



A Newsletter for Employees and Retirees • Issue 3, 2004

## Preserve America Presidential Award Goes to Historic Raven Ranger Station —Becky Timmons, Kootenai National Forest

Out of 107 contenders, the historic Raven Natural Resource Learning Center in the Kootenai National Forest in Libby, MT, received one of four *Preserve America* Presidential Awards. Only in its first year, the awards were presented recently at a dinner in the White House hosted by President George Bush and First Lady Laura Bush.



President Bush, Bruce Vincent, Bob Castaneda, and Laura Bush

It has been a remarkable journey for Raven Ranger Station, marked by people who cared for it with tender hands. The station's odyssey began with the construction of the eight buildings between 1932 and 1944 by the Civilian Conservation Corps. It was saved from a wildland fire in 1984, when Forest Service crews snuffed out flames that literally crept up to its back door.

Raven was unoccupied from the 1970s until Communities for a Great Northwest (CGN) adopted it as a learning center in 1997.



The historic Raven Ranger Station, now a natural resource learning center

Since then, historic preservation specialists from CGN, the Forest Service, and the Montana State Historical Society, along with other Forest Service staff and community volunteers (17,000 hours), are bringing the ranger station back to life.

The historic Raven Natural Resource Learning Center is now home to the innovative educational program called *Provider Pals*, a rural/urban student exchange program that brings hundreds of urban students each year to Raven. The 30 partners involved with Raven have raised over \$1.9 million in grants and contributions from such entities as Ford Motor Company and

Lincoln County Commission. The Forest has contributed \$25,000.

On the Big Day, Executive Director Bruce Vincent of Provider Pals, and Kootenai Forest Supervisor Bob Castaneda received the award from President Bush and the First Lady Laura Bush. A second round of the awards was made in the East Room by Laura Bush and Chairman of the Advisory Council John Nau. Becky Timmons received the first national Heritage Program award for Excellence by Chief Dale Bosworth.

The odyssey of Historic Raven Ranger Station continues on!



Regional Forester Gail Kimbell

## A Message from the Regional Forester

**A**s I've traveled around the Region the past six months, I'm struck by the dedication and professionalism of all of you. The spectrum of work accomplishments and extent of part-

nerships is outstanding. I especially want to thank everyone for helping to attain our hazardous-fuel reduction target—and doing it safely. With our achievement level in August at 101 percent, I couldn't ask for better teamwork. This has taken a commitment of a cross-section of disciplines as well as sharing of resources across unit boundaries. And planning is underway to prepare fuels projects for 2005 to identify additional acres that give us the best opportunity to

restore resilient fire-adapted ecosystems.

Your achievements are all the more remarkable because of the level of change we are experiencing. Although all of us were delighted and relieved to hear the announcement that IT services will be provided by our own employees, we know that staffing is still an issue. There will be a new, and no doubt smaller, IT organization. The next change to absorb is the centralization of Budget and Finance processes. Centralization of Human Resources processes has been moved out to FY 2006. Still, there are many unknowns with each of these efforts.

Although our organization is experiencing change, our mission remains the same. We will not compromise the purposes for which our agency was created almost 100 years ago—but we do need to figure out more efficient and effective ways to achieve those goals.

## A Monumental Move

—Kathy Bushnell, Dakota Prairie Grasslands

**A**fter countless hours of preparation and planning, the moment of truth arrived. The only sound in the unusually still air was that of the working crane lifting not only a 60-million-year-old fossilized tree stump, but also the hopes of all who dedicated their past year to this project.

The moment actually began about 60-million years ago when the rugged Badlands were swampy lowlands—when turtles and crocodiles roamed the land, instead of bison and cattle—and bald cypresses grew in the area. According to state paleontologist John Hoganson, the stump was once part of a 100-foot-tall bald cypress tree surrounded by a forest of similar trees.

In the summer of 2002, during a paleontological dig for a prized crocodile fossil near Watford City, ND, the petrified cypress tree stump was unintentionally unearthed on the Little Missouri National Grassland. Since its discovery, many federal, state, county and city partnerships were formed to ensure the success of this project. The Forest Service donated the stump to Watford City to display at the Long X Trading Post Visitor's Center.



The 60-million-year-old cypress tree stump discovered on the Little Missouri National Grassland.

"That fossil is worth preserving and I commend the Forest Service, city, and county for the foresight in seeing that," said Dale Karpyak, Watford City business owner who designed and created the carriage used to transport the stump.

County employees dug beneath the stump to allow room for the straps to wrap around it. Plastic material was wrapped around the 8-foot-diameter stump to contain any cracked pieces that could have broken during lifting and transporting. The custom-made carrier was placed around and underneath the stump.

