

Thanks  
for  
another  
awesome  
year!



# 2023 Board of Directors



## **Officers**

Rex Philpot, President  
Bettye Miller, Vice President  
Dee McCoy, Secretary  
Curt Lindemer, Treasurer

## **Directors**

Kent Johnson  
Rocio Nuñez  
Andrew Sauer  
Ana Soltero  
Roxanne Smith  
Nelva Valladares  
Paul Valiukas  
Bob Williams

## **Staff**

Val Silva, Executive Director  
Dee McCoy, Office Manager  
Bob Williams, Volunteer Coordinator  
Eileen Hay, Trails Coordinator  
Roxanne Smith, Front Desk Coordinator

*Photos contributed by David Bratt, David Christian, George Crusoe, John Flippin, Don Hale, Gayle Haro, Eileen Hay, Antonio Huerta, Marlene Linsalato, Bettye Miller, Manish Pagey, Jan Pettit, Rex Philpot, James Radtke, Nikolette Reich, Jean Rogers, Michael San Filippo, Shawn Sisler, Nelva Valladares, Domenic Wager, Alfredo Zarate, and Janelle Zarate.*

*A special thank you to Jean Rogers for proofreading this yearbook.*

# From the President

It has been an honor to serve again this year as your president. For decades SGWA has put forth the effort to protect the wilderness, educate the public and maintain the trails of our wilderness. It has been my privilege to work next to many of our awesome volunteers and welcome new volunteers into the family.

With the rain totals of this last year, people visiting the wilderness have had full lakes, streams, springs, and lots of wildflowers to enjoy this year. The beauty of our wilderness is a wonder to behold and enjoy. Get out and feel the good tidings.

Thanks to all of you volunteers, who give of your time to help make SGWA work. From greeting people in our visitor centers, programs at the amphitheater, Big Falls, trail patrols, trail crews and many who work behind the scenes to help organize and keep everything going. All cannot be done without you. You all rock!

I leave you with a John Muir quote: "To sit in solitude, to think in solitude with only the music of the stream and cedar to break the flow of silence, there lies the value of the wilderness."

*Rex Philpot*



# From the Executive Director

SGWA is a family of volunteers who work together to protect the wilderness. San Geronio Wilderness is a jewel in the Southern California area. Experienced hikers come here to get prepared for long Sierra trips. Inexperienced hikers come to enjoy the wilderness and learn about getting back to nature, enjoying the serenity of the wilderness.

Wilderness is special, and so are the volunteers who help preserve it.

SGWA volunteers help promote enjoyment of the wilderness. They give information at Barton Flats, Mill Creek and on the trail. They provide educational entertainment at the Greyback Amphitheater and other events. Volunteers work to clear trails, as you will see in lots of pictures in this yearbook.

Volunteers are the protectors of our wilderness. All volunteers in this yearbook have played a part in preserving the wilderness for the enjoyment of the public and for future generations. They work hard and enjoy what they are doing; we do have fun. We urge anyone interested to sign up and join our family of Wilderness Defenders.

*Val Silva*



# The Year in Review



Hundreds of dead trees removed from trails. Backcountry patrolled and permits electronically issued. Visitor centers staffed and nature talks presented.

The 2023 season was another smashing success. Despite challenges presented by climate change – particularly damage from debris flows – SGWA volunteers made trails safer for hikers and educated the public about how to enjoy and protect the forest. Our volunteers have acquired serious skills and know how to have fun, whether it's sawing 52-inch-diameter trees with a crosscut saw or talking to amphitheater audiences about the natural world. That camaraderie and sense of

purpose are what make SGWA so awesome.

More than 140 volunteers contributed nearly 16,000 hours in the San Geronio Wilderness and Cucamonga Wilderness, which the Forest Service calculates is equivalent to more than \$508,000. Volunteers helped approximately 25,000 visitors appreciate and enjoy the forest, nearly 11,000 of them on wilderness trails.

SGWA volunteers care for the San Geronio Wilderness and surrounding areas as well as the

portion of the Cucamonga Wilderness that is managed by the San Bernardino National Forest. Volunteers picked up more than 200 bags of trash, cleared more than 60 illegal fire rings, and removed 750+ fallen trees from trails.

