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CWC appeals Toiyabe salvage sale

Logging Raymond Peak RA is "like logging the Matterhorn"

By Ryan Henson

A few miles east of Hope Valley along the West Fork Carson River are the isolated and extremely rugged Raymond Peak and Horsethief roadless areas of the Toiyabe National Forest. The California Wilderness Act of 1984 added approximately 19,000 acres of the Raymond Peak Roadless Area to the Mokelumne Wilderness but left an equal amount unprotected (the Act also failed to designate any of the 37,000-acre Horsethief Roadless Area as wilderness). Since that time, the unprotected portions of both roadless areas have remained largely wild, making them important havens for plants and wildlife, sources of clean, clear water, and increasingly popular venues for primitive recreation.

Together, these wildlands contain thousands of acres of rare, eastside Sierra old-growth forest composed primarily of Jeffrey and ponderosa pine, with clusters of red and white fir. At first glance, it seems unlikely that a forest could grow at all in these dry, incredibly steep, and landslide-prone wildlands. When I first saw them a few weeks ago, my reaction was that both roadless areas look like cliffs, and what was not a cliff was a canyon. With elevation gains of 2,700 feet in a single mile in some places, the roadless areas support small pockets of old-growth that cling to the few places stable enough to hold soil and water. Many of the groves are scarred and battered by centuries of landslides and avalanches. In recognition of their rugged topography, the Forest Service declared the areas unfit for logging in its 1985 land and resource management plan for the Toiyabe National Forest.

Unfortunately, the Toiyabe forest plan's prohibition against cutting does not apply to "salvage" logging, a form of logging sanctioned in supposed emergencies that is immune from many of the environmental and fiscal constraints that govern other timber sales. The "emergency" in this case is that decades of fire suppression have allowed dense pockets of young trees to grow in areas where fire naturally would thin them out. In the absence of fire, bark beetles are moving in to thin the young conifers, much to the delight of woodpeckers and other birds which feast on the insects and nest in the dead and dying trees. Unlike the woodpeckers, the Forest Service sees rotting trees as little more than a terrible waste of resources. Thus, to recover the economic value of the dying trees, the Forest Service is moving ahead with its plans (detailed in the June 1994 *Wilderness Record*) to salvage log much of the old-growth in the Raymond Peak Roadless Area and younger forests in the Horsethief Roadless Area—three to five million board feet of forest overall—as part of the Woodfords salvage sale.

To save these roadless areas and adjacent lands, the California Wilderness Coalition (CWC), Friends of Hope Valley, Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, and Wilderness Society are appealing the Forest Service's plans. The appeal will argue that the sale would violate the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and damage watersheds and old-growth habitat.

Forest Service regulations require that any proposal "that would substantially alter the undeveloped character of inventoried roadless areas of 5,000 acres or more" must be analyzed with an environmental impact statement (EIS). Despite this mandate, the Forest Service chose

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The Forest Service plans to log the ancient forests of the Raymond Peak Roadless Area in the Toiyabe National Forest.

Photo by Ryan Henson

DC update

Desert bill languishes, Wild & Scenic bill is on hold

September 3, 1994, the 30th anniversary of the act that established the National Wilderness Preservation System, will be celebrated in many ways. Wilderness lovers will make pilgrimages to the solitary places of the country, places that are wild and free only because another generation of wilderness lovers strove to protect them. September 3 will not, however, be the double celebration conservationists had hoped. August passed without significant action on the California Desert Protection Act.

The August doldrums are attributable to a number of factors. The crime bill occupied Congress for much of the month, and Republican opponents of desert protection have vowed to delay the desert bill at every opportunity.

For desert advocates, this is nail-biting time. Congress is expected to adjourn for the year in early October so members can return to their districts to campaign for the November election. For the desert bill to be enacted, a House-Senate conference committee must agree to a final version of the bill and both houses then must approve that bill, all before Congress adjourns. Only then can the president sign the legislation. But so far, the senators and representatives who will serve

on the conference committee have not even been chosen by party leaders.

Desert advocates will return to Capitol Hill after the Labor Day recess with a single purpose: to work for the desert bill. But more than ever before, the legislation now is in the hands of Congress.

With so little time and so much for this Congress still to do, Senator Barbara Boxer and House Natural Resources Chair George Miller decided to delay introducing a proposed omnibus wild-and-scenic rivers bill for California until 1995.

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Coalition news

Monthly Report

It had been years since the CWC's staff and volunteers took a backpack trip. We seem to have developed a certain notoriety for bad weather karma. Yes, it did rain on the Cache Creek trip in 1989, but that was winter and the beginning of the "March miracle" that got us out of one dry year. Okay, there was the Memorial Day hike into the Granite Chief Wilderness that became a snow survival outing.

But time heals all wounds, and a couple veterans of the snowy trip to Picayune Valley signed up for an August reprise. Candace Cross-Drew, Ryan Henson, and I retraced our steps of years ago.

We were joined by environmental troubadours Bill Oliver and Glen Waldeck, who had a free weekend during their concert tour, and by John Graham, Mary Tappel, and Elaine Hebert.

In deference to a party thrown for our musicians the night before at Rodney Robinson's ranch (farms in Davis?), we hit the trail long after the crack of noon. But it's a mellow hike up the North Fork American River and into Picayune, so we arrived at the lofty waterfall in the center of the valley with plenty of warm sun remaining.

Some readers may recall the wilderness videotaping Nancy Kang and I did in past years. After mounting several safaris to haul all the antique camera equipment into the wilds, I have been searching for just the right lightweight camcorder before resuming these expeditions. I had just about settled on a new Sony model when Bill showed up for the hike with that very camera.

I spent the weekend trying out his new purchase to assure myself it was the right choice for me. I got footage of my canine companion Inyo, a snake, water ouzels, hawks, and light-skinned skinny dippers gathered about the waterfall. Glen showed off his rock climbing prowess by ascending a cliff, eschewing not only ropes and pitons, but clothing as well (for a videotape, send \$10 to Bill Oliver...).

