

FISHLAKE NATIONAL FOREST

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC SCOPING COMMENTS for the FISHLAKE OHV ROUTE DESIGNATION PROJECT

22 September 2004

INTRODUCTION

This document contains a listing of public concerns received between June 7, 2004 and September 22, 2004, for the Fishlake OHV Route Designation Project. The corresponding public comments that generated the public concerns are included in a separate and longer version of this document. The information includes hand delivered comments from the seven public meetings and comments received through e-mail and letters. We received responses from individuals and organizations in 14 States although most are from Utah. Beaver, Piute, and Wayne Counties provided written comments, but numerous briefings and meetings have occurred with all of the affected counties. Other agency comments came from the Capitol Reef National Park, Environmental Protection Agency – Region 8, Utah State Extension Service, and a Utah State OHV Advisory member. Advocacy groups providing written comments include the Blue Ribbon Coalition, Bullhead 4 Wheelers, Inc., Red Rock Forests, Sand Rock Ridge Riders ATV Club, Southern High Rollers 4x4 Club, Southern Utah OHV Club, USA-ALL, Three Forests Coalition, Utah Forest Network, and the Utah Environmental Congress. Utah Power and Light also provided comments.

METHODS

The processing and analysis of the comments follows the procedures developed by the National Forest Service Content Analysis Team (CAT August 2003). Each sender and letter was assigned a unique identification number for tracking in the CAETv1 ORACLE database. Comments within each correspondence were given a code to group like comments by the type of action requested, the rationale provided, and by site-specific location if referenced. Each individual comment was then entered into the CAETv1 database word-for-word, except for the correction of spelling and minor grammatical errors. As processed, the 198 letters received contained 893 comments. These data were then exported to a Microsoft Access database developed by the CAT team. The Access database allows the user to develop public concerns from the individual comments. The 893 comments are now represented by 67 individual public concerns and are attached in the following report. The public concerns attempt to display unique aspects of the information provided. However, there is unavoidable overlap among several of the public concerns.

The public concerns identified in this report simply characterize what the public told the Forest Service about the OHV Route Designation Project. The Forest Service makes no endorsement or criticism of the content. Since these are scoping comments, the Forest will not make formal responses, but the public concerns and site-specific comments will be used directly by the Forest Leadership Team and Interdisciplinary Team to shape the development of Alternative 3 and any subsequent alternatives. The Forest has however provided formal and informal responses when requested in individual letters.

A separate Access database developed by the Forest is being used to track site-specific comments so that comments can be considered route-by-route as we develop Alternative 3, which will be a modification of the proposed action that is based on updated inventory and public comments.

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Public Concerns

Public Concern Number 101

Public Concern *The Forest Service should complete a Forest scale Roads Analysis as part of the travel management planning process: a) to comply with agency policy, b) to achieve an optimal transportation system, c) to protect natural resources.*

Public Concern Number 102

Public Concern *The Forest Service should have a detailed and complete inventory of routes prior to making travel management planning decisions: a) to perform Roads Analysis, b) to perform cumulative effects analysis, c) to allow the public to influence the decision, d) to determine the value of the route to motorized recreation, e) to maintain motorized recreation opportunities.*

Public Concern Number 103

Public Concern *The Forest Service should propose a motorized travel plan that the Fishlake can afford to maintain and monitor: a) to protect natural resources, b) to ensure better enforcement of travel plan rules, c) to be consistent with the Roads Analysis process, d) for public safety.*

Public Concern Number 104

Public Concern *The Forest Service should follow the requirements of the "National Roadless Rule": a) to comply with legal and regulatory requirements, b) to protect roadless areas and potential wilderness, c) to protect natural resources.*

Public Concern Number 105

Public Concern *The Forest Service should comply with Executive Orders 11644 and 11989, 36CFR295: a) to comply with rules and regulations.*

Public Concern Number 106

Public Concern *The Forest Service should follow its multiple-use mandate from the National Forest Management Act: a) to comply with the law, b) to prevent exclusive use by one user group.*

Public Concern Number 107

Public Concern *The Forest Service should include County, State, and other Federal land management agencies in the motorized travel plan decision process: a) to assure consistency, b) to assure that local issues are considered.*

Public Concern Number 108

Public Concern *The Forest Service should do a better job involving the public in this and other travel management decisions: a) to allow greater opportunity for the public to influence the decision, b) so that the public can understand the reasons why the decisions are made.*

Public Concern Number 109

Public Concern *The Forest Service should collaborate with user groups: a) to help enforce motorized travel plan rules, b) to implement route mitigation and site restoration, c) to improve public trust.*

