

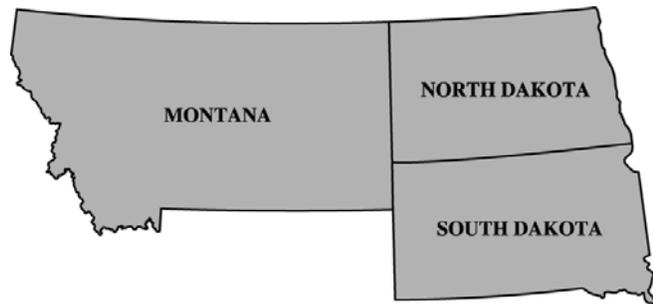


August 2004

INTERAGENCY OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE PROJECT

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- The BLM and Forest Service issued a final environmental impact statement (EIS)/plan amendment January 5, 2001. The FS issued its Record of Decision at that time. The BLM received eight protests on the EIS and resolved them in May 2003. BLM issued its ROD June 18, 2003.
- The decision restricts motorized wheeled cross-country travel on 5.8 million acres in Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota.
 - Exceptions: emergency and necessary administrative use; lease and permit holders subject to the provisions of their permits or leases; camping within 300 feet of roads or trails; disabled access per the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and firewood and Christmas tree cutting in specific areas where allowed by the local office.
- The ROD amends nine BLM land use plans in Montana and the Dakotas.



HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- The BLM and FS Northern Region administer 26.6 million acres in Montana/Dakotas (BLM 8.4, FS 18.2).
- OHV traffic has increased 92 percent since 1990; many land use plans were written prior to 1990.
- When the EIS process began, 16 million acres were open to motorized cross-country travel, which could allow the spread of noxious weeds, create user conflicts, cause erosion, damage cultural sites, and disrupt wildlife and wildlife habitat.
- The goal of the EIS/plan amendment is to prevent these problems and take the first step towards the long-term goal of designating routes through site-specific planning.



WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

- Through site-specific planning, the BLM and FS will inventory, map, analyze and designate roads and trails as open, seasonally open, or closed.
- The BLM prioritized 19 high priority and 23 moderate priority planning areas. Butte and Dillon Field Offices are addressing travel management in their ongoing RMPs. The BLM is involving the public and the RACs in the prioritization and site-specific planning.
- Site specific travel planning for the remainder of the Montana/Dakotas will be initiated for:
 - High Priority Areas: within 2 years.
 - Medium Priority Areas: within 5 years.
 - Low Priority Areas: as resources are available.
- Additional funding will be necessary to complete site-specific planning, signing, and maintaining the site-specific planning schedule. Any decisions to close roads will be made as part of the site-specific plans.



WHO ELSE IS CONCERNED?

Where BLM, FS and State of Montana lands are intermingled, OHV users will now have consistent rules.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact Richard Hopkins, 406 896-5005; or go to <http://www.mt.blm.gov/ea/ohv/index.html>.