

Off-Highway Vehicle Information Sheet

Ozark-St. Francis National Forests



Photo courtesy of Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism

Web Site: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/osfnf/maps-pubs>

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Overview

- The Ozark National Forest has over 1,000 miles of designated routes (roads and trails) for off-highway vehicle use.
- The rapid expansion of off-highway-vehicle use on national forests and grasslands is impacting the natural and cultural resources on federal lands.
- Off-highway-vehicle operators should use a Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) or the "Traveling the Backcountry" brochure to determine designated routes that are legal.

OHV Use on the Ozark National Forest

Riding off-highway vehicles (OHVs) is a fun way to recreate on the Ozark National Forest. Over 1,000 miles of riding opportunities are currently being provided in order to meet that demand. Ensuring that the opportunities are sustainable is important to public land managers. As a result, a balanced approach must be used, factoring in other recreational demands with management of natural resources.

OHV use has increased dramatically in the past two decades in Arkansas, causing significant impacts and challenges to ensure protection of cultural and natural resources, while providing suitable places to ride to meet the demand. Degraded trails and roads have developed when use exceeds the natural carrying capacity. Another concern is use that spills over onto places that are not designated for OHV traffic.



Riding OHVs is permitted on designated routes. These routes are managed for public use by the Ozark National Forest. (Photo courtesy of Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism)

Designated Routes

In an effort to protect the environment for future generations, the Ozark National Forest is making it easier for OHV riders to find designated riding routes.

■ Maps and Publications

- **Motor Vehicle Use Maps (MVUM)/Traveling the Backcountry Brochure** - It is the responsibility of OHV riders to reference maps designating legal OHV routes. The free MVUM and Traveling the Backcountry publications can be obtained from our website or any district office. For more information on OHV maps and publications or to download them, visit <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/osfnf/maps-pubs>.
- **Avenza Adobe (PDF) Maps** - This free mobile map application enables OHV riders to download the MVUM over a Wi-Fi or cellular network to read on their smartphone or tablet. The device's built-in GPS tracks a rider's location on the map. Riders can access these maps and find their location even when offline (no WiFi or cellular connection) because maps are saved to the device's memory.

■ **Visits with OHV groups** – Throughout the year, national forest officials will visit various OHV groups to explain OHV policies and answer questions from their members.

■ **Signage** – Currently signs are being ordered that will designate open OHV routes, provide important reminders and identify designated routes



Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Why do National Forests restrict where OHV riders can go?

Unmanaged recreation was identified years ago as a primary threat to the health of National Forest System lands. The use and size of OHVs has increased over the last two decades with increasing impacts. While most OHV riders are very conscientious about the environment, significant damage is still occurring. Increased levels of stream sedimentation have been found, ruts are deepening at stream crossings and on steep hillsides, cultural (archeological) resources have been damaged and vegetation is being lost from some fragile soil types. Widespread trash and litter is increasing across the national forests. To help maintain optimal resource conditions, a plan was implemented to designate routes for all motorized recreation that would meet visitor needs and protect forest resources for future generations.

2. Where can I find out about designated routes for my OHV? Are there maps available of the routes?

Designated routes on each ranger district can be found using the forest downloadable Motor Vehicle Use Maps at <https://fs.usda.gov//main/osfnf/maps-pubs> or the free Avenza app on your smartphone at www.avenza.com/pdf-maps. Printed maps may also be obtained from any district office.

3. Where are OHV enthusiasts NOT allowed to ride?

Any route that is not specifically designated for OHV use. There are over 1,000 miles of designated routes for riding OHVs. The general national forest area is closed to OHVs, as well as any route not designated for that use. Not every open road or trail is legal for OHV use. Consult the MVUM or Traveling the Backcountry brochure to ensure you are on a legal route. You may not take your OHV behind a closed gate, over a berm, off a designated road or trail (cross-country), or on any other route not shown on the MVUM as designated for that specific use. Motorized vehicles are not allowed in any Wilderness Area. For more information on wilderness areas, please visit Wilderness Connect at <http://www.wilderness.net/forests-service>.

4. Can a disabled person use motorized means to access the national forest?

Only on designated trails and routes. Any person whose disability requires the use of a wheelchair may use their wheelchair anywhere foot travel is permitted even if the wheelchair is battery-powered, with the exception of within Wilderness Areas. All wheelchairs must be designed solely for the use of the person with the disability and suitable for indoor use. This includes routes and trails that have not been designated for motor vehicle use. Wheelchairs are allowed on all OHV-designated routes.

For more OHV access information, please contact the nearest district office

Big Piney Ranger District PO Box 427 Hwy 7 N. Jasper, AR 72641 Phone: (870) 446-5122	Boston Mountain Ranger District 1803 N 18th St. Ozark, AR 72949 Phone: (479) 667-2191	Pleasant Hill Ranger District 2591 Hwy 21 North Clarksville, AR 72830 Phone: (479) 754-2864	Sylamore Ranger District 1001 E. Main St. Mountain View, AR 72560 Phone: (870) 269-3228
Big Piney Ranger District (Hector) 12000 SR 27 Hector, AR 72843 Phone: (479) 284-3150	Mount Magazine Ranger District PO Box 511 3001 E. Walnut Paris AR 72855 Phone: (479) 963-3076	St. Francis National Forest 2955 Hwy 44 Marianna, AR 72360 Phone: (870) 295-5278	