

## Accessing the Trails

From **Hamilton** proceed to the end of the Sleeping Child Road (CR 8520) to the parking area. From there take the White Stallion Road (FS 273) and proceed on FS 273 for **12** miles to **Loop 1**.

**Loop 1** can also be accessed from **Darby**. Travel **5.5** miles on the Rye Creek Road (FS 75) to its intersection with the North Fork Road (FS 321). Proceed **5.3** miles on FS 321 to the intersection with FS 1127.

**Loop 2** can be accessed from **Darby**. Travel **11.5** miles on the Rye Creek Road (FS 75) to FS 5607. Follow the route markers.

There's a connection between **Loop 1** and **Loop 2** utilizing the Mine Road (FS 715). Follow the route markers.

Other than a modest **parking area** at the end of the Sleeping Child Road, there are no developed parking areas at other access points. Visitors are advised to exercise caution in choosing where they park to unload their motorcycles and ATVs.

## Following the Trails

The Loop routes are generally well marked with carsonite posts and labels. These labels include the route, what types of vehicles are permitted and directional arrows. Visitors are urged to strictly comply with vehicle restrictions.



**YAMAHA**



**POLARIS**

## History of the Area

The Bitterroot National Forest acquired 11 sections of private land in 2005 in the upper Rye Creek and Sleeping Child Creek drainages. These acquired sections were "checkerboard" sections originally granted to railroads around the turn of the century. The last private landowner, the Darby Lumber Company, constructed an intensive network of low standard roads for timber extraction and clear-cut most of the checkerboard sections. The massive fires of 2000 burned through logging slash on private lands and adjacent Forest Service lands, drastically changing the hydrology by burning vegetation and organic soil layers. The combination of post-fire hydrology and abandoned logging roads encouraged widespread erosion with a direct path to the area streams.

In July of 2015, the Forest Service began their "Darby Lumber Lands Watershed Improvement and Travel Management Project—Phase I". The focus of this project is to treat the existing road system to improve the watershed function. Another part of this project is to create some OHV Loop routes utilizing the Darby Lumber roads connected with short newly constructed trails.

The Ravalli County Off Road User Association partnered with the Forest Service on this project beginning in 2008. The Darby Trails are the culmination of countless hours of Association members' volunteer efforts, encouragement and support from the Bitterroot National Forest, and generous financial contributions from Polaris, Yamaha and Montana FVVP.

Travel along these trails is a study in the recovery of the landscape after an intense wildfire: First the grasses, then the bushes, and finally the trees. Visitors will notice dense patches of new growth trees in some locations, and little recovery in other areas.

The lack of timber along portions of these Loop routes inevitably impresses visitors with the vastness and ruggedness of the Sapphire and Bitterroot Mountains. One comes away from this experience with an improved appreciation of the impacts of wildfire, the recovery process, and the difficulties of managing such vast landscapes.

*Brochure provided courtesy of the Ravalli County Off Road User Association and the Bitterroot National Forest*

[www.ravallioffroad.org](http://www.ravallioffroad.org)

## Darby Trails

*Routes on the Bitterroot National Forest for Motorcycles and ATVs \**



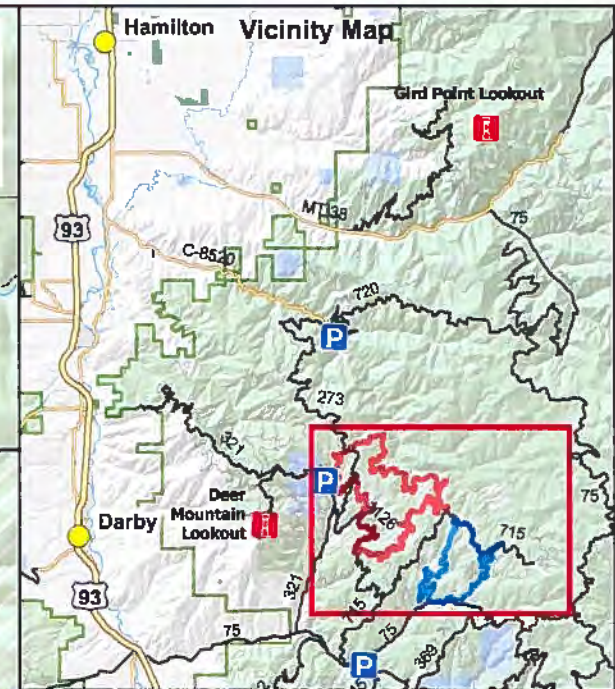
Located about **7 miles east of Darby, MT**, the **Darby Trail system** offers **44 miles of motorized routes for motorcycle and ATV travel in the Bitterroot National Forest**. These trails are characterized by **spectacular scenic panoramic views of the Sapphire and Bitterroot Mountains and the Bitterroot Valley** and offer **outstanding opportunities for photography and wildlife viewing**. These trails have been created by joining abandoned logging roads and active roads together with short connector trails to form two loop routes. These routes have been designed to be suitable for novice riders.

**\*ATVs are vehicles less than or equal to 50" in width.**

# Darby Trails OHV Routes



## Hamilton Vicinity Map



**Loop 1**  
(28.4 mi)

**Loop 2**  
(15.4 mi)

| Legend            |   |
|-------------------|---|
|                   | Parking Areas                               |
|                   | OHV Loop 1                                  |
|                   | OHV Loop 2                                  |
|                   | Open Road                                   |
|                   | Road with Seasonal Restriction              |
|                   | OHV Route with Seasonal Restriction         |
|                   | Closed/Stored Road                          |
|                   | Route Connector - OHV Only                  |
|                   | Trails Open to Motorcycles Only             |
| MT Land Ownership |   |
|                   | US Forest Service                           |
|                   | Montana State Trust Lands                   |
|                   | US Forest Service (previously Darby Lumber) |



For detailed route information including closure dates, please reference the Bitterroot National Forest Motor Vehicle Use Map. Available at the any Bitterroot National Forest Office.