

**FINAL**



**United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Montana State Office**



**United States Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service  
Northern Region**

**January 2001**

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**OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
AND PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT FOR  
MONTANA, NORTH DAKOTA AND PORTIONS  
OF SOUTH DAKOTA**





Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Montana State Office  
P.O. Box 36800  
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Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service  
Northern Region  
P.O. Box 7669  
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Dear Reader:

Enclosed is the Final Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Plan Amendment (FEIS). This FEIS discloses the potential environmental consequences of changing OHV area designations on public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Forest Service (FS), Northern Region, in Montana, North Dakota, and portions of South Dakota (excluding the Black Hills National Forest, Buffalo Gap Grasslands and the Fort Pierre Grasslands). The BLM and FS are joint lead agencies responsible for preparation of the FEIS.

The FEIS incorporates comments and suggestions made on the draft OHV EIS and plan amendment (DEIS) during the public review period which began in November 1999 and ended in February 2000. Chapter 4 of the FEIS contains the public comments received and the agencies' responses to those comments.

A new alternative, Alternative 5, the Preferred Alternative in the FEIS, was developed in response to comments on the DEIS from the public and other agencies. The Preferred Alternative restricts motorized wheeled cross-country travel throughout the analysis area to protect riparian areas, wetlands, crucial wildlife habitat, threatened or endangered species, soils and vegetation, and to reduce user conflicts. The alternative addresses the concern that the agencies need to allow for some motorized wheeled cross-country travel for administrative use, lessee and permittee use, and camping but includes specific limitations on the use of vehicles traveling cross-country.

Some of the differences between the FEIS and the DEIS include:

- \* Alternative 5 clarifies the long-term goal of designated roads and trails through subsequent site-specific planning. Chapter 1 has been revised to clarify the agencies' two decision levels for travel planning and Appendix B has been revised to clarify the implementation of area designations and guidance for site-specific planning.
- \* Alternative 5 clarifies that motorized wheeled cross-country travel for official administrative use by the BLM and FS, other government entities, and lessees and permittees would be limited to the minimum necessary to accomplish required work.
- \* Alternative 5 would not allow motorized wheeled cross-country travel for big game retrieval, although use of roads and trail to retrieve big game could continue.
- \* Disabled access will be allowed per the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This applies to all alternatives as discussed under Management Common to All Alternatives in Chapter 2 of the FEIS.
- \* The FEIS would not affect the BLM intensive OHV use area (500 acres) near Radersburg, Montana, nor the National Forest System lands (3,600 acres) involved in the Recreation Management Plan for the Lake Kookanusa drawdown area on the Kootenai National Forest.

The FS planning process includes an opportunity for review and appeal pursuant to the regulations in 36 CFR 217. The FS appeal process is explained in the FS Record of Decision.

The BLM's resource management planning process includes an opportunity for administrative review via a plan protest to the BLM's Director. The BLM protest process is explained in the attachment to this letter.

We thank the individuals and organizations who participated in our planning process, helping us to prepare a plan amendment that will lead to more effective and efficient management of public lands. Your interest is appreciated. For additional information, please contact your local BLM or FS office or contact Jerry Majerus (BLM) at (406) 538-1924 or Dave Atkins (FS) at (406) 329-3134. You can also visit our website at [www.mt.blm.gov](http://www.mt.blm.gov) or [www.fs.fed.us/r1](http://www.fs.fed.us/r1).

Handwritten signature of Mat Millenbach in black ink.

Mat Millenbach  
State Director

Handwritten signature of Dale N. Bosworth in black ink.

Dale N. Bosworth  
Regional Forester

## Attachment - BLM Protest Process

The BLM's resource management planning process includes an opportunity for administrative review via a plan protest to the BLM's Director. Any person who participated in the planning process and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the approval of an amendment to an RMP may protest such approval. Careful adherence to the following guidelines will assist in preparing a protest that will assure the greatest consideration to your point of view.

Only those persons or organizations who participated in the planning process may protest. A protesting party may raise only those issues which were commented on during the planning process. New issues may be raised at any time but should be directed to the appropriate BLM field office for consideration in plan implementation, as potential plan amendments, or as otherwise appropriate.

The period for filing protests begins when the Environmental Protection Agency publishes in the *Federal Register* its Notice of Receipt of the FEIS. The protest period extends for 30 days. There is no provision for any extension of time. To be considered "timely," your protest must be postmarked no later than the last day of the protest period. Also, although not a requirement, we suggest that you send your protest by certified mail, return receipt requested.

