



# WILDERNESS RECORD

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION

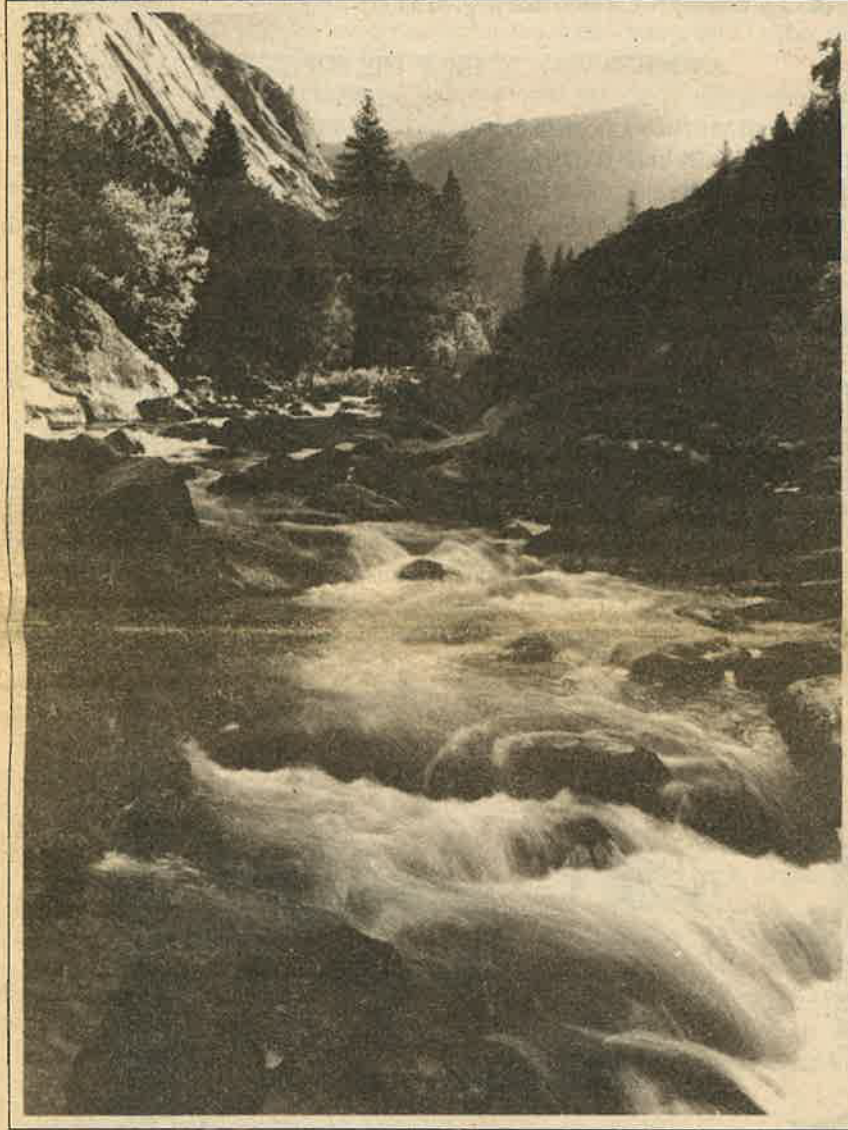
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No.6



## RIVERS GO WILD (& SCENIC)!

*By Stephanie Mandel*

Donn Furman is out of a job but he doesn't mind a bit. The Committee to Save the Kings River has met its goal: the Kings River, along with the Merced and Kern Rivers, was designated as Wild and Scenic in early November.

Furman was the Director of the Committee to Save the Kings River, a group that has been active in the Fresno area since 1972. To celebrate, "we're planning a big dedication ceremony and barbeque in the spring," he said.

Also celebrating victory is the Merced Canyon Committee (MCC), a group of residents of El Portal and Mariposa, California, that has taken the lead on saving the Merced River since 1984, as well as Friends of the River (FOR). Since early 1985 FOR has been focusing on its Three Rivers Campaign, which encompassed the Kings, Merced, and Kern Rivers. FOR's letter writing campaigns generated thousands of letters of support from people all over the state. Susan LeFever, director of the campaign, said that when the Wild and Scenic bills were signed into law "we drank a toast to the rivers. FOR is also having a big celebration dance in San Francisco on January 23," she added.

There's Still Preserving  
Work To Be Done

### Merced River

Now protected are 71 miles of the main stem of the Merced and 43 miles of the South Fork.

For the Merced Canyon Committee, the next step is "rolling up our sleeves and getting to work on the lower river," according to Ron Stork, a board member and former director of the MCC. He refers to eight miles of the main stem river, downstream from Briceburg to Lake McClure, that were designated a "Study River." The U.S. Bureau of Land Management and Department of the Interior have up to three years to make a recommendation to Congress about permanent designation. From now until three years after the recommendation is made, the river will have all the protections of a Wild and Scenic river. Stork is "cautiously optimistic" that the MCC can overcome the opposition of water developers to protect this portion.

### Kings River

81 miles of the Kings River was included in the Wild and Scenic bill.

The lower eleven miles of the Kings River were designated part of the Kings River Special Management Area, rather than Wild and Scenic. Conservationists, including Friends of the River and the Committee to Save the Kings, are still

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## Tiny Portion of Wild Lands Studied by Bureau Recommended for Preservation

*By Jim Eaton*

The Bureau of Land Management has released wilderness recommendations for eight Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) in California. In keeping with the anti-wilderness bias of the agency, less than 16 percent of nearly 11,000 acres of wild lands is recommended for preservation.

Public hearings have been scheduled for December 1 in Cedarville, December 2 in Ukiah, and December 9 in Bakersfield, although notice of the hearings was almost non-existent. Written comments will be accepted until February 15, 1988.

The lands currently under review had been dropped from study by former Interior Secretary James Watt in December of 1982.

Six major environmental groups and the late Rep. Phillip Burton challenged Watt's decision in court. In April of 1985 U.S. District Court Judge Lawrence Karlton ruled that Watt had not properly exercised his legal authority in opening these lands to development.