There were wildfires burning that weekend, but we were not affected by their smoke. One large fire was threatening Verdi, Nevada. Since we have been appealing salvage logging sales touted as "fuels reduction" necessary to lower fire danger, I

felt vindicated to learn that the blaze began in a recently logged area. In fact, logging can *increase* fire danger (besides, it's folly to believe that a forest can be saved by cutting down all its trees).

But in recognition of the fire danger, we shunned an evening campfire and instead sang silly songs under the stars. Our serenading served as an acoustic beacon for John and Mary, who hadn't reached the trailhead until after dinner and arrived at camp long after dark.

We were unable to dally the next day because Bill and Glen had agreed to perform an introduction to a slide presentation on Humboldt County's Headwaters forest. Back to Davis we hustled, and over to the City Council chambers.

I've seen many slide shows, but this was a work of art. Photographer Doug Thron brought together beautiful, shocking, and moving photographs of this last large unprotected redwood grove. His clear narration made manifest the problem—and the need for congressional action. The appalling images of clearcuts in this magnificent forest touched the audience. I then understood why Representative Dan Hamburg and Senator Barbara Boxer felt compelled to introduce the Headwaters Forest Act after watching his presentation.

So I went out and ordered my first camcorder. It is my fantasy to capture the essence of California wildlands—their importance, their beauty, and their critical role in preserving our native biodiversity. In the coming months and years, I plan to haul this machine wherever I go, in hopes of catching those magic images that might inspire and influence activists, decision makers, and just plain ordinary citizens.

One drawback is the time I'll have to spend indoors editing the tape into a coherent story. But seeing and hearing the videos will bring back the memories of being in these special places, along with the fragrance of the flowers, the kiss of the wind, and the fellowship of my companions.

Anyone for a hike?

By Jim Eaton

Forest Service stands by its wilderness at Caples Creek

After years of intensive lobbying, conservationists have convinced the U. S. Forest Service not to adjust the boundary of the proposed Caples Creek Wilderness in the Eldorado National Forest to accommodate a destructive hydroelectric project on the Silver Fork of the American River.

Conservationists had thought the issue was concluded when the Forest Service recommended a boundary for the proposed Caples Creek Wilderness that included the desired site for the Foottrail hydroelectric project. But the Bush administration required the agency to review its wilderness recommendation and consider dropping nearly 200 acres from the proposed wilderness to allow for construction of the hydroelectric project.

Over the last two years, conservationists have lobbied agency officials and members of Congress and generated hundreds of letters opposing the boundary adjustment. The Forest Service's recent decision upholding its proposed wilderness boundary should make it easier for the

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to deny any further extension of the preliminary study permit for the Foottrail project. The Forest Service's demonstrated commitment to a Caples Creek Wilderness also is important in gaining congressional support for wilderness designation.

The Forest Service's decision also is a testament to how effective the California Wilderness Coalition's members can be. Thanks to your letters on behalf of Caples Creek, we are one giant step closer to wilderness.



Adventurers welcome

The Coalition's newest member group is Peak Adventures, the outdoor recreation program run by the student association at California State University, Sacramento. Peak Adventures organizes cooperative backpacking trips and day hikes in California wilderness areas, teaches rock climbing, wilderness first aid, and orienteering, and operates a ropes course.

All trips, classes, and facilities are open to the public and are described in a brochure published twice a year. For a copy, call Peak Adventures at (916) 278-6321.

Furnishers, too

For 18 years, the office of the California Wilderness Coalition has been furnished with other people's cast-offs, a proud tradition that continues to this day. Thanks to Chris Agruss of Village Computers, we soon will be retiring one of our oldest cast-offs, a battered gray desk made by Claud Eaton (Jim's father) in the 1950s, to make way for a newer, sturdier, and roomier cast-off desk, a filing cabinet, and a video cart.

Then we'll be casting about for a good home for Claud's still-serviceable desk, a desk job if there ever was one.



CWC T-shirts

Gary models our six-tone landscape shirt now available in jade and fuchsia as well as the ever-popular light blue and pale green for \$15. Sue wears 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.

Wilderness Trivia Question:

If the Toiyabe Mountains are in central Nevada (and they are), why is there a Toiyabe National Forest in California?

Answer on page 7

Wilderness in peril

Preposterous Toiyabe logging plan appealed

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to prepare a less comprehensive environmental assessment (EA) for the sale, asserting that an EIS is unnecessary because the roadless areas "no longer exist." Usually, it takes chainsaws, bulldozers, and other tools to render roadless areas nonexistent, but the Forest Service claims that the Raymond Peak and Horsethief roadless areas no longer exist because the Toiyabe forest plan determined that neither of them meets certain undefined "roadless area criteria."

Conservationists argue that though the California Wilderness Act of 1984 did indeed authorize the Forest Service to "release" roadless areas either to wilderness or non-wilderness uses in forest plans, this authorization does not free the Forest Service from its obligation under the NEPA to consider the cumulative and specific impacts of developing released roadless areas if they remain primitive and 5,000 acres or larger in size. The NEPA provisions clearly apply to both the Horsethief and Raymond Peak roadless areas which were officially inventoried by the Forest Service in the 1970s, remain over 5,000 acres in size, and are still undeveloped (though a fire road was bulldozed into a portion of the Horsethief Roadless Area in the mid-1980s). In addition, the logging of dead and dying trees throughout these roadless areas would result in over 5,700 acres (almost nine square miles) being lost to development. This surely is a substantial alteration of the areas' primitive character.

Though the EA fails to examine the proposed salvage sale's impact on the Horsethief and Raymond Peak roadless areas, it does attempt to assess the impact

on old-growth ecosystems. The analysis is highly problematic, however, given the Forest Service's preposterous claim that salvage logging will not "significantly alter the old-growth characteristics" of the stands targeted for cutting. The Woodfords EA attempts to support this assertion by positing that old-growth ecosystems are little more than the sum of their components. It states that since these components (snags per acre, number of downed logs per acre, multi-layered canopy, degree of canopy cover, etc.) will not be reduced below "minimum old-growth characteristics" by the sale, the groves will not be harmed. Needless to say, the CWC and the other appellants view old-growth ecosystems as far more than a collection of characteristics.