Protests must be filed in writing to:

Director, Bureau of Land Management  
Attention: Ms Brenda Williams, Protest Coordinator  
WO-210/LS-1075  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

In order to be considered complete, your protest must contain, at a minimum, the following information:

1. The name, mailing address, telephone number and interest of the person filing the protest.
2. A statement of the issue or issues being protested.
3. A statement of the part or parts of the amendment being protested. To the extent possible, this should be done by reference to specific pages, paragraphs, sections, tables, maps, etc. included in the proposed amendment.
4. A copy of all documents addressing the issue or issues submitted during the planning process by the protesting party or an indication of the discussion date of the issue(s) for the record.
5. A concise statement explaining why the proposed decision is believed to be incorrect. This is a critical part of your protest. Take care to document all relevant facts. As much as possible, reference or cite the planning documents, environmental analysis documents, available planning records (i.e., meeting minutes or summaries, correspondence, etc.). A protest which merely expresses disagreement with the proposed decision, without any data will not provide us with the benefit of your information and insight. In this case, the Director's review will be based on the existing analysis and supporting data.

At the end of the 30-day protest period, the BLM may issue a Record of Decision, approving implementation of any portions of the proposed plan amendment not under protest. Approval will be withheld on any portion of the plan under protest until the protest has been resolved.

**OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT STATEMENT AND PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT  
FOR MONTANA, NORTH DAKOTA, AND  
PORTIONS OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

**January, 2001**

Responsible Joint Lead Agencies	USDA Forest Service	USDI Bureau of Land Management
Responsible Officials	Dale N. Bosworth USFS Regional Forester P.O. Box 7669 Missoula, MT 59807	Mat Millenbach Montana State Office P.O. Box 36800 Billings, MT 59107-6800
For Information Contact:	David Atkins Co-Project Leader USFS Regional Office P.O. Box 7669 Missoula, MT 59807 406-329-3134	Jerry Majerus Co-Project Leader Lewistown Field Office Airport Road, P.O. Box 1160 Lewistown, MT 59457-1160 406-538-1924

**ABSTRACT**

This final environmental impact statement and proposed plan amendment (FEIS) describes the analysis that was completed on the proposed management changes in off-highway vehicle (OHV) area designations on public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service, Northern Region, in Montana, North Dakota, and portions of South Dakota.

The FEIS was developed to meet the purpose and need of the project and respond to significant issues. The purpose and need are to avoid future impacts from increasing OHV use and address the impacts of OHV travel on open areas that are currently available to motorized wheeled cross-country travel. Public comments on the draft environmental impact statement and plan amendment (DEIS) were considered in development of this FEIS in order to verify significant issues, modify alternatives, and correct and clarify information presented in the DEIS. A new alternative (Alternative 5) has been developed in response to comments on the DEIS from the public and other agencies and is the preferred alternative. The preferred alternative would restrict motorized wheeled cross-country travel yearlong and would include an exception for camping. Disabled access will be allowed per the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In addition, five other alternatives, including a No Action Alternative, were also fully developed, analyzed, and considered. The No Action Alternative would maintain current management. Areas currently open seasonally or yearlong to motorized wheeled cross-country travel would remain open. Alternatives 1 and 2 would restrict motorized wheeled cross-country travel yearlong. Alternative 3 would restrict motorized wheeled cross-country travel yearlong in North Dakota, most of Montana, and portions of South Dakota. Alternative 4 would limit motorized wheeled cross-country travel seasonally. Disabled access will be allowed per the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 in all alternatives. Exceptions for camping and game retrieval would apply in Alternatives 2, 3, and 4. An exception for camping would apply in Alternative 1.

# SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

This is a summary of the final environmental impact statement and proposed plan amendment (FEIS), which discloses the potential environmental consequences of managing motorized wheeled cross-country travel on lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Forest Service (FS). The BLM and FS, referred to in this document as “the agencies,” are joint lead agencies responsible for preparation of this FEIS. Oftentimes, BLM and National Forest System (NFS) lands are intermingled, and the agencies believe it is better customer service to have consistent policies across agency boundaries.

