



# WILDERNESS RECORD

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Kaiser crest in the Kaiser Wilderness, Sierra National Forest

Photo by Phil Farrell

## Sierra NF's recipe for sustainable forestry: clearcuts and herbicides

The U. S. Forest Service has released its final land management plan for the Sierra National Forest. If adopted after a review period that ends June 4, the plan will direct the management of five wilderness areas, eight roadless areas, more than 500,000 acres of forest lands, and two Wild & Scenic rivers. Needless to say, it is an important (and hefty) document.

It is also, from the outset, controversial. Six years have passed since the release of the draft forest plan, and the condition of the forest, public opinion, and official policy all have changed. Overcutting of trees, unsuccessful attempts at forest regeneration, and the designation of sensitive forest-dependent species mean less timber can be sold. In fact, the new plan sets an annual sale target of 88 million board feet, lower than previous targets but still higher than local environmentalists consider healthy or sustainable. Forest planners intend to achieve these sale levels (which largely determine their annual budget) with a combination of clearcuts and herbicides.

Given the already low success rate for regeneration,

members of the Sierra Club's Tehipite Chapter expect to appeal the plan if it is, in fact, adopted. The final plan was released for public review without a record of decision, the official document that constitutes the Regional Forester's acceptance of the plan. The passage of time since the release of the draft plan is given as the reason for the unusual absence of a decision notice, but it is generally believed that inherent problems with the plan have caused the delay. The plan may need modifications to conform with management plans that are still being developed for declining populations of California spotted owls and furbearers. The plan also conflicts with new regional direction that seeks to limit use of clearcuts. When the record of decision is finally released, after the public comment period ends, "needed changes to the document will be addressed," the Forest Service announced.

Forest planners justify their reliance on clearcuts as necessary for the control of mistletoe and insect infestations. Overall, 67 percent of their projected annual sales

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## Court victory salvages hope for the S. Fork Trinity RA

No logging in the South Fork Trinity Roadless Area of the Shasta-Trinity National Forest will be allowed pending the outcome of a March 1993 trial, thanks to an injunction obtained by the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund on behalf of The Wilderness Society and other groups. In a ruling that could have broad implications, federal district court Judge Lawrence Karlton considered the cumulative impacts to a watershed, rejecting Forest Service arguments that erosion from the proposed salvage sale alone would not harm the South Fork Trinity Wild & Scenic River and its declining runs of salmon and steelhead.

Although a court-appointed scientist, Forest Service hydrologist R. Dennis Harr, found that the proposed timber sale in itself would not damage the watershed beyond its tolerance, both Dr. Harr and Judge Karlton agreed with the environmentalists' contention that the erosion triggered by the sale, in conjunction with erosion from other sources, would irreparably damage the river's anadromous fishery.

A preliminary injunction against the Shasta-Trinity National Forest was obtained in 1989 after the Forest Service proposed salvage logging in the 17,000-acre roadless area, which was extensively burned in 1987. In the intervening years, the forest has begun to recover and scientific testimony presented at last month's hearing by Stephan Volker, the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund attorney representing the environmentalists, showed to the satisfaction of Dr. Harr and Judge Karlton that the trees the Forest Service has marked dead and consequently proposed for logging are still alive. As Dr. Harr mildly testified, "it appears there is an opportunity for the Forest Service to reassess its guidelines...for salvage cutting." Moreover, Dr. Harr refuted a stance he attributes to the Forest Service: "that a dead tree has no value if it is not processed into wood products to be used by humans."

Environmentalists were not alone in opposing the proposed salvage  
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## COALITION PAGE

### MONTHLY REPORT

BY JIM EATON

I suppose I'll have to watch *Wayne's World* to get the general public's view of public access television. Locally there are occasional moments when there is some wild and zany programming. Most of the time, however, our local access channel replays videos that are sponsored (not produced) by community organizations, including local religious groups. When I told a friend about our weekly environmental program *Planet Talk* on Davis Community Television, he replied, "oh yeah, the Hindu channel."

This is not high-priced television. Like most public access stations, DCTV operates on a shoestring budget. Aaron patiently explains to me that the effects I want are possible in the real world, but not on the aging equipment DCTV owns. Louie always manages to find control room time for us, although he's turning me into a morning person with these 7 a.m. time slots. Jesikah puts her reputation on the line when we inadvertently violate DCTV rules and regulations. Judi deftly adjusts our color and sound levels when a program airs. And Karl defends us when a viewer writes in complaining about how bad the sound was on our Gary Snyder program.

After dabbling in this field for a while, I have a lot more respect for the good videos I see. All of us are volunteer producers, and we must learn to set up lighting, get microphones properly rigged, use the cameras correctly, get all the settings right on the tape deck, learn to use the editing equipment, and do it all right the first time. Then we need to find copious amounts of time to videotape and edit, out-compete numerous other volunteer producers and interns for equipment and studio time, and still do our regular jobs.

When DCTV's overused, decaying equipment breaks down, we improvise. When the much hated (by me) Amiga computer died before our closing credits were completed, we discovered that fate (or Gaia, perhaps) had brought neighbor Christopher Agrus of Village Computers into our building. Chris was delighted to help, and after several 2 a.m. sessions on the Macintoshes we have credits that are the envy of all the other volunteer producers. Now if only the program quality matched the credits...

