PROPOSED CASPER
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AND
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

APPENDIX R

Clarification of Off-Highway Vehicle Designations and Travel Management in the Bureau of Land Management Land Use Planning Process

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In conformance with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Washington Office Instruction Memorandum No. 2004-005 (October 1, 2003), the planning area will be divided into areas that are open, limited, or closed to off-highway vehicle (OHV) travel. Those areas that are designated limited may have seasonal restrictions or travel limitations to either existing or designated roads and vehicle routes, or any combination of these.

Road and Vehicle Route Designation Process for Limited to Designated OHV Areas

During the travel management planning period, the following will occur:

- Interim management guidelines for identification of the road and vehicle route network, including signing and maintenance, will be defined.
- Additional data needs and collection strategy will be outlined.
- A clear planning sequence, including public collaboration, criteria, and constraints for subsequent road and vehicle route selection and identification, will be established with a schedule not to exceed 5 years.
- Collaboration on designation of roads and vehicle routes will occur, consistent with the goals, objectives, and other considerations described in the Resource Management Plan (RMP), according to the above planning sequence.
- A Travel Management Implementation Plan will be written.
- Signs and barriers will be installed where needed, and reclamation according to the plan will occur.
- Desirable roads may be reopened after repairs, recovery, or adequate mitigation has occurred.

Until the designation process is completed, travel in limited to designated areas (LDA) will remain limited to existing roads and vehicle routes. Some portions of LDAs may receive other designations during the planning process outlined above. Travel on parcels of public land not having legal public access will remain limited to existing roads and vehicle routes.

The LDAs will be divided into geographic sub-areas in which specific roads and vehicle routes will be designated open to OHV travel. Geographic sub-areas and their order of consideration will be determined based on criteria such as current OHV use, areas with sensitive resources, and areas with special designations (i.e., Areas of Critical Environmental Concern [ACEC], wildlife habitat management areas, and Other Management Areas [MA]). Roads and vehicle routes that are designated as open may have further restrictions placed on their use.

During the planning process, teams made up of the BLM, cooperating agencies, and members of the public will be used to ensure resource concerns and OHV user needs are properly addressed. Maps will be available to the teams that include all known roads to aid input for additional roads and vehicle routes to be considered for designation as open to OHV use. In addition to the sub-areas in general, these teams will address roads and vehicle routes in specific areas that have ongoing resource problems.

Criteria for road closures include the following:

- OHV use is causing, or will cause, considerable adverse impacts.
- A road or vehicle route poses a threat to public safety.
- Road and vehicle route density is adversely impacting resources.
- Closure is necessary for desired future conditions for access.
- Closure is necessary for visual resource protection.
- Closure is necessary for sensitive habitat management.

The BLM recognizes that designated OHV recreation sites play a vital role in satisfying a portion of the recreation experience for OHV enthusiasts. These areas include motocross tracks and novice riding areas. The Poison Spider OHV Park is open to all types of motorized use. These sites would be managed to reduce the possibilities for inappropriate activities on adjacent public and private lands. Management of these sites will include education, public outreach, and displaying appropriate signage.

Instruction Memorandum WY-2005-034 (March 10, 2005)

Travel Management Guidelines for the Public Lands in Wyoming

Management of the travel and transportation system is becoming increasingly important as development and use of the public lands progresses into the 21st century. Increasing demands for all uses of the public lands, and the crucial role the travel and transportation system plays has caused us to revise the guidelines for travel management in Wyoming.

This Instruction Memorandum introduces the updated travel management guidelines. While the major focus of travel management is on Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Management, these guidelines apply to all forms of travel and transportation, including non-motorized and mechanized forms of transportation.

Travel management affects all resource management programs. Although OHV designations have traditionally been linked to the recreation management program they affect all programs, including minerals and range management. Accordingly, all programs should participate effectively in travel management planning.

These guidelines are an outgrowth of the OHV Policy that the Bureau of Land Management in Wyoming has relied on since the early 1980s. The previous policy is outdated and fails to address problems and issues commonly encountered by Field Offices today. The intent is that these updated guidelines will improve consistency between Field Offices and help Field Offices address 21st century travel and transportation problems and issues.

Most travel management planning occurs in RMP or in activity plans called for by RMP decisions. The guidelines include hypothetical language for RMP decisions. Although they are not intended to be used as actual templates, they do provide suggestions how to craft RMP decisions for OHV Designations.

INTRODUCTION

Travel management planning incorporates comprehensive travel management, in addition to making required OHV decisions in land use plans (See BLM Manual Handbook H-1610-1 LAND USE PLANNING HANDBOOK). Comprehensive travel management involves consideration of public access, resource management, and regulatory needs through land use planning. It encompasses access needs as well as the effects of and interactions among all forms of travel, including motorized; mechanized; and non-motorized/non-mechanized travel; equestrian and other livestock; walking, bicycling, boat and other travel modes.

The success of travel management planning depends on the degree to which the planning effort consults and coordinates with the general public and with state and local government.

We recommend using road and trail information from all available sources, including states, tribal governments, counties, other agencies, interest groups and individuals. Involving the public in the collection and analysis of transportation data can be an important factor in achieving transportation management goals.

The Relationship between Travel Management Planning and On-going Development and Use of the Public Lands.

The overall goal of travel management planning is to provide for the travel and transportation needs of all resource uses for a given area during the life of the RMP. Accordingly, to meet resource management and use needs over time, travel management planning:

- Incorporates needs for public land access into the planning process.
- Establishes an appropriate travel and transportation network that supports all authorized uses of the public lands.
- Provides for regulation of travel on the public lands through OHV or similar designations.
- Provides for changing transportation needs as resource use and development progresses over time on the public lands.