Interpretive programs, including outreach at outdoor festivals, educated nearly 2,000 visitors about fire safety, Leave No Trace ethics, and how to appreciate and share the forest with the plants and animals that live there. In a season shortened somewhat by the closure of Highway 38 near Heart Bar after Tropical Storm Hilary and mudslides in Forest Falls, the Barton Flats Visitor Center served approximately 3,000 people; volunteers at the Big Falls Recreation Area talked to more than 7,200 visitors; and Front Desk staff at the Mill Creek Ranger Station assisted more than 3,500 visitors.

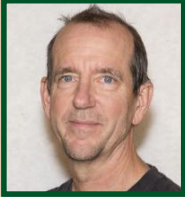


# The 300+ Club



Topping the list of volunteer hours donated in the 2023 season is **Roxanne Smith**, with more than 900 hours. Roxanne is familiar to visitors at Mill Creek Visitor Center, where she provides information about roads, hiking and picnicking; answers questions; and sells merchandise. She also serves on the SGWA Board of Directors.

**David Bratt**, with more than 800 hours, is one of our fabulous trail bosses. David surveys trails and helps identify projects before trail crews tackle them, and leads volunteers as they clear trees and repair damaged tread.



Winter, spring, summer or fall, **John Howell** likes them all as he patrols the back country. John, who donated more than 800 hours this season, is especially partial to Dry Lake, where he advises hikers about bear safety, water sources, and the best places to camp.

**Paul Eickhoff**, isn't daunted by gnarly trees blocking trails or washed-out tread. A stalwart member of our dedicated trail crew, he contributed more than 500 hours this season.



For several years **Eileen Hay** has coordinated SGWA trail projects and led a team of multi-talented trail bosses and sawyers. Her organizational and leadership skills were on display as she donated more than 500 hours.

**Antonio Huerta** is a valued member of the trail crew, donating more than 500 hours. If there's a humongous tree blocking a trail, you'll find him and his fellow sawyers ready to tackle it .



If you've wondered who picks up trash littering Mill Creek and does a variety of chores at Mill Creek Visitor Center, look no further than **John Provot**. John donated more than 500 hours.

What should you do if you run into a bear on the trail? Ask **Jean Rogers**. Jean, who contributed more than 500 hours, coordinates the Ranger Talk program and is the lead volunteer at Barton Flats Visitor Center.



**Nelva Valladares** is a cheerful and skilled trail boss who relishes the challenge of removing complicated trees and repairing damaged trail tread. She also serves on the Board of Directors. This year she donated more than 500 hours.

The job of volunteer coordinator requires attention to detail, patience, and good humor. **Bob Williams** displayed all of those skills and more as he contributed more than 500 hours this year. He also serves on the Board of Directors.



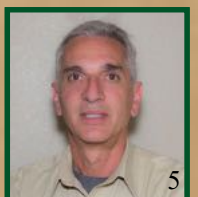
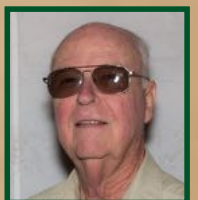
In his first year as an SGWA volunteer **Guy Burnett** donated more than 400 hours patrolling the backcountry in both the San Gorgonio and Cucamonga wilderness areas.

**John Do** is a familiar face to hikers in the Cucamonga Wilderness, checking permits and answering questions of hikers about trail conditions. John donated more than 400 hours.



Whether assessing storm damage to trails or organizing and leading a trail project, **Shawn Sisler** is a seasoned and successful trail boss. This season he donated more than 400 hours.

Have camera, will travel. **Michael San Filippo** is as known for his gorgeous photos of the backcountry as his dedication to patrolling wilderness trails and assisting hikers. He donated more than 300 hours.



# 40 Years of Service



**Val Silva**

Wherever Val Silva goes, fun and hard work are sure to follow. As SGWA's executive director, she has fostered the camaraderie and development of skilled trail volunteers for which SGWA is known. As a volunteer, she has donated more than 11,500 hours; helped recruit equestrians to patrol wilderness trails; served on the SGWA Board of Directors; and helped staff the Mill Creek Front Desk.