But what do you do when you talk some newly-trained producers into taping your fundraiser with

Gary Snyder and Peter Coyote and you find serious problems? For unknown reasons, one camera made everything quite dark. The other camera had great color, but the zooms and pans were shaky, and for some inexplicable reason it went out of focus for nearly five minutes. The operators patched into the theater sound system, but the finished product sounds like it was taped in Carlsbad Caverns.

You do the best you can with what you have. And before I chastise my volunteer help, I must confess that when Nancy Kang and I taped the previous year's CWC fundraiser, featuring David Brower and Martin Litton, both the audio and video were so bad that we finally decided it couldn't be used.

The good news is that we all are learning rapidly. Each week *Planet Talk* is better than the previous week. We produced four hour-long programs in April, and we have four more scheduled for May. We have educated local citizens on what the Yolo Environmental Resource Center and other local groups are doing to protect the environment, shared videos on ancient forests, biodiversity, and Mount Shasta, and provided a unique presentation of what Gary Snyder would sound like if he read his poetry in a cave. In May we will show viewers programs on the upcoming Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the California Desert Protection Act, the local Quail Ridge Wilderness Conservancy, and the extensive recycling program in Davis.

I have wondered if anyone out there in tv land ever watches DCTV. But the number of people in Davis who have come up to me during the past month and praised *Planet Talk* has been most gratifying. It hasn't hurt that we taped 30 third-grade children talking about endangered animals and are dribbling them out a few each week—at least we know there are 30 families watching.

Our goal is to produce programs we would be proud to have played on other stations in California. At the rate we are improving, I expect that this summer we will have some videos on potential wilderness areas and some public service announcements that will be good enough to play in other communities. So try to stay away from the devil's machine, but check your cable guide to see if some environmental programs are airing. You are absolved if you watch us.

### Michael Harold Huddleston

Michael Harold Huddleston, 40, of Leggett, died peacefully on Earth Day, April 22, 1992, at the Mendocino County AIDS Volunteer Network Residential Shelter of a long-term illness. A memorial service will be held on Earth Day 1993.

A weaver and cook, Michael was a member of the Ancient Forest Defense Fund, Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC), and Mendocino County AIDS Volunteer Network. Born June 29, 1951 in Portland, Oregon, he lived in Leggett for the past 13 years.

Michael will be remembered for his storytelling and his many years of working to save the forests, including the proposed Cahto Wilderness. Contributions in his memory may be made to the Ancient Forest Defense Fund, P. O. Box 221, Branscomb, CA 95417.

—Steven Day

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

Name California's shortest rivers.

Answer on page 7.

## Pine Away Pine Bark Beetle

A song by Bill Oliver

I wouldn't want to be a pine tree, livin' on a pine plantation  
With nothing but other pine trees in every single direction  
No, I'd rather be a wilderness with a mix of tree species  
Than back at the pine plantation where the chainsaw waits for me.

The wilderness is protected from cutting of any kind  
At least that's what the law says, but that's not what I find  
Crews from the Forest Service are overprotecting my trees  
From a beetle that eats the weaker pines that are overcrowding me.

They say that bug is buggin' their profits  
So they come in the forest, and they kill and they chop it  
But that method never stops it anyway  
The beetle doesn't affect the hardwoods, many pines are even immune  
They're the genetics we should be saving, but we're cutting them down too  
If they've got to cut these buffer zones, let 'em cut the buffer zones in zones of their own  
Let the wilderness handle the beetle the wilderness way.

I say pine away pine bark beetle, turn the wilderness over to nature  
Let the woods be like they wood be if they weren't a business venture  
Back at the pine plantation, we got pine enough for the whole nation  
So pine away pine bark beetle, turn the wilderness over to nature.

Burning down the barn to get rid of the rats  
Is a foolish solution, is a foolish act  
And that's what the Forest Service can't seem to see  
Saving the wilderness by cutting it down is like saving a village by bombing it out  
They're barking up the wrong solution and cutting down the wrong trees.

That beetle's been around a long, long time, and you know it always will  
Poison just makes it stronger, and cutting won't cure its ills  
It's selective in its pace, it's selective in its kills  
It leaves homes in the forest where the woodpecker drills  
Just making its place in the wilderness, while they're taking the wilderness away.

I say pine away pine bark beetle, turn the wilderness over to nature  
Let the woods be like they wood be if they weren't a business venture  
Back at the pine plantation, we got pine enough for the whole nation  
So pine away pine bark beetle, turn the wilderness over to nature.  
Pine away pine bark beetle, turn the wilderness over to nature.



## BLM wilderness study areas

### Is this hell? No, it's Timbered Crater WSA.

By Jim Eaton

Timbered Crater first came to my attention during the second Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE II) when the Lassen National Forest recommended three separate, tiny portions of the Shasta-Trinity National Forest for wilderness designation. Now here was a mystery worth investigating!

It turns out that the Lassen National Forest administers a portion of the Shasta-Trinity in the region where Siskiyou, Modoc, and Shasta counties meet. The three Forest Service roadless parcels, totaling less than 5,000 acres, surround a chunk of wild land controlled by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). All together, the potential wilderness area is about 23,000 acres (see map).

In the summer of 1977, when a succession of public meetings being held by Lassen National Park coincided with a series of RARE II meetings in northern California, I decided to take the opportunity to explore en route to the evening meetings. Between meetings in Susanville and Alturas, I elected to visit Timbered Crater.