The travel and transportation network is established in the RMP and/or subsequent activity plans. OHV designations provide for regulation of travel on the public lands. As new resource use and development authorizations are granted, changes to the transportation system are automatically incorporated into the existing management framework. For example, as oil and gas development continues as provided for in the RMP, the transportation system that accompanies this development is automatically incorporated under the umbrella of existing management.

Travel management decisions are made at the RMP-level since they are concerned with allocating lands for certain uses. The transportation system affects all resource uses. It provides access for mineral development and production; it facilitates livestock grazing and a host of other commercial uses of the public lands. It affects the kind of recreation experience BLM-administered lands provide.

Goal of These Guidelines

The goal is to establish consistency between BLM field offices and promote environmentally responsible management of the entire travel and transportation system. It encompasses Off-Highway Motor Vehicle management, non-motorized trail and transportation systems, as well as mechanized means of travel. These guidelines are an outgrowth of BLM Handbook H-1601-1 Land Use Planning Handbook, the National OHV Strategy, and the National Mountain Bicycling Strategic Action Plan. This document replaces and expands Wyoming BLM's February 22, 1984, Off-Road Vehicle Policy and serves to implement IM No. 2004-005. OHV use of the public lands is one of the most important issues facing public land managers today and will only become more difficult over time.

Authority

Federal Land Policy & Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.); the Taylor Grazing Act (43 U.S.C. 315a); the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1281c); the Land & Water Conservation Fund Act (16 U.S.C 460 1-6a); the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1241 et seq.); Executive Order 11644 (Use of Off-Road Vehicles on the Public Lands), 37 Federal Register 2877, 3 CFR part 74, 332, as amended by Executive Order 11989 42 Federal Register 26959 (May 25, 1977), and Instruction Memorandum No. 2004-005.

The Travel and Transportation System

The travel and transportation system consists of all travel routes of all types that function to provide access and use of the public lands. This includes the entire spectrum of roads and trails from foot paths and un-maintained two-tracks to constructed and surfaced roads which receive regular maintenance.

There are two broad categories of travel routes. The first is the broad collection of roads, trails, and travel ways that are out there on the public lands. Most roads, trails, and travel ways are user-created and receive no regular maintenance, but they are crucial to providing for access and use of the public lands. These travel ways are not public roads by definition, but often provide crucial public access to the public lands. While these roads play an important role in public land access and use, they are not considered assets in a formal sense and few if any are included in the Facility Asset Management System (FAMS). Over 90 percent of all roads that exist on the public lands are of this type.

The second category of roads is part of what is known of as the Transportation Plan. Roads on the Transportation Plan are the official network of BLM roads which, in combination with County roads and State Highways, form the basic transportation and public land access system for many Field Offices. Roads on the Transportation Plan are administrative roads which are improved and maintained and which provide public access to large blocks of public land. The BLM spends public funds on easement acquisition and maintenance for roads that are on the Transportation Plan. All roads on the Transportation Plan are included in FAMS. Constructed and maintained trails are also included in FAMS. This category makes up no more than 10 percent of all roads on the public lands.

Some field offices (e.g., Rawlins Field Office) have an extensive network of formal numbered BLM roads while others (e.g., Casper, Newcastle, and Buffalo Field Offices) have few or none.

The Role of Engineering in Travel Management Planning

The role of engineering in the Field Offices will remain fundamentally unchanged as the BLM moves toward more comprehensive Travel Management Planning. At the present time, the role of engineering is to design and maintain roads and to participate in transportation planning efforts at the Field Office level. Transportation planning at the present time is centered around the Transportation Plan or in planning and designing travel and transportation routes and trails.

Under the broader topic of Travel Management, which includes the entire spectrum of transportation and travel systems, the engineering function would have appropriate involvement in planning and management of the entire travel and transportation system for a given Field Office.

The Planning Process

Travel management decisions are made in the RMP. The process consists of inventory, identification and analysis of issues, formulation and analysis of alternatives, and the selection of a final land use plan, all done with substantial public involvement in the entire process. The BLM Planning Process is described in BLM Manual Handbook H-1601-1 LAND USE PLANNING HANDBOOK.

I. OFF-HIGHWAY MOTOR VEHICLE DESIGNATIONS

OHV designations for public lands are formulated in RMPs. These guidelines provide direction for establishing, modifying, and implementing OHV designations to meet resource management objectives.

OHV mapping and signing guidance, public education, enforcement, monitoring, and long-term OHV management direction are also included.

OHV designations are updated and/or revised whenever an RMP undergoes a major revision. OHV designations may be updated or revised any time a Field Office determines that existing designations are outdated or no longer address prevailing conditions in the field. In such cases revisions are accomplished through maintenance actions or amendments to the existing RMP.

All the public lands in Wyoming were designated as Open, Limited, or Closed to Off-Road Vehicle use when the existing RMPs were completed in the mid 1980s and early 1990s. About 97 percent of lands were placed in the "Limited" category. Most lands were in "Limited to Existing Roads and Vehicle Routes," but some were placed in the "Limited to Designated Roads" category.

The current OHV management objective is to develop designations that provide for access and use of the public lands while protecting the lands and resources from damage and overuse. Public involvement ensures that the BLM's OHV designations and implementation actions reflect the public interest.

