

Gila National Forest Travel Management

Recreation Report

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for:

Gila National Forest

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Recreation

Changes Between the Draft and Final

All additional information added to the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Recreation Specialists Report addresses information requested within response to comments regarding the following: Non-Motorized Opportunities, Equestrian, Quiet, Noise and User Conflicts, Concentrated Use, Motorized Routes (and Opportunities), Motorized Opportunities - Analysis, Cross Country Travel Prohibition, User-Created Routes, National Forest System Trails (NFST) Trails, Single Track Motorcycle Opportunities, Both Motorized Dispersed Camping and Big Game Retrieval, Motorized Dispersed Camping, Motorized Big Game Retrieval, One Vehicle Length Parking, Motorized Areas, Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS), Visual Quality Objectives and eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers (W&S Rivers).

The background section has been updated to include information from the 2011 National Visitor Use Monitoring Report; Information regarding zip codes from Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) comment respondents; Recreation Facility Analysis - Forest Niche; Trail maintenance figures for the Southwestern Region 3 and the Gila National Forest; National Scenic and National Recreation Trails; Overview of Off-Road Vehicle Recreation in New Mexico The Senate Joint Memorial 40 Report; Overview of Facilitation of Hunting Heritage & Wildlife Conservation Plan as directed by Executive Order 13443, Summary of Outfitted services provided on the Gila National Forest, and Eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers.

Noise and User Conflicts was included in the indicator table in Chapter 2 of the DEIS. User Conflicts is not included in the Comparison of Alternatives Table in Chapter 2 of the FEIS. A discussion of Noise and User Conflicts is included within the Motorized routes issue discussion.

Proposed corridors for Motorized Dispersed Camping (MDC) and Motorized Big Game Retrieval (MBGR) along county and state roads are clarified.

Updated Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) to include ROS desired condition established for Forest Plan Analysis Areas.

Updated Visual Quality Objectives to include discussion of effects from Action Alternatives.

Added Analysis of Eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers located outside of Wilderness.

Added Analysis of National Recreation Trails (NRT) – specifically the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST) and Whitewater National Recreation Trail (NRT).

Updated Cumulative Affects Analysis for each Issue.

Background

The Gila National Forest is the sixth largest forest in the United States and offers spectacular scenery ranging from high cool mountains with aspen and Douglas-fir to warm semi-arid lowlands with juniper, oak and cactus. It remains one of the more remote and least developed national forests in the Southwest. The administrative boundary encompasses 3,392,519 acres. Twenty four percent of the forest's land mass is included in congressionally designated wilderness and is managed for Primitive, and Semi-Primitive Non-motorized use. These wilderness areas are the Gila Wilderness (559,688 acres), Blue Range Wilderness (29,099 acres), and Aldo Leopold Wilderness (203,797 acres).

Recreational Opportunities

Developed recreation is defined as recreation that requires facilities that result in concentrated use of an area (Forest Plan, page 297 (USDA Forest Service 1986)). The Gila National Forest currently has 27 campgrounds (2 for groups), 7 picnic sites (3 for groups), 42 trailheads, 3 public shooting ranges on the Glenwood, Silver City and Reserve Ranger Districts, an observation site, and an Interpretive Site Visitor Center at Gila Cliff Dwellings. Developed sites and areas receive most use during the summer and fall seasons and holidays, although several facilities, primarily on the south end of the forest, remain open and receive use year-round.

Other prominent or special features on the forest that contribute to its recreational resource diversity is a 250-mile segment of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST), the Catwalk National Recreation Trail and Whitewater Picnic Area, the Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument (a National Park Service area surrounded by lands managed by the Gila National Forest); Emory Pass Aldo Leopold Vistas; and Senator Clinton P. Anderson Wilderness Overlook. Two scenic byways also travel through the forest; the Trail of the Mountain Spirits traces a circuit in the southern half of the forest, while the Geronimo Trail creates a longer loop encompassing the eastern edge of the forest. Interpretive Trails include the following: Apache Creek Rock Art Trail, Dragon Fly Trail, Vista Village Trail, Scorpion Campground Trail to the Past, Pueblo Park Trail, Lake Roberts Trail, and Tularosa Cabin Trail. The Fort Bayard National Historic landmark is located on the Gila National Forest and includes the Arrastra Interpretive Site as well as the Fort Bayard Big Tree, an enormous Alligator Juniper. Another unique record tree, a Texas Mulberry, is located in the Burro Mountains. The Gila River Bird Area was set aside as bird habitat in 1972 and continues to offer outstanding viewing opportunities year round.

Dispersed recreation activities occur outside of designated sites or developed facilities, and in Wilderness Areas. Dispersed recreation activities many times involve a combination of motorized and non-motorized activities, and occur throughout the year. Hunting from dispersed campsites is very popular on the Gila National Forest. Motorized dispersed camping (MDC) on the forest is primarily characterized as driving off road some distance, parking, and setting up camp. This can be characterized as vehicles towing travel trailers, horse trailers or other types of camping trailers, vehicles with campers, or vehicles with a tent camp set up. Non-motorized opportunities include hiking, backpacking, mountain climbing, mountain biking, horseback riding and packing, dispersed camping, fishing, hunting, boating, and viewing nature. Visitors seeking these forms of recreational experiences often use the forest's single-track trail system for hiking or horseback riding.

Although the Gila National Forest is relatively dry, fishing and water based recreation opportunities can be found on approximately 1,770 miles of perennial creeks and rivers as well as on three man-made lakes: Quemado Lake (112 acres), Lake Roberts (68 acres), and Snow Lake (72 acres). Some of the more common sport fish found in these waters include rainbow and brown trout, large and small mouth bass, as well as channel and flathead catfish. Many native fish are also found in the streams on the forest, some of which are federally listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. None of the streams or rivers on the Gila National Forest are designated as Wild & Scenic Rivers (W&S). The following rivers were found eligible pending determination as of their suitability for inclusion in the W&S River System: Whitewater Creek; Spruce Creek; Middle Fork Gila River; West Fork Gila River; Main Diamond Creek; South Diamond Creek; Holden Prong and Las Animas Creek.

Horseback riding and packing are also popular forms of non-motorized recreation on the forest. This type of use is primarily observed within wilderness and areas adjacent to communities. Backcountry horseback riders visiting wilderness areas use vehicles and stock trailers to access trailheads and areas throughout the forest. It is common for some of these users to pull stock trailers for 3 to 5 hours to reach a trailhead.

Many of these trips are multi-day backcountry trips using pack and saddle stock. Day trip horseback riders more often use trails in areas of the forest immediately adjacent to local communities.

Hunting is a very popular activity in southwestern New Mexico. The 2011 National Visitor Use Monitoring Report (NVUM) (USDA Forest Service 2012) shows that approximately 20 percent of visitors to the Gila National Forest participate in hunting. Eleven New Mexico Game & Fish (NMG&F) Game Management Units (GMUs) are encompassed on the Gila National Forest. Several of the GMUs fall entirely within the Gila National Forest Boundary. (New Mexico Big-Game & Furbearer Rules & Information 2013-2014 license year (NMDGF 2013)).

There are 6 airstrips located on the Gila National Forest. Two airstrips, Jewett Mesa and Reserve are open to the public with maintenance/grading conducted as needed. The others, Beaverhead, Glenwood, Me-Own, and Negrito have restricted access with the public needing to acquire prior approval for landings. All airstrips have road access and none are located within Wilderness.

Outfitted Opportunities

In order to ensure quality recreation experiences for the guided public, the Forest Service requires that any commercial outfitter and guides operating on the National Forest have a special use permit. Special use authorizations provide commercial use of National Forest System lands for a wide variety of activities.

There are 86 Outfitter and Guide operations that provide services on the Gila National Forest. A list of outfitters providing hunting services in New Mexico can be found at http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/enforcement/guide_outfitter/Outfitter10-02-2013.pdf (NMDGF 2013a). Most operations facilitate multi-day visits in designated wilderness including horseback hunting and fishing trips, day rides, pack trips, and guided backpack trips. The following discussion of outfitted opportunities is grouped by Ranger District.

Black Range Ranger District

The Black Range Ranger District administers 17 Outfitter and Guide permits. The majority provide hunting services, however not all provide horseback hunting services. Five Outfitters offer cougar hunting, 1 Outfitter provides camp trips for troubled/at-risk youth, and 1 Outfitter provides weeklong camp trips in the wilderness for youth. One guest ranch located on private land provides summer horse trail rides. Six to 7 of these permits provide hunting trips within the Aldo Leopold and Gila Wilderness areas. Other than the outfitters that provide hunting trips within wilderness, the rest typically camp outside of wilderness and hunt areas accessible by ATV, UTV, or 4x4 vehicles.

Quemado Ranger District

The Quemado District administers 33 hunting Outfitter and Guide Permits, primarily for hunting services for elk, deer bear, mountain lion, and turkey. Outfitters may use motorized vehicles such as ATV/UTVs to access hunting areas and for big game retrieval.

Glenwood Ranger District

The Glenwood Ranger District administers 3 hunting outfitted operations, 2 outfitters providing hunting/fishing/and wilderness trips, 2 operations affiliated with backpacking youth University trips, and 1 operation that provides horseback day rides from Glenwood. Three of these operations provide trips into the Gila Wilderness for youth and young adults.

Wilderness Ranger District

The Wilderness District administers 4 hunting operations, 3 backpacking operations and 3 summer pack trip and day ride operations providing trips into the Gila Wilderness.

Reserve Ranger District

Reserve District administers 11 outfitter operations. Most of them use ATVs and drive forest roads with clients. Very few use horses. All the outfitters mostly provide elk hunting trips with one operation focusing mainly on bear and mountain lion hunting. All hunts start early September and run till the end of December with a few hunts in January. One operation conducts summer trail rides mainly from a private Guest Ranch. Some operations do conduct hunts in the Wilderness but depends on the draw and the hunters.

Silver City Ranger District

The Silver City District administers 7 outfitted hunting operations and 4 operations that provide summer horseback trail rides, and backpacking trips.

Road and Trail Opportunities

There are 4,572.6 miles of NFS road open to all motor vehicle types on the forest, 2.8 miles open seasonally, 33 miles asserting right of way, 9.3 miles acquired right of way, .6 miles of existing right of way, 462 miles of road under County (Catron, Grant, Hidalgo, or Sierra) jurisdiction and 255.8 miles of road under State jurisdiction.

There are 1,608.6 miles of foot/horse trail opportunities on the forest, with 873 miles of trail (54 percent) located within the three wilderness areas (Aldo Leopold, Blue Range, and Gila Wildernesses) providing non-motorized trail opportunities. There are 735 miles of trail located outside Wilderness. An additional 524 miles of Maintenance Level 1 closed roads are available for non-motorized travel opportunities. These “closed roads” are roads are in storage between intermittent administrative uses and closed to all vehicular traffic, but may be available and suitable for non-motorized uses. Currently, except where prohibited, foot/horse travel on the forest is not restricted to the designated trail system, that is, foot/horse travel can travel cross-country within the forest boundary.

There are 16 miles of existing motorized OHV trails, less than 50 inches in width, designated on the forest. There are over 5,300 miles of roads within the forest boundary that are under Forest, county, state, and federal jurisdiction available for motorized travel by all types of motor vehicles.

National Visitor Use Monitoring

The National Visitor Use Monitoring (NVUM) survey process was designed to better understand recreation use of National Forest System (NFS) lands (USDA 2012). The (NVUM) program provides science-based estimates of the volume and characteristics of recreation visitation to the National Forest System. Visitor Use Monitoring was collected on the Gila National Forest during Fiscal Years (Oct – Sept) 2001, 2006 and 2011.

Information provided regarding NVUM data is from the 2011 surveys (USDA Forest Service, 2012) unless stated otherwise. The information gleaned from NVUM is valid and applicable at Forest, Regional, and National levels, but was not designed to be accurate at the district or site specific level. This is the only use data the Forest has collected.

FY 2011 Total Estimated Site Visits to the Gila National Forest are 699,000 site visits broken out into the following categories: 214,000 Day Use Developed Sites Visits; 62,000 Overnight Use Developed Site Visits; General Forest Area Site Visits 402,000; and Designated Wilderness 21,000 Site Visits. A site visit is the entry of one person onto a National Forest site or area to participate in recreation activities for an unspecified period of time. Demographic results show that over 72 percent of visits are made by males. Hispanics account for over 35 percent of all visits to the Gila. Native American visitors account for almost 4 percent. Children under the age of 16 comprise only a little more than 10 percent of visits. Over 30 percent of visits are people age 60 or older. The Gila serves two distance zones. Approximately 55 percent of visits are from people living within 50 miles of the forest; however, almost 30 percent are from 100 to 500 miles away (Figure 1).

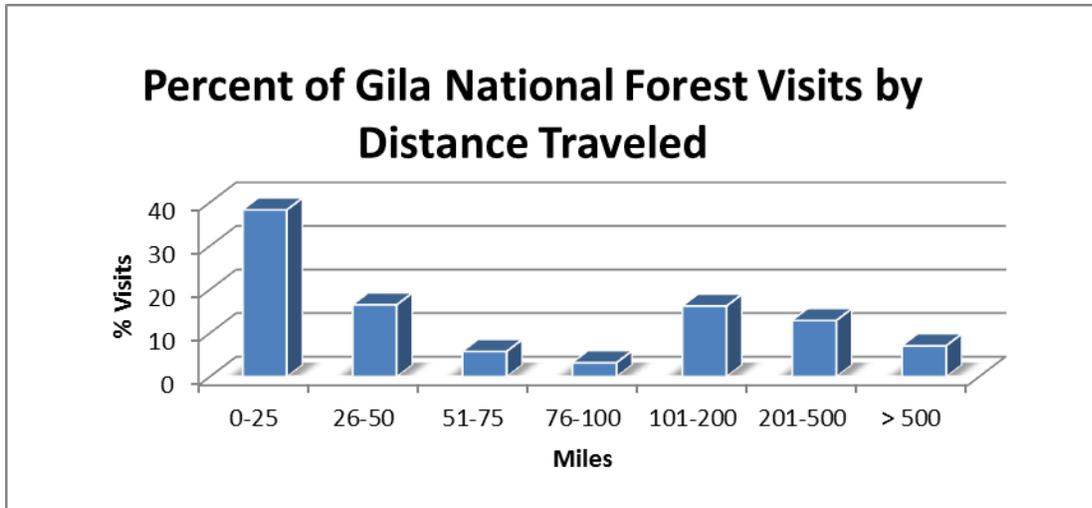


Figure 1. Percent Distribution of Forest Visits by Distance Traveled from FY11 NVUM Report (USDA Forest Service 2012)

For comparison purposes, Figure 2 displays the distribution of comments received on the DEIS by distance from the Gila National Forest.

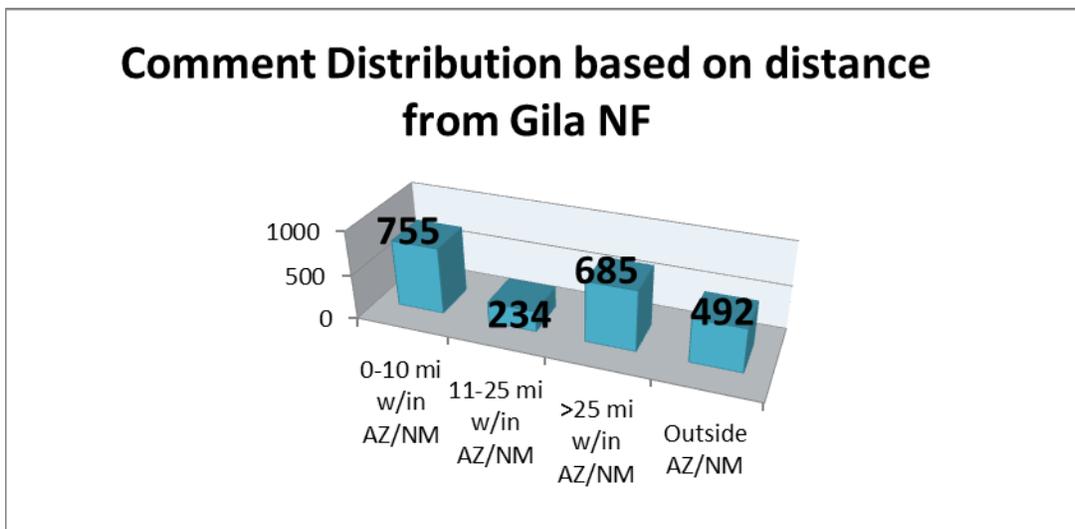


Figure 2. DEIS Comment Distribution Based on Distance from the Forest

The Figures below display the following NVUM data from the 15 most commonly reported zip codes and DEIS Comment Data by zip code:

- percent of respondents from the 4 counties where the Gila is located with other counties grouped - FY11 NVUM.
- percent of respondents from the 4 counties where the Gila is located who responded to the request for comments for the DEIS with other counties grouped.

The top 15 most common zip codes reported in the NVUM are from the following vicinities: Grant Co. 61 percent. Catron Co. 10 percent, Sierra Co. 4 percent, Hidalgo Co. 0 percent. Other Counties grouped in the chart are comprised of: Dona Ana Co. 6 percent, Luna Co. 5 percent, Socorro Co. 5 percent, Valencia Co. 4 percent, Cibola Co. 3 percent and Foreign Countries 2 percent. Wilderness visitors travel the furthest. Most travel from other states to visit Wilderness Areas within the Gila National Forest. NVUM data regarding respondent distribution for Wilderness is located within the FY 11 Gila National Forest Visitor Monitoring Report.

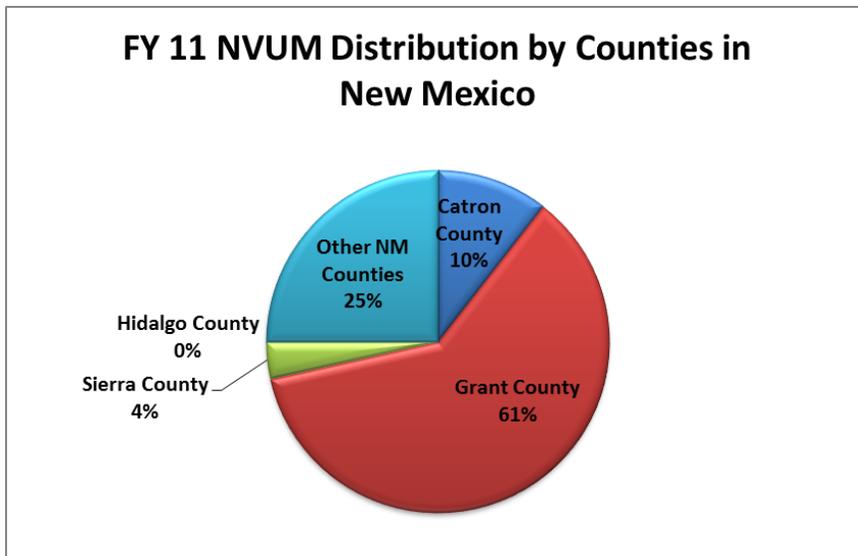


Figure 3. NVUM Distribution by Counties in New Mexico

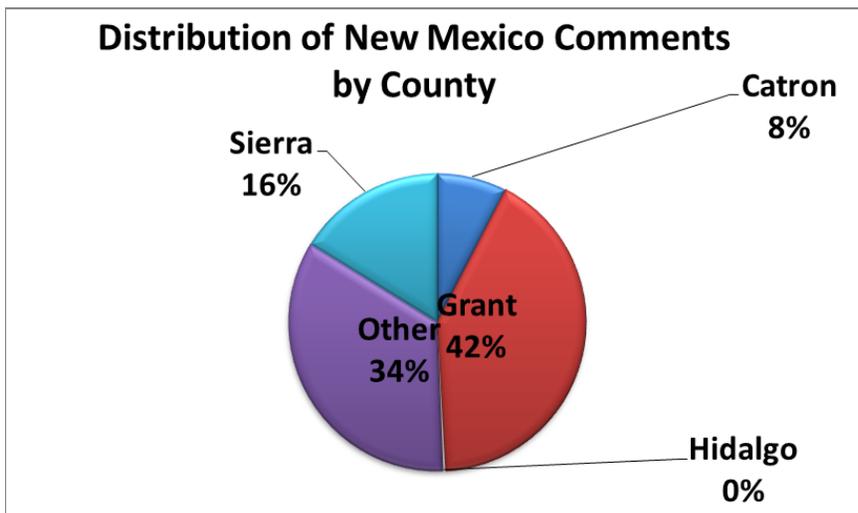


Figure 4. FEIS Comments Distribution by Counties in New Mexico

Most visits to the Gila National Forest are relatively short. The median National Forest visit duration is under 5 hours. But, since the mean national forest visit duration is over 38 hours which indicates a number of national forest visits involve staying quite some time. Almost 50 percent of visits are made by people who visit at most five times per year. But nearly 20 percent are made by people who visit more than 50 times per year.

See Activities Tables in the Social and Economic Report USDA Forest Service 2013k. The first table displays the main activity participation on the Gila National Forest from NVUM, another Table provides an estimate of the break out of these activities as motorized and non-motorized. The distribution of activities by recreation type estimates that motorized activities account for 26 percent to 50 percent and non-motorized activities account for 53 to 76 percent of the Gila NF recreation. The use figures could likely underestimate users. The figures are taken from what users indicated as the primary purpose of their visit. Users may not have indicated their mode of travel as their primary purpose of their visit. The four most frequently selected main activities reported by those surveyed on the Gila National Forest are hiking/walking, (21 percent) hunting (20 percent), viewing natural features (12 percent), and pleasure driving (12 percent).

The distribution of activities by recreation type is 46.4 percent split between motorized and non-motorized, with 14.7 percent motorized, and 41.1 percent non-motorized. Since the precise distribution of “split activities is unknown, a range of (25 to 75 percent is used to capture a reasonable distribution for the Economic Analysis. The result of this split is an estimate motorized activities accounting for 26.3 percent to 49.5 percent and non-motorized activities accounting for 52.7 to 75.9 percent of the Gila NF recreation.”

Figure 5 displays the Main Activity information graphically from the Activity Table in the Socio-Economic Report. The four most frequently selected main activities reported by those surveyed on the Gila National Forest are hiking/walking (21 percent), hunting (20 percent), viewing natural features (12 percent), and pleasure driving (12 percent).

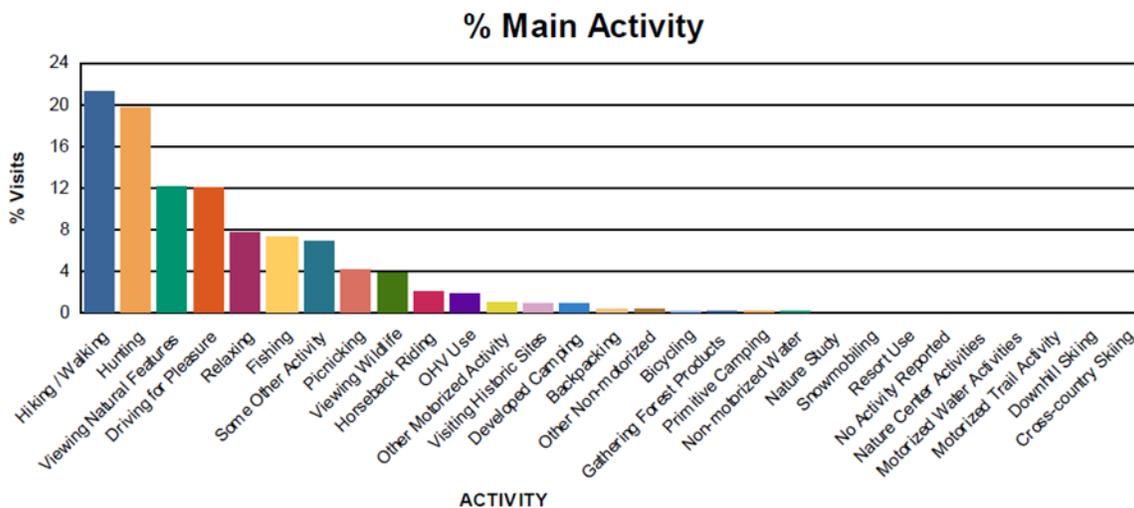


Figure 5. FY11 NVUM – Main Activity Percentages

Table 1 displays Forest visits indicating use of Special Facilities or Areas. One third of those surveyed were asked about whether they made use of the listed facilities and special designated areas on the table during their visit. Twenty-two point five percent indicated using Designated OHV Areas, 37.8 percent

indicated using Forest Roads, 37.5 percent indicated using Motorized Dual Track Trails, and 7.3 percent indicated using Motorized Single Track Trails.

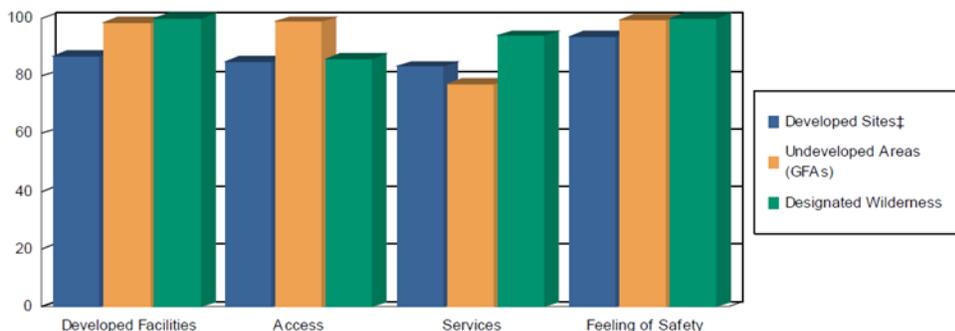
Table 1. FY 11 NVUM – Percent of National Forest Visits* Indicating Use of Special Facilities or Areas

Special Facility or Area	Percent of National Forest Visits†
Developed Swimming Site	0.6
Scenic Byway	11.5
Visitor Center or Museum	3.6
Designated ORV Area	22.5
Forest Roads	37.8
Interpretive Displays	7.5
Information Sites	5.4
Developed Fishing Site	5.7
Motorized Single Track Trails	7.3
Motorized Dual Track Trails	37.5
None of these Facilities	22.1

* A National Forest Visit is defined as the entry of one person upon a national forest to participate in recreation activities for an unspecified period of time. A National Forest Visit can be composed of multiple Site Visits.

† Survey respondents could select as many or as few special facilities or areas as appropriate.

Overall satisfaction ratings were quite high. Ninety-three percent were very satisfied with their visit and 6.3 percent were somewhat satisfied. Satisfaction with Forest-wide Road Conditions follows: Roads – 40 percent very satisfied, 40 percent somewhat satisfied, 10 percent neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 8 percent somewhat dissatisfied. Satisfaction with Forest –wide Signage Adequacy follows: 62 percent Very Satisfied, 26 percent somewhat satisfied, 10 percent neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 2 percent very dissatisfied. See Figure 6 and Figure 7 below. Satisfaction Ratings specifically for General Forest Areas (GFAs) are shown in Table 2. Ten percent expressed concern with Condition of Environment, 55 percent very satisfied with Road Conditions, 67 percent satisfied with signage adequacy and 78 percent satisfied with Trail Conditions.



* “Percent Meet Expectations (PME)” is the proportion of satisfaction ratings in which the numerical satisfaction rating for a particular element is equal to or greater than the importance rating for that element. This indicator tracks the congruence between the agency’s performance and customer evaluations of importance. The idea behind this measure is that those elements with higher importance levels must have higher performance levels. Lower scores indicate a gap between desires and performance.

*‡ This category includes both Day Use and Overnight Use Developed Sites

Figure 6. FY 11 NVUM – Percent Meets Expectations Scores*

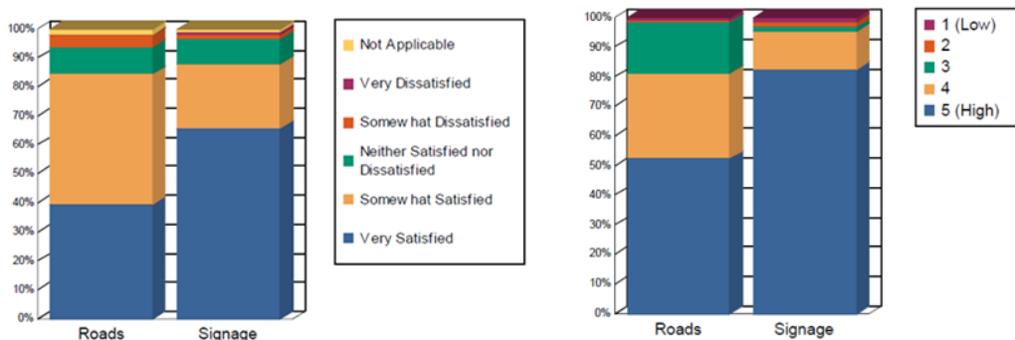


Figure 7. FY 11 – NVUM Satisfaction with and Importance of Forest-wide Conditions and Signage Adequacy

Table 2. FY 11 NVUM Percent Satisfaction Rating for Facilities

Satisfaction Element	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Mean Rating§	Mean Importance†	No. Obs‡
Restroom Cleanliness							4.5	8
Developed Facilities							3.2	9
Condition of Environment	10.8	0.0	0.2	12.2	76.9	4.4	4.9	27
Employee Helpfulness								4
Interpretive Displays	0.0	0.0	30.0	10.0	60.0	4.3	3.9	10
Parking Availability	0.0	0.0	32.1	1.1	66.8	4.3	4.3	13
Parking Lot Condition	0.0	1.5	86.9	1.5	10.2	3.2	3.2	10
Rec. Info. Availability	0.0	0.4	71.5	24.5	3.6	3.3	3.8	17
Road Condition	0.0	0.2	11.0	33.1	55.8	4.4	4.3	25
Feeling of Safety	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2	99.6	5.0	5.0	27
Scenery	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.1	88.9	4.9	4.8	27
Signage Adequacy	0.0	0.0	11.0	22.1	67.0	4.6	4.7	26
Trail Condition	0.0	0.3	0.6	20.3	78.8	4.8	4.6	21
Value for Fee Paid								8

NOTE: The data was not reported for items with 10 or fewer responses. Satisfaction and importance were asked as two separate questions so one of these may have 10 responses even though the other does not.

§ Scale: Very Dissatisfied =1 Somewhat Dissatisfied=2, Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied=3, Somewhat Satisfied=4, Very Satisfied=5

†Scale: Not Important = 1, Somewhat Important=2, Moderately Important=3, Important=4, Very Important=5

‡No. obs is the number of survey respondents who responded to this item.

Visitors were asked to rate their perception of how crowded the recreation site or area felt to them. Crowding was reported on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 denotes hardly anyone was there, and a 10 indicates the area was perceived as overcrowded. Site types are broken out by Day Use Developed Site, Overnight Use Developed sites, Undeveloped Areas (General Forest Areas-GFA) and Designated Wilderness. For Undeveloped Areas (GFA) 0.2 percent of respondents rated their visit a 10 as overcrowded, while the average crowding rating was 3.2. Average crowding ratings for Day Use Developed Sites is 3.7, Overnight Use Developed Sites 3.4 and Designated Wilderness 3.7. Two percent rated their experience a 1 hardly anyone there in the Day Use Developed Sites category. See Table 3 and Figure 8 below showing percent of site visits by crowding rating by site type.

Table 3. FY 11 NVUM - Percent of Site Visits* by Crowding Rating and Site Type

Crowding Rating†	Percent Of Day Use Developed Sites	Percent of Overnight Use Developed Sites	Percent of Undeveloped Areas (GFAs)	Percent of Designated Wilderness
10 - Overcrowded	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0
9	1.1	0.0	0.4	14.1
8	2.5	9.2	0.2	0.0
7	2.6	0.0	0.2	0.0
6	13.6	0.5	11.5	0.0
5	8.1	1.9	0.5	0.0
4	17.3	20.6	10.9	14.1
3	18.7	35.9	43.3	43.2
2	34.1	31.8	32.9	28.6
1 - Hardly anyone there	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Average Rating	3.7	3.4	3.2	3.7

*A Site Visit is the entry of one person onto a national forest site or area to participate in recreation activities for an unspecified period of time.

† Survey respondents rated how crowded the site or area they were interviewed at was using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 meant hardly anyone was there and 10 meant the site or area was overcrowded.

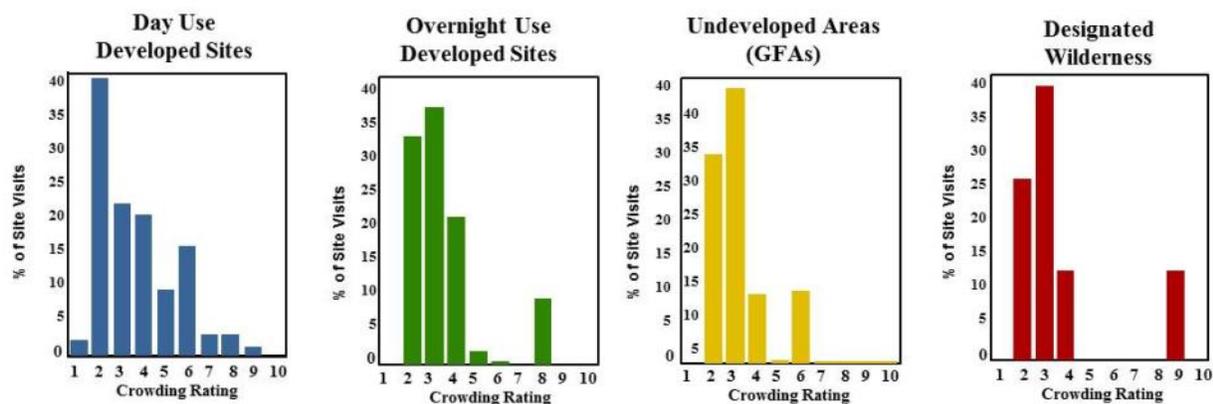


Figure 8. FY11 – Percent of Site Visits by Crowding Rating and Site Type

National Recreation Trends

Trend information from Outdoor Recreation Trends and Futures, A Technical Report supporting the Forest Service 2010 Resource Planning Act Assessment (RPA) (Cordell 2012), states one overriding national

trend is quite evident: the mix of outdoor activities chosen by Americans and the relative popularity of activities overall have been evolving over the last several decades. One general category of activity that has been showing growth in the first decade of the 21st century is nature-based recreation. Among types of nature based recreation, motorized activities showed growth up to about 2005, but ended up toward the end of the 2000-2009 decade at about the same as 2000. The trend in hunting, fishing, and backcountry activities is relatively flat during this period. The clear growth area was within the overall group of activities oriented toward viewing and photographing nature. This study projects outdoor recreation activities to grow out to 2060. The top five activities projected with the highest growth potential in terms of participants are developed skiing, other skiing, challenge activities, equestrian activities, and motorized water activities. The lowest rate of projected participant growth are visiting primitive areas, motorized off road activities and motorized snow activities, hunting, fishing, and floating water activities.

