MCKINLEY GROVE GIANT SEQUOIA’S
High Sierra Ranger District

WELCOME TO THE WORLD’S LARGEST TREES
McKinley Grove is a stand of virgin, mostly mature Giant Sequoia trees, with the largest being over 230 feet tall. Mature sequoias average 15 feet in diameter and 250 feet in height.

At the turn of the century, fallen trunks of giant sequoias served as cabins and tables. Some cut stumps were so large they served as dance floors that would accommodate two or three dozen couples!

HISTORY OF MCKINLEY GROVE
McKinley Grove was originally called the Washington Grove and then Dusy Grove in honor of a colorful local settler. It was later named McKinley Grove after the 25th president of the United States.

Because there were no roads or trails nearby, McKinley Grove remained undiscovered until 1869. Even then few people visited the site. The grove remains in the public domain, but has been protected by the Sierra Forest Reserve since 1893.

RECREATION:
This botanical area offers a paved nature trail that winds through the towering redwoods and is accessible for persons with disabilities. Picnic tables and restrooms are available.

ORIGIN:
The giant sequoia first appeared over 130 million years ago during the time of the dinosaurs. Fossils show that vast sequoia empires stretched across the continents of North America and Eurasia. As the climate cooled and dried, the once vast sequoia forests were gradually reduced. Only three species of sequoia stock remain today, each in climatically restricted ranges. Two of these are found in California; the Sequoia sempervirens or coastal redwood, and the Sequoiadendron giganteum or giant sequoia. The other species, Metasequoia glyptostroboides, or dawn redwood, is a deciduous tree found only in China.

AGE:
These giants are among the oldest of living things. Some trees may be as old as 3,000 years.

Absence of pitch and very thick bark (from two to four feet in mature trees) help the sequoias to be fire resistant.

Tannic acid in the bark inhibits wood-boring insects and destructive fungi and also retards decay. A topped sequoia may remain intact for decades. No giant sequoia is known to have died of “old age”. Rather, because of their shallow root system, they generally fall during severe windstorms in the winter when the ground is wet.

USES:
The wood of the big trees is among the lightest of the American trees. However, because of its resistance to decay, people used it for things such as shingles, fence posts, and grape stakes. It is also soft and brittle like balsa.

At one time, lumberjacks would work one or two weeks to topple a single tree. Often, the trunk would shatter when it crashed to the ground, becoming
The sequoia has a shallow root system that allows it to obtain surface moisture. The roots often extend 100 to 150 feet and sometimes more than 200 feet from the tree. The entire root system may affect from two to four acres of ground.

A sequoia’s annual growth is one of the fastest in the world; two millimeters diameter in a mature tree is equal to a seedling starting from seed and reaching 50 feet in height and 12 inches in diameter in one year.

DISTRIBUTION:
Today the giant sequoia is found in only 75 isolated groves at mid-elevations along the west slope of the Sierra Nevada from Placer through Tulare counties, a 260 mile range. Only eight groves, including McKinley, are north of the Kings River.

If grouped together, the groves would cover 35,600 acres, less than half the surface of Lake Tahoe, and contain less than 60,000 mature trees. This does not include the 10,000 acres that were logged for timber before 1950.

McKinley Grove has over 170 specimen sized sequoias spread out over 100 acres. The majority of these trees are between the two walls on the uphill side of McKinley Grove Road.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
High Sierra Ranger District
P.O. Box 559
Prather, CA 93651
559-855-5355
(TDD) 559-855-5367

Dinkey Creek Visitor Center
559-841-3404 (summer only)

All Are Welcome
The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual’s income is derived from any public assistance program. (not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.), should contact USDA’s TARGET center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.