The OHV section provides direction for managing motor vehicles. The BLM in Wyoming uses the term "Off-Highway Vehicle" as opposed to "Off-Road Vehicle." Both terms are consistent with the definition for an off-road vehicle provided in 43 CFR 8340.0-5 and referenced in 43 CFR 3809, Surface Management Regulations. The term "Off-Highway Vehicle" is a modern term in use throughout the western United States and will be used from now on in Wyoming. Motor vehicle use on the public lands away from public highways or county roads is subject to BLM management; thus, the term "Off-Highway."

All public lands administered by the BLM must be designated as Open, Limited, or Closed to Off-Road Vehicle use (43 CFR 8342.1). The regulations require the BLM to protect soil, wildlife, wildlife habitat, cultural, and vegetative resources. OHV designations are based on sound resource information. The OHV policy for BLM-administered public lands in Wyoming anticipates that the "limited" designation will be used in most situations.

A. OHV Designation Categories

Field Offices may designate public lands as "Open," "Limited," or "Closed" to OHV use. Designations will be made in RMP.

1. Open:

In the "Open" category all types of vehicle use is permitted at all times anywhere in the area. However, motor vehicles may not be operated in a manner causing or likely to cause significant, undue damage to or disturbance of the soil, wildlife, wildlife habitat, improvements, cultural or vegetative resources or other authorized uses of the public lands (See 43 CFR 8341). Accordingly, in Open areas, driving off-road to perform necessary tasks, for recreational activities, or any other purpose, is allowed. The experience in the western United States suggests that "Open" designations encourage route proliferation and unlimited cross country driving and is causing degradation of the lands and resources. It is the policy of the BLM in Wyoming to limit the use of "Open" designations to areas suitable for unlimited off-road driving such as sand dune areas that are essentially devoid of vegetation.

2. Limited:

This category includes several options including:

a. Vehicle use is allowed only on roads and trails which were in existence prior to the date of publication of the Federal Register notice that announces the designation. Exceptions allow for limited vehicle travel off existing roads and trails to accomplish necessary tasks and certain leisure-time activities up to 300 feet from roads only if such travel does not cause resource damage, create new roads, or extend existing roads. Random cross-country travel off existing roads within and beyond the 300 foot limit is not allowed. The creation of new routes or extending or widening existing routes is not allowed without agency authorization.

b. Vehicle travel is allowed only on designated roads and trails, i.e., a road network designated by the BLM. Exceptions allow for limited vehicle travel off designated roads and trails to accomplish necessary tasks as defined elsewhere in these guidelines. Also, off-road travel to accommodate certain recreational activities such as dispersed camping up to 300 feet from roads only if such travel does not cause resource damage, create new roads, or extend existing roads. Until such time as this designation is fully implemented, vehicle travel is limited to existing roads and trails as described in "a" above.

   On "designated" roads a white arrow or other appropriate sign will be used to identify the open road.

   Various actions can be taken to close roads not designated as open. They must be sufficient to ensure that non-designated roads are no longer available for motorized use. Such means could include removal of the road from the travel map, a closure with a gate, signing the road as closed and allowing it to re-vegetate naturally, or mechanically reclaiming and re-vegetating it. Field managers will use appropriate means for a given situation. Roads or trails that do not support a management objective should be eliminated.

c. Vehicle travel is limited by type of vehicle (ATV, motorcycle, vehicles less than 48 inches in width, etc.)

   Examples of possible designations:

   1. Vehicle route is limited to four wheel drive vehicles only.
   2. Vehicle route is limited to motorcycles only.
   3. Vehicle route is limited to ATVs only.

d. Vehicle travel is limited to time and season of use. Seasonal closure to type(s) of motor vehicle or all motor vehicles (the dates and times of the closure are indicated). This is often used to protect wildlife winter range and wintering wildlife.

e. Recreational OHV use areas (sometimes referred to as OHV Play Areas). Field Offices may, where appropriate, seek out and designate areas of public lands suitable for concentrated recreational OHV use. Such areas could allow unlimited ATV, motorcycle, and other 4x4 vehicles such as "rock crawlers" under specific management guidelines or prescriptions. These could allow substantial surface disturbance or construction activities to enhance the interest and challenge of the opportunity being provided. The "Open" category may also be appropriate for such areas.

The "Limited" category has the following exemption:

Unless posted otherwise, driving up to 300 feet away from the edge of the road for such leisure-time activities as recovering harvested big game animals, dispersed camping, or picnicking is allowed, in all "limited" category areas as long as it doesn't cause resource damage, create new roads, or impose a safety hazard to others. See definitions below for additional information. This exemption is in addition to the Off-Road driving allowance to perform Necessary Tasks (see "L" below) associated with permitted or authorized activities. This exemption does not apply to Wilderness Study Areas.

3. Closed:

The area is closed to motor vehicles. Access by means other than motor vehicles may be allowed. The Field Manager may only allow motor vehicle access on a case-by-case basis or for emergencies. Decisions to close areas to motorized use must be carefully coordinated with all resource programs such as minerals, range, realty, etc.

B. Establishing OHV Designations

1. Public Involvement – A substantial public involvement process is crucial to the success of OHV designations. Federal, State, county, local agencies, local landowners, OHV users, and the public in general must be involved.
2. Location of Roads and Trails – Approval of an RMP, or a plan revision or amendment, constitutes formal designation of OHV use areas. As quoted from 43 CFR 8342.1, the following apply to the location of roads and trails:
    a. Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability.
    b. Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats.
    c. Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to ensure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors.
    d. Areas and trails shall not be located in designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, aesthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

C. Factors to Consider When Developing OHV Designations

Consider the following when developing OHV designations:

- Are high priority resources such as crucial wildlife habitat present?
- Is visitor use high or low?
- What are the travel and transportation needs in the area?
- Are needs and desires of public land users being met?
- Are threats to important resources present?
- Is there evidence of OHV- related problems?
- Are resource conflicts present?

