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Record of Decision for Travel Management on the Santa Fe National Forest

Santa Fe, New Mexico

Cover Photo: Boulders moved to drive on a road.

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Record of Decision
for
Travel Management
on the Santa Fe National Forest

USDA Forest Service
Santa Fe National Forest
New Mexico

Decision – Alternative 2M

Based on the analysis presented in the "Final Environmental Impact Statement for Travel Management on the Santa Fe National Forest" (FEIS), I have decided to select and implement alternative 2M. Alternative 2M meets the purpose and need by providing for a system of roads, trails, and areas designated for motor vehicle use by class of vehicle and time of year as specified in the Travel Management Rule (rule) and by minimizing adverse effects to natural and cultural resources. The changes proposed in alternative 2M prohibit driving off roads or motorized trails unless in a designated area or fixed-distance corridor; clarify which roads and trails are open to motorized use; and amend the forest plan to be consistent with the rule.

Changes to the Current Motorized Travel System

Alternative 2M makes the following six types of changes to the forest's current motorized travel system:

1. **Motorized cross-country travel:**
   - Motorized travel by the public off designated National Forest System roads, trails, and areas shown on the motor vehicle use map (MVUM) would be prohibited except as allowed by permit or other authorization.
   - Vehicles would not be allowed within 100 feet of water (FSM 2526.03). The concept of not driving near water was originally presented in the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) in alternative 3, which proposed no driving off roads for any reason.
2. **Changes to existing National Forest System routes:**
   - Allow motorized use by all vehicles on 65 miles of system roads not currently managed as open for motorized use.
   - Allow motorized use by highway legal vehicles only on 2 miles of system roads not currently managed as open.
   - Convert 39 miles of closed system roads to motorized system trail; 13 miles for motorcycles only and 26 miles for vehicles less than or equal to 50 inches wide.

- Convert 68 miles of open system roads to motorized system trail; 22 miles for motorcycles only and 47 miles for vehicles less than or equal to 50 inches wide[1].
- Convert 108 miles of system roads currently open to all vehicles to open to highway legal vehicles only.
- Close 2,878 miles of open system roads to public motorized use.
- Allow motorized use for motorcycles only on 3 miles of system trail originally not built for motorized use outside wilderness.
- Close 13 miles of motorized system trail.
- Change 4 miles of open system road that is coincident with motorized trail to 2 miles for motorcycles only, 1 mile for vehicles 50 inches or less, and 1 mile open to all vehicles.

3. **Adding routes to the system:**
   - Add 48 miles of unauthorized routes as roads open to all vehicles.
   - Add 7 miles of unauthorized routes as motorized trails for vehicles 50 inches wide or less.
   - Add 82 miles of unauthorized routes as motorized trails open to motorcycles only.
4. **Changing motorized access to dispersed camping or big game retrieval:**
   - Designate approximately 13,856 acres along 381 miles of system routes solely for the purpose of motorized access to dispersed camping or to retrieve a downed big game animal. In alternative 2M, the corridors for dispersed camping and motorized big game retrieval are the same: 150 feet from either side of the road.
   - In these corridors, alternative 2M does not allow any vehicles within 100 feet of water.
5. **Changing vehicle class allowed on routes:**
   - 2,144 miles would be open to all vehicles.
   - 111 miles would be open to vehicles legal on paved highways (no all-terrain vehicles or motorcycles that are not street legal).
   - 80 miles would be open to vehicles less than or equal to 50 inches wide.
   - 128 miles would be open to motorcycles only.
6. **Changing season of use:**
   - 2,298 miles of routes would have no set closure date for weather, but could be closed individually during wet seasons.
     - 164 miles of routes would be closed at set times of year to protect wildlife.

[1] Anywhere that mileage does not add up exactly is due to rounding in the GIS analysis. This is usually 1 mile or less and considered insignificant in the context of the entire forest transportation system.

Alternative 2M incorporates the errata listed in appendix 8 of the FEIS.

Resultant Designated Motorized System

Implementing the changes listed in alternative 2M will result in the following designated motorized travel system for the Santa Fe National Forest. The changes listed in appendix 8 of the FEIS are *in addition to* this table:

	Kind of Vehicle Allowed	Miles	Miles Open by Time of Year**		Percent Open by Time of Year**
Roads	Open to all vehicles	2,144	All Year	2,017	94%
			Seasonal	127	6%
	Open to vehicles legal on paved highways*	111	All Year	110	99%
			Seasonal	1	1%
Trails	Open to vehicles less than or equal to 50" wide	80	All Year	68	85%
			Seasonal	13	16%
	Open to motorcycles only	128	All Year	104	81%
			Seasonal	24	19%

	Miles	Percent Open All Year**
Total roads	2,255	94%
Total trails	208	82%
Total trails, vehicles ≤ 50 inches wide	80	84%
Total trails, motorcycles only	128	81%
GRAND TOTAL, Alternative 2M	2,463	93%

	Acres	Miles
Areas	41	NA
Corridors - dispersed camping	13,856	381
Corridors - big game retrieval	13,856	381

* Under New Mexico State Law, ATVs are not allowed on paved highways but are allowed on nonsurfaced highways.

**Roads or trails may be closed due to wet weather on an individual basis, but no set closure dates for weather are proposed.

The map of specific roads, trails, areas, and fixed-distance corridors contained in the resultant system under this record of decision appears in appendix 1 of this document. Paper copies of large-sized maps of the designated motorized system are found at the forest headquarters and all ranger district offices. Electronic versions are available on CD from any Santa Fe National Forest office, or on the forest's Web site at: http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/sfe/travelmgt/index.html.

Amendments to the "Santa Fe National Forest Plan"

Alternative 2M incorporates the nonsignificant amendments to the 1987 "Santa Fe National Forest Plan" listed in appendix 3 of this record of decision. The amendments are presented and analyzed in the FEIS in appendix 1 and chapter 3, respectively.

The amendments adopt language to eliminate motorized cross-country use on most of the forest, incorporate the 2005 travel management regulations, eliminate the lower road density thresholds from some management areas, have the MVUM guide where people may legally drive instead of other maps or direction, allow for limited motorized use in corridors in some management areas, restrict increased motorized use in some management areas, and bring standards and guidelines in line with current management practices. All these changes align the forest plan's language with the intent and direction in the 2005 rule.

The reason these amendments are considered nonsignificant follow. Regulations guide the development, revision, and amendment of land management plans. The 2000 planning regulations allow forests to use the regulations promulgated in 1982 when adopting amendments (36 CFR 219.14 (b)(2)). I have elected to amend the "Santa Fe National Forest Plan" using the 1982 planning regulations. The 1982 planning regulations state:

> *If the change resulting from the amendment is determined not to be significant for the purposes of the planning process, the Forest Supervisor may implement the amendment following appropriate public notification and satisfactory completion of NEPA procedures (36 CFR 219.10(f)(1982)).*

Proposed plan amendments for travel management on the Santa Fe National Forest are not significant under any of the action alternatives. The amendments are not significant because they: (1) do not significantly alter the multiple-use goals and objectives for long-term land and resource management; (2) consist of adjustments of management area boundaries or management prescriptions resulting from further onsite analysis when the adjustments do not cause significant changes in the multiple-use goals and objectives for long-term land and resource management; or (3) are minor changes in standards and guidelines (FSM 1926.51).

Designated Roads, Trails, and Fixed-Distance Corridors that May Not Appear on the First Motor Vehicle Use Map

While I have decided on a desired transportation system, not all changes can be made to the system immediately. As described in appendix 5 of the FEIS, some roads, trails, and fixed-distance corridors may not appear on the first, or possibly subsequent, version(s) of the MVUM until the issues associated with them have been resolved. Appendix 5 of the FEIS describes the conditions or requirements that must be met for them to be published. I will not publish these roads, trails, and fixed-distance corridors on the MVUM until all the requirement(s) have been met.

Table 1 shows the minimum amount of roads, trails, areas, and fixed-distance corridors that will appear on the first MVUM. If, between the time of my decision and its publication, more roads and trails are surveyed and the requirements described in appendix 5 are met, they too will appear on the first version of the MVUM. Appendix 2 of this record of decision is the map of the roads, trails, areas, and fixed-distance corridors that will certainly appear on the first MVUM. Should more routes and areas clear the requirements listed in appendix 5 of the FEIS, they too will be published on the MVUM.

Forest Orders

Any existing forest orders that are not consistent with this record of decision will be rescinded.

Table 1. Minimum miles and acres that will appear on the first motor vehicle use map.

District	Roads				Trails				Total		
	Open to All Vehicles		Open to Highway Legal Vehicles Only		Open to Vehicles < 50"		Open to Motorcycles Only				
	Yearlong	Seasonal	Yearlong	Seasonal	Yearlong	Seasonal	Yearlong	Seasonal	Roads	Trails	Total
Coyote RD	540	45	3	0	25	4	4	0	588	32	620
Cuba RD	408	30	1	0	9	0	0	0	439	9	448
Espanola RD	281	33	4	0	0	2	13	2	318	18	336
Jemez RD	205	6	56	1	0	0	6	0	268	6	274
Pecos RD	476	4	35	0	11	0	0	0	515	11	526
Total	1,910	118	99	1	45	6	23	2	2,128	76	2,204
Grand Total	**2,028**		**100**		**51**		**25**				

Corridors

District	Miles	Acres
Coyote	69	2,539
Cuba	63	2,298
Española	25	895
Jemez	28	1,029
Pecos/Las Vegas	80	2,863
Grand Total	**265**	**9,624**

Areas

District	Acres
Coyote	0
Cuba	0
Española	0
Jemez	28
Pecos/Las Vegas	5
Grand Total	**34**

Reason for the Decision

Background

To address concerns about the effects of unmanaged off-highway vehicles, the Forest Service published final travel management regulations for motor vehicle use on national forests and grasslands on November 9, 2005 (70 FR 68264). The Travel Management Rule *"… provides for a system of National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas on National Forest System lands that are designated for motor vehicle use. After these roads, trails, and areas are designated, motor vehicle use, including the class of vehicle and time of year, not in accordance with these designations is prohibited..."* (36 CFR 212.50(a))

Every national forest and grassland in the country is expected to provide for a designated system of roads, trails, and areas for motorized use. This record of decision explains why I chose to make the changes listed in alternative 2M to the Santa Fe National Forest's system for motorized use.

