

Malheur National Forest Access Management Policy and Procedures

- * 1. Intent is to comply with management objectives of a closed road decision to the degree possible, since roads are closed primarily for resource protection or safety concerns.
2. Roads to be closed will be posted with a "pending closure" sign one year prior to actual implementation in order to give adequate public notification.
3. As a minimum, roads will be closed with a closure sign within 18 months from decision date. This will avoid the situation of "forgotten" closed roads.
4. All closed roads need to be properly signed to meet FS Manual direction; signs should include the actual reasons for closure of the specific road. Any road that is closed should have a closure device in place and be monitored for effectiveness. CFRs will be posted on all gated roads. Purchasers and contractors may be authorized to use the road during the duration of their activity if stated in the NEPA documentation. The exception would be green dot areas, eagle roosts, and other sensitive situations which should have contract language limiting operations during the closure period.
- * 5. Roads that are closed, regardless of closure type, will not have vehicle access without a permit. The permit will be in the vehicle at all times the vehicle is on any closed road.
6. Persons wishing to travel a closed road in a motorized vehicle will be required, with assistance from the Access and Travel Manager, to research and describe the objectives of the closure and evaluate if the need merits an exception to the closure.
7. The Access and Travel Manager will coordinate review of the application with unit staff whose resource is protected by the closure, and include mitigation recommendations if needed to protect resources. Law Enforcement will also review the application prior to decision and make recommendations if needed. The District Ranger or Forest Line Officer will then approve or disapprove the application. A 5-day review time is anticipated for applications.
8. Forest Policy is that employees, permittees, and contractors will abide by the same rules as required for the public. Employees will walk or use alternative means of transport if the distance to projects on the closed road is 1 mile or less.
9. Entry permits may be granted if the activity requires:
 - a. Heavy equipment.
 - b. Transporting materials.
 - c. A vehicle nearby for safety purposes.
 - d. Providing access to private land without alternative access.
 - e. Emergency, resource protection, or enforcement situations.
 - f. A vehicle in order to comply with law, regulation, or other legal direction.
- * 10. Use of wet, native surface roads should be avoided in order to prevent road damage and sedimentation. The Malheur NF Road Use Rules specify conditions when unacceptable damage is occurring and road traffic must cease.
11. Green dot entry permits should be infrequently granted. As much as possible, administrative work should be planned to avoid the closure period or to be near roads open to the public.
12. A sign will be posted 3 days prior to use of a closed road in a green dot closure area. The sign will state that the road is being used for administrative use by the Forest Service or contractor, the reason(s) for the use, and the period of use. Notification will be given to cooperating agencies prior to use.
13. For use of closed roads outside green dot areas, prior public notification signing will be required for use periods of 4 days or longer.
- * 14. If opened at time of entry, all closure devices will then be closed to assure no other access is allowed. If the project has repetitive entries, a decision may be made on a case-by-case basis to open the road for the duration of the project. If such decision is made, the project manager is responsible to close the road upon completion of use.