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Court bans logging of owl habitat

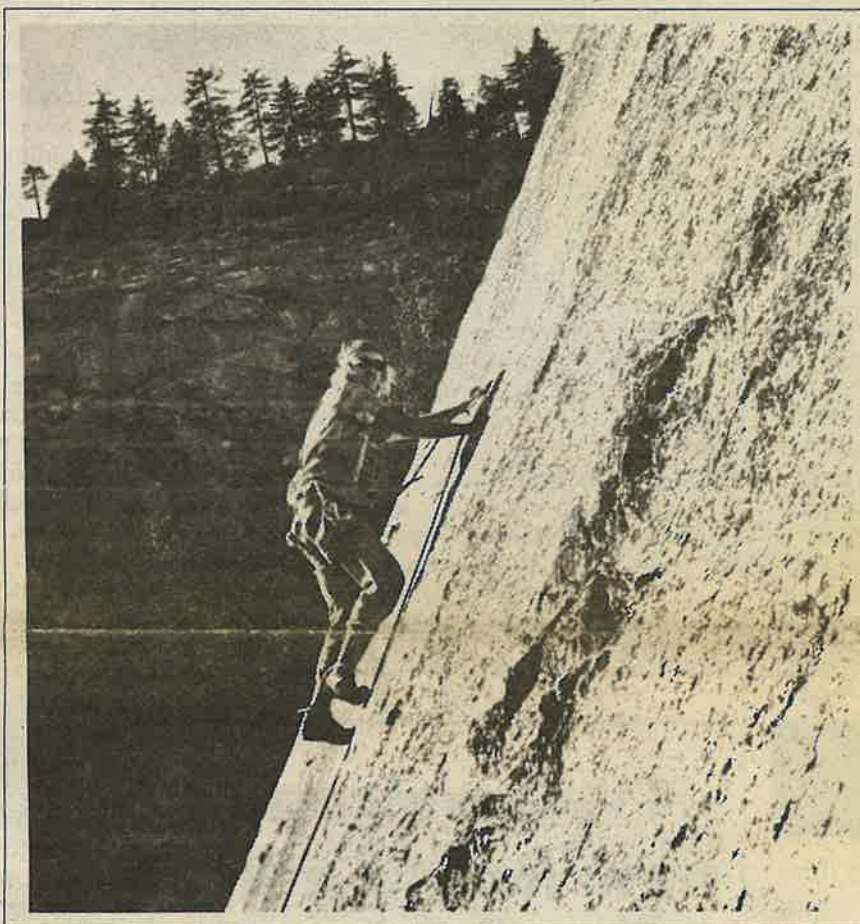
By Tim McKay

The threatened northern spotted owl won its biggest victory to date last month when Judge William Dwyer blocked all unsold Forest Service timber sales in suitable owl habitat on the West Coast until at least next March. (A separate suit involving Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands is pending.)

The judge's decision came a month after the Fish and Wildlife Service (F&WS) proposed the designation of 11.6 million acres as critical habitat for the rare raptor.

The state of owl affairs is confusing because three separate federal agencies (the F&WS, BLM, and Forest Service) are developing owl management plans, while three separate federal courts are enmeshed in forest management issues.

Action in Judge Dwyer's court grew out of the Forest Service's failure to adopt "standards and guidelines" to protect a viable population of spotted owls in national forests in Oregon and Washington, as required by the National
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Steve Schneider uses a previously-placed bolt (near his hands) to climb Bald Rock in the Plumas National Forest's Bald Rock roadless area.

Photo by Bob Schneider

Climbers' bolts create controversy

By Jeff Widen

Mountaineering in its various forms is a rich tradition in this country, with a fascinating and exciting history. From the big wall era of Yosemite to today's gymnastic free climbing, the climbing scene in America has been characterized by individualism and innovation, a keen undercurrent of friendly competition, and an abiding sense of community among climbers.

This community, like any other, has had its share of internal squabbling and disagreement, mostly over issues of concern to climbers only.

Recently, however, one issue has surfaced that has raised concerns outside the climbing community: the use of permanent climbing anchors—expansion bolts—in designated wilderness areas. The controversy has focused on the impacts, real and perceived, that bolt use imposes on wilderness resources and the question of whether bolts should be allowed in wilderness at all.

Background

Expansion bolts have been used as protective devices by technical rock climbers since 1939, during the first ascent of Shiprock in
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Forest Service proposes gutting environmental planning regs

By Nathaniel Lawrence

Two recent U.S. Forest Service proposals could prove to be the death knell for meaningful environmental planning in national forests. While each proposal contains something for the conservation community to applaud, together they would eliminate many environmental considerations from forest plans and all environmental documentation for small and mid-sized timber sales.

The first of these proposals is contained in an "advanced notice of proposed rulemaking" that would rewrite the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) regulations. The agency's draft rules would undo a number of federal court victories won by environmentalists and give local forest supervisors a much freer hand in the forest planning

process. The proposed regulations also formally adopt the "two-step" theory of planning under which the Forest Service has increasingly ducked hard questions raised by conservationists during forest-wide planning by promising to address them later in site-specific documents.

Along with the planning proposal, the Forest Service would entirely exempt from environmental review timber sales up to a million board feet with up to a mile of road construction. Under a so-called "categorical exclusion," national forest managers could avoid doing even environmental assessments by dividing up their sales programs into million board foot units. As a result, the planning issues deferred under the two-step approach might never be addressed at all.

The rewrite of NFMA regulations is the more far-
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COALITION PAGE

MONTHLY REPORT

It's a hot Sunday afternoon in Davis. Stephanie and Lucy are finishing up this issue of the *Record* and would like me to finish up this report (as usual, the last unwritten article) so they can go home.

