



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Sawtooth National Forest  
Supervisor's Office

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Date: July 20, 2006

Dear Interested Party:

The Sawtooth National Forest "Visitor/Travel Plan" has been in place since 1989. The purpose of a Travel Plan is to show visitors the system of roads and trails they may use, as well as how and when they may use them. In addition to this managed system of roads and trails, the Sawtooth Forest contains user-created roads and trails. These routes are concentrated in areas where cross-country travel by motor vehicles has been allowed, and sometimes include dense, braided networks of criss-crossing paths.

The Sawtooth National Forest is proposing to revise the current summer Sawtooth National Forest Visitor/Travel Plan (Travel Plan) to restrict motor vehicle use to designated roads and trails. This proposal was in part, generated in response to the *Travel Management; Designated Routes and Areas for Motor Vehicle Use; Final Rule* published November 9, 2005. This national final rule requires the Forest Service, with input from the public, to prepare a Motor Vehicle Use Map designating those roads, trails and areas that will be open to motorized travel. In addition, the 2003 revised Sawtooth Forest Plan includes direction to manage motorized and non-motorized travel to provide for public safety; meet resource objectives and access needs; mitigate road and trail damage; and minimize maintenance costs and user conflicts.

I am sending you this letter in order to initiate "scoping" of this project. This scoping notice is an initial step in conducting the environmental analysis that is required prior to making route designation decisions. This initial public comment period helps us to identify the scope of the project, analysis needs, and related issues. The project area to be analyzed only includes areas on the Sawtooth N.F. Visitor /Travel Map shown as "G" and "H" Areas on the Ketchum and Fairfield Ranger Districts, portions of Area "A" in and around Kelly Creek Flats, and areas shown as "K", "L" and "Q" on the Cassia Division, the Albion Division, the Black Pine Division and the Sublett Division of the Minidoka Ranger District. Motorized use on the Sawtooth National Recreation Area, the northern two-thirds of the Ketchum Ranger District, and the northern half of the Fairfield Ranger District is already restricted to designated routes and therefore is not part of this analysis.

It is critical that we get the assistance of Forest users in developing a designated road and trail system that meets access needs, while also protecting the resource values of the area. Please read the attached document entitled: **Travel Plan Revision – Scoping Document**. In this document you will learn about the proposed action, why we need to take this action, how and when to comment, and whom to contact for additional information.

I hope to hear from you.

Sincerely,

/s/ Ruth Monahan  
RUTH M. MONAHAN  
Forest Supervisor

Enclosures (3)

