

# NEWS RELEASE

**USDA Forest Service  
Eldorado National Forest  
100 Forni Road; Placerville, CA 95667**



Date: October 9, 2012  
Release: Upon Receipt

Contact: Diana Erickson  
Phone: 530-622-5061

## **Forest Service Begins Environmental Analysis on 42 Routes Closed to Motorized Vehicles**

Placerville, CA...Eldorado National Forest Supervisor Kathy Hardy began an environmental analysis today that will determine whether portions of 42 travel routes that were closed by court order will be re-opened to public wheeled motor vehicle use. The Forest Supervisor's decision is expected in July 2013.

Hardy began the analysis by proposing to keep all of the 42 routes open to public wheeled motorized vehicle use, with the exception of portions of two routes.

"I know how important these routes are to many people and I've given a lot of thought to my initial proposal," said Hardy. "All of the 42 routes were designated in 2008 after an environmental impact statement was completed. We are supplementing the original EIS with a review of those portions of routes that cross meadows as directed in our Forest Plan."

After the analysis is completed the Forest Supervisor has the authority to amend the Forest Plan to allow exceptions to the standards and guidelines if she determines it is necessary.

In 2012, the US Eastern District Court of California ruled that the Forest Service erred when it failed to analyze 42 routes that appeared to cross meadows for their consistency with direction in the Eldorado National Forest Plan.

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“The judge was very specific about what we need to analyze before we can designate segments of routes that go through meadows,” said Hardy. “Our environmental analysis will be limited to just that standard and guideline.”

Hardy said her staff has already started reviewing segments of the 42 routes for their consistency with a Forest Plan standard and guideline for meadows. This information and information she gained through reviewing public comments in the 2008 Travel Management EIS helped to frame the proposed action. The public has until November 7 to comment on this proposal.

“I look forward to learning from information and ideas people will bring to the analysis,” said Hardy.

Three public open houses are scheduled for people to meet with the Forest Supervisor and other Forest Service employees. The drop-in opportunities will be hosted from 4-7 p.m. in Markleeville at Turtle Rock Community Center on October 22; 3-8 p.m. in Placerville at the Placerville Inn on October 25; and 3- 8 p.m. in Jackson at the Civic Center on October 29.

The proposed action, maps and other SEIS information are posted on the Eldorado National Forest website at: [www.usda.fs.gov/eldorado](http://www.usda.fs.gov/eldorado). Copies of documents can be also be obtained by contacting Forest Supervisor; Eldorado National Forest; 100 Forni Road; Placerville, CA 95667.