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PROCEEDINGS OF THE CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION

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Ventana Wilderness, Los Padres National Forest, looking down from Hare Canyon to the sea from Cone Peak. The Los Padres will soon boast new wilderness areas—and spotted owl habitat. Photo by Phil Farrell

BLM unveils long-awaited wilderness proposal

By Jim Eaton

After 15 years of review, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has released its final wilderness recommendations for California.

Secretary of the Interior Manuel Lujan announced he is proposing portions of 62 Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) totalling 2.3 million acres to be designated wilderness. Over seven million acres of BLM land qualifies as potential wilderness. The agency manages 16 million acres in California, 16 percent of the state's land.

The recommendations range in size from a 344-acre addition to the Agua Tibia Wilderness to nearly 400,000 acres in the Saline Valley WSA. The vast majority of proposed wilderness is in the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA); only 185,703 acres in the rest of the state are proposed for wilderness.

In addition to the wilderness recommendations, Lujan proposed transferring 108,600 acres of land to the National Park Service as additions to Death Valley and Joshua Tree national monuments. Legislation currently before Congress, Senator Alan Cranston's California Desert Protection Act, would transfer nearly a million and a half acres of BLM land to these monuments and reclassify them as national parks.

Environmentalists are proposing far more wilderness

continued on page 6

Sierra owl halts timber sales

Temporary ban may not stave off lawsuit

In early July the U. S. Forest Service (FS) halted most Sierra timber sales pending a review of habitat suitable for the California spotted owl. The review process is expected to be completed later this summer; until then, no sales of live timber will be approved in the Sierra Nevada or the coastal mountains of central and southern California. Salvage sales are not affected.

The FS action followed negotiations between Regional Director Ronald Stewart and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), which represents several conservation groups.

David Edelson of the NRDC characterized the FS action a positive step. According to Edelson, environmentalists consider that "the current management strategy for the California owl fails to ensure the owl's long-term viability." The NRDC may file a lawsuit on the owl's behalf. It took a federal court order halting timber

sales to guarantee habitat protection for the northern spotted owl, a threatened species.

The California spotted owl, like its northern cousin, nests in old-growth forests, where dense canopy provides protection from predators. Less is known about the California owl's habits and habitat because it has not been studied as extensively as has the northern owl.

The FS has embarked on a biological study of the California owl's population and habitat; FS spokesman Chris Bowan says the FS study should be complete early in 1992.

This summer's field review will use the same criteria to define suitable habitat as the ongoing, more comprehensive, study. Suitable habitat is determined by a "cumulative effects analysis process" whereby 70 percent canopy closure is deemed necessary for roosting and nesting habitat and 50 percent for foraging habitat.

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COALITION PAGE

MONTHLY REPORT

Less than a month after finishing her career as *Wilderness Record* editor, Stephanie Mandel is the proud mother of a daughter, Melody Rain. Born June 29th, Melody weighed in at 9.0 pounds.

Stephanie did manage one last error in her final issue, though. On page 2 in last month's *Record*, the caption for the photo of Steph and our new editor, Lucy Rosenan, is reversed. Stephanie is on the left wearing the CWC T-shirt; Lucy is the dark-haired woman on the right.

June 29 not only was Melody's birthday, it also was CWC director Mary Scoonover's wedding day. Mary and Bill just managed to miss our freak June rainstorm for their outdoor ceremony, and they had a marvelous celebration. We trust that they will invite us all back for a repeat party each anniversary.

Many other things happened in June. Lucy and I attended a meeting of Forest Service wilderness rangers and managers at Mt. Shasta and managed to spend some time on the mountain. Inyo was able to visit the wilderness legally since the Forest Service proposal to ban dogs there has yet to go into effect. He did not trample any meadows, wade in any streams, or harass any wildlife (although that may have been due to lack of opportunity); he did roll in the snow and gnaw on sticks.

Later I joined four of my neighbors on a backpack trip into proposed additions to the Hoover Wilderness along the West Walker River. This was our fourth annual trip, and for once I was healthy—the first trip I got the flu at the trailhead, the second I had mysterious blisters (later attributed to sap from my fig tree) erupting as we began, and last year I sprained my ankle and missed the whole thing.

