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Date: August 19, 2005

**Sequoia National Forest
Giant Sequoia National Monument**
www.fs.fed.us/r5/sequoia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SEQUOIA NATIONAL FOREST FIRE OFFICIALS CONTINUE
TO MONITOR FIRE-USE PROJECTS**

KERNVILLE, CA... Sequoia National Forest fire personnel continue to monitor the progression, fire effects and behavior on several fire-use fires. The Crag Fire, started by lightning four weeks ago, continues to benefit the ecosystem south of Albanita Meadows on the Kern Plateau. As of this morning, the Crag has grown to 325 acres.

District Ranger, Dave Freeland stated, "archery season opens tomorrow in the vicinity of the Crag. We would like the public to use caution in and around the fire and to be aware of our helicopter use." Freeland continued to remind the public, "the temporary trail closure on the Hooker Meadow Trail (#35E05) is still in effect."

A total of 10 personnel are presently assigned to the Crag, including one engine crew, one helicopter and specialized personnel. According to Chris Vero, Fire Use Manager from the Bridger-Teton National Forest in Wyoming, the fire is continuing to meet resource objectives.

Vero states, "Fire behavior continues to be moderate on the Crag, with creeping ground fire consuming 1 to 5 acres per day. The current drying conditions may show an increase in fire activity and daily acreage over the next several days." Vero continued, "the smoke from the Crag, which is light at this time, continues to be monitored. We are working closely with the San Joaquin Air Pollution Control District."

The Smith and North fire-use fires occurred during lightning storms over the Kern Plateau the first week in August. The North fire, one mile northwest of Sherman Peak, is one acre in size and continues to smolder in scattered brush and open timber. This fire is surrounded by the McNally fire of 2003. The Smith fire, west of the South Sierra Wilderness, remains less than 1/10th of an acre and has shown no activity in the last week. Vero states, "all fires will continue to be monitored and necessary actions will be taken to minimize impacts associated with the fires."

For further information, visit the Forest webpage at www.fs.fed.us/r5/sequoia or contact Cindy Thill, Fire Public Affairs at (760) 376-3781, extension 625.

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