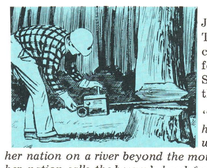
National Forest Resources



Beaverhead National Forest was established July 1, 1908, by executive order of President Theodore Roosevelt from lands previously proclaimed as Forest Reserves. The Forest is named for a landmark rock formation recognized by Sacajawea as she guided Lewis and Clark on their historic westward trek.

"the Indian woman recognized the point of a high plain to our right which she informed us was not very distant from the summer retreat of her nation on a river beyond the mountains which runs to the west. This hill she says her nation calls the beaver's head from a conceived resemblance of it's figure to the head of that animal."

Captain Meriwether Lewis
Thursday, August 8, 1805

Beaverhead rock is 12 miles south of Twin Bridges and 18 miles north of Dillon, just to the west of Montana Highway No. 41.

Congress, by the Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act of 1960, directed the Forest Service manage "all the various renewable surface resources of the National Forests so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the needs of the American people." The law requires that the National Forests be administered for "outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, and wildlife and fish purposes." Sustained yield management requires "maintenance in perpetuity of a high-level annual or periodic output of the various renewable resources of the National Forests without impairment of the productivity of the land."

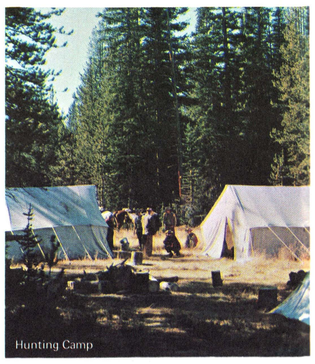
The Beaverhead National Forest produces many things that benefit many people. Watersheds are maintained to produce the maximum flow of clear, cold water for irrigation, for domestic and industrial needs, for hydro-electric power, and to minimize flooding by controlling rate of runoff.

Timber is harvested under a sustained-yield program designed to produce a perpetual supply of more than 60 million board feet of sawtimber each year.

Local ranchers graze more than 34,000 cattle and 54,000 sheep on approximately 760,000 acres of rangeland in the Beaverhead National Forest. Under paid permits, these animals harvest the forage. Livestock are carefully managed to prevent overgrazing and damage to the watershed.

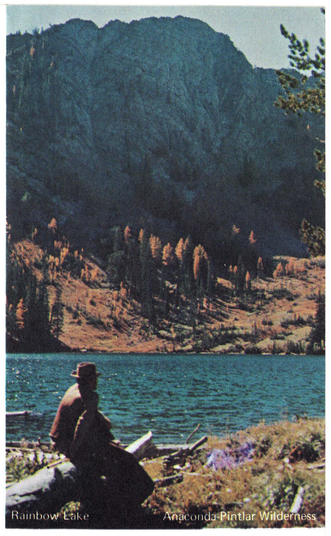
Receipts from sale of timber, forage, and from permits for other activities return many dollars to the U. S. Treasury each year. Twenty-five percent of all National Forest receipts are returned to local counties for schools and roads.

Outdoor recreation is recognized under multiple use management as one of the important uses of the Beaverhead National Forest. Recreation facilities are being expanded and improved to meet the growing needs of National Forest users.


Hunting Camp

Coyote

Male Blue Grouse


Rainbow Lake — Anaconda-Pintlar Wilderness

The Forest Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture is dedicated to the principle of multiple use management of the Nation's forest resources for sustained yields of wood, water, forage, wildlife, and recreation. Through forestry research, cooperation with the States and private forest owners, and management of the National Forests and National Grasslands, it strives—as directed by Congress—to provide increasingly greater service to a growing Nation.

Rocky Peaks, Wildflowers, Timbered Slopes

The 2,195,166-acre Beaverhead National Forest offers a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities. At the lower elevations, you find semi-desert conditions. Snow-covered peaks tower above timberline. Large areas are covered by forests of lodgepole pine, Douglas-fir, and Engelmann spruce.

In the rugged mountains of the Anaconda-Pintlar Wilderness, alpine larch splash the green slopes with patches of gold in the fall.

Elevations range from 5,200 feet in the vicinity of Melrose east of Sheridan and east of Ennis Lake to 11,316 feet at Hilgard Peak in the Madison Range. More than 30 peaks tower over 10,000 feet. Nine peaks exceed 11,000 feet. All of these peaks can be climbed without special climbing equipment.