The FS and BLM are proposing to limit/restrict motorized wheeled cross-country travel on lands administered by the agencies in Montana, North Dakota and portions of South Dakota (excluding the Black Hills National Forest, Buffalo Gap National Grassland and Fort Pierre National Grassland). The purpose of this proposal is to avoid future impacts to public resources likely to result from the increasing use of off-highway vehicles (OHV's) on these lands and to provide direction for subsequent site-specific planning for motorized recreation opportunities.

Each BLM field office, and FS national forest and grassland manages OHV use based on its BLM resource management plan or FS land and resource management plan (referred to as forest plans). This FEIS would amend those plans.

## PURPOSE AND NEED

### Purpose

The purpose of this FEIS is to avoid future impacts from the increasing use of OHV's on areas that are currently available to motorized wheeled cross-country travel. It would amend forest plan and resource management plan OHV area designations to protect natural resource values. This would provide timely direction that would minimize further resource damage, user conflicts and related problems, including new user-created roads, associated with motorized wheeled cross-country travel until subsequent site-specific planning is completed. Site-specific planning would address OHV use on individual roads and trails to provide for a range of safe motorized recreation opportunities while continuing to protect resource values. This FEIS would not change the current limited/restricted yearlong, or closed area designations or designated OHV intensive use areas. This FEIS would not change current road or trail designations.

### Existing Condition

About 16 million acres of public land are currently designated as available to motorized wheeled cross-country travel either seasonally or yearlong. During the past 10 years, OHV use and associated cross-country travel have increased in some areas. The estimated number of vehicles used off-highway across the three-state area increased dramatically in the 1990's. Between 1990 and 1998 the number of registered ATV's and motorcycles increased 92%. The increased use has resulted in environmental effects on public resources in numerous areas, including roads and trails that have developed as the result of repeated use. Problems do not occur equally throughout the analysis area. Some of this use has occurred in riparian areas and on highly erodible slopes. In other areas use is very light and little or no effects from motorized wheeled cross-country travel are evident.

### Desired Condition

The goal of managing OHV's is to provide a range of safe motorized recreation opportunities, recognizing their legitimate use while minimizing the current or anticipated effects on wildlife and their habitat, soil, native vegetation, water, fish and other users. The long-term goal is that OHV use would occur on designated routes and intensive use areas to provide a variety of motorized and nonmotorized recreation opportunities. However, designation of specific routes requires local site-specific planning consistent with the resource management or forest plan. In the interim period before designation of travel routes can be accomplished, it is desirable to take the first step and restrict motorized wheeled cross-country travel. The designation of areas to the limited/restricted category in the resource management plan or forest plan can be accomplished programmatically for both agencies in the three-state area and is a valuable step towards the long-term goal.

### Need

In comparing the existing condition to the desired condition, OHV use and associated effects have increased in many areas since forest plans and resource management plans were completed. The BLM and FS are concerned that continuing unrestricted use could potentially increase the spread of noxious weeds, cause erosion, damage cultural sites, create user conflicts, disrupt wildlife and damage wildlife habitat. The trend of increased use is expected to continue. In order to minimize further resource damage in areas already experiencing increased activity and to avoid

future impacts in areas not yet affected, management of OHV use needs to be reviewed.

## ISSUES

### Primary Issues

Five primary issues were identified that reflect concerns or conflicts that could be partially or totally resolved through the EIS process. These issues are: need for plan amendment, exceptions, enforceability, flexibility, and identified problems. While these five issues are by no means the complete list of concerns identified during the public scoping process and comments on the DEIS, they did help guide the development of the alternatives. The following discussion provides a brief summary of these issues.

**Need for Plan Amendment:** Some of the public expressed concern that the proposal is not needed or is too restrictive. Of particular concern was the need for OHV decisions to be made at the local level rather than for a three-state area. Others expressed concern that the proposal was not restrictive enough and the agencies could not wait 10 to 15 years to complete site-specific planning.

**Exceptions:** Some of the public expressed concerns of whether or not exceptions for motorized wheeled cross-country travel should be allowed. These include camping, firewood gathering, disabled access, game retrieval, BLM and FS administrative use, and effects on lessees and permittees.

**Enforceability:** Some of the public expressed concerns that the proposal needs to be enforceable and provide consistency between the two agencies. The proposal also needs to provide implementation of the Executive Orders (EO) and regulations pertaining to OHV's.

**Flexibility:** Some of the public expressed concerns that the proposal needs to be flexible and allow motorized wheeled cross-country travel or allow exceptions under certain conditions. The proposal needs to look at seasonal, rather than yearlong restrictions, when problems are occurring. The proposal should only address problems where they occur.

