



News Release

Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest

Supervisor's Office

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D.C. Memorial Tree Planting for Tom Stefani Planned for Today and Another Humboldt-Toiyabe Employee to be Honored

Sparks, Nevada...In honor of Tom Stefani, an American chestnut tree will be planted on the east lawn of the USDA Whitten Building grounds today at 11:30 a.m. Steven Thomas "Tom" Stefani, a Forest Service employee, died while voluntarily serving as an agricultural advisor on a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan on October 4, 2007. Stefani worked on the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest as a Rangeland Conservationist in Northeast Nevada prior to his oversea's assignment.

The Stefani family, including parents Barbara and Steve, and Tom's youngest brother, Dan, will attend. Tom's other brother John and his wife are unfortunately unable to attend.

Secretary of Agriculture Ed Schafer will preside over the ceremony. Under Secretary of Natural Resources and the Environment Mark Rey will introduce the family; Schafer, Rey, and Associate Chief of the Forest Service Sally Collins will talk about Tom and his contributions as a Forest Service employee and as an agricultural advisor in Afghanistan.

The Stefani family will receive a plaque from Secretary Schafer and Under Secretary Rey. Secretary Schafer and Mr. and Mrs. Stefani will shovel soil onto the base of the tree and Under Secretary Rey will then provide closing remarks.

In addition to the memorial tree planting, another ceremony will honor Stefani at the State Department earlier in the morning. During this Memorial Plaque Ceremony, a marble plaque engraved with Stefani's name will be unveiled on the west end of the diplomatic wall at the Department of State. This event is co-sponsored by the State Department and the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) during the annual Foreign Service Day at State.

Will Wilson, a longtime Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest employee who was in Afghanistan in the same position and at the same time as Tom last year, will be formally recognized for his contributions in a separate ceremony in D.C. later this afternoon. Wilson also works on the Jarbidge and Ruby Mountains Ranger District, and lives in Elko, Nevada. Wilson is one of 58 individuals who have served in civilian positions in Iraq and Afghanistan to be honored today. For further information on this release, please contact Forest Public Affairs Officer Christie Kalkowski at 775-355-5311.

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