But Canyon Fred is in town, so he, Wendy, and I are down at Sudwerk, sipping märzen and talking about wilderness management issues. To out-macho the guys, Wendy has polished off five Cajun chicken wings and is downing most of my beer.

So far we've discussed climbing bolts, grazing, stock use, dams, fires, and dogs (without Inyo to defend his kind—he is on guard dog duty at home).

Canyon Fred is a purist on management issues. But he does admit that it is hard to come down on dogs when a string of 25 steel-shod mules passes by, nibbling away the grass. So he does have a sense of proportion, although he would prefer neither animal in the wilderness. But it's a real world, Fred.

We find more agreement on sheep and cattle grazing. Extracting a political compromise necessary to pass the Wilderness Act back in 1964, livestock interests continue to wield inordinate political power in the West. For the price of the beer we are quaffing, Canyon Fred and I each could be raising a cow and her calf on public land for a month.

Although ignored by conservation groups for decades, grazing in wilderness is now recognized as one of the great inconsistencies in wilderness management. Some of the issues mentioned above—such as dogs, campfires, stock use, and climbing bolts—pale in comparison to the ecological impact of commercial grazing on wilderness areas. I receive

BY JIM EATON

more complaints about grazing than any other wilderness management issue.

As a consequence, the Coalition has successfully appealed the grazing portion of the Ishi Wilderness Management Plan and is appealing grazing decisions in the Golden Trout and South Sierra wilderness areas [see page 5].

The main problem we have with the Forest Service on grazing is that they think they can do nothing to control commercial grazing in wilderness. They look at the California Wilderness Act and read, "grazing ... shall be permitted to continue ..." They should finish the sentence, "... subject to such reasonable regulations, policies, and practices as the Secretary deems necessary."

The way the Forest Services reads the law, wilderness areas would receive less protection than non-wilderness lands. That was *not* the intent of Congress. Congress simply was making the point that grazing should not be eliminated from a wilderness area solely due to its designation. And until the agency understands this, we will continue to appeal (and win) on this issue.

The beers are finished, so back to the office. Big changes this month. Intern Tova is away in London, Lucy takes over as editor, and Stephanie is off to bear child (although if she makes it to the July 3rd due date, it's gonna be one huge kid). Stephanie, you turned the *Wilderness Record* into an outstanding publication, the showpiece of the Coalition. Thanks for all your good work and fellowship, and good luck with your new life.

Bearing my soul: pregnant thoughts on wilderness

In this, the last issue of the *Wilderness Record* I'll edit, I'd like to make a confession: I'm scared of wilderness. When backpacking in a small group, I inevitably find fear creeping around the doorways of my mind. Sure, I love the scenery, exercise, and fresh air. I'd even say that my soul expands, beholding the gigantic calm of the world.

But I still get scared. Night is definitely scarier than day for me, and bear country is scarier than places where eagles are the main predator. I'm most scared in forests, where you can't see very far, and where there are so many hiding places so near the hiker. It's not that I really expect bears (especially big ones) to be stealthily lying in wait. It's not rational—I just feel scared.

Please don't send in letters confidently asserting that "bears are more scared of you than you are of them." I've heard these reassurances before, and they help only a little. My fear of bears, night, and forests is the primal fear of the unknown, the universal fear of death, the awe of mystery. My love of wilderness, I think, is partly a desire to preserve that which I revere as supernatural.

I'm encouraged that someday I will face these fears and feel more comfortable in forests and bear country, because I have conquered one fear: the fear of birthing a child. Dread of this youth-shattering, awesome, painful event loomed large for a while, and I had to find a way to look forward to it. I compare childbirth to the unknown in wilderness because both are inevitable and overwhelming, when you're there. Both are powerful, mysterious, and marvellous.

Perhaps embracing the wilderness of child-bearing and motherhood will help me leave behind my fear of the wild places where I'm reminded of my mortality.

And speaking of endings, these three and a half years as editor of the *Record* have been incredibly rich (not financially) and fulfilling, and I'll miss the job and people very much. Thank you for reading!

Stephanie Mandel

Letters

A tribute to the Walkers

Hello Jim,

I was greatly saddened to hear about Ardis Walker—first in the *Wilderness Record* [February, 1991], then in an article my mother sent me from Bakersfield. What an honor it was for me to know him and Gayle, truly outstanding people whose many years of effort to protect the wilderness of the southern Sierra will long be remembered. Their successes remain as a living heritage of wilderness for the future.

Please use the enclosed check to help protect those areas Ardis and Gayle held dear.

Best wishes to you,
Karen Fant
Seattle, WA

Uncle Jim's Wilderness Trivia Quiz Question:

In what wilderness area would you find Toejam Lake, Horse and Cow Meadow, and The Three Chimneys?

Answer on page 7.

CWC welcomes new *Record* editor

Please welcome Lucy Rosenau, the new editor of the *Wilderness Record*. Lucy will "solo edit" next month's issue.

The CWC staff has known Lucy for about a year as she worked across the hall as volunteer editor of the Village Homeowners Association newsletter.

Lucy is a newcomer to California's backcountry and its issues, but she's learning fast. After working with her for the past six weeks, we are confident that she will do an excellent job.

Lucy grew up in New England and remembers fondly the woods and advent of spring there. She's lived in Davis off and on for ten years and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Linguistics from the University of California, Davis.

Her hobbies are playing tennis, reading, and growing tomatoes.



