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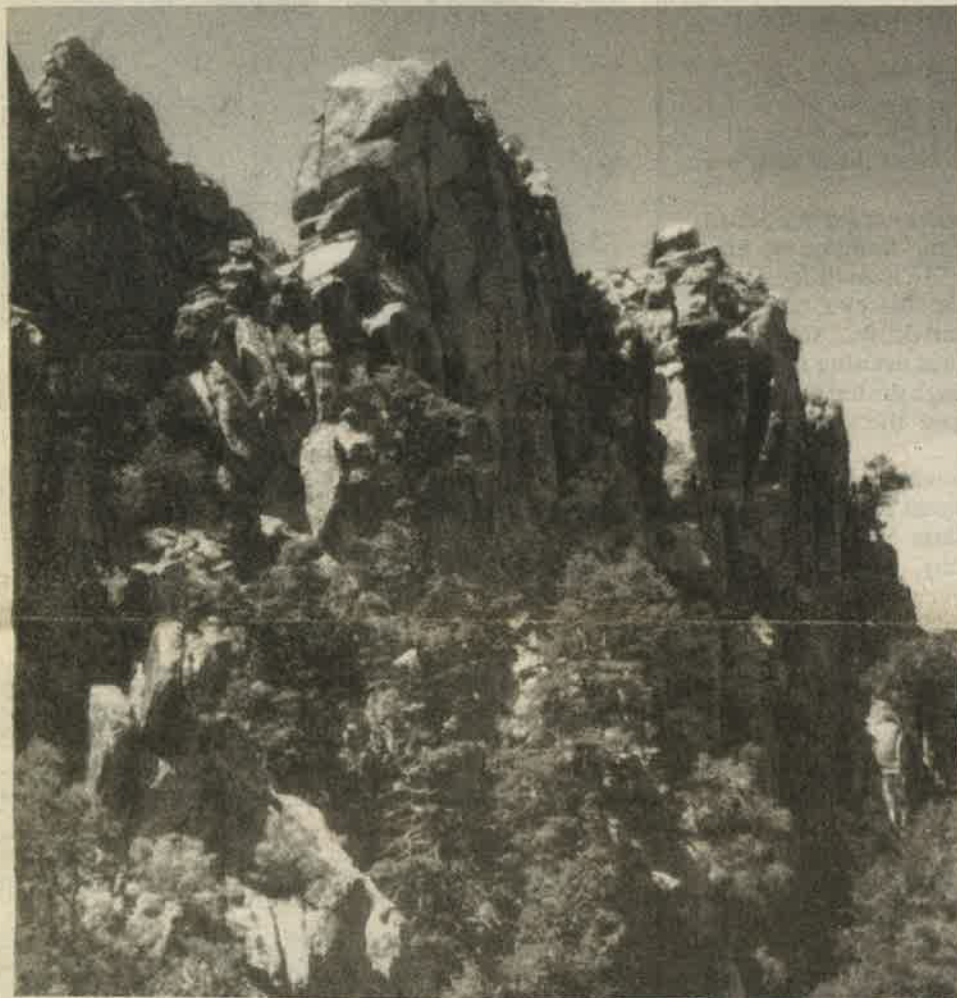
PROCEEDINGS OF THE CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION

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The desert is not just sand dunes and scrub: White fir, remnants of a much cooler, wetter climate, grow on north-facing slopes in the New York Mountains in the soon-to-be Mojave National Park. Photo by Pete Yamagata

Desert bill clears committee, awaits action on House floor

In May the California Desert Protection Act cleared its antepenultimate hurdle—the House Natural Resources Committee—and arrived on the House floor mostly intact. The legislation, which was passed by the Senate on April 13, still must survive a barrage of amendments from opponents of desert preservation. And if, as expected, the bill that emerges from the House differs from the bill passed by the Senate, a joint Congressional conference committee will determine its fate.

Although the desert bill was debated by the full House on May 17, no amendments were offered that day, and no votes were taken. Since Congress will recess for the Memorial Day holiday, decisive action on the desert bill may be delayed until June.

The version of H. R. 518 crafted by the Natural Resources Committee is more protective than the Senate bill but less protective than the version introduced by Rep. Rick Lehman (D-Fresno) early last year. So in addition to fending off bad amendments, desert advocates also will be working to strengthen the bill with their own amendments.

In its broad strokes, the House bill is identical to the Senate bill; both would establish a Mojave National Park and enlarge Death Valley and Joshua Tree national monuments and redesignate them as national parks. The majority of all three parks would be protected as wilderness, and more than 60 other new wilderness areas would be administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

The single greatest difference between the House and Senate bills is their treatment of Lanfair Valley, a vast area of public and private land between the New York Mountains and the Nevada border. The valley and its neighboring highlands had been slated to become part of the Mojave National Park in the original versions of both bills, but the Senate, in drawing boundaries that would keep much of the private land out of the proposed park, eliminated much of the public land as well. The House bill goes a long way toward rectifying the mistake: All the public and checkerboard railroad lands would be included in the park; the other private lands in the valley would be left out. Environmentalists, who want to protect the ecological integrity of the Mojave, and some landowners, who would see their land appreciate if it ends up inside the park, would like to see the private lands in the park as well.

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Debt-for-nature strategy may pay the way for Headwaters wilderness bill

By Josh Kaufman

"Visitors who enter an ancient redwood forest are enveloped. Foggy mists pierced by shafts of shifting sunlight preserve the serenity of the forest. Hardly a sound is heard. These trees of incredible size and age crowded together so closely have no equals on earth. They are sentinels of a remote past, a living testimony of prehistoric forests, seeming unaltered by the forces of time and impervious to the many changes and pace of modern civilization." —Dr. Rudi Becking, *Pocket Flora of the Redwood Forest*, Island Press.

Unfortunately, this seeming imperviousness is illusory. For years, conservationists in north coastal California have been engaged in a struggle to slow the destruction of the great climax redwood forests. In August 1993, U. S. representatives Dan Hamburg and Pete Stark, along with

80 co-sponsors, introduced legislation that opens a new chapter in that struggle (see August 1993 *WR*). The Headwaters Forest Act, H. R. 2866, calls for the federal acquisition of the world's largest unprotected ancient redwood forests and surrounding watersheds, 44,000 acres in all. The bill would prohibit the logging of old-growth groves, establish a new federal wilderness area (see map on page 3), and rehabilitate lands damaged by past timber operations. The legislation addresses the need to repair the physical, biological, and, ultimately, the economic damage done to much of the area by providing stable restoration jobs to timber workers displaced by the acquisition.

