Sequoia Riverlands Trust volunteer at home in nature

By Teresa Douglass
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Sean Robinson volunteers with Sequoia Riverlands Trust to get out in the great outdoors.

At the nonprofit organization's native plant nursery, he plants native seeds into pots and later transplants them into the ground at some of SRT's six preserves in Tulare County. He also marks invasive weeds, such as milk thistle, with Global Positioning System technology so they can be removed afterward.

"They don't want non-native plants to take over," he said.

This week, he helped set up for Saturday's big SK Trail Run and Heritage Festival at the Kaweah Oaks Preserve just east of Visalia, which is owned and operated by SRT. The public is invited to attend the festival free of charge.

Next he wants to help the trust with its marketing programs. He has done online marketing for his own business, Monarch Soap.

It was his computer skills that led him to SRT in the first place. He found the nonprofit on www.meetup.com while searching for like-minded individuals. Camping and backpacking are favorite pastimes of this native Visalian.

"I like to be outdoors," he said.

Although Robinson has been volunteering for the trust for less than one year, he is making a difference, said Andrew Glazier, native plant nursery manager.

"He has done a pile of work," he said. "He's an exemplary volunteer."

Sequoia Riverlands Trust has a volunteer day from 9-11 a.m. each Thursday at one of the preserves, said Hannah Saltman, volunteer coordinator. Usually it involves planting native plants or working in the native plant nursery. Another volunteer day is offered on the second Saturday of every month to help with habitat restoration or cleanup.

Other volunteer opportunities involve helping with educational programs and field trips, invasive species removal, grant writing and communications.

"Once volunteers let me know their interest and availability, I can arrange a volunteer opportunity whenever is most convenient for them," she said.

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