Stephanie Mandel (right) and Lucy Rosenau (left) discuss production of the *Wilderness Record*. Photo by Jim Eaton

Roadless areas



Pitcher plants, found near Deadfall Lakes in the Mt. Eddy Further Planning Area. Photo by Pete Yamagata

Wilderness degraded while land exchange is low priority

The wilderness in the Mt. Eddy Further Planning Area (FPA) near Mt. Shasta doesn't seem to get any respect from the Forest Service.

The only place in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest designated by Congress for further planning, the area is a prime candidate for wilderness. Its FPA status means that its pristine quality must be kept intact at least until the final national forest land management plan is issued.

Past planning documents (which are being rewritten due to the designation of the spotted owl as a threatened species) have not recommended that the 9,000 acres of forest be designated as wilderness. Although the Forest Service acknowledges that it would make a fine wilderness area, its potential as a ski area is considered even more promising.

The Forest Service also has given low priority to acquiring private lands within the FPA boundaries. In April the owner of acres, Dave Frase of Weaverville, requested a permit to re-open an old road crossing 50 feet of Forest Service lands to reach his property. Frase told the *Wilderness Record* he isn't sure whether he wants to log the land or not. He did say, however, that "I'd just as soon put together a trade" of his lands for Forest Service lands. He has let the agency know of his willingness to trade. According to Stacey Harbin of the Mt. Shasta Ranger District, "dollars and time" and "a lot of high priority land exchanges" have impeded such a trade. Most of the land exchanges given higher priority have involved consolidating lands slated for timber sales.

The private land inholding, about two miles east of the Mt. Eddy summit, was partially logged in 1988 by its previous owner, Santa Fe Pacific Timber Company. Environmentalists appealed the previous decision to allow the road to be built and got the Forest Service to agree to obliterate the road after logging. The portion of the road on Forest Service land was, in fact, obliterated in 1989.

Phil Rhodes, who wrote the appeal, complains that the road and logging "whittle away an already small area, adding that "in the Eddy Range there's not much that hasn't been logged."

Frase, who has made land exchanges with the Forest Service in the past, complains that trades "take a hundred years," due to difficulties in finding suitable sites to trade.

An Environmental Assessment of the project is expected.

Castle Crags

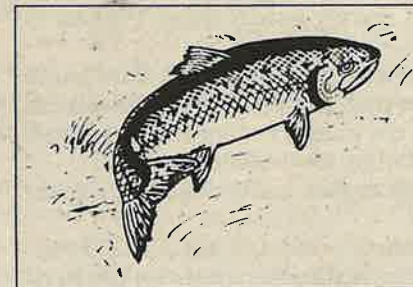
Also awaiting public acquisition is a private land inholding within the Castle Crags Wilderness. [See March, 1991 *WR* for a longer article.] Although owner Dave Frase says he is also willing to exchange or sell these lands to the Forest Service, no deal has been made.

Plan released for some BLM northern California lands

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has released the Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Environmental Impact Statement for its Redding Resource Area. The plan will direct the management of 247,500 acres of public land in northern California. Over 1,000 individual parcels of BLM administered land, ranging in size from a fraction of an acre to over 8,000 acres, are addressed in the document.

Of particular interest to wilderness supporters are lands adjacent to the Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness Area and the Bald Rock Roadless Area. Also of concern is the Beegum Gorge area, near the Forest Service roadless area of the same name. All three parcels are scheduled for transfer to the Forest Service.

Twelve river and stream segments are found eligible for National Wild and Scenic River status. These streams are Battle, Beegum, Butte, Clear, Deer, Mill, and Paynes creeks, three forks of Cottonwood Creek, and the Sacramento and Shasta rivers.



Grazing is ignored in the RMP; BLM feels the issue was addressed in a 1984 document. The agency also ignores air quality, hydroelectric development, mining, water qual-

ity, and the protection of oak woodlands.

Comments on the RMP will be accepted through June 28, 1991. For a copy, call (916) 246-5325. Send comments to: Francis Berg, Team Leader, Bureau of Land Management, 355 Hemsted Drive, Redding, CA 96002.

Big, bad changes in planning regs

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reaching of the two proposals. Most environmentalist court victories involving NFMA have relied on the existing regulations, which were drafted by the Forest Service with extensive input from the public, Congress, and a committee of outside scientists. For example, forest plans have been overturned for failure to use the best available data, consider a broad range of timber program alternatives, or identify the technology that would assure regeneration of marginal lands within five years. In addition, a federal judge recently ruled that the NFMA regulations prohibited the agency from simply leaving northern spotted owl management questions to the Fish and Wildlife Service. Every regulatory provision relied on to force more careful planning on the Forest Service in these cases would be either dropped or amended so as to negate the rulings.

The new proposal would also leave the choice of basic environmental safeguards much more to the discretion of line officers than do the current regulations. For example, the proposed rules fail to provide any concrete standards for protecting biodiversity. All standards for wilderness evaluation would be deleted, along with the mandates to determine the suitability of lands for grazing, off-road vehicle use, and mining. Existing limitations on clearcut size also would be abandoned. Land would only need to be identified as economically unsuitable for logging if "timber production is clearly not feasible now or in the future," with no direction provided as to what is "feasible." And Forest Supervisors apparently would be free to limit 10-year plan revisions to whatever issues they chose. None of the missing standards would be supplied by

regional guides, because they, too, would be eliminated.

In addition to broadening management discretion, the new regulations would encourage reduced environmental review by embracing the two-step planning theory. By proclaiming that forest plans "generally do not provide final authorization for irreplaceable resource

"All standards for wilderness evaluation would be deleted..."

commitments," the new regulations excuse review. The agency may have a hard time making this approach stick, however. A federal judge's opinion, filed April 25, 1991 in *Sierra Club v. Robertson*, appears to have rejected squarely the idea that NFMA plans do not have concrete enough impacts to merit judicial or environmental review.

