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Route To:

Subject: 2014 National Wilderness Award Recipients

To: Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, IITF Director, Deputy Chiefs

I am pleased to announce the recipients of the 2014 National Wilderness Awards. These awards honor individuals and groups for excellence in wilderness education, traditional skills leadership, decision making, and overall wilderness stewardship. Most of the Awards were presented on October 18, 2014, at the National Wilderness Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The remainder will be sent to the respective regional offices for presentation at an appropriate opportunity.

2014 National Forest Service Wilderness Awards

Aldo Leopold Award for Overall Wilderness Stewardship Program:

Joshua Simpson, Natural Resources Specialist, Humbolt-Toiyabe National Forest, Ely Ranger District

Joshua initiated and led wilderness stewardship programs for nine wilderness areas, including five new wilderness areas added to the Ely Ranger District in 2006. Joshua's work included establishing air quality monitoring, developing boundary signing protocol, and posting of boundaries. Joshua is highly engaged with planning on the district, ensuring wilderness stewardship is fully integrated with all activities.

Bob Marshall Award Individual Champion of Wilderness Stewardship:

Connie Myers, Director, Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center (ACNWTC)

For 21 years, Connie has led development of the ACNWTC as an interagency training and education center of excellence. She has successfully guided the multiagency staff in developing wilderness training and education programs that have reached hundreds of agency line officers and managers. Under Connie's leadership, the Center's programs have been continuously evaluated and improved to better meet the interests and needs of the agencies. As an outstanding champion of interagency stewardship of the National Wilderness Preservation System, in 2014 she co-facilitated development of the "2020 Vision" document that the heads of five federal agencies signed at the National Wilderness Conference.

Bob Marshall Award for Group Champion of Wilderness Stewardship:

Society of Wilderness Stewardship (SWS)

Lee Lambert, Executive Director

This award honors Executive Director Lee Lambert and the 21-member SWS Board for providing their expertise and skills to advance the profession of wilderness stewardship. SWS served the critical role of fiscal sponsor for Wilderness50 and the National Wilderness Conference. SWS co-hosted the national pre-conference trainings, the Wilderness Interpretive Trail, several sessions at the conference, and SWS published the 50th Anniversary edition of the



Wilderness Ranger Cookbook. The Society's focus on increasing the professionalism of wilderness stewardship continues to inspire those working in the field.

Wilderness Partnership Champion Award:

San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grant Cemetery Project, New Mexico Land Grant Council.

Leonard Martinez, San Joaquin Del Rio de Chama Land Grant

Juan Sanchez & Arturo Archuleta, New Mexico Land Grant Council

Dr. Manuel Garcia y Griego, University of New Mexico Land Grant Studies Program

Michelle Jacquez-Ortiz, Senator Tom Udall's Office

Patricia Dominguez, Senator Martin Heinrich's Office

Jennifer Manzanares, Congressman Ben Ray Lujan's Office

Michael Casaus, The Wilderness Society

Mike Frazier, Andy Vigil, Leslie Byrne, Anne Baldwin, Santa Fe National Forest

James Melonas, Diane Taliaferro, Southwestern Region

This group worked together to resolve a tense issue involving the Chama River Canyon Wilderness and access to a historic cemetery. The partners worked together to define and locate boundaries of the cemetery area that was found to be outside of wilderness and eased access concerns. The group also improved the trail to the cemetery. The work of the partners precluded the need for a legislative solution and strengthened relationships and trust. This accomplishment is a "win-win-win" for wilderness stewardship for honoring the heritage of the historic Land Grant and for building positive relationships for further collaboration among the participants.

Traditional Skills and Minimum Tool Leadership Award:

Monongahela National Forest and Detailed Cross Cut Saw Crews

Ed Sherman, North Zone Wilderness Manager

The Monongahela National Forest developed a strong traditional skills program for stewardship of eight wilderness areas on the forest; but in 2012, Hurricane Sandy brought more of a challenge than it could handle. The storm resulted in severe windfall on 120 miles of wilderness trails. The forest responded by mobilizing employees with extensive cross-cut saw and ax experience from five national forests in four regions. The crews hauled in gear and cleared trails of the extreme windfall using wilderness-appropriate traditional skills and without injury.

Ed Sherman organized and supervised the crews. The ten skilled detailers involved in this effort included: Aaron Deschu, Michael Irvin, Matthew Bulow, and Elee Deschu, Bridger-Teton National Forest; Danna Strout, Green Mountain and Finger Lakes National Forest; Caleb Hairfield, George Washington-Jefferson National Forest; Rod Fahl and Scott Hannigan, Hoosier National Forest; and Mike Miller, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest.

Wilderness Education Leadership Awards (2):

Lisa Ronald, University of Montana, Wilderness Institute

Lisa's creativity, hard work, and high standards have resulted in development of the Wilderness.net website as one of the most innovative and effective tools for managing the National Wilderness Preservation System. The site is widely used by managers and diverse publics. It provides a one-stop source of wilderness information and connects agencies and the public with the best information available on wilderness. Lisa also developed the Wilderness50 website, which served as the centerpiece of 50th anniversary events and activities, drawing together a huge coalition of partners in support of wilderness stewardship.

Sam Massman, White River National Forest, Eagle-Holy Cross Ranger District

Sam has demonstrated outstanding dedication with many years of leading wilderness education programs on the Eagle-Holy Cross Ranger District and in the Rocky Mountain Region. He has taught wilderness awareness, wilderness trail and bridge construction and maintenance, use of traditional skills, wilderness character monitoring, campsite inventory, and has served as the Region's Leave No Trace Coordinator for 6 years. Sam is chair of the Chief's Wilderness Advisory Group (WAG). Sam's dedicated work as leader, mentor, and practitioner has greatly benefited visitors, stewards, and the wilderness resource.

Line Officer Wilderness Leadership Award:

Kent Connaughton, Regional Forester, Pacific Northwest Region

Kent has strongly supported line officers in the region in ensuring they are well-trained and take ownership of wilderness stewardship decisions. Kent's passion and commitment to wilderness was reflected in his final decision to hold off on planting white bark pine in wilderness, while requiring program staff to continue working with researchers on evaluating restoration projects in wilderness. Kent exemplifies line office leadership in wilderness management by asking thoughtful questions and looking at the big picture of wilderness decisions. His approach has had lasting impact on wilderness stewards and the wilderness resource.

Please join me in congratulating all of this year's award recipients.

/s/ Thomas L. Tidwell
THOMAS L. TIDWELL
Chief