

**DECISION**  
**SHASTA-TRINITY NATIONAL FOREST**  
**OHV ACCESSIBILITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT**  
**TOWNSHIPS 28-39 NORTH, RANGES 11 WEST- 2 EAST, MULTIPLE SECTIONS, M.D.M.**

**BACKGROUND**

This documents my decision to change maintenance levels on selected specific road segments to increase OHV recreational opportunities while providing a safe and cost-effective transportation system.

The project area is shown on Attachment A.

In 2010, I signed the Motorized Travel Management Record of Decision (ROD)(Shasta-Trinity National Forest 2010) implementing subpart B of the Motorized Travel Management Rule for the National Forest Transportation System (NFTS) on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest (STNF). The ROD added 32.1 miles of unauthorized routes to the National Forest Transportation System and authorized mixed use on 21.31 miles of Maintenance Level 3 (ML 3) routes. The decision also prohibited cross-country travel by motor vehicles on 1,599,122 acres of National Forest, allowing motor vehicle travel by the public on NFTS roads, trails and in open OHV areas only. This brought the total STNF NFTS to 5,182 miles of road with 4,034 miles NFTS open to all vehicles; a NFTS motorized trail system of approximately 85.14 miles and 44,047 acres of open (to off-highway vehicles, OHV) areas below the high water mark of Shasta Lake and Trinity Lake.

Since that time, motorized recreation advocacy groups and local counties have requested additional miles of mixed use on what are currently ML 3 routes. Specifically, the Shasta County Board of Supervisors submitted a request and proposal for motorized mixed use that was a starting point for this project.

In response to local government and public requests for increased recreational opportunities for OHVs, I identified a need for additional miles of existing road open to OHVs. This project will meet this need by reclassifying segments of routes from ML 3 to ML 2.

**CHANGES FROM FIRST SCOPING**

There were 98.55 miles proposed to change from ML3 to ML2 in the first scoping for this project. I have now included segments of Motorized Mixed Use (Vehicle class changes to allow highway-legal and non-highway legal on ML 3) that were designated in the ROD (0.83 miles of 28N10, 0.32 miles of 28N28, 1.56 miles of 34N17). I have also now revised road mileages to make them more accurately reflect conditions on the ground and I have added design features and monitoring measures.

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

The project was incorporated in the Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) for the Shasta-Trinity National Forest on February 9, 2012. The Tribal Consultation period began February 9, 2012. The public scoping period began February 16, 2012 and ended March 21, 2012. My response to the comments we received is included in following sections of this letter.

**DECISION**

I have decided to make the following changes to the maintenance level of the specific road segments displayed in Table 1 and shown on Attachment A. This decision authorizes a total of 99.80 miles of ML3 roads to be administratively changed to ML2. This decision affects approximately 2% of the total road miles on the STNF NFTS.

**Table 1. Changes to Specific Road Segments**

Road #	Road Segment	BMP <sup>1</sup>	EMP <sup>2</sup>	Segment length (miles)	Decision
28N10	1	0.50	4.03	3.53	Change from ML3 to ML 2
	2a	4.03	8.90	4.87	
	2b <sup>3</sup>	8.90	9.73	0.83	
	2c	9.73	11.34	1.61	
	3	11.34	12.72	1.38	
	4	12.72	24.80	12.08	
29N02	1	0.35	4.35	4.00	Change from ML3 to ML 2
	2	4.35	5.05	0.70	
	3	5.05	5.20	0.15	
29N28	3a <sup>3</sup>	6.49	6.81	0.32	Change from ML3 to ML 2
	3	6.81	8.75	1.94	
	2	8.75	10.72	1.97	
	1	10.72	11.20	0.48	
30N01	1	0.00	1.0	1.00	Change from ML3 to ML 2
	2	1.00	6.00	5.00	
30N44	1	0.00	0.40	0.40	Change from ML3 to ML 2
31N02	2	10.65	12.40	1.75	Change from ML3 to ML 2
	1	12.40	13.90	1.50	
34N17	6	0.00	4.62	4.62	Change from ML3 to ML 2
	5	4.62	20.96	16.34	
	4 <sup>3</sup>	20.96	22.52	1.56	
	3	22.52	34.74	12.22	
37N08Y	1	0.00	5.20	5.20	Change from ML3 to ML 2
	2	5.20	8.70	3.50	
37N78	2	5.09	6.42	1.33	Change from ML3 to ML 2
37N79	1	0.56	1.10	0.54	Change from ML3 to ML 2
	2	1.10	1.48	0.38	
	3	1.48	2.05	0.57	
38N11	1	9.50	10.56	1.06	Change from ML3 to ML 2
	2	10.56	14.31	3.75	
	3	14.31	15.91	1.60	
	4	15.91	17.59	1.68	
39N05	1	3.13	4.16	1.03	Change from ML3 to ML 2
	2	4.16	5.07	0.91	
Total				99.80	

<sup>1</sup> Beginning mile post.

<sup>2</sup> Ending mile post.

<sup>3</sup> The portion of this road that is currently designated as ML3 Mixed Use is included in this decision.

Source: Bielecki 2012, Infra database, Putt 2012. Note INFRA miles and GIS miles differ slightly.

## DESIGN FEATURES INCLUDED IN THE DECISION

The following design features will assist with safe road management.

- Provide route identification signing, consistent with the forest visitor map and forest motor vehicle use map.
- Provide clear communication and education to the visitors on allowed uses, safe motor vehicle use, and natural resources (maps, website, visitor information sites, on-site informational signing and existing kiosks). Repair and replace information devices (signs, kiosks etc.) as needed.
- Implement and maintain the appropriate Forest Service traffic management strategies for the assigned operational maintenance level (Bielecki 2012).
- Combine the appropriate law enforcement measures with the allowed uses for the road.
- Coordinate with other agencies to improve law enforcement consistency.
- Change the functional class on maps as new maps are printed.
- As needed and appropriate use temporary closures during construction or during logging activities.

