

**US Forest Service Maintenance Level 3 Roads in Trinity County Proposed for OHV Accessibility**



**Trinity County Department of Transportation**

**in partnership with Watershed Research and Training Center**

**& Trinity County Resource Conservation District**



This plan was made possible through California State Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division funding



## **Background**

This planning process was initiated by public outcry after the Shasta Trinity National Forest completed its forest-wide Travel Management decision in 2010. At that time, Forest Supervisor J. Sharon Heywood signed the Motorized Travel Management Record of Decision (ROD) implementing subpart B of the Motorized Travel Management Rule. The ROD added 32.1 miles of unauthorized routes to the National Forest Transportation System and authorized mixed use on 21.31 miles of Maintenance Level 3 (ML3) routes. The ROD also prohibited cross-country travel, including the use of unauthorized routes, and closed ML3 roads to OHV use. This decision effectively removed hundreds of miles of routes from the OHV transportation system in Trinity County. Remaining OHV legal routes are very fragmented, with little connectivity and few loop opportunities remaining. After this decision, motorized recreation advocacy groups and local counties requested additional miles of what currently are ML3 routes to be re-authorized as legal OHV routes.

The Trinity County OHV Accessibility Enhancement Project has worked to create a list of recommended USFS roads to be brought back into the OHV transportation system, the main goal of this effort is to restore connectivity within the OHV system. Identified ML3 routes are proposed to be either reclassified as a Maintenance Level 2 (ML2) route or have a mixed-use designation added to their current classification—either of which would authorize OHV travel on the route.

A similar project was completed in Shasta County in 2012. That project was initiated by the Shasta County Department of Transportation, which partnered with Forest OHV Coordinator Paul Hart to complete the assessment. That effort was successful and as a result 99.8 miles of ML3 routes were added back to the OHV transportation system in Shasta County. Similar assessment work for this project has been completed in Trinity County, but has yet to be implemented.

## **Public Input**

A series of 3 public meetings were held throughout Trinity County to review project findings and gather public input. One meeting was held in each of the county's 3 largest population centers (Weaverville, Trinity Center, and Hayfork). One Shasta County meeting was also held with the Redding Dirt Rider group on June 5, 2018 in Redding. In the summer of 2016 riders at the Hay-Town MX track in Hayfork were also asked to give input on the project at several different events.

Users were universally in support of the project and were excited about potential increased access. They also expressed frustrations with the current USFS Motor Vehicle Use Maps (MVUM), and discussed desires for more motorized access in the county.

### *Gate Issue in Northern Trinity County*

During the public meeting in Trinity Center on May 8, 2018, the issue of gates blocking access was discussed at length. Users from that area are extremely frustrated and feel like every year they lose more access due to new gates blocking routes they have recreated on for years. The root cause of this issue stems from checkerboard ownership between the USFS and private timber companies. In recent years the private timber companies have been gating roads that they historically left open for public

travel. There is little that can be done within the scope of this project, but working with Sierra Pacific Industries (the prominent private land owner) to increase the amount of “looped” routes was identified as a potential organized effort.

**Route Review**

As part of this planning process, all ML3 roads in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest in Trinity County were evaluated for potential recommendations. All routes were evaluated first as a mapping exercise and then through an on-the-ground assessment. Some stretches were systematically excluded due to access issues or limited access through private industrial timber lands or the presence of Late Sectional Reserve / Threatened and Endangered Species habitat or a high likelihood of user conflicts. All identified roads were surveyed and evaluated for their safety and compatibility with OHV use. Features such as staging areas, campsites, vistas, and sight lines were identified and evaluated. Data collected in the field was used in conjunction with USFS roads Geographic Information System (GIS) to create a master map/spreadsheet of routes. This data was sorted and used to create the list of route recommendations.

