



U.S. Forest Service National Forest System Briefing Paper

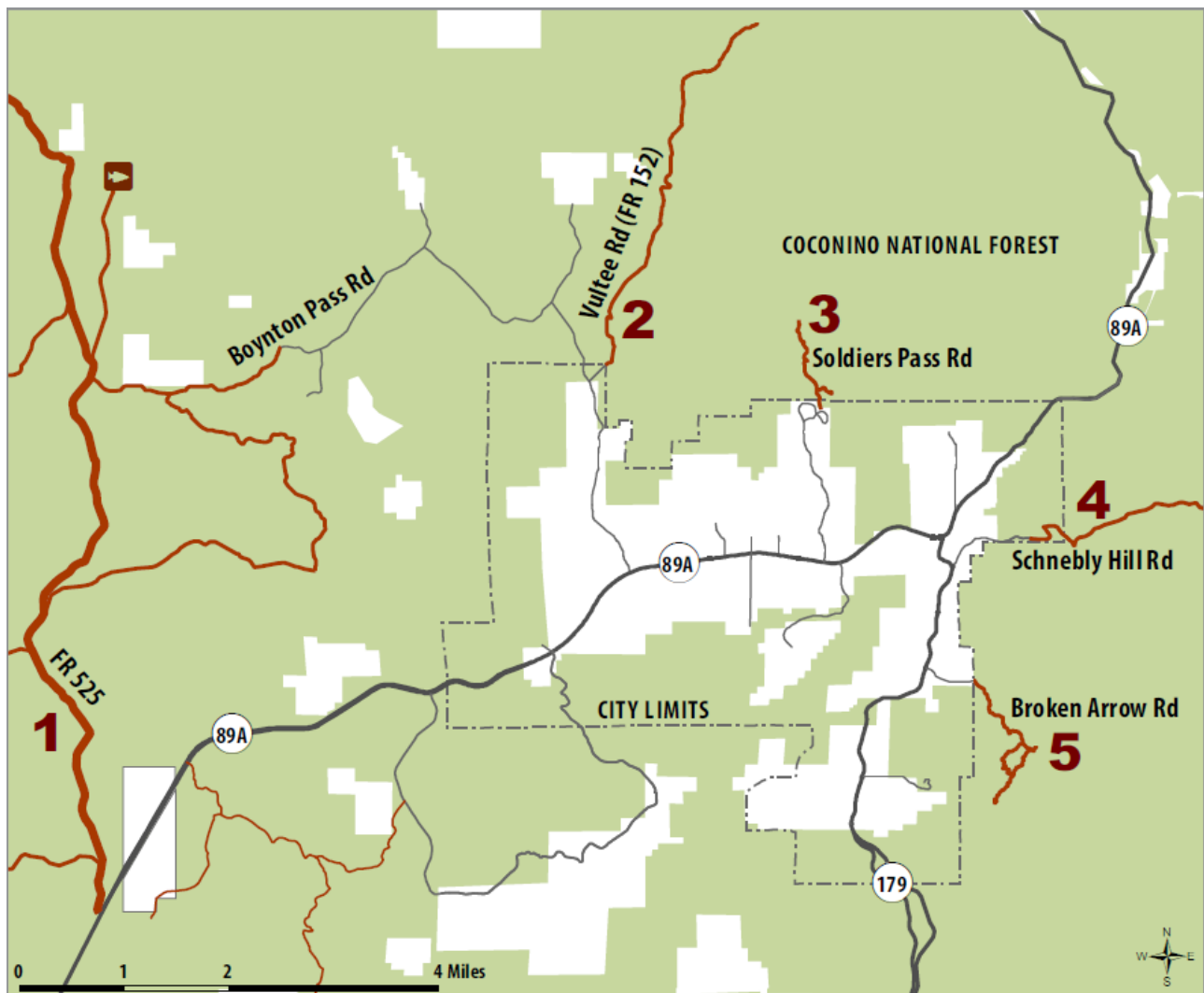
Date: May 20, 2022

Topic: Greater Sedona Motor Vehicle Management Issues and Past Activities

Summary/Key Points:

There has been long-term concern about noise and other negative impacts of OHV and associated uses from residents in and adjacent to the City of Sedona. Use data indicates an increasing trend and the growing visitation to the Sedona area suggests that this trend will continue over the long-term.