The following features will be considered in the future and may require additional analysis before implementation:

- As allowed by timing, workload, funding and competing priorities, change the functional class appropriately as needed on the ground by:
  - Improving sight distance by clearing brush and trees, especially along curves and at intersections.
  - Reducing roadside hazards by removing or reducing boulders, trees, and debris.
  - Changing drainage treatments by removing ditches and culverts and replacing them with surface outsloping and dips.

## MONITORING

The following items will be considered for monitoring:

- Monitor frequency/type/amount of road maintenance.
- Monitor amount and type of vehicle use.
- Monitor sediment delivery to streams and stream temperature as needed.
- As road maintenance activities occur, include those activities for consideration of best management practices (BMP) implementation and effectiveness monitoring for water quality.
- Use monitoring data to provide information on appropriate management strategies for the types of use, new technologies, changes in visitor demands, and resource protection measures.

## CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

In determining whether to prepare an environmental impact statement the Federal agency shall determine under its procedures supplementing these regulations (described in 40 CFR §1507.3) whether the proposal is one which normally requires an environmental impact statement (EIS), or normally does not require either an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment (EA) (categorical exclusion)(40 CFR §1501.4).

Forest Service NEPA procedures at 36 CFR §220.5(a) identify the following classes of action which normally require preparation of an environmental impact statement. These classes of actions were identified because they normally result in significant effects.

*(1) Class 1: Proposals to carry out or to approve aerial application of chemical pesticides on an operational basis. Examples include but are not limited to:*

*(i) Applying chemical insecticides by helicopter on an area infested with spruce budworm to prevent serious resource loss.*

*(ii) Authorizing the application of herbicides by helicopter on a major utility corridor to control unwanted vegetation.*

*(iii) Applying herbicides by fixed-wing aircraft on an area to release trees from competing vegetation.*

(2) *Class 2: Proposals that would substantially alter the undeveloped character of an inventoried roadless area or potential wilderness area. Examples include but are not limited to:*

*(i) Constructing roads and harvesting timber in an inventoried roadless area where the proposed road and harvest units impact a substantial part of the inventoried roadless area.*

*(ii) Constructing or reconstructing water reservoir facilities in a potential wilderness area where flow regimens may be substantially altered.*

*(iii) Approving a plan of operations for a mine that would cause considerable surface disturbance in a potential wilderness area.*

This proposal is not within or similar to a class of actions which normally requires an Environmental Impact Statement. It does not substantially alter the undeveloped character of an inventoried roadless area or potential wilderness area (Putt 2012, Shoemaker 2012). This proposal does not involve the aerial application of chemical

A proposed action may be categorically excluded from further analysis and documentation in an EIS or EA only if there are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action and if:

- a) The proposed action is within one of the categories in the Department of Agriculture NEPA policies and procedures in 7 CFR Part 1b, or
- b) The proposed action is within a category listed in section 31.12 or 31.2 of FSH 1909.15.

Because this proposal addresses road maintenance levels, it can be considered under the category: Repair and maintenance of roads, trails, and landline boundaries [36 CFR §220.6(d)(4); FSH 1909.15 Chapter 30, Section 32.12(4)].

## REVIEW OF EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES

Resource conditions that should be considered in determining whether extraordinary circumstances related to a proposed action warrant further analysis and documentation in an EA or an EIS (36 CFR §220.6) are listed below. The mere presence of one or more of these resource conditions does not preclude use of a categorical exclusion. It is the degree of the potential effect of a proposed action on these resource conditions that determines whether extraordinary circumstances exist.

In making this decision, I considered the following information regarding extraordinary circumstances:

- (1) **Federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat, species proposed for Federal listing or proposed critical habitat, or Forest Service sensitive species.**

### Wildlife

Because the project is administrative in nature and will not change the current or historical use of these road segments and primary stressors produced by road use such as noise, activity level, exhaust, trash dumping, etc. will not change in either variability, duration or intensity and because the project will not modify current northern spotted owl (NSO) habitat in the area, the project will have *no effect* on northern spotted owls or their designated critical habitat (either 2008 designation or anticipated 2012 designation)(Wildlife BA, Wolcott 2012). Under the same rationale, the project will have *no impact* on Forest Service Sensitive wildlife species or on their habitat (Wildlife BE, Wolcott 2012).

### Fish

The proposed action is administrative and, in this case, simply memorializes what is occurring contemporaneously as the environmental baseline. The proposal does not constitute an action on the ground that affects fishes or the anadromous fish habitat that occurs in Hayfork Creek and Browns Creek. Vehicle use is not expected to appreciably change based on this proposed action. No direct effects will occur because all Project-related 'actions' associated with this Element occur upstream from any anadromous salmonid fish or habitats (proximity) considered in this geographic area. No indirect adverse effects to anadromous fish or habitats will

occur since the specific road segments of the project are located several miles (proximal distance) from the upstream end of occupied or unoccupied Critical Habitat. The analysis completed to evaluate effects to ESA-listed fish species and Forest Service Sensitive Fish Species (Fisheries BA/BE, Brock 2012) concluded that the proposed action would have *no effect* on ESA-listed fish species (coho salmon) or Forest Service Sensitive fish species (Chinook salmon and steelhead).

### **Plants**

There are no type localities of Forest Service Sensitive plants adjacent to any of the route segments proposed for change from ML3 to ML2. As the proposal consists of an administrative change of certain system road segments from Maintenance Level 3 to Maintenance Level 2, no ground-disturbing effects are expected other than what is already occurring from existing vehicle use of these roads (Botany Report, Nelson 2012).

### **(2) Flood plains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds.**

This project has no direct effects to soil and water resources since there is no new ground disturbance proposed (Soils Report, Rust 2012). There are no known wetlands that would be affected in the project area (Hydrology Report, Mai 2012).

