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USDA FOREST SERVICE, 160A ZILICOA STREET, ASHEVILLE, NC 28801

NEWS • RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Winter Closure for Upper Tellico OHV Area Announced

The Upper Tellico Off-Highway Vehicle System on the Tusquitee Ranger District is now closed for the winter season, in compliance with a temporary closure order signed in December 2007. The roads and trails in the Upper Tellico will be closed to motor vehicles through March 31, 2009, to prevent resource damage during a period when the area is most vulnerable. This seasonal closure will be in effect for the three winter months each year until March 31, 2012, barring other management decisions that may be made in the interim.

Steve Lohr, Tusquitee District Ranger, states, "Compliance with the trail system closure last January through March was quite good. I appreciate the public's cooperation and understanding as we work to protect and manage all of the resources in the area."

The Forest Service is finalizing the environmental analysis of a long term plan for the Upper Tellico OHV Trail System, and anticipates releasing an environmental assessment for public review and comment by early February. The public will have an opportunity to provide feedback to the agency before a final decision is made. Questions concerning the trail system may be directed to Candace Wyman, Upper Tellico OHV Project Coordinator, at 828-257-4816.

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