This decision includes only **changes** to the current motorized travel system. The rule allows me, as the responsible official, to incorporate previous administrative decisions regarding travel management (§212.50(b)). Thus, if alternative 2M doesn't propose something as a change, it will stay the same. For example, Forest Road 376 in the Jemez Ranger District is now an open system road that is open to all vehicles, and no changes to it have been proposed.

The Santa Fe National Forest's current motorized travel policy is unclear and inconsistent (FEIS, appendix 4). Numerous sources, including the forest visitor map, forest plan, closure orders, and databases, contain divergent direction on where motorized use is allowed. This decision makes the MVUM the legal guidance as to where people will be allowed to drive.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is to comply with the Travel Management Rule by providing a system of roads, trails, and areas designated for motor vehicle use by class of vehicle and time of year on the Santa Fe National Forest (36 CFR 212.50).

On the Santa Fe National Forest, complying with the Travel Management Rule means there is a need for: (1) no cross-country motorized travel except in designated areas; (2) clarification of which roads and trails would be open for motorized use; (3) the optional designation of the limited use of motor vehicles within a specified distance of certain designated routes and, if appropriate, within specified time periods, solely for the purposes of dispersed camping or retrieval of a big game animal by an individual who has legally killed that animal; and (4) amended forest plan direction regarding motorized vehicle use that is consistent with the rule.

There is also a need for fewer detrimental effects to natural and cultural resources from unmanaged motorized use and the existence of roads and motorized trails.

The FEIS analyzes five action alternatives, including alternative 2M, which meet these needs.

Reasons I Selected Alternative 2M

In reaching my decision, I have considered the criteria in the rule, the purpose and need for action, the issues and range of alternatives, and environmental consequences. I have also

considered public comments on the DEIS and the original proposed action, the forest plan amendments, the FEIS, and the documents incorporated by reference, including resource specialist reports. The FEIS uses the best available science, as evidenced by the extensive literature citations and its acknowledgment of incomplete and imperfect information (FEIS, p. 16). In this section I describe how I considered each and why I chose alternative 2M.

The rule—and, thus, my decision under it—implements Executive Orders 11644 and 11989. The analysis in the FEIS and the project record provide reasons why routes and areas were not designated, and if they were, how they met the criteria described in the rule. All practical means to avoid or minimize environmental harm from the decision have been adopted.

Criteria in the Travel Management Rule

General Criteria

As stated in the rule, general criteria apply to the designation of roads, trails, and areas.

> ***"General criteria for designation of National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas on National Forest System lands.*** *In designating National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas on National Forest System lands for motor vehicle use, the responsible official shall consider effects on National Forest System natural and cultural resources, public safety, provision of recreational opportunities, access needs, conflicts among uses of National Forest System lands, the need for maintenance and administration of roads, trails, and areas that would arise if the uses under consideration are designated; and the availability of resources for that maintenance and administration." (36 CFR 212.55(a)).*

Effects on National Forest System Natural and Cultural Resources

I have decided to not allow adverse effects from any of the action alternatives to cultural resources as defined by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Thus, there is no difference among them (FEIS, table 16) because there will be no adverse effects to cultural resources. For natural resources, I find that alternative 2M best protects natural resources while still providing motorized opportunities, as explained in the remainder of this decision.

Public Safety

The effects analysis in the final statement shows there is no difference among the action alternatives. I find that all the proposed route systems, including alternative 2M, are considered safe (FEIS, p. 121).

Provision of Recreational Opportunities

The final statement examines the provision of recreational opportunities in detail (FEIS, pp. 79–104). Alternative 1, the no action alternative, provides the most motorized recreational opportunities because few enforceable restrictions currently exist. Of the action alternatives, alternative 4 provides the most miles of roads, trails, and areas designated for motorized use. It still, however, reduces motorized opportunities by approximately half (FEIS, p. vii). Alternative 3 proposes the least amount of places where people could drive.

The forest plan, originally written in 1987, did not contemplate the extent to which motorized use would become part of the forest's recreational landscape. Some members of the public requested that I designate all the roads that exist now, or at least choose alternative 4. I chose alternative 2M because it provides a variety of motorized experiences while best protecting natural and cultural resources. I understand that alternative 2M does not designate every route suggested by riders or leave as much open to motorized use as many members of the public desire. The analysis determined that not all the system or unauthorized routes were appropriate for designation because of their effects to natural or cultural resources (project record documents: "Travel Analysis Process Report" and "Summary of Process Used to Develop Alternatives in the DEIS and FEIS"). For some people, having fewer motorized opportunities will be a significant negative effect.

I chose alternative 2M because it designates the roads forest staff evaluated as needed for access or recreation, are situated in locations not harmful to natural or cultural resources, and can be maintained to prevent damage to natural and cultural resources (FEIS, pp. 119–120). Data collected by staff show that many roads are no longer used, or are used very infrequently, and the forest cannot afford to maintain such roads. I understand that even though a road may only be used once per year, it may be very important to that driver at that particular time—not having it open may remove a potential adventure or favorite spot. On balance, however, having fewer open roads on the forest better protects natural and cultural resources for all (FEIS table 16).

Alternative 2M increases the forest's managed motorized trail system from 27 to 208 miles. It proposes to designate approximately 90 miles of unauthorized trails. The analysis shows that designating these unauthorized trails would minimize the damage to natural and cultural resources as compared to the forest's current motorized travel system (FEIS, chapter 3).

Alternative 2M, like the other action alternatives, nearly eliminates motorized areas, which the analysis shows to be detrimental to natural and cultural resources (FEIS, chapter 3). Some members of the public requested motorized areas specifically for trials riding. Staff considered the areas suggested. I chose alternative 2M because it designates 38 acres of the areas requested, which would allow riders to practice. Forest staff may still issue permits for special trials events in other locations as has been done in the past.

For the fixed-distance corridors, I chose alternative 2M because it treats hunters the same as campers by allowing them to drive in the same places. This equal treatment was requested by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (FEIS, p. 23), with whom forest staffs work closely. Alternative 2M is less restrictive than alternative 3—which allows no driving off roads for any reason—but still prevents vehicles from being within 100 feet of water. The analysis in chapter 3 shows that keeping vehicles away from water will improve riparian and watershed conditions. Many people felt that not allowing vehicles to drive to campsites was the same as removing camping. For these individuals, being limited in where they can drive could be perceived as a significant negative impact to their recreational experience. I believe, however, alternative 2M is a fair compromise by allowing people to drive most of the places they are accustomed to for camping but still keeping vehicles away from water, which will provide some riparian areas the opportunity to recover (FEIS p. 166). Further, alternative 2M proposes to designate numerous unauthorized spur routes for access to motorized dispersed camping in lieu of a corridor (FEIS pp. 28, 42).

Many hunters commented that not being able to drive to retrieve their game meant they would not be able to hunt due to age or disability. Alternative 2M would allow hunters to drive up to 150 feet from either side of some routes to retrieve their game. I am certain this is not as far as many would like; and for some, it will present a significant obstacle to game retrieval. Nonetheless, I selected alternative 2M because the FEIS describes how less motorized use is apt to improve the habitat that game, particularly elk, use. Designating fixed-distance corridors for game retrieval limits the amount of motorized use compared to the existing condition.

Access Needs

The forest's data show that most motorized use occurs on its main roads (roads report). These are the roads, for instance, that lead to campgrounds such as Jacks Creek in the Pecos/Las Vegas Ranger District. Alternative 2M would designate 95 percent of the main forest roads for motorized use, thereby preserving motorized use of the most frequently used roads (FEIS, p. 89). Alternative 2M removes none of the motorized access to developed recreational sites.

Alternative 2M would remove motorized use on about 61 percent of the high-clearance vehicle roads, many of which are not used frequently or have grown over (FEIS p. 88; project record). I realize this may mean that some people will have to walk farther to get to a favorite spot, or may lose some of their chances to explore the forest (FEIS, p. 88). I believe, however, that the tradeoff to protect natural resources is reasonable.

I chose alternative 2M because it follows the forest plan, specifically with regard to the Rio Chama. It implements the "Rio Chama Management Plan," which is part of the "Santa Fe National Forest Plan." This means that people will be able to drive fewer places in the Rio Chama corridor than they are currently accustomed to (FEIS, p. 88), but this direction is consistent with the intent of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Alternative 2M proposes no change to permitted activities, e.g., firewood collection, as long as people are driving where their permit allows (FEIS, p. 4). It also exempts limited administrative use by the Forest Service (FEIS, p. 4). I find, based on the cumulative effects analysis for each resource, that continuing to allow this administrative use is acceptable (FEIS, chapter 3).

I chose alternative 2M because it provides flexibility for seasonal closures. Alternative 2M does not set fixed closure dates for weather. Fixed closure dates apply to known, predictable, and specific days every year. Because we have such variable winters, I find this does not apply to the Santa Fe National Forest. Rather, districts will close roads and trails on an as-needed basis, when roads are wet or muddy to protect them from erosion and rutting (FEIS, p. 27). This system of closures should provide motorized access for the longest period of time, since routes would not be arbitrarily closed during a dry winter, for instance (FEIS, pp. 92–93). Some roads and trails become impassable during certain seasons or conditions, but this does not mean they need to be closed in a legal sense during those periods since they close themselves. Alternative 2M does keep certain set seasonal closures for the protection of wildlife.

Conflicts Among Uses of National Forest System Lands

The analysis in the FEIS predicts that merely having a MVUM is expected to decrease conflicts among motorized and nonmotorized uses (FEIS, pp. 106–107). Thus, there is not a significant difference among the alternatives and all, including 2M, are expected to reduce conflicts. Though

alternative 5 was specifically designed to cluster motorized uses, I find alternative 2M better meets the other needs required by the rule.

Need for Maintenance and Administration

The road maintenance needs do not vary significantly among the action alternatives, but all reduce the need for maintenance from the current condition (FEIS, p. 119). Alternative 2M would increase maintenance requirements for motorized system trails over the existing system. I find that the increase in maintenance and administration required is reasonable in order to provide motorized system trails, a popular recreational use of the forest.

