



# WILDERNESS RECORD

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION

Vol. 5

P.O. Box 429, Davis, CA 95616

January - February 1980

No. 1

## In Courts, Congress

### RARE II Rolls On

As expected, the State of California won its lawsuit against the U.S. Forest Service's "non-wilderness" decisions for 47 roadless areas in the Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE II). The court decision prohibits development of these particular areas until site-specific environmental impact statements are written.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Congress is continuing to debate bills that would protect varying amounts of California wilderness and bills that could require the release of wild lands to permanent "non-wilderness" status. Competing bills by Reps. Phil Burton and Harold T. "Bizz" Johnson are now before the Subcommittee on Public Lands of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs.

The lawsuit against part of the RARE II decision was filed by the State of California after the Forest Service designated as "non-wilderness" the 47 areas the State requested be placed in "wilderness" or "further planning" status. The court agreed with the State that one environmental statement for the entire RARE II program did not adequately assess the impacts likely to occur on the thousands of areas under consideration.

The court also took a dim view of the way the Forest Service analyzed public

opinion and their means of planning the wilderness qualities of roadless areas. Citing the broad, generic terms used in rating wilderness attributes, the judge commented in his decision "[o]ne can hypothesize how the Grand Canyon might be rated: 'Canyon with river, little vegetation.'

On the Congressional scene, wilderness bills for California are beginning to be drafted using the information received during November's hearings and in the mail.

Rep. Phil Burton continues to champion wilderness in the state and is working with local members of Congress to find acceptable boundaries for many areas. This has meant some compromise to accommodate potential downhill ski areas and other possible developments, but for the most part, long-standing wilderness proposals are fought for without major alterations to the boundaries. The amount of land released to development by the Forest Service last year has limited the need for compromising the little wild land that remains.

The timber industry, however, has convinced Rep. Thomas Foley of Washington to introduce a bill to release to development all "non-wilderness" areas and to set a deadline for Congressional action on

"wilderness", "further planning" and Primitive Areas after which all these lands would be released to development. Conservationists completely oppose this blatant raid on the public's remaining wild areas.

House action on the California bills and the Foley bill is expected during the next few months. 1980 promises to be the year for a number of new wilderness areas in the state. Whether it also means the death knell of other roadless lands remains to be seen.

### Judge Blasts Forest Service

On January 8, 1980, Judge Lawrence Karlton granted summary judgement against the U.S. Forest Service in *California v. Bergland*, the California RARE II lawsuit. The ruling rests on the judge's conclusion that the Forest Service failed to comply with the requirement of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in several significant respects in designating roadless areas as non-wilderness in RARE II. The NEPA violations found were as follows:

1. The RARE II draft environmental statement and final environmental statement ("DES" and "FES" respectively) failed to examine in anything ap-



proaching the detail required by NEPA the site-specific wilderness values of the RARE II roadless areas. The DES and FED completely failed to examine the site-specific adverse environmental impacts that would result from the decisions to open areas to development through non-wilderness designation.

2. The ruling also concludes that the Forest Service did not examine a reasonable range of alternatives for the disposition of the RARE II roadless areas. Of the eleven alternatives examined in the FES, ten allocated 34 percent or fewer of the total areas to wilderness; the eleventh allocated all the areas to

wilderness and was conceded by the Forest Service to be unrealistic. The unexplained failure of the Forest Service to examine any alternatives that allocated more than 34 percent but less than 100 percent of the roadless areas to wilderness was a violation of NEPA's requirement that a broad range of reasonable alternatives to a proposed action be studied.