This document includes background information on the recent evolution of issues associated with motor vehicle management in the greater Sedona area, and past management activities and occurrences that have led to where we are today.



Previous Milestones

2010 – First company specializing in OHV rentals opens in West Sedona

2013 - Documented increase in local concerns regarding motorized use and specifically OHV rentals along Soldiers Pass Road, Dry Creek Road, Morgan Road, and to a lesser degree Schnebly Hill Road. In response, the city formed a **Sedona OHV Work Group** under the Citizen Engagement Program in 2014 to address community concerns.

2016 Soldiers Pass Motorized Use Environmental Assessment and Decision

- Purpose was to address landowner complaints and move toward Forest Plans desired conditions for ROS, as measured by encounter level
- Initial decision, was rejected by the Regional Forester because it was too restrictive by prohibiting all public motorized use
- Authorized parking lot improvements, installation of a gate and limited entry permit system of 12 public vehicles per day (includes OHV rentals)
- Implementation of the permit system began in 2018

2017 Forest Service receives grant for 3-year OHV Coordinator

- Enables agency to better work with the OHV Work Group, improve communication, find and implement solutions

2017 West Sedona OHV Trails Identified

- The Forest Service identified a number of existing roads in the west Sedona area as motorized trails. The Forest developed an electronic trail map and handout and worked with OHV rental companies to address issues with trespassing and use of non-designated roads

2018 Coconino National Forest Plan

- Revised plan changed ROS management direction for the Broken Arrow route. The changes were made to address comments that use levels could not be realistically brought down to meet the existing ROS classification for the area. The current Plan language states:
 - Broken Arrow is highlighted as a route that will be managed for a high level of OHV use, balanced with the management of other forest resources.
 - The parking, staging areas, and main four-wheel drive road at Broken Arrow Basin should be managed for the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) setting of “rural” because of the area’s high level of use. The physical setting and maintenance level of the road should be managed as semi-primitive motorized to be consistent with the surrounding area.

2018 Petition to stop Dispersed Camping in west Sedona

- Increasing amounts of dispersed camping along Forest Road 525 and connecting routes has increased substantially in recent years resulting in landowner impacts, new roads, resource damage and residential use

2019 City of Sedona issues Sedona Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Report

- Report documents OHV issues in the area and issuing recommendations
 - All of the recommendations are implemented in some form over the next few years

2020 Pandemic brings sudden increase in recreation

- All types of Forest use increases, especially dispersed camping and residential use in the West Sedona area
- Landowners concerns and forest impacts noticeably increase

2020/2021 Forest Service hears increasing concerns about motorized use near residential areas

- Increasing landowner concerns about impacts from public motorized use on Broken Arrow
- Increasing landowner concerns about motorized use and dispersed camping in West Sedona along routes 525/152C and the Sedona OHV trails
- Correspondence and meetings between the agency, landowners, and the City of Sedona to address increasing concerns

2021 Red Rock OHV Conservation Crew (RROCC) Established and forms partnership with TreadLightly! To address OHV issues

- Local O/G and OHV rental companies commit to one percent of each rental transaction or guided trip will be collected to fund trail improvements and rider education

2022 Forest Road 152C (Boynton Pass Rd.) Engineering Study and review of dust-impacted vegetation

- Engineering report found reasonable speeds and road maintenance level for the road

May 2022 – Forest Service approves dispersed camping and campfire closure order on over 32,000 acres west of Sedona

- Forest order to address resource damage and public safety concerns from sudden increase in dispersed camping since 2018
- To be implemented in Summer 2022

May 2022 – City of Sedona City Council Meetings and correspondence with numerous homeowners regarding impacts from OHV use, particularly on Broken Arrow

June/July 2022 – Establishment of Greater Sedona OHV Collaborative Group

- Facilitated by Southwest Decision Resources
- Currently in process of establishing group members, roles and rules, member interviews and issue identification, communication processes, shared goals, and other process elements.