

PRESS RELEASE
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Conservation Group Appeals Giant Sequoia National Monument Management Plan

Kernville, CA – Nonprofit organization Sequoia ForestKeeper filed two appeals against the U.S. Forest Service’s second attempt at the Management Plan for the Giant Sequoia National Monument (Monument) last Thursday, Dec. 6, 2012.

The Giant Sequoia National Monument was created from lands within Sequoia National Forest to forever protect the Giant Sequoia groves and their surrounding ecosystems from the logging-oriented management practices currently governing our National Forests. President Clinton’s Proclamation which established the Monument in April, 2000, directs that the Monument lands are not within the timber base, commercial logging is not to occur within the Monument, and trees within the Monument are not to be removed except in extraordinary circumstances.

The most current Management plan, released on September 7, 2012, is an improvement over the first plan, which was overturned in August 2006, by the Northern District Court of California in San Francisco as “incomprehensible” as the result of a lawsuit filed by Sequoia ForestKeeper along with five other organizations. The ruling forced the Forest Service to rewrite the plan, which did not do enough to protect the giant sequoias, and their surrounding ecosystem, or the objects of interest in the Monument, as directed by President Clinton.

While the Forest Service's proposed management plan includes language which states a preference for fire as the primary management tool, it includes loopholes that could allow for tree removal over too wide a region of the Monument. The Forest Service also failed to reconvene a Scientific Advisory Board when creating the new plan, and fails to use the best available science in figuring fuels reduction limits. The plan also fails to consider any alternative to the current cattle grazing, which causes considerable harm to the forest, particularly in meadows.

If the Forest Service does not respond favorably to the appeals, Sequoia ForestKeeper is prepared to once again take the agency to court.

To view the appeals, go to http://sequoiaforestkeeper.org/comments_and_appeals.aspx

Sequoia ForestKeeper's mission is to protect and restore the ecosystems of the southern Sierra Nevada – including both Sequoia National Forest and the Giant Sequoia National Monument – through monitoring forest conditions, awareness of laws, education, and litigation. By acting as the eyes, ears, and voice of the forest, SFK seeks to improve land management practices, to promote land stewardship, to enforce existing laws and regulations, to implement public awareness programs, to offer assistance to local land management agencies, and to save natural forest ecosystems.

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