Interestingly, the EA for the Woodfords salvage sale acknowledges that "past logging activities have already fragmented old-growth forests...along the entire eastern Sierra front, making options for managing old-growth forests limited." To conservationists, the scarcity of ancient forests is reason enough to forgo any cutting in old-growth stands, especially since there currently is not enough old-growth in the Toiyabe to fulfill the agency's wildlife and seral diversity goals. The importance of retaining old-growth in the project area is heightened because the roadless areas are home to martens and contain habitat suitable for fishers, wolverines, California spotted owls, and Sierra red fox as well. Studies have shown that these animals—in particular the marten and fisher—rely on an abundance of large live trees, dense canopy cover, large snags, large logs, and other features of old-growth forest for survival, especially in winter. The Woodfords EA reveals that a marten was observed in Merk Canyon in the northeastern corner of the Raymond Peak Roadless Area in 1993. And yet, under the EA's preferred alternative, the largest old-growth cutting unit in the sale runs directly along Merk Canyon's eastern edge, and three other units are nearby.

It is no surprise that the Forest Service has had a very difficult time attempting to justify on paper a salvage sale that appears preposterous on the ground.

As the CWC and other groups recently informed the Forest Service, several prominent wildlife biologists have concluded that a moratorium on old-growth logging is required in the Sierra Nevada if the marten, fisher, Sierra red fox, wolverine, and other old-growth dependent or associated species are to be preserved in the region. Indeed, the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) recently submitted a petition to Dr. Jack Ward Thomas, Chief of the Forest Service, and Ronald Stewart, the former Regional Forester for the Pacific Southwest region, requesting that the agency follow "scientifically credible management to ensure viability of sensitive furbearers" in the Sierra Nevada. The NRDC further requested that,

until such a strategy is developed, a stay be issued against all old-growth logging projects, all cutting in roadless areas of 1,000 acres or more, and all logging within 600 feet of each side of all perennial and intermittent streams throughout the Sierra Nevada.

If the NRDC's interim guidelines are applied to the Woodfords salvage sale, all but small portions of the old-growth units proposed under the preferred alternative would have to be eliminated. A recent inspection of the sale area revealed that few, if any, of these mitigation measures are being followed, however. Indeed, the Forest Service is proposing to protect only small riparian buffers



Expert witnesses for the appeal demonstrate that the riparian buffers in the logging plan for Raymond Peak are too narrow.

Photo by Ryan Henson

ranging in size from 50 feet on both sides of the West Fork Carson River down to 15 feet on both sides of several small yet ecologically important streams. It is doubtful that these small riparian buffers will protect slide-prone areas, sensitive soils, and riparian ecosystems, much less provide corridors for old-growth dependent species.

As members of all of the appellant organizations agreed on our last tour of the area, salvage logging the steep, landslide-prone Raymond Peak and Horsethief roadless areas is like logging the Matterhorn. It is, therefore, no surprise that the Forest Service has had a very difficult time attempting to justify on paper a salvage sale that appears preposterous on the ground.

Ryan Henson is the CWC's conservation associate.

New regs for old roads

Draft RS 2477 regulations don't go far enough

"The right-of-way for the construction of highways over public lands, not reserved for public uses, is hereby granted." With those words, Congress in 1866 enacted Revised Statute 2477 and paved the way for a modern-day land grab that is sweeping the West. Although R. S. 2477 was repealed by the 1976 Federal Land Policy and Management Act, routes established before the repeal and before the lands they cross were reserved—as national parks or wilderness areas for instance—are still subject to development under R. S. 2477.

After Interior Secretary Donald Hodel in 1988 issued a loose interpretation of what qualifies as a right-of-way under R. S. 2477—an interpretation that would allow virtually any dirt road, track, or footpath to qualify as an R. S. 2477 right-of-way and be paved, widened, or realigned without regard for environmental impacts—counties, states, and off-road vehicle groups began filing claims to R. S. 2477 rights-of-way through national parks, wilderness areas, and wildlife refuges. The State of Alaska claims some 1,700 roads and trails under R. S. 2477—including dogsled routes—and asserts the right to develop them into major highways. In southern Utah's red rock canyon country, seven counties have claimed rights-of-way for more than 5,000 routes across public wildlands and national parks. And conservationists have reason to fear that the California desert is the next target.

In response to the flood of claims, the Clinton administration issued its own interpretation of R. S. 2477 in July,

along with draft regulations that would clarify the standards for determining which routes qualify as valid rights-of-way and would create an administrative procedure for asserting and processing claims. Though the proposed regulations are a significant improvement over the Hodel policy, conservationists believe the regulations need to be substantially strengthened.

On the positive side, the draft regulations would:

- disqualify routes that were not actually constructed, including footpaths, vehicle tracks, dogsled routes, or routes established merely by the passage of vehicles;
- require that a route currently be in use as a highway to qualify as an R. S. 2477 right-of-way;
- confine the scope of any valid R. S. 2477 right-of-way to the "width, surface treatment, and location" actually in use when the statute was repealed;
- establish a deadline for filing claims; and
- stay R. S. 2477 right-of-way determinations pending appeal.

The regulations suffer from major weaknesses, however. As proposed, the regulations:

- define "highway" so broadly that meandering, little-used routes with no significant destinations could qualify as R. S. 2477 rights-of-way;
- fail to specifically state that an entire route must satisfy all the governing criteria;
- fail to disqualify routes if any segment traverses reserved,

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30 years of wilderness

Wilderness before '64

A short history

On September 3, 1964, President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the Wilderness Act, formally establishing the National Wilderness Preservation System and designating 54 wilderness areas in 13 states, including 13 wilderness areas in California. But for all the importance of the Wilderness Act, it did not bring wilderness to California. Four of the wilderness areas the Act established in California—John Muir, Marble Mountain, Minarets (now Ansel Adams), and Yolla Bolly–Middle Eel—already had been designated wilderness by the Forest Service.