# 35 Years of Service

**Phebe Baty**

Phebe Baty nurtures a sense of wonder about the forest among children who visit the Barton Flats Visitor Center. She has contributed more than 3,500 hours; served on the SGWA Board of Directors; patrolled wilderness trails; and volunteered at the Mill Creek Front Desk. She also teaches others how to weave baskets using pine needles and raffia.



# 30 Years of Service

## Sandy Messner

Sandy Messner has donated more than 3,200 hours in a variety of roles. She has volunteered for wilderness patrols, staffed interpretive activities at Horse Meadows, and answered visitor questions at the Barton Flats Visitor Center, the Mill Creek Front Desk, and the Forest Festival. She also has served on the SGWA Board of Directors.



# 25 Years of Service



## Walter Roth

A certified naturalist, Walter Roth is a popular presenter of Ranger Talks at the Greyback Amphitheater. Who doesn't appreciate rattlesnakes after listening to him? Walter has contributed more than 1,600 hours in 25 years, volunteering for trail patrols and trail maintenance, and serving as coordinator of Ranger Talks.

# Protect

Extensive treefall and tread damage resulting from the 2015 Lake Fire and 2020 El Dorado Fire, as well as a wetter-than-usual winter and Tropical Storm Hilary in late August, continued to challenge SGWA trail crews in 2023. Not only were some of the trees among the largest trail crews have encountered – one measured 52 inches in diameter – avalanches and debris flows produced tangled messes of limbs that required much skill and patience to clear.

Volunteers cleared more than 750 trees and repaired more than 35,000 feet of trail in the San Geronio and Cucamonga wilderness areas, making those trails safer and more enjoyable for hikers throughout the summer.

Trail crews tackled a variety of tasks in one-day and overnight projects throughout both wilderness areas, including the removal of trees blocking trails, repairing



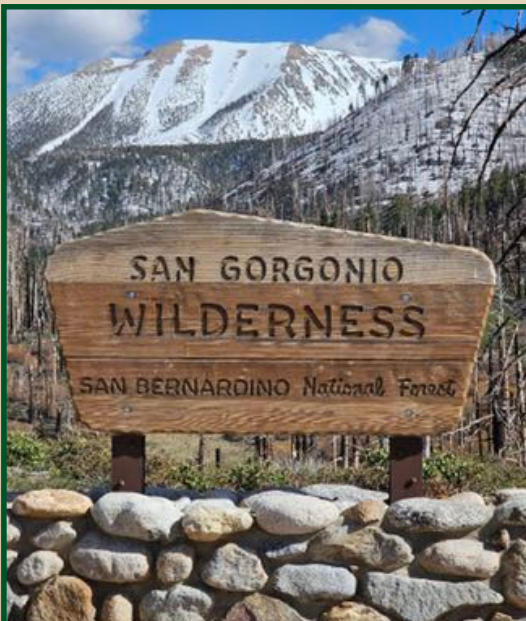
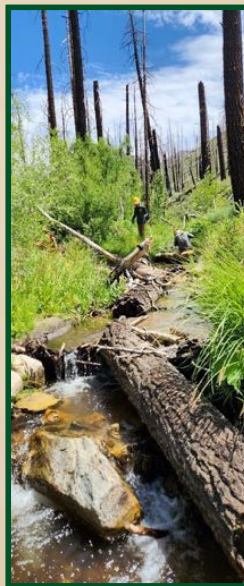


# Serve

damage to switchbacks, hauling tons of rock by hand to shore up trails with rock walls, and removing brush growing over trails.

Patrol volunteers also monitored sources of water – which were more plentiful after a wet winter – and trail conditions, and advised backpackers about the need for permits. They also dismantled more than 60 illegal fire rings, which improves fire safety in the backcountry.

SGWA issued nearly 12,500 permits electronically for day and overnight use via the online system launched in 2022, a fivefold increase over the 2022 season. The online system makes permits easier to obtain and enables SGWA to provide current information about trail conditions and issue urgent safety warnings. The issuance of many more permits suggests better compliance with USFS requirements.



