



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bob Monroe  
(618) 658-2111

## FOREST SERVICE CHIEF'S AWARD PRESENTED TO WILDERNESS TRAIL CREW

Harrisburg, IL, October 30, 2008 - The Shawnee National Forest, Hidden Springs Ranger

District Wilderness Trail Crew was chosen as recipients of the Traditional Skills and Minimum Tool Leadership Forest Service Chief's Award for work done in the Lusk Creek Wilderness.

The Hidden Springs' Leadership and Wilderness Trail Crew members included Jeff Seefeldt, former District Ranger; Bob Monroe, Recreation Staff Officer; Brian Bourne, Trails Technician; Tony Longbucco, Trail Crew leader; and crew members Nick Abel, Tyler Cox, Janice Ralls, Justin Dodson, Jeremy Mohr, Shane Quimby, Ray Broadway, Sarah Wallace, Eric Stead, Matt McClanahan and Nick Terrell. These recipients competed with forests across the country for this prestigious award.

Those traveling to Washington, D. C. to represent the Wilderness Trail Crew in receiving the Award during the ceremony held October 15 were current District Ranger Tim Pohlman, Brian Bourne, Tony Longbucco, Ray Broadway, Justin Dodson and Eric Stead.

In the Spring of 2006, the Forest implemented the Trails Designation Project. The project's primary purpose is the management of a trail system within a four-watershed area, which includes Lusk Creek, Garden of the Gods and Bay Creek Wildernesses. The trail crew continued this ambitious project in 2007 by constructing five miles of new re-routes and trail features in the wilderness.

One of the most visited spots on the Forest, the 6,700 acres of Lusk Creek Wilderness is frequented by equestrian groups and hikers. At the beginning of this project there were ten miles

- more -



of system trails and fifty miles of non-system trails. Many trails displayed the effects of moderate to heavy use and were both poorly designed and poorly located. Since the implementation of the Trails Designation Project, major improvements to the trail system have been finished.

Trail Team Leader Brian Bourne instructed trail crew members in the use of primitive tools, such as the cross-cut saw, and about working with pack stock. During 2007, the crew constructed three miles of trail, reconstructed two miles of trail and installed turnpikes, retaining walls, causeways and erosion control features. This work was achieved without the use of modern tools and techniques.

Each day, crew members hiked to the work site in the wilderness over rough and steep terrain. Using shovels, buckets, handmade chain baskets and pack stock they moved tons of soil, 300 tons of sandstone rock, 350 tons of gravel and 1,400 feet of timber were removed. In March and part of May, a pack stock team from the Hoosier National Forest in Indiana joined the crew. During May, an eight mule team and three Forest Service staff from the Bridger-Teton National Forest in Wyoming were on hand to help. In all, the mule teams hauled over 300 tons of gravel into the wilderness.

The trail crew's detailed rock work can be compared to the quality work done by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930's. The techniques and primitive tools used were the traditional methods practiced for hundreds of years by foresters and American frontiersmen. Native materials, such as sandstone, were used to construct trail features. Using native materials not only reduces construction costs, but blends aesthetically with natural surroundings.

- end -