

WILDERNESS *Record*

NEWS JOURNAL OF THE
CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION
WINTER 2003

**BIG SUR WILDERNESS BILL
PASSES HOUSE AND SENATE**

**SALVAGE LOGGING THREATENS
RINCON PROPOSED WILDERNESS**

**SHOULD THE BLM MANAGE THE
LOST COAST AS WILDERNESS?
ACTION!**

**DUNCAN CANYON OLD-GROWTH
FOREST ENDANGERED: ACTION!**

**UTILITY CORRIDOR EXPANSION VS.
DESERT TORTOISE & WILDERNESS:
ACTION!**



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A Voice for Wild California

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DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Challenge and commitment

Taking over the reins at the California Wilderness Coalition (CWC) from our former Executive Director, Paul Spitzer, has been a daunting challenge. Paul made CWC the vibrant, effective organization that it is today. In five years, Paul took CWC from a handful of employees to a staff of 13. He also spearheaded a new, pro-active wilderness campaign that helped lead to the introduction of Senator Barbara Boxer's California Wild Heritage Act. Those are very large shoes to fill.

I'm excited by the opportunity, though. The dedication of CWC's board members and staff to California's wild lands is inspiring. It's that commitment and enthusiasm that is going to lead CWC through the next challenging years.

Never before has our environment in California been in more political peril. The 2002 elections have resulted in a U.S. Senate that is led by ardent anti-environmentalists. For example, Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM) will now chair the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Senator Domenici has endorsed waiving environmental reviews for logging in our national forests and blocking the designation of critical habitat for some endangered species. Senator James Inhofe (R-OK) will take over the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. Mr. Inhofe has described the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a "Gestapo bureaucracy."

This sort of thinking is laughably out of step with that of the average Californian. Yet, these gentlemen will have incredible influence over the stewardship of our lands and the quality of our environment in California. Senators Domenici and Inhofe will be able to dictate all federal environmental legislation for the next two years. They will consider rewriting our most important environmental laws—like the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, and Clean Water Act.

That may sound very remote, but that legislation will affect our whole environment in California. It can decide:

- how many ancient trees are clearcut in the Tahoe National Forest;
- how much habitat is saved for the California spotted owl;
- whether mining companies can dig in the Mojave desert;
- how much pollution can be dumped into the San Joaquin River; and
- whether oil companies drill in the Los Padres National Forest.

To make matters worse, a newly emboldened Bush Administration has also emerged since the 2002 elections, forging ahead with its industrial agenda for our environment. It recently announced that it is:

- rewriting the regulations guarding our national forests to encourage more logging;
- permitting an energy company to build a new facility at Medicine Lake, a 10,000-year old, revered spiritual site for Native Americans; and
- refusing to let California set stronger air pollution standards than the federal government.

And those decisions were handed down in just one week in November!

At the same time that the California Wilderness Coalition will be fighting all of these attacks on our environment, we still plan to push ahead with our work to pass the California Wild Heritage Act. Senator Dianne Feinstein has indicated her interest in supporting new, federally protected wilderness in California. And CWC and the environmental community recently won the passage of the Big Sur Wilderness and Conservation Act. Despite the current political climate, CWC still has hope that we can protect California's last wild places.

I look forward to working with you in that effort!



Mary L. Wells



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Photo: Jim Rose



Photo: Mike McWhorter

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Our Mission

The California Wilderness Coalition's mission is to protect and restore California's wild places. CWC works toward a healthy future for Californians and our wild mountains and rivers, coasts and deserts, a future where wilderness, wild lands, and biodiversity are core values. For people who believe that wilderness holds a special place in the human spirit and has intrinsic value, the California Wilderness Coalition is the only statewide organization that brings together individuals and organizations in the vigorous defense of California's remaining wildlands.

front cover photo: Arroyo Seco Corridor new addition to the Ventana Wilderness, by Jim Rose.

New wilderness for California's central coast!

by **Gordon Johnson**

U.S. Congressman Sam Farr's "Big Sur Wilderness and Conservation Act of 2002" passed both the House and Senate in November and was still awaiting the President's signature at press time.

Championed by Representative Farr, the Big Sur bill had its beginnings in the summer of 1998 when the Ventana Wilderness Alliance began an inventory of roadless areas in the Monterey Ranger District of the Los Padres National Forest and adjacent Bureau of Land Management lands. These public lands were surveyed and mapped and their wilderness values documented. The results of this effort helped to lay the groundwork for the Congressman's important wilderness expansion legislation.

Passage of the Act would not have been possible without the extraordinary efforts of both Representative Farr and Senator Barbara Boxer. On the evening of the final House session, Mr. Farr spent many hours on the House floor gaining the support necessary to discharge his bill from the House Resources Committee. His efforts were rewarded, and in the waning hours of the session, his legislation was passed by voice vote. In a late night session in the Senate, Senator Boxer's firm insistence that the legislation be included with other bills to be voted on as a package led to its Senate passage.

If enacted, the "Big Sur Wilderness

and Conservation Act of 2002," will expand the Ventana Wilderness for the fifth time since its original designation, adding nearly 35,000 acres. Originally set aside as a 55,884-acre Primitive Area in 1929, it was subsequently expanded and given wilderness status in 1969.

The 14,500-acre Silver Peak Wilderness, created in 1992 by the "Los Padres Condor Range and River

additions also include significant stands of rare Santa Lucia fir. The Native American archaeological sites found within many of the additions will benefit from the protection afforded by wilderness designation.

The 8,820-acre Willow Creek addition to the Silver Peak Wilderness was never inventoried as roadless by the Forest Service and features the largest

Douglas fir forest found in central California. With its old-growth redwood forest, expanses of meadow, and stunning mountain top views of the Pacific Ocean, it makes a spectacular wilderness addition.

Other additions display a variety of features including segments of the Little Sur River, the sandstone monolith of Wagon Caves Rock, and the enormous

ancient oaks found along the San Antonio River. Also included in the legislation is the Bureau of Land Management's Black Rock Wilderness Study Area. This parcel adjoins the northernmost region of the Ventana Wilderness and features two perennial streams with lush riparian corridors.

The Act also authorizes the expenditure of \$1,000,000 per year for five years for a pilot program to combat invasive plant and animal species.

Gordon Johnson is a founder of the Ventana Wilderness Alliance and an expert on California's central coast wilderness.



Jim Rose

Maple trees in the newly legislated Willow Creek addition to the Silver Peak Wilderness

Protection Act," is to be more than doubled in size to 31,555 acres by the Big Sur Act. Also, 2,715 acres of the Chalone Creek watershed were added to the Pinnacles National Monument Wilderness, located in San Benito County.

From the rugged slopes of Monterey County's highest mountain, 5,862' Junipero Serra Peak, to the lush redwood forests of the Big Sur coast, a great diversity of wildlife and vegetation is sheltered by these wilderness additions. Threatened steelhead trout are present and the re-introduced California condor is often observed soaring high above the wilderness. Along with redwoods, chaparral, pines, ancient oaks and grassy meadows, several



CWC celebrates wilderness with smashing success

It was a night of great beauty and merriment as over 100 wilderness enthusiasts gathered at Earthjustice in Oakland for the 2002 California Wilderness Coalition Autumn Celebration. With balconies overlooking the city under a clear night sky, lively discussion, and a stunning gallery of artwork by renowned California printmaker Tom Killion, guests found the event to be both entertaining and inspiring.

Guest-of-honor Tom Killion displayed the original letterpress copy of his recent book, written with Gary Snyder, *The High Sierra of California*, as well as other unique prints from his collection. A master of the woodcut, Mr. Killion's meticulous artwork combines elements of



Bob Schneider

New CWC board member Catania Galvan waves hello

traditional Japanese and European printmaking techniques to produce spectacular images of California's wild places. Many guests delighted in swapping tales of their adventures in the High Sierra with Mr. Killion as they admired his incredible work.

Striking a more serious note as he began the evening's formal program, CWC President Don Morrill called upon all attendees to observe a moment of silence in honor of long time CWC supporters and California artists Galen and Barbara Rowell.

Although the night seemed to belong to the wilderness of the Sierra Nevada, CWC Executive Director Mary Wells also advocated for the importance of urban greenspace and local parks in the protection of California's wild heritage. Arguing that conservationists need to meet people where they are, she urged the audience to "move beyond wilderness with a capital W," by reaching out to urban residents and promoting opportunities for people to enjoy the outdoors locally.

Throughout the night, guests



Bob Schneider

Catherine Fox and Guy Saperstein enjoying the night's festivities

enjoyed delicious, organic hors d'oeuvres and fine wines donated by local California wineries. Despite the jovial atmosphere, competition was fierce for outdoor equipment and other items for sale in the silent auction. CWC would like to thank all those individuals, businesses, and organizations whose donations helped make this year's autumn celebration a truly special night. Over \$15,000 was raised from this event. We'd also like to extend a special thank you to Earthjustice for the use of their wonderful space. As for all of our guests—we hope to see you again next year!

