



# WILDERNESS RECORD

Proceedings of the California Wilderness Coalition

January 1999

## Turning a new leaf at the Modoc National Forest

### New Forest Supervisor signals grazing, logging reforms

By Ryan Henson

As described in the September 1998 *Wilderness Record*, the Modoc National Forest, due to geographic isolation and institutional resistance, is out of step with emerging conservation. However, there are some tentative signs of improvement on the horizon.

Scott Conroy, most recently on the staff of Senator Harry Reid (D-NV), has become the Modoc's new forest supervisor. Conservationists from CWC, Sierra Club, Klamath Forest Alliance, and the Sierra Nevada Forest Protection Campaign met with Mr. Conroy and two of his staff in November and were pleasantly surprised by his openness, honesty, and commitment to sound conservation policies.

Mr. Conroy's last Forest Service post was on the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest in the Great Basin east of the Sierra Nevada. At that time the agency was so aggressive in reforming destructive grazing practices that anti-conservation forces attempted to kill then-Forest Supervisor Jim Nelson with a bomb. Luckily, he escaped unscathed. Mr. Conroy helped lead the grazing reform effort in the Bridgeport Ranger District of the Humboldt-Toiyabe.

In our meeting with Mr. Conroy, he made it clear that grazing reform is one of his highest priorities. But he went further and said that the Modoc would "not go chasing old-growth" in its timber sale program. This was a great relief since most of the conservation community's battles with the forest have involved the logging of old-growth.

Our meeting with Mr. Conroy also involved a tour of the Diaz timber sale, an old-growth logging project that had been roughly sixty percent logged by the time we visited it (for more information on the Diaz timber sale, see the September 1998 *Wilderness Record*). The Diaz timber sale revealed everything that is wrong with the Modoc National Forest's current logging policies.

The area slated for logging in the Diaz timber sale was characterized by scattered, large pines (mostly ponderosa pines) with very little undergrowth below the crowns of these dominant trees. Known to scientists as the "eastside pine" community, the University of California has identified this kind of forest as the most endangered type of old-growth trees in the entire Sierra Nevada. Indeed,

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Winter in the Freel Peak Roadless Area, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit. This pristine area includes Freel Peak, the highest point in the Lake Tahoe basin. Healthy forests, an uncommon community of alpine cushion plants, and the Tahoe Rim hiking trail make this area an excellent candidate for wilderness protection. Photo by Phil Farrell.

## 1998 Annual Report

Read highlights of CWC's programs:

- Wildlands 2000
- Adopt-a-Wilderness
- Wildlands Defense
- California Wildlands Project
- Financial statement
- Membership highlights

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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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Submissions on California wilderness and related subjects are welcome. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month. We reserve the right to edit all work.

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## Coalition News

### Director's Report

#### Reflecting on 1998

Enclosed, I'm happy to present CWC's annual report for 1998. Within it you will find descriptions of our 1998 programs, stories of our successes, and our plans for 1999.

We have exciting plans for the coming year. Our core programs will remain the same—we'll still be advocating for more wilderness, defending threatened areas, identifying critical wildlife habitat, and involving the public in our efforts. But we'll also add some new wrinkles.

One of the major changes you'll see is a new format for the *Wilderness Record*. This will be your last monthly *Record*. Starting in spring, we'll be producing the *Record* quarterly and it will come to you in a journal format, rather than as a tabloid.

Like the *Wilderness Record* you've grown to love over the past twenty-three years, the new *Record* will be chock-full of stories highlighting the values of, threats to, and opportunities to protect our cherished lands. We'll also

continue to provide updates on each of CWC's programs and give you the latest news about California's wildlands.

We'll also be providing you with more frequent action alerts in 1999, thus giving you more opportunities to comment and make a difference on issues you care about. We'll be producing more fact sheets on our programs and California wildlands issues too. Finally, we'll provide a well-maintained and regularly updated world wide web site (www.calwild.org, for those of you who still haven't seen it) to give you up to the minute news about California's wildlands.

1998 was an exciting year for both CWC and California's public lands, and with your continued support, 1999 will be even better. I want to thank our dedicated members for your support over the past year. We couldn't have done it without you, and we look forward to another year of working together to protect California's last great places. Onward!

**By Paul Spitler**

### Farewell to Celia Barotz

After a year-long stint with CWC, Celia Barotz, our Wildlands 2000 coordinator, is heading for greener pastures. Celia was the first coordinator of the Wildlands 2000 campaign and has led the effort since its infancy. She managed a massive volunteer recruitment and training effort, assisted in producing draft maps for hundreds of potential wilderness areas, and helped publicize the campaign throughout the state. If any of you have read about, volunteered with, or in any way supported the Wildlands 2000 campaign, it was due to Celia's hard work and dedication.

"It's been a great year, both for me and the Wildlands 2000 campaign," Celia said. "I'm looking forward to staying involved with the campaign and seeing the permanent protection of California's many special places." So long, Celia, and thanks for all your hard work on behalf of California's wildlands. We'll miss you!

