

USDA Forest Service

San Bernardino National Forest



Date: January 31, 2008

San Bernardino National Forest
602 South Tippecanoe Avenue
San Bernardino, California 92408

For Immediate Release

Contacts:

Lytle Creek Ranger Station (909) 382-2851

Volunteers Wanted for Bighorn Sheep Survey

Lytle Creek, CA...Volunteers are needed on March 1 and 2, 2008 (Saturday evening and all day Sunday) to assist in the annual survey of bighorn sheep in the San Gabriel Mountains. The California Department of Fish and Game, USDA Forest Service, and the Society for Conservation of Bighorn Sheep have conducted annual surveys for bighorn sheep in the San Gabriel range since 1979. The mountain range once held an estimated 740 bighorn sheep, which made the San Gabriel population the largest population of desert bighorn sheep in California. The population declined over 80% through the 1980's but appears to be on the increase, with recent estimates yielding approximately 300 bighorn sheep.

Volunteers will hike to designated observation sites in the San Gabriel Mountains on Sunday and count and record bighorn sheep observed. Each volunteer group will be led by a representative from the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep or the Forest Service. Survey participants must be at least 16 years old and capable of hiking one mile on rugged terrain, though most routes will be longer. Most of the hikes are not on trails, and may involve scrambling over boulders, climbing steep slopes, or bush-whacking through chaparral. No survey experience is necessary however, volunteers must attend a mandatory orientation at 6:00 PM on Saturday, March 1, at Day Creek Intermediate School, in Rancho Cucamonga. Complimentary campsites are available to volunteers on a first-come basis at the Applewhite Campground in Lytle Creek and Mt. Baldy RV Park in Mt. Baldy. Participants are encouraged to camp because they will need to hit the trail early Sunday. Volunteers should bring binoculars or spotting scopes as well as FRS/GMRS radios in addition to hiking gear. Mountain weather can be unpredictable and volunteers should be prepared to spend several hours hiking and additional time making observations in cold and windy weather.

Please call the Lytle Creek Ranger Station at 909/382-2851 no later than February 15, to sign up and receive a volunteer packet.

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