- Are critical resources such as T&E or WSAs present?
- What are management objectives for the area?
- How would OHV proposals affect activity and experience opportunities in the area?
- What benefits or outcomes would accrue from various options?
- Are other issues or problems present? Noxious weeds, etc?
- Are sufficient data available to support the decision?
- Finally, is it realistic? Are budget and manpower resources sufficient to implement this designation?

D. Priorities for OHV Designations

Field Offices should consider using the designation "Limited to Designated roads and Trails" in high priority areas such as Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs), Crucial Wildlife Winter Ranges, or other areas where the BLM is prepared to provide a more intensive management effort. On the other hand, the designation: "Limited to Existing Roads and Trails" may be more appropriate for Extensive Recreation Management Areas or other areas where the BLM provides a more custodial level of management.

E. OHV Access for Persons with Disabilities

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (PL 93-112 as amended) requires Federal land managing agencies to provide reasonable opportunities for access for persons with disabilities. Accordingly, during hunting seasons, individuals possessing a valid WGFD "Permit for Hunters with Qualifying Disabilities" will be allowed to use an OHV to retrieve harvested big game and trophy game animals in Limited areas beyond the 300 foot travel zone without any additional authorization, providing resource damage or the creation of new roads do not occur.

In addition, Field Managers will consider requests by persons with disabilities for authorization for cross-country travel for the purposes of gaining access to the public lands for recreational purposes. These requests will be considered case by case. Decisions will be based on a combination of factors including need, other available opportunities, resource management considerations, and the assurance that the activity can be carried out without causing resource damage. If OHV use authorizations are granted, the above criteria will be included in the written authorization.

F. Implementation of OHV Designations

The BLM uses several means to implement OHV designations. The first is a signing program in the field sufficient to ensure that the public encounters enough signs to understand the regulations for any given area they may enter. The second is a series of maps and/or brochures designed to portray OHV designations. Third comes enforcement and fourth is monitoring and evaluation.

OHV Signs

Signs are designed to notify the public, in the field, of the OHV designations. They should be easy to understand, inexpensive, durable, and easy to install and replace.

Signs will be <u>standardized</u>. An OHV sign in the Pinedale Field Office must look the same as an OHV sign in the adjacent Kemmerer Field Office. The message on the sign may vary according to the nature of the individual OHV designation but the size, type of substrate, layout, and design should be the same.

Portal signs will be used. At points where access roads leave public highways or County roads and enter areas containing public lands, portal signs that tell what the OHV designation is for that area will be installed. A message such as: "On the public lands in this area, motor vehicle travel is limited to existing roads and trails" will appear on the sign.

For areas designated as "Limited to Existing Roads …" Field Offices will use portal signs only. Individual roads and vehicle routes need not be signed.

For areas designated as "Limited to Designated Roads…" a portal sign will be posted with a message something like: "Motor Vehicle Travel on the Public Lands in This Area is Limited to Roads and Trails Identified with A White Arrow." All designated roads will be identified with signs. The recommended sign is the white arrow. The reason for the white arrow is that it is a simple, recognizable symbol in use in the western United States. It is inexpensive, easy to install and replace, and unobtrusive when installed in the field. White arrows should be placed at entrances and intersections of all designated roads.

For road closures and closed areas, signs that state the rationale for the closure must be posted. The public will usually support reasonable measures to protect lands and resources, but will often rebel against seemingly arbitrary decisions by Federal land management agencies.

The cost to implement and maintain an extensive signing program should be carefully considered during the planning process.

Maps and Brochures

Maps and brochures can provide detailed information to the public about OHV designations. They may eventually be printed on 1:100,000-scale Surface Management Status maps. The goal is for OHV information to be available in all BLM offices throughout the State.

However, there are limitations to the 1:100,000-scale maps. There are 56 of them for the entire State and it is impossible to update and print all of them in any given year or even in several years. The cost of doing so is prohibitive. Roads, land ownership status, and other conditions in the field are constantly changing so the maps will never be completely up to date. In spite of the limitations, the maps are an excellent source of land ownership status and travel information. While they cannot be the only source of information, they are an excellent tool to help the public access and use the public lands.

Brochures for specific areas may also be published. Simple folding color brochures, printed on both sides, can adequately portray OHV designations for specific areas. These are developed by the Wyoming State Office from information provided by Field Offices. They will contain a detailed map, photographs, and narrative information about the area. The advantage of brochures is they are relatively easy to produce, they are inexpensive, and they can be updated quickly to reflect changing conditions in the field.

It is recommended that brochures be completed for priority areas where OHV travel is Limited to Designated Roads and Trails. The reason is this is a fast and inexpensive way to produce and distribute accurate maps for specific road systems. GIS capabilities in the Bureau make it possible for high quality maps and brochures to be developed in-house in a timely manner. Accurate information of this type helps enable enforcement activities.

OHV brochures will use a standard format and design. The brochure includes a description of the designation and a summary of applicable regulations. The base map could be a current 1:100,000 scale topographic map (or as near to that scale as possible) with land ownership status.

Implementation of OHV designations is more complex where a designated road network is specified. For these areas, an accurate road inventory is necessary.

Enforcement

Law enforcement is essential for successful OHV implementation and management. All Federal and State laws that apply to motor vehicle use (including the Wyoming Off-Road Recreational Vehicles Act) are subject to enforcement when OHV designations – which may include closures or restrictions – are developed through RMPs, publication of the Federal Register Notice for the RMP, Record of Decision, is required and is sufficient for legal enforcement.