### CWC in the news

After the release of the California's Vanishing Forests report in October, CWC penned an editorial calling on the Clinton Administration to respond to the "will of the people" by protecting California's last remaining roadless areas. Like the report itself, the editorial made headlines across the state.

Since November, CWC's editorial has run in six newspapers stretching from Yreka, just south of the Oregon border, to San Diego. The papers include the *Fresno Bee*, *San Jose Mercury News*, *San Diego Tribune*, *Los Angeles Daily News*, *Santa Barbara News Press*, and *Siskiyou Daily News*. The drumbeat for wilderness protection in California just got a little louder...

### Membership survey results

In the summer of last year, CWC sent out surveys to each of our members. We wanted to know how we're doing—what you like, what you don't like, what issues are most important to you, what you'd most like to see us working on. Hundreds of you sent in completed surveys, and we greatly appreciate your thoughtful comments.

We've used the results of the surveys to shape our programs for 1999, which are highlighted in the enclosed annual report. For the most part, your responses overwhelmingly endorsed a continuation of our existing programs. Five issues were rated the highest priority for

CWC: advocating for more wilderness, protecting threatened roadless areas, and defending threatened areas from logging, mining, and grazing. These issues also happen to be the highest priority for us as well!

Most respondents thought the Coalition should focus its attention on all areas of high ecological importance, whether or not they qualify for wilderness designation. The vast majority also felt that CWC was rarely too aggressive, and a quarter of you thought that we should occasionally be more aggressive.

Many of you appreciate the fact that we often work in coordination with other environmental groups, and want to see us continue in that capacity. Many of you also like

**Five issues were rated the highest priority for CWC: advocating for more wilderness, protecting threatened roadless areas, and defending threatened areas from logging, mining, and grazing. These issues also happen to be the highest priority for us as well!**

our expertise on wildlands issues. As one respondent noted, CWC is an organization that "knows what it's talking about."

Thanks again to all of you who filled out surveys.



## Wilderness Forum

### Letters

#### Quincy Library Group bill: bad for forests—and democracy

In late October, the product of an irregular collaborative process became law the only way it could—by an equally irregular legislative process. The controversial Quincy Library Group bill is now law.

*Déjà vu!* Like the infamous Salvage Rider of 1995, the QLG bill was grafted onto the half-trillion dollar 1999 Omnibus Appropriations package without the open and balanced debate so fundamental to a representative democracy.

A much feared precedent has been established. Passage of the QLG legislation paves the way for powerful corporations that dominate rural communities to do as they please with public lands.

Earlier in the decade, with spotted owl protection looming on the horizon, a compliant county supervisor flanked by the timber industry propositioned local timber activists in Quincy, California. A group began meeting in a room at the library typically reserved for such public forums. However, this public forum was to become dominated by the ruling business sector in Quincy, the timber industry. This is hardly a collaborative scenario.

Initially popular, the Quincy Library Group developed a proposal that evolved from discussions about public land management to national legislation mandating the logging of 2.5 million acres in three national

forests. But strong opposition surfaced as environmentalists, concerned politicians and scientists awoke to the dangers posed by the QLG bill. The legislation was finally stopped dead in its tracks when Senator Barbara Boxer withdrew as co-sponsor of the Senate version of the bill last January.

Ironically, it was clear that Senator Boxer had no choice but to vote for a rider she opposed in order to ensure passage of the larger package of legislation she could not possibly ignore. Senator Boxer joined other lawmakers in denouncing the last minute appropriations process, calling it "severely flawed." She further stated, "I strongly object to the environmental riders in the bill, including legislation that will double the timber cut in several national forests in California."

Through it all, Senator Boxer's environmental record has remained unblemished. In November she was re-elected for six more years to the U.S. Senate. Perhaps her victory establishes its own precedent. Unlike the situation with the Salvage Rider, the majority party in Congress did not bite the dust immediately following the budget vote as they did in the most recent round of elections.

Del Williams

Formerly of Quincy, California

#### Changes ahead for the Modoc National Forest

Continued from page 1

many scientists and others have joined conservationists in arguing that old-growth eastside pine groves are simply too rare and precious to log. This did not stop the Modoc National Forest.

As our tour revealed, loggers were aggressively targeting every large, handsome tree and leaving behind small, stunted trees. In many places, the loggers were clearcutting, a practice that is now extremely rare in the Sierra Nevada. The practice of taking the best trees and leaving the rest is called "high-grading" (or "chopper's choice"). This method of logging has been blamed for increasing disease rates among trees, worsening fire danger, wiping out rare plants and animals, and generally making our forests less attractive by replacing majestic forests with crowded, crop-like thickets of stunted trees.