This traditional outing, with Village Homes residents Rick Jorgensen, Bill Leipham, Rob Thayer, and Jon Watterson, is one of the few in which we gain weight. Each person is responsible for but one dinner

or breakfast, so gourmet meals are the rule. Instead of subsisting on freeze-dried foods or macaroni and cheese, we feasted on shish kabobs, pasta with fresh pesto, good wines (in the bottle), french toast, and blueberry pancakes.

This year inyo was joined by Scout, the frisbee catching champion of UC Davis' Picnic Day. Inyo's customary six-pack of beer was not as popular as in past hikes; the freezing nights found us favoring bourbon and Drambuie instead.

In a marked contrast, Wendy and I sweated a lot when we joined CWC director Steve Evans and Jeannette Colbert for half of their two-week journey in the Carson-Iceberg Wilderness. For the first time I can recall, my down jacket remained in my pack for the entire trip despite our camping at 9,000 feet. We later discovered it was a good week to leave the Valley—Davis topped out at 114° while we were in the mountains.

As we wandered through the wilderness, we met three men hiking the Pacific Crest Trail, the first of whom sported a CWC T-shirt! After complimenting his taste in apparel, Wendy learned that he was a Visalia resident who attended our 1989 conference there.

When we returned home we discovered that the heat wave had resulted in ants invading both home and office. Not only had they discovered the sugar bowl and cat food, they also sought refuge in the freezer and died all over the ice cube trays. At the office I found my staff in revolt over ants crawling across their desks, along the bookshelf, and in the computer. Normally I'll tolerate a certain amount of local wildlife, but with the balance of nature out of hand we are resorting to lethal solutions.

I sure hope they don't get listed as a threatened species.

BY JIM EATON

Wilderness Primer, Part XI

Bureau of Land Management Wilderness Review

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), commonly known as the "BLM Organic Act," was signed into law on October 21, 1976. The Act established basic policies and procedures for the administration, management, and protection of the 446 million acres of public lands nationwide now under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), an agency of the Department of the Interior.

One of the requirements of the law, spelled out in Section 603, is for the Secretary of the Interior (through the BLM) to complete a review within 15 years of all "roadless areas five thousand acres or more and roadless islands of the public lands...having wilderness characteristics described in the Wilderness Act." The President then has two additional years in which to advise Congress of his or her recommendations for each area. An Act of Congress is needed for an area finally to become designated as wilderness.

BLM first began to review lands in the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA). In 1978, while procedures for inventorying potential "Wilderness Study Areas" (WSAs) still were being finalized, public meetings were held for review and comment on 336 potential WSAs. By the following year the desert inventory had shrunk to 138 areas totalling slightly over 5.7 million acres.

The wilderness review in the CDCA was incorporated into the larger *California Desert Plan*, completed in 1980. Only 44 areas, with two million acres, were recommended by BLM for wilderness designation.

The agency completed its inventory for lands outside the CDCA in 1979. Here, too, the number of surviving WSAs was a fraction of the roadless areas initially inventoried. The California Wilderness Coalition and other groups protested and appealed on behalf of a number of discarded areas, but only one area was reinstated.

During the 1980s, these non-CDCA areas were studied in fifteen different environmental impact statements. Formal public hearings were held and written comments were accepted for each of these documents.

While the studies were underway, then-Interior Secretary James Watt tried to drop from review 63 WSAs, a quarter million acres of land. Six major environmental groups and the late Rep. Phillip Burton filed suit to stop the Interior Secretary and have these "Watt-droppings" reinstated. U.S. District Court Judge Lawrence Karlton agreed with environmentalists that Watt did not have the authority to remove areas from study.

Ultimately, the BLM recommended that outside the CDCA, portions of only 16 WSAs totalling 185,703 acres should become wilderness—22 percent of the acreage studied. This proposal has been sent to the President for presentation to Congress.

Congress did not bother to wait for the President's recommendations. In 1986 Senator Alan Cranston introduced the California Desert Protection Act to designate 81 WSAs as wilderness and transfer additional areas to the National Park Service. This legislation currently is being refined by House and Senate committees after six years of hearings and field studies.

BLM lands outside the CDCA are not yet before Congress, but environmentalists are developing proposals that will lead to legislation. Activists from San Diego to Modoc County, from the north coast to the east side of the Sierra, are conducting field studies, gathering information, and drawing boundaries for a statewide wilderness bill. To become involved in this exciting venture, read the article on Page 3.



