

# Boots in the Forest

# RECREATION TRAILS TECHNICIAN

Hi, I'm Jarrod Hansen, a Recreation Trails Technician for the Ashton/Island Park Ranger District on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. I help groom approximately 30 miles of cross-country ski trails and maintain three rental cabins, the [Big Springs area](#), and the [Upper Mesa Falls Interpretive Site](#).



**Where were you when this photo was taken?**

I was at the Island Park Administrative Site, preparing to groom cross-country ski trails. We use a snowmobile to pull the groomer.

**How did you get this position?**

I was a firefighter for three seasons. When the previous trails technician left to join law enforcement, I offered to help out. I got the job about six years ago, which was great because I grew up in the area and was raised around horses and snowmobiles. Now I work with both as part of my job.

**What is a typical day for you?**

In the winter, we groom cross-country ski trails at least twice a week if it snows. We take care of restrooms and check on junction signs for Fremont County. This year, we also had visitor use surveys to do. During the summer, we do a lot of trail maintenance and work at dispersed and developed recreation sites. We take care of recreation rental projects.



*Jarrod wears warm snow boots as he prepares to leave the Buffalo River Cross Country Ski Trailhead*

We usually have a couple of big projects that are funded with grants. For example, we had a grant from the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. We worked on an old railroad grade that has been converted to an ATV trail. We installed drainage structures to correct some serious erosion problems.

**Do you work much with partners or groups?**

Yes, we get volunteers from the Montana Mountain Bike Alliance, the College of Southern Idaho, and Montana Conservation Corps. A fire crew from a prison in St. Anthony also helps maintain trails. We have an agreement

with Fremont County. We check signage for over 400 miles of snowmobile trails that they groom.

### What kind of footwear do you typically wear?

Snow boots in the winter. In the summer, I wear trail boots or cowboy boots if I'm working with horses and mules.

### What do you like most about your job?

I like being able to do something different every day. I've learned that whatever I plan for the day will usually change. By the time I get to work, something has happened. For example, someone may call about something blocking a trail and we need to go deal with that.

## FOREST SERVICE RENTAL CABINS

Rustic guard stations, cabins, and fire lookouts once used by Forest Rangers of the Intermountain Region can be rented by visitors to our National Forests through [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov).

With few exceptions, the rental cabins are rustic and primitive. Many are in remote locations offering beautiful scenery and clean air. Wildlife is abundant in these natural settings.

When making reservations, ask about what is or is not furnished with the cabin or lookout. The facilities are generally equipped with the bare basics including a table, chairs, wood stove, and bunks (most with mattresses, some without). Bedding is not furnished. Cooking utensils are available at some cabins. Water may not be available; check before you go.

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*"Some days I can't believe I get paid to do what I love to do."*

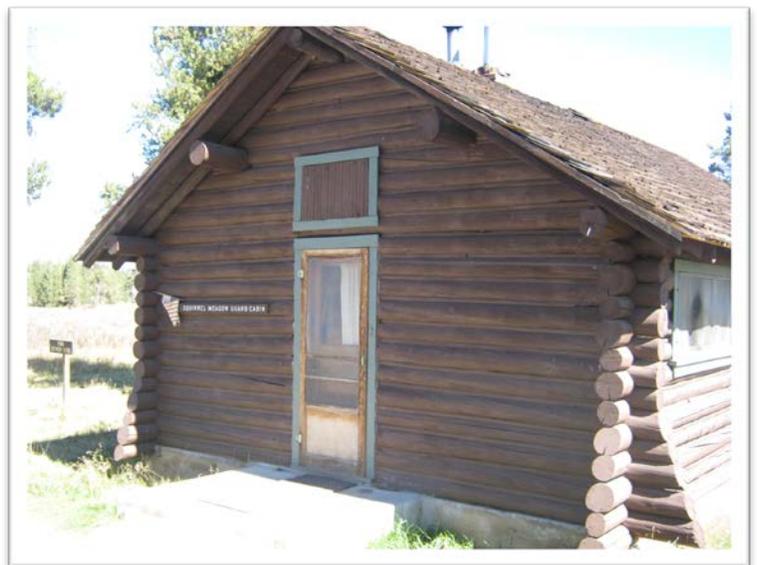
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### What is interesting about your job?

The most interesting thing is the diversity of people that I meet. One year, a group of snowmobilers pulled up while we were shoveling the bridge at Big Springs. They were from New York City Fire Department and told us of friends that had been lost on 9/11. In one day, I'll meet people from diverse places like South Africa and Kentucky. They tell us how much they enjoy the forest. They're amazed that we live in such an amazing place.

### If you had to pick another occupation, what would it be?

My dream job would definitely be in the outdoors, perhaps something to do with hunting and camping. I'm pretty close to that already. Some days I can't believe I get paid to do what I love to do.



*The historic Squirrel Meadows Guard Station cabin is available for rent.*