At the end of our tour Mr. Conroy appeared to be as appalled as we were (he had nothing to do with the sale since it was approved by his predecessor). Later, he made it clear that future logging projects on the Modoc Na-

tional Forest will focus on the thinning of younger trees and not on old-growth removal or clearcutting. Interestingly, the Modoc's latest proposed logging project now involves a sixteen-inch diameter limit on the size of the trees to be cut. This is a positive sign that Mr. Conroy is practicing what he preaches.

In addition to Mr. Conroy's reforms, there is another sign of hope on the horizon. Though less dramatic than the old-growth logging battle, the Big Valley Ranger District in the southwestern portion of the forest has decided to build its first hiking trail. This is important since it is a small step away from the notion that the Modoc only exists for the benefit of the timber and livestock industries and "at most" deer hunters. The

proposed trail will run for approximately eighteen miles from the Lower Rush Creek Campground to the Ash Creek Campground near some of the Modoc's best remaining old-growth (and near its only confirmed California spotted owl nest). Ironically, the trail will run through many areas the conservation community saved from

**Loggers were aggressively targeting every large, handsome tree and leaving behind small, stunted trees. In many places, the loggers were clearcutting, a practice that is now extremely rare in the Sierra Nevada.**

## Calendar

**January 30: Southern Sierra Nevada Activists Conference.** The Sierra Nevada Forest Protection Campaign is hosting this all-day gathering which will address a variety of topics. For more information contact Bob Brister at (559) 641-7427 or [sierra\\_outreach@friendsoftheriver.org](mailto:sierra_outreach@friendsoftheriver.org).

**February 5-7: Western Ancient Forest Activists Conference**, Ashland, Oregon. Headwater's 8th annual gathering brings forest activists from all over the West for education, politics and inspiration. For more information contact Headwaters at (541) 482-4459 or e-mail [headwtrs@mind.net](mailto:headwtrs@mind.net).

**February 7: Castle Rock State Park activists' hike.** Join Bruce Bettencourt of Friends of Castle Rock State Park to learn about the natural history of the lush redwood forests and oak woodlands of the Santa Cruz mountains. Bruce will discuss the proposed general plan for the park and show "on the ground" what is at stake. Meet at 10 a.m. at the main parking lot in Castle Rock State Park. For more information about the park see the September 1998 *Wilderness Record* or call Bruce at (408) 354-5661.

**February 25: Field-checking training** for Wildlands 2000. Co-hosted by CWC and the Redwood Chapter of the Sierra Club, the meeting will be held in Santa Rosa from 7-9 p.m. For more information contact Ryan Henson at (530) 335-3183 or [ryan@calwild.org](mailto:ryan@calwild.org).

**February 28: Field-checking training** for Wildlands 2000. We will carpool from Santa Rosa to a local proposed wilderness area. Meet at 10 a.m. at the Environmental Center in Santa Rosa. For more information contact Ryan Henson at (530) 335-3183 or [ryan@calwild.org](mailto:ryan@calwild.org).

logging under the infamous salvage rider of 1995-1996. If the trail becomes popular, perhaps it will encourage the Modoc to build additional trails and become more concerned about wildlife and aesthetics and low-impact recreation.

Only time will tell. As always, CWC encourages everyone to visit California's "forgotten forest" and let the Forest Service know that you want its wildlife, ancient forest, and other irreplaceable treasures preserved and restored.

*Ryan Henson is a Conservation Associate for CWC.*

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**"If Congress approves this request, then these places will never know the roar of bulldozers and chainsaws. They will never drown out the call of the wild. Families will still be free to enjoy the lands, but they will be expected to take only photographs and leave only footprints."**

*—President Bill Clinton, in announcing a proposal to increase spending for the conservation of public lands, including National Park Service lands, farmland and urban parks.*

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## California Wilderness Coalition: The Year in Review

# 1998: The Year In Review

## Wildlands 2000: Heeding the call for more wilderness

Just over a year ago CWC concluded that it was time to do much more than defend our wildlands from the ever-present threats of logging, mining, grazing and off-road vehicle use. Heeding the call for more wilderness, we launched Wildlands 2000, a campaign to protect many of California's remaining wildlands as legally designated wilderness.

Despite the startling results of our report, *California's Vanishing Forests: Two Decades of Destruction*, which confirmed our suspicion that our last wild places are disappearing fast, there are still vulnerable roadless areas, both large and small, deserving wilderness designation. Unlike wilderness campaigns of years past, Wildlands 2000 will not only secure protection for alpine peaks and glacial lakes, but will also include oak woodlands, chaparral, grasslands, wetlands, ancient forests and sagebrush. These valuable ecosystems are poorly represented in the National Wilderness Preservation System, and sadly, declining quickly.

*continued on next column*



Mount Eddy as seen from Deadfall Lakes. Mount Eddy Roadless Area, Shasta-Trinity National Forest. This area, despite threats from logging and development, is a high priority for Wildlands 2000. Photo by Pete Yamagata.