The WSAs in this study all are adjacent to designated or proposed wilderness areas. They range in size from 80 to 4,500 acres. The eight areas are:

**South Warner Contiguous WSA**—This WSA consists of nine separate parcels totaling 4,500 acres located along the east face of Modoc County's Warner Mountains. They are adjacent to the 70,385-acre South Warner Wilderness managed by the U.S. Forest Service. BLM

is recommending that 1,187 acres (26 percent) of this WSA be added to the existing wilderness area.

**Big Butte WSA**—When Congress enlarged the Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness in 1984, most of the Big Butte WSA was added to the much larger Forest Service wilderness to the east. The 2,311 acres now under study is that portion of the WSA which did not become designated wilderness in 1984. BLM is recommending none of the land as suitable for wilderness designation.

**Yolla Bolly WSA**—This 640-acre parcel of land is on the east side of the Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness. If it were to become wilderness, BLM says that "while developments in support of activities such

as recreational ORV [Off-Road Vehicle] use, mining, and grazing would be prohibited, these activities currently do not occur

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### INSIDE: -----

- Mt. Lion hunt cancelled
- Timber industry twists truth
- Dr. Suess' Lorax
- Wilderness Quiz Question

## COALITION REPORT

By Jim Eaton

On Halloween day, the Coalition hosted a "Preserving Public Lands" workshop, a gathering of activists working to protect Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) outside of the California Desert. Costumes were optional.

Volunteer activists from as far away as Tulare County and southern Oregon attended the one-day event. Don Falk of Desert Survivors explained the ins and outs of interim management of WSAs, including how to protest and appeal poor BLM decisions. Case studies of appeals filed on the King Range and Pit River Canyon WSAs were presented by Jay Watson of The Wilderness Society and myself.

Topics of other sessions included administration recommendations, citizen wilderness proposals, legislative strategy, and coordination of activist efforts. Sierra Club staff and activists, including Sally Kabisch, Stan Weidert, John Hopkins, and Herb Klarer, shared their knowledge and experience with others.

After a homemade Mexican dinner the group settled back to wine, beer, and slides. Slide shows of threatened BLM areas in Colorado and the California Desert were

shown, as well as presentations of proposed wilderness lands in Cedar Roughts in Napa County and the Soda Mountains in southern Oregon and Siskiyou County (and to be featured in an upcoming issue of the Wilderness Record).

This training session followed a successful spring workshop on forest planning issues. Due to the enthusiastic response from member groups and activists, the Coalition is planning another one-day workshop next spring to focus on how northern Californians can help with the effort to protect the California Desert.

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Back in 1983 a young woman *demanded* to be an intern for the Coalition, becoming our expert on BLM issues. She later worked for Debbie Sease in the Sierra Club's Washington, D.C., office. Twice she returned to D.C. to represent the CWC at congressional hearings overseeing the BLM's management of our public lands.

Many of you have read articles by Mary Scoonover or seen her name in the credits of this newsletter. She now has achieved another goal by graduating from law school and passing the bar exam. Congratulations Mary!

## UPDATES

### Forest Service Asks for Cash & Muscle

Operation Pheonix is the name of a program soliciting money and volunteer labor from the public to restore fire-damaged lands. In an unprecedented call for help, the Forest Service (FS) and the California Department of Forestry are asking Californians to make contributions to supplement regular and emergency funding for fire recovery efforts.

Most recovery efforts that volunteers can help with require physical labor, such as planting trees, repairing trails, or restoring streams. Most of the work will not begin until spring and summer, and will probably continue for several seasons.

Monetary donations can be tied to a specific use, such as planting new trees, restoring streams and wildlife habitat, or repairing trails and recreation areas.

"Nature will eventually restore these lands," said Paul Barker, FS's Pacific Southwest regional forester. "However, to speed the process up, and minimize further damage from erosion and other problems, we would like to give nature a boost."

#### ANOTHER WAY TO HELP THE FORESTS

Another suggestion of how labor and money can be used to give nature a boost was given by Jim Eaton of the California Wilderness Coalition (CWC): "Stop the unwise timber harvests that are more destructive than fires." Individuals and groups are working all over the state to monitor post-fire timber salvage practices. "The CWC will help anyone find out what's going on in their favorite forest," Eaton offered.

### Mountain Lions Saved Again!!

A court ruling may spell the end for the mountain lion hunting season this year. A Superior Court Judge ruled as insufficient a cumulative impact finding that was submitted by the State Department of Fish and Game (DFG).

Judge McCabe called the finding a "churning" of previous material, and said it failed to address such important issues as the impact of recent forest fires and plans for future kills. The finding was produced rapidly in response to Judge Lucy McCabe's earlier ruling that delayed the hunting season, which was originally to have begun in October.

State Deputy Attorney General Dennis Smaage, who represented the DFG, said he would urge the Fish and Game Commission to appeal the decision but said the ruling probably will prevent any hunting this year.

The hunt would have been California's first in 16 years.

### Truth Twisted by Timber Industry to Justify Faster Salvage Cutting

By Jay Watson

In an attempt to legitimize its zeal to maximize salvage logging in our national forests, the timber industry is resorting to a gross simplification of what is, in fact, a complex situation.

The focus of the industry's argument is the exaggerated threat of pest infestation and wood deterioration. The flaw with the industry's "reasoning" is that it ignores biological reality and the physical properties of trees. It also runs counter to the official Forest Service position on these threats.

Conifer species differ widely in their capacity to fight deterioration. Tree species, trees size, and burn intensity are all important factors that must be taken into account before estimating deterioration rates. Refer to Table I for a summary of deterioration information and salvability periods of important commercial species.

As for pest infestation, the implication of the industry's arguments is that all 1.5 billion board feet of the estimated salvageable timber is immediately at risk of insect attack. Forest Service research has shown that insects preferentially attack trees in burned areas, concentrating on islands of moderately damaged trees within a burn

zone or along the edges of a burn zone.

A second pest-related claim is that burned areas will act as reservoirs for insects, from which insects eventually will spread to undamaged trees outside burn areas. The Forest Service has refuted this statement in its salvage guidance packets to the individual forests. An October 9, 1987 packet contains the following statement:

"We do not believe that the recent fire siege significantly increases the potential for major bark beetle problems in undamaged stands outside the burns in 1988 or 1989."

Certain trees or groups of trees are at risk. Due to two years of relative drought, trees are moisture stressed, and this factor complicates the situation. However, the timber industry is misrepresenting the gravity of the situation in an attempt to mask its eagerness to salvage every "stick" possible, in as short a period of time as possible. Their arguments are a lot of bark — don't buy 'em.

*Jay Watson is Regional Associate for California and Nevada for The Wilderness Society and a member of the Board of Directors of the California Wilderness Coalition.*



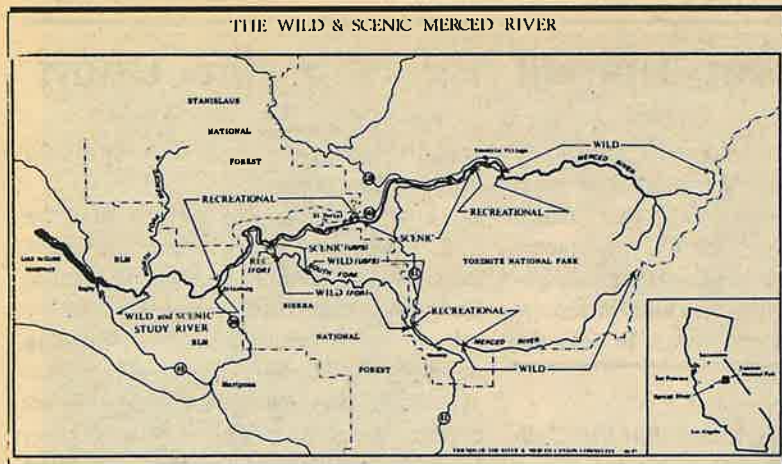
Table I Wood Deterioration Rates and Salvability Periods

| Species | Blue-stain | Sapwood                 | Heartwood         | Salvage Period<br>Ave & Large Trees |
|---------|------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| WF      | -          | very thick, rapid decay | rapid decay       | 1-2 4 years                         |
| PP/JP   | +          | thick, slow decay       | thin, slow decay  | 2-3 5 years                         |
| SP      | +          | thin, slow decay        | thick, slow decay | > 5 10 years                        |
| DF      | -          | thin, slow decay        | thick, slow decay | > 10 20 years                       |

WF: white fir  
PP/JP: ponderosa pine/Jeffrey pine  
SP: sugar pine  
DF: Douglas fir

Source: United States Forest Service

Save this date: October 19-22, 1989 is the California Wilderness Conference!



### 3 rivers continued from p. 1

trying to protect these miles of river. They have asked the Forest Service, as part of its plan for the Management Area, to make a recommendation on whether the 11 miles, plus the single unprotected mile above the reservoir, should be Wild and Scenic.

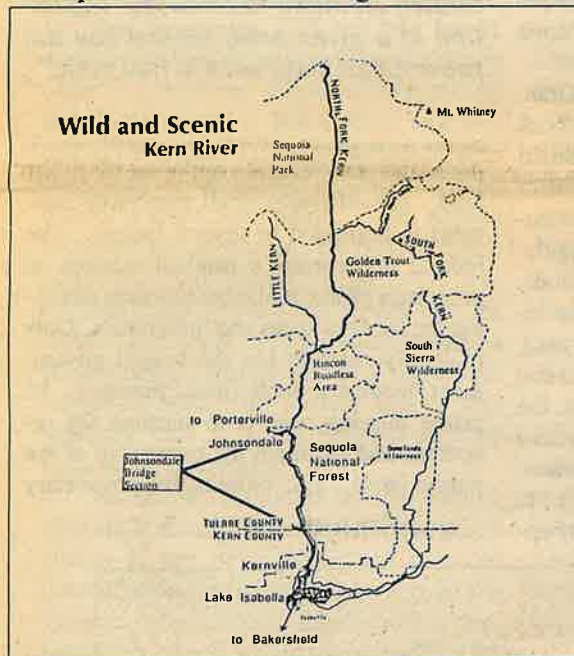
While further planning takes place on the lower section, Congress specifically prohibited building a dam, and Furman is confident that a dam will never be built on the river. The Committee to Save the King's original goals were to stop the dam and to get recognition for the river. Although the Committee never pushed for it, 49,000 acres of the canyon's wilderness were also protected.

In the long term, the group would like to see the expansion of Kings Canyon National Park. "There's lots of de facto wilderness around the river," Furman pointed out.

#### Kern River

A total of 78.5 miles of the North Fork Kern and 72.5 miles of the South Fork were designated Wild and Scenic.

A management plan for the river will be put together by the Sequoia National Forest. Part of this plan the classification of segments of the river as wild, scenic, or recreational. The uses that are allowed and prohibited on a river segment depend on its classification. Friends of the River, the lead group that worked on the Kern protection, plans to oversee the Forest Service's classifications on the South Fork of the Kern, but otherwise intends to reduce its role in what happens to the river. "Most of it (the management plan) is going to be up to the local people," said Susan LeFever.



The major controversy is expected to be in Monarch Meadows along the South Fork, where conservationists fighting to add this land to the South Sierra Wilderness want to see the river designated as "wild." The Lower Kern, below Lake Isabella, is not affected by the recent designation.

The Lower Kern, below Lake Isabella, is not affected by the recent designation.

The Lower Kern, below Lake Isabella, is not affected by the recent designation.

## PUBLIC LANDS

### Klamath, Stanislaus Forest Plans Delayed

As the Forest Service bureaucracy continued to work on cranking out the forest plans called for by the 1976 National Forest Management Act, nature threw a monkeywrench in the schedule. The 1987 fires substantially altered forests, and different resources call for different plans.

Does the forest planning process take into account the possibility of catastrophic events? Conservationists have asked Regional Forester (head Forest Service honcho in California) Paul Barker to see that fires, floods, and windstorms be fully evaluated and factored into calculations providing for a sustained yield of timber in national forest plans.