Our sincere gratitude to the following organizations and individuals for their generous donations to our 2002 Autumn Celebration

Wallace Stegner Donors

Sue Barton and Don Morrill
Roscoe Moss
Anne Schneider
Bob Schneider and Liz Merry
Sorensen's Resort

Wilderness Defenders

Mary Tappel and John Graham

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Dana Harmon Charron and Dave Charron
Chris Desser and Kirk Marckwald
Kathryn Burkett Dickson and John Geesman
Ellison, Schneider & Harris
Foundation for Deep Ecology
Ed Grumbine
Fern Grumbine
Vicky Hoover
Julie McDonald and Tom Parry

Robert McLaughlin and Theresa Rumjahn

Trent W. Orr
Mark and Joan Reinhardt Reiss
Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger
Richard Simpson
Mary Wells and Drew Caputo

Wilderness Benefactors

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Dick Schneider
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Davis Food Co-op
Frey Vineyards
H. Coturri & Sons Vineyards
La Farine
Peet's Coffee

The McNally Fire: How will the prospect of salvage logging affect wild areas in the Sequoia National Forest?

by Tina Andolina

On July 21, 2002, a fire started in the Sequoia National Forest that would make headlines and help fan the flames of the already raging controversy surrounding fire management on public lands. The McNally Fire, named for the café near where it started, swept up the Kern River Canyon, burning lands on both sides of the river and threatening some of the state's magnificent groves of giant sequoia trees. Before the blaze subsided, it had torched 150,696 acres, including portions of several roadless areas, the Golden Trout Wilderness, and lands within the recently designated Giant Sequoia National Monument.

The Rincon area, a proposed addition to the Golden Trout Wilderness, was one of the roadless areas hardest hit. This area, roughly 41,000 acres, is currently being considered for wilderness designation in Senator Barbara Boxer's California Wild Heritage Act. Not only was much of the Rincon area burned, but several temporary roads were punched through the area to allow firefighters access to the blaze. Although very little is currently known about the severity of the fire, initial inspections of the Rincon area reveal that much of it burned only moderately; in fact, the fire may have improved the health of the forest ecosystem.

Now the Forest Service is evaluating the impact of the fire and drafting the necessary environmental documents to begin "restoration" work. While these plans are still unclear, what is known is that the Forest Service intends to conduct salvage logging operations, including in the area's proposed wilderness. Salvage logging has been the tool of the trade for timber companies and their allies in the government to gain access to land and trees they would otherwise not be able

to cut. Salvage logging most often removes the biggest, most commercially valuable trees and leaves behind small trees that serve as tinder for future wildfires.

This has nothing to do with restoration. Logging increases sedimentation into the nearby creeks and streams, reduces the forest canopy necessary to keep soils moist, and will severely detract from the wilderness character of the roadless lands. (It's an eyesore.)

Initial information we have received from the Forest Service on their logging plans indicates that they are, in fact, planning to log along Rattlesnake Creek within the Rincon proposed wilderness.

Once the Forest Service releases its logging plans, the public will have a chance to comment on them. This will be our best opportunity to influence the process and ask that no commercial logging take place within proposed and potential wilderness areas. Since the Bush Administration has proven eager to use fire as an excuse to clearcut forests, including in backcountry wild areas, we can predict that we will have a fight on our hands to protect the roadless lands of the Sequoia.

It is critical that we work to ensure



courtesy Joe Fontaine

The Rincon proposed wilderness and the Kern River

that the Forest Service does not conduct salvage logging and diminish the wilderness character of these wild places, particularly the Rincon area. The Forest Service must follow the guidelines of the Roadless Area Conservation Rule and the Sierra Nevada Framework and ensure that the wilderness values of all unroaded areas are protected. Please stay tuned for future updates and alerts on this issue. Once the draft plan is released, we will need to make our voices heard.

Tina Andolina is the Senior Field Organizer for the California Wilderness Coalition.



California's 10 Most Threatened Wild Places - UPDATE

Trinity Alps and Mojave Desert Areas Saved!

by Keith Hammond

Great news: two of California's most imperiled wild places have been saved from development. On October 8, the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) of Southern California voted to kill the Cadiz project, a developer's scheme to pump billions of gallons from beneath the parched Mojave Desert, threatening desert wildlife, wilderness areas and the Mojave National Preserve. The MWD board found that the controversial project was an economic boondoggle and a threat to the desert's ecology—but it took a huge public outcry to convince them, led by Senator Dianne Feinstein, Representative Jerry Lewis, and conservation groups including Public Citizen, the Western Environmental Law Center, Citizens for Mojave National Park, and the Sierra Club. See page 11 of this issue for more on the story.

And in April, roadless forests adjacent to the Trinity Alps Wilderness were saved from salvage logging when a federal court stopped the Forest Service's illegal logging plan. Seven environmental groups including CWC and the Environmental Protection Information Center brought the successful lawsuit. In May, Senator Barbara Boxer and Representative Mike Thompson formally proposed the areas for permanent protection as the Trinity Alps Wilderness Additions in the California Wild Heritage Act.

Both these places were featured in CWC's first annual report on *California's 10 Most Threatened Wild Places*, released in February 2002. Our report gathered substantial media coverage, helping to build public awareness, political support and editorial opinion for saving these places and others including the Los Padres National Forest and the Klamath River basin. The report highlighted remote



Jim Rose

The Trinity Alps proposed wilderness additions were spared from the axe again this past April, when a federal court stopped the Forest Service's illegal logging plan.

national forests and BLM deserts, as well as open spaces in urban places like Orange County and the Gaviota Coast. It provided action alerts telling activists how they can help; it was also used to educate decisionmakers in California and in Washington, D.C.

Unfortunately, many places in last year's report are still in trouble—and so are new places such as the Duncan Canyon proposed wilderness (see page 12 of this issue of the *Wilderness Record*), and wildlands in the Cleveland National Forest. As the Bush Administration steps up the attacks on our wild public lands, CWC staff and partner groups are now selecting the state's 10 most threatened wild places of 2003, based on the severity and urgency of threats, ecological significance, and habitat fragmentation. Look for the 2003 report in January.

Media stories on 2002's *10 Most Threatened Wild Places* (selected):
Associated Press
San Francisco Chronicle
Orange County Register

San Bernardino Sun
Sacramento Bee
Bakersfield Californian
Riverside Press Enterprise
Stockton Record
San Luis Obispo Tribune Telegram
Ventura County Star
Santa Barbara News Press
North County Times (San Diego Co.)
Desert Dispatch (Barstow)
Redding Record Searchlight
Daily Press (Victorville)
KQED-FM San Francisco
KPFK-FM Los Angeles
KNX Radio Los Angeles
KGO Radio San Francisco
KPFA-FM Berkeley
KXJZ-FM Sacramento
KVMR-FM Nevada City
North State Public Radio
Jefferson Public Radio
KMUD-FM Garberville
KZYX & Z Mendocino Co. Public Radio

Keith Hammond is the Communications Director for the California Wilderness Coalition.



Please help protect the King Range National Conservation Area!

by Ryan Henson

The King Range National Conservation Area (NCA) in Humboldt and Mendocino counties, part of California's famous Lost Coast, is the longest stretch of roadless and undeveloped coastline in the United States outside of Alaska. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is seeking public input on the future management of the NCA. The agency has done an excellent job of managing the King Range over the last decade, but given the current anti-conservation leadership in the White House, it is important that Californians let the BLM know that they want this excellent management to continue. This is where you can help!

As the BLM plans for the future of the King Range, key issues for conservationists include:

Wilderness—The BLM is required by law to assess the wilderness potential of its holdings when preparing management plans. Areas identified as being eligible for wilderness status are called "wilderness study areas" (WSAs) and must be managed in such a way as to preserve their wilderness character. The King Range currently contains two WSAs: the 34,033-acre King Range WSA and the 4,483-acre Chemise Mountain WSA. After identifying these WSAs in 1988, the BLM acquired thousands of acres of land and closed many roads to vehicles in areas adjacent to the two WSAs.

Conservationists want the existing WSAs to be expanded to include these new wilderness-quality lands. Senator Barbara Boxer (D-California) and Representative Mike Thompson (D-Napa) have also proposed in the California Wild Heritage Act (CWHHA) that 41,100-acres of the NCA (including both WSAs and adjacent roadless lands) be protected for all time as the King Range Wilderness. It is imperative that



Backpackers in the King Range National Conservation Area. The King Range contains a large amount of wilderness-quality lands that have not yet been designated; 41,100 acres are proposed for wilderness designation in the California Wild Heritage Act.

the BLM do nothing to reduce the wild qualities of the proposed wilderness area before the CWHHA passes.

Vehicles and roads—The BLM has done an outstanding job of only allowing roads and vehicles in appropriate locations. However, many off-road vehicle enthusiasts resent the fact that the NCA is not more open to them, especially along beaches. Conservationists are determined to prevent any new roads from being built or any areas being opened to off-road vehicles.

Logging—The law that created the NCA allows logging in the area, but does not say what kind of logging is allowed. Conservationists would like to see the new NCA plan limit tree cutting to only small trees along roads and near communities to improve fire safety, or in previously logged areas to improve plant and wildlife habitat.

If the BLM adopts these recommendations, the King Range will continue to be managed as one of California's most important wild areas.

What you can do

Please write the BLM as soon as possible and request that:

- All roadless land in the NCA be identified and managed as a WSA.
- Senator Boxer and Representative Thompson's proposed King Range Wilderness be managed in a manner that is consistent with the Wilderness Act.
- No new areas be opened to motorized vehicle use.
- Tree cutting be limited to the removal of only small trees for fire management or habitat restoration.

Please send your letter to:
Bureau of Land Management
Arcata Field Office
1695 Heindon Rd.
Arcata, CA 95521
Fax: (707) 825-2301
Email: CAweb330@ca.blm.gov

Ryan Henson is the Policy Director for the California Wilderness Coalition.



