

policies, and Comprehensive Conservation Plans. The Wilderness Act of 1964 directs the National Wilderness Preservation System be managed to protect natural wilderness conditions and to provide outstanding opportunities for the public to find solitude or primitive and unconfined types of recreational experiences. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge contains 8,000,000 acres of federally protected wilderness (Molly Beattie Wilderness) and over 11,000,000 acres of land and water that are managed for multiple values (subsistence, wildlife, water quality, scenic values, etc.), and mandated to provide recreation experiences to visitors under a number of laws, including the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act, (as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act), the Refuge Recreation Act, and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act.

To help meet Federal agencies' mandates related to recreation, scientists at the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute will periodically monitor and report, to managers and the public, visitor use and user characteristics, and visitor feedback on management actions on federal lands. Agency personnel will use the collected information to ensure that visitors' recreational activities do not harm the natural resources of the refuge and that wilderness-type recreation experiences are protected. The agency intends to record visitor responses in 2008 for comparison to the most recent survey (1977 prior to Refuge status and Wilderness designation), and expand the scope of the survey to include visitor feedback to understand major dimensions of experiences and factors that influence those experiences. Potential influences include encounters with other visitors, subsistence users, researchers, and agency personnel and information sources used to plan the trip. The data from this information collection will be stored at the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute in Missoula, Montana. Scientists working at the Research Institute will conduct the data analysis.

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service will use information from this collection to:

- (1) Understand;
 - a. Individual visitor demographics, frequency of visits, and residence;
 - b. Visit characteristics, such as whether they are hunting or not, river floating or not, method of access, size of group, and difficulty in finding campsites, evaluations of conditions encountered, and feedback on information available for trip planning;

(2) Gain an understanding of how the agency's management of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and other potential facilitating and constraining factors influence a visitor's recreation experience;

(3) Help understand how to educate recreation visitors so they do not leave impacts from their visits, such as damaged vegetation, litter, polluted lakes and streams, and wildlife disturbance while engaging in high quality, safe, responsible recreation visits; and

(4) Provide information that may assist in revision of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan.

Respondents will be recreation visitors to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Visitors will be contacted as they enter the Arctic Refuge or upon exit and will be provided with a mail-back postcard that offers them alternative methods of response to the survey: (1) Mail the postage-paid postcard to the Leopold Institute with a name and address in order to receive a mail-back survey, (2) mail the postage paid postcard to the Leopold Institute with an electronic e-mail address to receive an electronic form of the survey, or (3) keep the postcard that contains a web address for on-line completion of the survey. All responses will be voluntary. Data collected in this information collection are not available from other sources and have not been collected since 1977.

This study will only ask recreation visitors (non-local, non-subsistence users) questions about their recreation visit, their personal demographics relevant to education and service provision, and factors that have influenced or are likely to influence their recreation visits. Survey respondents will be told that this information is voluntary, in confidence (their names will not be connected to their responses in any way). The Survey will not include questions related to oil exploration or development within the boundaries of the Refuge.

Estimate of Annual Burden: 20 minutes.

Type of Respondents: Individuals.

Estimated Annual Number of Respondents: 900.

Estimated Annual Number of Responses per Respondent: Once.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 300 hours.

Comment is Invited:

Comment is invited on: (1) Whether this collection of information is necessary for the stated purposes and the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the

information will have practical or scientific utility; (2) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including the additional use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

All comments received in response to this notice, including names and addresses when provided, will be a matter of public record. Comments will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval.

Dated: September 21, 2007.

Ann M. Bartuska,

Deputy Chief for Research & Development.

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BILLING CODE 3410-11-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Bitterroot National Forest, Ravalli County, MT, Travel Management Planning

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environment impact statement.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, notice is hereby given that the Forest Service, Bitterroot National Forest will prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement to disclose the environmental consequences of the proposed travel management planning. The proposed action would provide approximately 2,487 miles of wheeled motorized recreation opportunities on the Bitterroot National Forest while maintaining 1,030,405 acres of non-motorized areas. The proposed action would also provide approximately 341 miles of open snowmobile routes and 608,031 acres open to snowmobile use.