The proposed planning regulations appeared in the February 15, 1991 *Federal Register*, and the proposed categorical exclusion in the April 29 edition. The comment period on the first proposal has formally closed. Another draft of the regulations is due out in October, however, and readers can get on the mailing list for it by writing to: Land Management Planning Staff, USDA Forest Service, P.O. Box 96090, Washington, DC, 20090-6090. Comments on the categorical exclusion must be received by the Forest Service at the same address by June 28, 1991.

Nathaniel Lawrence is a lawyer with the Natural Resources Defense Council in San Francisco.

Ancient forests

Judge halts logging of spotted owl habitat

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Forest Management Act (NFMA).

Judge Dwyer noted that 400,000 acres of suitable owl habitat was logged during the seven years that the agency worked on developing guidelines.

Last month, Dwyer held seven days of hearings that included testimony from all sides, all the arguments of economic hardship, and the latest theories of population biology. His 35-page ruling establishing a permanent injunction against new timber sales chronicles the history of the breakdown of government.

Harsh Criticism

"More is involved here than a simple failure by an agency to comply with its governing statute," he wrote. "The most recent violation of the National Forest Management Act exemplifies a deliberate and systematic refusal by the Forest Service and the Fish & Wildlife Service to comply with the laws protecting wildlife."

He added, "The problem here has not been any shortcoming in the laws, but simply a refusal...to comply with them."

The judge also elaborated on testimony regarding the economic and social consequences of owl protection, concluding that the main reasons for the decline of the timber industry are "modernization of physical plants, changes in product demand, and competition from elsewhere..."

"To bypass the environmental laws, either briefly or

permanently, would not fend off the changes transforming the timber industry. The argument that the mightiest economy on earth cannot afford to preserve old-growth forests for a short time, while it reaches an overdue decision on how to manage them, is not convincing today. It would be even less so a year or a century from now," he stated.

It remains unclear whether the decision to freeze sales on national forests in California, Oregon, and Washington will prod Congress into action on the larger question of preserving America's last temperate old-growth forests. The fate of the owls is linked to the health of the forests.

Twisted History

In 1988 environmental groups brought suit against the F&WS for rejecting a petition to list the owl as a threatened species. Judge Thomas Zilly ruled that the agency had acted in an "arbitrary and capricious" manner and ordered another review. As a result, in June 1989 the agency formally proposed to list the owl.

However, the agency did not identify "critical habitat," and plaintiffs in the Zilly case filed a motion which finally resulted in the F&WS proposal of 11.6 million acres of critical habitat.

The agency held hearings on its proposal last month, and comments on the proposed designations were due by June 5. The F&WS expects to issue a revised critical

habitat designation, conduct another hearing process, and issue a final habitat decision by fall.

Judge Dwyer's decision is an important historical document, and the NEC can send you a copy for \$3.50 to cover copying, postage, and handling. Write Owl c/o NEC, 879 9th Street, Arcata, CA 95521. A copy is available for review in the NEC library.

Reprinted from the June 1991 issue of Econews, newsletter of the Northcoast Environmental Center in Arcata.

Legislation

Timber industry proposes ancient forest bill

The judicial injunction against new Forest Service timber sales [article on pages 1 & 4] may spur legislative action on some form of ancient forest protection in Congress, where conservationists and the timber industry are pushing rival bills.

The timber industry staked out its negotiating position when a coalition of Republicans and southern Democrats introduced H.R. 2463 (Huckaby) in the House and S. 1156 (Neffin-Packwood) in the Senate.

While the industry bill espouses old-growth protection, it would make environmental concerns subservient to pre-established minimum timber sale levels. The bill would lock in commodity production as the "highest and best use" of national forest lands and review all wilderness areas and national parks to see if they should be opened for logging. It also would sharply restrict citizens' access to the courts.

One analyst characterized the forest bill situation in the House as "a three-ring circus," with northwestern Republicans largely in the industry camp and Democrats seeking a quick fix for ailing local economies.

In the Senate, no champion has emerged for ancient forests.

The environmentalist-backed Ancient Forest Protection Act (H.R. 842), sponsored by Congressman Jim Jontz (D-Indiana), got a boost when the Los Angeles City Council voted unanimously to support the measure. The San Francisco Board of Supervisors followed suit, endorsing it unanimously at its May 20 meeting.

Supervisor Angela Alioto, who offered the resolution, said, "By taking this unequivocal stand, the Board is

sending a clear message to Washington, D.C.: San Franciscans, and in fact, all Americans, care deeply about the fate of our rapidly diminishing ancient forests."

Reprinted from the June 1991 issue of Econews, newsletter of the Northcoast Environmental Center in Arcata.

Bad sign from Seymour

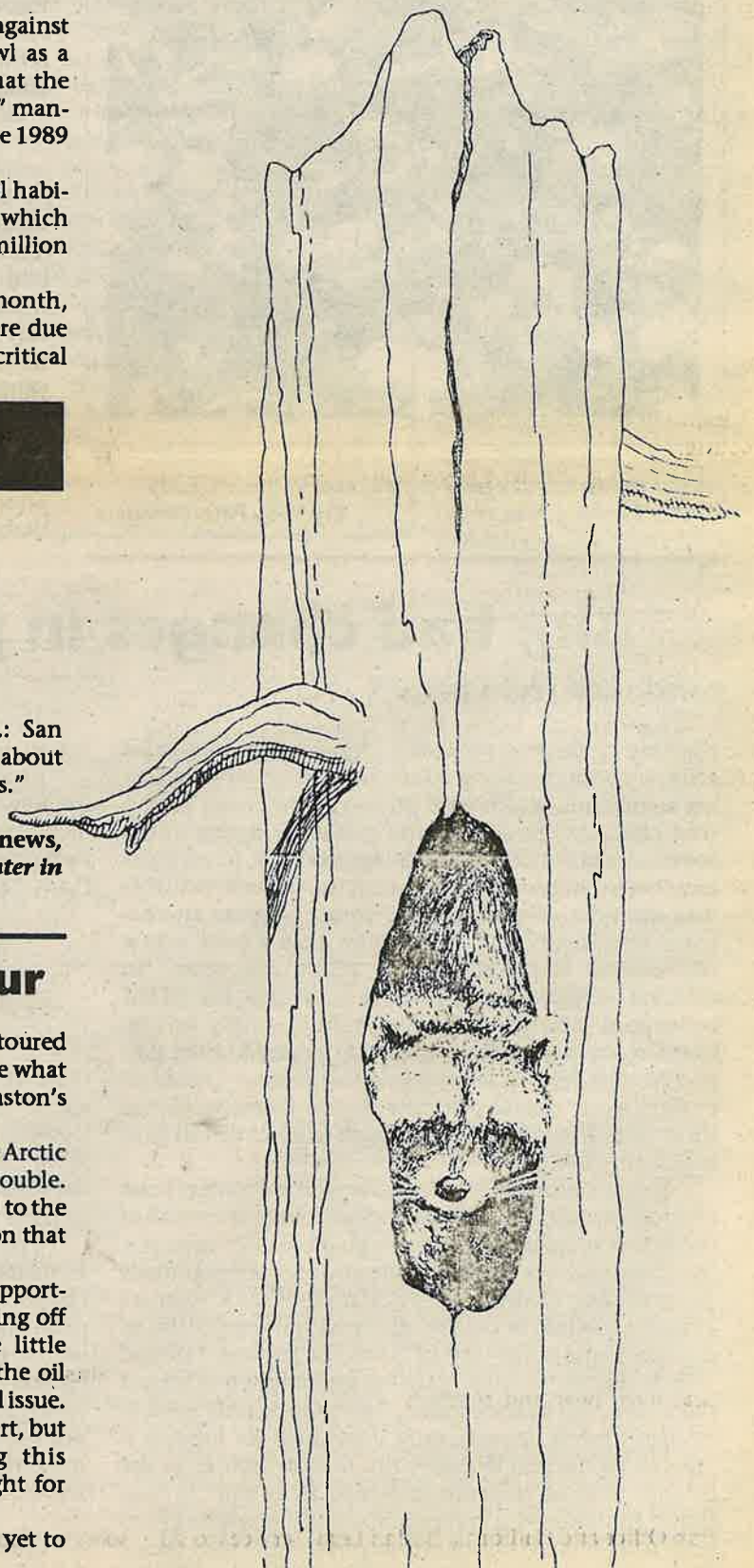
California Senator John Seymour recently toured the California desert, ostensibly to help him decide what type of support he will give to Senator Alan Cranston's California Desert Protection Act.

If this tour inspires him as did his trip to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the desert bill will be in trouble. After his visit to Alaska, Senator Seymour returned to the Senate Energy Committee and voted for legislation that would open the refuge to oil exploration.

Seymour wrote an amendment to that bill, supporting President Bush's moratorium on new oil leasing off California's coast, but environmentalists were little comforted by this gesture. Seymour sided with the oil industry on his first vote on a major environmental issue.

Seymour's vote is not a good sign for the desert, but desert sources are still hopeful that during this Congressional session the political climate is right for passage of Senator Cranston's bill.

In the House, Representative Mel Levine has yet to reintroduce his companion desert legislation.



Wilderness management

Trail "maintenance" can do more harm than good

By Sally Reid

After several decades of screaming about roads versus trails, with little or no effectiveness, as road miles quadrupled and trails were abandoned, we are finally seeing a dribble of money in the direction of trail maintenance and construction (two separate line items in the annual U.S. Forest Service appropriations).

But before you shout "Hurray!" and "It's about time!" take a hike with Les and me down the newly maintained and partially reconstructed Buck Creek Trail, in the proposed Sespe Wilderness in southern California's Los Padres National Forest.

It wasn't so bad, starting at the trailhead. The only noticeable change in the trail was clipped brush. But where the brush was heavier and the trail high on a steep slope, the cut brush had all been tossed "overboard" to lie atop the next layer of vegetation. The "uglification" of naturally graceful old manzanita was a wonder, in a sense. Clipped tightly against trunks as thick as your thigh in a semi-circle of 180 degrees, the shrub won't make its way across that trail in a century! Trimmings were tossed overboard, of course.

The Acting District Ranger and Forest Supervisor, who accompanied us, let a few choice comments drift by: "Well, we had to get in here before this was made a wilderness, or we'd have to do all this work by hand!"

Further along, we saw the freshly-cut stumps of at least a dozen trees—old growth fir 3-4 feet in diameter, with the complete trees lying helter-skelter below. For what? "We had to cut them because they might have fallen across the trail, and we won't be able to get back in here for five to ten years." Might fall in five or ten years, after not falling in 200 years? Even the Supervisor allowed as how some of the cuts were a little extreme.

We rolled on down the steep trail, commenting from time to time that the trail was considerably higher up than we remembered it, maybe ten years ago. "Oh yes, we lifted the trail up the slope to avoid all the stream crossings."

And to lose the ambiance of a wandering trail along a stream meandering through a mixed oak, bigcone, and white fir forest, in blessed southern California shade.