Wild flowers abound. Mountain iris, bitterroot, Mariposa lilies, spring beauty, syringa, loco, and lupine are found at low and medium elevations. In the mountain meadows you will see wild geranium, shooting star, bistort, camas, buttercups, pasque flower, and wyethia. At timberline and above, mountain heather bravely presents its little flowers.

Songbirds and small animals will add much to your visit to the Beaverhead National Forest. Take time to watch the ground squirrels, chipmunks, and pine squirrels. Canada jays are common and may be seen near your camp.

Roads and trails lead to high country vista points where you can enjoy a wide panorama of mountains and valleys. Rocky peaks, timbered slopes, and open meadows offer opportunities to see wildlife, grazing cattle, and wildflowers. Roads and trails provide easy access to many good fishing lakes and streams.

In this National Forest, there are outstanding attractions for the rock hound and amateur geologist. Base formations include granitic uplifts in the Anaconda-Pintlar Wilderness, the Pioneer Mountains, and the Tobacco Root Mountains. There are Madisonian and Precambrian limestone on the west slope of the Pioneer Range, the Tobacco Root Mountains, and the Gravelly Range. Sedimentary formations are found in the Madison Range, the Gravelly Range, and in the Lemhi Pass area. Volcanic formations can be studied on the top of the Gravelly Range and widely scattered in the southwestern part of the National Forest. Small quartz crystals are easily found in Crystal Park, a few miles north of Elkhorn Hot Springs. Gold colors can be panned from many streams. Scouting ghost mining camps and abandoned prospector diggings add interest to a trip.

Fish and wildlife include several species classed as rare or endangered. They include the American peregrin falcon, wolverine, bald eagle, and Montana grayling.

Sphinx Mountain

Twin Lakes

Of Special Interest

You are always welcome at the Ranger Stations. They are listed on the map side of this folder. Stop and talk with the Ranger. He can give you directions, advise you about roads and trails, and help you plan your outdoor recreation in the Beaverhead National Forest.

Campers and picnickers will find many developed camps and picnic areas. Improved recreation sites are listed in the directory on the map side of this folder. There are hundreds of isolated, unimproved spots for the family that wants to camp and picnic alone. Several lakeside recreation areas have boat ramps. Small trailers are permitted at most campgrounds; there are no trailer hookups for water, sewage, or electricity.

Nights are cool at all elevations. Dress for cool evenings and cold nights. Snows come early in the fall and late in the spring.

There are many lodges, resorts and dude ranches convenient for National Forest visitors. Services of outfitters and guides are available. Outfitters and guides must be licensed by the Montana Fish and Game Department. Lists of licensed outfitters and guides can be obtained from the Department.

Recreationists planning to use motor scooters or snowmobiles should check with local Forest Rangers for information about the use of these vehicles in the National Forests.

Approximately 72,000 acres of the 158,000-acre Anaconda-Pintlar Wilderness is within the Beaverhead National Forest. The Wilderness straddles the Continental Divide. No mechanized travel is permitted in this roadless Wilderness. The area is covered by a network of hiking and riding trails. Here you can enjoy the natural beauty of rugged mountain country, very much as the first white men saw it.

Fishing for native cutthroat, rainbow and brook trout is good in most of the streams and lakes. There are 245 lakes on the Forest; about two-thirds are stocked with fish. Brown trout, mackinaw, and golden trout, grayling and mountain whitefish can be caught in limited locations. A Montana fishing license is required.

Hunters take elk, mule deer, moose, antelope, bear, mountain goat, and bighorn sheep. Native upland birds include Franklin, blue, rough and sage grouse. The National Forest is open to hunting. A Montana hunting license is required.

You can see many playful and interesting small animals: beaver, chipmunk, marmot, porcupine, snowshoe hare, ground squirrel, and pine squirrel.

There are approximately 200 varieties of birds. They range from sparrows, bluebirds, nutcrackers, blue heron, sandhill cranes, and warblers to hawks, eagles, chickadees, and pileated woodpecker.

479300

479312

Potentilla

Blue Camas

Wyethia (Yellow) with Lupine

Wild Geranium

Indian Paintbrush

Aster

Larkspur Blossom

Bitterroot

Indians, Gold, Cattle

Members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition were the first white men to see what is now the Beaverhead National Forest. In early August 1805, Sacajawea recognized the unusual rock formation near the Beaverhead River. Her people called it "Beaverhead Rock." The expedition leaders were much encouraged by this. They hoped to soon meet the Shoshones.