Availability of Resources for Maintenance and Administration

I do not anticipate any change in the forest's available resources for maintenance or administration of a motorized travel system. I do expect the return interval for maintenance on designated routes to increase. I believe alternative 2M is a system we could manage effectively, especially with the offers of volunteer help we have received.

Specific Criteria for Designation of Trails and Areas

This section of the rule applies to the designation of trails and areas.

> *"In addition to the criteria in paragraph (a) of this section, in designating National Forest System trails and areas on National Forest System lands, the responsible official shall consider effects on the following, with the objective of minimizing:*
>
> > *(1) Damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, and other forest resources;*
> >
> > *(2) Harassment of wildlife and significant disruption of wildlife habitats;*
> >
> > *(3) Conflicts between motor vehicle use and existing or proposed recreational uses of National Forest System lands or neighboring Federal lands; and*
> >
> > *(4) Conflicts among different classes of motor vehicle uses of National Forest System lands or neighboring Federal lands.*
>
> *In addition, the responsible official shall consider:*
>
> > *(5) Compatibility of motor vehicle use with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account sound, emissions, and other factors." (36 CFR 212.55(b)).*

Damage to Soil, Watershed, Vegetation, and Other Forest Resources

Trails. I chose alternative 2M because it minimizes damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, and other resources because it designates motorized trails in the most appropriate locations ("Travel Analysis Process Report" and "Summary of Alternative Development" dated April 26, 2012). It designates a system the forest can reasonably maintain, especially with the help of volunteers (FEIS, p. 119-120). Maintenance protects soil and watershed resources in the long term, despite initial disturbance effects (FEIS, p. 157–160).

Alternative 2M allows the ranger districts to seasonally close motorized trails when they are most vulnerable to rutting and erosion on an individual basis. Being able to close trails when they are most vulnerable is expected to minimize the damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, and other forest resources. I find having fixed seasonal closure dates proposed in alternatives 2, 3, and 5 may not minimize damage to soil and watershed because it may miss closing trails when they need it, for instance during monsoons (FEIS, p. 92).

Motorized trails are documented vectors for the spread of invasive plants (FEIS, p. 205). I chose alternative 2M in part because it minimizes the risk of spread of invasive plants more than any alternative except 3, and I find that alternative 3 would not provide a reasonable mileage of motorized trails desired by the motorized community.

Areas. Alternative 2M reduces the acreage available for motorized cross-country travel in the forest by over 99 percent (FEIS, p. 91). This significantly minimizes damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, and the risk of spread of invasive plants (FEIS, chapter 3).

Alternative 2M minimizes damage to soil, watershed, and vegetation by not allowing vehicles within 100 feet of water, which has been shown to promote recovery of riparian areas popular for dispersed camping (FEIS, chapter 3).

Approximately 35 acres of designated motorized areas[2] are intended for motorcycle trials as requested by the public. These acres are located on rocky terrain that isn't easily damaged by vehicles (FEIS, p. 162–163).

The remaining, approximate 5 acres of areas proposed in alternative 2M are intended for access to motorized dispersed camping in the Pecos/Las Vegas Ranger District. Designating these areas minimizes damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, and other forest resources because it keeps the use confined to places it happens now, and closes other areas. The areas that will be designated have been used for dispersed camping for years and are already denuded of vegetation, and no further change is anticipated.

Harassment of Wildlife and Significant Disruption of Wildlife Habitats

Trails. I chose alternative 2M because it minimizes the harassment of wildlife and the significant disruption of wildlife habitats by reducing the miles of trails open to motorized use by 49 percent compared to the existing condition. It also designates motorized trails in places not expected to disturb threatened or endangered or sensitive species' habitats (Project record document,

[2] People may drive in motorized areas without restriction pursuant to the rule. We, however, have designated motorized areas with two uses in mind: motorcycle trials and dispersed camping areas. We recognize that there is no way to tag these areas as such according to the rule, but the areas have been used that way for a long time and we think they will continue in that vein. The discussion of motorized areas that follows in the rest of this decision bears this in mind.

"Summary of Alternative Development" dated April 26, 2012). Over time, closing trails to motorized use has the potential to reduce habitat fragmentation by natural or active reclamation (FEIS, chapter 3). Alternative 2M institutes consistent seasonal closures during certain breeding seasons, which also minimizes the disruption to wildlife (FEIS, chapter 3). Finally, Alternative 2M doesn't designate the motorized trail in Polvadera Creek, which contains Rio Grande cutthroat trout (FEIS, p. 179).

Areas. Alternative 2M reduces the acreage available for motorized cross-country travel in the forest by over 99 percent. This significantly minimizes harassment of wildlife and disruption of their habitats (FEIS, pp. 184–185). The acres designated as motorized area would not affect wildlife or their habitats because they are so small as to be inconsequential or not located in sensitive habitats (FEIS, p. 186).

Conflicts Between Motor Vehicle Use and Existing or Proposed Recreational Uses

Trails. The public's comments indicated that conflicts between motor vehicle use and other uses, such as hiking or horseback riding, tend to occur in specific areas of the forest, such as Glorieta Mesa, Cañada de los Alamos, or Forest Trail 113 in the Jemez Ranger District. Some commenters wrote that any motorized use caused conflict and was dangerous, but did not support the comment with any evidence. I find that alternative 2M proposes the most reasonable set of motorized trails given the existing recreational uses—motorized and nonmotorized—of the forest. In Cañada de los Alamos, for example, I chose alternative 2M because it proposes to allow highway legal vehicles only—no ATVs—to the trailhead, which prevents illegal motorized trespass into the Santa Fe watershed. Forest Trail 113, which was highly sought after by motorized and nonmotorized users, has been washed away in the flooding following the Las Conchas Fire and is no longer appropriate for motorized use (FEIS, appendix 6).

In their comments and meetings with forest staff, both motorized and nonmotorized users wanted to use the same trails in much of the Jemez Ranger District. In developing alternative 2M, forest staff carefully evaluated which trails would be appropriate for motorized use one by one (Project record, "Summary of Alternative Development" dated April 26, 2012).

Areas. Thirty-five acres proposed as areas in alternative 2M are for motorcycle trials. This area of the Jemez Ranger District has been used for motorcycle trials in the past, so I do not expect there to be conflicts with other recreational uses (FEIS, p. 91). We received no comments that were opposed to this trials area. Designating a place for motorcyclists to practice could minimize conflicts by keeping them in one place dedicated for that use; having this location on the map means nonmotorized users can avoid it.

The 5 acres proposed as motorized area and intended for dispersed camping are not expected to create conflicts with other recreational uses because these locations have been used for motorized dispersed camping for years (FEIS, assumption 8).

Conflicts Among Different Classes of Motor Vehicle Uses of National Forest System Lands or Neighboring Federal Lands

Trails. The public's comments reflected no major conflicts among different classes of motor vehicle uses under the current motorized travel policy (FEIS, appendix 7). This could be because much of the forest is currently open to motorized use, so people are able to disperse.

Motorcyclists, however, requested their own trails not be shared by larger vehicles (Project record, various comment letters).

Many people felt that having a designated system of trails would confine too many people to the same trails, thereby causing conflicts. These claims were not supported by evidence, and the FEIS indicates that having a MVUM is expected to reduce conflicts (FEIS, pp. 106–107). Nonetheless, I will ask forest staff to focus on the potential for conflicts between different motorized uses when creating the monitoring plan.

The record indicates that most ATV riders appear to be content to share with either passenger-sized cars or motorcycles (Project record, comment letters).

Areas. The motorized areas for motorcycle trials are located on terrain composed of large rocks connected by single track trails that are not wide enough for ATVs or passenger cars to ride on; thus, I do not anticipate conflicts among different classes of motor vehicle uses since larger vehicles are not able to physically access the area (FEIS, p. 91).

Recreational vehicles, ATVs, and passenger cars currently share the motorized areas for dispersed camping in the Pecos/Las Vegas district every weekend in the summer without incident. There is no evidence that this will change by designating it (FEIS, p. 92; appendix 7).

Compatibility of Motor Vehicle Use with Existing Conditions in Populated Areas, Taking into Account Sound, Emissions, and Other Factors

Trails. There is no significant difference in emissions among the alternatives (FEIS, p. 223). I find alternative 2M to be the best compromise between providing motorized recreational opportunities while reducing the impact to local communities, especially in certain places in the Pecos/Las Vegas Ranger District, such as Glorieta Mesa and Cañada de los Alamos, as well as the Jemez Ranger District. Based on public comment, I believe selecting alternative 4 was likely to have resulted in conflicts between motorized users and the people who live and recreate in and around the forest. I believe alternative 3 does not provide enough motorized opportunities, especially in light of the sport's growth over the years. I find that no discernible difference in noise impacts exists among alternatives. The record shows that noise is transitory, depends on terrain, and that motorized use of most trails is infrequent (FEIS, pp. 129–135).

Areas. The motorcycle trials areas are not located in populated areas where sound or emissions would be an issue (refer to map of alternative 2M).

The motorized camping area at Dalton in the Pecos/Las Vegas Ranger District is relatively close to residences. This area has been used this way for years and the district is working on a proposal to better manage it. Though I understand the residents do not tend to look on the camping favorably, it is a highly desirable recreational opportunity that I believe needs to be retained given its popularity over the years.

Specific Criteria for Designation of Roads

This section of the rule applies to roads only.

> *"In addition to the criteria in paragraph (a) of this section, in designating National Forest System roads, the responsible official shall consider:*
>
> > *(1) Speed, volume, composition, and distribution of traffic on roads; and*
> >
> > *(2) Compatibility of vehicle class with road geometry and road surfacing." (36 CFR 212.55(c)).*

Speed, Volume, Composition, and Distribution of Traffic on Roads

No discernible difference among alternatives exists (project record, roads report). I find alternative 2M to be satisfactory in these elements.

Compatibility of Vehicle Class with Road Geometry and Road Surfacing

No discernible difference among alternatives exists (project record, roads report). I find alternative 2M to be satisfactory in these elements.

