

E. BENEFITS AND APPLICATIONS

Any travel across the public lands leaves some impact. However, it is neither practical, nor in line with the BLM mission to completely shut down all use and access.

Minimize impacts through route selections and rehabilitation

Both the resources and the riders benefit by applying prescribed efforts to mitigate areas that are whooped out, braided or eroded. **The desert can restore these areas** back to their natural character. **Users get a better riding experience** now and in the future.

Incorporate report recommendations into permit stipulations

Begin **rehabilitation efforts** during course clean-up and target their completion within a week of the race event when applicable. Work with MRANN to **establish standards** for the event weekend, clean-up and rehabilitation. **Monitor permit compliance** during the event and at post-event inspections.

Address route travel by all users

By fostering land stewardship through Public Lands Days, Tread Lightly ethics and other measures, the BLM can **encourage responsible use**. To **ease impacts** in areas of heavy use, install culverts, gravel pads and other improvements. Where adverse effects do occur, **mitigate impacts** by restricting access with fences and barriers such as those installed at Coyote Springs on the Black Rock desert, or at the Water Canyon 'Ski Hill'. This will allow time for area to self-repair or site rehabilitation efforts to take effect.

STUDY 4:

ROUTE USE EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE & GOOD

'THE FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1976 (FLPMA) PROVIDES THE TOOLS THE BLM NEEDS TO COOPERATIVELY AND CREATIVELY MANAGE THE PUBLIC LANDS, AND IN THE PROCESS, DISPELS THE NOTION THAT A VARIETY OF USES AND RESOURCES CANNOT CO-EXIST.'

from [http:// www.blm.gov / flpma/](http://www.blm.gov/flpma/)

A. STUDY GOAL

Demonstrate use of public lands with minimal impact to the resources

The team also noted travel routes and race courses that despite recent use showed little evidence of such. The nature of these areas was studied to determine the mechanisms that kept these areas healthy. By applying these lessons to travel management planning, this report can **aid the BLM in making route designations**. This can also be used by recreation planners and race organizers to **optimize route selections** for future races permits and **travel by all users**. These observations demonstrate the **sustainable use of the public lands** as dictated by FPLMA.

B. METHODS

As detailed in Study 3.

C. DATA AND RESULTS

2.7 % of the collected routes were **EXCELLENT**, and
8.5 % of the collected routes were **GOOD EXAMPLES**