When the BLM issues an order that closes or restricts the use of public lands, adequate public notification is required. For those orders to be legally enforceable and upheld in court the requirements found in 43 CFR Subpart 8364, Closures and Restrictions, must be followed.

An option for enforcement is for the BLM to enter into cooperative law enforcement agreements with state and local agencies such as the WGFD or the respective county law enforcement agencies. Other western states use these agreements successfully.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring is an integral component of OHV management as discussed in BLM Manual 8342. Field Offices should monitor the effectiveness and appropriateness of the OHV designations.

Monitoring methods can include the use of traffic counters, intercept surveys, aerial flights, the use of remote sensing observation techniques, and other tools but nothing can entirely replace simple field observations. Suggested items to monitor are:

1. User created roads or trails.
2. Effects of OHV use on wildlife.
3. Effects of OHV use on other recreation or resource uses.
4. OHV user conflicts and complaints.
5. Resource damage resulting from OHV use.
6. OHV associated private land conflicts.
7. The effects of allowing holders of a valid Permit for Hunters with Qualifying Disabilities to retrieve big and trophy game kills with an OHV.
8. Trends in the number of OHV violations and incident reports.

G. Education

The Tread Lightly and Operation Respect programs will be included in OHV implementation planning. Field Offices will initiate programs for the public that emphasize responsible OHV-use, respect for the land, resources, and private property rights. Tread Lightly! Inc. is a source of excellent educational materials that promote responsible OHV use. Better knowledge helps the public prepare for trips, enhance safety, and improve motor vehicle etiquette.

The BLM in Wyoming has used the Operation Respect program for over 20 years. This program is a public outreach initiative that promotes respect for both public and private land, provides information on

access to public lands, encourages users to obtain permission from private landowners, and specifies where to get information.

Additional programs such as the BLM's Environmental Education Program, the WGFD's Hunter Stewardship Program, Hunter Safety Education Program, and the Annual Hunting and Fishing Heritage Exposition, should be utilized when possible for BLM OHV program public outreach. The Wyoming Outfitters and Guides Association can also assist the BLM with educating the public about OHV ethics. These and other avenues that promote responsible OHV use should be strengthened.

Information about regulations, penalties, consequences for irresponsible behavior, and potential impacts to resources from inappropriate use will be incorporated into the outreach program. Methods of public outreach include information postings on the BLM's website, brochures, fact sheets, news releases, and radio talk shows.

H. Wilderness Study Areas

Cross country travel by motor vehicle is not allowed in WSAs. Signs, maps, and educational efforts will be used to make the public aware that cross country travel is prohibited in WSA's except as allowed in the "Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review," BLM Handbook H-8550, dated 7/5/95. The 300 foot travel exception which applies to the "limited" category does not apply in WSAs. In addition, the exemption for retrieving harvested big and trophy game animals within 300 feet of an existing road or trail is not allowed in WSAs, nor is the exemption for cross-country travel for hunters with qualifying disabilities. OHV designations for lands in WSAs must conform to the Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review.

I. Coordination with the State of Wyoming

The BLM has entered into a partnership with the State of Wyoming, Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources, Division of State Parks and Historic Sites to share management of a segment of OHV opportunities on the public lands. The State has recently created the Wyoming Off-Road Recreational Vehicle Trails program to provide opportunities and management of ATV and motorcycle trails on the public lands. The State will assist with management by providing funding, maps, and trail building expertise. The BLM provides management expertise, the land base, and enforcement. The program is new but may be the type program needed to help meet the challenges of OHV management in the future.

J. Administrative Use

Off-road travel by BLM employees conducting official business is allowed only for necessary tasks and only if such travel does not cause resource damage or create unauthorized or unplanned roads and trails. Such travel by BLM employees must meet the same standard required of permit holders who are performing necessary tasks in conjunction with their permit or authorization. Fire fighting operations will use existing roads whenever possible.

K. OHV Decisions in Resource Management Plans

OHV designations are made in RMPs. Each decision identifies the affected area and if possible, the roads specified by the decision. If it is not possible to identify individual roads in the RMP decision, they will be identified in implementation plans within 5 years of the completion of the RMP.

The following is a suggested template for RMP Decisions regarding OHV Designations. Each example includes the basic objective, followed by a prescription that defines the actions necessary to meet the

objective. OHV designations will be shown in the RMP, by OHV designation area or planning unit, on 1:100,000 scale (or as near as possible to that scale) topographic maps that show land ownership status.

1. Example of RMP Language Limiting OHV Travel to Existing Roads and Trails

Motor vehicle travel in XYZ area will be Limited to Existing Roads and Trails. (objective) (Prescription)

- Includes all Roads and trails that were in existence when the RMP was approved.
- Portal signs will be placed on main travel routes entering the area from highways or other public roads.
- Maps or brochures showing OHV designations will be published.
- Off-road travel will be allowed up to 300 feet away from roads for dispersed camping, recovering game animals, picnicking, or other uses that do not require specific authorizations or permits as long as resource damage does not occur and new routes are not created.
- Other necessary tasks that require off-road motor vehicle travel may be allowed as long as resource damage does not occur and new routes are not created. They include such activities as, but are not limited to: geophysical exploration, maintaining range improvements, surveying rights-of-way or other work-related tasks authorized by or which lead to the issuance of a permit or authorization. Necessary tasks may be allowed by the field office in advance of issuance of a formal authorization.
- Designation is effective as of the date of RMP approval/Federal Register notice.

2. Additional Language for Seasonal Closure

Motor vehicle travel is open in XYZ area from May 1 to November 30.