With more than ten times the biomass of the tropical rainforests, the redwoods are the most massive living systems on earth. As recently as 60 years ago, trees 20 feet
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Coalition news

Monthly Report

Only recently have I gotten away from the computer and telephone long enough to start seeing friends, colleagues, and activists (not mutually exclusive categories) again. Luckily, some old buddies didn't wait for me; they came to Davis.

We had a delightful visit from three (former and current) Sierra Club staff members, compatriots Sally Kabish, Frannie Hoover Waid, and Madeleine Landis (a.k.a. Mad Watters). Sally was down from Homer, Alaska on Sierra Club business with her daughter in tow, and the three women arrived in Davis on the way back from a camping trip with Marge Sill. Mad announced that it was her life's goal to appear in the *Wilderness Record* sporting a CWC t-shirt, so of course we acquiesced (she and Sally are pictured on page 7).

Others came to Davis for our fundraising roast of Bob Schneider. Along with most of Bob's family, his old school friends Jim Trumbly and Jim Rose (up from Ventura) and former business associate Rich Stevenson dropped by. Also on hand for the merriment were a covey of conservationists, an aggregation of developers, and a passel of politicians.

But in just the past few days I have seen a substantial portion of the Coalition's membership at two events, a range monitoring workshop in Truckee and a fundraiser in San Francisco.

Hosted by the California Grazing Reform Alliance and funded by the California Mule Deer Association, the weekend workshop informed 50 activists about proper range management and how to recognize bad grazing practices. Among the instructors were District Ranger Guy Pence, BLM Area Manager Dean Swickard, and U. C. Davis professor John Menke. Forest Service range conservationists took us out in the field to look at examples of good and bad grazing management.

Dano McGinn did a fantastic job in putting together this event; you should try to catch the next workshop if this is a topic that interests you.

Among the CWC members attending were a Nevada contingent led by Rose Strickland and Dennis Ghiglieri, activists Matt Bailey and John Moore, and the usual crowd from Friends Aware of

Wildlife Needs (FAWN). Jim Stokes came down from Redding and Brett Matzke up from Porterville, but former Coalition membership coordinator Nancy Kang won the distance prize for driving in from Wells, Nevada.

While waiting for her dream job with the Fish and Wildlife Service, Nancy took a summer position in the Humboldt National Forest as a range technician. I imagine the Forest Service is pleasantly surprised to find they hired a seasoned botanist at range tech wages; they pay even less than the Coalition.

Nancy is learning why rural Nevadans eat from cans so often. If you are headed to the Ruby Mountains this summer, you might drop her off a care package of fresh food. I don't think tofu is a staple in Wells.

The other event was a fundraiser for the Sierra Biodiversity Institute, the group founded by Eric and Steve Beckwitt and other San Juan Ridge activists. Patagonia, Inc. put on this event, which included scrumptious food and drink, a successful silent auction, and a marvelous evening of entertainment. Patagonia is planning a similar fundraiser for the Wildlands Project and the Coalition in September.

Actor Peter Coyote was the emcee for poet Gary Snyder, environmentalists David Brower and Eric Beckwitt, and musicians Maria Muldaur, David Grisman, and Roberta Donnay. Snyder's poetry and stories inspired, Brower's speech incited, Beckwitt's ancient forest slides roused, and the musicians intoxicated us all with stirring songs.

Brower recalled Senator Tom Hayden's reply to a question about the legislator's success: "I think I've slowed down the rate at which things are getting worse." Brower said he felt that applied to the environmental movement as well, but that it's not good enough. We need to make a U-turn and start making things better.

Judging from what I saw at both events, it just may be possible to make that U-turn.

By Jim Eaton



California Wilderness Coalition executive director Jim Eaton trusses Bob Schneider for "roasting"—the set-up behind a Davis *Enterprise* photo publicizing this year's CWC fundraiser, a Bob Schneider Roast. (The lengths we'll go to . . .) Photo by Jack Kenward

What we won't do for money

The 1994 fundraiser was a huge success, raising more than \$5,000 for our dwindling coffers. Our thanks first and foremost to Bob Schneider, who not only volunteered for the indignity of being roasted, but suffered the attendant humiliations with grace and good cheer. We are abjectly grateful.

We are grateful also to the Friends of Bob and of the CWC who generously sponsored the event, ensuring its success. Thanks to:

Mary Tappel, Zoogen, Roger Langbehn, Glenn Nedwin, Sierra Club California, Alan Carlton, Mike Eaton, Jim Eaton & Wendy Cohen, Andy Efstratis, Rick Elkins, Vic Fazio, Tom Jopson & Sari Sommarstrom, Robin Kulakow & Bill Julian, Tom Lumbrazo, Norbert Riedy, Mary Scoonover, Tom & Krista Smith, Jon & Peggy Watterson, Randy Yackzan,

Tim Ainsworth & Karen Leaf, Bob Black & Patty Vernelson, Marcelo Campos, Kay & Keith Chaffey, Dan Chapin, Dave Chick, H. C. Dunning, Claude & Lillian Eaton, Andy Gagnon, Vicky Hoover, Jerry Kaneko, David B. Kelley, Loreta Lamont, Whit Manley, Patricia Schifferle, Reuben & Debra Schilling, Anna Lee Schneider, Sandra Spelliscy, Rob & Lacey Thayer, Helen Thomson, Jim Trumbly, Richard W. Van Alstyne, Brock Wagstaff, Lois Wolk,

Cafe California, Davis Bread & Desserts, Davis Food Co-op, Kukalaka Food Crafts, Murphy's Pizza, and Semifreddi Bakery.

Wilderness Trivia Question:

Two wilderness peaks in California are each the highest point of more than one county. Which peaks, and which counties?

