

2017 USDA Forest Service National and Southwestern Regional Volunteers & Service Awards and Recognition

In fiscal year 2017, the Forest Service engaged 115,000 volunteers and service participants across the nation. Together, they contributed 4.6 million hours valued at \$111 million and equivalent to 2,560 full time employees—nearly 10% of the Forest Service permanent workforce.

The Southwestern Region recorded its highest engagement since 2009 with 10,907 volunteers and service participants contributing 631,348 hours of service valued at more than \$15 million, about 14% of the national total. The Southwestern Region is proud to recognize these individuals, organizations and partners for their exceptional work in four categories: Enduring Service, Restoration, Leadership, and Citizen Stewardship & Partnerships.

Enduring Service



National winner: Friends of the Sandia Mountains

For over 22 years, Friends of the Sandia Mountains has provided a cadre of dedicated and hardworking volunteers that do more than we could ever imagine to enhance the enjoyment of our visitors through the many hours of service they provide in maintaining and painting facilities, felling hazard trees, building and maintaining trails, serving at Sandia Crest and Tram information centers, supporting our partners' work, such as meadow thinning and historical building restoration. As we say on the District, "Friends of the Sandia Mountains is AWESOME!" They contributed over 8500 hours in FY17, nominated by Crystal Powell, Sandia District Ranger, Cibola NF and NG.



National special recognition: Arizona Trail Association

With their army of well-trained and dedicated volunteers, for over 24 years, the Arizona Trail Association enables the Forest Service, and other agencies who manage the Congressionally-designated 800 mile Arizona National Scenic Trail, to provide quality, sustainable recreation trail opportunities to the public and to improve, maintain, and preserve this national treasure for future generations. They served over 21,000 hours in FY17, equivalent to 11 full time employees, nominated by Laura White, Arizona National Scenic Trail Administrator.



Regional recognition: The Pecos Chapter of the Back Country Horsemen

The Pecos Chapter of the Back Country Horsemen has been instrumental in keeping trails open and clear in the Manzano Mountains for over 20 years by doing back breaking work themselves and supporting other crews with their expertise. The Mountainair Ranger District is so appreciative of their continued support and partnership! Nominated by Arlene Perea, Recreation Technician, Mountainair RD, Cibola NF and NG.





Regional recognition: Santa Catalina Volunteer Patrol

The Santa Catalina Volunteer Patrol has 241 members who pride themselves in maintaining a friendly uniformed presence throughout the Santa Catalina Ranger District. For 20 years, these volunteers have impacted the estimated 1.5 million visitors each year with their knowledgeable and safety-minded “engagement with a smile” attitudes, which enhances the overall outdoor experience for all who visit. In FY17, they contributed over 29,000 hours, nominated by Sarah Corning, Visitor Center Manager and Partnership Coordinator, Santa Catalina RD, Coronado NF.



Regional recognition: Tony Beere

Tony has worked with the “Over the Hill Gang” a weekly trail work crew that meets every Thursday since the late 1990s. Tony has been a consistent member since its inception, and although many volunteers and employees have worked with the Over the Hill Gang, Tony continues to be the most steadfast part of the effort. Tony is an inspiration to all of us in his commitment to do trail work, even now while in his mid-eighties! Before donating his efforts to the Prescott National Forest, he volunteered on trails for 10 years in CA. Tony is the definition and embodiment of a great public land steward and serves

as a shining example to us all of what will and determination can accomplish. Nominated by Tony Papa, Forestry Technician, Bradshaw RD, Prescott NF.



Regional recognition: Jim McGeorge

Jim is our most dedicated volunteer, always reliable and willing to lend a hand. He has dedicated over 15 years of service to the Coconino National Forest, nominated by Paul Dawson, Recreation Forestry Technician, Flagstaff RD, Coconino NF.