Route recommendations were broken into a scale ranging from 1-4. See Table 1 below:

**Table 1.**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>4</b>	Highest Recommendation - Connects existing ML2 loops, fun route, good sight lines, few resource issues present
<b>3</b>	Recommend - Connects several existing ML2 roads, fun route
<b>2</b>	Lowest Priority Recommendation - Last priority, connects few existing ML2 roads
<b>1</b>	Do not recommend - Not fun, Private Property, resource issues present, un-safe sight lines

**OHV Route Recommendations**

Route recommendation results created by this project are put forward below. High priority recommendations are described and potentially represent a huge increase in accessibility for OHV enthusiasts in Trinity County. Lower priority recommendations (1-3) are listed in a more abbreviated table form.

**HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS**

High Priority recommendations represent the highest quality ML3 forest roads for OHV use in Trinity County. These roads make key connections, contain staging opportunities, and are generally essential to create a well-connected OHV transportation system in Trinity County.

2N07 (Post Mountain) - This recommendation would allow OHV travel on 8.4 miles of Post Mountain Rd. This road starts at 2N10 and travels southeast, eventually terminating at State Route (SR) 36 near the HWY 3 junction. This recommendation would authorize OHV travel from the 2N10 junction to the

boundary with the Trinity Pines Subdivision. This route provides access to several dispersed campsites, as well as a developed campground in Indian Valley, creating multiple loop opportunities. It has historically been heavily used by hunters and OHV enthusiasts to access many ML2 routes and trails in the area. In addition, this route is directly connected to the following ML2 roads.

**Table 2.** ML2 Roads Accessed from 2N07 Post MTN

Road Number	ML2 Road Name	Miles
2N13	Enemy	4.48
1N30	West Side	5.9
1N25	Ponder	1.76
1N26	Plumb	2.7
1N09	Naufus Creek	2.5
1N14B	V-Springs	5.8
1N10	Bear Wallow Meadow	4.2
2N07F	Post MTN	.79
30N50	Glade	3.7
Total		31.83

Other ML2 routes that can be accessed from 2N07: 2N11, 2N53, 2N51 (A B & C Spurs), 1N31, 1N28 07E26 (Indian Valley Dispersed) motorized trail also is connected to this route.

**For reference see map:** Trinity County OHV Recommendations Strongly Recommended Roads Forest Glen Area.

1S14 (Bear Wallow) – This route would allow OHV travel on 11.6 miles of Bear Wallow Road. This road runs north from SR36 and is a major connector for several road systems as it makes the climb from Rattlesnake Creek to Indian Valley. This recommendation would allow OHV travel from the Intersection with 1N13 on the south end until it terminates at 2N07 on the north end. This route is well connected with numerous ML 2 roads and makes several loop opportunities possible.

**Table 3.** ML2 Roads Accessed from 1S14 Bear Wallow

Road Number	ML2 Road Name	Miles
1N40	Friend Ranch	1.05
1N01	Lower Naufus	2.3
1N28	Skip	1.03
1N26	Plumb	2.70
1N09	Naufus Creek	2.54
1N14	V-Springs	5.8
1N07	Big Bear Wallow	1.4
1N08	Plummer Creek	1.29
Road Number	ML2 Road Name	Miles
1N15	Little Bear Wallow	2.5
1N34	Wallow Mountain	1.16
1N12	Copper Mine	.97

1N05	Grouse Prairie	1.56
Total		24.3

Other ML2 routes that can be accessed from 1S14: 1N25, 1N26, 1N33, 1N10

**For reference see map:** Trinity County OHV Recommendations Strongly Recommended Roads Forest Glen Area.

1N13 (Post Flume) – This recommendation would allow OHV travel on 5.38 miles of Post Flume Road. This route runs northwest from the 1S14 (Bear Wallow) to Post Flume to 1N12 (Copper Mine) in the north. This route is part of a large OHV-friendly road system and combined with other high priority recommendations in this document (1S14 and 1N03) makes large loop opportunities possible.

