



## USDA Forest Service Stanislaus NF Travel Management Planning

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The Stanislaus National Forest (STF) is actively engaged in managing its transportation system and access for the public and partners. The Forest is guided by the Travel Management Rule (36 CFR Part 212) and the Forest Service Manuals and Handbooks (7700). The objectives of transportation planning are to:

- provide access to recreation facilities and opportunities and access for resource management including fire protection and suppression; and
- maintain a system that is affordable and manageable while meeting the management needs of the Forest.

### **Background**

In 2004, the Chief of the Forest Service identified four threats to our National Forests. One of these threats was unmanaged recreation. In November 2005, the Forest Service published travel management regulations in the *Federal Register* that provide a national framework for forests and grasslands to use in designating sustainable systems of roads, trails, and areas for motor vehicle use. The goal of the Travel Management Rule is to secure a wide range of recreation opportunities while ensuring the best possible care of the land. See Forest Service PSW Region website for more information: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/r5/recreation/travelmanagement>.

The Travel Management Rule and subsequent manual direction and handbooks directed the Forests to do three things:

- Subpart A - identify a minimum transportation system which would meet the needs of the Forest management and public and partner access;
- Subpart B - prohibit cross country travel and designate a system of roads and trails for public access; and
- Subpart C - designate trails and areas for snowmobile use.

The Chief directed the Forests to complete Subpart B by 2010, complete Subpart A by 2015, and at the discretion of the Forest Supervisor, complete Subpart C. When complete, each national forest and grassland should have a unique public motorized system based on:

- local interests;
- high quality, sustainable recreation opportunities;
- natural resources; and
- transportation management budgets

### **Current Status**

The Forest has completed Subpart B and designated a system of roads and trails that provide access to a variety of recreational activities including camping, hunting, fishing, mountain bike riding, and off highway vehicles. The Forest was litigated in 2010 and is working on completion of a settlement agreement. Other work will need to be completed but has yet to be determined by the court. There was no stay of the decision; recreational access continues under the November 2009 decision. Motor Vehicle Use Maps (MVUMs) are published annually which inform the forest visitor where and when they can access their national forest.

Subpart A - identification of the minimum system is in its preliminary stages of setting up the analysis and gathering data. Public involvement is expected to begin in late Fall of 2014. Individual planning projects, including the Rim Fire Recovery analyses, continue to evaluate the transportation needs and adjust the transportation system as needed for access and management activities.

Subpart C - analysis is conducted at the discretion of the Forest Supervisor. Eleven national forests in Region 5 were litigated in 2012 regarding their snow grooming programs. As part of the settlement, five national forests, including the Stanislaus will be conducting NEPA to analyze the effects of snow grooming on the environment. This analysis is expected to get underway in late fall 2014 and be completed by 2016. Snowmobile travel on the Stanislaus is still allowed anywhere there is 12 inches of snow or more. Snow trail grooming continues on Highway 4 and 108 where over 60 miles of trails are groomed annually when snow conditions allow.

For more information see the STF Motorized Travel Management webpage:  
[http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/stanislaus/home/?cid=fsm91\\_057731](http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/stanislaus/home/?cid=fsm91_057731)