



NEWS RELEASE

Sequoia National Forest and the Giant Sequoia National Monument

1839 S. Newcomb Street, Porterville, CA 93257

Centennial 1908-2008

Date: May 9, 2008

Op-Ed - For Immediate Release

Contacts: Mary Chislock, Public Affairs Officer

Phone: 559-784-1500

Monumental Outlook Over The Horizon

(What's Happening on the Sequoia National Forest
Giant Sequoia National Monument)

By Tina Terrell, Forest Supervisor

Porterville, CA..... The Forest Service has had a mission for many years as being the “land of many uses.” One of these uses is off-highway vehicle use. Last year, the Sequoia National Forest/Giant Sequoia National Monument was very successful in obtaining grant funds through the State’s Off-Highway Vehicle Commission. The Sequoia received over \$526,000 dollars to improve, repair, restore, and plan trails. Six different projects were funded which include:

1. A Forest -Wide Conservation Grant (\$71,000).

This is a two year grant to continue and expand the forest program of monitoring and protecting natural and cultural resources, as well as, development and/or implementation of soil conservation standards for the Wildlife and Plant Habitat Protection (WHPP)/Habitat Management Program (HMP) for existing off-highway vehicle routes.

2. A Forest -Wide Facilities Operation and Maintenance Grant (\$82,000).

This grant funding supports facilities on the Kern Plateau, Greenhorn, Piute and Breckenridge Mountains located on the Kern River Ranger District near Bakersfield. Funding would finance personnel, services, supplies and materials to accomplish facilities operation and maintenance projects directed towards maintaining health and safety standards, upkeep on facilities and providing a quality experience for visitors.

3. A Grant to Fund the Development of the Travel Management Environmental Impact Statement (\$82,000).

This grant funding will pay salaries for personnel who will analyze changes to the existing (baseline) road and trail system on the Kern River and Hot Springs Ranger Districts (areas outside of the Giant Sequoia National Monument). Proposed changes include conversion of some authorized system roads to trails; changing the type of motor vehicle use (such as roads currently authorized for highway legal vehicles only, to all wheeled motorized vehicle use); conversion of some system roads to be closed to vehicular use; and designation of some existing user-created routes. Also the prohibition of cross-country travel (off of designated roads and trails) will be analyzed. Alternatives to the proposed action will also be analyzed.

4. A Grant to Fund Forest-Wide Law Enforcement Patrols (\$216,000).

This grant funds activities that include patrol, incident management, signing, resource monitoring and protection, crime prevention, and restitution concerning off-highway vehicle recreation on the Sequoia National Forest.

5. A Grant to Fund the Eshom Staging Area Development Project (\$44,000).

This grant will fund salaries for personnel to prepare the environmental document required to develop a staging area north of Eshom Point on the Hume Lake Ranger District (outside the Giant Sequoia National Monument). The proposal will include designating camp sites, providing Tread Lightly information and reducing impacts to natural and cultural resources in this popular off-highway vehicle use area.

6. A Grant to Fund the Millwood Staging Area Development Project (\$31,000).

This grant will fund salaries for personnel to prepare the environmental document required to redesign the Millwood Staging Area on the Hume Lake Ranger District (inside the Giant Sequoia National Monument). Proposal includes activities aimed to better designate camp sites, restore riparian habitat and reduce impacts to cultural resources. This site overlaps the old town site of Millwood, and is along Mill Flat Creek which is designated as a Critical Aquatic Refuge.

###