

NEWS RELEASE

February 23, 2006

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Forest Service Hosts Community Workshop in Riggins, Idaho to Discuss Inventories of Areas with Wilderness Potential and Potentially Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers

A Community Collaborative Workshop, which will focus on reviewing and discussing updated inventories of areas with wilderness potential and potentially eligible wild and scenic rivers, will be hosted by the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision Team in Riggins, Idaho on March 2. The workshop will be held at the Best Western Salmon Rapids Lodge from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

The Malheur, Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests are revising their current Land and Resource Management Plans, commonly referred to as Forest Plans. The USDA Forest Service team has just completed the process of inventorying areas with wilderness potential and potentially eligible wild and scenic rivers for the three Blue Mountains national forests including the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area. The Revised Forest Plans, which are scheduled to be completed in fall 2007, will provide broad direction to the Forest Service about how to manage the natural resources on national forest lands. The three Blue Mountains national forests comprise about 5.3 million acres in northeast Oregon, southwest Washington, and west-central Idaho.

At this workshop, maps of the inventories will be displayed, and the inventory process and the role these inventories play in the forest plan revision process will be explained. There will be opportunities for the public to ask questions.

“These inventories have been of great interest to a broad spectrum of groups,” said Dave Schmitt, Revision Team Leader. “We look forward to explaining the revision process and hearing the comments of those who use the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area, as well as the rest of the Blue Mountains forests.”

Through a continuing series of Community Collaborative Workshops, the Revision Team is working with communities, state, and federal agencies, and American Indian tribes across the Blue Mountains. The goal is to work together to develop a vision for the future management of the national forests of the Blue Mountains and craft proposed revised forest plans. Additional workshops are planned for May 2006 in Oregon and Washington.

For more information, please contact Tami Paulsen, Public Affairs Specialist at 541-523-1332 or Dave Schmitt, Team Leader, at 541-523-1248. Up-to-date information as well as materials from past collaborative workshops are located on the forest plan revision website at www.fs.fed.us/r6/uma/blue_mtn_planrevision/.