**Identified Problems:** Some of the public expressed concerns that the proposal needs to look at the trend in identified problems to stop further adverse effects of motorized cross-country travel. Concerns have also been raised that the agencies do not have justification for the proposal and should only look at areas with specific problems.

### Resource Issues

A number of issues were brought up that were important for the analysis. Details of the effects on specific resources have been addressed in Chapter 3 of the FEIS. They are listed as follows:

#### In areas open seasonally or yearlong, what are the effects of OHV travel to:

- scenery and aesthetics,
- other forms of recreation (user conflicts),
- noise pollution and serenity for other recreation users,
- Inventoried Roadless, Recommended Wilderness, and Wilderness Study Areas,
- economics of recreation opportunities,
- cultural resources and tribal use,
- the spread of noxious weeds,
- native vegetation,
- threatened, endangered and sensitive species, wildlife habitat and its effectiveness, and wildlife displacement,
- water quality, soil erosion, wetlands and riparian areas, and
- air quality.

### Other Issues

A number of other issues were also raised during the scoping process that needed to be addressed and are discussed in more detail in Chapter 1 of the FEIS. These issues are listed as follows.

- Are current laws and regulations adequate to provide for OHV use and provide for protection of other resources?
- What are the effects of further OHV travel restrictions on personal freedom and the right to access public land?
- How can a one-size-fits-all decision work for a three-state area?
- How will site-specific problems be addressed soon enough with a 10-15 year window for completion of site-specific planning?
- How will the decision affect the North Dakota and South Dakota state section line laws and R.S. 2477?
- How will the decision affect the status of user-created roads and trails?
- How will the decision affect the 40"/50" rule for OHV's?
- What is an existing road or trail?
- How will the decision affect existing permits and leases?
- How will the decision be implemented and how will roads and trails be signed?

# ALTERNATIVES

## Alternatives Considered in Detail

**Management Common To All Alternatives:** The following management guidance will continue, regardless of which alternative is selected, and is common to all alternatives.

There are six BLM OHV intensive use areas in Montana (4,210 acres) that would remain open to motorized wheeled cross-country travel under all the alternatives; South Hills area near Billings, Glendive OHV area near Glendive, Terry OHV area near Terry, Glasgow OHV area near Glasgow, Fresno OHV area near Havre, and Radersburg OHV area near Radersburg. In addition, there are some isolated BLM lands (5,500 acres) that would remain open. These isolated lands were addressed in the Elkhorn Mountains Travel Management Plan (1995). Also, the drawdown area (3,630 acres) around Lake Koocanusa on the Rexford District of the Kootenai National Forest would not be affected by any of the alternatives. The drawdown area is currently being addressed in the Rexford District Recreation Management Plan.

The BLM and FS regulations (43 CFR 8341.2 and 8364.1 and 36 CFR 295.2 and 295.5) allow for area, road or trail closures where off-road vehicles are causing or will cause considerable adverse effects upon soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitat, cultural resources, threatened or endangered species, other authorized uses, or other resources. The authorized officer can immediately close the areas affected until the effects are eliminated and measures are implemented to prevent future recurrence.

Disabled access will be allowed per the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Under the Act, an individual with a disability will not, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by the BLM or FS. Disabled access per the Rehabilitation Act is considered at the local level on a case-by-case basis. Motorized wheelchairs, as defined in the Rehabilitation Act, are not considered OHV's and therefore are not restricted by any of the alternatives.

The BLM and FS will consult in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to ensure that any site-specific plan is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any species listed or proposed to be listed under the provisions of the ESA, or result in the destruction or adverse

modification of designated or proposed critical habitat. Access standards in effect for existing recovery plans will be followed in all site-specific plans. In addition, the authorized officer can immediately close areas, roads, or trails if OHV use is causing or will cause considerable adverse environmental effects to species listed or proposed to be listed. Information on consultation for this FEIS is contained in Appendix C.

Under Alternatives 1-5, after this FEIS is completed, the BLM and FS would continue to develop site-specific plans (i.e., landscape analysis, watershed plans, or activity plans) for geographical areas. Through site-specific planning, roads and trails would be inventoried, mapped, analyzed, and designated as open, seasonally open, or closed. In addition, site-specific planning could identify opportunities for trail construction and/or improvement, or specific areas where intensive OHV use may be appropriate. Implementation and monitoring are described in Appendix B. Implementation includes prioritizing areas for site-specific planning within six months of the respective agencies' Record of Decision based on the resources in the area, such as riparian areas and threatened or endangered species along with opportunities for recreational OHV use.