# Educate

Despite the threat of Tropical Storm Hilary the Forest Festival carried on as planned, attended by new exhibitors and about 125 visitors. Participants enjoyed music, an exuberant Smokey, crosscut sawing, panning for gold, a one-legged owl named Cowboy, and a variety of exhibits highlighting the history, plants and animals of the San Bernardino National Forest.

The Forest Festival is SGWA's premier outreach event, but not the only activity that introduces our organization and the outdoors to a wider audience. In 2023 SGWA volunteers staffed booths at nature/outdoor festivals in Oak Glen, Hemet, and Prado Regional Park, where they engaged with more than 1,200 people. The Banff Mountain Film Festival, SGWA's primary fund raiser, attracted nearly 800 people in February.



# Engage

Of course, what would summer in the Barton Flats area be without Saturday-night Ranger Talks at Greyback Amphitheater? Throughout the summer more than 450 campers and other forest visitors enjoyed learning about the secret lives of bears, bats and owls, caves and mines, the history of Native Californians, and more.

Volunteers at Big Falls Recreation Area helped educate more than 7,200 visitors about how to safely enjoy and protect the forest. At the Barton Flats and Mill Creek visitor centers, volunteers answered questions about the forest, the San Geronio Wilderness, and the status of trails damaged by winter storms in the aftermath of the El Dorado Fire; explained how to access the online wilderness permit system; and helped more than 6,500 visitors enjoy their mountain experience.



# 26+ Years of Service

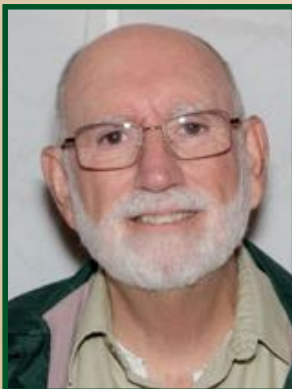
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Teddi Boston  
Ardis Beckner  
John Flippin



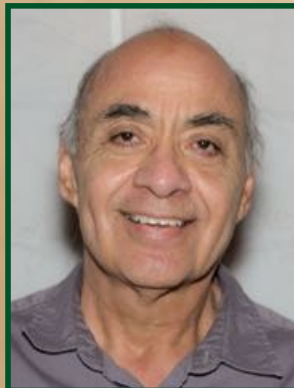
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Jeff Haggard  
Sheila McMahon  
Sandy Messner



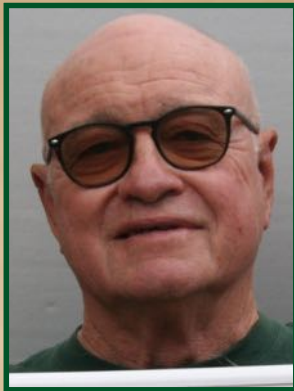
Pat Peters  
Phil Rosenkrantz  
Dan Scott  
Val Silva