The *Record*
welcomes future editor
Melody Rain



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Conservatree Information Services now offers **Greenline Membership**, consisting of a 55-page background library of material on recycled paper issues and six bi-monthly mailings, including ESP News, our newsletter on environmentally-sound paper issues, for \$49 (\$29 for non-profits). Sample issue and recycled paper primer, \$5. Please send your name and address, along with payment, to Conservatree Information Services, 10 Lombard St., Suite 250, San Francisco, CA 94111.

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

What Wilderness Study Area was named for a kind of sweet substance which the Indians extracted from reeds and wild fruit?

Answer on page 7.

BLM's Wilderness Study Areas

Help CWC protect state's neglected wildlands

By Mike Gonella

"...an 'island called California,' a singular piece of country with extremes unknown in more temperate or less diverse regions. Frozen peaks reach up over scorched valleys. Lichen-shrouded seamist forest is but an hour's drive from a mineral encrusted dry lake. Prairie and the world's tallest forest are only a few feet apart."

An Island Called California
Elna Bakker, 1971

Clearly, one of the most outstanding characteristics of California is its diversity—from the rocky, pinyon and juniper covered hills surrounding Bodie to the steep, rugged, mist-covered mountains and teeming shores of the King Range National Conservation Area [see map, page 4]. From the Otay Mountains along the Mexican border to the grassy meadows and sage-cloaked mountains in Lassen County, California's diversity is well-represented in the Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

This article is the first in a series highlighting specific BLM WSAs in our state. Future articles will describe in detail the natural treasures found in the WSAs and compare the BLM's and the California Wilderness Coalition's (CWC) recommendations for wilderness acreage. We will be focussing on the WSAs outside the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) since desert WSAs are addressed in the California Desert Protection Act currently before Congress.

The BLM's statewide wilderness proposal has been

submitted to Washington for approval. The 80 WSAs (outside the CDCA) contain 822,729 acres, but the Bureau has recommended only 185,703 acres in 16 WSAs, only 22 percent of the acreage reviewed in the 15-year-long wilderness study. If Congress adopts the BLM's proposal, WSAs and acreage not recommended [see chart, page 5] will be released for other uses, such as mining, grazing, and logging.

*first
in a
series*

Citizen

Involvement

The Record of Decision for the BLM's final recommendation has been issued, and the printed proposal

should be available later this year. Conservationists should be prepared to respond to whatever proposal the agency makes with an alternative proposal. Passage of a favorable wilderness bill may take years; pressure from citizen advocates is essential throughout the process. In every case where a wilderness campaign has been successful, it has been due to the commitment and involvement of citizens who have rallied and organized to protect the land.

The CWC and individuals across the state will be preparing an alternative proposal—one that better protects California's biodiversity by preserving wilderness acreage the BLM is ready to release for other uses. We hope this article and the upcoming WSA highlight articles will rouse your desire to protect California's BLM wilderness. Use the articles as a guide. Read about the areas and visit them. Bring a camera, a topographic map, and a keen thirst for becoming a personal steward for California wild areas. Write and talk about them knowledgeably. Be prepared to write to state and federal leaders to elicit their support for protecting these areas. And be ready to submit testimony in support of

the areas you know best. Each individual WSA needs your help!

