

THE CHIEF'S DESK ...

PEOPLE, PLACES AND THINGS

January 29, 2010

Safety isn't just a slogan – it's a way of life.



Agency in a First Ever Support Mission in Haitian Relief Effort

The National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho is responding to a request from the Department of Defense Southern Command to send radio equipment to Haiti in support of the U.S. military's disaster assistance mission. This is the first time that wildland fire agencies have supported a military operation with radio equipment. Included are 20 kits of 16 radios each, five repeaters, and five remote stations. This equipment will be used to establish a radio network which will be used primarily for security and logistics around Port Au Prince. Two Forest Service telecommunications specialists will travel to Haiti to set the system up and orient military specialists in the use of the system. The U.S. military has been a long-standing partner in supporting wildland fire by providing troops trained to fight fire, as well as military aircraft refitted as retardant-dropping air tankers.

R2: Public Asked to Help in Lynx Study

The White River NF is asking cross-country skiers and snowmobilers in Colorado's Vail Pass Winter Recreation Area to wear global positioning system units, which will allow the agency to track how human activities are affecting lynx in the area. A lynx reintroduction program begun in 1999 has led to the release of 218 of the evasive creatures in Colorado. Prior to the reintroduction effort, lynx had not been documented in Colorado since 1973. As part of the reintroduction program, the Colorado Division of Wildlife has outfitted lynx with radio collars to track their movements. Only 49 lynx are being monitored in the state because many of the radio collars have stopped working and only a few of the 126 lynx kittens born in the state have been fitted with transmitters.

R3: EPA Recognizes Rio Cebolla as a “Success Story”

Last month the Environmental Protection Agency accepted the nomination of the Rio Cebolla as an official Success Story for the Clean Water Act. This is the first case in New Mexico where a stream was delisted and the first EPA success story in the state. The Rio Cebolla is part of an important watershed in the Santa Fe NF (NM). A 9.1 mile segment of the Rio Cebolla was removed from the CWA's impaired streams list as a result of work accomplished under the *Respect the Rio* program. The forest, in conjunction with the New Mexico Environment Department and many partners, implemented the program to reduce sedimentation.
<http://www.fs.fed.us/rtr/forests-sfe.shtml>

R4: Payette NF Begins Taping of Radio Program

“By the Fire” is the name of the new local radio program in McCall, Idaho that is hosted by Payette NF PAO Laura Pramuk. Every two weeks Pramuk will host guests from the FS and its partner organizations. The first program focused on the Payette Avalanche Center and general avalanche safety. The second program will discuss snowmobiling, trail conditions, and general snowmobiling safety. Future programs will cover Native American tree marking, wildlife behavior in the winter, Bighorn sheep, and wildflowers.

R6: District Ranger Named County's Man of the Year

Umatilla NF DR, Tom Mafera received South Morrow County's 2009 Man of the Year Award at the January 14 Town and Country Event for the community of Heppner. "Tom was recognized for his contributions to the Heppner community during his time as District Ranger," says Forest Supervisor Kevin Martin. "Tom embodies public service," says Martin, citing a long list of projects including the Smart/Hero Program, Community Firewood, Fire and Fuels Career Camp, Bikeways, Lions Club, SOLV, Heppner Chamber Board, Heppner Fair and Rodeo, St. Patrick's Day book sale for Heppner Library District, Cycle Oregon and many other community events. "All are evidence of Tom's indefatigable participation and the huge impact he has made on this community, the District and the Forest," adds Martin.

R9: Undersecretary Harris Sherman Visits White Mountain NF

At the request of Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), USDA Undersecretary Harris Sherman visited the White Mountain NF on January 25. The Undersecretary talked with State agencies, environmental groups, and industry professionals about issues on the Forest, in particular, collaborative efforts during the development of the Forest Plan, support for implementation of the Plan, inventoried areas with roadless characteristics, and local/regional issues. The Undersecretary received a virtual tour of the Hillock Timber Sale and a real-time tour of the new eco-friendly headquarters.

R10: Alaska Region Joins Effort to Educate and Recruit Alaska Native Youth

A cost share challenge agreement between the Alaska Region and the University of Alaska, Anchorage, Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP), was implemented January 22. ANSEP is a comprehensive suite of components that will allow Forest Service employees to interact and develop relationships with Alaska Native science and engineering college students. Under this agreement, the Forest Service will provide guidance, training, mentoring and work experience for students. The University believes that this program will also increase the students' awareness about career opportunities related to conservation and management of natural resources in Alaska.

Personnel News

Kara Chadwick, currently a District Ranger on the Palouse RD, R1, Potlatch, Idaho, accepted the Liaison Specialist position (WO-NFS) in Arlington, VA.

Bruce Goines, currently the Acting Ecosystem Services Group Leader (R5) accepted the Ecosystem Services Group Leader position (Biologist) (R5 RO) in Vallejo, CA.

Bonnie Ilhardt, currently Acting ARRA Program Coordinator (R9) accepted the ARRA Program Coordinator position (NTE 2 – R9) in Milwaukee, WI.

Beth Pendleton, currently the Deputy Regional Forester for the Pacific Southwest Region accepted the Alaska Region, Regional Forester position.

In the future

The National Leadership Council will be meeting February 2-4, in Washington, D.C.

People, Places and Things is compiled from input by field units and Washington Office staffs as well as from news articles, newsletters and other sources.

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