

Bighorn sheep in the San Gabriel Mountains need your help!



***We need hikers and climbers interested in conservation
to assist in the annual survey of bighorn sheep***

Sunday, February 27, 2011
**Mount Baldy area, Lytle Creek
& surrounding canyons**

Volunteers will hike to observation sites in the San Gabriel Mountains and count and record all bighorn sheep observed. Each volunteer group will be led by an experienced observer from the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep (SCBS), California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) or USDA Forest Service. Survey participants must be at least 16 years old and capable of hiking one mile on rugged terrain, though most routes will be longer. Most of the hikes are not on trails, and may involve scrambling over boulders, climbing steep slopes, or bush-whacking through chaparral. A limited number of sites may be available for those with limited mobility.

The CDFG, Forest Service, and SCBS have been conducting annual surveys for bighorn sheep in the San Gabriel range since 1979. The mountain range once held an estimated 740 bighorn sheep, which made the San Gabriel population the largest population of desert bighorn sheep in California. The population declined over 80% through the mid 1980's but appears to be on the increase, with recent estimates showing approximately 400 bighorn sheep.

No survey experience is necessary, however, **volunteers must attend a mandatory orientation at 6:00 PM on Saturday, February 26th at Day Creek Intermediate School, Etiwanda.** Participants are encouraged to camp and hit the trails early Sunday. Volunteers should bring binoculars or spotting scopes in addition to hiking gear. Mountain weather can be unpredictable and volunteers should be prepared to spend several hours hiking and making observations in cold and windy weather. Please **call the Lytle Creek Ranger Station at 909-382-2870 no later than February 16th, to sign up and receive a volunteer information packet.**

For those who wish to camp, complimentary campsites will be available to at the Applewhite Campground in Lytle Creek on the night of February 26th.