Answer on page 7

Letters

In the May 1994 issue there was a short notice that the Inyo National Forest is planning to ban campfires in a portion of the John Muir Wilderness. You report that the Forest Service is proposing the ban in part because "depletion of woody debris . . . robs the subalpine ecosystem of an important source of nutrients." I've also read in many brochures on low-impact camping how campfires can "sterilize the soil." These and other misconceptions are widely held among recreationists and many wilderness managers.

Yet the fact is that most western landscapes are not nutrient poor; rather they typically lack water during the growing season, and nutrients are tied up in dead woody debris. Unlike moist environments such as the eastern United States where bacteria and fungi rapidly decompose woody debris, throughout most of the arid West, it is fire that is responsible for the release of nutrients. To suggest that burning wood in a campfire somehow destroys the nutrients demonstrates a lack of understanding of basic ecosystem processes. A campfire is no different from a

wildfire or even a prescribed burn. All of them release nutrients bound up in woody debris.

As for sterilization of the soil, again this is a false issue. Soil is a wonderful insulation, and in most cases heat penetrates less than an inch or two. That is why grasses, shrubs, and other plants sprout so rapidly after a fire—the heat does not harm the roots. While it's true a tiny amount of nutrients of some important elements like nitrogen may be volatilized in a campfire, the amounts are so small as to be inconsequential, especially when compared to the amount lost in a regular wildfire. Furthermore, the nutrients released by combustion often increase bacterial activity, resulting in rapid replacement of most nutrients lost in the burning process.

Finally, even if campfires were shown to be different somehow from the nutrient cycling that results from natural wildfire, I am not sure that it would make any difference in most wildland ecosystems. The amount of dead wood consumed by campfires is highly local, and within the grand scheme of a creek drainage, much less an

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Ancient forests

Headwaters bill makes some headway

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in diameter, 300 feet tall, and 2,000 years old were not uncommon. Now, of that two million-acre primeval redwood forest, less than 60,000 acres remain in scattered pockets from southwest Oregon in the north to Big Sur in the south.

The Timber Company

Of the timber companies, Pacific Lumber owns the largest acreage of unprotected old-growth redwoods, more than all its competitors combined. Until 1986, the company was operated under a relatively benign management policy, and Pacific Lumber's forest growth exceeded its rate of cutting. With no outstanding debt and 200,000 heavily forested acres, Pacific Lumber was asset rich and worth more than \$2 billion. But its valuation on Wall Street was a little over \$600 million.

Charles Hurwitz, chair of the Houston-based Maxxam Corporation, lost no time moving into that financial vacuum. His junk bond-financed takeover of Pacific Lumber and the resultant massive debt led to a cutting spree that continues to this day; 40,000 acres of residual old-growth have been leveled. Despite numerous successful lawsuits, brought mainly by the Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC) and the Sierra Club, and a host of protests and direct actions, including Redwood Summer in 1990, Pacific Lumber's ancient redwoods have been decimated. The remaining uncut groves form the core of the 44,000 acre Headwaters Forest Act.

Conservation biologists tell us that larger reserves are more effective in maintaining ecosystem

functions than smaller ones. This is especially true in terms of recovering endangered species and averting more listings. Declining species like the goshawk and torrent salamander, anadromous salmon runs, and the marbled murrelet, a sea bird that nests in Pacific coastal old-growth forests, will only continue their downward spiral without protection and recruitment of old-growth habitat.

Timber companies have, at best, given only lip service to habitat recruitment. Though complaining bitterly about the effect of the spotted owl's listing on their profits, they've done little to alter their practices and stave off new listings. As a result, Pacific coastal stocks of coho salmon may soon join the ranks of endangered species.

However inadequately, the fates of the owl, murrelet, and hundreds of other animals and plants on public lands are addressed by President Clinton's Option 9 plan. But the options are few to none for the species dependent on California's privately owned forests. The state Endangered Species Act (ESA), which theoretically guides the impact on California's listed species of projects on private lands, is relatively toothless, and federal agencies have been erratic in enforcing provisions of the federal ESA on private lands. This is especially troubling in terms of the murrelet, because one of its three California populations depends on Pacific Lumber's virgin stands. Since the takeover, Pacific Lumber has employed a deliberate and calculated strategy of isolating and fragmenting murrelet habitat. It's a simple tactic: no murrelet habitat, no murrelet and no problem with the ESA.

The Legislation

The Headwaters Forest Act has been moving steadily through Congress since its introduction last August, although there is still no companion legislation in the

Senate. As of mid-May, it had cleared two House subcommittees and the Natural Resources Committee and picked up the endorsements of the Clinton administration and 40 additional House members. Now in the full Agriculture Committee, the bill faces major obstacles: fiscal conservatives on that committee and a compromise amendment being pushed by Maxxam.

That amendment, proposed by Rep. Cal Dooley (D-Visalia), was defeated in the Natural Resources Committee by a too-close-for-comfort vote of 22-19. It would reduce the acquisition to some 7,000 acres, including only the 3,100-acre Headwaters Grove, the 395-acre Elk Head Springs Grove a half mile to the east, and 3,500 acres of surrounding cut-over land. The amendment undoubtedly will be proposed again in the Agriculture Committee, probably by Rep. Dooley, and there its chances of passage are good. Thus, two versions of the bill may go to the Rules Committee before one is chosen as the standard for action on the House floor.

Behind the reluctance of some House members is Pacific Lumber's asking price: at least \$600 million for Headwaters Grove alone. Environmentalists, informed by the efforts of EPIC, Forests Forever, and the Sierra Club, have argued that if the federal and state ESAs and the California Environmental Quality Act have any validity, that asking price is a dream. Pacific Lumber has been frozen out of Headwaters Grove for six years by state court rulings, and EPIC's federal lawsuit against the company over ESA viola-

tions—set for a hearing this July—could seriously constrain cutting in Pacific Lumber's other virgin groves.

Even given a realistic land appraisal that considers environmentally mandated restrictions on logging, there will be some cost involved. Swapping "surplus" government assets, such as property seized by the Resolution Trust Corporation, is a very real option.

The Solution: Debt for Nature

Another, more attractive, possibility arises from a long-overdue debt. In December 1988, a savings and loan controlled by a Hurwitz invention, the United Financial Group (UFG), went bankrupt. At \$1.6 billion, this was the fifth largest failure in American banking history. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation has assessed a \$548 million claim against UFG, more than enough to finance the Headwaters acquisition.

