



Flathead National Forest

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Media Release

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Collaboration Field Trip to Focus on Habitat, Invasive Species and Threatened and Endangered Species

KALISPELL, MONT – The Swan Lake Ranger District will host the third of four field trips to kick off the collaborative effort for forest plan revision on Thursday, September 12, 2013. This trip will focus on terrestrial and aquatic habitats, threatened and endangered species, species of conservation concern, and invasive species. Each of the public field trips focus on subject matter important to the forest plan revision effort. On these field trips we ask people to provide input to help us accurately assess the current conditions we have on the forest as they pertain to the topic of the field trip. The trips will also be an opportunity to experience the distinct geographical areas that make up our ranger districts.

The Flathead National Forest is embarking on a multi-year process to update its forest plan, the document that guides how we manage your public lands. The forest plan provides direction for managing resources and activities such as recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, historic and sacred sites, vegetation and timber production. Forest plan revision is achieved in a three-phase process: assessment, revision, and monitoring. The 2012 National Forest System land management planning rule calls for an enhanced commitment to collaboration and public engagement across all three phases, including outreach to groups such as youth.

The last two trips are planned to run from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM. Transportation is provided for all the field trips. The trips will begin and end at the Flathead County Fairgrounds with one additional pick-up/drop-off spot on the way to the area we are visiting. The second pick-up/drop-off point for the September 12th trip will be at the Swan Lake Campground just off of Highway 83 at 9:30 AM.

- September 12 - Terrestrial and aquatic habitats, threatened and endangered species, species of conservation concern, and invasive species (Swan Lake Ranger District)
- September 26 – Inventoried roadless areas, recommended wilderness, and wild and scenic rivers (Glacier View Ranger District)

* Social science, economics, and the role and contributions of the Flathead National Forest will be a component of each of the field trips.

The information shared and the feedback received will be used to develop and finalize the assessment, determine needs for change, and to draft a proposed plan. There will be additional opportunities to engage in the collaborative process as the plan is developed over the next few years.

Please RSVP to Wade Muehlhof (ewmuehlhof@fs.fed.us or 406-758-5252) at least one day before the field trip(s) you plan to attend. Please let us know if you have any special accommodation needs. For additional details please visit the Flathead National Forest Plan Revision page on our website:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/flathead/landmanagement/planning/?cid=stelprdb5422786&width=full>.

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