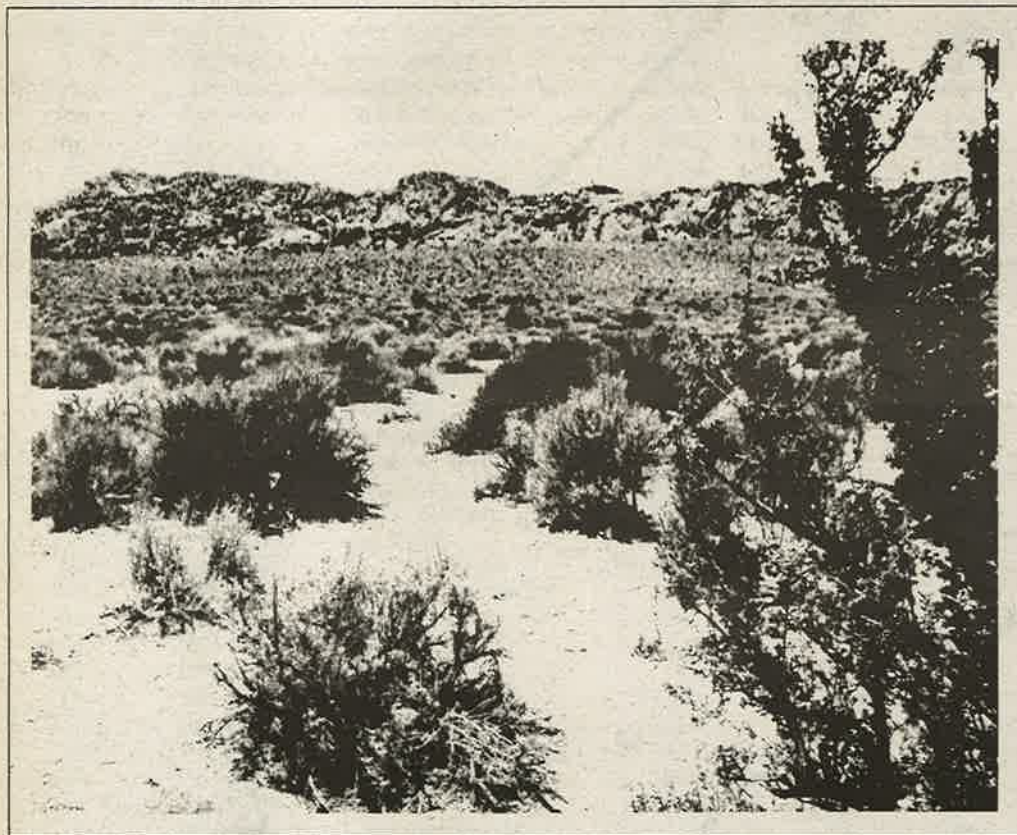
In California today there are about six million acres of protected wilderness—additional BLM wilderness would further enhance the state's wilderness system and permanently protect fragile ecosystems.

Bakker speaks of the distinctive interaction between native species and California's wild areas. "Like the...pines,



Red Mountain WSA in Mendocino County. Incense cedar, *Calocedrus decurrens*, grows in the rare lateritic soil.

