

NEWS RELEASE

**USDA Forest Service
Bridger-Teton National Forest
P.O. Box 1888
Jackson, WY 83001**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: October 5, 2010**

CONTACTS: Mary Cernicek (307) 739-5564

Calling All Wyoming Schoolchildren!

Deadline extended for Wyoming Children to Help Decorate US Capitol Christmas Tree

Everywhere, Wyoming – The US Forest Service – in cooperation with Santa – has issued an important request seeking the assistance of all Wyoming children in the next three weeks to decorate “The People’s Tree” and do Wyoming proud as part of Wyoming’s U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree 2010 project.

With the deadline extended to October 22, 2010, schoolchildren from all corners of Wyoming have been asked to help submit handmade ornaments to adorn the Capitol Christmas Tree.

This year, for the first time, the 67-foot tree will be a gift from Wyoming, with 75 accompanying trees, all of which are in need of decoration.

“While we’ve had hundreds of handmade ornaments arrive at the shop from Wyoming children, we need even more help to make sure the Capitol Christmas Tree looks beautiful for all the other children in the country,” said the U.S Capitol Christmas Tree Coordinator Mary Cernicek. “I know with the help of our families, teachers and their students, Wyoming can create the most beautiful Christmas Tree in the nation!”

The people of Wyoming will make the 5,000 ornaments used to decorate Wyoming’s tree. The ornaments will be nine to 12 inches tall and must be made to withstand three weeks of harsh winter weather. An additional 1,000 ornaments will be made for the 75 companion trees displayed throughout the Capitol.

In order to facilitate Santa’s request, Cernicek has extended the deadline for submission of ornaments from October 8th to October 22, 2010. “We want to do all that we can to be sure Wyoming’s children are able to meet the goal of over 6,000 ornaments by October 22, 2010,” said Cernicek. “Not to mention one lucky student’s name will be drawn to win a trip to Washington, DC to light the tree.”

It is time honored tradition that one lucky child from the state of origin light the Capitol Christmas Tree with the Speaker of the House in front of thousands of attendees in front of the U.S. Capitol.

ABOUT THE CAPITOL CHRISTMAS TREE PROJECT

The Bridger-Teton National Forest, at the request of Senator John Barrasso, is leading the State of Wyoming in the delivery of the Capitol Christmas Tree for 2010.

The Capitol Christmas Tree will grace the west front lawn of the U.S. Capitol in December 2010. The Architect of the U.S. Capitol has already selected a 67-foot Engelmann spruce from the Bridger-Teton National Forest which will be cut, loaded, covered and prepped for travel in November to Washington, D.C.

In mid-November, the tree will be toured across the state of Wyoming before heading east to the U.S. Capitol. In late November, the tree will be delivered to the U.S. Capitol, where it will be lowered into 5-foot deep hole, strung with lights, and decorated with thousands of handcrafted ornaments made by Wyomingites from across the State. In December, the Speaker of the House, along with one Wyoming student, will light the tree and showcase Wyoming's historical, cultural and natural beauty.

Through the holiday season, the tree will be lit at dusk, where it will be enjoyed by people from across world. The theme of Wyoming's tree is "Wyoming- Forever West."

For more information on the Capitol Christmas Tree for 2010, please visit www.capitolchristmastree2010.org, contact CapitolChristmasTree2010@gmail.com, or call Mary Cernicek at (307) 739-5564. Follow the Capitol Christmas Tree on Twitter at: www.twitter.com/BridgerTetonNF.