



Flathead National Forest

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News Release

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Flathead National Forest Seeks Input on Travel Analysis

KALISPELL, MONT – The U.S. Forest Service seeks public input on an analysis of the road system on the Flathead National Forest. The travel analysis process (TAP) is a science-based approach that is used to inform future road-related travel management decisions. This travel analysis report (TAR) documents a broad-scale analysis that encompasses all existing National Forest System Roads (NFSR) on the Flathead NF. The report provides a course assessment of the road infrastructure and a set of proposals for change to the forest transportation system that can be evaluated when subsequent site-specific National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) planning is undertaken. This report will *not* change or modify any existing NEPA decisions, but should help to inform decision makers with future NEPA assessments related to the road infrastructure.

Flathead National Forest Supervisor Chip Weber says, “The travel analysis is not a proposal or decision, but is intended to help inform possible future road management planning. We will need public input to inform the analysis, but this will not be a formal public comment process. Before any projects are implemented on the ground the public will have an opportunity to comment through the NEPA process.”

The Forest Service asks the public to view the analysis and provide input to help identify risks and benefits we may have missed as well as provide feedback on the process used to analyze the road system. An interactive mapping tool reflecting the initial results of the analysis is available on the FNF website at: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/flathead> and is the primary tool for providing public input. The Forest will accept inputs through July 31, 2014. A hard-copy of the maps which capture the results of the analysis area are available at the Swan Lake, Hungry Horse and Tally Lake Ranger District offices for those not able to view them online.

The Flathead National Forest is hosting an open-house on July 8, 2014, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Supervisor’s Office located at 650 Wolfpack Way, Kalispell, MT, to discuss the process used in the analysis and to demonstrate how to use the online mapping tool to provide inputs.

The agency expects to maintain an appropriately sized and environmentally sustainable road system that is responsive to ecological, economic and social concerns. The national forest system of the future must continue to provide access for recreation and resource management, as well as support watershed restoration and resource protection to sustain healthy ecosystems. Nearly everyone who uses the National Forest will be affected by possible future road management decisions, making it important to work together today to identify a sustainable road system.