



WILDERNESS RECORD

Proceedings of the California Wilderness Coalition

April 1997

Fort Irwin expansion to claim vast tracts of desert

Tank warfare maneuvers proposed for five Wilderness Studies Areas

By Bob Ellis

The National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, northeast of Barstow, is seeking to acquire 331,000 acres of land for expansion of the Army's largest training facility in the country. The proposed land grab threatens 310,000 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as well as 16,000 acres of State of California lands and 5,000 acres of private lands. The proposed expansion calls for full-scale combat simulations with thousands of troops, all in pristine desert lands, including five designated Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs).

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was released for comment in January and public hearings were held in five locations in February with an additional hearing in March. Overwhelming interest, mostly in opposition to the expansion, prompted the BLM to announce that it has extended the public comment period to June 3, 1997.

At the hearings virtually all testimony was against the expansion, while the majority of those testifying were motorized recreational users. In a strange joining of forces, activists from Desert Survivors found themselves seconding testimony from off road vehicle users against the Army's proposal. This issue seems to bring all types together. The expansion efforts appear to have taken some conservationists by surprise, for the issue has been slow to garner the critical attention that its scope warrants. Activists are hopeful that the comment extension will offer an opportunity to allow more wilderness and environmental groups to get involved.

The Army's plan would affect more than 500 square miles of mostly pure, untrammled desert and moun-



Avawatz Mountains from the Silurian Valley, looking southwest. All the lands pictured here would be taken over by the Army's proposal. Photo by Steve Tabor.

tains. The charge of tanks, trucks and armored personnel carriers will have impacts on the land that will take at least one hundred years to heal.

The Fort Irwin expansion will:

- Destroy all or part of five WSAs (see inset on page 7) including lands proposed for possible addition to Death Valley National Park.
- Harm or destroy habitat for the threatened desert tortoise, historic and Native American sites, native Mojave Desert vegetation, and Joshua Tree woodlands.
- Ban public access for recreation in the area.
- Impair access to Death Valley National Park and undermine the California Desert Protection Act.

• Affect local economies which are dependent on the tourism and recreation from the areas public lands.

• Worsen air quality from excessive dust clouds in an area that already has a problem with air quality.

The BLM has not identified a preferred alternative in the Draft EIS, rather the agency will choose one after considering all comments from the public and other agencies.

Unique to this issue is the common ground found among separate special interests, who may end up working together to fend off this threat to the desert.

Members of Desert Survivors travel to these areas, have backpacked and explored them and want to continue to do so. Other people will respond to the loss of the

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...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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Coalition News

Monthly Report

After taking three weeks off in February, I returned to a Coalition staff on the move. They didn't exempt me from their plans; I found myself in meetings from the first day I was back on the job.

First was a meeting with Kathy Brennan, CWC president Alan Carlton, and Karen Woodbury, the assistant manager of the Patagonia San Francisco store. We are cooking up a fall event in the Bay Area for your entertainment and our profit.

I returned to The City later in the month for a reception featuring The Wilderness Society's new executive director, Bill Meadows. In addition to the Society's staff, Jay, Louis, Barb, and Celia (Nobby was off in the desert), I saw former TWS staffer Patti Hedge and colleagues Johanna Wald and David Edelson from the Natural Resources Defense Council. I reminisced about RARE II and wilderness legislation with Rich Hammond (Patti's husband), who worked for former Resources Secretary Huey Johnson during that exciting time. It was my first visit to the Society's spacious new digs at the Presidio. Quite nice.

Kathy and I journeyed to Santa Cruz to meet with activists interested in The Wildlands Project. We met with folks excited about restoring the wild to the Peninsula and connecting these lands to the wilds of the Ventana Wilderness. It invigorated me to get out and see that there are lots of people still interested in protecting wilderness and working on a bold vision for achieving that.

More Wildlands meetings awaited Kathy in the central coast. She gave a presentation to the joint meeting of the Sierra Club's regional conservation committees in San Luis Obispo and met with Conception Coast Biodiversity Project, the group that formed in Santa Barbara to work on a Wildlands reserve proposal. The meetings were in her old stomping grounds, so Kathy had friends to stay with between her meetings.

Meanwhile, Ryan was off to Philadelphia to meet with the Pew Charitable Trusts folks about the Sierra Nevada Campaign, a major effort to protect the ancient forests of The Range of Light. The Coalition will play a key role in this effort, mostly seeking out activists and training them. Since he was on the east coast, Ryan couldn't resist

spending some useful time in our Nation's capitol testifying on legislation and walking the long marble halls in defense of the wild.

The latest hotbed of activism is Chico, and Ryan has been spending time with a large group of enthusiastic people there. He attended one meeting in March and plans to return for field training next month. There are a bunch of forest activists just itching to learn how to monitor the Lassen National Forest.

Ryan and Kathy found time to drive across the Sierra to meet with Coalition members and cooperators in Bishop. They spent time with board member Sally Miller who also is active with Friends of the Inyo. This was Ryan's second trip to the east side, and Kathy's first. They did manage to get up on the shoulder of the White Mountains for a grand view. Needless to say, they were impressed with this wildest corner of California.

Even *Wilderness Record* editor Herb made it to Washington, D.C. Herb's trip was a family vacation, so he spent his time wandering the National Gallery of Art and the Smithsonian Institute.

We also were graced by a visit from former *Record* editor Stephanie Mandel and her daughter Melody. Steph was our first paid editor who held the job for four years. She was impressed with the expansion of the office since her tenure, although some things remain the same. The light table, for instance, fashioned from an orange crate still is in use.

Our newly appointed county supervisor, Freddie Oakley, dropped by for a chat. Her assistant, Nancy Adams, has been a neighbor for the past decade and a half. Like Ryan, Freddie grew up in Mendocino County and has an appreciation of the coast range and chaparral ecosystems. Although this was just a get acquainted visit, Paul Spitler, the Western Ancient Forest Campaign organizer housed in our office, found time to lobby her about upcoming forest legislation.

March was a very interesting month, full of travel and action for the Coalition's staff. I hope it is a portent of things to come.