What You Can Do

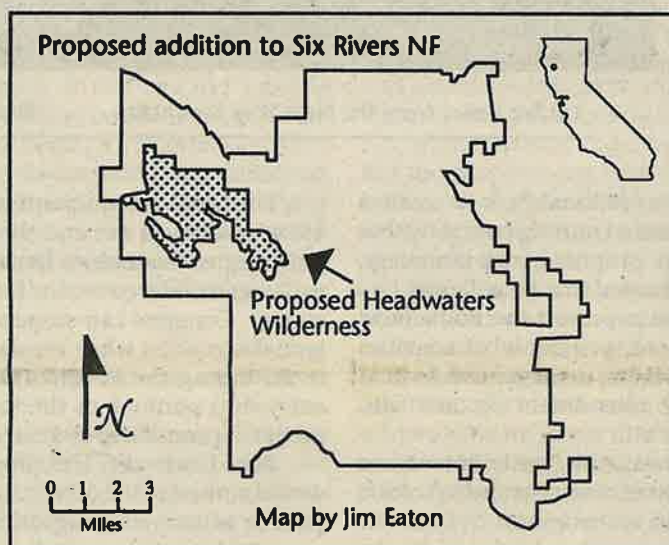
Write or phone your local member of Congress urging support for the acquisition of the full 44,000 acres and a swap of Hurwitz' \$548 million debt for the forest:

U.S. House of Representative
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 224-3121

Write or phone Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer calling for the introduction of companion legislation in the Senate:

Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-3121

The Environmental Protection Information Center, is spearheading the effort to save Headwaters. For more information about how you can help, contact EPIC at P. O. Box 397, Garberville, CA 95542; (707) 923-2931.



CWC asks Forest Service to protect Toiyabe roadless areas

Forest Service answers "What roadless areas?"

By Jim Eaton

It's finally happening. The institutional memory of the California Wilderness Coalition is beginning to eclipse that of the U. S. Forest Service.

Twice recently, the Coalition has caught the Forest Service planning timber sales in roadless areas the agency forgot it had.

First the Forest Service proposed a salvage sale in part of the Inyo National Forest's San Joaquin Roadless Area. Conservationists raised a stink, and the plan was dropped. Now the agency wants to log in two Toiyabe National Forest roadless areas south of Lake Tahoe near the hamlet of Woodfords (see map).

The roadless areas are Horsethief (known as Freel Peak in the agency's Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit) and Raymond Peak, which adjoins the 1984 expansion of the Mokelumne Wilderness. The roadless areas are separated by Highway 88 as it parallels the West Carson River. When the California Wilderness Act of 1984 released these areas from mandatory wilderness consideration, the Forest Service apparently decided the roadless areas had ceased to exist.

The agency justifies the proposed timber sale on the grounds that bark beetles and six years of drought have caused tree mortality, "jeopardizing the economic value of the timber resource and creating a potential for a large, uncontrolled wildfire."

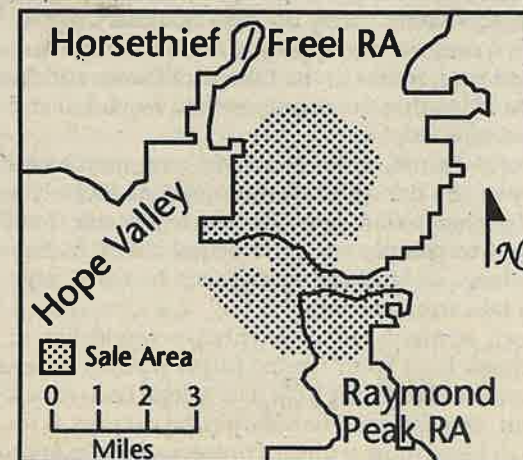
Although the Forest Service originally planned to log between 5 and 8 million board feet of trees in the area, the current proposal is to stay out of the old-growth groves north of Highway 88, reducing the cut to between 3.4 and 5.2 million board feet.

Much of the area south of the highway, however, is within the Raymond Peak Roadless Area. And the majority of trees the agency wants to cut there are in old-growth stands.

Old-growth trees are a rarity in the Toiyabe National Forest because extensive logging during the mining boom days in Nevada left the ancient forests along the east side of the Sierra fragmented and small.

The Forest Service acknowledges the importance of these isolated old-growth stands of red fir and mixed subalpine tree species; the environmental analysis (EA) for the sale acknowledges that old-growth stands "serve as biological islands and therefore are important for maintaining biological diversity." Unfortunately, the agency's goal of maintaining 10 percent of the Toiyabe National

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Map by Jim Eaton

Wilderness legislation

Desert bill: Lanfair restored, grazing entrenched

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The other committee changes to H. R. 518 are consistent with the Senate bill. South Algodones Dunes Wilderness Study Area has been released from consideration as wilderness to accommodate off-road vehicle users. Another wilderness study area, the 8,800-acre Great Falls Basin near Trona, will not be designated wilderness but will retain its protective study status. This change was made to assuage the owner of a nearby mine worried about the stricter clean air standards that accompany wilderness designation. Finally, and much more ominously, the committee adopted a provision of the Senate bill that would allow grazing to continue, without any date for its elimination, in both Mojave National Park and in the proposed additions to the existing Death Valley National Monument.

Although grazing occurs in many wilderness areas, it has been the exception in national parks. Only in a handful of national parks—most notably Nevada's Great Basin National Park and the Grand Tetons—is grazing presently allowed, and the prospect of two more national parks joining that list is galling to environmentalists. Though conservationists concede it is unlikely they will be able to remove the grazing provision from the House bill entirely, they will strive to ensure that grazing is not allowed to continue in perpetuity.

Motorcycle group cited again for WSA violations in desert

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) issued a citation to the organizer of a two-day motorcycle ride after participants left the approved route and entered two wilderness study areas (WSAs) in the California desert. One of the riders was overheard to say that they wanted one last ride through the areas, which will be designated wilderness when the California Desert Protection Act passes. Motorized travel is not allowed in wilderness areas.