- This area is closed to all motor vehicles from December 1 to April 30.
- Non-motorized access/travel is authorized the entire calendar year.
- Seasonal closure to motor vehicle access is necessary to protect big game species on crucial winter range.
- Signs will be placed on all roads entering the seasonal closure area.
- Maps or brochures showing the area will be published.

The above could "overlap" parts or all of other OHV decisions. It may be appropriate to close certain roads seasonally for a variety of resource-related reasons

3. Example of RMP Language Limiting Travel to Designated Roads and Trails

Here is hypothetical RMP language for areas where Field Offices wish to limit travel to a "<u>designated</u>" system of roads and trails. As stated above, this designation is especially appropriate for high priority management areas such as crucial winter range or Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs).

Alternative A. Where we know the road system to be "designated."

Motor Vehicle Travel in XYZ area is limited to a designated network of roads and trails. When implemented, motor vehicle travel will be allowed on all roads designated as open to such travel. All other roads in the area, if any, are closed to motor vehicles.

- Signs will be placed on main travel routes entering the area.
- Signs will be placed on Individual "designated" roads in the area.
- Closed roads will be marked or will be obliterated and reclaimed.
- Maps and/or brochures will be published that show the network of authorized roads and vehicle routes.
- Travel is authorized up to 300 feet away from roads for leisure-time activities such as dispersed camping, recovering game animals, picnicking or other uses that do not require authorizations or permits as long as those activities did not cause resource damage or create new roads.
- Other necessary tasks (usually commercial in nature) that require off-road motor vehicle travel may be allowed as long as resource damage does not occur and new routes are not created. They include such activities as, but are not limited to: geophysical exploration, maintaining range improvements, and surveying rights-of-way or other work-related tasks associated with or which lead to the issuance of a permit or authorization. Necessary tasks may be allowed by the Field Office in advance of issuance of a formal authorization.

Alternative B. Where we have yet to determine the roads to be "designated" at the time the RMP is written and approved.

Motor vehicle travel in XYZ area is limited to a designated network of roads and trails. To determine the authorized road network for the area the BLM will complete an implementation plan within 5 years of completion of this RMP. When implemented, motor vehicle travel will be allowed on all roads and trails designated open to such travel. All other roads in the area, if any, are closed to motor vehicles. Until such time as implementation plans are complete and the designations are established in the field, all motor vehicle travel is limited to existing roads and trails.

- Signs will be placed on main travel routes entering the area.
- Signs will be placed on individual "designated" roads in the area.
- Closed roads will be marked or will be obliterated and reclaimed.
- Maps and/or brochures will be published that show the network of authorized roads and vehicle routes.
- Travel is authorized up to 300 feet away from roads for leisure-time activities such as dispersed camping, recovering game animals, picnicking or other uses that do not require authorizations or permits as long as those activities did not cause resource damage or create new roads.
- Other necessary tasks (usually commercial in nature) that require off-road motor vehicle travel may be allowed as long as resource damage does not occur and new routes are not created. They include such activities as, but are not limited to: geophysical exploration, maintaining range improvements, and surveying rights-of-way or other work-related tasks associated with or which lead to the issuance of a permit or authorization. Necessary tasks may be allowed by the Field Office in advance of issuance of a formal authorization.

4. Example of RMP Language Closing Area to All Motor Vehicle Use

The XYZ area is Closed to All Motor Vehicle Use

- Motor vehicle travel may be allowed for fire fighting and emergencies only.
- Applies to all resource uses.

- Motor vehicle access allowed only by approval of the authorized officer.

5. Example of RMP Language Opening Area to All Motor Vehicle Use

The XYZ area is Open to All Motor Vehicle use under the Following Terms and Conditions:

- OHVs may be operated off-road on the public lands as long as this activity neither causes nor is likely to cause significant, undue damage to or disturbance of the soil, wildlife, wildlife habitat, improvements, cultural, or vegetative resources or other authorized uses of the public lands.

6. Example of RMP Language for Travel Management Planning

Travel management planning is an on-going function at the Field Office level. It includes developing inventories that serve as the basis for travel and transportation decisions. It will address issues such as the need for additional access, additional roads or trails, or the need to upgrade or re-route existing roads, the need to close certain roads or the need to update or change OHV or other travel and transportation-related designations. Travel and transportation decisions will be based on resource management and development needs, public involvement, and coordination with State and local governmental agencies and the general public. It includes motorized, non-motorized, mechanized, equestrian, over-snow, and other modes of travel.

L. Necessary Tasks

Necessary tasks are actions that support commercial or industrial uses of the public lands and which need to be accomplished by a person or organization seeking or holding an authorization from the BLM. These include tasks that are sometimes accomplished without formal written approval or in advance of receiving an authorization. Numerous necessary tasks are authorized by the BLM which require off-road driving.

Managing a livestock grazing operation on the public lands is an example. Fences and other range improvements need to be maintained, salt is placed out for livestock consumption, and sick cattle are attended to. These are typical tasks that are necessary to manage livestock grazing operations authorized under a grazing permit issued by the BLM and which may require off-road travel.

Other examples that may require off-road driving include surveying or staking work associated with filing a Notice of Intent (NOI) to conduct geophysical exploration activities, or field reconnaissance and survey work in advance of a right-of-way action such as a pipeline. In these cases the work done by the proponent leads to the issuance of a permit or authorization and may be authorized after initial contact with the field office. Another example is mineral activities defined as casual use (except in areas designated as Closed) by 43 CFR 3809 – Surface Management Regulations.

