

Huron-Manistee National Forests  
Mio Ranger District and Huron Shores Ranger Station  
Special Use Authorizations for Annual Horseback Riding Recreation Events

Wayne Gastfield, Virginia Franklin and the Michigan Trail Riders Association have made application to conduct annual organized events for horseback riders on the Michigan Shore to Shore Horseback Riding and Hiking Trail. The Forest proposes to issue separate special use permits to each of these applicants for a five year term (2009 - 2013).

The Michigan Shore to Shore Horseback Riding and Hiking Trail is a Forest Service System Trail and is open for public use. The events take place over the entire Michigan Shore to Shore Horseback Riding and Hiking Trail from Lake Huron to Lake Michigan. Approximately 110 miles of this trail system is located on the Huron National Forest and crosses the Mio, Harrisville and Tawas administrative units. It is recognized that many participants utilize roads parallel to the trail system and are open to public use during this event. The Forest has recognized this use and finds no conflicts or resource concerns. Each year the applicants submit a map and operating plan for the same location. No new issues have been identified.

The events are scheduled each year for the same locations with similar event dates.

Wayne Gastfield is an individual who has been sponsoring organized endurance rides for horses since 1997. The 2009 event is planned for 08/02-05 on National Forest system lands; camping at South Branch Trail Camp on 08/03 and Luzerne Trail Camp on 08/04/09. Participants will ride 50 miles each day. The event has attracted approximately 35 participants that compete for ribbons and prize money.

Virginia Franklin, Shore to Shore Trail Rides LTD, has been a sponsor of annual organized rides since 1990. The 2009 events are planned for Memorial Day weekend of 05/22-25 at Luzerne Trail Camp and 06/13-14 at River Road Trail Camp, 06/15-16 at South Branch Trail Camp, 06/17 at McKinley and 06/18-19 at Luzerne Trail Camp for a Cross State Ride on National Forest lands; and 09/4-8 at McKinley Trail Camp. The event attracts approximately 50 participants.

Michigan Trail Riders Association has sponsored organized trail rides since the early 1960s. The 2009 event dates on the Forest are; 05/16 at Luzerne, 05/29 at River Road, 05/30 at South Branch, 05/31 at McKinley, 06/01 at Luzerne; 06/22-23 at Luzerne, 06/24 at McKinley, 06/ 25-26 at South Branch, 06/27 at River Road, 09/11 at River Road, 09/12 at South Branch, 09/13 at McKinley, 09/14 at Luzerne. The May 2008 rides covered 10 days and averaged 41 people per day. The peak June 2008 event period was for 10 days on the Huron and the average group size was 124 participants per day. The September 2008 ride covered 8 days and averaged 88 participants per day. The Forest has limited group sizes to 250 participants per day by terms of the special use permit issued.

If you have any comments or additional information regarding these roads please contact Gordon Haase, at the Huron Shores Ranger Station, 5761 North Skeel Avenue, Oscoda, Michigan 48750, (989) 739-0728.