**The Alternatives:** Six alternatives, including the No Action Alternative, were developed and analyzed in detail. The major management actions and environmental consequences of the six alternatives are summarized in Tables S.1 and S.2. These tables are summaries of the alternative descriptions contained in Chapter 2 and the environmental consequences in Chapter 3. The reader is referred to the text in those chapters for specifics and more detail about the information in the tables.

## Alternatives Eliminated from Detailed Study

The following alternatives were eliminated from detailed study because they do not meet the purpose and need and/or due to technical, legal, or other constraints. More detail on these alternatives and why they were eliminated from detailed study can be found in Chapter 2 of the FEIS.

- Forest Service Development Roads and Trails and BLM Designated Routes
- Snowmobiles
- Site-Specific Alternatives
- Block Management
- Restrict Areas Greater than 5,000 Acres and Close All Areas to Off-Highway Vehicle Use
- Closed Unless Posted Open
- Montana State Lands Policy

**Table S.1 Summary of Alternatives**

<i>Management</i>	<i>No Action (Current Management)</i>	<i>Alternative 1</i>	<i>Alternative 2</i>	<i>Alternative 3</i>	<i>Alternative 4</i>	<i>Alternative 5 (Preferred Alternative)</i>
Areas open yearlong or seasonally	Areas currently open	None	None	Flathead NF, Kootenai NF and Bitterroot NF	Open 6/15 to 8/31 and 12/2 to 2/15 in all areas currently open	None
Prohibits motorized wheeled cross-country travel	No	Yes	Yes	Yes, except in Flathead NF, Kootenai NF and Bitterroot NF	Restricted seasonally	Yes
Emergency use	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
Administrative use	Allowed	Authorization required	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed as outlined by internal memo
Lease and permit holders	Allowed	Not allowed unless specifically authorized	Allowed unless specifically prohibited	Allowed unless specifically prohibited	Allowed unless specifically prohibited	Allowed unless specifically prohibited
Exceptions for Motorized Wheeled Cross-Country Travel						
- Camping	Allowed	Within 50 feet of roads and trails by the most direct route	Within 300 feet of roads and trails by the most direct route	Within 300 feet of roads and trails by the most direct route	Within 300 feet of roads and trails by the most direct route	Within 300 feet of roads and trails by the most direct route
- Game retrieval	Allowed	Not allowed	Allowed by the most direct route in portions of eastern Montana.* Not allowed in other areas.	Allowed from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. by the most direct route	Allowed by the most direct route	Not allowed. Retrieval would be allowed on roads and trails unless currently restricted.
- Disabled access	Allowed per Rehabilitation Act	Allowed per Rehabilitation Act	Could be modified in site-specific planning	Could be modified in site-specific planning	Could be modified in site-specific planning	Allowed per Rehabilitation Act
- Firewood and Christmas tree cutting	Specified by permit	Not allowed	Specified by permit at the local level	Specified by permit at the local level	Specified by permit at the local level	Specified by permit at the local level

\* Game retrieval is allowed in Montana only in the following field units: Miles City FO, Billings FO, Malta FO, Lewistown FO with the exception of the Great Falls Field Station, and Custer NF with the exception of the Beartooth RD.