Public Concern Number 110

Public Concern *The Forest Service should communicate more effectively with the public: a) to avoid confusion and frustration, b) to improve public trust.*

Public Concern Number 111

Public Concern *The Forest Service should use different definitions for motorized recreation terms: a) to avoid confusion, b) to avoid value judgments.*

Public Concern Number 112

Public Concern *The Forest Service should extend the timeline for completion of the OHV Route Designation Project: a) to allow more detailed review and comment from the public, b) to adequately analyze environmental impacts of the alternatives.*

Public Concern Number 113

Public Concern *The Forest Service should not cater to environmental interest groups: a) because they are the minority, b) because they are irrational and/or cannot be trusted, c) because they are not local [do not know the area and/or are not impacted by the decisions made], d) to avoid discrimination, e) because non-motorized users are not impacted to the same degree as motorized users by the decisions to be made.*

Public Concern Number 114

Public Concern *The Forest Service should not cater to motorized recreation users and industry groups: a) because they are the minority, b) because they are irrational and/or cannot be trusted, c) because these are public lands, d) to prevent impacts to natural resources, e) because motorized users are not impacted to the same degree as non-motorized users by the decisions to be made.*

Public Concern Number 201

Public Concern *The Forest Service should follow NEPA requirements including the use of science for the analysis of direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts: a) because it is required by law, b) to assure that the decision gives proper consideration to the relative impacts and value of each management alternative, c) to meet the requirements of the National OHV Rule, d) to comply with Executive Orders 11644 and 11989, 36CFR295 and other regulations.*

Public Concern Number 202

Public Concern *The Forest Service should consider other alternatives in addition to the proposed action: a) the Three Forest Coalition proposed motorized travel plan for the Fishlake Forest, b) Three Forest Coalition Forest*

Plan Standards, c) designate no motorized trails or new classified roads within UEC proposed wilderness areas, d) maximize motorized recreation, e) a conservation biology alternative, f) eliminate all motorized recreation alternative, g) close the forest to motorized cross-country travel first, then designate a system, h) stop most uses and management of National Forests, i) alternatives that addresses wolf recovery and reintroduction, j) to be consistent with NEPA requirements.

Public Concern Number 203

Public Concern

The Forest Service should issue separate summer recreation and winter recreation travel plans: a) because they have different levels and timing of use, b) because they have different types and levels of resource impacts than summer recreation.

Public Concern Number 204

Public Concern

The Forest Service should consider the economic value of motorized recreation to local economies: a) to provide a larger tax base, b) to promote local employment, c) to meet NEPA disclosure requirements.

Public Concern Number 205

Public Concern

The Forest Service should consider the economic costs of motorized recreation: a) from maintaining the route infrastructure, b) from creating or having to mitigate environmental impacts, c) from loss of business from displaced non-motorized users.

Public Concern Number 206

Public Concern

The Forest Service should propose additional Forest Plan Standards as part of the Fishlake OHV Route Designation Project: a) to comply with NFMA, b) to comply with NEPA.

Public Concern Number 301

Public Concern

The Forest Service should protect the physical and biological resources on the Fishlake National Forest: a) for future generations, b) to meet the agency mission and legal mandates, c) for homeland security.

Public Concern Number 302

Public Concern

The Forest Service should increase protections for roadless areas and potential wilderness: a) to address future growth in motorized use, b) to protect soils, c) to protect watersheds, d) to protect wildlife, d) to protect rare plants, e) to protect sensitive, threatened, and endangered species, f) to protect non-motorized recreational opportunities.

Public Concern Number 303

Public Concern

The Forest Service should monitor OHV impacts on natural resources and other recreational uses: a) to allow adaptive management, b) to comply with agency rules and regulations, c) to protect natural resources.

Public Concern Number 304

Public Concern *The Forest Service should enforce existing travel rules before proposing new restrictions: a) to maintain existing motorized recreation opportunities.*

Public Concern Number 305

Public Concern *The Forest Service should enforce existing travel rules and/or implement new restrictions: a) to protect natural resources, b) to avoid reduction of motorized recreational opportunities.*

Public Concern Number 306

Public Concern *The Forest Service should require licenses for ATVs on the Fishlake National Forest: a) to generate funds for motorized recreation management, b) to improve enforcement of the motorized travel plan.*

Public Concern Number 307

Public Concern *The Forest Service should increase the penalties for OHV violations: a) to increase compliance with the motorized travel plan rules, b) to fund additional law enforcement, c) to fund repair of environmental damaged caused by OHVs.*

Public Concern Number 308

Public Concern *The Forest Service should increase public education efforts related to motorized recreation and OHV use: a) to improve compliance with motorized travel plan rules, b) to promote public safety, c) to protect natural resources, d) to reduce user conflicts, e) to avoid having to resort to eliminating motorized access.*

