

I. Introduction

A. Purpose

The Forest Plan guides all natural resource management activities and establishes management standards for the Kootenai National Forest. It describes resource management practices, levels of resource production and management, and the availability and suitability of lands for resource management.

B. Management Direction

The goals, objectives, standards, schedule of management practices, and monitoring and evaluation requirements comprise the Plan's management direction. However, the projected outputs, services, and rates of implementation are dependent on the annual budgeting process.

C. Relationship to Other Documents

Environmental Impact Statement -

The Forest Plan is based on the various considerations which have been addressed in the accompanying Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and represents the Final Plan (Alternative JF) in that EIS. The planning process and the analysis procedure used in developing this Plan, as well as the other alternatives that were considered, are described or referenced in the EIS. Project level activities will be planned and implemented to carry out the management direction in this Plan. The NEPA requirements will be followed as the site specific issues and impacts are addressed during project development.

Regional Guide -

The Regional Guide displays the Northern Region's portion of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act (RPA) Program among the National Forests, provides direction for National Forest plans, and develops standards and guidelines for addressing major issues and management concerns which need to be considered at the Regional level to facilitate Forest Planning. The Regional Guide process allows for discussion and analysis of National Forest program capabilities to determine opportunities to meet short and long-term natural resource demands.

D. Forest Location, Description, and Organization

1. Location

The Kootenai National Forest is located in the northwest corner of Montana and contains 2.2 million acres (see reference map that follows). The Forest boundaries encompass almost all of Lincoln County and parts of Sanders and Flathead Counties, Montana, and small portions of Bonner and Boundary Counties, Idaho. Principal towns include Libby (Lincoln County seat), Eureka, and Troy, Montana. Major travel routes include US Highways 2 and 93 and

State Highways 200, 45, and 37. The closest metropolitan area is Spokane, Washington, a distance of approximately 150 miles.

2. Forest Organization and Headquarters Location (see map page I-3)

The organizational structure of the Kootenai Forest is composed of seven Ranger Districts and two Engineering Zones. The Supervisor's Office is located in Libby. The Ranger Districts and their Ranger Station locations include:

- Rexford Ranger District (Station at Eureka)
- Yaak Ranger District (Station at Sylvanite)*
- Fortine Ranger District (Station at Murphy Lake)
- Troy Ranger District (Station at Troy)*
- Libby Ranger District (Station at Libby)
- Fisher River Ranger District (Station at Canoe Gulch)
- Cabinet Ranger District (Station at Trout Creek)

The Eastside Engineering Zone includes Rexford, Murphy Lake, Libby and Fisher River Ranger Districts with offices at Canoe Gulch. The Westside Engineering Zone includes the Yaak, Troy, and Cabinet Ranger Districts and has offices located at Troy.

3. Forest Management Structure

The managerial organization of the Kootenai consists of the Forest Supervisor, seven District Rangers, two Zone Engineers, and seven Staff Officers, including: Timber Staff, Fire Management Staff, Lands/Minerals and Recreation Staff, Resources Staff, Planning Staff, Engineering Staff, and Administrative Staff.

