

TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PLANNING



Cove Wash, St. George Field Office



The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 directs the St. George Field Office to complete a Comprehensive Travel and Transportation Management Plan for all the BLM-managed public lands in Washington County, Utah, within three years.

What is a Comprehensive Travel and Transportation Management Plan?

Comprehensive travel management planning addresses access needs for a wide array of public land uses including recreational, agricultural, and commercial activities. Access needs are evaluated within the context of BLM's legal mandates to protect sensitive natural and cultural resources on public lands. Based on this comprehensive evaluation, every route on BLM-managed lands in Washington County will receive one of the following designations as a result of the planning process: open, closed, or limited. Open areas are where cross-country off-highway vehicle travel is permitted. Closed areas are not available for motorized travel. Limited areas are restricted to designated routes and trails only.

How are Travel Management Plans Developed?

Travel Management planning is a systematic, multi-step process that includes the following:

- Information Gathering: Conduct GPS mapping of existing routes and identify planning issues.
- Data refinement: Collect resource data required to successfully evaluate each route.
- Route Evaluation Preparation: Divide the planning area into sub-regions and produce planning maps.
- Public Feedback I: Solicit public input at workshops to ensure all information has been collected.



- **Route Evaluation:** Evaluate each route to determine all possible uses and potential impacts.
- **Route Designation:** Assign a preliminary designation to each route (open, closed, limited or administrative).
- **Public Feedback II:** Re-solicit public input to ensure that all possibilities have been examined.
- **Alternative Development:** Produce a range of alternatives based on public feedback.
- **Preferred Route Network:** Develop preferred route network based on route evaluation and public input.
- **Final Route Network Approval:** Receive approval for final route network after satisfying National Environmental Policy Act requirements for analysis and disclosure of potential environmental impacts.

- **Prepare Sign Plan:** Develop a sign plan based on the final preferred route network and produce signs.

- **Produce Maps:** Produce recreational travel maps of the approved route network.
- **Rehabilitate Closed Routes:** Routes designated as "closed" will be reclaimed and rehabilitated.

Will there be an Opportunity to Participate in the Route Designation Process?

Yes, there will be many opportunities to participate and provide comments during this process. The BLM will host workshops where the public can provide information about routes that are important to their use of public lands in Washington County. Input will be solicited from recreation groups; livestock operators; utility companies; local, county, state, and other federal government agencies; Tribal governments; and the general public to ensure that all relevant information is used in the planning process. There will also be opportunities to provide written comments on the draft plan and environmental analyses.

What's Ahead?

The St. George Field Office began the information gathering phase in September 2009. The BLM anticipates completion of the plan in 36 months.

More Information:

Additional information about the Travel Management Plan can be found on the St. George

Field Office web site at: http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/st_george.html

