

U.S. Forest Service - News Release

Black Hills National Forest • Public Affairs Office • 1019 N. 5th Street
Custer, SD 57730 • Voice (605) 673-9216 • Web: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/blackhills/>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Tom Willems 605.673.9200

Black Hills National Forest will be asking for public comments on an initial proposal to designate off-highway vehicle routes and areas

Custer, SD — After over three years of public involvement and input on a new travel management rule for the Black Hills National Forest, officials are ready to present the first draft of a potential system of routes and areas.

Interested people are invited to attend one or more meetings scheduled in September to review draft maps of the preliminary proposal for the transportation system on public lands administered by the Forest Service in the Black Hills.

The meetings are scheduled from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the following locations:

Sundance, WY – September 10, 2007 (Monday)
Crook County Courthouse, 309 Cleveland Street

Rapid City, SD – September 11, 2007 (Tuesday)
Best Western Ramkota Hotel (Rushmore Room)
2111 North LaCrosse Street

Spearfish, SD – September 12, 2007 (Wednesday)
Wilbur S. Tretheway Pavilion, 115 South Canyon Street

Custer, SD – September 13, 2007 (Thursday)
Crazy Horse Memorial (Mountain View Room)
Avenue of the Chiefs

A slide presentation on the proposal will begin at 7:00 p.m. each evening. The public will then have an opportunity to review and comment on the maps in small groups between 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Comments concerning the scope of analysis must be received 60 days after the Notice of Intent (proposal) is published in the Federal Register, expected to begin in early September. The draft environmental impact statement (EIS) is expected to be released in early 2008, at which time there will be another public comment period, with a final EIS and decision later in 2008.

Public feedback during this formal public scoping period will help refine important travel issues and develop alternatives to the transportation system that will be further evaluated through the environmental impact assessment process (NEPA process).

The final travel plan will designate which roads, trails, and areas on National Forest System lands within the Black Hills National Forest are open to motorized travel. The final travel plan will be published as a Motorized Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) that will depict routes and areas open to motorized travel. The MVUM will be available to the public and will be the primary tool used to determine compliance and enforcement with motorized vehicle use designations on the ground. Those existing routes, other user-created routes, and areas not designated open on the MVUM will be legally closed to motorized travel. The decisions on motorized travel do not include non-motorized and over-snow travel.

Draft maps and other information concerning Black Hills National Forest travel plan will be available in early September at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/blackhills/recreation/travelmanagement/ohv.shtml>. If you would like to be on the Black Hills National Forest Travel Management mailing list please email: r2_blackhills_webinfo@fs.fed.us or call (605) 673-9200 with your mailing address.

For more information visit our website at www.fs.fed.us/r2/blackhills