### **(3) Congressionally designated areas, such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or national recreation areas.**

There are approximately 8.5 miles of road (portions of road 34N17) that will be changed from ML 3 to ML 2 within the boundary of the Shasta Unit of the Whiskeytown Shasta-Trinity National Recreation Area (NRA). The Whiskeytown Shasta-Trinity National Recreation Area was established in 1965 by the United States Congress (16 U.S.C. §460q). The NRA currently has a variety of roads with different maintenance levels. This project would not noticeably change the representation of road maintenance levels within the NRA (Putt 2012). The NRA Guide, in section IV-12, indicates that Off-Highway vehicle use will be allowed on all open roads unless signed closed. Signs will be posted prohibiting off-highway vehicle use within restoration and wildlife enhancement project areas. This project is consistent with the 1995 Record of Decision Final Environmental Impact Statement Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) (Shasta-Trinity NF 1995), the NRA Guide (Shasta-Trinity National Forest, Shasta Lake Ranger District 1996) and the Motorized Travel Management ROD.

### **(4) Inventoried roadless areas or potential wilderness areas.**

None of the project roads are in wilderness areas or wilderness study areas (Putt 2012). None of the proposed roads are located within any inventoried roadless area (IRA). Most of the routes proposed are more than one mile away from any IRA. Four of the proposed routes are within one half mile with some directly adjacent to an IRA boundary. The 28N10 Road (Stuart Gap) is the boundary of the East Beegum and West Beegum IRAs. The 34N17 Road (Fenders Ferry) is the boundary of the Devils Rock IRA. Under the Motorized Travel Management ROD, cross-country travel by motor vehicles was prohibited on 1,599,122 acres of National Forest and motor vehicle travel by the public is allowed on NFTS roads, trails and in open OHV areas only. The proposed action will not negatively affect the potential of any IRA to be designated as Wilderness. Therefore, the proposed action does not present any extraordinary circumstances related to IRAs. The project will meet all direction within the Shasta-Trinity Land and Resource Management Plan for IRAs (Inventoried Roadless Area Report, Shoemaker 2012). The project is also consistent with all Forest Service policy and direction for IRAs.

### **(5) Research natural areas.**

No change in access to the nearest Research Natural Area (RNA), Devils Rock-Hosselkus RNA, is expected from the proposed action because access to this RNA is not from the nearest point on Road 34N17 (Fenders Ferry). Road 34N17 is connected to Road 35N02 which is connected to 35N02E which enters the RNA in the Pass Creek area. Both 35N02 and 35N02E are currently designated ML2 and so are open to all vehicles.

**6) American Indians and Alaska Native religious or cultural sites.**

The project area is within the ethnographic territory of the Wintu and Pit River Tribes. Information about this project was shared with the tribes on 02/10/2012. In addition, the project was discussed with the Pit River Tribe on 05/18/2012. Del Bene (2012) indicates that the proposed action qualifies as an Archeological Exemption pursuant to the First Amended Regional Programmatic Agreement Among the USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region, California State Historic Preservation Officer and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding the Process for Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for Undertakings on the National Forests of the Pacific Southwest Region (PA). The Exemption Category and Description is as follows: PA Attachment A (II) (B) –“activities whose Area of Potential Effects (APE) is entirely within obviously disturbed contexts, and the disturbance is such that the presence of historic properties is considered highly unlikely” (Cultural Resources Report, Del Bene 2012).

**(7) Archaeological sites, or historic properties or areas.**

Several archeological sites are adjacent to roads included in the project, but no additional standard resource protection measures are necessary. No ground disturbing activities outside of the road prism are proposed for this project. This project consists of an administrative change in maintenance levels for certain roads. All future routine maintenance associated with these roads will be analyzed separately for the purpose of satisfying the requirements of Section 106 of the NHPA (Cultural Resources Report, Del Bene 2012).

**RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES**

In making this decision, I considered the following information that indicates that there will be an increase in accessibility for OHVs and in associated recreational opportunities (Hart 2012a, Putt 2012).

**28N10 (Stuart Gap)** - This decision will allow OHV travel on 24.30 miles of Stuart Gap Road. The Stuart Gap Road runs south from SR36 near the Yolla Bolla Ranger Station to Stuart Gap. This route has been historically use by the Redding Dirt Riders, Shasta Rock Rollers, hunters and dispersed campers. In addition, there will be direct access from 28N10 to the following ML2 roads.

**Table 2. ML2 Roads Accessed from 28N10**

Road ID	ML2 Road Name	Road Segment	Miles
28N02	SUNSHINE	4	2.00
28N07	BEEGUM	2	2.93
28N10E	STUART GAP	4	1.30
28N10F	STUART GAP	4	0.40
28N10L	MIDDLE FK BEEGUM	2	0.65
28N10M	STUART GAP	2	0.45
28N18	SNAKE LAKE	4	1.10
28N36	POST CREEK	4	5.80
28N68	REAGAN MEADOW	2	2.80
28N68A	REAGAN MEADOW	2	0.30
28N84	LOWER CORRAL	4	0.80
29N39	STRONG	3	3.20
29N41	BAKER FLAT	1	2.50
<b>Total</b>			<b>24.23</b>

Other ML2 routes that can be accessed from 28N10 are: 29N22, 29N22D, 29N41, 28N10M, 29N39, 28N68, 28N68A, 28N10L, 28N18, 28N64D, 28N02, 28N84, 28N10F, 28N10E, and 28N36.

This geographic area on the South Fork Management Unit (SFMU) is known for dispersed camping opportunities. The resulting connections provide numerous miles of loop opportunities for OHV recreation, provide access between developed campsites, access to dispersed camping opportunities and improved hunting opportunities.

The opportunity to travel between developed campgrounds is very important to recreationists who hunt, fish, ride OHVs and may be part of a large group or organization and is a popular activity for the fall hunting public.

Hunters will be able to retrieve game without having to rely on a highway-legal vehicle to travel on Stuart Gap Road.

**29N02 (Knob Peak Lookout)** - This decision will allow OHV travel on 4.85 miles of Knob Peak Lookout Road. This road begins at State Route (SR) 36 near Platina and goes north as it traverses up the side of the ridge. It runs past the Platina Transfer Station, several ML2 roads, and a campground. In addition, there will be direct access from 29N02 to the following ML2 roads.

