

Attachment 3

Formulating Criteria for Making Road and Trail Selections

Choose individual roads and trails with the transportation network goals in mind rather than just using all the inherited roads and trails. Most existing roads and trails on public lands were created by use over time, rather than planned and constructed for specific activities or needs. Instead of simply using this process as a way of deciding which individual roads and trails should be closed or left open, consider a broader range of possibilities for management of individual roads and trails, including re-routes, re-construction or new construction, and closures. These are management considerations that can be used to develop a high-quality travel system. A well-designed travel system can direct use away from sensitive areas and still provide high-quality recreational activities and access for commercial and recreational needs.

Field Offices should use an interdisciplinary team, as well as a Field Office's Resource Management Plan (RMP) cooperating agencies, for special expertise in identifying the resource and use conflicts and benefits of various routes. The conflicts and benefits should be documented by use of a matrix, spreadsheet, checklist, or similar means. In determining potential effects, conflicts, and benefits, at a minimum the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) critical elements of the human environment should be considered and used as the basis for Field Offices' designation criteria. These elements include:

- Threatened, Endangered, or Candidate Species and Critical Habitat
- Floodplains
- Wetlands and Riparian Zones
- Wilderness Values
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
- Water Quality (drinking or ground)
- Air Quality
- Cultural Resources
- Prime or Unique Farmlands
- Wild and Scenic Rivers (eligible and/or suitable)
- Native American Religious Concerns
- Wastes, Hazardous or Solid
- Environmental Justice
- Invasive, Non-Native Species
- Wild Horses and Burros
- National Landscape and Conservation System units or study units

Field Offices should assess additional resource considerations in determining designation criteria. Considerations of both social and physical elements can help to define the criteria for a travel plan.

In addition to the NEPA critical elements, possible elements for route selection criteria include:

- Desired future condition
- Prescriptions for land use allocations including Special Recreation Management Areas
- Paleontological resources
- Watershed resources
- Erosive soils
- Saline soils
- At-risk watersheds
- Municipal watersheds
- Vegetative resources
 - At-risk vegetative sites
 - Relic vegetation
- Wildlife resources
 - Crucial winter habitats
 - Calving and fawning habitats
 - Sage-grouse habitat
 - Raptor nesting locations
- Cultural Resources
- Visual resources
- Elimination of route redundancy
- Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines
- Recreation Opportunities–Experiences–Settings–Benefits
- User preferences and conflicts
- Public health and safety; emergency services
- Rangeland standards
- Forest resources
- Riparian resources; assessment of proper functioning condition
- Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs)
- Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics
- Administrative access for the BLM and the BLM-authorized activities
- Energy development
- Current maintenance agreements
- Potential for adverse or positive economic effects
- Fire considerations
- Abandoned Mine Lands
- ACECs, National Historic or Scenic Trails, Wild Scenic Rivers, special management areas, congressional designations