

Regulatory Constraints

The BLM manages travel and transportation on public lands in accordance with existing laws, regulations and policies.

Comprehensive travel management planning addresses all resource use aspects; including recreational, traditional, casual, agricultural, commercial, and educational (BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1).

This involves more than motorized and off-highway vehicle activities, and includes the travel needs for all BLM-administered resource management programs. Program policy guidance provides direction for management and administration of all aspects of the travel management program.

Federal regulations (43 CFR Part 8340) and BLM planning guidance require BLM to designate all BLM-administered land as either open, limited, or closed in regard to OHV use.



RMP/ROD Guidance

Little Snake Record of Decision (ROD) and Approved Resource Management Plan (RMP) (October 2011)

- BLM undertakes extensive land use planning through a collaborative approach with local and state governments, the public and stakeholder groups.
- Travel management plans follow the framework provided in field office specific Resource Management Plans, which guide decisions for every action and approved use on Public Land.
- Transportation and Travel Management goals:
 - Provide a mix of motorized, non-motorized, and non-mechanized legal public access to public lands
 - Provide a transportation system that is manageable and maintainable, meets management needs, and minimizes impacts on resources and habitats
 - Provide for types or modes of access and travel that will balance resource protection with use
 - Provide for adequate protection of important archaeological sites in the Sand Wash Basin
- In addition to direction provided by the Little Snake Field Office RMP/ROD, a September 2015 Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment for Northwest Colorado provides additional management guidance specific to the Greater Sage-Grouse. The travel management plan will also seek to accomplish the following sage-grouse specific management objectives associated with transportation:
 - Reduce mortality from vehicle collisions
 - Limit change in Greater Sage-Grouse behavior
 - Avoid, minimize and compensate for habitat fragmentation
 - Limit the spread of noxious weeds
 - Limit the disruptive activity associated with human access



Purpose & Need

The TMP is considered an implementation or an action plan, and is in conformance with the Little Snake Field Office Record of Decision and Approved Management Plan, October 2011, and the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Resource Management Plan Amendment, September 2015.

Purpose

- Identify within the Travel Management Area (TMA) new or existing routes that will provide access to other BLM managed public lands, state lands, local communities and private lands
- Delineate a transportation system which, through designation of routes, encourages responsible use and meets socioeconomic and access needs, while protecting natural and cultural resources on public lands.
- Provide high quality recreational experiences through a comprehensive, maintainable road and trail network, while ensuring additional resources management needs are met.
- Provide access to primary gateways; create loops, long-distance trail experiences, trails for different types of users, and access to community features.
- Reduce redundancy, resource degradation, and habitat fragmentation within the network.

Need

- Maintain high quality recreational experiences and provide a range of resource opportunities for a wide variety of users.
- Identify routes to be designated and provide continued access and key connections to heritage sites, scenic overlooks, hunting, wildlife/wild horse viewing, recreational areas, dispersed camping, private property, management areas, travel routes, and valid existing rights.
- Address impacts caused by cross-country motorized vehicle use in order to maintain and protect the condition of resources.
- Consider the different modes of travel and access as well as conditions of travel on public lands, while reducing conflicts with key natural resources and sensitive habitats.
- Collaboratively identify the type of road construction and maintenance standards needed to protect resources and accommodate anticipated traffic types and use levels.



Key Issues from Scoping

Cultural Resources

- Vandalism and theft
- The need for surveys

Paleontological Resources

- Protection of claystone and sandstone rocks void of vegetation

Soils

- Fragile soil protection
- Steep gradients
- Drainage crossings (need for culverts and water bars)

Fish & Wildlife

- Reduce habitat fragmentation
- Special status species protection
- Sage grouse protection
- Big game habitat protection
- Elk habitat
- Mule deer habitat
- Pronghorn habitat
- Raptor habitat
- Mountain lion habitat
- Cooperation with other agencies
- Targeted seasonal closures
- Protection of riparian areas

Recreation

- Importance of tourism and hunting to the economy
- Enhance the experience for route users
- Quiet use opportunities
- Wild horse viewing access and opportunities
- Wild horse protection
- Restrictions on shed hunting (the search for antlers)
- Maintain routes for multiple users
- Provide good loops
- Singletrack motorcycle trails
- Keeping Bears Ears, Sheephead Basin and Hartman draw open for recreation and hiking

Designations

- Maintenance of designated routes
- Non-motorized travel experiences
- Protect LWCs and include existing BLM datasets (eg. LWC) in evaluation
- Use existing routes to create foot, horse and bike experiences
- Restoration of closed routes
- Restoration of temporary oil and gas routes
- Signage
- Closure of user created routes (specifically in Vermillion Basin)
- Improve maps
- Reduce redundancy and duplicate routes
- Implementation funding plan
- Network/connection
- Protect undeveloped/undisturbed areas
- Include routes identified by Moffat County
- Define a road using existing definitions
- Match Wyoming route designations
- Inventory Sand Wash Open OHV Area
- Road maintenance agreement on oil and gas routes used for multiple purposes (e.g. livestock grazing, fire management, recreation) Livestock and Range
- Livestock grazing/permittee access needs
- Access to move sheep camps and take care of sheep

Mitigation

- Mitigate impacts to wildlife and sensitive species
- Apply minimization criteria to minimize impacts to resources
- Enforcement of use and management

Vegetation

- Invasive species



Considerations During Alternatives Development

The following considerations will be used to evaluate each individual road and trail. These criteria seek to identify benefits as well as risks to natural or cultural resources:

Benefits:

- Recreation
- Wildland Fire Management
- Livestock Grazing & Rangeland
- Energy & Minerals
- Transportation & Access
- Lands & Realty
- Forestry

Risks:

- Water Resources
- Fish & Wildlife
- Special Status Species
- Soil Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Paleontological Resources
- Visual Resources



Suitability Map