## 1999 brings new challenges—and opportunities

Whether your love is the pristine ancient forests of the Sierra Nevada or the sand-swept slopes of the California desert, 1998 was an exciting year for California's wildlands.

On the positive side, the year brought a new statewide wilderness campaign, California's first Democratic governor in sixteen years, and a national proposal to halt road construction in over 30 million acres of roadless land—including three million acres in California.

Unfortunately, the year also brought new proposals to carve up several of California's potential wilderness areas, passage of the infamous Quincy Logging Bill, and a continued attack on the environment by the Republican majority in Congress.

With so many changes, where do we go from here? The new year brings many opportunities to protect the lands we care so deeply about. CWC's program in 1999 will be a combination of wildlands defense, citizen organizing, and wilderness advocacy. In short, we'll hold the line on threatened areas, while building the proposals and constituency necessary to achieve permanent wildlands protection.

The Forest Service proposal to develop a long-term policy for managing roadless areas provides an excellent opportunity to protect millions of acres of California wildland. CWC will take a leadership role in building support for a strong roadless area policy by gaining endorsements for such a policy from newspapers, local elected officials, and civic organizations. In building support for roadless area protection, we'll simultaneously be building support for more California wilderness as well.

Through our wildlands defense efforts, we'll continue to defend each roadless area that is threatened by logging, road construction, off-road vehicle use, or development. These efforts are not only essential to preserve the ecological integrity of California's land-

Some of these magical places that the Wildlands 2000 campaign is seeking to protect include the 200,000-acre White Mountains in the eastern Sierra, the mountainous and remote King Range in the heart of the "Lost Coast", and the North Fork of the American River, home to breathtaking ancient forests.

Going into 1998 with a campaign plan and an enthusiastic and dedicated steering committee in place, our efforts made great strides. Most notably, we inspected aerial photos and drew preliminary boundaries on topographic maps for approximately eighty-five percent of the national forest and sixty percent of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposed wilderness areas.

Because Wildlands 2000 is committed to drafting a defensible wilderness proposal, we began the time-consuming yet critical process of field-checking the preliminary boundaries. The purpose of field-checking is to ensure that significant human incursions such as clearcutting, roadbuilding, mining, and off-road vehicle

scape, but also provide opportunities to engage the public, media and policy-makers about the need to preserve California's last wild places. Thus, in defending threatened areas we'll highlight our pro-active land conservation agenda.

This agenda includes the passage of statewide wilderness legislation that will protect millions of acres of California wild areas. In 1999, we'll continue our statewide potential wilderness inventory. We'll send staff and volunteers to look at each of California's several hundred potential wildernesses. We'll be documenting boundaries, taking photographs, writing descriptions, and developing our proposal.

But in 1999, we'll do more than develop a wilderness proposal. We'll also build a statewide constituency for wilderness as well. We'll be grooming potential congressional champions, educating the media, public and policy-makers about the values of wilderness, and involving citizens in our efforts through continued workshops, field tours, slide shows, and action alerts.

The recent election of a pro-environment governor provides an opportunity to increase conservation efforts at the state level. In the coming year, CWC will work with the Davis administration to begin a comprehensive effort to identify critical plant and animal habitat throughout the state. Through this effort, we will move California towards endorsing a wildlands vision for the Golden State. In 1999, we'll build support for this effort within state government, the environmental community and among the general public. By building support for the drafting of a statewide conservation blueprint, we'll also create an opportunity to talk about the need for, and values of, the California Wildlands Project.

In all of our programs, we'll continue to engage the public and bring you, our members, into our efforts. Whether teaching workshops on how to write wilderness proposals, letting you know about critical issues that need a letter, or leading field tours of potential wilderness areas, we'll be there. We'll keep you informed through the *Wilderness Record*, regular action alerts, and campaign updates. We look forward to sharing this journey with you, and to working together to protect the many treasures of the Golden State.

use have not occurred within the proposed areas that would disqualify them for wilderness consideration.

CWC held workshops throughout California to introduce new and seasoned public lands activists to Wildlands 2000. There, they learned how to map and field-check preliminary wilderness boundaries. Once activists understood the field-checking process, many of them headed off to their favorite potential wilderness areas with Wildlands 2000 maps and our field-checking guide in hand to investigate the current condition of the land.

Word is spreading about Wildlands 2000. We're encouraged by the public's interest in the campaign and are certain that many Americans recognize that we owe it to future generations to protect what's still wild from the whine of chainsaws and the boom of development.

Indeed, 1998 was an exciting and successful year. We're convinced it's a harbinger of things to come as we head into the second year of the Wildlands 2000 campaign.

## California Wilderness Coalition: The Year in Review

# Holding the line on threatened areas, while building support for their future



Black Sands Beach in the King Range National Conservation Area (NCA). The Bureau of Land Management recently closed this area of the "Lost Coast" to off-road vehicles. The decision sparked protests and a well-organized campaign from the off-road enthusiasts, who are currently appealing the decision. Removing vehicles from the King Range NCA, part of the longest stretch of undeveloped coastline in the lower 48 states, brings the area one step closer to wilderness protection. Photo courtesy of the BLM.

