



News Release

United States Department of
Agriculture - Forest Service

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Plumas National Forest Awarded More Kids in the Woods Grant

Plumas National Forest is a recipient of a national conservation education grant, More Kids in the Woods. The Forest Service awarded Plumas National Forest and Women's Mountain Passages \$20,000 to provide girls with outdoor experiences through youth stewardship, service learning and other outdoor activities with the goals of increasing their environmental connectedness and resiliency, as well as enhancing their leadership skills.

Environmental Connections will meet on Wednesdays from 3:30 to 5:30 at the Forest Service Supervisor's Office, at 159 Lawrence Street in Quincy. All participants will have the opportunity to participate in outdoor recreation activities such as orienteering and environmental leadership activities including leading educational hikes for Sixth Grade Outdoor Education. All eleven through fifteen year old girls are eligible for the program. Programming will begin in early June and end in October. For more information about how to become a program participant, contact Jamie Williams at 283-0859 or jamielauren@womensmountainpassages.org.

"Outdoor recreation and environmental science programming are great ways to engage girls, increase their connections to others and enhance a growing sense of self-reliance," said Jamie Williams, Youth Program Coordinator of Women's Mountain Passages.

According to Williams, research from the Girls' Coalition Leadership Council identified middle-school age girls as critically underserved, especially in the sciences and physical fitness activities. Plumas County, with its many natural resources and outdoor recreation opportunities, serves as an ideal setting for helping girls create a life-long connection to the environment. With this goal in mind, Plumas National Forest and Women's Mountain Passages partnered to create Environmental Connections.

The Forest Service awarded a half-million dollars in matching funds to mobilize our nation's most important

conservation resource: kids. The funds will be used to get more kids outside, up close and personal with nature so they can have fun, get dirty, get healthy and learn. “I am very pleased that we have developed this important partnership in our local community that will serve our children. The competition was stiff for the More Kids in the Woods grants,” said Forest Supervisor Alice Carlton.

Gail Kimbell, Chief of the Forest Service, announced awards to 16 Forest Service project leaders and their partners from around the country. The awards plus matching funds by partners will top \$2 million. Partners in these projects represent schools, environmental and youth non-profit organizations, Native American Tribes, and other federal, state and local governments. The projects will help urban and rural children connect to the land in a hands-on way.

“The Forest Service and its partners want to help kids understand the natural world and to know how important wildlands are to their quality of life. By getting outdoors, kids will learn that forests and rangelands provide clean air, clean water and a multitude of goods and services for their benefit and for the benefit of future generations, and learn the conservation of these lands is important. These projects will encourage kids to experience the great outdoors, whether it is a remote mountain wilderness or a spot of nature in the heart of a city,” said Chief Kimbell.

More than 270 proposals were considered for the awards. The Forest Service sought proposals focused on underserved and urban youth; recreation and environmental stewardship; solid, broad-based partnerships; and innovative techniques. Funding will help with costs such as transportation, supplies, tools and safety equipment to ensure a healthy learning experience. While many of the projects will take place on national forests, others will bring nature to children in their schoolyards and community green spaces.

The Forest Service has a long history of working with teachers, youth groups and others educating children about the natural environment. This year’s funding for More Kids in the Woods continues that tradition by helping children be better prepared in the future to care for the land as they cope with climate change, demographic changes, and increasing demands for clean air, clean water and other benefits from nature.

The mission of the Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation’s forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.