**Table 3.** ML2 Roads Accessed from 1N13 Post Flume

Road Number	ML2 Road Name	Miles
1N03	N Rattlesnake	4.5

**For reference see map:** Trinity County OHV Recommendations Strongly Recommended Roads Forest Glen Area.

1N12 (Copper Mine) – This recommendation would allow OHV travel on 8.49 miles of Copper Mine Road. This route runs east-west. It begins at Post Mountain (2N07) in the east and runs to Bear Wallow (1S14) in the west. Along the way the route connects several ML2 routes creating a loop opportunity along with several dispersed campsites.

**Table 4.** ML2 Roads Accessed from 1N12 Copper Mine

Road Number	ML2 Road Name	Miles
1N29	Post	2.55
1N02	North Post Creek	3.50
1N03	N Rattlesnake	4.51
1N05	Grouse Prairie	1.56
1N10	Bear Wallow Meadow	4.20
Total		16.32

**For reference see map:** Trinity County OHV Recommendations Strongly Recommended Roads Forest Glen Area.

40N45 (Bear Creek) – This recommendation would allow OHV travel on 13.14 miles of Bear Creek Road. Bear Creek Road runs south along the western edge of a ridge from Parks Creek (40N40) to South Fork Road (40N26), and along the way 32.2 miles of ML2 connections and expansive vistas are present. In addition, there would be direct access from 40N45 to the following ML2 roads.

**Table 5.** ML2 Roads Accessed from 40N45 Bear Creek

Road Number	ML2 Road Name	Miles
40N25Y	South Bear	2.31
40N05Y	Upper Bear Creek	1.26
40N67	Orford	2.8
40N62Y	South Picayune	1.56
40N45C	EAR	.43
40N32Y	Dodge	1.86
39N01	Little Picayune	2.48
39N72	Lower Picayune	1.38
39N18	Picayune	18.12
Total		32.2

Other ML2 routes that can be accessed from 40N45: 40N25YA, 40N40, 40N40B, 40N32YA, 39N07Y, 39N07YA, 39N09Y, 39N09YA, 39N18B, 39N02, 39N15, 39N10Y, 39N14Y, 39N15Y, 39N16Y, 38N80, 39N27, 39N27A, 38N39, 39N26, 39N26A, 38N15, 39N63, 39N64, 38N12, 39N99, 39N26B, 39N29 (including A & B spurs), 39N29D, 38N66, 38N78, 38N78A, 38N66E, 38N66D, 39N81, 39N73A, 39N73

**For reference see map:** Trinity County OHV Recommendations Strongly Recommended Roads North Lake Area.

34N95 (Musser Hill) – This recommendation would allow OHV travel on 4.6 miles of Musser Hill Road. Musser Hill Road runs north from SR 3 and dead ends near the Trinity Alps Wilderness boundary in the north. This route is within the Weaverville Community Forest and is predominantly used for recreation by local residents, such as running, mountain biking and equestrian enthusiasts.

**Table 6.** ML2 Roads Accessed from 34N95

Road Number	ML2 Road Name	Miles
34N52Y	Long Gulch	1.31

Other ML2 routes that can be accessed from 34N95: 34N05Y, 34N52YA

**For reference see map:** Trinity County OHV Recommendations Strongly Recommended Roads Middle Trinity Area.

33N38 (Weaver Bally Road) – This recommendation would allow OHV travel on 2.4 miles of Weaver Bally Road. The route originates near Highway 299 in Weaverville at Weaver Bally Rd and Victory Ln, and runs north into the Trinity Alps Wilderness. This route serves access to a fire lookout on Weaver Bally, and is used by many recreationists for mountain biking, running and to visit the vista. Currently the upper 5.7 mile portion of the route is legal to OHV travel. This recommendation would allow OHV users to legally stage much further south on the route.

**For reference see map:** Trinity County OHV Recommendations Strongly Recommended Roads Middle Trinity Area.

33N47 (Soldier Creek) – This recommendation would allow OHV travel on 12.3 miles of Solder Creek Road. This route provides nice staging opportunities and provides access to the Hayfork divide Jeep trail (33N32) via 33N05Y.

