

## **Clearwater Travel Management MVUM Questions & Answers**

### **Where can I get a MVUM?**

The MVUM is posted on the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests website at [<http://www.fs.usda.gov/nezperceclearwater>]. Hard copies are also available, free of charge, at all District and Supervisor offices. Many sporting goods stores in local communities may also have these maps available. District Offices adjacent to the Clearwater National Forest (Lolo, Bitterroot, and Idaho Panhandle) will also have hard copies available. Other partners and distribution locations may be developed over time to help disseminate maps.

### **What does a MVUM show me?**

The MVUM shows the National Forest System (NFS) roads, NFS trails, and the areas on NFS lands that are designated for motor vehicle use. The map also identifies the types of vehicles that are allowed on each route and in each area and any seasonal restrictions that apply. Other public roads are shown for information purposes only.

### **What was not put on the map and why?**

MVUMs do not show NFS roads and NFS trails that do not allow motor vehicle use. They also do not show topographic lines or streams. All of these features are linear features like designated routes. It would be difficult to differentiate between non-motorized routes, topographic lines, and streams and designated routes.

### **Why do I need a visitor map, or topographic map, when the MVUM is free?**

The MVUM is not intended to be a navigational tool. It also does not display all the features shown on a visitor map or topographic map. The single purpose of the MVUM is to identify those NFS roads, NFS trails, and areas on NFS lands that are open to the public for motor vehicle use.

You may also reference the states electronic trail maps as a complimentary navigational tool at [www.trails.idaho.gov](http://www.trails.idaho.gov)

### **What do you mean by vehicle class or type?**

Vehicle class refers to certain categories of motor vehicles. The following are typical vehicle class route designations of the Clearwater National Forest:

- Roads open to highway legal vehicles only
- Trails open to ATVs and motorcycles (two-track)
- Trails open to all vehicles, including highway legal vehicles
- Trails open to motorcycles only (single track)

Some examples of vehicle classes or types of highway legal motor vehicles, motor vehicles 50 inches or less in width, all-terrain vehicles, and motorcycles.

- **VEH** = all motor vehicles over 50 inches wide measured at their widest point. This category includes UTVs like the Yamaha Rhino, Polaris Ranger and RZR and similar vehicles regardless of width since these vehicles do not meet the definition of an ATV.
- **MOT** = means all two-wheel motor vehicles like motorcycles, trail bikes, dirt bikes, etc.
- **ATV** = all motor vehicles with three or more wheels or with tracks that are less than 50 inches wide measured at their widest point, with a saddle-style seat that is straddled by the operator and steered with handlebars. Any towed trailer must also meet the 50 inch width limit measured at its widest point. UTVs do not meet the definition of an ATV and cannot be used except where VEH are permitted.
- **OVER SNOW** = any track drive motor vehicle designed exclusively for over-snow travel and operated entirely on snow. Other track driven vehicles like ATVs or ATVs fitted with removable tracks are generally considered summer vehicles and are governed by restrictions on the MVUM. They are considered over-snow vehicles only when operated entirely on snow and after November 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **What is a highway legal vehicle and how do I go about making my vehicle highway legal?**

A highway-legal vehicle is any motor vehicle that is licensed or certified under state law for general operation on all public roads in the state. Operators of highway-legal vehicles are subject to state traffic law, including requirements for operator licensing. To determine if your vehicle is highway legal contact your state police or state DMV.

## **What are road maintenance levels and how do those affect open vs. closed roads?**

Forest Service roads are divided into 5 maintenance levels. These are:

- Level 1 – Closed to vehicular traffic but may be available and suitable for non-motorized uses.
- Level 2 – Open to high clearance vehicles.
- Level 3 – Assigned to roads open and maintained for travel by a prudent driver in a standard passenger car. User comfort and convenience are not considered priorities. Roads in this maintenance level are typically low speed with single lanes and turnouts.
- Level 4 – Assigned to roads that provide a moderate degree of user comfort and convenience at moderate travel speeds. Most roads are double lane and aggregate surfaced. However, some roads may be single lane. Some roads may be paved and/or dust abated.
- Level 5 – Assigned to roads that provide a high degree of user comfort and convenience. These roads are normally double lane, paved facilities.

## **What is the fine for violations?**

Violations of 36 CFR 261.13 are subject of a fine up to \$5,000 and/or 6 months imprisonment (18 U.S.C. 3571(e)).

## **How far can I park off a designated route?**

You may park a motor vehicle on the side of the road when it is safe to do so without causing damage to NFS resources or facilities, unless prohibited by state law, a traffic sign, or an order. Parking is allowed within one vehicle length, or within a specified distance of up to 30 feet, from the edge of the road surface. The MVUM will indicate the distance from the route that motor vehicles may be driven for the purpose of dispersed camping.

## **Can I camp on the side of the road with my RV, 5th wheel or pop-up camper?**

You may camp with a motor vehicle in dispersed camping sites. The MVUM will indicate the distance from the route that motor vehicles may be driven for the purpose of dispersed camping.

## **How does this impact big game retrieval?**

Big game retrieval with a motor vehicle is allowed only where the big game retrieval symbol is displayed on the MVUM. The MVUM will indicate the distance from the route that motor vehicles may be driven for the purpose of big game retrieval.

When a big game animal has been legally taken, the individual who legally took the animal may drive or be driven to the downed animal. Under no circumstances may a second vehicle be used to retrieve the animal. The vehicle driven to the animal should be of sufficient capacity that only one trip is necessary. The number of individuals who participate in the retrieval is limited only by the vehicle's capacity, and the willingness of others to walk to and from the downed animal.

