

NEWS RELEASE

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



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Eastern Idaho Resource Advisory Committee Seeks Project Proposals

The Eastern Idaho Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) is now accepting project proposals for natural resource improvements on National Forest lands. Project funds have been made available under Title II of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000. The law is commonly referred to as the Craig-Wyden legislation, and was enacted to stabilize the payments rural counties receive from the federal government for roads and schools.

The RAC, which was established by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture in response to The Act, will review proposals and recommend for funding the highest ranking projects on the Caribou-Targhee National Forests within Bannock, Bear Lake, Bonneville, Caribou, Clark, Franklin, Fremont, Jefferson, Madison, Oneida, Power and Teton Counties.

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Title II of The Act allows counties to designate a portion of the payments they receive for natural resource projects benefiting our National Forests. Approximately \$66,000 was made available by the county commissions of Bonneville, Caribou, Clark and Fremont Counties for projects on the Caribou-Targhee National Forests.

A citizen's panel (RAC) is accepting applications from any interested person or organization with a proposal to improve National Forest lands. The deadline for submissions is **Friday, February 27, 2004.**

Although The Act provides for a wide range of project types, projects must be on National Forests and/or benefit National Forest resources. At least fifty percent of all project funds must be used for projects that restore streams and watersheds, or maintain or decommission roads. Project proposals must be submitted on the Eastern Idaho RAC Project Proposal Form. The form and directions for completion are available at any Caribou-Targhee National Forest Office or on the Internet at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/caribou-targhee> . For more information or for assistance in completing the proposal form, contact Lynn Ballard or Joanna Bennett, by phone at (208) 524-7500 or by email at lballard@fs.fed.us or jjbennett@fs.fed.us.

“We hope there will be a variety of proposals for our RAC to consider,” said Jerry Reese, Designated Federal Officer. “These projects will provide good opportunities to work with the counties and public in improving National Forest lands.”

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The next Eastern Idaho RAC meeting is scheduled for March 17, 2003 starting at 10:00 AM at the Caribou-Targhee National Forest Headquarters, 1405 Hollipark Drive, Idaho Falls, Idaho. All meetings are open to the public, with public comment permitted throughout the session. This meeting will be to make the first cut in applications that have been received. If your project is chosen for the second round, a second application will be sent to you and will need to be filled out and sent in by April 9, 2004. A final meeting will be held on April 28, 2004, where these project proposals will be presented orally to the RAC. A final decision will be made at the end of the meeting for project funding for Fiscal Year 2004.