The moment of truth arrived as the crane lifted the stump from its home of 60 million years. A truck transported the stump 30 miles to the visitor's center, and a crane lowered it into the building. The stump was carefully placed in its steel base for permanent display.

"This great fossil specimen will tie in well with the themes of the Long X Visitor's Center," Dave Valenzuela, McKenzie Ranger District geologist, said. "It will be a good jumping-off point to tell about our natural resources on the North Dakota Prairie Grasslands and where people can experience them on Forest Service public land."

## Battling Bugs with Their Own Odors

—Jack de Golia, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest

Forests and insects have been together for eons, and as many people have seen in southwest Montana, when older forests, mild winters, and long-term drought coincide, the insects tend to get the upper hand.

Forest insects are particular, though. The Douglas-fir beetle, for example, attacks only Douglas fir. It's a small beetle about the size of a match head. Adults and larvae feed in the inner layer of bark, girdling the tree

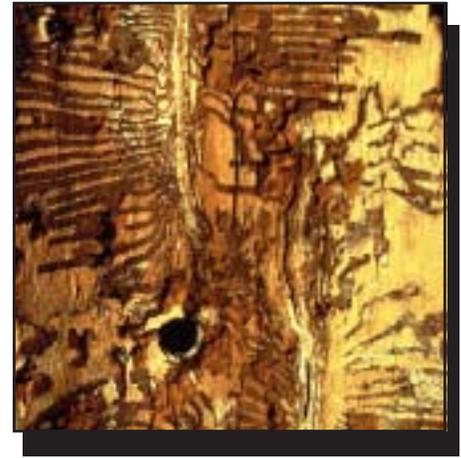
and usually killing it. The beetle inoculates the tree with fungi called *blue stain*, which aids in killing the tree. The beetle prefers large trees; they usually don't attack Douglas fir less than 12 inches in diameter.

The Douglas-fir beetle does something Forest Service scientists are learning to take advantage of: they produce odors that affect behavior. It puts out the "No Vacancy" sign for others whenever a particular tree has too many beetles in it. The beetles exude an odor—a *pheromone* that tells late arriving beetles that there's no room at the trough. The latecomers smell the odor and move on.

Forest Service researchers studying the Douglas-fir beetle have captured its scent, and helped develop easy-to-apply "bubble caps" that emit the odor that keeps beetles away from uninfected trees in certain circumstances.

"The bubble caps can be very effective in small areas," Lee Harry, a silviculturist with the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest said.

For several springs, Forest Service workers have tacked up bubble caps on trees around key areas near Philipsburg, Wisdom and



Douglas-fir bark showing egg and larval galleries (channels the beetle have made by eating the bark tissue).

Wise River where the beetle outbreak is particularly severe. They also put up bubble caps to protect historic trees at the Big Hole National Battlefield.

"Using pheromones is a really promising avenue of research," Harry said. "Work continues on a similar approach for the mountain-pine beetle and others."

## Black-Backed Woodpeckers and Fire —Ellen Davis, Lolo National Forest

Scientists know that the black-backed woodpecker prefers to nest and feed in recently and severely burned forests where they can forage on an abundance of insects found in dense stands of dead trees. What is not known about this species is how forest management activities conducted before and/or after fire may affect habitat use. Specifically, how do different combinations of vegetative management (before and/or after fires) in combination with fire severity, affect the structure of the forest and the woodpecker's ability to thrive?

The University of Montana (UM), Lolo National Forest, and Glacier National Park recently received \$325,000 from the Joint Fire Sciences Program for a 3-year study that will determine the effects of fire severity, pre-fire, and post-fire vegetative management activities on the black-backed

woodpecker. The study will look at information gathered from 2003 wildland fires that occurred on the Lolo, Flathead, Helena, and Bitterroot National Forests, as well as on private land near Missoula, MT.

About \$256,000 of the grant will be used to fund the study through the UM, while \$36,000 will go to the Lolo Forest and \$33,000 to Glacier Park for interpretative and education programs to share the study's results and fire ecology principles with land managers and the public.

"It is our hope that the results of this study will be used by land managers to prepare and implement fire management and fuels-treatment plans that meet the needs for vegetative treatments as well as the habitat needs of the black-backed woodpecker and other fire-dependent wildlife species," said Sandy Kratville, wildlife biologist on the Lolo National Forest.



Black-backed woodpecker in a burned forest



Justin Trodick removes a mistletoe Douglas-fir tree.

The ink was barely dry on Swan Lake District Ranger Steve Brady's decision to reduce fuel on the east shore of Flathead Lake and work was already under-

## Swan Lake Ranger District has Success Reducing Fuel

—John Ingebretson, Flathead National Forest

way. On a sunny day during the last week of June, crews were busy slashing, piling, pruning and reducing ladder fuel in the Eastshore Fuel-Reduction Project.

