



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
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IN REPLY REFER TO:  
1792(116)  
MRA Events  
A3850(LL:cn)

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Dear Interested Public:

The *Motorcycle Riders Association Events 2000 - 2005 Environmental Assessment* (EA) is being advertised in the Medford Mail Tribune for a 30 day public review period. This EA analyzes a request from the Motorcycle Riders Association for a commercial permit to hold three annual events that take place in part on existing roads and trails on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land in the Timber Mountain/John's Peak Off-Highway Vehicle Area.

The primary purpose of a public review is to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the BLM's determination that there are no significant impacts associated with the proposed action and, therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary.

We welcome your comments on the content of this document. We are particularly interested in comments that address one or more of the following: (1) new information that would affect the analysis, (2) possible improvements in the analysis; and (3) suggestions for improving or clarifying the proposed management direction. Specific comments are the most useful. Comments, including names and addresses, will be available for public review. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name and/or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. This EA is published on the Medford District web site, [www.or.blm.gov/Medford/](http://www.or.blm.gov/Medford/), under "Planning Documents."

All comments should be made in writing and mailed to Lorie List, Ashland Resource Area, 3040 Biddle Road, Medford, OR 97504. Any questions should be directed to Lorie at (541)618-2384.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Dreihobl  
Field Manager  
Ashland Resource Area

Enclosures(1)

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
MEDFORD DISTRICT  
ASHLAND RESOURCE AREA

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

FOR

Motorcycle Riders Association  
2000 - 2005 Events

EA No. OR-110-00-28

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
ASHLAND RESOURCE AREA

EA COVER SHEET

Project Name/Number: Motorcycle Riders Association 2000-2005 Events,  
EA No. OR 110-00-28

Location: Ashland Resource Area

Preparer: Lorie List, Environmental Coordinator

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This environmental assessment (EA) for the proposed Motorcycle Rider's Association events was prepared utilizing a systematic interdisciplinary approach integrating the natural and social sciences and the environmental design arts with planning and decision making.

  
Richard J. Drehobl  
Ashland Area Field Manager

09-01-00

Date

ASHLAND RESOURCE AREA  
Motorcycle Riders Association Events 2000 - 2005

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## **CHAPTER 1: PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION**

### **PURPOSE AND NEED**

The Motorcycle Riders Association (MRA) has requested a commercial permit for three annual, organized motorcycle rides and races that take place in part on existing trails and roads on BLM land. The planned events would be based out of MRA lands (220 acres) and would traverse lands owned by Boise Cascade Corporation and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The BLM 1995 Medford District Resource Management Plan (RMP) designated 16,250 acres in this area (Timber Mountain/John's Peak) for Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use (p. 66). BLM lands in the John's Peak area are currently open to OHV use, including motorcycles.

When the MRA hosts an organized event that involves BLM lands, they must apply for and obtain a commercial permit before the event can be held. This EA will determine whether or not the BLM will issue a permit for a total of 15 organized motorcycle rides and races over the next 5 years.

### **CONFORMANCE WITH EXISTING LAND USE PLANS**

The proposed forest management activities are in conformance with and tiered to the *Medford District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (RMP) (USDI 1995<sup>b</sup>)*. This Resource Management Plan incorporates the earlier *Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl and the Standards and Guidelines for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (NWFP) (USDA and USDI 1994)*. These documents are available at the Medford BLM office and the Medford BLM web site at <http://www.or.blm.gov/Medford/>.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO STATUTES, REGULATIONS, AND OTHER PLANS**

The proposed action and alternatives are in conformance with the direction given for the management of public lands in the Medford District by the Oregon and California Lands Act of 1937 (O&C Act) and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA).

This environmental assessment (EA) is being prepared to determine if the proposed action and any of the alternatives would have a significant effect on the human environment thus requiring the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) as prescribed in the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. It is also being used to inform interested parties of the anticipated impacts and provide them with an opportunity to comment on the proposed activity.

## **DECISIONS TO BE MADE ON THIS ANALYSIS**

The Ashland Resource Area Field Manager must decide:

- Whether or not the impacts of the proposed action are significant to the human environment beyond those impacts addressed in previous NEPA documents. (If the impacts are not significant, then a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) can be issued and a decision can be implemented. If any impacts are determined to be significant to the human environment, an Environmental Impact Statement must be prepared before the manager makes a decision.)
- Whether to implement the proposed action alternative with its associated Project Design Features, or defer to the no action alternative.

## **RELEVANT ISSUES**

During the scoping process, the Interdisciplinary Team (ID Team) identified potential impacts to resources that may occur under different alternatives. Upon closer examination, the team determined which potential impacts (issues) were relevant to the analysis. These issues (listed below) become the focus of the analysis.

### Aquatic Systems: Hydrology, Water Quality and Fish

Motorcycle use on natural surfaces can increase the erosion that occurs with surface runoff. Although utilizing the existing trail system for the event reduces potential ground disturbance, concerns remain over increased erosion and potential impacts to the watershed.

Portions of the course cross intermittent or perennial streams without the drainage structures needed to prevent streambank destabilization and increased sediment movement into the channels.

Erosion from increased travel in this area may increase the delivery of sediment to fish-bearing streams, reducing egg and fry survival.

Refueling vehicles in or near stream channels could result in spilled fuel in the channel. Fuel spills could adversely affect riparian vegetation and be transported downstream to fish populations, resulting in the loss of eggs, fry, or adult fish, as well as aquatic insects.

### Riparian Reserves

OHVs trails may negatively impact riparian vegetation.

### Special Status Plants

Gentner's fritillaria (*Fritillaria gentneri*), a species listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, is present at three sites adjacent to the proposed course (two on BLM land; one on private land) with several other sites in the vicinity. Participants who

accidentally or intentionally left the trail could damage plants. In addition, dirt and dust could effect the plant's reproductive process.

#### Noxious Weeds

The area has infestations of noxious weeds and nonnative species. Participants may inadvertently spread noxious weed seeds with their motorcycles.