There had been widespread lightning the previous night, and as I drove over the Hat Creek Rim I noticed spirals of smoke rising from many areas. Continuing northward, I found one particular blaze growing rapidly. Timbered Crater was on fire.

I chose another area to visit that day and did not return to the region for a year. My future wife Wendy and I had planned to backpack in the South Warners, but I came down with the flu just before reaching the trailhead. We camped for several days near Lava Beds National Monument, instead. On our way home, we checked out Timbered Crater.

We arrived late in the afternoon, discovering that the crater itself is roaded. As darkness neared, we found a campsite overlooking the roadless area—a huge lava flow then covered with blackened remains of a forest. It was

bleak, dreary, and ominous. We did not linger long in that dismal place.

Timbered Crater became a family joke, a synonym for wild places of great biological value in which we'd just as soon *not* spend a week backpacking.

But I remain intrigued by Timbered Crater. After all, the Forest Service recommended its parcels for wilderness, implying that the BLM had indicated that it wanted to protect the core of the area. And in 1981 a new 6,000-acre state park, Ahjumawi Lava Springs, linked the federal lands to Big Lake and the Little Tule River.

The makings of a truly great wilderness were coming together.

#### The living lava

Aside from being roadless, what are the values of Timbered Crater? As you might imagine, this is volcanic country, part of the vast lava flows of the Modoc Plateau. Lassen and other volcanos punctuate the skyline to the south, and Mt. Shasta dominates the view westward. Sometime within the last few thousand years, an enormous lava flow of black basalt erupted from the crater and filled the northern end of the Fall River Valley.

This lava flow is the potential wilderness area. Circled by dirt roads, the crater itself lies outside the Forest Service roadless areas and the BLM wilderness study area (WSA).

There are few streams in the Modoc Plateau. Water drops into lava tubes or down to a buried lava flow that is impervious to water. After flowing underground for miles, the water issues forth in enormous springs in the Fall River Valley. Two billion gallons of water each day flow into Big Lake, Horr Pond, and the Tule and Little Tule rivers.

The slopes of Timbered Crater are covered with grasses, manzanita, and ponderosa pine. On the lava flow, thin soils support ponderosa, knobcone, and some gray (foothill) pines, black oak, juniper, bitterbrush, manzanita, and the world's largest stand of Baker cypress. The cypress was discovered by Milo S. Baker in 1898 and described as a new species a few years later.

Three rare plants are found in the WSA: eryngium, long-haired star tulip, and slender orcutt grass. The vegetation attracts deer in winter and pronghorn. Bobcats, coyotes, jackrabbits, cottontail rabbits, porcupines, and badgers also inhabit the area.

Numerous bird species are found here, including Townsend's solitaires, robins, towhees, Clark's nutcrackers, scrub and Steller's jays, plain titmice, and sparrows. Raptors include redtailed, Cooper's, and sharp-shinned hawks, goshawks, American kestrels, and ospreys. Bald



Crystal Springs in Ahjumawi State Park. Scarce water and desolate terrain attract few visitors to the wild lands north of the park. Photo by Steve Moore

eagles nest nearby.

The Ajumawi (no "h") band of Native Americans lived along the shores of the lakes and rivers in the valley. Known as the "river people," some Ajumawi people live there still.

The Ajumawi roamed over Timbered Crater, and their presence left marks in the WSA. A site with 43 stone house rings remains, as well as a trail originally thought to be the result of a Boy Scout mapping exercise. The trail is polished smooth in places and is marked by rock cairns at intervals of 15 feet or more.

Recreational use today is light. A few hunters and explorers of lava tubes visit the WSA, but most use is near Big Lake. Even there, the state Department of Parks and

Recreation cautions visitors to be prepared for extreme heat in summer and extreme cold in winter, voracious mosquitoes, and rattlesnakes.

#### Why not wilderness?

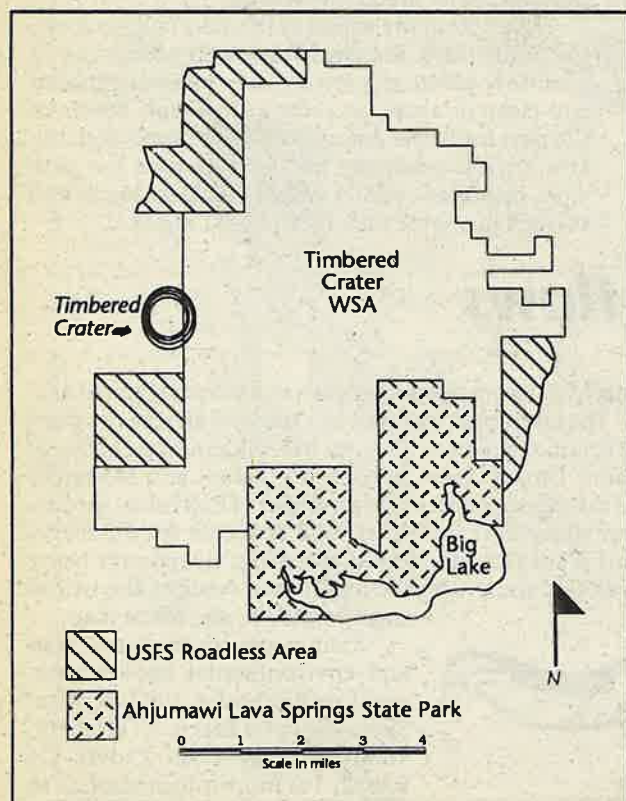
With little opposition, Timbered Crater was included in the draft California Wilderness Bill. The proposal survived years of

hearings and compromises and was included in the bill passed by the House of Representatives in 1983. But then-Senator Pete Wilson demanded a smaller wilderness bill, and Timbered Crater joined a score of areas dropped in the final compromise.

