



NEWS RELEASE

Lolo National Forest

www.fs.fed.us/r1/lolo

United States
Department of Agriculture

Forest Service
Lolo National Forest
Building 24, Fort Missoula
Missoula, Montana 59804

For Immediate Release

Date: October 6, 2008

Contact: Boyd Hartwig 406-329-1024

Maggie Pittman Selected as Idaho Panhandle Deputy Forest Supervisor

Missoula, MT. – Maggie Pittman, the Missoula District Ranger since October 2004, has been selected as the Deputy Forest Supervisor for the Idaho Panhandle National Forests. She will report to her new position in December and be based out of the Supervisors Office in Coeur d' Alene, Idaho.

Prior to coming to the Missoula Ranger District, Pittman held a variety of forester and public affairs positions in the agency's Northern Region.

Reflecting on her work and accomplishments on the Missoula District over the last four years, Pittman noted the importance of partnerships and collaboration. Those are the same themes she identified when she took over the job in 2004 – citing the need to work with the community and interested groups in recreation, fuels reduction, and watershed restoration. She cited the Upper Lolo Watershed Restoration project – where Trout Unlimited was a critical partner—as one of the most important examples of successful collaboration. The project was also supported by Wild West Institute and Wildlands CPR.

“Look at all of the partners who have stepped up to fund that work...we've decommissioned roads and improved fish habitat. That project will pave the way for partnerships that will continue that work and other work,” Pittman said.

Pittman also noted important fuel reduction work in Grant Creek and Pattee Canyon as rewarding accomplishments over her last four years.

“People saw that you can do fuel reduction work in the heart of the (wildland/urban) interface and people will support it.”

The success of those kinds of projects, Pittman said, eventually led to the Society of American Foresters and the Sierra Club approaching her with the Sawmill Gulch fuels reduction project, which was aimed at protecting the Rattlesnake community from high-intensity fire. That project was completed with local support this summer.

“I think we now have a track record in Missoula that we can continue to move forward with,” she said.

Pittman noted that when she first arrived on the district she came with the philosophy that resource management is “90 percent about people.” Her experience over the last four years, she said, has reinforced that. “Working with people, that's what we do on the Missoula district,” she said.

She thanked the partners and members of the community for their involvement with the district, noting that they have always been responsive and active participants in the land management decisions that affect them. She noted the strong community involvement in the Forest Plan Revision process two years ago, and the district's trails analysis in 2005 – where a comprehensive review of trails in Pattee Canyon, Rattlesnake, and Blue Mountain was

completed and the trail system “was shored up” to eliminate unneeded trails. She also noted the positive participation of the local folk community as the district has sought to balance the resource protection needs of Pattee Canyon with recreation. “We are on our way to having a sustainable folk course in Pattee Canyon,” she said.

“People have been willing to slide up to the table to discuss public land issues,” Pittman said. “It’s always been about sharing the same piece of country with a wide array of interests.”

Looking ahead, Pittman said she is eager for the challenges and excitement that will come with her new position. Reflecting on the last four years will mostly mean thinking about the people she has worked with and the community she has lived in.

“I will miss Montana for a lot of reasons. I moved here in 1978, I raised my family here, it’s been my home. It will be a bittersweet thing, leaving Missoula.”

For more information, please contact the Lolo National Forest Public Affairs Office at (406) 329-1024.

- END -