#### Special Status Wildlife

The northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) is listed as a threatened species under the auspices of the ESA. Noise and activity from the event could disturb a pair of spotted owls nesting in close proximity to the proposed route known as the "Boundary Trail" in the southern portion of T. 37S., R. 3W., Sect. 23.

#### Roads

Increased road use, without preventive and periodic road maintenance, may cause road damage and increase erosion.

#### Trespassing

Authorized use of BLM land may encourage trespassing on private land in the area.

#### Fire Danger

Sparks from off-road vehicles such as motorcycles are sometimes an ignition source for wildfires.

### **ISSUES CONSIDERED BUT NOT ANALYZED IN DETAIL**

The following issues in *italics* were identified during the scoping process, but were not considered relevant to this analysis. These issues include those that have already been analyzed in a previous and related NEPA document, or issues that go beyond the scope of this EA and are not relevant to the decision maker.

#### Wildlife

*There is a bat cave located in the area.* The cave is not in close proximity to the routes and would not be affected by the event.

#### Noise Pollution

*Local residents may be impacted by noise from the event.* To date, there have not been any noise-related complaints during events in the area.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Alternatives**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter describes the no action and proposed action alternatives. This chapter also outlines specific project mitigation features that are an essential part of the project design.

#### **NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Under the No Action alternative, the BLM would deny the MRA's application for a permit to hold annual events on BLM lands. For the purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that without a permit the MRA would continue to hold the three annual riding events on private property in the area.

#### **PROPOSED ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

This alternative would allow the MRA to use specified roads and trails on BLM land to hold three annual events. These events take place in April, May and October. The events in April and October are non-competitive "Poker" rides with check-in points. The May event is a timed race event. The MRA proposes to use three different courses (A, B & C) to accommodate various levels of rider experience (see Appendix B). The A, B, and C course lengths range from 16.1 miles to 68.8 miles and would take place on public and private land. The percentage of roads and trails used on BLM land for each course ranges from 43 to 50 percent, with an average of 47 percent. Each rider would make one complete lap around the course during the event. The maximum number of riders allowed for any one event over the next 5 years would be 500.

#### **PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES**

This proposed action alternative includes project design features (PDFs). PDFs are incorporated into the project design for the purpose of mitigating, reducing, or eliminating potentially adverse environmental impacts. They are directly related to the relevant issues identified in Chapter One. Chapters Three (Affected Environment) and Four (Environmental Consequences) incorporate these PDFs into the analysis of alternatives.

##### General

- MRA events would be limited to the trails and roads identified in this EA (Appendix B). The potential impacts on the entire course are highly interrelated. Route changes on either private or public land that would change the impacts analyzed in this EA would require an amendment to this EA.
- The MRA would be required to inform the BLM of any proposed route changes on public or private land.
- The MRA would not construct any new trails on public land within the analysis area before, during or in-between events.

### Aquatic Systems: Hydrology, Water Quality and Fish

- Stay on existing roads and trails and keep trails free of obstacles to avoid riders having to leave the trail.
- The ID team identified the following two sections of the A course totaling 6.5 miles that were not appropriate for OHV use. These sections have been re-routed to follow the B course. The BLM would selectively monitor these sites to ensure compliance with reroutes. (Portions of the A course eliminated for consideration are identified on the map in Appendix B by a red xxxxxx.)
  - The proposed A course on BLM land in the SE corner of section 17, T. 37 S., R. 3 W. crosses Galls Creek, a perennial stream, on BLM land. Cutthroat trout are present in Galls Creek less than one mile downstream from this crossing. A bridge crossing is not feasible at this site because the trail parallels the creek for approximately 50 feet before crossing it. *The A course would now follow the B course in section 21 to avoid the area of concern (see Appendix B).*
  - The proposed A course on BLM land in section 1 (T. 38S., R. 4W) and sections 6, 7, and 18, (T. 38 S., R. 3 W.) would overlap with a BLM road that is scheduled to be decommissioned (mechanically ripped and seeded). Continued riding on the road would prevent rehabilitation. *The A course would now follow the B course in sections 6 and 7 (T. 38S., R. 3 W.) to avoid the area of concern (see Appendix B).*
- No refueling stations in the channel or within 200 feet slope distance, whether ephemeral (dry), intermittent (sometimes dry), or a perennial stream (based on Ecological Protection Width Needs of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy).

### Threatened and Endangered Plants

Areas of highest potential for *Fritillaria gentneri* occurrence along the ride/race course would be surveyed prior to the first event each year. *Fritillaria* does not flower every year. Annual surveys would provide a high likelihood of finding occupied sites.

The effects of airborne dust and dirt on flowering and pollination of *Fritillaria gentneri* would be monitored. Known sites adjacent to the course would be studied and effects documented after each of the rides. Plant vigor, flowering, and fruit development would be compared to nearby populations not subjected to airborne dust and dirt.

Vehicle travel off existing roads and trails is prohibited. Not all *Fritillaria gentneri* flower every year and therefore cannot be located. Keeping vehicles on existing roads and trails minimizes opportunities for direct damage to individuals and damage to habitat.

During the ride/race, sites with a high potential for participants to leave the course would be monitored. On the course, spotters would alert participants of hazardous sections to ensure vehicles remain on the course and minimize effects to plant sites (known, undiscovered, and unconfirmed) and habitat.

Vegetation manipulation in areas of known sites is prohibited. This restriction would maintain site conditions and avoid inadvertent direct damage.

#### Noxious Weeds

Ride/race vehicles (especially the undercarriage) would be cleaned of mud, debris, and vegetation material prior to arriving at the course.

#### Special Status Wildlife

Events using the section of trail known as the "Boundary Trail" in the southern portion of T. 37S., R. 3W., Sect. 23 and which occur between March 1 and Sept. 30 would require a re-route of the southern end of the Boundary Trail in order to avoid impact to spotted owls in the area.

If additional spotted owl sites are located in the future or if one of the known sites moves and is in conflict with routes then a seasonal restriction (Mar. 1 - Sept. 30) on event activities in that area would be enforced, and the course re-routed.