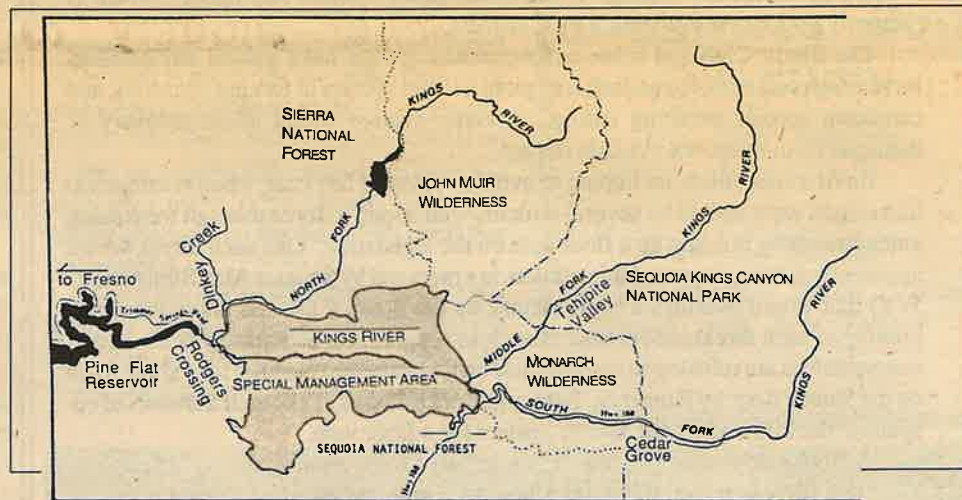
The state of planning in four of the most charred national forests is summarized below.

**Six Rivers National Forest**— Due to the small size of the burned area (outside of the Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness Area, which had the biggest fire), the Forest Service is not planning to make any significant changes in the forest plan that currently is being put together. Outside of the wilderness area 2,000 acres were burned. The draft plan comment period closed in May 1987, with 8,700 responses received. The final report is due to be released late in 1988.

**Stanislaus National Forest**— It was ready for printing, but due to extensive burning the final forest plan has been delayed at least a year. By late fall of 1988 either a new draft or a supplement will be released for public comment. Of the 147,095 burned acres, over sixty percent were hit by moderate- to high-intensity fires. This change in the resource base will substantially alter timber cutting plans, according to the Forest Service.

**Klamath National Forest**— Originally due in mid to late 1988, the draft plan has been delayed for an unknown period. Over 280,000 acres burned in the Klamath.

**Shasta-Trinity National Forest**— The revised draft forest plan is due to be released late next summer. The Forest Service is updating its database and the plan will take into account changes on the 92,000 acres that were burned.



## A View of Fire Suppression

by Jim Eaton

In mid-October a group of us, including Sierra Club Northern California Rep. Sally Kabisch, her assistant Frannie Waid, and northcoast activist Lynn Ryan, spent a few days wandering around the King Range. The King Range National Conservation Area, managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is part of the Lost Coast of southern Humboldt and northern Mendocino counties.

This trip had been planned for months, but just prior to our jaunt an interesting sequence of events occurred:

1) BLM sent us notice that in order to be better able to fight fire, they intended to build

seven helispots (helicopter landing pads) inside the Wilderness Study Area (WSA);

2) the California Wilderness Coalition and The Wilderness Society protested this decision, stating that the environmental analysis of the project did not justify this action in a proposed wilderness area;

3) a "freak" lightning storm in early October ignited two small fires in the King Range; and

4) three helispots, several safety clearings, and miles of fire line were cut in the WSA. The fires went out without reaching the fire lines.

Our group hiked around the devastated area, and wondered why so much vegetation was cut to suppress two small fires that never

spread out the canyon they were in. I began to get paranoid about whether or not lightning really *did* set these fires in the first place.

When I returned home, I got a phone call from BLM asking if I would participate in a field trip to look at the clearings and to discuss why these actions were taken. Never being one to turn down an opportunity to visit a wild place, I accepted.

In mid-November I joined Patty Schifferle (The Wilderness Society), Don Falk (Desert Survivors), and Susie Van Kirk (Sierra Club) on a tour with BLM and California Department of Forestry [CDF] officials. We drove to the scene of the fires. Unfortunately, the mountains were cloaked with a dense mist which turned into heavier and heavier rain as the day went on. I was glad that I had seen the fire lines and clearing

on a sunny day.

Despite the cloudy atmosphere, I must admit I learned a lot. I was pleasantly surprised at how candid the BLM and CDF employees were. Their main concern about a fire in the WSA is that it might spread to private property and structures outside the public lands. They agreed that fire was a natural and beneficial event in the wilderness.

Patty and I questioned the wisdom of plunking down firefighters by helicopter in steep chaparral country. We were told that this would be done only under very calm conditions to stop a fire before it spread.

I wondered about how successful a fire line could be, considering the dense chaparral and forest in this area. We were told that ...continued on p. 7

# State's Right to Regulate Mining in National Forest Upheld By Supreme Court

By Lora Moerwald

Few parents are ever in total agreement about decisions regarding their children. Mom says yes. Dad says no. There are no formal "rules" regarding resolution of conflicts like these, since these are private family matters. But what happens when federal and state governments disagree about decisions regarding management of federal public lands? Both governmental caretakers share the same critical "dual regulation" of public land as parents do for their children. What happens when the U.S. Forest Service says yes, and the California Coastal Commission says no? Early in March of this year, the U.S.

their locations," if he or she complies with the requirements of the Mining Act and other related regulations.

In 1980, Granite Rock submitted to the U.S. Forest Service a detailed five-year plan of operations for the removal of substantial amounts of limestone from the area. Shortly after the Forest Service prepared, modified, and approved the environmental assessment of the plan, Granite Rock began operations in the area.

The State of California became involved in Granite Creek's five year plan because under the California Coastal Act, any person

undertaking any development (including mining) in California's coastal zone must obtain a permit from the California Coastal Commission (CCC). The CCC implements and enforces the state's coastal zone management program in accordance with the federal Coastal Zone Management Act. In 1983, the

**"Granite Rock...argued that the California Coastal Commission's permit requirement was preempted — or overruled — by federal law."**

CCC instructed Granite Rock to obtain a coastal development permit for its operations in the Big Sur region.