II. PLANNING FOR NON-MOTORIZED & NONMECHANICAL TRAVEL

There will always be a need for non-motorized travel and transportation systems on the public lands. This mainly includes opportunities for travel by foot or horseback.

Depending on the management objective, travel by non-motorized means may be preferred. This could be especially true in areas where the management objective is to provide a semi-primitive, non-motorized or primitive experience.

Planning for non-motorized and non-mechanized transportation will be accomplished within the BLM planning system using:

- accepted scientific principles and procedures
- reliable and accurate inventory and monitoring data
- knowledge from local users
- political and financial (budget) realities
- laws, regulations and valid existing rights
- comprehensive public involvement, and
- professional judgment.

III. PLANNING FOR SNOWMOBILE USE OF THE PUBLIC LANDS

Snowmobile trails are managed cooperatively by the State of Wyoming and the landowner or land manager responsible for the lands on which the trails are located. Typically, the USFS or the BLM, under the terms and conditions of a Memorandum of Understanding, authorizes the State of Wyoming to establish and maintain the snowmobile trails.

Decisions regarding the establishment and management of snowmobile trails are made through the BLM planning process.

IV. PLANNING FOR MOUNTAIN BICYCLING ON THE PUBLIC LANDS

Mountain bicycling is recognized as a legitimate recreational use of the public lands. Planning for mountain bicycling will be accomplished within the BLM planning system using:

- accepted scientific principles and procedures
- reliable and accurate inventory and monitoring data
- knowledge from local users
- political and financial (budget) realities
- laws, regulations and valid existing rights
- comprehensive public involvement, and
- professional judgment.

DEFINITIONS

Resource Damage: Defined as leaving signs of vehicle use such as wheel ruts in wet meadows, visual scars on hillsides or soil erosion. Additional examples include surface disturbance that causes the loss of vegetative cover, degradation of wildlife habitat, the creation of new roads, and the introduction of noxious weeds. Damage to vegetation also includes crushing or uprooting trees and shrubs. The determination of whether resource damage has occurred is left to the discretion of Field Managers and law enforcement personnel.

Dispersed Recreation: Recreational activities are considered "dispersed" when they are not dependent on developed facilities such as campgrounds, playgrounds, or developed park areas other than roads and trails. Roads and trails usually serve to disperse recreational activities into undeveloped or back-country settings. User density is often low relative to developed or intensive recreation. Developments such as access points, portal areas, trailheads, staging areas and campgrounds often facilitate dispersed recreation. Activities thought of as examples of dispersed recreation include but are by no means limited to hunting, hiking, and off-highway driving. Dispersed uses, as defined here, are usually non-commercial.

Allowable Off-Road Driving: Certain activities occur on BLM-administered lands that may not require specific authorizations and that may not necessarily cause any appreciable disturbance or damage to the public lands. Recreational activities are examples. Dispersed camping, parking, and picnicking are examples of activities that sometimes require a degree of off-road driving. Dispersed camping in undeveloped areas is an activity that has been allowed on BLM-administered lands since before the BLM came into existence. These are activities that can normally be accomplished within a minimal distance of roads and vehicle trails. Also included is driving off-road to pick up a harvested big game animal.

The public is allowed to pursue these activities up to 300 feet away from roads and trails as long as such activities do not cause resource damage or create new roads or extend existing roads. The existing road system and this off-road travel allowance are designed to accommodate the needs of recreational activities on the public lands. This applies only to all "Limited" designations.

Special circumstances involving specific areas (wilderness study areas) that might require deviation from this standard 300 foot parking area will be signed accordingly.

The authorized officer may approve off-road driving in excess of 300 feet to achieve resource management objectives. For example, a fuel wood harvest area established by a field office may require off-road driving in excess of 300 feet to meet harvest objectives.

Existing Roads and Trails: Are defined as routes existing prior to the date the OHV designation is announced in the Federal Register. These routes may have been constructed and maintained or may be two-track routes created and maintained by the passage of motor vehicles and which receive regular use. Roads and trails may be added, modified, or deleted by the BLM from the inventory through authorizations as needs arise.

Designated Routes: A network of roads and trails specifically identified as the official travel and transportation network for a given area. Designated roads and trails are identified on maps, identified by signs in the field, and may be assigned road numbers for inventory and identification purposes. This may include routes on the official BLM transportation plan that are routinely maintained as well as routes that were user-created and which receive no regular maintenance.

Trails: The term "trails," when used in the phrase "roads and trails" in association with OHV designations means motor vehicle trails only. These include distinct two-track vehicle trails or single-track motorcycle trails which were created by the passage of motor vehicles and which receive continuous use. Cow paths, foot trails, mountain bike trails, and game trails are not motor vehicle trails and motor vehicle travel is not allowed on them. Vehicle traces created by the unauthorized passage of a few motor vehicles are not legal motor vehicle trails.

Mechanical Transport: Any non-motorized vehicle, device or contrivance for moving people or material over land, water, snow, or air that has moving parts. This includes, but is not limited to, sailboats, sailboards, hang gliders, parachutes, bicycles, game carriers, hand carts, wheel barrows, and wagons. The term does not include wheel chairs, nor does it include horses or other pack stock, skis, snow shoes, non-motorized river craft including but not limited to drift boats, rafts, and canoes, or sleds, travois, or similar devices without moving parts. The terms "mechanical transport" and "motor vehicle" are not synonymous.

Off-Road Travel: The term Off-Road Travel, as used here, means travel off of existing roads and trails, or driving cross-country.

Closed Areas: Areas under the "Closed" designation are closed to all motor vehicle use. Motor vehicle access is only allowed for emergencies or by special authorization from the authorized officer.