#### Roads

The MRA would be responsible for the cost of maintenance to BLM roads used for race events. The BLM would specify how and when the roads would be maintained. The BLM would conduct a road evaluation before and after each race to ensure that the roads drain properly and were not damaged from a race event. If maintenance is required, it would be done according to current BLM road maintenance standards. The BLM would have the option of collecting maintenance fees as a condition of the permit or the BLM would require the MRA to hire a contractor or maintain the roads themselves as directed by the BLM. The MRA would be required to post a road maintenance bond.

#### Trespassing

The MRA would provide the BLM with proof of permission from local landowners whose property would be accessed during the events.

#### Fire Danger

All state fire restrictions and requirements would be met.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Affected Environment**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter describes the present condition of the environment within the proposed project area that would be affected by the alternatives. Analysis incorporates the Project Design Features described in Chapter Two. This information provides a general baseline for determining the effects of the alternatives and is organized around the relevant issues identified during the scoping process. No attempt has been made to describe every detail of every resource within the proposed project area. Enough detail has been given to determine if any of the alternatives would cause significant impacts to the human environment as defined in 40 CFR 1508.27.

The following “critical elements” of the human environment are subject to requirements specified in statutes, regulations or executive order (for example, the Clean Water Act of 1977):

- Air Quality
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
- Cultural Resources
- Environmental Justice
- Farmlands, Prime/Unique
- Floodplains
- Invasive, Nonnative Species
- Native American Religious Concerns
- Threatened & Endangered Species
- Wastes, Hazardous/Solid
- Water Quality
- Wetlands/Riparian Zones
- Wild & Scenic Rivers
- Wilderness

Only substantive site specific environmental changes that would result from implementing the proposed action or alternatives are discussed in this document. If an ecological component is not discussed, it should be assumed that the resource specialists have considered effects to that component and found the proposed action or alternatives would have minimal or no effects.

#### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT AREA**

The proposed project would take place in the John’s Peak/Timber Mountain area west of Jacksonville, OR. The area has been used as a riding area for over 40 years by members of the local communities and out of state residents. The area used for riding extends from Grants Pass to Jacksonville, but the portion used under the proposed permit includes portions of the Kane Creek, Galls Creek, Foots Creek, China Gulch, Forest Creek, and Jackson Creek drainages (Appendix B).

## **AQUATIC SYSTEMS: HYDROLOGY, WATER QUALITY AND FISHERIES**

### Hydrology

The MRA's proposed courses for their three annual motorcycle events traverse portions of three 5<sup>th</sup> field watersheds: Rogue-Gold Hill, Bear Creek, and Middle Applegate. The courses cross five 6<sup>th</sup> field subwatersheds and fifteen 7<sup>th</sup> field drainage areas within these 5<sup>th</sup> field watersheds (Table 1). The 6<sup>th</sup> field subwatersheds are subdivisions of the 5<sup>th</sup> field watersheds and the 7<sup>th</sup> field drainage areas are subdivisions of the 6<sup>th</sup> field subwatersheds, thus allowing for analysis at several different scales. These watershed-based subdivisions are termed hydrologic units. The "fields" refer to the two digit field added to the U.S. Geological Survey's 4<sup>th</sup> field hydrologic unit code (HUC).

Table 1. Hydrologic Units

5 <sup>th</sup> Field Watersheds (HUC 5)	6 <sup>th</sup> Field Subwatersheds (HUC 6)	7 <sup>th</sup> Field Drainage Areas (HUC 7)	Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC)
Bear Creek			1710030801
	Bear-Jackson		171003080111
		Jackson Creek above Walker Creek confluence	171003080 <b>11106</b>
		Walker Creek (tributary to Jackson Creek)	171003080 <b>11112</b>
		Willow Creek	171003080 <b>11121</b>
Rogue-Gold Hill			1710030802
	Rogue-Galls/Kane		171003080202
		Kane Creek	171003080 <b>20209</b>
		Galls Creek	171003080 <b>20215</b>
	Foots Creek		171003080204
		Middle Fork Foots Creek	171003080 <b>20403</b>
		Left Fork Foots Creek	171003080 <b>20406</b>
		Foots Creek above Right Fork and below Middle/Left Forks confluence	171003080 <b>20409</b>
		Right Fork Foots Creek	171003080 <b>20412</b>
		Foots Creek above Rogue River and below Right Fork confluence	171003080 <b>20415</b>
Middle Applegate			1710030904
	Forest Creek		171003090402
		Forest Creek above Right Fork Forest Creek	171003090 <b>40203</b>
		Right Fork Forest Creek	171003090 <b>40206</b>
		Forest Creek above Poorman Creek and below Right Fork confluence	171003090 <b>40209</b>
		Forest Creek above Bishop Creek and below Poorman Creek	171003090 <b>40215</b>
	Applegate-Humbug/Chapman		171003090403
		Humbug Creek	171003090 <b>40333</b>



The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality’s (ODEQ) 1998 list of water quality limited streams (also known as the 303(d) list) includes two streams (Galls Creek and Jackson Creek) that are within the analysis area (Table 2).

Table 2. Water Quality Limited Streams

HUC 5	Stream Name	Segment Location	Parameter on 303(d) List
Bear Creek	Jackson Creek	Mouth to headwaters	Bacteria (year-round) Temperature - summer
Rogue-Gold Hill	Galls Creek	Mouth to headwaters	Temperature - summer

### Water Quality

The ODEQ’s 1988 Oregon Statewide Assessment of Nonpoint Sources of Water Pollution (NPS Assessment) identifies two streams (Walker Creek and Willow Creek) within the analysis area that are impacted by nonpoint source pollution (Table 3). These streams are not included on the 303(d) list because there is not supporting data.