Photo by the man who walks in the woods

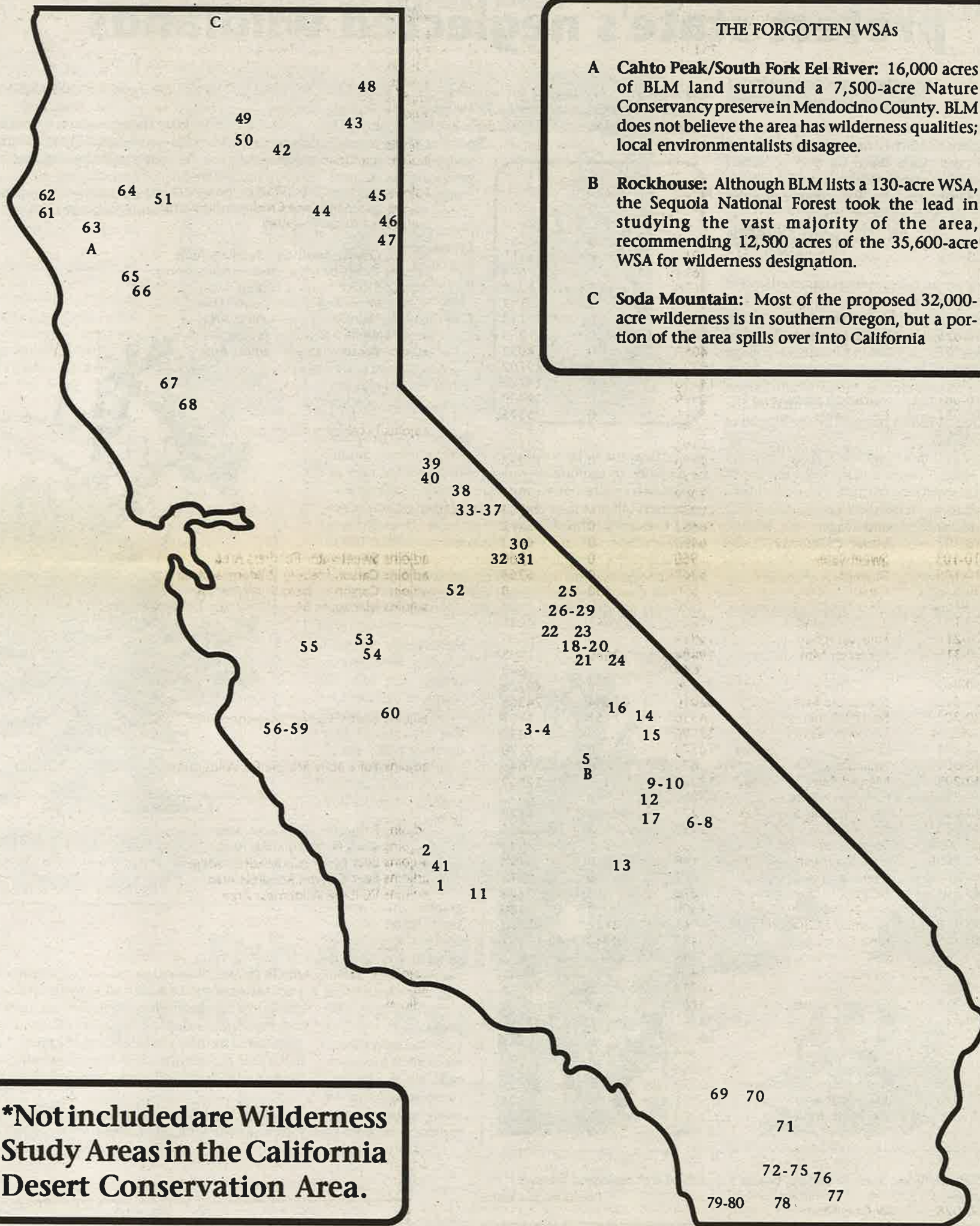


Volcanic Tablelands WSA, north of Bishop, boasts a wealth of archaeological features, including petroglyphs. Photo by Jim Eaton

and cypresses...like chaparral and coniferous forest...on a serpentine slope, in a Sierran canyon...[these] have...no exact duplicates elsewhere in the world; [they] are incredibly intricate, multiple and unfortunately irreplaceable if obliterated by man's heedlessness or apathy." Our actions in the coming months will determine whether California's unique wild lands will remain unspoiled for the future.

Mike Gonella is a California Wilderness Coalition intern working on BLM Wilderness Study Areas.

BLM's Wilderness Study Areas *



THE FORGOTTEN WSAs

A Cahto Peak/South Fork Eel River: 16,000 acres of BLM land surround a 7,500-acre Nature Conservancy preserve in Mendocino County. BLM does not believe the area has wilderness qualities; local environmentalists disagree.

B Rockhouse: Although BLM lists a 130-acre WSA, the Sequoia National Forest took the lead in studying the vast majority of the area, recommending 12,500 acres of the 35,600-acre WSA for wilderness designation.

C Soda Mountain: Most of the proposed 32,000-acre wilderness is in southern Oregon, but a portion of the area spills over into California