To understand this enigma, travel with us now back to the 1920s, when Aldo Leopold worked for the Forest Service's Southwest region. It was Leopold who proposed the nation's first wilderness, the Gila in New Mexico, which was established in 1924 by the authority of the Regional Forester. A few years later, the Forest Service adopted its first regulations for managing administratively designated wilderness areas.

By the late 1930s, Bob Marshall had become Chief of Recreation for the Forest Service, and he began writing new regulations which were instituted after his death in 1939. Under those regulations, existing wilderness areas were reclassified as primitive areas, and all primitive areas were to be studied to assess their wilderness potential. Primitive areas larger than 100,000 acres could become wilderness under the new regulations; smaller areas could be designated "wild."

After World War II, timber began to dominate the Forest Service's attention, and primitive areas began to shrink in response to the demand for new forests to log. Alarmed, Howard Zahniser and David Brower initiated the campaign for congressionally designated wilderness areas, areas that would forever be off-limits to logging.

Though early versions of the Wilderness Act would have incorporated all the Forest Service primitive areas in the new wilderness system, the final bill designated only the wild and wilderness areas. California had nine wild areas and four wilderness areas at the time, though two of those, the future Dome Land and Mokelumne wildernesses of the Sierra Nevada, barely made the cut. They were not designated wild until 1963.

Though wilderness advocates were disappointed that the Forest Service's many primitive areas were not designated wilderness by the 1964 Act, the short-term loss turned into a long-term boon. Gaining protection for the primitive areas became a rallying point for conservationists, and the experience they acquired—in Congress and in the courts—was critical to subsequent successful battles

against the roadless area review and evaluations (RAREs I and II) and for the 1984 California Wilderness Act.

The wild and wilderness areas in California that became "instant wilderness" with the passage of the Wilderness Act are:

Caribou Designated in 1931 as Caribou Butte (also Caribou Peak), this Lassen National Forest (NF) wilderness had 19,080 acres in 1964 and has 20,546 acres today.

Cucamonga Designated in 1931, Cucamonga Wilderness had 9,022 acres (all in the San Bernardino NF) in 1964 but has 12,781 acres (in the Angeles and San Bernardino NFs) today.

Dome Land Designated in 1963, this Sequoia NF wilderness was 62,121 acres in 1964 and is now 93,781 acres.

Hoover Designated in 1931, the Hoover Wilderness of the Inyo and Toiyabe NFs had 42,800 acres in 1964 but has 48,601 acres today.

John Muir The largest of the Forest Service's Sierra Nevada wildernesses, the John Muir Wilderness was first designated in 1931, had 502,978 acres in the Inyo and Sierra NFs in 1964, and has since grown to 580,323 acres.

Marble Mountain Designated (as Marble Mountains) in 1931, this Klamath NF wilderness had 213,283 acres in 1964 and has 241,744 acres today.

Minarets Originally Mt. Dana–Minarets and now part of the Ansel Adams Wilderness, the area was first designated in 1931 and had 109,484 acres in the Inyo and Sierra NFs in 1964. Today, the Ansel Adams Wilderness is 230,258 acres.

Mokelumne Designated in 1963, the Mokelumne had 50,400 acres in the Eldorado and Stanislaus NFs in 1964. Since then, the wilderness has spread into the Toiyabe NF as well, for a total of 98,921 acres.

San Geronimo Designated in 1931, this San Bernardino NF wilderness had 33,898 acres in 1964 and has 56,722 acres today.

San Jacinto Designated in 1931, this wilderness had 20,565 acres in the San Bernardino NF in 1964 and now has 32,248.

South Warner Designated in 1931 as South Warners, this Modoc NF wilderness had 68,507 acres in 1964 and has 70,614 acres today.

Thousand Lakes Designated Thousand Lake Valley in 1931, this Lassen NF wilderness had 15,695 acres in 1964; 16,335 acres today.

Yolla Bolly–Middle Eel Designated as Middle Eel–Yolla Bolly in 1931, this wilderness had 109,051 acres in the Mendocino and Shasta-Trinity NFs in 1964 and has since spread into the Six Rivers NF, for a total of 146,696 acres.

Note: Some differences in acreage result from more accurate mapping and measurement techniques; others represent wilderness additions since the 1964 act.

Sources: Dave Foreman; Luis Ireland; *103 Wilderness Laws* (for 1964 acreages); *Wilderness Management* (for modern acreages).

When every acre counted

The 1984 California Wilderness Act remembered

By Jim Eaton

When the California Wilderness Act was adopted on September 28, 1984, environmentalists celebrated the designation of 1.8 million acres of national forest wilderness. Unfortunately, for every acre protected, two acres were "released" for uses other than wilderness and another acre deferred for further study.

In the late 1970s, there were nearly eight million acres of unprotected roadless areas in California's national forests. In the second Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE II), the Forest Service proposed protecting as wilderness only 757,252 acres, reassessing the wilderness potential of 2.5 million acres in "further planning areas," and releasing the balance of the wildlands to non-wilderness uses. The further planning areas the Forest Service established generally

were the areas too hot to handle, contested areas that were wanted by different constituencies for inherently-conflicting uses: primitive recreation, logging, mining, downhill skiing, or off-road vehicle travel.

Environmentalists and the State of California (under Governor Jerry Brown) successfully sued to stop the Forest Service from implementing RARE II. Then Congress stepped in to resolve the dispute.

The late Representative Phillip Burton introduced legislation that would have designated five million acres of the state's national forest as wilderness. By the time that bill passed the House of Representatives, it had been whittled down to 2.3 million acres.

Unfortunately, the Reagan administration was backing the Forest Service's recommendation of just 1.2 million acres of wilderness. Republican Senator Pete Wilson insisted on splitting the difference between 1.2 and 2.3 million acres—he demanded that a solution be reached that designated about 1.8 million acres of wilderness.