### Wildlands defense

In 1998, CWC engaged in hundreds of small, everyday efforts to protect California's wild public lands. Here are just a few of the highlights.

#### BLM grazing reform

Early in the year CWC helped change the way livestock are grazed on California's vast Bureau of Land Management (BLM) holdings. For decades, cattle have been "king" on public lands, and reform efforts have either bogged down in federal court, or been reversed by Congress. For much of 1997 and 1998 the Coalition worked with the BLM, reform-minded ranchers, fellow conservationists, and others to craft grazing reform standards which focused on sensitive plants and riparian areas. Instead of being thwarted by the courts or politicians, these grazing reform guidelines are currently being implemented. Only time will tell if these reforms are sufficient to reverse the damage from unchecked cattle grazing.

#### Defending the Modoc National Forest

In 1998, the Coalition agreed to defend the Modoc National Forest on behalf of the Sierra Nevada Forest Protection Campaign, which is working to protect all the forests of the Sierra and Modoc Plateau regions. As has been described in *the Wilderness Record*, the Modoc National Forest is terribly threatened on several fronts. This past year CWC worked hard to monitor Forest Service management of this remote forest and prevent the rampant clearcutting, road construction, and other activities we have seen in the past. Recent victories include the appointment of an enlightened forest supervisor with a good track record of reform, a promise from the new supervisor that old-growth logging projects are a thing of the past, and the fact that all planned old-growth logging projects have been altered to focus on the careful thinning of small trees. In addition, CWC has helped raise the profile of the fight against geothermal drilling in the Medicine Lake Highlands region from an obscure issue in an unsung forest, to one of the better-known public lands conservation struggles in California. The Coalition will keep watching and defending California's forgotten forest in the years to come.

#### Roadless area defense

In January, the Forest Service prohibited road construction in all agency-surveyed roadless areas in the Sierra Nevada. In addition, the Forest Service is currently developing a national prohibition against road construc-

tion in roadless areas (unfortunately, this policy may exclude northwestern California). CWC worked to support and strengthen this proposal by circulating a Congressional sign-on letter (gaining the support of 22 members of California's congressional delegation), securing favorable editorials in several California newspapers and organizing a strong citizen response. In 1998, logging or other forms of development threatened eight roadless areas. So far, three of these projects have been stopped, while the rest are still being contested.

#### Black Sands Beach

In 1997, the BLM proposed to close Black Sands Beach in the King Range National Conservation Area (also known as the "Lost Coast") to off-road vehicles (ORVs). CWC became the first conservation group to rally support for the BLM's proposal and help counter the severe backlash from ORV organizations. Despite the fierce rhetoric and hard work of ORV enthusiasts, CWC (joined by the Sierra Club and the Environmental Protection and Information Center) generated substantial public and Congressional support for the BLM's proposal. As a result, the BLM officially implemented its closure decision, although it is currently held up by an appeal from ORV users. Meanwhile, the Pacific Ocean cast its vote for the closure by washing away the Black Sands Beach parking area—thus preventing all but the most determined ORV enthusiasts from riding on the beach. The net result of this closure will be a larger King Range Wilderness when Congress passes the next wilderness protection bill for California.

#### Hi-Ridge Lumber Company

CWC, the Klamath Forest Alliance and the Sierra Nevada Forest Protection Campaign worked tirelessly in 1998 to assist the small Hi-Ridge Lumber Company of Yreka, California in its effort to cancel several logging contracts it held with the Forest Service. These contracts required the company to log old-growth in the Shasta-Trinity, Lassen, Modoc, and Klamath national forests. The company argued that if it complied with the contracts it would face bankruptcy because high operating costs would greatly exceed the profits achieved from the current low price of lumber. CWC and other conservationists decided to help because can-