**Table 3. ML2 Roads Accessed from 29N02**

Road ID	ML2 Road Name	Road Segment	Miles
29N01	UPPER COW GULCH	1	5.20
29N01A	UPPER COW GULCH	1	0.30
29N01B	UPPER COW GULCH	1	0.42
29N01C	COW GULCH ROCK PIT	1	0.70
29N01D	UPPER COW WATER	1	0.10
29N02A	KNOB PEAK / COW GULCH	2	1.63
29N03	KNOB PEAK CG	2	0.70
<b>Total</b>			<b>9.05</b>

The resulting connections provide the opportunity to complete a loop.

**29N28 (String Bean Creek)** - This decision will allow OHV travel on 4.71 miles of String Bean Creek Road. This road runs along the Shasta/Trinity Ridge. This area has historically been used by the Redding Dirt Riders and the Shasta Rock Rollers. In addition, there will be direct access from 29N28 to the following ML2 roads.

**Table 4. ML2 Roads Accessed from 29N28**

Road ID	ML2 Road Name	Road Segment	Miles
28N68	REAGAN MEADOW**	2	2.80
29N28D	STRING BEAN CR	2	1.55
29N36	GOAT CAMP	3	1.70
29N38	REDDING PINE	3	5.20
29N39	STRONG**	3	3.20
29N43	CHAMBERS LOOP	3	3.40
<b>Total</b>			<b>17.85</b>

\*\* Level 2 route connected to more than one road in this decision.

These connections provide numerous loop opportunities.

**30N01 (Browns Creek)** - This decision will allow OHV travel on 6.00 miles of Browns Creek Road. This road runs northeasterly from SR36 along the Shasta/Trinity County line and provides access to the Hall City Caves and the edge of the Chanchelulla Wilderness Area. OHVs are not allowed within the wilderness area. This area has historically been used by the Redding Dirt Riders, Shasta Rock Rollers and hunters. In addition, there will be direct access from 30N01 to the following ML2 roads.

**Table 5. ML2 Roads Accessed from 30N01**

Road ID	ML2 Road Name	Road Segment	Miles
29N07	HALL CITY CREEK	1	4.00
29N10	GOODS MOUNTAIN	1	2.60
30N15	CHANCELULLA GU	2	2.90
30N16	MIDAS SADDLE	2	9.90
<b>Total</b>			<b>19.40</b>

These connections provide numerous loop opportunities.

**30N44 (Gemmill Tie)** - This decision will allow OHV travel on 0.40 miles of Gemmill Tie Road. This road acts as a short connector road to 30N01 (Browns Creek). The additional connections shown for 30N01 above can also be accessed from this road.

**31N02 (County Line)** - This decision will allow OHV travel on 3.25 miles of County Line Road. This road begins at the Harrison Gulch Road and runs along the Shasta/Trinity line, past Windy Gap to the intersection with 30N02. County Line Road parallels Browns Creek Road, which receives the majority of the vehicle traffic. This area has historically been used by the Redding Dirt Riders and Shasta Rock Rollers. In addition, there will be direct access from 31N02 to the following ML2 roads.

**Table 6. ML2 Roads Accessed from 31N02**

Road ID	ML2 Road Name	Road Segment	Miles
30N11	KNOB GULCH	2	2.40
30N13	PHILPOT LAKE	2	1.90
30N54	GAP	2	1.10
30N79	OLD BEE	1	0.63
31N02A	DEERLICK HELIPORT	2	0.22
<b>Total</b>			<b>6.25</b>

Another ML2 route that can be accessed from 31N02 is 30N11B.

**34N17 (Fenders Ferry)** - This decision will allow OHV travel on 34.74 miles of Fenders Ferry road. This road skirts the north side of Shasta Lake, from Round Mountain to Delta. The westerly end runs along sideslopes through rocky and clay soils. The easterly alignment is oriented along drainages. Fenders Ferry road provides access to known loop opportunities and for connections between the dispersed ML2 roads. The Redding Dirt Riders and the Shasta Rock Rollers use portions of Fenders Ferry. In addition, there will be direct access from 34N17 to the following ML2 roads.

**Table 7. ML2 Roads Accessed from 34N17**

Road ID	ML2 Road Name	Road Segment	Miles
34N17F	FENDERS FERRY (F SPUR)	3	0.65
35N02	BROCK MTN	4	16.47
35N03	BULLY HILL	4	12.99
35N07	PC CREEK	5	6.82
35N18	CURL RIDGE	3	0.95
35N21	CURL/SALT MTN	3	8.52
35N21D	CURL	3	0.26
35N46	REYNOLDS BASIN	5	9.46
35N56	CHATTERDOWN	3	8.44
<b>Total</b>			<b>64.56</b>

**37N08Y (Hall Gulch)** - This decision will allow OHV travel on 8.70 miles of Hall Gulch Road. This area has historically been used by the Redding Dirt Riders. In addition, there will be direct access from 37N08Y to the following ML2 roads.

**Table 8. ML2 Roads Accessed from 37N08Y**

Road ID	ML2 Road Name	Road Segment	Miles
36N63	CRESTLINE/DAMN SLATE	2	4.10
37N08YA	HALL GULCH	1	3.70
37N08YB	HALL GULCH	1	1.40
37N08YC	HALL GULCH	1	0.60
37N08YD	HALL GULCH	1	0.80
37N08YJ	HALL GULCH	2	0.50
37N17	E HALLS	2	0.40
37N42	CROSSOVER	2	1.80
38N47	BEAR FLAT	1	1.04
<b>Total</b>			<b>14.34</b>

These connections provide access to numerous ML2 roads that go from French Gulch over to Trinity Center and opportunities for OHV rides.

**37N78 (Iron Canyon)** - This decision will allow OHV travel on 1.33 miles of Iron Canyon Road. In addition, there will be direct access from 37N78 to the following ML2 roads.

