



Klamath Basin OHV Club
PO BOX 1774
Klamath Falls, OR 97601

August 12, 2009

Robert Wetherell, Project Team Leader
Fremont-Winema National Forest
2819 Dahlia Street
Klamath Falls, Oregon 97601

Dear Robert:

Last night we held our monthly meeting and there were many concerns voiced by the 43 people in attendance. As the President of the Klamath Basin OHV club, I have been asked to write a letter, listing our concerns with the travel management plan, but I would like to start with some history on how we became involved in this project.

A few years ago the Fremont -Winema National Forest Service held a local meeting and the first slide was titled Public Involvement and Collaboration. The next slide said "Your input will influence the outcome". Our club was organized to assist you and protect the public lands that we ride. We were given DVD's to show how the Forest Service wanted us to record the trails and roads that we ride, in an acceptable GPS format. We began recording the trails we used in your GPS format, we took pictures of viewpoints, looked at loading and unloading areas and hand wrote trails on your existing district maps. These were turned in as often as we could. We used a contact person or two to as a liaison to the forest service. We did this to make it easier for the forest service, rather than to deal with each member of the club.

We followed the GPS methods that were recommended in the video and this year we were told that the forest service was not able to interpret the format we had used. We then re-gathered all of our GPS files they were put in a new format that worked for the forest service. After all of this work the Travel Management Plan did not take into account the trails etc. that we had submitted. While we did feel that there was "public involvement and collaboration" during the process, it appears as if all of our work has been in vain and that our input did not influence the outcome in phase I.

We are encouraging the members of our club and others to attend the local meeting next Thursday August 18th at your office and to give input there, but we formally want to lodge our concerns in this letter. The following points are our major concerns.



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1. The Travel Management Plan lists 8.5 miles of 50 inch or less trails. These trails are over 100 miles from Klamath Falls and are much less than 1% of the existing road system.
2. The Travel management plan will cut over 5400 miles of existing level 1 road's. While the forest service looks at this as no change to the existing road plan - we do. Most of these are excellent roads for off road vehicles. Many of these roads can still have a log truck driven down them.
3. The travel management plan on page 10 states: "The Majority want a system available to all classes of vehicles so ATV's could access various routes. People want loop systems that provide a variety of riding experiences without having to see the same places and routes." As far as we can see there are no loops or trails on the maps excluding the 8.5 miles outside of Lakeview.
4. The burden of responsibility to travel along designated routes has shifted from the forest service to the motorized user. There are other forests that use a green or red nail on a tree to designate if the road is open or not. Currently snowmobile trails use a similar system and have not seen much, if any vandalism to their signs. Other forests use a green or red dot placed on existing road signs. (Our club is willing to assist in either of the above processes)
5. The local economy will loose in this process. Motorized vehicles are purchased in our community; the upkeep of the vehicles the gas used in them will diminish.
6. With the closure of the trails and roads, there will be fewer eyes in the forest to see fire danger, vandalism, illegal pot grows etc.

We feel that the Winema National Forest Travel Management Plan was postponed until the 11th hour and that the users of the Forest will be the losers, due to the Forest Services' procrastination. A year ago the Deschutes National Forest came to our community with trail areas that they had worked with users to develop. There were areas to park, ride, gas up, avoid elk calving areas and connect to other trails in their system. We have not seen anything close to this from our forest – only closure.

We do not feel that closure is the best method. We want the following considered:

1. Amend the existing Fremont Winema National Forest Plan to remove the clause that "allows cross-country use in most places" and replace it with a clause that allows OHV use on existing level 1, 2, 3 roads (in some areas level 4 or 5 roads could be considered to use as a link to other trails as found in the Prospect riding areas).



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2. Do not close any of the existing roads, unless it is shown that extensive damage will occur from usage.
3. Open existing snowmobile roads or trails for use by ATV's (when there is no snow on the roads).
4. Work with our club in phase II to accomplish a usable trail system that will connect riding areas in our forest and other forests.

I appreciate your honesty and the concern that you share for our forest. Our club wants to continue working with you and the Fremont – Winema National Forest in making a usable Travel Management Plan. If you have any questions or concerns, please call me at 541-274-6723 or 541-331-8315.

Sincerely,

Alan E. Caldwell
President
Klamath Basin OHV Club