Fortunately, acreage was the main criterion, not whether an area was forested or popular with off-road vehicle recreationists. Environmentalists reluctantly pared down the list of wilderness areas, giving up lands that were not likely to be developed in the near term because they were inaccessible or lacked commercial value. Areas like the White Mountains and the Scodies in the southern Sierra were sacrificed on the premise that we probably could gain wilderness protection for them in the future. (For the White Mountains, the strategy seems to have paid off. The Forest Service's original wilderness recommendation was so small that it was named, aptly, Boundary Peak. Today, the agency supports the establishment of a 223,326-acre White Mountain Wilderness. Though still less than the 275,000 acres conservationists believe should be protected, the Forest Service's current recommendation is far better than its original 49,900-acre proposal.) When the dust settled, 20 areas that had been proposed for wilderness in the House bill were eliminated from the compromise legislation, and 13 more were reduced in acreage.

When the bill was signed into law, roadless areas received one of three classifications: wilderness, further planning, or released. Wilderness areas were permanently protected. Further planning areas were to be studied again as potential wilderness by the Forest Service in the agency's

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Marble Mountain Wilderness

Photo by Jim Eaton

Roadless areas

Looking beyond the California Wilderness Act

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forest planning process (unlike the RARE II further planning areas, most of Congress's further planning areas lacked commercial value and consequently were not at risk of being developed). Released areas could be made available for uses other than wilderness (after the appropriate environmental studies); those still wild when the second cycle of forest planning is undertaken must again be studied for their wilderness potential. This second round of forest plans was expected to begin in the 1990s.

During the past decade the disposition of 61 further planning areas, totaling over 1.8 million acres, was determined by the Forest Service in individual forest plans. True to its anti-wilderness bias, the agency proposed only portions of just 15 areas for wilderness protection, less than half a million acres (see chart). Those areas not proposed for wilderness were considered "released" to non-wilderness uses.

Between the California Wilderness Act of 1984 and the further planning recommendations of the Forest Service, only 2.3 of the 8 million acres of wildlands that existed in the 1970s either have been designated or are slated to be designated as wilderness.

Never say never

At least that's what the Forest Service would like to believe. Wilderness activists, however, seldom give up.

The released areas included lands that had been the subject of controversy for decades, areas like Silver Peak, Chips Creek, Echo-Carson, Tuolumne River, and Glass Creek Meadows. Activists working to protect these and other areas did not quit; they redoubled their efforts to preserve their favorite wild areas.

In 1992, for example, the Condor Range and Rivers Act took the four further planning areas in the Los Padres National Forest that the Forest Service had recommended for wilderness designation, enlarged them, added five areas not recommended by the agency, and made them all wilderness. One of the areas, Silver Peak, had been released by the 1984 legislation.

In preparing forest plans since the 1984 act, the Forest Service first took the attitude that the disposition of roadless areas had been "resolved" with the act's passage. Forest plans referred to some of the areas as "former roadless areas," and the Toiyabe forest plan claimed that, with the passage of the 1984 act, released roadless areas no longer exist (see article on page 1). Letters from thousands of citizens are correcting these mistaken interpretations.

Indeed, Forest Service regulations now require the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) before any roadless area of 5,000 acres or more can be developed. Just the public scrutiny that results from the release of an EIS has stopped a number of developments, as was the case with the proposed Peppermint ski area in the Sequoia National Forest's Slate Mountain Roadless Area.

On to the future

New champions have come to the rescue of roadless lands. Conservation biologists are now explaining the incredibly important role of wild lands in the

maintenance of natural biodiversity. Many roadless areas are likely to be preserved as part of a network of core reserves, buffer zones, and migration corridors necessary for the preservation of wildlife, especially large carnivores.

Finally, a new generation of activists has arrived to defend roadless areas. The California Wilderness Coalition's conservation associate Ryan Henson, for example, has developed a proposal for a Yuki Wilderness that combines Mendocino National Forest roadless areas with Bureau of Land Management wildlands. These areas, including Thatcher, Eden, and Elk creeks, were virtually unknown until recently.

Today's activists, more concerned with protecting flora and fauna than recreational meccas, are looking at ecosystems ignored in past wilderness studies. Their enthusiasm, supported by the science generated by conservation biologists, makes the future of roadless lands brighter now than ever before.

Jim Eaton was involved in RAREs I and II and the California Wilderness Act.

N. Fork American needs funds

Because of the defeat of Proposition 180 in the June election, private forest lands along the North Fork American Wild & Scenic River may be logged in the coming months. The parks and wildlife habitat bond measure would have provided millions of dollars to acquire private inholdings along the river that are threatened by logging. The only way to stop the proposed logging may be federal acquisition, but allocation of federal funds for the project remains uncertain.

The California Department of Forestry is processing two timber harvest plans for more than 1,000 acres of private lands along the North Fork American River near Watson Crossing and Italian Bar. Although the North Fork is a federally designated wild river and state-designated wild trout stream, the federal and state governments have no control over land use in private inholdings and, therefore, cannot stop the sensitive parcels from being logged. Even though the proposed logging method is by helicopter, the plans would still result in degradation of the wild river corridor and the North Fork American Roadless Area.

The inholdings in question are two of several private parcels along the North Fork owned by High Sierra Properties. Although the Trust for Public Land has an option to purchase the properties, no federal funds have been allocated for the critical acquisition, and state funding was blocked when California voters turned down Proposition 180 in June.

Representative Vic Fazio (D-West Sacramento) has been instrumental in reserving \$1 million in Land & Water Conservation funds in the House Interior budget for the acquisition, but no similar line item is in the Senate budget. It is unknown whether a House-Senate conference committee to resolve the differences between the budget bills will include North Fork acquisition funds. If no funds are allocated this year, it is almost certain that the state forestry department will approve the timber harvest plans, and logging could commence in March 1995 when the Trust for Public Land's option expires.

