



News Release

Forest Service, Northern Region

Media Contacts: Elizabeth Slown, Regional Office, 406-329-3089 (office) 406-274-3306 (cell) easlown@fs.fed.us
Sandi Mason, Program Manager, Kootenai National Forest, (cell) 406-830-5837

Montana Forest to Provide Nation's Christmas Tree in 2017

Tree Will Come From Kootenai National Forest

MISSOULA, MONT.: Feb. 10, 2017 - The Kootenai National Forest has been selected to provide the 2017 U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree slated for the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC. Preparations begin Saturday, Feb. 18 in conjunction with the District basketball games in Eureka, Mont. with a community event.

Join Kootenai National Forest Supervisor Chris Savage at the kickoff at the Eureka Elementary School gym, 235 7th Street E. Activities begin at noon and include refreshments, music, ornament making to adorn the Christmas Tree, displays highlighting past journeys of Christmas trees, and special appearances by Smokey Bear and school mascots. Christmas Tree activities are free and conclude at 4 pm.

"Montanans are proud of our rich outdoor heritage: our public lands, forest and rangelands, and clean air and water that provide recreation and economic opportunities for thousands of Montanans," said Governor Bullock. "It is an honor for Montana to provide the tree for our nation's Capital while also showcasing our ability to work with diverse interests to do what's best for our forest lands."

The last time a Montana tree was chosen for this honor was 2008. The fir came from the Bitterroot National Forest. "Once again folks from around the country get to see what a real Christmas tree looks like. I am thrilled that we will be able to share a little bit of Montana's incredible natural resources with the rest of the nation," said Senator Jon Tester.

"This is a great honor for Montana to have the Kootenai National Forest selected to supply the 2017 Capitol Christmas Tree," said Senator Steve Daines. "This is an amazing opportunity to showcase the majesty of the Kootenai National Forest and Montana's abundance of natural resources at the base of the U.S. Capitol for all Americans to enjoy. I'm excited for Montana to join with the rest of the nation in this special way to celebrate the joy of the Christmas season."

"It is an honor for Montana to provide the official 2017 Capitol Christmas tree," said Representative Ryan Zinke. "Montana's forests are an important part of our heritage, economy, and legacy. I applaud the selection from the Kootenai National Forest and I look forward to a piece of our state being shared with Washington D.C., our nation and the rest of the world."

An imperative step is choosing the best tree specimen to represent Montana. Trees need to be between 60 and 85 feet in height. The candidate needs to be accessible for the crane and semi-truck that will be used to remove the tree. The tree species should be representative of Montana. If you have a suggestion, please contact Sandi Mason at the KNF. Her telephone number is 406-830-5837 or email her at smason@fs.fed.us.

The Kootenai National Forest and its lead non-profit partner for the Christmas Tree project, Choose Outdoors, will work together to bring the tree to Washington DC in November 2017. During 2017, there will be special events, ornament making, a tree cutting ceremony and the cross-country tour prior to the arrival of the tree in the capitol city. The Feb. 18 event kicks off festivities.

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SIDEBAR: Text to go with the attached Kootenai National Forest Christmas Tree 2017 logo.

Kootenai National Forest Unveils Symbol Representative of Montana

Beauty of the Big Sky logo visually stamps KNF's Christmas Tree happenings

The Kootenai National Forest will present the nation its Christmas Tree in November 2017, in Washington, DC. The Forest was selected to choose and supply the nation's tree for 2017 for the grounds of the Capitol Building in Washington, DC.

The KNF has designed an accompanying logo to give a visual symbol to its preparations. The *Beauty of the Big Sky* logo conveys the message that this tree is uniquely Montana. Reminiscent of a snow globe in shape, the logo captures the essence of Montana. The grizzly bear, *Ursus arctos horribilis*, is Montana's state animal. The tree resembles an Engelmann spruce. The purple and gold colors represent the plains and mountains of the state. Montana's state outline provides a solid base.

The Kootenai's *Beauty of the Big Sky* Christmas Tree logo for 2017 is unique, high impact, eye-catching and leaves an unforgettable impression. The logo is now part of the 2017 KNF Christmas Tree program.

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