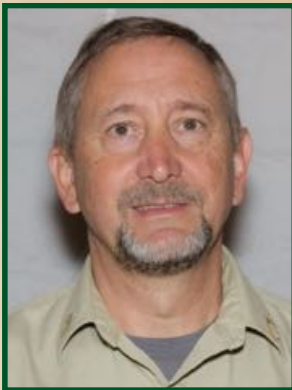
Bob Villa  
Janelle Zarate



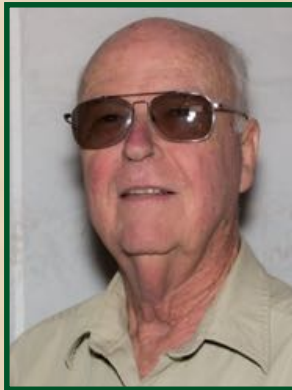
# 16-25 Years of Service



Allan Chang  
Cyndi Johnson  
Suzie Kirkwood  
Walter Kirkwood



Dee McCoy  
Linda Roddick  
Walter Roth  
Domenic Wager



Bob Williams  
Katherine Williams



# 6-15 Years of Service

Changhai Ahn  
Mike Bigness  
Rebecca Bradshaw  
David Bratt



George Crusoe  
John Do  
Mariana Elder  
Tim Elder



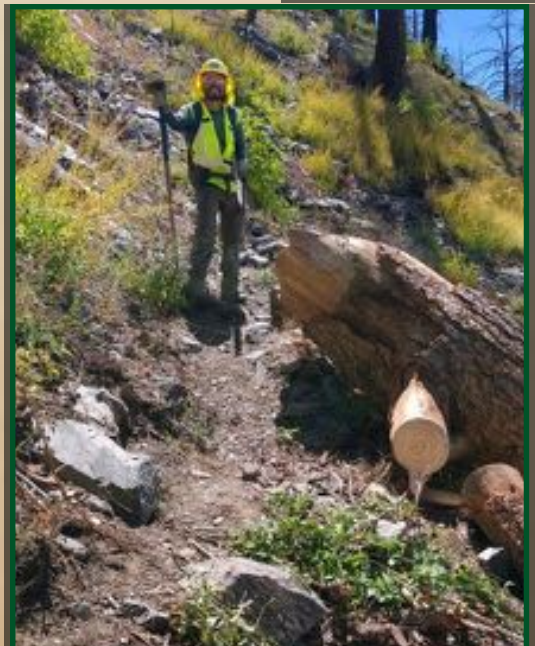
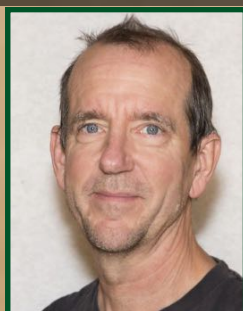
Chelsey Feierfeil  
Hope Garant  
Melinda Garcia  
Gina Griffith



Eileen Hay  
Jim Hill



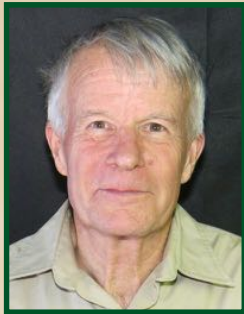
John Howell  
Rob Knox  
Not pictured:  
Mark Knight



# 6-15 Years of Service



Albert Lee  
Eliza Lee  
Marlene Linsalato  
Sarah Linsalato



Nicholas Litt  
Bob Lum  
Brenda McGee  
Lewis Merges



Bettye Miller  
Ed Nemeth  
Rocio Nuñez  
Manish Pagey



# 6-15 Years of Service

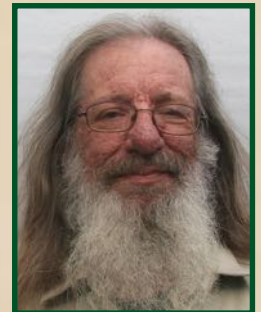
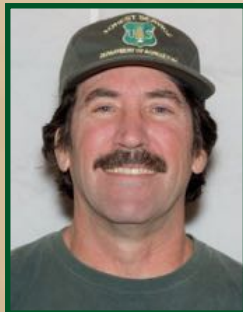
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Jan Pettit  
Rex Philpot  
Sharon Philpot



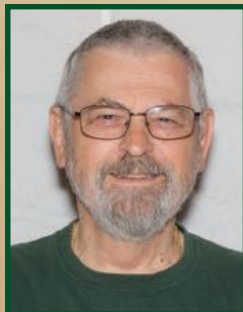
Jean Rogers  
Michael San Filippo  
David Sill  
Reidell Sill



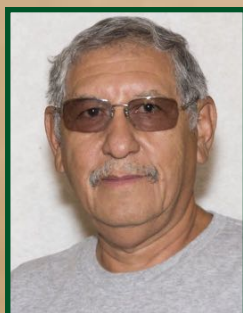
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Roxanne Smith  
Chris Sobek  
Rick Sobek



Bob Stokke  
Becky Sweet

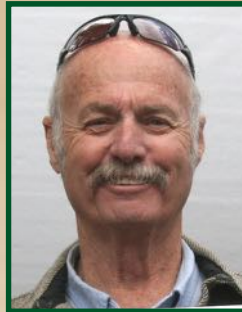
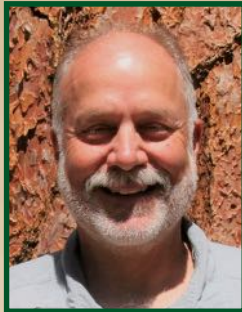