***Not included are Wilderness Study Areas in the California Desert Conservation Area.**

MAP KEY	BLM #	WSA NAME	TOTAL ACREAGE	ACRES IN*	ACRES OUT*	NOTES
1	010-012	Garcia Mountain	80	0	80	adjoins Garcia Mountain Roadless Area
2	010-020	Black Mountain	150	0	150	adjoins Black Mountain Roadless Area
3	010-022	Sheep Ridge	5102	0	5102	adjoins Sequoia National Park
4	010-023	Milk Ranch/Case Mtn	8970	0	8970	adjoins Sequoia National Park
5	010-025	Moses	558	0	558	adjoins Moses Roadless Area
6	010-026	Owens Peak	24128	15897	8231	adjoins Owens Peak WSA in the desert
7	010-027	Sacatar Meadows	17460	10721	6739	adjoins Little Lake Canyon WSA in the desert
8	010-029	Rockhouse	130	0	130	adjoins Dome Land Wilderness
9	010-030	Scodie	5847	0	5847	adjoins Scodies Roadless Area
10	010-032	Domeland	2223	0	2223	adjoins Dome Land Wilderness
11	010-042	Caliente Mountain	17590	0	17590	
12	010-045	Kelso Creek Valley	2244	0	2244	adjoins Scodies Roadless Area
13	010-046	Piute-Cypress	3453	0	3453	adjoins Staff roadless area
14	010-055	Cerro Gordo	14079	0	14079	
15	010-056	Southern Inyo	36901	28291	8610	adjoins Southern Inyo WSA in the desert
16	010-057	Independence Creek	6458	0	6458	adjoins Independence Creek roadless area
17	010-060	Paiute	7600	0	7600	adjoins Staff Roadless Area
18	010-062	Crater Mountain	7069	0	7069	
19	010-063	Coyote Southeast	3211	0	3211	adjoins Coyote Southeast Roadless Area
20	010-064	Symmes Creek	7694	0	7694	adjoins Independence Creek roadless area
21	010-065	Black Canyon	6518	0	6518	adjoins Black Canyon Roadless Area
22	010-068	Wheeler Ridge	3197	0	3197	adjoins Wheeler Ridge Roadless Area
23	010-072	Laurel-McGee	110	0	110	adjoins Laurel-McGee Roadless Area
24	010-075	White Mountain	1260	0	1260	adjoins White Mountain Roadless Area
25	010-077	Benton Range	4052	0	4052	adjoins Benton Range Roadless Area
26	010-079	Chidago Canyon	19702	0	19702	
27	010-080	Fish Slough	14700	0	14700	
28	010-081	Volcanic Tablelands	12499	0	12499	
29	010-082	Casa Diablo	5325	0	5325	
30	010-088	Excelsior	9383	0	9383	adjoins Excelsior roadless area
31	010-090	Granite Mountain	54178	0	54178	
32	010-092	Walford Springs	12840	0	12840	
33	010-094	Mormon Meadow	7721	0	7721	
34	010-095	Mt Biedeman	13069	0	13069	
35	010-099	Bodie Mountain	23934	0	23934	
36	010-100	Bodie	16482	0	16482	
37	010-102	Masonic Mountain	6493	0	6493	
38	010-103	Sweetwater	960	0	960	adjoins Sweetwater Roadless Area
39	010-105	Slinkard	6268	0	6268	adjoins Carson-Iceberg Wilderness Area
40	030-532NV	Carson-Iceberg	550	550	0	adjoins Carson-Iceberg Wilderness Area
41	010-108	Machesna	70	0	70	adjoins Machesna Mountain Wilderness Area
42	020-103	Pit River Canyon	11724	7443	4281	
43	020-211	Tule Mountain	16998	0	16998	
44	020-311	Tunnison Mtn	19884	7889	11995	
45	020-604	Bitterbrush	640	0	640	
46	020-609	Five Springs	49206	0	49206	
47	020-612	Skedaddle Mtn	62010	37644	24366	
48	020-708	South Warner	4330	1161	3169	adjoins South Warner Wilderness Area
49	030-201	Timbered Crater	17896	0	17896	
50	030-203	Lava	10770	0	10770	
51	030-501	Yolla Bolly	646	0	646	adjoins Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness
52	040-203	Merced River	12959	0	12959	
53	040-301A	Panoche Hills N.	6631	0	6631	
54	040-301B	Panoche Hills S	11229	0	11229	
55	040-303	Pinnacles	5951	1983	3968	adjoins Pinnacles Wilderness Area
56	040-305A	Black Butte	40	0	40	adjoins Black Butte Roadless Area
57	040-305B	Bear Mountain	3198	0	3198	adjoins Bear Mountain Roadless Area
58	040-305C	Bear Canyon	318	0	318	adjoins Bear Canyon Roadless Area
59	040-308	Ventana	676	0	676	adjoins Ventana Wilderness Area
60	040-309	San Benito Mountain	1500	0	1500	
61	050-111	Chemise Mountain	4143	4143	0	
62	050-112	King Range	33485	20248	13237	
63	050-132	Red Mountain	6244	0	6244	
64	050-211	Big Butte	2408	0	2408	adjoins Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness Area
65	050-212	Thatcher Ridge	16918	0	16918	adjoins Thatcher & Elk Creek roadless areas
66	050-214	Eden Vly/Md Fk Eel	6166	0	6166	adjoins Elk Creek Roadless Area
67	050-317	Rocky Ck/Cache Ck	33561	0	33561	
68	050-331	Cedar Roughs	5875	0	5875	
69	060-002	Agua Tibia	344	344	0	adjoins Agua Tibia Wilderness
70	060-020G	Beauty Mountain	11364	0	11364	
71	060-022	San Ysidro Mtn	2125	0	2125	
72	060-023	San Felipe Hills	5325	0	5325	
73	060-024A	Sawtooth Mtns A	3883	0	3883	adjoins Anza Borrego Desert State Wilderness
74	060-024B	Sawtooth Mtns B	25791	22875	2916	adjoins Anza Borrego Desert State Wilderness
75	060-024C	Sawtooth Mtns C	2454	0	2454	adjoins Anza Borrego Desert State Wilderness
76	060-025A	Carrizo/E McCain Valley	15408	15408	0	adjoins Anza Borrego Desert State Wilderness
77	060-026	Table Mountain	1018	0	1018	adjoins Anza Borrego Desert State Wilderness
78	060-027C	Hauser Mountain	5540	0	5540	
79	060-028	W Otay Mountain	5758	4323	1435	
80	060-029	S Otay Mountain	8055	6783	1272	
TOTALS			822,729	185,703	637,026	

