



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Idaho Panhandle
National Forests

Coeur d'Alene River
Ranger District

Silver Valley Office
P. O. Box 159
Smelterville, ID 83868

Fernan Office
2502 East Sherman Avenue
Coeur d' Alene, ID 83814

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Contact: Don Garringer
(208) 769-3005, or
Rob Davies
(208) 769-3067

Second Open House Planned for District Travel Plan Project

The Forest Service is hosting its second open house public meeting on Wednesday, May 31, to discuss the Travel Plan Project for the Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District. The meeting is from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Canyon Elementary School, E. 27405 School House Loop, Cataldo, Idaho. (From Interstate 90 take Exit 34 (Rose Lake-St. Maries), turn left and cross the interstate, then right on East Canyon Road for 1.2 miles. Turn left at East School House Loop, and the school is about one-third mile ahead.)

In 2005, the Forest Service published a new rule for providing motor vehicle access to national forests and grasslands. The rule requires each national forest to designate those roads, trails and areas open to motorized vehicle use, and identify them on a motor vehicle use map. The Coeur d'Alene District Travel Plan Project is intended to develop that map, which will be available free to the public.

“A few weeks ago we met with interested members of the public to introduce the project and discuss the new rule for motor vehicle access on the Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District,” reported Linda McFaddan, Deputy District Ranger. “The May 31st meeting will be much different– truly a working meeting. We'll be available to help those people who are submitting recommendations register their proposals. In return, we'll ask participants to help us run each proposal through a simple screening process that will help us sort out which may be appropriate to include in the Proposed Action and which will not be appropriate to consider under the Travel Plan project,” added McFaddan.

McFaddan noted that there appeared to be a good representation of interests at the first public meeting, including ATV users, motorcycle riders, hunters, horsemen, hikers, conservationists, environmental organizations, and other interested individuals. There was some concern expressed that those with nonmotorized interests would not have a role in the project. “There is a time and place in this process for everyone to put forth their proposals and concerns that relate to motorized uses on the Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District,” stated McFaddan. “While we won't be creating any new nonmotorized routes under this particular project, someone could choose to propose changing a route designated for motorized use to a designation that does not allow motorized use. They would have to provide the same level of information and rationale for their proposal as with any other proposed change to a travel route. Also, once a Proposed Action is developed and presented to the public, it will be important that anyone with an interest review and comment on the recommended changes to ensure all concerns are voiced and addressed.” McFaddan emphasized that participants, whether representing a group or their own interest, have to be willing to work with people who have interests they may not agree with, and be willing to work toward solutions that may take months to identify.

“The May 31 meeting will not be about making decisions – it will focus on defining proposed changes and gathering the information we need to be able to develop a Proposed Action to present to the general



public,” she said. “We anticipate another meeting (probably during the third week in June) where we’ll sit down with the public again and look at a tentative proposed action based on the proposals that have met the criteria. For example, would such a proposed action meet the needs and desires of the diverse recreational visitors to the Coeur d’Alene River Ranger District? Are the routes and uses of the proposed action in harmony with the environment around them?”

For more information about the meeting or the project, please contact one of the Assistant Team Leaders at the Fernan Office of the Coeur d’Alene River Ranger District: Don Garringer, (208) 769-3005 or Rob Davies, (208) 769-3067, or visit the project web page (www.fs.fed.us/ipnf/cda/travelplan/).

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