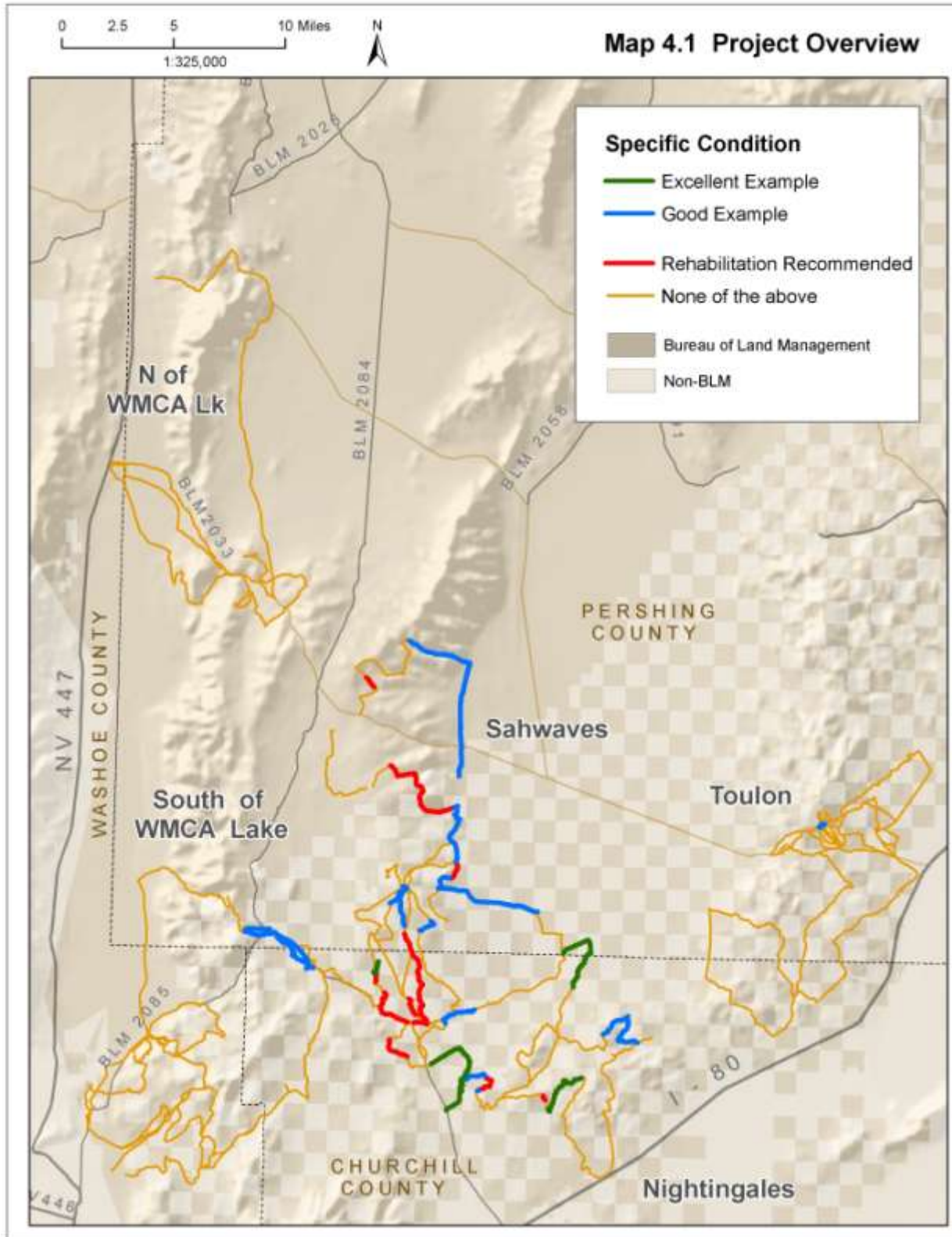
Miles detailed by route condition and project area -

Miles	NTG	N WLk	SAH	S WLk	TOU	TOTAL	%
None of the Above	43.82	70.05	76.97	124.09	92.80	407.72	85.0%
Good Example	5.38		25.18	9.70	0.52	40.78	0.09
Recommend Rehab	2.78		15.14			17.92	3.7%
Excellent Example	8.55		4.73			13.28	0.03
TOTAL	60.53	70.05	122.02	133.79	93.32	479.71	

