

# **NEWS RELEASE**

## **USDA Forest Service -- Northern Region**



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **FOREST SERVICE ISSUES OHV REMINDER TO HUNTERS**

With big game hunting season underway, Deputy Regional Forester Kathy McAllister would like to remind all hunters and other Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) users to please stay on existing roads this year. Cross-country driving is not allowed on national forest lands in Montana as well as the Custer National Forest in South Dakota, and the Dakota Prairie Grasslands in North and South Dakota.

This policy, which was approved and took effect in January of 2001, states vehicles must stay on existing roads and trails. McAllister notes this policy also prohibits driving off roads and trails to retrieve game.

“This is an effort to help stop the spread of noxious weeds, control erosion and protect fragile soils while preserving the natural quality of areas without trails or roads,” McAllister said. Driving cross-country significantly contributes to these management concerns.

McAllister suggested vehicles stay off routes that are narrower than the vehicle. “This becomes a safety issue for people where motorized vehicles are not expected. If a single-track trail is open to motorized use, then a motorcycle can use it, but an ATV or pickup shouldn’t be there,” she said.

“We encourage folks to check locally to get the most current information and obey the posted signs,” McAllister said.

National Forest or Grassland Offices have additional information regarding this requirement and current travel information. A free brochure can be obtained at most district offices in Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota. OHV enthusiasts are also encouraged to check with state motor vehicle departments for current licensing information related to use of the national forest road system.

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