CWC analyzes bogus road claims

RS 2477 threatens Mojave Preserve and many desert wilderness areas

by Amanda Dranginis

CWC's inventory of RS 2477 "ghost road" claims filed throughout California by local governments, interest groups, and individuals is near completion and a statewide campaign to prevent these bogus RS 2477 rights-of-way from being granted is in the works. For those of you who missed our last newsletter, Revised Statute 2477 is an archaic statute enacted as part of an 1866 mining law to encourage economic development in the West. Though repealed in the 1970s, it has been used recently in several western states, notably Alaska, Utah, and more recently California, as a tool to disqualify lands proposed for wilderness designation. County governments and interest groups have attempted to claim jeep trails, wagon roads, wash bottoms,

cowpaths, and footpaths as "highways" across public lands.

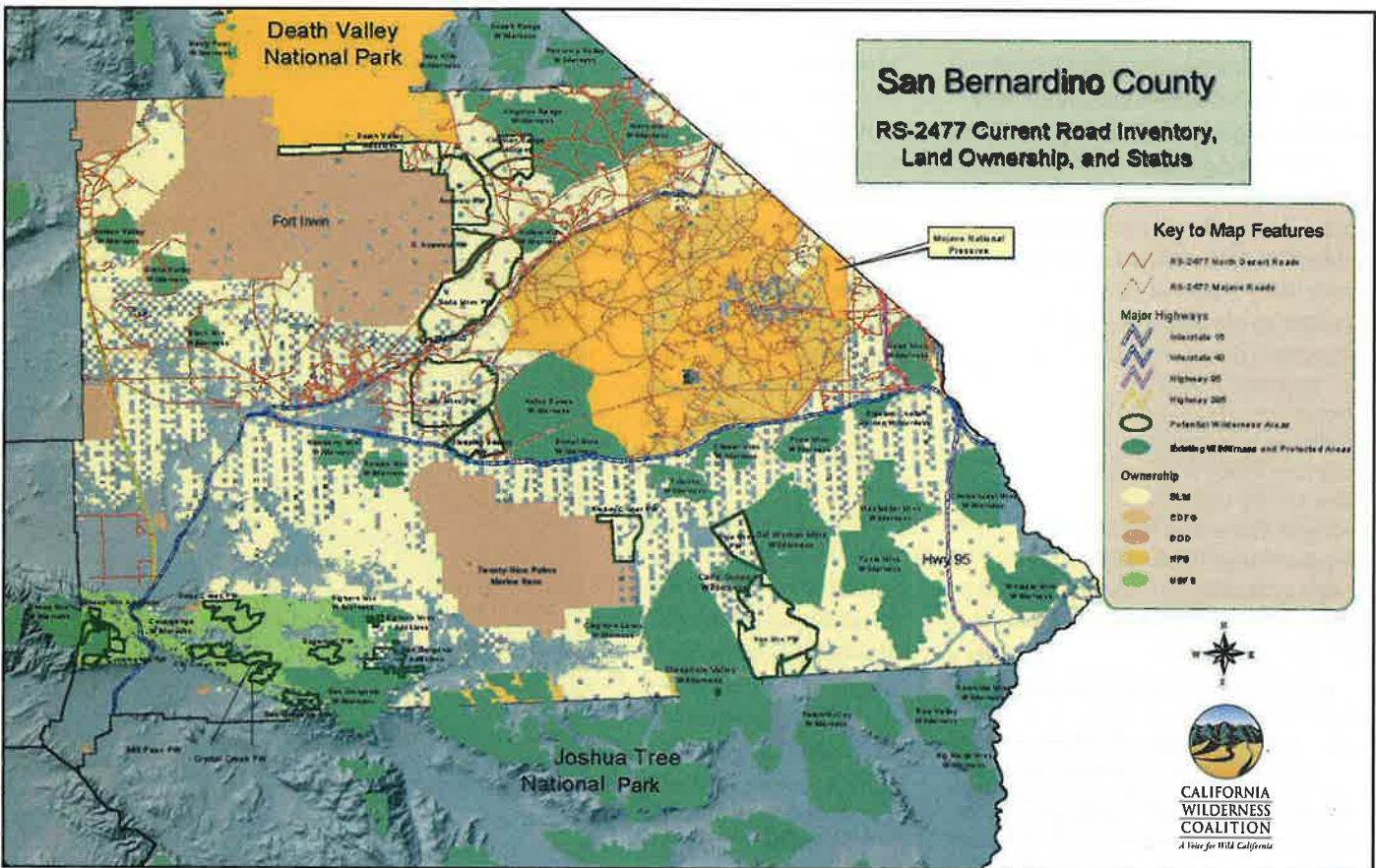
Our initial analysis has revealed that the most threatening claims to be asserted thus far are those filed by individuals and local governments in the desert. Of particular concern is the vast number of claims made by San Bernardino County throughout the Mojave National Preserve and in several designated Wilderness Areas managed by the National Park Service and the BLM. We have completed a GIS map of these county claims and have circulated copies among key activists and interested parties in the region to determine which routes pose the greatest threat to our federal public lands.

Though San Bernardino County's surveying process is further along than that of any other county in the state, there is reason to believe that several other desert counties will soon follow

suit. Inyo, Imperial, Riverside, Kern, San Diego, and San Bernardino counties have all passed resolutions asserting RS 2477 claims. At the suggestion of an Antelope Valley equestrian group, Los Angeles County has recently directed its Department of Parks and Recreation to work with interest groups to identify potential RS 2477 assertions. The department is to report back its initial findings in December for further consideration by the L.A. County Board of Supervisors. It is not clear at this point whether any action will be taken by the board.

It is not uncommon for county governments to collaborate with interest groups, primarily off-road vehicle and other recreational groups, before asserting specific claims. In fact, San Bernardino County has postponed

continued on the next page



RS 2477 threatens many desert wilderness areas

continued from the previous page

the remaining 20 percent of its RS 2477 surveying process in order to collaborate with several interest groups in the area, including the Blue Ribbon Coalition, the Cattlemen's Association, and miners groups.

On the national scene, the Bush Administration is staking out ways to expedite and facilitate RS 2477 claims. The Bureau of Land Management is currently developing a rule to facilitate RS 2477 claims despite an existing moratorium on the processing of such claims. The rule was forwarded to the Department of the Interior Solicitor's Office on October 18 for final review and approval and may be published as soon as January 2003.

Though the RS 2477 campaign in California is still in its early stages, already we have uncovered a number of claims that pose clear threats to designated wilderness areas, potential wilderness areas, national parks, preserves, desert tortoise habitat, and other environmentally sensitive and ecologically valuable wild lands. Thus far we have mapped documented claims in the following areas:

Mojave National Preserve wilderness areas
Joshua Tree National Park wilderness areas
Death Valley National Park Wilderness
and proposed wilderness additions
Chuckwalla Bench Area of Critical Environmental Concern
Chemehuevi Mountains Wilderness
Cleghorn Lakes Wilderness
Sheephole Valley Wilderness
Palen McCoy Wilderness
Orocopia Mountains Wilderness
Kingston Range Wilderness
Mesquite Wilderness
Surprise Canyon Wilderness
Palo Verde Wilderness
Kingston Range proposed wilderness additions
Cady Mountains proposed wilderness
Soda Mountains proposed wilderness
Avawatz Mountains proposed wilderness
Denning Springs proposed wilderness
Sleeping Beauty proposed wilderness



Bogus highways: a washout and deteriorated track in the Soda Mountains...

Terry Frewin

These are places that both the American public and the U.S. Congress have seen fit to protect in a pristine state in order to sustain the vast array of wild ecosystems, plant and animal species, habitat, and water resources they harbor. Proposed RS 2477 routes threaten to permanently scar our last wild places and extinguish the ecological and intrinsic values inherent in these resources. Through this campaign, the California Wilderness Coalition intends to prevent illegal abuse of public lands and defend the original intent of wilderness designation in threatened areas for generations to come.

Amanda Dranginis is CWC's Administrative Assistant.



...And a jeep trail petering out in the Avawatz Mountains proposed wilderness

Terry Frewin

Victory for California consumers and environmentalists Cadiz water privatization project stopped!

by Faramarz Nabavi

The controversial Cadiz water project—a plan to store Colorado River water in the Mojave Desert and also mine local groundwater—was scuttled by the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) of southern California at its board meeting on October 8. A unique aspect of the successful coalition to stop Cadiz was bringing together environmentalists, concerned about the impact on the fragile desert ecology, and public interest groups who are fighting to prevent a water commodity market similar to the electricity one that robbed Californians of tens of billions of dollars in 2001.

“The financial house of cards that makes up the Cadiz empire has crumbled,” stated Jane Kelly, Director of the Oakland office of Public Citizen, a national consumer rights organization. “This has been a bogus project from the start and we are glad the MWD has finally killed it.”

Slated to cost water ratepayers over \$1 billion for the next 50 years, Cadiz was tagged as a corporate boondoggle. British investor Keith Brackpool, Cadiz’s Chief Executive Officer, has contributed heavily to Governor Gray Davis and serves as his chief advisor on water issues.

The week before the vote, MWD staff, headed by Chief Executive Ronald Gastelum, recommended to the board that the project be tabled indefinitely based on many concerns that opponents had raised throughout the three-year campaign. Gastelum cited rising costs, Cadiz, Inc.’s financial condition, environmental concerns, and the Colorado River drought that has dramatically reduced the chances that the Cadiz project could store any surplus water.

