



# NEWS RELEASE

Sequoia National Forest and the Giant Sequoia National Monument

1839 S. Newcomb Street, Porterville, CA 93257

Date: February 25, 2010

Op-Ed – *Monumental Outlook Over the Horizon*

By Tina Terrell, Forest Supervisor

Contacts: Mary Chislock, Public Affairs Officer

Phone: 559-784-1500

## Get Fit in the Outdoors in 2010!

It's that time of year to set new goals and get outdoors. Let me highlight an opportunity for you, friends and family to set a date to volunteer in the Sequoia National Forest and Giant Sequoia National Monument.

Since 2004, Stewards of the Sequoia have been a Sequoia National Forest partner and operate under an agreement, called a Memorandum of Understanding, to maintain hiking and biking trails throughout the forest. They have adopted nine multiple use trails on the southern part of the forest on the Kern River Ranger District. They work diligently to keep trails open and in good condition for everyone.

Non-profit volunteer organizations such as Stewards of the Sequoias are great partners and the backbone of many forest operations. They provide enthusiasm and hard physical labor, operate on a slim budget, recruit volunteers with passion who want to make a difference, and offer opportunities for you to get outdoors! They also embrace our forest service safety principles that "safety starts with a vision and ends with a mindset," with all projects. Each volunteer project begins with a training session for all participants on sustainable trail management practices.

From the multi-year efforts these volunteers see large improvements in trail conditions and find many new places to explore, along with forming new bonds and friendships. I would like to thank Stewards of the Sequoia volunteers for showcasing the positive aspects of natural resource management by donating over 8,000 hours performing:

- Maintenance on 1,400 miles of trails averaging 200 miles per year of brushing and other maintenance;
- Planting over 500 trees to speed reforestation in the McNally Fire;
- Installing or maintaining almost 1,400 water bars to reduce erosion and promote forest health;
- Clearing 700 downed trees to keep people on the trail and reduce trail braiding.

The Stewards of the Sequoia volunteers have provided over \$300,000 in community and environmental benefits to the Forest Service through their volunteer program!

Open your calendars; come enjoy nature's beauty with family and friends and get fit in the outdoors! This is a great way for volunteers, especially kids, to learn and practice Tread Lightly ethics. Increase your enjoyment of the wild world.

-more-

Please offer your services by volunteering in your National Forests! Set an example and impact future generations. We won't say no to your help! Pencil in the upcoming dates for Steward Trail Appreciation project days in 2010! I invite you to contact the Executive Director, Chris Horgan. For more information and upcoming project dates visit: [www.StewardsOfTheSequoia.org](http://www.StewardsOfTheSequoia.org).

###