Gila National Forest Niche

In 2007, the Gila National Forest developed a Recreation Facility Analysis 5 Year Program of Work and Programmatic Results of Implementation Document. During the Recreation Facility Analysis (RFA) Process the Forest developed a Forest Niche that defines what opportunities the Gila National Forest can provide local and regional visitors (USDA Forest Service 2007). A full description of the Gila National Forest Niche is located in the project file. The Gila National Forest Niche is “Experience the Wild.”

From wilderness to western heritage, visitors to the Gila NF have the opportunity to “find themselves” in the wildness of the forest. The essence of the Gila is the freedom to explore vast expanses of backcountry. Heritage and cultural connections allow local communities, Native Americans, and recreationists to establish long-term bonds with the forest. Traditional gathering of forest products and hunting bring visitors from near and far. Rivers and lakes, uncommon in the Southwest, provide relief from heat across the forest.

Issues Identified Through Outreach Efforts

This report includes analysis of each of the issues, Motorized Routes, Motorized Dispersed Camping, Motorized Big Game Retrieval, and Motorized Areas in relation to the changes described in Alternatives C through G. This report will also analyze effects of the alternatives on the Trail Economics, Wilderness Areas, National Scenic and National Recreation Trails, Wild & Scenic (W&S) Eligible River segments located outside of Wilderness, Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS), and Visual Quality Objectives (VQO).

Motorized Routes – Affected Environment

Motorized routes within the Gila National Forest boundary include 4,572.6 miles of maintenance level 2–5 National Forest System roads, and 15.8 miles of National Forest System trails (vehicles <50 inches) designed and managed for motorized use. There are also 784.1 miles of County, State and US roads and highways within the administrative boundary; this mileage remains constant throughout all alternatives.

There are 1,608.6 miles of foot/horse trail opportunities on the forest, with 873 miles of trail (54 percent) located within the three wilderness areas (Aldo Leopold, Blue Range, and Gila Wildernesses) providing non-motorized trail opportunities. There are 735 miles of trail located outside Wilderness providing foot/horse trail opportunities.

An additional 524 miles of Maintenance Level 1 closed roads are available for non-motorized travel opportunities. These “closed roads” are roads in storage between intermittent administrative uses and closed to all vehicular traffic, but may be available and suitable for non-motorized uses. Currently, except

where prohibited, foot/horse travel on the forest is not restricted to the designated trail system, that is, foot/horse travel can travel cross-country within the forest boundary.

There are currently no single-track-motorcycle trails designated on the forest. Nearly all forest visitors, regardless of the purpose for their visit, use the motorized transportation system to reach their destination. Many times, recreation activities involve a combination of motorized and non-motorized activities. Therefore, making changes to the existing motorized transportation system by adding and/or removing roads and motorized trails has the potential to affect the diversity of recreation opportunities for both motorized and non-motorized users of the forest.

Motorized opportunities involve the use of both highway legal and non-highway legal vehicles such as motorcycles, ATVs, UTVs, and 4-wheel drives of all varieties. People who practice motorized recreation such as firewood gathering and motorized dispersed camping are specific user groups who benefit greatly from the Gila National Forest's network of nearly 4,600 miles of open maintenance level 2–5 roads.

Many non-motorized activities such as picnicking, hiking, viewing wildlife, biking, and fishing depend on motorized routes to access areas in which to perform these primary activities. These same non-motorized activities, however, are among the most susceptible to the detrimental impacts of noise, emissions, and use conflicts associated with the addition of unauthorized motorized routes. Public responses to scoping emphasize this dilemma. Many comments expressed a desire to protect and enhance opportunities for quiet recreation; others expressed a desire for continued motorized access to special places, while others expressed a desire to keep motorized access points in which to begin trips in which to perform non-motorized forms of recreation travel.

The Forest is currently open to cross-country motorized travel. There is approximately 2.44 million acres of National Forest land outside of wilderness and other areas restricted to off road vehicle use that is open to motorized uses. The areas listed in the Forest Plan where motorized off-road use is restricted include: all Wilderness Areas, Tularosa Wetlands, Gila River Bird Management Area, Fort Bayard, Silver City Watershed, Funny Rocks Area, and San Francisco River from Mule Creek to the Arizona state line.

There are currently few prohibitions on motorized use of the single-track trail system within the forest area; however, evidence of motorized use of single-track trail on the ground is limited. This could be because most single-track trails are designed and maintained for hikers or pack and saddle stock. Many public comments on the matter expressed a desire to authorize motorcycle use of certain trails throughout the forest. Other comments recommended closing all single-track trails to motorized travel.

It is also acknowledged that slope, topography, and vegetation may limit motor vehicle use and access on the 2.44 million acres. Using 40 percent as a maximum slope for vehicle travel, approximately 1.85 million of the 2.44 is more likely available for motorized cross-country travel. This is just an approximation and motor vehicle use may still be limited by topography and vegetation across the landscape. The design parameters for maximum slope for short pitches recommended for construction of single track motorcycle trails is 40 percent (FSH 2309.18 2008a). See Figure 9 and Figure 10.

The earliest approach to recreational conflict was to view it as competition for resources among user groups (Devall & Harry, 1981; Owens 1985). Two more theoretically grounded and somewhat overlapping conceptualizations today are categorized as follows: conflict as goal interference and conflict based on differences in social values. (MacLennan & Moore 2011) Jacob & Schreyer 1980 conceptualized the goal interference can arise between recreationists on the basis of four distinct factors: activity style – the various personal meanings attached to an activity, resource specificity – the significance attached to using a specific recreation resource for a given recreation experience, mode of

experience – the varying expectation of how a natural environment is perceived, and tolerance for lifestyle diversity – the tendency to accept or reject lifestyles different from one’s own.

All of these types of conflict can arise between motorized and non-motorized recreationists. Use conflict often can be “asymmetrical” in that one user group is generally more impacted by conflict than the other. The most often reported social and safety impacts are conflicts between OHV and non-motorized users, displacement of users, conflicts with private land owners, and irresponsible OHV operation. (GAO report June 2009 report to subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public lands, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives; Enhanced Planning Could Assist Agencies in Managing Increase Use of Off- Highway Vehicles). Often motorized and non-motorized users share the same or similar goals, but those seeking quiet and solitude through non-motorized means are more likely to be disturbed by engine noise from an ATV than are those traveling by motor vehicle.

In the comments, examples of specific incidences were provided regarding conflicts which occurred on the forest with motorized users. Comments received from non-motorized users expressed the importance of the ability to enjoy their recreational forest pursuits such as hiking, horseback riding, hunting, angling, bird watching, and other activities where quiet and solitude are an important element of their recreational experience. When non-motorized users encounter motorized activity and associated traffic, speeding, exhaust, dust, vehicle noise, or environmental damage conflict can occur. This can all lead to the displacement of non-motorized recreationist from places they would normally frequent. (Moore 1994, Gambill 1998, and La Pointe 2000). Comments were received favoring primitive and semi primitive non-motorized modes of recreation within the general forest area outside of wilderness.

Comments were received from residents of communities adjacent to and within the forest including the Burros, Mimbres, Glenwood, Quemado Estates, Reserve, and Rancho Grande Estates. Most of these comments expressed concern of the allowance of cross country travel on forest adjacent to their community and were in support of the designation of motorized routes and the elimination of cross-country travel on forest.

Comments from motorized users stated conflict was not perceived as an issue. More important to motorized users experience and satisfaction is the variety, distance, and number of motorized routes to choose from. Motorized users comments expressed concern that the Action Alternatives do not provide enough Semi-Primitive Motorized and Roded Natural opportunities. Concern was also expressed that the range of the Action Alternatives was not wide enough. Commenters felt Alternative C proposing the most motorized activities would not adequately meet their desires to enjoy their motorized recreational pursuits.

The conflict for motorized users may stem from off-site interactions when other user groups seek to restrict motorized access and issue complaints about ORV use to land management agencies. Forest recreation managers’ report many motorized users are feeling disenfranchised and frustrated that they keep “losing trails and areas” to ride. After decades of relatively unrestricted use, many motorized users are beginning to feel squeezed. (Yankoviak 2005)

Motor vehicles are a legitimate and appropriate way for people to enjoy their National Forests in the right places, and with proper management. Current regulations were developed when OHVs were less widely available, less powerful, and less capable of cross-country travel than today's models. The growing popularity and capabilities of OHVs demand new regulations, so that the Forest Service can continue to provide these opportunities while sustaining the health of NFS lands and resources.

Americans cherish the National Forests and Grassland for the values they provide: opportunities for healthy recreation and exercise, natural scenic beauty, important natural resources, protection of rare species, wilderness, a connection with their history, and opportunities for unparalleled outdoor adventure.

National Forests should provide access for both motorized and non-motorized users in a manner that is environmentally sustainable over the long term. The National Forest is not reserved for the exclusive use of any one group, nor must every use be accommodated on every acre. The Forests are managed by law for multiple use. The Travel Management Rule TMR does not prohibit the management of National Forest System (NFS) lands for multiple use as provided in the Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act of 1960 (MUSYA). MUSYA authorizes and directs the Secretary of Agriculture to develop and administer the renewable resources of timber, range, water, recreation, and wildlife on the national forests for multiple use and sustained yield of the products and services.

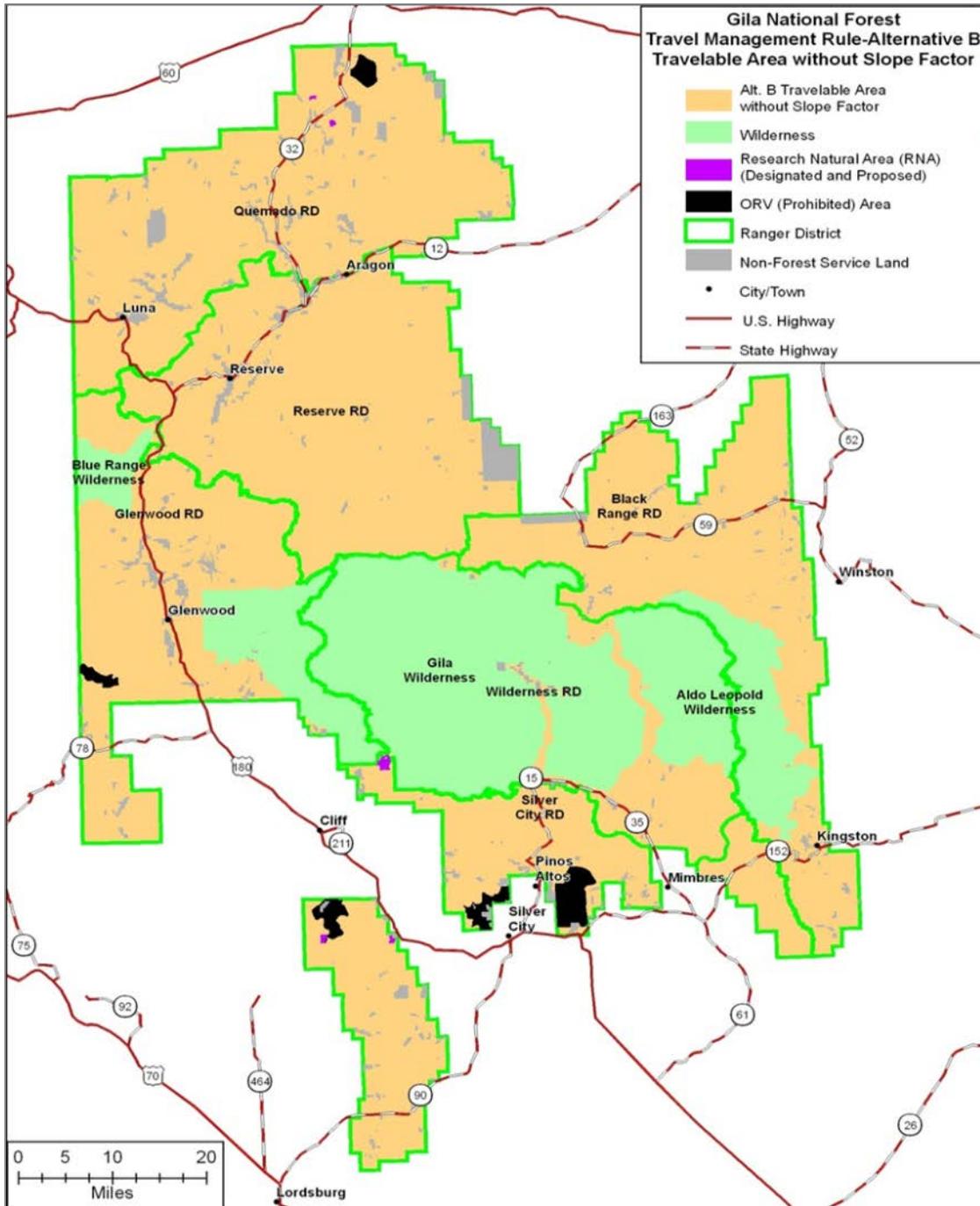


Figure 9. Travelable Area without Slope Factor

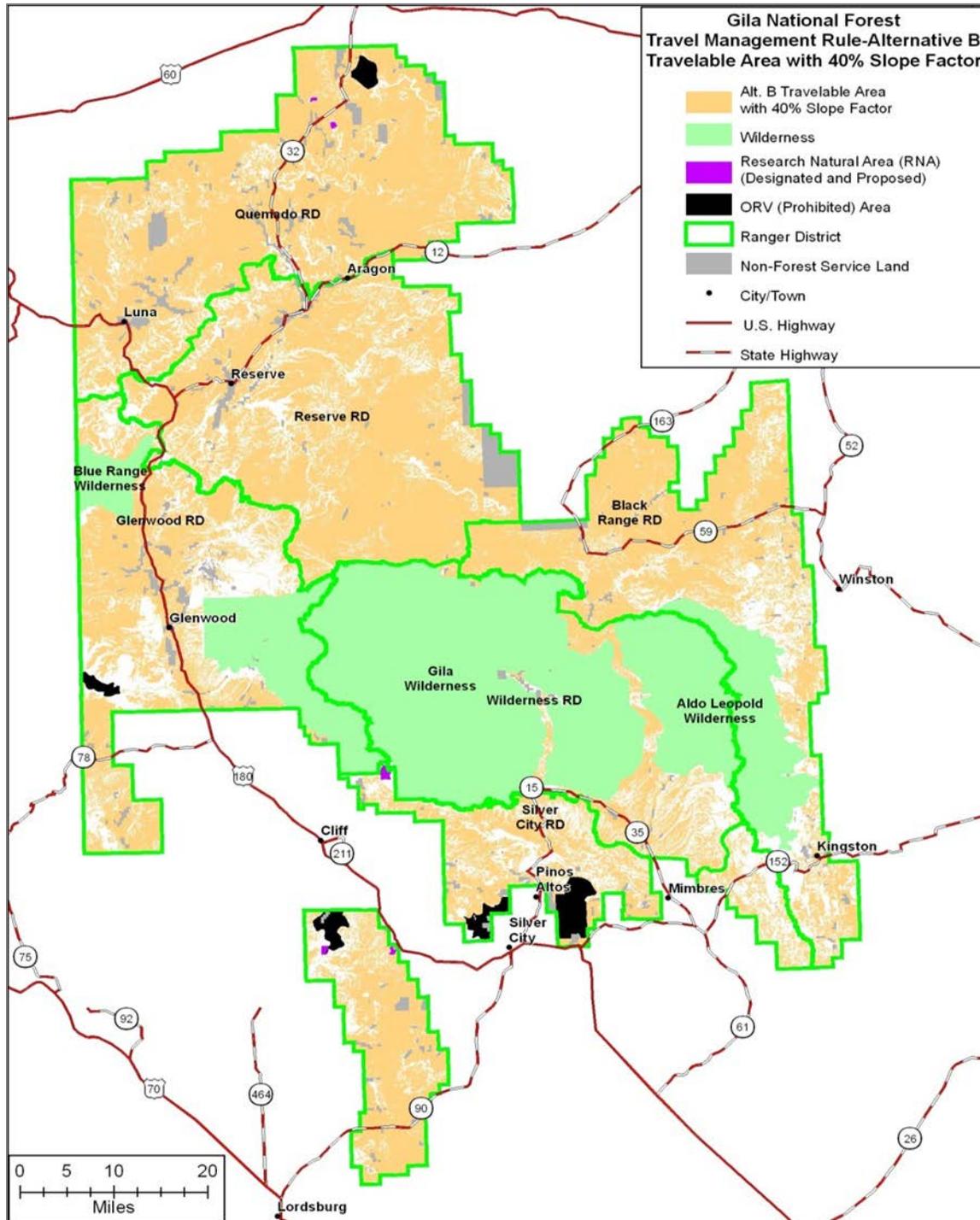


Figure 10. Travelable Area with 40 Percent Slope Factor

Motorized Routes – Environmental Consequences

Short-term Timeframe: 1 year

Long-term Timeframe: 20 years

Spatial Boundary: The administrative forest boundary is the unit of spatial analysis when considering effects associated with changes in the NFS or season of use.

Analysis Methods:

Analysis methods included the use of Forest Service databases and Geographic Information System (GIS) data coverages for roads, trails, ROS, Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs), WSAs, W&S Rivers outside Wilderness and NMG&F GMUs for the Gila National Forest. The GIS mileage was used as a relative comparison for analyzing all resource areas. For this analysis, miles of roads and trails open or closed to different vehicles were calculated using the Forest Service GIS spatial data. Information about road and trail mileages is located in the Forest Service infrastructure (INFRA) data base and in the project file. Infrastructure data is not currently completely linked to the GIS data base. Calculations and numbers represent the GIS mileages of roads and trails within the administrative boundary of the forest, for comparative purposes. Mileages in Tables in FEIS Chapter 2 utilize Infra data and differ slightly from the GIS trail mileages. Actual road and trail mileages vary on the ground. All numbers may have some rounding errors. Some of the Table route mileages vary slightly from the original DEIS route mileages presented.

Data limitations:

A complete inventory of on the ground unauthorized routes has not been completed. Unauthorized routes proposed in the Action Alternatives were recommended from the public and proposed to respond to the issues and intent of each alternative. The Travel Management Rule (TMR) states that “reviewing and inventorying all roads, trails, and areas without regard to prior travel management decisions and travel plans would be unproductive, inefficient, and counter to the purposes of this final rule.” Regional Guidelines regarding the Travel Management Rule state that “it is important to convey to all interested parties that identification of the existing direction does not preclude the designation of road, trail, or areas that are not part of the existing direction. Conversely, a road, trail, or area that is currently part of the existing direction does not assure its designation.”

There is no data available regarding user conflicts. Miles of proposed motorized activities has been used to estimate the risk of potential conflicts by alternative. There is no site specific visitor use data for Wilderness, IRAs, WSAs, or GMUs. National Visitor Use Monitoring data is presented in the background section. This data pertains to the forest level and is not site specific.

CEQ regulations for implementing NEPA state that when an agency is evaluating reasonable foreseeable significant adverse effects on the human environment, in an EIS, and there is incomplete or unavailable information, the agency shall always make clear that such information is lacking. (40 CFR 1502.22)

The following are the direct and indirect effects of proposed actions that relate to the issues presented for Motorized Routes. The discussion includes the breakdown of any additions and/or changes to the motorized NFS road and trail system for each alternative described in Chapter 2 of the FEIS. The effects of the Action Alternatives discussion is based on the data tables included in the Recreation Specialists Report Appendix A. A number of the Tables include mileages of state and county roads within the Gila National Forest boundary to display road opportunities available to visitors Forest Wide. Opportunities for hunting access, miles of motorized and Maintenance Level 1 ML-1(closed) Roads, and motorized trails are displayed by New Mexico Game & Fish Game Management Unit (GMUs). The discussion focuses on the recreation opportunities available based on the proposed mileages of designated routes, proposed route closures, and percentage of non-wilderness with mileages to the nearest open road.

Motorized Route Indicators

- Miles of Motorized Road and Trail Route Designation by Definition Forest Wide including State and County Roads. The subsets of Miles of Motorized Road and Trail Route Designations within WSAs and IRAs are included in the WSA and IRA sections.
- Miles of motorized and Maintenance Level-1 (ML-1) (closed) Road and Motorized and Non-motorized trail opportunities Forest wide including county, state, highways that cross the Forest, including the 11 New Mexico Game and Fish (NMG&F) Game Management Units (GMUs). The subsets of 28 Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs), 2 Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) and 3 eligible Wild & Scenic (W&S) Rivers outside Wilderness are included in the IRA, WSA, and Eligible W&S River sections.
- Number of motorized routes by lengths in miles proposed for closure
- Total Forest Percentage of Non- Wilderness displaying nearest open road within 0.0-0.5mile, 0.5 -1.0 mile, 1.0-2.0 mile, 2.0-3.0 mile, 3.0-4.0 miles and > 4.0 miles by alternative

Assumptions Common to All Action Alternatives Regarding Motorized Routes

- Roads, trails, and areas designated for motor vehicle use are open to visitors of all ages and abilities. The Forest Service is committed to integrating into the full range of recreation opportunities while protecting natural resources and settings so that people with and without disabilities have the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors. This commitment is established by laws and in Forest Service policy.
- Wheelchairs are not motor vehicles and may be used where foot traffic is allowed, which is almost everywhere in the National forest System; this will not be changed by the travel management decision. However, where motor vehicle use including the use of other power-driven mobility devices is prohibited, such use is prohibited for all people, including people with disabilities. Federal laws, regulation and policy do not require exceptions be made solely because a person has a disability.
- A TMR Implementation Plan would be developed that would include: monitoring; education; enforcement; and engineering (signing).
- With visitor use data limited and National Visitor Use Monitoring data lacking site specificity, it is difficult to estimate or predict if or how visitor use and travel would change under the various action alternatives.
- The site specific routes proposed for closure and proposed to remain open to motorized travel would affect each individual's visitor satisfaction. Each visitor's perception of opportunities the Forest should offer into the future is based on past experiences tied to a sense of place and preferred recreation activity.

Effects Common to All Action Alternatives Regarding Motorized Routes

- The prohibition on cross-country travel will be in place for all action alternatives. The effects of the prohibition on cross-country travel in the short and long term are expected to be the same for each action alternative as described in the following bullets.
 - ◆ The addition of unauthorized motorized routes resulting from unrestricted motorized cross-country travel will be drastically reduced and/or eliminated. The designation of motorized routes and prohibition on cross-country travel gives the most opportunity for managers to contain and rehabilitate areas damaged by cross-country motorized use.

- ◆ Forest users who currently travel cross-country expressed concern at the loss of this opportunity on the forest. Cross country travel is currently practiced for the following uses: retrieving game; testing technical skills and exciting off-route travel; traveling between two existing routes or to points of interest; accessing dispersed campsites by a motorized mode of travel; or gathering forest products (i.e., piñon nuts and firewood gathering for dead and down) outside of designated areas. These forest users will now be restricted to traveling on designated routes.
- ◆ Upon implementation of the Travel Management Rule, the use of motorized vehicles off of the designated road system for the purpose of gathering firewood (dead, down, live, and green) within designated firewood areas may be allowed. Where allowed, based on need and project area, vehicles use off of designated routes will be described within the designated firewood area permit.
- Overall, user conflict on motorized routes is expected to be reduced by implementing the Travel Management Rule under all Action Alternatives. Researchers have found that such a system reduces direct conflicts (Filmore and Bury 1978, Frost and McCool 1998, Albritton and Stein 2007, Snyder et al. 2008). This is due to motorized road and trail routes, areas, and corridors for motorized dispersed camping and motorized big game retrieval would be administratively defined and published on the Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM). This would offer the public a means to better plan their recreational pursuits based on the unique expectations of the individual. When drivers, dispersed campers, and hunters stay on the system of designated routes, everyone else knows where to go to avoid motorized users if they choose. When a user's expectations of what they will experience are aligned with the opportunities provided that user's satisfaction is increased and conflict between users has the potential to be reduced.
- All Action Alternatives provide the current access to the 27 developed campgrounds, 7 picnic sites, 42 trailheads, and 3 public shooting ranges located on the Gila National Forest. An exception exists where access is proposed to change to one or two trailheads. This is described in Action Alternatives D, E, F, and G.
- Forest users would continue to be able to park within one vehicle length (including vehicle and trailer) from road edge along all designated roads where it is safe to do so without resource damage.
- Motorized routes, corridors for Motorized Dispersed Camping and Big Game Retrieval and Areas all would be defined with locations and published on the motor vehicle use map (MVUM). This would offer the public a means to better plan their recreational pursuits based on the unique expectations of the individual.
- This project may affect special use Outfitter and Guide operations where a change in motorized or non-motorized opportunity is proposed. Direct and indirect effects to outfitter and guide operation could occur with all Action Alternatives. The proposed changes to motorized access could affect the outfitters operation and hunting opportunities provided. The effects would be operation specific depending upon the Outfitters current operating plan and how the Outfitter-Guide accesses the current campsites used in their operation.
- Table 2 in the FEIS displays 28 miles of roads proposed to be open to highway legal vehicles only. Mixed use would no longer be allowed at certain parking lots, parking areas and View Points. The rationale listed in the table includes state law prohibiting off-highway (ATV) vehicles on paved roads. Members of the public commented that the continued use of ATVs in the campgrounds proposed to be limited to street legal vehicles is essential to their recreation experience at these sites. A main concern for limiting use to highway legal vehicles only in the campgrounds proposed is visitor safety. These are main access routes within the campground and receive a large amount of vehicle and foot traffic from campers and family groups.

Alternative B – No Action

The number of NFS motorized routes (roads and trails) and their mileage would remain unchanged. The current road system provides access to the majority of the 2.44 million acres of non-wilderness forest lands open to motorized travel. Use of motor vehicles is essentially unrestricted outside of designated wilderness and areas closed by the Forest Plan and forest orders. There are no prohibitions on motor vehicle use off designated routes under this alternative and cross-country travel outside of designated wilderness and other areas closed by the Forest Plan and forest orders would continue to be allowed. Users would continue to be able to travel cross-country for retrieving big game; for testing technical skills and exciting off-route travel; for traveling between two existing routes or to points of interest; for accessing dispersed campsites by a motorized mode of travel; or for gathering forest products i.e., piñon nuts and firewood gathering.

Under current conditions, the ability to get away from roads is rather limited outside of designated Wilderness. Approximately 70 percent of the forest located within non-wilderness is 0 - 0.5 miles from an open road, with 0.4 percent of the non-wilderness located greater than 3 miles distant from a road, when examining the distance to the nearest open, motorized route. (Table 4). This exercise utilized lands within the administrative boundary excluding wilderness. See Figure 11.

Table 4. Area of Non-Wilderness to Nearest Open, Motorized Route and Percent Distribution for Alternative B

Distance in miles between open roads	Percent
0.0 to 0.5 mi	70.8%
0.5 to 1.0 mi	18.6%
1.0 to 2.0 mi	9.0%
2.0 to 3.0 mi	1.1%
3.0 to 4.0 mi	0.4%
>4.0 mi	0.0%

Currently users who participate in non-motorized and motorized activities may meet each other at some point of their trip on trails or in the backcountry. To some non-motorized users, such contact is not an issue. For those seeking solitude for a variety of reasons (i.e., hunting, wildlife viewing, fishing, viewing scenery etc.), it can be an important issue. As a result of the continuation of the forest being open to cross country travel, such user dissatisfaction is expected to increase over time under alternative B. Conversely, motorized users are satisfied with the ability to travel cross country with no restrictions.

Currently access to Eagle Peak, Signal Peak, Fox Mountain, Mangus Mountain, and Bearwallow Lookouts is restricted with flexible open and closure dates. These roads are generally opened by April 1 and closed by September 1; however closure and opening dates are contingent upon road and weather conditions. Some falls there is an opportunity to visit these lookouts over the Labor Day Holiday weekend. The Action Alternatives propose implementing seasonal restrictions for these routes.

Roads 4043J, 4172O, and 4307K located on the Reserve District located south of South Fork Negrito Campground are currently open year-long providing opportunities for motorized travel and motorized camping. The Action Alternatives propose implementing seasonal restrictions for these routes. See FEIS Chapter 2.

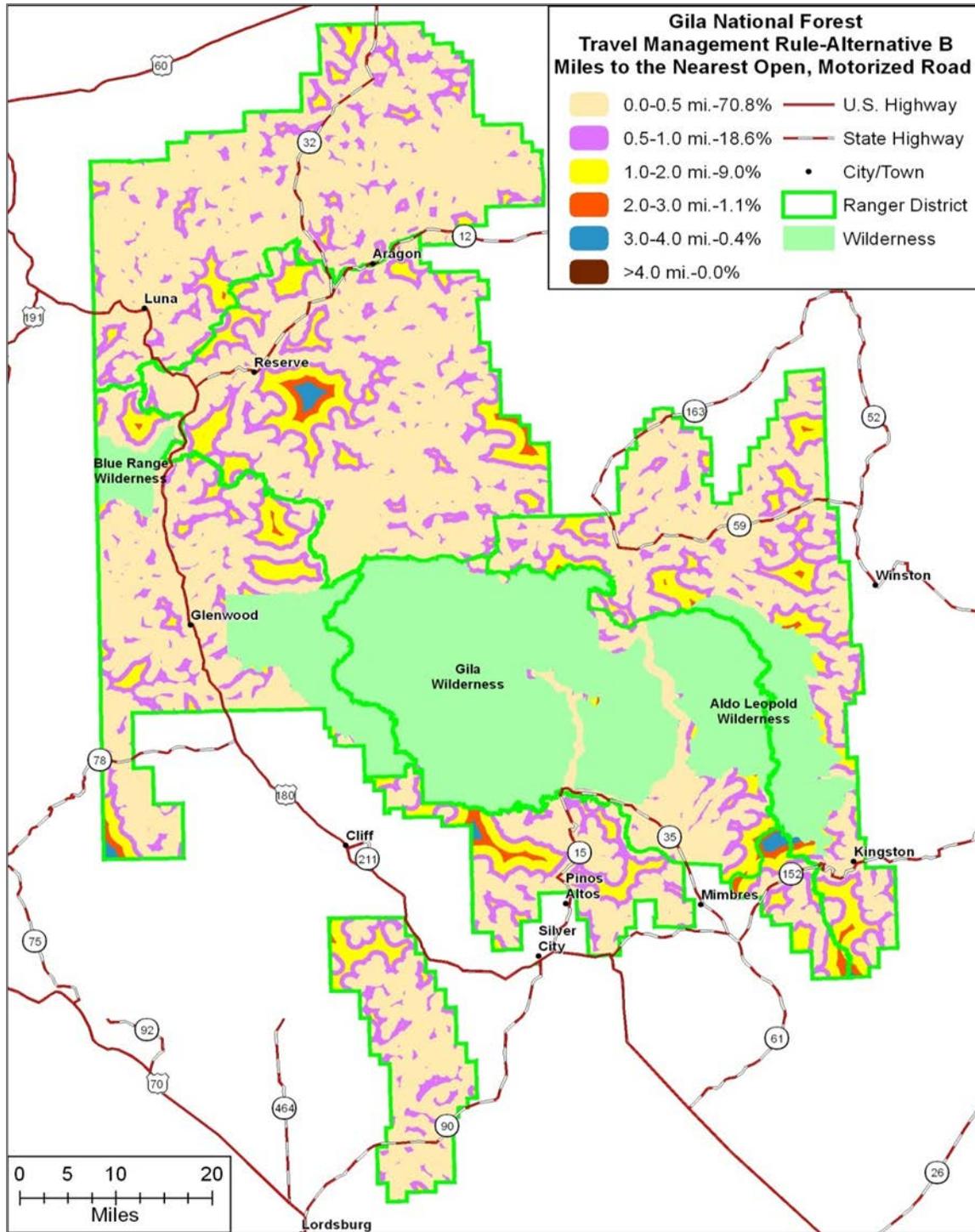


Figure 11. Miles to Nearest Open Road – Alternative B – No Action

Alternative C

Alternative C proposes 4,233.7 miles of roads open to the public, 5.5 miles are a result of additions or re-opening of previously closed or decommissioned routes and 7.1 miles are unauthorized routes proposed to be added to the Forest Road system.

The number of NFS road mileage open to all vehicle types will be reduced by 7.4 percent or 338.9 miles from the current mileage displayed under Alternative B due to closure or change to periodic administrative use or by written authorization only (i.e., not open to the public for general use) or conversion to motorized trail. This Alternative proposes to designate 172.4 miles for periodic administrative use or by written authorization only.

This Alternative would result in the highest number of miles of road designated for motor vehicle use when compared to the other action alternatives. This mileage would be available for exploring, driving for pleasure, and access to developed campgrounds, trailheads and roadside parking.

National Forest System Trails designated for motor vehicle use would increase from 15.8 miles to 203.7 miles, an increase of 1,189 percent. Alternative C ranks first in providing the most motorized trail opportunities on designated routes than the other action alternatives. This alternative provides 188 additional miles of designated motorized trail routes. However, since there are currently no restrictions or designation of motorized trail routes on the ground, comments were received stating that these designations are not perceived as an increase but a decrease in motorized trail recreation opportunities.

