



**United Four
Wheel Drive
Associations**
P.O. Box 15696
Chesapeake, VA
23328

Chief Dale Bosworth
USDA Forest Service
Office of the Chief
201 14th & Independence Ave. SW, Room 4NW
Washington, D.C. 20090

March 4, 2004

Dear Chief Bosworth,

We are writing to you on behalf of our members who use and enjoy America's National Forests for access and recreation. Combined, our organizations represent over 750,000 individuals, organizations and businesses. We have considerable expertise in recreation management and believe we may be able to offer some assistance to the Forest Service as you seek to improve management of off-highway vehicles (OHV's).

We are generally supportive of the following 3 key points identified by the National OHV Policy Team to improve management and minimize or eliminate the impacts from unmanaged OHV use:

1. Wheeled OHV travel will be allowed on designated roads, trails and areas.
2. Cross-country travel by wheeled OHVs will generally be prohibited except where specifically authorized; and
3. Decisions of which roads, trails and areas to designate will be made at the field level.

We are concerned that the implementation of the policy is conducted so that the result is sustainable, manageable and enforceable OHV systems. Toward that end, we would like to offer our assistance and support in moving toward our common goals.

Our support for some of the Policy Team's broad concepts should not be misinterpreted as wholehearted support of this entire process. Even at this early stage, where the agency has determined and/or communicated minimal detail, we have several concerns we wish to share with you and the Policy and the Implementation Team.

Our organizations sense a propensity in some Forest Service employees to interpret your Initiative as direction to immediately close large areas to all OHV use. We feel it is essential that internal and public communications regarding the Initiative reflect the importance of OHV recreation to millions of Americans and the legitimacy of such properly managed use for the Forest Service of the future.

We strongly urge your office to offer immediate clarification that this Initiative should not be interpreted as an attempt to eliminate legitimate OHV use, and to caution line officers that any landscape level change in management must be performed pursuant to lawful planning, with full public involvement and not via "special order" or "emergency order" powers.

We would like to schedule a meeting with you as soon as it is convenient in order to clarify and amplify our ideas regarding rule-making and other future planning direction.

Sincerely,

Bill Dart,
Executive Director, BlueRibbon Coalition

Carla Boucher,
Attorney, United Four Wheel Drive Associations