Work began in the Beardance Picnic Site about 7 miles south of Bigfork. This small tract is the only Forest Service land along the 188 miles of shoreline around Flathead Lake. Neighbors adjacent to the site visited with the crew and expressed their support of the project. Forest Supervisor Cathy Barbouletos was on hand for the project kickoff.

Hazardous fuel on about 2,000 acres of National Forest adjacent to private lands along the lake will be treated. The district held public meetings in the community and there was wide support for a fuel project in the area. Using the guidelines of the Na-

tional Fire Plan, the district began drafting a response. The district conducted a watershed scale analysis in 2003, and held more public meetings last fall. The final decision was signed in June. The Flathead Lake Biological Station will assist in monitoring post-project water quality.

The project has extended to private lands as well. The Bigfork Volunteer Fire Department received a \$250,000 National Fire Plan grant to reduce fuel on private lands adjacent to the Forest Service project. This effort has proved so popular that the Fire Department has applied for additional funds to meet the increased needs.

The fuel-reduction work has allowed the agency and community to strengthen old acquaintances and make new ones.



Glacier National Park fire ecologist Dennis Divoky and interpreter Bill Schustrom demonstrate the "matchstick forest" on a May fire tour.

On a spring day, a group of people wait outside a yellow school bus. They check in with the uniformed man wearing the familiar wide-brim park ranger's hat. Some chat with the woman in the Forest Service uniform. Many are anxious to begin the tour. They've looked forward to seeing the areas affected by the fires they heard so much about and lived through last summer. They've come to see what's changed 3 years after the 2001 Moose Fire. And they've come to look, learn, and for a few, "share and help heal" after last summer's intense fire season.

## Getting the Real Story—by Bus

—Teresa Wenum, Flathead National Forest

Last fall, Flathead National Forest and Glacier National Park continued a tradition started in 2001 to offer public bus tours of the fire areas in the North Fork of the Flathead. Over 400 residents, visitors, teachers, and students participated in

tours of the Robert and Moose Fire areas. This spring, the same number joined forest and park interpreters for the half-day tour.

The forest and park are close neighbors, made closer last summer when employees shared office space at the Hungry Horse Ranger Station during the evacuation of park headquarters.

This has been a readymade lesson during the fire tours and one noticed by participants, who write, "...especially good to see Forest Service and Park Service interagency cooperation." The tour route takes participants to "both sides of the river," the west



side managed by the forest and the east side managed by the park. Folks looked at fire history, fire effects and behavior, how to protect your home from wildland fire, and how plants and wildlife adapt and benefit from fire. Participants recognized the differences in management. "It was interesting to get all the different management perspectives," wrote one participant.

Working together has its side benefits in sharing new ideas, materials, common concerns, and joys. It's also sparked new friendships and greater ease at picking up the phone to say *hi* and plan the next cooperative project.

## Forest Sponsors "How To" Demonstration

—Jerry Meyer, Helena National Forest

This June, the Helena National Forest was fortunate to be able to offer Deputy Regional Forester Kathy McAllister a look at some of our projects during her visit here. The tour included two fuel-reduction projects on the Helena District. At one point, a member of the group commented that there were probably lots of people with homes in the wildland-urban interface who knew they should reduce fuel on their property, but didn't have a clue as to how to get started.

To that end, the forest organized weekend demonstrations for the public to watch the district fire crew thin and pile brush in a dense stand of ponderosa pine near town.

Forest silviculturist Jack Kendley was on hand to talk about leave-tree selection, insect and disease considerations, and fire regimes. Prevention Fireman Gabe Witham showed them how and where to pile the brush and when to burn the piles. Pat McKelvey from the Tri-County Fire Working Group talked about defensible space and assistance programs available to landowners. Two private contractors were there to inform residents of their services.

Participants expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to see first-hand how to reduce fire danger in an overly-dense stand of trees. We hope they will create healthier and safer conditions on their



*Young and old alike enjoyed the field demonstration.*

lands and that their neighbors will follow their example.

## State & Private Forestry: Bridging Programs and People

—Angela Farr, RO State & Private Forestry

*Artist's rendition of the Travelers Rest Bridge that will be built.*

Northern Region (R1) small wood bridge proposals recently captured the majority of national funding under a competitive process for 2004 Wood in Transportation (WIT) grants. We received a total of \$135,000 out of the \$200,000 that was available nationally. Our two winning projects are a 165-foot suspension bridge at Traveler's Rest State Park near Lolo, MT, and a 140-foot cable stayed bridge near the Rattlesnake National Recreation Area in Missoula, MT—both to begin construction this fall.