## **How does this impact other activities like firewood gathering, mushrooming, and hunting?**

Activities taking place under a special permit, such as firewood gathering, mineral permits, Christmas tree cutting, range allotment activities, and others are managed by a permit system. If the permit does not specify that motor vehicles are allowed for that activity, then using a motor vehicle to carry out such activities is governed by the Motor Vehicle Use Map. If the permit specifies that motor vehicle use can occur in certain areas or on roads or trails closed to motor vehicle use by the public, the permit holder is authorized to use motor vehicles as required in the permit. Be sure that you are carrying the permit with you and abide by all stipulations outlined in the permit while carrying out that permitted activity.

## **Is a wheelchair a motor vehicle?**

A wheelchair or mobility device, including one that is battery powered that is designed solely for use by a mobility impaired person for locomotion, and that is suitable for use in an indoor pedestrian area is not considered to be a motor vehicle (36 CFR 261.2).

## **Does the MVUM also show mechanized and non-motorized trails and over-snow uses?**

Over-the-snow Motor Vehicle Use Maps are the parallel regulatory map to the MVUM for winter travel on the Clearwater National Forest. These use areas are displayed separate from the MVUM, on the other side of that map.

## **Are there any ‘play areas’ or areas open to cross-country motorized travel?**

No. The Clearwater National Forest does not have any areas designated for cross-country motorized travel. All motorized travel must occur on designated routes as shown on the MVUM.

## **Why are some routes only open during certain times of the year?**

Some routes or areas may be open only during certain times of the year for various reasons such as to reduce wildlife disturbance, protect users from unsafe or impassable conditions, reduce conflict between users, and to reduce impacts to other resource values.

## **Are there road and trail route marker signs on the ground?**

Every reasonable attempt has been made that routes designated for motor vehicle use are appropriately marked with route marker signs. However, some routes may be missing route markers due to vandalism, severe weather, maintenance schedules, etc.

Travel management signs indicating motor vehicle closures, restrictions, or the prohibition of cross-country motor vehicle travel are not required for enforcement of the MVUM. Travel management signs may be used in addition to the MVUM to draw attention to the prohibition such as:

- In trespass or other problem areas with poor compliance from the public
- For educational purposes when the restriction or prohibition is new to the public
- When a route has been open historically to motor vehicles
- To avoid confusion with other prohibitions on non-motorized, mechanized or over snow use.
- To provide reassurance to the public as needed

Routes designated for motor vehicle use are identified on the MVUM. The MVUM is an enforcement tool to ensure that individuals are on the correct route. It is the responsibility of the user to determine if they are on a route designated for the motor vehicle being used, whether a route marker is present or not.

## **How does the MVUM impact access to my favorite camping site?**

Developed (including fee) campgrounds on the Clearwater National Forest will continue to be open as in previous years. Most have gates that will be closed at the end of the summer-fall recreation season, and not re-opened until the next spring when facilities such as water pumps and toilets have received maintenance and are ready to use.

The Forest has made an effort to identify spur roads to dispersed (i.e., non-campground) campsites, and to show those roads on the MVUM. This effort is on-going, but in general, there has been no change in where and how you can access dispersed campsites when there is an existing road that accesses those sites – so your favorite ‘car camping’ site is still open for camping so long as there is a track accessing it off of a main road that is still open for public use. We encourage you to let the Forest know about those sites which might not be identified with an open route on the current MVUM, in order to help us to identify those roads, and keep your favorite campsites open for public use. If you have questions about camping, please contact the Ranger District on which you are planning on camping.

## **How does the MVUM impact firewood gathering and other permit activities?**

Activities taking place under a special permit, such as firewood gathering, mineral permits, Christmas tree cutting, range allotment activities, and others are managed by a permit system. If the permit does not specify that motor vehicles are allowed for that activity, then using a motor vehicle to carry out such activities is governed by the Motor Vehicle Use Map. If the permit specifies that motor vehicle use can occur in certain areas or on roads or trails closed to motor vehicle use by the public, the permit holder is authorized to use motor vehicles as required in the permit. Be sure that you are carrying the permit with you and abide by all stipulations outlined in the permit while carrying out that permitted activity.

## **Where can I find State of Idaho laws and regulations governing motorized vehicles?**

Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV) traveling off-road on public lands falls under the State of Idaho’s off-highway vehicle laws (<http://www.atvsafety.gov/state/idaho.html>). OHV Education information is also available at the web site. Highway-legal vehicles (e.g, registered and licensed passenger cars and trucks, and licensed OHVs, ATV’s and motorcycles – driven by a licensed driver) are also defined by Idaho law and the laws governing them must be followed on National Forest Service roads. This includes regulations such as driver licensing, child-seat use, seatbelt laws, and all other laws governing vehicles on roads within the state of Idaho.

## **When will the MVUM become enforceable?**

The MVUM becomes enforceable when the map has been posted to the Web and is available to the public in a hard copy format.

**After MVUMs are available to the public in map form and on the web, what will be the USFS enforcement strategy?**

When new regulations are posted, the Forest Service provides some time to educate the public about the specifics of the regulation. A law enforcement officer contact with the public is a great opportunity to provide information education and create awareness about MVUMs. However, law enforcement officers can issue a notice of violation any time after the MVUM is publically available.

**Will the MVUM be updated?**

A requirement of the Travel Management Rule is that the MVUM be updated annually. Any changes made as a result of Access and Travel Management plans during the year will be updated on the next MVUM.