

Shoshone National Forest Travel Management
Request for Public Input
Comment Form

Ranger District: Wind River

Comments on Current Proposals

1. Which proposal are you commenting on?

WR-03, WR-08, WR-11, and WR-28

2. Provide comments below on the proposal: (continue on back if needed)

Please be specific and provide rationale for your position. In other words why do you like or dislike about the proposal.

As much as I am in favor of supporting a loop trail from Town near the rodeo grounds thru the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission Lands to Salt Barrel Park , Moon Lake, and back thru the Upper Little Warm Spring Subdivision on private subdivision and County roads, I am not in favor of rewarding illegal behavior by making user created routes now legitimate motorized trails (it sets a bad precedent now and for future travel management planning). So I don't want to see the WR-03 proposal go forward. I am not sure how you would keep the users on just the designated route in that wide-open meadow west of and below Windy Mountain. The closed road to Windy Mountain electronic facilities also currently provides a non-motorized access for horseback riders that park adjacent to the FSR 554 just inside the forest boundary or ride from the adjacent Upper Little Warm Springs Subdivision. For those of us that cherish the solitude from others beyond the motorized areas, especially during the fall and late season elk hunting seasons, this area begins to provide that right behind it gate. If we reduce these closed areas by opening them up to motorized access during this travel management planning process, then those of us who like this kind of non-motorized experience in the "front country" will be crowded into fewer and fewer of them; thus defeating their attraction and function.

I am also not in favor of the WR-11 proposal for some of the same reasons listed above. This motorized user created route very much disturbed the only non-motorized route to Moon Lake. There was a non-system horse trail that even the Forest Service used to get to Moon Lake and the Simpson Lake area in the Fitzpatrick Wilderness that paralleled the west side of Batchelor Creek at its intersection with FSR 554 and joined the now MT13 exactly where the user created ATV trail and the proposed WR-11 does. But since the illegal users started driving on the closed route to the old tie-hack slab pile site and pioneering it farther south on to the horse trail, the horse trail riders have stop using this route.

There currently exists a loop motorized trail from town to back to town via FSR 554 (Wildcat road), FSR 263 (Union Pass road), FSR 531 (Moon Lake road), MT14, and FSR 524 (Salt Barrels Park road) and I realize that it is a very long route. So to have a shorter loop and have two loop options for ORV users to pick from, I would support the WR-28 proposal to construct a connection between the end of FSR 554.1Q and either the road to the Moon Lake road cow camp (FSR 531.1A) or FSR 531 somewhere in the vicinity of the Moon Lake cow camp road. My support for this proposal is contingent on gaining access thru private land near the rodeo grounds in town to access Wyoming Game and Fish Commission lands in the Whiskey Basin WHMA. It should also be the Forest Service's position to only proceed with only one of these proposals (WR-28, WR-03, or WR-11), if that access thru private land near town is acquired.

In addition, and because part of the proposal involves motorized travel on the Whiskey Basin WHMA managed by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department for winter range and it has seasonal restrictions on motorized travel on their road to the forest boundary and FSR 524 from December 1 thru May 15, a closure should be applied to these segments of this proposed loop. Granted, most of the higher elevation portions of this proposed loop will not be passable most years until after May 15th so the possibility of accessing these seasonally closed areas on the Game and Fish Habitat Unit from the backside would be low most years, but there are always those dry, low snow years when that could occur and it could occur more often if WR-03 is implemented. The Little Warm Springs, Windy Mountain, Grandy Reservoir, and Batchelor Creek areas are used by elk as calving areas and from a maintenance and sedimentation stand point those routes in this area could stand to have time to dry out before motorized use occurs, so I would propose a seasonally closure on these roads and routes that would comprise this loop system to be closed to wheeled motorized travel from April 1 thru May 31st.

For the same reasons above for WR-03, I am not in favor the WR-08 proposal. However the road into Grandy Reservoir from FSR 554 has never been gated in the 23 years that I have lived here. There has been the old sign with the red slash over a jeep on a tree at the entrance to this road. It has been driven on for access to the reservoir control structure on the reservoir dam by the special use permittee, by contractors for timber harvest, a by nearly everyone else that has seen that road. There is not much that can be damaged by driving on this road, it is very rocky in most portions of the road to the reservoir. I would suggest that it be classified as an open road on the MVUM and added to the ORV Map as a enrolled road, but only to the reservoir and not beyond.

Mark Hinschberger