"Our projects were ranked number one among all proposals, said Dean Graham, WIT

program manager for the Northern and Intermountain Regions. "One reason is that the criteria this year really emphasized the use of local small-diameter material and technology."

So did the R1 proposals. Both bridges will feature roundwood measuring no larger than 6 inches in diameter as structural members, to be manufactured by Porterbilt Company near Hamilton, MT. Chapel Cedar from Troy, MT, will supply the cedar decking.

"By using local, small-diameter wood, we will help small businesses and really demonstrate the potential to tie this technology in with fuel-reduction efforts," said Graham. The WIT program, in existence

since the 1980s, is all about demonstrating new technologies—to expand the range of markets for wood products, and diversify local economies.

The partnerships involved in these projects are phenomenal! State & Private Forestry for the Northern and Intermountain Regions granted \$30,000 in Rural Community Assistance dollars to the Traveler's Rest project, and the Forest Products Lab's Technology Marketing Unit contributed most of the funding for both bridges' engineering designs. Additional agency partners include Northern Region Engineering's geospatial unit, Bitterroot National Forest Engineering, and Missoula Technology and Development Center.

Even more critical is the support of our outside partners. Montana Community Development Corporation, Beaudette Consulting Engineers, Porterbilt Company, Chapel Cedar, Traveler's Rest State Park, Traveler's Rest Preservation and Heritage Association, and Friends of Missoula Parks are making these projects possible. Together, we are building bridges among Forest Service programs, small businesses, and community organizations—strengthening our forests and our communities.



## Groups Agree on Winter Recreation

—Bonnie Dearing, Lewis and Clark  
National Forest

After 2 years and 13 meetings, the Forest Service, Montana Snowmobile Association, local snowmobile clubs, a cross-country ski club, and Montana Wilderness Association reached an accord on a recommendation for winter recreation in the Lewis and Clark National Forest's Little Belt and Big Snowy Mountains. A signing ceremony was held April 27.

The group worked together to identify opportunities for snowmobiling and cross-country skiing, and balance those with protecting wildlife habitat, including big game winter range, mountain goat winter range, and potential wolverine denning habitat.

One of the most valuable outcomes of the agreement is that it addresses long-term winter recreation use. It cites trails, routes and play areas that should be open to motorized use as well as those for closure. The

proposed closures will protect the wilderness qualities in the congressionally-designated wilderness study areas.

As a valuable byproduct, the agreement sets up a specific process for those who helped develop the agreement to stay involved as the Forest Service completes the required environmental analysis of the recommended plan.

The Forest Service will release the recommendations for winter recreation this fall for public comment or scoping. This "proposed action" initiates an environmental analysis of the travel plan. Other alternatives will be developed as a direct result of comments made during scoping. When a draft EIS is released, the public will again be asked to comment on all alternatives analyzed.



## Montana OHV Riders Clean Up Recreation Area

—Mona Ehnes, National OHV Association

There were 118 ATV and off-highway motorcycle riders from the Montana Trail Vehicle Riders Association who braved the unpredictable summer weather on Saturday, June 26, to pick up over a half-ton of garbage from the campsites, parking areas, roads, and trails in the Homestake Pass area near Butte, MT. Most of the trash was removed from the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest.

The area is extremely popular for camping, fishing, hiking, hunting, and off-highway vehicle riding. The trail riders removed everything from gum wrappers to car tires over the course of the day. Redline Motor Sports provided trash bags and a free barbecue.

The event was part of the broader *Take Pride in America* program. This is a national program with over 100 agencies and organizations. The goal of the program is to get all Americans sharing in the responsibility of protecting our public lands by providing skills, resources, and volunteer labor.

Prizes were awarded to riders who collected

the most trash throughout the day. The winner was Mike Slevin from West Yellowstone, MT, who collected 37 bags. Mike has become very experienced at trail cleanup since he started his one-man volunteer program in the West Yellowstone area called *Trail Trash*

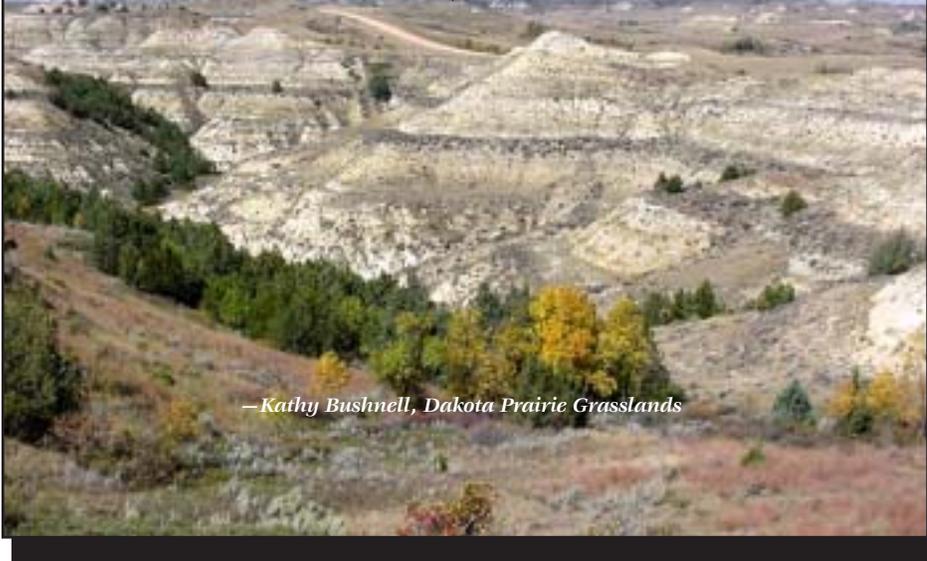
*Recovery and Recycling Project*. Mike pulls a modified utility trailer behind his ATV to recover trash left behind by others. So far this year, Mike has picked up several tons of trash from along 65 miles of roads and trails on public lands around West Yellowstone.



*Take Pride in America* is a national partnership that aims to seek, support, and recognize volunteers who work to improve our public parks, forests, grasslands, reservoirs, wildlife refuges, cultural and historic sites, local playgrounds, and other recreation areas. With 100 charter partners, Take Pride involves federal, state

and local governments, conservation, youth, and recreation groups, and top national corporations and organizations. Together, we protect and enhance the special legacy all Americans share—our public lands that cover one in every 3 acres across the nation. For more information visit: <http://www.TakePride.gov>.

## Celebrating Our National Grasslands, 1954–2004



—Kathy Bushnell, *Dakota Prairie Grasslands*

*Badlands on the Little Missouri National Grassland*

We are celebrating the 50th anniversary of our National Grasslands! The story of the National Grasslands is one of heartache and restoration that many North Dakotans hold close to their hearts.

In the 1860s, the lure of free land brought thousands of homesteaders west. By 1904, nearly 100 million acres of Western land had

been homesteaded. Many farmers lived in poverty on submarginal lands. In the 1920s and 1930s, many farmers suffered economic hardships related to devastating natural events like drought, floods, insect infestations, and erosion. For many, these challenges, along with the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl, were too much.

In the 1930s, the government bought back nearly 11 million acres of the submarginal farmland through the *Land Utilization Program* (LUP) to begin intensive restoration projects via the Soil Conservation Service (SCS). The LUP culminated with the passage of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act of 1937, a law which transfers land to its most suitable use.

In 1954, management of LUP lands was transferred from the SCS to the Forest Service. On June 23, 1960, these lands were renamed and designated as the National Grasslands.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Forest Service management of the National Grasslands. To help commemorate our anniversary, Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman signed a proclamation in which she stated, "In recognition of the significance of national grasslands and of building awareness of their importance in land and resource management, I proclaim June 13–19, 2004 as National Grasslands Week."

The Dakota Prairie Grasslands celebrated National Grasslands Week across North Dakota with various activities. Events included a scavenger hunt at a zoo, a *Smile with Smokey* photo shoot at a local parade, and a fire awareness event at a newly constructed community center.

Fiftieth anniversary activities and events will continue throughout the remainder of this year across North Dakota and a portion of South Dakota. Happy anniversary!

## Fourth Annual Prairie Day —Kathy Bushnell, *Dakota Prairie Grasslands*

Prairie Day 2004 was slightly windy and cold—but successful—day spent with the public exploring the unique wildlife, wildflowers and grasses, and natural beauty of the Little Missouri National Grassland at the Buffalo Gap Campground.

"People think that North Dakota has little to offer, but there's a lot out our back door," Darla Lenz, Dakota Prairie Grasslands botanist and cofounder of Prairie Day, said. "The prairie is one of the natural resources that make North Dakota a more beautiful place."

Nearly 60 people participated in the fourth annual event. Participants had a choice of three guided tours, including birding on the prairie, wildflowers and grasses, and prairie dog towns. Each tour group visited a different part of the grassland.

"The prairie is very subtle," said Kristine Askerooth, Tewaukon National Wildlife Refuge biologist and Prairie Day cofounder. "It hooks you when you are out there. It's fragile and strong; it can handle drought, flood, grazing bison, and survive fire. It's exciting to share that with people."