Some oaks were chopped in half, longitudinally, to stay out of the trail. Nowhere was the trail re-routed to accommodate old, well-established standing trees. The sandy soil appeared thin and unstable; if we're not through having occasional characteristic drenching downpours, we can count on several miles of the steep slope washing out the trail completely. With the loss of all that soil and vegetation, the stream will clog, and then the trail will need massive maintenance and reconstruction.

A huge lichen-covered rock nudging the stream is slated for dynamiting in "clean up operations." "What for?" I asked, after just having passed by it. "Because the trail is in the stream along here!"

The final indignity was that no one had gone out on the trail to supervise what was going on, to check work that took considerable time. "There isn't time to supervise a contract job. We just give them the specs [specifications] and let them do the work."

So who did this massacre? Outside contractors! Why? Because "We haven't had enough money for a crew for over a decade—in fact, we really don't know much about trail maintenance anymore!" And why didn't we see the Environmental Assessment?

Because there wasn't one. The work was considered minor maintenance, and was exempted from analysis as a "categorical exclusion." The term "minor maintenance" can lull one into the belief that only brushing is to take place, with some erosion repair and water bar installation, plus poison oak cutback if relevant. Nothing for alarm.

And was this "minor" trail maintenance work low cost, with the money spent excruciatingly carefully after all the years of no funds? Would you believe \$40,000 was spent, for six miles? Believe it.

Reprinted from the April 1991 issue of Public Lands, newsletter of the Sierra Club Public Lands Committee. Sally Reid is vice-chair of the Public Lands Committee.



CWC appeals cattle grazing decisions

The California Wilderness Coalition and four other organizations have appealed the South Sierra Wilderness Implementation Plan for failure to analyze the impacts of cattle grazing in the wilderness. The Coalition was joined in the appeal by the Eastern Sierra Audubon Society, Eastern Sierra Nevada Committee of the Sierra Club, High Sierra Hikers Association, and Wilderness Watch.

These groups, along with Friends of the Inyo and the Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club, also have appealed the Templeton Grazing Allotment Management Plan for cattle grazing in the Golden Trout Wilderness.

The appellants argue that the two plans violate the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Forest Management Act. The wilderness areas are located south of Sequoia National Park in the Inyo and Sequoia national forests.

"We receive frequent complaints from members about overgrazing in wilderness areas," said Jim Eaton, the Coalition's executive director. "Just because cattle grazing is a historic use does not mean it should be allowed to damage our wilderness lands."

An intrusion on the natural landscape, fences used to restrict livestock movement disturb wilderness users, and makeshift gates are a burden on hikers passing through an area. Many hikers also complain that passing through a fence gives them the feeling that they are on private property instead of public lands. Bells placed on grazing animals also annoy many recreationists.

The Forest Service justifies continued high grazing levels on the grounds that grazing may not be excluded from an area solely due to its designation as wilderness. The appellants point out that there are many environmental reasons for curtailing grazing on national forest lands regardless of wilderness designation.

For example, over half the lands grazed in the South Sierra Wilderness are considered to be in poor to fair condition. These areas can be expected to remain in poor condition if grazing occurs at the levels proposed in the decision under appeal.

Trampling by cattle is known to increase soil compaction and to contribute to streambank erosion, sedimentation, widening and shallowing of channels, and physical destruction of vegetation. Streambanks are particularly susceptible to trampling because of their high moisture content.

Livestock grazing is known to damage fish habitat. The Forest Service admits that poor streambank stability may be limiting trout production in the South Sierra Wilderness.

Significant impacts to recreation also will occur due to water quality degradation. Cattle in the southern Sierra are known to harbor human-infective *Giardia*. Since cattle often congregate around water and defecate into water, significant amounts of *Giardia* can be expected to pollute streams in the South Sierra and Golden Trout wilderness areas.

In the South Sierra Wilderness appeal, the organizations also objected to the Forest Service's hands-off approach to military overflights. They also questioned whether additional trails and trailheads are the best means of preventing recreational overuse of the wilderness area.

Mt. Shasta's sacred sites reconsidered

The nearly complete final management plan for the Mt. Shasta Wilderness has been delayed as the Forest Service re-evaluates the plan's section on cultural and historic values. The draft was released in May 1990.

The state Historic Preservation Office called attention to the agency's consideration of Native American sacred sites when they raised questions about the Mt. Shasta ski area proposal. The Wintu, Shasta, Modoc, Karuk, and Pit River tribes are among those that lived near and regularly used Mt. Shasta as a ceremonial site.

Michele Berditchevsky of Save Mount Shasta studied the laws designed to protect Native American sacred places, and alerted the state Historic Preservation Office and California Indian Legal Services to ski

area development plans. The office asked the Forest Service to re-evaluate their plans in light of the requirements of the National Historic Preservation and National Historic Sites acts. The acts require that historic sites be considered for the National Register of Historic Places and for National Historic Landmark status.

"Mt. Shasta is sacred to Native Americans all over Northern California," says Berditchevsky. She explains that the mountain as a whole is considered sacred, and that the location of individual sites all over Mt. Shasta are not public information.

Gary Oye of the Shasta-Trinity National Forest says of the delay in the wilderness plan's release that "there's a strong interest to get management going" soon, as there currently is no plan for the area.

Controversy mounting over bolts in wilderness

continued from page 1

New Mexico. The history of their use (similar to the history of piton use) is one of steadily increasing numbers. Prior to the early 1980s, newly established climbing routes mostly tended to follow natural weaknesses in rock faces, i.e. natural crack systems, and bolts were used sparingly. At first, the occasional bolt was used for protection or upward progress (direct aid) only as a last resort, to connect discontinuous crack systems.