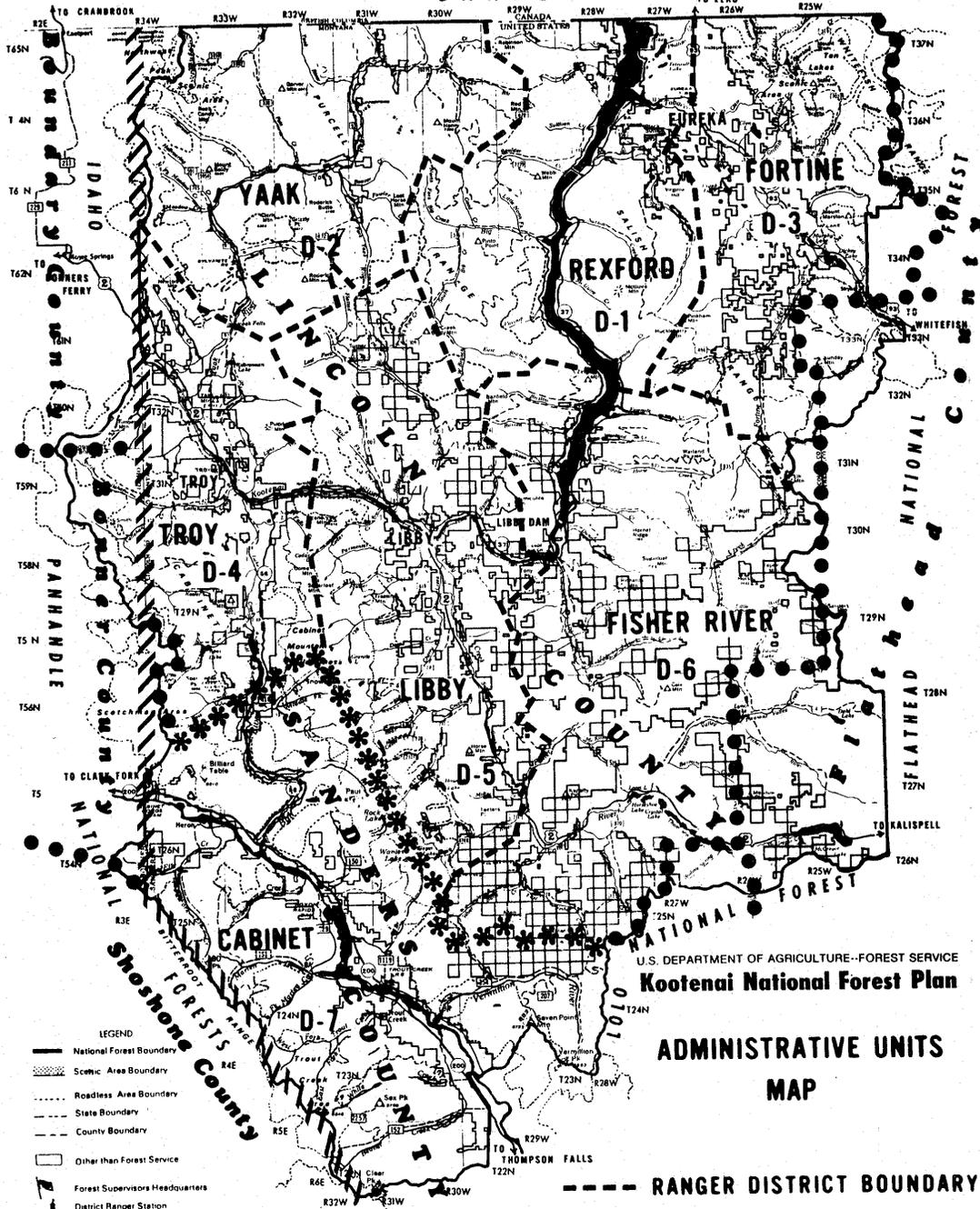
The Forest workforce numbers about 540 (1986 figure). This includes 200 seasonal employees who are hired during the April to November field season.

4. Ranger District Descriptions

The Rexford Ranger District, D-1, is located in the north central part of the Forest, bordered by the Yaak Ranger District to the west, Fortine Ranger District to the east, and Canada to the north. Kootenai Reservoir bisects the District into eastern and western halves, with the Tobacco River, Big Creek, Pinkham Creek, Dodge Creek, and Young Creek being important drainages flowing into the Reservoir. The Tobacco River Valley provides most of the livestock grazing capacity within the Kootenai Forest, with timber harvesting and commercial Christmas tree harvesting also important resource uses. Bighorn sheep range occurs on the slopes just east of the Reservoir.

* As of August, 1987 the Yaak District headquarters is located in Troy.