By Jim Eaton

Walkin' for predators

Walkin' Jim Stoltz will present his inspiring multimedia wilderness show, "*Forever Wild*," in Davis, California, on April 23rd at the Village Homes Community Center. Jim has walked more than 23,000 miles through the wild country of North America, carrying his guitar and writing songs along the way. Incorporating live music, poetry, and beautiful multi-image slides, Jim leads the audience in a stirring celebration of wilderness.

Joining Jim in Davis will be Tom Skeele, director of the Montana-based Predator Project. Prior to the show, Tom will introduce Predator Project and their unique work protecting predators and their forest and grassland habitats. The show costs \$10 for adults, \$7 for students (with ID), and kids are free. Proceeds will benefit Predator Project. Call Predator Project at 406-587-3389 or CWC at (916) 758-0380 for more information.

Wilderness Trivia Question

What new Wilderness Study Area (WSA) was established by the California Desert Protection Act of 1994?

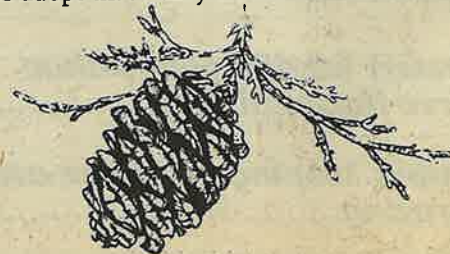
Answer on page 7

Coalition's projects garner financial boost

The California Wilderness Coalition (CWC) is pleased to announce that the Foundation for Ecology and Development has granted us \$10,000 for use in the California Wildlands Project.

CWC's Adopt-a-Wilderness project received a boost when the Sierra Nevada Campaign, with funds received from the Pew Charitable Trusts, matched an earlier \$10,000 grant from the Mennen Environmental Foundation for grassroots organizing and training in the Sierra Nevada. Patagonia, Inc., also sent \$8,000 for this exciting and important project.

The Sierra Nevada Campaign also granted the Coalition \$3,000 to organize and assist activists interested in working for the protection of wild areas in the Lassen National Forest. This seed money will help us organize a group to adopt that needy forest.



Wilderness Management

Forest Service unveils its vision for the Mammoth-June area

By Sally Miller

After years of preparation, the Inyo National Forest has released its "desired condition" document for the Mammoth-June area in California's eastern Sierra Nevada. The 36,000-acre study area, located between the towns of Mammoth Lakes and June Lake, comprises the headwaters of the Owens River and contains ecologically significant wildlands. The document will guide the future management of this hotly contested region.

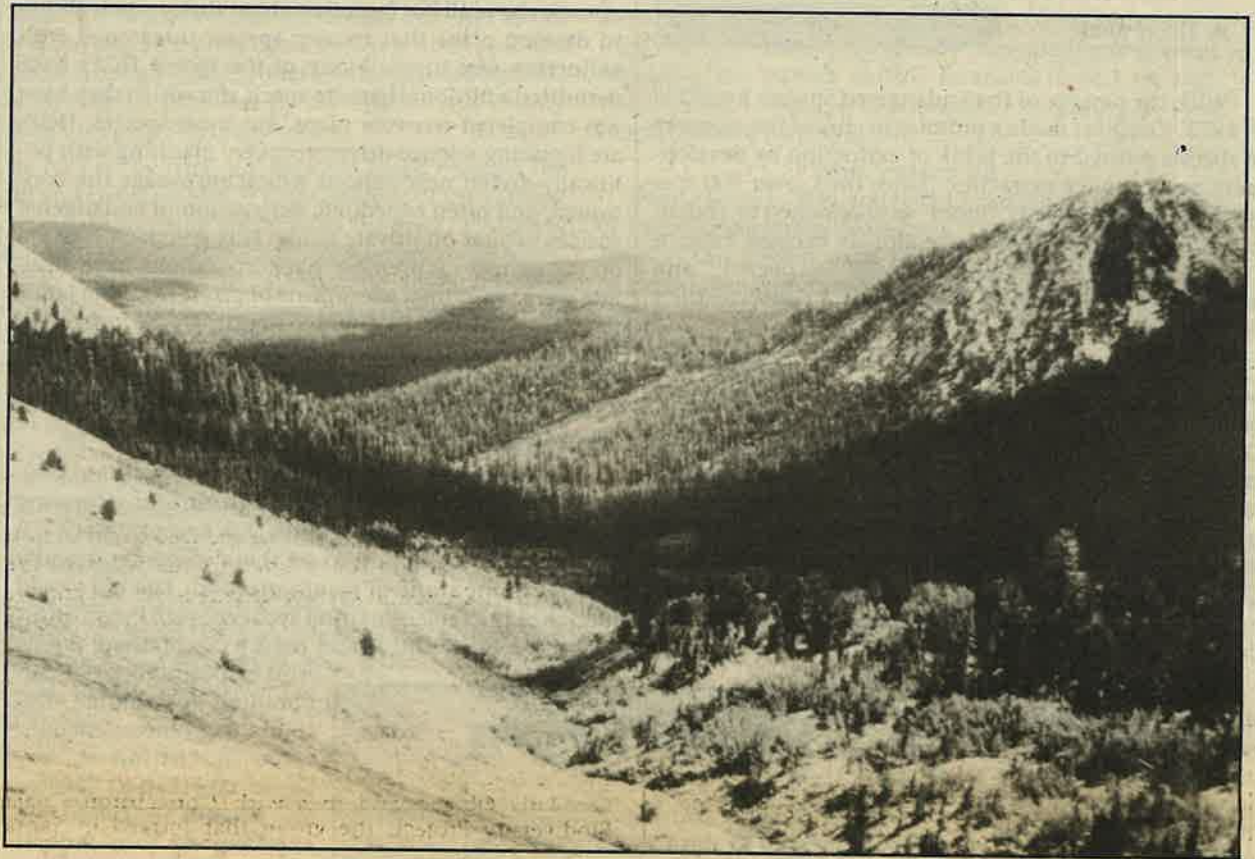
Conservationists have long sought wilderness designation for the San Joaquin Roadless Area, which lies adjacent to the Ansel Adams Wilderness and within the Mammoth-June study area. The roadless area and surrounding wildlands host spectacular old-growth red fir forests, lush subalpine meadows, important riparian areas and unique geological features, and are home to furbearers, goshawks, the rare Yosemite toad, and other wildlife. While some envision wilderness designation as a means to protect the biodiversity of the area, others would like to see development of alpine skiing, roads and trails for mountain biking and off-road vehicle use, and a range of developed recreational activities, all of which could preclude a wilderness designation and threaten the ecological viability of the area.

