

BLUERIBBON COALITION ACTION ALERT!

Dear BRC Action Alert Subscriber,

Tahoe National Forest Releases DEIS For Motorized Travel Plan

The Tahoe National Forest, located in northeastern California, has just released their Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Motorized Travel Management. The Forest Service (FS) will be accepting comments for the next 60 days and there are some open house/orientation meetings scheduled for early October (see schedule below).

These public meetings are being held to provide an overview of the DEIS, to answer questions and assist the public in formulating comments. These public meetings will start with an informal open house for people to view displays, talk with various team members, and get questions answered. The open house will be followed by a presentation by the Forest Service to help those reviewing the document to better understand and comment on the DEIS. Later in the comment period, they may offer additional open houses/listening sessions.

The Forest has developed seven alternatives for managing motor vehicle use on the Tahoe National Forest. Here is a brief overview of each alternative:

1) No Action - This alternative is required by the National Environmental Policy Act and provides a baseline for comparing other alternatives. Under this alternative, no changes would be made to the current Transportation System of roads and trails. Motorized cross-country travel would not be prohibited.

2) Motorized Recreation and Access Opportunities - All site-specific routes that were recommended for addition during the earlier public scoping process were added to this alternative, totaling 72 miles in addition to 2 "open areas." The reservoirs east of Truckee would also be designated as "open" below high water line. Cross-country travel would be prohibited. A modified deer closure would be incorporated; however, no wet weather closures would be included. 481 miles of smoother surface roads would be changed to "Open to all Vehicles."

3) Cross-Country Travel Prohibited with No Changes to Existing National Forest Transportation System - The only change in this alternative would be to prohibit cross-country travel.

4) Modified Proposal by Environmental Group Coalition - This would prohibit motorized travel off system roads and trails, would add wet weather closures, and would add 31 miles of new trails to the system. None of the trail additions would be in Roadless Areas or in spotted owl/goshawk-protected activity centers.

5) Modified Proposal by BlueRibbon Coalition - This would prohibit motorized travel off system roads and trails, would establish seasons of use to incorporate modified deer and wet weather closures, would maintain most of the roads open to both street legal and off-road vehicles; and would add 238 miles of trail to the system. 481 miles of smoother surface roads would be changed to "Open to All Vehicles".

6) Preferred Alternative - This would prohibit cross-country travel, would establish seasons of use to incorporate modified deer and wet weather closures, and would add 70 miles to the trail system. None of the trail additions would significantly impact Roadless Area character or spotted owl/goshawk-protected activity centers. Considering public need and public safety, 276 miles of smoother surface roads would be changed to "Open to All Vehicles."

7) Notice of Intent - This was the proposal released in the spring of 2007, and would prohibit cross-country travel and add 45 miles to the trail system.

The DEIS discloses the various effects of alternatives for each of the different resources, including: air quality, archeology, watershed resources, wildlife species, plant communities, recreation, transportation, Roadless Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, fire, adjacent ownerships, and socio-economic impacts.

Copies of all DEIS documents and maps are available on the Forest's website at: http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/tahoe/projects_plans/ohv_inv/DEIS_overview.shtml Please review the documents and maps closely and try to make your comments as site-specific as possible, preferably by referring to those specific roads or trails you have concerns with. It is important to remember this proposal is just a draft. Your comments will be critical in refining this draft proposal prior to the final decision in March 2009.

THE COMMENT DEADLINE IS NOVEMBER 26, 2008

Mail written comments to:

Travel Management Team
631 Coyote Street
Nevada City, CA. 95959

Email comments to:

tnf_rte_desig@fs.fed.us

Comments must be postmarked by: November 26, 2008.

Technical questions can be addressed to:

David Arrasmith, Forest Planner
631 Coyote Street
Nevada City, CA 95945
(530) 478-6220
EMAIL: darrasmith@fs.fed.us

Open House/Meeting Schedule

Wednesday, October 1, 2008 Open House 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm., Orientation 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Nevada City Elks Lodge
518 Hwy 49 North
Nevada City, CA

Friday, October 3, 2008 Open House 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm., Orientation 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Sierraville Ranger Station
317 So Lincoln Hwy, (Hwy 89)
Sierraville, CA

Tuesday, October 7, 2008 Open House 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm., Orientation 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Resort at Squaw Creek
400 Squaw Creek Road
Olympic Valley, CA

Thursday, October 9, 2008 Open House 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm., Orientation 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

The Ridge Golf Course
2020 Golf Course Way
Auburn, CA

If you know of someone who would like to be added to the mailing list, please have him or her email their address to Ann Westling, Public Affairs Officer, at awestling@fs.fed.us or call (530) 478-6205.

JUST REMEMBER, PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IS CRUCIAL TO KEEP RECREATION AREAS OPEN, PLEASE GET INVOLVED!

Thanks in advance for your support,

Ric Foster
Public Lands Department Manager
BlueRibbon Coalition
208-237-1008 ext 107

Get BRC's Latest News & Alerts via RSS!
<http://feeds.feedburner.com/BlueRibbonCoalition>