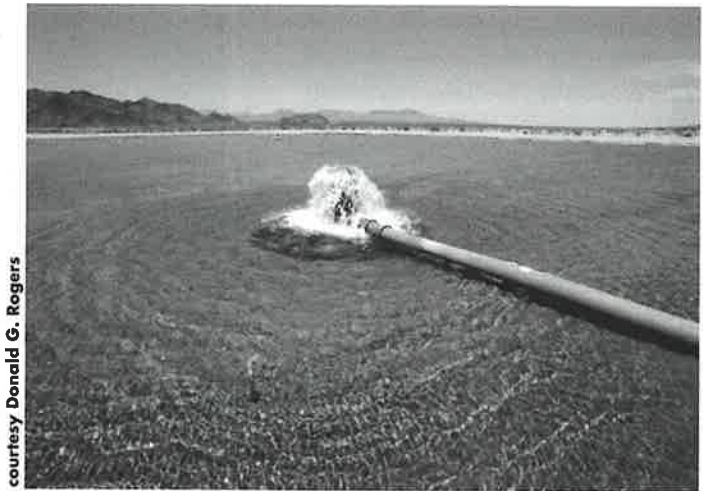
The MWD board voted to reject the Bush Administration’s Record of Decision approving the Final Environmental Impact Report and Right of Way

grant, expressing deep skepticism regarding the financial viability and environmental sustainability of the project. Several MWD board members went further and stated that they opposed opening the door to water privatization. Faced with a packed audience of constituents who rose up and chanted, “Stop Cadiz without delay!,” the MWD board

listened to the public, not the corporate interests pushing this ill-conceived project.

“The Cadiz water grab posed a great threat to the environment, impacting two national parks, five wilderness areas, several endangered species and local air quality,” said Elden Hughes, Sierra Club’s California/Nevada Desert Committee Chair. “There also isn’t enough groundwater in the Mojave Desert to provide the amount the company has been projecting,” added Simeon Herskovits of the Western Environmental Law Center, an invaluable source of legal aid for the opposition.

“We owe the defeat of the Cadiz Project to the efforts of Senator Dianne Feinstein (D), Representative Jerry Lewis (R), and a coalition of public advocacy groups,” stated Courtney Cuff, Director of the National Parks Conservation Association. The coalition included Public Citizen, Sierra Club, California Wilderness Coalition, National Parks Conservation Association, The Wilderness Society, Western Environmental Law Center, Alliance for



courtesy Donald G. Rogers

The test pond that Cadiz Corporation built to show how surface water would percolate into the aquifer.

Environmentalists objected to the proposal because it would have stripped water resources from two national parks and five wilderness areas.

Democracy, and Desert Survivors.

After Cadiz, members of the coalition are focusing on a number of threats to California’s freshwater resources. A company called Alaskan Water Exports has filed a request to sell water from two northern California rivers—the Gualala and Albion—by shipping it in large plastic bags down the Pacific Coast to San Diego. Similar to Cadiz, this project would set a dangerous precedent for the export of water by privatizing rights to sensitive watersheds, held in the public trust. Also, transnational water corporations are attempting to ram through privatization of Stockton’s water utilities, despite petitions from thousands of residents in opposition, as a possible foothold for controlling the San Joaquin Delta’s water supply in the long term.

Faramarz Nabavi is the Water for All Campaign Organizer for Public Citizen, which led the opposition to the Cadiz project. Public Citizen is a national, nonprofit consumer advocacy organization founded by Ralph Nader in 1971 to represent consumer interests.



Forest Service finalizes plan to salvage log Duncan Canyon wilderness

by Jason Swartz

In November, the Tahoe National Forest released its final salvage logging plan for Duncan Canyon, naming it the "Red Star Restoration Project" after the fire that burned the area in August 2001. The decision of the Forest Service is to support Alternative C, which would "treat" 5,530 acres of forestland through commercial salvage logging activities, resulting in trees over 10" in diameter being removed from the landscape. This includes logging approximately 1,900 acres of the Duncan Canyon roadless area. A significant portion of this acreage is also currently proposed for wilderness designation in the California Wild Heritage Act of 2002. The Forest Service's decision represents a clear lack of dedication to protect and properly manage our last remaining wild places.

The Forest Service is seeking to conduct a major logging operation under the guise of reducing both fuel levels and future threats from fire. The "restoration" activities outlined in the



Don Jacobson

Duncan Canyon is one of the last old-growth mixed conifer forests left in the entire Sierra Nevada, home to the northern goshawk, Pacific fisher, and spotted owl.

final plan can only be carried out by selling the largest, most fire-resistant, and ecologically important trees.

It is extremely important that conservationists oppose this logging plan in order to preserve the ecological integrity of our most remote wild places. Considering the limited monetary budget that the Forest Service currently has, they need to focus their "restoration" in areas close to towns and cities, not in remote wilderness like Duncan Canyon. This plan also violates

the letter and intent of the Sierra Nevada Framework and allocates zero funding for fuels reduction via controlled, prescribed burning.

In fact, the proposed alternative would remove the most fire resistant trees, yet leave all of the small woody debris that will serve as the most effective vector for starting and fueling future fires. When we consider the added problem of additional small fuels created through the destructive activity of helicopter logging, the Forest Service

Conservation Security Program: bringing new incentives to California

by Ben Wallace

A major victory gained in the 2002 Farm Bill, the Conservation Security Program offers financial rewards to farmers who meet high standards of environmental performance, including conservation of wildlife habitat. The CSP is especially important to California because it is designed for *all* farmers and ranchers who achieve high standards of environmental performance on the working landscape. This creates new incentive-based opportunities for California's producers of commodity crops, row crops, orchard fruit and nuts, grapes, livestock, and specialty crops that have heretofore not been included in federal conservation programs.

However, there is still much work to be done to bring this and other new conservation opportunities to California. Congress now must add money to the 2003 budget to implement it. Recognizing the uncertainty of the budget based on economic factors and the November elections, the California Wilderness Coalition brought together 35 statewide and local groups to demand that California's Congressional delegation fight for full funding of Farm Bill conservation programs, and nationwide implementation of the Conservation Security Program.

The letter was signed by the California Wine Grape Growers, California Rice Commission, California Farmers Union, former Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Richard Rominger, Ducks Unlimited, Defenders of Wildlife, Community Alliance with Family Farmers, California Wilderness Coalition, California Sustainable Agriculture Working Group, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs), and other farm and conservation groups. At press time, the issue was still awaiting Congressional action.

Ben Wallace coordinates the Private Land Stewardship Initiative at the California Wilderness Coalition.



Duncan Canyon, continued from facing page

is accomplishing exactly the opposite result from what they claim to be attempting to achieve.

What you can do

Please write your congressional representatives and the Forest Service and insist that they support the protection of Duncan Canyon, not the exploitation of it. Ask that the Forest Service not conduct any commercial logging activities within the Duncan Canyon proposed wilderness area or within the roadless area.

Tell your congressional representatives that this proposed action flies in the face of roadless area conservation, wilderness preservation, true ecological restoration, watershed protection, and threatened species preservation. Send your letters to:

1 Senator Barbara Boxer
1700 Montgomery Street, Suite 240
San Francisco, CA 94111
Phone: (415) 403-0100
Fax: (415) 956-6701

2 Senator Dianne Feinstein
One Post Street, Suite 2450
San Francisco, CA 94104
Phone: (415) 393-0707
Fax (415) 393-0710

3 Karen Jones
Tahoe National Forest
22830 Foresthill Road
Foresthill, CA 95631

4 Your Congressperson in the U.S. House of Representatives. To find your representative's address, navigate to: <http://www.house.gov/writerep/>

5 Please send a copy of your letter to the California Wilderness Coalition, Attention Jason Swartz, 2655 Portage Bay East #5, Davis, CA 95616, so we can track public opposition to this destructive project.

The deadline for comments on the final plan is January 6, 2003. If you receive this newsletter after that date, please send your letters anyway.

Jason Swartz is the California Wilderness Coalition's Public Lands Policy Analyst.

Transmission corridors threaten tortoise habitat and wilderness

by Pat Flanagan

The Soda Mountains Wilderness Study Area, proposed as wilderness in the California Wild Heritage Act of 2002, harbors some of the last remaining high-quality habitat for the endangered desert tortoise in the Mojave Desert. But now the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP) wants to expand an existing transmission corridor, for not very clear or convincing reasons, smack into the middle of this last remaining habitat.

Utility Corridor D was originally approved in the California Desert Conservation Plan as two miles in width. It angles in from Nevada heading southwest toward Barstow, skirting the southern boundary of the Fort Irwin Army base. In 1980, the corridor contained three existing power lines. Today the transmission corridor has in place four power lines, two natural gas lines, and one fiber optic cable line, all together occupying only about a quarter mile of the existing two-mile wide corridor.

Last year's expansion of Fort Irwin extended to the westernmost power line, taking away about 7/8 mile of this corridor. DWP still has 7/8 of a mile on the Soda Mountains side of the existing corridor in which to expand, surely enough. Yet they claim that they still need two miles southeast of the transmission lines (not including the width of the lines themselves), widening the corridor and trespassing into the wilderness study area.

DWP claims it is concerned that Fort Irwin tanks will stray into the power line area (this has happened in the past), although Fort Irwin officials claim to have solved this problem already by installing GPS units on all their vehicles.

The Fort Irwin expansion has dealt the desert tortoise population a heavy, possibly lethal, blow in the western Mojave by annexing Superior Valley, some of the tortoise's finest remaining

habitat. The remaining desert tortoise habitat in this area, which must be preserved at all costs, is in the southern section of the Soda Mountains proposed wilderness, right where DWP claims it needs to expand the transmission corridor.