With the advent of ecosystem management in 1992, the Forest Service dubbed the Mammoth-June area a "pilot project" for the implementation of ecosystem management and proceeded to prepare a document that would purportedly allow sustainable use of the area while protecting its ecological values. Because the process being applied to the Mammoth-June region is one of the first watershed-scale applications of ecosystem management in the Pacific Southwest (California) Region of the Forest Service, the Mammoth-June project was analyzed as a case study in the congressionally-funded Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project (SNEP) report, released last summer. The SNEP report noted that what happens with the Mammoth-June project "could have implications for landscape analysis on national forests throughout the Sierra Nevada."

The desired condition proposes a significant change in direction from the current forest plan, which governs land management activities in the Mammoth-June region. The Forest Service proposes to eliminate the "potential alpine ski area" designation for portions of the roadless area, including San Joaquin Ridge and White Wing Mountain. While the agency may be moving in a direction away from alpine skiing for at least part of

the roadless area, it has left in place the alpine ski area designation for Hartley Springs, a portion of which lies in the roadless area. Hartley Springs is home to furbearers and other forest-dependent species, and is popular with cross-country skiers and those who enjoy primitive camping amongst the large Jeffrey pine and red fir trees.

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The San Joaquin Roadless Area, Deadman Creek drainage. Photo by Sally Miller

In order to modify the boundaries of the alpine ski area designation, the Forest Service will have to amend its forest plan. The agency has indicated that several years could pass before it begins this process. Even then, whether the Forest Service actually changes the land use designation will depend upon public response. And just as the Forest Service may choose to amend the plan to remove a part of the roadless area from the alpine ski designation, it may in five or ten years change the plan once again to favor alpine skiing.

In the meantime, the desired condition document does nothing to protect the wilderness character of the area. The agency favors development of an extensive mountain bike trail network in the roadless area. If implemented, this proposal would fragment furbearer habitat, damage sensitive riparian areas, and very likely lead to violations by off-road vehicles, as the agency admits. The Forest Service has said it will consider wilderness designation as an alternative when it processes the plan amendment, but since its proposed actions in the interim would likely preclude an eventual wilderness designation, the agency's promise rings hollow.

The Forest Service is currently debuting its desired condition to the local public. At a well-attended meeting held March 10, the agency had a team of specialists on hand to answer questions about the desired condition. The agency will hold another public meeting in May at which it will solicit ideas from the public as to what activities it would like to see in the Mammoth-June

region. The Forest Service will then decide which actions to pursue.

To date, the entire process of defining a desired condition for the Mammoth-June area has been conducted independently of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NEPA confers legal rights on members of the public, allowing them to be involved in the decision-making processes of federal agencies. The agency has held many informal meetings soliciting the public's input on what it thinks the desired condition should be. Yet if individuals disagree with the desired condition chosen by the Forest Service, or with the document's underlying assumptions, they have no legal recourse to challenge the document. Friends of the Inyo has protested this aspect of the agency's process since its inception. The SNEP report acknowledged the controversy, saying "Should this issue be pursued, it could cause major revisions of the nascent ecosystem management guidelines and could thus affect the way US Forest Service landscape analysis is conducted throughout the Pacific Southwest region."

Friends of the Inyo (FOI) and other local conservation organizations are closely monitoring the Forest Service's evolving process for applying ecosystem management to the Mammoth-June region. FOI is currently collecting data on the agency's use of desired condition and ecosystem management on Forest Service lands in California. If you have experience with this agency process, either good or bad, please contact FOI with information at: sallym@telis.org or Friends of the Inyo, P.O. Box 64, Lee Vining, CA 93541. If you would like to be placed on the mailing list to receive updates and action alerts telling you how you can help preserve the San Joaquin Roadless Area and the wildlands of Mammoth-June, please contact Friends of the Inyo at P.O. Box 64, Lee Vining, CA 93541.

Sally Miller is a Board member of CWC and an activist with Friends of the Inyo.

Endangered Species

Extinction's threat, recovery's promise: Saving the Endangered Species Act

By Stacey Schull

With the passage of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1973, Congress made a promise to ensure the recovery of species pushed to the brink of extinction by development and resource extraction. Since then, over 900 species have been officially "listed" as threatened or endangered, and seven of these have already become extinct. Only two species have been officially "recovered," and nearly half lack final recovery plans to reverse their decline.

With the ESA due for reauthorization this year, the need to address the backlog of species without recovery plans should be a priority for the newly seated 105th Congress. Instead, legislators are planning to retract the promise of recovery, and place the fate of species, ecosystems, and our children's quality of life, in the hands of special interests whose activities have contributed most to the current crisis. Experiments with this approach in California have revealed an alarming trend of reduced protection for species and ecosystems at exponentially increased cost to the public.

