

NEWS RELEASE



USDA Forest Service -- Northern Region

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“Northern Region Goes Green”

MISSOULA, MT. - In recognition of Earth Day on April 22, 2008, the Northern Region of the Forest Service wants to highlight its sustainability efforts to reduce its environmental footprint.

The Federal Government as a whole is the largest consumer of goods, services and energy in the United States. By changing our consumption habits, we, as a federal agency, can help change consumption habits of the nation.

The Forest Service is focusing on five footprint areas: energy, water, fleet/transportation, waste prevention/recycling and green purchasing.

The Northern Region’s goal is to reduce regional fleet costs 20 percent in 2008. Currently the Northern Region has 2,016 “green vehicles” in its fleet. The fleet ranges from sedans to tractors and trailers. Among these are; 1,531 gasoline, 231 diesel, 74 E-85 vehicles, 10 Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and Liquid Propane Gas (LPG) vehicles, and several hybrid vehicles.

Bi-fuel vehicles have two fuel tanks, one for gasoline and a second for the alternative fuel. Dedicated means they run solely on CNG or LPG and only has one fuel tank.

Regional Fleet Manager, Brian Ingalls, says the agency is taking an active role in reducing the environmental footprint of our vehicle and equipment activities through many visible and measurable activities.

“The Forest Service will be purchasing alternative fuel vehicles (AFV’s) and hybrids wherever and whenever possible to support sustainability initiatives and to support local folks who buy our vehicles, as well as alternative fuel vendors who consider providing fuel resources in the future,” says Ingalls.

Forest Service employees are also improving the efficiency of day-to-day operations to conserve energy and decrease waste in the workplace.

Copiers and printers in the regional office in Missoula are now using 100 percent recycled paper. Employees are encouraged to conserve energy by shutting off light switches, computers, printers, copiers and faxes at the end of the work day. The recycling program has also expanded and includes paper, newspapers, toner cartridges, aluminum cans and other office products that can be recycled. Recently, all of the old windows in the regional office were replaced with new, more efficient windows.

The Forest Service is also recycling materials from buildings no longer in use to keep waste from going to the landfill.

The Northern Region consists of northeastern Washington, northern Idaho, Montana and the national grasslands in North Dakota and northwestern South Dakota.

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Media Opportunity

Reporters can take pictures of hybrid and E-85 vehicles at the regional office's motor pool located at 14th and Catlin. This is a gated motor pool, so please contact Brian Ingalls (406) 329- 3224 or Joni Packard (406) 329-3586 to be escorted and for interviews.

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