

## **Black Hills National Forest Advisory Board**

### **Background**

In August 2001, Senator Tom Daschle hosted a Forest Summit in Rapid City, SD, that drew a crowd of over 600 people to air their views on current national forest management. One concept discussed concerned the formation of a “council” of persons representing diverse interests who would work cooperatively to provide advice and recommendations regarding national forest management. In the months following the Summit, it became clear that the public supported this concept and was ready to participate. In response, Forest Supervisor John Twiss made the decision to establish the Black Hills National Forest Advisory Board (Board).

Because of its nature, the Board was formed under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) of 1972 for which the Secretary of Agriculture approved the charter. The Board consists of 15 members representing a cross-section of interests and perspectives. Potential members may nominate themselves, someone from their organization, or anyone else whom they believe would serve the needs of the Board. **The Forest must receive completed applications by January 15, 2005.**

While the Board’s recommendations are not legally binding, their findings are seriously considered during the decision-making process. Other forms of public participation continue to be used. The Black Hills National Forest Advisory Board provides a unique opportunity to serve in an advisory role to the Black Hills National Forest.

### **Purpose of the Advisory Board**

The purpose of the Board is to provide advice and recommendations to the Black Hills National Forest on a broad range of forest issues. The Board will improve cooperative relationships and opportunities for collaboration with individuals, organizations, agencies, and governments who are interested or affected by Black Hills National Forest management.

Examples of issues the Board may address include the following:

- Forest plan revisions or amendments
- Travel management

## *Information*

- Forest monitoring and evaluation
- Site-specific projects with forest-wide implications

# Membership

Board membership consists of 15 people who represent a cross-section of interests regarding the Black Hills National Forest. Membership is balanced and diverse to the extent practicable. Members have demonstrated professional or personal qualifications or experiences to contribute to the charter and duties of the Board. The 15 members are representative of the interests shown in the following three categories.

1. Five persons who
  - a. Represent economic development
  - b. Represent developed outdoor recreation, off-highway vehicle users, or commercial recreation
  - c. Represent energy and mineral development
  - d. Represent the commercial timber industry
  - e. Hold federal grazing permits or other land use permits within the area for which the committee is organized
2. Five persons representing
  - a. Nationally recognized environmental organizations
  - b. Regionally or locally recognized environmental organizations
  - c. Dispersed recreation
  - d. Archaeology and history
  - e. Nationally or regionally recognized sportsmen's groups, such as anglers or hunters
3. Five persons who
  - a. Hold South Dakota state-level elected office or his/her appointee
  - b. Hold Wyoming state-level elected office or his/her appointee
  - c. Hold county or local elected office in South Dakota or Wyoming or his/her appointee
  - d. Are a tribal government elected or appointed official
  - e. Are a state of South Dakota or Wyoming natural resource agency official

### Other information about Board membership:

- Board members must be US citizens and at least 18 years old.

## *Information*

- Board members will elect the Chairperson of the Board for a one-year term.
- Board members serve without pay, although qualifying travel expenses to attend meetings may be reimbursed.
- To the extent practicable, each of the three categories will be composed of local (Black Hills area) residents.
- Equal opportunity practices in line with USDA policies shall be followed in all membership appointments to the committee. To ensure that the Board recommendations have taken into account the needs of the diverse groups the Department serves, membership shall include to the extent practicable individuals with demonstrated ability to represent minorities, women, and persons with disabilities.
- The Rocky Mountain Regional Forester appoints Board members and alternates after reviewing the list of recommended nominees from the Black Hills National Forest Supervisor.

## **About the Board and its Meetings**

1. The Board will provide timely advice and recommendations to the Forest Supervisor regarding programmatic and project-level issues with forest-wide implications.
2. The Board may create and operate subcommittees recommended by the members and approved by the Regional Forester or the Designated Federal Officer. Subcommittee members are not required to be Board members.
3. The Board operates separately from the Crook County (WY) Resource Advisory Council (RAC), which has been established under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000. Both committees cooperate with each other and share any information of public record.
4. The Board meets on a periodic basis as often as is necessary to complete its business.
5. The Board uses consensus with an opportunity for dissenters to submit a minority opinion as the method by which it arrives at its recommendations.
6. While the Board largely determines its own course, the Forest Supervisor provides direction as to issues on which recommendations are appropriate and timely.

## ***Information***

7. Members should make every effort to attend meetings. A quorum must be present if the Board is to conduct business.
8. The Black Hills National Forest hosts the meetings at a central location in the Black Hills. The Board elects a chairperson from within its membership to chair the meetings. The Forest Supervisor of the Black Hills National Forest serves as the *Designated Federal Officer* of the group and is responsible for approving agendas and convening and adjourning meetings.
9. All meetings are open for public observation and participation according to procedures the Board establishes.

## **Membership Terms**

The Board is chartered for two years but may have its membership renewed prior to expiration.

Board members serve two-year terms and may be reappointed for a total of six years.

The Rocky Mountain Regional Forester appoints one alternate for each position category. If a vacancy occurs, the alternate must be available to fill the vacancy immediately.

## **Nomination Process**

Nominees must submit the Black Hills National Forest Advisory Board Nomination Form AND the Advisory Committee Membership Background Information Form (OMB 0505-0001).

Nominees are evaluated on their response to the following evaluation criteria:

1. *Familiarity with forest-wide issues on the Black Hills National Forest.*
2. *Knowledge and ability to accurately represent a particular interest group and its constituents.*
3. *Knowledge and understanding of and respect for other cultures and points of view.*
4. *Demonstrated skill in working toward mutually beneficial solutions to complex issues.*
5. *Respect and credibility in the Black Hills community.*

## *Information*

In reviewing nominations, the panel considers cultural diversity and gender representation when making recommendations. Recommendations for each category include one member and one alternate who will fulfill the duties of the member if he/she is unable to do so.

Individuals or organizations may submit nominations for Board members and/or alternates. Individuals may nominate themselves. However, if nominating someone else, nominators must first verify that the nominee is willing to serve.

### **The Black Hills National Forest must receive nominations by January 15, 2005.**

Please send to  
Black Hills National Forest Supervisor's Office  
25041 N. Hwy. 16  
Custer, SD 57730  
Attn: Frank Carroll/National Forest Advisory Board

## **About the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)**

The Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 is intended to govern the formation and operation of committees established to advise officers and agencies in the executive branch of the government. The intent of the committees is to serve as a beneficial means of furnishing expert advice, ideas, and diverse opinions to the government. At the same time, it is the intent of FACA to minimize the number of unwarranted advice-giving entities, especially those that result in undue influence on the decision-making process. Major tenets of the Act are openness, balanced membership, and sound record keeping.