



Three Rivers Ranger District
Kootenai National Forest
Troy Montana
295-4693



Spring 2017

THREE RIVERS NEWS



Morrison Elementary 5th Grade Woods Tour

Foresters, biologists and fire managers from the Lincoln County Conservation District, Three Rivers Ranger Station and Weyerhaeuser collaborated to give the students of Mrs. Winslow's 5th grade class some insights into natural resource management activities and science. The students visited the Akin homestead where they were introduced to forestry, watershed and fire management. Presentations included tree, plant and animal identification, basic cruising techniques, insects and disease damage and control, soil science and tree climbing. At Alvord Lake Community Forest the students learned about low impact recreation, fisheries science, aquatic insects, and local wildlife.

2017 Scholarship Awards

Sami Rohrich, Molly Walters, Heather Lyons and Taylor Carter, 2017 graduates of Troy High School, each received a \$400 scholarship from The Three Rivers Employee's Association.

The Employee Association sponsors several fundraisers throughout the year to support this program including the scholarship breakfast held each spring at the Methodist Church community hall. Join us next year, enjoy a great breakfast and support the students of Troy.

Make Ornaments for the Capitol Christmas Tree

Tuesday July 4th

Morrison Elementary School Gym

After the Parade until 4:00 PM



PROJECT UPDATES



Spread Thick Timber Sale

Spread Creek Drainage in Yaak

Substantial progress was made implementing Buckhorn Project treatments during winter harvest operations in the Spread Thick Timber Sale. The project emphasizes landscape design of treatments to promote resilient vegetation conditions. After harvest is complete, prescribed burning will take place across much of the project area to achieve various project objectives.

We are expecting a lot of activity across the district in 2017.

- Harvest operations will take place near the Troy Mine site as part of the Sparring Bulls timber sale.
- Road reconstruction for harvesting, and watershed improvement road projects will begin on the Oly Moly Stewardship project in the Lower Yaak, O'Brien Creek area.
- Harvest will begin on Red Top and Meadow Creek roads as part of the Redhead Meadowchild timber sale.
- Road work and slashing will continue in the Spread Thick timber sale in the Spread Creek drainage.
- Right of way road clearing will occur on the upper West Fork Yaak off Pete Creek road.
- Continued fuels reduction, roadwork and other clean up work will occur in the South Fork Yaak area as part of the Southbound Stewardship project.
- Contact Sara Alberts at 295-7439 for more information or updates.

Expect harvest operations and potential hauling in these areas.

Tree Planting Inspection



Spring Tree Planting

Approximately 66,000 conifer seedlings have been planted on 220 acres of the Three Rivers District. Western larch, ponderosa pine and a genetically improved rust resistant western white pine were the predominate species planted in the Sparring Bulls, Rocky Pine, Grizzly and Southbound timber sales.



White Pine Seedling

PROJECT UPDATES

- The Oly Moly Stewardship Project in the Lower Yaak O'Brien Sheep project area sold this spring to Idaho Forest Group (IFG). The project includes approximately 1,850 acres and 28 MMBF of timber. IFG will begin working this summer on road reconstruction and watershed improvement road projects as part of the stewardship contract.
- Kootenai Faceoff timber sale around the Troy Shooting Range and Kootenai Mtn. has been advertised with a bid opening scheduled for June 13 at the Supervisor's Office in Libby. Kootenai Faceoff encompasses approximately 570 acres and includes 8 MMBF of timber.
- We are currently working on the Starry Goat project west of Troy. The project includes timber harvest and associated fuels treatments, prescribed burning, watershed improvements and recreation improvements. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement is scheduled to be published in June.
- This summer personnel will be working on developing the next project area in the North West Yaak planning area.

Wildlife in a recently completed harvest unit on Lake Creek Road.

Elk browsing in Sparring Bulls harvest unit 35 on the Lake Creek Road. Post harvest broadcast burning of this unit took place in 2015 and planting was completed in the spring of 2016. The photographer reported mule deer and white tail deer also enjoying the spring forage.