Table 3. ODEQ’s 1988 NPS Assessment

HUC 5	Stream Name	Segment Location	Parameter of Concern
Bear Creek	Walker Creek (tributary to Jackson Creek)	Mouth to headwaters	Sedimentation
	Willow Creek	Mouth to headwaters	Sedimentation Turbidity

The water quality parameters most likely to be affected by the proposed action are sedimentation and turbidity. The State water quality criterion for sedimentation prohibits the formation of appreciable bottom or sludge deposits or the formation of any organic or inorganic deposits deleterious to fish or other aquatic life or injurious to public health, recreation, or industry. (OAR<sup>1</sup> 340-041 1999:58). Sedimentation can negatively affect domestic water supplies, resident and anadromous fish and other aquatic life. The State water quality criterion for turbidity prohibits more than a ten percent cumulative increase in natural stream turbidities, as measured relative to a control point immediately upstream of the turbidity causing activities (OAR 340-041 1999:57). Beneficial uses affected by turbidity are domestic supplies, resident fish and aquatic life, water supply and aesthetics.

Sediment sources in the analysis area include roads; logging (tractor skid trails, yarding corridors, and landings); off-highway vehicle (OHV) trails; concentrated livestock grazing in riparian zones;

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<sup>1</sup>Oregon Administrative Rule

urban, residential, and agricultural clearing of riparian zones; maintenance of irrigation diversions; irrigation return flows; irrigation ditch blowouts; and mining.

There are areas of granitic soils in the headwaters of Kane, Galls, Foothills, Willow, and Jackson Creeks. These areas are very susceptible to surface erosion when the surface has been disturbed. The granitic soils are primarily on private lands within the analysis area. All three of the proposed courses cross granitic soils on both BLM and private lands.

Existing roads, trails, skid roads, and yarding corridors in the analysis area are currently being used by OHVs on a regular basis. This use has increased the amount of sediment moving off site and into nearby streams. This is primarily a concern where OHVs directly cross streams without a drainage structure. The action of the vehicle moving across bare soil causes soil particles to detach and destabilizes the streambank. Soil moves into the channel bottom and if water is flowing, the sediment may continue to move downstream. If no water is flowing in the channel when crossed by an OHV, the soil is deposited on the channel bottom until a rainfall event supplies enough water to move the sediment downstream. Indirect effects include channel destabilization that could result in future streambank sloughing, aggradation of bedload sediments, changes in stream channel morphology, and scouring of streambanks causing degradation of aquatic habitat downstream.

Sediment may also enter stream channels either directly or indirectly from trails that parallel streams on steep adjacent side slopes. Soil material can build up on the downhill side of the trails and end up moving into the stream channels below.

The three proposed courses are on existing roads or trails located predominantly on ridge tops. The proposed courses cross dry draws and stream channels (Appendix A). The dry draws or swales do not have a defined channel and do not show signs of scour and deposition. Sediment deposited in these draws is unlikely to move downstream except during an extreme storm event. Stream channels crossed by trails without a drainage structure are mostly headwater streams that are either ephemeral or intermittent. Channels associated with these headwater streams are generally narrow, have steep gradients (generally 4-10 percent) and are in V-shaped channels. With incorporation of the PDFs described in Chapter 2, there would be no places where a trail crosses a perennial stream on BLM land. No significant segment of any course traverses a riparian reserve, the courses only cross through riparian reserves where trails intersect stream channels.

Fisheries

The MRA’s proposed courses in the entire analysis area fall within three 5<sup>th</sup> field watersheds containing seven fish bearing streams. These streams provide habitat for both resident and anadromous fish. Resident fish include cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki*), rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and sculpin (*Cottus* sp.). Anadromous fish are Coho salmon (*Onchorhynchus kisutch*), a species listed as threatened as of May 1997, and Steelhead trout (*O. mykiss*) (Table 4).

Table 4 Fish Bearing Streams

5 <sup>th</sup> Field Watersheds	Fish bearing streams	Species*	Nearest Channel Crossing (miles)**	Nearest Parallel Trail (miles)
Bear Creek	Willow Creek	RB/St	3.5 (seasonal) <b>P</b>	3.5 <b>P</b>
Rogue-Gold Hill	Kane Creek	St, CT	0.10 (ephemeral) <b>P</b>	0.10 <b>P</b>
	Galls Creek	St, CT	0.5 (seasonal) <b>P</b>	0.5 <b>B</b>
	Left Fork Footh Ck.	St, CT	2.25 (ephemeral) <b>P</b>	0.5 <b>P</b>
	Fooths Creek above Right Fork and below Middle/Left Forks confluence	Co, St	0.5 (seasonal) <b>P</b>	0.5 <b>B</b>
	Right Fork Fooths Creek	St	0.75 (seasonal) <b>B</b>	0.75 <b>B</b>
	Fooths Creek above Rogue River and below Right Fork confluence	Co, St	0.5 (seasonal) <b>P</b>	0.5 <b>P</b>
Middle Applegate	Right Fork Forest Creek	CT	0.25 (ephemeral) <b>B</b>	0.25 <b>B</b>
	Forest Creek above Poorman Creek and below Right Fork confluence	St, CT	0.25 (ephemeral) <b>B</b>	0.25 <b>B</b>
	China Gulch	RB/St	no crossings <b>B</b>	2.5 <b>B</b>
	Humbug	St/CT	2.5 (ephemeral) <b>P</b>	2.5 <b>P</b>

\* CT=cutthroat, Co=Coho, RB=rainbow, St=steelhead

\*\* P = Occurs on Private Land; B = Occurs on Public Land

Trails that cross streams on both BLM and private land are above resident fish populations; primarily on ephemeral or seasonal head water streams (Table 4). The closest trail crossing to resident fish is above Kane Creek, where a trail crosses a dry draw 0.10 miles above Kane Creek on private land. The closest crossing to a Coho stream is 0.5 miles above Foots Creek through a seasonal channel on private land.

The fish bearing streams in the analysis area have higher than desirable levels of sediment as a result of the sources listed above (1991 ODFW Physical Habitat Surveys, ODFW 1999 electroshocking surveys). OHV use can contribute sediments to stream channels from trails on adjacent side slopes and channel destabilization from trail crossings that could result in future streambank sloughing, aggradation of bedload sediments, changes in stream channel morphology, and scouring of streambanks. Sedimentation may reduce habitat for and survival of eggs and fry.

### **THREATENED AND ENDANGERED PLANTS**

#### *Fritillaria gentneri*

During Spring 2000, areas adjacent to all courses were surveyed for *Fritillaria gentneri*. Two sites along the course were known previously; one new site was found on private land. Other sites are in the vicinity but are not adjacent to the course.

*Fritillaria gentneri*, listed as endangered under the auspices of the ESA, occurs in the proposed project area. A critical habitat determination has not been made. The Final Rule for *Fritillaria gentneri*, January 10, 2000, describes three suitable habitats,

- 1) oak woodlands dominated by *Quercus garryana*,
- 2) mixed hardwood forest dominated by *Quercus kelloggii*, *Quercus garryana*, and *Arbutus menziesii*,
- 3) coniferous forests dominated by *Arbutus menziesii* and *Pseudotsuga menziesii*.

*Fritillaria gentneri* is found only in Jackson and Josephine Counties with most populations within a seven mile radius of the Jacksonville Cemetery. Population size is near the threshold necessary for long-term genetic integrity.

Other Special Status Species (see Table 5) occur near the course but the proposed action is not expected to affect these species.

**Table 5: Special Status Plants in the Analysis Area**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status*	Occurrences
<i>Cypripedium fasciculatum</i>	clustered lady's-slipper	1, 2, S, SC	5
<i>Cypripedium montanum</i>	mountain lady's-slipper	1, 2, T	6
<i>Fritillaria gentneri</i>	Gentner's fritillary	FE, SE	3
<i>Isopyrum stipitatum</i>	dwarf isopyrum	A	2
<i>Lithophragma heterophyllum</i>	hill star	T	3
<i>Bryoria tortuosa</i>	tortured horsehair lichen	1, 3	3
<i>Collema nigrescens</i>	jelly lichen	4	2
<i>Leptogium saturninum</i>	Saturn skin lichen	4	4
<i>Lobaria hallii</i>	Hall's lung lichen	1, 3	6
<i>Lobaria pulmonaria</i>	lung lichen	4	2
<i>Nephroma helveticum</i>	Swiss kidney lichen	4	4
<i>Nephroma resupinatum</i>	kidney lichen	4	3
<i>Peltigera collina</i>	felt lichen	4	2
<i>Pseudocyphellaria anomola</i>	pseudocyphellaria lichen	4	1
<i>Pseudocyphellaria anthraspis</i>	pseudocyphellaria lichen	4	2

\*

A = BLM Assessment species in Oregon

FE = Listed as endangered with the USF&W

S = BLM Sensitive species in Oregon

SC = Oregon State candidate

SE = Listed as endangered by the State of Oregon

T = BLM Tracking species in Oregon

1 = Survey & Manage Survey Strategy 1, manage known sites

2 = Survey & Manage Survey Strategy 2, survey prior to ground-disturbing activities

3 = Survey & Manage Survey Strategy 3, extensive surveys

4 = Survey & Manage Survey Strategy 4, general regional surveys

## **SPECIAL STATUS WILDLIFE**

The analysis area provides habitat for a variety of wildlife species, some of which have special management status. These special status species include:

Northern Spotted Owl

Great Grey Owl

Blue Grey Taildropper (slug)

Papillose Taildropper (slug)

Because the MRA event would take place only on the continuously disturbed ground of the existing roads and trails there is no requirement to survey for any Survey and Manage species.

There are 13 known spotted owl sites within the analysis area.

There are 2 known great grey owl sites in the analysis area.

The area has received heavy recreational use by motorcycles for many years. The area also receives some use by other off-road vehicles. Individuals of special status species which occur in the area are currently co-existing with heavy motorized use on the many miles of trails, BLM roads, and other private roads in the analysis area.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Environmental Consequences**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter forms the scientific and analytic basis for comparison of alternatives. Discussions include the environmental impacts of the alternatives and any adverse environmental effects that cannot be avoided should the action alternative be implemented. Analysis incorporates the PDFs described in Chapter 2. It also identifies and analyzes mitigation measures designed to avoid or reduce projected impacts. The impact analysis addresses direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on all affected resources of the human environment.

#### **HYDROLOGY, WATER QUALITY AND FISHERIES**

##### No Action Alternative - Direct and Indirect Effects

Under the No Action alternative, it is assumed that the three annual riding events would occur on private land. This would confine the OHV use to a smaller area and could potentially result in a heavy concentration of OHV use in a few drainages on private land rather than spread out across many drainages. It is likely that on the three event days there would be more streambank damage and sediment movement into stream channels than on an average non-event day of OHV use because of the concentrated use. Indirect effects include sediment input to stream channels from trails on adjacent side slopes and channel destabilization from trail crossings that could result in future streambank sloughing, aggradation of bedload sediments, changes in stream channel morphology, and scouring of streambanks which could indirectly effect fish by reducing habitat for and survival of eggs and fry. Since the race course is not known for the No Action Alternative, the distance of trails from fish bearing streams, and thus the likelihood of an indirect effect on egg and fry habitat cannot be determined.

A direct effect on riparian vegetation would be riders skidding out and damaging plants while in the riparian corridor. The damage caused by the occasional rider falling on a riparian plant during an annual riding event should be minimal.

Indirect effects would be damaging plant roots through compaction, trails could widen through use destroying neighboring vegetation, and channel crossings could cause bank destabilization resulting in plant failure on the banks. The trails used during the three event days are ridden year round, and trails are unlikely to widen significantly or incur additional bank destabilization during the three event days each year.

##### Proposed Action Alternative - Direct and Indirect Effects

Under the Proposed Action alternative, the types of direct impacts to water quality would be similar to those under existing conditions (see Affected Environment page 10 and 11). However, the amount of OHV use on the three annual event days would increase substantially over the average daily use. The use would be more dispersed across drainage areas than under the No Action alternative. Impacts to water quality (sedimentation) would be higher on private land than

on BLM land due to more trails that cross streams without drainage structures on private lands (Appendix A).