In 1983 Congress amended the ESA under pressure from development interests to allow an exemption from the law's strict prohibition against harm to listed species. Most environmental organizations supported the exemption as a "safety valve" to prevent special interests from waging war on the ESA. The benefits of Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) required to obtain permits to kill species were expected to outweigh the loss of a few individuals (See inset). The HCP exemption has turned from safety

valve to loophole, and currently threatens to take over the already insufficient budgets of agencies established to protect endangered species. Since 1992, California has become a laboratory for "the HCP experiment," conducted by federal and state agencies pressured by industry-funded public relations campaigns and lawsuits. Governor Wilson initiated a pilot program, creatively named, the Natural Communities Conservation Program, to enable developers in southern California to obtain multiple permits to harm the growing list of endangered species, without preparing an HCP for each one. Several large regional plans were established to engage local governments in an experimental planning process promoted as a means of achieving balance between conservation and growth. The Clinton Administration assisted the efforts by adjusting federal policies to meet the demands of developers for immediate permits to harm species. Clinton saw the political advantages of the approach and began expanding the use and scope of HCPs outside of southern California. Federal agencies began actively soliciting major corporations throughout the state as "customers" for permits to kill species by offering "one-stop-shopping," (i.e., streamlined approval processes) and unprecedented assurances against future regulation. The number of permits to kill endangered species in California skyrocketed from less than twenty to over one hundred in four years, comprising over three quarters of the HCPs underway nation-wide. In the rush to issue these permits, federal

agencies have all but forgotten about their responsibility to develop plans that recover species threatened with extinction (see inset). Many of the recent HCPs have permitted additional harm to species for which they have not completed recovery plans. For these species, HCPs are replacing science-driven recovery planning with politically-driven negotiations which encourage the continued, and often expedited, destruction of endangered species habitat on private lands. This approach is based on the dangerous premise that corporations have absolute rights to extract every dime of profit from the lands to which they hold title, with no regard to the impacts of their activities on public trust resources such as water, air, or wildlife. This premise flies in the face of both common sense and common law, precluding the possibility of adequately protecting most species and ecosystems.

Despite these problems, the failing California experiment is being promoted as the blueprint for reforming the federal ESA this year. Senator Dirk Kempthorn (R-ID) has proposed legislation to set these corporate-friendly policies in the stone of reauthorization. The bill would formalize the replacement of recovery plans with HCPs on private land, and would reduce or eliminate public

Recovery Plans

Recovery is the cornerstone of the ESA, intended by Congress to delineate the specific steps necessary to "avert and reverse the trend towards extinction." Teams of qualified, expert scientists are chosen to compile data and determine specific threats and steps necessary for recovery of each species. This information is published in a recovery plan, which includes specific benchmarks for evaluating progress. Recovery Plans provide information which is essential for the evaluation of impacts of take permits. Barely half of the 909 species approved for federal protection have completed recovery plans.

trust responsibilities of corporations for wildlife. Despite the problems encountered in California, key Democrats such as Chaffee and Dianne Feinstein are expected to join federal agencies in supporting the legislation. Parallel changes in the budget process are expected to reinforce the shift away from recovery and science as well. As legislators in Washington consider these reforms, early results of model plans in our state provide important illustrations of the problems they will create. The leading "model" being emulated is in San Diego. After 6 years of planning, the San Diego Multi-species plan is severely flawed, and expected to cost \$650 million, \$411 million of which will come from local taxpayers. Minimal data provided by private consultants for only two species was used to determine boundaries for a habitat preserve expected to protect over 80 local species, none of which will ever have a recovery plan. Taxpayers will foot most of the bill for the small amount of private lands to be preserved, while developers will enjoy half a century of unrestricted development on most of their lands. Furthermore, any future unexpected costs will be borne by the public as a result of Clinton's "no surprises" policy, which specifically insulates corporations from having to pay for later adjustments arising from new scientific information or the failure of plans to adequately protect species.

The problems created by the multi-species HCP approach in California have little chance of interfering with plans to replicate the model. Special interests who benefit from these compromises have hired public relations firms to maintain public support. According to the US Fish & Wildlife Service, large corporations were the primary beneficiaries of over two-thirds of the pending and approved HCPs in the Pacific region. Irvine Company reported profits of over \$850 million in 1995, exclusively from the conversion of San Diego's open space into multi-unit apartments, yet it incurred less

Habitat Conservation Plans

Congress inserted authorization for private landowners to kill or harm endangered species when incidental to their planned activities as a safety valve within the ESA. A Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) is an application for a permit to "take" (=harm, kill, or destroy habitat of) a threatened or endangered species. The current ESA requires the Secretary of Interior approve the permit only if he/she can determine that it will not jeopardize the survival or recovery of the species involved. HCPs typically propose to create, enhance, or acquire habitat in one place, in exchange for the permit to destroy habitat in another place. There are no standards or minimums regarding how much habitat can be destroyed. Over 350 HCPs are in place or under way currently.

than one-fifth of the costs of the multi-species HCP that exempts it from liability for the survival of over 80 species. Charles Hurwitz's Maxxam Corporation stands to reap huge profits from the HCP at the heart of the Headwaters Forest agreement; the public has been asked to pay almost \$400 million for the fragment of habitat that will be set aside, footing the bill for Hurwitz's permit to liquidate the remaining old growth forest on the rest of his land, including four of Headwaters' six ancient groves. Endangered species aren't the only losers in this "win-win" charade; our children will pay the price tomorrow for today's resource addiction, and our communities will be left powerless to fight urban sprawl, preserve open space, and challenge plans which sacrifice the long-term health of our ecosystems to quick profit-taking.

At this critical juncture, grassroots groups must work to build support for a strong and effective ESA, instead of political quick-fixes. Renewing the promise of recovery will restore ecosystems and communities suffering from over a century of resource abuse, recover endangered species using sound science to develop cost-effective plans, and reward local communities that develop innovative plans to recover both species and economies instead of rewarding corporations that seek to eradicate habitat.

The people of California understand that the needs of species and healthy ecosystems are the guideposts for the recovery of our communities and the development of a sustainable economy. Reauthorizing an ESA based on the promise of recovery is the only real solution for cost-effective protection of our natural heritage and healthy ecosystems. Only one proposal to renew the promise of recovery is being offered in Congress this year: The Endangered Natural Heritage Act (ENHA). This bill is being supported by over 200 of the nation's leading conservation organizations who recognize that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Californians should urge their representatives in Congress to learn from the HCP experiment we have endured, and invest in prevention and recovery by supporting ENHA. For more information contact the Endangered Species Defense Campaign at (415) 522-6644 or EPIC at (707) 923-2931 (e-mail: epic@igc.org).

Stacey Schull works for the Endangered Species Defense Campaign, a project of EPIC, the Sierra Club and the Environmental Law Foundation.