Yet, if Corridor D were to be expanded on the grounds of needing new transmission capability, it would need to be expanded along the entire corridor. This is not feasible because the corridor would run into a choke point east of the Kingston Wash, where it cuts between the Mesquite Wilderness and the Clark Mountains in the Mojave National Preserve.

Finally, DWP is also asking that Utility Corridor BB, running along the southern boundary of the Soda Mountains proposed wilderness, be expanded to three miles wide, gobbling up more wilderness. Currently, Corridor BB contains a coaxial cable pipeline and one power line. The California Wilderness Coalition questions why such a huge corridor is needed, especially when it would come at the expense of so much wilderness and the Cronese Lakes Area of Critical Environmental Concern with its sensitive cultural sites.

What you can do

Please send a letter to Senator Barbara Boxer and let her know that you support desert wilderness and desert tortoise habitat in the Soda Mountains rather than unnecessary power line corridor expansions. Send your letter to:

Senator Barbara Boxer
c/o Maribel Juarez
312 N. Spring Street, Suite 1748
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Phone (213) 894-5000
Fax (213) 894-5042

Pat Flanagan is the Desert Field Organizer for the California Wilderness Coalition.

Why focus on carnivores?

by Alison Sterling Nichols

The sight of a large grizzly bear or gray wolf in Yellowstone National Park would, to many, be the epitome of a complete experience in nature. But why is this? Why do we associate the presence of these animals so closely with the essence of nature? Most would say it is because these wildlife, large carnivores, represent nature in its truest form: untrammelled and in balance. Thus it is important to focus on preserving the habitat of “top carnivores” to maintain a landscape of ecosystems that are in balance with one another and that ultimately represent the highest level of biodiversity.

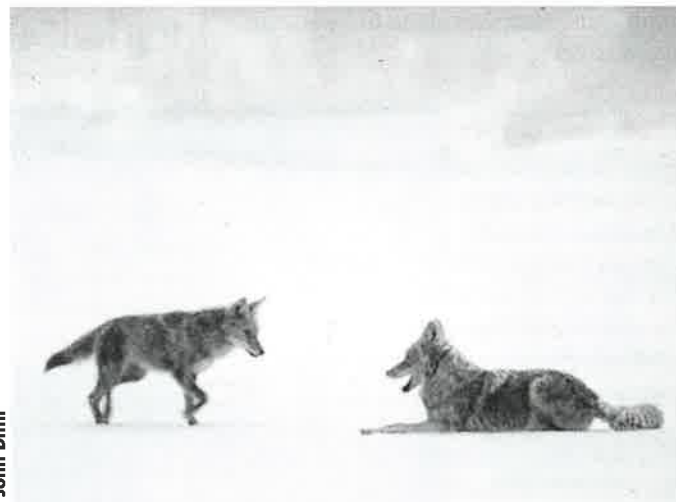
Today, grizzly bears and gray wolves are associated with Yellowstone and other large parks and wilderness areas in the northern climes. Few people realize that both species were once abundant in California. In fact, grizzlies historically roamed much of the West. As late as 1850, roughly 100,000 grizzly bears lived between Canada and Mexico, from the Pacific Coast to the Mississippi River (Stringham, 2002). Unfortunately, persecution and fragmentation of habitat has driven both of these species, and many others, to the brink of extinction—and in some cases beyond.

One of the primary goals of the California Wildlands Project is to reverse this trend of species loss by developing Wildlands Conservation Plans for the diverse ecoregions of California. These plans focus on identifying large areas of habitat (cores) and movement corridors (habitat linkages) based on many factors, including the habitat requirements of large carnivores like the gray

wolf and mountain lion. By protecting the remaining large-carnivore habitat that represents intact, functioning ecosystems, we will also protect a wide variety of other species that are also integral components of these ecosystems.

Carnivores are critical to ecosystem-level conservation because of the controlling influence they have on other species. One of these effects is called “top-down regulation.” “Top-down” means that “species occupying the highest trophic level (top carnivores) exert a controlling influence on species at the next lower level (their prey)” (Soule and Terborgh, 1999). An example of this is the predator-prey relationship between mountain lions and deer. When there are top carnivores present in the system, the deer population is kept in check by the lions preying upon the deer. However, when lions are absent from the system, the deer population increases and there is a resulting impact upon the entire system, including over-grazing by an over-abundant deer population.

It has been found that this top-down regulation also has an impact upon the next lower level of predators in the food-chain, often referred to as meso-predators. Today many mammals, such as opossums, raccoons, and even house cats, that historically would have



John Dittli

Coyotes in the snow near Twin Lakes, California.

been prey for the top carnivores that are no longer present, are over-abundant despite other sources of mortality, such as cars (ibid, 1999). In the absence of top carnivores, these overly abundant meso-predators increase predation on birds and their eggs, resulting in a drastic decline in songbirds.

If we look at carnivore species as critical pieces to a puzzle, the puzzle being a complete ecosystem, we see repeatedly how removing these pieces does not result merely in a puzzle with only those pieces missing. More frequently, the results create a domino effect of negative impacts on the entire puzzle, with pieces no longer fitting together how they once did.

As we look to the future, it is imperative that we look to a conservation vision that strives to maintain biodiversity by keeping and restoring as many pieces to the puzzle as possible, whether large or small.

Sources

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Alison Sterling Nichols is California Wildlands Project Coordinator.

Biodiversity: The variety of life and its processes; it includes the variety of living organisms, the communities and ecosystems in which they occur, and the ecological and evolutionary processes that keep them functioning, yet ever-changing and adapting.
—Noss & Cooperider, 1994.



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At the California Wilderness Coalition's annual Autumn Celebration. Top left: Anne Schneider, Joan Reinhardt Reiss, Amanda Dranginis, and Julie McDonald with the new CWC hoodies. Top right: John Regan (left) with Pete Nichols and Alison Sterling Nichols, California Wildlands Project staff extraordinaire. Bottom left: Renowned California printmaker Tom Killion talks with guests about his new book, *The High Sierra of California*. Bottom right: One of CWC's youngest guests of the evening, Raechel MacMillan. See page 5 for more about this year's celebration. (Photos by Bob Schneider and others.)



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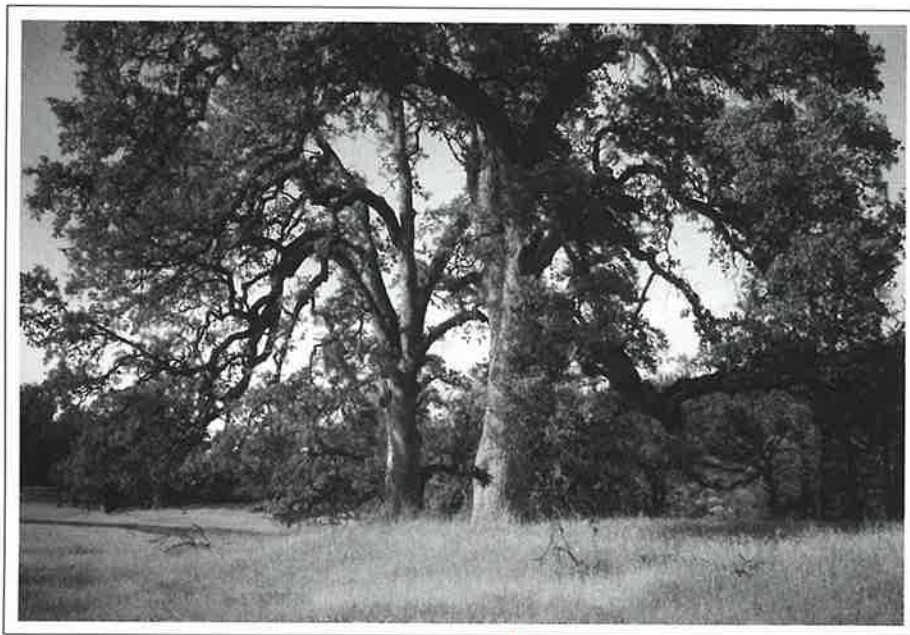
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Phil Farrell



California Wilderness Coalition

2002 Annual Report



Celebrating CWC's 26th year of wilderness and wildlands advocacy

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to our 2002 annual report. Our 26th year has been both thrilling and challenging. In May and June, four members of the U.S. Congress introduced the California Wild Heritage Act into both houses. Staff and volunteers worked unstintingly to finalize maps and materials, and then to continue to build support for wilderness protection at every level of government. In November, Republicans gained a narrow majority in the Senate. Taking advantage of the lame duck session, Congressmembers Farr and Boxer pushed the Big Sur Wilderness and Conservation Act through both houses of Congress, which if signed by the President, will designate nearly 55,000 acres of wilderness on California's central coast and protecting key habitat for the endangered California condor and the mountain lion.

CWC's California Wildlands Project made excellent progress this year, producing detailed analyses of wildlife habitat throughout the Sierra Nevada and central coast. We also began collaborating with many conservation partners to formulate a plan for wildlife habitat restoration in the San Joaquin Valley.

In June, CWC opened its first southern California office, in 29 Palms. CWC Desert Field Organizer Pat Flanagan has made huge strides in

garnering support for desert wild lands, while becoming known throughout the community as a local advocate for desert conservation. She has also begun to put together a desert wilderness conference for 2003.

