

# **General Description of the Travel Analysis Process**

## **The Purposes of Travel Analysis**

Travel Analysis helps to fulfill requirements of 36 CFR 212, subparts A and B:

1. To identify the minimum road system
2. To identify unneeded roads
3. To identify site-specific technical recommendations to be considered for subsequent designation of a system of roads, motorized trails, and areas for motor vehicle use.
4. To address motor vehicle use for dispersed camping and big game retrieval (optional)

TAP will follow the same six step process outlined in the roads analysis process. The roads analysis process is currently described in Miscellaneous Report FS-643, *Roads Analysis: Informing Decisions About Managing the National Forest Transportation System* (1999). The new proposed directives will incorporate key provisions of FS-643 into the directives system, while streamlining the language and clarifying the procedures.

## **The Objectives of Travel Analysis**

The objective of Travel Analysis is to provide Forest Service Line Officers (Responsible Officials, i.e., Forest Supervisors and District Rangers) with critical information to ensure that existing and developed road and motorized trail systems provide for user safety and convenience, are responsive to public needs and desires, provide sustainable access, are affordable within current and future expected budgets, are efficiently managed, have minimal negative ecological effects on the land, are administered in an environmentally responsible manner, and are consistent with land management objectives. Travel Analysis will not change or modify any existing NEPA decisions, but information generated by the analysis should be used during subsequent decision making related to motorized travel management.

## **The Travel Analysis Overview**

Travel Analysis is intended to identify opportunities for the national forest transportation system to meet current or future management objectives, and to provide information that allows integration of ecological, social, and economic concerns into future decisions. The process is intended to complement, rather than replace or preempt, other planning and decision processes.

The Travel Analysis process is a six-step progression. The Analysis is tailored to local situations and landscape/site conditions by Forest staffs and coupled with public input. The process provides a set of possible transportation-related issues and analysis questions. Only those relevant issues and questions, and any additional relevant suggestions on information needs and research findings that might apply to the analysis area, need to be addressed.

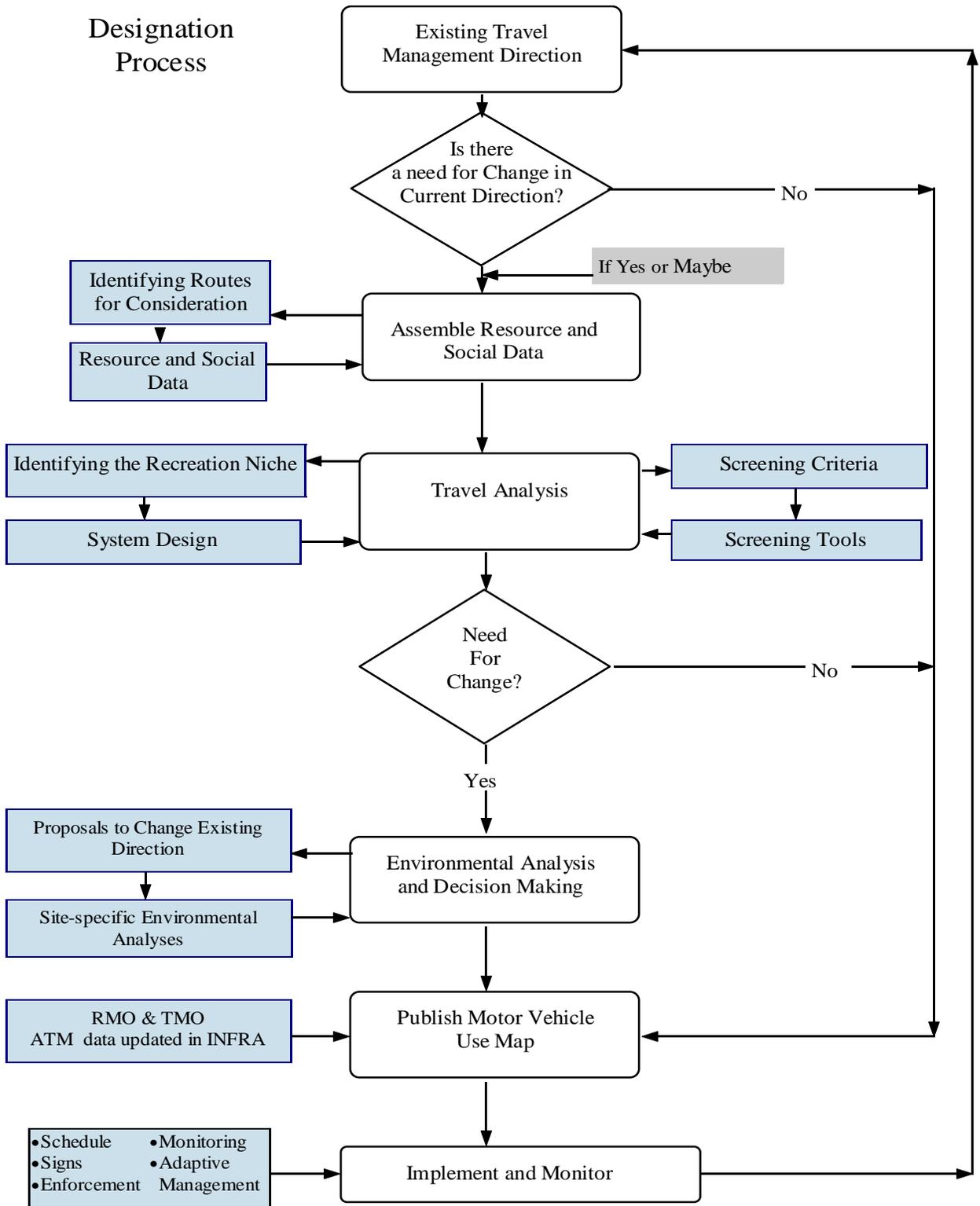


Figure 1: Process as described in the Motor Vehicle Route and Area Designation Guide. Available @ [http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/rhwr/ohv/documents/route\\_designation\\_guide\\_2-2.doc](http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/rhwr/ohv/documents/route_designation_guide_2-2.doc)

## **Six Step Process**

- Step 1. Setting up the Analysis
- Step 2. Describing the Situation
- Step 3. Identifying Issues
- Step 4. Assessing Benefits, Problems and Risks
- Step 5. Describing Opportunities and Setting Priorities
- Step 6. Reporting

The amount of time and effort spent on each step differs by the complexity of the issues, specific situations and available information particular to the project. Details about these steps can be found in FS-643 titled *Roads Analysis: Informing Decisions about Managing the National Forest Transportation System*.

## **Travel Analysis Products**

The product of a Travel Analysis is a report that documents the information and analyses used to identify opportunities and set priorities for future National Forest road and motorized trail systems. This report will provide a list of site-specific recommended changes to the transportation system. The Report will help land managers address questions on road and motorized trail access related to ecosystem health and sustainability, commodity extraction, removal of forest products, recreation, social and cultural values, and administrative uses.

The Report informs future management decisions on the merits and risks of constructing new roads and motorized trail; relocating, upgrading, or decommissioning existing roads and motorized trail; managing traffic; and enhancing, reducing, or discontinuing road and motorized trail maintenance. The analysis is based upon:

- Use of the best available scientific information;
- Economics;
- Social and economic costs and benefits of roads; and
- Contribution of existing and proposed roads and motorized trail to the land management objectives and desired conditions.