**Table S.2 Summary of Environmental Consequences**

<i>Identified Environmental Issues</i>	<i>No Action (Current Management)</i>	<i>Alternative 1</i>	<i>Alternative 2</i>	<i>Alternative 3</i>	<i>Alternative 4</i>	<i>Alternative 5 (Preferred Alternative)</i>
Recreation						
User Conflicts	User conflicts would continue to increase.	User conflicts associated with cross-country travel would be substantially reduced.	User conflicts associated with cross-country travel would be substantially reduced.	Effects under Alt. 2 would apply where motorized wheeled cross-country travel is prohibited. Effects under No Action would apply elsewhere.	Effects under No Action Alt. would apply from 6/15-8/31 and 12/2-2-15. Effects under Alt. 2 would apply during other time periods.	User conflicts associated with cross-country travel would be substantially reduced.
Motorized Recreation	Existing opportunities would remain.	Motorized users would have access to roads and trails. Cross-country travel eliminated.	Motorized users would have access to roads and trails. Cross-country travel eliminated.	Same as above.	Same as above.	Motorized users would have access to roads and trails. Cross-country travel eliminated.
Nonmotorized Recreation	Recreation experience would be reduced.	Recreation experience would improve.	Recreation experience would improve.	Same as above.	Same as above.	Recreation experience would improve.
Visuals	Objectives for scenic values may not be met.	Additional disturbances to visuals would be substantially reduced.	Additional disturbances to visuals would be substantially reduced.	Same as above.	Same as above.	Additional disturbances to visuals would be substantially reduced.
Roadless/Wilderness Study Areas	Motorized wheeled cross-country travel may have an effect on the naturalness of these areas.	This alt. would enhance the protection of the naturalness of these areas.	This alt. would enhance the protection of the naturalness of these areas.	Same as above.	Seasonal motorized wheeled cross-country travel may have an effect on the naturalness of these areas.	This alt. would enhance the protection of the naturalness of these areas.
Social						
Older Recreationists	Opportunity would be available to substitute motorized wheeled cross-country travel for activities that require more mobility. There is no clear evidence this is what people will choose to do as they age.	No opportunity would be available to substitute motorized wheeled cross-country travel for activities that require more mobility. There is no clear evidence this is what people will choose to do as they age.	No opportunity would be available to substitute motorized wheeled cross-country travel for activities that require more mobility. There is no clear evidence this is what people will choose to do as they age.	Opportunity would be available in some areas to substitute motorized wheeled cross-country travel for activities that require more mobility. There is no clear evidence that this is what people will choose to do as they age.	Opportunity would be available from 6/15-8/31 and 12/2-2/15 to substitute motorized wheeled cross-country travel for activities that require more mobility. There is no clear evidence this is what people will choose to do as they age.	No opportunity would be available to substitute motorized wheeled cross-country travel for activities that require more mobility. There is no clear evidence this is what people will choose to do as they age.

<i>Identified Environmental Issues</i>	<i>No Action (Current Management)</i>	<i>Alternative 1</i>	<i>Alternative 2</i>	<i>Alternative 3</i>	<i>Alternative 4</i>	<i>Alternative 5 (Preferred Alternative)</i>
Environmental Advocacy	This group feels that current management does not sufficiently protect resources on public lands.	This alt. may meet the desires of this group.	This alt. may meet the desires of this group.	This alt. may meet the desires of this group in most areas. In open areas, this group feels that current management does not protect resources on public lands.	This alt. would not meet the desires of this group because it may not go far enough to protect the resources on public lands.	This alt. may meet the desires of this group.
Lessees and Permittees	Motorized wheeled cross-country travel opportunities would be available to administer a lease or permit.	Motorized wheeled cross-country travel to administer a lease or permit would only be allowed under specific terms of the lease or permit.	Motorized wheeled cross-country travel opportunities would be available to administer a lease or permit.	Motorized wheeled cross-country travel opportunities would be available to administer a lease or permit.	Motorized wheeled cross-country travel opportunities would be available to administer a lease or permit.	Motorized wheeled cross-country travel opportunities would be available to administer a lease or permit.
Rural Communities/ Personal Freedom	This alt. would best respond to rural communities who prefer that current activities on public lands not be limited.	This alt. would not be consistent with rural communities' preference for leaving activities on public lands at current levels.	This alt. would not be consistent with rural communities' preference for leaving activities on public lands at current levels.	Effects under Alt. 2 would apply where motorized wheeled cross-country travel is prohibited. Effects under No Action Alt. would apply elsewhere.	This alt. would not be consistent with rural communities' preference for leaving activities on public lands at current levels.	This alt. would not be consistent with rural communities' preference for leaving activities on public lands at current levels.
Economics of OHV Industry	Minor increase in jobs is expected to increase due to projected increases in OHV's and trucks.	Minor reductions in jobs and employee compensations may occur.	Minor reductions in jobs and employee compensations may occur.	Minor reductions in jobs and employee compensations may occur.	Minor reductions in jobs and employee compensations may occur.	Minor reductions in jobs and employee compensations may occur.
Cultural Resources	This alt. would cause the greatest direct and indirect impacts to cultural sites in the analysis area.	This alt. would offer the most protection for cultural sites in the analysis area.	This alt. would offer protection similar to Alt. 1, with minor differences due to the exceptions.	Effects under Alt. 2 would apply where motorized wheeled cross-country travel is prohibited. Effects under No Action Alt. would apply elsewhere.	This alt. would cause direct and indirect impacts to cultural sites in the analysis area.	This alt. would offer protection similar to Alt. 1, with a minor difference due to the camping and permitted use exceptions.
Vegetation and Weeds	This alt. would have the greatest risk for expanding and introducing existing and new weeds to BLM and NFS lands.	This alt. would have the lowest risk for expanding and introducing existing and new weeds to BLM and NFS lands.	This alt. would have the third lowest risk for expanding and introducing existing and new weeds to BLM and NFS lands.	This alt. would have substantially less risk than the No Action Alt. because only 6.5 million acres would be open and of those lands, many acres would not be available because of dense forest cover. But it has more risk than alt. 1, 5 and 2.	Effects under this alt. would be similar to the No Action Alt.	This alt. would be similar to Alt. 1, with a minor difference due to the camping and permitted use exceptions.