**Table 7.** ML2 Roads Accessed from 33N47 Soldier Creek

Road Number	ML2 Road Name	Miles
33N47	Soldier Creek	5.3
33N05Y	Rat Gap	3.1
1N25	Barker Mountain	.9
33N51	Carter Ranch	6.1
Total		15.4

Other ML2 routes that can be accessed from 33N47: 32N02, 32N25, 33N02, 33N32, 33N57, 33N34, 33N45, 33N50, 33N19, 33N29

**For reference see map:** Trinity County OHV Recommendations Strongly Recommended Roads Hayfork/ Big Creek Rd Area.

*4N08 (Miners Creek)* – This recommendation would allow OHV travel on 4.59 miles of Miners Creek Road. This route is a key tie between two popular Jeep trails that both lead to Hayfork Bally Fire lookout. It includes a dispersed campsite and creates a loop opportunity. In addition, there would be direct access from 4N08 to the following ML2 roads.

**Table 8.** ML2 Roads Accessed from 4N08 Miners Creek

Road Number	ML2 Road Name	Miles
32N16	Little Creek	5.48
32N14	Donaldson Creek	6.72
32N31	Little Creek Ridge	1.14
32N29	Sims Gap	2.4
Total		15.74

Other ML2 routes that can be accessed from 4N08: 31N50, 32N05, 33N52Y, 32N31A, 32N29A, 32N29B

**For reference see map:** Trinity County OHV Recommendations Strongly Recommended Roads Hayfork/ Big Creek Rd Area.

*29N28 (String Bean Creek)* – This recommendation would allow OHV travel on 6 miles of String Bean Creek Road. This route travels south from SR 36 and overlooks the upper Hayfork Creek watershed for most of the journey to 28N25 (Rat Trap Gap). This area has historically been used by the Redding Dirt Riders, the Shasta Rock Rollers, and hunters. The route would connect a dispersed campsite and create several new loop opportunities. In addition there would be direct access from 29N28 to the following ML2 roads.

**Table 9.** ML2 Roads Accessed from 29N28 String Bean Creek

Road Number	ML2 Road Name	Miles
29N27	South Fork Goods CK	4.8
29N25	McFarland Ridge	7.9
29N28A	String Bean Creek	.7
29N79	Good Kost	2.91
29N36	Goat Camp	1.7

29N39	Strong	3.29
Total		21.3

Other ML2 routes that can be accessed from 29N28: 28N28D, 29N25F, 29N41, 29N27A, 29N27C, 29N91, 29N25G, 29N29, 29N83, 29N83A, 29N25E, 29N25F, 29N25H, 28N10 (including E, F, L, and M spurs), 29N22 (including B, D & C Spurs), 28N07, 28N18, 28N64D, 28N02, 28N84, 28N47, 28N36, 28N68 (Including A & B spurs), 29N92, 29N92A, 28N15, 28N15A, 28N67, 29N43, 29N38

**For reference see map:** Trinity County OHV Recommendations Strongly Recommended Roads Wildwood Area.

Total miles of ML2 opportunities directly connected to the 76.9 miles of high priority recommended routes totals 165.44 miles.

### **MODERATE PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS**

These routes/segments are a good fit with OHV use. Many of these routes create loop opportunities, connect currently isolated ML2 routes, and contain amazing vistas. These routes have acceptable sight lines and are generally compatible for OHV and passenger cars to share the road.

