

NEWS RELEASE

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



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: **Joanna Bennett / Debra Tiller**
Phone: **208-524-7500**

Forest Service begins Caribou National Forest Travel Plan Revision

Idaho Falls, ID: The Caribou-Targhee National Forest proposes to revise the Caribou Travel Plan. The plan was last revised in 1988, but methods of travel have changed. The Revised Caribou Forest Plan (RFP), completed in 2003, provides new direction, and the new travel plan will implement these changes.

The revised Caribou travel plan will provide direction for travel on the Caribou Forest's three ranger districts, the Westside (Pocatello and Malad), Soda Springs, and Montpelier. The Curlew Grasslands and the Targhee portion of the Caribou-Targhee National Forest have separate resource management plans that address travel and access. The new travel plan will meet the desired condition for the Caribou transportation system as described in the RFP (pg.3-36):

The revised Caribou travel plan:

- **will determine the designated routes for motorized vehicles in areas formerly managed as open to cross-country motorized use;**
- **may decrease or increase designated motorized routes in areas that were restricted in the last travel plan; and**
- **will provide a variety of recreation opportunities while meeting prescribed motorized route densities.**

The Caribou-Targhee National Forest will release a proposed action for the travel plan in March of 2004. After the proposed action is made public, the forest will host a series of open houses to explain the travel planning process and to gather public comment.

Meeting dates and locations are as follows:

April 15	Idaho Falls	Headquarters, Caribou-Targhee National Forest, 1405 Hollipark Dr., Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401
April 21	Fort Hall	Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, Tribal Business Center, 306 Pima Drive, Fort Hall, Idaho 83203

The open house meetings will be from 6:00 - 8:00 PM.

Public comments along with suggestions from other agencies will help an interdisciplinary team create travel planning alternatives to consider as part of the environmental analysis or environmental impact statement.

For more information check our website at www.fs.fed.us/r4/caribou-targhee. Details of the proposed action will be posted soon.

Travel planning is an allocation process based on social and resource concerns. The Caribou Forest has set restrictions on certain types of travel since the early 1980s. Reasons for travel restrictions include: reducing impacts to wintering wildlife, avoiding fragile soils, maintaining municipal watersheds, ensuring user safety, and providing areas for non-motorized use. Stock and foot traffic are rarely restricted. A hiker can travel on most forest roads and trails. Motorized vehicles may be restricted to designated routes and to seasons of the year when the roads and trails are dry. Some trails are only single-track trails and ATV use is not recommended.

The Forest travel plan map identifies how each travel route is managed, and the details of access. It answers such questions as, "Can I take my motorcycle on this trail? What time of year is this ATV trail open? Can I go off the road, to park my truck and then ride my mountain bike to that ridgeline? Is this trail open to horses? Is this area open to snow machines? A travel plan map identifies the allowed uses for each area, road or trail.