

# NEWS RELEASE

**USDA Forest Service  
Caribou-Targhee National Forest  
1405 Hollipark Drive  
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401**



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Contact: **Lynn Ballard / Joanna Bennett**  
Phone: **(208) 524-7500**

## **National Forest Surveys Coming Your Way!**

**Eastern Idaho:** Beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>, the Caribou-Targhee National Forest will be conducting a Visitor Use (Recreation) Monitoring survey. The entire forest will be involved with this survey which will begin October 2004 and end September 2005.

Soon, you may see more Forest Service and contract employees working in developed and dispersed recreation sites and along Forest Service roads. They will be wearing bright orange vests and be near a sign that says "Traffic Survey Ahead". Just like the postman these folks may be out in all kinds of adverse weather conditions. These folks are waiting to talk to you, so please pull over for an interview. These well trained interviewers want to know about your visit to the national forest. All information you give is confidential and the survey is voluntary.

This on-going national forest survey has already been conducted once on every National Forest in the country. We are now returning 5 years later to update the information previously gathered as well as to look at recreation trends over time. The information is useful for forest planning and even local community tourism planning. It provides the National Forest managers with an estimate of how many people actually recreate on federal lands and what activities they engage in while there. Other important information forest and tourism planners need includes how satisfied people were with their visit and the economic impact of your recreation visit on the local economy. So many small towns are struggling and they hope that tourism may help strengthen their communities. This is one way to estimate the effects.

This recreation visitor program gathers basic visitor information. All responses are totally confidential, in fact a person's name is never written anywhere on the survey. The basic interviews last about 6 minutes. Every other visitor is asked a few additional questions which may take an additional 5 minutes. The questions visitors are asked include: where they recreated on the Forest, how many people they traveled with, how long they were on the Forest, what other recreation sites they visited while on the Forest, and how satisfied they were with the facilities and services provided. About a third of the visitors will be asked to complete a confidential survey on recreation spending during their trip.

Information collected in this national study will be used in local Forest planning, at the state planning level, and even by Congress. The more they know about the visitors, especially their satisfaction and desires, the better managers can provide for their needs.

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Although the survey is entirely voluntary, we sure would appreciate it if visitors would pull up and answer a few questions. It's important for them to talk with local people using the forest as well as out-of-area visitors so all types of visitors are represented in the study. Even I you answered the survey questions one already, we would to talk to you about each of your national forest visit, so if you see us out there again, please stop for another interview. If you have any question about this program you can visit our web site at <http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/nvum> or call Sue Kocis at 707.574.6233.

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