



NEWS RELEASE

Sequoia National Forest and the Giant Sequoia National Monument
1839 S. Newcomb Street, Porterville, CA 93257

Date: March 17, 2009
New Web Address Added

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Phone: (559) 784-1500

Planning Begins for Giant Sequoia National Monument Plan

Porterville, Calif...... The Sequoia National Forest is one step closer in the development of the new Giant Sequoia National Monument Plan. On April 15, 2000, President William J. Clinton signed a Presidential Proclamation establishing the Giant Sequoia National Monument, which is located in south-central California. On March 18, the Forest will release the proposed action which outlines a framework for the monument and begins a 45-day public review period, ending May 4, 2009.

“I would like to hear from the public,” stated Tina Terrell, Sequoia National Forest Supervisor. “I hope everyone takes the opportunity to become actively involved and share their thoughts, hopes and ideas for this new monument plan.”

Following the analysis of public comments, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be issued in September 2009, followed by another public comment period. The Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision are scheduled to be made in the March 2010.

Four public workshops will be held throughout forest communities to display and explain key features of the proposed action. The workshops dates are:

Location	Date	Time
Visalia Convention Center	April 14 - Tuesday	6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Lake Isabella	April 15 – Wednesday	6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Porterville Supervisor’s Office	April 16 - Thursday	6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Hume Lake Ranger District Office	April 20 - Monday	6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

The two-hour workshops are opportunities for those interested to participate and learn about the proposed action and meet informally with U.S. Forest Service staff. Additionally, at the meetings people will be able to practice and interact with the new Web-based comment portal (<http://gsnm-consult.limehouse.com/portal>) hosted by Limehouse Software™, that Sequoia National Forest is piloting. The website presents the newest tool in our collaborative outreach efforts and includes an instructional guided tour which is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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All the traditional tools such as phone calls, letters, e-mails, faxes and meetings are still available. From any computer with internet access, the public can draft and submit comments while reading the documents, access dynamic interactive maps, receive e-mail notifications and save and share links with friends or online networks. Forest Service personnel with displays will be on hand to help guide people to the information they want.

Another feature available on the Web site, is a decision framework tool: the Values and Interest-Based Explorer (the "VIBE"), which will allow one to apply their values to the monument planning effort. There are three pseudo-alternatives with value selections one can make on key resources in the monument. When finished, the tool displays a chart of one's values. Please take a test drive.

Where to send your comments:

Comments concerning the scope of the analysis must be received by May 4, 2009. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement is expected in September 2009, and the Final Environmental Impact Statement is expected in March 2010. Send written comments to Marianne Emmendorfer, Project Leader, Sequoia Forest Headquarters, 1839 S. Newcomb Street, Porterville, CA 93257. Attention: Monument Management Plan.

Comments may be sent via the Web site at: <http://gsnm.consult.limehouse.com/portal>, or via facsimile to (559) 781-4744, or one can call (559) 784-1500 for further information.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including the names and addresses of those who comment will be part of the public record on this proposed action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, anonymous comments will not provide the respondent with standing to appeal the subsequent decision.

For further information contact Marianne Emmendorfer at (559) 338-2251, extension 313. Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service at 1 (800) 877-8339 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday.