



United States Department of Agriculture

# 2014 Spotlight Articles



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Service

Pacific Southwest  
Region

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## Presenting 2014 Regional Forester's Honor Awards



At an evening ceremony in Sacramento, Regional Forester Randy Moore announced the winners of the 2014 Regional Forester Honor Awards. “We are here to celebrate the many successes of the past year,” he said. “The men and women we are honoring this past 12 months are deserving of this recognition. Their professionalism, dedication, and public service are reflected in their many extraordinary accomplishments. Forest Service employees and our partners make enormous contributions to the good of our nation. I am proud to celebrate their contributions to the success of the Forest Service.”

This year’s theme was *Inspired Journeys*, and key note speaker Juana Rosa, Generation Green Coordinator, shared her inspiring life journey.

Honor award categories included Ecological Restoration, Healthy Workplace/Workforce and Special Accomplishments.

- To see photos of the event, [visit our Flickr site](#)

**Published: December 18, 2014**

## **LPNF and partners team up to remove abandoned dam, restore aquatic habitat**



**CCC working hard to restore flow to Lion Creek by removing old dam**

A group of partners recently joined forces to remove an abandoned diversion dam on Los Padres National Forest’s Ojai Ranger District. The dam presented a migration barrier for the endangered southern steelhead. Aquatic passage was restored opening up an additional 3.7-mile stretch of Lion Creek.

### **The partnerships that made this project happen**

The Lion Creek Dam Removal Project was funded by NOAA’s Community-based Restoration Program, a national effort that encourages partnerships among Federal agencies, states, and non-profit organizations to carry out habitat restoration. The project took two years to plan.

The project work was conducted by a California Conservation Corps crew using hand tools over the course of one week in October. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife provided on-site technical assistance to the crew.

### **About the steelhead trout**

Steelhead trout are anadromous, meaning the species spawn in fresh water before making their way down tributaries leading to the Pacific Ocean. After maturing, they return to their ancestral spawning grounds to complete their cycle.

## **Restoring the steelhead's habitat**

One of the highest priorities for recovery for the southern steelhead was to remove this 26.5 by 3.1 foot diversion dam that was originally installed to provide potable water to a nearby campground. Lion Creek is a tributary to Sespe Creek, which is one of the few remaining intact wild rivers in Southern California. Sespe Creek flows into Santa Clara River which then flows into the Pacific Ocean.

Lion Creek Dam Removal Project serves as an important step in improving aquatic ecosystem connectivity as part of the Forest's Ecological Restoration efforts. These management actions restore historical fish passage that benefit endangered species.

**Published: November 13, 2014**

## Vallejo Goes Wild



View the "thank you" [video on Facebook](#)

In early September, the Regional Office celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wilderness Act in their hometown of Vallejo, Calif. The Visions of the Wild Festival kicked off on September 3rd, the date that President Lyndon Johnson signed the landmark conservation bill in 1964.

Hundreds of people turned out for the four-day festival, which included author talks, film screenings, field trips, a concert and four wilderness-themed art exhibits. The activities were centered in Vallejo's historic downtown, an area undergoing a major revival catalyzed by artists and by public-private partnerships. The restored Empress Theatre was the primary venue.

More than one observer noted that it was sometimes difficult to find a parking space in downtown Vallejo during the festival--and how wonderful that was.

Vallejo may seem like an odd choice for a wilderness event, but that is precisely why the Region chose this city. The goal was to reach a diverse urban community and support the transformation of a city that has suffered severe hardships in recent years.

The arts community was an integral part of the planning. They embraced the festival theme of "connecting nature, culture and community." Four exhibits provided a cross-cultural perspective from a wide range of artists, young and old. For one of the shows, a raw space was converted into a "pop-up" gallery by a team of hard working volunteers.

Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell traveled from Washington DC to deliver the opening address. His presentation drew parallels between the Wilderness Act and the Civil Rights Act, which were both signed in the summer of 1964. He emphasized the importance of diversity to both the Forest Service and the conservation movement. National Wilderness Program Manager, Elwood York, hosted one of the evening programs. Eli Ilano, deputy forest supervisor on the Tahoe National Forest emceed the closing concert/variety show.

The festival partners plan to build on the relationships and energy generated by Visions of the Wild. They will meet soon to consider bringing similar “visions” events to the community in the coming months and years.

- [View all of the beautiful photos of the event.](#)

**Published: November 13, 2014**

# Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit working out its mussels

## About the project



If you want to learn more about this or other projects on the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, [visit their website](#).

healthy river.

## Good vs. bad mussels

With so much effort being placed on keeping the highly destructive quagga and zebra mussels (an invasive species) out of California streams, some of the native mussels have received an unfounded bad reputation. The native pearlshell is a much larger species than the quagga and zebra mussels and has been known to live up to 100 years. Because, the native pearlshell is a filter feeder, they filter out nutrients, contaminants and suspended matter from the water helping to clean the river.

Western pearlshell mussels were once numerous in the Upper Truckee Watershed. The species is declining due to human impacts on watershed, including chemical pollution, channel alteration, siltation and the decline of native fish populations.

## Moving forward

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) is protecting the good mussels in the Upper Truckee River, as it improves the river's habitat for its native species.

The LTBMU, in coordination with the Nature Conservancy, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the University of Nevada Reno, is conducting a pilot project to relocate Western pearlshell mussels from a portion of the Upper Truckee River that will be re-routed to reduce erosion and restore wet meadow and aquatic habitat.

*This project highlights the importance of agency partnerships and how we are working together for the common goal of a healthier watershed.*

The river's natural ecosystem depends on the native pearlshell mussel, just as it depends on a

“This population is very likely the largest and last population of Western pearlshell mussels in the Lake Tahoe Basin,” said Aquatic Biologist Sarah Muskopf. “This monitoring effort will evaluate the impacts of relocation on freshwater mussel populations and hopefully ensure that this last population of mussels in the Basin is not lost.”

The Forest Service portion of the Upper Truckee River restoration will dewater and fill in a 7,400 foot section of the river that contains about 12,000 mussels. The pilot relocation project will move no more than 10 percent of the population in order to evaluate the success of relocation prior to moving the remaining mussels in 2015 and 2016.

**Published: November 13, 2014**

## Inyo National Forest crew attains Hotshot status



The Inyo National Forest proudly announced the certification of the Inyo Interagency Hotshot Crew. Hotshot crews consist of 20 firefighters specifically trained in wildfire suppression tactics. Hotshots provide initial attack response for fast-moving fires in remote regions and are trained to meet the most stringent physical requirements.

This group of determined firefighters, formerly referred to as Crew 3, completed a demanding and extensive certification process to become an Interagency Hotshot Crew in July.

“I am proud of the work and dedication that this crew showed to become the Inyo Hotshots,” said Ed Armenta, Inyo National Forest Supervisor. “Their skills will assist with fire response throughout the Eastern Sierra as well as being part of the interagency response when they are needed for highly complex fires throughout the nation.”

The certification process included scenarios that tested their physical fitness, firefighting skills, leadership, and communication processes.

“The crew is extremely excited about reaching this goal,” said Glen Tingley, Superintendent of the Inyo Interagency Hotshots. “We are looking forward to learning more, achieving more, and striving to be our best in fire response.”

The Inyo Hotshots join an exclusive group of 47 hotshot crews in California and only 110 crews in the entire nation.

Within two hours of receiving orders, hotshots must be ready to travel anywhere in the country

and are often flown in to steep terrain where they fight fires using only the equipment they can carry. They work extended shifts and battle the most dangerous, complex, and intense wildfires. Hotshots also respond to all types of national emergencies including hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, earthquakes and other disasters. Already this summer, the Inyo Interagency Hotshot Crew responded to numerous wildfires across California, including the Meadow Fire near Yosemite.

**Published: November 13, 2014**

## Pocket Park Fish Tent and Booth

### Visions of the Wild activities at Pocket Park



Visions of the Wild was a multi-agency, community, and citizen partnership to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the wilderness act and how people interpret the wild through art located in Vallejo, California. Galleries, films, music, dance, and focused talks were all presented during this Festival that occurred from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> of September, 2014.

On Friday and Saturday, Pocket Park in Vallejo was filled with activities for kids and booths providing the community with information about wild places.

Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, California State Parks, and the Forest Service shared information about visiting public lands at locations set up in walking distance from each other in the downtown area. The Forest Service had one display featuring items that one would use in the wilderness such as a

tent, sleeping bag, and cooking gear; and demonstrated proper camping etiquette and techniques to the visitors. Another forest-related activity available to participants at the event was a log-sawing station where participants could saw a “cookie” from a log and have it branded with the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Wilderness Act emblem. At another station, Forest Service employees helped kids create “rubs” of forest animals—a fun activity that taught these young participants about animal identification.

One of the highlights was the **fish-tent**, where the Forest Service provided a unique opportunity for kids to learn about fish. At 24 feet in length, the giant fish tent beckoned for kids to venture inside, and explore; which provided a great opportunity to educate them about the freshwater fish of the forest and the



ecosystem in which they live. Aside from the kids loving the way the sunlight shown through colorful fish-tent once inside, they also enjoyed the free “fish hats” and educational cards about amphibians that employees shared with them. All the fun activities helped the Forest Service spread a simple, but effective message to the

children: **Wilderness areas provide clean water and fish need clean water. Fish need Wilderness areas. Some fish travel from high mountain lakes and streams to the ocean. Please keep all waterways clean for fish.**

More than 500 people of all ages and backgrounds participated in the Pocket Park activities, making the event a very big success!

**Published: October 6, 2014**

## **Sierra National Forest Landscape Architect's dedication is unmatched**

By John C. Heil III, press officer for the Pacific Southwest Region

### **Sanchez strives for maximum accessibility at all recreation sites, wins 2014 National Accessibility Accomplishment Award**



**Regional Forester Randy Moore (left) presents the 2014 National Accessibility Accomplishment Award to Cesar Sanchez (right).**

Cesar Sanchez, the Sierra National Forest landscape architect believes that maximizing accessibility is more than just providing access for a person in a wheelchair. It is providing equal recreational opportunities to accommodate all people, including persons with disabilities, to the greatest extent possible. It is with that strong conviction that Sanchez was recognized with the 2014 National Accessibility Accomplishment Award.

“To be acknowledged for my work and to represent the U.S. Forest Service - Pacific Southwest Region and the Sierra National Forest is very special to me,” said Sanchez, who attended California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly) in San Luis Obispo, Calif. where he earned a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture and graduated in 2007. “This award is an amazing honor. Thanks to all my co-workers and partners for working with me on maximizing accessibility. This award is for all of us.”

Among his many accomplishments, Sanchez, who is from Reedley, California has strived for the maximum number of recreation sites to meet accessibility standards. This includes the Dowville and Billy Creek picnic sites where he created recreation facility site designs that

allowed 100 percent accessibility while protecting the unique characteristics of the natural setting.

“Cesar not only has a willing and inclusive attitude related to accessibility, but he also teaches those involved in design of facilities, such as how to move a parking spur a few feet in one direction or another, and thereby removing slope issues which prevented the site from meeting all accessibility standards,” said his supervisor Susan Burkindine, assistant recreation officer for the SNF.

“Cesar has a strong desire to provide meaningful opportunities for forest visitors and the communities surrounding the forest recreation areas,” said Burkindine. “Cesar is always looking for new solutions, if the first one does not succeed. He never limits his thinking to the status quo. He is a creative resource for the Forest Service.”

To maximize accessibility, the landscape architect must consider complex site conditions, to include of a rugged terrain - vegetation, rock outcroppings, cultural resources, etc. The goal Sanchez achieved was meeting 100 percent accessibility without any segregated access for people with disabilities, while protecting the unique characteristics of the natural setting.

“My passion for protecting the natural and social environments is what gives me my drive to do what I do as a landscape architect, from protecting public health, safety, and welfare through the planning, design, and construction of outdoor settings,” said Sanchez, 31, a 10-year U.S. Forest Service employee.

There have been several learning experiences along the way for Sanchez, but perhaps the most rewarding for him has been working jointly with the Forest’s Tribal Relations and Heritage Program managers. This involved conducting government-to-government consultation with six Native American Tribes to avoid adverse effects of cultural resources during the design of a campground. During these consultations, he learned about the tribe’s spiritual attachments to the land, how they used the land, and how they would like to continue using it. Sanchez learned there is a historical significance and a spiritual connection to the land that exists in the landscape beyond the physical, biological, and cultural features that we see.

“This experience not only gave me the knowledge to design recreation sites to accommodate the tribe’s recreational needs, but also made me aware of the importance of learning about other cultures so the U.S. Forest Service can also accommodate their recreational needs and expectations,” said Sanchez.



**Cesar Sanchez stops for a moment while conducting an inspection for quality control during the construction of Rancheria Campground in Huntington Lake, California.**

### **So how has Cesar gotten to where he is now in his career?**

While his wife Yesenia and four children (with a fifth on the way) are of great inspiration to him, his mentors have made a big difference to him also. Those mentors on various landscape architecture principles and concepts, including accessibility, have been Ken Kunert, retired Forest Landscape Architect on the Los Padres National Forest and Trini Juarez, Region 5 Regional Office Landscape Architect/Recreation Planner. In 1979, both Ken and Trini were recognized in Region 5 for applying principles of barrier free-design to National Forest campgrounds and recreation areas on the Los Padres National Forest.

"Cesar's collaboration skills keep him seeking win-win solutions," said Kunert. "His focus remains on how to allow all people to have the opportunity to enjoy the recreation setting. It is not enough to find 'adaptations' that solve access issues; he looks for solutions that improve the opportunity for everyone."

"Cesar is very bright, sensitive and inquisitive," said Juarez. "I can always count on him to do the right thing. He is a great representative of the region. I was happy to see him recognized for being top notch."

"I think that Cesar is personable with a calm manner," said Isaac Sims, Eldorado National Forest landscape architect. "His outlook on accessibility is to find the answer. It is our job as a landscape architect to translate the dreams into designs that are buildable. Cesar is one of those guys that must have the answer. He will dig for the regulation or guideline until he finds

it. His manner is still calm and personable, but will push until the requirement is met.”

“Cesar is a very gifted landscape architect who seeks to ensure maximum accessibility on the Sierra National Forest,” said Teri Drivas, deputy director of Public Service for the Pacific Southwest Region of the U.S. Forest Service. “He has been instrumental in developing design ideas that help all people experience the outdoors and enjoy a variety of activities, including accessible viewing and fishing piers that allow people to experience the water beyond the shore. His hard work, attention to detail, solution-based thinking, and always striving for excellence is not just related to his dedication to maximizing accessibility, but is how he approaches all his work. The Forest Service is lucky to have such a talented individual.”

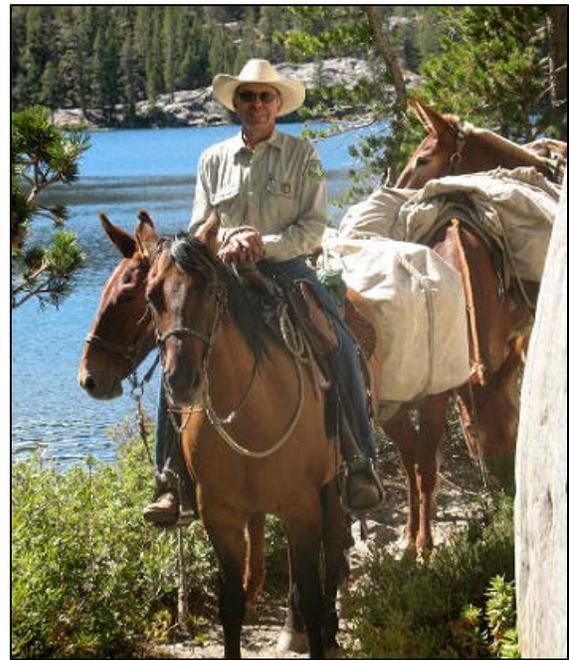
**Published: September 30, 2014**

## Lee Roeser—The mule packer

By John C. Heil III, press officer for the Pacific Southwest Region

Lee Roeser was born to be a mule packer in the mountains and wilderness. At a very early age he learned the craft from his parents who ran a mule pack station. By six years old he was assisting his parents, by 13 was already earning a salary as a packer, and at 16 he was hauling explosives, gear and tools for a trail project.

“I grew up on it and it stuck with me,” said Roeser, 57, a packer for the U.S. Forest Service on the Inyo National Forest, one of two host forests for the [Pack Stock Center of Excellence](#). “You must be passionate for the well-being of the animals. I do it for that and my love of the mountains and opportunity to continue to learn.”



The U. S. Forest Service has a long tradition of using pack stock to bring supplies to remote locations to support fire and trail crews. Pack supported rangers and resource crews are also a common sight in wilderness areas, which do not allow mechanized transport of supplies and equipment. A 12-year U.S. Forest Service employee, Roeser really embodies the three most important elements a pack stocker needs: 1) care for the animals, 2) customer service, and 3) knowledge and making adjustments on the job.

“He grew up in an environment where there was a very high standard of packing for 50 years,” said Michael Morse, Wilderness Supervisor for the Mammoth District of the Inyo National Forest, Co-Director of the [Pack Stock Center of Excellence](#) and fellow packer. “He has spent his entire life learning how to be a packer. We consider Lee to be the best of the best and it shows in his work.

“He is methodical on what type of equipment he uses and is engaged and thoughtful. Everything he does has a purpose when it comes to packing. Something as simple as a tying a hitch on a mule makes a difference to him.”

It is this attention to detail that has led to amazing record of perfection with issues such as injuries to the animals. But it doesn't stop there. Roeser is a big proponent of teaching the craft. Recently he worked with an intern Corey Finneman who saw firsthand what it takes to

be a packer.

“He is very artistic with his process – a great teacher,” said Finneman. “He always has a purpose when he teaches and is articulate and thorough but keeps it simple – to the basics.”

“I’ve learned a lot from him over the years,” Morse added. “Everything he does he does for a reason. His highest priority is always the safety of the animal and the packer. We realized how much better our chance of success with the [Pack Stock Center of Excellence](#) was by hiring the best packer out there.”

“What makes me tick is always looking for things I can learn from to make packing better for the animals and myself,” said Roeser. “I want the equipment to be more in harmony with the mules. You can’t be a packer for the salary. You have to have a love for working with mules in the mountains.”

Everything about Roeser revolves around packing. In fact even his wife Jennifer of 25 years owns a pack station, running a family business.

“He is a humble quiet guy,” said Jeff Davis, a USDA Wildlife Services professional hunter, trapper and packer. “He is completely honest. There is not a shady side to him. Lee is as good as it gets – it would take decades of professional experience to match him. I put him on a pedestal for many reasons.”

Two years ago, Roeser was tasked with supporting a trail crew in an area that wasn’t built to the typical stock standard. The location was Mt. Whitney on the Inyo National Forest at 12,500 feet. The task was tall – bring heavy boxes, shovels and other equipment up a trail – to reconstruct it without disturbing the public. There were safety hazards along the trail and the project was going to take several months with over 300 mule loads. Despite all the challenges, Roeser and his team didn’t have a single injury or accident. “It was flawless,” stated Morse.

Roeser employed the strategy of using a ranger in front and back to look for the public to keep everyone safe.

So what should a young person expect if they are interested in a career as a packer?

“Someone starting out needs to come in with an open mind,” said Roeser. “They should expect to work long days. They must be passionate about the care of the animals. They can’t be hurrying to get back by a certain time. That could be harmful to the animals. They must always keep the animals in mind. Not everyone is a natural mule person. If they are not, the mules will know and they probably should find another career.”

- To view more photos of the Pacific Southwest Region's Packers, visit [USFS Region 5 Packers](#).

**Published: September 16, 2014**

## Faces of the Region: OHV Techs enjoy educating forest visitors

Teresa Benson, Hume Lake Ranger District, Sequoia National Forest, and Stephanie Bryant, Pacific Southwest Region Public Affairs



Kyle Lane and Martin Soto, both Off-Highway Vehicle Technicians from Hume Lake Ranger District on the Sequoia National Forest, spend their days enforcing OHV use on the district and educating the local community and forest visitors about responsible OHV use on Forest Service lands.

“Kyle and Martin demonstrate a dedication and passion for the work that they do every day,” said Carol Hallacy, recreation officer on the Sequoia NF who supervises both Lane and Soto. “They consistently provide education to our visitors in a friendly manner that I believe has helped the district tremendously in ensuring our OHV users are able to enjoy the ride while exercising responsible behavior.”

The two regularly attend community fairs and local gatherings as part of their job. This past Spring, the techs were able to man an information booth at *BIG Hat Days*, a festival in Clovis, California. The event is the largest two-day festival in Central California. More than 140,000 visitors attend the event in Old Town Clovis to shop at vendors, eat, and learn about their local environment. Lane and Soto, who talked with more than 1,200 people during the festival, shared information on recreational opportunities and distributed materials about [Tread Lightly](#) principles.

Soto’s career with the Forest Service started when he was in high school where he worked for Fire for two years.

“Since then I knew I wanted to work for the Forest Service,” said Soto. “I worked for Fire, but my ideal job was working on roads, enforcing the law, and educating the visitors. Once they offered me this OHV Tech position I did not think twice before I said yes.”



Soto said there is nothing he doesn't enjoy about his job and he wakes up every morning with a positive attitude to come to work.

“The best part about working on the Sequoia is that it is pretty much my backyard,” explained Soto. “I only live 20 minutes from the district office and I love the different outdoor opportunities you can find at Sequoia National Forest.”

Lane came to work for the Forest Service through a program called [Pathways](#). He recalls sitting in class at his Junior College on a Friday morning listening to a Forest Service representative recruit for vacant summer

positions.

“Once I heard of the details associated with that of an OHV Tech...I felt in love with the idea,” said Lane. “The ability to serve the public and protect the land that I have grown so fond of during my time spent in the mountains was beyond imaginable...I had to do it! I have been with the Forest Service continuously for a little over four years now as a student.”

Lane says he often finds himself hanging up the keys at the office and going right back out into the field he had been working in that day to spend his leisure time. He says besides his love of the land, his co-workers are the icing on the cake.

“The best part about working for the Sequoia National Forest is the people – specifically all of my co-workers,” explained Lane. “Each individual I have ever worked with has been able to teach me something these last four years. I can't thank them enough for all that they have done for me and my growth in this agency. They have all helped out more than they can ever imagine.”

**Published: July 22, 2014**

## USFS Region 5 announces certification of Tallac Hotshots

Lisa Herron, Lake Tahoe Basic Management Unit Public Affairs



A group of 20 determined firefighters from the U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) completed a demanding and extensive certification process to become the first Interagency Hotshot Crew (IHC) from Lake Tahoe. Formerly the Tallac Hand Crew, the Tallac Hotshots join an exclusive group of roughly 2,000 firefighters across the country.

"The certification of the Tallac Hotshots is a significant event for the Lake Tahoe Basin," said Forest Supervisor Nancy Gibson. "Fire suppression in the Basin is vital to our communities and it's reassuring, particularly in light of the anticipated active fire season, to have such a key resource of well-trained and experienced firefighters in our area."

The Tallac Hand Crew was established in 2001 and the original intent of the crew was to perform fuels management projects and to be available for wildland fire response. The crew evolved through extensive training, recruitment, and leadership retention to become a highly skilled 20 person crew. The primary mission of an IHC is to provide a safe, professional, mobile and highly skilled hand crew for all phases of fire management and incident operations.

"Hotshots are unique group of individuals," said Casey Hoffman, Tallac Hotshot. "They have to be tough physically and mentally to be able to do the work they do."

The Tallac Hotshots provide a valued resource to the Lake Tahoe community by carrying out

initial attack for wildfires that occur in and around the Lake Tahoe Basin. They also provide training for the Forest Service Wildland Firefighter Apprentice Academy and the Lake Tahoe Community College Fire Academy.

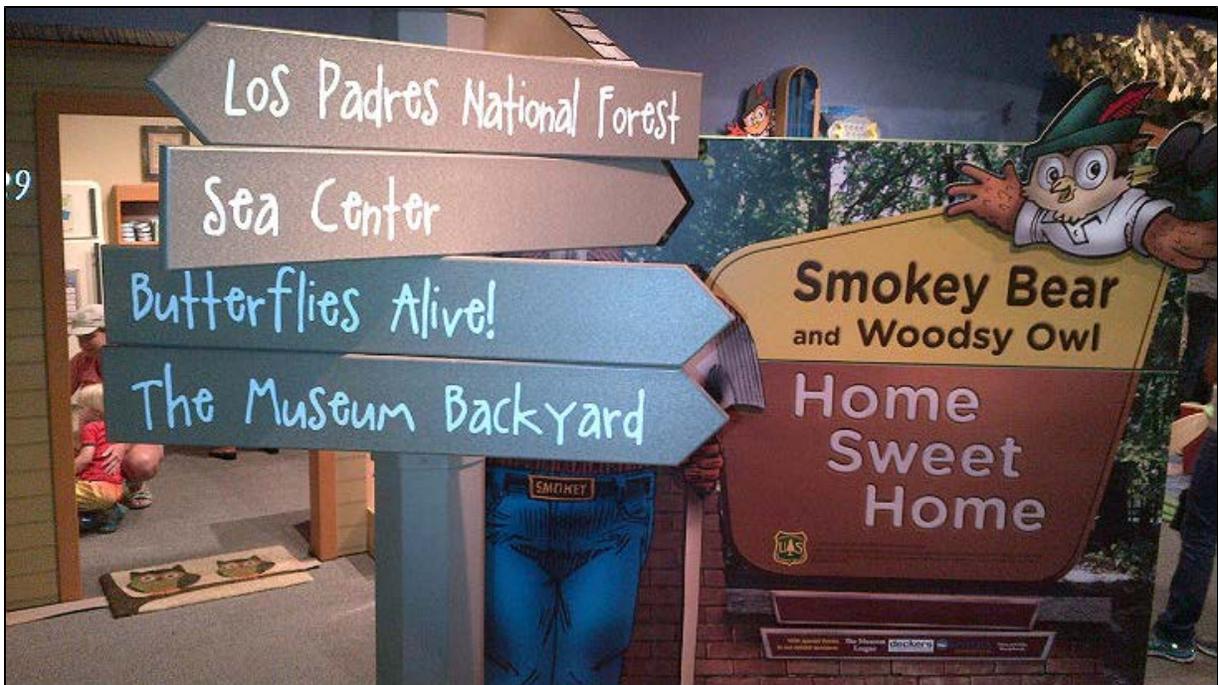
Hotshot crews consist of 20 firefighters specifically trained in wildfire suppression tactics. Hotshots, who are on call 24/7, provide initial attack response for fast-moving fires in remote regions and are trained to meet the most stringent physical requirements. Within two hours of receiving orders, Hotshots can be ready to travel anywhere in the country and are often flown in to steep terrain where they fight fires using only the equipment they can carry. Hotshots can respond to all types of national emergencies including hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, earthquakes and other disasters.

- For general information on Forest Service Hotshot crews, visit [USFS Hotshots](#)
- For more information about the Tallac Hotshots, visit [Tallac Hotshots](#)

**Published: July 22, 2014**

## Los Padres NF supports interactive children's exhibit in Santa Barbara

Andrew Madsen, Los Padres National Forest Public Affairs



The “Home Sweet Home” exhibit includes a custom signpost arrow pointing in the direction of Los Padres National Forest. (U.S. Forest Service)

The “Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl – Home Sweet Home” interactive children’s exhibit is being hosted by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History through Sept. 21, 2014. While the exhibit is in Santa Barbara, California, the Los Padres National Forest is working with the museum to maximize the “[One Less Spark, One Less Wildfire](#)” message and to highlight recreational opportunities.

On Saturdays throughout the summer, Los Padres employees will staff a booth outside the exhibit’s exit to provide information on sustainability practices and Ecological Restoration. A Forest Service fire engine will visit the exhibit, and a special celebration is planned for Smokey Bear’s 70th birthday Aug. 9.

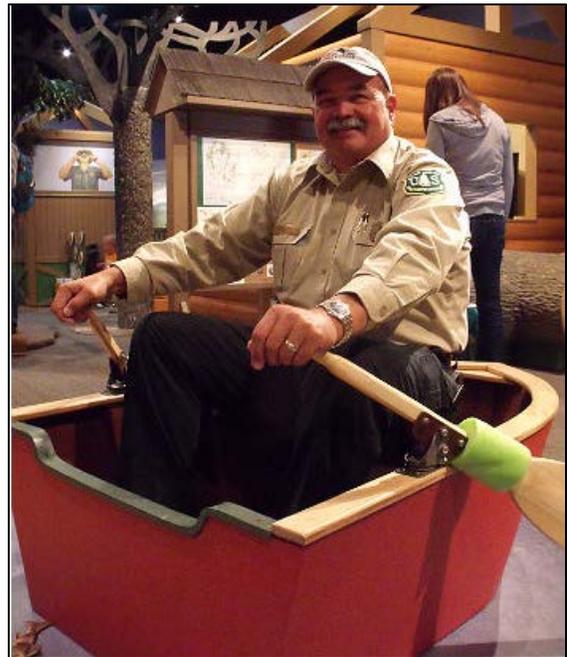
“We’re seeing lots of families as they come out of the exhibit, and this gives us a chance to talk with them about the Los Padres,” said Jennifer

Gray, a Los Padres NF visitor information assistant. “Many of them are not aware of the recreational opportunities that are just a short drive away.”

The exhibit is comprised of two sections depicting a natural and urban setting. The natural setting, which focuses on Smokey’s prevention message, features miniature replications of a Ranger Station and fire lookout tower along with a fishing boat and campfire ring. The urban side of the exhibit incorporates many of Woodsy Owl’s sustainability messages and includes a kitchen with lessons about recycling and saving water.

The exhibit was designed by the Betty Brinn Children’s Museum in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in conjunction with the Forest Service’s R9 Regional Office. The exhibit has been touring the country since 2009.

**Published: July 22, 2014**



**Santa Barbara District Ranger Pancho Smith proves that the “Home Sweet Home” exhibit can be fun for adults as well as children. (U.S. Forest Service)**

## Region 5 SusOps staff attends energy summit

Pacific Southwest Region Public Affairs



**Ashley Banuelos (left) and Sophia Lin (right), Region 5 Sustainable Operations interns, pose for a photo with Former Secretary of Energy Steven Chu at the Silicon Valley Energy Summit 2014, June 19.**

Members of the Pacific Southwest Region’s Sustainable Operations, Acquisition Management, and Engineering staffs attended the annual Silicon Valley Energy Summit on June 19, 2014.

This year’s summit was hosted by Stanford University and focused on “Workable Ideas for Sustainable Business.” Discussions explored best business practices, emerging technologies, government regulations and energy policy.

Lara Buluc, Sustainable Operations/Climate Change coordinator for the Pacific Southwest Region, found the summit beneficial, not just because of the topics, but also because it allowed the region to compare sustainable business practices with Silicon Valley companies like Google, eBay, and IDEO. Moreover, the summit provided networking opportunities with key state and non-profit partners such as the California Public Utilities Commission and the Natural Resources Defense Council.

“One of the biggest takeaways for me was to note that as a population we are innovative and the impossible ‘is’ possible,” said Buluc. “Also, data is critical for decision-making and we must prioritize our projects as a region. The allocation of funding to programs clearly delineates priorities.”

“For example, if drought-preparedness is a priority, then the dollars must follow the verbiage,” explained Buluc.

Topics covered at the summit included:

- Resource revolution
- Will renewable energy meet our policy goals and energy needs?
- Managing drought
- Utility of the future: Evolution of the electric power industry
- Lighting innovations
- Big data analytics in energy management
- Innovation and water scarcity
- Energy investment trends
- Managerial approaches for energy and carbon
- Business case for the Internet of things

**Published: July 22, 2014**

# Veterans "Walk Off The War" along the Pacific Crest Trail

Lee Anne Schramel, Plumas National Forest, and Stephanie Bryant, Pacific Southwest Region, U.S. Forest Service



(Left to right) Shawn White and Tom Bielecki, both U.S. Army veterans, and Kevin Black, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, spent the Fourth of July weekend in Plumas County, California. The three veterans are part of the 2014 Warrior Hike. While in Plumas County, they took part in the Mohawk Valley Independence Day celebration. The local Portola Rotary Club and employees from Plumas National Forest supported the veterans during their stay. (U.S. Forest Service)

U.S. Army veterans Shawn White and Tom Bielecki, along with U.S. Marine Corps veteran Kevin Black set off to hike the entire Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT) on April 12 as part of the Warrior Hike's "Walk Off The War" program. Along the 2,650-mile journey, they will hike through 25 national forests, and recently passed through Plumas National Forest and stopped in Plumas County, California where they were welcomed by the local community and invited to participate in the Mohawk Valley Independence Day festivities. The warrior hikers attended all of the weekend's festivities, including a special recognition ceremony honoring all veterans that followed the Independence Day parade, appropriately themed: "Honoring Our Veterans."

"The warrior hikers rode in golf carts with (more than 50 local) veterans from WWII, the Korean War, Vietnam War, and current conflicts," said Ann Taylor, a realty specialist for the Forest Service's Pacific Southwest and member of the Portola Rotary Club which hosted the hikers. "The thing that impressed me was the great respect (the community) showed these veterans. They each seemed so moved by the ceremony offered after the parade and it made

me proud that I was a part of their experience and their journey home.” Plumas National Forest employees volunteered their time to shuttle the warrior hikers to and from the PCT.

The veterans’ six-month trek is part of the “Walk Off The War” program sponsored by the [Warrior Hike](#) in partnership with the [Pacific Crest Trail Association](#). This is the first year that the Warrior Hike has utilized the PCT. The program focuses on outdoor therapy supporting combat veterans transitioning from their military service back to civilian life by hiking the entire length of the PCT.

“The thing that I think is really exciting is that the PCT provides a platform for transition and life changing experiences and an opportunity for healing and growth,” explained Beth Boyst, U.S. Forest Service Pacific Crest Trail administrator. “It is wonderful that the PCT, and the Forest Service, has been able to support activities for the Warrior Hike.”

The Warrior Hike provides participating combat veterans with the equipment and supplies required to complete a thru-hike of the PCT; coordinates trail town support in the form of transportation, food, and lodging with veteran organizations and community groups located along the trail; and assists veterans with future employment opportunities through the program's numerous partners and sponsors.

The “Walk off the War” program was started in honor of Earl Shaffer who, in 1948, told a friend he was going to "walk off the war" to work out the sights, sounds, and losses of World War II. Four months later, Shaffer became the first person to hike the entire length of the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine.

**Published: July 22, 2014**

## R5 participates in Urban & Community Forests Conference

Pacific Southwest Region Public Affairs



**(Pictured left to right) Kevin O’Donnell, PSW Social Science analyst; Chris Fischer, deputy director of R5 State & Private Forestry; and Alex Friend, PSW director, participate in a panel at the California Urban & Community Forests Conference in San Diego, California, June 25-27.**

Representatives from the Pacific Southwest Region (R5) and Research Station (PSW) of the U.S. Forest Service attended the California Urban & Community Forests Conference in San Diego, California, June 25-27. The theme of the Conference was “Under One Canopy: Creating Connections Between Urban Forestry and Diverse Communities.”

Alex Friend, PSW director; Kevin O’Donnell, PSW Social Science analyst; and Chris Fischer, deputy director of R5 State & Private Forestry, participated as panelists. They presented current science and research to support urban forestry, the strength of partnerships to implement urban forestry projects, and opportunities to obtain financial assistance.

“We each represented a different facet of what we, as an agency, are doing to sustain urban environments – with Alex discussing the larger agency’s objective, Chris discussing the region’s objective and I discussed our specific efforts in LA, particularly the development of the Los Angeles Center for Urban Natural Resources Sustainability and PSW Urban Field Station,” said O’Donnell. “The conference attendees have been longtime partners of the Forest Service in our urban efforts and have helped support us as we are working to create a greater presence in LA”

“By knowing who’s doing what in each critical area, we can better position ourselves to

represent the collective vision of urban forestry... and further promote our brand and prove our relevance in other urban areas,” added O’Donnell.

Many things make California's communities diverse – the people, the geography, the available resources, and the issues that they face. Butch Blazer, Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources & Environment for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, delivered a keynote speech that described the Forest Service and the agency’s role in delivering urban and community forestry programs. He also discussed the important role urban forests play in sustaining healthy and diverse communities.

Marty Dumpis, R5 Regional Forester’s representative for Ecological Restoration, who also attended the conference, echoed Blazer’s remarks by pointing out that urban forests are an essential element in creating healthier, happier communities.

“Whatever we can do to create open or green space in urban areas helps to create a more enjoyable living environment for the residents in these large cities,” explained Dumpis. “People should not have to travel long distances to the forests to be able to enjoy green space. There should be a variety of parks and green space within walking or short travel distances available in all urban areas.”

**Published: July 16, 2014**

## PSW aircraft used to locate missing Alzheimer's patient

Pacific Southwest Research Station Public Affairs



**Aerial telemetry program aircraft used to find a missing man. (U.S. Forest Service/John Litton)**

In response to a mutual aid request by the Mariposa County Sheriff's Office seeking assistance in locating a missing local Alzheimer's patient this past Spring, three U.S. Forest Service employees postponed their daily duties to listen for a signal from the missing man's tracking bracelet. Pacific Southwest Research Station-Fresno (PSW-Fresno) scientists Isaac Kelsey and Shannon Forshee and their Pacific Southwest Region (Region 5) pilot Sam Stigall located the signal and gained reasonable accuracy on the missing patient's location. Once they contacted the Sheriff's Office, the plane circled the area while rescue personnel closed in on the area. The team was on a flight to conduct research for PSW's Sugar Pine Fisher Research Project, which is part of Region 5's aerial telemetry program. Scientists generally utilize the planes five days a week to obtain locations on radio-collared fishers in the Sierra National Forest.

**Published: July 16, 2014**

## Tahoe National Forest receives Partner of the Year award

Tahoe National Forest Public Affairs



The Tahoe National Forest, represented by Forest Supervisor Tom Quinn (second from the left), was recently awarded the South Yuba River Citizens League’s (SYRCL) Partner of the Year award. The award was presented at SYRCL’s first ever “State of the Yuba” event. SYRCL is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting and restoring the Yuba River watershed. Quinn recognized the important role partners play in the restoration of forests and pointed to SYRCL’s collaboration on meadow restoration and hydropower relicensing. The award was presented in front of a standing room only crowd in Nevada City, Calif.

**Published: July 16, 2014**

# Echo Summit honored as 1968 Olympic training site on Eldorado National Forest

Pacific Southwest Region Public Affairs



Pacific Southwest Regional Forester Randy Moore poses for a photograph, June 27, 2014, with some of the 1968 Olympians who originally trained at Echo Summit. Pictured left to right: R5 Regional Forester Randy Moore and 1968 Olympians: Norm Tate, Ron Whitney, Mel Pender, John Carlos, Reynaldo Brown and Ed Caruther.

Eldorado National Forest hosted a ceremony to honor the Echo Summit training site as a California Historical Landmark. Around a dozen of the 1968 Olympians who trained at the high-altitude camp returned for the celebration.

The plaque, which is set in a large granite boulder that marks Echo Summit as a California Historical Landmark, reads:

"In 1968, Echo Summit served as a high-altitude training center and site of the U.S. Olympic Men's Track and field trials. Four world records were shattered here on the track carved out of the Eldorado National Forest. The U.S. Team selected for the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City was celebrated worldwide for its athletic dominance and deep commitment to racial equality."



- To watch the video from the event, visit [Echo Summit](#)
- To see more photos from the event, visit [Return to Echo Summit](#)

**Published: July 16, 2014**

# The Pacific Southwest Region participates in Vallejo Filipino festival

Annette Delos-Santos, Region 5 Civil Rights Staff



**Steve Dunsky, audio visual manager for the Pacific Southwest Region of the U.S. Forest Service, participates in the 28th Annual Vallejo Pista Sa Nasyon festival, June 7, to help promote careers with the Forest Service and also to highlight some of the region's upcoming events.**

The Pacific Southwest Region (Region 5) participated in the 28th Annual Vallejo Pista Sa Nasyon (town festival) that was held at the Vallejo Waterfront in Vallejo, Calif., June 7. The festival, which celebrates the independence of the Philippines from Spain, has become a tradition for many in the Filipino-American community and Vallejo. Region 5 Civil Rights and Public Affairs used the opportunity to engage with the community by staffing a booth to provide educational information about Forest Service career opportunities and wildland fire prevention.

In addition, the Forest Service staff talked to people and passed out flyers about the upcoming "Visions of the Wild" Festival, a celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act. Because Vallejo is recognized as the most diverse city in the United States, the Forest Service has partnered with many public, private and non-profit agencies and organizations in planning of the festival to take place throughout downtown Vallejo September 4-6, 2014. Flyers in both English and the Filipino language of Tagalog were passed out to let the community know about the festival.

**Published: July 14, 2014**

## Region 5 forests participate in 45th Bishop Mule Days

Deb Schweizer, Inyo National Forest Public Affairs



**Michael Morse, wilderness supervisor who leads the Inyo NF R5 Pack Stock Center of Excellence, rides Betty while she shows off a blue ribbon during the 2014 Bishop Mule Days in Bishop, Calif.**

The Inyo National Forest and the Pacific Southwest Region Pack Stock Program participated in the 2014 Mule Days in Bishop, Calif., May 20-25. Regional Packers attended from the Sierra, Sequoia, Stanislaus, Shasta Trinity, Klamath, Los Padres and Inyo NFs.

R5 Packers, local U.S. Forest Service fire crews, and local forest leadership represented the region in the Mule Days parade, resulting in the USFS winning the Overall Best Government Entry Presentation and trophy. “Packers from the Region 5 Pack Stock Centers of Excellence demonstrated that the enduring tradition of a forest ranger on horseback is alive and well,” said Ed Armenta, Inyo National Forest Supervisor.

“Mule Days provided a great opportunity to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Wilderness Act,” added Armenta. “Our involvement in Mule Days shows our community that the U.S. Forest Service remains a dedicated partner to recreation experiences on the east-side of the Sierra.”

An interagency team (USFS, Bureau of Land Management, and National Park Service) helped promote the upcoming 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act by hosting an

information booth. Activities taught children and adults alike about how to be responsible stewards of public lands through Leave No Trace methods as well as understanding the skills required to care for and pack stock



animals. The Inyo National Forest is home to a Region 5 Pack Stock Center of Excellence that is dedicated to maintaining the traditional role of pack stock on federal lands and passing this skill onto the next generation.

Information on family-friendly activities such as picnicking, fishing, and short hikes encouraged children of all ages to explore the great outdoors. Smokey Bear and the Inyo National Forest's fire prevention staff were on hand to help people learn how to be safe with fire both at home and on camping trips.

**Published: July 14, 2014**

## USFS, CAL FIRE bring fire prevention, life safety messages to state capital

Kerry Greene, Klamath National Forest Public Affairs



**Pictured from left to right: CAL FIRE Prevention Specialist Suzi Brady as Ember, Forest Service Dispatcher Gene Bach as Axe, CAL FIRE Volunteer, Cynthia Bach as Seabelt Sally. Sally’s Rodeo Seabelt Cheer goes like this “Put your seatbelt on your hips. Tighten up until it fits. Check your partner do-si-do. We’re all buckled up let’s go.”**

The award winning Siskiyou County Fire PALS (FIRE PALS stands for Fire Prevention and Life Safety) recently brought their important safety program to the stage at the Sacramento County Fair in Sacramento, Calif.

The Fire PALS are a local group of agency professionals from both the Forest Service and CAL FIRE who bring characters like Axe and Ember to life to teach kids important life and fire safety messages. The program is geared toward kids from kindergarten to fifth grade and covers topics such as: matches and lighters are tools not toys, how to stop bullying, how to call 911 in an emergency, exit drills in the home, what to do if you get lost in the woods, and seatbelt and helmet safety.

This January, Fire PALS participant and CAL FIRE Fire Prevention Specialist, Suzi Brady, was honored with an award from CAL FIRE Chief Ken Pimlott in recognition for her work in collaboration with the Klamath National Forest on Fire PALS.

“We think it’s important to reach as many families as we can with these important and life-

saving messages,” said Klamath Forest Supervisor Patty Grantham. “As the saying goes, there is zero risk to homes, firefighters, citizens, natural resources and communities, from the fire that never starts. If just one serious accident or fire is prevented by kids hearing these safety messages, all of our efforts to bring this program to the community will be worthwhile.”

Fire PALS will be on stage at the Siskiyou County Fair in Yreka, Calif., this August.

**Published: July 7, 2014**

## Arlen Cravens named 2013 Forest Fire Management Officer of the Year

Pacific Southwest Region Public Affairs



Arlen Cravens was selected as the 2013 National Forest Fire Management Officer (FMO) of the Year by the National Forest Fire Management Officer Committee recently. He retired this past winter from the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, and is being recognized for his lifetime achievements as a Canadian and Redding smokejumper, and a career in fire that culminated as a fire staff officer.

Cravens, who was born and raised in the San Fernando Valley of Southern California, started his career in 1977 with the Canadian Smokejumper program. He spent 25 years with the Redding Smokejumpers and is credited with nearly 400 jumps. He worked his way up to becoming the Redding Smokejumper Base manager from 1995-2001. In 2008, he was selected to be the Shasta-Trinity NF FMO.

“Chief Cravens was a very strategic thinker who provided a depth of excellence and experience for Fire and Aviation Management in the Pacific Southwest Region,” said Shawna Legarza, director of Fire and Aviation Management (FAM) for the Pacific Southwest Region.

Part of his career was spent playing a significant role in external relationships between the Forest Service and many local and regional partners, including five counties and their governing boards, CAL FIRE, local fire protection districts, timber companies and others.

“Arlen Cravens was a rare blend of dedicated professional Fire Management Officer and

visionary public land manager sought after in the Forest Service,” said J. Sharon Heywood, former Shasta-Trinity NF Forest Supervisor. “Many of the relationships required direct communication at any hour of the day and Cravens was vigilant about taking care of forest customers.”

Legarza said she is looking forward to formally recognizing Cravens during one of the region’s upcoming 2014 FAM Board of Directors meeting.

“It is an honor just to be nominated for an award like this and, I have to be honest, I was surprised to receive it,” said Cravens. “I feel pretty blessed that I was able to have the career that I had. Being a smokejumper is the best job on earth.”

**Published: June 26, 2014**

## Vallejo City Council Recognizes 50th anniversary of the Federal Wilderness Act



On Tuesday, March 25, Vallejo Mayor Osby Davis and the Vallejo City Council issued a proclamation in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Federal Wilderness Act “proclaiming the significance of our National Wilderness Preservation System to America’s cultural, scientific, historical, cultural and spiritual heritage.”

Deputy Regional Forester Ron Ketter made brief remarks and thanked the Mayor and Council members. The Proclamation also acknowledged the “Visions of the Wild” Festival that will be held in Vallejo during September 2014.

The Forest Service looks forward to working closely with the City of Vallejo and with the local community on this innovative festival.

**Published: June 24, 2014**

## Region 5 S&PF conducts management review for various Pacific islands

State & Private Forestry, Pacific Southwest Region



As part of improving cooperative forestry program delivery and assisting state partners in meeting the requirements for receiving federal funds, the Pacific Southwest Region's State & Private Forestry staff conducts a cooperative management review every five years. This year's recent reviews were conducted for the island territories of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. These tropical islands are important national resources for the rich array of flora and fauna they preserve as well as the indicators they provide for issues such as climate change, storm frequency, and impacts to vulnerable human populations due to ecosystem sensitivity. They present a unique opportunity for the Forest Service to work collaboratively in supporting key projects for the protection of forest resources.

**Published: June 24, 2014**

## USFS Region 5 wins EPA Federal Green Challenge Sustainability Leadership Award

Sustainable Operations, Pacific Southwest Region



The Pacific Southwest Region (Region 5) was recently named the 2014 winner of the Environmental Protection Agency Federal Green Challenge Sustainability Award. The region received this award for its innovative, web-based system, “Summit Mt. Whitney Green Challenge.” The system was designed to encourage employees to reduce their environmental footprint by keeping track of their sustainable actions.

More than 300 individuals from 13 administrative units in Region 5 participated. The green actions:

- saved 7,032 kWh of electricity
- conserved 5,106 gallons of water
- cut 855 pounds of solid waste, and
- cut 46.1 pounds of paper use.

These actions are estimated to have reduced 30,000 pounds of carbon dioxide equivalent.

Learn more about the national effort at [EPA Federal Green Challenge](#).

**Published: June 23, 2014**

## Children’s Forest expands educational program

Peggi Lawrence, Six Rivers National Forest Public Affairs



**Pictured left to right: Mike Minton, acting forest supervisor for the Six Rivers NF; Louise Phillips, Children’s Forest artist; Linda West, former planner for the Six Rivers NF; and Merv George, deputy forest supervisor for the Six Rivers NF.**

Rivers to Redwoods Children’s Forest, which is located on the Six Rivers National Forest, has recently expanded and enhanced the network of quests offered through the Redwood EdVenture’s program. The quests are a series of scavenger hunts of rhyming interpretive clues leading participants through a diverse range of North Coast public lands. The expansion is the result of a partnership that the forest has with the Bureau of Land Management, California State Parks, the Humboldt County Office of Education and many others.

“This has been a great opportunity for these agencies to join in a unified effort to get kids engaged with their diverse north coast landscapes,” said Lynn Wright, partnership coordinator for the Six Rivers National Forest.

Washington artist Louise Phillips created a painting to celebrate the Rivers to Redwoods Children’s Forest. The painting will be dedicated on May 16 at “Discover the Coast @Trinidad” celebration of the transfer of the Trinidad Head Light Station to the BLM. The painting will “travel” to different partner offices and will be displayed in the Six Rivers NF Supervisor’s Office in Eureka, Calif., for a number of months.

In May 2013 the Rivers to Redwoods Children’s Forest was established with \$36,000 in funding from the Children’s Forest program. The Children’s Forest embraces an “All Lands,

All Children” vision to engage children with their unique North Coast landscape that encompasses vital upland watersheds, majestic redwoods and distinctive coastal zones.

Congressman Jared Huffman and other dignitaries from federal, state and local agencies and partners have been invited to the dedication.

**Published: June 23, 2014**

## Two Pacific Southwest Region employees awarded coveted Bronze Smokey Award

Pacific Southwest Region Public Affairs



**Pictured (L-R) Trudie Mahoney, Pacific Southwest Regional Office; Mark Thibideau, Shasta-Trinity National Forest; Joe Aragon, California Wildfire Coordinating Group Prevention Team; and Ron Hodgson, former Pacific Southwest Regional Office.**

Smokey Bear knows a good thing when he sees it. In the “One Less Spark, One Less Wildfire” campaign, the wildfire icon sees an effective way to get an important message delivered to the public. The program was designed by Mark Thibideau, a fire prevention patrolman on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, and developed into a statewide fire prevention campaign by then Forest Service fire prevention manager for California, Ronald Hodgson. For their efforts, they were recently awarded a coveted Bronze Smokey, the highest national award for innovative fire prevention programs.

**Published: June 23, 2014**

## Plumas NF, local garden club award poster contest winners

Lee Anne Schramel, Plumas National Forest Public Affairs

The Plumas National Forest and the Lake Oroville Area Garden Club (LOAGC) awarded winners of the 2013-14 Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl Poster Contest during a festive ceremony at Berry Creek School recently. Area resident, club member and Forest Service retiree Lee Standlee served as the contest chair for Butte County, working with the Feather River Ranger District in Oroville, Calif., and the Berry Creek School.



“The Lake Oroville Garden Club accomplishes so much good work; we are so pleased to be working with them on this project,” said Plumas National Forest Supervisor Earl Ford. “The forest and the region actively seek partners like Lake Oroville Garden Club who can join with us to ensure future generations of Californians continue to benefit from our programs and initiatives.”

The garden club hopes to encourage children and adults to learn about the enjoyment of gardening and caring for their environment through the mottos of Smokey (Only You Can Prevent Wildfires!) and Woodsy (Lend a hand, Care for the Land!). Via an educational session kicking off the contest, the Forest Service educates students about the importance of fire safety in local forests. Berry Creek School, with a student population of just 65, is situated in a remote area north of Oroville.

First place winning posters were sent to the state level competition; a national first place winner will be chosen by a committee in Washington in May. The garden club is expanding the contest to other Butte County schools next year, according to Krystal Migliore, local club president.

National Garden Clubs, Inc. is the world’s largest volunteer gardening organization comprising 50 state garden clubs and the national capital area. The nearly 6,000 member clubs include almost 200,000 members. The LOAGC has 67 members and is involved in civic beautification, horticulture scholarships, guest speakers, workshops, fieldtrips and the Penny Pines program (sponsoring tree planting on fire burned areas).

For information about CA Garden Clubs visit:

<http://californiagardenclubs.com/Youth/Programs>.

**Published: June 23, 2014**

## **Region 5 Receives 2013 Chief's Honor Awards**



**Region 5 Receives 2013 Chief's Honor Awards for Cultural Transformation and Engaging Urban America.**

### **Cultural Transformation Award**

Karen Hayden, former District Ranger, and employees of the Feather River Ranger District of the Plumas NF were recently honored as recipients of the 2013 U.S. Forest Service Chief's Honor Award for Cultural Transformation.

The Chief's Cultural Transformation Award recognizes an outstanding individual, group or organization that has demonstrated highly effective and measurable contributions toward making the Forest Service an employer of choice; creating a fair, diverse, inclusive and effective workplace.

"I would like to congratulate the employees on the Feather River Ranger District for being the recipients of the Chief's Honor Award for Cultural Transformation," said Regional Forester Randy Moore. "The dedication and care exhibited by the Feather River Ranger District serve to strengthen the Forest Service and our strong relationships with our partners in managing America's Forests."

### **Engaging Urban America Award**

The R5 Wilderness Stewardship Crew was recently honored as recipients of the 2013 Chiefs Honor Award for Engaging Urban America.

This award recognizes individuals, work units or groups whose activities and programs have demonstrated outstanding success in promoting conservation education, community “greening” efforts, management of urban forests and youth opportunities to volunteer in urban forestry activities in their neighborhoods.

I would like to congratulate the Angeles and San Bernardino National Forests for receiving the Chief’s Honor Award for Engaging Urban America, said Regional Forester Randy Moore.

“The dedication and commitment of your employees, specifically Gabe Garcia, Melisa Lyons, Alfredo Zarate, L’Tanga Watson, Freddie Duncan, O’Dell Tucker, and Fabian Garcia, serves to strengthen the Forest Service and the partnerships that help us manage America’s Forests.”

*The ceremony for the 2013 award recipients was held Monday, March 17, 2014, in conjunction with the March 2014 National Leadership Council meeting in Washington, DC.*

**Published: May 30, 2014**

## 2014 Wings Across the Americas Conservation Award



The Pacific Southwest Regional Office and the Institute for Bird Populations has received the 2014 Wings Across the Americas Conservation Awards in the Research Management & Partnership category, for Monitoring and Conservation of Black-Backed Woodpecker in Burned Forests. The Award recognizes programs, projects, and partnerships that contribute significantly to bird, bat, butterfly, and dragonfly conservation. The award was

presented during the March 12 Conservation Award Ceremony presided over by Associate Chief of the US Forest Service, Mary Wagner. This festive event was held as part of the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference.

Link to you tube video: Black-Backed Woodpecker: [http://youtu.be/Q1UnMDGqG\\_4](http://youtu.be/Q1UnMDGqG_4)

- Diana Craig, Pacific Southwest Region
- Chrissy Howell, Pacific Southwest Region
- Patricia Flebbe, Pacific Southwest Region
- Steve Dunsky, Pacific Southwest Region
- Ann Dunsky, Pacific Southwest Region
- Deb Whitman, Pacific Southwest Region
- Dawn Lipton, Eldorado National Forest
- Richard Perloff, Inyo National Forest
- Shay Zanetti, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
- Victor Lyon, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
- Gale Bustillos, Lassen National Forest
- Ryan Foote, Lassen National Forest
- Karen Harville, Lassen National Forest
- Marty Yamagiwa, Modoc National Forest
- Mary Flores, Modoc National Forest
- Patrick Lieske, Lassen National Forest
- Colin Dillingham, Plumas National Forest
- Matthew Johnson, Plumas National Forest
- Emilie Lang, Sequoia National Forest
- Greg Schroer, Sierra National Forest
- Crispin Holland, Stanislaus National Forest
- Adam Rich, Stanislaus National Forest

- Tina Mark, Tahoe National Forest
- Danny Cluck, Forest Health Protection

### **Non-Forest Service Honorees**

- Rodney Siegel, Institute for Bird Populations
- Robert Wilkerson, Institute for Bird Populations
- Morgan Tingley, Princeton University and Institute for Bird Populations
- Institute for Bird Populations
- James Saracco, Institute for Bird Populations
- Ron Taylor, Institute for Bird Populations
- Joanna Wu, Institute for Bird Populations

**Published: May 30, 2014**

## 2013 Rise to the Future Lifetime Achievement Mentoring Award



**Terry Kaplan-Henry, Sequoia National Forest**

Deputy Chief, National Forest System, Leslie Weldon recently announced the recipients of the 2013 National Rise to the Future Awards for Fisheries, Hydrology, Soil Science, and Air Programs.

Terry Kaplan-Henry, Sequoia National Forest employee, was the recipient of the 2013 Rise to the Future Lifetime Achievement Mentoring Award for her exceptional dedication to mentoring in the field of forest hydrology.

Known as a leader in meadow restoration, burned area restoration and collaboration in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, Terry has excelled in her service as a teacher, mentor and trainer to a new generation of scientists for over 20 years. She invested countless hours training a diverse group of students ranging from high school to post graduate studies, many of who have chosen careers in hydrology, natural resources and the Forest Service.

**Published: May 30, 2014**

## Forest Service Volunteer to Judge Humboldt County Science Fair Projects

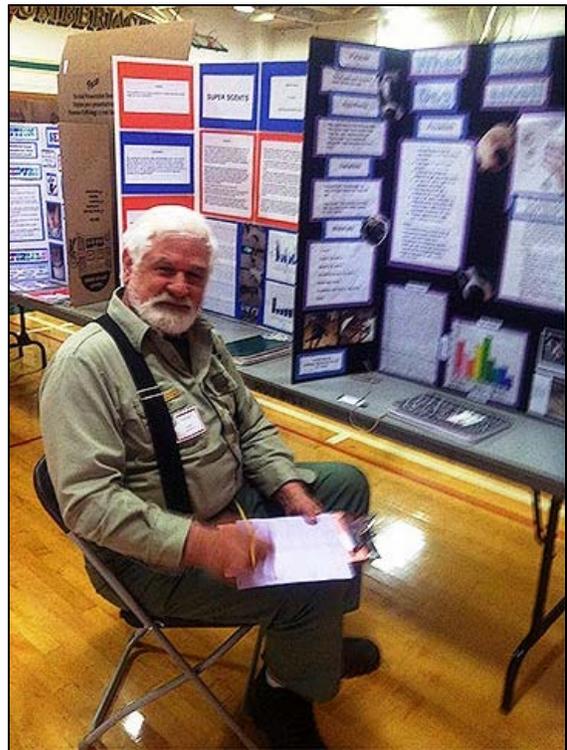
Supporting youth in science draws Six Rivers National Forest and PSW Redwood Sciences Lab employees to volunteer hours at the 31st Annual Doris Niles Humboldt County Science Fair, held March 17 through 21 at Humboldt State University. The Science Fair featured nearly 400 projects created by 4th through 12th grade students from 36 of the county's schools. Project categories included: Life Science–Animals; Life Science–Botany; Earth/Space Science; Math/Engineering/Inventions; and Physical Science.

Forest Service employees volunteered as judges and interviewers, including; Karen Kenfield, Fisheries Biologist; Kary Schlick, Wildlife Biologist; Harry Scott, Timber Contracting Officer; Amy Ziegler, Fuels Planner from the Six Rivers NF, and Ted Weller-Research Ecologist from PSW Redwood Sciences Lab.

When asked why she volunteers, Karen said, "I may be judging the future Aldo Leopold or influencing the next Teddy Roosevelt who like these kids likely dabbled in nature only to grow-up to be great managers of our lands. That's why, and its fun!"

Every year the Forest Service volunteers with youth to increase their awareness of public lands and help connect them with nature and their cultural community, the science fair is one of many events Six Rivers NF and Redwood Sciences Lab are involved in.

**Published: May 20, 2014**



**Harry Scott judges projects during Humboldt County Science Fair**

## Stanislaus National Forest Conducts Rim Fire Tours



As part of an effort to communicate the story of the Rim Fire and Rim Fire Recovery, the Stanislaus National Forest (NF) conducted guided tours of the affected area throughout February. The tours were provided for Congressional representatives, local and state elected officials and forest employees.

Tours for retirees are currently in the planning process.

The Rim Fire was the third largest fire in California history, burning 256,428 acres, including 154,430 acres on the Stanislaus NF. That’s equivalent to more than 400 square miles—an area approximately the size of New York City and seven times the size of Washington, D.C.

“Many people who worked on the Rim Fire and who were impacted on a personal level haven’t seen the area since the fire was contained,” said Scott R. Tangenberg, Deputy Forest Supervisor, Stanislaus NF. “We thought it was important to provide a safe avenue for employees and soon for retirees to visit the burn area.”

Even those that have seen portions of the area since the fire were affected by their visit to the recovery area.

Four stops were highlighted during the tour: Ferretti road, overlook of the Tuolumne River Canyon and the origin of the fire; Rim of the World overlook; overlook of Tuolumne River canyon looking down on the city and county of San Francisco intake facilities; and Evergreen road and Ackerson Creek crossing.

The guided tour was led by Marty Gmelin, silviculturist, Rim Fire Recovery Team, Stanislaus NF.

One of the tours to the recovery area involved district directors from the offices of Congressmen Denham and McClintock, a Tuolumne County Supervisor (2<sup>nd</sup> Dist.) and Turlock and Modesto Irrigation District staff.

“The Stanislaus National Forest did a fine job highlighting the challenges recovering from the Rim Fire’s devastation,” said Rocky Deal, district director for the office of Congressman Tom McClintock. “Hopefully, working together, we can recover the value in the burnt timber to the maximum extent practicable and invest those funds in restoring the landscape.”

Though guided tours to the burned area are being conducted, the area remains closed due to safety concerns. There is a temporary Forest Order (STF 2013-15) closing the area to the public until Nov. 18, 2014. At that time, the closure will be re-evaluated to see what safety hazards remain in the area and adjustments made as needed.

Currently access permits are only being granted to residents, land owners or individuals associated with Rim Fire Recovery. Individuals wanting to gain access to the closure area should contact the Mi-Wok or Groveland Ranger District by phone or in person (Mi-Wok Ranger District: 209-586-3234/Groveland Ranger District: 209-962-7825). Requests are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

“It remains an unsafe and unstable environment. Some trees are still burning and some root systems are still hot. Some areas near burned or fallen trees could collapse if walked on,” said Chris Schow, Forest Fire Chief, Stanislaus NF. “There are thousands of acres of fire killed trees, snags present that could fall at any time, especially after weather events which weaken already unstable root systems.”

Crews and their equipment must complete stabilization work before the area is reopened. As an example of potential danger present in burned areas, an oak snag last summer in the area of the Power Fire on the Summit Ranger District fell on a fire engine and completely destroyed the vehicle. Fortunately, there were no passengers.

New information on the forest closure will be posted on the Stanislaus NF web site as it becomes available: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/stanislaus/home>.

## **Tour Stop Information**

Stop 1: Ferretti road, overlook of the Tuolumne River Canyon and the origin of the fire: The basis for the stop was to highlight efforts by the Southwest Interface Team fire safe council to install and maintain fuel breaks on the HWY 120 corridor. The recently maintained fuel break

offered an area for firefighters to stop the advancement of the fire towards Pine Mtn. Lake subdivision.

Stop 2: Rim of the World Overlook: Overview of the fire

Stop 3: Overlook of Tuolumne River canyon looking down on City and County (C&C) of San Francisco facilities at Early Intake Powerhouse: Discussion of what C&C did for salvage logging around their infrastructure (building, roads, power lines).

Stop 4: Evergreen road and Ackerson Creek crossing: Burned Area Emergency Recovery (BAER) determined the culvert is substandard and decaying and would not be able to sustain predicted water flows that would occur after the fire. BAER funds can only be used to replace culverts to their current standard, not upgrade. Through a cooperative effort, Forest Service, BAER, National Park Service, County and C&C of San Francisco all contributed money to upgrade the stream crossing.

**Published: May 20, 2014**

## Region 5 Headquarters hosts school's Urban & Community Forestry art project

### Pacific Southwest Region



**Annette Delos-Santos, equal opportunity specialist, Pacific Southwest Region, U.S. Forest Service, looks at student artwork hanging on the wall of the regional office, Jan. 15. The artwork is part of an Urban & Community Forestry Project titled “100+ Tree Portraits of South Solano County, California.” (U.S. Forest Service)**

The Pacific Southwest Region (Region 5) Headquarters of the U.S. Forest Service, located in Vallejo, Calif., recently hosted a meet-and-greet with a group of local, high school students from Jesse Bethel High School. On Jan. 15, the group of about 30 students visited the regional office to help highlight their Urban & Community Forestry art project, as well as allow the U.S. Forest Service employees a chance to meet the artists.

About 97 students contributed artwork to the project, which is titled “100+ Tree Portraits of South Solano County, California.” The project was partially funded by a Forest Service urban forestry grant and will be located on the 2nd floor hallway of the headquarters building for an indefinite amount of time.

“These projects facilitate relationships and partnerships with our host community,” said Sandra Macias, Urban & Community Forestry Program Manager, S&PF, Region 5. “These projects also help communicate the importance of protecting our natural resources whether on a national forest or in our own backyards.”

This is the second Urban & Community Forestry Project that Region 5's State & Private Forestry Department (S&PF) has promoted in partnership with Solano Advocates Green Environments (SAGE), a local non-profit urban forestry organization.

“Healthy trees and forests in urban areas foster a range of environmental and social benefits,” explained Mary Lou Fairweather, Urban & Community Forestry, S&PF. “This urban and community forestry partnership contributed to engaging students in planting trees in their community, learning about the trees around them, and creating art with that knowledge. Projects like these help build healthy and viable communities.”

To view the artwork, visit <http://vallejourbanforest.com/TreeID>.

**Published: March 31, 2014**

## **Regional Analyst to serve as president-elect of Western Section of the Wildlife Society**

### **Pacific Southwest Region**



**Donald Yasuda, a regional analyst for the Pacific Southwest Region (Region 5), was announced as the President-Elect of the Western Section of the Wildlife Society at its 2014 annual meeting in January.**

The Western Section of the Wildlife Society, which represents California, Nevada, Hawai'i and Guam, is a professional society dedicated to excellence in science-based management of wildlife and advocates for the needs of wildlife professionals.

As part of his new responsibility, Yasuda will be planning the 2015 annual conference that will be held in Santa Rosa, Calif., in January 2015. He looks forward to shaping how and what that event is about.

“It is a great opportunity to showcase the important work the Forest Service does to conserve wildlife resources,” said Yasuda.

Yasuda’s three year leadership commitment to the Western Section fits well with his experience as a wildlife biologist and regional analyst on the planning team for the three early adopter forests in Region 5. These forests are among eight that are pioneering the implementation of the 2012 Forest Planning Rule.

“With Don’s hard work, Region 5 is developing innovative approaches to complete forest plan revision in a timely manner under the new rule,” said Debra Whitall, Acting Ecosystem

Planning Director, Pacific Southwest Region. “Forest plan revision is a complex undertaking and Don’s dedication to the task has helped to support streamlining the process.”

Yasuda also serves as chair of the Interagency Alignment Team for the California Biodiversity Council, which was created to improve coordination and cooperation between the various resource management and environmental protection organizations at federal, state, and local levels.

Yasuda, who earned his undergraduate degree in wildlife and fisheries biology from the University of California, Davis in 1987, he started working for the Forest Service monitoring bald eagles and spotted owls before becoming a District Wildlife Biologist. Since 2003, Yasuda has been working on regional issues integrating wildlife, fire, and vegetation management. Don has been a member of TWS since 1995 and is a Certified Wildlife Biologist.

**Published: March 28, 2014**

## **Inyo National Forest employee recognized for contributions to community**

**Denise Adamic, public affairs specialist, Pacific Southwest Region**



**Deb Schweizer, public affairs officer for the Inyo National Forest, recently received the Sequoia Foothills Chamber of Commerce 2014 Hero Appreciation Award for being the face and voice of firefighting in their community. (U.S. Forest Service)**

While Deb Schweizer may be one of the newest faces on the Inyo National Forest, the public affairs officer is already well known in Eastern California. In January she was recognized as a “hero” by Tulare County who presented Schweizer with the 2014 Hero Appreciation Award for Fire. The award is for her tenure at the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park.

Every year the Sequoia Foothills Chamber of Commerce, which is located in Three Rivers, Calif., asks business owners and residents to nominate whom they think should be honored in fire, law enforcement, and the military in the coming year.

“Deb was selected by the community of Three Rivers who wished to thank her for being the face and voice of firefighting in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park –making us feel protected, and always available to explain what was happening in our parks and the reasoning

behind it,” said Leah Launey, director, Sequoia Foothills Chamber of Commerce.

From the community’s point of view, how wildland fire was handled and the significance of it in the ecosystem is always changing. When the community needed clear explanations of what was happening, they often looked to Schweizer for help.

“Deb provided straightforward and clear information without flinching,” said Launey. “Her community presentations were so clear that we feel someone should use them to present at all the schools in our gateway communities.”

In October 2013 after six years as the Fire Education Specialist with the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park, Schweizer accepted the Public Affairs Officer position on the Inyo National Forest. She has 15 years of experience with the National Parks Service and 10 years of experience in Fire Education and Outreach.

“Wildland fire continues to be a complex and difficult issue for the American West,” said Schweizer. “Finding the balance between firefighter safety, community protection, and restoring natural fire to the landscape when safe are issues that all land managers face. I hope to continue to further this work for the U.S. Forest Service.”

This year marks the 8th year of the Sequoia Foothills Chamber of Commerce Hero Appreciation program.

**Published: March 28, 2014**

## Region 5 Partnership Council celebrates 20 years

### Pacific Southwest Region



**Front Row (left-right): Shawna Legarza, RO; Susan Jack, LTBMU; Susan Forbes, Stanislaus NF; Ron Ketter, RO; Sherry Tune, Mendocino NF. Second Row (left-right): Barry McDonald, Inyo NF; Joe Duran, Los Padres NF; Nathan Leatherman, San Bernardino NF; Christine Frisbee, Klamath NF; and Tom Menzel, RO. (U.S. Forest Service)**

The Region 5 Partnership Council (R5PC), which is comprised of five representatives from both Pacific Southwest Region (Region 5) management and the union, recently celebrated its 20th anniversary in the region. The R5PC, which held its most recent meeting Jan. 22-23 at the Regional Office in Vallejo, Calif., meets quarterly and works together in order to achieve Forest Service goals and to meet employee interests. “As we celebrate our 20th year, I think it is a strong indication that both parties value the relationship,” said Barry McDonald, vice president of the National Federal of Federal Employees Forest Service Council for Region 5. “It identifies key interests and mutually resolved issues and problems using interest-based problem solving techniques. This collaborative process serves to strengthen working relationships and to foster trust.”

**Published: March 28, 2014**

## Regional Forester visits Hawaii, tours watershed protection project

### Pacific Southwest Region



A watershed protection project is taking place in the Poamoho Natural Area Reserve in the Koolau Mountains of Oahu, will protect headwaters and remove invasive species in two major drainages that supply Oahu's largest freshwater aquifer. Pictured from left to right: Sherry Hazelhurst, director, State and Private Forestry, Pacific Southwest Region, USFS; Irene Sprecher, Cooperative Resource Management Forester, Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW), Hawaii Department of Lands and Natural Resources (DLNR); Rob Hauff, Forest Health Coordinator, DOFAW, DLNR; Randy Moore, Regional Forester, Pacific Southwest Region, USFS; and Marigold Zoll, Oahu Native Ecosystem Protection and Management Section Manager, DOFAW, DLNR. (U.S. Forest Service)

Randy Moore, Regional Forester of the Pacific Southwest Region of the U.S. Forest Service, recently conducted an annual visit to the Hawaiian Island of Oahu.

Moore, who visited Oahu from Jan. 13-15, divided his time between meeting with Hawaii's representatives, recognizing valued employees and partners, and touring an important watershed protection project.

"It's clear that for Pacific Islands communities, like Hawaii, water is critical for life and that healthy forest ecosystems are a critical part of ensuring a fresh water supply," said Moore.

For Moore, touring a watershed protection project, which is located in a remote area of the Poamoho Natural Area Reserve in the Koolau Mountains, was an essential stop on his itinerary for multiple reasons. The 1,400 acre project to protect headwaters and remove invasive species in two major drainages that supply Oahu's largest freshwater aquifer

demonstrates the value of collaboration amongst partners in the Pacific Islands. The project is one of Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources' "The Rain Follows the Forest" watershed protection projects and is taking place with the support of the many agencies, local watershed partnerships and private landowners. Region 5 has contributed \$300,000 to the Poamoho project through the Forest Service's State and Private Forestry department. The Institute for Pacific Islands Forestry of the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Army, and the Board of Water Supply for the City and County of Honolulu are also contributors.



**The Poamoho Natural Area Reserve, part of the Koolau Mountains, is an approximately 1,400 acre reserve protecting native species and ecosystems. This watershed can deliver millions of gallons of water to Oahu's residents.**

"Contributing to projects such as Oahu's Poamoho is an important way we work with partners to conserve forest and water resources that benefit people today and into the future," said Sherry Hazelhurst, Director of State & Private Forestry of the Pacific Southwest Region.

During the trip, Moore was able to sit down with and present two awards to local partners.

First, he co-presented the U.S. Department of Agriculture's prestigious Two Chiefs' Award to Melissa Irene Sprecher of Hawaii's Department of Land and Natural Resources. She developed the "Collaboration on Forestry Related Program Delivery in Hawaii" Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service and Forest Service, the Hawaii Association of Conservation Districts and the State's Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Moore also presented John Leong, the Executive Director of Kupu, with the 2013 Regional Forester's Honor Award for the Ecological Restoration-Engaging Youth category. Kupu is a Hawaii non-profit that's mission is to train up the next generation in natural resource management, renewable energy, energy conservation and other green job skill sets.

"Being able to present these awards really illustrates the success with our all-lands approach in working across boundaries to optimize our efforts," said Moore. "This hard work which continues today is vital to the health of our island's forests in Hawaii and beyond."

**Published: March 28, 2014**

## Stanislaus National Forest models local water conservation efforts

### Stanislaus National Forest



In the town that surrounds the Supervisor’s Office for the Stanislaus National Forest (NF), visitors are noticing a new addition to the landscape – large white signs. They’re on nearly every corner, urging the public in big bold, black letters, “WATER SHORTAGE. PLEASE CONSERVE NOW.”

The recent signs follow a series of Tuolumne Utilities District (TUD) conservation measures aimed at reducing water usage district wide by 50 percent.

On Feb. 6, the Stanislaus NF joined the local effort to conserve water by instituting forest-wide water restrictions.

“The Forest is very aware of our importance as the primary source for our downstream water users,” said Scott Tangenberg, deputy forest supervisor, Stanislaus NF. “As users ourselves, we’re taking several steps to conserve this limited resource.”

The following restrictions are in effect until the drought has ended or until further notice:

1. No vehicle washing at any site except when going in for annual maintenance or as approved by the District Ranger.
2. Limit landscape watering to drought maintenance needs.
3. Avoid unnecessary draining and refilling of engines and water tender tanks.
4. No washing of pavement or sidewalks.

5. Practice water conservation in all kitchens, restrooms and during house cleaning activities.

(Administrative sites connected to non-Forest Service, public water systems are also complying with any additional local restrictions.)

Forest reductions in water usage will have instant measurable effects both in resource usage and money saved, just through the reduction of vehicle washings.

The Stanislaus NF has a fleet of 255 vehicles that get washed on average, once per week. Based on industry numbers, conveyor car washes use an average of 35 gallons of water per vehicle and charge a minimum of six dollars per wash. With forest conservation measures in effect, the Stanislaus will have saved an average of 35,700 gallons of water and \$6,120 in the first four weeks. These numbers are on the low end, since vehicle numbers go up with seasonal employment and a portion of the fleet are fire related vehicles, which may be larger – requiring more water per wash and may need to be washed more than once per week based on usage, according to Jeremy Craddock, fleet manager.

The Stanislaus NF has 22 permitted water systems located within three counties: four in Alpine; two in Calaveras; and 16 in Tuolumne County. Last year one frequently visited campground water system went dry while several others were greatly diminished and had to ration water. Given current snowpack measures and expected weather trends, the forest is looking into contingency plans, which could include closing some recreational sites, hauling in water or operating some sites without a water system.

“Though cutting down on landscape watering or the washing of vehicles isn’t going to cure the effects of three years of drought, making small changes can make a difference,” said Tangenberg.

Once outside of drought conditions, the forest plans to lift the water usage restrictions with the caveat that common sense should prevail, added Tangenberg.

**Published: March 28, 2014**

## **Pacific Southwest Region Receives National Volunteer Program Awards**

Volunteerism supports the Forest Service mission and engages individuals and groups to preserve the public lands legacy in all areas of the Agency. Annually the Agency recognizes excellence in volunteerism and volunteer program management.

### **Volunteer Campground Host—Brenda Negley, Bass Lake Ranger District, Sierra National Forest**

Ms. Brenda Negley is the recipient of the 2012 National Volunteer Program “Volunteer Campground Host Award.” Brenda has served for the past 3 years at Nelder Grove Campground continuing her grandparent’s legacy as campground host at Nelder Grove. From 1970 to 1990, Brenda’s grandparents were campground hosts at Nelder Grove, where Brenda spent most of her summers as a child. “Nelder Grove is much more than a campground to me,” she says. Nelder Grove is home to a highly diversified cluster of plant species including the Giant Sequoias that are unique to California. A fabulous host and interpretive guide, Brenda is an enthusiastic educator and shares the history of Nelder Grove and the importance of practicing campground etiquette and fire safety with visitors. Her public outreach has resulted in expanded public usage of Nelder Grove. Her efforts have been recognized by the Fresno Bee Newspaper, Yosemite Sierra Visitors Guide, and Sierra Club blogs.

### **Individual Volunteer—John Hauer, Pacific Southwest Research Station (PSW), Riverside**

Mr. John Hauser is the recipient of the 2012 National Volunteer Program “Individual Award.” John has contributed 1000 service hours to the PSW Riverside assisting with a laboratory science, improving the safety and appearance of their PSW facility, and assisting with data collection in the field. Although John had no formal training in scientific technique, he was a quick study. His attention to detail and meticulous record keeping enabled the team to nail down protocols and begin experimentation. Without John’s dedication and organization skills, the project would have failed within the first few months. Working under the supervision of the facilities manager, he tackled many over-due projects like brush and weed clearing; erosion problems that were damaging infrastructure; organization and disposal of broken, obsolete equipment; and irrigation repair. As one scientist put it, “Without John’s help we would still be working on field projects with no end in sight.”

### **Volunteer Coordinator of Volunteers—Jason Beckstrand, Los Padres National Forest**

Mr. Jason Beckstrand was the recipient of the 2012 National Volunteer Program “Volunteer Coordinator of Volunteers Award.” Jason volunteers to recruit and train volunteers within eight of the designated Wilderness areas of the Los Padres National Forest. Volunteer activities include inventories of recreation sites, trail condition surveys in fire burn areas, and documentation of progress and completion of the entire project. Jason has shown initiative to lead safety training and job hazard analysis for each volunteer trip, along with equipment training and scheduling of trips within the wilderness. He worked closely with Forest Service staff to secure supplies and report activities and keep communications open. Jason challenged himself and the other volunteers to produce results that are useable, easily understood, and supported by both other volunteers and the forest.

**Published: March 28, 2014**

## **Southern California emergency center honored for interagency partnership**

Stanton Florea, fire information officer, Pacific Southwest Region



**The Federal Interagency Communications Center, located on San Bernardino National Forest, received a partnership recognition award from CAL FIRE, Jan. 8, during the 2013 CAL FIRE Director’s Annual Recognition Award ceremony. Pictured left to right – Ken Pimlott, director, CAL FIRE; Sandy Nieman, FICC operations manager, BLM, Department of the Interior; Andrea Lannen, FICC operations manager, USFS, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA); Elizabeth Barrera, FICC center manager, USFS, USDA; and Bart Chambers, deputy chief of law enforcement, San Bernardino Unit, CAL FIRE. (CAL FIRE)**

The staff of the Federal Interagency Communications Center (FICC), located on the San Bernardino National Forest, was honored at the 2013 CAL FIRE Director’s Annual Recognition Award ceremony, Jan. 8, for dedication and cooperation in support of CAL FIRE law enforcement officers.

CAL FIRE Director Ken Pimlott and Deputy Chief for Law Enforcement Bart Chambers cited their on-going partnership with the San Bernardino National Forest and the FICC as “a model of interagency cooperation.”

FICC Manager Elizabeth Barrera accepted the award on behalf of her staff. “I’m very proud of the dispatchers and our center for receiving this award. We’re committed to the FICC and its mission to provide efficient, prompt and courteous service with the highest regard for the safety of the public and member agencies,” Barrera said.

Pimlott and Chambers believe the law enforcement dispatching partnership is directly

responsible for helping ensure officer safety and accountability. In particular, FICC staff were critical in helping support fireworks interdiction efforts in 2012 as well as the Dorner Manhunt in early 2013.

“Our dispatchers are always concerned for the safety of all personnel out in the field no matter what agency they are from,” Barrera said.

The Federal Interagency Communications Center serves federal fire and law enforcement agents who are in charge of 33,000,000 acres of federal land in Southern California.

Dispatchers at the communications center serve the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the National Park Service (NPS), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

### **Federal Interagency Communications Center Staff:**

- Elizabeth Barrera—FS Center Manager
- Sandy Nieman—BLM Operation Manager
- Andrea Lannen Littlefield—FS Operation Manager
- Kelli Haggerty—FS Operation Manager
- Irene Haynes—BLM Dispatcher
- Karen Brown—BLM Dispatcher
- Lisa Chavez—FS Dispatcher
- Kathleen Haninger—FS Dispatcher
- Ray Kell—FS Dispatcher
- Davette Johnson—FS Dispatcher
- Ashley Truett Solomon—FS Dispatcher
- Tracey Kern—BLM Dispatcher
- Adam Tinker—FS Dispatcher
- David Raphael—FS Dispatcher

**Published: February 26, 2014**

## DLNR Specialist receives high praise, national honor from USDA

DLNR News Release



**Randy Moore (right), Regional Forester of the Pacific Southwest Region, presented the USDA's prestigious Two Chiefs' Award to M. Irene Sprecher of Hawaii's Department of Land and Natural Resources, Jan. 13. (Forest Service)**

U.S. Department of Agriculture's prestigious Two Chiefs' Award was presented to M. Irene Sprecher of Hawaii's Department of Land and Natural Resources, Jan. 13.

The Two Chiefs' Award is a national award that is presented annually to recognize people and teams that work collaboratively to support conservation and forest stewardship. Award winners are selected by the Chiefs of the USDA Forest Service (USFS) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Sprecher played a lead role in the development of the "Collaboration on Forestry Related Program Delivery in Hawaii" Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the USDA NRCS, the Forest Service, the Hawaii Association of Conservation Districts and the State's Department of Land and Natural Resources - signed May 19, 2011. This MOU

was derived from the National MOU that is used for the same purpose and was signed Sept. 29, 2008.

Since the implementation of the Hawaii MOU, the partners have significantly improved their interaction with each other and cooperated to coordinate the delivery of several landowner assistance programs in Hawai'i. Through this MOU, a landowner who obtains an approved Forest Stewardship Program management plan may access multiple programs for forestry conservation assistance - Forest Stewardship Program, the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and/or the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). This has significantly streamlined the process for landowners to access assistance funding, while simultaneously improved the collaboration among agencies and efficiency of their programs.

While this MOU is in place at the national level, not all states have implemented a state-level process, and most of those that have received some financial support to make it happen. Hawai'i has accomplished all of this with no extra funding provided by or given to any of its

MOU partners. The MOU partners are involving existing staff only and are motivated simply to improve all aspects of private landowner assistance in Hawaii through increased cooperation.

Also, through a grant written by Sprecher, the Hawaii MOU partners were awarded \$250,000 in January 2013 from a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant. These funds will provide needed resources for statewide planning and outreach to private forest landowners. Two fulltime staff were hired in August, 2013, to increase the number of CREP projects, complete more NRCS conservation plans, strengthen interactions with partner agencies, and generally support sustainable management of Hawaii's forest resources.

Finally, Sprecher was instrumental in the Fiscal Year 2007 and 2008 Kealahou Heritage Ranch Forest Legacy applications for the acquisition of two conservation easements and primary author for the Fiscal Year 2010 Kainalu Ranch and the Fiscal Year 2012 Kukaiau Koa Forest applications to the Forest Legacy Program (FLP). Recently promoted, she now runs the FSP and FLP programs in Hawaii.

## **An all-lands approach**

Sprecher was a major contributor towards the establishment of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program in Hawaii. That process required extensive collaboration and negotiation with national and local partners in order to customize the program to best serve Hawaii, and to obtain all the required approvals. In addition, she has been very active in modifying the Hawaii Forest Stewardship Program (supported via state and USFS funding) to come into alignment with the conservation practices, technical specifications and cost share rates associated with NRCS's EQIP. Similarly to the Forest Stewardship Program's management plans, this has made various federal and state forestry conservation assistance programs work in parallel, with a consistent look and process for prospective cooperators.

"We are very pleased to jointly present this award," said Randy Moore, U.S. Forest Service Pacific Southwest Regional Forester. "This really illustrates our all-lands approach in working across boundaries to optimize our efforts. This hard work which continues today is vital to the health of our island's forests in Hawaii and beyond."

"I am so happy to recognize her and this multi-agency public-private approach to solving a critical resource problem on our forest lands," said NRCS Acting Director Christine Clarke. "This work exemplifies good stewardship."

"Sprecher has proven to be an extremely valuable partner for the USDA as part of our Hawaii Joint Forestry MOU. She worked very closely with NRCS to get forestry conservation projects on the ground and information out to potential clients. She's collaborated with Katie Friday of USFS, to get funding out for Forest Stewardship Plans. She is very worthy of this

award for her contributions to USFS and NRCS here in Hawaii."

