

Changes proposed to public travel on national forest lands

SHOSHONE COUNTY

— After three months of talking with the public, peering at maps, and checking out travel routes on the ground, the U.S. Forest Service is close to presenting the public with a set of proposed changes to the Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District Travel Plan.

The Forest Service has conducted three public meetings to share information about the process and help the public identify proposed changes that could be used to design

a proposed action for the project. According to Project Team Leader Linda McFaddan, public scoping for the project will begin in about two weeks, when maps and other information about the proposed action will be mailed to anyone who has indicated an interest in the project. This information will also be found on the project Website: www.fs.fed.us/ipnf/cda/travelplan/.

"After the public has had a week or so to look over the information package, we'll

schedule a meeting to sit down and talk about the proposed changes," McFaddan stated in a press release issued by the Idaho Panhandle National Forest's Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District. "To ensure that there is ample time to discuss concerns, this scoping period will last 60 days."

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 unit to designate those roads, trails and areas open to motorized vehicle use, and identify them on a motor vehicle use map. The map will be published annually, and will be free to the public. The motorized vehicle use map will not replace visitor maps or other maps intended to convey visitor information; the map will only address routes designated for motor vehicle use.

McFaddan predicted the motor vehicle use map for the

Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District will be available in spring 2007.

"After incorporating any necessary changes identified during scoping, the project team will analyze and document potential effects of the proposed action and other alternatives," McFaddan stated in the press release. "In January 2007, our findings will be presented to the public in an environmental assessment. We'll have 90 days to work with interested mem-

bers of the public to respond to concerns, comments and specific recommendations for designation of roads and trails. By spring 2007, we should be ready to issue a decision notice documenting the details of the new Travel Plan, and issue a motorized vehicle use map."

For more information about the Travel Plan for the Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District, please contact Linda McFaddan (208-783-2101) or Rob Davies (208-769-3067).