



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Ottawa National Forest
Supervisor's Office

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File Code: 2300/2500/7700

Date: August 21, 2014

Dear interested public and government officials,

The U.S. Forest Service has begun a study that analyzes the road system on the Ottawa National Forest. This study is part of the Travel Management Rule, nationally-adopted by the U.S. Forest Service in 2005 (36 CFR Part 212). For our local study to be successful, we need input from the public, interested organizations, and other governments. To help share information about our road study, and gather input from stakeholders like you, we have scheduled three open house events:

- **Monday, September 22, Iron River.** 3 to 6 PM CST. Iron River City Hall. 107 W Genesee Street. Iron River, MI.
- **Thursday, September 25, Ironwood.** 3 to 6 PM CST. Gogebic Community College, Lindquist Center. E4946 Jackson Road, Ironwood, MI.
- **Tuesday, September 30, Ewen.** 3 to 6 PM EST. Ewen-Trout Creek School board room. 14312 Airport Road. Ewen, MI.

The open houses are meant to be an informal, two-way information-sharing event. You may come or go any time between 3 and 6 PM, local time.

Subpart A of the Travel Management Rule discusses road system management. It Requires each National Forest to "identify the minimum road system needed for safe and efficient travel and for administration, utilization, and protection of National Forest System Lands" (36 CFR 212.5b1). To determine the road system, Forests must use a science-based analysis and involve the public and local officials. Every National Forest will complete their study by the fall of 2015. The studies analyze all the system roads on the forest for their existing use and characteristics, need for management activities and public access, benefits, environmental risks and maintenance costs.

A team is currently working to identify a minimum road system on the Ottawa National Forest. We began this analysis using 25 criteria developed by the USFS Eastern Region, including risk and benefits such as: access, wildfire prevention, wildfire control, invasive species, heritage, wildlife, recreation, water, watersheds, vegetation management, forest health, special forest products, and soils.



The Forest Service will consider input from the public, in addition to analyzing agency needs for access to manage the forest. Criteria under consideration include analyzing each road's benefit, potential risks to natural resources, and agency costs to manage. Your input at this time can help us determine which criteria (benefits or risks) are important for understanding the Ottawa's transportation needs. The road study is not a decision, but is intended to help inform possible road management planning. Before any future actions are taken regarding the status of or access on specific roads, the Forest Service will provide additional opportunities for the public to participate in the process.

We have created an Ottawa Road Study website with more information here: <http://fs.usda.gov/goto/ottawa/roadstudy>. The website contains maps showing the existing road system on the Ottawa National Forest, helpful links, and an input form. After the meetings occur, the meeting materials will also be posted for those who are unable to attend.

If you wish to provide input, you may use the enclosed form, or email comments-eastern-ottawa@fs.fed.us. Please include the words 'Road Study' in the subject line. The input form may be mailed to Ottawa National Forest, Road Study, E6248 US 2, Ironwood, MI 49938. Hardcopy maps and input forms are also available for review at each Ranger District office (Kenton, Ontonagon, and Watersmeet) and the Forest Supervisor's office (Ironwood).

If you have any questions about the Road Study or open houses, please call Ian Shackleford, Acting Public Affairs Officer, at 906-932-1330 x328. For more information about the Ottawa National Forest, please visit www.fs.usda.gov/ottawa.

About the U.S. Forest Service

The U.S. Forest Service is an agency under the department of Agriculture, and as such is part of the federal government's executive branch. The mission of the U.S. Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land and is the largest forestry research organization in the world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Randy Charles", written in a cursive style.

Randy Charles, Acting Forest Supervisor

Ottawa National Forest Road Study – Input Form

The U.S. Forest Service is studying the risks and benefits for visitors and the environment associated with the road system on the Ottawa National Forest. The analysis (Subpart A of the 2005 Travel Management Rule) will identify a road system that provides access for the public and forest management activities, minimizes environmental impacts, and can be maintained within budget constraints. **For more information about the Road Study, please visit the website:**

<http://fs.usda.gov/goto/ottawa/roadstudy>. Hardcopy maps and public input forms are also available for review at each Ranger District office and the Forest Supervisor's office. To learn more about the Ottawa's road study process contact Christine Handler, at 906-884-2311 x12 or cahandler@fs.fed.us. Please have your input to us by October 17, 2014.

Please mail this form to Ottawa National Forest, Road Study, E6248 US 2, Ironwood, MI 49938. You may also email us at comments-eastern-ottawa@fs.fed.us. Please include the words 'Road Study' in the subject line.

Name: _____ Title/Organization: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

How do you use National Forest roads? What kinds of sites do you visit? (For example, are you using well-maintained roads to drive a car to campgrounds? Do you use off-highway vehicles for hunting?)

What do you feel are **benefits** of National Forest roads, specifically relating to your use and enjoyment of the Ottawa National Forest?

What do you feel are risks of National Forest roads, specifically relating to your use and enjoyment of the Ottawa National Forest?

After reviewing the road study information, do you have any comments about the benefit/risk questions being used to evaluate the existing National Forest roads?

Provide any additional comments here. If you are offering information about a specific road or area, please include details, such as road number, Township, Range, Section, or latitude/longitude.
