



# NEWS RELEASE

USDA FOREST SERVICE • Intermountain Region 324 25<sup>th</sup> STREET  
OGDEN, UTAH 84401 • Voice: (801) 625-5153 • Web: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4>

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Contact: Loyal Clark 801-342-5117

## U.S. FOREST SERVICE TO CONTRIBUTE TO NATIONAL ECONOMIC STIMULUS

**Provo, Utah, March 6, 2009**—U.S. Forest Service Chief Abigail Kimbell announced today the Agency's plan to participate in the nation's economic recovery program. The Forest Service has received \$1.15 billion from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

At this time, approximately ten percent of the Forest Service projects created by the American Recovery and Economic Stimulus Act, totaling \$98 million, have been selected. These initial projects will create 1500 jobs, giving the Agency the early opportunity to put people to work. The remaining 90 percent of projects, totaling \$1.052 billion, will be announced shortly and will create an additional 23,500 jobs nationwide.

“Here in the Intermountain Region there are communities in Idaho, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming that have been hit hard by job losses,” said Regional Forester Harv Forsgren. “These outstanding projects selected for rapid implementation are well configured to put people to work, improve infrastructure, advance public safety and enhance forest health.”

The local Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest will receive \$11.6 million to improve 165 miles of National Forest System roads. Maintaining these roads is important to promoting a safe and enjoyable experience when visiting the National Forest. An additional benefit will be an increase in business activity – food, lodging, gas – in towns surrounding the Forest.

Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest Supervisor, Brian Ferebee stated, “We are committed and prepared to assist with the creation of jobs in local communities. We will work closely with the counties to implement the projects we have identified to be funded.”

Local counties including Utah, Cache, Box Elder, Juab, and Wasatch counties are available and willing to accomplish the work through agreements with the Forest Service. These projects are expected to create approximately 116 jobs.

Juab County Commissioner Val Jones stated, “As a rural county our tax base will not support our infrastructure in the county. We are very appreciative of the effort the Forest Service went through to secure these funds. This will be a great benefit to Juab county residents and will help the economics of this area.”

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Box Elder County Commissioner Jay Hardy stated, “The money coming through the Forest Service to Box Elder County will provide much needed funding to repair damage that has been occurring to the Willard Mountain road over the past 30 years. This project will directly benefit the citizens of Box Elder County by providing jobs for our local road contractors and it is my hop that it will help to jump start our local economy.”

Lynn Lemon, Cache county, stated, “Cache county has been working with the Forest Service for several years to provide much needed maintenance to the roads within the Forest Service boundaries in order for the public to have greater access to and enjoyment of our National Forests. Cache County is grateful for this stimulus funding which will put our road construction people back to work and allow us to provide much needed maintenance to these roads.”

Richard Nielson, Utah County Public Works Director, said, “Utah County is pleased to learn that the funding for the Forest Service road projects discussed earlier this year has been made available. These projects are an example of a great partnership between the Forest Service and Utah County which provides for safe, usable roads in the National Forests for the use of the citizens of the county and surrounding areas. These projects will also help to stimulate the economy of the area by providing employment opportunities to local suppliers and contractors who will take part in the projects. Utah County looks forward to working with the Forest Service on these projects and others in the future to provide quality facilities for the use of the forest patrons and residents of Utah County.”

Under the language of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the Forest Service will create as many jobs as possible to support communities and to get money flowing through the economy again. All funds will be spent on specific targeted projects that are, or soon will be, ready to go.

“The Forest Service anticipates playing a key role in our nation’s economic recovery,” said Chief Kimbell. “We are grateful for the confidence Congress has shown us and look forward to demonstrating how the Forest Service can create good jobs during difficult times,” Kimbell added.

Many of the most affected communities of the economic downturn are located near national forests. Rural jobs will be created in areas needing restoration work with shovel ready projects related to fire prevention, roads, bridges, buildings and recreation facilities.

Information on the overall U.S. Forest Service role in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act can be found at: <http://fs.usda.gov/recovery>. Information on the total federal effort can be found at <http://www.recovery.gov>.

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