**Table 9. ML2 Roads Accessed from 37N78**

Road ID	ML2 Road Name	Road Segment	Miles
37N43	COYOTE	2	3.74
37N50	COYOTE PEAK	2	1.45
37N51Y	MCKENZIE MTN. RD. IRON CANYON*	2	1.94
<b>Total</b>			<b>7.13</b>

These connections provide a local loop opportunity and link to larger loop opportunities on the Bagley Mountain Jeep trail creating a potential for loops over 50 miles in length.

**37N79 (Kosk Creek)-** This decision will allow OHV travel on 1.49 miles of Kosk Creek Road. This road runs along the east bank of Kosk Creek. The road does not have any ML2 spurs which would provide more OHV opportunities. Currently the road is in very poor condition and is not suitable for passenger car travel: some pick-up trucks may have trouble traveling on the road. However, the road is suitable for OHV travel and would allow the OHV recreationist to access dispersed campsites along Kosk Creek.

**38N11 (Hawkins Creek)-** The proposed change will allow 8.09 miles of Hawkins Creek to be open for OHV travel. This section begins at Ash Camp, where the Pacific Crest Trail crosses the McCloud River. The road is very rough in nature and is not suitable for passenger car travel. OHVs are not allowed on the Pacific Crest Trail. This area has historically been used by the Redding Dirtriders and the Shasta Rock Rollers. In addition, there will be direct access from 38N11 to the following ML2 roads.

**Table 10. ML2 Roads Accessed from 38N11**

Road ID	ML2 Road Name	Road Segment	Miles
37N48	VAN SICKLIN	4	17.56
37N48C	VAN SICKLIN SPUR	4	0.34
38N11C	HAWKINS CREEK	3	1.56
39N06	STOUTS MDW	3	5.93
<b>Total</b>			<b>25.39</b>

These connections provide opportunities for Dual Sport rides.

**39N05 (Bartel Gap)-** This decision will allow OHV travel on 1.94 miles of Bartel Gap Road. This road begins in Siskiyou County on SR 89. It runs south into Shasta County and ties into Summit Lake road which is a ML2 road. This road provides access to a trailheads for a remote section of the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT). OHV's are not allowed on the PCT. In addition, there will be direct access from 39N05 to the following ML2 roads.

**Table 11. ML2 Roads Accessed from 39N05**

Road ID	ML2 Road Name	Road Segment	Miles
38N10	SUMMIT	2	11.51
39N93	COLBY	1	2.36
39N96	WALKING BEAR	1	1.76
Total			15.63

The routes are located on four management units. The following table displays summary information by Management Unit.

**Table 12. Routes by Management Unit**

Road	Miles	Unit
28N10	23.47	South Fork Management Unit
29N02	4.85	South Fork Management Unit
29N28	4.39	South Fork Management Unit
30N01	6.00	South Fork Management Unit
30N44	0.40	South Fork Management Unit
31N02	3.25	South Fork Management Unit
34N17	33.18	NRA/Shasta Lake Management Unit

Road	Miles	Unit
37N08Y	8.70	Trinity River Management Unit
37N78	1.33	NRA/Shasta Lake Management Unit
37N79	1.49	NRA/Shasta Lake Management Unit
38N11	0.76	NRA/Shasta Lake Management Unit
38N11	7.33	Mt. Shasta McCloud Management Unit
39N05	1.94	Mt. Shasta McCloud Management Unit
Total	97.09	

Source: Putt 2008, GIS, Note miles from INFRA and GIS differ slightly.

There is enhanced accessibility to over 208 miles of ML2 roads from this decision.

### **SAFETY OF USERS AND LIKELY FUTURE COSTS**

In making this decision, I considered the following effects to the safety of users and likely future costs as discussed in Bielecki (2012).

The use of motor vehicles on NFS roads is subject to State traffic law where applicable, except when in conflict with motor vehicle designations (36 CFR 212.51) or with the rules at Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 261 (36 CFR 212.5(a)(1)). On NFS roads, designations for motor vehicle use take precedence over conflicting State traffic laws. The Forest Service may designate some NFS roads under 36 CFR §212.51 as open to a vehicle class that would normally be precluded from public roads under State law.

Road maintenance frequency and intensity is determined in site specific project planning.

Crash probability was assessed based on: traffic volume, rates of speed, alignment, road segment uses, sight distance, traveled right-of-way surface and width and operator requirements. Crash severity was assessed based on: roadway geometry (embankments, slopes, horizontal and vertical alignments), difference in vehicle sizes, difference in speeds of OHVs and full-size passenger vehicles and potential path and objects encountered if a vehicle left the travelway.

The following sections discuss crash probability and crash severity by road.

#### **Road 28N10**

The crash probability is expected to be low and the crash severity is expected to be medium after the application of the design features. The approximate cost for application of design features is \$8,000 per mile. Natural deterioration could be planned as an alternative; however, much of the road template is insloped with ditch and drainage structures are not self-maintaining.

#### **Road 29N02**

The crash probability is expected to be low and the crash severity is expected to be medium after the application of the design features. The approximate cost of application of design features is \$2,000 per mile. Natural deterioration could be planned as an alternative, since many of the drainage structures have "stormproofing" techniques used such as diversion potential dips.

#### **Road 29N28**

The crash probability is expected to be low and the crash severity is expected to be medium after the application of the design features. The approximate cost of application of design features is \$6,000 per mile. Natural

deterioration could be planned as an alternative; however, much of the road template is insloped with ditch and drainage structures are not self-maintaining.

#### **Road 30N01**

The crash probability is expected to be low and the crash severity is expected to be medium after the application of the design features. The approximate cost of application of design features is \$8,000 per mile. Natural deterioration could be planned as an alternative; however, many of the existing drainage structures (culverts, ditches) would eventually fail without continued maintenance or reconstruction.

#### **Road 30N44**

The crash probability is expected to be low and the crash severity is expected to be medium after the application of the design features. The approximate cost of application of design features is \$3,000. Natural deterioration could be planned as an alternative.