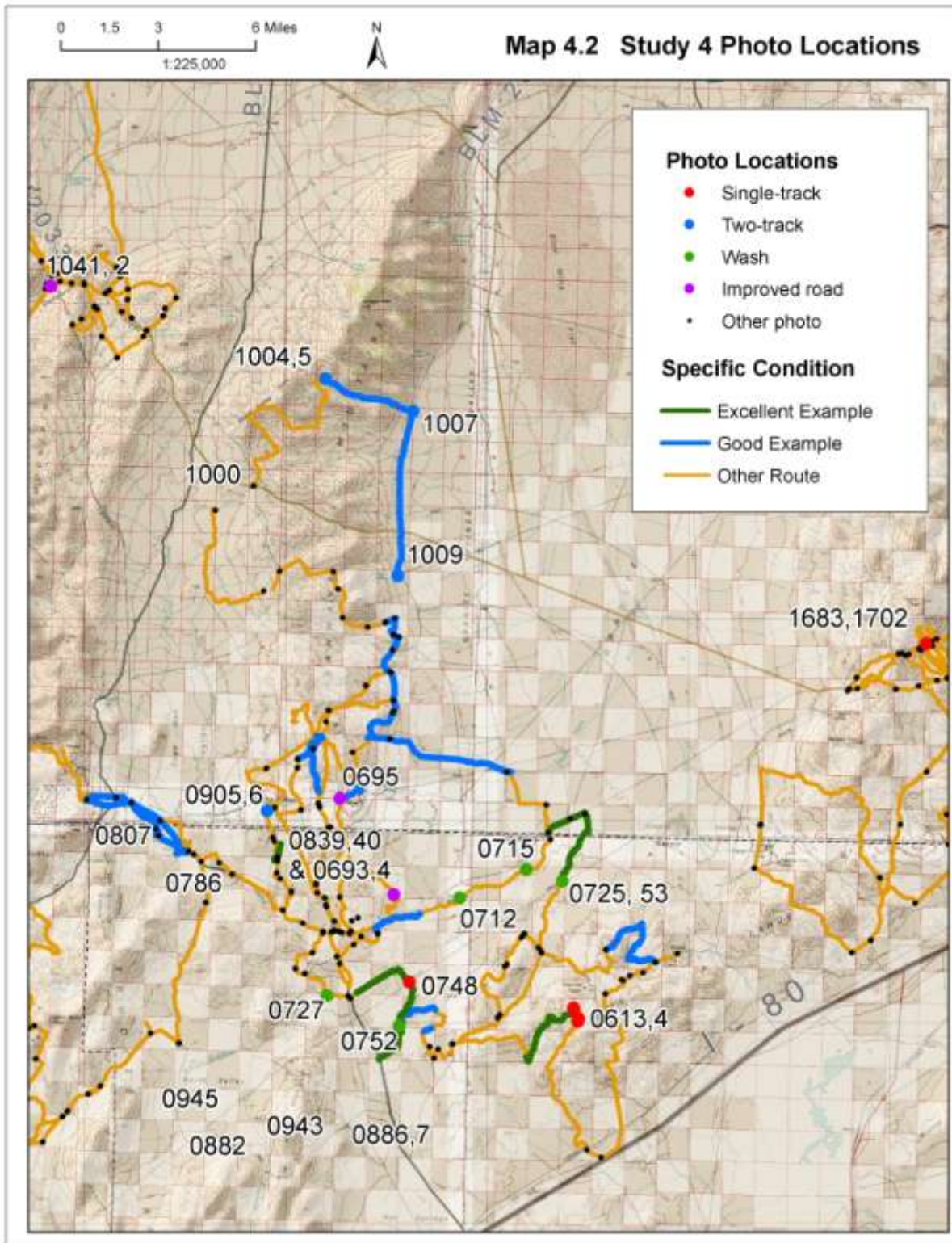
Team observations and recommendations were made from the **professional expertise** and **cumulative experience** of the team in storm water management and surface erosion, motorcycle course design and riding, land management and GIS.

They are discussed by route type: single tracks, two-tracks, drivable washes, and bladed roads. Heavily used areas are also discussed. These include such as staging areas used for participant check-in, race logistics, and camping and routes adjacent to race starts.

Gaps in routes are areas lacking GPS satellite and/or team coverage



Point label displays the last 4 digits of photos displayed in this study. Other photo locations marked by black dots can be viewed electronically in the project dataset.



i. Single track

This section shows **EXCELLENT** examples of travel routes with known high levels of use but little evidence to suggest disturbance outside of the route.

This route was part of a former race course. The soil is mostly **decomposed rock** which resists erosion and dust. **It holds up to a high level of use.** This is desirable as racers can cover the ground quickly and safely and will be unlikely to stray from the established track.