Disposition of further planning areas since 1984

Forest	Area	Acreage	FS rec.	Congress		
Angeles	Arroyo Seco	5,000	0			
	Cleveland	Caliente	5,900	0		
Eldorado	Sill Hill	5,200	0			
	Inyo	Caples Creek	17,340	13,694		
		White Mountains	223,326	120,000		
		Paiute	130,653	0		
		Coyote S.E.	55,588	0		
		Table Mountain	4,138	4,138		
		Wheeler Ridge	16,229	0		
		Buttermilk	854	0		
		Laurel-McGee	9,090	0		
		Horse Meadow	5,580	0		
		Tioga Lake	920	920		
		Hail Natural Area	5,209	0		
		Log Cabin Saddlebag	17,093	0		
		Benton Range	10,451	0		
		Blanco Mtn.	16,348	0		
Birch Creek		32,705	0			
Black Canyon	34,804	0				
Andrews Mtn.	13,619	0				
Lake Tahoe	Freel	15,600	0			
	Lassen	Heart Lake	9,289	9,289		
		Wild Cattle Mtn.	4,965	3,900		
		Trail Lake	1,115	815		
		Ishi	20,027	0		
		Mill Creek	7,990	7,580		
		Butt Mountain	8,300	0		
		Los Padres	Sespe-Frazier	334,696	197,047	220,000
			Black Butte	22,718	0	22,000
			Bear Mountain	22,487	0	16,000
Bear Canyon			14,808	0	0	
Garcia Mountain	22,425		10,306	14,000		
Black Mountain	12,624		0	0		
La Panza	5,303		0	0		
Los Machos	11,700		0	0		
Big Rocks	12,995		0	0		
Stanley Mtn.	16,661		0	0		
Horseshoe Spr.	13,850		0	0		
La Brea	60,455		16,516	48,000		
Diablo	19,820		0	0		
Matilija	35,106		30,017	30,000		
Dry Lakes	17,270		0	0		
Sawmill Badlands	90,333	0	38,000			
Antimony	44,702	0	0			
Quatal	7,628	0	0			
Little Pine	875	0	0			
San Bernardino	Cucamonga B	12,860	0			
	Cucamonga C	3,960	0			
	Pyramid Peak	11,550	0			
	Sugarloaf	8,000	0			
	Raywood Flat	11,110	0			
Sequoia	Oat Mountain	12,400	0			
	Dennison Pk.	6,700	0			
	Moses	24,360	0			
	Scodies	48,000	0			
Shasta-Trinity	Mt. Eddy	9,600	0			
	Kings River	68,668	0			
Sierra & Sequoia	Carson-Iceberg	34,200	23,900			
	Stanislaus	9,700	4,900			
Toiyabe	Carson-Iceberg	9,700	4,900			
	Hoover Additions	103,300	49,200			
	Sweetwater	40,000	0			
TOTAL		1,848,197	492,222	388,000		

Note: In 1992 Congress added Black Butte and Bear Mountain to the Ventana Wilderness and La Brea to the San Rafael Wilderness. Sawmill Badlands is now the Chumash Wilderness. Though Congress designated less than the potential wilderness acreage, it still established far more wilderness than the Forest Service (FS) had recommended.

Wilderness news

Plumas rivers study could protect roadless areas too

By Steve Evans

The Forest Service is soliciting public comments on its preliminary identification of 24 segments of the Feather River and its tributaries in the Plumas National Forest as eligible for wild-and-scenic protection. Two tributaries of the North Yuba River also were identified as eligible by the study.

Many of the eligible stream segments are in roadless areas conservationists have been working to protect for decades. Eligible stream segments include portions of Chips Creek, Squirrel Creek, Yellow Creek, Fall River, South Branch of the Middle Fork Feather River, Little North Fork Feather River, Onion Valley Creek, Bear Creek, Canyon Creek, Dixon Creek, Jamison Creek, Little Jamison Creek, and Nelson Creek. These drainages encompass portions of the Chips Creek, Bald Rock, Middle Fork, West Yuba, Dixon Creek, and Lakes Basin roadless areas and other roadless lands around Nelson Creek never inventoried by the Forest Service.

Most of the Feather River watershed, which is the origin of the State Water Project and the source of much of the state's drinking water, also was determined eligible. Eventual wild-and-scenic designation of the eligible segments would regulate logging, mining, and grazing on public lands, activities which have been the source of sedimentation that is rapidly filling reservoirs downstream. Sedimentation also is responsible for 30 percent of the watershed's runoff failing to meet state and federal water quality standards. The eligibility findings also advance the concept of watershed protection by including several key tributaries to the Middle Fork Feather River. One of the original rivers designated by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in 1968, the Middle Fork Feather has since been threatened by logging and road building in its sensitive tributary watersheds.

What you can do

The Forest Service intends to finalize its list of eligible rivers in late 1994 or early 1995. Public comments about

the eligibility findings are still being accepted by the agency. Write a letter today to Supervisor Wayne Thornton, Plumas National Forest, P. O. Box 11500, Quincy, CA 95971. Thank the Forest Service for conducting the wild-and-scenic eligibility assessment and urge the agency to initiate a suitability study and make its recommendations to Congress as soon as possible. In your letter:

- Support the eligibility findings for all rivers and streams determined eligible by the agency except the three segments of the North Fork Feather River downstream of Beldon. These segments are virtually dewatered by Pacific Gas & Electric's existing hydroelectric dams and cannot be considered free-flowing. Urge the Forest Service to support increased flow releases from the hydroelectric project as part of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing process.

- Note that portions of upper Indian Creek, Red Clover Creek, lower Spanish Creek, and Rock Creek possess outstanding scenic, recreational, fishery, and ecological resources and should be considered eligible for wild-and-scenic status.

- Urge the Forest Service to conduct joint studies of streams which flow from the Lassen National Forest into the Plumas National Forest, including Yellow Creek, Squirrel Creek, Indian Creek, and Chips Creek.

- State that wild-and-scenic protection of the eligible tributaries of the Middle Fork Feather River—particularly Nelson Creek—is critical to the protection of the Middle Fork's outstanding wild trout fishery and water quality.

- Note that wild-and-scenic designation will regulate activities on public lands that cause sedimentation of downstream reservoirs and result in 30 percent of the water flowing from the forest failing to meet state and federal water quality standards.

- Ask to be placed on the mailing list to be notified of any further action on the wild-and-scenic findings.

