



Fremont-Winema National Forest

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Fremont-Winema National Forests Roads Analysis Report

Fremont Portion of the Fremont-Winema National Forests
December 2006

Issue 2: Define and Identify the Public Road System

It is a national requirement to identify the Public Road System. This analysis will recommend which main roads on the Fremont could be formally designated as Public Forest Service Road (PFSRs).

Goals and benefits of a public transportation system serving National Forest System lands would meet Forest Service land use and management goals, the public desire to access areas opened to the public and other benefits including economic development, improved water quality, quality of life in edge communities, and improved condition of the transportation infrastructure.

The goal of the Public Forest Service Road Program is to develop a transportation system funded under the Federal Lands Highway Program (FLHP) to serve the National Forest System. The PFSR subset is part of the full transportation system funded under the (FLHP), which includes Forest Highways (FH), PFSR, and alternative transportation systems such as mass transit. Public Lands Highway funding for the Forest Highways and Discretionary program will continue. A new category of funding using Public Lands Highway Trust Funds is proposed to cover the PFSR system.

The intent of the "public roads" authorization under TEA - 21 (Transportation Equity Act) is for the Forest Service to "designate" a subset of roads so that these roads will be "eligible" for Highway Trust Funds. In this designation for funding, the Forest Service would receive funds to improve and reconstruct these roads. The Forest Service will be responsible as the public roads authority to maintain these public roads open to public travel.

Key elements of this intent are to:

1. Provide a new funding source for the forest transportation system, thereby reducing the deferred road maintenance needs and critical needs. This directly supports the Chief's Road Policy Reform initiative and Deferred Maintenance efforts to reduce backlogs of road maintenance.
2. Enable the Forest Service to manage the forest transportation plan to meet land management objectives and enhance the safe and environmentally sensitive use of the forests transportation system.
3. Work jointly with the States, Counties, Cities and other public road agencies in providing access to National Forest System lands and in developing an overall network connecting to State, County, and other Federal road systems.

2. Background

In 1998 the Forest Service Chief's Office initiated an effort to secure funds through TEA 21 with the revision of Section 102, Authorization of Appropriations and Section 117, Federal Lands Highways Program, and Section 143, Definitions.

The language was not included in TEA 21, however, through the support of the Federal Highway Administration for the development of a category for public Forest Service roads under the Public Lands Highway Program has resulted in their allocation of **\$750,000** to the Forest Service to begin planning and identification of a subsystem of eligible PFSRs to receive funding under the next TEA bill.

In an October 16, 1998 letter from the Chief's office the forest service declares itself a public road agency. The letter stated "the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) concluded that the Forest Service would be a public road agency when we declared ourselves as such and were committed to managing all or some of our roads as public roads".

Currently the Forest Service operates a system of roads that have been classified into five levels of access and maintenance. They are:

- Maintenance Level 3-5 open and maintained for passenger car vehicles.
- Maintenance Level 2 open and maintained for high clearance vehicles.
- Maintenance Level 1 closed to traffic.

The Forest maintenance level 3-5 roads are subject to the Highway Safety Act requirements for "open to public travel" as such all level 3-5 roads may be viewed as potential PFSRs.

The objective of this analysis is to evaluate the main forest roads, to determine which roads should be recommended for designation as PFSRs the following criteria were used to identify the PFSR system:

- Critical link with State/County and Federal roads.
- Network connections to State, County and Federal roads.
- Provides Community access
- Scenic or heritage Byways/Highways
- Important public access to National Forest land or interests
- Not on Forest Highway system
- Provides key link to recreation/tourism or destination type facilities

3. Information

Information sources used were people with knowledge of the Forest road system, the Road Management Objectives (access needs, uses, average daily traffic categorized by Public, Administrative, and Commercial), and maps.

4. End Result

The end result of the analysis will identify the recommended potential Public Road System. These roads will be coded in the official database "INFRA Travel Routes", as PFSRs.

Public Roads:

The following criteria were used to evaluate the Forest level 3-5 road system. The potential PFSR routes are intended to be the longer, connecting arterial and collector roads, not short dead end single purpose type roads, for example; administrative or campground internal loop roads, short access into small subdivisions, short access into pits and quarries, ect.

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- Network connections to State, County and Federal roads
- Provides Community access
- Scenic or heritage Byways/Highways
- Important public access to National Forest land or interests
- Not on Forest Highway system
- Provides key link to recreation/tourism or destination type facilities
- Average daily traffic
- Community sites: landfills, pits and quarries

- Private land access
- Provide unrestricted access (other than seasonal snow closure)

The roads were evaluated using the above criteria. Resulting in 75 percent of the system being recommended for PFSR designation.

RECOMMENDED PFSR MILES BY MAINTENANCE LEVEL

Maintenance Level	Total Miles	PFSR Miles
Level 3	733	493
Level 4	221	218
Level 5	0	0

Note: The listing of roads and evaluation criteria analysis is included in the appendix.

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