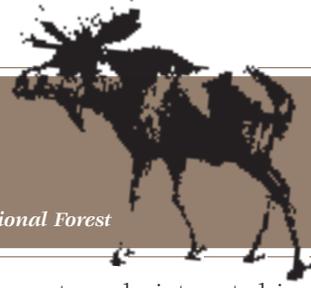


The prairie dog town tour group witnessed one of the many recreational opportunities on the national grasslands—prairie dog hunting. The tour was rerouted to a safer and quieter area for exploration.

After the tours, participants enjoyed a free lunch and a presentation by North Dakota State Paleontologist John Hoganson. Shortly after the lunch program, participants headed to their cars and turned on the heaters.

## Discovering About Nature at the Discovery Care Center

—Julie Schreck, Bitterroot National Forest



The Bitterroot National Forest has partnered with the Discovery Care Center to deliver a series of monthly programs about the natural world to its residents. The Discovery Care Center is an assisted-care facility located in Hamilton, MT.

The program started in March with a program about bears. All sorts of props were shared with the audience. In April, in celebration of Arbor Day, the seniors learned about tree health and tree species in the area. They played a guessing game to determine items in the room that had come from some type of tree or tree product. They were surprised at the many items

that one does not normally think come from some part of a tree, such as rayon and cellophane.



Julie Schreck talks about wolves with attentive seniors. A wolf pelt is draped over her shoulder.

In May, the program focused on wolves. The audience watched a presentation on the life history of wolves and a video that studied the sources of the myths that our culture holds about this mammal. Moose was the star in June. The audience was

extremely interested in this animal as moose frequent the riparian area adjacent to the center and many residents had seen them. In July, beaver was the theme. Residents took a field trip to see beaver ponds in the area.

Many of the residents have a connection to the Forest Service. Following the presentations, residents often shared their experiences on national forest lands. Some of the residents were wives of Forest Service employees and they told stories about remote ranger stations where they lived and raised their families. Many also have sons, daughters or other family members that work for the agency.

The value of the programs has been established. Serenity, program director at the center states, "These have been fantastic presentations for the residents."

## Forest Service Helps Dillon Visitor Center

—Jack de Golia, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest

The Camp Fortunate Interpretive Center in Dillon, MT, broke ground in June. The Forest Service contributed grants through its Rural Community Assistance Program and the National Fire Plan, which provided funds for using unused wood materials.

Built with Douglas fir, the facility will teach visitors about natural resource use in southwest Montana. In addition, the center will highlight Lewis & Clark with several exhibits.

"Camp Fortunate" is the name Lewis & Clark gave to their camp at the forks of the Beaverhead River, now under the waters of Clark Canyon Reservoir. Corps of Discovery spent about 3 weeks at Camp Fortunate in August 1804, preparing to travel by horse instead of by river, and caching supplies for their return trip the following year.

The center will also house the Beaverhead Chamber of Commerce and Beaverhead County Development Corporation.



Site of new Camp Fortunate Interpretive Center



Visitors can help make history by trekking along Blacktail Trail—the first trail constructed on the Grand River National Grassland. The trail is a 7-mile loop trail that leads visitors of all ages into the peaceful prairie. The trail was completed in the middle of May and is now open to the public for nonmotorized use.



## First-Ever Trail on Grand River National Grassland

—Kathy Bushnell, Dakota Prairie Grasslands

*Blacktail Trail looping around behind the trees on the Grand River National Grassland.*

## New Bonneville Power Agreement Signed

—Jane Kipp, Regional Office

On July 12, Regional Forester Gail Kimball signed a new agreement with the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) for energy conservation services.

The previous 5-year agreement expired in June and had to be updated. A team composed of Roger Henderson, Elaine Hilliard, Bob Ennis, and Jane Kipp made revisions and rewrote the agreement in record time.

The BPA agreement has provided energy

conservation design and financial incentives for several projects in R1 and the Herbert J. Stone Nursery in R6. The most recent project at the Idaho Panhandle National Forest Nursery secured a \$2 million loan to design and replace the tree cooler system and install lighting, HVAC, and water heater retrofits at the existing 40-year-old facility. BPA offered \$250,000 in financial incentives to aid the project. Construction began in June and

is expected to be completed October 1, 2004.

BPA will continue to offer design and financial assistance through the new agreement. They are particularly interested in improving all electric facilities that use excessive amounts of energy provided by a BPA.

If you are interested in energy conservation retrofits through the BPA agreement, please contact Jane Kipp at 406-329-3210.