Steve Evans is conservation director for Friends of the River and a director of the California Wilderness Coalition.

Draft RS 2477 regs

continued from page 3

state, or private land that was not lawfully open to construction and highway use by the public;

- imply that insubstantial types of evidence might suffice to prove that a route qualifies as an R. S. 2477 right-of-way;
- fail to provide adequate opportunities for public participation;
- suggest that improvements in road surfacing sometimes may be considered within the scope of an R. S. 2477 right-of-way; and
- fail to direct federal managers to exercise full authority to avoid harmful impacts to our national parks and public lands from the future use and maintenance of R. S. 2477 rights-of-way.

What you can do

Write to Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt before September 30 commending the Department of Interior for developing new regulations to control R. S. 2477 rights-of-way but urging that the regulations be strengthened in the following ways:

- Request that the scope of any validated right-of-way be limited to the physical dimensions and conditions that existed when R. S. 2477 was repealed. Object strongly to language in the explanatory preamble which suggests that improvements in the surface of a road (like gravel, chipseal, or pavement) sometimes may be considered within the scope of an R. S. 2477 right-of-way. Emphasize that any upgrading or expansion of a road's physical dimensions and conditions, including any improved surfacing, should require separate authorization under contemporary right-of-way law.

- Urge tightening of the criteria governing which routes qualify as valid rights-of-way. In particular, urge that the definition of "highway" be tightened. Under the draft regulations, any "thoroughfare" used before 1976 by vehicles carrying people or goods from "place to place" may qualify as an R. S. 2477 right-of-way. This vague definition could allow occasionally used routes meandering across remote federal lands to qualify as R. S. 2477 "highway" rights-of-way. At a minimum, the regulations should require that a route connect "identified and significant centers of public activity" to qualify as a highway right-of-way.

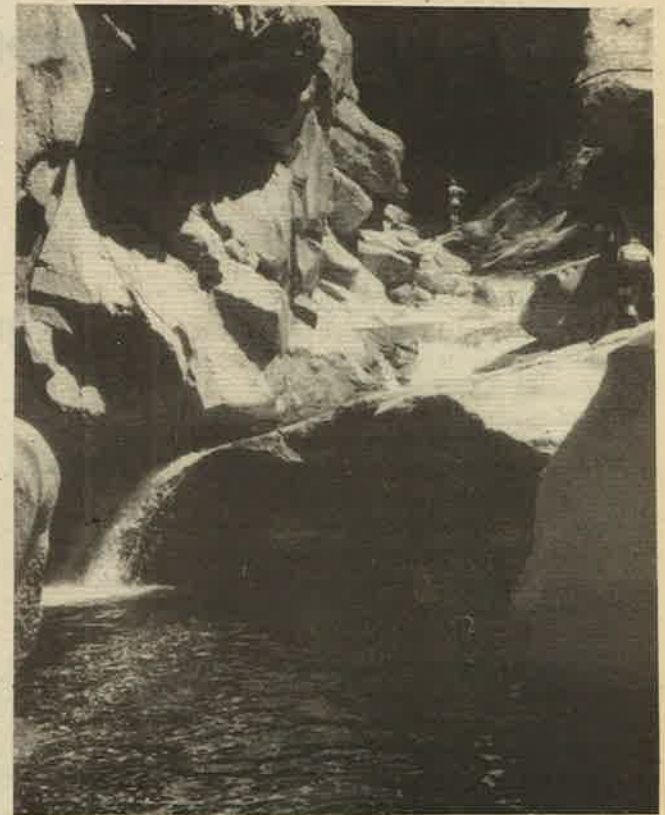
- Urge that the regulations specifically direct federal land managers to exercise their full legal authority to avoid harmful impacts to parks and other federal lands from the future use and maintenance of R. S. 2477 rights-of-way.

- Request that the deadline for filing R. S. 2477 claims be no more than one year after the regulations are final, rather than the two years proposed in the draft regulations.

Send your letter by September 30 to:

Secretary Bruce Babbitt
U. S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW, Room 5555
Washington, DC 20240

Compiled from materials provided by the National Parks and Conservation Association. For more information, contact the association's Rocky Mountain Regional Office at P. O. Box 1563, Salt Lake City, UT 84110; (801) 532-4796.



God's Bath, Clavey River Photo by Steve Evans

FERC denies Clavey hydro project

In a surprising decision, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has tentatively denied the Turlock Irrigation District's proposal to build five hydroelectric dams on the Clavey River and several of its tributaries. The denial was documented in a draft environmental review of the project. Although the FERC decision is a tremendous step toward protection for this endangered river and its surrounding wildlands, the decision did leave the door open for the district's re-analysis of two project alternatives. These alternatives would require water diversions from the Clavey and its tributaries and would affect the adjacent North Fork Tuolumne River watershed. The FERC has given the irrigation district until December 5, 1994 to provide additional information on the alternatives or face cancellation of the license application.

The proposed project and the alternatives considered by the FERC would entail building a powerhouse, re-regulating dam and a powerline in the 18,200-acre Tuolumne Roadless Area of the Stanislaus National Forest. The roadless area and its wild Clavey canyon provide an important migration route for the Yosemite deer herd, sensitive furbearers, and the Clavey's renowned wild trout.

Local opposition to the hydroelectric project is growing almost daily, with the Me-Wuk Tribal Council of Tuolumne County recently joining the Tuolumne County Farm Bureau, Highway 120 Business Association, and scores of local businesses that are clamoring for its demise. In addition, the irrigation district is under fire from its largest industrial customers and employers concerned about the utility's run-away rate increases; pursuit of a costly hydroelectric project will only send their energy bills skyward.

Letters congratulating the FERC for recognizing the environmental destruction and poor economics of the proposed Clavey project are in order. In addition, you should urge the FERC to reject all dam building alternatives and to consider well-documented alternative sources of energy which are available now and at a far cheaper price than any Clavey dam. Your comments should be mailed by November 3, 1994 to: FERC Secretary, 825 N. Capitol Street, NE, Washington, DC 20426. Your letter should clearly show the following caption on the first page: Clavey River Project, California, Project No. 10081.

