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Coronado Forest Service
Jennifer Ruyle, Forest Planner

The Tucson Rough Riders would like to submit the following comments on the Coronado National Forest Working Draft Land and Resource Management Plan.

Access

Add to Objectives

We believe that public access is one of the most important issues concerning our public lands. As recreationalists we have lost countless access points into our public lands and believe this should be a number one priority with this plan. We believe that access issues should be considered and possibly plan for permanent access where possible.

We also believe that any permanent access that is now on the Forest property should stay that way, we can't continue to lose access and still be able to use our public lands.

Construct roads to provide access to areas where access is needed or presently blocked by private property and where access can be negotiated.

Guidelines

Permittees should only have exclusive use of a road under permit grants but for no other reason, unless that road is open to the public.

Possibly remove incentives for private property owners to block access to the Forest and eliminate their ability to profit from exclusive access, such as exclusive hunting permits. This might keep some private property owners from blocking access.

Motorized Transportation System

Desired Conditions

We would like to have the following added:

Include long distance loop rides with varying levels of challenges. These can be managed with manmade obstructions and education of the users.

Unneeded roads should be looked at carefully. When removing any roads the impact will be greater on other roads. Leaving more roads open will also help with recreation in the future.

Maintenance of level 2 roads does not necessarily need to be done as often as other level roads. Look at more volunteer partnerships to keep roads passable.

The Forest Service needs to look at what might be required in the future for roads. Consider Administrative level instead of closing the roads. These roads could be opened in the future as needed for growth.

Guidelines

Could a road ever be reopened if it was closed? Is there a status that might be developed for this possibility?

We do not believe budget constraints be an issue inclosing roads.

Standards

Add standards for performing maintenance.

Look at road maintenance agreements with government agencies and private organizations to supplement Forest Service funded maintenance.

Consider grants for some road maintenance, when applicable.

Management Approaches

Primary purpose of the road system is to provide access to the forest and should be identified in the management process.

Again, look at developing partnerships with organizations for road maintenance, consultation and public outreach.

Wilderness Areas

We find this the least important issue when access is dwindling we certainly do not need to incorporate more areas of deigned access.

If wilderness has to be considered, follow all of the rules that have been established such as no signs of man and actual roadless areas.

Wild Backcountry/Roaded Backcountry

These are misleading titles and should be changed or have multiple use added to it to make sure that wild backcountry motorized areas remain and do not get treated as wilderness.

This land use zone is managed for a range of dispersed motorized and non-motorized uses. Areas are managed to retain the natural character and recreation settings while limiting the level and type of development. This zone offers recreational opportunities in the semi-primitive to roaded natural recreation opportunity spectrum. Roaded Backcountry makes up 623,400 acres, or about 35%, of the Coronado NF.

Santa Catalina Ranger District

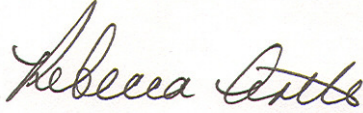
The following roads should possibly titled something other than Back Country such as Motorized Access Corridors. The following roads located north of Redington Road and east of Agua Caliente Canyon are more characteristic of the Roaded Backcountry zone than Wild Backcountry zone: FR 4321/4322, FR 6614, FR 4315, FR 4313, FR 4314, FR 4320FR 4326, FR 4340, FR 4304, FR 4300, FR 4331, FR 4329, and FR 4330. These roads are largely included in the current Forest Service Redington Pass Backcountry Touring Area, provide access to destinations such as Chimney Rock, and should remain available for OHV recreation.

Final comments

All roads presently providing access to the forest shall be kept open. Within ten years of plan approval there shall be opened not less than nine additional points of permanent legal access where roads exist but such access is presently not available.

The Tucson Rough Riders and the Arizona State Association of 4 Wheel Drive Clubs are available to help in any way that we can to ensure that we maintain access to our public lands.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Antle", is written over a light-colored rectangular background.

Rebecca Antle

Land Use Chair Tucson Rough Riders

President/Legislative Liaison Arizona State Association of 4 Wheel Drive Clubs