Although this single track is **sandy**, the sand is not very deep. There are not and whoops or traces of erosion. **Routes at higher elevations** are more resistant to impact since the soil particles tend to be larger and more stable than those at the valley floor which are composed of fines and silts deposited there by water flow. Like the previous photographs, it is **difficult to see this track from 10 feet on either side** despite use by hundreds of motorcycles during the race and pleasure riders outside of permitted events.



ii. Two - track

These photos depict two-tracks that were in good condition despite regular travel by a variety of users and vehicles. **Sufficient drainage has prevented the erosion** of topsoil or the development of gulleys. The vegetation looks healthy in the middle and along the sides of the route.



There is no evidence of a race course in this set of photos. The area is thriving as evidenced by vegetation and horse tracks in the two-track itself.



iii. Drivable wash

With proper slope and drainage, **washes will self-repair** as shown here.



There is no erosion and the vegetation is flourishing. This is an **EXCELLENT** example of a self-repaired wash.



This self-repaired, gravelly wash shows little evidence of being ridden by hundreds of riders 2 years before. At a slightly higher elevation, the soil is gravelly and non-erosive. **Whoops never form on hardier surfaces.**



This is a **GOOD** example of a **self-repaired, sandy wash**. Although races over 3 years ago, the area is shows no whoops and the vegetation looks healthy.



These observations support the recommendation that **race courses should be used in rotation to allow the course to rest and self-repair.**

iv. Bladed gravel or dirt

These are **EXCELLENT** examples of tracks with heavy travel by all users. There is a slight amount of erosion but this **route is holding up to a high level of use.**



This on the east side of Winnemucca Lake. It is **easily accessible by all type of vehicles** and serves as a main thoroughfare for all travelers headed into the back country. There is no evidence of use specifically attributed to the many motorcycle and a car rally events that have used this route.

