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## OUR VIEW: Otter picks righteous fight with feds this time

Posted on: Friday, May 21, 2010

Idaho Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter's frequent spat with federal agencies are often misguided.

But his latest dustup is spot on.

Otter has taken exception to a Salmon-Challis National Forest official's decision to deny an Idaho Public Television request to send a lone cameraman into the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness Area for educational-filming purposes.

Specifically, IPTV wants to film about 15 participants in a Student Conservation Association program meant to train future land managers, according to an Associated Press report. The footage would be featured in an "Outdoor Idaho" program.

Salmon-Challis National Forest Supervisor Frank Guzman threw water on IPTV's plans when he told the taxpayer- and viewer-supported station that "this sort of filming is commercial, and thus not allowed in the wilderness."

Say what?

We wonder if Guzman has been living in a cave, or whether he's ever even tuned into IPTV. The station doesn't air commercials, and faced a serious predicament when Otter proposed pulling the plug on its state funding during the last legislative session.

Otter and other lawmakers caught hell from their constituents and ultimately kept IPTV's funding intact.

Perhaps the governor learned something from the lesson. He called Guzman's decision "ill-advised," and urged him to reconsider. On Thursday, a U.S. Forest Service spokesman indicated that agency officials in Washington, D.C., are looking into the matter.

We hope they make things right in time for "Outdoor Idaho" to get the footage it needs.

There are several reasons why some of Idaho's best backcountry has been designated as protected wilderness, and folks throughout this state and others should be educated about those reasons.

IPTV is well-suited to present that information to the general public, and any respectable Forest Service employee should realize as much.

- **Doug Bauer**, for the editorial board