CWC continued building support for conservation and restoration of wildlife habitat on private lands, producing a report outlining financial incentives, working to bring Farm Bill conservation funds to California, and collaborating with ranchers, farmers, and environmentalists to structure a proposal to the U.S. Department of Agriculture regarding private land stewardship.

CWC maintained its long-standing, staunch defense of California's unprotected wilderness. We opposed unwise development schemes such as geothermal plants and old-growth logging in the Medicine Lake roadless areas, and illegal salvage logging in the Tahoe and Sequoia National Forests. We also helped to draft a conservation alternative for California's four southern national forests and wilderness management recommendations for Channel Islands National Park.

None of this would have been possible without your unwavering support. Every letter you wrote on behalf of wilderness and wildlands, every phone call you made protesting the squandering of our last roadless areas, every dollar you sent us was critically important in building our success. Enjoy the annual report!



Sule Gordon

California Wilderness Coalition staff, from left to right: Front row: Alison Sterling Nichols, California Wildlands Project Coordinator; Tina Andolina, Senior Field Organizer; Amanda Dranginis, Administrative Assistant; Ben Wallace, Private Lands Project Coordinator; Mary L. Wells, Executive Director; Michael Gelardi, Development Associate. Back row: Ryan Henson, Policy Director; Pete Nichols, California Wildlands Project Science Coordinator; Laura Kindsvater, Editor and Designer; Keith Hammond, Communications Director; Jason Swartz, Public Lands Policy Analyst. Not pictured: Pat Flanagan, Desert Field Organizer; Janice Stafford, Bookkeeper.



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The California Wild Heritage Act: Turning a dream into reality

In 1998, the CWC decided it was time to convince Congress to designate California's threatened wild places as permanently protected wilderness areas. After mapping potential wilderness candidates for over two years, the CWC helped form the California Wild Heritage Campaign (CWHC) to advance the wilderness effort in the political arena—something the CWC could not do alone given the vast scope of statewide wilderness legislation. The vision of wilderness protection was later complemented by adding proposed wild and scenic rivers. In 2001, Senator Barbara Boxer (D-California) agreed to help craft and introduce a wilderness and wild rivers bill.

Progress over the last year

January: Intense negotiations begin with Congressional staff over the composition of the forthcoming bill.

February: After more than a year and a half of tireless political organizing, over 600 businesses, 300 elected officials, and hundreds of other opinion leaders endorse the goals of the CWHC.

March: The list of wild places that will be proposed for legislative protection is finalized with Congressional staff after literally months of intense review and negotiation. Representative Hilda Solis (D-El Monte), Representative Mike Thompson (D-Napa), and Representative Sam Farr (D-Monterey) agree to introduce our legislation in the House.

April: The California Wild Heritage Act is drafted by Congressional staff. Names, acreage numbers and legislative provisions are re-checked for accuracy. The bill is finalized at long last.

May: At a profoundly inspiring event on a sparkling day at the Presidio in San Francisco, Senator Barbara Boxer and Representative Hilda Solis publicly unveil this landmark legislation: The



Bob Schneider

California Wild Heritage Campaign lobby team (including CWC Senior Field Organizer Tina Andolina, front row in the center) and activists at the U.S. Capitol.

California Wild Heritage Act (CWHC). The proposed legislation includes almost 2.8 million acres of land in wilderness and other designations, and nearly 503 miles of streams as wild and scenic rivers. The CWHC is introduced soon thereafter in the Senate by Senator Boxer.

June: Representatives Solis, Farr and Thompson introduce the CWHC in the U.S. House of Representatives. Representative Thompson's bill covers northern California, Representative Solis's bill covers southern California, and Representative Farr's bill covers his own central coast district.

July: An aggressive campaign begins to win support for the CWHC from elected officials and other opinion leaders.

August: The effort to win endorsements for the CWHC reaches a milestone when both the California State Senate and the California State Assembly pass resolutions of support.

September: The focus on convincing Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-California) to support the CWHC results in efforts to win endorsements from hundreds of opinion leaders such as business owners and local elected officials, as well as tens of thousands of California citizens. Meanwhile, despite everyone's best efforts, it becomes apparent that the full CWHC will not make significant progress towards passage in either the House or Senate in 2002.

October: Over 10,000 Californians sign petitions urging Senator Feinstein to support the CWHC.

Everyone involved resolves to reintroduce the CWHC in 2003 and to fight even harder to pass it.

November: Republicans gain a narrow majority in the U.S. Senate, giving them control of all committees that review wilderness legislation before it goes to a vote. Wilderness activists vow to work with Congressmembers in California who support wilderness designation within their own districts, in order to protect as many areas as possible. On November 15, Representative Sam Farr's Big Sur Wilderness and Conservation Act passes the House, and on November 20 it passes the Senate, leading toward the probable addition of nearly 55,000 acres to the Ventana, Silver Peak, and Pinnacles National Monument Wildernesses.

CALIFORNIA WILDLANDS PROJECT

From the Sierra Nevada to the central coast and valleys, we identify where wildlife can thrive and migrate

It's been another exciting year for the California Wildlands Project, working to identify biologically important lands, based on the principles of conservation biology, and to achieve protection of these lands.

The valuable habitat of California is becoming fragmented into islands unable to sustain our state's biological wealth. Many species of wildlife need room to roam, and we need to modify our development patterns to allow for this movement. The California Wildlands Project is working to identify which lands need to be maintained for habitat areas, and how to connect them so that wildlife can migrate.

In February 2002, the California Wilderness Coalition published *The Guide to Wildlands Conservation in the Greater Sierra Nevada Bioregion*. Today this substantive report is being used as a biological foundation for the prioritization of important lands in need of protection throughout the Sierra Nevada.

The California Wilderness Coalition also released *The Guide to Wildlands Conservation in the Central Coast Region of California* in July. Because the central coast region is different from the Sierra in its biology and land ownership patterns, there are many new opportunities in the region. The California Wildlands Project team is working with



Roger Jones

many partner organizations toward a vision of habitat connectivity and protection in that region.

We also began work in the San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys this year. Fortunately, there are numerous organizations and agencies working within this region. The California Wilderness Coalition has formed a steering committee for this project with participation from the Great Valley Center, Bureau of Land Management, The Nature Conservancy, the Endangered Species Recovery Program, California Department of Fish and Game, and land trusts.

Additionally, the California Wildlands Project is looking forward to furthering its efforts in the north coast and desert regions of the state. This effort will help complete a state-wide

wildlands vision for habitat protection based on large habitat areas linked together by wildlife movement areas.

Finally, the first wildlands conservation plan that was completed by the California Wilderness Coalition in 1999 for the south coast region has turned into a true success story. That information, combined with the findings of the Missing Linkages Conference and subsequent report (see our 2001 annual report), has been transformed by committed individuals into the South Coast Wildlands Project, an organization dedicated to protecting and restoring wildlife migration corridors within that region.

For more information on the California Wildlands Project, please contact Alison Sterling Nichols, Project Coordinator, at alison@calwild.org.

Kit foxes are endangered in California's central valley and central coast regions. The California Wildlands Project's work this year identified key habitat for the San Joaquin kit fox.

California Wilderness Coalition brings together representatives from the California Rice Commission, Resource Landowners Coalition, Defenders of Wildlife, and other groups to strategize on how to pass legislation that would encourage farmers and ranchers to protect wildlife habitat on their land.

CWC releases the *Guide to Wildlands Conservation in the Greater Sierra Nevada Bioregion*, an analysis of wildlife habitat needs that will act as a tool for land protection in the greater Sierra Nevada.

CWC publishes *California's 10 Most Threatened Wild Places*, which receives wide acclaim and coverage throughout the state, including the *Associated Press* and the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Senator Barbara Boxer introduces S. 2535, the California Wild Heritage Act of 2002. After two years of organizing and preparation, CWC sees the fruits of its labor in a bill designed to protect nearly 2.8 million acres of wildlands.

Representatives Hilda Solis, Mike Thompson and Sam Farr introduce companion bills to the California Wild Heritage Act in the House of Representatives. Solis's bill aims to protect the wilderness in the southern half of the state, Thompson's bill includes the areas in the northern half, and Farr's bill includes the areas in his own central coast district.

CWC produces *The Guide to Wildlands Conservation in the Central Coast Region of California*, facilitating the California Wildland Project team's work with many partner organizations to protect wildlife in that region.

Selected CWC Accomplishments in 2002

January 8

February 15

February 27

May 21

June 17

July 1



CWC's desert conservation program makes good progress in its first year

The California Wilderness Coalition's desert office opened on June 1, 2002, in 29 Palms, the easternmost community in the centrally located Morongo Basin. CWC Desert Field Organizer Pat Flanagan immediately set about getting to know all the issues threatening desert wilderness and the constituents involved, while becoming known as the new advocacy voice from within the desert.

Already Pat has visited the five proposed new desert BLM wilderness areas, even though summer temperatures were frequently over 105° F.

The first trip in June was into the Cady Mountains, a world of pristine dunes perched on volcanic cliffs and washing through mountain passes. These dunes are little studied, except for the genetics of the fringed-toed lizard. The dunes are extensive but not contiguous, which has allowed this lizard to develop genetic differences throughout its range. Aerial photographs show the linear Cady Mountain dunes as unique within the region and important to preserve for that reason, as well as for their biodiversity and for scientific research.

In early September, the temperatures more moderate, Pat accompanied Sierra Club Desert Committee members George Barnes, Bob Ellis, and Terry Frewin (all seasoned Mojave explorers

since before the 1994 California Desert Protection Act) into the Avawatz proposed wilderness and Kingston Range proposed wilderness additions for three days of checking the proposed wilderness boundaries. They generously shared their area-wide knowledge and experiences gained from years in the field.