Rights of Access

> *"In making designations pursuant to this subpart, the responsible official shall recognize:*
>
> > *(1) Valid existing rights; and*
> >
> > *(2) The rights of use of National Forest System roads and National Forest System trails under § 212.6(b)." (36 CFR 212.55(d)).*

Valid Existing Rights

I find alternative 2M designates access to private land based on valid existing rights and would not designate access where authorizations had not been properly obtained (FEIS, pp. 145–147). Forest staff will work toward issuing authorizations for all roads leading to private property so that they do not need to appear on the MVUM. Alternative 3 may have unnecessarily removed some legal access by proposing too few roads, and alternative 4 proposed motorized use of hiking trails to private property, such as around Bearhead Peak on the Jemez Ranger District, which is not appropriate at this time.

Appendix 6 of the FEIS identifies some routes that will not be designated in alternative 2M due to the damaging effects of the 2011 Las Conchas Fire and subsequent flooding. Two of these are Forest Roads 89 and 268. Not having motorized access to private land on these roads is likely to be a significant burden to landowners in Cochiti and Bland Canyons.

Rights of Use of National Forest System Roads and National Forest System Trails

Alternative 2M designates roads and trails for which we have easements or prescriptive rights.

Effects Analysis

Chapter 3's analysis of effects to natural and cultural resources and the human environment in the FEIS indicates that the biggest change is between alternative 1 and any of the action alternatives (FEIS, table 16). I find that any action alternative selected would protect or maintain natural and cultural resources significantly more than the current motorized travel system. Any of the action alternatives—even alternative 4—also puts significant limits on where people can drive by reducing the miles of forest system roads and trails open for motorized use, by limiting the season when people can drive off road to retrieve game, and by limiting where people can drive to get to campsites (FEIS, table 15).

Nonetheless, I selected alternative 2M because of its balance between resource protection and provision of motorized opportunities. Below, I explain what I found in the effects analysis that led me to choose the changes proposed in alternative 2M.

Resources for which I find a significant difference among alternatives:

Recreation – amount and type of motorized access. I selected alternative 2M because, based on the public's comments, it is a compromise that balances the desires of motorized recreational users while maintaining natural and cultural resource values. The majority of people who supported a specific alternative asked me to select either alternative 3 or alternative 4 (FEIS, Appendix 7). I find alternative 3 too restrictive given the rise in popularity of motorized use, and alternative 4 too permissive given the need to protect natural and cultural resources. To people who supported less or more motorized use, the chosen alternative 2M is likely to be perceived as significantly harmful.

Conflicts between motorized and nonmotorized uses. The analysis in the FEIS shows that simply having a MVUM is expected to reduce the conflicts between motorized and nonmotorized users. Nonmotorized users, shown to bear the brunt of the conflicts disproportionately (FEIS, pp. 104–105), will know where motor vehicle use is allowed and can, thus, avoid it.

I selected alternative 2M because it balances motorized use in the areas where letters I received said conflicts existed: Cañada de los Alamos, La Cueva, Glorieta Mesa, and the Jemez Ranger District.

Inventoried roadless areas. I selected alternative 2M because it proposes no unauthorized roads in inventoried roadless areas (IRAs). Designating an unauthorized road in an IRA adds miles to the forest transportation system, which is interpreted as "construction." Only the Secretary of Agriculture can authorize construction of roads in IRAs as of the time of this writing, and I find that none of the unauthorized roads proposed in any alternative merit that level of scrutiny. Alternative 2M also contains a few motorized trails in IRAs, which is an experience that motorcyclists requested, but not so many that it detracts from the nine roadless characteristics (FEIS, pp. 113–114).

Compliance, or ability to understand the map. The ease with which the public can understand the MVUM is a principal factor in ensuring compliance. Maps that are readily understood are more likely to result in compliance. I find that alternative 2M's MVUM would be among the simplest by having one corridor width and a blanket restriction on driving within 100 feet of water (FEIS, pp. 116–117).

Fish habitat. Alternative 2M does not propose motorized trails in Rio Grande cutthroat occupied streams, such as the one in Polvadera Creek. The Rio Grande cutthroat trout is currently on the Regional Forester's list of sensitive species and is being evaluated for listing as threatened or endangered. I find keeping its habitat intact to be extremely important.

Wildlife habitat. I find that the changes proposed in alternative 2M would protect or improve wildlife habitat by reducing the places where people would be allowed to drive.

Soil and watershed condition. Alternative 2M, by not allowing vehicles within 100 feet of water in areas or fixed-distance corridors, provides the forest's valuable riparian areas an opportunity to naturally revegetate or remain intact (FEIS, pp. 154–171). I find that alternative 2M also provides people opportunities to drive to camp, unlike alternative 3, which I find too restrictive.

Water quality. Forest staff assumed that there would be no net change in the state of the forest's roads and trails within the timeframe of the analysis after the travel management decision is implemented (FEIS, pp. 154–171). All the alternatives significantly limit the amount of driving off roads and trails, which is a considerable source of water quality problems (FEIS, pp. 154–171). Limiting the amount of motorized use near riparian areas, however, is expected to improve water quality (FEIS, pp. 154–171). For this reason, I find alternative 2M would improve water quality by not allowing vehicles within 100 feet of the water's edge in areas and fixed-distance corridors.

Nonnative invasive plants. I find alternative 2M limits the risk of spread of nonnative species in the forest's riparian areas by not allowing vehicles within 100 feet of water in areas and fixed-distance corridors (FEIS, pp. 207–208).

Maintenance, trails. I find that alternative 2M designates a motorized trail system that the forest can reasonably maintain, especially with volunteer help (FEIS, p. 120). Designating any more miles of trail at this time is likely to stretch the forest's limited maintenance resources. Unmaintained routes often cause resource damage (FEIS, pp. 154–171).

Resources for which I find there is no significant difference among action alternatives:

Cultural resources. None of the alternatives would have adverse effects as defined by Section 106 of the NHPA; therefore, there is no difference among them (FEIS, table 16).

Wilderness. None of the action alternatives proposes to change any use of the forest's wilderness areas. I do not find evidence that any of the action alternatives significantly affects wilderness, especially in terms of noise, which is shown to be transitory and highly dependent on terrain. There is no correlation shown between the number of routes and the amount of motorized trespass into wilderness. As described in the FEIS, only Congress can designate wilderness areas; the Forest Service does not have the authority to "extend" wilderness by not designating routes near it.

Public safety. The analysis in the FEIS shows that all the action alternatives are equally safe.

Permitted activities, such as firewood collection. The rule exempts authorized activities. No change is expected in the amount of motorized administrative use, and the cumulative effects analysis for each resource shows that alternative 2M would not significantly damage natural or cultural resources.

Environmental justice. I find no significant difference in the effects described in the FEIS among the alternatives (FEIS, pp. 134–135). I find no disproportional effects to minorities or low income communities because the transportation system will be equally available to all. Most traditional uses, such as forest product collection or ceremonial uses, will continue to require a permit. A permit may exempt the users from the MVUM on a case-by-case basis.

Air quality. I find no significant difference in the effects described in the FEIS among the alternatives (FEIS, pp. 221–225).

Wildfire – response time and human-caused starts. I find no significant difference in the effects described in the FEIS among the alternatives (FEIS, pp. 224–227).

Maintenance, roads. I find no significant difference in the effects described in the FEIS among the alternatives (FEIS, pp. 119–120).

Property values. I find that there is no definitive manner to predict how an alternative would affect property values (FEIS, pp. 135–136).

Jobs and income. I find no significant difference in the effects described in the FEIS among the alternatives (FEIS, pp. 128–129). Some commenters who own small businesses are likely to disagree with me; however, no scientific evidence has been presented showing the direct correlation between publication of a MVUM and the increase or decrease in local jobs and income.

Noise. I find no significant difference in the effects described in the FEIS among the alternatives (FEIS, pp. 131–133).

Motorized access to private land. The forest will provide access to private land, either with an authorization or via the MVUM, no matter the alternative selected. In this regard, there is no difference among alternatives. The differences are which roads appear on the MVUM, whether people will have the motorized access they are accustomed to, and whether they would need to obtain an authorization from the Forest Service.

Collection of piñon nuts, herbs, and other unpermitted activities. None of the action alternatives limits people's ability to collect forest products for personal use, only where they could drive to get those (FEIS, pp. 138–139). I understand that some people may disagree, but because piñon nuts and herbs are easier to collect and transport than firewood, I do not believe that an extensive road system is needed.

Public Comment

From the rule's inception in 2005, the public has been extremely involved. We received approximately 3,275 letters throughout this planning process. I want to thank each of you who took the time to write and express your opinion. I recognize that you highly value the Santa Fe National Forest and assure you that this decision represents a starting point from which we can, together, modify the roads, trails, and areas based on the appropriate site specific environmental analysis in the future.

Appendix 7 of the FEIS summarizes the public's comments on the DEIS. As you can see, they were considerable. A few subjects were raised repeatedly throughout the planning process. I would like to address them here.

Amount of motorized use. Many people held an extreme view of how much motorized use of the Santa Fe National Forest should be allowed, an "all or nothing" approach as represented by alternatives 3 and 4, respectively. I selected alternative 2M because it represents a middle ground between these views.

Bias. Many people expressed concern that I was being unduly influenced by either the motorized community or the environmental community. I assure you that I have based my decision on the criteria in the rule, the analysis presented in the FEIS, and your comments considered equally.

Administrative issues. People asked us to regulate things like licenses, registrations, fines, permits to drive in the forest, decibel limits, and other things over which we do not have administrative jurisdiction.

Enforcement. Repeatedly, people questioned the forest's ability to enforce this decision. We firmly believe that most people follow the rules. Enforcement is the last of the "four E's": evaluation, education, engineering, and enforcement. I am confident that our forthcoming implementation plan will help the public understand and comply with the new rules. I have selected alternative 2M in part because I believe the relative simplicity of the map as compared to the other alternatives will aid in compliance.

Limited mobility. Some people wrote to say that designating a motorized system would be unfair to those with limited mobility. The action alternatives treat everyone the same. Everyone is allowed to drive in the places published on the MVUM. The Forest Service is not legally required to allow those with limited mobility to drive places closed to motorized use because such an exemption could fundamentally alter the nature of its travel management program (7 CFR §15e.103). Reasonable restrictions on motor vehicle use applied consistently to everyone are not discriminatory.

Removing routes too soon. People, mostly from the motorized community, claimed that we removed routes from consideration inappropriately prior to this record of decision because they did not appear in alternative 1 (no action). As emphasized in the FEIS, alternative 1 shows where people are driving now (FEIS, p. 17). This is not the same as where they are allowed to drive, which is the existing travel system shown in appendix 4 of the FEIS. Any road, trail, or area could have been proposed—and many were—for motorized use at any time throughout the planning process.