Motorcycle riders would benefit most under Alternative C since it is the only alternative that designates motorcycle use only routes on 13.1 miles of unauthorized routes. The remaining 50.6 miles of proposed motorcycle trails are located on existing non-motorized trails designed and managed for both hikers and pack and saddle stock. There is a potential for conflicts to increase over time between motorized and non-motorized users.

An analysis was conducted evaluating the length of road closures due to comments received concerning the closure of roads and resultant limitations on access to the forest. Alternative C proposes the least miles of motorized closures totaling 338.9 miles with the longest closure length between 4 and 5 miles in length. Fifty four percent of the proposed road closure lengths fall between 0-0.25 mile and 0.26 - 0.5 mile in length (Figure 12). Some of these roads are not currently being used based on natural re-vegetation growth within the road bed; have resource concerns; or are redundant to other, better sited roads that access the same destination. The recreational experiences for those users who are accustomed to traveling in a motorized vehicle on the road segments proposed for closure to access the Forest will be affected. The longer closure lengths would mean a further distance for visitors to travel using non-motorized modes of travel to access a favorite area. With this alternative proposing the least amount of closures, the effect of limiting recreationist ability to travel on routes they are accustomed to travel on with a motorized vehicle is the least of the Action Alternatives.

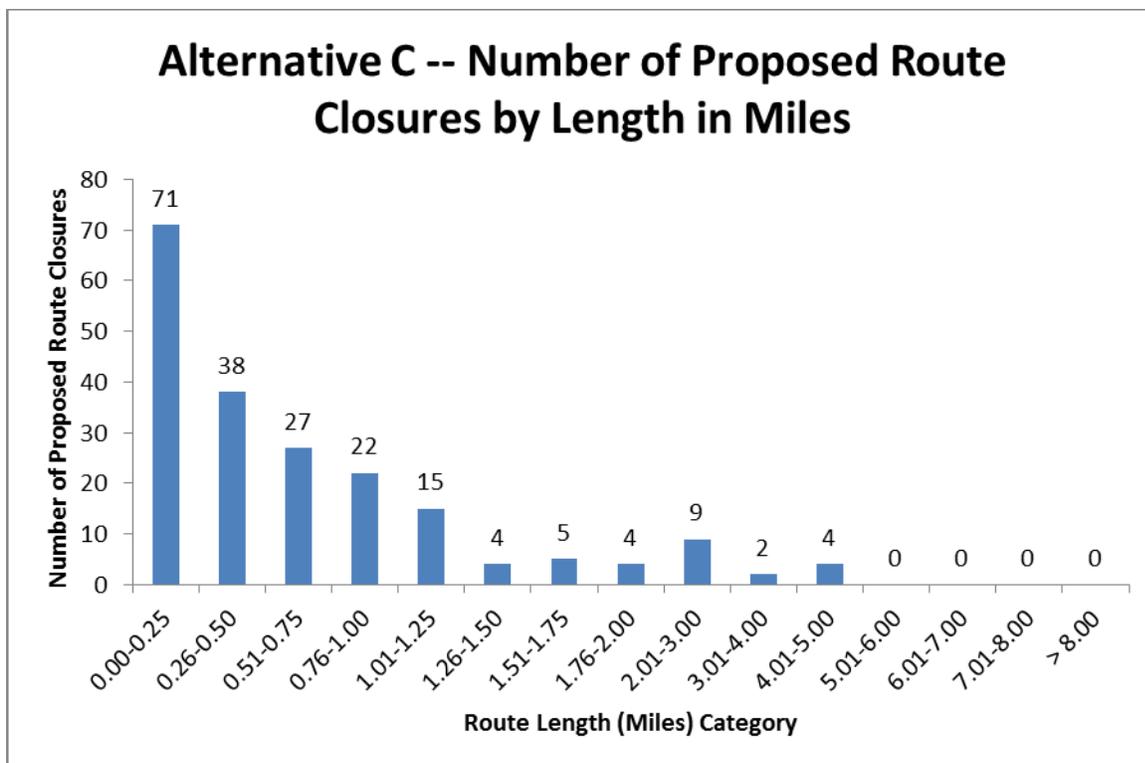


Figure 12. Distribution of the Number of Route Closures Proposed Under Alternative C by Mileage Categories

Motorized Access to the East Canyon Trailhead will continue in this Alternative. The Action Alternatives propose to change access to this Trailhead.

When examining the distance to the nearest open, motorized route (Table 5), Alternative C provides a similar percentage break out from Alternative B. However, compared to Alternative B, this Alternative increases the area of the forest to 0.4 percent where the nearest open road is greater than 3 miles and reduces the area with roads within 0-0.5 mile to 68 percent providing a mix which includes some remote settings and open space. See Figure 13.

Table 5. Area of Non-Wilderness to Nearest Open, Motorized Route and Percent Distribution for Alternative C

Distance in miles between open roads	Percent
0.0 to 0.5 mi	68.1%
0.5 to 1.0 mi	19.0%
1.0 to 2.0 mi	10.6%
2.0 to 3.0 mi	1.9%
3.0 to 4.0 mi	0.3%
>4.0 mi	0.1%

Since this alternative proposes the least amount of closures and the most mileage of designated routes of the Action Alternatives, it will provide the most opportunities for motorized access and camping along roadways. The proposed 1 mile corridor for Motorized Big Game Retrieval for elk, deer, bear, mountain lion, javelina, and pronghorn provides access for this activity to most of the forest. The recreation opportunities provided by this alternative are the most similar to Alternative B, the existing condition.

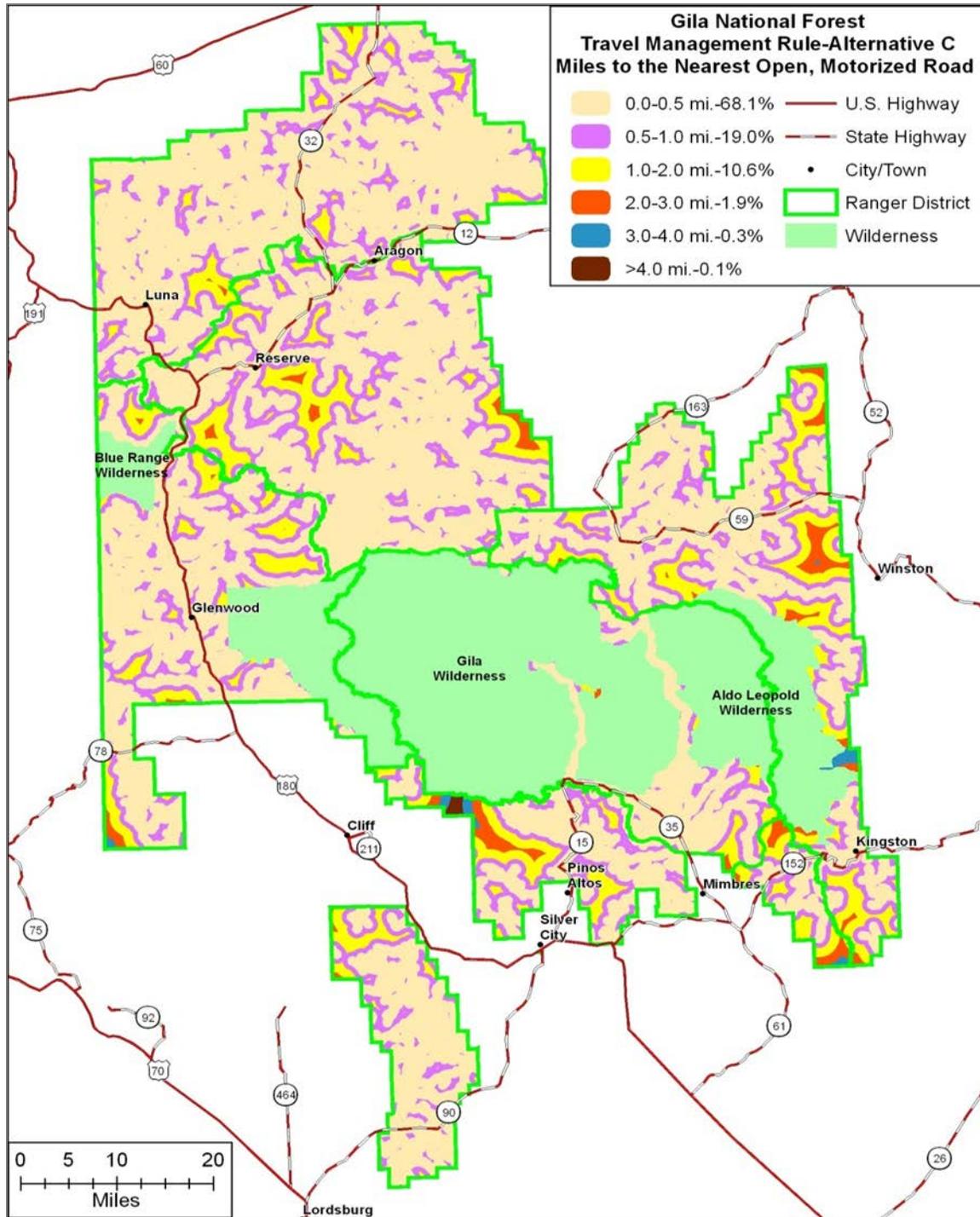


Figure 13. Miles to Nearest Open Road – Alternative C

Road restrictions are proposed for Fox Mountain and Mangus Mountain Lookouts with the roads open from April 1 – September 1. This would limit forest visitors’ access to these two lookouts to within these dates and limit access over the Labor Day Holiday weekend. Eagle Peak, Signal Peak, and Bearwallow Lookouts would continue have flexible dates for when road access is open and closed.

Roads on the Reserve District located south of the South Fork Negrito Campground are proposed as follows: 4043 J open with dispersed camping corridor; 4172 O –open to motorized vehicle use; 4307 K - open to motorized vehicle use providing camping and motorized travel opportunities year-long.

Alternative D

Alternative D proposes 2,943.3 miles of roads open to the public, 5.8 miles are a result of unauthorized route additions and re-opening 2.4 miles of previously closed or decommissioned routes. The number of road mileage will be reduced by 35.6 percent or 1,629.3 miles from the current mileage displayed under Alternative B due to closure or change to periodic administrative use or by written authorization only (i.e., not open to the public for general use).

National Forest System Trails designated for motor vehicle use would increase from 15.8 miles of trail designed and managed for motorized use to 123.6 miles of NF system trail designated for motorized use for vehicles less than 50 inches, an increase of 682 percent. However, since there are currently no restrictions or designation of motorized trail routes on the ground, comments were received stating that these designations are not perceived as an increase but a decrease in motorized recreation opportunity.

The effects regarding motorized access to opportunities on the general forest when compared to Alternative B is that motorized and non-motorized users alike (those who drive to the place of their non-motorized activity) would experience a corresponding 35.6 percent reduction in road access.

Alternative D ranks 4th in opportunity for motorized trail access among the Action Alternatives. Motorcycles and ATVs would share the same designated motorized trail segments.

Alternative D proposes the second largest miles of motorized closures totaling 1,629.3 miles of road closure with the longest closure length between 7 and 8 miles in length. Sixty percent of the proposed route closure lengths fall between 0-0.25 mile and 0.26 - 0.5 mile in length (Figure 10). Many of these roads are not currently being used, have resource concerns, or are redundant to other, better sited roads that access the same destination. These closures would affect the recreational experiences for those users who are accustomed to traveling these short road segments proposed for closure in a motorized vehicle to access the Forest. Examples of activities that could be affected include exploring routes, camping with a vehicle or trailer away from roadways, staging areas for horse trailers for camping with stock or parking area for pack trips.

The motorized closure of Road 537 at the junction of 152 (McKnight Road) would change the access to East Canyon and Quaking Aspen Trailheads to non-motorized. The Quaking Aspen and East Canyon Trailheads are located approximately 1 1/2 miles from the Road Junction. This provides a day hiking loop opportunity from the road junction traveling up or down both East Canyon and Quaking Aspen accessing a portion of the Black Range Crest Trail. This alternative provides more travel and hiking on a closed road than Alternatives F and G.

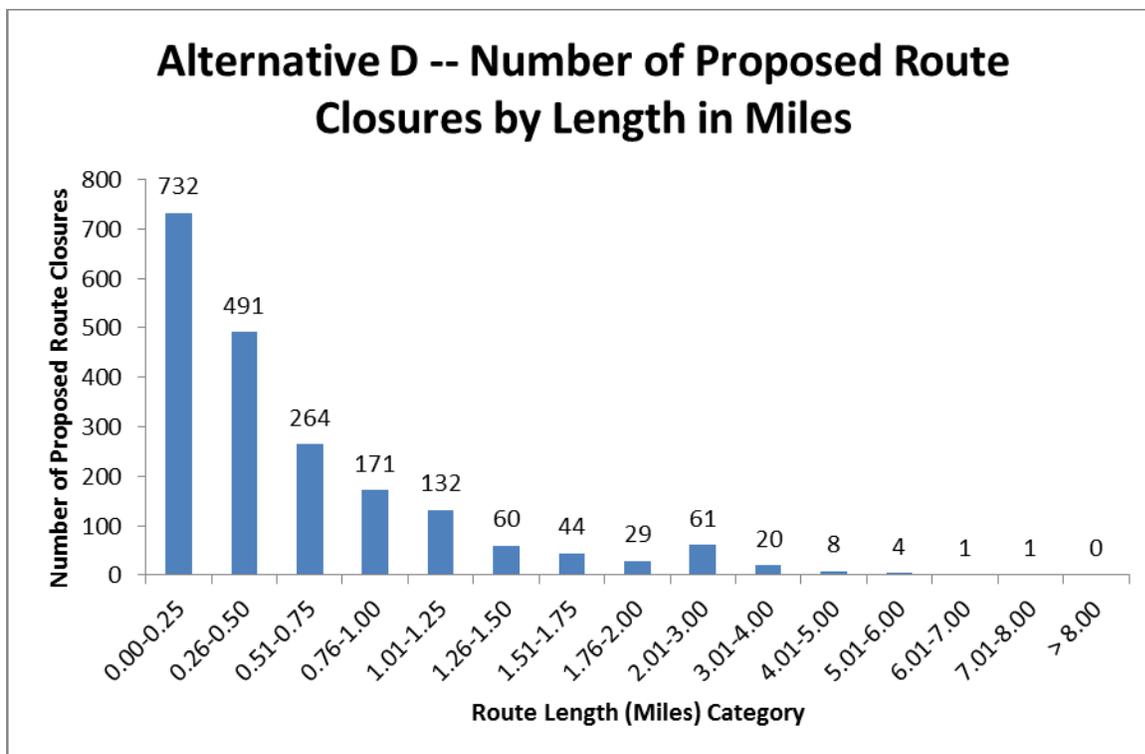


Figure 14. Distribution of the Number of Route Closures Proposed Under Alternative D by Mileage Categories

When examining the distance to the nearest open, motorized route (Table 6), Alternative D provides a similar percentage break out from Alternative B. See Map 5.

However, compared to Alternative B, this Alternative increases the area of the forest to 1.7 percent where an open road is > 3 miles and reduces the area of non-wilderness with roads within 0-0.5 mile to 60 percent providing a mix that would include some remote settings and open space. Since this alternative proposes the second highest amount of closures and ranks 4th in mileage of designated routes of the Action Alternatives, it will provides less motorized access and opportunities for camping along roadways. There will be less motorized opportunities and less chance of motorized and non-motorized users traveling the same routes.

Table 6. Area of Non-Wilderness to Nearest Open, Motorized Route and Percent Distribution for Alternative D

Distance in miles between open roads	Percent
0.0 to 0.5 mi	59.7%
0.5 to 1.0 mi	21.5%
1.0 to 2.0 mi	13.6%
2.0 to 3.0 mi	3.6%
3.0 to 4.0 mi	1.1%
>4.0 mi	0.6%

Road restrictions are proposed for Eagle Peak, Signal Peak, Fox Mountain, Mangus Mountain, and Bearwallow Lookouts with the roads open from April 1 – September 1. This would limit forest visitors’ access to these lookouts to within these dates with access not available over the Labor Day Holiday Weekend.

Restrictions are proposed for Roads located on the Reserve Ranger District south of South Fork of Negro Creek Campground with road access open from September 1 – February 28, for Roads 4043 J, 4172 O, and 4307 K. The proposals for restrictions for 4037K are located on .894 miles of road, with the remainder of the road proposed for closure. This road restriction would provide access opportunities to the area for hunters during the bow and rifle seasons in the fall.

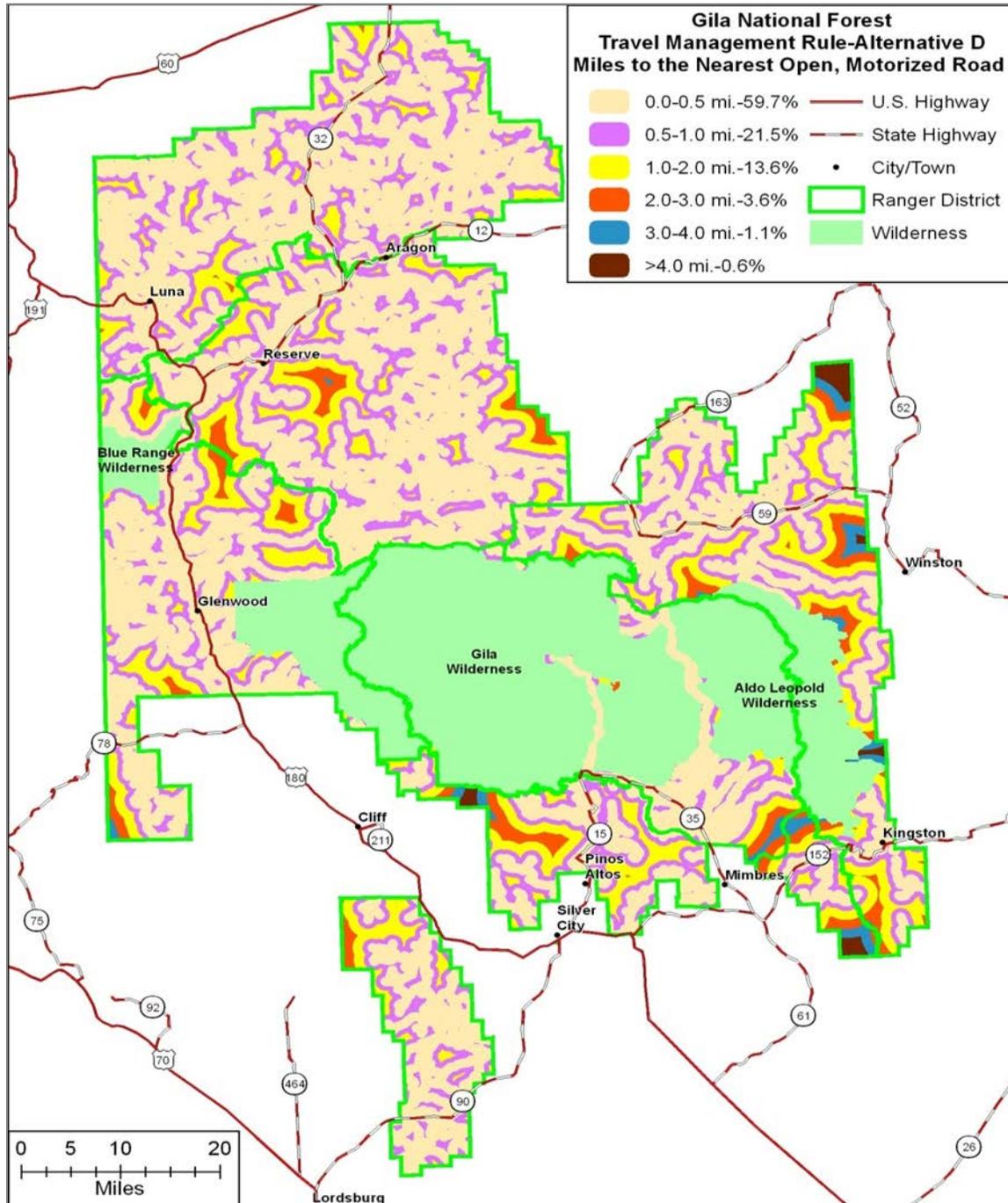


Figure 15. Miles to Nearest Open Road – Alternative D

Alternative E

Alternative E offers the largest reduction in miles and ranks the lowest in road miles available among the other Action Alternatives. Alternative E proposes to designate 2,290.3 miles of roads open to the public. Less than 2 miles of routes are proposed to be added under this alternative. Road mileage will be reduced by 49.9 percent or 2,282.3 miles from the current mileage displayed under Alternative B due to closure or change to periodic administrative use or by written authorization only (i.e., not open to the public for general use). This Alternative would designate 425.3 miles to periodic administrative use or by written authorization only.

The effects regarding motorized access to opportunities on the general forest when compared to Alternative B is that, more than any alternative, motorized and non-motorized users alike (those who drive to the place of their non-motorized activity) would experience the most effects, a corresponding 49.9 percent reduction in road access.

NFS motorized trails mileage would experience a decrease of 100 percent. All existing motorized trails designed and managed for motorized use (15.8 miles) will be converted to non-motorized trails. Less than 2 miles of road are proposed to be converted to ATV use under this alternative. Unlike any of the alternatives proposed, users of ATVs and motorcycles will be restricted to those NFS roads designated open to all vehicles and the less than 2 miles of road converted to ATV use. This alternative is the most restrictive and offers the least opportunity for motorized users.

Alternative E proposes the largest number of miles of motorized closures totaling 2,282.3 miles of road closure with the most segment closures over 4 miles in length. Three segments are proposed with closure lengths over 8 miles. Fifty six percent of the proposed route closure lengths fall between 0-0.25 mile and 0.26 - 0.5 mile in length (Figure 11). Many of these roads are not currently being used, have resource concerns, or are redundant to other, better sited roads that access the same destination. These closures would affect the recreational experiences for those users who are accustomed to traveling these short road segments proposed for closure in a motor vehicle to access the forest.

As in Alternative D, the motorized closure of Road 537 at the junction of 152 (McKnight Road) would change the access to East Canyon and Quaking Aspen Trailheads to non-motorized, see Alternative D for effects.

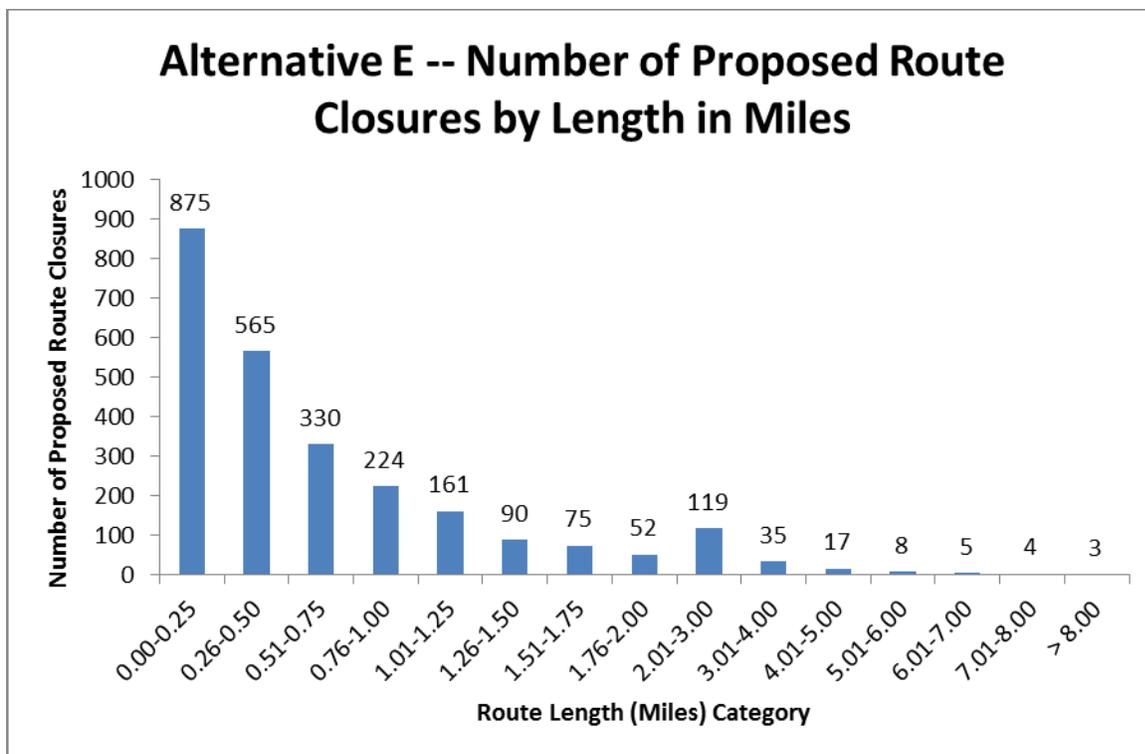


Figure 16. Distribution of the Number of Route Closures Proposed under Alternative E by Mileage Categories

Alternative E proposes the least motorized routes and most route closures results in the least percentage of area, (52 percent)of non-wilderness within 0.5 mile of a route and the most percentage of area of non-wilderness (2.1) over 3 miles from a route (Table 7). See Figure 17.

Table 7. Area of Non-Wilderness to Nearest Open, Motorized Route and Percent Distribution for Alternative E

Distance in miles between open roads	Percent
0.0 to 0.5 mi	52.1%
0.5 to 1.0 mi	23.4%
1.0 to 2.0 mi	17.7%
2.0 to 3.0 mi	4.7%
3.0 to 4.0 mi	1.4%
>4.0 mi	0.7%

With a 49 percent proposed reduction of motorized road and trail routes from Alternative B, the existing condition, this alternative provides the least motorized access and opportunities for camping along roadways. With no corridors proposed for motorized dispersed camping and big game retrieval, this alternative represents the most loss of these activities. Motorized users accustomed to traveling routes proposed for closure: for general forest access; for access to dispersed campsites; and for retrieving big game would potentially be dissatisfied with the reduction in access. This Alternative provides the most opportunity for visitors to get away from roads outside of designated Wilderness. The visitor who seeks a more remote setting will benefit while motorized users accustomed to traveling routes proposed for closure may be dissatisfied with the reduction in access. Visitors seeking a more remote setting will have less change to meet motorized users on roads or trails.

As in Alternative D, road restrictions are proposed for Eagle Peak, Signal Peak, Fox Mountain, Mangus Mountain, and Bearwallow Lookouts with the roads open from April 1 – September 1. This would limit forest visitors' access to these two lookouts to within these dates, and limit access over the Labor Day Holiday Weekend.

Roads 4043 J, 4172 O, and 4307 K located on the Reserve District south of South Fork Negrito Campground are proposed to be closed year-long to vehicle traffic in this alternative. There would be no motorized access to the area for summer users and hunters in the fall. There could be user dissatisfaction by recreationist who are accustomed to traveling these routes with a motor vehicle in the summer and fall.

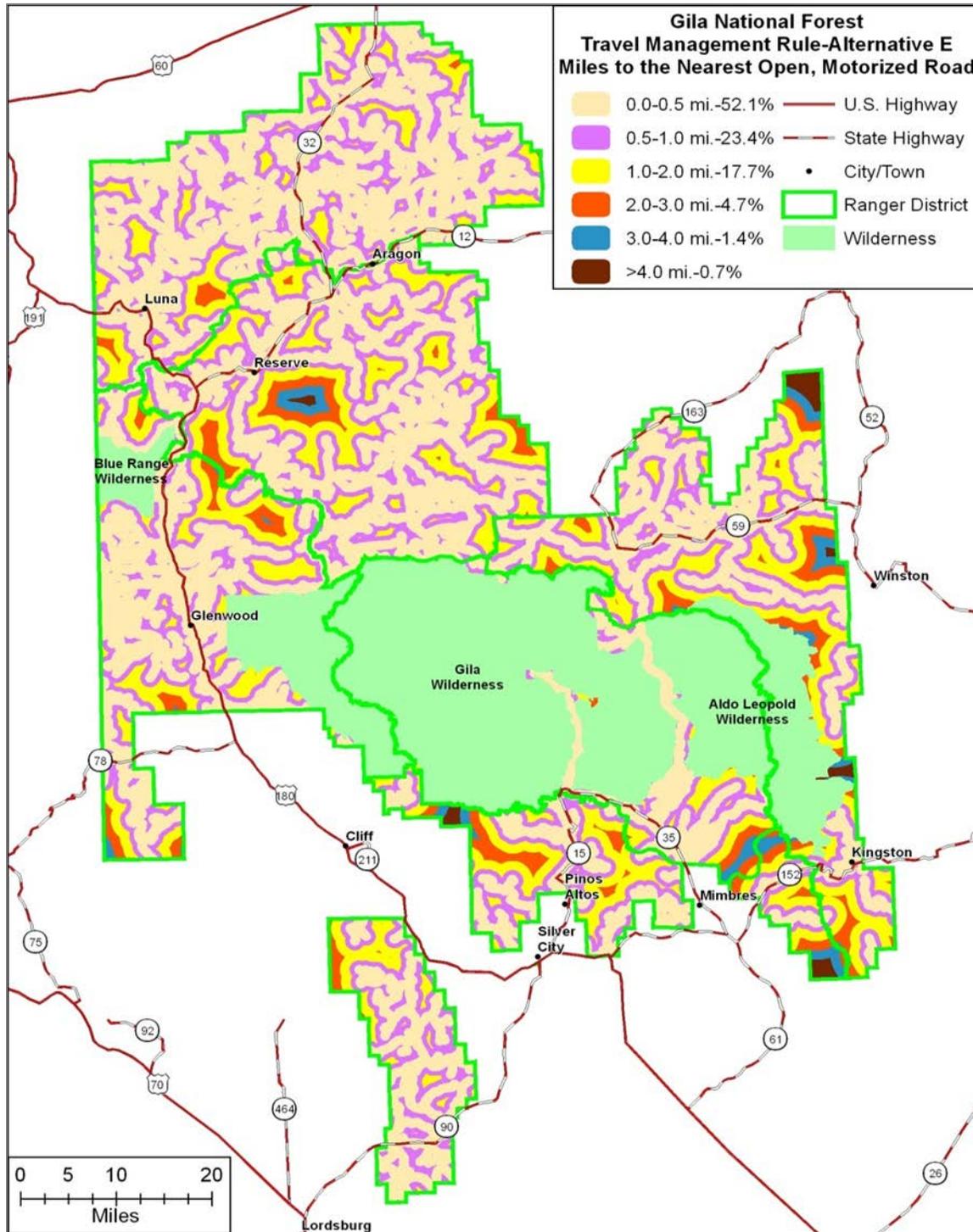


Figure 17. Miles to Nearest Open Road – Alternative E

Alternative F

Alternative F offers the 3rd largest reduction in motorized opportunities among the Action Alternatives. Of the five action alternatives proposed, Alternative F ranks 2nd in road miles available.

Alternative F proposes 3,329.2 miles of roads open to the public, 2.5 miles are a result of re-opening of previously closed ML-1 or decommissioned routes and 5.9 miles of unauthorized route additions. Road mileage will be reduced by 27.2 percent or 1,243.4 miles from the current mileage displayed under Alternative B due to closure or change to periodic administrative use or by written authorization only (i.e., not open to the public for general use) or conversion to motorized trails. This alternative would designate 289.8 miles of road to periodic administrative use or by written authorization only.

The effects to motorized access to opportunities on the general forest when compared to Alternative B is that motorized and non-motorized users alike (those who drive to the place of their non-motorized activity) will experience a corresponding 27.2 percent reduction in road access.

NFS motorized trails mileage would experience an increase of 1,027 percent, up from its current level of 15.8 miles to 178.1 miles. This alternative provides 162.3 additional miles of designated motorized trail routes. However, since there are currently no restrictions or designation of motorized trail routes on the ground, comments were received stating that these designations are not perceived as an increase but a decrease in motorized recreation opportunity. Alternative F ranks 2nd in opportunity for motorized trail access among action alternatives proposed.

Alternative F proposes the 2nd least miles of roads closed to all motor vehicle use, totaling 872.2 miles. One segment being closed to all motor vehicle use in this alternative is between 6 and 7 miles in length (Figure 18). Seventy percent of the segments proposed for closure fall between 0-0.25 miles and 0.26 - 0.5 miles in length. Many of these roads are not currently being used, have resource concerns, or are redundant to other, better sited roads that access the same destination. These closures would affect the recreational experiences for those users who are accustomed to traveling these short road segments proposed for closure in a motor vehicle to access the forest.

Motorized access would continue to the Quaking Aspen Trailhead, with the East Canyon Trailhead located above Quaking Aspen becoming non-motorized. Parking will be at the Quaking Aspen Trailhead. This also provides a day hiking loop opportunity from East Canyon Trailhead traveling up or down both East Canyon and Quaking Aspen accessing a portion of the Black Range Crest Trail. This alternative provides less travel and hiking on a closed road than Alternatives D and E.

