

# GRAND CANYON NEWS

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## Travel management decision issued for Kaibab

Motorized travel to be restricted to within 30 feet of roads except in camping corridors where vehicles will be allowed up to 300 feet from side of road

Associate Grand Canyon News Editor

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FREDONIA, Ariz. - The Kaibab National Forest has issued a decision on its Travel Management Project to designate roads, trails, and areas for motorized use on the North Kaibab Ranger District.

A 45-day appeal period follows publication of a legal notice announcing the decision and finding of No Significant Impact. Implementation of travel management rules on the Kaibab Plateau is expected to begin in January 2013.

Under the new rules, motorized traffic will be restricted to within 30 feet of roads, except in camping corridors, which allow vehicles to travel up to 300 feet from the side of the road. Vehicles can also be taken off-road to retrieve firewood, and legally harvested bison or elk.

As part of the planning process, all roads were evaluated by the Forest Service for resource concerns. The decision reduces the miles of open roads on the district from about 1,850 to about 1,475, a difference of about 20 percent.

The decision also adds 796 user-created campsites to the existing system, along with about 16 miles of additional road.

Outside of wilderness areas, 95 percent of the district will remain within one mile of an open road.

The Center for Biological Diversity contends the plan exposes thousands of acres of public forest north of Grand Canyon to destructive off-road vehicle use.

"We don't understand why the Forest Service is giving motorized hunters a free pass to destroy public forests near the Grand Canyon," said Cyndi Tuell, Southwest conservation advocate at the Center. "Unfortunately, the Forest Service believes Arizona's hunters are unable to retrieve the animals they kill the old-fashioned way," Tuell said. "This policy will damage our national forest to accommodate a new breed of motorized hunters."

The district will produce a Motorized Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) to display the open road system. Maps will be free to the public.

The North Kaibab Travel Management Project was undertaken in response to the 2005 national Travel Management Rule, which requires all national forests and grasslands to designate a motorized travel plan.

The North Kaibab Ranger District began travel planning in 2009. The Williams and Tusayan Ranger Districts have already implemented decisions.

To learn more about the North Kaibab Travel Management Project, visit [www.fs.usda.gov/goto/kaibab/tmr](http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/kaibab/tmr).

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