

## Transportation Planning

10-28-2010

### Background

In fulfilling our mission as a public land management agency, one of BLM's greatest challenges is providing reasonable and varied access routes to and through public lands for a variety of activities. Considerations for various landscapes, user interests, equipment options, weather conditions, transportation infrastructure, and resource constraints are incorporated through travel management planning.

Section 1507(a) of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act (OPLMA) of 2009 states that "...the Secretary shall...prepare 1 or more travel management plans for motorized and mechanized off-highway vehicle recreation for the land managed by the Bureau of Land Management in the County." Section 1507(c) of the OPLMA states that "...the plan shall limit recreational motorized and mechanized off-highway vehicle use to a system of designated roads and trails established by the plan." Until a Travel Management Plan (TMP) is completed for Owyhee County, Section 1507(d) of the OPLMA restricts all recreational, motorized and mechanized off-highway vehicle use to roads and trails lawfully in existence on the day before the date of enactment of the OPLMA.

The BLM Boise District (BDO) is initiating the preparation of a single TMP for the portion of Owyhee County located within the BDO. The decisions from the existing Hemingway, Wilson Creek and Murphy travel plans will be incorporated into this single TMP and therefore, will not be reviewed during this process. Wilderness access needs will be addressed separately in the Wilderness Management Plans. Scoping for the wilderness planning process will begin in the spring of 2011.

Due to its proximity to the Treasure Valley, Idaho's fastest growing metropolitan area, Northern Owyhee County is experiencing increased demand for outdoor recreational opportunities. In 2004, the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR)<sup>1</sup> found that 52% of people questioned participated in OHV recreation. From 2003 to 2007, motorcycle and All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) registrations increased 62% in Idaho. IDPR found that during the same period recreation use increased 57% in Ada, Adams, Boise, Canyon, Elmore, Gem, Owyhee, Payette, Valley, and Washington counties in the southwest Idaho.<sup>1</sup>

Owyhee County is located in southwest Idaho and contains approximately 2.8 million acres of BLM-administered public land within the Boise District. This area, which will be the focus of the travel planning effort, is bounded on the west by Oregon, on the south by Nevada and the Duck Valley Indian Reservation, on the north by the Snake River, and on the east by the Bruneau

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<sup>1</sup> Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. 2007. Idaho motorbike/ATV/UTV registration statistics 2003-2007. 1 pg. available at: [http://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/datacenter/recreation\\_statistics.aspx](http://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/datacenter/recreation_statistics.aspx).

River. Most of the public land in this area occurs in large blocks, with only a few scattered or isolated parcels.

### **Public Meetings**

The BLM is hosting meetings to provide the public an opportunity to review the transportation maps that will be used as the basis for developing the final TMP. BLM will be seeking information on:

1. The level and type of use of the routes on the maps;
2. Routes that may exist, but are not shown on the maps;
3. Routes on the maps that either do not exist or should not be included.
4. Issues and concerns that the public would like addressed during the transportation planning process.

This TMP will specifically address all motorized off-highway routes, including single track routes.

### **How You Can Comment**

The public meetings will use an informal “open house” format during which you can view hard-copy and electronic maps and provide comments directly. In addition to these meetings you have the opportunity to review these maps:

- on the web at [http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/fo/owyhee/travel\\_management.html](http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/fo/owyhee/travel_management.html), and provide comments.
- Geo-Referenced PDF (requires Adobe Acrobat) on CD. Please contact TJ Clifford at 208 384-3459 if you do not have internet access and would like to request a CD.

Please remember that these base maps were developed for planning purposes only and may not be completely accurate at this time. Through the public meeting process, we hope to ensure the most accurate maps possible.

- Comments can be sent via email to: [oma\\_trans\\_wild@blm.gov](mailto:oma_trans_wild@blm.gov)

### **Additional Public Comment Opportunities**

Following receipt of initial public comments on existing routes, BLM will develop a range of alternatives for transportation management. Additional formal opportunities for public comment will occur following alternative development (Spring, 2013), and following the Environmental Assessment (Fall, 2013)

Throughout the planning process BLM will provide newsletters and make every effort to keep interested publics involved.