Regional recognition: Georgy Namoli

Georgy has dedicated her time and efforts to the Mesa Ranger District for more than 10 years. She always brings positive energy, kindness, and a hard-working attitude to every group project that she works on. Nominated by Kelly Richards, Special Uses Administrator, Mesa RD, Tonto NF.



Restoration



Regional recognition: Friends of the Tonto

The Friends of the Tonto provide amazing support to the Tonto National Forest in recruiting volunteers, hosting trainings and orientations for new volunteers, providing financial support to fix irrigation equipment, and they maintain a highly demanding schedule of biweekly watering events to ensure the success of the newly planted milkweeds as part of the Mesa Ranger District Monarch Habitat Restoration Project. The Friends of the Tonto have dedicated 4 years of service and contributed over 1800 hours in FY17. Nominated by Kelly Richards, Special Uses Administrator, Mesa RD, Tonto NF.

Leadership



Regional recognition: Mike Salvucci

Mike is a dedicated and positive leader on the Tonto National Forest with over 4 years of service and 1800 hours contributed. He actively participates in the Superstition Wilderness Advisory Group, Superstition Wilderness Steward Program and leads the Wilderness Adopt-a-Trail Program. Nominated by Kelly Richards, Special Uses Administrator, Mesa RD, Tonto NF.

Citizen Stewardship and Partnerships



Regional recognition: Yavapai County Education Service Agency

The Yavapai County Education Service Agency's leadership and commitment to the Youth Conservation Corps program on the Prescott National Forest for eight years has ensured that this unique youth engagement opportunity is sustainable and available to a broad spectrum of you across Yavapai County, fostering education, awareness, stewardship and pride for the natural resources on public lands. Nominated by Tom Palmer, East Zone Recreation Program Manager, Verde RD, Prescott NF.



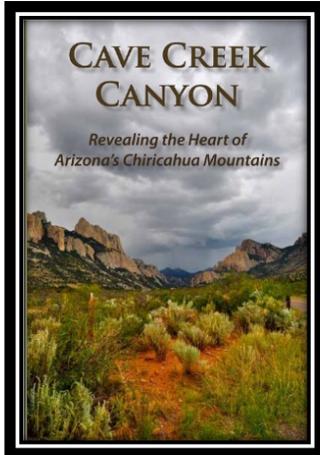
Regional recognition: Tonto Recreation Alliance

The Tonto Recreation Alliance has played a key role in assisting the Tonto National Forest to collect and analyze data, inspect routes, conduct trail maintenance and install markers along off highway vehicle routes, recruit volunteers and members, and provide quality input for the Forest’s Travel Management process. They have dedicated nine years of service and contributed more than 43,000 hours in FY17, nominated by Kelly Richards, Special Uses Administrator, Mesa RD, Tonto NF.

Regional recognition: Flagstaff Biking Organization



Since its inception in 2002, the Flagstaff Biking Organization has been a valued partner of the Coconino National Forest, by connecting people to the outdoors and strengthening community interest, through their trail advocacy and educational efforts. Flagstaff Biking Organization has raised thousands of dollars to construct and maintain sustainable trails in the Flagstaff area and promotes an active trail volunteer program to implement the Forest Service mission. Nominated by Brian Poturalski, Recreation Staff Officer, Flagstaff RD, Coconino NF.



Regional recognition: Friends of Cave Creek Canyon

The Friends of Cave Creek Canyon has become a crucial highly valued partner for the Douglas Ranger District of the Coronado National Forest in the Chiricahua Mountains, and the surrounding communities with six years of dedicated service. They continue to expand their capabilities into new areas and they regularly come alongside us to maintain facilities and provide services to visitors on the Coronado National Forest. Their outreach efforts and the public education opportunities they provide for our visitors are a highlight of any visit to Cave Creek Canyon, Portal, and the Douglas Ranger District. They contributed over 3400 hours in Fy17, nominated by Doug Ruppel, Douglas District Ranger, Coronado NF.