To add insult to injury, the BLM then came out against wilderness designation, deciding that Timbered Crater lacked outstanding wilderness values, that other wilderness areas protected similar features, and that the BLM already was adequately protecting the area.

The BLM's current plans for Timbered Crater belie the agency's latter claim. Although there is virtually no commercial timber in the WSA, the BLM wants to log 40 acres every ten years. Firewood cutting would impact 100 acres each year. Off-road vehicle (ORV) use would destroy the naturalness of 20 percent of the area. And the removal of flat lava rock, desired for decorative purposes, would

*continued on page 6*



Map by Jim Eaton

## Ancient forests

### New ancient-forest legislation introduced

Hopes for meaningful protection for the ancient-forest ecosystems of the Pacific northwest and Sierra Nevada now lie with a new House bill introduced in April. Although only a skeleton bill at present, just two pages long and as yet unnamed, the legislation is scheduled to be fleshed out in May at meetings, called "mark-ups," of the committees and subcommittees with jurisdiction over public land policy. The bill should reach the House floor in early June.

Despite its lack of specificity, the bill was welcomed by the conservation community as the most likely vehicle for the establishment of old-growth reserves. The bill would adopt the so-called "Portland panel" of scientists' recommendations outlined in a report, "Alternatives for Management of Late-Successional [i.e. old-growth] Forests of the Pacific-Northwest," released in October 1991. The report strongly criticized management policies that have brought the ancient-forest ecosystem of the Pacific northwest to a crisis and recommended sweeping changes. The bill's co-sponsors have not yet specified which of the management alternatives listed in the report will be incorporated into their legislation.

Both the report and the skeleton bill address only the ancient forests of the Pacific northwest, but Interior Committee Chair George Miller (D-Martinez) intends to amend the bill to include interim protection for Sierra ancient forests as well. Rep. Miller introduced the legislation jointly with five colleagues—Reps. Kika de la Garza (D-TX; chair of the Agriculture Committee), Walter Jones (D-NC; chair of the Merchant Marine & Fisheries Committee),

#### Skeletal bill needs fleshing out

Bruce Vento (D-MN; chair of the National Parks and Public Lands Subcommittee), Harold Volkmer (D-MO; chair of the Forests, Family Farms, and Energy Subcommittee), and Gerry Studds (D-MA; chair of the Merchant Marine, Fisheries, and Wildlife Subcommittee).

Mark-up for the legislation begins May 6 with the Agriculture Subcommittee on Forests, Family Farms, and Energy. The next day, May 7, the Interior Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands gets its turn. Finally, May 13 and 14 are scheduled for mark-up by the full Interior and Agriculture committees, respectively.

A number of California representatives sit on the committees scheduled to mark-up the bill. Serving on the Agriculture Committee are Reps. George Brown (D-Riverside), Gary Condit (D-Ceres), Cal Dooley (D-Visalia; also

on the Interior Committee), Wally Herger (R-Rio Oso), and Leon Panetta (D-Carmel Valley). Apart from Reps. Miller and Dooley, the other California Interior Committee members are John Doolittle (R-Rocklin), Elton Gallegly (R-Simi Valley), Robert Lagomarsino (R-Ventura), Richard Lehman (D-Fresno), and Senate-hopeful Mel Levine (D-Los Angeles).

## South Fork Trinity

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sale; several government agencies—the Environmental Protection Agency, the state Department of Fish & Game, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board—submitted comments opposing the sale during an environmental review.

By ignoring their comments, the Forest Service failed to cooperate with other agencies as required by the federal Wild & Scenic

*The Forest Service seems to think that a dead tree has no value if it is not processed into wood products to be used by humans.*

Rivers Act, Judge Karlton ruled. The South Fork Trinity, along with four other California rivers, was designated a Wild & Scenic River (W&SR) in 1981 by then-Secretary of the Interior Cecil Andrus. The Forest Service is in the process of developing a management plan for the South Fork Trinity W&SR (see *WR* articles, March 1992). If, as expected, the final plan addresses only the river corridor and not the watershed, it probably will be appealed. Because none of the other "Andrus" rivers has a management plan yet, the South Fork Trinity W&SR plan is expected to be precedent-setting.

Apart from the values of the Trinity River itself, the South Fork Roadless Area is important as "a wildlife population reservoir" surrounded by roaded and clearcut areas, according to Joseph Bower of Citizens for Better Forestry. Remote and steep, the area attracts relatively few recreationists but provides important winter habitat for deer herds and shelters peregrine falcons and bald eagles.