3. The Forest Service was held to have violated its duty under NEPA to solicit and consider public comment in RARE II in three major respects.

a. First, the Forest Service failed totally to solicit public comment on the actual RARE II proposal. This proposal did not appear until the FES was released in January, 1979, and differed considerably from the ten alternatives

present in the DES upon which public comment was sought. The Court held that the Forest Service should have circulated its final proposal as a supplement to the DES for public comment before taking any final action.

b. The Forest Service failed to respond to site-specific comments received from the public on RARE II areas. It had expressly solicited such comments in the DES, but only responded to general comments about the overall RARE II process in the FES. The Court held that the large number of comments received indicated not that the Forest Service should be excused from its NEPA duty to respond to site-specific comments, but that the Service had simply attempted to do too much at one time. — Trent Orr

### BLM Completes State Inventory

On December 28, 1979 the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) issued its decision on final Wilderness Study Area (WSA) selections for all BLM lands outside the California Desert Conservation Area. A total of 93 units with 1,141,445 acres were designated as WSAs. 232 other units comprising 2,064,428 acres will not be studied and will be available for immediate development unless protested.

The decision was deferred for 18 units (235, 135 acres) that are jointly administered by the Nevada and California, or Oregon

and California State Offices.

The final inventory included some gains for wilderness supporters, but many areas about which conservationists have been concerned are still deleted from wilderness study.

Some important areas that were originally proposed for elimination from future wilderness consideration (in the draft intensive inventory) will now receive wilderness study thanks to strong public support during the inventory comment period. The 93,205-acre Eagle Head/Dry Valley Rim area (#CA-020-615) in the BLM's

Susanville District is now the largest WSA in the inventory. It was originally targeted for elimination from consideration by the BLM. Public support also helped restore almost the full acreage of the Skeddadle Mountains unit (#CA-020-612) an area of rugged peaks and sheer canyons that provides habitat for antelope, deer, golden eagles, falcons, and wild horses. The area is also proposed for bighorn sheep reintroduction.

The Willow Creek/Tun- nison Mountains unit (#CA-020-311) was also restored to study status and consol-

idated into a single unit by combining areas 311 and 312. 24,130 acres contiguous to the proposed wilderness in the Sheldon National Antelope Range will also be studied in the Susanville District as a result of public support (#CA-020-1012).

Despite strong public support for wilderness study, the BLM refused to give WSA status to the Stanislaus River Canyon (#CA-040-207), Pahoia Island in Mono Lake (#CA-010-091B), Blue Ridge and Rocky Ridge in the Putah/Cache Creek drainages (#CA-050-318 and 332), Brush Moun-

tain and Elkhorn Creek in

the South Fork Eel River drainage (#CA-050-132 and 134), most of Tunnel Ridge in the Redding District (#CA-030-402), and many large areas in the Susanville District, including 121,760 acres in four areas proposed as part of a Skeddadle Mountains Wilderness Complex. Non-WSA decisions could be protested to the State Director, BLM until February 5, 1980. Unsuccessful protests may be appealed to the Department of the Interior's Board of Land Appeals.

Areas for which the WSA decision was deferred include parts of the 132,000-acre High Rocks Wilderness Complex in Nevada and

extreme northeastern California. However, two units of the 5-unit High Rock Complex (19,820 acres) were placed in non-wilderness. 137,660 acres of the Buffalo Hills Wilderness Complex were given WSA status (2 units) and 14,090 acres were placed into the non-WSA category. The decisions on deferred areas will be made after a joint inventory and analysis of public comments by the state directors of the BLM state offices involved.

Other important areas to receive wilderness study are the King Range along California's north coast,

cont. on page 4

# Coalition Report

by Wendy Cohen

As we enter 1980, the California Wilderness Coalition is entering its fifth year. The organization has changed a lot in that time. One recent change which you have probably already noticed is a new format for *Wild California* that changed format in October from offset printing to newsprint which saved a significant sum.

Another recent improvement is the switchover of the membership list from the U.C. Davis computer to Jim Eaton's home computer. Many, many thanks go to Mike Carter for his hours of work and patience in providing CWC with mailing labels for the past year and a half. His computer program and services helped us get out the publications, membership renewals and wilderness alerts much more quickly.