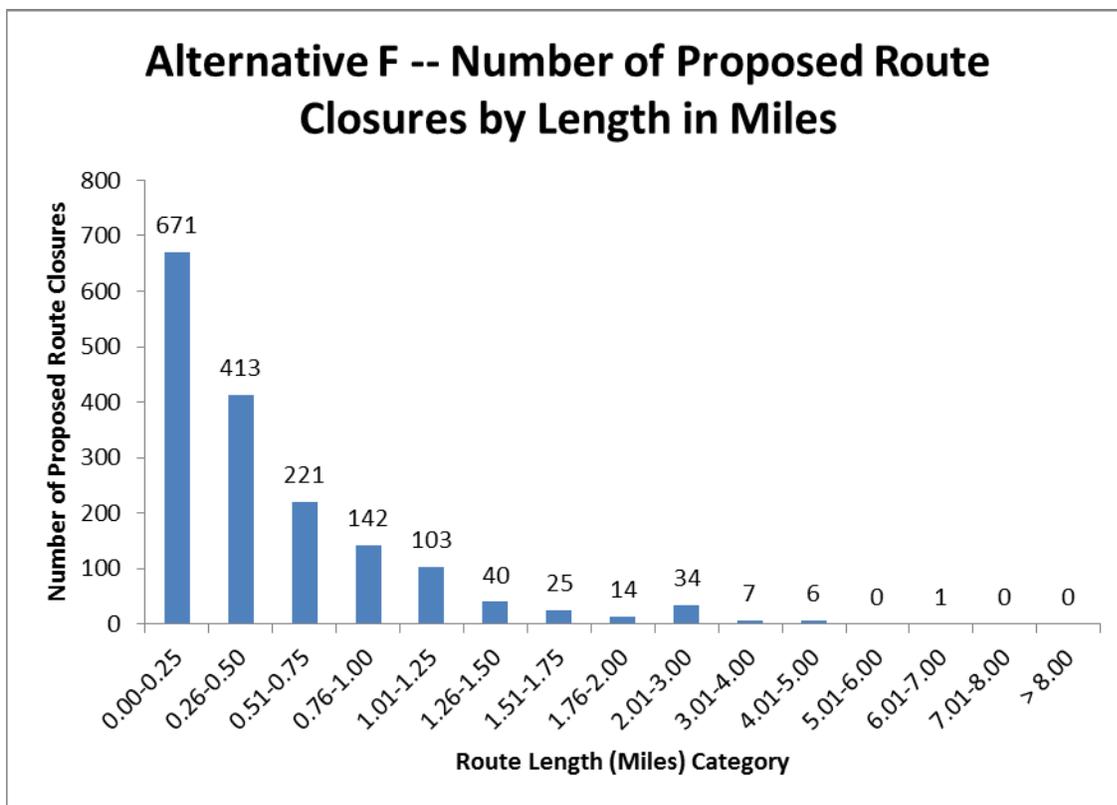


Figure 18. Distribution of the Number of Route Closures Proposed Under Alternative F by Mileage Categories

When examining the distance to the nearest open, motorized route (Table 8), compared to Alternative B, Alternative F increases the area of the forest to 1.3 percent where an open road is > 3 miles and reduces the area of non-wilderness with roads within 0-0.5 mile to 63.4 percent providing a mix that would include some remote settings. These closures would affect the recreational experiences for those users who are accustomed to traveling these short road segments proposed for closure in a motor vehicle to access the forest. See Figure 19.

Table 8. Area of Non-Wilderness to Nearest Open, Motorized Route and Percent Distribution for Alternative F

Distance in miles between open roads	Percent
0.0 to 0.5 mi	63.4%
0.5 to 1.0 mi	20.7%
1.0 to 2.0 mi	11.9%
2.0 to 3.0 mi	2.8%
3.0 to 4.0 mi	0.9%
>4.0 mi	0.4%

This Alternative accommodates both motorized users and those users who prefer a more remote setting providing more areas with the potential to get away from roads outside of designated Wilderness than in Alternative B the No Action Alternative and Alternative C which proposes the most motorized recreation opportunities.

As in Alternative D and E, road restrictions are proposed for Eagle Peak, Signal Peak, Fox Mountain, Mangus Mountain, and Bearwallow Lookouts with the roads open from April 1 – September 1, limiting

access to these two lookouts to within these dates. This would limit forest visitors' access over the Labor Day Holiday weekend.

Roads 4043 J, 4172 O, and 4307 K on the Reserve District located south of the South Fork Negrito Campground are proposed as open year-long to motorized vehicles providing the motorized opportunity for visitors that currently exists under Alternative B – No Action Alternative.

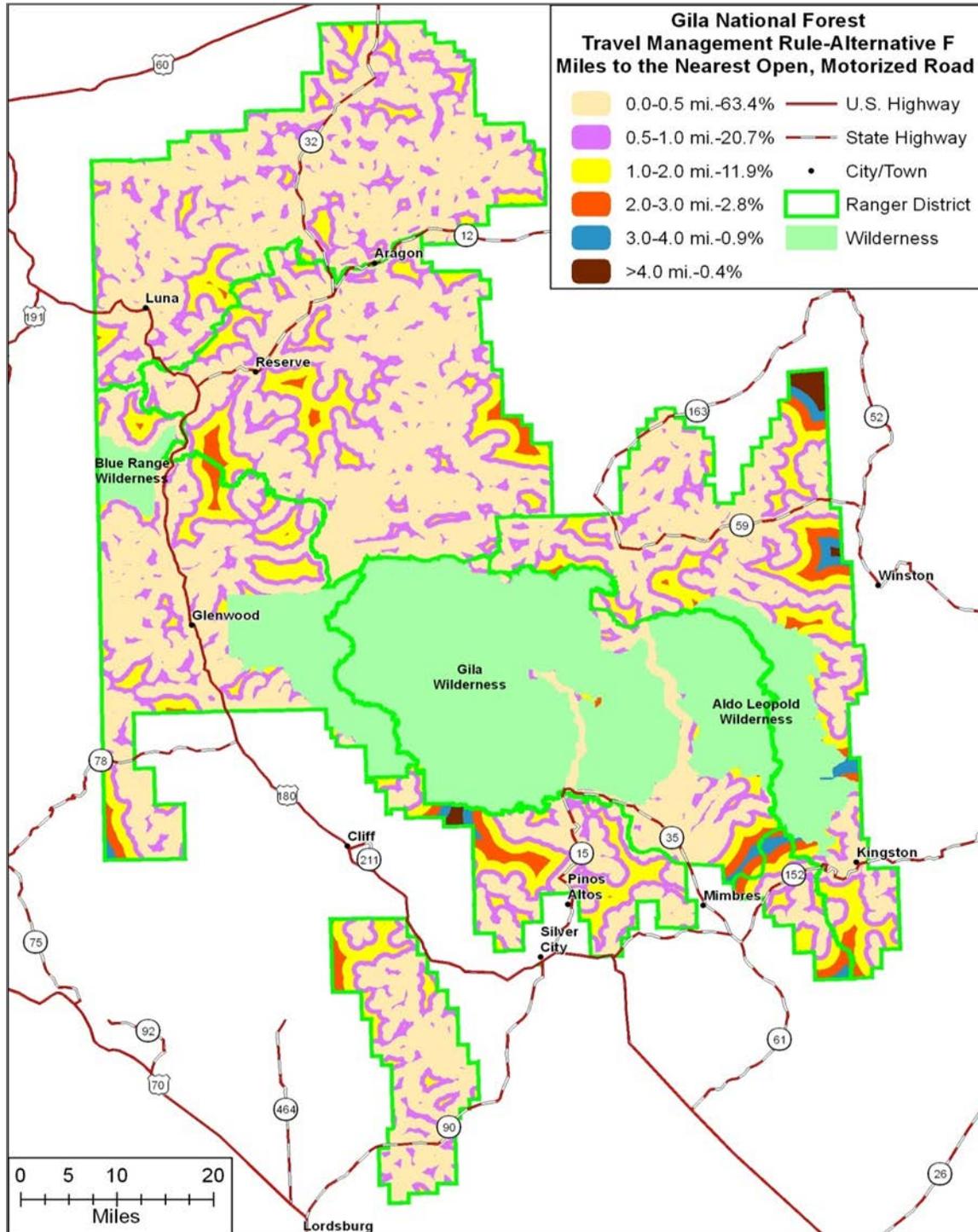


Figure 19. Miles to Nearest Open Road – Alternative F

Alternative G

Alternative G offers the 3rd largest reduction in miles of NFS road open to all motor vehicle types and proposes 3,300.1 miles of roads open to the public, wherein 2.5 miles are a result of re-opening of ML-1 (closed) roads and 6.6 miles from unauthorized route additions. Road mileage would be reduced by 27.8 percent or 1,272.5 miles from the current mileage displayed under Alternative B due to closure or change to periodic administrative use or by written authorization only (i.e., not open to the public for general use) or conversion to motorized trails. This alternative would designate 288.2 miles to periodic administrative use or by written authorization only.

The effects to motorized access to opportunities on the general forest when compared to Alternative B is that motorized and non-motorized users alike (those who drive to the place of their non-motorized activity) would experience a corresponding 27.8 percent reduction in road access. Of the five action alternatives proposed, Alternative G ranks 3rd in road miles available.

NFS motorized trails mileage would experience an increase of 1,151.8 percent, up from its current level of 15.8 miles of trail designed and managed for motorized use to 177.8 miles of trail designated for motorized use. This alternative provides an additional 162 miles of designated motorized trail routes. However, since there are currently no restrictions or designation of motorized trail routes on the ground, comments were received stating that these designations are not perceived as an increase but a decrease in motorized recreation opportunity. Alternative G ranks 3rd in opportunity for motorized trail access among action alternatives proposed, but only 0.3 miles behind Alternative F.

Alternative G proposes slightly more miles of motorized closures totaling 1309.7 miles of road closure with one segment between 7 and 8 miles in length than Alternative F. Sixty three percent of the proposed closure segments fall between 0-0.25 mile and 0.26 - 0.5 mile in length (Figure 6). Many of these roads are not currently being used, have resource concerns, or are redundant to other, better sited roads that access the same destination.

Motorized access will continue to the Quaking Aspen Trailhead, with the East Canyon Trailhead becoming non-motorized. Parking will be at the Quaking Aspen Trailhead the same as Alternative F.

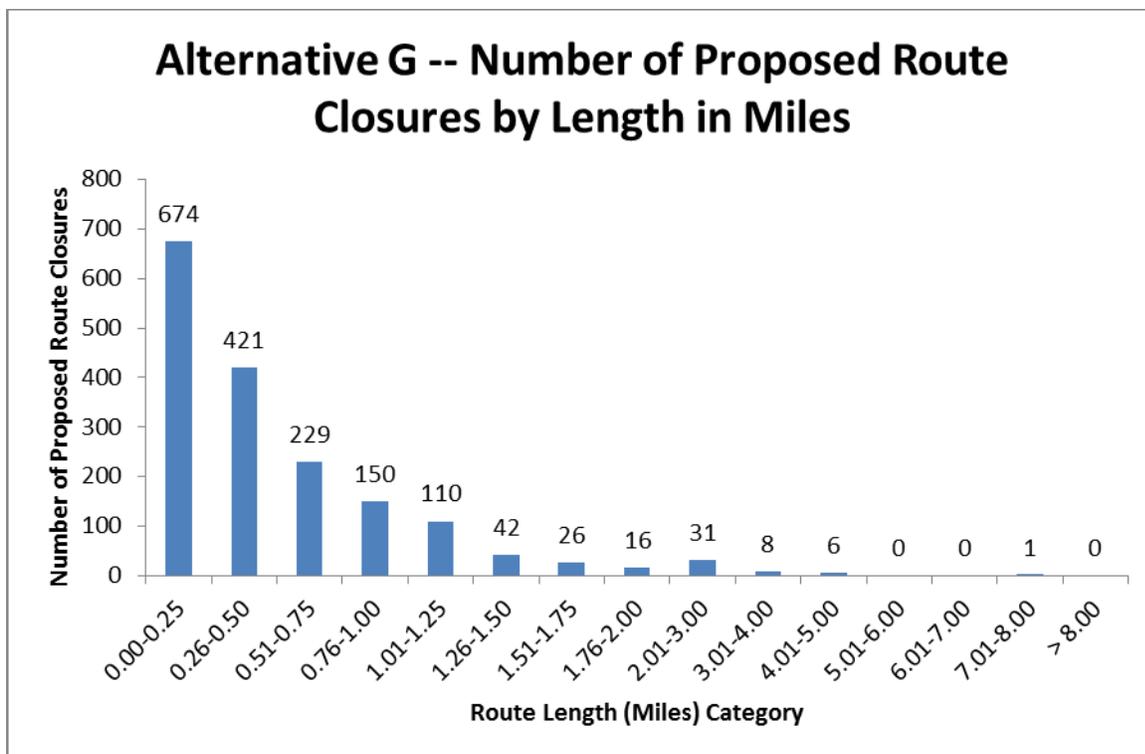


Figure 20. Distribution of the Number of Route Closures Proposed Under Alternative G by Mileage Categories

When examining the distance to the nearest open, motorized route (Table 9), Alternative G is very similar to Alternative F increasing the area of the forest to 1.3 percent where an open road is > 3 miles and reducing the area of non-wilderness with roads within 0-0.5 mile to 63.3 percent providing a mix that would include some remote settings. These closures would affect the recreational experiences for those users who are accustomed to traveling these short road segments proposed for closure in a motor vehicle to access the forest. See Figure 21.

Table 9. Area of Non-Wilderness to Nearest Open, Motorized Route and Percent Distribution for Alternative G

Distance in miles between open roads	Percent
0.0 to 0.5 mi	63.3%
0.5 to 1.0 mi	20.6%
1.0 to 2.0 mi	11.9%
2.0 to 3.0 mi	2.8%
3.0 to 4.0 mi	0.9%
>4.0 mi	0.4%

Alternatives F and G propose the same mileages of motorized trail opportunities. Proposed designated Road mileages and opportunity to get away from roads outside of designated Wilderness are similar accommodating both motorized users and those users who prefer a more remote setting. The difference in this alternative with Alternative F is the reduction in opportunities for motorized dispersed camping and big game retrieval.

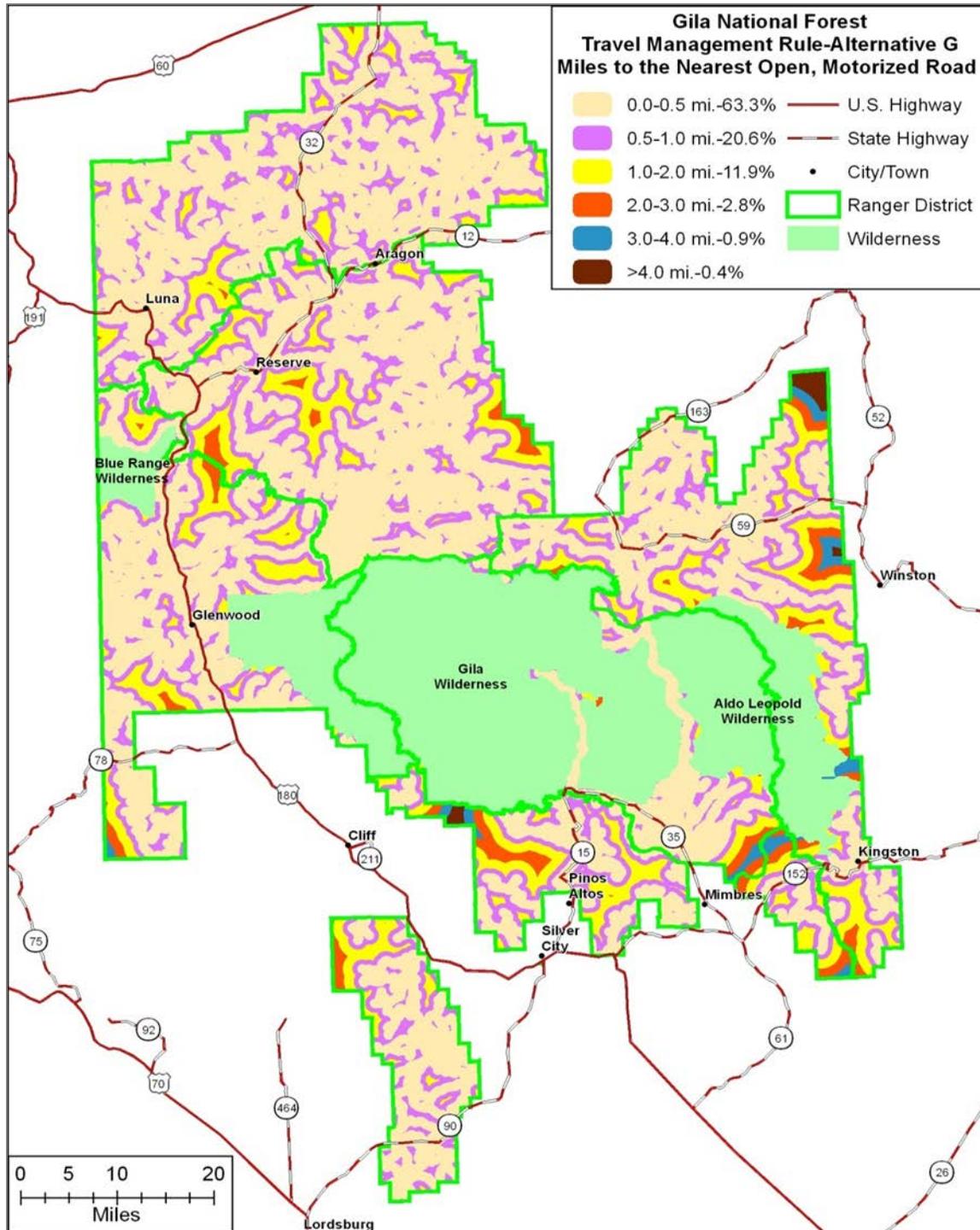


Figure 21. Miles to Nearest Open Road – Alternative G

As in Alternatives D, E, and F, road restrictions are proposed for Eagle Peak, Signal Peak, Fox Mountain, Mangus Mountain, and Bearwallow Lookouts with the roads open from April 1 – September 1, limiting access to these two lookouts to within these dates. This would limit forest visitors’ access over the Labor Day Holiday weekend.

As in Alternative F, Roads 4043 J, 4172O and 4307 K on the Reserve District located south of the South Fork Negrito Campground are proposed as open year-long to motorized vehicles providing this motorized opportunity for visitors.

Motorized Routes – Cumulative Effects

The cumulative effects analysis for Motorized Routes considers past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions upon Motorized Recreational Opportunities on the Gila National Forest, Forests in the Southwestern Region 3, and adjacent BLM lands for the next 20 years. Twenty years was selected because it is the longest anticipated length of time for natural rehabilitation of unauthorized routes (where achievable).

Past Actions

The Interpretive trails listed in the Background section have all been constructed to provide a variety of Interpretive Trail opportunities across the forest.

The 2012 Whitewater Baldy Fire Area currently has a closure order in place for the Willow Creek Area and trails within the fire area including a portion of the Catwalk National Recreation Trail (NRT). Burned Area Emergency Restoration (BAER) work was implemented in 2012 and included the road and trail closures mentioned above including gates and signing, aerial mulching, aerial seeding, installation of drainage features on roads, pumping of vault toilets, clearing and stabilizing of 3 miles of trail access to Mogollon Baldy and stabilization of Heritage sites located within high severity burn areas of the fire. The 2011 Wallow Fire on the Apache Sitgreaves National Forest also has a closure order in place restricting road and trail access within the burned area. Some roads and trails on both forests may be closed for several years.

The past construction of roads for timber sales may also have contributed to conflict by the addition of roads where they had not previously existed.

Ongoing and Future Foreseeable Actions

Projects on the Forest's Schedule of Proposed Action (SOPA) for the period up to 4/2013 were considered for the cumulative effects analysis as reasonably foreseeable actions (Appendix A Table Rec A5)

Alternative B the existing condition provides 5,290.9 miles of road access including state highways and county roads on the Gila National Forest. The range of alternatives for Forest Road access including state highways and county roads (excluding roads for periodic administrative use) is 3,011.9 miles for Alternative E the least Road access and 4,960.6 miles of Road Access the most miles of Road access in Alternative C. Alternative G the Preferred Alternative would provide 4,026.2 miles of road access to the forest. The Forest believes a wide range of motorized opportunities have been analyzed with an action alternatives emphasizing motorized, an alternative emphasizing non-motorized, as well as alternatives emphasizing a mix of both motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities.

If the population in the Southwest and its preference for using off-highway vehicles continues to increase, a potential exists for an increase in conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users in Alternative B, No Action. People wishing to avoid vehicles altogether could potentially be pushed to using wilderness areas exclusively. With a designated system in place, as proposed in All Action Alternatives, there would be no cumulative change since people would know where to go to avoid vehicles and where to go to participate in motorized activities.

All National Forest in the Southwestern Region are either in the process of travel management planning or implementing existing Travel Management Plan decisions. The following Forests or Ranger Districts within the Southwestern Region have completed Travel Planning and have designated routes for motorized travel, published Motor Vehicle Use Maps (NVUM) and are currently implementing their TMR decisions:

Arizona

Coconino NF

Coronado NF

Kaibab NF - Williams and Tusayan Districts*

Prescott NF

New Mexico

Santa Fe NF

Lincoln NF

Cibola NF –Mount Taylor and Sandia Ranger Districts;

Black Kettle and McClellan Creek National Grasslands*

Carson NF – Jicarilla, Questa, El Rito, Tres Piedras, and Canjilon Ranger Districts*

*The Carson, Kaibab, and Cibola National Forests completed their analyses at the District Level. Work is ongoing to complete TMR planning and produce MVUMs for the additional districts on the Kaibab, Carson, and Cibola National Forests.

The Apache-Sitgreaves and Tonto NF's are currently in the process of travel management planning. Based on the status of the Modified Proposed Actions for both forests, the proposals would restrict off-road vehicle travel and designate a portion of existing roads and trails.

The Socorro Field Office of the BLM completed a Land Use Plan in 2010 that included Transportation Planning on all Wilderness Study Areas (approximately 300,000 acres) including the Continental Divide WSA and is implementing this decision. The Field Office has not started the analysis for Transportation planning on the remaining 1.2 million acres of the Resource Area. The BLM land that lies adjacent to the Black Range Ranger District will be evaluated for the designation of routes when the Travel Planning process begins.

The White Sands Field office of the BLM is currently working on a Revision of their Tri County Dona Anna, Otero and Sierra) White Sands Resource Area Plan. After completion of this revision, a separate Transportation Planning Analysis would be completed with route designations within the next 5 years for this area. Motorized travel within the Apaches Box, Blue Creek, and Cooke's Range Wilderness Study Areas is limited to the existing routes in the areas when inventoried in 1979.

All Action Alternatives have the potential for the following cumulative effects upon Motorized Recreational Opportunities.

- Change the array of Recreational opportunities across the Forest and would restrict motorized cross-country travel and reduce the amount of motorized access on the Gila National Forest.
- The possibility of user dissatisfaction over the loss of cross-country motorized access.
- The possibility of user dissatisfaction with the loss of motorized recreational opportunities throughout the forest lands in the Southwestern Region 3, particularly in New Mexico.

Motorized Routes and Wilderness Areas – Affected Environment

The concept of wilderness in the National Forest System was first implemented in 1924 with the administrative designation of the Gila Wilderness.

The Gila Wilderness became a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System when Congress passed the Wilderness Act of 1964. In 1980, the Blue Range and Aldo Leopold Wilderness Areas were designated and became part of the National Wilderness Preservation System with passage of Public Law 96-550.

The definition of wilderness from the 1964 Wilderness Act is:

“A Wilderness in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.”

The Wilderness Act prohibits permanent roads and the use of vehicles and any other forms of motorized or mechanized transport within wilderness areas. There is no law or policy that prohibits motorized use up to the boundary of designated Wilderness.

The Wilderness Act describes wilderness using these 4 qualities of Wilderness Character:

- Untrammeled – free from modern human control or manipulation
- Natural – where the natural condition of the land, its plants, wildlife, water, soil, air and the ecological processes are managed, protected and preserved
- Undeveloped – retaining its primeval character and influence, as is essentially without permanent improvements or human occupation
- Solitude or Primitive Unconfined recreational opportunities

During the comment period for the Draft EIS, specific concerns were raised about the effects of road closures around designated Wilderness areas on the Forest. It was felt that buffers were being created around designated Wilderness areas by closing roads near the boundaries. The creation of these buffers was expanding the wilderness boundaries and that creation of such buffers was in violation of the Wilderness Act and Public Law 96-550 the New Mexico Wilderness Act. PL 96-550 states “Congress does not intend that designation of Wilderness areas in the State of New Mexico lead to the creation of protective perimeters or buffer zones around each Wilderness area. The fact that non-wilderness activities or uses can be seen or heard from areas within the Wilderness shall not, of itself, preclude such activities or uses up to the boundary of the Wilderness Area.”

Motorized Routes and Wilderness Areas – Environmental Consequences

Motorized Route Indicators for Wilderness Areas

- Roads leading to wilderness boundary to within ¼ mile
- Four Wilderness Characteristics listed above

The quarter mile distance was chosen as an indicator to accommodate the width of NM-15, a road corridor within the Gila Wilderness and FR -150, a road corridor between the Gila Wilderness and the Aldo Leopold Wilderness areas. This aids in not duplicating road miles in examining changes to the road system around the Wilderness areas. This quarter mile distance indicator was not chosen to be a buffer, but to identify and illustrate the effects of proposals that are adjacent to a wilderness boundary.

Effects Common to All Action Alternatives Regarding Motorized Routes and Wilderness Areas

- The prohibition on cross-country travel would be in place for all Action Alternatives. The effects of the prohibition on cross-country travel in the short and long term are expected to be the same for each Action Alternative as described in the following bullets.
 - ◆ The prohibition on cross-country travel and the reduction of where people can drive would improve all four wilderness characteristics in all three Wilderness Areas. In particular, the prohibition would reduce the encroachment of sight and sound across the wilderness boundary improving the solitude characteristic.
 - ◆ Reduction in illegal intrusions would reduce the influence of humans on the wilderness improving the untrammeled characteristics.
 - ◆ Fewer intrusions would reduce resource damage, improving the natural characteristic.
 - ◆ No Areas are proposed within ¼ mile of a Wilderness boundary posing no effect to the solitude characteristic.

Alternative B – No Action

Alternative B proposes no change to the existing road system within ¼ mile of the three Wilderness boundaries. The same road system and trailheads would be available for access to the forest and as starting points for trips into the Gila, Aldo Leopold, and Blue Range Wilderness Areas. With the continuation of cross country travel, this alternative provides the most motorized opportunities including Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval. This Alternative poses the most potential for motorized intrusions into the Wilderness. There have been individual incidences reported where motorized users have extended or pioneered routes from existing roads across the boundary into the Wilderness. The Gila National Forest has not completed any baseline monitoring for Wilderness Character.

Access to and along the boundaries of the three Wilderness areas is available off of 62.4 miles of roads located within ¼ mile of these boundaries. The miles of road located within ¼ mile of a wilderness boundary break out for each Wilderness as follows: Aldo Leopold 18.8 miles; Blue Range Wilderness 7.7 miles; and Gila Wilderness 35.9 miles. These road systems have been in place since Wilderness designation and are allowed up to the boundary of a Wilderness Area. If users stay on current motorized routes, there would be no effect on Wilderness Character.

All Action Alternatives

Action Alternatives C through G add and reduce miles of motorized roads and trails that are open to the public within ¼ mile of the wilderness boundaries. Miles of roads open to the public are also reduced within ¼ mile of the wilderness boundaries for roads proposed to be changed to an Administrative Use only designation. See Table 10 and Table 11. Table 12 and Table 13 display the proposals for Motorized Dispersed Camping (MDC) and Motorized Big Game Retrieval (MBGR) within ¼ mile of a Wilderness Boundary.

Table 10. Forest Service Route Miles Open to the Public within ¼ mile of Wilderness Boundaries and Percent Change

Wilderness Area	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E	Alt F	Alt G
Aldo Leopold Wilderness	18.8	15.2	11.4	4.4	12.3	12.3
Blue Range Wilderness	7.7	6.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.7
Gila Wilderness	35.9	31.7	19.7	17.9	22.7	22.7
Total	62.4	53.4	34.7	25.9	38.6	38.6
Percent change from Alt B		-14.5%	-44.4%	-58.6%	-38.3%	-38.2%

Table 11. Forest Service Route Miles for Periodic Administrative Use or by Written Authorization Only within ¼ mile of Wilderness

Wilderness Area	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E	Alt F	Alt G
Aldo Leopold Wilderness	0.00	3.29	3.78	4.14	3.78	3.78
Blue Range Wilderness	0.00	3.18	5.98	4.15	5.52	5.82
Gila Wilderness	0.00	1.63	6.21	6.87	6.02	6.02
Total	0.00	8.10	15.97	15.16	15.32	15.62

Table 12. Miles and Acres of Motorized Dispersed Camping within a Quarter Mile of Wilderness Areas

Wilderness Area Name	Alt. B Miles	Alt. B Acres	Alt. C Miles	Alt. C Acres	Alt. D Miles	Alt. D Acres	Alt. E Miles	Alt. E Acres	Alt. F Miles	Alt. F Acres	Alt. G Miles	Alt. G Acres
Aldo Leopold	N/A	17,395	4.65	328	4.25	297	0.00	0	4.65	328	4.65	328
Blue Range	N/A	4,727	0.88	83	0.88	79	0.00	0	0.88	83	0.88	79
Gila	N/A	29,582	9.75	722	8.45	654	0.00	0	9.30	683	9.30	682
TOTAL	N/A	51,704	15.28	1,133	13.58	1,030	0.00	0	14.83	1,094	14.83	1,089

Table 13. Miles and Acres of Motorized Big Game Retrieval within a Quarter Mile of Wilderness Areas

Wilderness Area Name	Alt. B Miles	Alt. B Acres	Alt. C ¹ Miles	Alt. C Acres	Alt. D ² Miles	Alt. D Acres	Alt. E ³ Miles	Alt. E Acres	Alt. F ⁴ Miles	Alt. F Acres	Alt. G ⁵ Miles	Alt. G Acres
Aldo Leopold	N/A	17,395	14.95	9,305	4.25	297	0.00	0	11.74	5,499	4.65	328
Blue Range	N/A	4,727	19.80	4,355	0.88	79	0.00	0	16.95	3,050	0.88	79
Gila	N/A	29,582	49.28	24,266	8.45	654	0.00	0	40.24	18,207	9.30	682
TOTAL	N/A	51,704	84.03	37,927	13.58	1,030	0.00	0	68.93	26,756	14.83	1,089

1 Alternative C -- 1 Mile Each Side from Any Designated Road

2 Alternative D -- 300 feet Using Same Motorized Dispersed Camping Corridor

3 Alternative E -- None

4 Alternative F -- ½ Mile Each Side from Any Designated Route

5 Alternative G -- 300 feet Using Same Motorized Dispersed Camping Corridor

Alternative C

Alternative C proposes the least reduction, 14.5 percent, in roads leading to within ¼ mile of the Wilderness boundary compared to the No Action Alternative. Of the Action Alternatives, when considering Motorized Routes, Corridors for Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval, this alternative provides the most motorized access opportunities for recreationists. This Alternative is the most similar to Alternative B, the No Action Alternative posing the most potential for motorized intrusions into the Wilderness affecting the characteristics of Solitude and Untrammelled.

Alternative D

Alternative D proposes the second most reduction, a 44.4 percent in roads leading to within 1/4 mile of the Wilderness boundary. When considering Motorized Routes, Corridors for Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval (300 ft. off of both sides of 13.58 miles of road/1,030 acres for MDC and MBGR, this alternative proposes more motorized opportunities than Alternatives E and less motorized opportunities than Alternatives F and G with the potential for motorized intrusions into Wilderness more than Alternative E and less than Alternatives F and G.

Alternative E

Alternative E proposes the most reduction of 58.6 percent reduction in roads leading to within ¼ mile of the Wilderness boundary. Of the Action Alternatives, this alternative provides the least motorized opportunities for recreationists with no opportunities for Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval. This Alternative poses the least potential for motorized intrusions into the Wilderness.

Alternatives F and G

Both Alternatives propose a 32.8 percent reduction in roads leading within ¼ mile of the Wilderness boundary. Both Alternatives propose the same mileage of Corridors for Motorized Dispersed Camping 300 ft. off of 14.8 miles/1,089 acres within ½ mile of a wilderness boundary. Alternative F proposes 68.9 miles/ 26,756 acres of Motorized Big Game Retrieval ½ mile off both sides of the road that are located within ½ mile of a Wilderness Boundary. Alternative G proposes the same 300 ft. corridor and miles/ acres for Motorized Dispersed Camping. This represents more motorized recreation opportunities than Alternatives D and E with less motorized opportunities provided than Alternative C. The potential for intrusions are more likely in Alternative F with a wider corridor and more mileage proposed for motorized big game retrieval within ½ mile of a wilderness boundary.

Although all Action Alternatives reduce road mileage within ¼ mile of all three Wilderness boundaries, corridors for Motorized Dispersed Camping and Big Game Retrieval are proposed in all Action Alternatives except E. The proposed reductions of road mileages would potentially improve wilderness character. The proposed road closures, corridors for Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval were not proposed with the intent to create a complete buffer around these Wilderness areas. None of the Action Alternatives are in violation of the 1964 Wilderness Act and Public Law 96-550 the New Mexico Wilderness Act. Proposed closures and corridors were identified during the Travel Analysis Process (TAP) and through public comments during the TMR planning process.

Motorized Routes and Wilderness Areas – Cumulative Effects

The spatial boundary for the cumulative effects analysis for Motorized Routes and Wilderness includes the boundaries of the Gila, Aldo Leopold, and Blue Range Wilderness Areas with the area adjacent to the

boundaries defined as ¼ mile. This distance was utilized to identify projects adjacent to the Wilderness Boundary that may cumulatively influence Wilderness Character.

The analysis considers past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions upon the Wilderness Character of Wilderness Areas located on the Gila National Forest for the next twenty years. Table Rec A6 in Appendix A displays the Activities within Wilderness and adjacent to wilderness (within ¼ mile) since 1988 compiled from the Forest Activity Tracking System (FACTS) data base.

Wilderness Character including the untrammeled attribute of wilderness may be compromised regardless of alternative from the general population increase and associated increase in recreational use within and adjacent to wilderness areas.

As described in the assumptions section the prohibition on cross-country travel has the potential to improve all 4 characteristics of Wilderness character: Untrammeled; Natural; Undeveloped; and Solitude.

Motorized Routes and Motorized Creek Crossing - Eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers Outside of Wilderness

Affected Environment

The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress in 1968 (Public Law 90-542; 16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.) to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. There are three classifications of Wild & Scenic Rivers: "Wild," "Scenic," and "Recreational." For a River to be eligible for Wild & Scenic River (W&S) designation it must be free flowing and, with its adjacent land area, must possess one or more outstandingly remarkable values. Outstandingly remarkable values (ORV) are specific to each river segment and may include Scenic, Recreation, Fish, Historic, and Cultural Values. None of the streams or rivers on the Gila National Forest are designated as Wild & Scenic Rivers.