DATES: Specific comments on the proposed action should be received by November 23, 2007. The draft environmental impact statement is expected to be available for the public in August 2008, and the final environmental impact statement is expected to be available in May 2009. The Motor Vehicle Use Map is scheduled to be available on or before December 2009.

ADDRESSES: Submit written, faxed, or e-mail comments by: (1) Mail—Travel Management Planning Team; Stevensville Ranger District; 88 Main; Stevensville, Montana 59870 (2) fax—(406) 777-7423; (3) e-mail—comments-northern-bitterroot@fs.fed.us

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dan Ritter, Stevensville District Ranger (406) 777-5461 or Sandy Mack, Project Team Leader (406) 777-7415 (see **ADDRESSES** above)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose

The objectives of the project are to: 1. Change the existing motorized recreation designations provide quality motorized recreation experiences while protecting natural resources and providing non-motorized recreation opportunities.

- Provide motorized loop routes that offer a quality recreational experience, with the focus on using old roads and linkages with only minor resource impacts.

- Provide areas for non-motorized recreation experiences.

- Close routes to motorized use that have resource concerns that can't reasonably be mitigated.

2. Close routes that offer little value as a motorized experience and have resource concerns.

3. Clarify and simplify the motor vehicle use designations.

4. Comply with the 2005 Travel Management Rule.

Proposed Action

The proposed action establishes clear, standardized designations of where motorized recreation is appropriate, sustainable and desirable on the Bitterroot National Forest. It would provide 2,487 miles of routes open to wheeled motorized use including: 25 mi. of roads open to all vehicles, yearlong or seasonal (mixed-motorized); 1,479 mi. of roads open to highway legal vehicles only, yearlong or seasonal; 746 mi. of trails open to vehicles 50" or less in width, yearlong or seasonal; 237 mi. of trails open to motorcycles, yearlong or seasonal. It would also provide 1,030,405 acres of non-motorized use (½ mile or more from wheeled motorized use designations) across the Forest. The proposed action would provide 58 miles of groomed snowmobile trails, 341 miles of open snowmobile routes and 608,031 acres open to snowmobile use.

Alternatives to the proposed action will be developed based on public comments.

Responsible Official

The responsible official for the Travel Management Planning Project is Dave T. Bull, Forest Supervisor, Bitterroot National Forest 1801 N. First, Hamilton 59840-3114.

Nature of Decision To Be Made

The Responsible Official will determine whether or not to proceed with the proposed motorized use designations.

Scoping Process

Comments will be accepted during the 60-day scoping period as described in this notice of intent. To assist in commenting, a coping package providing more detailed information on the project proposal has been prepared and is available to interested parties. Contact Sandy Mack, Project Leader at the address listed in this notice of intent if you would like to receive a copy. The information is also available on the web at www.fs.fed.us/r1/bitterroot/projects/motorized_rec.shtml, and at each District Office and at the public libraries in Darby, Hamilton, Stevensville and Missoula. The Forest will schedule public meetings in November, prior to the end of the public comment period. Meeting times and locations will be announced at a later date.

Comment Requested

This notice of intent initiates the scoping process that guides the development of the environmental impact statement.

Early Notice of Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review: A draft environmental impact statement will be prepared for comment. The comment period on the draft environmental impact statement will be at least 45 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**.

The Forest Service believes, at this early stage, it is important to give reviewers notice of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of draft environmental impact statements must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so that it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewer's position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978)*. Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the draft environmental impact statement stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement may be waived or dismissed by the courts. *City*

of Angoon v. Hodel, 803 F.2d 1016, 1022 (9th Cir. 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980)*. Because of these court rulings, it is very important that those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the 24 day comment period so that substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the final environmental impact statement.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft environmental impact statement should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft statement. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft environmental impact statement or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statement. Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposal and will be available for public inspection.

(Authority: 40 CFR 1501.7 and 1508.22; Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Section 21)

Dated: September 20, 2007.

Barry Paulson,

Deputy Forest Supervisor.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Inyo National Forest, California, Inyo National Forest Motorized Travel Management EIS

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: The Inyo National Forest (INF) will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement to disclose the impacts associated with the following proposed actions: 1. The prohibition of wheeled motorized vehicle travel off designated National Forest System (NFS) roads, NFS trails and areas by the public except as allowed by permit or other authorization. 2. Changes in the INF Transportation System, including