## Rusty Tools—Accountability

—Sandi Sandry, Regional Office, and Debby Wesselius, Flathead National Forest

The Forest Service presently has the necessary tools to ensure a higher level of accountability by its employees, but has not taken advantage of these tools and avenues. Eight Rusty Tools and a few new tools were presented to the regional leadership team for discussion. We would like to briefly share three of the tools where accountability can be reinforced and incorporated into your job.

**Position Descriptions, Rusty Tool 6**—Incorporate accountability into current position descriptions. Use existing guidelines

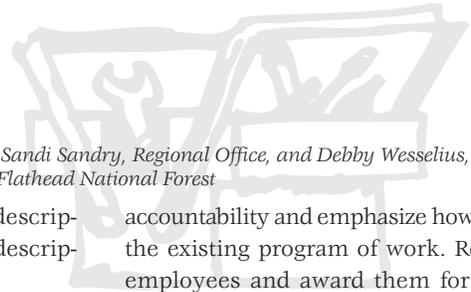
and protocols to improve position descriptions. Periodically review position descriptions.

**Performance Evaluation, Rusty Tool 7**—Understand that existing performance evaluations do not deal with accountability issues effectively. Understand that pass-fail ratings do not encourage sincere attention by employee or supervisor. Use, and take seriously, an active and personal approach in applying performance standards.

**Family Meetings, Rusty Tool 8**—Take advantage of family meetings to address

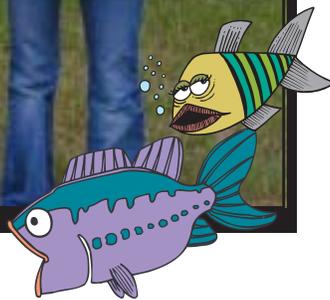
accountability and emphasize how it affects the existing program of work. Recognize employees and award them for accountability.

Please take the time to be personally accountable. Lead by example, and make an effort with employees, coworkers, and supervisors to discuss what being accountable means and what you can do to make a difference. All of these tools are simple tasks that can be incorporated and made successful if everyone makes an effort to dust them off and put them to work.





*Fish winners*



Dakota Prairie Grasslands, Medora Ranger District employees, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) staff and members of Dickinson, North Dakota's, Southwest Anglers Association (SAA) recently cosponsored their

10th Annual Kids Fishing Derby on May 22.

The derby originated as a classroom-based, station-to-station fun day at local schools with Forest Service and BLM volunteers instructing children on fishing basics. After 2 years, the volunteers' desire to give

the kids an opportunity to apply their newfound knowledge led to a small local fishing contest.

During the derby's 4th year, 125 kids attended, and volunteers realized they needed more support. Help came in the form of a partnership with the SAA, a club of fishers who raise funds to promote and improve the quality of fishing. SAA and volunteers collected donations from businesses, organizations, and individuals to help support the needs of the growing event.

This year's attendance expressed the success of the effort: 552 participants, including 301 children, 224 grownups, and 27 volunteers. The derby, free and open to children ages 12 and under, provided a small tackle box and other donated outdoor items as gifts to the kids. During the contest volunteers patrolled the lakeshore, assisting and advising the participants.

After 3 hours, contestants were called in, their catch weighed, and the winners of the largest fish determined. All attendees, including children, grownups and volunteers, were treated to a free lunch—600 hot dogs were given out! Trophies were then awarded and recognition given to the 70 contributing patrons and businesses whose donations helped make the derby a success.



## Fishing Derby Lures Little Tykes

—Erica Wilsey,  
Nez Perce National Forest

Free Fishing Day, in conjunction with National Fishing Week, was held at Wilkin's Pond near Grangeville, ID. Seventy-three kids, ages 1 to 12, participated in the event. The fishing derby was sponsored by the Nez Perce National Forest's Clearwater Ranger District, Bureau of Land Management, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the Wilkins family, and the Grangeville Lion's Club. Lion's Club representatives once again provided free hot dogs and soda pop.



*Brylee Spencer wins the 8 years old and younger category with his 6 pounder.*

The event was a big success during the sunny day with 59 fish caught and an array of individual prizes given, including awards for largest fish and best cast. It showed the little folks that being outside can be fun.

Top winners included Brylee Spencer, who won the 8 years old and under, largest fish category with his  $24\frac{1}{8}$  inch, 6-pound fish. Seth Dreadfulwater won the 9 to 12 years old, largest fish category for his  $18\frac{3}{4}$ -inch,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  pounder.

# Celebrating Wildflowers in Livingston

—Scott Laughlin, Gallatin National Forest

**C**elebrating Wildflowers Week was a big deal for elementary children in Livingston, MT, this spring. A total of 532 participants from five different schools and numerous home schools entered the Gallatin National Forest, Livingston Ranger District's, *Celebrating Wildflowers* poster contest. We thank Everett and Pete Stoltz, Judy West, Brian Wolf, employees from River Bend Embroidery, and Forest Service staff for judging posters and choosing winners.