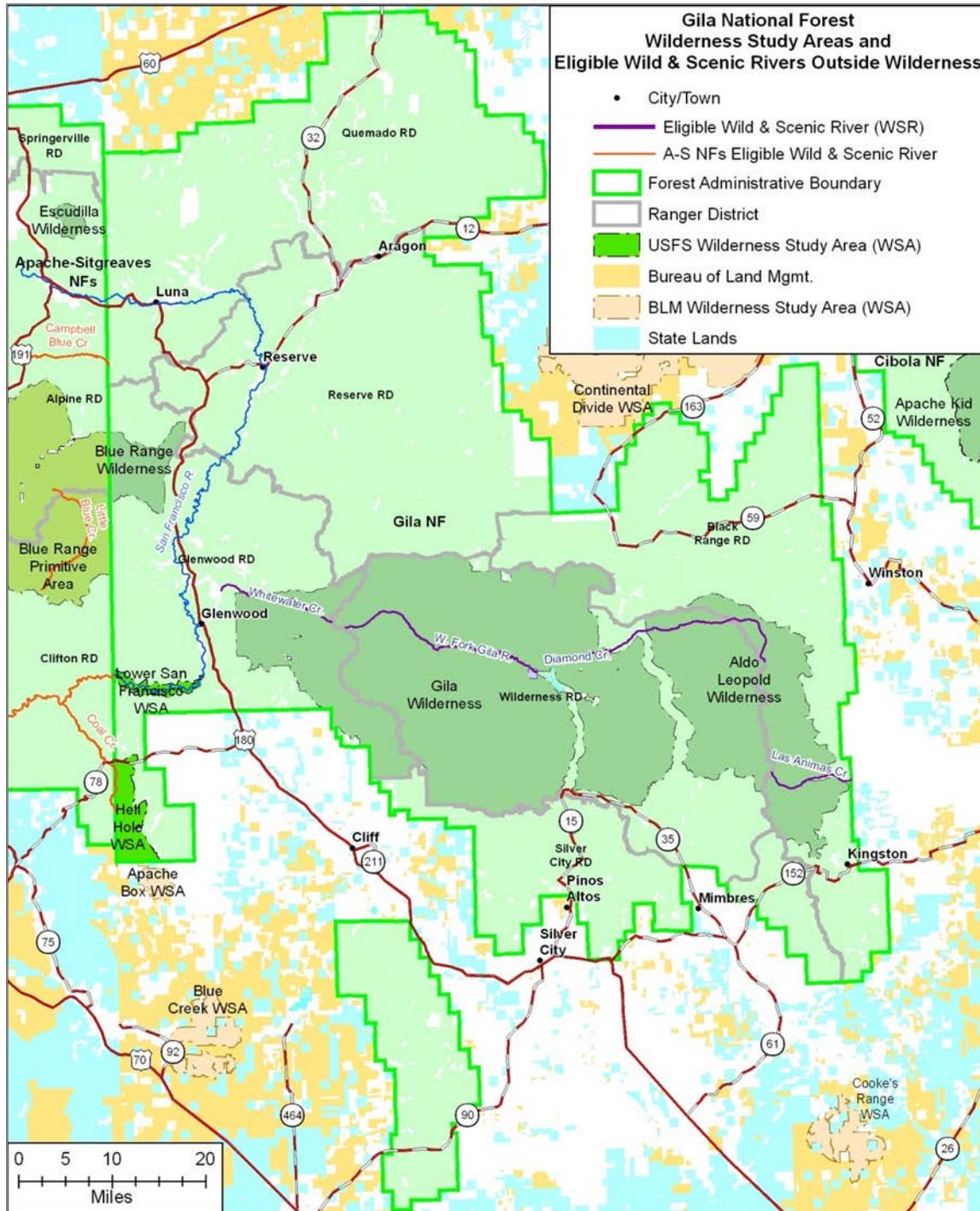


Figure 22. Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers Outside of Wilderness

The Gila National Forest Plan 1986 as amended incorporated direction to protect eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers (river areas) for their outstandingly remarkable values, and preserve their classification pending determination of their suitability for inclusion in the National Wild & Scenic River System. The following Rivers were included in the eligibility findings: Whitewater Creek, Spruce Creek, Middle Fork Gila River, West Fork Gila River, Main Diamond Creek, South Diamond Creek, Holden Prong, and Las Animas Creek.

Table 14 displays the Outstandingly Remarkable Values and Classification for the proposed eligible segments located outside Wilderness.

Table 14. Outstandingly remarkable values and classification for the proposed eligible segments located outside wilderness

Name	Outstandingly Remarkable Value	Classification
Whitewater Creek	Recreational and Historic	Recreational
Las Animas	Fish and Historic	Wild
West Fork	Scenic and Historic	Wild and Recreational
Main Diamond	Fish and Historic	Wild and Recreational

Segments of the San Francisco and the Mimbres Rivers on the Gila National Forest were proposed during the eligibility planning process for W&S Rivers and not included in the final eligibility findings.

The San Francisco River and Coal Creek are included in the eligibility findings for the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest. These findings identify a segment of the San Francisco River eligible under the classification of “Wild” and a segment of the river eligible under the classification of “Recreational.” A segment of Coal Creek is identified as eligible under the classification of “Wild” and a segment as eligible under the classification of “Recreational.” The “Recreational” segment of Coal Creek flows along the Arizona New Mexico border and flows on and off the Gila National Forest. The Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest administers this eligible W&S River.

Motorized Route and Motorized Creek Crossing Indicators for Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers Outside of Wilderness Indicators

- Miles of motorized routes within 300 ft. of eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers Outside of Wilderness
- Number of Motorized Route Crossings

Assumptions Common to All Action Alternatives Regarding Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers Outside Wilderness

- Total miles of motorized routes miles within 300 ft. of Eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers outside Wilderness that remain the same for all Action Alternatives are:
 - ◆ Main Diamond Creek 1 mile;
 - ◆ Las Animas Creek 4 miles; and
 - ◆ West Fork Gila River 0.05 miles.
- The 0.05 miles in the West Fork Gila River, Road 973B (Gila Cliff Dwellings Parking Lot) and 0.1 miles in Whitewater Creek (Catwalk Parking Lot) are proposed in All Action alternatives to change from open to all motor vehicles to NFS road open to highway legal vehicles only. These two parking lots will no longer allow mixed use of highway legal vehicles and off high vehicles improving visitor safety at these parking lots.

Motorized Routes and Motorized Creek Crossing - Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers Outside of Wilderness

Environmental Consequences

Alternative B

The current miles of motorized routes within 300 feet of eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers outside Wilderness are as follows: Main Diamond Creek (1.0 mile), Las Animas Creek (4.0 miles), West Fork Gila River (0.05 mile), and Whitewater Creek (1.0 mile). This totals to 6.0 miles of motorized routes for all non-wilderness eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers on the Forest. Currently an ATV trail accesses an eligible segment of Whitewater Creek from the Powerhouse trailhead and Road 810. The trail accesses a popular picnicking spot at the confluence of Whitewater and South Fork Whitewater Creeks. Currently visitors may enjoy the Outstandingly Remarkable Values of Historic and Recreation of Whitewater Creek with an ATV or motorcycle to access this segment of the Creek.

Total Motorized Route Creek Crossings in Perennial/Intermittent Segments of eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers located outside of Wilderness on the Gila National Forest are as follows: 1 on Diamond Creek; 21 on Las Animas Creek and 2 on Whitewater Creek totaling 24 motorized route creek crossings. Road access on Las Animas Creek is currently not open to the public, the public only has access to the motorized routes on Diamond Creek and Whitewater Creek.

Currently with no prohibition on cross country travel, opportunities for Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval are currently available within eligible Wild & Scenic River corridors outside of Wilderness.

Alternatives C, F, and G

Total motorized route creek crossings (24) in perennial/intermittent segments and miles of motorized routes (5.9 miles) within 300 feet of eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers outside Wilderness are proposed the same as Alternative B. Twenty-one creek crossings on Las Animas Creek are proposed for Administrative Use or Use by Written Authorization, this does not represent a change on the ground since the public does not currently have access to these roads.

The ATV trail providing access to a portion of Whitewater Creek from the Powerhouse trailhead and Road 810 will continue to provide motorized ATV trail accesses to the popular picnicking spot at the confluence of Whitewater and South Fork Whitewater Creeks providing a motorized route to enjoy the Outstandingly Remarkable Values of Historic and Recreation along Whitewater Creek.

Alternative C proposes the most miles/acres providing Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval within Wild & Scenic River corridors outside of Wilderness. See Appendix D Table MDC D2 and Appendix E Table MBGR E3. Alternatives F and G propose more opportunities for Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval than Alternative E. There is a potential for dissatisfaction by visitors who currently use motor vehicles to dispersed camp and retrieve big game within Wild & Scenic River corridors outside of Wilderness.

Alternatives D and E

The proposed 0.5 mile reduction of motorized ATV routes resulting in 5.4 miles of motorized routes within 300 feet of eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers outside Wilderness is located in Whitewater Creek. These two Alternatives would eliminate one motorized crossing on Whitewater Creek. The short segment of ATV trail proposed for closure accesses a popular picnicking spot at the confluence of Whitewater and South Fork Whitewater Creeks. This portion of Whitewater Creek is accessed from the Powerhouse

trailhead and Road 810. Visitors currently accessing this picnic spot with an ATV will be affected by this proposal. Non-motorized access will continue to provide the opportunity to experience the historic and recreational outstandingly remarkable values on this eligible Wild & Scenic River segment.

The same mileages and acreages of Corridors for Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval are proposed, 0.9 miles/89 acres providing Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval opportunities within Wild & Scenic River corridors outside of Wilderness in Alternative D. Alternative E proposes no opportunities for Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval in Wild & Scenic River corridors Outside of Wilderness. There is a potential for dissatisfaction by visitors who currently use motor vehicles to dispersed camp and retrieve big game within Wild & Scenic River corridors outside of Wilderness.

Motorized Routes and Motorized Creek Crossings - Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers Outside of Wilderness

Cumulative Effects

The cumulative effects analysis for Motorized Routes and Motorized Creek Crossings for Eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers Outside of Wilderness considers the past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions within the 300 ft. corridors of all eligible Wild & Scenic River segments including Whitewater Creek, Spruce Creek, Middle Fork Gila River, West Fork Gila River, Main Diamond Creek, South Diamond Creek, Holden Prong and Las Animas Creek for the next twenty years.

Table W&S B3 located in the Appendix B of this report contains a listing of past projects implemented within eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers since 1987. Treatments include thinning, pesticide application of Tamarix (spp.)-Salt Cedar, and Wildfire natural ignitions.

The history of the Catwalk located on Whitewater Creek began with the discovery of gold and silver in the rugged Mogollon Mountains above Whitewater Canyon. A pipeline was constructed to channel water from a water collection point 3 miles upstream from Whitewater Creek to the Graham mill at the mouth of Whitewater Canyon. This operation lasted only 10 years when the mill and pipeline were sold. In the mid-1930s the CCC rebuilt the Catwalk as a recreation attraction for the Gila National Forest. The Catwalk National Recreation Trail (NRT) located on Whitewater Creek has been rebuilt several times after devastating floods have taken their toll. A portion of the Catwalk NRT is currently closed due to hazards from the Whitewater Baldy Fire of 2012. The headwaters of Whitewater Creek were aerially reseeded as part of the Whitewater Baldy Fire Burned Area Emergency Restoration (BAER) efforts discussed in Motorized Routes. A future project may include establishing Gila trout in Whitewater Creek which is likely fishless due to the fire effects from the Whitewater Baldy fire. Initial surveys indicate that Whitewater Creek could be fishless.

There is a planned restoration project in Las Animas Creek. The project includes the use of Rotenone to remove non-native fish species and restore the native fish assemblage to Las Animas Creek, thus improving the Outstandingly Remarkable Value of Fish. There is not an expectation that visitor use with a motorized vehicle will increase on the motorized route and associated creek crossings on Las Animas Creek since access is not currently open to the public and will be limited to periodic administrative use or by written authorization only.

With no prohibitions on cross country travel within eligible Wild & Scenic River corridors, there would be a reduction in opportunities for Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval in all Action Alternatives. The designation of motorized routes and proposal for corridors for MDC and

MBGR has the potential to reduce the creation unauthorized routes within Wild & Scenic River corridors outside of Wilderness.

Motorized Routes - National Scenic and National Recreation Trails

Affected Environment

The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail or CDNST is a 3100 mile trail that runs along the Rocky Mountain Range starting at the Mexican border crossing 5 states, 25 National Forests, 3 National Parks, 1 National Monument, 8 BLM Resource Areas, and 3 Indian Reservations and ending at the Canadian border. The trail travels through New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana. Seven hundred and seventy five (estimated) miles of the CDNST are located in New Mexico with 251 miles located on the Gila National Forest.

Traveling from south to north, (the direction a majority of hikers and horseback riders travel the trail) CDNST hikers and horseback riders cross onto the Gila National Forest in the Burro mountains between Lordsburg and Silver City through the Gila Box IRA. A segment of the trail has not been completed or officially designated from Mangus Creek to the Bear Mountain trailhead in the Burros. The CDNST route continues along the Continental Divide, crosses Signal Peak, then Black Peak within the Meadow Creek IRA, and drops down into Sapillo Group Campground. It then enters the Contiguous to the Gila Wilderness IRA, then the Gila Wilderness up Rocky Canyon crossing the Road 150 (North Star Mesa) entering the Aldo Leopold to Rocky Point climbing just below Reeds Peak heading north on the Continental Divide through the Contiguous to the Black and Aldo Leopold Wilderness, Dry Creek, Poverty Creek, Wahoo and Stone Canyon IRAs. It then leaves the Forest crossing private land where the BLM has facilitated a trail easement within the Continental Divide WSA (administered by the BLM Socorro Field Office), then enters the forest again on the Reserve Ranger District traveling along the Continental Divide and through the Wagon Tongue IRA leaving the forest on the north east side of the Quemado Ranger District. A discussion of the effects related to Recreation Opportunities to the specific portions of the CDNST located within IRAs is included within the WSA and IRA Recreation Specialists Report. See Figure 23 and Figure 24.

The Forest Service amended the CDNST Comprehensive Plan (USDA 2009) and internal agency directives (FSM 2350). The CDNST Comprehensive Plan provides overall direction for the development, management, and use of the CDNST. FSM 2350 guides policy, development, and management of the CDNST on National Forest System lands. The amended directives provide future management direction for the CDNST by addressing and clarifying the nature and purpose of the CDNST. All Action Alternatives reduce the mileage of CDNST that intersects and that follows an open motorized road. Implementation of District Plans for CDNST reroutes (separate from the travel planning process) will further reduce the mileage of CDNST route following an open road. See Cumulative Effects.

The nature and purpose of the CDNST are to provide for high-quality scenic, primitive hiking and horseback riding opportunities and to conserve natural, historic, and cultural resources along the CDNST corridor. The intent of the National Scenic Trail pursuant to the National Trails System Act of 1968 is for non-motorized use. Motorized use by the general public is prohibited on the CDNST. Exceptions are listed in FSM 2350 and include: motorized crossings, the designated class and width of vehicles were allowed on the segment of the CDNST prior to November 10, 1978 or the designated segment was constructed as a road prior to November 10, 1978, as long as that use will not substantially interfere with the nature and purpose of the trail. Directives also state "Locate a CDNST segment on a road only where it is primitive and offers recreational opportunities comparable to those provided by a trail with a designed use of Pack and Saddle Stock, provided that the CDNST may have to be located on or across motorized routes because of inability to locate the trail elsewhere. Concerns received in comments state

that the continuation of motorized use will substantially and significantly interfere with the nature and purposes of the trail and the experience sought by hikers and horseback riders on the CDNST. Specific concerns include the Burro Mountains, Sapillo Campground, and Quemado Ranger District.

Table VQO G1 in Appendix G of this document displays the Visual Quality Objectives for the Contiguous Management Areas from the Forest Plan. Management Areas where segments of the CDNST travel through are noted along with the VQO shown for those trail segments. The VQOs for the segments of the trail managed by the following districts follow:

- Black Range Ranger District – Mostly partial retention, with some segments preservation which includes those segments located in wilderness.
- Wilderness Ranger District – Mostly partial retention, Wilderness segment preservation
- Silver city Ranger District – Partial retention

The Catwalk National Recreation Trail is a historically intriguing feature of the Glenwood District. The area offers a beautiful picnic spot next to Whitewater Creek, a challenging one mile non-motorized trail along the historic water line route from the 1890s, a trailhead access into the Gila Wilderness, a bird watcher's paradise and a sense of place that creates images of an earlier time. A portion of the Catwalk trail is currently closed to provide for public safety as part of the Whitewater-Baldy Fire Area closure.

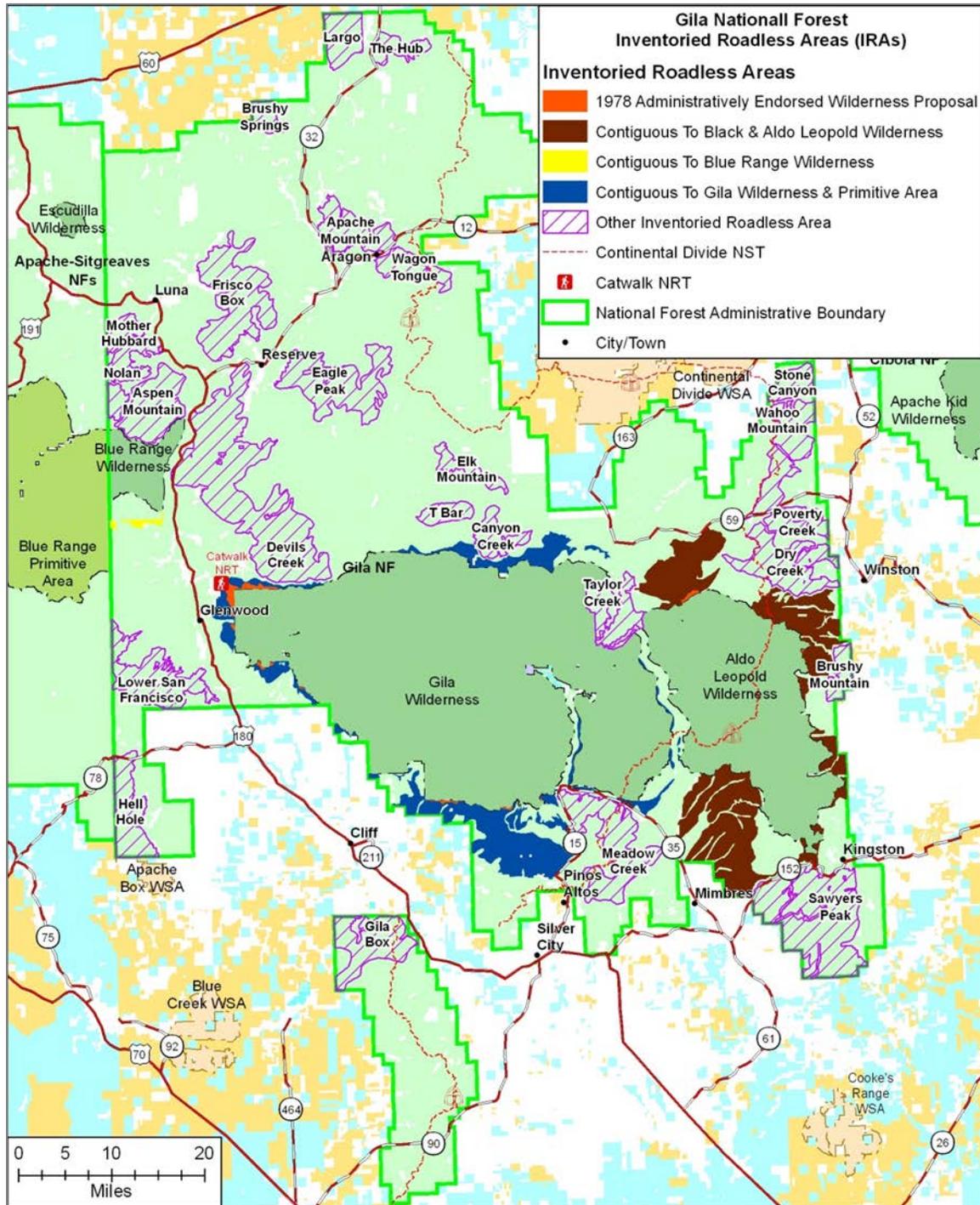


Figure 23. Catwalk National Recreation Trail, Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and Inventoried Roadless Areas

Motorized Routes - National Scenic and National Recreation Trails

Environmental Consequences

Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Motorized Route Indicators

- Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST)
Total Miles of CDNST:
 - Miles intersecting a motorized trail
 - Miles intersecting a motorized road
 - Miles following an open motorized trail
 - Miles following an open motorized road
 - Miles following an open motorized road after CDNST District Proposed Reroutes
 - Miles following a closed motorized trail proposed in alternatives
 - Miles following a closed motorized road proposed in alternatives
 - Miles/Acres CDNST located within proposed corridors for motorized dispersed camping
 - Miles/Acres CDNST located within proposed corridors for motorized big game retrieval

Assumptions Common to All Action Alternatives Regarding Motorized Routes – CDNST

- None of the Action Alternatives propose to change the location of the 251 miles of CDNST route designated on the Gila National Forest. No new trail construction or reconstruction is proposed in any of the Action Alternatives associated with TMR.
- In all Action Alternatives motorized cross-country travel will be prohibited which includes no cross-country travel being allowed off of any motorized segments of the CDNST.
- None of the Action Alternatives propose motorized designations on the 1.35 miles of the Catwalk National Recreation Trail.

Effects Common to All Action Alternatives Regarding Motorized Routes - CDNST

- Visual quality along the CDNST could be improved in all Action Alternatives due to the prohibition of cross-country travel. The elimination of cross-country travel and limiting motorized use to designated routes reduces the possibility of the creation of new unauthorized routes along the CDNST.
- In All Action Alternatives the mileages CDNST following an open road are reduced, improving the non-motorized opportunities on the trail.

Table 15 displays a summary of the existing condition and effects of each alternative upon the motorized route indicators for the CDNST. Supporting data tables are located in Appendix C of this document. In Table 16, it appears that motorized trail routes are being added to the CDNST. However, Alternative D, F, and G propose motorized open roads to change to the designation of trails open to vehicles less than 50 inches in width. Within the Burros there are also proposals to designate decommissioned and unauthorized routes that would be converted to motorized use for vehicles less than 50 inches in width

and single track motorcycles, and routes proposed for motorized use for vehicles less than 50 inches in width and single track motorcycles that would cross a segment of the CDNST.

Table 15. Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Motorized Route Indicators by Alternative

Indicator	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E	Alt F	Alt G
Total CDNST Miles on NFS Land	251	251	251	251	251	251
No. of CDNST intersects with a motorized trail	0	4	3	0	3	3
No. of CDNST intersects with a motorized road	73	66	50	41	56	56
No. of miles where CDNST follows an open motorized trail	0	1.0	2.0	0.0	2.4	2.4
No. of miles where the CDNST follows an open motorized road	41.4	36.2	30.2	29.9	30.2	30.9
No. of miles where the CDNST follows a ML-1 (closed) road	5.31	10.55	15.07	16.85	15.02	14.35

Alternative B – No Action

As described in the Affected Environment, there are 251 miles of the CDNST located on the Gila National Forest. The route currently does not intersect or follow a motorized trail open to vehicles less than 50 inches in width. It currently intersects an open road 73 times and the trail currently follows an open road for 41.4 miles. Of these miles, 2.2 miles are located on Maintenance Level 3 roads with the remaining 39.2 miles located on Maintenance Level 2 roads. The majority of this road mileage is located on primitive routes that offer recreational opportunities comparable to those provided by a trail with a designed use of Pack and Saddle Stock meeting the intent and purpose of the trail and are estimated to be on existing routes that were constructed as a road prior to November 10, 1978 the date the CDNST was designated. No date construction data is retained in any Roads data bases. Currently 209.2 miles of the CDNST is located in non-wilderness where cross country vehicle travel is allowed. As opportunities arise, the districts have moved the CDNST off or roads and will continue to evaluate and implement proposals to move the CDNST off of motorized roads. The CDNST currently follows 5.31 miles of ML-1 (closed) Road. Currently, motorized cross-country travel is allowed from any motorized segment of the CDNST.

Alternative C

Alternative C would add 4 intersections with a motorized trail, would reduce intersections with a motorized road to 66, would incorporate 1 mile of unauthorized coincident routes into a motorized trail open to vehicles less than 50 inches in width, and would reduce the miles following an open road to 36.2. The trail would follow 10.55 miles of ML-1 (closed) Roads. Of the Action Alternatives this alternative proposes the most motorized use associated with the CDNST. Corridors for motorized dispersed camping are proposed on most of these proposed motorized designations on the CDNST which are located within the Burros. The majority of this road mileage is located on primitive routes that offer recreational opportunities comparable to those provided by a trail with a designed use of Pack and Saddle Stock meeting the intent and purpose of the trail. However, with the most miles of trail located on road, miles/acres of Corridors for Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Game Retrieval it is the least compatible with the purpose of providing a high quality scenic, primitive hiking and horseback riding opportunity for non-motorized users.

Alternative D

Alternative D would add 3 intersections with a motorized trail, would reduce intersections with a motorized road to 50, would add 2 miles of CDNST route where it would follow a motorized trail open to vehicles less than 50 inches in width, and would reduce the miles following an open road to 30.2. One mile of the motorized trail proposed is currently a motorized road. The majority of this road mileage is located on primitive routes that offer recreational opportunities comparable to those provided by a trail with a designed use of Pack and Saddle Stock meeting the intent and purpose of the trail. There would be 13.1 miles of CDNST that travel through 300 ft. corridors for Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval, less than Alternative B the No Action Alternative where cross country travel is currently allowed, improving non-motorized opportunities on the trail.

Alternative E

Alternative E proposes the most reduction in motorized routes coincident with the CDSNT and would provide the most primitive experience on the trail. Alternative E would add 0 intersections with a motorized trail, would reduce intersections with a motorized road to 41, would add 0 miles of CDNST route where it would follow a motorized trail open to vehicles less than 50 inches in width, and would reduce the miles following an open road to 29.9. No Corridors for Motorized Dispersed Camping or Big Game Retrieval are proposed. This alternative is the most compatible with the purpose of the CDNST providing a high quality scenic, primitive hiking and horseback riding opportunity for non-motorized users.

Alternative F

Alternative F would add 3 intersections with a motorized trail, would reduce intersections with a motorized road to 56, would add 1.4 miles of CDNST route where it would change from following a motorized road to a motorized trail open to vehicles less than 50 inches in width, would add 1 mile of trail route open to vehicles less than 50 inches in width, and would reduce the miles following an open road to 30.2. The majority of this road mileage is located on primitive routes that offer recreational opportunities comparable to those provided by a trail with a designed use of Pack and Saddle Stock meeting the intent and purpose of the trail. Alternatives C and F provide the least non-motorized opportunity along the trail. They also carry the most risk of motorized ingress/access on the CDNST and potential for motorized group camping next to the trail.

Alternative G

The affects in Alternatives F and G are very similar. Alternative G would add 3 intersections with a motorized trail, would reduce intersections with a motorized road to 56, would add 1.4 miles of CDNST route where it would follow a motorized trail open to vehicles less than 50 inches in width, would add 1 mile of trail route open to vehicles less than 50 inches in width, and would reduce the miles following an open road to 30.9. The majority of this road mileage is located on primitive routes that offer recreational opportunities comparable to those provided by a trail with a designed use of Pack and Saddle Stock meeting the intent and purpose of the trail. This Alternative proposes 14.1 miles of CDNST passing through 300 ft. Corridors proposed for Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval are less than Alternative F. This poses less risk of motorized ingress/access on the CDNST and potential for group camping with vehicles next to the trail.

Cumulative Effects upon National Scenic and National Recreation Trails

The cumulative effects analysis considers past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions upon CDNST trail segment located on the Gila National Forest as well as the CDNST trail easement segment located between the Black Range and Reserve Ranger Districts for the next twenty years.

Past Actions

As mentioned, trail routes have been constructed to move the CDNST off of road routes. See Appendix C Table CDNST C6. Most of this work has occurred on the Quemado, Reserve, and Silver City Districts. The Valle Tio Vincens CDNST Trailhead has been upgraded with a trail constructed to access the CDNST.

The BLM has facilitated a trail easement within the Continental Divide WSA between the Black Range and Reserve Districts that is administered by the BLM Socorro Field Office.

The 2012 Whitewater Baldy Fire Area currently has a closure order in place that closes the upper portion of the Catwalk National Recreation Trail for public safety. An additional closure has been implemented at the Catwalk June of 2013 due to a rock slide and flooding hazards. This closure is temporary and will be lifted as soon as safety conditions warrant.

Ongoing and Future Foreseeable Actions

Implementation of District Plans for CDNST reroutes (separate from the travel planning process) will further reduce the mileage of CDNST route following an open road. See Table 16. Additional analysis will be conducted in the future to consider reducing additional mileage of CDNST traveling on roads. The CDNST District Plans propose to construct reroutes that would reduce the amount of trail on motorized road system. Work with forest and volunteer crews will occur in the John Kerr area of the Reserve District routing the trail off system roads summer 2013. See Figure 24 of proposed reroutes on the Reserve District.

Table 16. Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Motorized Route Indicators, District CDNST Proposed Plans, by Alternative

Route Indicators	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E	Alt F	Alt G
No. of miles where the CDNST follows an open motorized road	41.4	36.2	30.2	29.9	30.2	30.9
No. of miles where the CDNST follows an open motorized road						
Estimate After CDNST District Approved Plan Reroutes are completed	27.4	22.2	16.2	15.9	16.2	16.9
No. of miles where the CDNST follows a ML-1 (closed) road	5.31	10.55	15.07	16.85	15.02	14.35

The analysis for a long-term plan for the Catwalk National Recreation Trail will begin mid-summer 2013.

Cumulatively there is likely to be a beneficial effect on the CDNST due to the TMR proposed actions and proposed District reroutes moving the trail away from motorized routes to better meet the nature and intent of the trail.

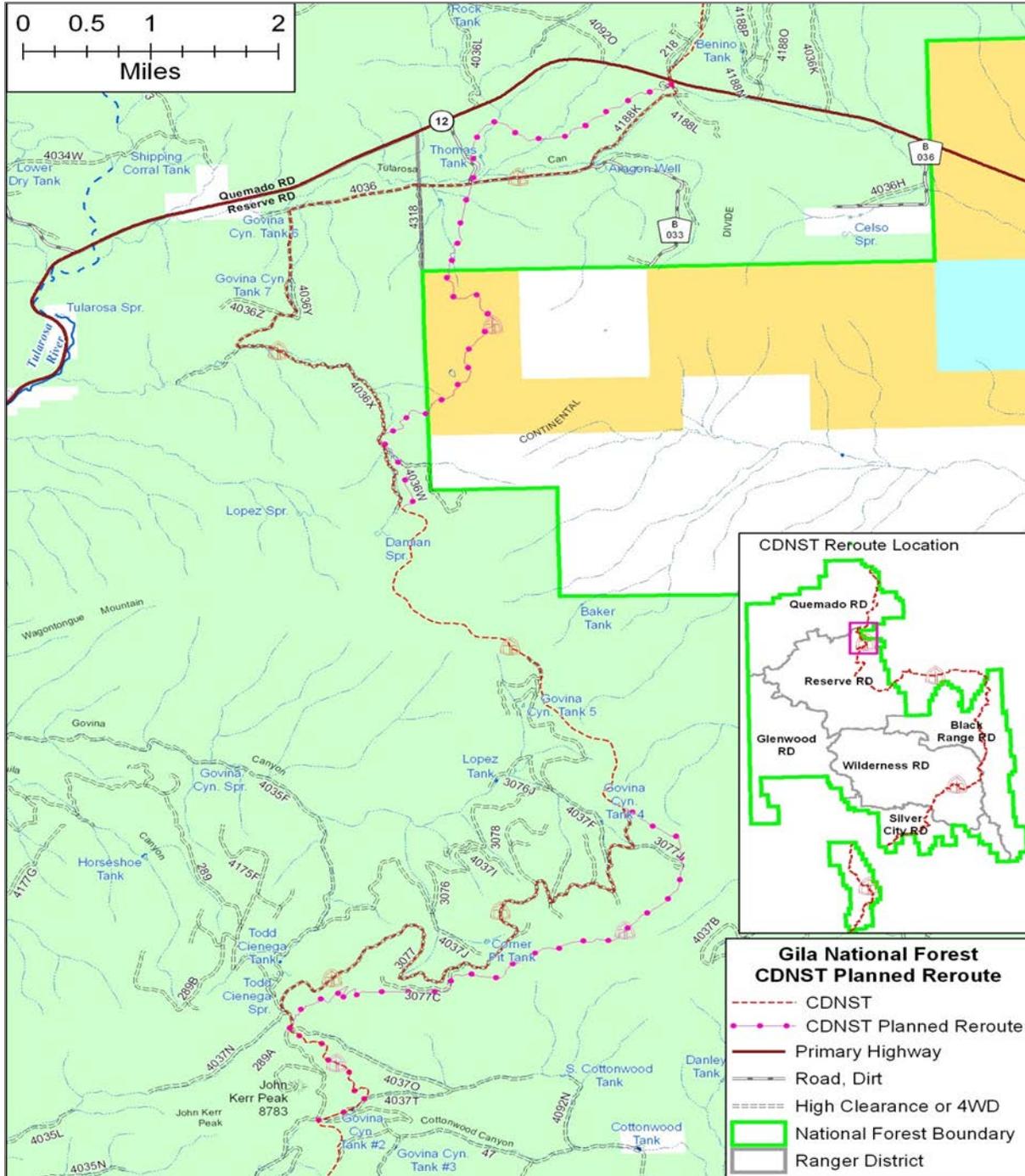


Figure 24. CDNST Planned Reroute

Motorized Routes – Economics

Affected Environment

Trail Maintenance

Many trails including motorized trails are not maintained on an annual basis. An accurate number of unusable miles are unavailable, so the entire Forest Trail system will be used for this analysis. However, the total usable system is known to be much smaller, which would have a direct effect on the comparison of “equity” when using numbers of trail miles as an indicator. See Table in the Roads section of the FEIS for miles of roads maintained based on annual forest road budget allocations.