On August 12, 1805, with three men, Captain Lewis crossed the Continental Divide at 7,373-foot Lemhi Pass. On the return journey, the party, led by Captain Clark, traveled through the Big Hole Valley on their way to Camp Fortunate, where Horse Prairie Creek flows into Red Rock River to form the Beaverhead River. Here they recovered boats and supplies cached a year earlier.

Gold was first discovered in Montana in 1858. The first major strike was at Bannack in 1862. Shortly thereafter, a major strike was made at Virginia City. By 1864, Virginia City had a population of 10,000. Bannack became the first territorial capitol. As the yield of placer gold declined at Bannack, the territorial capitol was moved to Virginia City. Several old mining camps may be found. Alder Gulch produced $10,000,000 in gold in 1863.

Montana's first sawmill was built west of Sheridan. The first smelter was at Argenta. There were early-day smelters in Birch Creek and at Glendale. Charcoal kilns, used to provide fuel to smelters, can still be found in Rattlesnake Creek, Trapper Creek, and Canyon Creek. All are on the east slope of the Pioneer Mountains. Montana's first cattle ranches were established in the Horse Prairie Creek, Beaverhead River, and Ruby River drainages during the heyday of Bannack and Virginia City.

In 1877, Chief Joseph and his band of Nez Perce Indians left their reservation in eastern Washington. Pursued by Federal troops, the Nez Perce fought several battles, retreated through the Bitterroot Valley, and were engaged in a major battle at what is now the Bighole Battlefield National Monument west of Wisdom, Montana. From here, the Indians retreated southward into Idaho before turning eastward toward the Yellowstone Park area.

The Big Hole Valley was so named by the early-day mountain men who found this valley to be the home of countless beaver.

The first roads into Montana connected the Bannack and Virginia City gold camps with railroad connections in Utah. The Utah and Northern Railroad reached Dillon in 1890 to give Montana its first railroad transportation.

Indian wars and booming gold camps are things of the past. But the opportunity to prospect, explore undeveloped areas, and travel and camp in a wilderness environment remain in rich abundance in the Beaverhead National Forest.

Black Butte

Lemhi Pass "after refreshing ourselves we proceeded on to the top of the dividing ridge from which I discovered immense ranges of high mountains still to the west of us with their tops partially covered with snow. I now descended . . . to a handsome bold running Creek of cold Clear water. Here I first tasted the water of the great Columbia River."

Captain Meriwether Lewis, August 12, 1805

Outdoor Recreation

Anaconda-Pintlar Wilderness (B-3) This 158,000-acre Wilderness straddles the Continental Divide and extends into parts of the Beaverhead, Bitterroot, and Deerlodge National Forests. It can be reached by horse or foot over trails from the Big Hole, Bitterroot, Rock Creek, and Warm Springs Creek Valleys. Motorized travel is not permitted. Hikers and riders enjoy travel along the 45-mile Continental Divide Trail.

Big Hole Battlefield National Monument (D-3) This is the site of the August 9, 1877, battle between Chief Joseph and his Nez Perce Indians and Federal troops under the command of General Gibbons. The monument is administered by the National Park Service.

Lemhi Pass (J-4) Here Captain Lewis, with an advance party of three, first reached the Continental Divide. The small spring here is referred to in the Lewis and Clark Journals as the "Headwaters of the mighty Missouri." Lemhi Pass (7,373 feet) has been designated the Sacajawea National Historical Area.

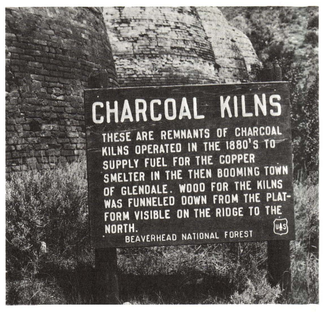
Elkhorn (F-7) This is a mining ghost town. You will see the skeleton of a large mill, an old railroad grade, and the mine. Elkhorn is about 25 miles south of Wise River. A primitive road leads from the mine to the main Wise River Road. The structures are privately owned. Please respect the private property.

