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**HOUSE PASSES  
DESERT BILL!**  
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# WILDERNESS RECORD

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION

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## House to vote on Desert Bill Passage expected

On Monday, November 25, California environmentalists were rooted to telephones and television screens, anxiously awaiting a vote by the U.S. House of Representatives on H.R. 2929, the California Desert Protection Act. If the bill passes, as observers expect, it will be the culmination of five years and countless hours of hope and effort.

The bill, introduced in July by California Representatives Richard Lehman and Mel Levine, designates more than four million acres as Bureau of Land Management wilderness and establishes a one-and-a-half million-acre Mojave National Monument (see *WR* article, August 1991). Two existing national monuments, Death Valley and Joshua Tree, would be accorded national park status. Because grazing, mining, and off-road vehicle (ORV) use would be circumscribed by the establishment of wilderness and parks, the legislation is opposed by ranchers, miners, ORV users, and the administration.

President Bush has indicated he will veto the California Desert Protection Act. The president supports instead an amendment introduced the previous Friday by Representative Jerry Lewis (R-Redlands) that would have cut two million acres from wilderness protection. The amendment was defeated, but it garnered 150 votes—enough to prevent the House from attaining the two-thirds majority needed to override a presidential veto.

Another impediment to permanent protection for the desert remains. Before any legislation can be enacted, the House and Senate must reach consensus. The Senate is not expected to consider S. 21, Sen. Cranston's bill, until January. Senator John Seymour—who serves on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources committee which must vote on the bill before it reaches the full Senate—has said that the acreage figures in the Cranston bill are unacceptably high.

The margin by which the House bill finally passes is considered important  
*continued on page 4*



Light breaks over Whipple Mountain Wilderness Study Area, which would be protected as wilderness in the Desert Bill.  
Photo by Jim Eaton

## Stanislaus plan: Carson-Iceberg expansion and clearcutting apace

By John Buckley

For decades, the Forest Service has devastated the Stanislaus National Forest ecosystem by clearcutting, building roads, and converting the natural forest ecosystem into tree plantations. And now, despite protecting some spectacular areas, the overall direction set forth in the newly-released final "land management plan" would continue the same abuse on the same scale for at least another decade.

That letters do make some difference was evidenced by the final plan's wilderness recommendation for some beautiful crestline areas, despite industry opposition. Three "further planning areas" which

adjoin the existing Carson-Iceberg wilderness were looked at in the final plan—Bald Peak (20,500 acres), Tryon Peak (3,400 acres), and Pacific Valley (10,300 acres). All three are so high in elevation and so marginal in commercial timber that no major logging is realistically feasible. Nonetheless, the local timber industry and "wise use" lobby groups vocally opposed protecting even these "rock and ice" lands; Friends of the Stanislaus Forest and other environmental groups urged wilderness recommendation for all three.

Thanks to lots of letters on behalf of these areas, the Forest Service stayed with its draft decision, recommending Tryon Peak and Bald Peak for wilderness designation. (Only rarely has Congress failed to accept  
*continued on page 4*

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## COALITION PAGE

### MONTHLY REPORT

The storm had passed through Davis, bringing sunny skies and welcome clean air. The dark clouds moved on to the Sierra where the first significant snowstorm was in progress. That's where I was going.

Steve Evans and I had been chosen to attend the Sierra Summit, the gathering organized by state Resources Secretary Douglas Wheeler to discuss the future of the Sierra Nevada. So on Sunday afternoon we resignedly set out on Highway 50 towards those ominous, black clouds.

We knew that chains were required at Twin Bridges, but snow began sticking to the roadway at lower elevations. As we approached Strawberry, I rhetorically asked whether it might be time for us to stop and put on chains.

At that moment, an oncoming car careened diagonally across the highway, narrowly missing us and overturning in a snow bank. We took that to be an affirmative answer to my question.

The Summit was at the Stanford Sierra Camp at Fallen Leaf Lake. As the snow deepened in the narrow road along the lake, our visibility obscured by the blizzard, we questioned our sanity in ignoring Mother Nature and speculated that the gathering would be sparsely attended. We were amazed to discover that almost all of the invitees had braved the storm as well.

Due to the State's fiscal condition, they tried to recover costs by charging \$60 for the conference and \$35 for four meals. I opted to save another \$60 dollars by sleeping in the back of my truck. As it turned out, the power failed at the lodge during the night, making conditions about equal indoors and out.

Those Stanford folks do eat well. What I paid for meals would have cost more at a local restaurant. On the other hand, I might not have eaten so lavishly if I had been given a choice.

Apart from the small cadre of environmentalists, there were representatives of local and state government, federal and state agencies, business

and user groups, and civic organizations.

Looking around the crowd, I noticed one change from previous conferences—there were more younger people. Of course, that observation may be colored by my own aging. I learned that I am now older than a number of county supervisors, state Senators, and Assemblymembers.

I noticed too that the participants were predominantly white men. Perhaps fifteen percent of the attendees were women. Among the score of environmental activists present, that percentage increased to nearly half.

The Coalition was well represented at the Summit. Board members Frannie Waid and Steve Evans were present, along with Advisory Committee member Ike Livermore. I encountered Art Baggett, Steve and Eric Beckwitt, John Buckley, Mary Anne Ferguson, Joan Hamilton, Michael Jackson, Mark Palmer, Marjorie Sill, and Stan Weidert, CWC members all.

During a break on Monday afternoon, Steve and I went out to dig my truck out of the parking area. As we returned to the lodge, a bald eagle flew across the lake and began circling, gradually spiraling lower and lower. It was a beautiful sight—snow covered mountains all around, sparkling in the afternoon sun, with the dark blue lake and magnificent eagle in front of us.

For a moment we forgot the lodge, the panel discussions, and the acrimonious debates on the health of the Sierra. In our view was the reason we had come to the Sierra Summit: the snow-capped peaks of Desolation Wilderness, representing the five million acres of wild land in the Range of Light; the clear waters of Fallen Leaf Lake, embodying the pure and free-flowing waters of the mountains; and the bald eagle, symbolizing the wildlife throughout the range.

It was a sign of hope. We took it as an omen that this was not just another conference, but the beginning of a series of gatherings that will lead to real protection for the Sierra Nevada.

### BY JIM EATON

### Those nitpicking,

"Everybody is suing us. We can be 99.9 percent perfect, but on one little point they get you."

—Forest Service Chief Dale Robertson, as quoted in the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

### ragged environmentalists

"Their Volkswagens couldn't make it up this road."

—security guard Kurt Leonard, explaining why no environmentalist protests disrupted the Sierra Summit, as quoted in the *Sacramento Bee*.

### On grazing

As announced in the November *Wilderness Record*, CWC's Board of Directors is considering adopting a policy opposing cattle and sheep grazing in wilderness. The Board invites members to comment on the proposed policy, which will be on the agenda at the Coalition's annual meeting in February. Address your comments to: Grazing Policy, CWC, 2655 Portage Bay East, Suite 5, Davis, CA 95616.

Three members and one non-member have written the Board to communicate their support for the proposal. Here's what they said:

"Let's face it, wilderness areas are no longer 'wilderness' when livestock grazing takes place therein."

"I have been chased off trails by aggressive cattle, have had to deal with cattle fecal matter even in designated campsites, and, most significantly, have been witness to repeated destruction of plants and riparian habitat due to excessive and untimely grazing."

"Cattle are total contradictions in wilderness."

### Uncle Jim's Wilderness Trivia Quiz Question:

What national forest was named for a river that was named for an Indian who was given the name of a Polish saint?

Answer on page 7.

### Corrections

In a page 1 photo caption in the November issue, we mistakenly relocated East Tannen Lake to the Trinity Alps. East Tannen Lake, Dave Willis informs us, is (still) in the Red Buttes Wilderness of southern Oregon. We regret the error.

Editor emeritus Stephanie Mandel astutely discerned that the last paragraph of a story about logging plans for spotted owl habitat which appeared on page 4 of the November issue was inadvertently cut. The truncated sentence should have read: "The taxes would accrue to a trust fund that states could use to boost economic development in 'timber-dependent communities' and to retrain workers." Also cut was credit for the article, which first appeared in the October 1991 issue of *Econews*, newsletter of the Northcoast Environmental Center. Our apologies to author Tim McKay and the NEC.