#### **Road 31N02**

The crash probability is expected to be low and the crash severity is expected to be medium after the application of the design features. The approximate cost of application of design features is \$6,000 per mile. Natural deterioration could be planned as an alternative; however, since much of the roadway is outsloped.

#### **Road 34N17**

The crash probability is expected to be low and the crash severity is expected to be medium after the application of the design features. Approximate cost of application of design features is \$15,000 per mile for segment 6 and \$10,000 per mile for segment 2. Natural deterioration could be planned as an alternative; however, much of the road template is insloped with ditch on steep terrain and drainage structures are not self-maintaining.

#### **Road 37N08Y**

The crash probability is expected to be low and the crash severity is expected to be medium after the application of the design features. Approximate cost of application of design features is \$6,000 per mile. This would mainly be required for segment 1 since much of segment 2 is already outsloped. Some culverts have diversion potential dips installed directly below them; this stormproofing technique may offer some self-maintenance if the pipes clog or fail.

#### **Road 37N78**

The crash probability is expected to be low and the crash severity is expected to be medium after the application of the design features. Approximate cost of application of design features is \$6,000 per mile.

#### **Road 37N79**

The crash probability is expected to be low and the crash severity is expected to be medium after the application of the design features. Approximate cost of application of design features is \$6,000 per mile for segment 1 and for removal of the guardrail barrier. Segments 2-4 are already at the ML2 standard.

#### **Road 38N11**

The crash probability is expected to be low and the crash severity is expected to be medium after the application of the design features. The approximate cost of application of design features is \$10,000 per mile. Natural deterioration could be planned as an alternative; however, much of the road template is insloped with ditch on steep terrain and drainage structures are not self-maintaining.

### Road 39N05

The crash probability is expected to be low and the crash severity is expected to be medium after the application of the design features. Approximate cost of application of design features: \$6,000 per mile. Natural deterioration could be planned as an alternative; however, much of the road template is insloped with ditch on steep terrain and drainage structures are not self-maintaining.

### FINDINGS REQUIRED BY OTHER LAWS AND REGULATIONS

I find that the actions to be implemented by this decision are consistent with laws, regulations, and policy. The following sections discuss specific consistency findings.

#### Forest Plan Consistency

The project area roads occur within eight Management Areas (MA) (Shasta-Trinity National Forest 1995). Land allocations and prescriptions for each section of road are listed in Table 4.

**Table 13. Land Allocation and Prescriptions by Road Segment**

Road Number and Segment	Management Area	Land Allocations	Prescription	Planning Watershed
37N08Y Segment 1 & 2	MA 7 – Weaverville Lewiston	Late Successional Reserve (~0.04 miles)	Late Successional Reserve	East Fork Trinity
		Matrix	Commercial Wood Products Emphasis	
		Private land	N/A	
34N17 Segment 3	MA 12- Nosoni	Matrix	Wildlife Habitat Management and Commercial Wood Products	Lower Pit River Squaw Creek
34N17 Segment 5	MA 12 – Nosoni	Matrix	Wildlife Habitat Management and Commercial Wood Products Emphasis	Squaw Creek and Lower Pit River
		Late Successional Reserve (~3 miles)	Late Successional Reserve	
		Private	N/A	
34N17 Segment 6	MA 8 – National Recreation Area	Administratively Withdrawn	Limited Roaded Motorized Recreation	Lower Pit River
	MA 13 - Front	Administratively Withdrawn	Limited Roaded Motorized Recreation	
38N11 Segment 1, 2 & 3	MA 10 – McCloud River	Late Successional Reserve	Late Successional Reserve	Lower McCloud River
38N11 Segment 4	MA 11 – Pit	Late Successional Reserve	Late Successional Reserve	Lower McCloud River and Iron Canyon
39N05 Segment 1	MA 10 – McCloud River	Late Successional Reserve (~1 mile)	Late Successional Reserve	Upper McCloud River
39N05 Segment 2	MA 10 McCloud River	Late Successional Reserve (~0.2 mile)	Late Successional Reserve	
37N78 Segment 2	MA 11 - Pit	Private	N/A	Iron Canyon
		Late Successional Reserve	Late Successional Reserve	

Road Number and Segment	Management Area	Land Allocations	Prescription	Planning Watershed
37N79 Segments 1 & 2	MA 11 – Pit	Private	N/A	Kosk Creek
37N79 Segments 3	MA 11 – Pit	Late Successional Reserve	Late Successional Reserve	
31N02 Segments 1 & 2	MA 21 – Wildwood MA 22 – Beegum	Late Successional Reserve	Late Successional Reserve	Browns Creek and Middlefork Cottonwood
30N44	MA 22 – Beegum	Private	N/A	Middlefork Cottonwood
30N01 Segment 1	MA 21 – Wildwood	Late Successional Reserve (~1 mile)	Late Successional Reserve	Upper Hayfork Creek and Middlefork Cottonwood
30N01 Segment 2	MA 21 – Wildwood MA 22 – Beegum	Late Successional Reserve (~0.02 mile) Adaptive Management Area	Late Successional Reserve Wildlife Habitat Management	
29N02 Segment 1	MA 22 – Beegum	Adaptive Management Area	Roaded Recreation and Wildlife Habitat Management	Middlefork Cottonwood
29N02 Segment 2 & 3	MA 22 – Beegum MA 22 – Beegum	Adaptive Management Area Late Successional Reserve (~0.05 miles)	Wildlife Habitat Management Late Successional Reserve	
28N10 Segment 1	MA 22 – Beegum	Adaptive Management Area	Roaded Recreation	Beegum Creek
28N10 Segment 2	MA 22 – Beegum	Adaptive Management Area	Roaded Recreation and Commercial Wood Products Emphasis	
28N10 Segment 3	MA 22 – Beegum	Adaptive Management Area	Commercial Wood Products Emphasis and Wildlife Habitat Management	
28N10 Segment 4	MA 22 – Beegum	Adaptive Management Area	Commercial Wood Products Emphasis	Beegum Creek
29N28 Segments 1, 2, & 3	MA 22 – Beegum	Adaptive Management Area	Commercial Wood Products Emphasis	Beegum Creek and Upper Hayfork Creek

This decision is consistent with the Record of Decision for the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Shasta-Trinity National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan), April 28, 1995 (Brock 2012 a,b, Del Bene, 2012, Hart 2012 a,b, Joyce 2012, Mai 2012, Nelson 2012, Rand 2012, Rust 2012, Shasta-Trinity National Forest 1995, Shoemaker 2012, Wilson 2012). This decision is also consistent with the Record of Decision for the Northwest Forest Plan (Brock 2012, Wolcott 2012).

