

In your December issue, National Geographic included an article about the second-largest Giant Sequoia, the President, and the writer's study of the Park. The article emphasized Sequoia National Park, but did not mention the Giant Sequoia National Monument, a 328,000 acre parcel of land dedicated by President Clinton on April 15, 2000, "to counteract the effects of a century of fire suppression and logging." Unfortunately, President Clinton's mission to protect the Sequoias has not been put into effect by the U.S. Forest Service, under whose jurisdiction the Monument was placed. Despite the Proclamation's clear intent, the Forest Service has not been able to move beyond logging as its main management tool.

Within Sequoia National Forest and the Monument, the Forest Service continues to use business as usual management practices, such as extensive logging, grazing, and the use of pesticides -- despite the fact that scientific studies have shown these activities to be harmful. Logging has caused erosion which has created severe siltation in our mountain streams and opened the forest canopy to greater sun exposure and the subsequent warming and drying of the forest. The fish and aquatic invertebrate species that rely on the purity of their local watersheds have felt the impacts of logging. The California Spotted Owl, an "at-risk" species, makes its home in the Giant Sequoia National Monument, but the population is declining by 7 to 10% each year due to loss of forest canopy cover caused by logging. The owl is not a lone case; many species who make their home within the Sequoia National Monument are headed toward a slow extinction unless we do something, now, to stop continued forest degradation. Because the forests of the Sierra are also the "drinking-water tower" for many California and Nevada residents, protecting the forested areas of the Sierra is also crucial for the survival of our own species.

Sequoia ForestKeeper has been working tirelessly since the creation of the Giant Sequoia National Monument to ensure that this unique landscape, which contains half of the naturally-occurring giant sequoia trees in the world, is protected now and for future generations. We have for the past decade been educating Congress about the failures of the Forest Service and urging our legislators and the White House to take the final step in protecting these national treasures by transferring the Monument into the care of the Department of Interior's National Park Service, so these majestic trees are protected once and for all.

81 members of Congress sent a letter to President Obama in June 2011 asking him to transfer jurisdiction of the Giant Sequoia National Monument to the National Park Service.

I urge everyone to call your representative and the President to demand that the Giant Sequoia National Monument be transferred into the jurisdiction of the National Park Service as soon as possible, so that these living cathedrals can be appreciated by all future generations.

For more information, visit our website at [www.sequoiaforestkeeper.org](http://www.sequoiaforestkeeper.org).

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P.S. I have pasted below additional information regarding some of the Forest Service's shortcomings in managing the Monument, and would welcome the opportunity to speak with you further about the possibility of a feature article about this issue.

The Forest Service is demonstrating a Pattern and Practice of failing to follow the environmental laws and their own legally binding agreement while causing irreparable damage to the ecology of the unique sequoia forests that the agency is charged with protecting. Examples of these Forest Service failures are:

1. On January 12, 2004, the Forest Service produced a management plan that was overturned by THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA (case No. C 05-00397 CRB and Related Case No. C. 05-0898 CRB) as failing to adequately protect the Monument's resources.
2. Since 1988 the Forest Service has failed to provide a Watershed Improvement Needs Inventory (WINI) of streams, roads, etc. within the Monument that need fixing, as required by the 1988 Management Plan. Creating this inventory is a critical first step to ensuring that the Forest Service addresses critical problems around these resources.
3. The Forest Service has never obtained a Clean Water Act Certification from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for permits it issues allowing people or businesses to take water from streams, even though the Service is required by law to do so, and even when such permits allow the permittees to take all or most of the water from the stream. These certifications would allow the Department of Fish and Wildlife to prevent dewatering of streams or to create other protections for fish and wildlife, such as limiting times when water could be withdrawn so that fish could spawn. In 2011, Sequoia ForestKeeper received a second favorable court ruling on this issue vacating a Forest Service permit allowing significant amounts of water to be withdrawn on Fay Creek, a tributary of the South Fork of the Kern River.