

# FOIA MARKER

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Giant Sequoia Nat'l. Mon. 4/14/00

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Final 04/14/00 10:30pm  
Heather Hurlburt

4-20-00

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON**  
**ANNOUNCEMENT OF GIANT SEQUOIA**  
**NATIONAL MONUMENT**  
**SEQUOIA NATIONAL FOREST, CA**

**April 15, 2000**

CC:  
Speechwriting

4-20-00

Acknowledgements: Thank you, Alexander  
~~Reed-Krase~~. Alexander did a lot of the work to earn  
his Eagle Scout status right here in these woods. I  
also want to thank Secretary Dan Glickman; Art  
Gaffrey; Marta Macias Brown. And let me recognize  
Mike Dombeck, Chief of the Forest Service, and  
Under Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources  
and Environment Jim Lyons.

Almost 100 years ago, when Theodore Roosevelt  
dedicated America's first national monuments, he  
reminded us that we cannot improve upon our native  
landscape; "the ages have been at work on it," he  
said, "and man can only mar it."

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What you can do is keep it for your children and your children's children."

These giant sequoias are indeed the work of the ages. They grow taller than the Statute of Liberty and broader than a bus — ~~and~~ they are the largest living things on Earth. Sequoias are so perfectly adapted to their environment that one has never been known to die of old age — ~~and~~ many of the trees we saw earlier are more than 1500 years old.

Once, sequoia groves flourished across America's west.

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Today, they exist only here in the Sierra Nevada mountains; America's second national park was created in 1890 to protect them. Yet fully one-half of the <sup>remains</sup> groves lie outside the national park. And although sequoias on federal lands are currently protected from logging, the environment around them must also be protected for the great trees to grow and reproduce.

As we look toward the first Earth Day of the 21st century, it is my great honor to designate the Trail of 100 Giants, ~~more than 30 nearby sequoia groves, and~~ the magnificent forest that surrounds them as the Giant Sequoia National Monument.

These lands will continue to be managed by the U.S. Forest Service, as it once again embraces the conservation ethic that inspired its creation 95 years ago. More and more Americans are discovering their national forests as places to hike, camp, ride horses, or enjoy a few hours of quiet contemplation. Years from now, Americans will come here to do all those things, and these majestic trees will continue, as John Muir said, to preach “God’s forestry fresh from heaven.”

I know there are strong and conflicting views about the best way to manage these federal lands.

Secretary Glickman recommended that they be protected after careful analysis and consultation with residents; state, tribal and local officials; and members of Congress. The Forest Service will work closely with the local community to develop a long-term management plan for the monument. We want to ensure that all interests are respected – and that we help bring jobs and opportunity to the area. This is not about locking lands up; it's about freeing them up – for all Americans, for all time.

We are here because we recognize that these trees, like life itself, are fragile.

The sequoia's roots are surprisingly shallow, and the greatest threat to the tree's life is any disturbance to the tenuous balance between the tree and the ground that anchors it.

Thirty years ago next week, Americans came together to celebrate the first Earth Day – because they understood that we too have shallow roots on this planet, and that our future depends on the balance among all living things. The story since then is a story of the American people's determination to protect and preserve that balance.

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In the years since 1970, we have cleaned up many of our worst toxic waste sites and our waterways, <sup>and</sup> ~~We have~~ cut toxic factory emissions almost in half ~~and reduced the volume of waste we produce to a twenty-year low.~~ The American people have made environmental protection part of their daily lives – and they have demanded that government and industry act to protect our national treasures.

I'm grateful for the opportunities Vice-President Gore and I have had to act as stewards of our environment. We adopted the strongest air quality protections ever, <sup>improved the safety of drinking H<sub>2</sub>O + food,</sup>

3X  
? We cleaned up <sup>as many</sup> Superfund toxic waste sites  
as the two previous Administrations combined.

We've made record investments in public  
transportation; <sup>helped to provide a new generation of ~~infrastructure~~</sup> and launched new efforts to fight the

sprawl that threatens so many Americans' quality of  
~~to provide a new generation of infrastructure~~  
life. We've helped hundreds of communities turn

dangerous brownfields deserted by industry into safe,  
productive space. And with the strongest economy in

a generation, I believe we have put to rest decisively  
the old idea that you cannot grow the economy and

protect the environment at the same time.

We need to keep that in mind as we confront critical challenges on this first Earth Day of the 21st century.

First, we want to make sure that our nation's most beautiful places are preserved for our children's children to enjoy. Our Lands Legacy Initiative protects green spaces from the most remote mountain to the nearest city park. This year, I have asked Congress to provide \$1.4 billion to protect special places, including nearby Dillonwood Grove, the last privately-held grove of giant sequoias. These funds will also help states and communities pursue their own conservation priorities.

There is strong bipartisan support for making our Lands Legacy initiative permanent, and I am committed to working with both sides of the aisle to secure it this year.

Second, we need to invest in the future of our environment not just at home, but around the world. Tropical forests are home to more than half the known species on Earth -- yet they are being lost at the rate of more than 50 acres per minute. This year, I have proposed a Greening the Globe Initiative, to help developing countries protect their endangered forests and better manage their natural heritage.

Of course, all these efforts to preserve biodiversity will do us little good unless we act to meet the greatest environmental challenge of our new century – global warming. Scientists tell us the 1990s were the hottest decade on record. They also say that the temperature rise is at least partly caused by human activity, and that if left unchecked, global warming will result in more storms and floods, more economic disruptions, and more threats to unique habitats such as the one where we're standing.

We have got to step up our efforts to cut our own emissions of greenhouse gases and to work with others around the world to introduce clean energy technology. I urge Congress to drop its opposition, and recognize that we have the technology to cut emissions while making economies grow. Think about this. We have the technology to reduce by 85 percent the amount of energy it takes to run a refrigerator. We will soon have cars on the street that routinely get more than 60 miles to the gallon. And new technologies such as fuel cells and biofuels will give us the equivalent of hundreds of miles from every gallon of gasoline.

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What would it mean for the health of our planet if we could get that technology to developing countries, where industry is booming and people are lining up for refrigerators and cars? It would make all the difference in the world. That is why I have asked Congress for \$2.4 billion to fund local, national and international efforts to reduce greenhouse gases and fund clean technologies, and to provide tax credits for those who make a more who buy clean energy products

For more than 100 years, starting with residents of Visalia, California, Americans have fought to save the giant sequoias and other wondrous pieces of our natural heritage. Earth Day brought groups across America together on a crusade to protect our planet.

Today, even here on the Trail of 100 Giants, the global village presses ever-closer around us. We must look beyond our borders for partners and allies in the fight to combat global warming and preserve for all our children our precious natural heritage.

Here today we do our part by ensuring that, long after we are gone, these monarchs of the forest will still stand tall – rooted strong in the web of nature that sustains us all.

Thank you very much. [*sign proclamation*]