Total estimated five year average of forest trail needs from (2005-2010 Average National Trail Cost figures) for the Gila National Forest follows: Total Operations \$277,873, Deferred Maintenance \$4,085,922, Annual Trail Maintenance \$870,769 and Trail Capital Improvement (Trail Reconstruction) \$2,948,985. The total (2005-2010 average Allocation figure) for funding the Gila National Forests Trails Program including Operations, Maintenance, and Trails Capital Investment is \$485,554. See glossary for description of Trail funding types. This Operations, Annual Maintenance, and Capital Investment funding currently goes to maintain the non-motorized trail system on the forest. The Gila National Forest has the highest number of trail miles of any Forest in the Southwestern Region 3.

Environmental Consequences

As described above, currently annual budgets to support trail maintenance work are insufficient to maintain all the miles of the Forest’s trail system to standard. Out year budget funding projections are currently unknown. No alternative would change the amount of funds available for trail maintenance. Table 17 shows estimated cost for maintenance and operations for each alternative for the motorized trail system.

Table 17. Annual Maintenance/Operations Cost per Mile by Alternative

Alternative	No. Miles Motorized Trails Designated for Motorized Use*	Annual Maintenance /Operations/Needs/Mile	Annual Cost
B	15.8	\$900**	\$14,220***
C	203.4	\$900	\$183,060
D	123.5	\$900	\$111,150
E	1.5	\$900	\$1,350
F	178	\$900	\$160,020
G	178	\$900	\$160,020

*Does not include mileages of motorized trail open for periodic administrative use of by written authorization only for ATV access

**Average Trail Class 3 Costs for Operations and Maintenance/Year

*** Currently this amount is not being spent on motorized trail Maintenance and Operation

With the exception of Alternative E, all Action Alternatives increase the mileage of designated motorized trails and associated motorized trail maintenance needs. Alternative E with the least motorized mileage is the least costly while Alternative C with the most motorized trail mileage is the most costly of the Alternatives. Although the estimated motorized annual maintenance cost is below the average allocation figure of \$485,554, this funding would be used for both the motorized and non-motorized trail system. As discussed previously, there are 1,608 miles of foot/horse trail opportunities on the forest. The effect could be a designated motorized trail system that is not maintained to standard on a yearly basis.

Cumulative Effects

For all alternatives, volunteers who maintain trails help stretch the trail maintenance budget. Volunteers enable the forest to accomplish more maintenance with fewer dollars. Grants and other sources of funding could be a viable option for increasing the Forests ability to maintain the motorized and non-motorized trail system. Having a designate motorized trail system has the potential to improve the forests chances to be competitive to obtain grants. While grants and volunteers cumulatively increase the amount of trails the Gila could maintain, it isn't expected to be enough to maintain every trail on the system on an annual basis with the potential for some trails to eventually pose a safety hazard.

Motorized Dispersed Camping

Affected Environment

Motorized Dispersed Camping (MDC) occurs in undeveloped areas, usually adjacent to roads, trails, and water areas, particularly streams and riparian areas. Forests in the Southwestern Region receive some of the highest dispersed use in the nation USDA Forest Service (2012), likely due to open vegetation and year-round sun. Though not identified among the Gila National Forest's geospatial inventory of features, or identified within the Infra data base with data on condition or location of dispersed campsites, there are numerous locations throughout the transportation system where motorized dispersed camping traditionally occurs (i.e., camping with the use of a motorized vehicle). Such practice typically takes place where terrain is flat, and obstacles created by vegetation and rock features are sparse or few, allowing motorized vehicles to effectively drive off the road system and park where they can have privacy. Many public comments regarding motorized access to dispersed campsites emphasize the importance of this type of dispersed recreation opportunity. Many comments expressed support for the continuation of motorized dispersed camping, but there were those opposed to the designation motorized dispersed camping corridors because of the possibility of increasing resource damage within the corridors and potential for overcrowding. Other comments expressed concern that the amount of corridors proposed were too few and or narrow and would limit motorized dispersed camping opportunities on the forest.

Currently on the Gila National Forest, 2,443,391 acres are open to motorized dispersed camping; however, evidence of motorized dispersed camping, such as fire rings and ground disturbance, is rarely seen beyond 300 feet from roads. Many motorized dispersed camping sites within 300 feet from road are consistently used. Many areas are used on an annual basis by large family gatherings during the summer seasons and hunting parties during the fall. Rarely are new dispersed camping areas created, and when they are, they are likely to only be used once because the "good" or "favorite" spot was already taken. Conversely, in some cases, campsites can be transitional during hunting season due to weather conditions, game presence, and the success of drawing a big game permit.

Environmental Consequences

The following are the direct and indirect effects of proposed actions that relate to the issues presented for corridors for motorized dispersed camping. The effects of the Action Alternatives discussion is based on the data tables located in Appendix D. To display opportunities for dispersed camping for hunting access, miles/acres motorized access for dispersed camping are displayed by New Mexico Game & Fish Game Management Unit (GMUs), IRA, WSA, eligible W&S Rivers outside Wilderness and CDNST located within a proposed corridor. The mileages and acreages differ in the discussion of each alternative using Table MDC D1 Motorized Dispersed Camping by GMU figures and MDC acreages and mileages by alternative due edge mapping differences between the NM G&F GMU boundaries and Forest boundaries within the GIS mapping data layers. The discussion below focuses on the recreation opportunities available for Motorized Dispersed Camping under the Action Alternatives. Areas (as opposed to

corridors) proposed for dispersed camping is analyzed under the Motorized Areas issue. See Alternative Maps for locations.

Corridors for Motorized Dispersed Camping (MDC) Indicators

- Miles/Acres of corridors for motorized access for dispersed camping available by NMG&F GMUs, and estimated travelable ground. Opportunities for MDC within eligible W&S Rivers outside Wilderness and along the Continental Divide Trail are discussed above. MDC for IRAs and WSAs are included in the IRA and WSA Specialists Report.

Assumptions Common to All Action Alternatives Regarding Motorized Dispersed Camping

- Implementing the travel management rule only affects motorized dispersed camping (i.e., travelling off the designated NFS road system with a vehicle to set up a camp); it does not affect dispersed camping by any other non-motorized means. Dispersed camping by any other non-motorized means, such as parking within one vehicle length (including vehicle and trailer) alongside a designated open road and walking into a dispersed campsite to set up camp would continue to be allowed anywhere on the forest in All Action Alternatives.
- Corridors for motorized dispersed camping are meant solely for the purpose of motor vehicle access to dispersed campsites. These corridors would be limited to what is needed to provide direct ingress and egress to the campsite, with the campsite the base of activity. These corridors would not be open to unrestrained motor vehicle use, i.e., driving a motor vehicle outside that which is needed to drive to and from the campsite.
- Concern was expressed that designation of routes and corridors for motorized dispersed camping would confine people to a smaller area with the potential for resource damage and concentration of use at the reduced number of dispersed campsites that are available for motorized access under the various alternatives.
- In General Forest Areas, the FY11 NVUM shows the average crowding rating was 3, where 1 denotes hardly anyone there, and 10, perceived as over-crowded. Of the visitors surveyed 11.5 of the responses fall in a crowding rated over 5 while 87.6 percent of the responses fall in a lower crowding rating of under 5.
- Game Management 21 B contains no proposed designation for motorized dispersed camping in any of the Action Alternatives however; there are only 140 acres of Forest Service land within this GMU.
- There are no proposals for motorized dispersed camping within the following eligible Wild & Scenic River corridors outside of Wilderness: Las Animas Creek, West Fork Gila River, and Whitewater Creek.
- Outfitters would be limited to the same corridors proposed for motorized dispersed camping. This has a potential to change the type of hunting opportunity provided to the public.

Effects Common to All Action Alternatives Regarding Motorized Dispersed Camping

- Some campers may leave the Gila to find motorized dispersed camping opportunities elsewhere. A few campers may be displaced to developed campgrounds. Using developed campgrounds, however, would not provide the same opportunity because these campgrounds may not be in desired locations, camp site availability may be limited, and this may not be the type of camping they prefer. Equally, using developed campgrounds does not provide for the privacy and solitude important to many motorized dispersed campers. It is difficult to predict if and how dispersed camping visitor use would change under the various action alternatives.

Alternative B

Under Alternative B, all 4,572.6 miles of NFS roads are open to the public; people may park alongside any system road where it is safe to do so and walk into a dispersed campsite. In addition, because the forest is open to motorized cross-country travel (except for in Wilderness and other areas closed by the Forest Plan and forest order) people may also drive off road for any distance and set up a camp. This includes driving off of any segment of the CDNST that is currently located on a road (41.4.miles) and within IRAs, WSAs and GMUs.

Currently on the Gila National Forest, 2,443,391 acres are open to motorized dispersed camping; however, evidence of motorized dispersed camping, such as fire rings and ground disturbance, is rarely seen beyond 300 feet from roads.

Alternative B, the No Action Alternative with no prohibitions on cross country travel, does not meet the intent of the Travel Management Rule (TMR). The No Action Alternative is required by 40 CFR 15602.14(d) and is presented to provide a baseline for comparison of effects of the alternatives.

This alternative affords the greatest opportunity for motorized dispersed camping and benefits those who use motor vehicles to access a camping spot that provides the desired level of privacy and solitude. Without restrictions on where and how far to travel off the roadway to access dispersed campsites with a vehicle, the range of camp distribution has potential to be greatest, and unintended contact among others is anticipated to be less; however, without the ability to predict where people may be, contact between user groups still has the potential to occur. Unintended consequences of this alternative include the addition of unauthorized routes through the establishment of new dispersed campsites. This is due to the unrestricted cross-country travel associated with this alternative.

Though the public has the opportunity to practice motorized dispersed camping anywhere under Alternative B, the reality is, they typically do not. Most motorized dispersed camp sites on the forest have already been established due to terrain features such as gentle slopes, flat surfaces, and sparse vegetation types that provide for cover, all within proximity to places of interest like hunting grounds or natural features. Such favorable conditions do not exist along all 4,572.6 miles of roads on the Gila National Forest. With these considerations, use levels of motorized dispersed camping are expected to remain level in the short term and long term.

In this analysis, the entire acreage (approximately 2.44 million acres) of National Forest land on the Gila outside of wilderness and other areas restricted to off road vehicle use was used to describe Alternative B, the existing condition regarding motorized dispersed camping.

Like motorized routes, it is acknowledged that slope, topography, and vegetation may limit motor vehicle use and motorized access to dispersed campsites. Using 25 percent as a maximum slope for vehicle travel, approximately 1.16 million of the 2.44 million acres is more likely available for motorized dispersed camping. The design parameter for maximum slope for short pitches recommended for construction of 4x4 vehicles is 25 percent. (FSH 2309.18 2008a). This is just an approximation and motor vehicle use may still be limited by topography and vegetation across the landscape. See Figure 25 and Appendix D of this document, Table MDC D1 that displays acres of Motorized Dispersed Camping by GMU and adjusted acreage considering a 25 percent slope factor.

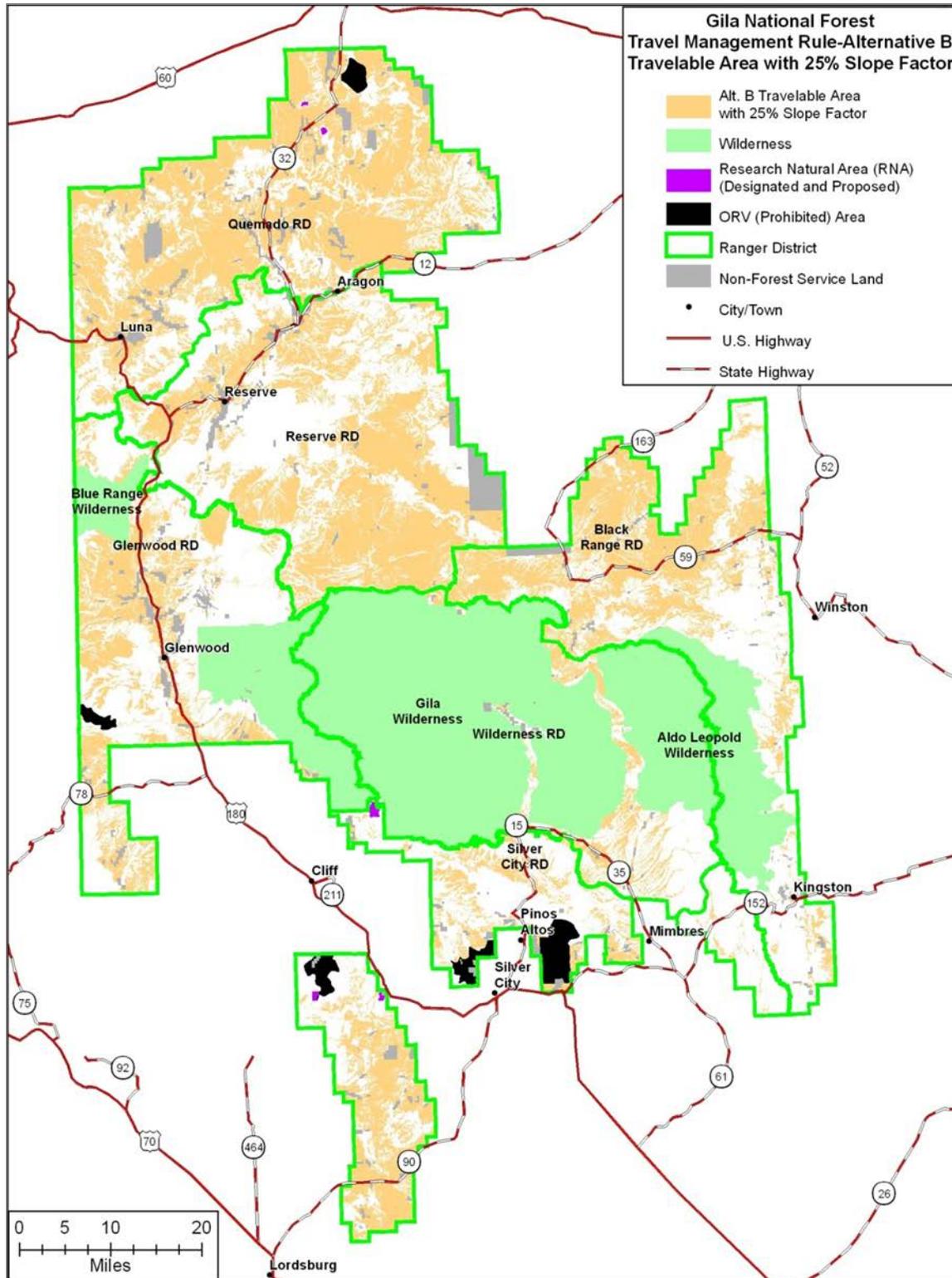


Figure 25. Travelable Area 25 percent Slope Factor

The addition of unauthorized routes is also a possible effect of this alternative. Cross-country travel for Motorized Dispersed Camping has the possibility of creating travel ways and new dispersed campsites. In the long term, the addition of these routes, particularly in sparsely covered landscapes, has the potential to

adversely affect the forest's visual resources. Areas that have a more sensitive Visual Quality Object (VQO) (i.e., retention or partial retention) may take on characteristics of a more modified landscape and could exceed their prescribed VQO.

Alternative C

This alternative proposes corridors for motorized dispersed camping along 1,538.1 miles and of NFS roads designated for motorized travel encompassing 110,780 acres. The MDC GMU Dispersed Camping Table MDC D1 in the Appendix D shows that 1,510.8 miles and 108,174 acres of proposed corridors for motorized access for dispersed camping. Seventy of these miles of corridors are proposed along county roads. See FEIS Alternative Maps for locations. See Areas discussion below for Areas proposed for Motorized Dispersed Camping.

Most campers may not notice the change because corridors were identified to incorporate areas where dispersed camping is currently occurring to the extent possible. This alternative ranks 1st among the five action alternatives providing the most miles of road and associated acres of corridors for motorized dispersed camping within GMUs, IRAs, WSAs, eligible W&S Rivers outside Wilderness and miles of CDNST within proposed corridors (19.6 mi).

Alternative D

This alternative proposes corridors for Motorized Dispersed Camping along 1,183 miles and of NFS roads designated for motorized travel encompassing 85,921 acres. The MDC GMU Table MDC D1 in Appendix D displays 1,171 miles and 84,384 acres of proposed corridors for motorized dispersed camping. Thirty four of these miles of corridors are located along county roads. See Alternative Maps for locations.

This alternative does not propose the designation of any Areas for motorized dispersed camping. All motorized dispersed camping will be limited to roadside parking and within the proposed corridors.

The effect of this reduction in opportunity is not likely to be great. Most campers may not notice the change because corridors were identified to incorporate areas where dispersed camping is currently occurring to the extent possible. However, this alternative ranks 4th among the five action alternatives in terms of motorized dispersed camping opportunity within IRAs, WSAs, W&S Rivers outside Wilderness and GMUs, and it is possible that some traditional motorized dispersed camping areas will no longer be available for public use. This could result in a concentration of use at desired camping areas within designated corridors, which could lead to user conflicts. The same mileage and acreage of corridors within W&S Rivers is proposed within Alternatives C and D 0.99 miles/89 acres.

Alternative E

No corridors for motorized dispersed camping are proposed for designation in this alternative – a 100 percent reduction in opportunity from what currently exists. Alternative E ranks last among the five action alternatives in providing motorized access opportunities for dispersed camping.

The public would be restricted to parking within one vehicle length including a trailer, on both sides of an open road where it is safe and feasible to do so. They would be able to use this as their campsite or walk further in to find a place to camp. Non-motorized dispersed campers are not likely to be affected since this reflects their current use. People who rely on the comfort and convenience of their motor vehicle, but still seek privacy or added safety gained by parking off of routes to dispersed camp, would be most affected by this alternative.

Alternative F

This alternative proposes corridors for motorized dispersed camping along 1,447 miles and of NFS roads designated for motorized travel encompassing 104,390 acres. The MDC GMU Table MDC D1 in Appendix D displays 1,421.6 miles and 101,911 acres of proposed corridors for motorized access for dispersed camping. Sixty-two of miles of these proposed corridors are located along county roads. See FEIS Alternative Maps for locations.

Most campers may not notice the change because corridors were identified to incorporate areas where dispersed camping is currently occurring to the extent possible. This alternative ranks 2nd among the five action alternatives in terms of motorized dispersed camping opportunities within IRAs, WSAs, eligible W&S Rivers outside Wilderness and GMUs. It is anticipated that most motorized campers will be accommodated by this alternative.

Alternative G

This alternative proposes corridors for motorized dispersed camping along 1,327 miles and of NFS roads designated for motorized travel encompassing 95,994 acres. The MDC GMU Table MDC D1 in Appendix D displays 1,421.6 miles and 101,911 acres of proposed corridors for motorized dispersed camping. Forty-eight of these miles of corridors are located along county roads. See FEIS Alternative Maps.

Most campers would not notice the change because corridors were identified to incorporate areas where dispersed camping is currently occurring to the extent possible. This alternative ranks 3rd among the five action alternatives in terms of motorized dispersed camping opportunities within IRAs, WSAs, eligible W&S Rivers and GMUs and is similar in mileage and acres to Alternative F.

It is anticipated that most motorized campers will be accommodated by this alternative; however, the reduction in designated corridors in relation to the other action alternatives coupled with the restrictions on cross-country travel, have the potential to affect motorized dispersed camping experiences and opportunities for some campers by limiting choice with the potential to concentrate use.

Cumulative Effects

The cumulative effects analysis evaluates past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions upon Motorized Dispersed Camping Opportunities on the Gila National Forest, and Forests in the Southwestern Region located in New Mexico for the next twenty years.

The change from open, cross-country travel to the use of designated motorized camping corridors has the potential to exclude places and areas where motorized dispersed camping has previously occurred in all Action Alternatives. With the proposed restrictions on cross-country travel, there would be a potential to affect motorized dispersed camping experiences and opportunities due to a more limited choice of motorized dispersed campsites with the potential to concentrate use.

As mentioned in the Motorized Routes section, all National Forest in the Southwestern Region are either in the process of travel management planning or implementing existing Travel Management Plans. Selection of any of the action alternative would contribute to a statewide reduction in places to drive and camp next to your car on public land. Private land owners offer camping throughout the state. This would cumulatively add to this concept.

The following depicts Travel Management Decisions being implemented on New Mexico Forests within the Southwestern regarding dispersed camping:

New Mexico

Santa Fe NF – Motor Vehicle use 150 ft. off both sides of centerline roads on specific routes are designated for both motorized dispersed camping and motorized big game retrieval for deer or elk.

Lincoln NF – Motor vehicle use off of designated roads or trails for the purpose of dispersed camping is permitted for up to 300 feet from the centerline of road or trail for the same period as permitted for that road or trail as specified on the MVUM.

Cibola NF – Mount Taylor and Sandia Ranger Districts Black Kettle and McClellan Creek National Grasslands
Designates specific road routes for limited cross-country motor vehicle use within 300 feet of that route, solely for the purpose of dispersed camping

Carson NF – Jicarilla, Questa, El Rito, Tres Piedras, and Canjilon Ranger Districts
Motor vehicle use off of designated roads or trails for the purpose of dispersed camping or big game retrieval is permitted for up to 300 feet from the centerline of road or trail or 150 ft. centerline of road or trail as specified on MVUM.

Motorized Big Game Retrieval

Affected Environment

Motorized Big Game Retrieval involves the use of full-size vehicles, ATVs, and UTVs and occurs throughout the non-wilderness portions of the forest where vehicle use or cross country travel is allowed. Motorized vehicles are used primarily to retrieve elk and deer, although some responses to comments expressed the desire to allow motorized retrieval of bear, mountain lion, and pronghorn. There is a wide diversity of opinion concerning motorized big game retrieval within the sporting community, as well as in the public at large.

Many commenters reported that motorized big game retrieval is essential to retrieving big game and protects against wanton waste, while others object to the noise and potential effects to adjacent hunters and recreationists. Other hunters mentioned they do not use a vehicle to retrieve their game. A separate issue for some commenters was for the potential for unauthorized routes arising from motorized big game retrieval. Other comments emphasized the importance of motorized big game retrieval for elderly hunters or the mobility impaired.

Portions of eleven Game Management Units (GMUs) administered by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, are located within the administrative boundary of the Gila National Forest. Motorized Route Densities per Game Management Unit: GMUs 16 B, 21A, and 22 have the lowest motorized route densities and have the largest numbers of acres located within Wilderness Areas. GMU 16 E has the highest road densities. The total number of miles of motorized roads for GMUs is 5,217 miles. See Figure 26.

Table 18. Acres of New Mexico Game and Fish Game Management Units on Gila National Forest

New Mexico Game & Fish Game Management Unit	Gila NF Acres	Gila NF (percent)	Wilderness Acres	Percent Wilderness of Gila NF Acres
15	598,970	57.27	0	0.00
16A	396,661	96.17	1,074	0.27
16B	599,314	99.33	524,536	87.52
16C	236,765	77.07	24,231	10.23
16D	242,873	80.55	0	0.00
16E	3,803	0.62	0	0.00
21A	293,832	97.75	82,467	28.07
21B	140	0.01	0	0.00
22	159,971	63.62	106,461	66.55
23	441,743	23.56	29,084	6.58
24	297,208	30.70	24,466	8.23

Executive Order #13443, 2007; Facilitation of Hunting Heritage and Wildlife Conservation directs federal agencies “to facilitate the expansion and enhancement of hunting opportunities and the management of game species and their habitat.”

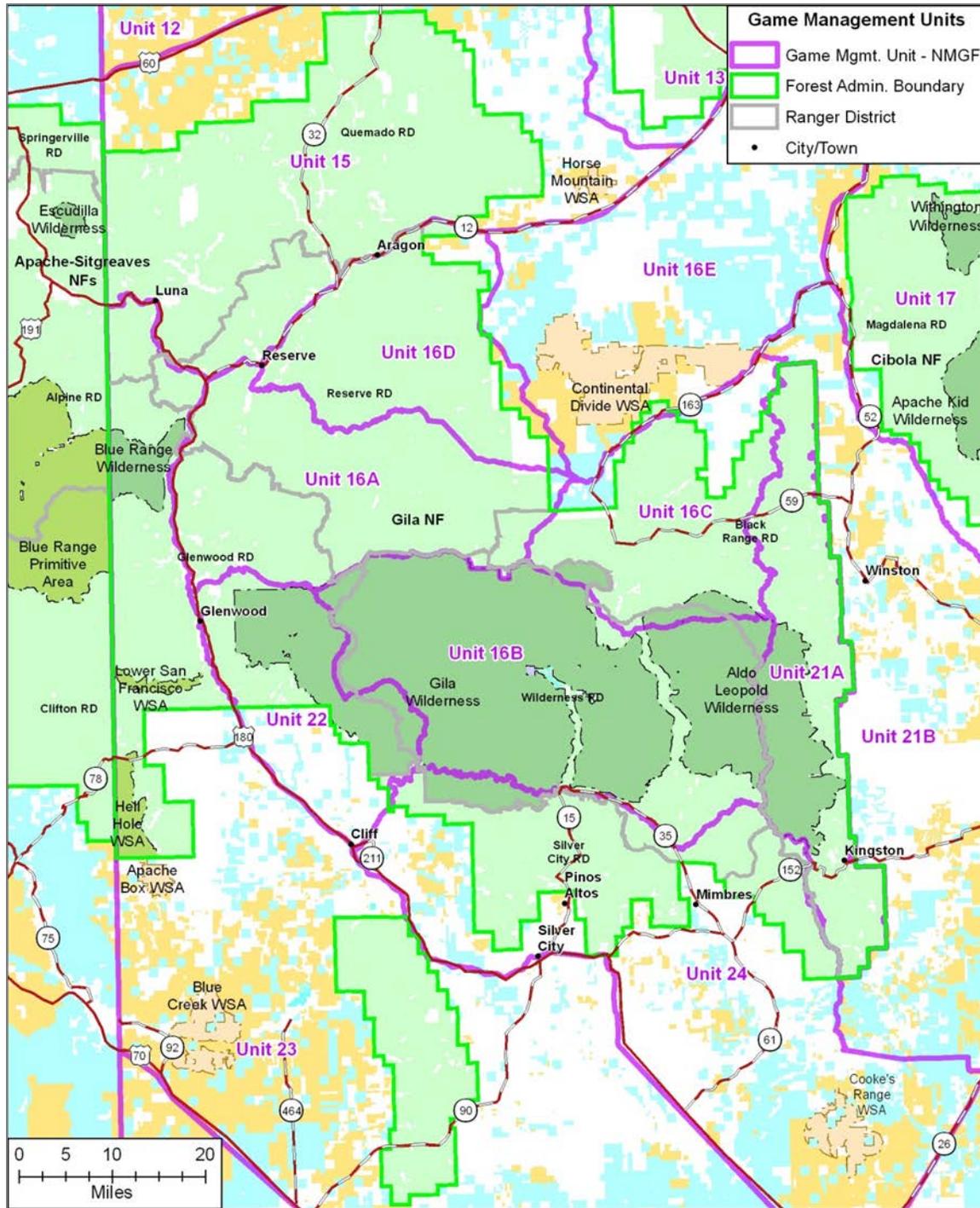


Figure 26. New Mexico Game & Fish Game Management Units within the Gila National Forest

Environmental Consequences

The following are the direct and indirect effects of proposed actions that relate to the issues presented by motorized big game retrieval.

Corridors for Motorized Big Game Retrieval (MBGR) Indicators

- Motorized Route Densities per New Mexico Game & Fish Game Management Units

- Miles/Acres of corridors for motorized access for big game retrieval available by NMG&F GMUs and estimated travelable ground*
- Number of maximum trips per proposal estimated per hunting success of game proposed for retrieval

* See Table 18 above displaying GMU acres on the Gila National Forest. Acreages within the New Mexico Game & Fish Hunting Regulations are calculated using UTM Zone 13 for the central area of the state while the Gila National Forest Acreage calculations are calculated using UTM Zone 12 for southwest New Mexico. This means that the acreages for GMUs shown in the NM G&F hunting regulations differ from what is displayed here using the Forests data base. The miles of roads designated in Alternative C and F in Table Rec A1 differ from the GMU figures in Table Rec A3. This is due to the fact that Table Rec A3 includes state, federal and county roads that access the forest.

Assumptions Common to All Action Alternatives

- Fixed distance corridors for motorized big game retrieval are meant solely for the purpose of motor vehicle access to retrieve downed game. These corridors would not be open for use with a motorized vehicle to hunt and scout game. These corridors would not be open to unrestrained motor vehicle use, i.e., driving a motor vehicle outside that which is needed to drive to and retrieve a game animal.
- Motorized big game retrieval only applies to those portions of GMU 15,16A,16B, 16C, 16D, 16E, 21A, 22, 23, and 24. Hunters must possess a valid big game license for one of these listed GMUs.
- All applicable New Mexico hunting regulations must be followed. To protect forest resources on forest roads or within fixed distance corridors applicable laws or regulation must be followed such as:
 - ◆ Roads should not be damaged and left in a damaged condition(36 CFR 261.12 (c))
 - ◆ Retrieval of big game should take a relatively direct and safe route (R3 TMR Guideline, June 2008)
 - ◆ Motor Vehicle use off road should not damage or unreasonably disturb the land, wildlife, or vegetative resources (36 CFR 261.15(h))
 - ◆ Use the minimum number of trips to retrieve a downed animal (R3 TMR Guideline, June 2008)
- Proposed corridors for motorized big game retrieval are from NFS roads. No corridors for motorized big game retrieval are proposed from designated motorized trail routes.
- Hunting outfitters would be limited to the same corridors proposed for motorized access for big game retrieval. This has a potential to change how the outfitter would retrieve game for their clients.

Information on the number of hunters that use motor vehicles to retrieve downed game was lacking. The following table displays the length of season for each big game species and average harvest per year. This gives an estimate of time frames when motorized game retrieval is occurring for each game species and the maximum number of trips that could occur if one assumes every successful hunter within a Game Management Unit harvests their game on the Gila National Forest and will use a motorized means to retrieve their game. This does not allow for hunters who may currently be taking more than one trip in and out, to retrieve their game.

Harvest Numbers are averaged from 2006-2009 New Mexico Department of Game & Fish harvest records of the 11 Game Management Units located on the Gila and surveys with the exception of javelina. No harvest records are available for javelina, so an average harvest rate for other species (30 percent) was used to calculate the number of javelina harvested based on 30 percent of 2,7090 licenses issued throughout the state. Assuming that the vast majority of javalina are harvested in the southern half of the state, we used half of the potential harvest or 450 harvested javelina.

Table 19. Hunting Season and Average Harvest Data by Game Species

Species	Number of Days Open for Hunt	Average Harvest Per Year
Deer and Elk	108	2,633
Elk	89	1,311
Javelina	90	450
Bear	91	71
Mountain Lion	212	33
Antelope	18	18

The following are the direct and indirect effects of proposed actions that relate to the issues presented for motorized access for big game retrieval. The effects of the Action Alternatives discussion is based on the data tables and listed indicators that are presented within Motorized Big Game Retrieval Indicator Tables located within Appendix E. Motorized route densities per GMU, opportunities for motorized big game retrieval, miles of road and associated acres are displayed by New Mexico Game & Fish Game Management Unit (GMUs), eligible W&S Rivers outside Wilderness and CDNST located within a proposed corridor. The route mileages in Table 1 and MBGR acreages in Table 12 differ from Tables Motorized Big Game Retrieval by GMU Tables in Appendix E due to edge mapping differences between the NM G&F GMU boundaries and Forest boundaries within the GIS mapping data layers. The mileages of open road also differ from the motorized route tables in Appendix A and the MBGR GMU tables in Appendix E due to the mapping differences mentioned above. The discussion below focuses on the recreation opportunities available for motorized big game retrieval under the No Action and Action Alternatives using the data in Appendix E for GMUs.

Alternative B

Under this alternative, 2,441,804.3 acres of forest lands are open to the public and available for all game retrieval by motorized means (designated wilderness and areas closed by Forest Plan and forest order excluded). Access to these acres is from any road open to the public in the NFS roads inventory. Because of the open cross country travel policy currently in place, distance from the roadway for hunters to retrieve legally downed animals is unrestricted. Game Species hunted within all GMUs on the forest include deer, elk, javelina, bear, mountain lion, and antelope.

It is also acknowledged that slope, topography, and vegetation may limit motor vehicle use and access for retrieve downed game. Maps 1 and 2 above in the Motorized Routes Affected Environment discussion display the estimated acreages available for cross country travel using a factor to display the maximum grade for travelable ground for motorized travel. The estimate of travelable ground for MBGR can be estimated at 1.84 million acres, the same as motorized travel.

Adding average harvest data together for all species hunted on the Forest a maximum of 3,205 trips could currently occur. This assumes all successful hunters would use motorized vehicles to retrieve their game. In addition to the number of trips, one must consider the lengths of each hunting season for each of the species allowed. With the variety of species allowed under this alternative, this alternative allows the most days when game retrieval could occur. See Table 19 - Hunting Season and Average Harvest Data by Game Species above. Motorized Route Densities per NM Game Management Unit are 1.6 miles/sq. mile. GMUs 16 B, 21A, and 22 with the lowest motorized route densities have the largest numbers of acres located within Wilderness Areas. GMU 16 E has the highest road densities. The total number of miles of motorized roads for GMUs is 5,217 miles.

A 3-year study conducted by Rocky Mountain Research Station tracked hunters with Global Positioning Systems (GPS) during hunting season to examine elk-hunter behavior and movement patterns within an area in western Montana that has no motorized access (Lyon and Burcham 1998). The study found that hunters who go the greatest distance from trailheads spend a great deal of time on closed roads. Where such roads are present, horses, bicycles and walking are highly effective transportation modes. An important observation from the study is that closed roads have a significant impact on hunter behavior. The study hypothesizes that closed roads facilitate access to areas most distant from open roads and trailheads. This study also found that less than half of the hunters traveled no further than 1.6 miles from their starting point and only 12.5 percent of the hunters traveled as far as 2.8 miles from where they started. Although motorized access for big game retrieval is currently unlimited due to the forests being open to cross-country travel, this study indicates there could be limits on how far hunters are willing to travel off roads to hunt and retrieve game using modes of non-motorized travel.