CWC's fund-raising efforts in the past six months have taken on some new and varied forms. Bob Schneider has been at the fore in his work with Alpine Products, Inc. (a CWC Business Sponsor, address on back page). Alpine

Products is manufacturing a day pack with a CWC label and handbill. The pack will sell for \$1 more than the regular price and that \$1 will be donated to CWC. This steady source of income will help us greatly in our programs. The packs should be available in March, so if you need a new one, buy it then and help out CWC!

Alpine Products also held a special week-long sale during the second week of December in a store in downtown Berkeley. They offered incredibly low prices for a variety of items including polarguard jackets and alpine tents, and donated to CWC 25 cents for each item sold. A thousand thanks to Tom van Overbeek and others at Alpine Products and to Bob Schneider for the tremendous support!

Another fund-raising event has been wine tasting parties led by Shawn Denkler. Two tastings were held in the Fall and were a smashing success (especially afterwards when we had to finish the leftovers). Two more tastings are planned for the Bay Area at the end of

February and perhaps more Davis/Sacramento tastings after that. Contact the Coalition in Davis at (916) 758-0380 for information.

Finally, at the end of March, our year-long CETA project ends. Dennis Coules has been working for the past year developing comments on Forest Service and BLM plans and environmental statements, and researching a variety of wilderness issues such as wilderness-dependent wildlife. Dennis will be leaving in February and will be missed at the office. It will certainly be a lot less lively around there!

Archie Douglas has been working as CETA administrative assistant since November and will have completed the resource library by the end of March. Archie may be staying on after March to help keep the office going and keep Jim company.

So, CWC is starting its fifth year with many changes and new faces. With the various wilderness and nonwilderness bills in Congress, we have our work cut out for us and we are ready!

# Timber Sale Denied

The Northstate Wilderness Committee has achieved a major victory for wilderness through the Forest Service appeals process.

Northstate along with the Sierra Club, Audubon Society, Friends of the River, and fly-fishing groups appealed a helicopter salvage sale slated for the Polk Springs area of Deer Creek in the Lassen National Forest. The sale would have removed up to 8 mmbf of dead and dying timber from

the roadless area which was designated for further planning at the conclusion of RARE II.

The conservation groups appealed the sale on the grounds it would severely degrade the area's wilderness qualities. The Polk Springs area is a unit of the proposed Ishi Wilderness which is currently under consideration in a wilderness bill before Congress.

The salvage sale appeal eventually made its way through the Regional and National levels of the Forest Service to the desk of Rupert Cutler, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture. In late December, Cutler released his decision concerning the appeal stating, "Various points raised by the appellants and others have caused me to reconsider this decision and I now conclude that this sale should not go forward." Cutler instructed the Chief of the Forest Service to cancel the sale.

Acknowledging that the Forest Service has a commitment to manage further planning areas to preserve

their wilderness values, Cutler cancelled the sale because, he said, "it would detract from the wilderness qualities of the area and potentially reduce its suitability for wilderness designation."

Rick Middleton, the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund attorney who handled the case in Washington D.C., stated "it appears that we have won a sweeping victory."

The successful appeal is important in terms of halting developmental activities in other "further planning" roadless areas. Cutler's decision demonstrates a commitment to protect roadless area values. His statement could be utilized in other appeals and attempts to preserve "further planning" areas in the next three to five years.

For copies of Cutler's decision, contact the Northstate Wilderness Committee, 708 Cherry St., Chico, Ca. 95626, 916-891-6424, or the California Wilderness Coalition, P.O. Box 429, Davis, Ca. 95616, 916-758-0380.

## Oops!

As you have no doubt discovered, it is March and you are just now receiving your Jan.-Feb. *Wilderness Record* and your Feb. *Wild California*. We apologize. In an attempt to save money we switched typesetters. Several weeks were lost as we repeatedly tried to obtain readable type. Finally, we had to find another typesetter. We hope to be back on schedule soon.

Thanks for your patience.

## ORVers Appeal Successfully

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has amended its wilderness inventory for the California Desert Conservation Area, as the result of protests by the American Motorcycle Association and other primarily motorized recreation groups.

Five inventory units (145, 159, 184, 184A, and 184B) have been altered.

