

Plan To Increase Vehicle Access in Cleveland National Forest

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The Cleveland National Forest is considering opening up more of the forest to motorized house to explain the proposal tonight at the Cleveland National Forest office in Alpine. k details.

The changes proposed in the forest could add roads for cars and trails for other vehicles

Anne Carey is the Recreational Planner for the Cleveland National Forest. She says adding off-road vehicles is part of the multiple-use mandate for the forest.

Carey: We have three alternatives we're looking at. One is the existing condition, two of road and trails, and the third one is reduction in that proposal. But what we're trying to do is reduce the popular use of using motorized vehicles and having it done in an environmentally-s

Carey says adding from 7 to 12 miles of roads and trails will give more people a chance

Carey: Driving for pleasure is one of the primary recreational activities that occurs in the Cleveland National Forest.

Carey says off-road vehicle use in the Cleveland has been restricted since the 1980s.

David Hogan is with the Center for Biological Diversity.

Hogan says even a small addition of roads in the forest can cause damage.

Hogan: Wherever you can drive into on the national forest impacts reach much farther. Because people drive to that point, they dump garbage, they target shoot illegally, they cut down trees. The influence of people who have access with motor vehicles is much greater at that point of that access.

Comments on the proposal are being accepted through August 13.

Only people who comment on the plan can appeal the forest services' decision.

Ed Joyce, KPBS News.