



## USDA Forest Service Intermountain Region

### CARIBOU-TARGHEE NATIONAL FOREST & CURLEW NATIONAL GRASSLAND



#### Caribou-Targhee Forest Supervisor



**Mel Bolling** is the Forest Supervisor on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest and Curlew National Grassland in southeastern Idaho. He is a graduate of the University of Georgia and holds a Bachelor of Science in Education with a focus in Recreation Resource Management. His career spans almost 30 years across multiple Regions. Interest in the wide variety of recreation activities on public lands, multiple use management, and his ability to recruit, develop, and build strong teams aligns well with regional and national priorities.

As a leader and manager, he focuses on cultivating a strong forest culture that emphasizes three key areas: Safety, Operational Efficiency, and Customer Service.

#### ABOUT THE FOREST

The 3-million-acre Caribou-Targhee National Forest is located in the states of Idaho and Wyoming, with a small section in Utah. To the east the forest borders Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park and the Bridger-Teton National Forest. The forest lies almost entirely within the 20 million-acre Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, the largest remaining block of relatively undisturbed plant and animal habitat in the contiguous United States.

The Caribou-Targhee is actually comprised of two forests that were combined in 2000. Both forests were part of original forest lands created in 1891. Two designated wilderness areas are located in the easternmost sections of the forest. The 123,451-acre Jeddediah Smith Wilderness is known for its karst limestone formations and numerous caves. Recreation use in the Jed Smith has exploded over the years as it provides excellent views of the less often seen west face of the Teton peaks. The smaller 10,715-acre Winegar Hole Wilderness was set aside primarily to protect prime grizzly bear habitat.

While the western sections of the forest have a mixture of sagebrush and grasses, the higher elevations in the east support lodgepole pine, and numerous species of spruce and fir. In addition to grizzlies, most of the major megafauna associated with Yellowstone National Park can be found in the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. Black bear, wolf, elk, moose, mule deer, bison, grizzly bears, mountain lion, wolverine, and pronghorn have all been seen on the forest.



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The Forest boasts several world-class blue-ribbon fisheries, including the Henry's Fork and South Fork of the Snake River, Warm River and Cub River. Lakes, reservoirs, and numerous other streams offer a variety of water-related activities. The Caribou-Targhee National Forest is incredibly diverse with 16 ecological subsections. We host more than 2.5 million visitors annually and are known for our recreation opportunities, including developed recreation facilities, dispersed camping opportunities, numerous trailheads, and fascinating interpretive sites. The Forest administers special use permits for three ski areas, miles of cross-country ski trails and has one of the largest snowmobile trail systems in the West. Dozens of campgrounds and 3,975 miles of trails allow access to much of the forest. The Forest also maintains the largest cabin rental program in the Intermountain Region.

#### CURLEW NATIONAL GRASSLANDS

The Curlew National Grasslands comprises 47,000-acres of public land on the southern portion of the Forest west of Malad, Idaho. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the Curlew Valley had a ranch on every 160 acres. When a formidable drought came in the late '20s and early 30's the land wouldn't support the homesteads and the fields began to erode. Between 1934 and 1942, the government started to buy back the acres to improve soils and vegetation. Today, we manage the area to promote and demonstrate grass-land agriculture and sustained-yield management of forage, fish and wildlife and water and recreation. The Grassland offers important habitat for sage-grouse, mule deer and other wildlife as well as significant forage for cattle.



241 active allotments and 297 permittees.



22% of the Nation's and 4% of the world's phosphate is mined in southeast Idaho predominately on public lands.



Caribou-Targhee sold 9,280 Christmas Tree permits in FY21.



Caribou-Targhee sells approximately 2,020 permits and around 10,000 cords of wood a year.



Minnetonka Cave is one of only five guided/open public caves in the National Forest System.



250,000 visit Upper and Lower Mesa Falls, the last major undisturbed falls on the Columbia River system.



Seven scenic byways provide access across the Forest.



The Forest boasts 7 designated nationally recognized trail systems, including a water trail