

A Bridge to Tomorrow

RAC

North Central Idaho Resource Advisory Committee

Symbolic of the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000, a bridge crosses the Lochsa River in north central Idaho.

RAC funds paid for repairs to the Mocus Point Bridge just as Secure Rural Schools funds stabilize payments to counties affected by declining receipts from resource extraction on Forest Service lands.

CLEARWATER RANGER DISTRICT NEZ PERCE NATIONAL FOREST

Road 492 to Sourdough Peak Lookout drives a little easier now that 20 miles have been cleared of logs, brush and debris. RAC funds augmented Forest Service maintenance funds to get the work done.



*Before:
Water-filled
potholes
make driving
difficult.*

*After:
Newly graded,
the road is ready
for a smooth
ride.*



RACs Review, Recommend

U.S. Department of Agriculture regulation established Resource Advisory Committees. A RAC's duty is to review proposed projects in accordance with the SRS Act. The committee then makes recommendations to National Forest Supervisors while providing opportunities for interested parties to participate.

Historically 25% of Forest Service receipts from timber sales, mineral resources, grazing fees and other uses have been returned to states in which national forest lands are located to help fund roads and schools. These receipts have sharply declined.

The SRS payments help fund local schools, transportation infrastructure and projects to enhance ecosystem health and local employment opportunities.

While going about its duties, a RAC fosters collaborative cooperative relationships among federal land management agencies and those who use and care about the lands the agencies manage.

The North Central Idaho RAC represents a five-county area (Nez Perce, Clearwater, Latah, Lewis and most of Idaho) where the Nez Perce and most of the Clearwater National Forests are located. Fifteen members and three replacement members represent a wide array of interests in three categories. Every member serves a three-year term.

Each year the North Central Idaho RAC funds an average of \$750,000 on local projects. Since the committee's inception in 2000, that translates into \$4.5 million spent in the five-county north central Idaho area.

NORTH FORK RANGER DISTRICT CLEARWATER NATIONAL FOREST

Before:

A view from Pierce-Superior Road 250 looking across the North Fork Clearwater River offers a glimpse of Weitas Creek Campground before and after hazard tree removal. Note the dense growth in the photo (top right).



After:

Weitas Creek Campground, closed for several years due to potentially dangerous dead and dying trees, will reopen this year. After hazard tree removal (photo, right) sunlight reaches the ground. The site beckons the visitor to come set up camp.

RAC funds paid for removal of “hazard” trees that posed a threat to campground occupants. A form of root rot, a fungus that destroys root systems of certain tree species, made the trees vulnerable to blowdown during high winds.



For more information on SRS, RAC and projects, check the website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater/rac/rac.shtml>

RAC Members Reflect a Wide Array of Interests

Members represent three categories of interests, five members from each category.

Category 1:

- Organized labor
- Developed outdoor recreation, off-highway vehicle users, commercial recreation
- Energy and mineral development
- Commercial timber industry
- Federal grazing permit holders or land use permit holders within the RAC area

Category 2:

- Nationally recognized environmental organizations
- Regionally or locally recognized environmental organizations
- Dispersed recreation activities
- Archaeological and historical interests
- Nationally or regionally recognized wild horse or burro groups

Category 3:

- State-elected office holders or their designees
- County or local elected office holders
- American Indian tribal representatives from tribes within or adjacent to RAC areas
- School officials or teachers
- Citizens representing the affected public at large