Unhappy with CCC's permit requirement, Granite Rock took the issue to court. The company argued that the California Coastal Commission's permit requirement was preempted — or overruled — by federal law (the Mining Act and the Coastal Zone Management Act). The U.S. Supreme Court disagreed, and determined that the State of California could regulate mining in a national forest located along the California coastal zone.

The Supreme Court responded to Granite Rock's three allegations. Granite Rock first alleged was that the federal government's environmental regulation of mining claims in national forests demonstrated an intent to preempt any state regulation. According to former court decisions, when Congress clearly demonstrates an intent to dominate regulation in a given area, federal law will preempt all state laws in that area. The Supreme Court found that the Forest Service regulations not only lacked specific expression of Congressional intention to preempt state law, but also seemed to imply that whoever submitted a plan of op-

erations would also comply with any related state law as well.

Granite Rock also alleged that the CCC's permit requirement was "an impermissible state land use regulation" because Congress intended to serve a purely advisory role in management decisions regarding public lands. The Supreme Court again disagreed, holding that the CCC's permit requirement was an act of environmental regulation of development activities, not a land use planning activity.

Finally Granite Rock alleged that the Coastal Zone Management Act was proof of legislative intent that federal lands be excluded from all state coastal zone regulations because the act excluded federal lands from its definition of "coastal zone." The Supreme Court found no preemptive intent in the Coastal Zone Management Act, nor in the Mining Act of 1872.

The Granite Rock case joins not more than a handful of other cases questioning

**"when Congress clearly demonstrates an intent to dominate regulation in a given area, federal law will preempt all state laws in that area."**

dual state and federal regulation of public land. The relatively small number of decisions is attributed to several factors. The federal government's original mission as proprietor of the public lands was to distribute the lands to states and individuals. Only relatively recently has the federal government become a public lands manager. Its prime mission now is to manage the resources and maintain the ownership of the public lands. This more active proprietary

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## Strengthened Endangered Species Act Awaits Votes on the House & Senate Floor

By Terry Callahan and Mark Palmer

Under the Reagan administration, protection of endangered species has suffered due to lack of commitment and uncertain funding. Environmentalists are seeking to reverse this trend by adding strengthening amendments and higher funding authorization ceilings to the Endangered Species Act (ESA), which is currently up for reauthorization by Congress.

The Sierra Club and other environmental groups have gained amendments increasing protection for endangered plants, listed species in foreign countries, and candidate species awaiting listing. Another change would allow recovery of damages from those who violate the act.

Environmentalists are hoping to avoid a replay of last year, when reauthorization efforts were stalled by several senators who hoped to force through weakening amendments by holding up a floor vote on the legislation. One such threat, which apparently is being repeated this session, is a proposal by Senator Alan Simpson (R-WY) that would overturn a court victory by the Sierra Club and allow increased hunting of such threatened predators such as gray wolves and grizzly bears. Environmentalists are refusing to compromise on this issue and pushing for a showdown on the Senate floor by February. Supporters are asked to 1) ask their Senators to co-sponsor the bill, and 2) ask Senate leaders for a floor vote.

A House floor vote is tentatively scheduled for December 8.

New ESA provisions that have been won in both houses of Congress are:

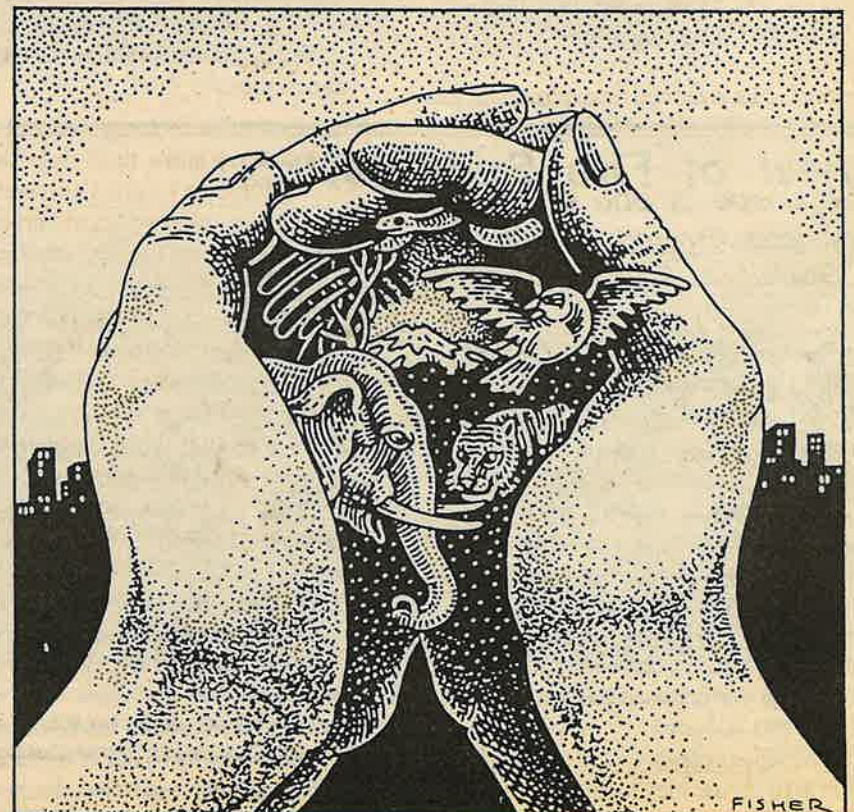
A gap in the ESA is the minimal protection provided for endangered plants. This provision would forbid vandalism of plants on federal lands. The intentional damage or removal of listed plants on private property in violation of state laws forbidding trespass or theft would become a federal offense.

Over 80 species have become extinct while waiting to be placed on the Endangered Species List. This provision would require closer monitoring of the nearly one thousand candidate species known to be heading for extinction but not yet listed. The US Fish & Wildlife Service would have to use existing emergency powers in the act to list a species if there was an imminent threat to its existence. Such a system would help set priorities for listing, determine when emergency listing is warranted, and prevent species from becoming extinct while waiting for paperwork to be processed.