Looking east from Limesdyke Ridge. The South Fork Trinity Roadless Area is "a wildlife population reservoir" surrounded by roaded and clearcut areas. Photo by Karen Wilson

## Sierra forest plan riddled with flaws

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will come from clearcutting and "shelterwood" cutting, which Terry Thompson, chair of the Central California Ancient Forest Alliance, calls a purely semantic distinction. The Forest Service acknowledges, Thompson says, that to maintain planned cut levels, herbicides will have to be applied to competing vegetation on 3,000 acres each year. But Thompson, who has studied tree regeneration in the Sierra National Forest for three years, says the reason regeneration fails is more fundamental: soil. The soil which supports the forest's red and white fir and Jeffrey pine is thin and sandy. After clearcutting, the soil is compacted (by the heavy equipment used) and loses its ability to retain moisture. Because herbicides do not address the real problem, it is no wonder regeneration efforts fail.

In the steepest portions of the forest, where clearcutting is not feasible, the plan designates 62,000 acres of furbearer

habitat. But the presence of fishers, martens, and red fox will not deter planners from making their cut; three million board feet of timber is anticipated from the furbearer habitat each year.

Loggers will be visiting roadless areas as well. Of the Sierra National Forest's eight roadless areas, at least three are destined for timber production under the plan's preferred alternative. In other areas, the plan states that "no regulated timber harvest" will take place. Whatever the facts of the plan, the vagueness of the language and the accompanying map, and the fact that the management direction for roadless areas is buried in the back of the document among the appendices, all suggest that roadless area planning needs to be

brought out from the underbrush and into the light of day.

The forest plan incorporates the land allocations from existing management plans for five wilderness areas (Ansel Adams, Dinkey Lakes, John Muir, Kaiser, and Monarch) and management plans for a number of individual species. Land allocations from two Wild & Scenic river management plans (for the Merced and Kings rivers) now being developed and a new plan for off-road vehicles also will be incorporated in the forest plan.

Comments on the forest plan and environmental impact statement are due June 4, 1992. Send to: Sierra National Forest, ATTN: LMP, 1600 Tollhouse Road, Clovis, CA 93612. For more information or to receive a copy of the plan, call Merlin Hehne at (209) 487-5985.



## Desert management

# Blistering GAO reports blast desert grazing

By Steve Johnson

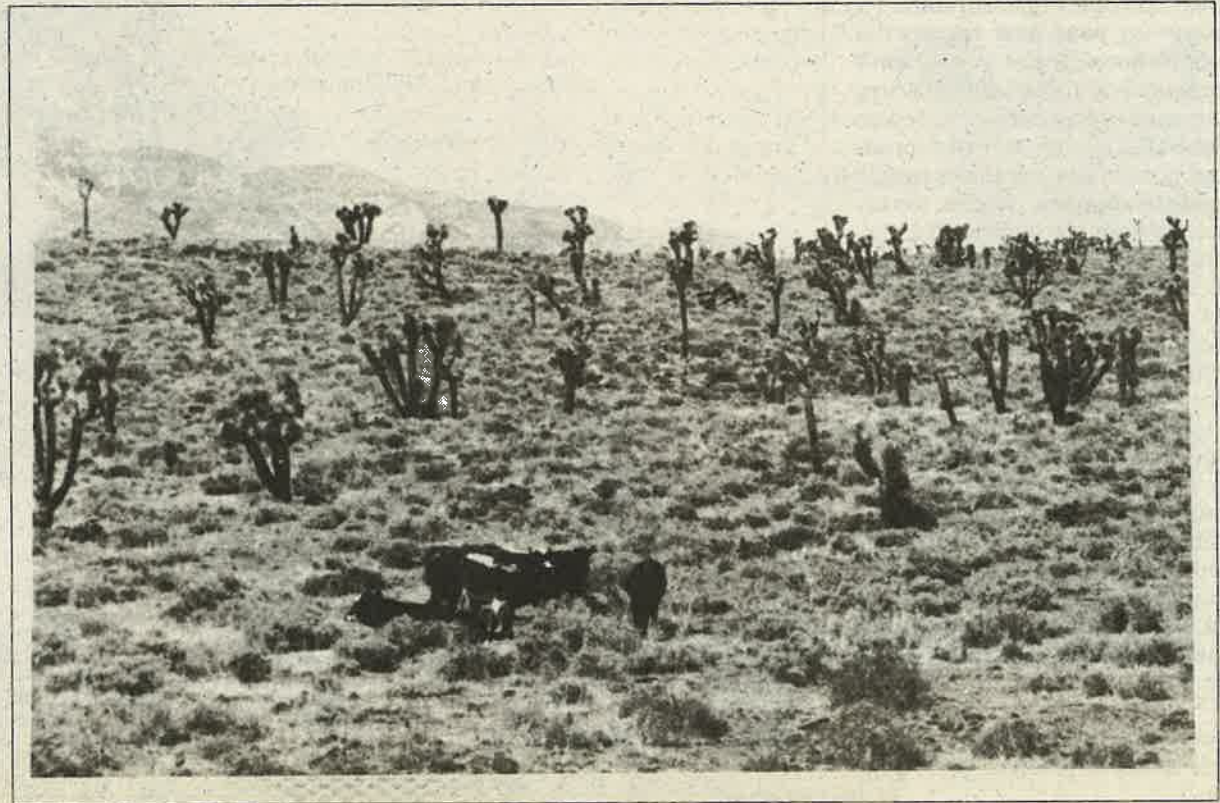
Over the last five years, the General Accounting Office (GAO) has been asked by various members of Congress to investigate the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) handling of livestock grazing on the nation's public lands.