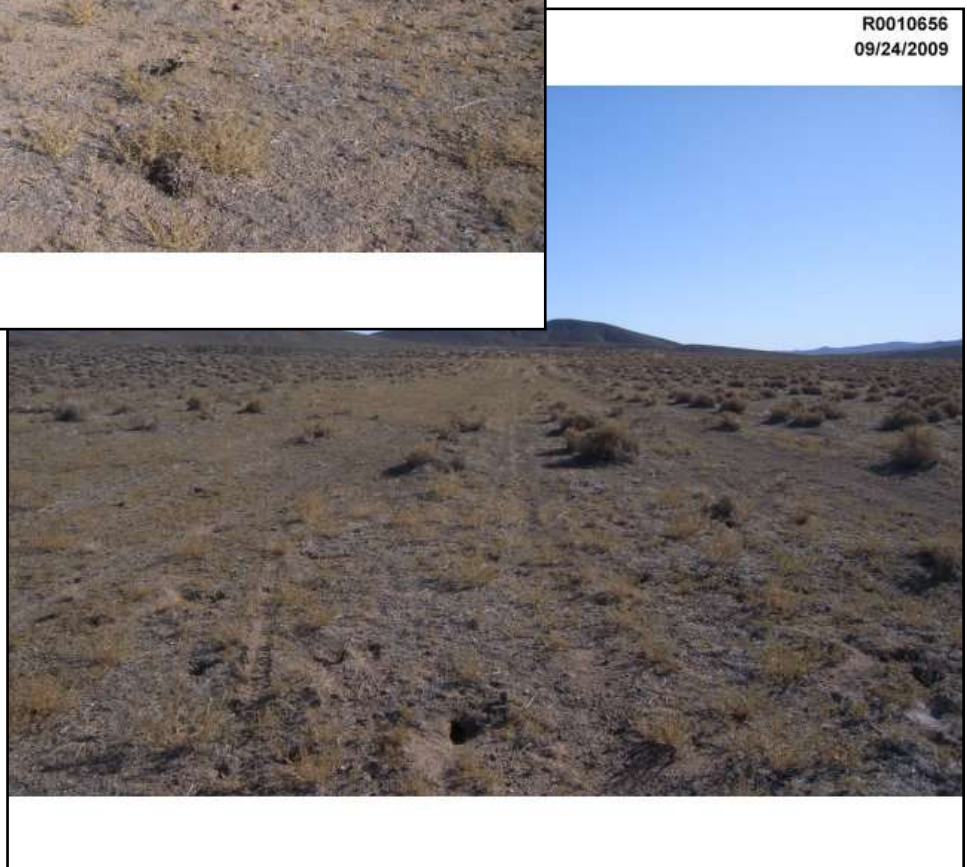


v. Race staging areas

Staging areas are used for participant check-in, race logistics and camping. By necessity, all vehicle types – cars, pickups with trailers and motor homes can access these areas. **Their easy access also makes for high levels of use in these areas by the general public for weekend pleasure trips and short off-road rides.**



2009 Staging Area



2009
Staging Area



R0011034
11/18/2009



R0011037
11/18/2009

UTM NAD 83 Zone 11N
11N 0306969 4454838

UTM NAD 83 Zone 11N
11N 0308024 4456821

These photos show the same staging area and a nearby segment of race course. **These areas were only lightly impacted** for the reasons outlined in the discussion section of this study.





Generally, **areas more likely to be impacted** are those adjacent to the staging area where the race begins – especially in **washes which are more susceptible to impacts**.

An example of wash adjacent at the race start was discussed in Study 3. The photo shows the same 2009 race start shows evidence of much use, but these shallow tracks and **will be erased** with the next rain or windstorm.

vi. The **PERFECT** route !!!

This stretch offers riders a test while leaving minimal resource impacts.

For riders, the slope offers a challenge in itself. Novice riders **could ride this downhill, but uphill travel would tax beginning riders.**

This route is at a higher elevation with **hardier rocky and gravelly soil type that can withstand use.** There has been little water or runoff downhill that has degraded or eroded the route. Despite being raced recently by hundreds of riders, only a single track is visible, and then only from the route itself. **Looking back uphill, this trace is barely visible.**



D. DISCUSSION

Staging areas

Typically, these areas are on the valley floor and chosen because they are **easily accessed by a well-maintained road**. They are silty and sandy since natural processes have deposited the finer particles here. It might be expected that heavy traffic and silty soil conditions would result in extensive damage to soils and vegetation in staging areas. However this is not the case – **impacts are minimal**.

Why? For safety reasons, 5 mph is the posted speed limit for all vehicles in this area. Travel speed and distance by large motor homes and toy haulers is also restricted by the terrain and vegetation. Motorcycle and OHV riding in camping and staging areas is prohibited except to travel to the start line. **Low travel speeds keep impacts low**.

Impacts are low in the staging areas because all participants are well aware of the consequences of failing a post-event inspection. Trash, campfires and leaving any lasting trace of camp is frowned upon by this **self-patrolled community** during the weekend.

E. BENEFITS AND APPLICATIONS

Numerous excellent and good examples of travel routes were described where despite heavy use by permittees and other users, the resources were lightly impacted.

Choose sustainable, fun routes

Find routes that **balance the needs of users with those of the environment**. GIS can be used to combine collected with project data with a) digital elevation data to evaluate slope, b) vegetation data for soil types, c) hydrology data for locating washes, and other relevant data sets to aid in selecting optimized travel routes.

Vary race course routes to allow land to rest

Impacts are cumulative. To minimize these impacts, it is recommended that race courses be allowed a chance to self-repair. This may seem at odds with the current permitting process which reviews only routes from past approved race. It is not. A **complete race geodatabase** which outlines not only the race locations but the years of use should offer enough options to choose analyzed routes and allow for rest periods. **Permitting by areas** rather than specific linear routes will also open up the number of choices for race course routes.

Rotate staging areas to minimize impacts

Given their **popularity and easy access**, it is recreational users not rather than organized racers that cause impact the staging areas. Also, there are many additional areas from which these races can be staged but are not being used. Perhaps this is due to human nature to use the same areas again. It is recommended that **alternating areas be used for staging**.

Encourage dispersed route use

Recommend tours by distance, skill level and scenic riding opportunities to **encourage dispersed by all users**.