

Interagency News Release



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Four Federal Agencies Combine Research Efforts To Manage the Southern Sierra Nevada

PORTERVILLE, CA – On January 17, 2008, Sequoia National Forest/Giant Sequoia National Monument, Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks, Pacific Southwest Research Station, and the U. S. Geological Survey signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a shared vision for the future of the Southern Sierra Nevada. The four federal agencies met last month to discuss their mutual interest in sustainably managing forests in the face of rapid global changes. By signing a MOU the partners have agreed to collaboratively develop a program of research, resource management, and public education, to help mitigate the impacts from, and adapt to, climate change effects on the ecosystems of the southern Sierra Nevada. The primary land base in the MOU includes 1.2 million acres of the Giant Sequoia National Monument/Sequoia National Forest, and 865,257 acres in Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks.

A long-term goal of the agreement is to establish a joint Research Learning Center. The short-term goal is to develop a multi-agency adaptive research program which crosses boundaries between both Sequoia National Forest/Giant Sequoia National Monument, and neighboring Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. The first joint effort will develop an interagency science symposium in the fall of 2008. One focus will be research on future climate change effects for giant sequoia ecosystems. This symposium will invite experts nationwide with various scientific backgrounds to discuss the current forces of climate change on the Southern Sierra Nevada landscape.

“The Sequoia National Forest will incorporate the proceedings from the symposium into our current collaborative planning effort for the new Giant Sequoia National Monument Management Plan,” stated Tina Terrell, Forest Supervisor. “This joint effort will build a strong link between *adaptive research sciences and management*. This adaptive research will be applied across agency boundaries to help us better understand the impact that treatments have on the forest landscape that include giant sequoia ecosystems.”

“We’re very much looking forward to this collaboration,” said Craig Axtell, Park Superintendent. “Climatic change is one of the great challenges facing the southern Sierra Nevada and the nation. We aim to meet this challenge head on.”

Signatories of the MOU include Craig C. Axtell of the National Park Service, Tina J. Terrell of the USDA Forest Service, James R. Sedell of the USDA Pacific Southwest Research Station, and Steven E. Schwarzbach of the U.S. Geological Survey, Western Ecological Research Center. The MOU can remain in effect for five years.

Editor’s note: Further information about the science symposium will be released when planning details become available.

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