Without exception, the nine reports that resulted criticized the BLM. The GAO found that public lands were being overgrazed (1988), that cattle were favored over wildlife (1989 and 1991), that land management planning was not occurring (1990), and that grazing of excess numbers of livestock was common (1990).

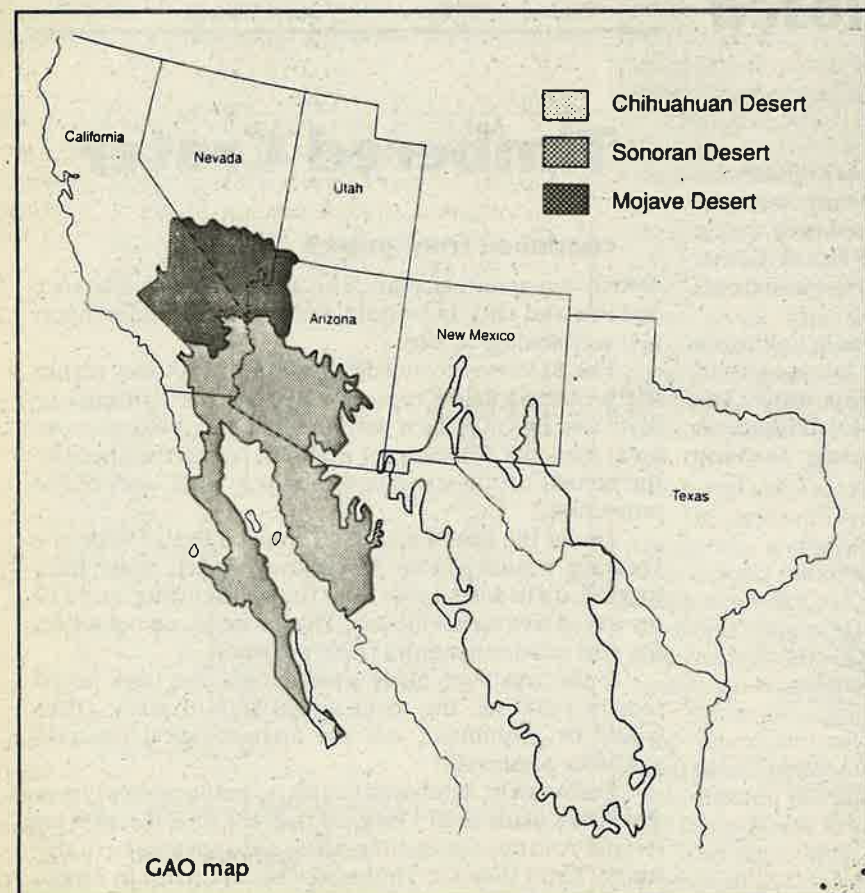
The most recent of the GAO reports on grazing, released in November 1991, examines the BLM's management of the desert lands of five western states, an area of nearly 20 million acres. It includes the Mojave, Sonoran, and Chihuahuan deserts in California, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, and Arizona.

The GAO found that:

- Current livestock grazing in the BLM's hot desert areas "risks long-term environmental damage while not generating grazing fee revenues sufficient to provide for adequate management";
- There is "evidence of damage occurring on BLM lands as well as evidence of livestock grazing's adverse impacts on several wildlife species";
- "Some damaged lands may take decades to recover if they recover at all";
- "The economic benefits derived from livestock grazing on BLM lands in the hot desert areas are minimal" and represent "a small fraction of national [livestock] totals";
- "At a local level, BLM documents indicate that local economies do not depend on public-lands ranching for economic survival. The primary economic benefits accrue



Cattle grazing among Joshua trees in Southern Inyo Wilderness Study Area Photo by Jim Eaton



to about 1,000 operators who hold livestock grazing permits in these areas";

- Due to staff shortages, the "BLM primarily relies on livestock operators to provide counts of the livestock that grazed an allotment during the grazing season." Of the allotments surveyed by the GAO, 40 percent had no counts whatsoever.

The most serious finding was that the BLM is not collecting and evaluating data that measure the impact of livestock grazing on many desert lands. The GAO found that no monitoring is occurring on 48 percent of all allotments. Of the 52 percent that had monitoring data, 38 percent have not been evaluated.

"Without proper evaluation of collected monitoring data," wrote the GAO, the "BLM does not know the impact of current grazing activity and is in no position to change the number of livestock grazing on public lands." Without such data proving that grazing is damaging the land and its dependent wildlife, the BLM is reduced to depending on voluntary reductions by ranchers. If ranchers choose not to reduce livestock numbers, the BLM can do nothing until the necessary data are gathered.

By federal law, the BLM must ensure "harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources of the public lands without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land and the quality of the environment...."

Without adequate funding, such laws mean nothing. That could explain why Robert Burford, a rancher and the head of the BLM under the Reagan administration, repeatedly cut the BLM's funding for monitoring. From 1980-1988, high BLM officials appearing before Congressional committees stated that the agency needed no funding increases.

Ranchers' efforts, successful to date, to keep grazing fees low could backfire—at least on our 20 million acres of desert lands. Unless

higher grazing fees and other funding increases allow the BLM to do its job as required by law, the GAO's latest report recommends that Congress consider a halt to all grazing in hot desert areas.

The grazing of livestock could be one of the most sustainable of all agricultural activities. But when cattle are permitted to graze year-round on desert plants that did not evolve in the presence of such heavy demands, the result is destruction.