The group that sponsored the event, Countdown Dual Sport, has a record of violating permit conditions. Conservationists monitoring the group's previous events observed participants riding on unauthorized routes in the White Mountains and in Coyote Flats in the Sierra Nevada. And in 1990, another motorcycle group, California Trail Rides, helped stage a "protest ride" through protected lands in the Inyo Mountains (see article in December 1990 WR).

Despite these precedents, the group was issued a permit for this year's ride, which took place the weekend of April 30–May 1. The approved route began in Lone Pine and continued through Cerro Gordo, Darwin, Panamint Springs, and Saline Valley on WSA boundary roads. On both days, riders left the approved route for routes through protected land, routes in the Panamint Dunes and Southern Inyo WSAs that the organizers had requested and the BLM had rejected.

George Barnes, a desert activist who monitored the first day of the ride and saw motorcyclists illegally enter Panamint Dunes WSA, says "It's very regrettable that they chose not to comply with the permit the BLM issued." Barnes does not fault the agency, but he does "urge the BLM to take strong action."

Much as many environmentalists would like to see Countdown Dual Sport denied future permits for events near protected lands, the BLM has no legal basis for a long-term ban, Barnes says. The solution, he believes, is for the agency to adopt more stringent procedures for its approval process.

Two amendments to the bill were defeated by the committee. One would have allowed hunting in the Mojave, which would have been designated a park preserve rather than a national park. Elk hunting presently is allowed in parts of Grand Teton National Park, but in no other park. The other rejected amendment, advanced by Rep. Richard Pombo (R-Tracy), would have opened 1,000 miles of off-road vehicle routes in wilderness areas. Both amendments are likely to reappear when the full House considers the bill, along with many others.

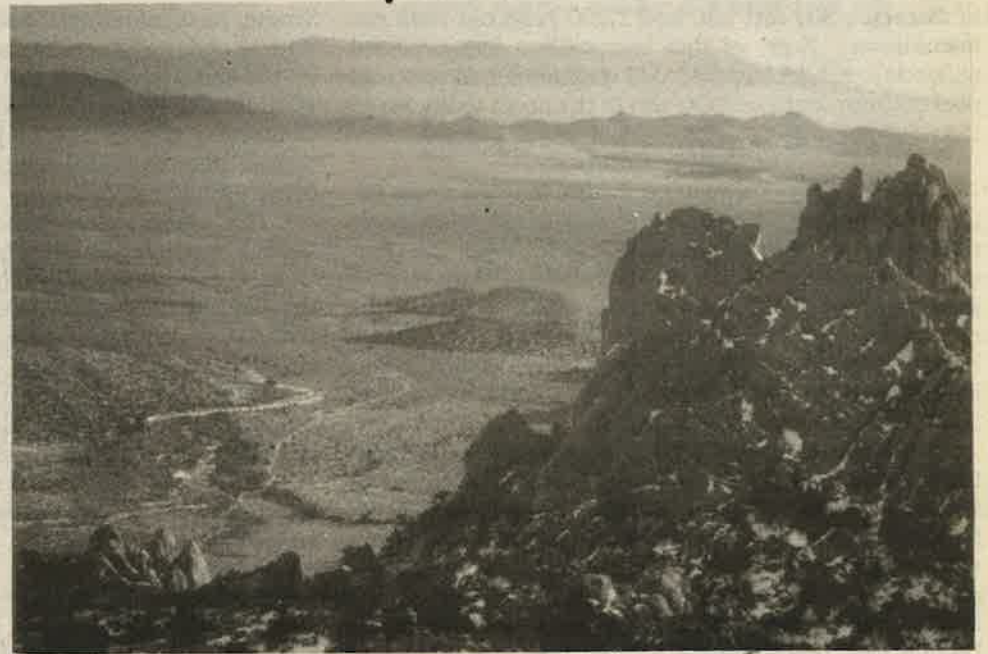
Most of the expected amendments would weaken the desert bill's protections. Rep. Lehman, the author of the bill, plans to offer an amendment that would delete 28,200 acres from Mojave National Park to create a buffer for the benefit of a Canadian mining company that owns a gold mine outside the proposed park boundary. But Rep. Lehman also has indicated that he will offer two additional amendments—one to protect the Bodie Bowl north of Mono Lake and one to spell out what activities will be allowed for fish and wildlife management in BLM wilderness areas. The latter amendment accords with language in the Senate desert bill.

Among the threatened weakening amendments are the expected broadsides on behalf of miners and inholders and a plethora of poison pills, amendments designed to undercut the intent of the desert bill and delay its implementation. The most outrageous, perhaps, are Rep. Jerry Lewis's (R-Redlands) three amendments that would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to strip park or wilderness designations from protected areas if any mineral available in the area is in short supply domestically.

Vento bills would reform park management, selection

A package of bills introduced by Rep. Bruce Vento (D-Minnesota) as the National Park Service Reform Initiative targets flaws in how the country chooses and protects its national parks. Among Rep. Vento's proposals are requirements that the director of the National Park Service be an experienced natural resources manager and that the agency perform studies of potential additions to the park system according to established criteria. Both changes are intended to ensure that "the National Park Service should never again lend itself to service as a political pincushion."

Although the Park Service once routinely inventoried federal lands to determine their potential as national park additions, that program was aborted by the Reagan administration and was not resumed until last year. To eliminate such political vagaries and establish a consistent system, Rep. Vento's New Area Studies bill would require the park service to submit to Congress each year a prioritized list of areas that warrant study. Congress then would pass legislation requiring that the studies be performed, according to the criteria in the agency's handbook, within three years. Ultimately, the agency's findings would be referred to Congress for designation.



Lanfair Valley from the New York Mountains

Photo by Pete Yamagata

The Lewis amendments would effectively amend the 1964 Wilderness Act and the 1916 Park Service Organic Act and give the Interior Department power now reserved to Congress. Moreover, the Lewis amendments are unnecessary. Congress can suspend or revoke any protective land designation when the national interest is at stake, as it did during the Korean War when it allowed mineral entry into portions of the Joshua Tree National Monument that contained iron ore.