# BLM's Wilderness Study Areas

## Valuing a mountain of one-of-a-kind species

By The man who walks in the woods

Red Mountain was aptly named. It is red. Its dark red, lateritic soils are among the oldest in northern California and are believed to have been formed under tropical conditions. These lateritic soils are heavy in metals such as iron, nickel, cobalt, and chromium, and therein lies the tale.

Because the metals are toxic to most vegetation, Red Mountain has an abundance of rare plants. The stunted trees are widely spaced with little understory and, refreshingly, no non-native vegetation. Because the ancient soil supports few plants, evolution has populated the bare, red ground with red lizards, red insects, even red ticks, all well camouflaged.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) does not doubt the mountain is loaded with values like these. Take the rare plants. Several are endemic to just this one peak. One of them, McDonald's rock-cress, is listed as endangered by both the state and federal governments. Three others, Kellogg's buckwheat, Red Mountain stonecrop, and Red Mountain catchfly are candidates for listing. All are endangered by the potential of mining which would take the entire top off the mountain and leave a prominence shaped of enormous benches, rather like a pyramid. In two sections, the resulting tailings would prove so inhospitable that nothing might ever grow there again.

In recognition of the area's unique values, the BLM has designated Red Mountain as a Research Natural Area and an Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

*Red  
Mountain  
WSA*

But the BLM deems the Wilderness Study Area (WSA) non-suitable for wilderness designation because the abundant strategic metals "outweigh the area's wilderness values."

### Wilderness values

Overhead are eagles golden and bald, peregrines, the goshawk, and, awaiting her hour, the brown owl whose coat contains the countless stars. When I go to Red Mountain, I am often the only human for miles in any direction. A mountain lion has snarled in my face at my intrusion. Is this not solitude? Is this not exceptional?

Not according to the BLM, which determined in its Statewide Wilderness Study Report that "opportunities to find secluded places...are limited" by the sparse vegetation and that "the absence of outstanding recreational opportunities reduce the area's wilderness values."

The BLM's valuation of the WSA has changed much, and often, over the years. At first, the BLM's 1979 final inventory found there were "outstanding" opportunities for solitude; the 1983 draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) cited the presence of mining claims which would render the area unmanageable and hence unsuitable as wilderness. But in the 1988 final EIS, just months after corporate miners had sold out their claims, the BLM concluded that any mining would have been enjoined by the Endangered Species Act (as environmentalists had argued since the early 1970s), but maintained that the area

was not outstanding!

Included in the draft EIS was a letter from Dr. Hans Jenny, professor emeritus of soil science at the University of California at Berkeley. Dr. Jenny's letter stated that "the opinion prevails that at some time in the past Red Mountain must have experienced a tropical climate to acquire the red soil colors, which are seen as relicts or fossils. This view, if valid, elicits profound repercussions on ideas of biotic evolutionary trends, geological history and climatic change of California. Red Mountain is destined to become the proving ground of testing [this] hypothesis. Whatever the final answer, representatives of the red soils deserve to be set aside and protected..."

It is said that ancient peoples bartered here, coming from the cool coast we see to the west and from the hot valleys and snowy peaks in our eastern view. But General U. S. Grant came by way of Red Mountain and ended their time.

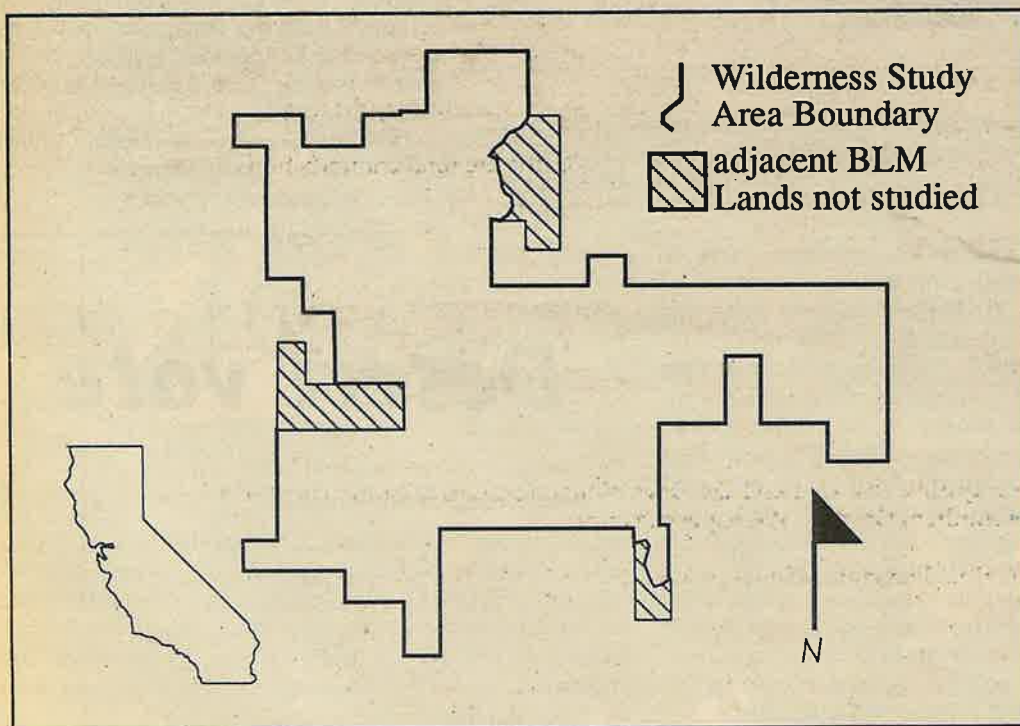
Some 6,244 public acres at the core of this outstanding area are eligible for inclusion in the wilderness preservation system. Local visionaries Michael Huddleston and Steven Day have yet a grander idea, encompassing Cahto Peak, the Nature Conservancy's Branscomb reserve, and Brush Mountain across the Wild and Scenic Eel River which curls around the feet of Red Mountain. Add to these the redwood parks, the Sinkyone Wilderness State Park, and the King Range National Conservation Area [see WR article, August 1991], and you have wilderness on a scale commensurate with the values.

A self-taught naturalist, *The man who walks in the woods* is known to his friends as "Woods" and to his detractors as "The."



In bloom: the endangered McDonald's rock-cress, *Arabis macdonaldiana*, which grows only in Red Mountain's unique soils.

Photo by The man who walks in the woods



The BLM considers Red Mountain non-suitable for wilderness because the WSA has large concentrations of strategic metals. Rare plants grow where the metal is concentrated, posing a classic dilemma—which do we value more?

Map by Jim Eaton



Soil Conservation Service graphic

## Ancient forests

# Best timberlands left unprotected

### continued from page 1

and enlarge upon agency recommendations for wilderness. No legislation addressing the Stanislaus currently is pending, but Congress could decide to include Stanislaus wilderness areas in another wilderness bill. In the meantime, the Forest Service will manage these areas as if they were already wilderness.)

Like the draft, the final plan zones Pacific Valley as "near natural," a category under which "no timber harvest is scheduled" but "special timber harvest methods to enhance recreation or to salvage losses may be employed." Under this designation, Pacific Valley will be temporarily protected until the next forest plan in 10-15 years.

In another victory for environmentalists, North Mountain Roadless Area, beloved for its old-growth sugar pine groves and open forest glades, escaped the axe. In the draft forest plan, North Mountain Roadless Area had been targeted for clearcutting and conversion to tree plantations, but in the final plan, North Mountain was spared. Almost all of the roadless area was designated as near natural, meaning no green timber sales will be offered within its groves for the duration of the plan, although salvage sales will still be allowed.

Bell Meadow/Bourland Roadless Area also gained greater protection in the final plan: of the roadless area's 8,200 acres, 6,200 (up from 4,000 in the draft) are protected, with another 1,500 acres zoned for "wildlife."

### Wildlife zoning—great or fake?

This "wildlife" designation is difficult for environmentalists to assess because, despite its title, it allows intensive logging, new road construction, and chemical sprays. For the optimistic, the "wildlife" zoning means limited logging, with trees allowed to grow older before being cut down. For pessimists, "wildlife" zoning is just a cover for continued logging in areas supposedly set aside for furbearers like fishers and pine martens.

The Dome Roadless Area (known to environmental groups as Brightman) is one example of an area dominated by the "wildlife" designation. Half of its older forest groves are mapped under "wildlife;" another 2,000 acres of its best timber stands are slated for intensive logging "management."