**Published: February 24, 2014**

## **New District Ranger coming to the Mad River District**



Christine Hill has been named the new Mad River District Ranger on Six Rivers National Forest. Hill will fill the district leadership position formerly held by Tom Hudson, who moved to a new position in Alaska.

"Christine brings over 28 years of experience with the Forest Service managing cultural and natural resources and forest special uses," said Forest Supervisor Tyrone Kelley. "We are very pleased to welcome her to the Six Rivers National Forest."

Hill holds a Bachelor's Degree in Anthropology, a Graduate Certificate in Natural Resource Management, and is currently participating in

the Executive Leadership Program through Graduate School, USA's Center for Leadership and Management. Originally from Philadelphia, Pa., she has a great appreciation for the rural nature of Northern California where she has lived for the past 30 years. During this time, she worked in four national forests where her experience includes: Acting District Ranger, Lands and Recreation Officer, and Heritage Program Manager.

Hill looks forward to continuing her dedication in Region 5 and welcomes the challenge of managing forest resources for multiple use and ecological restoration.

"More importantly, in my new capacity as Mad River District Ranger, I am excited about working with Six Rivers National Forest employees, local communities and tribes," said Hill, who reports for duty on Dec. 29, 2013.

Managing a work/life balance is important to Christine and she enjoys travel, adventure, various outdoor recreation activities, and continued learning. Christine and her fiancé, Josh, have three children and two grandchildren: Cierra is a fulltime mother and hairdresser, Hether is a student attending Humboldt State University, and Travis is in the U.S. Marine Corps.

**Published: January 28, 2014**

## Forest Service leader enjoys working with partners

John C. Heil III, Press Officer, Pacific Southwest Region of the U.S. Forest Service



**Diana Craig, the Deputy Director of Ecosystem Management for the Pacific Southwest Region of the U.S. Forest Service, finds working with partners one of the greatest joys of her job.**

Such collaboration is crucial for the agency as the Pacific Southwest Region recently started a strategy focused around Ecological Restoration. This strategy is an effort to make the forests resilient and able to adapt to the changing climate by restoring them to a healthy state from disturbances such as insects and disease, intense fires, etc. It is a challenge, but with the right partners and working across boundaries, the Forest Service believes they can obtain their goals. That is why employees such as Craig, who resides in Yountville, Calif., are so important.

"Working with partners has been so rewarding," said Craig. "I get energy from working with people...partners."

A recent project she was engaged in was the Sierra Nevada Forests Management Indicator Species Forest Plan Amendment. This project, which was challenged in court but upheld, standardized the Management Indicator Species list of 10 national forests to include 13 species, such as black-backed woodpecker, mule deer, sage grouse, yellow warbler, fox sparrow, macro invertebrates, etc. The process was analyzed in a methodical way with public outreach and the Forest Service worked with partners for a proposal that made sense. The agency then worked with partners to implement monitoring for these species.

She is especially proud of her work on the California Landscape Conservation Cooperatives steering committee for the past two years. The committee is made up of non-governmental organizations and state and federal agencies. Their goal is to look at landscape scales and improve the link between science and management in how to maintain ecosystems in the face of climate change, urbanization, and other stressors. The cooperative has facilitated a number of projects, including looking at where sensitive ecosystems are headed with climate change, which species and species habitat is the most vulnerable, and checking sea levels to see if they are on the rise.

"The intent is what has the greatest need and not duplicating effort," said Craig. "We get synergy with ideas."

"I have known Diana for four years and she has the ability to think strategically in and around environmental issues and is able to balance the most appropriate action for animal and plant species balanced against managing for natural resources," said Bernie Gyant, Deputy Regional Forester. "She is well respected at environmental organizations around the state. Her presence at the table brings credibility to the mission of Ecological Restoration."

"Diana is incredibly intelligent, knowledgeable and is very interested in other people's point of view to make the best decisions," said Ecosystem Management Director Deb Whitman. "We work on partnerships together and I rely on her skills. She is very talented. There is nothing she couldn't take on and do extremely well."

Craig, who always had a love for animals and enjoys bird and mammal-watching, met her husband, Bill of 28 years in college and knew he was the right one after he assisted with her thesis project on the food habits of mountain lions, coyotes, and bobcats.

"We had to collect scat to study under microscopes and he was willing to go out and help me with it," said Craig. "I knew he was a keeper."

Craig, who has a BA and MA from San Jose State University in Wildlife Biology, started working for the Forest Service as an Assistant Forest Wildlife Biologist in 1990 for the Tahoe National Forest (TNF). She went on to other jobs on the TNF including Acting Forest Wildlife Biologist to jobs in the Regional Office in Vallejo, Calif. such as "Partners in Flight" Coordinator, Regional Wildlife Program Leader, Regional Wildlife Ecologist to her current job. The common theme of her interests is working with animals including her volunteer work with the bald eagle on the TNF and work with the willow flycatcher, great grey owl and California Spotted Owl in the early 1990s.

"She is an excellent wildlife biologist and has great knowledge of wildlife ecology and habitat relationship population dynamics," said Karen Hayden, a District Ranger on the TNF. "The partnership program really blossomed when she was here (as the Assistant Wildlife

Biologist)."

Additionally, Craig was instrumental in helping the Tahoe National Forest complete a special supplement to the Forest Plan that promised further science and improvements for riparian areas, old growth forest, meadows, and other important wildlife habitat. The work involved engaging the help of Cal Fire, California Department of Fish and Wildlife and many university scientists from around the west.

"Diana was a perfect fit for our staff and this different approach," said former TNF Wildlife Biologist Mike Chapel, who was the first to hire Craig. "She has done well ever since. She has a strong scientific background and embraced our views of working outside our agency and still does. Diana is a real champion on working with partners."

"She is very personable, fun, professional and ethical," said Hayden." She believes that you get a lot more done when you have partners."

**Published: January 28, 2014**

## 2013 Regional Forester's Honor Awards



The Pacific Southwest Region held the 2013 Regional Forester's Honor Awards Nov. 20 in Sacramento. This year's theme was "Awakening and Strengthening All People's Connection to the Land." The Honor Awards recognize the outstanding service by Forest Service employees and partners whom have achieved exceptional results because of dedication, leadership and hard work.

"The men and women we are honoring this evening deserve our thanks and congratulations; their accomplishments have been nothing short of extraordinary," said Regional Forester Randy Moore. "I continue to be profoundly inspired by the work we achieve. Together we make a difference and the work we do matters."

The keynote speaker for the event was Rue Mapp, the chief executive officer and founder of Outdoor Afro, a community that reconnects African-Americans with natural spaces and one another through recreational activities.

### **Regional Forester's Honor Awards 2013 Award Recipients**

#### **Ecological Restoration – All Lands Watershed & Forest Health:**

Whiskey Ridge Ecological Project, Sierra National Forest

#### **Ecological Restoration – Engaging Youth**

KUPU, Hawaii Nonprofit

**Healthy Workplace/Workforce – Cultural Transformation, Diversity & Inclusion**

Tahoe National Forest Employees

**Healthy Workplace/Workforce – Safety Leadership & Emergency Response**

San Bernardino National Forest Air Tanker Base

**Healthy Workplace/Workforce – Sustainable Operations & Energy Management**

Karie Wiltshire, Tahoe National Forest

**District of the Year**

Groveland Ranger District, Stanislaus National Forest

**Partnership of the Year**

Southern California Mountains Foundation

**Rookie of the Year**

Roy Cuzick, Modoc National Forest

**Leading in a Business Environment**

Bob Knopp, Information Management Staff, Regional Office

**Leading in a Natural Resources Environment**

R5 Air Program

*Congratulations to All the Recipients!*

**Published: January 29, 2014**

## Five Region 5 employees receive Secretary's Honor Awards

### Pacific Southwest Region



Five Pacific Southwest Region employees received Secretary's Honor Awards, Dec. 11, in the Jefferson Auditorium at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in Washington, D.C. from Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Agriculture Deputy Secretary Krysta Harden. **PICTURED LEFT:** Adrienne Dunfee (center left) and Nora Gamino (center right), Inyo National Forest. **PICTURED RIGHT:** Ann Dunskey (center left) and Steve Dunskey (center right), Regional Office. USDA photos by Lance Cheung.

Five employees of the Pacific Southwest Region received honors at the 65th Annual Secretary's Honor Awards, Dec. 11, in Washington, D.C. The Secretary's Honor Awards are an opportunity for Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack to honor U.S. Department of Agriculture employees from across the nation for leadership efforts and accomplishments that have furthered the mission and goals of the USDA. This year's theme was "Serving a Modern, Innovative and Inspiring Rural America."

Three of the R5 recipients are members of the Mono Basin National Scenic Area Visitor Center Photovoltaic System Team: Adrienne Dunfee, Inyo National Forest; Nora Gamino, Inyo National Forest; and Marilyn Renee Jewell, Pacific Southwest Regional Office. They received the Secretary's Award for Management Excellence for their joint efforts and dedication to the field of sustainable operations, resulting in carbon footprint reduction at Department facilities and increasing sustainability awareness among national forest visitors.

The other two R5 recipients are members of the Green Fire Production Team: Steven Dunskey and Ann Dunskey, R5 Regional Office. The team received the Secretary's Award for Personal

and Professional Excellence for producing the award-winning documentary *Green Fire* which continues to share the Forest Service land ethic with millions of viewers around the world. *Green Fire* highlights Aldo Leopold's extraordinary career, tracing how he shaped and influenced the modern environmental movement.

**Published: January 23, 2014**

## Stanislaus NF employee receives regional, national award

### Pacific Southwest Region



**Kristen Nelson (left), director of Interpretive Services and Travel and Tourism, Washington Office, presents Marie Malo (right), a natural resource interpretive specialist on the Stanislaus National Forest, with the National Gifford Pinchot Award for her “Excellence in Interpretation and Conservation Education”.**

Marie Malo, a natural resource interpretive specialist on the Stanislaus National Forest, recently received the Forest Service 2013 Pacific Southwest Region Gifford Pinchot Award and the National Gifford Pinchot Award for her “Excellence in Interpretation and Conservation Education.”

Malo, who has been with the Stanislaus NF for two years, said the most rewarding part of her job is watching people see the beautiful Sierra Nevada landscape for the first time.

“Sometimes (visitors) have seen the landscape with their eyes before, but with interpretation, they see the landscape, the resources with their hearts and minds for the first time,” said Malo. “Watching people of all ages have ‘ah-ha’ moments, seeing their faces light up, and seeing a concern for the resources develop is what I love about my job.”

Malo said many visitors have touched her life during a program, but last summer one particular hike stands out in her mind. As she led a hike through an area where prescribed burns had taken place and areas that had not been burned yet, Malo explained fire ecology and the importance of fire in the forest ecosystem.

“About three quarters of the way through the hike, someone started pointing things out that she noticed and said that she will never look at the forest in the same way again,” explained Malo. “The visitor said that she felt that it was as if there was a new light, a new way of looking that helped her understand why we manage the forest based on science. Everyone started sharing their stories about what they found interesting as we sat eating a snack on a rock, overlooking the beautiful landscape. It seemed like we all felt a change take place.”

Malo has maintained her ultimate goal of providing exceptional public service to visitors of the forest.

This past year, Malo orchestrated the Pinecrest Fish Faire, created Saturday Morning

Interpretive Snowshoe hikes, established the first “Artist in Residence” program, hosted a career day presentation to over 120 4th-6th grade students and trained new interpreters to increase Forest Service presence.

Additionally, the number of visitors participating in summer interpretive programs under Malo’s leadership, doubled in two years, from 8,000 to 16,000.

Malo, who especially enjoys working with children, believes breaking barriers to understanding and enjoying nature is most important to her job.

“For children, especially those who live in urban areas, I get the chance to help them experience the beauty of the land and develop a respect for it.”

“She is continually developing new partnerships, adding new programs to old venues,” said Stanislaus Forest Supervisor Susan Skalski. “She continues to find creative ways to educate both the public and employees about conservation while making it fun to learn.”

Locally Malo has shared her outstanding interpretive skills to assist the staff’s programs to make sure they are of high quality. She trains her staff members and is personally involved with students from the local community to become certified interpretive guides.

“Marie Malo sets high standards for herself, and achieves them,” said Tim Williams, the Pacific Southwest Region conservation education specialist and interpretive services coordinator. “Her professionalism demonstrates how much she really cares about the work that she does, the people who work for her, and the visitors to the Stanislaus National Forest.”

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