The House bill adds an amendment championed by Rep. Claudine Schneider (R-RI) that would raise fines levied against those who harm endangered species.

Many endangered species are not being adequately protected because of insufficient funding. The current reauthorization bills will set funding limits for implementation of the act through fiscal year 1992. Congress is required not to budget monies for endangered species programs in excess of these ceilings. The current bills would set limits of \$55 million in fiscal year 1988 and about \$10 million more by fiscal year 1992. The next president would be limited by these amounts.

*Terry Callahan and Mark Palmer serve on the Sierra Club Wildlife Committee.*





A hiker pulls a raft along the Sespe "corridor," near the river's West Fork. This section, between Alder Creek and Devil's Gate, runs through a condor sanctuary.

Photo by Timothy Teague/Ron Seba

## NEW MEMBER PROFILE

### "Keep The Sespe Wild" Group Works to Save Hiking & Hot Springs Near L.A.

Willow branches turn colors in the winter, and there are house-sized purple boulders. "It's one of the most spectacular places I've seen," photographer Timothy Teague says of the Sespe River.

The Sespe runs wild and free for 51 miles in the rugged backcountry of Ventura County, California. From its source high among the pines, it flows south and east through spectacular scenery, accessible only on foot or by horseback, its pools offering bountiful trout for fishing. Past ancient Chumash Indian sites and the popular Sespe hot springs, the river turns to the south and, swelling with winter rains, surges into the Condor Sanctuary. There it roars through a colorful gorge reminiscent of a Southwest canyon, strewn with smooth twenty foot boulders, until it finally emerges into the flatlands of civilization.

The Sespe is one of the last free flowing rivers in Southern California. The unspoiled quality of the Sespe watershed provided habitat for the California Condor and the last spawning grounds in the area for native rainbow trout. The river can be explored all the

**"The Sespe is one of the last free flowing rivers in Southern California."**

way on foot and some of the way on horseback, providing an outstanding wilderness recreation experience. Archaeologically, the whole length of the river shows evidence of prehistoric settlements and rock art sites.

A core of ten or so Ventura County residents has been working together as Keep the Sespe Wild (KSW). The organization is non-hierarchical, with each member working in their area of expertise. Timothy Teague, an active member, explained that one person who has a computer keeps a mailing list, another takes photographs, and another, who

is good at details, keeps details. They're also low-budget, working out of their homes. Financial support has come from Lost Arrow Corp./Patagonia founder and owner Yvon Chouinard, who rates the Sespe as "one of the best whitewater streams in California." Chouinard covered over 30 miles of the Sespe on a kayak during high water in April.

The group faces opponents such as the California Farm Bureau, county water districts, and several city councils, who reacted against the draft Los Padres Forest Plan. That plan recommended that 25 miles of the Sespe, from Lion's Campground to Devil's Gate in Fillmore, be designated wild and scenic. KSW would like to see 41 miles of the river remain wild.

Although no concrete plans for dams have emerged, members of the KSW have attended private meetings at which dam sites were discussed. Ventura County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state, and Teague is convinced that the Sespe water is targeted to support urban growth in the agricultural county.

The group is focusing its efforts on getting letters written to Congressional representatives. They show their slide show to groups of people and have distributed hundreds of their photo-packed brochures. They're also planning to train budding Sespe activists to give letter-writing talks. Teague hopes that with enough public support a Congressperson will take an interest in the area and carry a wild and scenic bill.

To get to the Sespe River, take Highway 33 to the Rose Valley turnoff, and then to the locked gates at Lion Campground. Hike down the paved road until you reach the water, then downstream along the bank or the trail. Twelve miles downstream is Willet Hot Springs, 18 miles down is Sespe Hot Springs, the hottest natural springs in the state. A quicker route to the springs is to drive through Fillmore to the Old Condor Observatory at Doe Flat, and then follow a well marked trail 12 miles to Sespe Hot Springs.

## helispots continued from p.3

a line would be of use only if a back fire could be set to burn towards the wild fire. Setting such a back fire would only be possible under wind conditions that are probably rare in this region.

We also asked if putting out these fires under mild conditions would lead to a buildup of chaparral that could help lead to a major fire that could not be stopped. Their answer? Yes.

Now that was interesting. I've always felt that in many parts of California, when conditions are right, fires are going to burn. And burn. And they won't be put out until the weather conditions change. After all, fires have jumped the penultimate fire line, Interstate 5, when the hot winds were blowing hard. Here were the CDF and BLM fire fighters agreeing with me! Their charge is to contain wild fires, and they believe that the King Range is so narrow that they cannot allow fires to burn there. So, they will continue to put out the small fires here until the big one roars out to consume nearby Shelter Cove or the farms along the Mattole River.

So how do I feel now about helispots and the way the October fires were fought?

The King Range is a unique place. Not many parts of California get 100+ inches of rain a year, and the scars made by the fire fighters will not remain apparent for long. This especially is true since BLM Area Manager John Lloyd insisted that bulldozers not be used in the WSA, so the fire lines were cut by crews with hand tools. We saw evidence of the land's healing process while on a hike on nearby Chemise Mountain, the scene of a major fire a decade ago that is mostly obscured by the dense chaparral that has returned.

I still am not convinced, however, that helispots are needed in anticipation of future fires. It seems to me that most of the fires that start will not do so under the calm conditions

needed for these pads to be used. And if such conditions do exist, clearings can be made at that time.

If seven helispots will help prevent fires from spreading, why wouldn't seventy or seven hundred be that much better? How about fire lines along all the ridges? Can't we convert the chaparral to grass or some other plant that won't burn as hot?

At some point the land ceases to be wilderness and becomes a manipulated landscape. I am not sure where that threshold is, but I do think it is better to err on the side of preservation. We either are going to keep some of California's lands natural, fire danger or not, or we are going to resign to land managers mucking around with our native ecosystems with unknown results.

I vote for the wilderness option.

*Jim Eaton is the Executive Director of the California Wilderness Coalition.*

## Wilderness Quiz Question by Jim Eaton

*What California  
Wilderness Area was  
signed into law twice?*



A hiker in the Sespe River Corridor.

