



News Release

Monongahela National Forest

For Immediate Release
March 27, 2009

Contact: Kate Goodrich-Arling
(304) 636-1800 extension 220

Forest Service Seeks Volunteers for Advisory Committee

(Elkins, WV) The Monongahela National Forest (MNF) is seeking volunteers to serve on a Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) being formed for the Forest. The RAC will be a mechanism for local community collaboration with Forest managers in recommending projects on federal lands, or projects on adjacent lands that will also benefit resources on federal lands. Under the 2008 Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act, counties which are located within the boundary of the Monongahela are eligible for certain federal funds. As part of the funding process some counties chose to receive funds under Title II of the Act. In order for these funds to be disbursed a RAC must be formed to provide advice on the use of the funds. A single RAC is being chartered to cover all of the counties within the Monongahela.

The 2008 Act specifies the membership of the RAC. Nominations for the required 15 members are being sought to fill three categories. In Category I five persons are being sought representing the following interests: (a) organized labor or non-timber forest product harvester groups; (b) developed outdoor recreation, off highway vehicle users, or commercial recreation activities; (c) energy and mineral development, or commercial or recreation fishing interests; (d) commercial timber industry; or (e) holders of Federal grazing permits or other land use permits or who represent non-industrial private forest land owners. To fill out the ranks of Category II five persons are sought who represent (a) nationally recognized environmental organizations; (b) regionally or locally recognized environmental organizations; (c) dispersed recreational activities; (d) archaeological and historical interests; or (e) nationally or regionally recognized wild horse and burro groups, wildlife or hunting organizations, or watershed organizations. In Category III five persons are sought who (a) hold State or elected office or their designee; (b) hold County or local elected office; (c) represent American Indian tribes within or adjacent to the area for which the committee is organized; (d) are school officials or teachers; or (e) represent the affect public-at-large. All members must be residents of West Virginia, but not necessarily from within the geographical boundary of the Monongahela.

More

Forest Service Seeks Volunteers for Advisory Council (continued)

Efforts are being made to fill as many of these specific positions within each category for the 15 person committee. Selected applicants serve a four year term (until the end of the current Act.) This is not a paid position. Once formed the RAC members will determine their meeting schedule and operating procedures under the general guidelines for such RACs.

Applications for the RAC are available on the web at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/mnf/> or at any MNF office during regular business hours. There are two forms to be filled out. Application must be returned no later than **May 11, 2009**. Monongahela National Forest managers will review submitted applications and forward the top three candidates in each of the sub-categories to the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture for final selection. Selected applicants are subject to a background check.

For more information about the Secure Rural Schools and County Self-Determination Act and the role of Resource Advisory Committees under the Act visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/srs>. For questions about the RAC being formed for the Monongahela National Forest please call Kate Goodrich-Arling at 304-636-1800 extension 220.

END