Alternatives Considered

In addition to alternative 2M, I considered five other alternatives in detail. These are described briefly below. A detailed description and comparison of these alternatives is on pages 17 through 44 of the FEIS. Pages 44 through 56 of the FEIS describe other alternatives considered but eliminated from detailed study. Alternative 3 is the environmentally preferred alternative.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Alternative 1 describes where people drive now, which is the result of current management. Under the no action alternative, the conflicting direction contained in the 1987 “Santa Fe National Forest Plan” (forest plan) and other written direction (e.g., closure orders and the forest visitor map) would continue to guide motor vehicle use in the national forest. The Travel Management Rule would not be implemented, and no MVUM would be produced. No permanent prohibition on motorized cross-country travel would be in place. No changes to the existing transportation system would be made. Without clear and consistent direction, motorized use of the national forest would continue in more or less the same manner as it does currently.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

Alternative 2 was the forest’s proposed action, which was its first attempt at meeting the purpose and need. Alternative 2 reduced the miles of roads and trails designated for motorized use by approximately 55 percent. It proposed motorized access for dispersed camping and big game retrieval in the same corridors. This alternative kept motorized access to dispersed camping where it currently occurs along roads and trails, except where forest staff identified unacceptable resource damage during field surveys. Alternative 2 had 11 different dates for seasonal closures in an effort to provide the best balance between resource protection and motorized access.

I did not choose alternative 2 because it did not incorporate enough of the public’s comments nor the additional field verification conducted by forest staff. These are better reflected in alternative 2M.

Alternative 3

Alternative 3 proposed the fewest places where people could drive. It did not allow people to drive off roads or trails anywhere for any reason unless under permit or other authorization. This means that to camp, people would have had to park next to the side of the road and carry their gear to a camping spot. They could not drive their car to the campsite. Retrieving game would need to be done by foot, horseback, or other nonmotorized method. Alternative 3 did not add any unauthorized trails to the system. This meant that people wanting to ride on loop routes would be restricted mainly to the existing forest system roads.

I did not choose alternative 3 because I find it too restrictive for the way the public is used to accessing and using the forest now. Several people observed that drivers are more likely to follow the rules if the motorized travel system is reasonable, and I find alternative 3 does not provide a reasonable amount of motorized trails or access to dispersed camping or big game retrieval.

Alternative 4

Of the action alternatives, the changes proposed in alternative 4 resulted in the most miles of designated routes and the highest number of acres designated for motorized use. It did not have uniform seasonal closures for weather, which meant that people could have driven on routes until they “closed themselves” with snow or closure orders were put in place. Alternative 4 proposed two different fixed-distance corridor widths: 300 feet for motorized access to dispersed camping, and 1 mile for motorized retrieval of downed big game. This alternative proposed to add the most miles of unauthorized routes to the system.

I did not choose alternative 4 because alternative 2M better meets the purpose and need of reducing the detrimental impacts caused by unmanaged motorized use and the use and existence of motorized roads and trails. I found the 1-mile corridors for retrieving big game particularly problematic, even though this is still a reduction in use compared to the current motorized travel system. Motorized recreation is not this forest's recreational niche; therefore, alternative 4 is not the appropriate alternative.

Alternative 5

Alternative 5 geographically grouped motorized and nonmotorized uses separately as much as possible to reduce conflicts between visitors. Alternative 5 clustered motorized routes, with motorized recreation in mind, in certain places in the forest. This means that motorized recreation could occur away from nonmotorized recreation on a larger scale.

I did not choose alternative 5 because it did not separate motorized and nonmotorized uses significantly enough to vary from alternative 2. I did not find the grouping concept to be effective.

Public Involvement

As described in the "Background," the need for this action arose in November 2005 with publication of the rule. Prior to publishing the proposed action, forest staff engaged in a collaborative process with the public by hosting 38 public meetings and attending many others.

A proposal to provide for a system of roads, trails, and areas designated for motorized use was outlined in a notice of intent dated July 17, 2008. The proposal was provided to the public and other agencies during scoping from July 10 until September 2, 2008. Additionally, as part of the public involvement process, the agency held 13 public meetings.

Using the comments from the public and other agencies, an interdisciplinary team identified several issues regarding the effects of the proposed action. The significant issues included protection of natural and cultural resources, provision of enough motorized recreational opportunities, the ability to retrieve big game with a vehicle, the effects caused by motorized access to dispersed camping, and conflicts between motorized and nonmotorized uses (FEIS, pp. 7–8). To address these concerns, the Forest Service created alternatives 3, 4, and 5 described above.

After the notice and comment period for the DEIS, which ran from August 7 through September 30, 2010, forest staff created alternative 2M—a slight modification of alternative 2—from the public's comments.

Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations

I find that the decision to provide for a system of roads, trails, and areas designated for motor vehicle use by class of vehicle and time of year by implementing the changes listed in alternative 2M is consistent with the intent of the forest plan's long-term goals and objectives (Project record, all resource specialist reports). The project was designed in conformance with forest plan standards, incorporates appropriate forest plan guidelines, and amends the forest plan where needed (FEIS, appendix 1). The United States Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with this

proposal. The New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer also concurred. Mine is an independent decision based on the analysis for the Santa Fe National Forest.

The specialist reports in the project record certify that alternative 2M is consistent with a variety of laws and regulations pertaining to each resource topic, and I incorporate the findings in each report into this record of decision. Among these are:

- Clean Air Act
- Clean Water Act
- Endangered Species Act
- National Environmental Policy Act
- National Forest Management Act
- National Historic Preservation Act
- Executive Order 11593, Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment
- Executive Order 11644, as amended by Executive Order 11989 (regulating motorized off-road travel)
- Executive Order 11990 (Wetlands Management)
- Executive Order 11998 (Floodplain Management)
- Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice)
- Executive Order 13443 (Enhancement of hunting opportunities)

Opportunities for Administrative Review or Appeal

Pursuant to the regulations at 36 CFR 215, people and organizations who commented on the DEIS during the notice and comment period that ran from August 7 until September 30, 2010, have standing to appeal my decision. People who commented anonymously or outside of the notice and comment period do not have standing to appeal. Appeals received, including the names and addresses of those who appeal, will be part of the public record.

How to Submit an Appeal: You must submit your appeal within 45 days after the legal notice of decision is published in the Albuquerque Journal. The publication date of the legal notice is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an appeal (§215.15 (a)). Do not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. The content of your appeal must meet the requirements described in 36 CFR 215.14.

Appeals may be delivered by facsimile, hand, U.S. mail, express delivery service, or email. Acceptable electronic formats are text in the body of an email or an attachment (.pdf, .doc, .txt, .rtf, or other formats readable by Microsoft Word).

Send Appeals to:

Corbin Newman, Appeal Deciding Officer
Southwestern Region
333 Broadway Blvd., SE
Albuquerque, NM 87102
Fax number: (505) 842-3173
Email address: appeals-southwestern-regional-office@fs.fed.us

Appeals may be hand delivered to the above address during regular business hours from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Implementation

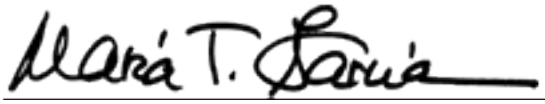
If no appeal is filed within the 45-day time period, implementation of the decision may begin on, but not before, the 5th business day following the close of the appeal filing period (§215.15).

When an appeal is filed, implementation may occur on, but not before, the 15th business day following the date of appeal disposition (§215.2). In the event of multiple appeals of the decision, the implementation date is controlled by the date of the last appeal disposition.

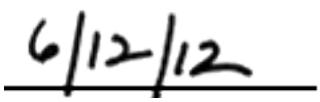
Contact Person

For additional information concerning this decision or the Forest Service's appeal process, please contact:

Julie Bain
Santa Fe National Forest
11 Forest Lane
Santa Fe, NM 87508
(505) 438-5443
jbain@fs.fed.us