Alfredo Zarate  
Not pictured:  
Bryce Sisler

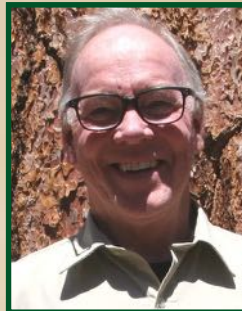
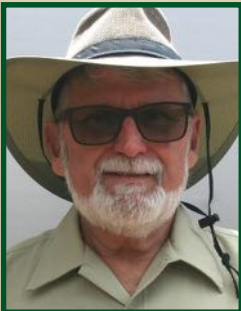




# 2-5 Years of Service



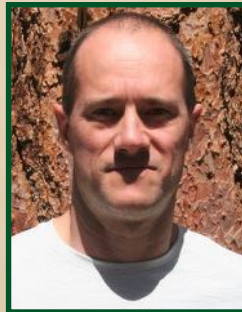
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Rex Brown  
Jeff Butler



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Bryan Clabeaux  
Ross Conklin



Greg Craft  
Shannon Cwikla  
Fabien Derache  
Paul Eickhoff



Mark English  
Cindy Foster



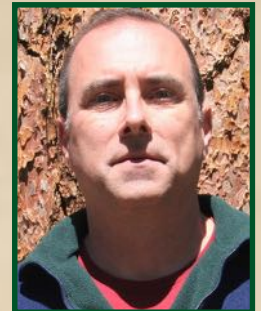
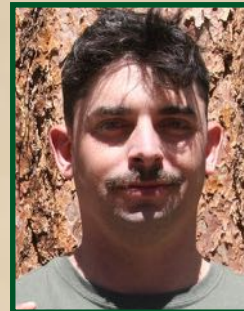
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Gayle Haro  
Not pictured:  
Chuck Churchill  
Don Hale

# 2-5 Years of Service

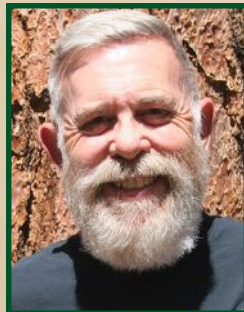
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Antonio Huerta  
Kent Johnson  
Margot Johnson



Chris Lee  
Curt Lindemer  
Louis Machado  
David Martin del Campo



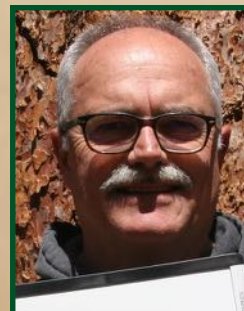
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Steve McCuen  
Justin O'Brien  
Diane Rachels



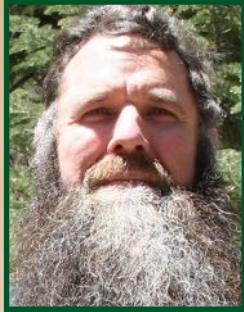
James Radtke  
Aliana Sanders  
Lorien Sanders  
Shiloh Sanders



Andrew Sauer  
David Schumacher  
Bob Sjogren  
Matt Sobek  
Not pictured:  
David Lyons, Zara  
Matheson, John  
Provot, Ken Rice



# 2-5 Years of Service



Ana Soltero  
Brent Swanson  
Jason Tontz  
Paul Valiukas



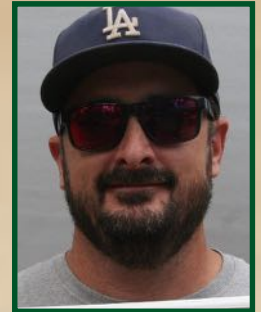
Nelva Valladares  
Brandon Wakefield  
Justin Williams



621 Ultra 5G

# Chipmunks

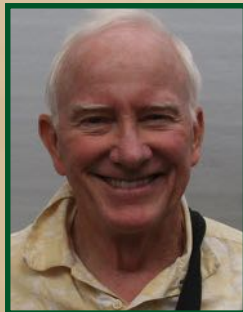
Guy Burnett  
Mitch Chivetta  
Gabriel Coulombe  
Steven Coulombe