Public Concern Number 401

Public Concern *The Forest Service should improve management of motorized recreation: a) to protect natural resources, b) to improve the recreational opportunities for motorized users, c) to improve the recreational opportunities for non-motorized users, d) to assure better compliance with motorized travel plan rules, e) to address future growth of motorized use.*

Public Concern Number 402

Public Concern *The Forest Service should provide a "balance" between motorized and non-motorized recreation and its responsibility to protect the environment a) to assure that current and future recreational opportunities are provided for each interest, b) to comply with NFMA's multiple-use mandate, c) to protect natural resources, d) to promote public adherence to the motorized travel plan.*

Public Concern Number 403

Public Concern *The Forest Service should minimize use/user conflicts between motorized users and other resource uses and values: a) to comply with Executive Orders 11644 and 11989, 36CFR295 and other regulations.*

Public Concern Number 404

Public Concern *The Forest Service should create more loop routes: a) to improve motorized recreation opportunities, b) to protect natural resources, c) for public safety.*

Public Concern Number 405

Public Concern *The Forest Service should provide more motorized single track opportunities: a) to create unique recreational opportunities for motorcycles.*

Public Concern Number 501

Public Concern *The Forest Service should make a travel plan with a map and rules that are easy to understand: a) to improve public understanding and adherence to the motorized travel plan, b) public service.*

Public Concern Number 502

Public Concern *The Forest Service should make a travel plan with a map and rules that are consistent with route designations and land management objectives on adjacent lands: a) to improve public understanding and adherence to the motorized travel plan, b) to reduce or eliminate management conflicts on National Forest and adjacent lands.*

Public Concern Number 503

Public Concern *The Forest Service should prohibit unrestricted motorized cross-country travel on the Fishlake National Forest: a) to protect soils, b) to protect watersheds, c) to protect wildlife, d) to protect sensitive, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species, e) to protect roadless areas and potential wilderness, f) for public safety.*

Public Concern Number 504

Public Concern *The Forest Service should designate additional play areas next to communities: a) to provide motorized recreational opportunities.*

Public Concern Number 527

Public Concern *The Forest Service should prohibit play areas next to communities: a) to protect natural resources, b) to protect scenic integrity.*

Public Concern Number 505

Public Concern *The Forest Service should allow motorized cross-country travel for game retrieval: a) to allow elderly and disabled greater hunting opportunities, b) to avoid the wasting of game meat, c) to improve public compliance with the travel plan.*

Public Concern Number 506

Public Concern *The Forest Service should prohibit motorized cross-country travel for game retrieval: a) to protect natural resources, b) to avoid enforcement problems.*

Public Concern Number 507

Public Concern *The Forest Service should increase seasonal restrictions: a) to protect wildlife habitats, b) to reduce road and trail maintenance needs.*

Public Concern Number 508

Public Concern *The Forest Service should designate a system of roads and trails that are open to motorized travel: a) to improve public understanding and adherence to travel plan, b) to make the travel plan easier to enforce, c) to meet the requirements of the National OHV rule, d) to protect natural resources.*

Public Concern Number 509

Public Concern *The Forest Service should increase the number and miles of roads and trails that are open to motorized recreation: a) to address future growth in motorized use, b) to reduce use conflicts, c) to reduce environmental effects, d) for public safety, e) to provide for desired motorized recreation opportunities.*

Public Concern Number 510

Public Concern *The Forest Service should decrease the number and miles of roads and trails that are open to motorized recreation: a) to address future growth in motorized use, b) to reduce use conflicts, c) to protect natural resources, d) for public safety, e) to provide for desired non-motorized recreation opportunities, f) to reduce route maintenance needs.*

Public Concern Number 511

Public Concern *The Forest Service should have and provide good rationale for closing roads and trails to motorized use: a) to give the public a chance to influence the decision, b) to gain public understanding and acceptance, c) to maintain motorized recreation opportunities.*

Public Concern Number 512

Public Concern *The Forest Service should have and provide good rationale for making or keeping roads and trails open to motorized use: a) to give the public a chance to influence the decision, b) to gain public understanding and acceptance, c) to comply with Executive Orders 11644 and 11989, 36CFR295 and other regulations, d) to protect natural resources, e) to create a minimal and/or optimal motorized transportation network.*

Public Concern Number 513

Public Concern *The Forest Service should leave all existing roads and trails currently used by motorized users open: a) because the use is established, b) to meet current and future demands for motorized recreation, c) because they have minimal resource impacts.*

Public Concern Number 514

Public Concern *The Forest Service should not validate user created roads by classifying them and designating them as open to motorized travel: a) because they*

were created illegally, b) to protect soils, c) to protect watersheds, d) to protect wildlife, e) to protect sensitive, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species, f) to protect roadless areas and potential wilderness, g) to maintain non-motorized recreational opportunities.