Wilderness News

World's largest landfill proposed for desert Site less than one mile from Joshua Tree National Park

By Helen Wagenvoord

Joshua Tree National Park may have a new neighbor as the California desert gets subdivided to accommodate the world's largest landfill. The Eagle Mountain Landfill would be surrounded on three sides by Joshua Tree National Park Wilderness less than a mile away. This 2,000-acre facility would accept 20,000 tons of garbage a day from seven southern California counties for the next 117 years. Garbage would eventually fill a site the size of 1,500 football fields, 1/4 mile deep. The project has the potential to threaten the wilderness resources of Joshua Tree National Park, destroy bighorn sheep and desert tortoise habitat, violate the Endangered Species Act, diminish groundwater supplies, and increase regional air pollution.

The Eagle Mountain proposal has been in play for several years, its progress slowed by legal challenge and the prudent decision of its major financial backer to pull out of the project. However, in early December, National Park Service (NPS) officials in Washington D.C. and the Mining Reclamation Corporation (MRC) signed a questionable agreement which nudges this project forward. MRC was legally required to consider public input and incorporate it into the final draft of an environmental impact statement. Instead MRC and NPS officials entered into an agreement, ostensibly to provide for added resource protection measures should the landfill be built. In reality, MRC used the agreement to imply that the NPS supported the project. In addition, by signing this agree-

ment, NPS thwarted meaningful public participation, thereby violating federal requirements for public review and input. Furthermore, this agreement does not afford much more resource protection. Judging from past history, most if not all of the "concessions" granted by MRC would already be provided by the federal and county planning and permitting processes.

The NPS at the park and regional levels opposes the landfill and criticizes MRC's scant analysis of the garbage dump's environmental impacts to the park. However, Washington D.C.-based NPS officials agreed to the assertion that MRC has done "a complete analysis of the known effects of the project upon the environment." The superintendent of Joshua Tree National Park asserts that the national Park Service officials are countering a 1994 NPS policy which gives more decision-making authority to local and regional officials. Compounding the problem, the agreement calls for the National Park Service to surrender its mandated authority to protect park resources "to assure Kaiser/MRC that NPS does not have a regulatory role with respect to the operation and management of the project."

Fortunately, other federal officials have started paying attention. Senator Barbara Boxer has inquired about the agreement's subversion of both federal and public oversight, and the Department of Interior has started an investigation.

The next hoop through which the project must jump is approval from the Riverside County Board of Supervisors. The Board must approve the project for it to be

permitted. The project is currently under review by the County Planning Commission which will make a recommendation to the Board. After a series of ongoing hearings, the Commission has already expressed reservations regarding the project and its financial impact on the county. The Commission is currently preparing its recommendation for the Board.

What you can do

Please write to Bob Buster, the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, and express your concern about the hazard that this project poses to Joshua Tree National Park. In particular, MRC is giving short shrift to the project's impact on the wilderness resources and the wilderness experience in the region. Furthermore, the dump will adversely impact regional air quality and scarce water resources. Send your letter to:

Chairman Bob Buster
P.O. Box 1527
Riverside, CA 92502

For more information, call the National Parks and Conservation Association at 510-839-9922.

Helen Wagenvoord is a staff member of the National Parks and Conservation Association.



Still grazing in Upper Truckee watershed Public scoping begins for Meiss Allotment

By Jim Eaton

The cow saga continues in the upper Truckee River watershed near Lake Tahoe. Robert Harris, Supervisor of the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) is asking for scoping comments on a proposal to allow cattle grazing with various restrictions in the Meiss Allotment.

Harris decided in 1993 that the Meiss allotment needed to be closed to restore its fisheries and vegetation after decades of grazing (see August 1993 *WR*). The situation was particularly acute at Meiss Meadow, where cattle trampling the streambanks and browsing on willows had so degraded trout habitat that the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimated the area would need 10-15 years to recover even with all the cattle removed.

The land involved, also known as the proposed Echo-Carson Wilderness and the Dardanelles Roadless Area, is heavily used by backcountry recreationists. During the comment period in 1993, about 150 letters were received by the Forest Service. As a result of public comments, a "no grazing" alternative was added to the environmental analysis.

Harris' decision to bar cattle to allow the lands to recover was supported by California's Attorney General and the Department of Fish and Game. In 1995, Deputy Regional Forester James Lawrence overturned the decision to bar cattle from the proposed area.

In the face of strong evidence to the contrary, Lawrence ruled there were "insufficient data" to justify the preservation of threatened, endangered, and sensitive wildlife and plant species. The LTBMU supervisor was ordered to reconsider his decision to remove cows from the allotment. In the meantime, cattle were to be allowed to graze

there, subject to the concurrence of the Fish and Wildlife Service. Grazing was again allowed last year.

The current proposal would allow cattle grazing but limit the season of use, amount of vegetation consumed, and trampling of streambanks and spawning habitat. New fencing and gates will be required.

Unfortunately, the cost of the new fencing and necessary monitoring will be far in excess of the receipts received from the grazing permittee. And with more than half of the stream reaches in the allotment in fair to poor condition, it is unlikely that the land will recover without more fencing and further restrictions on grazing.

After the Desolation Wilderness, Echo-Carson is the most popular backcountry area in the LTBMU, with between 10,000 and 15,000 people visiting the area each year. The Forest Service receives frequent complaints from recreationists about cows eroding streambanks, trampling meadows, destroying trails, and clanging their bells.

In addition to the opportunity to express your opinion during this scoping period, the public will have another chance to comment when the environmental analysis is released later this year.

What you can do

Write to the Forest Service and tell them the best solution for the environment and the economy is to eliminate cattle grazing from the Meiss Allotment.

Robert E. Harris, Forest Supervisor
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
870 Emerald Bay Road Suite 1
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
The comment deadline is April 19.

Judi Bari: 1949-1997 Activist, organizer passes away

Environmental and social justice organizer, Judi Bari, died at her home on March 2 of breast cancer, with family and friends with her. She leaves behind two daughters.