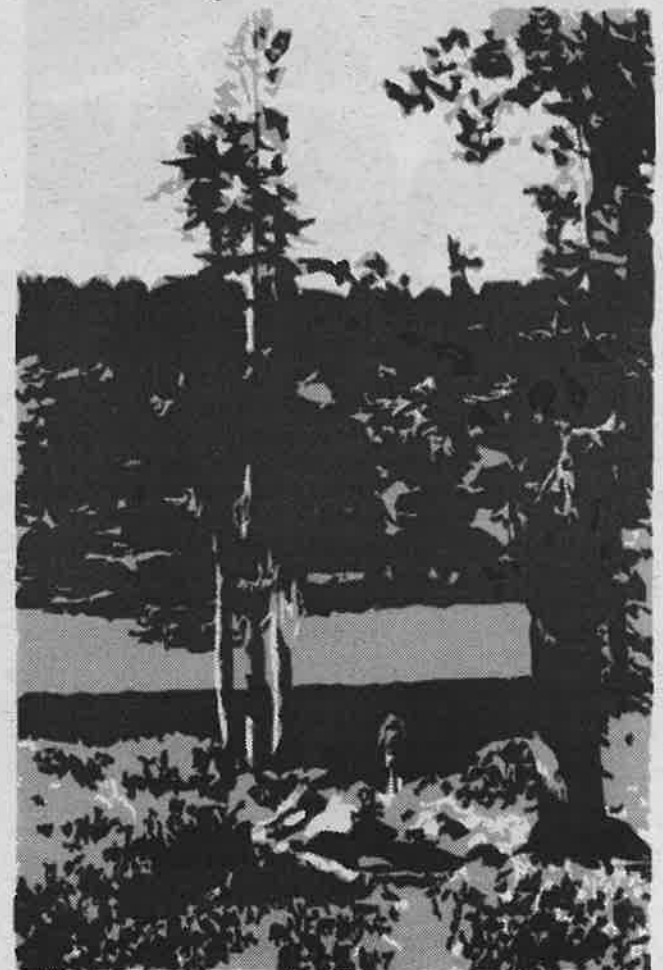
celing the contracts would spare hundreds of acres of ancient forest and a roadless area. After a great deal of lobbying, Clinton administration officials ordered the Forest Service to cancel the contracts.

#### Mount Shasta Ski Area rejected

In March, the supervisor of the Shasta-Trinity National Forest announced her intention to recommend the termination of the proposed Mount Shasta Ski Area. Later in the year, Regional Forester Lynn Sprague terminated the project. If built, the ski area would have decimated the scenic beauty of one of California's most beautiful mountains. CWC, along with other conservation organizations, had been fighting the development since it was initially proposed in 1984. Its demise is a testament to the hard work of the Coalition and others.

#### Ski shuttle proposal dropped

Also in 1998, CWC worked with Friends of the Inyo, High Sierra Hikers Association, Nordic Voice, and the Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club to defeat a proposal to open several potential wilderness areas to a commercial ski shuttle service. The operation would bring skiers into the backcountry on snowmobiles or cat-skis, thus jeopardizing the wilderness potential of the areas. After hearing the avalanche of protest from conservationists, the proponents of the shuttle service quietly withdrew their proposal. Wilderness wins again!



# California Wilderness Coalition: The Year in Review

## California's Vanishing Forests: Release of landmark report fills information void

In October of 1997, CWC began working on an ambitious project to determine the status of each potential wilderness area identified by the U.S. Forest Service in 1979. Our reasons for taking on this massive effort were simple: citizen activists, policy makers, and land managers need an accurate picture of the current extent of roadless land remaining in California's national forests, and that information was sorely lacking.

The last comprehensive survey of potential wilderness areas was completed in 1979, nearly twenty years ago. Since that time, hundreds of thousands of acres have been lost to logging, mining, road construction and other forms of development. Despite the increased awareness of the importance of roadless lands, and continued calls for their preservation, no one, not even the U.S. Forest Service, knows the extent of these lands in California. Until now.

On October 14, 1998, CWC released *California's Vanishing Forests: Two Decades of Destruction*, which documented that California has lost over 675,000 acres of national forest roadless land since 1979—the equivalent of almost 100 acres per day being lost to various forms of development.

These losses were not spread evenly throughout the state. Northwest California lost close to a quarter million acres of roadless land in the past twenty years—almost as much as in the entire Sierra Nevada. The northwest region also contains a disproportionately high percentage of the state's remaining unprotected roadless land—

which is important considering the entire region was excluded from a current ban on new road construction within these areas.

The report focused tremendous attention on California's publicly owned wildlands. Numerous newspapers, television, and radio stations covered the release of the report and highlighted the loss of wild areas across California. CNN aired the story nationally. Rush Limbaugh responded on his syndicated radio show by calling CWC a group of "environmental wackos." Forest Service officials shook their heads and wrung their hands, unsure of how to respond to the honest, yet blistering assault on their land management policies.

CWC fanned the flames of publicity coming from the report's release by taking out a full-page ad in the *New York Times*, calling on the Clinton Administration to walk its talk and enact a common sense policy that fully protects roadless areas. Similar CWC editorials also appeared in newspapers in San Diego, Los Angeles, Fresno, San Jose, and Santa Barbara.

*California's Vanishing Forests* is a powerful tool that provides critical new information in our efforts to protect California's wild forests. Conservationists, policy makers, land managers and the general public have now been made aware that California has lost an area nearly the size of Yosemite National Park in the past two decades. We now know that if we keep destroying our wild forests at the same rate, by the year 2098 ninety percent will be gone. Armed with this information, we are well-equipped to argue persuasively for the preservation of our rare and



## California Wildlands Project: creating a network of activists with a bold mission

CWC raised its involvement and leadership in The Wildlands Project to new heights in 1998. In its first year with a full-time coordinator, the California Wildlands Project forged new relationships, provided organizing assistance to regional mapping groups, and began building a powerful database of maps and geographic information systems (GIS) layers.