* ACRES IN are recommended for wilderness by BLM
 * ACRES OUT are recommended for release by BLM

Wilderness legislation

Condors to go wild in new Los Padres wilderness

Proposed new wilderness areas in the central coast's Los Padres National Forest may welcome the first captive-bred California condors into the wild. The "Los Padres Condor Range and River Protection Act," currently before Congress, would designate more than 400,000 acres of new wilderness, almost doubling the wilderness acreage in the forest.

After successful releases of Andean condors, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service—which oversees the state's condor program—will attempt to reintroduce zoo-bred California condors to the wild this fall. The Los Padres National Forest is home to the Sespe Condor Sanctuary.

The Los Padres legislation is supported by both Senators Cranston and Seymour, and by



Los Padres National Forest, from Cone Peak trail

Photo by Pete Yamagata

PROPOSED FOR WILDERNESS

Ventana Additions (two parcels)	38,000
Silver Peak	14,500
Garcia	14,500
San Rafael Addition	43,000
Chumash	38,200
Matilija	30,000
Sespe	220,500
Total Acres	398,700

From the *Santa Lucia*, newsletter of the Sierra Club Santa Lucia chapter.

the three Representatives—Lagomarsino, Panetta, and Thomas—whose districts include the forest. Their unanimous sponsorship and a marked lack of controversy should ensure passage of the bill, which resulted from negotiations among wilderness proponents, the Forest Service, and off-road vehicle users. There is no commercial timber in the proposed wilderness areas, where coastal chaparral and conifers predominate.

Compromises have been reached on all but one issue—the proposed designation of the 55-mile-long Sespe Creek as a Wild and Scenic River. Wild and Scenic status would preserve the free-flowing nature of the creek and designate as *de facto* wilderness a one-quarter-mile-wide strip on each bank.

The proposed 220,000-acre Sespe Wilderness is the largest single addition, and will include the existing Condor Sanctuary.

BLM WSA proposal disappoints

continued from page 1

than BLM. In addition to the national park expansions, the Desert Act would create a new, 1.5 million-acre Mojave National Park and designate 81 wilderness areas encompassing 4.4 million acres. Outside the CDCA, conservationists are disappointed by the BLM's failure to recommend many areas, including Cahto Peak and the South Fork of the Eel River, Cache Creek, Merced River, Bodie Hills, Granite Mountain, and the Volcanic Tablelands.

In the past, Congress has listened to the public rather than the agencies in designating wilderness areas. The Forest Service, for example, originally opposed wilderness for the Siskiyou, Mt. Shasta, Snow Mountain, Granite Chief, Golden Trout, and Santa Lucia—all now part of our National Wilderness Preservation System.

The 15-year wilderness review process was mandated by the 1976 Federal Land Policy and Management Act. During that period, BLM lands were inventoried for wilderness values, WSAs identified, studies conducted, and public hearings held. In the 1980s, Interior Secretary James Watt attempted to remove 63 California WSAs from study, but federal judges reinstated nearly all of the areas. Congress also disregarded Watt—three areas he tried to drop were designated as wilderness in the California Wilderness Act of 1984.

Unlike Forest Service roadless areas, WSAs receive some degree of interim protection. The BLM is supposed to preserve the wilderness values of each WSA until Congress determines whether to add the area to the National Wilderness Preservation System. Unfortunately, BLM's interpretation of the law has resulted in extensive mining, grazing "improvements," and off-road vehicle races in WSAs.

Environmentalists hope Senator Cranston's desert bill will pass this session of Congress. But even as that legislation works its way into law, activists are developing wilderness proposals for the rest of the state to assure that California's wild heritage is passed on to future generations.

Wilderness wildlife

Fish and Wildlife Service proffers protection for murrelet

The marbled murrelet is no ordinary bird: it can fly underwater. But it was another of the bird's habits that made headlines last month when the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (F&WS) proposed listing the species, which nests only in coastal old-growth forests of the Pacific northwest, as threatened.