Christopher Sukut and Josie Batey were selected as the grand winners for this year's contest. Each received a tee shirt with their drawing on it, plus prizes for being the top winners in their grade categories. The top individuals in each grade received a ribbon, a plant or seeds, wildflower book, an embroidered athletic bag, and a special gift. The top five posters for each grade were on display at businesses throughout Livingston from May 14–23.



Beargrass—Photo courtesy of Montana Plant Life (<http://www.montana.plant-life.org>)

# National Wildflower Coloring Contest Winners



—Erica Wilsey, Nez Perce National Forest

**T**he Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests have sponsored a *Celebrating Wildflowers* coloring contest for children ages 5 to 10 since 1993 as part of National Wildflower Week, held May 17–21, 2004. The week was set aside to emphasize the importance of the plants we rely on. The flowers used in this year's posters were beargrass, Oregon sunshine and the scarlet gilia.

Wildflower coloring posters were given to area schools and were judged according to the flower description on the poster, overall neatness, creativity and special touches to the borders and writing within the poster.



## Hunting at the Zoo

# Celebrating National Grasslands Week

—Kathy Bushnell, Dakota Prairie Grasslands

**H**unting season opened early this year...sort of. Children of all ages were invited to participate in a scavenger hunt at the Dakota Zoo in Bismarck, ND, earlier this summer to help celebrate National Grasslands Week.

This year marks the 50th year the Forest Service has managed the national grasslands. To commemorate this anniversary, the Secretary of Agriculture signed a proclamation

designating June 13–19 as National Grasslands Week.

Nearly 30 children participated in the scavenger hunt. Smokey Bear greeted participants to start the hunt at the Prairie Dog Town exhibit. From there, the hunters raced around the zoo following clues about animals they could see in their natural habitats on the national grasslands.

The top three fastest hunters won prizes provided by the Dakota Zoo, while all other

participants received coloring books, stickers, pencils and water bottles. Smokey presented the awards while the tired hunters enjoyed some cookies and lemonade.

The children enjoyed the hunt and were excited to meet Smokey Bear. As Smokey left at the end of the awards presentation, a little voice yelled, "Bye Smokey, I wuv woo!" (Translation: You're the tops, Smokey!)

## West Yellowstone Observes Wildland Fire Awareness Day

—Marianne Baumberger,  
Gallatin National Forest

The Gallatin National Forest's Hebgen Lake Ranger District, West Yellowstone Interagency Fire Center, West Yellowstone City Fire Department, North Side Rural Fire and the Bureau of Land Management welcomed the public to Wildland Fire Awareness Day on May 27th at the West Yellowstone Interagency Fire Center.

Activities included smokejumper-led tours of the fire center, wildland fire displays, and presentations about creating *Firewise* property, and a history of smokejumping. All three fire agencies had engines and

other firefighting equipment available for folks to explore. The city fire department provided hamburgers and hot dogs to visitors and Smokey Bear was on hand to begin celebrating his 60th birthday.

The day helped raise wildland fire awareness and also stressed the importance of the work homeowners and communities can do to protect homes, neighborhoods, and communities from wildland fire.



Young folks getting tour of firefighting equipment from Melissa Shea, assistant engine crew leader, Hebgen Lake Ranger District.

## A Summer Full of Projects

—Kelcee Hanna, Dakota Prairie Grasslands

The Youth Conservation Corp at the McKenzie Ranger District, Dakota Prairie Grasslands, recently completed another summer full of projects. Working out of Watford City, ND, the six crew members—Asa Omlid, Maria Baye, Tyla Gates, David Lawrence, Jenna Wagner and Weston Melby—and supervisor Kelcee Hanna cleaned campgrounds, removed fence from oil well pads and other sites, maintained parts of the Maah Daah Hey Trail, clipped forage plots and replaced section line markers.

The crew said replacing section line monuments was their favorite project. "Being able to look for and identify actual markers from 1901 was really cool," stated Baye.

During each task, the teenagers learned about safety and other useful skills and tools.

Project coordinators also incorporated educational activities into the program aside from hands-on experiences. The participants attended Rough Creek Institute for one week where they learned about dif-

ferent areas of the Forest Service.

None of the crew is sure at this point if they want a career in the Forest Service, but after this summer they feel working for the agency might be interesting.



(L to R) YCC crewmembers Weston Melby, Tyla Gates, David Lawrence, Jenna Wagner, Maria Baye and Asa Omlid. Crew supervisor Kelcee Hanna is in front.