Bari survived a 1990 car bombing that left her injured and living in constant pain. Her lawsuit against the FBI, accusing it of focusing the investigation on her and Daryl Cherney to discredit them and their environmental movement, remains in the courts.

Although known as a leader in Northern California's Earth First! movement, Bari had a history of organizing with both social and environmental justice issues. In college she was a part of the anti-Viet Nam War movement and later organized around labor issues. After relocating to northern California, she was active in the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, the defense of a Ukiah Planned Parenthood Clinic, and continued her labor activism.

An Earth First! action she helped organize, a blockade of logging on public land near Cahto Peak, aided in the preservation of the 16,000-18,000 acre forest that later became part of the Cahto Wilderness Area.

Many activists agree with former Congressional Representative Dan Hamburg's statement: "...you're somebody who will always be thought of, always remembered as a great person in the movement for the world that we all want to see come about. Thank you Judi."

Wilderness Activism

Grassroots initiative seeks to bring accountability to the Forest Service

By Paul Spitler

The ecological harm caused by logging in national forests is tremendous. Each year, more old-growth forests are lost, streams are choked with sediment, critical wildlife habitat is destroyed, and logging-related landslides threaten life and property. Despite these risks, logging continues to be the dominant use of national forest lands.

What's worse is that the destruction of publicly owned forests is carried out at taxpayer expense. Last year, the Forest Service lost over \$200 million on its national forest logging program. Why should taxpayers be forced to subsidize the destruction of their forests?

What you can do

The Grassroots Forest Appropriations Initiative is an effort to restore fiscal and environmental accountability to the United States Forest Service. By forcing the agency to become more accountable, we will help to protect our

imperiled forests. Please write your Representative and Senators and ask that they support the Grassroots Forest Appropriations Initiative. In particular, ask that they:

- Eliminate the Forest Service road building budget.
- Prohibit logging on steep, landslide prone slopes.
- Abolish Forest Service slush funds.
- End money-losing timber sales.

Addresses:

Senator Boxer/Feinstein
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Your Representative
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Paul Spitler is the California Organizer for the Western Ancient Forest Campaign.

The Grassroots Forest Appropriations Initiative

The Timber Logging Rider clearly demonstrated the Forest Service's lack of accountability: healthy, green forests were logged as "salvage sales," water quality was endangered in the name of "forest health," and no record exists that even a dime from any of the salvage sales sold under the Rider made its way to the U.S. Treasury. As a result of the failure of the Forest Service to protect the full range of forest values in the National Forests under their management, both the ecological integrity of our forests and the well being of federal taxpayers were sacrificed.

We urge the 105th Congress to take the following steps to restore the accountability of the Forest Service and protect the interests of both taxpayers and our natural environment:

1. Prohibit new roadbuilding on the National Forests by ending any appropriation for new roads and by prohibiting the use of purchaser road credits to build new roads. The elimination of purchaser road credits in the President's budget is a good first step.
2. Prohibit logging and road-building on unstable and potentially unstable national forest land. Recent landslides in the West have demonstrated the "hidden costs" to public safety and the environment of subsidized logging and road building on steep, unstable slopes.
3. Restore accountability by reforming or abolishing off-budget funds. There is a growing consensus that the various off-budget funds—the Knudsen-Vandenburg (KV), Brush Disposal and Salvage Funds—must be either reformed or abolished. The Green Scissors Coalition urges abolishing the Salvage Fund and the Clinton Administration proposes new limits on this fund in the 1998 budget. The Administration has also proposed the creation of a new fund for ecosystem restoration called the Forest Ecosystem Restoration and Maintenance Fund (FERM). While we support the intent of the new FERM fund, as currently envisioned it would only perpetuate the same perverse incentive to log that plague the other funds. Instead, we support the Administration's request for \$30 million of appropriated funds for restoration activities and urge Congress to appropriate necessary funds for restoration rather than creating another off-budget fund.
4. End money-losing timber sales. The annual report of the White House Council of Economic Advisors shows that the Forest Service spent \$234 million more than it collected in timber receipts in 1995. "Generally, the Forest Service subsidizes timber extraction from public lands by collecting less timber sale revenues than it spends on timber program costs," the report says. According to the Government Accounting Office (GAO) the timber sale program lost nearly \$1 billion from 1992-1994. For the sake of both the environment and the taxpayer, it is time to end subsidized logging on the National Forests.



The Wildlands Project (TWP) reserve design is grounded in the premise that connectivity is critical for plants and animals. In this context the core reserves function as havens in a sense, especially as good quality habitat becomes increasingly scarce. Corridors serve as links between the cores, thereby permitting flow between the core areas.

For activists, scientists, and others working on TWP reserve design, or on related projects, connectivity is also critical. It behooves all of us to stay linked and work together as much as possible.

March was a good month for taking steps towards more connectivity among people and groups working on biodiversity issues and reserve design in California.

In the beginning of the month we met with Joe Rigney, a Santa Cruz local who has put together a map of the current status of protected areas and potential core reserves in the Santa Cruz Mountain region.

Joe has been working to identify goals and needs for the area. He has already done some preliminary outreach in the area, and has plans for more in the near future. Some of the proposed goals include building a coalition between groups interested in preserving open space, especially as potential buffer zones, bringing bioregional issues to a broad local audience through education and outreach, and the development of a long term reserve design that can be used as an active, locally developed proposal to address a range of bioregional planning issues.

Representatives from the Ventana Wildlands Group were present at that meeting, and agreed that the best strategy for long term success would involve working together and coordinating on interests and issues that overlap.

The following week, while on the central coast, we went to Santa Barbara and met with The Conception Coast Biodiversity Project's (CCBP) Executive Director, John Gallo, the Director of Administration and Outreach, Bob Arenz, and Greg Helms of the Environmental Defense Center. The CCBP is a community-oriented group comprised of volunteers from academic, government, and environmental organizations. Their goals involve working within their community to focus on education, science, and outreach to find solutions to potentially contentious issues of growth and conservation in the Santa Barbara area. They are dedicated to integrating the needs and concerns of the regional community, in order to achieve their goals.

