LEMHI COUNTY NAMED IDAHO’S FIRST CONTINENTAL DIVIDE TRAIL GATEWAY COMMUNITY

Salmon, Id. (April 11, 2018) – In August of 2016, a forest fire forced hikers off the Continental Divide Trail (CDT). Nearly 50 miles of the 3,100-mile National Scenic Trail were closed, and the U.S. Forest Service rerouted hikers into Salmon, Idaho. The town took notice.

That fall, Lemhi County applied for designation as a Continental Divide Trail Gateway Community. Launched in 2013 by the Continental Divide Trail Coalition (CDTC), the CDT Gateway Community program serves to help communities benefit from their proximity to the CDT. Gateway Communities are recognized for their part in promoting awareness and stewardship of the CDT and creating a welcoming environment for people traveling along the Trail. Lemhi County’s designation marks the first time that an entire county has been granted status as a CDT Gateway Community.

“We are thrilled to welcome Lemhi County as our first CDT Gateway Community in Idaho,” said Teresa Martinez, Executive Director of the CDTC. “This designation helps us celebrate the important connections between those who travel the CDT, and the communities that live along the Trail. We are excited that Lemhi County has joined our grassroots movement to support, steward and experience the CDT.”

To make Lemhi County’s designation official, proclamations were signed by Ken Miner, Commissioner Chairman of Lemhi County, John Warren, Mayor of Leadore, and Leo Marshal, Mayor of Salmon. Each was co-signed by Teresa Martinez, Executive Director of the Continental Divide Trail Coalition.

“CDT hikers are really on a mission,” said Rachel Layman, Coordinator of the Salmon Valley Trails Committee. “I’m excited to explore what it means to be a Gateway Community.”

“The CDT is always at the top of everyone’s list,” added Max Lohmeyer of the Idaho Youth Corps, who helps to organize maintenance projects on the CDT. “It is a showcase of what we can accomplish when working together.”

Over 90% of Lemhi County is public land. Most famously, the “River of No Return” attracts whitewater thrill-seekers from around the world. Present-day Salmon was once home to the Lemhi Shoshone tribe and was the birthplace of Sacagawea, who accompanied Lewis and Clark from North Dakota to the Pacific Coast. They crossed the Divide at Lemhi Pass, now part of the CDT. The county contains two incorporated municipalities: Salmon and Leadore, both popular stops along a very remote stretch of the Trail.

Residents are eager to welcome travelers, and the county boasts many trail-friendly amenities: a grocery store, a range of hotels and motels, restaurants, a brewery, and even a small movie theater. When asked what makes Salmon an attractive stop for a CDT hiker, Layman said, “A great community. People are super friendly here. They will help you with whatever you need.”
About the Continental Divide Trail
The CDT is one of the world’s premiere long-distance trails, stretching 3,100 miles from Mexico to Canada along the Continental Divide. Designated by Congress in 1978, the CDT is the highest, most challenging and most remote of the 11 National Scenic Trails. It provides recreational opportunities ranging from hiking to horseback riding to hunting for thousands of visitors each year. While 95% of the CDT is located on public land, approximately 150 miles are still in need of protection.

About the Continental Divide Trail Coalition
The CDTC was founded in 2012 by volunteers and recreationists hoping to provide a unified voice for the Trail. Working hand-in-hand with the U.S. Forest Service and other federal land management agencies, the CDTC is a non-profit partner supporting stewardship of the CDT. The mission of the CDTC is to complete, promote and protect the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, a world-class national resource. For more information, please visit continentaldividetrail.org.

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