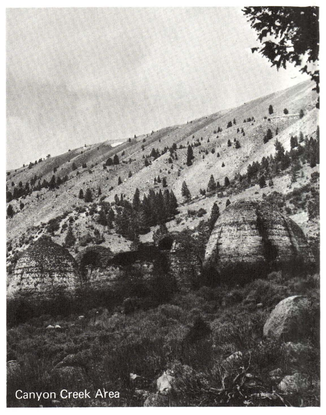
Charcoal Kilns and Mountain Goats (D-8) These aged kilns, near Canyon Creek west of Melrose, Montana, hark back to the days when Hecla was a booming mining camp and the smelter town of Glendale vied for the honor of being the territorial capitol. The charcoal was used to fuel the copper-silver smelter at Glendale. Mountain goats can often be observed on the cliffs across the creek from the charcoal kilns.

Gravelly Range Tour (K-14) This self-guided tour extends up the Ruby River to its headwaters to the top of the Gravelly Range, then northward along the ridge and drops off into the Madison Valley 10 miles south of Ennis. A self-guided tour folder is available at the Ranger Stations.

Sphinx Mountain (G-14) At a vista point on Highway 34, 5 miles southwest of Ennis, Montana, you will find a large interpretive sign that identifies the Sphinx, a peak composed of a red conglomerate rock. The sign base is built of this red conglomerate.

Cliff Lake Natural Area (L-16) This 2,301-acre area is reserved for research. Inaccessibility and lack of stock water protected it from past grazing use. It is now fenced and protected to preserve the natural vegetation from change.




Canyon Creek Area

Mountain Goat

Safety in the Forest

CAMPFIRES should be built only in safe places. Select a spot several feet from logs, stumps, trees or brush. Scrape away all inflammable material down to mineral soil. Be sure the fire will not spread. Never build a fire in a high wind. Always extinguish your fire before leaving it. Add water and mineral soil; stir thoroughly feel it to be sure it is cold.

SMOKING can be dangerous in the Forest. Do not smoke while traveling. Stop at a safe place: a creek crossing, a lakeshore, or on barren ground or rock. Hold your match until it is cold; then break or pinch it. Extinguish or crush all tobacco.

WILDERNESS or roadless area travel requires special preparations and precautions. Leadership and supervision as experienced woodsman are essential. At least one member of the party should have had first aid training.

ACCIDENTS of a severe nature should be reported to the nearest Forest Officer or sheriff. They can aid in securing medical assistance or help arrange for the hire of transportation.

REMEMBER: Watch out for truck traffic. Drive slowly enough to stop within one-half the distance you can see ahead.

DEAD TREES can be dangerous. Avoid traveling through standing dead trees during a strong wind. Never make camp where standing dead trees may fall on your camp.

BEARS are not pets. They are wild animals. Protect yourself by keeping a respectable distance from them. Do not feed them. Avoid getting between a mother bear and her cubs.

RATTLESNAKES are occasionally found at low elevations near the Forest boundaries. Snakebite kits are recommended when visiting these areas.

BOATING, HUNTING, AND FISHING are subject to Montana laws and regulations. Detailed information can be obtained from the Montana Fish & Game Department, Helena, Montana.

WATER is not always pure and safe because it appears clear and germ-free. Boil, or otherwise purify, drinking water from open sources.

SHOVEL, AX, AND BUCKET must be carried by each motor vehicle or pack string for camp use and potential fire control use.

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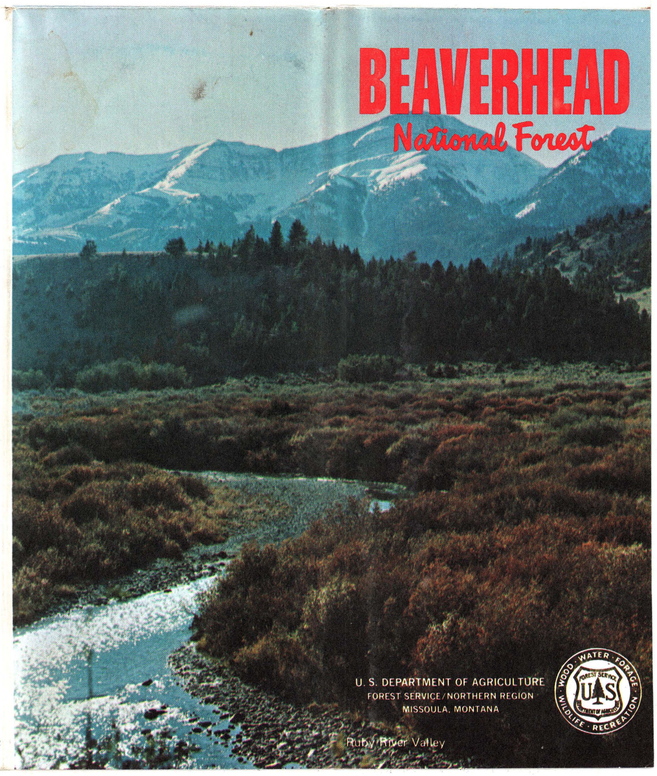