During April, we are looking forward to meeting with interested activists in the Southern Sierra (Kern River area), and with LEGACY on the North Coast to discuss collaboration of efforts.

Back here in Davis we are pleased that we will have two interns starting to work on our GIS (geographic information systems) database by next month.

Editor's note: The Wilderness Record will print an update of CWC's work on The Wildlands Project every month. Kathy Brennan, the Wildlands Project Coordinator, is the contact person for the California Wildlands Project. Anyone interested in becoming involved can reach her at (916) 758-0380.

Wilderness Forum

Music Review

If A Tree Falls; EarthBeat! Records

Those of you who read the *Wilderness Record* regularly may be surprised to see this here: our first attempt at a CD review. *If A Tree Falls* is a new recording produced by Darryl Cherney and Lieb Ostrow of EarthBeat! records.

If A Tree Falls is a compilation that includes recordings by a diverse and varied group of musicians, united by their concern for our ancient forests. The disc is designed as a sort of "Forest Opera," with each song a chapter in a story that is eons old. It begins with songs that tell tales of the beauty of the forest, it shifts to lamentation of the destructive logging happening today, then ends with songs of hope and possibility for our collective future, humans and trees and other forest dwellers.

The music ranges from spoken word/poetry to ballads to rousing "punk-a-billy." All the tracks on this CD are interesting, and well worth the investment, especially considering proceeds go to the Trees Foundation, which supports twenty conservation groups in their forest defense work.

Highlights of the CD include Joanne Rand's "Never Alone," Hank Williams Jr.'s "Kiss Mother Nature Goodbye," Jello Biafra & Mojo Nixon's "Where Are We Gonna Work When the Trees are Gone?," and Ferron's "Heart of Destruction."

If A Tree Falls is an entertaining listen, and you should buy this CD, if only to have Hank Williams Jr. and Mojo Nixon on the same disc.

-Kathy Brennan

Fort Irwin expansion

continued from page 1

natural view as they approach Death Valley National Park. Some will respond to the great loss of natural habitat or wildlife in general or some species in particular. Some will respond to the need for a reduction of military impacts and be against military expansion. Others will respond to threats to wilderness areas. All will share a common vision about what they do not want to see in the Mohave Desert— tanks, heavy armor and up to 12,000 troops treading on pristine desert ecosystems.

What you can do:

- Write a letter to the BLM asking them to oppose the Army's land grab and protect California's fragile desert ecosystem. The comment deadline has been extended to June 3, 1997.

Address your letter to:
Fort Irwin Expansion Proposal DEIS
Bureau of Land Management
Barstow Resource Area
150 Coolwater Lane
Barstow, CA 92311
(619) 255-8700

For those interested in receiving the complete Draft EIS (the Executive Summary has little specific information on the proposal's impacts) you can request a copy by writing to the above address.

Bob Ellis is an activist with *Desert Survivors*. For more information about the Fort Irwin expansion contact *Desert Survivors* at (510) 769-1706, Johanna Wald with the *Natural Resources Defense Council* at (415) 777-0220, or Brian Huse with the *National Parks and Conservation Association* at (510) 839-9922

Facts about the Fort Irwin land grab

- Five legislatively-designated Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) are located within the area proposed for expansion, including the Avawatz Mountains WSA (61,320 acres), the South Avawatz Mountains WSA (23,250 acres), the Soda Mountains WSA (43,428 acres to be taken), the Death Valley National Park Boundary WSA (51,300 acres), and the Kingston Range WSA (39,750 acres).

- The congressionally-designated Kingston Range Wilderness, Hollow Hills Wilderness, Saddle Peak Hills and Owlshead Mountains (wilderness units within Death Valley National Park) are adjacent to the Army's proposed tank warfare area and were not evaluated for impacts in the Army's EIS.

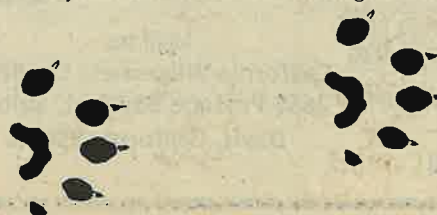
- The complete text of the Army's proposed mitigation for taking control of the 256 square miles of the five WSAs and opening them to tank warfare training follows: "Access routes into the Wilderness Study Areas from the National Training Center at Fort Irwin will be gated and posted with signs stating 'You are entering a WSA'."

- Rhode Island, at 1,054 square miles, is approximately the current size of Fort Irwin. The Army wants to acquire 523 more square miles, about half of its present size.

High Sierra wilderness planning in the works

The federal agencies that administer wilderness in the High Sierra are currently preparing plans that will affect backcountry lovers' use of wilderness for many years to come. The National Park Service is preparing a draft wilderness plan for Sequoia and Kings Canyon national parks, due out this summer. Over on the east side of the Sierra, the Inyo National Forest also plans to release its draft wilderness plan for the John Muir, Ansel Adams, Dinkey Lakes and Monarch wildernesses this summer. These plans will address such issues as campfires in wilderness, trails, livestock grazing, and protection of declining populations of Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep and the mountain yellow-legged frog. A coalition of conservation organizations in the eastern Sierra and

beyond, including the California Wilderness Coalition, is working to ensure that the public who uses and enjoys John Muir's Range of Light is informed and will comment on these plans. If you would like to get on the mailing list for action alerts concerning issues affecting the Inyo National Forest, please send your name and address to Friends of the Inyo, P.O. Box 64, Lee Vining, CA 93541.



Calendar

April 11-13: International Forum on Globalization. Will highlight the social, ecological, cultural and political aspects of economic globalization. At U.C. Berkeley campus. Contact Victor Menotti at (415) 771-3394 for more information.

April 19: Comment deadline on the public scoping period for the Meiss grazing allotment. See story on page 5.

April 22: Earth Day!

April 24-27 Desert Conference sponsored by the Oregon Natural Desert Association. A wide range of topics, including grazing, media skills, science and strategy. Call Gilly Lyons at (541) 330-2638 for more information.