Rep. Lewis also has proposed an amendment that would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to strip away park or wilderness designation if protected status would cause "substantial unemployment." Other likely amendments would mandate the use of motorized vehicles for wildlife management in wilderness, exclude much of the Greenwater Range from Death Valley National Park, and require the Interior Department to sell as many acres of public land as it gains from the desert bill.

Along with the New Area Studies bill, Rep. Vento introduced the National Parks and Landmarks Conservation Act, H. R. 3710. This legislation would direct the National Park Service to research and monitor the condition of the nation's parks and landmarks and would establish processes to protect parks and landmarks from the impacts of developments on neighboring lands.

If the latter provision sounds like buffer zones, Rep. Vento most emphatically wants you to know they are not. "This legislation does not create buffer zones, impose draconian policies, or otherwise force a heavy governmental hand on areas near parks and landmarks," the summary in the November 14, 1993 *Congressional Record* insists. What the legislation would do is establish a procedure for park managers to work with neighboring landowners to lessen or eliminate impacts on the parks. The park service would draft park conservation plans in cooperation with other landowners and agencies. The carrot that would drive cooperation is money: The director of the park service would have the authority to give grants for planning or plan implementation to cooperating individuals, companies, and local, tribal, or state governments.

Roadless lands, wild rivers

Fazio opposes wild-and-scenic protection for Ishi rivers

By Steve Evans

At a recent town hall meeting in the tiny Sacramento Valley farming community of Los Molinos, Rep. Vic Fazio (D-West Sacramento) announced his opposition to designation of three streams in his district as national wild-and-scenic rivers. Made before a packed hall of farmers and ranchers, the announcement stunned river conservationists who had been courting Rep. Fazio's support for protecting Deer, Mill, and Antelope creeks in Tehama County for more than a year.

Major westside tributaries to the Sacramento River, the creeks provide critical habitat for one of the state's two remaining native runs of spring chinook salmon. The salmon are considered at risk of extinction because downstream water diversions, poaching, and degradation of habitat have reduced the run, which once numbered in the thousands, to less than 350 fish in 1993.

Flowing from the slopes of Mt. Lassen, Deer, Mill, and Antelope creeks are probably best known as the ancient homeland of the now extinct Yahi Indian tribe and Ishi, the tribe's last survivor.

The rugged creek canyons of Ishi country provide critical winter habitat for one of the largest herds of black-tailed deer in the state and are home to numerous sensitive and endangered wildlife species, including the California spotted owl and endangered peregrine falcon. Largely wild and accessible by road in only a few places, the creeks offer a wide variety of recreation opportunities including hiking, backpacking, angling, camping, wildlife viewing, and expert kayaking.

Unfortunately, the watersheds are threatened by logging, construction of access roads, and increased recreational development planned by the U. S. Forest Service. Fisheries biologists are concerned that sedimentation from logging and road building will degrade water quality and fish habitat and that new access roads and campgrounds could lead to increased poaching of the few remaining salmon.

Logging proposed in two Toiyabe roadless areas

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Forest as old-growth can be met for only one tree species, lodgepole pine.

Since the loss of old-growth habitat would violate the Toiyabe forest plan, the agency has conveniently decided that salvage logging will not disqualify these groves from being counted as old-growth so long as the five largest trees per acre are left standing.

These ancient trees provide essential wildlife habitat. Such sensitive species as northern goshawk, great gray owl, Williamson's sapsucker, hairy woodpecker, and marten inhabit the area. With the assistance of the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Coalition

recently petitioned the Forest Service to protect habitat for martens and other forest carnivores in the Sierra to keep these species from becoming threatened or endangered.

One of the alternatives the Forest Service considered in the EA is allowing logging outside of the old-growth groves. But in probing that document's charts and maps, Coalition conservation associate Ryan Henson determined that this proposal still would allow logging in the roadless area, including one stand identified as old-growth.

Toiyabe forest officials expressed surprise that the timber sale they proposed is in roadless areas. But more

But the primary culprits responsible for the decline of the fish are existing irrigation diversions downstream which historically have dewatered the creeks during the critical spring migration period. Although the Department of Fish and Game now has a "handshake agreement" with diverters on Deer Creek to provide for occasional flow releases to attract salmon upstream, the agreement is neither permanent nor legally binding. State and federal water project diversions from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta also contribute to the salmon's decline.

Friends of the River formally requested Rep. Fazio's sponsorship of wild-and-scenic legislation to preclude new dams and require public lands along the rivers to be managed to protect salmon habitat and other outstanding natural values. But the proposal ran into a buzzsaw of local opposition from private landowners and farmers who view wild-and-scenic designation as an attack on their private property and water rights.

The local opposition to wild-and-scenic status is completely without merit. Because the designation confers no federal authority over private land use or zoning, designation would have no impact on private landowners. In addition, wild-and-scenic designation would have little effect on the irrigation diversions which have contributed to the salmon's decline because the legislative proposal does not include the privately owned farmlands in the Sacramento Valley where the diversions take place. Fur-

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thermore, the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act specifically leaves decisions about water rights to the state.

According to his staff, Rep. Fazio chose to oppose designation after local landowners presented him with a proposal to establish a Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy which supposedly would resolve all the watershed's environmental problems and preclude the need for federal designation. Conservationists are wary about this proposal since the "conservancy" appears to be dominated by many of the same interests responsible for dewatering the creeks, overgrazing riparian lands, and more recently, illegally constructing a road along Deer Creek in the existing Ishi Wilderness (see article on page 6).

Rep. Fazio's position on wild-and-scenic status is particularly troublesome to wilderness activists because of the extensive roadless lands in the Lassen National Forest. The Forest Service has recommended wilderness designation for portions of the Mill Creek, Wild Cattle Mountain, and Heart Lake roadless areas in Rep. Fazio's district, but the agency also plans to build roads and log more than 25 percent of the roadless acreage in the Deer Creek drainage, including portions of the Butt Mountain, Cub Creek, and Polk Springs roadless areas. Rep. Fazio's tendency to cater to agricultural interests bodes ill for the future preservation of wildlands, ancient forests, and forest-dependent species in the region.