Under the proposed alternative, there would be no direct impacts to fish since none of the trails on private or BLM lands cross fish bearing streams.

There are two HUC 7 drainage areas that would receive substantially more direct and indirect effects to water quality from OHV use under the Proposed Action alternative than the other HUC 7 drainage areas in the analysis area. The two drainage areas are: Jackson Creek above Walker Creek (Appendix A/011106 in Tables 6, 7, and 8) and Right Fork Forest Creek (Appendix A/040206 in Tables 6, 7, and 8). These two HUC 7s have more trail stream crossings without drainage structures than the other HUC 7s for both BLM-administered and private lands and they are the only HUC 7s that have perennial stream crossings (all on private land). The OHV courses in these two drainage areas plus Kane Creek (Appendix A/020209 in Tables 6, 7, and 8), Galls Creek (Appendix A/020215 in Tables 6, 7, and 8), and Middle Fork Foothills Creek (Appendix A/020403 in Tables 6, 7, and 8) also have the highest number of seasonal stream crossings. The seasonal streams are likely to contain water during the two spring events. The amount of bank damage and sediment entry for the perennial and seasonal crossings would be dependent upon the number of motorcycle riders and the weather, streamflow, and soil conditions on the event days.

Indirect effects include sediment input to stream channels from trails on adjacent side slopes and channel destabilization from trail crossings that could result in future streambank sloughing, aggradation of bedload sediments, changes in stream channel morphology, and scouring of streambanks causing decreasing habitat available and/or increasing mortality to eggs and fry. The indirect effects resulting from the Proposed Action would be most noticeable in Jackson Creek above Walker Creek drainage area and the Galls Creek drainage area.

The closest trails paralleling to fish bearing streams are 0.15 miles above Kane Creek, with most 0.5 miles away or more, and the closest trail crossing is also 0.15 above Kane Creek in a dry draw, with most trail crossings 0.5 miles or more away (Table 4). With the concentrated riding limited to three days, and the distance that sediments would need to travel to reach a fish bearing stream, the proposed action is not likely to affect the existing water quality or downstream aquatic conditions on BLM lands.

The direct and indirect effects on riparian vegetation are the same as for the No Action Alternative.

### Cumulative Effects - No Action and Proposed Alternatives

Cumulative effects result from incremental effects of proposed actions when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such actions. Other past and present sediment sources in the analysis area include roads; logging from ongoing BLM and private timber harvest (tractor skid trails, yarding corridors, and landings); concentrated livestock grazing in riparian zones; urban, residential, and agricultural clearing of riparian zones; maintenance of irrigation diversions; irrigation return flows; irrigation ditch blowouts; and mining. No other activities that would affect sediment delivery to stream channels are planned on BLM lands in the analysis area. The A course traverses a ridge bordering a proposed Area of Critical Environmental Concern and the proposed sites of future BLM timber sales.

Sediment delivery to stream channels from OHV use in the analysis area adds to the existing sedimentation rates that result from other sediment producing activities and the natural erosion properties of granitic soils. The three annual MRA events, whether run on private lands as the “No Action alternative,” or on BLM lands in the “Proposed Action Alternative,” could add additional sediments to stream channels. Sediments added by OHV use during the three one-day events each year would be small in comparison to the sediment contributed by the other activities occurring in the analysis area.

## **THREATENED AND ENDANGERED PLANTS**

### No Action Alternative

#### Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects

By not issuing the permit and assuming the events would take place on private land in the same drainages, undiscovered populations of *Fritillaria gentneri* could be impacted. The effects to *Fritillaria gentneri* and its habitat would be similar to that of the proposed action. Specific courses and adjacent private land have not been surveyed. Suitable habitat is assumed to be occupied and therefore effects to the species could be greater.

### Proposed Action Alternative

#### Direct effects

No direct effects to *Fritillaria gentneri* are expected provided the project occurs as designed. Crashes and accidental leaving of the course cannot be guaranteed against. If these accidents happen at known sites, direct damage to *Fritillaria gentneri* could occur. Damage to individual *Fritillaria gentneri* could result from being run over or having gas and oil spilled on or near them. This type of damage would be localized and only very small populations could be extirpated.

A small fire started by vehicles is possible. In April and May, when the plants are up, a fire could damage or extirpate small populations. However, moisture conditions at this time would likely allow suppression efforts by the State of Oregon to control any fires quickly. No known fires have been attributed to OHV use during past events.

### Indirect effects

Indirect effects would include the influence of dirt and dust on the *Fritillaria gentneri*'s fertilization process and the changes to habitat from the introduction of nonnative species. While the effectiveness and mechanism of this plant's fertilization process is not well understood, it is assumed that road dust and dirt could have an impact. However, it is suspected that *Fritillaria gentneri* reproduces mainly by an asexual process, and in this case effects of dust would be discountable. A study of *Fritillaria*'s fertilization process has been initiated in Spring 2000 by the Oregon Department of Agriculture and a *Fritillaria* demographic study contracted by BLM was initiated in Spring 1999.

The project area does have infestations of noxious weeds and nonnative species. In this area, yellow starthistle and weedy annual grasses present the greatest threat of habitat modification. Particularly susceptible are disturbed areas, oak woodlands, shrublands, and meadows. Off-highway vehicles have a high potential of transporting plant seeds. Vegetative material caught on the undercarriage and caked-on mud are recognized seed spread mechanisms.

A fire early or late in the fire season would have an effect on the successional state of the existing plant communities. Fires at these times of the year can burn incompletely and in a mosaic pattern. Because *Fritillaria* is an early seral species, this type of burn may be beneficial to the habitat of *Fritillaria gentneri*.

### Interdependent and interrelated effects

Effects to the species and its habitat are expected to be similar for private land.