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS): The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum provides a framework for stratifying and defining classes of outdoor recreation opportunity environments. Possible mixes of activities, settings, and experience opportunities have been arranged along a spectrum; thus: Recreation Opportunity Spectrum. Each of several classes, ranging from primitive to urban is defined in terms of its combination of activity, setting, and experience opportunities. ROS classes become an integral part of management prescriptions for recreation in the RMP.

Recovering Big Game Animals: This involves driving a motor vehicle away from roads or trails open to motor vehicles for the purpose of recovering a harvested big game animal such as an elk or deer. This activity is allowable in "Open" areas any distance and in "Limited" areas up to 300 feet from the road or trail as long as roads are not created or extended and as long as resource damage does not occur. This is not allowed in "Closed" areas.

Categories of Roads and Trails that Exist on the Public Lands: A through C of this list conform to BLM guidelines included in the Pocket Field Guide: Road Standards, Excerpts from BLM Manual Section 9113. The kinds of roads that exist on the public lands are as follows:

a. Collector Road – These roads normally provide primary access to large blocks of public land, and connect with or are extensions of a public road system. Collector roads accommodate mixed traffic and serve many uses. They are generally capable of handling high traffic volumes. Collector roads usually require application of the highest engineering standards used by the BLM. Collector roads receive routine maintenance.

b. Local Roads – These BLM roads normally serve a smaller area than collectors, and connect to collectors or the public road system. Local roads receive lower volumes of traffic, carry fewer traffic types, and generally serve fewer users. Low volume local roads in mountainous terrain, where speeds are reduced, may be single lane roads with turnouts, and may be maintained to a lower standard than collector roads.

c. Resource Roads – These are normally spur roads that provide point access and may connect to local or collector roads. They carry low traffic volumes and accommodate few uses.

The following kinds of travel routes are in use but are not currently described in BLM Manual Section 9113.

a. ATV Trail – A narrow two-track created by or for 4-wheel ATV use. Suitable also for motorcycles, bicycles, and non-motorized means of travel.

b. Motorcycle Trail or Single-track Trail – Often created by the passage of motorcycles. Suitable also for bicycles and non-motorized means of travel.

c. Single-Track Bicycle Trail – Established for use by bicycles. May also be suitable for non-motorized means of travel such as foot or equestrian. A trail designed for bicycles is often unsuitable for motorcycle use.

d. Single-Track Foot or Horseback Trail – Trails established for non-motorized or non-mechanized use only.

COMPREHENSIVE TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT PLANS

Comprehensive Travel and Transportation Management Plans (CTTMP) will be completed within five years of signing the Record of Decision for the Casper Field Office RMP and will address both motorized and non-motorized access. This will be accomplished through a collaborative and community-based process by incorporating internal and external input from cooperating agencies, communities and interest groups. Inventories, monitoring and maintenance intensities will be consistent with the standards terminology defined in WO No. 2006-173 "Implementation of Roads and Trails Terminology Report."

The following language has been included to clarify future planning criteria, and management prescriptions in OHV areas.

Interim Travel and Transportation Management Guidelines for the Casper Field Office RMP

Muscle-powered activities such as hiking, back-packing, and snowshoeing are allowed to occur off existing routes in all OHV use areas except those designated as open.

Limited to Existing or Designated Roads and Trails

1. Roads and trails currently depicted on 1:100,000 scale maps will serve as baseline transportation data sets for the Casper Field Office.
2. These maps will be maintained and updated to reflect database corrections and refined decisions.
3. The inclusion of new routes and existing routes not currently included in the baseline will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis for public use through an environmental analysis process. Routes must meet resource objectives and serve a public need in order to be considered for inclusion.
4. The development or construction of recreational trails will be considered on a case by case basis. Recreational trails may be developed for both non-motorized and motorized uses such as ATVs, snowmobiles, mountain bikes, hiking and equestrian use. Trail specifications will be dependent on the proposed use and resource concerns.
5. Existing or unauthorized routes that are determined to be unduly detrimental to other resources values or pose a threat to public safety will be rerouted or closed whichever, is more appropriate.

Open to OHV Use

1. The Poison Spider OHV Park will continue to be managed for open OHV use.
2. Non-motorized transportation is not allowed.

Closed to OHV Use

1. Both motorized and non-motorized transportation along the National Historic Trails is not allowed.
2. Non-motorized transportation is allowed on other existing trails, unless otherwise indicated at site.
3. The development or construction of new non-motorized recreational trails will be considered on a case-by case basis.

Motorized cross-country or closed-route travel (excluding the National Historic Trails) is allowed to occur *without prior permission* for the following activities:

1. Military, fire, search and rescue, and law enforcement operations for emergency purposes.
2. BLM personnel, agency contractors, performing official business (e.g. prescribed fire, noxious weed control, re-vegetation, surveying, etc.). Where possible, personnel will place a sign or notice in the area they are working in to identify for the public the function authorized to perform.
3. Lessees and permittees performing administrative functions on public lands within the scope of a permit or lease. Some examples of administrative functions include but are not limited to gas and electric utilities monitoring a utility corridor for safety conditions or normal maintenance, accessing a remote communication site for normal maintenance or repair, livestock permittees checking vegetative conditions, building or maintaining fences, delivering salt and mineral supplements, moving livestock, checking wells, or pipelines as part of implementation of the grazing permit or lease, and scientific groups under contract for resource assessments or research. This provision does not preclude modifying permits or leases to limit motorized cross-country travel during further site specific analysis to meet resource management objectives or standards and guidelines.