One of the strongest proofs that the BLM is failing miserably at desert management is the number of endangered, threatened, and candidate species in the Mojave, Sonoran, and Chihuahuan deserts. From information furnished by the BLM, the GAO found that 240 species are now at risk.

Given the widespread damage done to land and to

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**When cattle are permitted to graze year-round on desert plants that did not evolve in the presence of such heavy demands, the result is destruction.**

## Wilderness news

### B. Y. O. water to the Angeles this year

A microscopic organism could really louse up your next trip to the Angeles National Forest if you don't take precautions, forest officials warn. *Cryptosporidium* has been detected in surface water throughout the forest. Though not life threatening to people with healthy immune systems, the organism does produce intestinal distress similar to the symptoms of another, better-known micro-organism, *giardia*.

According to a forest spokesman, water filters adequate for *giardia* removal will also protect against *Cryptosporidium*. A 0.2 micron filter is considered more reliable than the 0.5 micron filter. Boiling water for five minutes also will work. Although the organism has been detected only in the southern portion of the forest so far, officials believe the problem is widespread. Three wilderness areas—San Gabriel, Sheep Mountain, and Cucamonga—lie within the affected area.

For more information, call the Angeles National Forest at (818) 574-5200.



Sheep Mountain Wilderness in the Angeles National Forest Photo by John Rapp

### Dam proposal would shrink Caples Creek Wilderness

The Eldorado National Forest is proposing to amend its forest plan to make room for a hydroelectric project in an area now proposed for wilderness. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has requested that forest planners re-evaluate the proposed Caples Creek Wilderness boundary, which was drawn to include the confluence of Caples Creek and the Silver Fork of the American River. The FERC proposes to locate the Foottrail Hydroelectric Project at the confluence, under a "power withdrawal" which establishes energy production as the highest priority use of the site.

A site-specific supplement to the forest plan's environmental impact statement will consider wilderness boundary lines that do not encompass the confluence. A public scoping meeting is scheduled May 19 from 6:30-10:00 p.m. at the Placerville Inn's Alexandria Room in Placerville. For more information about the meeting or about the proposed dam, call Resource Officer Cindy Oswald at (916) 644-2324. Written comments addressing the wilderness attributes of the area may be sent to: Eldorado National Forest, 100 Fortni Road, Placerville, CA 95667.

### GAO reports

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wildlife, it is time for the desert cowboy to ride into the sunset.

Steve Johnson lives in the Sonoran desert, in Tucson, AZ. A longer version of this article first appeared in the April 20, 1992 issue of High Country News.

The nine GAO reports listed below are available from the U. S. General Accounting Office, Box 6015, Gaithersburg, MD 20877. The first copy of each report is free.

**Rangeland Management: More Emphasis Needed on Declining and Overstocked Grazing Allotments** (GAO/RCED-88-80, June 10, 1988)

**Public Rangelands: Some Riparian Areas Restored but Widespread Improvement Will Be Slow** (GAO/RCED-88-105, June 30, 1988)

**California Desert: Planned Wildlife Protection and Enhancement Objectives Not Achieved** (GAO/RCED-89-171, June 23, 1989)

**Rangeland Management: Improvements Needed in Federal Wild Horse Program** (GAO/RCED-90-110, August 20, 1990)

**Public Lands: Limited Progress in Resource Management Planning** (GAO/RCED-90-225, September 27, 1990)

**Rangeland Management: BLM Efforts to Prevent Unauthorized Livestock Grazing Need Strengthening** (GAO/RCED-91-7, December 7, 1990)

**Public Land Management: Attention to Wildlife Is Limited** (GAO/RCED-91-64, March 7, 1991)

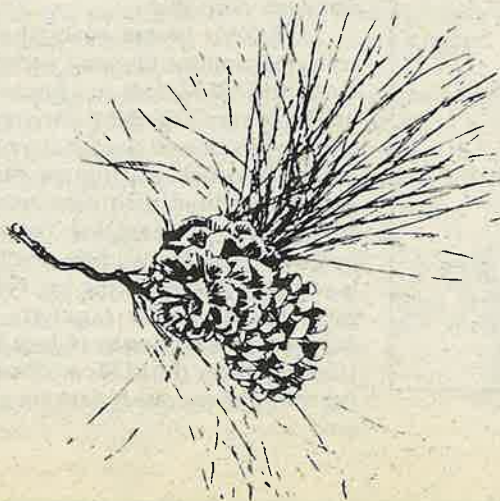
**Rangeland Management: Forest Service Not Performing Needed Monitoring of Grazing Allotments** (GAO/RCED-91-148, May 16, 1991)

**Rangeland Management: BLM's Hot Desert Grazing Program Merits Reconsideration** (GAO-RCED-92-12, November 26, 1991)

### Cache Creek's Wilson Valley closed to visitors

The Wilson Valley portion of Cache Creek Wilderness Study Area has been closed to visitors until June 30 for the benefit of calving tule elk. The area is closed each spring at the request of the state Department of Fish & Game, which manages the herd. Other sections of the wilderness study area remain open.

Native tule elk were nearly exterminated in California before the last remaining individuals were transported to the Owens Valley in southeastern California, where the species rebounded. Herds were later re-established on public lands from Mendocino to Kern County. As many as 500 elk may now inhabit Cache Creek.



