

NEWS RELEASE

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



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: **May 14, 2004**
04-25

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Mesa Falls Recreation Area will be opening on
May 15th to the public

Ashton, Idaho: The Ashton/Island Park Ranger District of the Caribou-Targhee National Forest has opened the Mesa Falls Recreation Area starting Saturday, May 15, 2004, with a fee of \$3.00. Mesa Falls Recreation area has many different recreational opportunities for the whole family. You can simply enjoy the power and beauty of the falls and watch the osprey and eagles that frequent the area. The walkways make viewing safe for all. Visit Big Falls Inn to see exhibits on the geology of the falls and canyon, history of the lodge, the river ecosystem, plants and animals of the area and maps of other parks and points of interest in the area.

In 2001 the Caribou-Targhee National Forest began charging \$3.00 per car at Upper Mesa Falls under the Recreation Fee Demo Project. Fees collected at the site remain on the site. The money will be used to make improvements at Mesa Falls such as creating

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nature trails, replacing the boards in the walkway, additional picnic sites, additional parking and restrooms, and establish educational programs for area schools.

Along the Mesa Falls Scenic Byway you can see the succession of wildflowers throughout the seasons. Moose, bear, deer, elk, marmots, coyotes, martens, and many other small mammals and birds are also seen.

Mesa Falls is a cooperative effort between the U.S. Forest Service and the Idaho State Parks and Recreation Department. For more information on the Mesa Falls Recreation Area or Mesa Falls Scenic Byway, visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/caribou-targhee/about/mesafalls/index.html>, or call the Ashton/Island Park Ranger District at (208) 652-7442.