Photo by Tim Teague/Ron Seba

## WILDERNESS WILDLIFE

## Great Gray Owls

By Justin Teeguarden

With vision a million times better and hearing a hundred times better than ours, the great gray owl glides effortlessly and soundlessly through the cool night air, searching the darkened meadow below for prey. A mysterious and rarely seen bird, the California population of the great grays is the most southernly in the world. The owl's population has been dwindling in California as a result of timber harvesting and grazing practices on U.S. Forest Service land, and it was placed on the state's endangered species list in 1980.

Standing 22 inches high and having a wingspan of 5 feet, the great gray owl is an impressive bird. In California the owl lives in the band of forest between 4,500 feet and 8,000 feet in elevation, the meadows therein being their primary hunting grounds. Starting at dusk, the owls hunt into the night, feeding on mice and pocket gophers. The

production of snags, on which the owls nest, would be reduced. Another problem is that with the loss of trees, the forest will warm up in the nesting area. While incubating, mother owls may be forced to leave the nest to cool off, leaving the nest vulnerable to attack.

The current status of the great gray owl in California is somewhat precarious. The largest concentration of the owls is in Yosemite National Park. The actual number of birds in Yosemite and California is not agreed upon. Winter, who conducted a back country census of the owls in Yosemite this summer, estimates the park's population at between 75 and 100. Based on an extrapolation of this population, he estimates the California population of the owl to be near 300.

Winter and the research team continue to count the owls in Yosemite Park. They are also working to determine where the birds live and how they use space. To learn about



A great gray owl.

Photo by Mason Reid

owls nest within 200 to 300 yards of the meadow in which they hunt, utilizing dead trees with flat broken off tops, or snags, for nesting sites. Eggs are usually laid by the last week in April. The young hatch in late May and are flying by the end of June.

The series of wildfires that raged throughout California early this fall probably did not affect this year's brood of owls, according to biologist John Winter. Winter has been tracking great gray owls for 20 years and is senior project researcher of a team from the University of California at Davis which has been studying the great grays in Yosemite. He explained that the big fires came in August, well after young owls are flying in June.

The fires, however, may cause problems for the owls in subsequent years. Fire may reduce the populations of the owls' rodent prey. Also, the fire may have killed trees in the owls' primary nesting habitat. This in itself poses two problems, said Winter. First, the death of the trees means that the natural

range of the owls' feeding, nesting, and roosting areas, a method called telemetry is used, which involves putting radio collars on some owls. Another area of research is to study day roost characteristics to find out whether heat stress limits the owls' latitudinal range.

*Justin Teeguarden is studying Biochemistry at the University of California, Davis.*



*Leave your mark!*  
Write for the *Wilderness Record*



Just call the California Wilderness Coalition. Ask for Stephanie.

## wild study areas

continued from p. 1

in the WSA and are not anticipated in the future." Nevertheless, BLM is proposing that no wilderness be designated here.

**Domeland WSA**—The 2,209 acres in this WSA adjoin the Domeland Wilderness managed by the Forest Service. The land is located in Kern County, just across the South Fork of the Kern River from the community of Onyx. BLM opposes wilderness here because "Sequoia National Forest expressed concern about the potential for increasing trespass vulnerability to the USFS Domeland Wilderness Area should the WSA be designated wilderness" (what does this mean?) and because "the steep, rocky slopes do not add to or enhance the wilderness character of the Domeland Wilderness Area."

**Rockhouse WSA**—BLM is not recommending any of the 130 acres in this WSA for wilderness designation. It is part of a much larger Rockhouse WSA previously studied by BLM; all of the lands are adjacent to the Domeland Wilderness.

**Carson-Iceberg WSA**—This is the only area being recommended in its entirety for wilderness by BLM — all 550 acres of it. This Alpine County WSA is adjacent to the 154,000-acre Carson-Iceberg Wilderness managed by the Forest Service. A mile and a half of the East Fork of the Carson River meanders through the WSA.

**Garcia Mountain WSA**—Although this WSA consists of 494 acres in five parcels, BLM is only reviewing two parcels of 40 acres each adjacent to the proposed Garcia Mountain Wilderness in Los Padres National Forest. The other parcels are adjacent to Forest Service land not being recommended for wilderness designation. Regardless of this distinction, BLM is not proposing any land at all for preservation.

**Machesna WSA**—Part of this WSA was included in the Machesna Mountain Wilderness that was established in 1984. The remaining 80-acre piece is adjacent to the wilderness. BLM is not proposing any wilderness here, partly because it would block a route of the Hi Mountain Enduro motorcycle race.

Comments on the wilderness recommendations will be accepted by BLM until February 15, 1988. The California Wilderness Coalition will be mailing a Wilderness Alert to activists who have indicated a willingness to write letters on their wilderness questionnaire. Comments should be sent to:

Ed Hastey, State Director  
Bureau of Land Management  
California State Office  
2800 Cottage Way  
Sacramento, CA 95825



A view that includes the Machesna Wilderness Study Area, adjacent to the Los Padres National Forest and the Machesna Wilderness Area. The Bureau of Land Management recommends that this area not be designated as wilderness. Photo courtesy of Bureau of Land Management

**BOOK REVIEW****Lorax Teaches Kids About the Environment**

By Sherry Studley

**The Lorax, by Dr. Seuss. Random House, New York, 1971.**

Anyone who thinks you can't talk politics to young children should talk to Dr. Seuss. Seuss' book *The Lorax* describes how pollution affects the environment.

Written in Seuss' fanciful rhymes, the story tells of the Once-ler, an old hermit living atop a rickety house in a dark, dirty place where nothing much grows. For a price, he tells a young boy of a time long ago when the sky was blue, the air and water were clean, and plants and animals flourished. It was in this environment that the Once-ler arrived to set up a garment factory.

The Once-ler used the tufts of truffula trees to make all-purpose garments called thneeds. He was confronted at once by the Lorax, a small, brownish, bossy creature who speaks for the trees. The Lorax clearly believes that the trees are far more important than any thneed. The Once-ler did not heed the Lorax, but went on enlarging his factory.