### Cumulative effects

While this permit is for three events annually through 2005, events are expected to continue to occur past this date. The area is an officially designated and locally well-known as an off-highway vehicle riding area. Past and present use has been largely uncontrolled. The impacts of this use have not been analyzed. A future long-term management plan/Environmental Impact Statement will analyze OHV use in this area and designate limited use and closed areas. Effects to Special Status Species and their habitats would be assessed in a future document.

## **WILDLIFE**

### No Action Alternative

By not issuing the permit and assuming the events would take place on private land in the same drainages, impacts to wildlife would be similar to the proposed action alternative.

### Proposed Action Alternative

Because the MRA events would be limited to existing roads and trails, and these are not suitable habitat, there would be no effect on terrestrial mollusks, red tree voles or other Survey and Manage wildlife species. There is no habitat loss for any special status species anticipated under this alternative. The area to be disturbed by the event is already disturbed.

With the exception of the “Boundary Trail,” none of the proposed routes fall within the 0.25 mile radius of known spotted owl sites, thus no seasonal restrictions are necessary and no impacts are anticipated. One of the project design features described elsewhere in the document addresses the seasonality of use of the Boundary Trail.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **AGENCIES CONSULTED AND PUBLIC NOTIFICATION**

#### **FEDERAL AGENCIES**

##### National Marine Fisheries Service

Off-Highway Vehicle use is covered under the March 18, 1997 programmatic Biological Opinion as well as the August 11, 1997 Letter of Concurrence and the August 15, 1997 Biological Opinion for "motorized and non-motorized recreation activities outside of Riparian Reserves" from the National Marine Fisheries Service.

##### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The BLM received a Biological Opinion and Letter of Concurrence from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on August 30, 2000 that this project is not likely to adversely affect Gentner's fritillaria (*Fritillaria gentneri*).

#### **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

##### Publicity

Public notice of the availability of this EA was provided through advertisement in the Medford Mail Tribune and the BLM Medford District's central registration and recording system.

##### Notification

A copy of the EA was mailed to the following organizations:

- Applegate River Watershed Council
- Association of O&C Counties
- Audubon Society
- City of Jacksonville
- The Confederated Tribes
- Headwaters
- Jackson County Commissioners
- Klamath Siskiyou Wildlands Center
- Motorcycle Rider's Association
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Oregon Department of Forestry
- Oregon Natural Resource Council
- Rogue River National Forest
- Southern Oregon Timber Industry Association
- Star Ranger Station
- The Pacific Rivers Council
- Sierra Club, Rogue Group
- Southern Oregon University Library

##### Availability

A copy of this EA is available upon request from the Ashland Resource Area, Bureau of Land Management, 3040 Biddle Rd., Medford, OR 97540, (541) 770- 2200. The EA has also been placed in the public reading room at the Bureau of Land Management office (above address).

**APPENDIX A**

**Trail Stream Intersections by Course and Stream Type on BLM and Private Lands**

**Table 6 Trail Stream Intersections by Course and Stream Type<sup>1</sup> on BLM Lands**

HUC 7 <sup>2</sup>	Course A				Course B				Course C				All Courses			
	DD	I		P	DD	I		P	DD	I		P	DD	I		P
		SD	LD			SD	LD			SD	LD			SD	LD	
<b>Bear Creek Watershed</b>																
011106	1	1	1				1			2			1	2	2	
011112						3								3		
011121		1												1		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Rogue-Gold Hill Watershed</b>																
020209	1					1							1	1		
020215	3		1		2		2		2				5		3	
020403	2												2			
020406																
020409																
020412	3												3			
020415	1	1											1	1		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Middle Applegate Watershed</b>																
040203																
040206	3	4			3				1				6	4		
040209	1				3								4			
040215	2												2			
040333	8												8			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

1/ Stream Type (determined by a combination of field survey and aerial photo interpretation):

DD = dry draw (a swale that does not have a defined channel)

I = intermittent (a channel that meets the Northwest Forest Plan definition)

SD = short duration intermittent (an ephemeral stream that only flows during precipitation events)

LD = long duration intermittent (a seasonal stream that flows for a portion of the year but dries up in the summer)

P = perennial (a stream that normally flows year-round)

2/HUC7 number is the last 6 digits of the hydrologic unit code shown in bold in Table 1.

\* A blank in the table indicates that there are no trail crossings.

**Table 7 Trail Stream Crossings by Course and Stream Type<sup>1</sup> on Private Lands\*\***

HUC 7 <sup>2</sup>	Course A				Course B				Course C				All Courses			
	DD	E	S	P	DD	E	S	P	DD	E	S	P	DD	E	S	P
<b>Bear Creek Watershed</b>																
011106	9	15	6	2	5	10		1	5	1			15	25	6	3
011112			1		1	1	2						1	1	3	
011121		1												1		
<b>TOTAL</b>	9	16	7	2	6	11	2	1	5	1	0	0	16	27	9	3
<b>Rogue-Gold Hill Watershed</b>																
020209	3	3	3										3	3	3	
020215	4				2	3							5	3		
020403	6	2	3										6	2	3	
020406					4								4			
020409	2												2			
020412	4												4			
020415																
<b>TOTAL</b>	19	5	6	0	6	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	8	6	0
<b>Middle Applegate Watershed</b>																
040203	1				2								3			
040206	4	1	2		13	5	2	3	1				16	6	3	3
040209																
040215																
040333	6												6			
<b>TOTAL</b>	11	1	2	0	15	5	2	3	1	0	0	0	25	6	3	3

1/ Stream Type (determined by aerial photo interpretation):

DD = a dry draw that does not have a defined channel

E = an ephemeral stream that only flows during precipitation events

S = a seasonal stream that flows for a portion of the year but dries up in the summer

P = a perennial stream that normally flows year-round

2/HUC7 number is the last 6 digits of the hydrologic unit code shown in bold in Table 1.

\* A blank in the table indicates that there are no trail crossings.

\*\*The BLM's GIS mapping of roads on private land is not as accurate as it is for BLM lands; there are roads on private land that are not shown on the GIS map, thus the number of trail stream crossings that are not on existing roads shown in Table 7 may be higher than what is actually found on-the-ground.

