

Shoshone National Forest
North Zone Travel Management Field Visit: LINE CREEK
August 5, 2015

Participants:

Dustin Rosencrans – Northwest Wyoming OHV Club (NWWOHV)
John Fraser – NWWOHV
Dick Beery – NWWOHV
Howard Sanders – Backcountry Horsemen
Josh Milek – WY State Trails
Jenny DeSarro – Greater Yellowstone Coalition

Shoshone National Forest Participants:

Sue Stresser – North zone District Ranger
Julie Lyons – North zone Recreation Staff Lead
Ron Ostrom – Law Enforcement Office, north zone
Doug Johnston – North zone ATV Ranger
Olga Troxel – Planning, GIS

Purpose:

The purpose of the field visit was to look at a proposed motorized loop on the Clarks Fork District of the Shoshone National Forest. The proposal, made by Backcountry Horsemen and NW Wyoming OHV Alliance, could potentially connect Line Creek with Little Rock Creek using a combination of system roads and unclassified (non-system) routes.

Participants met at the Clark Fire Station parking lot, looked at maps and Sue discussed the options based on her reconnaissance of the area. The rest of the day was spent driving or walking in the Line Creek and Little Rock Creek drainages.

Discussion Points:

Discussion about the Route

There was much discussion about the possible routes and avoiding the private land. The area is open and mostly accessible. There would need to be trail construction to tie in the existing roads and 2-tracks. There was concern about elk using the area and of increased hunting pressure with access.

Unauthorized Use

A number of unauthorized roads were visible during the field trip. Most have been signed as closed but signs get removed and these routes continue to be used, especially during hunting season. Where there's no natural barrier or terrain is open it's tough to keep users out.

Suggestions

Josh said a section of buck and rail fence with a closed sign could be a deterrent. It worked on Washakie District but not on Wind River.

Ron Ostrom pointed out that we need the public to help report illegal use.

Dustin feels fines should vary. For example should be higher for breeching a closure gate vs. riding on a road signed as closed.

Summary:

Representatives of the Northwest Wyoming OHV group said this proposed route might be OK during shoulder seasons but too hot, dry, and exposed for summer. They are interested in developing routes in other areas. More challenging and in higher elevation, more forested areas such as Cottonwood proposal. They asked if agreeing to the Line/Little Rock Creek loops would mean foregoing other potential motorized routes. Sue explained that at this early stage in the process we are accepting proposals and considering everything within forest plan side boards. She also mentioned that proposals are not limited to new routes but could involve closing problem areas.