Seuss goes on to present the classic conflict between industrialist and environmentalist. As one protests, the other gets more defensive. Finally, the factory begins to change the environment. First, the Bar-ba-loots leave, because there aren't enough truffula fruits anymore. Then the Swamee-swans fly away because the air is too polluted. Then the fish leave because the factory has dumped too much brown goo in the water. Finally, the last tree is cut down, and with a sad look back, the Lorax leaves through a hole in the smog. The Once-ler is left alone with an empty factory and a place where nothing will grow.

Finished with his story, the Once-ler presents the boy with the very last truffula tree seed. Nothing will get better unless someone cares, someone who will grow the seed and start a forest; someone who will protect the environment.

The first graders I read this book to were visibly affected by the story. On one hand, they understood that without a clean environment we cannot live. On the other hand, they like toys, clothes, cars, and other things whose manufacturing helps cause pollution. They were able to come up with several ways we can preserve the world we live in.

If you know any young children, read this book to them. They can help us save our environment.

*Sherry Studley is a student teacher of the first grade, enrolled in the teacher credential program at California State University, Sacramento. She has been a political activist for 10 years.*

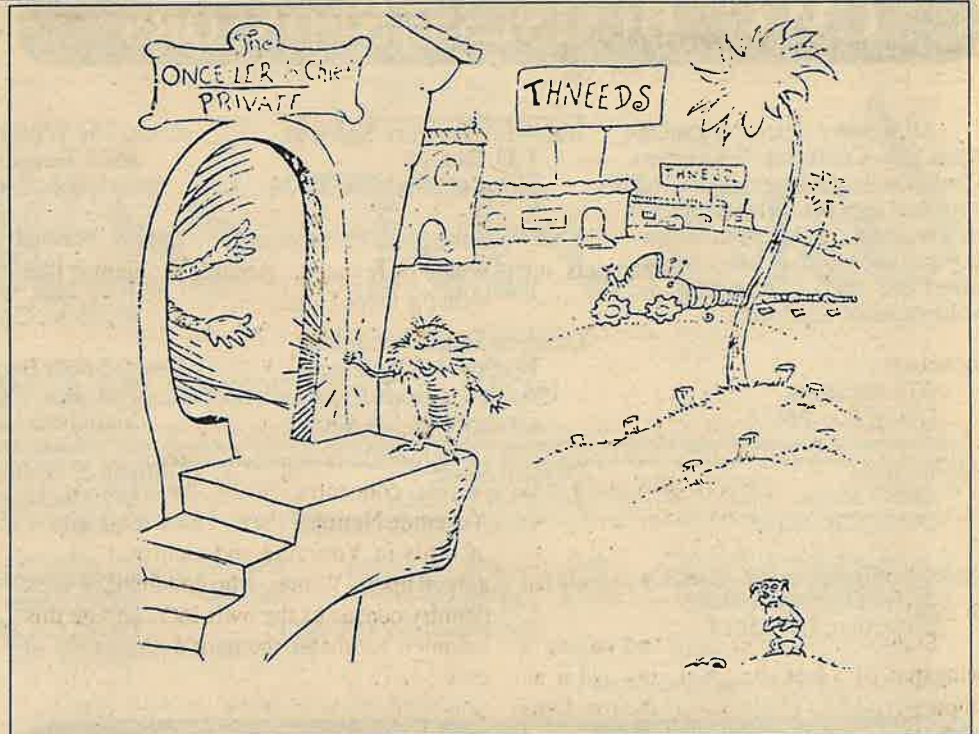
## The Contest is On Enter a T-Shirt Design for the CWC and You May Win Fabulous Prizes!!

The California Wilderness Coalition is seeking a new T-shirt design. Send in your original artwork by January 30, 1988.

In the meantime, you can order our old design of black mountains beneath a blue sky, with yellow sand dunes in the foreground. KEEP IT WILD rings the top of the logo, with CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION beneath.

T-shirts are 100 percent double knit cotton. Regular T-shirts are available in white, tan, blue, and yellow in small, medium, large, and extra-large. A limited number of French-cut style T-shirts are available in white and pink.

T-shirts are \$8.00 for CWC members and \$10.00 for non-members sales tax included.) Use the order form on Page 8. Clearly indicate if you want regular or French-cut, and a substitute color. Please add \$1.25 postage and 75 cents for each additional T-shirt.

**Granite Rock**

continued from p. 4

role is more likely to conflict with state resources management than did the previous more passive federal management role.

The states also have become more active in managing the resources within their boundaries. Before 1970 state governments rarely attempted to manage public lands more stringently than the federal government. Since 1970 the states and divisions of the state (cities, counties, etc.) have enacted a wide variety of environmental regulations. Some, as in the Granite Rock case, are applicable to public lands under the federal government's jurisdiction.

Finally, few public lands preemptive regulation cases have been decided because public land management agencies often try to resolve conflicts between resource managers and users internally.

It is not at all clear that the Granite Rock decision will have a significant impact on other federal-state dual public land regulation disputes. At the least, Granite Rock illustrates that conflicts between state and federal regulation of public land will not always be resolved in favor of the federal government. The agency with the bigger hand does not automatically win.

*Lora Moerwald is finishing her B.S. in Environmental Policy Analysis & Planning at the University of California, Davis. She works as a technical editor for an environmental consulting firm in Sacramento.*

### Wilderness Trivia Answer:

The Point Reyes Wilderness (now renamed the Phillip Burton Wilderness) was signed into law twice in October 1976. The proposal was part of a national parks omnibus bill including wilderness for Joshua Tree and Pinnacles national monuments. When passage of the omnibus bill seemed in doubt, Representative John Burton pushed the Pt. Reyes bill through Congress separately. The parks bill did pass a few days later, however, and both bills were signed by President Ford. Fortunately, both Pt. Reyes wilderness bills were identical.

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### Purposes of the California Wilderness Coalition

...to promote throughout the State of California the preservation of wild lands as legally designated wilderness areas by carrying on an educational program concerning the value of wilderness and how it may best be used and preserved in the public interest, by making and encouraging scientific studies concerning wilderness, and by enlisting public interest and cooperation in protecting existing or potential wilderness areas.

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