**Table 8 Total Trail Stream Crossings by Stream Type on BLM and Private Lands**

HUC 7 <sup>2</sup>	All Courses on Private Lands				All Courses on BLM-Administered Lands				All Courses on All Lands			
	DD	E	S	P	DD	I		P	DD	E/SDI	S/LDI	P
						SD	LD					
<b>Bear Creek Watershed</b>												
011106	15	25	6	3	1	2	2		16	27	8	3
011112	1	1	3			3			1	4	3	
011121		1				1			2			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Rogue-Gold Hill Watershed</b>												
020209	3	3	3		1	1			4	4	3	
020215	5	3			5		3		10	3	3	
020403	6	2	3		2				8	2	3	
020406	4								4			
020409	2								2			
020412	4				3				7			
020415					1	1			1	1		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Middle Applegate Watershed</b>												
040203	3								3			
040206	16	6	3	3	6	4			22	10	3	3
040209					4				4			
040215					2				2			
040333	6				8				14			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

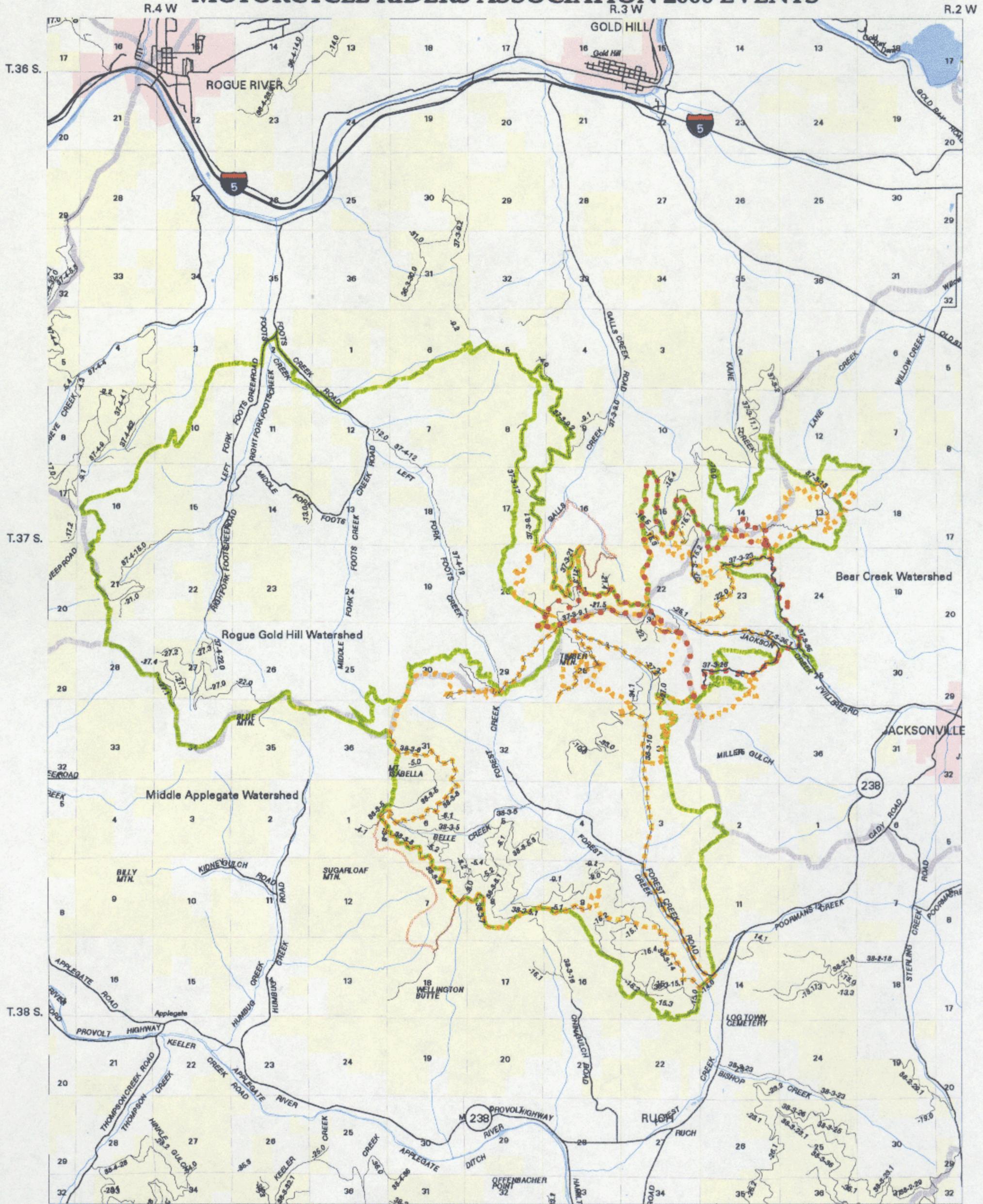
1/ Stream Type (determined by aerial photo interpretation):

DD = a dry draw that does not have a defined channel  
E = an ephemeral stream that only flows during precipitation events  
S = a seasonal stream that flows for a portion of the year but dries up in the summer  
P = a perennial stream that normally flows year-round  
2/HUC7 number is the last 6 digits of the hydrologic unit code shown in bold in Table 1.  
\* A blank in the table indicates that there are no trail crossings.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Map of Proposed Courses and Reroutes**

# MOTORCYCLE RIDERS ASSOCIATION 2000 EVENTS



United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
3000 Dahlia Road  
Boulder, Colorado 80508-4190

All rights reserved. No warranty is made by the Department of the Interior for the use of this map. The Department of the Interior is not responsible for any errors or omissions on this map. The Department of the Interior is not responsible for any damage to property or persons resulting from the use of this map.

1:50,000

Scale 1:50,000  
Date of Revision: March 1994, 11/97, 1/97

— TOWN	— A COURSE	— REROUTED A COURSE
— BLM LANDS	— B COURSE	— ROAD
— WATERSHED BOUNDARY	● C COURSE	
— STREAMS		