

Shoshone National Forest Travel Management

Request for Public Input

Comment Form

November 7, 2015

Ranger Districts: Wapiti, Clark's Fork, and Greybull Ranger Districts

To whom this concerns:

The Shoshone National Forest is a very beautiful and expansive forest but offers limited opportunities to enjoy that beauty using OHV's. Unfortunately, it seems that many OHV-accessible roads are being shut down, which in turn diminishes the opportunities even more. Due to this situation and the grizzly issues, our family has spent more time on the Big Horn Forest - but we utilize the Shoshone Forest when we can. Some of the areas we've enjoyed include: Kirwin, Morrison Jeep Trail, Sunlight Basin.

We feel the Shoshone National Forest (SNF) is strongly in need of challenging yet high quality OHV trails for 50", 70" and motorcycle single tracks to meet the needs of ever-growing numbers of OHV users. Having to ride on existing paved roads increases the danger and number of automobile/truck vs OHV accidents.

There are huge funding options for trail improvements and maintenance which the SNF could and should utilize, and allowing motorized use on these non-motorized trails would help bring this about.

We would like to give our support to the following areas for these improvements:

NZ-03 Morrison Jeep Trail:

Seasonal gate closure relocation above the lower switchbacks would allow year round access to one of the most challenging and rewarding SNF roads for all users.

NZ-04 Little Sunlight OHV Trailhead:

This would mitigate conflicts by allowing more area for OHV users, a restroom, and Kiosk. Currently, we believe that horse users have a conflict with motorized users when OHV users have to use the restroom already provided in the area.

NZ-05 Clarks Fork Wild and Scenic River Closures:

We do not recommend or support this unless 50" motorized trails are created in the same area by closing portions of 178.1B, and then bank the miles to create looped 50" trail opportunities (see below) while also minimizing use of the highway and highway ditches:

- 178 to 178.1B
- 178.1A to 165
- 109.1 to 166
- 166 to Pilot Road 117

NZ-07 Sweetwater and NZ-08 Elk Fork Closures:

We do not recommend or support these closures if resource damage is the main reason for closure, and if this is the case, OHV funding needs to be used in these areas to repair them. Another option is to change sections of these roads to 70" motorized trails that allow for lighter and smaller OHV users to use the area. The 70" trails require less maintenance, and allow younger members to use this area while still maintaining access for hunters, fishermen, and general recreational users.

CARTER MOUNTAIN AREA**NZ-10 Looped Trail Construction:**

Constructing this looped trail will provide a high-quality 70" trail that does not currently exist in the North Zone. It is much needed to meet the needs of OHV users, as well as families and friends of all ages to enjoy this looped trail.

WOOD RIVER/KIRWIN AREA**NZ-12 Dick Creek/Timber Creek and NZ-13 Aspen Trail 653 or 677**

This trail will utilize the existing trail network with very little construction and maintenance, while providing a high-quality motorcycle single track experience that does not yet exist in the North Zone. This will create a looped trail accessible during the low usage summer months while minimizing resource issues, and also minimizing wildlife and horse interactions.

NZ-13 X Country Trail:

This will provide for a high-quality 50" or 70" trail network of looped trails of varying challenges and lengths. It will also provide a high-quality network of motorized trails for families to enjoy with their kids, grandparents, grandkids, parents, etc., on side-by-sides or small ATV's or dirt bikes. It is a win/win solution for the area as it will also help with trail maintenance for the winter snow skiers.

GOOSEBERRY/GRASS CREEK AREA**NZ-14 Trail 213.3B to Rd 218:**

This trail will provide a high-quality 70" trail that does not exist in the North Zone. It will utilize the existing trail network with very little construction and maintenance while creating a motorized looped trail longer than 10 miles. It climbs through the trees with challenges and spectacular views of the area, with minimal conflict and other issues.

NZ-14 Trail 213.3A Looped Trail Connector:

This connector will provide a high-quality 50" or 70" experience that does not exist in the North Zone. This trail would provide a challenging opportunity with low maintenance, utilizing existing logging roads and new construction. This will create an 8 mile looped trail through the trees.

NZ-14 Road 260 Connector Loop:

This excellent road currently exists but is not open to the public. Very little work is needed to provide a looped route, and also be a great camping area and base camp for hunters and families to enjoy the excellent resource.

Thank you for allowing us to submit our comments. We feel the SNF has done an excellent job in involving the public in this process and appears to be open to and respectful of opinions and comments from every sector. We appreciate your time and efforts and hope that all concerns can be meshed and blended to the satisfaction of all parties concerned.

Respectfully submitted,

Philip, Toby and Skylar Sheets

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