### **MOTORIZED TRAVEL MANAGEMENT**

In making this decision, I considered the following effects regarding the criteria for designation of roads, trails and area as required in Travel Management Regulations at 36 CFR §212.55.

(a) *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

*Effects to natural and cultural resources are discussed in the archaeology report (Del Bene 2012), the response to comments and in the determination of extraordinary circumstances above.*

Public safety

*The effects on public safety are discussed in the previous section on safety, the response to comments section and in the engineering analysis reports (Bielecki 2012).*

Provision of recreational opportunities

*Provision of recreational opportunities is addressed in the purpose and need statement, in the recreation report (Hart 2012) and in the response to comments.*

Access needs

*The effects on access are addressed in the purpose and need statement, the recreation report (Hart 2012a), in the engineering analysis reports (Bielecki 2012, Rand 2012) and in the response to comments.*

Conflicts among uses of National Forest System lands,

*The different uses of the National Forest System lands and roads and the potential for conflict between users are addressed in engineering reports (Bielecki 2012, Rand 2012), recreation report (Hart 2012a) the Daily Fire Staffing Report (Bell 2012) and the response to comments.*

The need for maintenance and administration of roads, trails, and areas that would arise if the uses under consideration are designated;

*The maintenance and administration of the project roads is discussed in the purpose and need for the project and in the proposed action, the Safety and Future Costs section and in the Engineering reports (Bielecki 2012, Rand 2012). There are no actions for trails or areas in this project.*

The availability of resources for that maintenance and administration.

*The type of resources needed for maintenance and administration are discussed in the engineering analysis reports (Bielecki 2012, Rand 2012), in the Land and Resource Management Plan Appendix K (Shasta-Trinity National Forest 1995 and in the publication Guidelines for Road Maintenance Levels (USDA FS 2005).*

(b) *Specific criteria for 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;

*The effects to soils were analyzed by Rust (2012). The effects to watershed were analyzed by Mai (2012). The effects to vegetation were analyzed by Nelson (2012). All of the actions proposed are consistent with law, policy, regulation and the Land and Resource Management Plan.*

(2) Harassment of wildlife and significant disruption of wildlife habitats;

*The effects to wildlife were analyzed by Wolcott (2012). All of the actions proposed are consistent with law, policy, regulation, the Forest Plan and the Northwest Forest Plan.*

(3) Conflicts between motor vehicle use and existing or proposed recreational uses of National Forest System lands or neighboring Federal lands;

*The use of motor vehicles and proposed recreational uses of NFS lands is discussed in the purpose and need and the proposed action, the recreation report (Hart 2012) and the engineering reports (Bielecki 2012, Rand 2012). There are 196 acres of land managed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and 12,422 acres of land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) (other Federal Lands) identified as within the project area of 1,105,300 acres but not affected by the project (Putt 2012, Hart 2012a).*

(4) Conflicts among different classes of motor vehicle uses of National Forest System lands or neighboring Federal lands.

*The different classes of motor vehicle uses of NFS lands are discussed in the purpose and need for action, in the proposed action for this project and in the recreation report (Hart 2012a). The response to comments has additional discussion of this topic. As noted above, there are 196 acres of land managed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BLA) and 12, 422 acres of land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) (other Federal Lands) identified as within the project area of 1,105,300 acres but not affected by the project (Putt 2012, Hart 2012a).*

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.

*The Air Quality report (Hart 2012b) has a discussion of vehicle emissions. The recreation report (Hart 2012a) and the Engineering Report (Bielecki 2012) have information on the compatibility of motor vehicle use with existing conditions in populated areas. There is additional discussion of these topics in the response to comments.*

- (c) *Specific criteria for designation of roads.* 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:

*The Engineering Analysis reports (Bielecki 2012, Rand 2012) and the recreation report (Hart 2012a) discuss this in detail.*

- (2) Compatibility of vehicle class with road geometry and road surfacing.

*The Engineering Analysis reports discuss this in detail (Bielecki 2012, Rand 2012).*

- (d) *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).

*All routes in this decision are part of the NFTS (Harmon 2012, Putt 2012).*

- (e) *Wilderness areas and primitive areas.* National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails, and areas on National Forest System lands in wilderness areas or primitive areas shall not be designated for motor vehicle use pursuant to this section, unless, in the case of wilderness areas, motor vehicle use is authorized by the applicable enabling legislation for those areas.

*There are no actions proposed within Wilderness or Primitive Areas in this project proposal (Putt 2012, Hart 2012 and Attachment A).*

This project will meet the Motorized Travel Management Implementation Strategy objectives of travel management as expressed in the Forest Service Manual FSM 7700:

1. To provide for a safe and cost-effective transportation system.
2. To provide for orderly improvement and management of the forest transportation system and documentation of decisions affecting the system.
3. To determine the minimum road system needed for sustainable public and agency access to achieve the desired conditions in the applicable land management plan; to promote ecosystem health; and to address public safety and efficiency of operations in an environmentally sensitive manner within current and anticipated funding levels.
4. To determine appropriate motor vehicle uses of NFS roads, NFS trails and areas on NFS lands.
5. To designate NFS roads, NFS trails and areas on NFS lands for motor vehicle use.
6. To provide for and manage an appropriate range of motorized and non-motorized recreational experiences (FSM 2350) while minimizing conflicts among uses.
7. To provide access for the use and enjoyment of NFS lands. [FSM 7710.2]

This project will implement the objectives of Travel Management by:

- Reclassifying selected ML3 routes to ML2 routes.

## RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

The project was incorporated in the Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) for the Shasta-Trinity National Forest on February 9, 2012. The Tribal Consultation period began February 9, 2012. The public scoping period began February 16, 2012 and ended March 21, 2012. I received comments from 21 respondents. A summary of the comments and responses is shown in Table 3.

**Table 14. Comment Summary and Response**

Totals	Resource/Concern	Comment	Response
13	Increased Access/Recreation	Allow OHV use on all portions of roads indicated in the proposed action. These roads give visitors the needed access to travel on OHVs, hunt, fish, disperse camp, swim and access property.	The proposed changes from ML3 to ML2 will provide users with more access and enhanced recreational opportunities.
2	Safety	Safety concerns with OHVs on same road with highway legal vehicles and commercial trucks may increase collision potentials and law enforcement.	Design features are presented to assist with safe road management. They are to be considered, should the agency have the appropriate time, workload, and funding based on competing priorities. The use of motor vehicles on NFS roads is subject to State traffic law where applicable, except when in conflict with motor vehicle designations (36 CFR §212.51) or with the rules at 36 CFR Part 261 (36 CFR §212.5(a)(1)). On NFS roads, designations for motor vehicle use take precedence over conflicting State traffic laws. The Forest Service may designate some NFS roads under 36CFR §212.51 as open to a vehicle class that would normally be precluded from public roads under State law.

Totals	Resource/Concern	Comment	Response
1	Timber	Timber/Logging Companies expressed concerns with combining more OHVs on roads with commercial log hauling. The Forest or Cooperator should close such roads to OHV use during heavy log operations. Co-Op Agreements with the USFS.	Design features included signing for safety. Forest orders can be used to restrict access if or when needed.
3	Wildlife/Ecosystem	OHVs cause damage to wildlife, forest ecology and ecosystems.	All proposed maintenance level changes are on existing routes on the current National Forest Transportation System (NFTS). The effects to wildlife, forest ecology and ecosystems associated with changing maintenance levels were analyzed and no extraordinary circumstances were identified.
3	Decrease Access	OHV access should be decreased on the Forest.	The Motorized Travel Management ROD prohibited motorized cross-country travel, including the use of unauthorized routes. Since that time, motorized recreation advocacy groups and local counties have requested additional miles of mixed use on what are currently existing ML 3 routes. Specifically, the Shasta County Board of Supervisors submitted a request and proposal for motorized mixed use that was a starting point for this project. There were 1,231 miles of unauthorized routes that were not added to the NFTS.
3	Economics	The increase in OHV access will benefit the local communities. Cost effective Project.	Currently there is no data available that would indicate a change in recreational patterns as a result of the proposed action. The economic impact of Forest visitors depends on the local economic base, purchasing patterns of the visitors, whether visitors are considered local or non-local, as well as a variety of other socioeconomic factors. The STNF Motorized Travel Management Final Environmental Impact Statement (2010) reports response coefficients for a variety of recreational activities. Those response coefficients indicate the jobs and labor income supported per thousand visits by activity type for local and non-local visitors. Local visitors are defined as those whose primary residence is within 30 straight-line miles of the Forest. Non-local visitors are all those not considered local. The table below reports the total economic contribution per 1,000 party trips of OHV

Totals	Resource/Concern	Comment	Response
			recreationists on the Forest. For example, for every 1,000 non-local overnight trips there are 2.6 jobs and \$70,059 of labor income supported in the local economy. It is unlikely that the proposed action would have a noticeable effect on Forest-wide recreational patterns, therefore any economic impacts are expected to be minimal.

**Table 14a. Total Economic Contribution of OHV Visitation on the Forest**

Trip Type	Employment (Jobs per 1,000 Party-trips)	Labor Income (2006 Dollars per 1,000 Party-trips)
Local Day	0.5	\$13,516
Local Overnight	1.6	\$42,041
Non-local Day	0.9	\$23,798
Non-local Overnight	2.6	\$70,059

**Table 14. Comment Summary and Response (continued)**

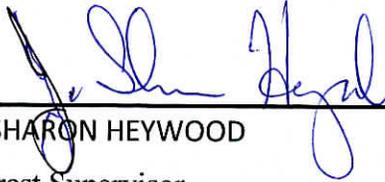
Totals	Resource/Concern	Comment	Response
3	Economics	The Forest cannot support the proposal due to backlog of maintenance and budget cuts. Not cost effective.	The proposed action doesn't affect existing road maintenance plans on the Forest. All roads would continue to be maintained according to applicable environmental compliance regulations. Roads included in the proposed action already exist in the NFTS, and therefore would not contribute additional road maintenance needs relative to the existing condition. When implemented, stormproofing activities would be expected to reduce annual and episodic maintenance costs.
1	Road Degradation	Change in current road conditions	Maintenance prescription guidelines from the Forest Service Handbook FSH 7709.58 include logging out and brushing as necessary, maintaining the road prism and shoulder, keeping drainage facilities functional to prevent environmental damage, removing or repairing slides or slumps, maintaining structures such as bridges, maintaining route markers, warning or regulatory and guide signs. Dips are the preferred drainage treatment. In addition, storm proofing as described in Mai (2012) can be included in maintenance actions when needed.

## ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW (APPEAL) OPPORTUNITIES

This decision is not subject to comment or administrative review or appeal, per 36 CFR §215.4(a), 36 CFR §215.12(f) and 36 CFR §220.6(d)(4) [FSH 1909.15 Chapter 30, Section 32.12(4)]. This category of action is applicable to this proposal regarding road maintenance.

## IMPLEMENTATION DATE

Under 36 CFR §215.9, implementation may begin immediately.



J. SHARON HEYWOOD  
Forest Supervisor

5 Nov 12

Date

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