<i>Identified Environmental Issues</i>	<i>No Action (Current Management)</i>	<i>Alternative 1</i>	<i>Alternative 2</i>	<i>Alternative 3</i>	<i>Alternative 4</i>	<i>Alternative 5 (Preferred Alternative)</i>
Wildlife	The current level of impact to wildlife and wildlife habitat would continue with this alt.	Direct and indirect effects would be reduced (habitat fragmentation, habitat abandonment, physiological effects, and indirect impacts of weeds).	Direct and indirect effects would be reduced (habitat fragmentation, habitat abandonment, physiological effects, and indirect impacts of weeds).	Effects under Alt. 2 would apply where motorized wheeled cross-country travel is prohibited. Effects under No Action Alt. would apply elsewhere.	Effects under No Action Alt. would apply from 6/15-8/31 and 12/2-2/15. Effects under Alt. 2 would apply during the other time periods. Overall, impacts to wildlife may be considerably less since closed period is when most travel occurs (fall hunting).	Direct and indirect effects would be reduced (habitat fragmentation, habitat abandonment, physiological effects, and indirect impacts of weeds).
Aquatic Resources	This alt. would provide no risk reduction for further impacts to aquatic resources.	This alt. would provide greatest risk reduction for further impacts to aquatic resources.	This alt. is similar to Alt. 5, with minor differences due to the additional exceptions.	Effects under Alt. 2 would apply where motorized wheeled cross-country travel is prohibited. Effects under No Action Alt. would apply elsewhere.	Overall, effects under this alt. would be less than those under No Action Alt. because there would be fewer days during which motorized wheeled cross-country travel could occur.	This alt. is similar to Alt. 1, with a minor difference due to the camping and permitted use exceptions.
Soils	This alt. would have the greatest potential to impact soil resources.	Impacts to soil resources would be kept to a minimum and widely dispersed.	Impacts to soil resources would be kept to a minimum and widely dispersed.	Overall accelerated soil erosion from motorized wheeled cross-country travel would be reduced, except if such travel were to occur in a concentrated manner.	This alt. would reduce soil erosion by reducing motorized wheeled cross-country travel to periods when soils are likely dry or frozen.	Impacts to soil resources would be kept to a minimum and widely dispersed.
Air	This alt. would have the greatest potential to influence short-term air quality in the immediate area.	This alt. would have reduced localized air effects from fewer user-created trails.	This alt. would have reduced localized air effects from fewer user-created trails.	Effects under Alt. 2 would apply where motorized wheeled cross-country travel is prohibited. Effects under No Action Alt. would apply elsewhere.	This alt. would offer no real difference from the No Action Alt.	This alt. would have reduced localized air effects from fewer user-created trails.
Minerals	This alt. would have no impact.	This alt. would cause increased administrative review before some routine activities could occur.	This alt. would have no impact to existing holders of mineral leases or permits. Some increase would occur in administrative review of casual use for pre-permit surveying and staking.	Effects under Alt. 2 would apply where motorized wheeled cross-country travel is prohibited. Effects under No Action Alt. would apply elsewhere.	Effects under No Action Alt. would apply from 6/15-8/31 and 12/2-2/15. Effects under Alt. 2 would apply during the other time periods.	This alt. would have no impact to existing holders of mineral leases or permits. Some increase would occur in administrative review of casual use for pre-permit surveying and staking.

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