The addition of unauthorized routes is also a possible effect of this alternative. Cross-country travel to retrieve game has the possibility of creating travel ways, especially in cases where multiple trips are used to retrieve downed game. In the long term, the addition of these routes, particularly in sparsely covered landscapes, has the potential to adversely affect the forest's visual resources. Areas that have a more sensitive Visual Quality Object (VQO) (i.e., retention or partial retention) may take on characteristics of a more modified landscape and could exceed their prescribed VQO.

Alternative C

Motorized Route Densities per NM G&F GMU are the highest in Alternative C. In GMU 23 there is a slight increase in densities due to proposed motorcycle and ATV routes in the Burros. This alternative provides the most motorized access for hunting. Depending upon hunting preferences, this Alternative benefits hunters who choose to retrieve game using motorized modes of transportation. There are 4,879.8 miles of road and 203.7 miles of motorized trail proposed for designation within GMUs.

Under this alternative, a one-mile wide corridor solely for the purpose of big game retrieval would be designated along both sides of open roads 4526.8 miles and county roads 255.8 (miles) for retrieval of elk, deer, bear, mountain lion, javelina and pronghorn. Adding average harvest data together for these species a maximum of 3,205 trips could occur in this alternative, the same as Alternative B. Roads from which the public can access these open acres for this purpose would be from NFS roads open to the public under this alternative. Motorized trails are not included. Alternative C ranks 1st among the five action alternatives in terms of providing acreage available for motorized big game retrieval. Alternative C allows for retrieval of multiple game species identified through public scoping, represents the most number of species among the action alternatives proposed, the widest corridor width and most miles of corridor proposed. Depending upon hunting preferences, this Alternative benefits hunters and outfitters who choose to retrieve game using motorized modes of transportation.

This alternative reduces motorized big game retrieval opportunities from what currently exists (forest open to cross-country travel) to a mile from each side of open designated road system. This alternative proposes the most mileage and acreage (4,879.8 miles/2,078,551 acres by GMUs) among the five action alternatives in terms of motorized big game retrieval opportunities. When considering the slope factor 1,639,672 acres would be available for motorized access for big game retrieval. The change from open, cross-country travel to the use of one-mile wide corridors represents a fundamental change in policy, but will only affect those hunters who currently retrieve big game with vehicles from more than one mile from either side of a roadway.

Alternative D

Motorized Route Densities per NM G&F GMU are the second lowest in Alternative D. There are 3,592.8 miles of road and 123.6 miles of motorized trail proposed for designation listed within the GMU Table.

Under this alternative, a 300-foot wide corridor for the purpose of big game retrieval would be designated along both sides of 1,171.0 miles of road. The corridors proposed under this alternative correspond to the motorized dispersed camping corridors proposed. In response to the Travel Management Rule, motorized cross country travel would be prohibited, and these corridors would represent the only opportunity for motorized big game retrieval. Alternative D ranks 4th among the five action alternatives in terms of providing acreage available for motorized big game retrieval. Alternative D allows for the retrieval of elk and deer species only. Average harvest data for deer and elk shows a maximum of 2,633 trips could occur in this alternative. This alternative benefits hunter who choose to hunt using non-motorized modes of transportation. There is the possibility of dissatisfaction by hunters who currently retrieve big game using a motorized vehicle for distances greater than 300 feet and for hunters who use a motorized vehicle to retrieve javelina, pronghorn and bear.

Users affected by the prohibition on cross-country travel element of the travel management rule are the same stated in Alternative C. However, those with a desire or need for using motorized vehicles to retrieve big game are restricted to the 1,171.0 miles of roads designated for motorized dispersed camping under this alternative. Public comments expressed concerns of concentrated motorized dispersed camping and big game retrieval within the same designated corridors. With the proposal to restrict Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval within the same corridors, hunting related ATV activities associated with Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval would be the same as those opportunities provided for other ATV recreationists.

Alternative E

Motorized Route Densities per NM G&F GMU are the lowest in Alternative E. Depending upon hunting preferences, this Alternative benefits hunters who choose to scout, hunt and retrieve game with non-motorized modes of transportation. There are 2,290.3 miles of road and 1.6 miles of motorized trail proposed for designation listed within the GMU Table located in Appendix A. Both the GMU Table and Forest wide Table show 1.6 miles of motorized trail open to vehicles less than 50 inches in width. This ATV trail is located in Sycamore Canyon and provides access to private land. There are also 6.6 miles of motorized trail designation for ATV only proposed for periodic administrative use or by written authorization only for access by ATV only.

No motorized big game retrieval would be allowed in this alternative – a 100 percent reduction from what currently exists. Alternative E ranks last among the five action alternatives in terms of providing acreage or opportunity for motorized big game retrieval.

However, those with a desire or need for using motorized vehicles to retrieve big game will not have that ability under this alternative. Because non-motorized big game retrieval is an inherently physical activity, even by/with aid of pack and saddle stock, this alternative has the most potential to impact elderly and mobility impaired hunters. This alternative has the most potential to affect hunting outfitted operations.

Comments received expressed concern that game would be wasted if hunters did not have the ability to retrieve game by motorized means. Regardless of hunter preference (motorized or non-motorized), responsible hunters will consider retrieval of the animal prior to the taking.

Alternative F

Motorized Route Densities per NM G&F GMU are very similar in Alternative F and G. There are 3,978.13 miles of road and 178.1 miles of motorized trail proposed for designation listed within the GMU Table.

Under this alternative, a ½ mile wide corridor solely for the purpose of motorized big game retrieval would be designated along both sides of 3,246.8 miles of road including county (462.6 miles), and 255.8 state (miles). This would amount to 1,506,508.2 acres. These open acres would represent opportunity for motorized big game retrieval purposes only, restricted to a ½ mile travel distance. Roads from which the public can access these open acres for this purpose would be from NFS road open to the public under this alternative and state and county roads. Alternative F ranks 2nd among the five action alternatives in terms of providing acreage available for motorized big game retrieval, but allows for the retrieval of only elk. Average harvest data for elk shows a maximum of 1,311 trips could occur in this alternative. There is the potential for hunter dissatisfaction by hunters who

Of the 3,978.1 miles/1,506,508 acres, 1,253,957 acres are available when considering slope factor. Corridors proposed for MBGR include .99 miles/446 acres within eligible W&S Rivers outside Wilderness and 141.62 miles of CDNST would travel through a corridor which would allow motorized big game retrieval.

Alternative G

Motorized Route Densities per NM G&F GMU are very similar in Alternative F and G. There are 3,949.0 miles of road and 177.8 miles of motorized trail proposed for designation listed within the GMU Table.

Under this alternative, a 300-foot wide corridor for the purpose of big game retrieval would be designated along both sides of 1,308.38 miles of road. This would amount to 94,004 acres or 87,693 acres are available when considering slope factor. The corridors proposed under this alternative correspond to the motorized dispersed camping corridors in the alternative. These corridors would represent the only opportunity for motorized big game retrieval. This alternative ranks 3rd among the five action alternatives in terms of providing acreage available for motorized big game retrieval, and allows for the retrieval of elk and deer species only. Average harvest data for deer and elk shows a maximum of 2,633 trips could occur in this alternative.

Of the 1,308.3 miles/94,004 acres, 87,693 acres are available when considering slope factor. Of this mileage proposed, 62.8 miles/4,954 acres are located within IRAs, .23 miles/21.9 acres within WSAs, .83 miles/70 acres within eligible W&S Rivers outside Wilderness and 14.1 miles of CDNST would travel through a corridor which would allow motorized access for big game retrieval.

Those hunters with a desire or need for using motorized vehicles to retrieve big game, are restricted to the 1,308.3 miles of roads designated for motorized dispersed camping under this alternative. With the proposal to restrict Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval within the same corridors, hunting related ATV activities associated with Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval would be the same as those opportunities provided for other ATV recreationists.

Concern was raised in comments that a hunter's inability to use motor vehicles to retrieve big game could lead to wanton waste of the animal. Regardless of hunter preference (motorized or non-motorized, responsible hunters will consider retrieval of the animal prior to the taking.

Cumulative Effects

The cumulative effects analysis evaluates past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions upon Motorized Big Game Retrieval Opportunities within the GMUs located on the Gila National Forest, and Forests in the Southwestern Region located in New Mexico for the next twenty years.

The change from open, cross-country travel to the use of designated corridors for big game retrieval in all Action Alternatives has the potential to exclude places and areas where hunters have previously used a motorized vehicle to retrieve game. With the proposed restrictions on cross-country travel, there would be a potential to affect hunters experiences and opportunities due to a more limited choice of location to retrieve game with a motorized vehicle.

As mentioned in the Motorized Routes and Motorized Dispersed Camping sections, all National Forest in the Southwestern Region are either in the process of travel management planning or implementing existing Travel Management Plans. Selection of any of the Action Alternatives would contribute to a statewide reduction in places to drive a vehicle to retrieve game.

The following depicts Travel Management Decisions being implemented on New Mexico Forests within the Southwestern regarding motorized big game retrieval:

New Mexico

Santa Fe NF – Motor Vehicle use 150 ft. off both sides of centerline roads on specific routes are designated for both motorized dispersed camping and motorized big game retrieval for deer or elk.

Lincoln NF – Motorized vehicle use off designated roads and trails for the purpose of game retrieval is not permitted on the Forest.

Cibola NF – Mount Taylor and Sandia Ranger Districts Black Kettle and McClellan Creek National Grasslands
Motorized big game retrieval is not permitted off of designated routes on the above Ranger Districts and Grasslands on the Forest.

Carson NF – Jicarilla, Questa, El Rito, Tres Piedras, and Canjilon Ranger Districts
Motor vehicle use off of designated roads or trails for the purpose of dispersed camping or big game retrieval is permitted for up to 300 feet from the centerline of road or trail or 150 ft. centerline of road or trail as specified on the Forest MVUM.

All New Mexico Forests have coordinated with NM Game & Fish regarding motorized big game retrieval.

Motorized Areas – Affected Environment

The forest is currently open to motorized cross-country travel, except in wilderness areas and where specified closed. Since there are currently no restrictions on motorized use within this area, the 2,443,391 acres of land can be considered a motorized area. Cross-country travel occurs on many parts of the forest; however, cross-country travel is rarely the primary activity for visitors. Cross-country travel is predominantly observed in combination with one or more recreation activities.

Big game hunting, for example, often includes elements of non-motorized and motorized activities, and sometimes includes cross-country travel to scout, hunt, and retrieve downed game. Route finding or “trail blazing” occurs in some areas, but often this is done in relation to firewood gathering or piñon nut

gathering. In limited areas of the forest, cross-country travel for its own sake has been observed. In most instances, this cross-country travel is for connecting existing routes or for access to points of interest.

In some places on the forest, motorized cross-country travel has been observed to lead to the addition of unauthorized routes. Some unauthorized routes have become established on remnant logging roads or other formerly managed roads that are no longer part of the National Forest System, but were never obliterated and remain on the landscape. Some routes have developed as a result of firewood harvest, while others have developed through recurring use. The unplanned nature of many of these unauthorized routes makes it difficult to manage the transportation system and sometimes leads to resource damage and user conflicts.

Motorized Areas – Environmental Consequences

Alternative B

Under this alternative, 2,441,804.3 acres of land on the Forest would remain open to motorized cross-country travel. Without restrictions, opportunities for motorized use are greatest, and benefit those who rely on or prefer to use motorized vehicles; however, no restriction on vehicle use has the most potential to create resource damage and conflict between motorized and non-motorized user groups.

In the long term, the addition of unauthorized routes, particularly in sparsely covered landscapes, has the potential to adversely affect the forest's visual resources. Areas that have a more sensitive Visual Quality Object (i.e., retention or partial retention) may take on characteristics of a more modified landscape and exceed their prescribed VQO.

Alternatives C, F, and G

Alternatives C, F, and G propose to designate 36 areas totaling 24 acres for use by all motor vehicle classes, and one 3 acre area restricted to only ATV and motorcycle use on the Reserve Ranger District. The 36 areas proposed for use by all vehicle classes are comprised of traditional motorized dispersed recreation camping areas throughout the forest. These are typically areas that have already been disturbed and receive predictable use by forest visitors. Some of these areas were also identified through public input. As discussed in Alternative B, since the forest is currently open to motorized cross-country travel, these areas are currently providing motorized access to dispersed campsites. The designation of these areas does not change the management and what is currently occurring on the ground at these sites. Table 20 displays the acreage of these proposed sites in the Alternative B the existing condition by GMU.

Table 20. Acres of Proposed Motorized Areas by Game Management Unit and Alternative

GMU	GMU Acres FS Ownership	Alt B Acres	Alt C Acres	Alt D Acres	Alt E Acres	Alt F Acres	Alt G Acres
15	598,970	598,970	12.14	0.00	0.00	12.14	12.14
16B	599,314	599,314	10.27	0.00	0.00	10.27	10.27
24	297,208	297,208	1.28	0.00	0.00	1.28	1.28
TOTAL	1,495,492	1,495,492	23.69	0.00	0.00	23.69	23.69

The prohibition on cross-country motorized travel included in all action alternatives has the potential to impact many motor vehicle users. The 36 motorized areas proposed in this alternative will continue to provide motorized dispersed camping at these sites/areas and fulfill needs and desires of the forest visitors who have traditionally utilized these sites/areas. Three GMUs, 15, 16B, and 24 have areas proposed that have dispersed camping areas that have been traditionally used during hunting seasons.

Area RA-1, the 3 acre area proposed for ATV and motorcycle use under these alternatives is located in the Reserve area within GMU 15 (acreage not included in table above) and is a previously disturbed area that currently receives substantial motorized use. Current motorized use and opportunities will continue under these alternatives.

Alternative D

No areas are proposed in this alternative. This Alternative proposes roads into these areas limiting camping to just roadside parking. This limits the motorized camping opportunities that are currently available with possible visitor dissatisfaction.

RA-1, the 3 acre area located on the Reserve Ranger District would no longer be available for off road travel for ATVs and motorcycles. There is the possibility of user dissatisfaction by current motorized users of the area over the loss of this motorized access and opportunity.

Alternative E

No areas are proposed within this alternative. Motorized dispersed camping would be limited to parking along roadways one vehicle length including a trailer. This limits the motorized camping opportunities that are currently available with possible visitor dissatisfaction.

RA-1, the 3 acre area located on the Reserve Ranger District would no longer be available for off road travel for ATVs and motorcycles. There is the possibility of user dissatisfaction by current motorized users of the area over the loss of this motorized access and opportunity.

Motorized Areas – Cumulative Effects

The cumulative effects analysis evaluates past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions upon Motorized Area Opportunities on the Gila National Forest, and Forests in the Southwestern Region located in New Mexico for the next twenty years.

The change from open, cross-country travel to the designation of areas in all Action Alternatives has the potential to exclude places and areas where hunters have previously used a motorized vehicle to retrieve game. With the proposed restrictions on cross-country travel, there would be a potential to affect experiences and opportunities for motorized users due to a more limited choice of where a motorized vehicle can travel.

As mentioned in the Motorized Routes, Motorized Dispersed Camping and Motorized Big Game Retrieval sections, all National Forest in the Southwestern Region are either in the process of travel management planning or implementing existing Travel Management Plans. Selection of any of the Action Alternatives would contribute to a statewide reduction in places to drive a motor vehicle.

The following depicts Travel Management Decisions being implemented on New Mexico Forests within the Southwestern regarding motorized areas:

New Mexico

Santa Fe NF – Designates Areas for cross country travel on the Forest.

Lincoln NF – There are no areas designated open to cross-country motorized travel on the Forest.

Cibola NF – Mount Taylor and Sandia Ranger Districts Black Kettle and McClellan Creek National Grasslands

There are no areas open to cross country motorized uses on the Mount Taylor Ranger District. The remaining Districts designate areas.

Carson NF – Jicarilla, Questa, El Rito, Tres Piedras, and Canjilon Ranger Districts

There are no areas open to cross country motorized uses on the Tres Piedras, Canjilon, and El Rito Ranger Districts. The remaining Districts designate areas.

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum

Affected Environment

The Forest Plan provides goals for the recreation resource and requires a broad range of developed and dispersed recreation opportunities in balance with existing and future demand. For management and conceptual convenience, possible mixes or combinations of activities, settings, and probable experience opportunities have been arranged along a spectrum, or continuum. This continuum is called the recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS), and planning for recreation opportunities using the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum is conducted as part of land and resource management planning. The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum provides a framework for defining the types of outdoor recreation experience the public can expect in a certain area. Visitors’ perceptions and experiences are very difficult to analyze with any reliability. The ROS was developed by Forest Managers to better understand the public need for recreational opportunities, but with the understanding that not all opportunities can be provided on all areas of land (USDA Forest Service 1986a)

A recreation opportunity inventory and assessment was conducted in 1980 for the Gila National Forest. This assessment, incorporated into the 1986 forest plan, identifies five Recreation Opportunity Spectrum classes: Primitive, Semi-Primitive, Semi-Primitive Motorized, Roaded Natural, and Rural. The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum as inventoried in 1980 forms the base for objectives in the forest plan.

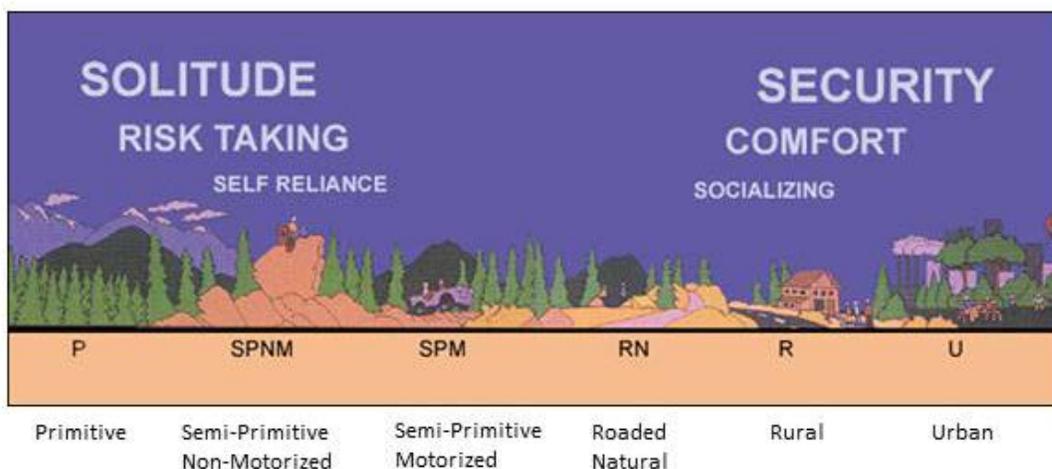


Figure 27. Recreational Opportunity Spectrum Settings

The designations identified for ROS within the Forest Plan are objectives to meet management goal to optimize users’ recreation experiences on the Gila National Forest. These categories are not prescriptive, for example the ROS categories of Semi-Primitive Motorized and Roaded Natural do not require a minimum miles of roads or motorized trails within these Opportunity Classes.

The following list contains ROS definitions from the Forest Plan and Acreages of ROS and percent of ROS on the Gila National Forest from the Forest Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement (FPFEIS) and characterizes the Existing Condition at the time. These figures include the existing condition discussed the TMR DEIS and the desired condition from the Forest Plan.

- **Primitive** classification characterized by an essentially unmodified environment, where trails may be present but structures are rare, and where the probability of isolation from the sights and sounds of man is extremely high.
Existing Condition - 526,611 acres, or 16 percent of the forest.
Desired Condition - 326,363 acres, or 10 percent of the forest.
- **Semi-Primitive** classification describes an area characterized by moderate opportunity for solitude in a predominately unmodified natural environment, with a moderate degree of trail maintenance.
Existing Condition - 787,063 acres, or 24 percent of the forest. *
Desired Condition – 1,023,684 acres, or 31 percent of the forest
- **Semi-Primitive Motorized** describes an area characterized by moderately dominant alterations by man, with strong evidence of primitive roads and/or trails.
Existing Condition - 240,940 acres, or 7 percent of the forest.
Desired Condition - 194,169 acres, or 6 percent of the forest.
- **Roaded Natural** describes areas characterized by a predominantly natural environment with evidence of moderate permanent alternate resources and resource utilization. Evidence of the sights and sound of man is moderate, but in harmony with the general environment. Opportunities exist for both social interaction and moderate isolation from the sights and sounds of man.
Existing Condition - 1,768,071 acres, or 53 percent of the forest.
Desired Condition - 1,771,995 acres, or 53 percent of the forest.
- **Rural** classification describes areas in which the sights and sound of man are prevalent and the landscape has been considerably altered by the works of people.
Existing Condition - 5,083 acres, or less than 1 percent of the forest.
Desired Condition - 7,647 acres, or less than 1 percent of the forest.

***Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized** is also described in the Forest Plan glossary as a classification of the ROS characterized by few and/or subtle modification by man, and with high probability of isolation from the sights and sounds of man.

Guidelines for changes in inventory acreage throughout the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum classes are included in the forest plan standards and guidelines, p. 26 shown below.

For each management area identified in the forest plan, categories of Recreation Opportunity Spectrum and inventoried acres for it are listed under management emphasis. The forest plan directs the following levels of acceptable change for each of these Recreation Opportunity Spectrum classes:

- Primitive – no change
- Semi-Primitive – no change in wilderness; change of plus or minus 10 percent in other areas
- Semi-Primitive motorized – change of plus or minus 10 percent
- Roaded Natural – change of plus or minus 10 percent
- Rural – no change

Table ROS F1 located in Appendix F shows the Desired Condition from the Forest Plan for each Contiguous Analysis Area and shows the percentage difference between the Existing Condition and the

Desired Conditions. The sums of the desired future conditions for Contiguous Analysis Areas and Existing Condition differ slightly. The percentages displayed for ROS within the DEIS are the Existing Condition from the Forest Plan EIS.

Environmental Consequences

There is no GIS layer for ROS. Mapping is incomplete; a portion of one Ranger District is missing. Due to technological changes and budget constraints ROS information has not been transferred from old Forest Service maps. When the Gila National Forest begins Forest Plan Revision efforts, a digital mapping update for the Forest will be completed.

Without a GIS layer of the existing ROS classes a quantitative comparison of ROS by alternatives cannot be completed. Each alternative provides a different array of recreational opportunities across the forest. Additional discussion of Semi-Primitive ROS within IRAs is included within the IRA section.

In general Alternative E proposes the least Motorized Routes, and no corridors for Motorized Dispersed Camping and Big Game Retrieval, or motorized areas emphasize opportunities for Primitive and Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized recreational pursuits. In contrast Alternative C proposing the most mileage of motorized routes, corridors for dispersed camping and big game retrieval, and motorized areas emphasize opportunities for Roded Natural and Semi-Primitive motorized recreational pursuits. Alternatives D, F, and G fall within the spectrum with a mix of motorized and non-motorized proposals providing a mix of Recreation Opportunity settings.

Cumulative Effects

The cumulative effects analysis evaluates past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions upon the spectrum of Recreation Opportunities on the Gila National Forest for the next 20 years. All action alternatives would change the array of recreational opportunities across the forest, but would continue to provide a mix of motorized and non-motorized opportunities.

Visual Quality Objectives

Affected Environment

The forest plan provides goals for visual quality and implements the visual management system as described on page 26 of the forest plan. Visual quality objectives were derived from a system that utilized a combination of land type, land characteristics, viewing distance, and viewer significance to arrive at a relative value scale. Like the recreation opportunity spectrum, visual quality objectives were inventoried in 1980, and serve as a base by which to compare the effects of management activities. The “Gila National Forest Plan” identifies five Visual Quality Objectives (VQOs) for management areas: preservation, retention, partial retention, modification, and maximum modification are further described including acceptable level of change in the Recreation Specialists Report. The following descriptions of these visual quality objectives were taken from USDA Agriculture Handbook number 462 709 Washington, DC: National Forest Landscape Volume 2. The percentages listed below include the Existing Condition discussed the TMR DEIS and the Desired Condition from the Forest Plan.

- Preservation: Only ecological changes to visual qualities are allowed. Management activities, except for very low visual impact recreation facilities are prohibited. This objective applies to wilderness areas, primitive areas, and some unique management units.
Existing Condition - Approximately 25 percent of inventoried areas on the forest are in this classification.
Desired Condition –Approximately 24 percent of the forest.

- **Retention:** Activities may only repeat form, line, color, and texture, which are frequently found in the characteristic landscape. Changes in their size, amount, intensity, direction, pattern, etc., should not be evident.
Existing Condition - Approximately 1 percent of inventoried areas on the forest are in this classification.
Desired Condition - Approximately 2 percent of the forest.
- **Partial retention:** Activities must remain visually subordinate to the characteristic landscape. Associated visual impacts in form, line, color, and texture must be reduced as soon after project completion as possible.
Existing Condition - Approximately 19 percent of inventoried areas on the forest.
Desired Condition – Approximately 22 percent of the forest.
- **Modification:** Activities may visually dominate the characteristic landscape. However, landform and vegetative alterations must borrow from naturally established form, line, color, and texture to blend in with the surrounding landscape character.
Existing Condition - Approximately 41 percent of inventoried areas on the forest are in this classification.
Desired Condition – Approximately 40 percent of the forest.
- **Maximum modification:** Activities may dominate the characteristic landscape. They may not appear to borrow from naturally established form, line, color, or texture.
Existing Condition - Approximately 14 percent of inventoried areas on the forest are in this classification.
Desired Condition – Approximately 12 percent of the forest.

The forest plan prescribes the following levels of acceptable change for each of these visual quality objectives.

- Preservation – no change.
- Retention – plus or minus 2 percent in foreground; plus or minus 5 percent in middle ground and background.
- Partial Retention – plus or minus 5 percent in foreground; plus or minus 10 percent in middle ground and background.
- Modification – plus or minus 10 percent in all areas.
- Maximum modification – the forest plan does not discuss limits of acceptable change for maximum modification.

Visual Quality Objectives

Environmental Consequences

Data Limitations

There is no GIS layer for Visuals. Due to technological changes and budget constraints VQO information has not been transferred from old Forest Service maps. When the Gila National Forest begins Forest Plan Revision efforts, a an inventory will be initiated using the Scenery Management System (SMS) process outlined in Landscape Aesthetics (AH-701) Scenery Management System Application (Chapter 5) (Blocker, L., et al. 1995) to propose Scenic Integrity Levels (SIL) by management area which replaces the VQO process. These (SILs) will be adopted as Scenic Integrity Objectives (SIO) when the Forest Plan is

approved. The SIOs are used to manage scenic resources over the life of the new Forest Plan. The VQO visual management system will continue to be utilized until completion of the Forest Plan Revision Process and is used for this Scenery Analysis.

Assumptions Common to All Action Alternatives Regarding Visual Quality Objectives

- Implementation of any of the action alternatives would be consistent with the visual quality objectives for the Gila National Forest. VQOs for the Forest include Preservation, Retention, Partial Retention, Modification, and Maximum Modification.
- Visual quality could be improved in all Action Alternatives due to the prohibition of cross-country travel. The elimination of cross-country travel and limiting motorized use to designated routes would reduce the possibility of the creation of new unauthorized routes.
- Seasonal closures proposed for varying mileage in all of the Action Alternatives could contribute to improved visual quality because the closures would help to protect routes from erosion and rutting during the wet seasons.
- The compatibility of proposed changes to the forest transportation system with forest plan standards and guidelines for visual Quality Objectives are reviewed. Concern for visual quality impacts of National Forest transportation system type road and trail features is generally low since such features are small in scale when compared to the overall landscape scenes they exist in, and when aspects of roads are seen, they generally do not visually dominate it to a degree that invokes a Maximum Modification VQO. Forest road and trail features typically consist of more natural surface materials, are narrower in widths, and exist with much less frequency or concentration than related highway or urban roadways that have fewer natural characteristics. When forest system roads and trails are seen, they typically result in landscapes that meet the conditions of Partial Retention to Modification VQO, both acceptable in areas where route additions are planned for.

Effects Common to All Action Alternatives Regarding Visual Quality Objectives

- The creation of unauthorized routes, particularly in sparsely covered landscapes, has the potential to adversely affect the forest's visual resources. In the long term, areas that have a more sensitive VQO (i.e., retention) may take on characteristics of a more modified landscape and exceed their prescribed VQO. Table VQO G1 in Appendix G displays the Visual Quality Objectives for the Contiguous Management Areas from the Forest Plan and the Existing Condition from the Forest Plan FEIS.
- As described on page 26 of the Gila Forest Plan, the deviation of a certain percentage of an area's VQO and/or a change from a higher VQO to a lower, is acceptable. None of the proposed routes, corridors for motorized access for dispersed camping or big game retrieval, or areas under any of the proposed Action Alternatives are expected to exceed partial retention to modification VQO where planned.

Cumulative Effects

The cumulative effects analysis evaluates past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions upon the spectrum of Visual Quality Objectives on the Gila National Forest for the next twenty years. This timeframe was chosen because it is the longest anticipated period of time for natural rehabilitation of unauthorized routes (where achievable). Wildfires pose the most potential to cumulatively impact scenic resources. Wildfire is a part of the Gila National Forest ecosystem, however high severity large scale wildfires have the potential to remove the majority of vegetative cover from entire viewsheds. By removing the characteristic vegetation of an area which can expose unnatural linear features such as roads, trails, and power lines there is a potential for a cumulatively downward trend within the fire affected area.

Vegetation and fuels management are planned to have a net, long-term improvement to natural scenic quality although there may be short-term negative impacts during implementation. Mitigation measures and Best Management Practices are designed to mitigate any short-term impacts that may occur from project implementation. Vegetation management under power lines would cumulatively impact viewsheds by altering the natural appearance of the landscape. Livestock grazing activities (past and ongoing) have impacted visual quality but re-authorizations of grazing permits are designed to minimize impacts to the visual resource.

Cumulatively, forest scenery is expected to meet forest plan scenery objectives in all Action Alternatives. With the prohibition on cross-country travel there is a potential for Visual Quality to improve with the reduction of unauthorized routes.

Effects of Forest Plan Amendments

Amendments 1 thru 6 to the forest plan may have effects because they propose changes in the management of specific areas of the forest. These effects, like those from the proposed action and alternatives, are disclosed as part of the effects analysis above.

Amendment 7 is administrative in nature and not expected to have effects as a result of this project or future projects. This proposed amendment, for the most part, simply updates and provides consistent direction for application of the Forest Plan with the Travel Management Rule.

Unavoidable and Adverse Effects

At the Forest-wide scale there are no unavoidable adverse effects to recreation from implementing the action alternative when compared against the current condition.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments

The implementation of the Travel Management Rule with the designation of routes, corridors for motorized dispersed camping and motorized big game retrieval, motorized areas, and permit zones as proposed are completely reversible. These actions are also retrievable since changes in travel management decisions can be revised, changed or removed through the travel planning process.