Judy Anderson

Mountains of the Kingston Range, which Pat visited along with longtime desert activists, in September.

In the California desert, five BLM proposed wilderness areas and 69 existing wilderness areas are affected by the numerous management plans in preparation or about to be signed and implemented. To monitor activities affecting wilderness, Pat attended quarterly BLM Desert Advisory Committee meetings and selected

scoping and review meetings, and provided CWC input on numerous plans throughout the desert region.

To organize local citizens and groups advocating for the desert, Pat has reached out to local conservationists, civic groups, and businesses. She attended Sierra Club and California Native Plant Society meetings, and joined the Morongo Basin Conservation Association, where she will host monthly public desert issues meetings beginning in January. She has found important allies in the business community and the many artists within the basin (organized as the Morongo Basin Cultural Arts Council). To date, Pat has gathered letters from over 25 businesses in support of new desert wilderness, and dozens of letters to Senator Dianne Feinstein asking her to co-sponsor the California Wild Heritage Act.

Pat has also begun planning a Desert Wilderness Conference, to be held October 3 to 5, 2003. An important focus of the conference will be the economics of wilderness. This is a hot issue for gateway communities throughout the desert, which are looking for near-term solutions for economic growth through tourism that treasures the desert's most precious existing assets: our national parks and wilderness areas.

California Wilderness Coalition releases *Wild Harvest: Farming for Wildlife and Profitability*, a report on private land conservation incentives in California.

The Private Lands Stewardship Initiative helps launch the Private Land Partnership, a multi-stakeholder effort to integrate ecological conservation and farmland preservation through farm profitability.

As the Bush Administration unveils its harmful fire logging plan, CWC releases the first-ever report by California conservationists setting out a statewide, pro-active vision for managing fire and restoring ecosystems in the state's national forests, *Restoring California's Forests: An Ecologically Based Strategy*.

Bureau of Land Management uses CWC's inventory and proposal of 54,000 acres of new wilderness study areas as a primary reference for a new BLM wilderness inventory of the Carrizo Plain National Monument.

Representative Sam Farr's Big Sur Wilderness and Conservation Act passes the U.S. Senate, after passing the House on Nov. 15. Once signed by President Bush, the act will add nearly 55,000 acres of wilderness to the Ventana, Silver Peak, and Pinnacles National Monument Wildernesses, important habitat for mountain lion and endangered California condor.

July 9

August 14

August 21

October 30

November 20

Creating incentives for wildlife conservation on private land

In 2002, the California Wilderness Coalition's Private Land Stewardship Initiative established a leadership role in several key areas. First, we became the nexus of support in California for federal Farm Bill conservation programs. Second, we helped launch an effort with statewide environmental, agricultural, and land use organizations to better coordinate California's private land stewardship policies. As part of this effort, the Private Land Stewardship Initiative published a report detailing how farmland and wildlife habitat conservation incentives can be structured.

Farm Bill

As the lead environmental organizer for support of federal conservation programs in the 2002 Farm Bill, the California Wilderness Coalition fought for conservation funding that can greatly benefit California. In the final bill, Congress authorized nearly \$18 billion over a ten-year period. These funds will help farmers restore and protect wildlife habitat on marginal farmland, protect farmland and grassland from development pressure, and reward good stewardship. CWC drafted a series of "sign-on" letters during key points in the debate, generating support from more than 30 grassroots conservation and sustainable agriculture organizations.

CWC also brought together a coalition of eight statewide groups to demand greater "regional equity" in the Farm Bill conservation programs. Previous farm bills have shortchanged California on account of arcane rules and policies that favored other regions of the country. In an unprecedented display of unity between statewide agricultural and environmental groups, the California Cattlemen's Association, California Rangeland Trust, California Association of Winegrape Growers, California Association of Resource

Conservation Districts, California Wilderness Coalition, Audubon Society, Environmental Defense, and Planning and Conservation League joined to demand fair and equitable access for California producers.

Wild Harvest Report

In July of 2002, California Wilderness Coalition released a new report recommending specific incentives for conservation on private land in California, entitled *Wild Harvest: Farming for Wildlife and Profitability*. Recognizing

Artwork: Heron Dance



The California Wilderness Coalition works to find common ground between ranchers, farmers, and environmentalists in order to preserve habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife on private land.

that California is the nation's largest agricultural producer, has the greatest biodiversity of any state and more endangered species than any state but Hawaii, and loses 47 square miles of farmland to urban development each year, the report recommends 28 ways the state can maximize new conservation resources.

The Community Alliance with Family Farmers, California Sustainable Agriculture Working Group, Defenders of Wildlife, and the Wild Farm Alliance also endorsed the report.

Private Land Partnership

The Private Land Stewardship Initiative kicked off 2002 by convening a unique

working group to advocate for policies that make the presence of viable habitat on private land a net benefit for landowners and agricultural producers.

With the Farm Bill under consideration in Congress at that time, the working group created an opportunity for stakeholders in the conservation and agricultural communities to develop a common vision for conservation on private lands in California.

Attracting interest from groups representing cattle ranchers, wine grape growers, rice farmers, waterfowl and wildlife conservationists, and sustainable agriculture advocates, the group began with an effort to promote the Working Lands Stewardship Act (AB 1398) in the state legislature. Although this bill was ultimately unsuccessful, the working group helped to build positive relationships leading to other successful projects.

In May, this working group merged with an agricultural conservation working group led by the California Futures Network (CFN). CFN is a statewide coalition dedicated to changing California's land use policies and practices to achieve economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable land use in California.

The unified working group formed the "Private Land Partnership" to push for a comprehensive strategy for farmland and ecosystem conservation on private working lands and associated wildlands. The strategy also works to ensure the economic viability of landowners and managers.

Policy Engagement

In addition to stakeholder-led efforts, the California Wilderness Coalition gives a strong voice to habitat conservation on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's "State Technical Advisory Committee" and the CALFED "Working Landscapes Subcommittee."

From Medicine Lake to the southern California forests, CWC fights to protect wildlands from shortsighted development

The California Wilderness Coalition's Defense of the Wild program seeks both to defend wildlands from threats that would destroy their wilderness character and to advocate for interim administrative protections for lands currently not within the Wilderness Preservation System. In 2002, some of the projects that were essential toward the achievement of the Defense program's goals included:

Threatened Wild Places

CWC published its first annual report entitled *California's 10 Most Threatened Wild Places*, highlighting areas under severe threat in California. The report, first of its kind, focused activist and media attention throughout the state upon these key threatened places.

Duncan Canyon

CWC continues to defend this roadless area and proposed wilderness from ecologically destructive salvage logging proposals by the Tahoe National Forest. In 2002, we protested the scientifically invalid claims and proposed actions of the Forest Service.

Medicine Lake Highlands

CWC fought plans to conduct drilling operations within the Mt. Hoffman Roadless Area by monitoring agency response to regulatory violations by the Calpine Corporation, and agency enforcement of applicable statutes. In addition, we monitored on-the-ground damage to the roadless area.

Carrizo Plain

National Monument

CWC staff conducted a wilderness inventory of the monument, recommending that over 54,000 acres be studied for wilderness suitability. As a result, the Bureau of Land Management



Don Jacobson

A wildflower springs up from the ashes after the Duncan Canyon fire

did conduct a new wilderness inventory using CWC information as a reference.

Southern California National Forests

CWC assisted in the drafting of the *Conservation Alternative for Land & Resource Management Plans for the four Southern California National Forests*. This alternative promotes forest management based on protection of roadless areas, biological diversity, and ecosystem health.

California National Monuments

CWC took a lead role in ensuring that newly designated national monuments receive the protections intended for them by their designation language. We provided detailed recommendations to the administering agencies during the creation of new management plans.

Off-road vehicles

CWC continued its charge for ORV reform, especially regarding the Stanislaus and Eldorado National Forests and the BLM's Algodones Dunes. We thoroughly reviewed Forest

Service and BLM off-road vehicle monitoring reports and formulated recommendations for the future effectiveness of the monitoring program. The final report will create an assessment that will serve as an effective tool for safeguarding public lands from off-road vehicle abuse and supervising agency management of the problem.

Channel Islands National Park

For the first time, a complete wilderness inventory of this unique park was completed by CWC. The inventory document proposed over 71,000 acres as wilderness study areas on Santa Rosa, San Miguel, and Santa Cruz islands. CWC also helped guide the park's new management plan by describing the most appropriate methods for ensuring the biological integrity and ecological health of the islands.

Fire management

As the Bush Administration unveiled its harmful fire logging plan, CWC released a well-timed report entitled *Restoring California's Forests: An Ecologically Based Strategy for Reducing Severe Fires, Protecting Communities, and Restoring the National Forests of California*. This first-of-its-kind report offers a blueprint for restoring the ecological health of our forests and reducing hazardous fuels near homes and communities.

Los Padres oil and gas drilling

CWC fought plans for drilling in the Los Padres National Forest in proposed wilderness areas, roadless areas, and critical habitat. We submitted comments derailing the myths propagated by the Forest Service that expanded drilling operations within these vital forest lands will not negatively impact ecosystems, endangered species, water quality, cultural resources, roadless areas, or proposed wilderness areas.