Public Concern Number 515

Public Concern *The Forest Service should implement an "Open unless signed closed" policy: a) to prevent making law abiding OHV riders criminals, b) to prevent non-motorized users from tearing down open signs.*

Public Concern Number 516

Public Concern *The Forest Service should implement a "Closed unless signed open" policy: a) to enhance enforcement of the travel plan, b) to prevent motorized users from tearing down closure signs.*

Public Concern Number 517

Public Concern *The Forest Service should do a better job maintaining motorized roads and trails: a) to protect natural resources, b) to provide quality motorized recreational opportunities, c) for public safety.*

Public Concern Number 518

Public Concern *The Forest Service should try mitigation of environmental impacts prior to closing motorized roads and trails: a) to maintain motorized recreation opportunities, b) to protect natural resources.*

Public Concern Number 519

Public Concern *The Forest Service should improve signage on the motorized travel system: a) to improve enforcement of the travel plan, b) to create a user-friendly route network.*

Public Concern Number 520

Public Concern *The Forest Service should add facilities such as bathrooms, trail heads and kiosks to the motorized travel system: a) for public service.*

Public Concern Number 521

Public Concern *The Forest Service should maintain access to facilities such as municipal water supplies, utility corridors, and other authorized special uses: a) to allow use, maintenance, and/or improvement of facilities.*

Public Concern Number 522

Public Concern *The Forest Service should consider homeland security issues in its designation of a motorized travel plan: a) to protect municipal water supplies, b) to reduce the nation's dependence on foreign countries for oil.*

Public Concern Number 523

Public Concern *The Forest Service should close special use roads to the general public:*

a) to protect natural resources, b) to reduce road maintenance costs and/or vandalism, c) for public safety, d) for homeland security.

Public Concern Number 524

Public Concern The Forest Service should continue its support and management of the Paiute and/or Great Western Trail systems: a) to provide desirable motorized recreation opportunities, b) to support local economies.

Public Concern Number 525

Public Concern The Forest Service should maintain/create access points between local communities and National Forest: a) to support local economies, b) to support motorized recreation opportunities.

Public Concern Number 526

Public Concern The Forest Service should convert the type of use occurring on a specific route or routes: a) to promote other motorized recreation opportunities, b) to promote ATV recreational opportunities, c) to promote non-motorized recreation opportunities, c) to protect natural resources.

Public Concern Number 528

Public Concern The Forest Service should consider the impacts of displacing existing motorized use: a) to protect natural resources, b) to address future growth of motorized use.

Public Concern Number 529

Public Concern The Forest Service should consider the impacts of displacing non-motorized use: a) because existing non-motorized uses may be less than historic and/or potential levels of use, b) because motorize use has greater impacts than non-motorized uses.

Public Concern Number 530

Public Concern The Forest Service should provide motorized access for elderly and handicapped persons who rely on OHVs for mobility a) as a matter of fairness, b) to comply with the American with Disabilities Act, c) because National Forests are public lands that should be able to be enjoyed by all Americans, d) to address future growth of motorized use.

Public Concern Number 531

Public Concern The Forest Service should manage all forms of cross-country use, not just motorized use: a) because other forms of recreation create impacts, b) because it is not fair for motorized users to be the only ones who are restricted.

Public Concern Number 601

Public Concern The Forest Service should open or keep open specific routes and/or areas to motorized use: a) to provide motorized recreation opportunities, b) to provide loop routes, c) to maintain access to private land inholdings, d) to provide hunting, fishing, and camping access, e) to

address future growth in motorized use, f) to reduce use/user conflicts, g) to protect natural resources, h) for public safety, i) to allow greater Forest access to the elderly and handicapped, j) to be consistent with opportunities/restrictions on adjacent lands, k) to facilitate travel plan enforcement.

Public Concern Number 701

Public Concern

The Forest Service should close or keep closed specific routes and/or areas to motorized use: a) because they were created illegally, b) to protect soils, c) to protect watersheds, d) to protect wildlife, e) to protect sensitive, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species, f) to protect roadless areas and potential wilderness, g) to be consistent with opportunities/restrictions on adjacent lands, h) to facilitate travel plan enforcement, i) to reduce maintenance costs and obligations and redundant routes, j) for public safety, k) because the route is revegetating and/or reclaimed.

Public Concern Number 801

Public Concern

The Forest Service should open or keep open specific trails and/or areas to non-motorized use: a) to provide non-motorized recreation opportunities.