Even if the optimists are right on the "wildlife"



This stand of old-growth mixed conifers may disappear; under the final Stanislaus plan, 90 percent of the North Fork Stanislaus Rim will be opened to loggers. Photo by John Buckley

electric projects.

### In the best public interest?

Simply put, it could have been worse. The final plan protects 31,000 more acres than the draft. North Mountain is temporarily protected, as are larger portions of the Bell Meadow/Bourland and Eagle roadless areas.

But it should be better. Stanislaus forest staff boast that more than five million visits are made to "their" forest each year. The Stanislaus is part of the same ecosystem as Yosemite National Park and, consequently, helps determine the health of the park's wildlife and plants. Yet recreation and biodiversity concerns were given little attention in the final plan.

The Stanislaus plan envisions continued logging of 88 million board feet a year from a forest which lost more than 80,000 acres of timberland to fire within the past four years. While clearcutting will strip only 5,000 acres over the next decade, another 25,000 acres of shelterwood logging will convert much of the forest into monoculture tree farms. Herbicides will be used as a large-scale tool to eradicate plants other than tree "crops," and cable logging will allow timber companies access to the steepest, least logical sites.

Without a doubt, the plan will be appealed, not only by conservation groups but by the timber industry and others who want to extract even more from the forest. Disappointed friends of the forest can write the Regional Forester to let him know they are unhappy with the final plan. Write to: Ron Stewart, Regional Forester, USDA Forest Service, 630 Sansome St., San Francisco, CA 94111.

John Buckley is coordinator of the Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center in Sonora.

### Ancient-forest groves slated for "intensive management"

grove	acreage eligible for logging
Blue Creek	80%
Beaver	100%
Lion	90%
N. Fork Stanislaus	90%
Highland Rim	25%
Mokelumne Rim	75%

question, the new plan opens most of the remaining old-growth forests to logging. Of the best ancient forest stands identified by local activists, almost all the prime groves will be fragmented by new timber sales.

Many people wrote letters about the Eagle Roadless Area, asking that its rugged terrain be left intact. In a telling example of Forest Service direction, the part of the area already designated as a Spotted Owl Habitat

Area is still protected, the rocky, marginal parts of the area were given expanded protection, but much of the roadless area's best timberland is now open for new road construction and logging.

By adjusting their maps carefully, forest planners were able to "give up" marginal areas that were mostly rock or brush and remap the final forest plan so that arithmetically, environmentalists will see large increases in protected acreage. Only by going back and looking carefully at individual areas is it clear that most of the better timberlands are still unprotected.

### Clavey River left high and dry

One of the most bitter pills to swallow was the omission of the Clavey River from the Wild and Scenic recommendations. The Clavey flows into the Tuolumne River in one of the most popular sections of river in the nation, and its wild canyon is prime wildlife habitat.

Yet Forest Supervisor Jan Wold dismissed the concerns of thousands of letter writers, claiming that to leave the river without any protection "was in the best public interest." Wold's decision reflects Forest Service policy of not interfering with planned hydro-

## Desert vote

### continued from page 1

because the greater the margin, the greater the pressure on Senator Seymour to pass compromise legislation. Senator Seymour will face Dianne Feinstein in a November 1992 contest for the special two-year Senate seat created when former-Senator Pete Wilson was elected governor and appointed Seymour in his place. 1992 is an election year for President Bush as well.

Some sort of compromise desert bill expected to be passed by both houses this Congress, before Senator's Cranston's retirement. President Bush would be unlikely to veto a compromise bill supported by both of California's Senators.

## Sierra news

# Sierra Summit exceeds expectations

By Jim Eaton

In June, the *Sacramento Bee* published a five-part series by Tom Knudson on threats to the Sierra Nevada from logging, grazing, mining, development, and other causes. This led Douglas Wheeler, state Resources Secretary, to call for a "Sierra Summit" to discuss the problems and look for solutions to protect the mountains John Muir called the Range of Light.

Some 200 people from local and state government, federal and state agencies, business and user groups, civic organizations, universities, and the environmental community were invited to the conference.