What you can do

Constituents of Rep. Vic Fazio (residents of northern Sacramento, Yolo, eastern Solano, Sutter, Colusa, Glenn, southwestern Butte, and Tehama counties) can write letters urging him to reconsider his opposition to wild-and-scenic designation of Deer, Mill, and Antelope creeks. Note that without permanent legislative protection of the spring run salmon's habitat, this species almost certainly will be listed under the Endangered Species Act, a move that could entail more restrictions on landowners than wild-and-scenic designation. In addition, all residents of California can write separate letters to senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein and Rep. George Miller (chair of the House Natural Resources Committee), urging them to include Deer, Mill, and Antelope creeks in the omnibus wild-and-scenic legislation currently under consideration. Their addresses are:

The Hon. (Boxer or Feinstein)
Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510



Mill Creek, Mill Creek Roadless Area Photo by Jim Eaton

reduce the fuel levels in the proposed treatment stands."

Although a preferred alternative was identified, the Toiyabe's Forest Supervisor R. M. "Jim" Nelson stated that he has not made a final decision. The Coalition trusts that our information on the presence of roadless lands, inconsistencies in the EA, and the value of ancient forests will result in a decision either to abandon this project or log outside of both roadless areas and old-growth stands.

Jim Eaton is executive director of the California Wilderness Coalition.

continued on page 6

Wilderness news

Illegal road constructed in Ishi Wilderness

By Steve Evans

Hikers were shocked last year to discover a newly constructed jeep road on public lands in the Ishi Wilderness. The road follows Deer Creek from a private inholding across public lands to another private parcel downstream. As part of the Ishi Wilderness, the public land through which the road was constructed is supposed to be off-limits to road building and motorized use.

The road construction involved cutting several oak trees, clearing brush, and filling a creek bed to allow for vehicular passage across Rock Creek. No one knows for certain who constructed the road, but motorized access to the area generally is limited to the owners of the Four Arrows Ranch—a private inholding encompassing the historic Apperson Cow Camp homestead near the confluence of Deer and Sulphur Creeks.

The Forest Service was informed of the illegal road but did not raise the issue in a subsequent field meeting with the landowners at the boundary of the Ishi Wilderness. Agency officials had called the meeting because they were concerned about the inholder's legal access road into the wilderness being used by people other than the owners. The meeting reportedly turned into an ugly confrontation with the landowners, who came armed with guns and denied agency officials access to the area.

Months later, hikers discovered that someone had tried to cover up the new road. Tree stumps had been burned and then covered with dirt to disguise the evidence that the trees had been cut recently. Unfortunately, the Forest Service has yet to gain access to the site to investigate the illegal intrusion, but Mike Williams, the new Almanor District Ranger, has promised to investigate.

In addition to its illegality, the road is of great concern to conservationists because it provides motorized access

near the Yahi cultural site of Ishi Caves. The cultural value of the site has been protected by its inaccessibility, but motorized access could lead to its vandalism.

This is not the first time that public interests have conflicted with the purely private interests of the Four Arrows Ranch owners. The owners have closed the historic Deer Creek, Steamboat, and Sulphur Creek trails, which had been used for more than 100 years by Native Americans, pioneers, homesteaders, hunters, and anglers, to public access. Ironically, the private inholders are guaranteed "reasonable" access by law into the wilderness, even though they are denying public access across their private inholding to the federal lands beyond.



Deer Creek near Apperson Cow Camp, Ishi Wilderness Photo by Steve Evans

What you can do

Write to Almanor District Ranger Mike Williams, Lassen National Forest, P. O. Box 767, Chester, CA 96020. Urge him to investigate the road, determine who built it, and prosecute the builders to the full letter of the law. The road should be closed and completely removed. Note that continued motorized access to the area may result in further vandalism of Yahi cultural sites and violates the intent of Congress in establishing the Ishi Wilderness.

Get with the flow! Eastside rivers workshop set for June 11

Friends of the River, the Mono Lake Committee, and the Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club are sponsoring a wild-and-scenic rivers workshop for conservation activists in the eastern Sierra. The workshop will be held Saturday, June 11, from 10:00-2:00, at Crowley Lake.

The workshop will include an overview of the federal Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, a discussion of eastern Sierra rivers that are candidates for wild-and-scenic status, and tips on how to develop local support for river protection. Officials from the Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service have been invited.

For more information or to reserve space in the workshop, please call Maureen Rose at Friends of the River, (916) 442-3155, by June 8. After June 8, call Sally Miller at the Mono Lake Committee, (619) 647-6595.

Questions loom large as Mount Shasta nears historic status

Mount Shasta has been determined eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, a determination that is expected to lead to the mountain's designation as a historic district. The Forest Service, which had recommended only the area above 8,000 feet (the Mount Shasta Wilderness) and Panther Meadows for designation, now is considering recommending—in line with the eligibility finding—that the whole mountain be protected for its cultural and spiritual value to Native Americans.

Environmentalists concerned about threatened ski area development on Shasta's south slope had joined Native Americans in seeking the protections afforded by historic district status. Before a new project can be implemented in a historic district, the project's effects on the district's value must be determined and disclosed so the public can have its say. The process is roughly analogous to the process mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act for projects with environmental impacts.

The environmentalists who wanted historic status for Mount Shasta may be getting more than they bargained for, however. The status that environmentalists would like to see wielded against ski developments, logging, and other profanities may also be used against climbing and wilderness management.

For Native Americans to whom Mount Shasta is sacred, the climbers who swarm up the mountain, eager to "bag" another peak, are profaning the place. Close to 10,000 people visited the Mount Shasta Wilderness last year, if the numbers on the permits issued are correct. That so many people have a profound effect on the wilderness is known; the Forest Service is now considering implementing a policy requiring climbers to pack out their body waste to protect the wilderness. But whether climbing and other forms of recreation could be altered or eliminated because of their effect on the mountain's spiritual value is unknown. There are other historic districts, of course, but there is not another Shasta.

What is certain is that if Mount Shasta becomes a historic district, its management will become more complicated. If the Forest Service proposes a new policy to protect wilderness values and that policy would violate spiritual values, which values take precedence? Even existing policy, since it must be implemented anew each year, may be subject to review under the National Historic Preservation Act. Finally, there is the possibility that if Shasta is added to the federal register, the state may follow suit—with another layer of protection and another layer of review.