Road ID	Road Name	Recommended Segment Mileage	Mileage of OHV Legal Connections	Completes Loop
30N29	BRAMLET	22.47	114	Yes
29N32	DUBAKELLA	5.76	89	Yes
29N75	UPPER SMOKEY	4.27	56	Yes
3N08	BUTTER CREEK	15.92	55	No
28N64	ROUND MTN	3.60	48	Yes
5N13	BIG FRENCH CRK	12.72	41	Yes
5N04	BIG MTN	8.18	37	No
2N10	INDIAN VALLEY	14.26	28	Yes
34N80	HAYLOCK RIDGE	6.82	25	No
31N31	MAIN TULE	7.16	23	No
2N01	INDIAN BUTTER TIE	5.04	15	No
2N03	BUCK GULCH	3.82	15	No
33N52	HAYFORK BALLY	4.29	14	No
38N22	RIPPLE CREEK	4.30	7	Yes
31N32	PHILPOT	6.29	5	No
35N23Y	MULE CREEK	5.06	3	No
31N29	EAST TULE CREEK	4.65	0	Yes
30N31	PLUMMER PEAK	3.41	0	Yes

### **LOWEST PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS**

These routes/segments make up the lowest priority recommendations. They would add value to the OHV transportation system, but generally do not make many connections or contain essential staging opportunities. These routes do maintain acceptable sight lines for OHV and passenger car mixed use.



Road Number	Road Name	Recommended Segment Millage	Miles of OHV Legal Connections	Completes loop
4N41	CHAPARRAL	1.40	53	No
29N58	RATTLESNAKE RG	9	40	Yes
30N01	BROWNS CREEK	10	27	No
1S14	BEAR WALLOW (paved segment from SR36)	2.77	0	No
27N02	JONES RIDGE	4.82	26	No
29N30	WILD-MAD	14.13	17	Yes
2N16	LIMEDYKE LOOKOUT	12.53	13	No
30N02	FOX GULCH	2.38	11	No
28N10	STUART GAP	16.63	11	No
7N15	FAWN RIDGE	5.73	6	No
3N10	PELLETREAU	9.69	3	No
30N30	DOUBLE PLATE	2.52	1	No
3N21	FIR ROOT SPGS	3.19	0	No

#### **ROUTES NOT RECOMMENDED**

These routes/segments are not compatible with OHV use for one or a number of reasons. The issues include poor sight lines, potential conflicts with passenger vehicles near wilderness trail heads, private property/homes along routes, etc. They should not be added to the OHV transportation system.

Road Number	Road Name	Segment Mileage	Miles of OHV legal Connections	Completes loop
4N16	PACKERS CREEK	17.96	75	Yes
4N47	CORRAL BOTTOM	10.07	61	Yes
2N07	POST MTN (Segment through Trinity Pines)	2.20	0	Yes
29N58	RATTLESNAKE RG (Segment from SR36 to Hell Gate)	.10	0	Yes
37N55	N FK SWIFT CREEK	10.03	20	Yes
34N07Y	Hobo Gulch	12.04	4	No
35N10	EAST STUART	.39	1	No
27N17	BOLLY BOUNDARY	2.09	0	No
1S26	MOORES	.62	0	No
1S25	SCOTT FLAT	.62	0	No
28N62	HULSE	2.06	0	No
38N27	EAGLE CREEK	7.33	0	No

## **Conclusions**

This project assessed 368 miles of roads across the Shasta-Trinity National Forest in Trinity County that would be safe, fun, convenient, and provide connectivity for OHV users. Environmental concerns were not assessed as part of this project. It is assumed that an administrative change to allow more OHV use would not create a significant change to the on-the-ground impacts of these routes.

This document makes recommendations to improve OHV use by reauthorizing (by priority) USFS ML3 roads that were identified in this document for legal OHV use. It would open over 214 miles of OHV opportunities in Trinity County if both high priority and moderate recommendations were implemented. It would also connect over 740 miles of OHV legal routes. Key connections would significantly change the landscape of available use for OHV users, enabling them to find fun, well-connected riding opportunities across the County. These routes already exist so the impacts they make have been present on the landscape for decades.

The prioritized recommendations simply ask for a managerial change that would allow motorized users to access routes as they did before the forest-wide Travel Management decision was signed in 2010.