Area 145 includes the Amargosa River Valley, Resting Spring Range and Eagle Mountain. Largely because of the complaints of off-road vehicle enthusiasts, 5,000 acres of WSA (the northeast corner) have been dropped due to vehicular tracks and bulldozer prospect scrapes.

Area 159 borders on the

Scodies RARE II area and contains deep mountains and canyons with dense clusters of Joshua trees, cacti, pinyon pine and juniper. Three roads were added to the inventory unit and a small portion of the WSA was removed to exclude developments.

Original area 184 was divided into three separate units (184, 184A and 184B) due to the presence of dividing roads verified in response to a protest. The original 12,798-acre Wilderness Study Area has now been completely dropped. Popular with off-road vehicle users, the area ranges from 2,500 to 6,588 feet with deep canyons containing riparian habitat, with pinyon-juniper and white fir at

the higher elevations.

Remaining as threats to the desert Wilderness Study Areas are three appeals filed by the American Motorcycle Association, National Outdoor Coalition and State Lands Commission. The appeals seek to reduce further or to drop 30 inventory units that the California State BLM office refused to change in response to protest, and have been filed with the Department of the Interior's Board of Land Appeals in Washington, D.C. Areas appealed include many of the largest study areas, such as the Saline Range, Nophah Range, Palen Valley, Chuckwalla Mountains, etc. The appeal process has not been concluded.

# Where the \$ Goes

The Board of Directors and staff of the California Wilderness Coalition feel it is important that members of the CWC know that their wilderness contributions are effectively used. The two pie charts, one for incomes and one for disbursements, illustrate the Coalition budget for 1979.

The slice of the pie labeled "staff" includes salary, benefits, and overhead (unemployment, workman's comp.) for three people, Dave Brown, Sheri Russell and Deb Haury. Much of Dave's work during his six months as Executive Director was directly associated with wilderness issues.

The office category includes items such as rent, monthly telephone service, computer labels, and office supplies. Moving to a downtown Davis location has increased our rent but increased out-effectiveness.

Not included on the charts is the CETA project which currently employs Dennis Coules and Archie Douglas. Their salaries and expenses are paid by CETA with the Coalition providing office space and supervision.

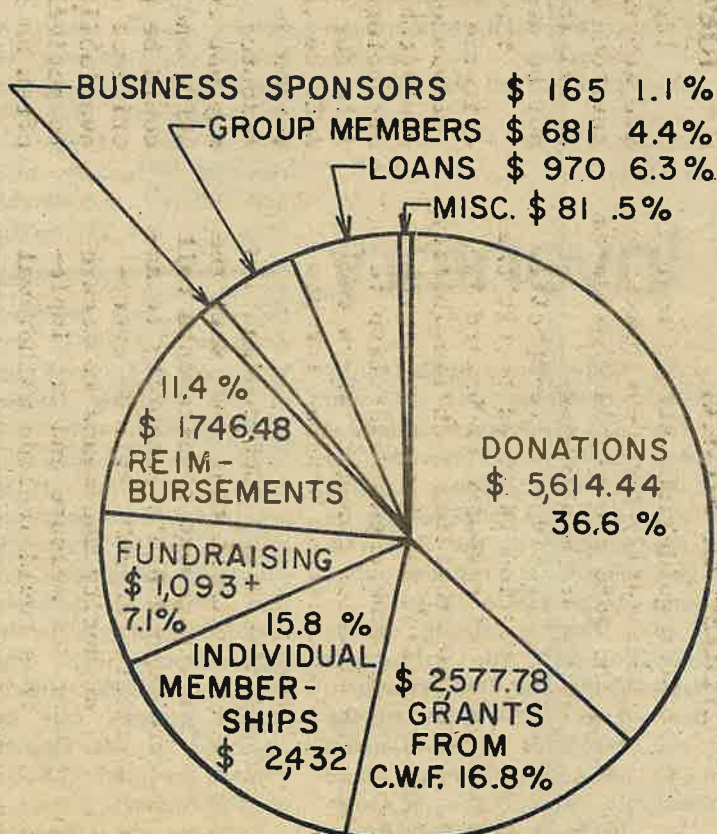
Our publications continue to be a major portion of our expenses. In 1979, *Wild California* was published six times to supplement the bi-monthly *Wild-*

*erness Record*. Our new publication features the "Citizen's Handbook" and allows CWC members to receive up-to-date information twice as often as in the past.