MARIA T. GARCIA
Forest Supervisor
Santa Fe National Forest



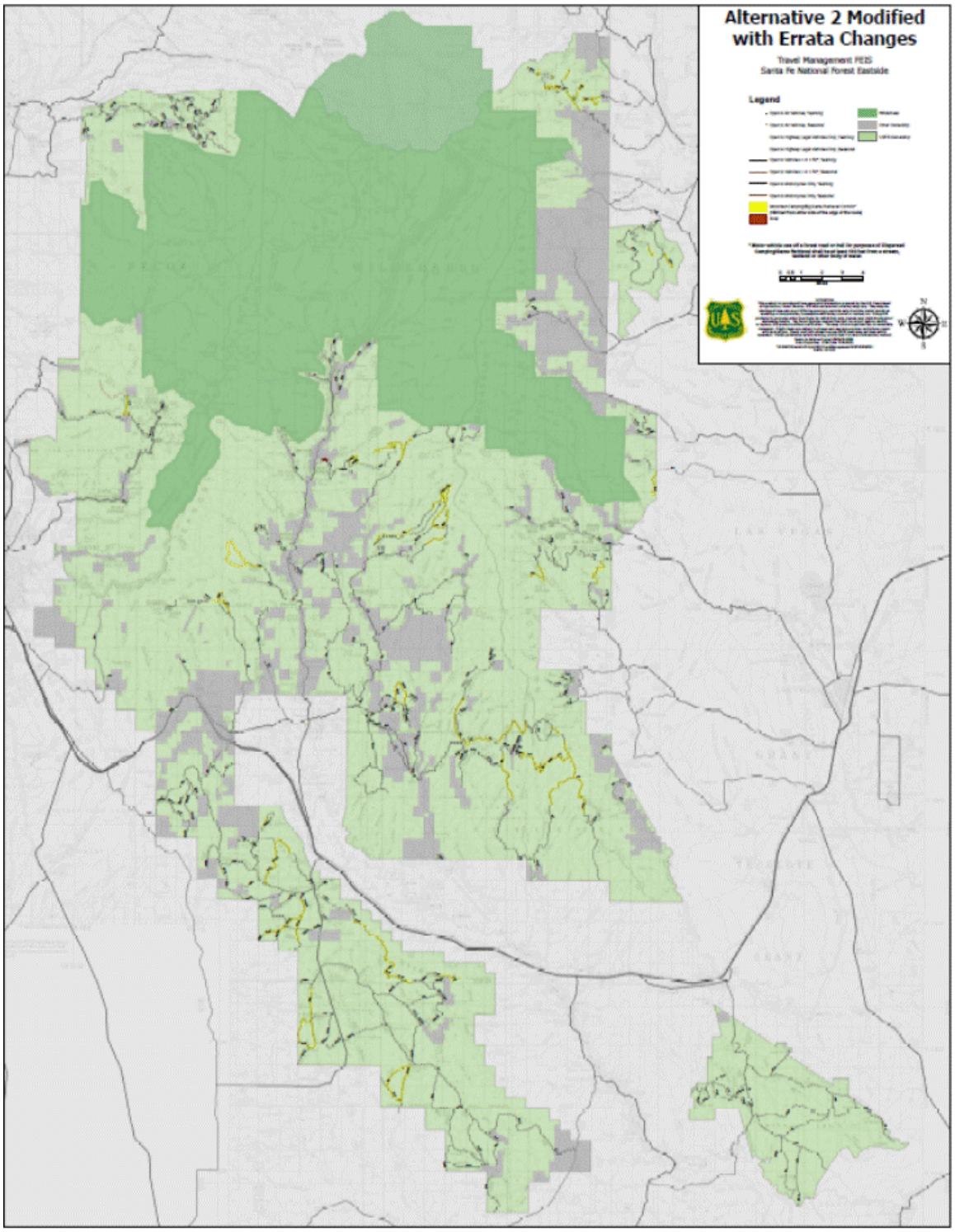
DATE

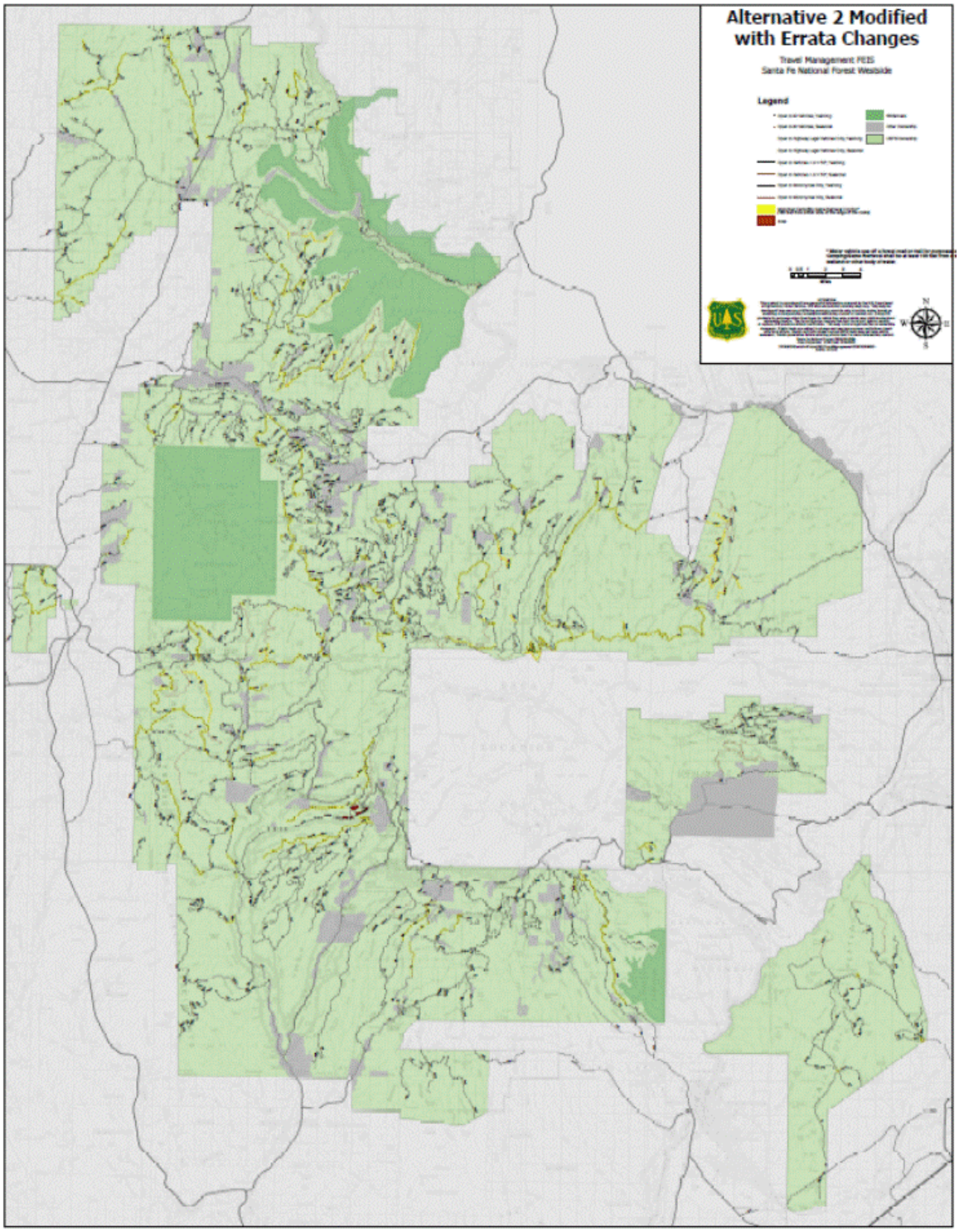
Appendix 1. Map of Roads, Trails, Areas, and Fixed-Distance Corridors in Resultant System

Large-sized maps are located at all Santa Fe National Forest offices. Electronic versions are online at: http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/sfe/travelmgt/index.html.

These maps depict the entire motorized transportation system with the changes made under alternative 2M.

Appendix 1. Map of Roads, Trails, Areas, and Fixed-distance Corridors in Resultant System



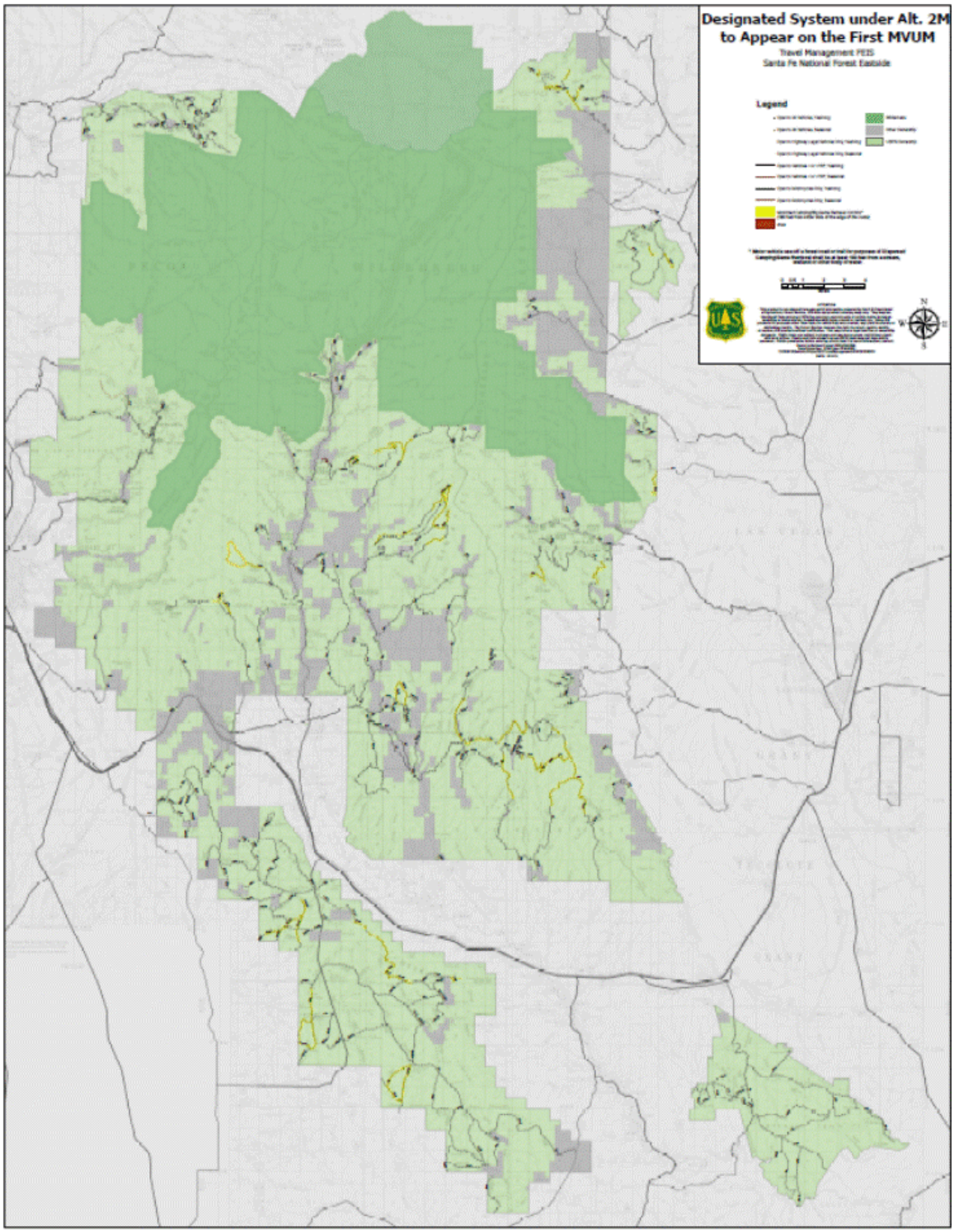

Alternative 2 Modified
with Errata Changes
Travel Management FEIS
Santa Fe National Forest Westside
Legend