Orchestrating the effort toward a statewide conservation vision, CWC has the challenging task of bringing together various groups and types of people: activists, biologists, agencies, planners, and others. As Michael Soule has said, "Networks of reserves need networks of people to plan and implement them." CWC is creating this network in California.

The year began by hosting a statewide workshop for cooperating groups in Davis. Around 35 people from more than fifteen organizations met in February to discuss mapping core areas, corridors, and buffers throughout California. Dave Foreman, Allen Cooperrider, Bill Devall, and Jim Eaton shared their years of experience as we charted the way toward establishing a reserve network for California's wildlands and biodiversity.

After the gathering, CWC set its energy toward helping regional groups and creating a map and GIS database of critical habitat and wildlife corridor information. The Coalition initiated a mini-grants mapping support program for projects that will contribute maps and analysis for the California Wildlands Project. This fund will assist groups in developing vision maps for the various regions.

In addition to assisting the Conception Coast Project and LEGACY continue their reserve design process, CWC actively shaped the conservation blueprint submitted to the U.S. Forest Service by the Sierra Nevada Forest Protection Campaign. The blueprint outlines a conservation plan for the federal forest lands of the Range of Light, proposing millions of acres of new reserves for old-growth forests, aquatic biodiversity, and wilderness.

CWC also organized a steering committee for the Ventana Wildlands Project to guide vision mapping in the central coast. We are working with members of the Department of Environmental Studies and the GIS Laboratory at the University of California at Santa Cruz to analyze GIS databases and map key habitats for focal species like mountain lion, steelhead, and tule elk, as well as rare and threatened species and underrepresented ecosystems. This team produced a preliminary paper on mountain lion conservation needs and mapped core areas and linkages. Our findings were presented in a poster session at The Wildlands Project's international conference in October.

Toward the end of 1998, CWC laid the groundwork for a workshop in the south coast region by organizing a steering committee of local conservation biologists. This workshop will use a regional perspective to assess and build upon on-going conservation planning efforts in California's fastest-growing area.

The puzzle pieces which comprise the state's biodiversity needs are starting to snap together!

## Some reactions from California's newspapers

**Los Angeles Times**  
California Is Losing 100 Acres of Wilderness a Day, Study Says

**VENTURA COUNTY STAR**  
Study: State wilderness reduced  
Los Padres National Forest leads in lost wild acreage

**SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY SUN**  
Study: Human activities are threatening state's forests

**SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER**  
Report: Wild land paved too fast

**The Sacramento Bee**  
Coalition attacks depletion of wild lands

**State's wild lands shrink, study says**

**California wilderness vanishing rapidly, study says**

**Unraveling the wilderness**

**Green Groups' Big Push To Protect Wilderness**

**San Francisco**  
Study cites wilderness loss

**Coalition attacks depletion of wild lands**

# California Wilderness Coalition: The Year in Review

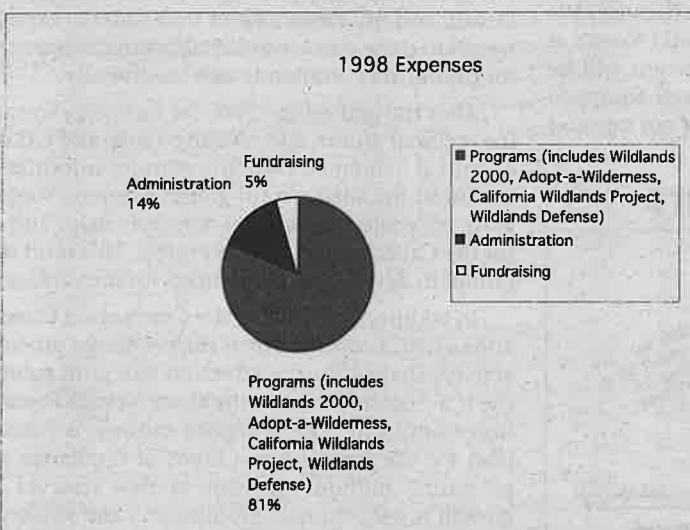
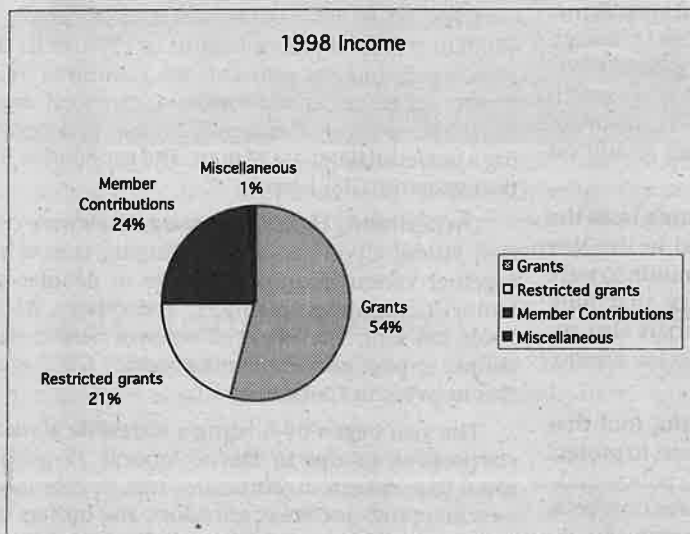
## Membership, budget grow in 1998