The conference consisted mostly of five panels. After the panelists gave their presentations, the audience asked questions. First was the Natural Environment Panel, dubbed the "doom and gloom" panel by industry representatives.

Dr. Don Erman, director of U.C. Berkeley's Wildland Resources Center, reported that in the watershed of the Middle Fork of the Mokelumne River, soil loss is occurring at eight times the natural erosion rate. "Now it may be that this is an extreme case," Erman said, "but the curious thing

is we don't know what end of the extreme—the high end or the low end."

Dr. Robert Curry from U.C. Santa Cruz said that the Sierra differ from most of the mountain ranges of Europe and the Near East because "our soils have not yet been stripped off through long-continued deforestation and overgrazing....Californians still have a choice."

"It is the best of air...it is the worst of air," stated Dr. Thomas Cahill of U.C. Davis. Depending on the time of the year, the air can be as clean as that at the South Pole or "the worst ever recorded in the U.S."

Sequoia-King Canyon National Park's Dr. David Graber reported on the status of wildlife in the Sierra. He decried our lack of knowledge about most

of the animals in the mountains and the loss of wildlife due to global climate change, habitat loss, logging, and grazing. "Grazing in the Sierra damages meadows and riparian habitats used by many species, it removes herbage that would otherwise be food for native animals, and it exposes the Sierran bighorn sheep to extinction through disease," Graber related.

Phillip Pister of the Desert Fisheries Council illus-

trated the problems of preserving aquatic diversity in the Sierra. Pister also spoke of the need for strong philosophical and ethical values in making planning decisions: "As we move into the future we should be more mindful of the needs of Americans in the year 2092 than of the economic considerations of 1992."

The industry representatives expected the Human Environment Panel to justify economic growth and development, but several speakers pointed out that the natural environment is what brings people to the Sierra.

While noting that the region will continue to be a refuge for white retirees, Dr. Ted Bradshaw from U.C. Berkeley said, "the driving motive for most people settling in the Sierra is life style, not economic opportunity."

Consultant Patricia Kelly pointed out that new residents want to preserve the quality of life and that "the 'clean' mountain environment is what both business owners and consumers are looking for."

The attendees were entertained at lunch by a panel of state legislators. Assemblymembers Tim Leslie and David Knowles argued for economic growth and local control, while Assemblyman Byron Sher and Senator Pat Johnston spoke for regional coordination and control.

The most soporific panel featured Regional Forester Ron Stewart, Regional Park Service Director Stanley Albright, and Bureau of Land Management State Director

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*"It is the best of air...it is the worst of air."*

## Advisory Board proposed for Sequoia-Kings Canyon wilderness

By Jim Eaton

A draft Wilderness Management Plan for Sequoia and Kings Canyon national parks has been released for public comment. The public review period will end on January 1, 1992.

A major change from earlier plans is the proposed establishment of a Wilderness Advisory Board to consist of representatives from private stock interests, commercial packers, environmental organizations, the backpacking community, and wilderness managers. This group would evaluate and review future changes to the management plan.

Other components of the plan address resource impacts of stock use and party size. The maximum numbers of stock and individuals per party will be 15 and 25, respectively, as determined in a joint Forest Service/Park Service review concluded last month (see *WR* article, November 1991).

Trails will be identified as either primary or primitive, the latter being trails frequently used but currently unmaintained. Some trails will be closed to stock, and a system of historic stock routes will be established.

The draft plan's grazing policy is designed to direct packers away from a few of the most popular and convenient meadows to areas that are "underutilized."

Curiously, the plan refers to 23 appendices, most of which have not yet been written. The plan states that many of the appendices will be similar to existing ones, and that "it is important at this point to focus public comment and internal review on the body of the plan before preparing the specific use restrictions and closures [to be] contained in the appendices."

To comment or obtain a copy of the draft plan, contact: Douglas K. Morris, Chief Ranger, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Three Rivers, CA 93271.



The Palisades: Sequoia-Kings Canyon Wilderness and John Muir Wilderness. Photo by Pete Yamagata

## Wilderness management

# BLM mining regs: is the fox guarding the henhouse?

In what skeptics call an attempt to stave off reforms of the 1872 mining law now before Congress, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has announced it will review its interpretation of the 1976 Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), an interpretation that has been criticized for its lack of rigor. At the same time, the BLM will reconsider its longstanding policy of not overseeing mining operations that affect five acres or less.