Book review

Indispensable guide for wildland defenders

Saving Nature's Legacy: Protecting and Restoring Biodiversity

By Reed F. Noss and Allen Y. Cooperrider, Island Press, Washington, DC, 1994, 380 pp., \$27.50 paper.

I normally don't lose books, and when I do, I rarely panic and turn the house, office, and car inside out looking for them. But that is precisely what I did when I lost my dog-eared, coffee-stained, and heavily annotated copy of Reed F. Noss and Allen Y. Cooperrider's *Saving Nature's Legacy*. Why? Because it is the most timely, informative, and practical conservation book I've read in years, an indispensable guide to wildlands defense that I'll need for a half-dozen upcoming appeals of logging, grazing, and road construction proposals. With chapters on the value of biodiversity, basic ecological processes, past, present, and future conservation strategies, and, most importantly, how to select, design, manage, and monitor reserve networks, *Saving Nature's Legacy* is a must for conservation activists.

Noss and Cooperrider provide the most detailed treatment yet of the vision, goals, and science behind what many are calling the new conservation movement. As the authors reveal, the new conservation movement differs from traditional conservation in two important respects. First, the explicit aim of new conservation is to preserve areas rich in biological diversity rather than to protect scenery, recreational opportunities, or other human benefits. Second, instead of saving small, isolated wildlands, the new conservation movement tries to preserve or restore large core wilderness areas protected by buffer zones and connected to other reserves by habitat corridors.

As Noss and Cooperrider point out, a new approach to land and species conservation is urgently needed since many of the areas currently protected as parks and wilderness areas cannot sustain viable populations of wide-ranging or migratory wildlife species. Indeed, even the larger protected wildlands cannot support a species with large territorial requirements if they are surrounded by a sea of clearcuts, roads, livestock, and urban development. When wildlife attempt to leave parks and wilderness areas and migrate to other suitable habitats, they may be struck

by vehicles, harassed, hunted, or poached. Species that cannot migrate may suffer from inbreeding, increased competition for cover and forage, and perhaps extirpation.

Noss and Cooperrider maintain that the best remedy for this ecological dilemma is to buffer wildlands from the effects of human activities and to provide corridors between them. Though this idea has been around for a decade or more (thanks to Noss, Michael Soulé, and other conservation biologists) and has been discussed at length in specialized publications, Noss and Cooperrider offer the most comprehensive and accessible guide available to identifying, designing, protecting, and managing reserves and corridors.

Many of the authors' recommendations for land management reform are certain to be controversial. Noss and Cooperrider maintain that, on average, 25 to 75 percent of a region's land base (including private land) must be set aside as core reserves, buffer zones, and corridors to protect viable populations of all native species of plants and animals. In addition, they believe proper reserve management should go beyond the provisions of the 1964 Wilderness Act by banning not only cattle but horses as well. These and other recommendations in *Saving Nature's Legacy* may not be acceptable to many conservationists and land managers, but they are sure to stimulate a lively and constructive debate.

One of the most interesting and useful sections of the book discusses the proper management of forests, rangelands, and aquatic ecosystems. I was particularly pleased that Noss and Cooperrider discuss the problem of the "sick forests" of the Sierra Nevada and eastside of the Cascades, where decades of logging and fire suppression have disrupted natural fire regimes. In a mere two pages, the authors provide the most scientifically-defensible list of suggestions for restoring the health of these forests that I have ever read. Like so much else of the book, I suspect this section will be quoted time and again in opposition to Forest Service salvage logging proposals.

Noss and Cooperrider acknowledge that the strategy of the new conservation movement is ambitious and that its goals can be achieved only if there is a radical change in the way lands are managed and in how the human race relates to nature. Whether or not you agree with Noss and Cooperrider's approach to preserving biological diversity, *Saving Nature's Legacy* is the most informative, useful, scientifically-credible, and comprehensive book to be published on the subject in many years.

Saving Nature's Legacy is currently hard to find, but your local bookstore can order it for you, or you can get it from Island Press at (800) 828-1302.

—Ryan Henson

Wilderness Trivia Answer:

The original Toiyabe forest reserve that protected the Toiyabe Mountains was greatly expanded in 1946 to include California lands that previously had been part of the Mono National Forest.

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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DATES TO REMEMBER

September 9 COMMENTS DUE on the Interior Department's Rangeland Reform '94 proposal. The deadline has been extended at the request of the State of Wyoming. Send comments to: Rangeland Reform '94, P. O. Box 66300, Washington, DC 20035-6300. (See article in July 1994 WR.)

September 30 COMMENTS DUE on the draft regulations proposed for R. S. 2477 rights-of-way. Send to: Secretary Bruce Babbitt, U. S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street, NW, Room 5555, Washington, DC 20240. (See article on page 3.)

October 2 MEETING of the California Ancient Forest Alliance in Davis. Call Jim Eaton at (916) 758-0380 for details.

October 8-9 FREE WORKSHOP and field trip in Hoopa, California for activists working on the Clinton plan for Pacific Northwest forests (Option 9). Workshops also are scheduled for October 15-16 in Roseburg, Oregon, and October 29-30 in Sandy, Oregon. Pre-registration is required for these hands-on workshops sponsored by the Wilderness Society and Western Ancient Forest Campaign. Some funding for travel expenses is available. For more information, call Deborah Ferber at the Wilderness Society, (206) 624-6430.

October 14 COMMENTS DUE on a Stanislaus National Forest proposal to change the boundary of the recommended Tryon Peak addition to the Carson-Iceberg Wilderness. A field trip to view the area near Highland Lakes that the Forest Service wants to remove from its wilderness recommendation is scheduled for October 7; to sign up, call Forest Service planner Lisa Schwartz at (209) 532-3671 ext. 444 by September 12. Scoping comments on the proposal should be sent to: David M. Freeland, District Ranger, Calaveras Ranger District, Stanislaus NF, P. O. Box 500, Hathaway Pines, CA 95233.

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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—Representative Pete Stark on the California Wilderness Act, ten years ago this month

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