During the 1970s, as standards of free climbing difficulty rose dramatically, bolts were still used with much restraint. Even as many of the natural crack lines were climbed and attention turned more and more to blank (uncracked) rock faces, the liberal use of bolts was considered unethical. Climbers depended upon boldness and judgment in lieu of protection on the blank face climbs. Indeed, many of the classic face climbs of the 70s are revered today as testimony to the boldness of the first such climbers.

The 1980s brought a different scene. Free climbing standards skyrocketed, fueling what has become a feverish search for newer and more difficult free climbs. As the more obvious and natural routes on cliff faces were climbed, climbers sought an increasing number of "routes between routes." A growing demand for more protection ensued: pure difficulty increasingly replaced boldness as the climber's desired end. No surprise, then, that the most heated controversy over bolt use has been in the last decade.

The controversy is in several areas:

The number of bolts being placed. This is the issue with the most history. The controversy has become increasingly acute with newer methods of placement and growing numbers of climbers, as well as a proportionately greater level of interest in high-standard face climbing, where bolts are often the only available protection.

The method of placement. Bolts are often placed using hand-held battery-powered drills, a much faster and less tiring method than traditional hand drilling.

The "style" of placement. This is more of a controversy within the climbing community itself, although it does have an effect on the local environment by making bolts easier to place and consequently more prevalent. In a traditional-style first ascent, a climber starts on the ground and climbs up a rock face, placing bolts at natural stances (footholds or small ledges) during the ascent. In the newer and more controversial method (rappel bolting), a climber hikes up to the top of a cliff the "back way," fixes a rope down the cliff face, then rappels down the rope, placing bolts at predetermined locations. The climb is subsequently done from the bottom up, but with the bolts already in place.

Environmental Impacts

From the perspective of wilderness management, bolt placement has the potential for negative environmental impacts. Large numbers of bolts in a limited area become an eyesore themselves, as do the associated webbing and chains used for rappel anchors. Lots of bolts can also lead to lots of climbers in a concentrated area, with all the associated impacts to flora and fauna. All of this has the potential to impair the wilderness experience of visitors.

Power drills make noise—noise which disturbs other wilderness users and local wildlife.

The "style" of bolt placement, in and of itself, has no direct environmental effect. Because rappel bolting of

climbs is much faster than ground-up techniques, however, proliferation of bolts becomes much more likely.

Environmental damage seems to derive not from the placement of bolts *per se*, but from the concentration of large numbers of bolts in wilderness areas. Certainly the placing of bolts is a traditional use on public land: the activity predates the 1964 Wilderness Act and has continued since then with a relatively low degree of controversy.

Bolt Any climbing anchor inserted into a drilled hole in a rock surface. The climber's rope is clipped to the bolt's metal hanger with a carabiner (or snap-link), protecting the climber. The 2" bolts are used when a rock surface has no natural cracks available in which to place other types of protection. Most bolts are expansion devices, locking against the side of the hole as they are pounded in or as a nut is screwed onto the head. Bolts are considered permanent anchors.

Piton A tapered steel spike that is pounded into natural cracks in the rock face for protection and anchoring. Pitons come in an array of shapes and sizes, from ultra-thin "knifeblade" pitons to larger "angle" pitons that fit cracks up to several inches wide. Although repeated piton use at the same location in a crack will damage the rock, pitons are not considered permanent anchors. Not often used for modern free climbing.

Nuts or Chocks Non-damaging devices that are wedged, not pounded, into natural cracks for protection and anchoring. Generally wedge-shaped, they are placed and removed by hand without the use of a hammer. This is the type of anchor most commonly used today.

Free Climbing Technically difficult rock climbing wherein the climber ascends using only the rock's natural features. Ropes and protective equipment are used only to catch the climber if he or she falls, not to aid in upward progress.

(There are notable exceptions to this; controversies have arisen in state and national parks.)

As regards the Wilderness Act itself, bolt placement properly restrained would be consistent with Section 2(c) by leaving "the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable." Section 4(c), "Prohibition of Certain Uses," was intended to address incursions with greater potential impacts than bolts—buildings, transmission lines, and the like.

The question that conservationists, climbers, and land managers must answer, then, is what are the real impacts of bolt use in wilderness and how can these impacts be minimized or eliminated?

There are a number of answers to the second part of this question. One answer is simply to ban all bolt use in wilderness. This would certainly eliminate any impacts, though some argue that this would put climbers at odds with wilderness proponents and land managers. The opposite extreme would be to leave things as they are, with no regulation at all.

The third answer is for land managers to regulate bolt use in wilderness. Regulation could take many forms, specific to local situations, but might include these types of restrictions:

- Prohibit use of power drills in any designated wilderness area.
- Require certain distances between bolted climbing routes and non-climbing trails.

- Require specific distances between adjacent bolted climbing routes.
- Require bolt hangers and other gear left behind to match the natural rock color.
- Prohibit any climbing near archaeological sites or in areas with sensitive plant or animal communities.
- Prohibit bolts in specific wilderness areas.

If developed with the cooperation of land managers, conservationists, and climbers, regulation holds high potential for minimizing real impacts and would, in all likelihood, maintain climbers as wilderness supporters.

Regulation of bolt use in wilderness is the way land managers are leaning so far. At a recent conference on climbing in public lands, a U.S. Forest Service task force released its preliminary recommendations that the agency adopt a regulatory process for limiting bolts in wilderness, rather than banning them outright. Climbers, more than ever before, are accepting the necessity for agency regulation of their activities.