New Tread Work on Shannon Lake Trail

RECREATION NEWS

Trails Cleared this spring:

NAME	NUMBER	DISTANCE
Historic Hwy 2 West	2W	2.4
Shannon Lake	322	0.5
Callahan Historic Trail	153	2.0
Alvord Lake Trail	460	2
Vinal Lake Trail	199	0.5
Grouse Lake Trail	423	1.5
West Fork Falls	176	0.3
Ross Creek Cedars	405	0.7
Kootenai Creek	218	3.85

All District Campgrounds are open and camp hosts are in place at Bad Medicine, Dorr Skeels, Spar Lake, Yaak River, Whitetail and Pete Creek.

We enjoy over 400 miles of hiking trails on the district. Call the office or check out the Kootenai Web page (address below) to find out which trails have been cleared.

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/activity/kootenai/recreation/hiking>

FIRE AND FUELS

Spring is here and the Three Rivers Ranger District is beginning to implement their spring prescribed burn program. If you have any questions about the prescribed burns or would like to be contacted prior to any burning in your area, please call the Three Rivers Ranger District at 406-295-4693 or Kootenai Dispatch at 406-283-7740.

The Three Rivers Ranger District uses prescribed burning as a tool to reach management objectives. Some of these burns occur to reduce fuels after harvest activity. Common objectives of prescribed burning are: fuel reduction, site preparation for reforestation, improvement and creation of wildlife habitat and regulation of stand composition. Some of these treatments are in close proximity to private property.

The Sparring Bulls project includes nearly 10,400 acres of natural fuels burning to enhance wildlife habitat. Three Rivers Ranger District has received grant funds from the Rocky Mountain Elk foundation to support these projects. 1,338 acres of landscape scale prescribed burning was completed in the Fall of 2016 on Spruce Mountain and Benning Mountain. Due to the rainy spring there were no opportunities to burn the 581 acres on Stanley Mtn west of Bull Lake or the 369 acres on Keeler Mtn that are part of this project. Weather permitting this work may be accomplished in the spring of 2018.

Local communities and the valleys may experience some periodic smoky conditions. All prescribed burns on the Three Rivers Ranger District must comply with air quality regulations, guided and monitored by the Montana/Idaho State Airshed



Group. Burns will occur when air dispersion and weather forecasts are predicted to be favorable. We will strive to minimize the smoke effects; however, there may be some short periods of smoky conditions. Although some areas will be impacted more by short term smoke created by the prescribed burns, the effects of fuels treatments in these areas will have long-term benefits. Please travel cautiously through smoky areas and reduce your speed. Visibility may be limited and people and equipment may be present in the smoke.

2017 Spring Burn Units

Project Name and Unit	Location	Acres
SouthBound Unit 25	S. Fork Yaak	8
SouthBound Unit 26	S. Fork Yaak	15
Sparring Bulls Unit 22	Pony Mtn.	52
Sparring Bulls Unit 23	Pony Mtn.	14
Sparring Bulls Unit 24	Pony Mtn.	72
Sparring Bulls Unit 27	Keeler Mtn.	16
Sparring Bulls Unit 29	Keeler Mtn.	8
Sparring Bulls Unit K	Stanley Mtn.	581
Sparring Bulls Unit O	Keeler Mtn.	369
Grizzly Unit 32	Burnt Dutch	40
Grizzly Unit 34	Burnt Dutch	19
Grizzly Unit 36A	Burnt Dutch	21
Grizzly Unit 37	Burnt Dutch	35
Grizzly Unit 40	Burnt Dutch	8
Grizzly Unit 44	Burnt Dutch	12
Grizzly Unit 45	Burnt Dutch	32
Grizzly Unit 45A	Burnt Dutch	8
Grizzly Unit 46	Burnt Dutch	15
Rocky Pine Unit 35	Yaak Hwy/Pine Cr.	8
Rocky Pine Unit 36A	Yaak Hwy/Pine Cr.	7
Rocky Pine Unit 37	Yaak Hwy/Pine Cr.	24

Green indicates burning completed spring of 2017