Under current regulations, as dictated by FLPMA, the BLM must protect the lands it administers from "unnecessary and undue degradation." The BLM has interpreted this mandate by applying what Philip Hocker, president of the Mineral Policy Center, has termed "the demented miner standard." BLM managers define appropriate mining techniques as those practiced by "reasonably sane miners," Hocker asserted. The BLM interpretation is such that "if a reasonably sane miner would do something," Hocker explained, "then it's not unnecessary and undue degradation."

In its establishment of a five-acre threshold, the BLM exempted small operations from even the questionable "demented miner standard." The BLM requires only that miners submit notice when their activities will disturb less than five acres in a year. For larger projects, a Plan of Operation must be submitted for the BLM's approval, triggering a public review process.

By requiring notice only, the BLM has effectively freed small operations—and itself—from the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Other policy issues that may be addressed in the course of the review include whether BLM regulations should stipulate prohibitions, penalties, and reclamation procedures.

The policy review, if it results in the elimination of the "demented miner standard" and the five-acre threshold, could have broad implications. Review, however, is no guarantee that any changes will be adopted. According to Hocker, it could be six months or more before a decision is reached. If the review was in fact occasioned by the introduction of mining reform legislation, then the status of that legislation is likely to play an equally pivotal role in the outcome of the review.

Public meetings will be held in Alaska, Washington, Colorado, and Nevada. The Nevada meeting is scheduled for December 12 at the Reno Nugget on Rock Boulevard from 1:00-4:00 and 6:30-9:30 p.m. For more information, telephone Bob Anderson, BLM Deputy State Director for Mineral Resources, at (916) 978-4735. Comments on issues pertinent to the policy review must be submitted by January 3, 1992 to: Director (140), Bureau of Land Management, Main Interior Building, Room 5555, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

## Summit sequel sought

continued from page 5

Ed Hastey. Stewart said that with increasing population there should be more, not less, multiple use of forest lands. But earlier he told a reporter that "in the very near future, the primary purpose for harvesting trees is going to be for wildlife and for biological diversity."

Norman B. "Ike" Livermore led the Perspectives on the Sierra Panel, a lively group from environmental organizations, businesses, and local governments. Livermore noted that few at the conference had mentioned wilderness even though a large part of the Sierra consists of designated or potential wilderness areas.

An open forum allowed participants to ask questions and comment on the colloquy. Environmentalists and industry representatives alike were refreshingly positive in their statements. Several speakers suggested that more people and more interests should be represented at future gatherings. Most delegates agreed that additional meetings are needed to reach consensus on the various problems.

A steering committee will design a process to continue the dialogue begun at the Sierra Summit.



The trail to King Peak in the King Range Wilderness Study Area.

Photo by Jim Eaton

## BLM refurbishing King Range

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced it will replant a portion of the King Range Wilderness Study Area (WSA) that has been deforested by logging and arson. In February, crews will plant 40,000 Douglas fir seedlings on three sites along Cooksie Creek. In compliance with interim management guidelines for the WSA, no mechanized equipment will be used, and crews will obtain access to the sites on existing roads.

By re-introducing Douglas fir (native hardwoods have survived in sufficient number to guarantee diversity), the BLM will restore to its natural state an area that has been artificially altered. Though constrained in many ways by the mandate of interim protection, the BLM does have the authority (albeit rarely-exercised) to make improvements that do not expressly violate management guidelines.

Before the 1970s, the then-private Cooksie Creek area was Douglas-fir forest with an understory of tan-oak and madrone. In 1985, after acquiring the property, the BLM replanted the area, which had been logged and burned. But in 1987 the newly-established plantation was eradicated by the Lake Ridge Fire, which was set by deer hunters.

For more information about the project, contact Tom Dematte, Forester, BLM, Arcata Resource Area, 1125 16th St., Room 219, Arcata, CA 95521-5580.

## Book reviews

### Voices from a vanished California

#### Bright Gem of the Western Seas: California 1846-1852

By James H. Carson and Lieutenant George H. Derby, Great West Books, Lafayette, Ca., \$12.95.