2002 FINANCIAL REPORT

Income*

Individuals	\$173,000
Foundations	575,000
Miscellaneous	6,200
Reimbursements	<u>10,000</u>
Total income	\$764,200

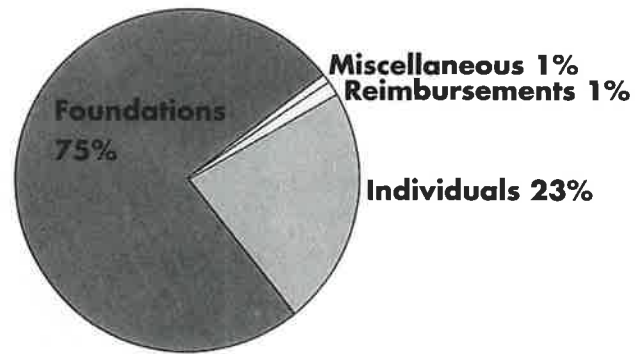
Expenses*

Benefits	\$19,500
Equipment	25,266
Operations	40,730
Postage	43,000
Printing	68,174
Professional Fees	75,219
Salary	408,064
Supplies	24,911
Telephone	21,408
Travel	<u>36,869</u>
Total expenses	\$763,141

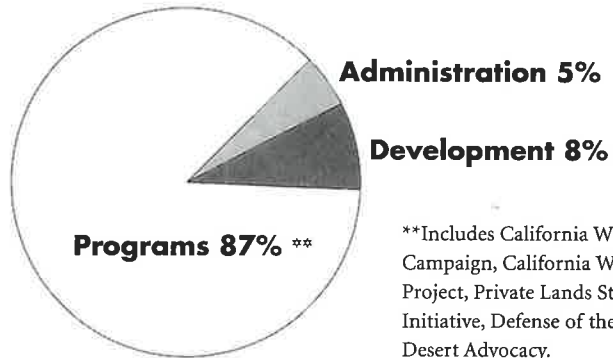
Net income **\$1,059**

* All numbers are estimates.

2002 Income



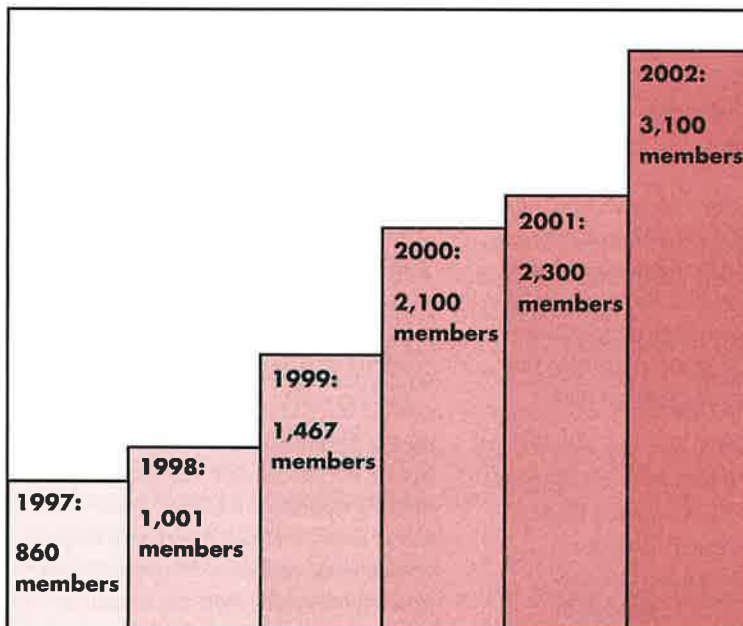
2002 Expenses



**Includes California Wild Heritage Campaign, California Wildlands Project, Private Lands Stewardship Initiative, Defense of the Wild, and Desert Advocacy.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

2002 was a remarkable year for the California Wilderness Coalition. Despite the American economic downturn, the ranks of CWC members swelled by 35 percent as CWC supporters, staff, and board of directors stepped up efforts to introduce Californians to our critically important conservation work. Our grassroots organizing to permanently protect California's last remaining wild places and our trailblazing efforts to empower landowners to conserve habitat on private lands are just two of our projects that are drawing praise from Californians across the state.



Our members have always been, and will continue to be, the backbone of the California Wilderness Coalition. Each and every one of our supporters is a voice for wild California, and together we are a chorus that cannot be ignored. Our members also provide the resources we need to be effective advocates for California's wild places. As the figures above demonstrate, nearly all of our monetary support goes directly to our cutting edge programs.

In 2003, CWC will launch an unprecedented effort to dramatically expand our network of supporters throughout the state and across the nation. We look forward to working with you as we speed into the exciting future of CWC.



The California Wilderness Coalition's top 2002 headlines

Los Angeles Times

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2002

Senate OKs Wilderness Protections

Bush's Plan Seeks Waivers to Speed Logging

The Sacramento Bee

Boxer ushers in wilderness legislation

Cache Creek may be part of national river system

Record Searchlight

AGRICULTURE

State urged to bolster conservation

Federal farm bill includes billions to protect habitat

Drilling industry has eye on national forest

SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS

A CRUDE PLAN?

The New York Times

Blaze Wins Converts to Fighting Fire With Fire

Talk of oil in Los Padres stirs passions

The Davis Enterprise

Ag-habitat link supported

Working together is key to plan

San Francisco Chronicle

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA'S LARGEST NEWSPAPER

Boxer wants far more wilderness

She introduces bill to add 2.5 million acres in California

Senate OKs bill to protect Big Sur

San Jose Mercury News

The Modesto Bee

★ ★ THE VOICE OF THE VALLEY ★ ★
TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2002

Leaked memos troublesome for U.S. Forest Service

PRESS DISPATCH

SERVING THE HIGH DESERT SINCE 1937

Off-roaders vs. everyone else

Noise, dust from illegal riders still plague residents

Daily Democrat

Woodland, California

Farmers reap from conservation

Once rivals making off-highway plan work

CONTRA COSTA TIMES

Bush pushes expanded logging



Los Angeles Times Don't Let Bush Agenda Destroy Our Deserts

Feinstein Asks MWD to Kill Mojave Project

CADIZ: Project Is in Question



Looking ahead to 2003

2002 was a year of great transition for the California Wilderness Coalition. After five years of innovative, hard work as Executive Director, Paul Spitler decided he was ready for new challenges. CWC hired Mary Wells as our new Executive Director, and she is already doing great work.

Our pro-active efforts really took off with the introduction of the California Wild Heritage Act and the passage of the Big Sur Wilderness and Conservation Act, and the debut of CWC's first desert advocacy program. Unfortunately, the November elections of 2002 brought about a disastrous twist for the California environment. 2003 is going to be a year of response. In order to meet the challenges ahead of us in 2003, CWC must become more nimble and thoughtful in its advocacy for wilderness and wild lands.

Already the Bush Administration is increasing the pressures to log, drill, and mine California's last wild public lands, green-lighting several harmful projects denied by the previous administration. It is also attacking the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, the Northwest Forest Plan, the Sierra Nevada Framework, and other critical protections we gained over the past decade. With anti-environmentalists in control of Congress as well, 2003 will be a year of defending our wild lands and the hard-earned policies that protect them.

CWC's California Wildlands Project has compiled the hard science that tells us that truly wild lands need a connected landscape so wildlife can migrate. Increased habitat loss from urbanization, industrial forestry and agriculture, mining and drilling, and land conversion has resulted in a fragmented patchwork of habitat where many species of wildlife have an uncertain future. California's once intact wild landscape is becoming divided, and once those habitat connections are lost, they are difficult to



Jim Rose

CWC will continue to work with members of Congress who support wilderness in their districts. For example, we will continue working with Representative Mike Thompson, who supports protection of the Sanhedrin Mountain proposed wilderness, pictured above, as well as many other wild areas in his district.

regain.

While federally designated wilderness and other federal public lands certainly provide habitat to many species, we won't be able to reconnect the California wilds only with federal lands. We're going to need to look to state, county, and even private lands to reunite habitat for both wildlife and people. Considering the political climate that we're in, protecting critical areas through state or private conservation measures could prove to be some of our few pro-active successes in the coming years.

At the same time, CWC can't just focus on biodiversity without addressing cultural diversity. Environmental organizations, especially wilderness groups, have long been a sea of white faces, with very few folks of color involved. It's certainly not that communities of color don't care about the environment. Indeed, in California over 80 percent of Latinos support increased wilderness lands. If we want to protect these lands for everyone, we need to reach further out. That's why CWC is very excited to have Catania Galvan as a new member of the CWC Board of Directors. Catania's background in

multicultural environmental education and public outreach will help make the California Wilderness Coalition a coalition that looks more like California. A more diverse wilderness movement will be a stronger force for wilderness.

We are also very pleased to announce that Ryan Henson has become CWC's Policy Director. Anyone who knows Ryan knows that this is really just stating the obvious. With over eight years tenure with CWC, Ryan has an encyclopedic knowledge of California's beautiful landscapes as well as state and federal agencies and the laws that govern them. Ryan also has a clear strategic vision that will be so necessary in 2003 as we tackle the many legislative and administrative assaults on the environment.

The many and varied attacks facing the environment will require CWC to adopt new strategies to fight them off. CWC will be launching new campaigns next year to answer these threats, while we also continue to fight for the California Wild Heritage Act. We welcome you to join us in these efforts in 2003!



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CNPS, Alta Peak Chapter; Springville
CNPS, Monterey Bay Chapter; Monterey
CNPS, North Coast Chapter; Arcata
CNPS, Sacramento Valley Chapter; Woodland
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