

## **Why Are OHV Trails Closed?**

Closing OHV trails when there is measurable rain and when trail conditions require helps preserve trails for future use and helps lessen the impacts on water quality. Closing trails during these conditions is also a matter of public safety for forest visitors.

### **Public Safety**

Wet weather closures are necessary to protect public safety because OHV trails on the Forest are often remote and can become slick, hazardous and inaccessible when saturated. When trail surfaces become saturated, treads become unstable and slippery. This reduces vehicle control, which increases the risk of falls and injuries, as well as collisions with other riders and off-trail obstacles including trees. Restricting use of trails under these conditions decreases the risk of serious accidents and injuries to the public and forest employees.

### **Why Should We Care?**

If we want to enjoy the trails in the future, we have to help protect them now. One way we can sustain trail quality for future use is by closing them when there is approximately 2 inches of rain which has saturated the topsoil. We do this because riding when the trails are saturated creates ruts which leads to increased erosion and extensive damage to the trail.

Implementing short-term trail closures protects trails from being damaged. Without these short-term trail closures, the damage caused over time would result in trails needing major restoration work, requiring long-term closures to repair the damage. With Forest Service recreation budgets decreasing, trail repairs will be prioritized, which may leave some trails closed longer while waiting for repairs.

The Mendocino National Forest has prided itself on its long-time partnership with the [State of California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division](#). The Forest receives grant money from the state (some of which comes from your green sticker fees) and that money goes right back into maintenance and upgrades to the trails. This outstanding partnership has helped the Forest create a world class OHV destination for visitors to enjoy.

The Forest follows all California State OHV laws and safety regulations. For questions please [click here](#).

### **How Can I Help?**

The most important thing you can do as a motorized vehicle user is to abide by and respect all trail closures. By doing so, you are protecting the trails and showing others why these closures are important.

For OHV Volunteer Opportunities, please contact Paige Makowski at 530-963-1328.