Conservationists have only recently begun to look at this issue, so opinions vary. The Wilderness Society has adopted a position that bolts should be prohibited in wilderness. The Sierra Club is in the process of formulating

its policy. Many conservation groups have yet to address the issue. Certainly activities such as livestock grazing and mining, with much more serious impacts on wilderness, are higher on most conservationists' lists of concerns. Yet there are important ramifications of the wilderness management policies outlined here, for both the wilderness itself and for potential supporters of new wilderness. However the bolting issue is decided, protecting our wilderness areas from undue impact must remain the first concern of all land managers, conservationists, and climbers.

Jeff Widen is the associate Southern California/Nevada representative of the Sierra Club and has been an avid climber for 21 years.

Power drills banned at Yosemite

Last December, after receiving numerous complaints, Yosemite National Park Superintendent Michael Finley banned climbers from using power drills to place bolts on Yosemite's rock faces. According to a *Yosemite* magazine report, geologists have linked drilling to exfoliation, the peeling-off of rock layers.

Because Yosemite attracts legions of climbers, its granite walls have accumulated bolts at an alarming rate. By banning motorized drills but not the bolts themselves, park managers hope to protect both the climbers and the rocks that draw them.



Bolts (hangers visible)



photo courtesy of Yosemite

Book review

The Nature of Women

Sisters of the Earth: Women's Prose and Poetry about Nature

By Lorraine Anderson, ed., Vintage Books, New York, 426pp., \$13.00.

Sisters of the Earth landed on my desk with a note from Jim predicting "this looks like a good one." And how. Lorraine Anderson set out to find the women's voices, the emerging ones and those long-stilled. In this volume are the fruits of her search: an extensive collection that stands as a testament to the scope of women's nature writing and the diversity of women's lives.

Anderson describes "a feminine way of being in relationship to nature. This way is caring rather than controlling; it seeks harmony rather than mastery; it is characterized by humility rather than arrogance, by appreciation rather than acquisitiveness." The various selections in this volume, however different in format and style, all illustrate that relationship.

There's Celia Lighton Thaxter's childhood memory of waiting for spring "with an eager longing; the advent of the growing grass, the birds and flowers and insect life, the soft skies and softer winds, the everlasting beauty of a thousand tender tints that clothed the world...." Annie Dillard, 100 years later, enjoins us to live like weasels, "to

stalk your calling in a certain skilled and supple way...yielding at every moment to the perfect freedom of single necessity."

While many of the writers represented are widely known, dozens more were new to me. Anderson provides a brief biography of each writer and an annotated bibliography that, by itself, is worth the price of the book. (A CWC member, Anderson will donate a portion of the book's proceeds to Kenyan reforestation efforts.)

A good anthology, while not as involving as a complete work, can be a sampler, an invitation to further discovery. *Sisters of the Earth*, slightly battered now and bristling with bookmarks, will see me through next winter and many winters to come.

"It is a good time," says Sue Hubbell, "to be a grown-up woman with individuality, strength and crotchets...."

...I have stopped sleeping inside. A house is too small, too confining. I want the whole world, and the stars too."

-Lucy Rosenau



Models Under Duress?

CWC intern Tova reluctantly models our six-tone anniversary shirt; it comes in light blue, yellow, light green, or peach for \$15. The animal design that Solomon stoically sports 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.

Wilderness Trivia Quiz Answer:

from page 2

Emigrant Wilderness
in the Stanislaus
National Forest

DATES TO REMEMBER

June 15 WILDERNESS ACTIVIST MEETING for people working on Bureau of Land Management non-desert wilderness. For more information, contact Jim Eaton at (916) 758-0380.

June 21 SCOPING COMMENTS DUE to help identify issues relevant to a management plan now being prepared for the Snow Mountain Wilderness. Send to: Virginia Pugh, Recreation, Mendocino National Forest, 420 E. Laurel Street, Willows, CA 95988.

June 28 COMMENTS DUE on the BLM Resource Management Plan for the Redding Resource Area. Send to: Francis Berg, Team Leader, Bureau of Land Management, 355 Hemsted Drive, Redding, CA 96002. (Article on page 3.)

June 28 COMMENTS DUE on proposed categorical exemptions from the National Environmental Policy Act. Send to: Land Management Planning Staff, USDA Forest Service, P.O. Box 96090, Washington, DC 20090-6090. (Article on pages 1 & 3.)

June-August Sierra Nevada Field Campus classes in geology, astronomy, education, and biology will be offered to the public; with college credit optional. For more information, contact: Jim Steele, Sierra Nevada Field Campus, Star Route, Satley, CA 96124.



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 *Wilderness Record* is the monthly publication of the California Wilderness Coalition. Articles may be reprinted; credit would be appreciated. Subscription is free with membership.

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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Editors

Stephanie Mandel

Lucy Rosenau

Contributors

Jim Eaton

Nathaniel Lawrence

Tim McKay, *Econews*

Sally Reid

Jonathan Stoke

Jeff Widen

Photos & Graphics

Jim Eaton

John McConnell,

Yosemite

Bob Schneider

Pete Yamagata

Production

W. Cohen, J. Eaton

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Focus:

Mountain Lion Preservation Foundation

The goal of the Mountain Lion Preservation Foundation is implicit in its name: protecting mountain lions and the wilderness where they survive. Last year's passage of Proposition 117, which outlawed hunting of mountain lions and allocated funds to acquire habitat, was a major victory for the Foundation.

Threats to the mountain lion remain, however. Describing the number of poaching incidents as "shocking," the Foundation has begun an anti-poaching campaign

to educate the public. The group hopes that increased reward programs will encourage citizens to report poachers.

The Foundation will continue to seek funding for habitat acquisition, since loss of habitat to human encroachment is the main threat to the species in California. Monitoring the state's use of Prop. 117 funds is another priority.

To learn more about the Foundation, write to P.O. Box 1896, Sacramento, CA 95812 or call (916) 442-2666.

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