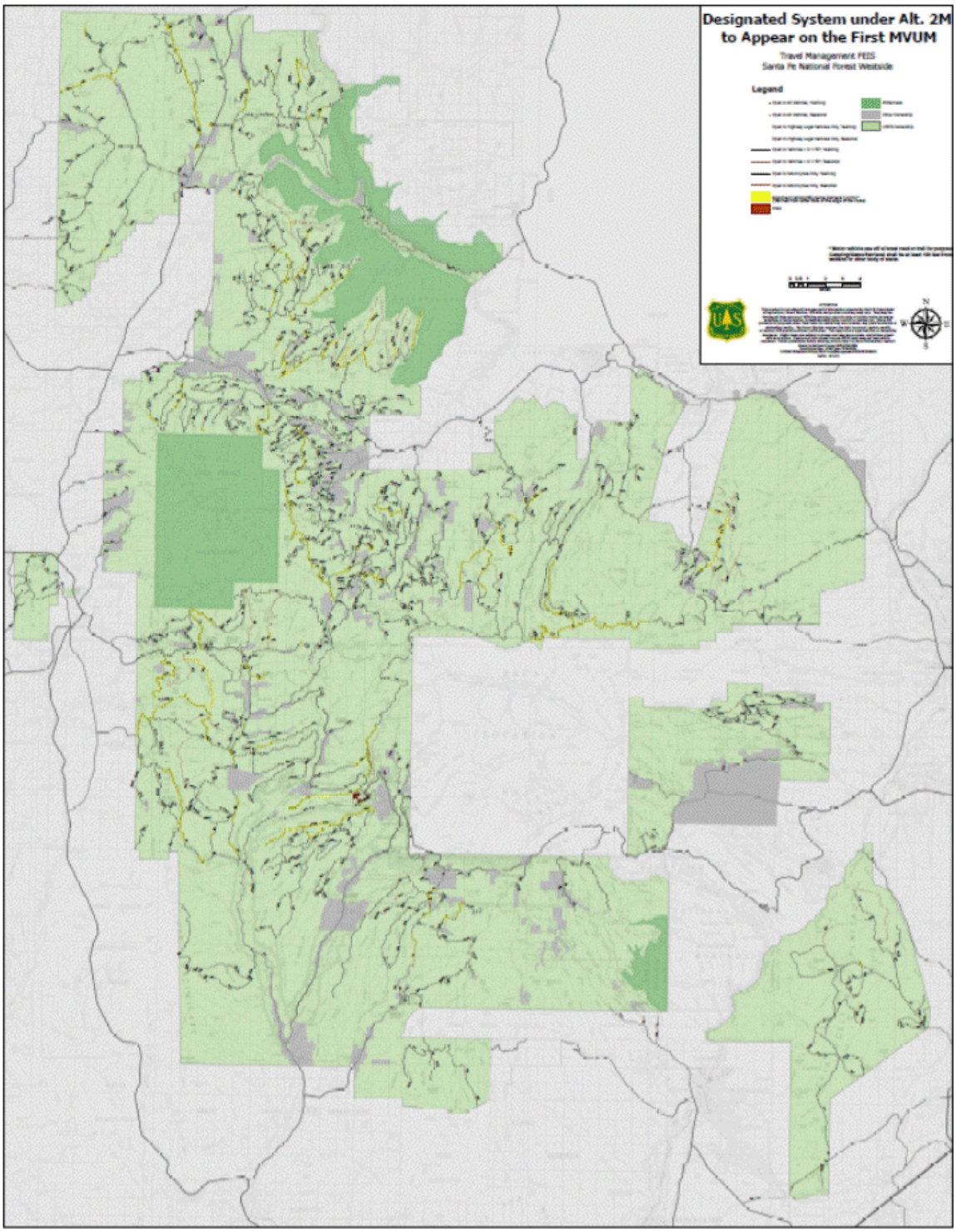
Appendix 2. Map of Roads, Trails, Areas, and Fixed-Distance Corridors that will Appear on the First MVUM

Large-sized maps for review are located at all Santa Fe National Forest offices. Electronic versions are online at: http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/sfe/travelmgt/index.html.

More roads, trails, areas, and fixed-distance corridors could appear on the first MVUM if they meet the requirements described in appendix 5 of the FEIS.

Appendix 2. Map of Roads, Trails, Areas, and Fixed-distance Corridors that will Appear on the First MVUM




Designated System under Alt. 2M
to Appear on the First MVUM
Travel Management FEIS
Santa Fe National Forest Westside
Legend

Appendix 3. Proposed Amendments to the Forest Plan

Chapter/ Management Area	Page	Current Plan Direction *Italics shows proposed deletions*. Regular text shows text that will not change.	Proposed Plan Amendment Direction **Bold text shows proposed new language.** Regular text shows text that will not change. [Text in brackets explains rationale for additions and deletions].
Chapter 4 - Forestwide Standards and Guidelines	52	*ORV closure and restrictions are indicated by management area. Remaining areas are open to ORV use unless resource considerations necessitate additional restrictions or closures based upon monitoring activitie and appropriate environmental analysis. These actions may vary from a seasonal restriction for specific vehicles to yearlong closures for all vehicles. User enjoyment and safety will be considered as well as needs for resource protection.* Criteria for restricted use *or closure of an area may include*: 1. Loss of vegetative cover. 2. Degradation of important wildlife habitat or wildlife harassment. 3. Identifiable impacts on soils, riparian ecosystems, or water quality. 4. Disturbance of known Native American religious or cultural resource sites. 5. Need for separation of different recreation uses which may adversely affect one another. 6. Disruption of grazing management programs or harassment of permitted livestock.	**Motor vehicle use by the public, including vehicle class and time of year is defined by the MVUM (motor vehicle use map) and 36 CFR 212.5. Motor vehicle use by the public off this designated system of roads, trails, and areas, and outside of corridors (motorized dispersed camping or motorized big game retrieval) is prohibited, except as identified on the MVUM.** **Addition of motorized roads, trails, areas, and corridors (motorized dispersed camping and motorized big game retrieval) to the MVUM will take into consideration the following** criteria: 1. Loss of vegetative cover. 2. Degradation of important wildlife habitat or wildlife harassment. 3. Identifiable impacts on soils, riparian ecosystems, or water quality. 4. Disturbance of known Native American religious or cultural resource sites. 5. Need for separation of different recreation uses which may adversely affect one another. 6. Disruption of grazing management programs or harassment of permitted livestock. 7. **Specific direction, if any, as indicated for any management area.** 8. **Regulations specified in 36 CFR 212 Subpart B – Designation of Roads, Trails, and Areas for Motorized Use**

Chapter/ Management Area	Page	Current Plan Direction *Italics shows proposed deletions.* Regular text shows text that will not change.	Proposed Plan Amendment Direction **Bold text shows proposed new language.** Regular text shows text that will not change. [Text in brackets explains rationale for additions and deletions].
Chapter 4 - Forestwide Standards and Guidelines	52	*Categories of ORV area management are defined as follows:* *CLOSED - to all motorized travel. Use of motorized vehicles is not permitted on trails or for cross-country travel. Some administrative roads may occur in some areas, but they are not open for public use.* *RESTRICTED - area closed to all cross-country motorized travel. Road and trail use is permitted through an area, but no cross-country use is allowed. Vehicles are allowed to pull off of open roads up to 100 yards (or to other administratively designated areas) for parking or camping.* *RESTRICTED SEASONALLY - Same guidelines as RESTRICTED but only for specified areas or times of the year. Outside of these times, areas are open.* *OPEN - to cross-country travel. Some slopes over 40 percent may be designated as open. Organized ORV events may occur by permit only. Seasonal closures may be imposed for resource protection.*	[Delete: Redundant with new forestwide direction.]
Chapter 4 - Forestwide Standards and Guidelines	86	*Allow only one private road permit for private land or subdivision access unless public safety or natural features dictate otherwise.*	**For access to an inholding, allow only one private road authorization for private land or subdivision access. The authorization shall be the only access authorized by the United States for such inholdings, regardless of future landownership patterns. The forest will follow regional or forest level manual and handbook direction supplements (if existing or applicable) for further guidance. As a condition of the authorization process, the forest will require reciprocal public or administrative access across the authorized road where appropriate.** [The forest is unable to definitively limit the number of roads to private property to one because of the history of private land access on the forest. The forest is moving toward this goal with requests for new access.]
Chapter 4 – Forestwide Standards and Guidelines	86	*Respond to applications for new permits, amendments, documents, leases, and rights-of-way within 30 days of receipt. Administer all existing permits.*	**Respond to applications for new permits, amendments, documents, leases, and rights-of-way in the manner consistent with Forest Service policy and regulation.** **[**This language brings the forest in line with current direction and guidance.]

Chapter/ Management Area	Page	Current Plan Direction *Italics shows proposed deletions.* Regular text shows text that will not change.	Proposed Plan Amendment Direction **Bold text shows proposed new language.** Regular text shows text that will not change. [Text in brackets explains rationale for additions and deletions].
Management Area A	99	*These lands are generally open to ORV travel except for the restrictions and closures displayed on the ORV map.*	[Delete**:** Superseded by new forestwide direction limiting motorized travel to that displayed on the MVUM.]
	100	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to *1.0 to* 2.5 miles per square mile.	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to 2.5 miles per square mile **or less.** [The new verbiage clarifies that the lower threshold is not sensible in the context of the guidelines' intent of "limiting open road density." It was never envisioned that if there were areas where road density was less than the lower limit that the forest would be required to build more roads. This rationale applies to all other amendments that eliminate the lower threshold.]
Management Area B	103	*These lands are generally open to ORV travel except for the restrictions and closures displayed on the ORV map.*	[Delete**:** Superseded by new forestwide direction limiting motorized travel to that displayed on the MVUM.]
	104	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density *to 0.3 to* 1.5 miles per square mile.	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to 1.5 miles per square mile **or less.** [Eliminates lower threshold.]
Management Area C	107	*These lands are generally open to ORV travel* except within the boundaries of developed recreation sites, *and for the areas displayed on the ORV map.*	**Addition of areas and corridors (motorized dispersed camping and motorized big game retrieval) to the MVUM are allowed if consistent with the management emphasis for the area,** except within the boundaries of developed recreation sites.
	111	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to *1.0 to* 2.5 miles per square mile.	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to 2.5 miles per square mile **or less.** [Eliminates lower threshold.]
Management Area D	113	*These lands are generally open to ORV travel* except within the boundaries of developed recreation sites, *and for the areas displayed on the ORV map.*	**Addition of areas and corridors (motorized dispersed camping and motorized big game retrieval) to the MVUM are allowed if consistent with the management emphasis for the area,** except within the boundaries of developed recreation sites.
	116	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to *1.0 to* 2.5 miles per square mile.	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to 2.5 miles per square mile **or less.** [Eliminates lower threshold.]
Management Area E	118	*These lands are generally open to ORV travel except for the restrictions and closures displayed on the ORV map.*	[Delete**:** Superseded by new forestwide direction limiting motorized travel to that displayed on the MVUM.]
	119	Road use will be managed with the	Road use will be managed with the

