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BECAUSE the Smrekovec highland ridge is a part of the net NATURA 2000



a programme of the European Commission on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. The nature of the Smrekovec is recognized as a value of European importance.

IN WHAT WAY?

The map of a friendly visiting of the environment



- - - - - MOUNTAIN PATH
- - - - - ROAD APPROPRIATE FOR MOUNTAIN BIKING
- NATURE RESERVE Smrekovec-Komen (source: ZRSVN)
- MOUNTAIN HUT

Leave your car in the valley – It is better to go on foot – It is allowed to drive by vehicles and bikes only on forest roads – It is not allowed to drive by snowmobiles, off-road motors or ATVs in the nature environment – Dogs must be kept on line – No tents and no fires in nature – No rubbish may be dumped here.

Respect the forest



It is not allowed to exaggerate by picking forest fruits, they are important food for animals – Do not walk off the marked path – Do not make excessive noise, especially not in the spring – Save the anthills.

WHAT FOR?

- TO** preserve the pristine nature that should remain as a **development opportunity** for local people.
- TO** support the **sustainable development** – eco tourism, supplemental farm branches.
- TO** grow the Smrekovec into a **cultural identity** of all neighbouring inhabitants.
- TO** welcome **visitors** with a pleasant rest and preserved nature.
- TO** raise awareness about the values of the Smrekovec and to **keep alive** that what has been elsewhere already lost.



Let's keep

The
SMREKOVEC
alive



The Smrekovec highland ridge is the biggest area of a capercaillie *Tetrao urogallus* in the southern Europe.

The leaflet is issued on the scope of the project "Ohranimo Smrekovec", Šoštanj, 2004. The project was financially supported by the Slovenian Ministry for Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy and the Dutch programme MATRA KNIP. Publisher: The Alpine Society Šoštanj. Draft: Martina Pečnik, Damjan Jevšnik. Responsible editor: Martina Pečnik. Foto: Damijan Kljajič, Milan Cerar, Martina Pečnik, archives. Proof reading: Lidia Napotnik. Design: Vinko Pejovnik Jr. Impression: 2500 issues. Printing: Igea Nazarje.

Copying and distribution of the leaflet are welcome!

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LET'S KEEP THE SMREKOVEC ALIVE

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WHY?

BECAUSE it is the only volcanic highland ridge in Slovenia

The Smrekovec volcanism occurred in the Upper Oligocene age: Oligocene and Miocene. The volcanic activity took place in the submarine environment. The characteristic rock is andesit and andesitic tuff. The peri-Adriatic lineament – the tectonic zone goes under the northern slopes, which divides the African and the European tectonic plate.



Example of andesitic tuff

Tuff is named after andesit, a fine grained volcanic rock. The name comprises the rock of consolidated volcanic ash (tuff) and lavas of andesitic composition (andesit). The bedrock gave the external appearance to the highland ridge. It differs from its neighbours the Plešivec, the Raduha or the Peca with a smooth ridge and rounded peaks. The type of the bedrock dictated the evolution of plant and animal specialities.

BECAUSE it is the botanical speciality

358 plants have been recorded on the Smrekovec highland ridge. They represent almost 10 % of all flora in Slovenia, what proofs the area's high biotic diversity. 26 of them are endangered. The highland ridge is one of the rare non-carbonate areas above the tree line, and because of this fact you can find here very rare plants in Slovenia. The most important habitats are highland meadows, alpine heaths, remnants of beech forests and wetlands. The last ones are precious habitats formed by nature or by men for the use of a stock trough.

Gentiana acaulis



Tengmalm's owl *Aegolius funereus*

BECAUSE it is a living place of rare animals

The highland ridge and the forests are a home of many endangered species. From the family of *Galliformes* you can find here a hazel grouse, a capercaillie and a black grouse. All three are treated as not adaptable species. The conditions for their existence are rich undergrowth and peace. They are especially vulnerable in the spring courting time. They can be chased away forever by frequent noise. From the list of endangered birds you can meet here a green woodpecker, a black woodpecker, a pygmy owl, a tengmalm's owl, a three toed woodpecker and a *Cuculiformes*. The most common endangered amphibians are yellow-bellied toads, common toads, edible frogs, newts and alpine salamanders. The area is a home of a mountain hare, periodically also for a wild cat, a lynx and a brown bear.

BECAUSE it has a forest – our green lungs

A spruce fir is the most common tree type on the Smrekovec highland ridge and has replaced the former beech forest. Deciduous trees are rare, but precious; they are namely food and a living place for animals, fallen leaves rejuvenate forest ground. The Smrekovec area is the only primary wild growing location of *Pinus cembra* in Slovenia. Forest is of economical importance as well. Many local people make a living from forestry. The upper part of the ridge does not have favourable



conditions for forest; therefore men changed it to highland pasture meadows. The cultural landscape of grasslands and dwarf pine scrubs is an important ecosystem and a recognizable image of the ridge.

BECAUSE it is an important water resource

The bedrock consists of impermeable layers, consequently there is a lot of surface water. Water gathers in abundant tributaries which may percolate underground in the contact with the permeable calcareous bedrock. They reach the surface in the valleys through karst springs. Some springs are water captures, e.g. the spring of the Ljubija, which is the most important supply of potable water for Šalek valley.