CANADA



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE-FOREST SERVICE
Kootenai National Forest Plan

ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS MAP

- LEGEND
- National Forest Boundary
 - ▨ Scenic Area Boundary
 - Roadless Area Boundary
 - State Boundary
 - - - - - County Boundary
 - Other than Forest Service
 - ▲ Forest Supervisors Headquarters
 - District Ranger Station
 - ▲ Recreation Site, Forest Service
 - ▲ Permanent Lookout Station
 - Ⓜ U.S. Highway
 - Ⓢ State Highway

- - - - RANGER DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- ● ● COUNTY LINE
- *** COUNTY LINE AND RANGER DISTRICT, COMMON BOUNDARY
- //// STATE LINE

5/85



The Yaak Ranger District, D-2, is located in the northwest corner of the Forest, bordered by the Idaho Panhandle National Forests to the west, the Rexford Ranger District to the east, and Canada to the north. The Yaak River is the principal drainage flowing north and south with Pete, Burnt, Spread, and Seventeenmile Creeks being important drainages. The Yaak District contains some of the most suitable timberlands and contributes substantially to the Kootenai annual timber production. The Northwest Peaks Scenic Area is located in the northwest corner of the District and contains grizzly bear habitat. Grizzly habitat also occurs in the Grizzly Peak/Roderick Butte area.

The Fortine Ranger District, D-3, is located in the northeast corner of the Forest, bordered by the Rexford Ranger District to the west, Flathead National Forest to the east, and Canada to the north. The Tobacco and Stillwater Rivers are the principal drainages with Grave, Sunday, and Fortine Creeks the main tributaries. The Ten Lakes Scenic Area is located along the Canadian border. Commercial timber harvesting and Christmas tree harvesting are important activities and grizzly habitat occurs along the eastern edge of the District in the Whitefish Range.

The Troy Ranger District, D-4, is located on the western edge of the Forest, bordered by the Yaak District to the north and the Cabinet District to the south. The Kootenai River running westerly bisects the District. Important tributaries of the Kootenai include the Yaak River and Callahan, Lake, and O'Brien Creeks. Important resource activities include timber harvesting and recreation. The northern half of the scenic Bull River Valley is located in the District, including Bull Lake, a well-used, developed recreation area, and the Ross Creek Cedars Scenic Area. A portion of the Cabinet Mountains Wilderness, Recommended Additions, and the Scotchman Peaks Recommended Wilderness are located on the District. ASARCO's MT. Vernon mine is located immediately west of Bull Lake. Important wildlife values include grizzly habitat on most of the District, and mountain goat habitat along the rocky spires west of Bull Lake. The Lower Ross Creek Proposed Research Natural Area is located adjacent to the Ross Creek Scenic Area.

The Libby Ranger District, D-5, is located in the center of the Forest. The Kootenai River flows through the District east to west, and the important tributaries of the river include Libby, Pipe, and Quartz Creeks. The District contains the east half of the Cabinet Mountains Wilderness and important viewing areas are seen from the town of Libby and Highway 2. Important resource activities include timber harvesting and recreation. W.R. Grace Company operates a vermiculite mine a few miles northeast of Libby.

The Fisher River Ranger District, D-6, is located on the southeastern section of the Forest, bordered by the Rexford and Fortine Districts to the north, Libby and Cabinet Districts to the west and southwest, and the Flathead National Forest to the east. The Fisher River and its important tributary, Wolf Creek, flow into the Kootenai River at the big bend of the Kootenai. Libby Dam and a portion of Kooconusa Reservoir are located in the District. Timber harvesting and recreation are important resource activities. The well-used recreation areas associated with Loon, Crystal, Thompson, and McGregor Lakes are located in the District.

The Cabinet District, D-7, is the southernmost District on the Forest, bordered by the Idaho Panhandle National Forests on the south and west and the Lolo National Forest to the east. The Clark Fork River flows northwest through the District and is fed by the Bull River and Vermilion River tributaries and other streams including Pilgrim, Marten, and Beaver Creeks. The District contains the southwest portion of the Cabinet Mountains Wilderness, Recommended Additions and the major portion of the Scotchman Peaks Recommended Wilderness. ASARCO and Pacific Coast Mines (U.S. Borax) have established valid existing rights on mining claims within the Cabinet Mt. Wilderness Area. ASARCO's proposed mine is in the EIS stage and Borax's is in the conceptual planning stage. Elk herds of State-wide importance are located within the District. Ulm Peak Proposed Research Natural Area is also located on the southern boundary of the District.