

News Release



USDA Forest Service
Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests
2250 Highway 50
Delta, CO 81416-2485

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact(s): Gary Shellhorn, Project Planner, 970.874.6666

GUNNISON TRAVEL PLAN READY TO IMPLEMENT

Delta, CO., (October 26, 2010) – The Rocky Mountain Regional Appeal Reviewing Officer determined the travel decision made on June 28, 2010 by Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests Supervisor, Charlie Richmond did not violate law, regulation or policy. With these findings, the Deputy Regional Forester, Maribeth Gustafson, affirmed the Gunnison Travel Management decision on September 30, 2010.

The GMUG will begin to implement the travel management decisions which encompass both the Gunnison and Paonia Ranger Districts. The first step will be to develop a Motorized Vehicle Use map (MVUM) for the area. That map, when completed and released, will be the guide for what routes will be open for public travel and for which types of vehicles and what motorized travel routes will have season-of-use restrictions. The Forest anticipates this will be released in early 2011.

Both the Paonia and the Gunnison District Rangers plan to provide user “information and education” about the new Plan and the changes that will occur, starting with the fall hunting season. According to Paonia District Ranger Levi Broyles, “Getting the word out and explaining to the public that changes have been made with travel is our first priority this year.”

Gunnison District Ranger John Murphy echoed this statement and added, “By next summer we will have the MVUMs out and will have our folks out on-the-ground putting up route marker signs to help with the use of the MVUMs.” Murphy went on to state, “in time, we will transition from primarily ‘information and education’ to enforcement, perhaps by next hunting season.”

The implementation of the Gunnison Travel Management Plan culminates over three years of work and substantial public involvement and collaboration. This Travel Management Plan is the third completed on the GMUG and with its implementation, accomplishes large scale travel management efforts across the three Forests, in accordance with the 2005 Travel Management Rule.

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