### Financial Statement

Financially, 1998 was one of the most successful years in CWC's history. We raised over \$360,000 in grants, personal gifts, and in-kind donations—far more than ever before. We also spent more than ever before: our expenses on behalf of California's wildlands totaled \$240,000.

Our growing membership provided a significant portion of this year's revenue, including \$15,000 from our annual fundraiser at Patagonia's store in San Francisco. Many major gifts from CWC members also provided a much-needed financial boost.

Much of this year's funding is earmarked for work in 1999, and the carryover will provide a great start to the year. With continued financial support, we will be able to continue playing a leadership role in the effort to protect California's last wild places. Thanks to all who donated.



### 1998 Income and Expenses

Income	
Grants	\$196,000
Restricted grants	\$75,000
Member contributions	\$86,000
Miscellaneous	\$5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$362,000</b>

Expenses	
Programs*	\$197,000
Administration	\$33,000
Fundraising	\$12,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$242,000</b>

\* Includes Wildlands 2000, Adopt-a-Wilderness, California Wildlands Project and Wildlands Defense.

### Adopt-a-Wilderness: finding and teaching new friends of wild places

The Adopt-a-Wilderness (AW) program is designed to recruit, train, and maintain a new generation of activists, with a particular emphasis on recruiting activists who live near the wild areas they would like to preserve and protect.

In 1998, CWC has recruited and trained dozens of people to help with the Wildlands 2000 campaign. Significantly, most of these volunteers are new to the AW program.

1998 featured many success stories for the AW program. For example, a large group in northern Humboldt County formed late in the year to survey potential wilderness in the Six Rivers National Forest and Bureau of Land Management holdings in the region. This group is composed of members of the Sierra Club, Student Sierra Club, CWC, Northcoast Environmental Center, and other groups. Many of the people involved do not have any group affiliation—exactly the type of "new blood" Wildlands 2000 and AW needs to complement the existing group of activists.

In the Santa Cruz and Big Sur regions, the Ventana Wilderness Alliance (VWA) formed to survey potential wilderness areas in the Los Padres National Forest. The VWA was one of the largest and most enthusiastic groups CWC had the pleasure to train and work with in 1998. Both the Humboldt group and VWA are currently training new wilderness recruits and field checking proposed wilderness areas.

Another success story can be found in the eastern Sierra Nevada. CWC organized several workshops, including a weekend field workshop, in the region with a goal of recruiting and energizing wilderness warriors in a land of much wilderness. Our wildest expectations were exceeded when volunteers turned out in droves for the workshops, and happily "adopted" potential wilderness areas. To date, these enthusiastic volunteers have adopted and field checked dozens of potential wilderness areas.

All in all, we hosted workshops and recruited volunteers in over a dozen regions throughout California in 1998. Through this process we were able to recruit numerous volunteers, both young and old, and teach them the fine arts of wilderness advocacy and wildlands defense.

In 1999 our AW program will be focusing most of its energy and resources on field-checking: the process used to ensure that proposed wilderness areas have appropriate boundaries. We will need a well-trained army of wilderness warriors to walk, ride, or drive the boundaries of hundreds of potential wilderness areas across the state. With Adopt-a-Wilderness, the recruitment of this army is well underway.

### Membership grows with the Coalition

For the California Wilderness Coalition, 1998 was a year of membership growth. We ended the year with 1,001 active members, up from 860 at the end of 1997. Of these members, 204 were new members, reflecting the success of our outreach efforts and publicity resulting from the publication of our report: *California's Vanishing Forests: Two Decades of Destruction*. We thank all our wonderful members for their participation and support, and encourage you to let us know how best we can serve you. We plan to keep growing in 1999, building support for a new California wilderness proposal. We couldn't do it without you!

The following foundations deserve a round of thanks for the support of the California Wilderness Coalition's work in 1998:

◆ Acorn Support Center    ◆ Columbia    ◆ Educational Foundation of America    ◆ Environmental Money-Arenz    ◆ ESRI    ◆ Foundation for Deep Ecology    ◆ Mennen Environmental    ◆ Recreational Equipment, Inc.    ◆ Patagonia, Inc.    ◆ Peradam    ◆ Pew Charitable Trusts    ◆ Richard and Goldman Fund    ◆ The Rockwood Fund    ◆ Tides    ◆ Town Creek