



# Travel Management

## White Mountain NATIONAL FOREST

### BACKGROUND

The Forest Service manages and maintains a network of roads on the White Mountain National Forest to provide public access and facilitate the long term management of forest resources. This 600 mile road network is managed at different maintenance levels based on the traffic it is designed to accommodate and the frequency and season of use that occurs from year to year. Heavy use by over 5 million visitors a year, an aging infrastructure and increasing frequency of high intensity storms have significantly raised maintenance and capital replacement costs over the last fifteen years. In the last five years, funding to maintain National Forest system roads across the country has decreased as the Federal budget is strained with other competing demands.

The Forest Service is conducting a road study that analyzes national forest roads for their existing use and characteristics, need for management activities and public access, benefits, environmental risks and maintenance costs. The goal of the national Travel Analysis Process (TAP) is to define safe, fiscally feasible minimum road systems that provide the greatest benefit to the largest number of visitors with the least risk to the environment. This road study, referred to as "Subpart A," is part of the implementation of the 2005 Travel Management Rule, 36 CFR 212. The result of the Subpart A process will be a report of recommendations intended to inform future decisions on specific roads or systems of roads. The report will identify a road network that considers access for management activities and the public, minimizes environmental impacts, and can be maintained within budget constraints.

The White Mountain National Forest is currently compiling information to identify the benefits and risks associated with our road system. This analysis will help to identify a road system that minimizes environmental impacts by assuring roads are in locations only where they are necessary to meet access needs, and can be maintained within budget constraints.

In early 2015 we will invite the public to attend an Open House to review the currently available information on our road system and recommend possible approaches that lead to a safe, affordable and environmentally sustainable road system. Anyone who uses roads or benefits from the White Mountain National Forest is encouraged to share information and ideas that could be added to the Road Study report.