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Appendix A. Motorized Route Tables

Table Rec A1 - Motorized Road Routes Designation by Definition - Gila NF Administrative Boundary by Alternative

Proposal Code	Description	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E	Alt F	Alt G
M	NFS road to remain open to all motor vehicle types	4,526.8	4,149.3	2,853.3	2,214.0	3,246.8	3,217.1
M - SLV	Change vehicle type on open NFS roads to highway legal vehicles only	0.0	27.6	27.6	27.6	27.6	27.6
S	Designation seasonally open	2.8	0.8	10.9	2.8	2.8	2.8
REOPEN-M	Re-open NFS closed or decommissioned (ML1) roads to all motor vehicle types	0.0	5.4	2.3	0.8	2.5	2.5
M - P	Unauthorized route proposed to be added to NFS roads and open to all vehicle types	0.0	7.1	5.7	1.8	5.9	6.6
ASSERT	Asserting Right-of-Way	33.0	33.3	33.3	33.0	33.3	33.3
AQ-ROW	Acquired Right-of-Way	9.3	9.3	9.3	9.3	9.3	9.3
ROW	Existing Right-of-Way to the national forest	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
SP	Change use of existing NFS roads to open for periodic administrative use or by written authorization only	0.0	172.4	339.0	425.3	289.8	288.2
REOPEN-SP	Re-open NFS closed or decommissioned (ML1) roads to open for periodic administrative use or by written authorization only	0.0	8.4	8.4	3.1	8.4	8.4
SP-P	Unauthorized route proposed to be added to NFS roads for periodic administrative use or by written authorization only	0.0	26.5	26.9	3.4	25.1	25.6
COUNTY	Road under County (Catron, Grant, Hidalgo, or Sierra) jurisdiction	462.6	462.6	462.6	462.6	462.6	462.6
SH - State Highway	Highway under State jurisdiction	255.8	255.8	255.8	255.8	255.8	255.8
Total Motorized Road Routes		5290.9	5159.5	4035.7	3440.1	4370.5	4340.4

Table Rec A2 - Motorized Trail Routes Designation by Definition - Gila NF Administrative Boundary by Alternative

Proposal Code	Description	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E	Alt F	Alt G
ATV	Open NFS roads proposed to be converted to NFS trail for motorized vehicles <50" in width	0.00	34.4	68.1	1.5	88.2	89.8
ATV - EX	Existing NFS trails designated for motorized vehicles <50" in width	15.8	14.9	8.5	0.00	14.9	14.9
ATV - P	Unauthorized proposed to be added to NFS trails for motorized vehicles <50" in width	0.00	60.3	33.4	0.00	52.8	50.9
CLOSED - ATV - P	Closed NFS road proposed to be converted to NFS trail for motorized vehicles <50" in width	0.00	15.2	5.5	0.00	12.5	12.5
DECOMM - ATV - P	Decommissioned NFS road proposed to be converted to NFS trail for motorized vehicles <50" in width	0.00	15.1	8.0	0.00	9.5	9.5
2WV - P	NFS trails or unauthorized routes proposed to be added as NFS motorized single-track trail (motorcycle)	0.00	63.5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
SP - ATV	Change use of existing NFS Trail to open for periodic administrative use or by written authorization only for access by ATV only	0.00	4.4	7.2	6.6	4.4	4.4
Total Motorized Trail Routes	15.8	207.8	130.7	8.1	182.3	182.0	

Table Rec A3 - Miles of Motorized and ML-1 Road and Motorized Non-motorized Trail Opportunities by Game Management Unit (Alternatives B, C, and D)

GMU	Alt B Roads (M)	Alt B Roads (ML1- Closed)	Alt B Roads (Admin- Permit)	Alt C Trail (M)	Alt C Roads (M)	Alt C Roads (ML1- Closed)	Alt C Roads (Admin- Permit)	Alt C Trail (M)	Alt D Roads (M)	Alt D Roads (ML1- Closed)	Alt D Roads (Admin- Permit)	Alt D Trail (M)
15	1,506.9	172.6	0.0	4.3	1,457.2	196.2	42.1	12.2	1,081.9	503.7	110.3	12.2
16A	901.8	165.2	0.0	0.0	871.6	165.7	18.9	22.6	640.5	387.2	37.3	8.0
16B	210.7	2.1	0.0	0.0	200.8	6.2	2.8	3.3	149.8	39.0	8.7	16.0
16C	418.8	27.3	0.0	0.0	401.4	40.6	9.7	0.0	278.5	151.2	22.0	0.0
16D	471.7	41.7	0.0	0.0	459.7	47.6	8.6	4.9	371.8	134.2	9.9	0.0
16E	12.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	11.8	0.4	0.1	0.0
21A	247.1	15.5	0.0	0.6	156.4	59.1	46.5	10.8	111.9	97.4	56.3	0.0
21B	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0
22	143.3	8.8	0.0	1.2	126.1	20.5	5.2	6.2	88.7	46.3	6.2	14.9
23	881.0	65.5	0.0	9.5	835.6	67.1	31.6	86.4	593.7	245.1	80.2	63.9
24	422.8	25.5	0.0	0.0	358.5	41.0	45.4	57.0	263.8	132.8	48.7	8.4
TOTAL	5,217.14	524.5	0.0	15.7	4,879.8	644.1	211.5	203.7	3,592.8	1,737.7	380.4	123.6

Note: Trails - NM = Hiking/Equestrian

Changes to Non-motorized Proposed for Alt C: GMU 21A = 5.287, GMU 24 = 45.35

Non-motorized mileages the Same for Alts B, D, E, F & G

Table Rec A4 - Miles of Motorized and ML-1 Road and Motorized and Non-motorized Trail Opportunities by Game Management Unit (Alternatives E, F, and G)

GMU	<u>Alt E</u> Roads (M)	<u>Alt E</u> Roads (ML1- Closed)	<u>Alt E</u> Roads (Admin- Permit)	<u>Alt E</u> Trail (M)	<u>Alt F</u> Roads (M)	<u>Alt F</u> Roads (ML1- Closed)	<u>Alt F</u> Roads (Admin- Permit)	<u>Alt F</u> Trail (M)	<u>Alt G</u> Roads (M)	<u>Alt G</u> Roads (ML1- Closed)	<u>Alt G</u> Roads (Admin- Permit)	<u>Alt G</u> Trail (M)
15	923.3	624.2	132.3	0.0	1,139.2	457.8	98.3	12.2	1,114.7	483.4	97.5	12.3
16A	465.3	563.3	39.7	0.0	728.9	297.3	36.3	12.9	733.0	291.8	36.3	14.4
16B	132.7	64.3	16.1	0.0	158.7	19.9	8.1	26.5	156.7	21.9	8.1	26.5
16C	232.6	193.5	21.0	0.0	368.4	70.8	12.5	0.0	368.4	70.8	12.5	0.0
16D	255.7	230.2	27.6	0.0	413.4	93.0	9.6	5.0	413.9	92.9	9.2	5.0
16E	11.9	0.4	0.0	0.0	12.3	0.0	0.2	0.0	12.3	0.0	0.2	0.0
21A	106.1	106.6	52.6	0.0	142.1	73.5	44.7	5.5	142.1	73.5	44.7	5.5
21B	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0
22	81.7	56.9	13.6	0.0	95.1	42.3	7.4	13.3	94.7	42.9	7.1	13.3
23	520.4	352.4	75.0	0.0	636.8	216.3	62.0	85.3	630.6	223.4	61.8	83.5
24	210.6	181.9	59.0	1.6	283.3	105.7	47.4	17.3	282.7	105.8	47.9	17.3
TOTAL	2,940.3	2,373.7	437.2	1.6	3,978.1	1,376.7	326.8	178.1	3,949.0	1,406.5	325.7	177.8

Table Rec A5 - Gila National Forest Recreation and Trail Related Projects from Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) and Capital Investment Projects (CIP)

Project Name	Project Purpose	Decision Expected
Burros	Thinning of Pinyon-Juniper, Ponderosa Pine, and Mixed Conifer	10/2013
Catron County Public Target Range at Cruville	Re-issuance of an existing target range in the Reserve, NM area. NE 1/4 Section 22, T.6 S., R.18 W., NMPM.	9/2013
Catron County Public Target Range north of Alma, NM	Re-issuance of an existing target range in the Glenwood, NM area S1/2SE1/4 Section 16, N1/2NE1/4 Section 21, T.10 S., R.20 W., NMPM	9/2013
Upper Mimbres Landscape Assessment	To improve watershed conditions, range improvement, improve wildlife habitat, and reduce hazardous fuels	8/2013
Whitewater Baldy Hazard Tree Removal	Reserve and Glenwood district removal of hazard trees	5/2013
Pueblo Park Campground Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Project	The project proposes to treat approximately 200 acres in and around Pueblo Park Campground to enhance ecological function and reduce hazardous fuels. Hazardous fuels in this area are in the form of an abundance of small trees. Legal T8R21sec23,24,25,26	2/2013
Dark Sky Campground	Develop 2 campgrounds to meet need for amateur astronomy viewing areas. Includes access road, parking signing, toilet, fence and campground	Decision completed - 9/11/12
Snow Lake Enhancement (RAC)	Improve boat ramp to prevent undercutting by wave action.	Decision completed 7/2012
Tularosa Interpretive Trail	Developing Interpretive Trail from FR4161C to the Tularosa River area	Decision completed - 6/2012
Sapillo Group Campground	Group site Improvements	08
Hough Site Complex	Campground Improvements	06
Grapevine Complex	Campground Improvements	06
Redstone Complex	Campground Improvements	06
Head of the Ditch Complex	Campground Improvements	06
Gila Bird Area Complex	Campground Improvements	06
Pueblo Park Complex	Campground Improvements	06
Cottonwood Campground	Campground Improvements	06
Middle Perch Campground	Campground Improvements	06
Black Range Complex	Campground Improvements	06
Rocky Canyon/Black Canyon Campground	Campground Improvements	06
Apache Creek Complex	Campground Improvements	06

Table Rec A6 - Forest Activity Tracking System (FACTS) Activities within ¼ mile of Wilderness

Row Labels	Sum of Activities within ¼ mile of Wilderness
Aldo Leopold Wilderness	28,451
2007	
Wildland Fire Use (WFU)	421
WFU - Lake	314
WFU - Granite	107
2008	660
WFU - Graves	330
WFU - Bailey	330
2009	24,914
Wildfire – Natural Ignition	21,868
Diamond Wildland Fire	21,249
Park Wildland Fire	15
Turkey Fire	604
Wildland Fire Use (WFU)	3,046
WFU - Cougar	290
WFU - Meason	2,756
2010	2,546
Wildfire Natural Ignition	562
Blue Range Wilderness	8,702
1989	151
Commercial Thin - Forest Health, under-thin Juniper, thin pine pulp to release. Both sides of Pueblo Park road from Park east to highway	130
Sanitation Salvage - Salvage of hazard trees adjacent to Pueblo Park road	21
2002	72
Commercial Thinning - Second entry thin along Pueblo Park road, cut juniper re-sprouts and thin overstocked stands.	72
2005	6,777
Pre-commercial Thin - Pueblo Park and surroundings including campground. WUI and thin overstocked stands for stand health	122
Special Cut - TEP powerline veg clearance east side of wilderness, within ROW	6,095
Stand Diagnosis Prepared - Pueblo Park and West Pueblo	146
Stand Silviculture Prescription	146
TSI Need Created - Precommercial Thinning Pueblo Park and West Pueblo	268
2007	399
Burning of Piled Materials - TEP powerline lps piles burned	107
Pre Commercial Thin - West Pueblo thin overstocked stand/WUI treatment	73
TSI Certification – Thinning - Pueblo Park and West Pueblo	146
TSI Need (precommercial thinning) Eliminated - West Pueblo thin overstocked stand/WUI treatment	73
2012	1,303
Range Cover Manipulation -	1,303

Row Labels	Sum of Activities within ¼ mile of Wilderness
Gila Wilderness	33,953
1988	
Stand Diagnosis Prepared - Hazard tree sale along Bursum road.	818
2002	
Stand examination data collection	533
2006	648
Reforestation Need Created by fire - Bear Fire near Willow Creek and Bursum road	627
Sanitation Salvage	21
2007	
Salvage Cut Intermediate Treatment (not regeneration) Bursum Bear Salvage	361
2008	3,644
Invasives – Pesticide Application – Wilderness District – Salt Cedar	1,944
Thinning for Hazardous Fuels Reduction	1,538
Middle Fork	356
Salt Cedar Thinning	1,182
Wildland Fire Use (WFU)	162
WFU - Graves	81
WFU - Bailey	81
2009	19,445
Invasives - Pesticide Application - Slat Cedar Along Gila River	1,075
Range Control Vegetation	5,457
Range Cover Manipulation	5,547
Road Maintenance – Bursum Road	102
Thinning for Hazardous Fuels Reduction-Bear Hazard Tree Removal	102
Wildfire – Fuels Benefit	
WFU - Whitewater - within Wilderness	279
WFU – Cub	6,888
WFU - Meason	3,095
WFU - Moore	1,844
Wildfire – Natural Ignition	
Trigger FRB	95
2010	1,844
Invasives - Pesticide Application – Salt Cedar	858
Wildfire – Natural Ignition – Holt Fire	986
2011	6,298
Invasives - Pesticide Application	679
Wildfire Natural Ignition – Jack Complex 2011	5,619
2012	352
Invasives – Pesticide Application	331
Reforestation Need Created by Fire - Whitewater Baldy Refor Need	21
Grand Total	71,196

Appendix B. Motorized Route and Motorized Creek Crossing Eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers (W&S) Outside of Wilderness Tables

Table W&S B1 - Motorized Routes (Miles within 300 Ft.) - Eligible W&S Rivers Outside Wilderness

Proposal Code	Proposal Description/Route	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E	Alt F	Alt G
Diamond Creek							
M	NFS road to remain open to all motor vehicle types						
	150	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14
	225	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53
	4069 G	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16
	609	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16
	WSR Eligible Route Miles	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99
Las Animas Creek							
M	NFS road to remain open to all motor vehicle types (No current access)						
	761	3.97	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
SP	Change use of existing NFS roads to open for periodic administrative use or by written authorization only						
	761	0.00	3.97	3.97	3.97	3.97	3.97
	WSR Eligible Route Miles	3.97	3.97	3.97	3.97	3.97	3.97
West Fork Gila River							
M	NFS road to remain open to all motor vehicle types						
	973 B (Cliff Dwellings Parking)	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
M-SLV	Change vehicle type on open NFS roads to highway legal vehicles only						
	973 B (Cliff Dwellings Parking)	0.00	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
	WSR Eligible Route Miles	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
Whitewater Creek							
ATV-EX	Existing NFS trails designated for motorized vehicles <50" in width						
	207	0.33	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.33
	212	0.07	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.07
	810	0.12	0.12	0.00	0.00	0.12	0.12
M	NFS road to remain open to all motor vehicle types						
	95 (Catwalk Parking Lot)	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
M-SLV	Change vehicle type on open NFS roads to highway legal vehicles only						
	95 (Catwalk Parking Lot)	0.00	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14
SH	Highway under State jurisdiction						
	NM-174	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30
	WSR Eligible Route Miles	0.96	0.96	0.44	0.44	0.96	0.96
Total Motorized Route Miles		5.97	5.97	5.44	5.44	5.97	5.97

Table W&S B2 - Motorized Route Crossings - Eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers (Perennial/Intermittent Segments)

Proposal Code	Proposal Description/Route	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E	Alt F	Alt G
Diamond Creek *							
M	NFS road to remain open to all motor vehicle types						
	225 (Low Water Natural)	1	1	1	1	1	1
	WSR Eligible Route Crossings	1	1	1	1	1	1
Las Animas Creek							
M	NFS road to remain open to all motor vehicle types						
	761 (Low Water Natural)	21	0	0	0	0	0
SP	Change use of existing NFS roads to open for periodic administrative use or by written authorization only						
	761 (Low Water Natural)	0	21	21	21	21	21
	WSR Eligible Route Crossings	21	21	21	21	21	21
Whitewater Creek *							
ATV-EX	Existing NFS trails designated for motorized vehicles <50" in width						
	212 (Low Water Natural)	1	1	0	0	1	1
SH	Highway under State jurisdiction						
	NM-174 (Low Water Concrete)	1	1	1	1	1	1
	WSR Eligible Route Crossings	2	2	1	1	2	2
Total Motorized Route Crossings		24	24	23	23	24	24

* Additional crossing exist - however they are on segments that are intermittent and dry on an average year

Table W&S B3 - Forest Activity Tracking System (FACTS) Activities within 300 Feet of Eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers

Row Labels	WSR Eligible Activity Acres
Diamond Creek	226
2008	
Thinning for Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Tamarix (spp.) Salt Cedar thinning	9
2009	204
Invasives - Pesticide Application - Tamarix (spp.) – Salt Cedar	4
Wildfire - Natural Ignition - Diamond Wildland Fire	200
2010	
Invasives - Pesticide Application - Tamarix (spp.) - Salt Cedar	6
2012	
Invasives - Pesticide Application - Tamarix (spp.) – Salt Cedar	7
Middle Fork Gila River	
2008	562
Invasives - Pesticide Application – Tamarix (spp.) – Salt Cedar	386
Thinning for Hazardous Fuels Reduction Middle Fork	176
West Fork Gila River	177
2008	
Thinning for Hazardous Fuels Reduction Middle Fork	99
2011	
Wildfire - Natural Ignition Jack Complex 2011	39
Wildfire – Natural Ignition	39
Grand Total	965

Appendix C. Motorized Route Indicators Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST)

Table CDNST C1 – Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Motorized Route Indicators by Alternative

Route Indicator	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E	Alt F	Alt G
Total CDNST Miles on NFS Land	251	251	251	251	251	251
No. of CDNST intersects with a motorized trail	0	4	3	0	3	3
No. of CDNST intersects with a motorized road	73	66	50	41	56	56
No. of miles where CDNST follows an open motorized trail	0	1.0	2.0	0.0	2.4	2.4
No. of miles where the CDNST follows an open motorized road	41.4	36.2	30.2	29.9	30.2	30.9
No. of miles where the CDNST follows a ML-1 (closed) road	5.31	10.55	15.07	16.85	15.02	14.35

Note: "Open Motorized Road" includes M, County, State

"Closed Motorized Road" includes Closed, NM but not Decomm

Planned reroute is mainly on the Reserve Ranger District and a little on Quemado would remove take roughly 14 miles off road

Table CDNST C2 - Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Open Roads Proposed to Designate as NFS Trail for Vehicles Less than 50 inches in Width

Route	Crossing	Coincident	Miles	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E	Alt F	Alt G	Comments
840		Yes	1.211	M	M	ATV	NM	ATV	ATV	Burros
4233 K	Yes			M	M	ATV	NM	ATV	ATV	Burros
4090 V		Yes	0.267	M	M	ATV	NM	ATV	ATV	Burros
		Total	1.478							

Table CDNST C3 - Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Unauthorized/Reopened NFS Trails Proposed to Designate for Motor Vehicles Less than 50 inches in Width

Route	Coincident	Miles	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E	Alt F	Alt G	Comments
4092 C	Yes	0.047	Decomm	Decomm-ATV-P	Decomm-ATV-P	Decomm	Decomm	Decomm	Burros
SC-19	Yes	0.005	Unauthorized	ATV-P	ATV-P	ATV-NM	ATV-P	ATV-P	Burros
SC16	Yes	0.425	Unauthorized	ATV-P	ATV-P	ATV-NM	ATV-P	ATV-P	Burros
SC34	Yes	0.33	Unauthorized	ATV-P	ATV-NM	ATV-NM	ATV-P	ATV-P	Burros
	Total	0.974							

Table CDNST C4 - Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Motorized Trail Intersections With Routes Proposed to Designate as Open for Single-Track Motorcycle Trail

Route	Crossing	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E	Alt F	Alt G	Comments
SC39(A-B)	Yes	Unauthorized	2WV-P	2WV-NM	2WV-NM	2WV-NM	2WV-NM	Burros
SC40(A-B)	Yes	Unauthorized	2WV-P	2WV-NM	2WV-NM	2WV-NM	2WV-NM	Burros
4089S	Yes	M	ATV	NM	NM	ATV	ATV	Burros

Table CDNST C5 - Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Motorized Trail Intersections With Decommissioned Routes Proposed To Be Converted to NFS Trail For Motorized Vehicles less than 50 inches in Width

Route	Crossing	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E	Alt F	Alt G	Comments
4092C	Yes	Decomm	Decomm-ATV-P	Decomm-ATV-P	Decomm	Decomm	Decomm	Burros

Table CDNST C6 - Gila National Forest CDNST Projects from SOPA

Project Name	Project Purpose	Decision Expected
Emory Pass Scenic Trail	Construct Approximately .3 mile of trail along east side of the Continental Divide to provide scenic loop trail.	Decision Completed 3/2012?
Bear Mountain CDNST	7 miles new trail construction north of Bear Mountain between FS boundary on LS Mesa and the east of FR 853 Bear Mountain Road on the Silver City Ranger District.	Decision Completed 9/2011
CDNST Reroute – Reserve Ranger District	The project would be to realign the Continental Divide Trail (CDNST) to remove trail from motorized routes on the Reserve Ranger District of the Gila National Forest.	Decision Completed 4/2011
North Burros Continental Divide Trail – Silver City District	Reconstruction to move CDNST off of road within the Gila Box IRA	Decision Completed 3/18/2010
Realignment CDNST on Quemado Ranger District	Realign a segment of the CDNST to relocate and move it away from developed multi-use roads on the Quemado Ranger District.	Decision Completed 9/2009
CSNST Reroute – Silver City District	½ mile trail reconstruction to move trail off of road within the Pinos Altos IRA	Cultural Review Completed 7/18/2008

Appendix D. Motorized Dispersed Camping Tables

Table MDC D1 - Miles and Acres of Corridors for Motorized Access for Dispersed Camping by NM GMU and Estimated Slope Factor

GMU	GMU Acres FS Ownership	Alt B Miles	Alt B Acres	Alt C Miles	Alt C Acres	Alt D Miles	Alt D Acres	Alt E Miles	Alt E Acres	Alt F Miles	Alt F Acres	Alt G Miles	Alt G Acres
15	598,970	N/A	594,034	487.62	35,835	422.08	31,137	0	0	467.31	34,368	431.03	31,826
16A	396,661	N/A	395,587	228.96	16,598	142.86	10,549	0	0	221.05	16,052	190.54	13,948
16B	599,314	N/A	74,636	84.27	5,387	82.90	5,287	0	0	82.63	5,270	82.63	5,270
16C	236,765	N/A	212,534	68.52	4,832	61.49	4,339	0	0	72.84	5,156	72.84	5,156
16D	242,873	N/A	242,783	140.19	10,088	79.01	5,800	0	0	134.92	9,717	117.15	8,392
16E	3,803	N/A	3,803	4.63	321	4.63	321	0	0	5.03	352	5.03	352
21A	293,832	N/A	211,365	30.19	2,212	22.95	1,681	0	0	30.19	2,212	30.19	2,212
21B	140	N/A	140	0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0.00	0	0.00	0
22	159,971	N/A	53,219	30.31	2,208	25.62	1,842	0	0	30.30	2,201	25.32	1,817
23	441,743	N/A	402,493	314.59	22,494	226.69	16,452	0	0	255.19	18,339	231.74	16,808
24	297,208	N/A	252,650	121.58	8,199	102.79	6,976	0	0	122.21	8,244	121.87	8,222
TOTAL	3,271,280	N/A	2,443,245	1,510.86	108,174	1,171.01	84,384	0	0	1,421.65	101,911	1,308.33	94,004
TOTAL 25 % Slope Factor			1,168,476		87,811		69,891		0		83,324		77,595

Table MDC D2 - Miles and Acres of Motorized Access for Dispersed Camping by Eligible Wild & Scenic River Corridor Outside of Wilderness by Alternative

Wild & Scenic River Eligible	Alt B Miles	Alt B Acres	Alt C Miles	Alt C Acres	Alt D Miles	Alt D Acres	Alt E Miles	Alt E Acres	Alt F Miles	Alt F Acres	Alt G Miles	Alt G Acres
Diamond Creek	N/A	344	0.99	89	0.99	89	0.00	0	0.83	70	0.83	70
TOTAL	N/A	344	0.99	89	0.99	89	0.00	0	0.83	70	0.83	70

Table MDC D3 - Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST) Miles traveling through Corridors for Motorized Dispersed Camping by Alternative

CDNST Miles	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E	Alt F	Alt G
Trail Miles	209.28	19.69	13.15	0.00	19.69	14.15

Appendix E – Motorized Big Game Retrieval Tables

Table MBGR E1 – Motorized Route Densities per Game Management Unit

GMU	% GMU on Forest	GMU Sq. Miles FS Ownership	Alt B Miles per Square Mile	Alt C Miles per Square Mile	Alt D Miles per Square Mile	Alt E Miles per Square Mile	Alt F Miles per Square Mile	Alt G Miles per Square Mile
15	57.27	935.9	1.615	1.570	1.169	0.986	1.230	1.204
16A	96.17	619.8	1.455	1.443	1.046	0.751	1.197	1.206
16B	99.33	936.4	0.225	0.218	0.177	0.142	0.198	0.196
16C	77.07	369.9	1.132	1.085	0.753	0.629	0.996	0.996
16D	80.55	379.5	1.243	1.225	0.980	0.674	1.102	1.104
16E	0.62	5.9	2.066	2.066	1.998	1.997	2.066	2.066
21A	97.75	459.1	0.540	0.364	0.244	0.231	0.322	0.322
21B	0.01	0.2	1.564	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001
22	63.62	250.0	0.578	0.529	0.415	0.327	0.434	0.432
23	23.56	690.2	1.290	1.336	0.952	0.754	1.046	1/034
24	30.70	464.4	0.911	0.895	0.586	0.457	0.647	0.646

Table MBGR E2 - Miles and Acres of Corridors for Motorized Big Game Retrieval by GMU and Estimated Slope Factor by Alternative

GMU	GMU Acres FS Ownership	Alt B Miles	Alt B Acres	Alt C Miles	Alt C Acres	Alt D Miles	Alt D Acres	Alt E Miles	Alt E Acres	Alt F Miles	Alt F Acres	Alt G Miles	Alt G Acres
15	598,970	N/A	594,034	1,457.24	557,745	422.08	31,137	0	0	1,139.19	431,701	431.03	31,826
16A	396,661	N/A	395,587	871.66	343,349	142.86	10,549	0	0	728.92	258,702	190.54	13,948
16B	599,314	N/A	74,636	200.80	71,882	82.90	5,287	0	0	158.65	54,090	82.63	5,270
16C	236,765	N/A	212,534	401.40	193,792	61.49	4,339	0	0	368.45	145,121	72.84	5,156
16D	242,873	N/A	242,783	459.73	207,268	79.01	5,800	0	0	413.39	153,754	117.15	8,392
16E	3,803	N/A	3,803	12.27	3,798	4.63	321	0	0	12.27	3,205	5.03	352
21A	293,832	N/A	211,365	156.43	127,189	22.95	1,681	0	0	142.06	68,755	30.19	2,212
21B	140	N/A	140	0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0.00	0	0.00	0
22	159,971	N/A	53,219	126.14	49,011	25.62	1,842	0	0	95.05	35,343	25.32	1,817
23	441,743	N/A	402,493	835.69	355,304	226.69	16,452	0	0	636.79	253,120	231.74	16,808
24	297,208	N/A	252,650	358.53	169,076	102.79	6,976	0	0	283.34	102,663	121.87	8,222
TOTAL	3,271,280	N/A	2,443,245	4,879.88	2,078,551	1,171.01	84,384	0	0	3,978.11	1,506,508	1,308.33	94,004
TOTAL 40% Slope Factor			1,847,381		1,639,672		78,930	0	0		1,253,957		87,693

- 1 Alternative C -- 1 Mile Each Side from Any Designated Road
- 2 Alternative D -- 300 feet Using Same Motorized Dispersed Camping Corridor
- 3 Alternative E -- None
- 4 Alternative F -- ½ Mile Each Side from Any Designated Route
- 5 Alternative G -- 300 feet Using Same Motorized Dispersed Camping Corridor

Table MBGR E3 – Miles and Acres of Motorized Big Game Retrieval by Eligible W&S River Outside Wilderness by Alternative

Wild & Scenic River Eligible	Alt B Miles	Alt B Acres	Alt C Miles	Alt C Acres	Alt D Miles	Alt D Acres	Alt E Miles	Alt E Acres	Alt F Miles	Alt F Acres	Alt G Miles	Alt G Acres
Diamond Creek	N/A	344	0.99	344	0.99	89	0.00	0	0.99	279	0.83	70
Las Animas Creek	N/A	266	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0
Middle Fork Gila River	N/A	3	0.00	3	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0
West Fork Gila River	N/A	3	0.00	3	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	0.00	0
Whitewater Creek	N/A	232	0.00	232	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	164	0.00	0
TOTAL	N/A	848	0.99	582	0.99	89	0.00	0	0.99	446	0.83	70

Table MBGR E4 - CDNST Miles traveling through Corridors for Motorized Big Game Retrieval by Alternative

CDNST Miles	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Alt E	Alt F	Alt G
Trail Miles	209.28	189.34	13.15	0.00	141.62	14.15

Appendix F – Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) Forest Plan Information

Table ROS F1 – Forest Plan Desired Condition ROS Acres by Contiguous Analysis Areas

Contiguous Analysis Area	District	Primitive Acres	Semi-Primitive Acres	Semi-Primitive Motorized Acres	Roaded Natural Acres	Rural Acres	Total Acres	Acres
2A Wilderness	Black Range	11,462	2,865					
2A Other	Black Range		1,800		1,900			
2B Wilderness *	Black Range	800	4,325					
2B Other *	Black Range		39,788		120,700			
2C *	Black Range		24,723		21,089			
2D *	Black Range		20,212		25,136			
2E Wilderness *	Black Range	2,560	14,461					
2E Other *	Black Range		2,997		38,624			
2F Wilderness *	Black Range	42,670	40,000					
2F Other *	Black Range		8,900		38,098			
2G Wilderness	Black Range		1,837					
2G Other	Black Range		8,900		47,672			
2H *	Black Range		10,878		21,531			
3A Wilderness	Luna	10,880	16,680					
3A Other	Luna		18,687		12,981			
3B	Luna		7,205		50,730			
3C	Luna		13,073	2,824	43,688			
3D	Luna		19,000	1,331	144,800			
4A Wilderness	Glenwood		3,847					
4A Other	Glenwood		44,000	5,000	29,480			
4B Wilderness	Glenwood	14,720	5,463					
4B Other	Glenwood		38,000	5,080	145,258			
4C	Glenwood		17,920	19,840	57,899			
4D Wilderness	Glenwood	18,121	18,100					
4D Other	Glenwood		2,842		4,400			

Contiguous Analysis Area	District	Primitive Acres	Semi-Primitive Acres	Semi-Primitive Motorized Acres	Roaded Natural Acres	Rural Acres	Total Acres	Acres
5A Wilderness	Mimbres	22,290	22,000					
5A Other	Mimbres			2,880	36,504			
5B Wilderness	Mimbres	66,831	54,680					
5B Other	Mimbres				13,132			
5C Wilderness*	Mimbres	21,760	48,101					
5C Other *	Mimbres		20,000	2,560	101,100	141		
5D	Mimbres		38,383		12,800			
6A *	Reserve		16,000		92,744	60		
6B Wilderness *	Reserve		15,097					
6B Other *	Reserve		11,430	50,000	172,500	240		
6C	Reserve		49,147		82,500			
6D	Reserve		38,178		45,151	380		
7A *	Silver City			41,243	58,423			
7B *	Silver City			4,160	57,574			
7C	Silver City		10,078		4,589			
7D *	Silver City				4,809	3,500		
7E Wilderness *	Silver City	9,620	3,500					
7E Other *	Silver City		766	30,779	41,500	162		
7F Wilderness *	Silver City	33,528	16,980					
7F Other *	Silver City		20,000		33,232			
7G Wilderness	Silver City	18,641	8,980					
7G Other	Silver City				3,233			
8A Wilderness	Wilderness		19,820					
8A Other	Wilderness					1,984		
8B Wilderness	Wilderness	52,480	183,929					
8B Other	Wilderness				1,194			
9A	Quemado		38,000	4,352	21,074			
9B *	Quemado		21,232	19,000	82,915	1,180		

Contiguous Analysis Area	District	Primitive Acres	Semi-Primitive Acres	Semi-Primitive Motorized Acres	Roaded Natural Acres	Rural Acres	Total Acres	Acres
9C *	Quemado			3,200	28,124			
9D	Quemado		880	1,920	74,871			
Total ROS within Forest Plan Analysis Areas		326,363	1,023,684	194,169	1,771,955	7,647	3,323,818	(3,950) diff
Percentage of each Op Class		10	31	6	53	less than 1		
Figures from TMR DEIS & Current Condition Forest Plan FEIS		526,611	787,063	240,940	1,768,071	5,083	3,327,768	
Percentage of each Op Class		16	24	7	53	less than 1		
TMR DEIS figures Wilderness	792,584							
Wilderness shown in FP ROS Analysis Areas	807,028	326,363	480,665					(14,444) diff
Wilderness and Semi Primitive acreages shown in FP ROS Analysis Areas	1,830,712	807,028	1,023,684					

* CDT located within these Contiguous Analysis Areas

Appendix G – Visuals Quality Objectives (VQO) Forest Plan Information

Table VQO G1 – Forest Plan Desired Condition VQO Acres by Contiguous Analysis Area

Visual Quality Objectives	District	Preservation Acres	Retention Acres	Partial Retention Acres	Modification Acres	Maximum Modification Acres	CDNST Direction	Additional CDNST Direction
2A	Black Range	14,327	-	1,915	1,785	-		
2B *	Black Range	5,125	-	78,511	81,977	-	Partial Retention	
2C *	Black Range		-	7,366	38,396	-	Partial Retention	
2D *	Black Range		-	3,480	41,868	-	Partial Retention	
2E *	Black Range	17,011	-	10,074	30,550	-	Preservation-Wilderness	Partial Retention Non-Wilderness
2F *	Black Range	82,870	-	6,775	39,232	-	Preservation	
2G	Black Range	1,837	-	16,113	41,459	-		
2H *	Black Range	-	-	27,420	4,984	-	Preservation	
3A	Luna	27,560	-	10,903	11,977	8,778		
3B	Luna	-	-	15,317	37,618	5,000		
3C	Luna	-	-	9,477	38,123	9,965		
3D	Luna	-	347	31,419	115,401	17,964		
4A	Glenwood	3,847	-	40,608	27,072	10,800		
4B	Glenwood	20,183	-	87,099	77,239	24,000		
4C	Glenwood	-	-	15,400	65,059	15,000		
4D	Glenwood	34,211	-	3,800	3,442	-		
5A	Mimbres	44,290	909	6,500	31,975	-		
5B	Mimbres	121,511	750	9,600	2,782	-		
5C *	Mimbres	68,861	5,200	34,895	67,078	16,628	Preservation - Wilderness	Partial Retention - Non-Wilderness
5D	Mimbres	-	-	13,840	5,123	32,220		
6A *	Reserve	-	11,687	28,342	33,787	34,988	Partial Retention	
6B *	Reserve	15,097	42,730	122,516	53,827	-	Partial Retention	
6C	Reserve	-	-	31,743	38,239	61,665		
6D	Reserve	-	-	15,852	39,160	28,807		

Visual Quality Objectives	District	Preservation Acres	Retention Acres	Partial Retention Acres	Modification Acres	Maximum Modification Acres	CDNST Direction	Additional CDNST Direction
7A *	Silver City	-	-	8,869	90,797	-	Cooperate on Route Designation	
7B *	Silver City	-	-	2,318	44,829	14,587	Partial Retention	
7C	Silver City	-	-	2,320	12,347	-		
7D *	Silver City	-	-	446	7,863	-	Partial Retention	
7E *	Silver City	13,120	2,041	20,001	33,898	17,267	Partial Retention	
7F *	Silver City	50,488	5,622	20,332	12,560	13,718	Partial Retention	
7G	Silver City	27,601	-	420	2,813	-		
8A	Wilderness	19,820	1,984	-	-	-		
8B	Wilderness	236,409	1,194	-	-	-		
9A	Quemado		506	9,404	40,716	12,800		
9B *	Quemado		2,450	21,780	59,535	40,544	Partial Retention	
9C *	Quemado			2,480	28,884	-	Partial Retention	
9D	Quemado		201	13,149	38,522	25,399		
Total Analysis Areas FP VQO's		804,168	75,621	730,484	1,300,917	390,130		3,301,320
Forest Plan VQO's	Percentages of VQO	24	2	22	40	12		
Total Forest Plan FEIS VQO Existing Condition		812,851	44,258	613,340	1,320,132	453,162		3,243,743
	Percentages of VQO	25	1	19	41	14		

* CDT located within these Contiguous Analysis Areas