The Wilderness Information Service also became a regular feature for wilderness leaders throughout the state. This computer print-out keeps our member groups and key activists alerted to hearings, docu-

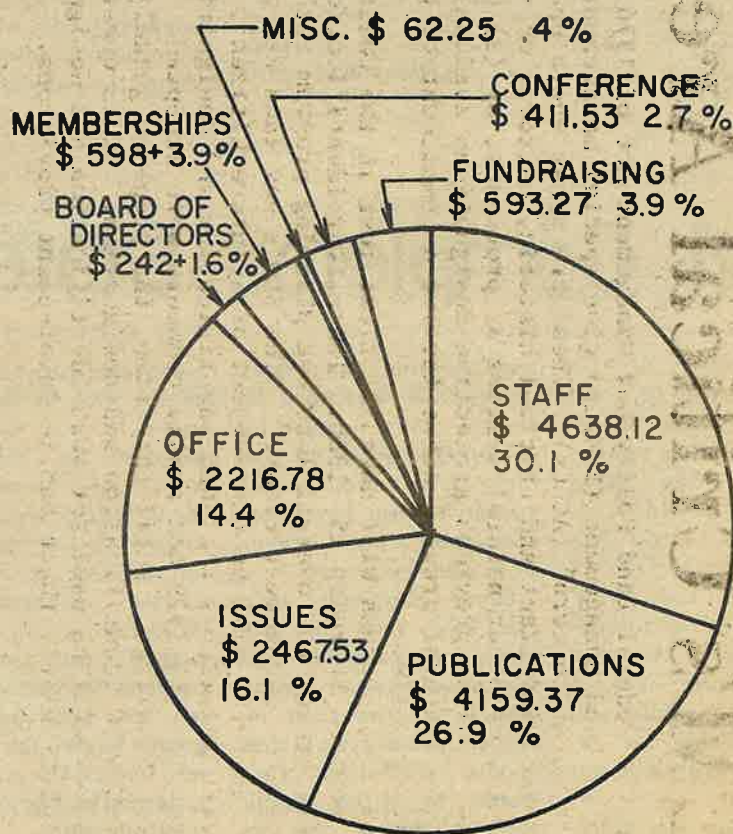
ments, and background information that comes to our attention.

1980 will prove to be a challenging year to the Coalition. We believe the Coalition provides vital functions to the wilderness movement in California and that we deliver a maximum amount of results per dollar donated. We hope you agree and will help us in 1980 with your generous contributions.