BEAVERHEAD
National Forest

1970

Scale

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 Miles

DISCOVER AMERICA

LEGEND

- Interstate Highway
- US Routes
- State Routes
- Improved Motor Roads
- Secondary Motor Roads
- Mileage Between Red Stars
- Trails
- Special Area Boundary
- Historical Trails
- Boat Access
- Ski Area
- Improved Recreation Site
- Unimproved Recreation Site
- Supervisor's Headquarters
- Ranger Station
- Forest Service Station
- Forest Service Lookout
- Point of Interest
- Beaverhead National Forest Boundary
- Beaverhead National Forest Land
- Mountain Peaks with Registers

Note: Mileage of distances at map edges are from last red star on map

KEY MAP

MONTANA

Missoula, Helena, Bozeman

VISIT YOUR FOREST RANGER AT

Dillon	H9
Ennis	G15
Sheridan	F12
Wisdom	E4
Wise River	C7

HE WILL BE GLAD TO SEE YOU

IMPROVED RECREATION SITES

Index No	Name	Location	Camp Units	Trailer Units	Picnic Units
1	East Creek	N9	X	X	X
2	Wade Lake	L16	X	X	X
3	West Fork	K16	X	X	X
4	Cliff Lake	L16	X	X	X
5	Hilltop	L16	X	X	X
6	Madison River	K16	X	X	X
7	Potosi	E14	X	X	X
8	Jack Creek	G16	X	X	X
9	Dimmer Station	F8	X	X	X
10	Reservoir Lake	I 4	X		X
11	Canyon Creek	E7	X	X	X
12	Aspen	F8			X
13	Grasshopper	F6	X	X	X
14	Elkhorn	F6			X
15	Lodgepole	D7	X	X	X
16	Willow	D7	X	X	X
17	Little Joe	E6	X	X	X
18	Mono Creek	E7	X	X	X
19	Seymour	A6	X	X	X
20	Mill Creek	F13	X	X	X
21	Balanced Rock	F13			X
22	Canyon	J13			X
23	Cottonwood	J14			X
24	Steel Creek	E5	X	X	X
25	May Creek	D2	X	X	X
26	South Van Houten	H4	X	X	X
27	North Van Houten	H4	X	X	X
28	Twin Lakes	F 3	X		X
29	Miner Lake	G3	X	X	X
30	Rainy Mtn Ski Area	F 6			
31	Deep Cr Ski Area	B6			

POINTS OF INTEREST

Index No	Name	Location
32	Lewis and Clark Memorial (Beaverhead Rock)	G10
33	Headwaters of the Missouri (from Lewis and Clark Journal)	J 4
34	Camp Fortunate	J 8
35	Big Hole Battlefield Monument	D3
36	Indian Pictographs	I 8
37	Bannack- First Territorial Capital	I 7
38	Virginia City- Second Territorial Capital	G14
39	Indian Pictographs	N9
40	Beaverhead County Museum	H9
41	The Elkhorn Mine	F 7
42	Dewey	C8
43	Glendale	D8
44	Vista Point	G14
45	Charcoal Kilns (Mtn Goat Cliffs)	D8
46	First Smelter to be Built in Montana in 1866	H8
47	Charcoal Kilns	E8
48	Polaris Mine	G6
49	Lewis and Clark Memorial	I 9
50	Nevada City	G13
51	Federal Fish Hatchery	H14

PROTECT AMERICAN EAGLES

Mature Bald Eagle

IMMATURE EAGLES DO NOT HAVE WHITE HEAD OR TAIL FEATHERS

All eagles are protected by law. Populations are declining. Please do not molest any eagle, nest, or young bird.

Prepared by U.S.F.S.
Northern Region
Missoula, Montana