April 25-27: Kern Valley Bioregions Festival. A celebration of the biodiversity of the Kern Valley, the festival offers a host of birding and natural history field trips. The trips are kept small to better appreciate the rich variety of species found in the valley (185 species of birds were recorded at last year's festival alone). For more information, contact the Kernville Chamber of Commerce at (619) 376-2629.

May 3-4: Grazing Conference in Salt Lake City. Learn about the latest efforts to reform grazing policy and new tools for activists. Topics include policy, impacts and strategy. Call Kelly Milliman at the National Wildlife Federation, (303) 786-8001, ext. 10 for more information.

May 15-16: Endangered Species in California: Evolving Regulations and Emerging Trends. This conference provides a forum for anyone involved in both federal and state ESAs to share information and participate in panel discussions. Legal credit is offered. Contact Linda Pike at (916) 757-8878 for more information.

June 3: Comment deadline on the Fort Irwin draft EIS. See story on page 1.

**HAPPY EARTH DAY!
APRIL 22**

Wilderness Trivia Answer

The Death Valley National Park Boundary WSA was created with portions of the Owlshead and Avawatz WSAs and other lands.

Coalition Member Groups

Ancient Forest Defense Fund; Branscomb Angeles Chapter, Sierra Club; Los Angeles Back Country Horsemen of CA; Springville Bay Chapter, Sierra Club; Oakland Bay Chapter Wilderness Subcommittee; S. F. California Alpine Club; San Francisco California Mule Deer Association; Lincoln California Native Plant Society; Sacramento Citizens for Better Forestry; Hayfork Citizens for Mojave National Park; Barstow Citizens for a Vehicle Free Nipomo Dunes; Nipomo
Committee to Save the Kings River; Fresno Conservation Call; Santa Rosa
Davis Audubon Society; Davis
Desert Protective Council; Palm Springs
Desert Subcommittee, Sierra Club; San Diego
Desert Survivors; Oakland
Eastern Sierra Audubon Society; Bishop Ecology Center; Berkeley
Ecology Center of Southern California; L. A. El Dorado Audubon Society; Long Beach Friends Aware of Wildlife Needs (FAWN); Georgetown
Friends of Chinquapin, Oakland
Friends of Plumas Wilderness; Quincy
Friends of the Garcia (FROG); Point Arena
Friends of the Inyo; Lone Pine
Friends of the River; Sacramento
Fund for Animals; San Francisco

Golden Gate Audubon Society; Berkeley Hands Off Wild Lands! (HOWL); Davis High Sierra Hikers Association; Truckee International Center for Earth Concerns; Ojai Kaweah Flyfishers; Visalia
Keep the Sespe Wild Committee; Ojai Kern Audubon Society; Bakersfield Kern River Valley Audubon Society; Bakersfield Kern-Kaweah Chapter, Sierra Club; Bakersfield Klamath Forest Alliance; Etna
League to Save Lake Tahoe; South Lake Tahoe Loma Prieta Chapter, Sierra Club; Palo Alto

Los Angeles Audubon Society, West Hollywood Los Padres Chapter, Sierra Club
Marble Mountain Audubon Society; Etna Marin Conservation League; San Rafael Mendocino Environmental Center; Ukiah Mendocino Forest Watch; Willits Mono Lake Committee; Lee Vining Mt. Shasta Area Audubon Society; Mt. Shasta Mountain Lion Foundation; Sacramento Native Habitat; Woodside
Natural Resources Defense Council; S.F. NCRCC Sierra Club; Santa Rosa Nordic Voice; Livermore
North Coast Center for Biodiversity & Sustainability; Leggett
Northcoast Environmental Center; Arcata

People for Nipomo Dunes Nat'l. Seashore; Nipomo
Peppermint Alert; Porterville
Placer County Cons. Task Force; Newcastle Planning & Conservation League; Sac. Range of Light Group, Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club; Mammoth Lakes
Redwood Chapter, Sierra Club; Santa Rosa The Red Mountain Association; Leggett Resource Renewal Institute; San Francisco San Diego Chapter, Sierra Club; San Diego San Fernando Valley Audubon Society; Van Nuys
Save Our Ancient Forest Ecology (SAFE); Modesto
Sequoia Forest Alliance; Kernville
Seven Generations Land Trust; Berkeley
Seventh Generation Fund; Arcata
Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund; S. F. Sierra Nevada Alliance; South Lake Tahoe Sierra Treks; Ashland, OR
Smith River Alliance; Trinidad
Soda Mtn. Wilderness Council; Ashland, OR
South Fork Mountain Defense; Weaverville
South Yuba River Citizens League; Nevada City
Tulare County Audubon Society; Visalia
Tule River Conservancy; Porterville
U.C. Davis Environmental Law Society
Ventana Wildlands Group; Santa Cruz
Western States Endurance Run; S. F. The Wilderness Land Trust; Carbondale, CO
The Wilderness Society; San Francisco
Wintu Audubon Society; Redding
Yolano Group, Sierra Club; Davis
Yolo Environmental Resource Center; Davis

"...it's not reform... it is 'modernizing.' Reform is another word that, because of voter cynicism and its overuse with other issues, sends mixed signals."

— from a memo written by Citizen's for a Sound Economy (an industry group), entitled "How to discuss Environmental Issues & Change." The memo made its way into Sierra Club hands.

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Join the Coalition

Yes! I wish to become a member of the California Wilderness Coalition. Enclosed is \$ _____ for first-year membership dues.
 Here is a special contribution of \$ _____ to help the Coalition's work.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Annual Dues: †

Individual	\$ 20.00
Low-income Individual	\$ 10.00
Sustaining Individual	\$ 35.00
Benefactor	\$ 100.00
Patron	\$ 500.00
Non-profit Organization	\$ 30.00
Business Sponsor	\$ 50.00

† tax deductible

Mail to:
California Wilderness Coalition
2655 Portage Bay East, Suite 5
Davis, California 95616

T-Shirt Orders

- landscape design in light blue, pale green, jade, or fuchsia: \$15
- animal design in beige (no med.) or gray: \$12
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Design Size(s, m, l, xl) Color Amount

Subtotal _____

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