTS is 16.51 miles in Alternative 2 and 5. Alternative 4 only adds roads that the CWC did not object to adding in the Citizens’ Proposed Wilderness areas. Alternative 3 does not add any unauthorized routes, and prohibits cross-country travel.

Environmental Consequences

This section describes the environmental consequences on Inventoried Roadless Areas and the area of the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal.

Alternative 1: No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects

Alternative 1 would have the greatest potential negative effect on roadless area characteristics. The largest impact of this alternative is from cross-country travel, which has the potential to affect all but the most inaccessible areas. Cross-country travel by merely one vehicle has the low potential to cause loss of roadless characteristics. Vehicles traveling through mud can potentially alter surface hydrology. Noise from vehicles could be increased. The visual impact and loss of solitude of additional routes may increase over time from the existing 8.02 miles of unauthorized routes. However, the low amount of use on these routes would most likely result in these roads revegetating over time.

Cumulative Effects

Under this alternative, it is difficult to quantify if travel routes would increase, thus leading to the loss of roadless characteristics in the Inventoried Roadless Area or the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal.

Action Alternatives (2 through 5): Prohibition of Cross-country Travel

Direct and Indirect Effects of Prohibiting Cross-Country Travel

Closing the Forest to cross-country travel would stop the creation of additional unauthorized routes by recreation users, thus preserving the roadless character of Inventoried Roadless Areas and within the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal areas.

Cumulative Effects of Prohibiting Cross-Country Travel

There would be limited cumulative effects of stopping cross-country travel on the roadless character of Inventoried Roadless Areas or the Citizens' Wilderness proposals. Over time, stopping cross-country travel would allow tracks left by recreation users in the past to grow over and become more natural in appearance, thus adding to the roadless character of the areas. There would also be a reduction in noise.

Action Alternatives (2 through 5): Changes to the NFTS

Direct and Indirect Effects of Changes to the NFTS

There would be no direct or indirect effects on the roadless characteristics of Inventoried Roadless Areas or the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal by change in vehicle class. Seasonal use may change the roadless characteristics of an area by reducing rutting and therefore reducing runoff.

Cumulative Effects of Changes to the NFTS

Cumulative effects may be the potential for less damage to roads that have seasonal closures on them.

Alternatives 2 and 5: Additions to the NFTS

Direct and indirect Effects

There would be no direct or indirect effects to MDF Inventoried Roadless Areas, because additional routes to the NFTS are not proposed. Alternative 2 and 5 have 16.51 miles of roads added in areas of the Citizen's Wilderness Proposal. These roads are small spurs off of well-roaded areas. The largest is the road segment of the Applegate Trail in the Lost River Proposed Wilderness (a part of the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal) that has been in existence since the late 1800's, and was never picked up on the NFTS inventory. The Lost River PW also contains the NFTS road segment that is proposed for closure. The effect of adding these additional roads formalizes the existing roaded condition of the areas, thus further fragmenting the Citizen's Wilderness Proposals Areas. However, there are already 208.89 miles of existing NFTS roads. The prohibition of cross-country travel includes 26.43 miles of unauthorized routes in the Citizen's Wilderness Proposal areas.

Cumulative Effects

There would be no cumulative effects to the inventoried Roadless Areas since there are no direct or indirect effects of Alternatives 2 and 4. The cumulative effects on the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal results in the addition of 16.51 miles of road to the 208.89-mile NFTS road system that is present in the Citizen's Wilderness Proposal. The result of the addition would be a loss of wilderness characteristics of solitude. However, compared to the miles of existing NFTS roads, the additions would be small.

Alternatives 3 and 4: Additions to the NFTS

Direct and Indirect Effects

There would be no direct or indirect effects on wilderness characteristics within the Inventoried Roadless Areas or the Citizen's Wilderness Proposal areas, since no additional roads are proposed to be added to the NFTS under Alternatives 3, and only 1.79 miles in Alternative 4.

Cumulative Effects

The direct or indirect effects on wilderness characteristics with the Inventoried Roadless Areas or the Citizen's Wilderness proposal areas are insignificant, as are the cumulative effects.

Compliance with the Modoc LRMP and Other Direction

Alternative 1 does not meet the requirements of the Modoc LRMP as Amended, nor does it meet the requirements of the SNFPA, Travel Management Motor Vehicle Use Rule. All action alternatives are consistent with the Modoc LRMP and the Travel Management Rule.