The F&WS, responding to a 1988 petition filed by conservationists, determined that loss of habitat poses a grave threat to the species. "Threatened" status would apply only in California, Oregon, and Washington where the bird's population is declining. The F&WS believes that

fewer than 2,000 marbled murrelets remain in California.

The F&WS proposal followed a decision by the California Board of Forestry to adopt emergency regulations that designate the bird "a species of special concern." "Threatened" status, as dictated by the Endangered Species Act, would make it illegal to kill or harm the bird.

The marbled murrelet, *Brachyramphus marmoratus*, is a member of the Auk family. A water bird, the marbled murrelet comes ashore only to nest. Because it is rarely seen on land, many questions about the bird's breeding habits remain unanswered.

The F&WS proposal for the murrelet does not designate critical habitat because the agency lacks sufficient information to determine what is necessary for the bird's survival. The murrelet's current range in California, Oregon, and Washington overlaps the range of the Northern spotted owl. A federal court ruling has banned timber sales in proposed critical habitat for the owl. The overlap in the two species' territory means that the murrelet will enjoy some of the protections accorded the owl while the F&WS gathers information and solicits public input.

Book review

An Armchair Voyage North

The Last Wilderness

By Peter Browning, Great West Books, Lafayette, Ca., 180pp.

North of the sixtieth parallel, east of Great Slave Lake and west of Hudson Bay, is a vast sweep of pure, unspoiled land. It is the least accessible region in North America, a wilderness that has been seen by few, traversed by fewer still, and inhabited by no one. There is only the land, carved and molded by glaciers: scoured boulders, ridges and low hills of white sand, the sparkling waters of myriad lakes.

In 1964 Peter Browning and John Blunt went by canoe from northern Saskatchewan to the village of Snowdrift on Great Slave Lake. Starting in early June, they traveled 600 miles on lakes and rivers and across agonizing portages through a land devoid of other people. For 74 days they saw no one. *The Last Wilderness* is their story.

This is a great book for those who want (or need) to shake off the cares of civilization for an armchair wilderness experience. It chronicles a modern odyssey amid the

beauty and serenity of what is termed "the last great wilderness in North America." Browning and Blunt suffered through storms, hordes of insects, exhausting labor, and hunger. Their reward was to experience total independence amid the forests and tundra of the Northwest Territories.

Especially intriguing to the twentieth century urbanite are the accounts of a "hunter/gatherer" lifestyle—Browning and Blunt subsisted in large part on fish, fowl, moose, and berries—and the many thoughtful descriptions of "the North." Browning relates how the human psyche develops when one trades the "Banana Belt" for the vast, open spaces of the Canadian wilderness.

If you're looking for a highly personal book that takes you along on an incredible journey, I recommend *The Last Wilderness*.

—Tom Suk



Worn in the (W)SA

In the Cache Creek WSA, Robin (l.) wears our six-tone anniversary shirt; it comes in light blue, yellow, light green, or peach for \$15. The animal design that Candace bears 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: Panoche Hills, in Fresno County
from page 2

DATES TO REMEMBER

July 31 NOMINATIONS SOUGHT for Ukiah BLM Advisory Council. Three-year terms are open for seats representing environmental protection, recreation, and renewable resources interests. Send to: District Manager Al Wright, Bureau of Land Management, 555 Leslie Street, Ukiah, CA 95482.

August 2 SCOPING COMMENTS DUE on the proposed Devils Canyon timber sale. The area is habitat for California spotted owl and furbearing mammals. Send to: District Ranger, Nevada City Ranger District, Tahoe National Forest, P.O. Box 6003, Nevada City, CA 95959-6003.

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

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:

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Focus:

Citizens for a Vehicle Free Nipomo Dunes

The Nipomo Dunes, south of San Luis Obispo, are shifting: formations change and move with the wind. Citizens for a Vehicle Free Nipomo Dunes hope public sentiment is shifting, too.

The 500-member group is circulating petitions in an effort to turn the tide against off-road vehicle use in the Dunes. Founder Bill Denneen considers motorized

recreation a threat to the fragile ecosystem which includes wetlands at Oso Flaco Lake.

Denneen's group wants to see the 10,000-acre Nipomo Dunes—which now includes a State Vehicle Recreation Area—designated a state preserve.

For more information, write the group at 1040 Cielo Lane, Nipomo, CA 93444.

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