In 1846, California's great San Joaquin Valley contained expanses of wilderness peopled only by native "Indians" and a handful of Spanish settlers and Anglo trappers. In a landscape now dominated by laser-leveled fields of cotton, food crops, and suburbs, myriad native beasts once "roamed in wild liberty over its vast and fertile bosom unchecked by the hands of man."

*Bright Gem of the Western Seas* illuminates this period by resurrecting the writings of two gold-rush era explorers. James Carson wrote a series of articles for a Stockton newspaper, reprinted here in their entirety for the first time. His accounts offer a fascinating portrait of California just before gold was discovered and the immigrants rushed in. Equally intriguing are his visionary predictions of California's future.

George Derby was an army officer, a skilled engineer and cartographer. He explored the Tulare (San Joaquin) Valley in the spring of 1850, when there were as yet no towns in the valley south of the San Joaquin River. His report includes vivid descriptions of the Indians and of the appearance and grandeur of the now-diminished

Tulare and Buena Vista lakes.

This enlightening collection includes 47 illustrations and a full-size copy of Derby's map, "A Reconnaissance of the Tulare Valley, 1850."

—Tom Suk

### Skulking among the tufas

#### Where Echoes Live

By Marcia Muller, Mysterious Press, New York, 326 pp., \$17.95.

In this, her twelfth outing, San Francisco private eye Sharon McCone travels to Tufa Lake and Promiseville—fictional counterparts to Mono Lake and Bodie—to investigate apparent attacks against local environmentalists.

The setting and context are the main appeals of this otherwise unexceptional mystery.

Author Marcia Muller evidently knows and likes Mono Lake and the Bodie area, places that abound with the atmosphere requisite to a good mystery. If at first her environmentalism seems heavy-handed, the tone lightens as the plot thickens.

The mystery's plot revolves around the imminent threat of corporate gold mining near Promiseville, an almost ghost town that supports a handful of colorful prospectors. (One, *de rigueur*, is a feisty broad.) The tensions of the environmental movement lend credibility: not only the obvious tension between extractors and preservationists but tensions within the movement as well.

continued on page 8

### Building support for CWC

Linda (r.) manages just fine in our six-tone anniversary shirt; it comes in light blue, yellow, light green, or peach for \$15. The neat animal design Donna chose is by Bay Area cartoonist Phil Frank; it comes in beige or light gray for \$12. All the shirts are 100 percent double knit cotton. To order, use the form on the back page.



## DATES TO REMEMBER

**January 1** COMMENTS DUE on the draft Wilderness Management Plan for Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. Send to: Douglas K. Morris, Chief Ranger, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Three Rivers, CA 93271. (Article on page 5.)

**January 3** COMMENTS DUE on the Bureau of Land Management's proposed review of mining regulations. Send comments on the Notice of Intent to Propose Rulemaking to: Director (140), Bureau of Land Management, Main Interior Building, Room 5555, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20240. (Article on page 6.)

### Wilderness Trivia Quiz Answer:

The Stanislaus. The Indian named Stanislaus led an uprising against the Mexican government. He was defeated at the river by General Vallejo.

from page 2



**California  
Wilderness  
Coalition**

#### 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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The *Record* welcomes letters-to-the-editor, articles, black & white photos, drawings, book reviews, poetry, etc. on California wilderness and related subjects. We reserve the right to edit all work. Please address all correspondence to:

California Wilderness Coalition  
2655 Portage Bay East, Suite 5  
Davis, California 95616  
(916) 758-0380

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#### Editor

Lucy Rosenau

#### Contributors

John Buckley  
Jim Eaton  
The man who walks in the woods  
Tom Suk  
**Photos & Graphics**  
John Buckley  
Jim Eaton  
The man who walks in the woods  
Soil Conservation Service  
Pete Yamagata  
**Production**  
W. Cohen, J. Eaton

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## The mystery at the haunted lake

continued from page 7

After a slow beginning (the first body doesn't surface until page 59), Muller provides a suspenseful plot and an ending that satisfactorily answers "who" and "what" but is pretty unconvincing on "why." (Admittedly, this is a weakness that, with some notable exceptions, pervades the genre.) Overall, *Where Echoes Live* is a pleasant diversion at once leavened and strengthened by its context.

—Lucy Rosenau

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