Blake Douglas  
Debbie Dunn  
Renee Elliott  
Calius Lawrence



Sonny Lawrence  
Solomon Leung  
Jon Maaraoui  
Nikolette Reich



Rudolph Schwendiman



Sarina Schwendiman



# Chipmunks of the Year



*Guy Burnett*

These first-year volunteers each contributed more than 100 hours in 2023. They patrolled trails, worked on the trail crew, helped staff the Mill Creek Visitor Center, and volunteered at the Forest Festival. Thank you for everything you did this season. You're awesome!



*Mitch Chivetta*



*Debbie Dunn*



*Rudolph Schwendiman*



*Sarinna Schwendiman*

# Hours of Service

## 600+

David Bratt  
John Howell  
Roxanne Smith

## 500-599

Paul Eickhoff  
Eileen Hay  
Antonio Huerta  
John Provot  
Jean Rogers  
Nelva Valladares  
Bob Williams

## 400-499

Guy Burnett  
John Do  
Shawn Sisler

## 300-399

Michael San Filippo

## 200-299

Rex Brown  
David Christian  
Gayle Haro  
Albert Lee  
Steve McCuen  
Lewis Merges  
Bettye Miller  
Rex Philpot  
Matt Sobek  
Paul Valiukas

## 100-199

Valeria Aguilar  
Mitchell Chivetta  
Bryan Clabeaux  
George Crusoe  
David Martin del Campo  
Fabien Derache  
Mark English  
John Flippin  
Michael Garant  
Jim Hill  
Kent Johnson  
Mark Knight  
Curt Lindemer  
Sheila McMahan  
Rocio Nuñez  
James Radtke  
Walter Roth  
Andrew Sauer  
Val Silva  
Chris Sobek  
Rick Sobek

Robert Stokke  
Becky Sweet  
Justin Williams  
Alfredo Zarate  
Janelle Zarate

## 0-99

Changhai Ahn  
John Barnes  
Phebe Baty  
Lenny Berz  
Mike Bigness  
Teddi Boston  
Rebecca Bradshaw  
Jeff Butler  
Allan Chang  
Chuck Churchill  
Nancy Cione  
Ross Conklin  
Gabriel Coulombe  
Steven Coulombe  
Shannon Cwikla  
Greg Craft  
Blake Douglas  
Debra Dunn  
Mariana Elder  
Tim Elder  
Renee Elliott  
Chelsey Feierfeil  
Cindy Foster  
Hope Garant  
Linda Garcia  
Melinda Garcia  
Nick Garcia  
Clara Garibay  
Kevin Gregory  
Gina Griffith  
Jeff Haggard  
Don Hale  
Ben Hamada  
Heather Hill  
Cyndi Johnson  
Margot Johnson  
Suzie Kirkwood  
Walt Kirkwood  
Ronn Knox  
Calius Lawrence  
Sonny Lawrence  
Andrew Lee  
Christian Lee  
Eliza Lee

Solomon Leung  
Marlene Linsalato  
Sarah Linsalato  
Nicholas Litt  
Bob Lum  
Louis Machado  
Dan Madeo  
Jody Madeo  
Jon Maaraoui  
Zara Matheson  
Dee McCoy  
Tom McCurnin  
Brenda McGee  
Sandy Messner  
Ed Nemeth  
Justin O'Brien  
Manish Pagey  
Pat Peters  
Kyle Petterson  
Scott Petterson  
Sharon Philpot  
Diane Rachels  
Edwin Raymundo  
Nikolette Reich  
Ken Rice  
Maxwell Riech  
Linda Roddick  
Phil Rosenkrantz  
Aliana Sanders  
Lorien Sanders  
Shiloh Sanders  
David Schumacher  
Rudolph Schwendiman  
Sarinna Schwendiman  
David Sill  
Reidell Sill  
Bryce Sisler  
Dan Scott  
Bob Sjogren  
Ana Soltero  
Brent Swanson  
Jason Tontz  
Bob Villa  
Domenic Wager  
Brandon Wakefield  
Katherine Williams