Ishi rivers

continued from page 5

The Hon. (Fazio or Miller)
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

For more information, contact Steve Evans at Friends of the River, (916) 442-3155.

Letters

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entire wilderness, the effect on ecosystem processes and nutrient flow is not measurable. It is like suggesting that killing one or two mosquitoes is destroying the food source for swallows and other insect-eating birds. In the grand scheme of things, a few mosquitoes won't be missed, and neither will the nutrients released by a campfire.

Keep in mind that Indians burned considerable amounts of wood, as did natural ignitions that started wildfires. Western ecosystems are adapted to periodic fires and the nutrient conversions that result. The amount of wood consumed by campfires is well within the ecological limits and tolerances of most western ecosystems.

There may be other reasons for banning campfires—to reduce cosmetic impacts of campfire rings and other socially unacceptable results of human fire use, for example. But let's not try to justify the ban with phony ecological reasoning

George Wuertner
Eugene, OR

Book review

A timely, even-handed look at grazing

Kill the Cowboy: A Battle of Mythology in the New West

By Sharman Apt Russell, Addison-Wesley, 1993, 240 pp., \$20.

Despite its bellicose title, *Kill the Cowboy* is an even-handed look at the volatile and increasingly polarized debate over grazing on public lands in the West—and a darn good read to boot. Recognizing that the debate is a complex one with many facets and no easy answers, Sharman Russell presents a number of different viewpoints. She sets the stage by acknowledging the power of the West's dominant myth—the myth of the cowboy, which incorporates our "cultural dreams of freedom and solitude, of riding a horse across golden fields as thunderclouds roil across the sky, of sleeping peacefully under the arc of the Milky Way, of waking alone to the bitter light of dawn." She also documents the real damage done to rangeland by overgrazing and to wildlife by predator control programs—the cowboy's "dark side."

The public lands debate comes alive as Russell skillfully profiles sincere, articulate people with diverse opinions and sometimes strong emotions. We meet outspoken opponents of grazing on public lands, conservationists who favor open dialogue with ranchers and feel a commitment to community and cooperation, a Forest Service official whose vigilant efforts to "protect the resource" have incurred the wrath of local ranchers, and ranchers who practice holistic resource management and are proud of the health of the land their cows graze. We meet a professional environmentalist who would like to see the end of predator control on public lands, a wildlife biologist for Animal Damage Control who believes ADC has a

legitimate role in protecting livestock interests, as well as people involved in the campaign to reintroduce wolves. In a chapter exploring the larger cultural context of the debate, we read about the role of the Judeo-Christian heritage in our view of natural resources and meet spokespersons for various alternative forms of spirituality: a Tewa Indian who contrasts his people's view of the land and the American way, a couple committed to bioregionalism as a moral and spiritual choice, and the originator of the philosophy of goatwalking—a life of nomadic pastoralism based on a covenant with the land.

Russell's own opinions are clearly stated. She would like to see a transition from viewing land as a commodity we own to viewing it as a community to which we belong, Aldo Leopold's old idea. She believes there should be less grazing on the public range, that the health of land and wildlife should be the bottom line. She believes we need wilderness and wolves. She thinks we also need ranchers: "As our last frontier urbanizes, we need the psychic ballast of people who make their livelihood directly from soil, grass, and water." She believes we need the cowboy. She believes environmentalists and ranchers can be allies against environmental ills. And she believes that beyond new laws and management plans, we also need new myths and role models that include "heroines as well as heroes, urbanites as well as country folk, ecologists as well as individualists." Her answer to the cowboy is the "green woman," who Russell describes as "an elusive dryad hidden in our hardened modern selves. A powerful green force. A generous spirit . . . Let's see what she has to say about the West," suggests Russell.

Though some environmentalists will feel that this book is too conciliatory toward ranchers, it does a good job of laying out the bones of the debate and digging underneath them for the deeper issues. It is thought provoking and highly readable. I learned a lot from it and would recommend it to anyone who wants to understand more about a central conundrum of life in the West.

—Lorraine Anderson

Alaska again; buy CWC T-shirts.

Madeleine (left) likes our six-tone landscape shirt now available in jade and fuchsia as well as the ever-popular light blue and pale green for \$15. Sally came all the way from Alaska to model a design by Bay Area cartoonist Phil Frank; it comes in beige or light gray for \$12. All shirts are 100 percent double-knit cotton. To order, use the form on the back page.



**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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DATES TO REMEMBER

June 8 PUBLIC HEARINGS in four cities on the Clinton administration's grazing reform plan. Registration, which is required of people who want to testify, runs from 8:00–9:00 a.m. The hearings will begin at 10:30 a.m., run until 5:00 p.m., and resume at 7:00 p.m. Hearings will be held in Redding (Red Lion Inn, 1830 Hilltop Drive), in Bakersfield (Red Lion Inn, 3100 Camino del Rio Court), in Barstow (Barstow Community Center, 841 Barstow Road), and in Susanville (Lassen Community College, Room H221-222, Highway 139). For more information, call Tina Gromo at the BLM, (916) 978-4746.

June 11 RIVERS WORKSHOP at Crowley Lake for activists concerned about eastern Sierra rivers. For information or to reserve space, call Maureen Rose at Friends of the River, (916) 442-3155, by June 8. After June 8, call Sally Miller at the Mono Lake Committee, (619) 647-6595. (See article on page 6.)

June 16–19 FOREST REFORM RALLY in La Grande, Oregon. Workshops, field trips, panel discussions, and receptions are scheduled. Call the Western Ancient Forest Campaign at (509) 527-0471 for more information.

July 28–31 FIELD WEEKEND, sponsored by the Eldorado National Forest and National Audubon Society, in Indian Valley and the Mokelumne Wilderness. Call Audubon's Bob Barnes at (916) 481-5332 for information or to register for the free event.

Wilderness Trivia Answer: from California County Summits, Wilderness Press

Mount Whitney (Inyo and Tulare counties) and Snow Mountain East (Colusa and Lake counties)

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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.

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"We wanted an administration and a secretary of the Interior who would protect ancient forests, desert grasslands, wetlands, and endangered species. We didn't get them. We will never get them. We will always get just politicians."

—Dave Foreman,
High Country News
 May 16, 1994

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