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		objective of limiting open road density to *1.0 to* 2.5 miles per square mile.	objective of limiting open road density to 2.5 miles per square mile **or less.** [Eliminates lower threshold.]
Management Area G	121	*These lands are generally open to ORV travel except for the restrictions and closures displayed on the ORV map.*	[Delete**:** Superseded by new forestwide direction limiting motorized travel to that displayed on the MVUM.]
	123	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to *0.3 to* 1.5 miles per square mile.	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to 1.5 miles per square mile **or less.** [Eliminates lower threshold.]
Management Area I	136	*Motorized travel is allowed only on open roads. Cross-country travel is prohibited, except under the terms of a special use permit.*	**Addition of areas and corridors (motorized dispersed camping and motorized big game retrieval) to the MVUM will be minimal and only allowed if consistent with the management emphasis for the area.** [Addition of routes and corridors will require archaeological survey and a report.]
	137	Roads will not be constructed except where necessary for permitted special uses, mineral activities, private land access, to access adjacent management areas where other reasonable access is not available, or to support cultural resource management.	Roads will **generally** not be constructed except where necessary for permitted special uses, mineral activities, private land access, to access adjacent management areas where other reasonable access is not available, or to support cultural resource management. Road management will be implemented with the objective of closing all unnecessary roads where they currently exist. [Allows for the designation of roads and trails that are currently unauthorized routes or decommissioned roads.]
Management Area J	141	*Motorized travel is allowed only on open roads. Cross-country travel is prohibited, except under the terms of a special use permit.*	**Addition of areas and corridors (motorized dispersed camping and motorized big game retrieval) to the MVUM will be minimal and only allowed if consistent with the management emphasis for the area.**
Management Area K	143	Consistent with this theme, *ORV travel will be prohibited,* and recreation, grazing, and firewood activities will occur only when compatible with the primary emphasis.	Consistent with this theme, recreation, grazing, and firewood activities will occur only when compatible with the primary emphasis. [Removes redundant language and potential confusion with MVUM direction.]
	144	*Motorized travel is allowed on open roads only. No cross-country travel is allowed, except under the terms of a special use authorization.*	**Addition of areas and corridors (motorized dispersed camping and motorized big game retrieval) to the MVUM will be minimal and only**

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			allowed if consistent with the management emphasis for the area.
	144	Special off-*road* vehicle recreation events will not be permitted in these areas.	Special off-**highway** vehicle recreation events will not be permitted in these areas. [Corrects language, continues direction on not issuing special use permit for off-highway events.]
	145	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to *0 to* 1.0 mile per square mile.	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to 1 mile per square mile **or less.** [Eliminates lower threshold.]
Management Area M	151	*Cross-country vehicular travel is prohibited within study areas.*	**Addition of areas and corridors (motorized dispersed camping and motorized big game retrieval) to the MVUM is prohibited and only allowed if consistent with the management emphasis for the area.**
Management Area N	153	*Motorized use is allowed on open roads only. No cross-country travel is allowed, except under the terms of a special use authorization.*	**Addition of areas and corridors (motorized dispersed camping and motorized big game retrieval) to the MVUM will be minimal and only allowed if consistent with the management emphasis for the area.**
	154	Roads will not be constructed except where necessary for special use permits, mineral activities, and adjacent management areas where other reasonable access is not available or to support wildlife habitat improvement projects.	Roads will **generally** not be constructed except where necessary for special use permits, mineral activities, and adjacent management areas where other reasonable access is not available, or to support wildlife habitat improvement projects. [Allows for the designation of roads and trails that are currently unauthorized routes or decommissioned roads.]
Management Area P	158	*These lands are generally open to ORV travel except for the restrictions and closures displayed on the ORV map.*	[Delete**:** Superseded by new forestwide direction limiting motorized travel to that displayed on the MVUM.]
	160	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to *1.0 to* 2.5 miles per square mile.	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to 2.5 miles per square mile **or less.** [Eliminates lower threshold.]
Management Area Q	163	*These lands are generally open to ORV travel except for the restrictions and closures displayed on the ORV map.*	[Delete**:** Superseded by new forestwide direction limiting motorized travel to that displayed on the MVUM.]
	164	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to *1.0 to* 2.5 miles per square mile.	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to 2.5 miles per square mile **or less**. [Eliminates lower threshold.]

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Management Area R	166	*These lands are generally open to ORV travel except for the restrictions and closures displayed on the ORV map.*	[Delete**:** Superseded by new forestwide direction limiting motorized travel to that displayed on the MVUM.]
	168	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to *0.3 to* 1.5 miles per square mile.	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to 1.5 miles per square mile **or less.** [Eliminates lower threshold.]
Management Area S	171	*These lands are generally open to ORV travel except for the restrictions and closures displayed on the ORV map.*	[Delete**:** Superseded by new forestwide direction limiting motorized travel to that displayed on the MVUM.]
	173	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to *0.3 to* 1.5 miles per square mile.	Road use will be managed with the objective of limiting open road density to 1.5 miles per square mile **or less.** [Eliminates lower threshold.]
Management Area X Jemez National Recreation Area Management Plan	9	*Close approximately 14 miles of currently open roads, and maintain existing road closures (9 miles), allowing administrative or permittee use only on these roads and decommission approximately 84 miles of roads, removing them from the designated forest road system (in additional to the 5 miles previously decommissioned in this area) within 5 years after approval of this management plan.*	[Delete**:** Superseded by new forestwide direction limiting motorized travel to that displayed on the MVUM.]
	9	*The Transportation Plan should reflect a total of approximately 23 miles of closed roads (for administrative or permittee use only), at least 89 miles of decommissioned roads (off forest road system inventory), and approximately 128 miles of open roads (including highways).*	[Delete**:** Superseded by new forestwide direction limiting motorized travel to that displayed on the MVUM.]
Management Area X Jemez National Recreation Area Management Plan	9 & 12	*Prohibit or restrict motorized vehicle use* in accordance with the Travel Area Map where: Open (16,905 acres) - Allows motorized travel on or off of designated forest roads and trails. A (15,455 acres) - Restricts motorized travel to designated forest system roads and trails, as well as any highways, except to pull off the road within 300 feet of the roadway. A1 (10,145 acres) - Restricts motorized travel to designated forest system roads and trails, and vehicles may not drive beyond the roadway. D (5,795 acres) - Prohibits all motorized travel. These areas may contain a few roads or trails for administrative use but are not open to public use. These are	**Plan changes to motor vehicle use as identified on the MVUM** in accordance with the travel area map where: Open (16,905 acres) - Allows motorized travel on designated forest roads and trails **and the addition of areas and corridors.** A (15,455 acres) - Restricts motorized travel to designated forest system roads and trails, as well as any highways, **except to pull off the road for motorized dispersed camping or motorized big game retrieval only** within 300 feet of the roadway. A1 (10,145 acres) - Restricts motorized travel to designated forest system roads and trails, and vehicles may not drive beyond the roadway. D (5,795 acres) - Prohibits all motorized

Chapter/ Management Area	Page	Current Plan Direction *Italics shows proposed deletions*. Regular text shows text that will not change.	Proposed Plan Amendment Direction **Bold text shows proposed new language.** Regular text shows text that will not change. [Text in brackets explains rationale for additions and deletions].
		typically areas where natural resources may be seriously damaged or threatened by continued motorized use, or where a non-motorized recreation opportunity is desired.	travel. These areas may contain a few roads or trails for administrative use but are not open to public use. These are typically areas where natural resources may be seriously damaged or threatened by continued motorized use, or where a non-motorized recreation opportunity is desired.
Management Area X Jemez National Recreation Area Management Plan	9 & 12	D (5,795 acres) - Prohibits all motorized travel. These areas may contain a few roads or trails for administrative use but are not open to public use. These are typically areas where natural resrouces may be seriously damaged or threatened by continued motorized use, or where a non-motorized recreation opporunity is desired.	D (5,795 acres) - Prohibits all motorized travel **except for on FR 133, 133A, 133AA, 133AAA, 133C, FR 384, and FR 4B as designated on the MVUM**. These areas may contain a few roads or trails for administrative use but are not open to public use **aside from the exceptions noted above, if any**. These are typically areas where natural resrouces may be seriously damaged or threatened by continued motorized use, or where a non-motorized recreation opporunity is desired.
Management Area X Jemez National Recreation Area Management Plan	Pages 9 & 12	D (5,795 acres) - Prohibits all motorized travel. These areas may contain a few roads or trails for administrative use but are not open to public use. These are typically areas where natural resrouces may be seriously damaged or threatened by continued motorized use, or where a non-motorized recreation opporunity is desired.	D (5,795 acres) - Prohibits all motorized travel **except for on FR 134 as designated on the MVUM**. These areas may contain a few roads or trails for administrative use but are not open to public use **aside from the exceptions noted above**. These are typically areas where natural resrouces may be seriously damaged or threatened by continued motorized use, or where a non-motorized recreation opporunity is desired.
Monitoring Plan Facilities 2 and Facilities 3	184	*Compare actual and planned amounts (of road construction and reconstruction)*	[Delete: This measure is no longer meaningful because road construction and reconstruction is being implemented on an as-needed basis rather than in support of a timber program.]
Management Area H	126	Use of mechanical conveyances. Including mountain bicycles, is prohibited.	Use of mechanical conveyances, including mountain bicycles is prohibited, **except for FR503J where motorized travel is allowed on the road only as per the MVUM.**
Management Area L	146, 147	These areas are primarily unroaded and are closed to motorized *recreation*.	These areas are primarily unroaded and are closed to motorized use**.**
		These areas are closed to motorized travel. *Existing use on roads* under special use authorization will continue until expiration of the permit or a suitable substitute for access is obtained.	These areas are closed to motorized travel **except where necessary for private land access or use** under special use authorization **which** will continue until expiration of the permit or a suitable substitute for access is obtained.