### Timbered Crater

continued from page 3

destroy ten acres per year. The agency admits that rock removal and ORV use would damage at least one important archaeological site.

The BLM even concedes that up to 100 trees within the protected Baker cypress stand will be damaged or destroyed by ORVs each year under its proposed management plan, but "this impact would be counterbalanced by the benefit to the stand of a relatively high level of fire protection."

Under the BLM's plan for Timbered Crater WSA, the Treasury would receive \$14,000 every ten years from logging, up to \$500 a year from firewood cutting, and \$10 per ton of lava rock removed. These receipts do not reflect the cost of administering these programs.

If the area were made a wilderness, the trees would remain standing, the rocks would stay in place, ORVs would be prohibited, and the archaeological treasures would be preserved.

Fortunately, Timbered Crater is itself protected from the BLM's plans until Congress makes a final decision on its fate. And our representatives do not appear to be in any hurry. Until they act, Timbered Crater remains in limbo.

Jim Eaton is the Executive Director of the California Wilderness Coalition. He would like to return to Timbered Crater WSA one day; Wendy says he'll be going alone.

## Reviews

### Videos bring the wilderness home

#### Mount Shasta: Cathedral of Wilderness

Produced by Save Mount Shasta, P. O. Box 1143, Mt. Shasta, CA 96067

#### Soda Mountain: A Living Legacy

Produced by Soda Mountain Wilderness Council, P. O. Box 512, Ashland, OR 97520.

It should have been no contest. After all, what mountain is more suited to a video celebration than Shasta, which seems to float, cool and white and luminous, above a flat, parched landscape? So it was particularly disappointing that, despite some beautiful footage and noble intentions, the Shasta video fails to transport the viewer, emotionally or imaginatively, to the side of Shasta. Ironically, it is the less-lofty Soda Mountain video—polished, educational, and affecting—that succeeds in its mission of fostering partisanship.

Both videos were produced by grass-roots groups seeking protection for the mountains they love. Soda Mountain, a 32,000-acre Bureau of Land Management wilderness study area on the California-Oregon border, has no permanent protection from the loggers and developers who threaten its unique ecology. Soda Mountain, the video informs us, is an ecotone, a place where four climate zones converge. It is the only remaining wild corridor connecting the Siskiyou and the Cascades at high and middle elevations. And it's beautiful. This is not the unearthly, heart-stopping beauty of Shasta but a smaller, more-accessible beauty: the beauty of woodlands and wildflowers, streams and canyons.

After introducing viewers to the area's beauty and resources with a nice balance of nature footage and expert commentary, the very well-written narration argues compellingly for the area's protection as wilderness. If at times,

in its tone and intent, the video is reminiscent of educational public television, the quality of the production is also, no small achievement for a group of amateurs.

The Shasta video, by contrast, seems distinctly amateurish. The stated purpose of the video is to garner support for the designation of Shasta as a National Landmark, a National Monument, and a World Heritage Site and Biosphere Reserve. Although most of Shasta is protected as wilderness, the mountain's southern flanks are unprotected and threatened by development. The unprotected slopes contain sites sacred to the native Wintu people. For many people, as the video somewhat laboriously points out, the whole mountain is sacred.

Save Mount Shasta found a wealth (an overabundance, really) of people to testify to the mountain's importance and value. Using the same technique as the Soda Mountain video, the Shasta video intersperses scenic shots with commentary. Better to have let the mountain speak for itself: there are just too many talking heads, and little of the testimony is more evocative or compelling than the images of the mountain in all seasons.

The video does contain good footage apart from the views of Shasta: some stills of archival photographs are very effective (although, again, there are too many in rapid succession, detracting from their power) and the image of Florence Jones, a Wintu leader, studying Forest Service documents is memorable. Apt quotations are used throughout to underscore the importance of protection. "In wildness," Thoreau once said, "is the preservation of the world."

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### The message of the medium

Chris (r.) models our six-tone anniversary shirt which comes in light blue, yellow, light green, or peach for \$15. The animal design Barry wears 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

**May 19** SCOPING MEETING on a proposal by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to locate a hydroelectric project inside the proposed Caples Creek Wilderness. The meeting will be held by the Eldorado National Forest from 6:30-10:00 p.m. in the Placerville Inn's Alexandria Room. For more information, call Resource Officer Cindy Oswald at (916) 644-2324. Written comments may be sent to: Eldorado N. F., 100 Forni Rd., Placerville, CA 95667. (See article on page 6.)

**June 4** DEADLINE FOR COMMENTS on the Sierra National Forest's final Land Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement. Send to: Sierra National Forest, ATTN: LMP, 1600 Tollhouse Road, Clovis, CA 93612. (See article on pages 1 & 4.)

**June 6** ACTIVISTS MEETING of the California Ancient Forest Alliance in Davis. For details, call Jim Eaton at (916) 758-0380.

### Wilderness Trivia Quiz Answer:

The three-mile long Tule River and its tributary, the Little Tule River, flow into the 20-mile long Fall River in Shasta County.

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 *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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## Video visits to the wilderness

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Preserving the wild places of the earth is a goal shared by many groups; two groups, Save Mount Shasta and Soda Mountain Wilderness Council, have learned to use a new technology on behalf of ancient places. As evidenced by the Soda Mountain production in particular, video clearly has the potential to be an effective and affecting medium.

—Lucy Rosenau

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