TOTAL : \$ 15361.02  
**INCOME**

Graphic by Mike Nolasco



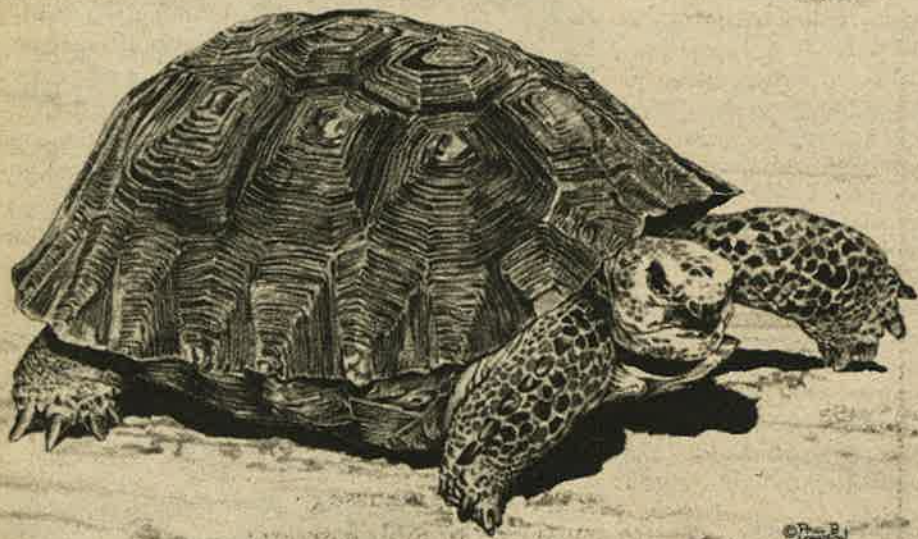
TOTAL : \$ 15389.16  
**DISBURSEMENTS**

# Wilderness Wildlife

# Endangered

# Desert Dwellers

by Dennis Coules



The California desert contains an amazing variety of wildlife species, although human encroachment has taken its toll and apparently caused several recent extinctions. Many of the more obscure desert species are either relics of wetter times or are inhabitants of isolated mountain ranges, which function as evolutionary islands.

The Inyo Mountains Salamander, for example, was once probably much more abundant in the desert, but presently its only suitable habitat is beneath rocks adjacent to permanent stream and seeps in shaded canyons. This rare species is particularly threatened by off-road vehicle (ORV) use of narrow canyons and by fouling of water sources by feral burros.

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) California Desert Plan will, in large part, define the future survival of desert wildlife by determining human activities to be allowed in wildlife habitat. Without adequate controls and enforcement, extinction of some species is assured. The need for preservation of large contiguous tracts of undisturbed habitat cannot be overemphasized.

A description of the status of a few species and groups can serve as an example of what is happening to desert wildlife in general:

## DESERT TORTOISE

Dr. Kristin Berry has studied the desert tortoise extensively since 1972 and has concluded that this reptile is diminishing rapidly in numbers throughout the desert. Even the high-population density areas

support only a fraction of historic numbers per square mile. Of the remaining high-density habitat 83 percent is in private ownership. Of the high-density area 67 percent is used by ORVs, reducing vegetation and destroying individuals. Of the tortoise's range 90 percent is grazed by sheep or cattle which compete with tortoises for food and reduce cover. Roads may cause a "tunnel effect" and reduce populations as tortoises are smashed or kidnapped (tort-napped?), the latter being a misdemeanor in California. Tortoise home ranges may encompass a square mile; often three linear miles of roads occur per square mile in tortoise territory.

The outlook for continued healthy tortoise populations in the California desert is not good. Only the preservation of sizeable areas of habitat, public lands consolidation, the prohibition of ORV use and the establishment of reasonable grazing levels can change this gloomy prospect. Suitable areas include Chemehuevi and Ivanpah Valleys in the East Mojave and Stoddard Valley in the West Mojave. Such preserves would benefit other low-desert wildlife as well, including the desert kit fox, coyote, chuckwalla, wide-winder rattlesnake, and a variety of other birds, reptiles, rodents, etc.

A "Desert Tortoise Natural Area" has been established in the Fremont Valley and private land acquisition is continuing with the assistance of many organizations and individuals.

## MAGIC GECKO

The "Magic gecko" (*Anarbylus switaki*), so named because of its surprising discovery in California in 1976, was first discovered in Baja in 1974. This lizard is part of a group of species called the "peninsular herpetofauna" which inhabit the Peninsular Ranges extending from Baja California north to Palm Springs. Other members of this group include the red diamondback rattlesnake, banded rock lizard, granite spring lizard and granite night lizard. Most are associated with granite boulder outcrops.

Although very secretive and inhabiting rugged terrain, the magic gecko is not safe. Reptile collectors, both commercial and amateur, have turned literally every stone and pried apart every rock slab on some hillsides in San Diego County, permanently destroying the lizard's habitat. High black market prices for protected western reptiles are also an incentive. Protection is hindered because so little is known about the gecko's biology and requirements.

## DESERT BIGHORN

It is clear that bighorn sheep populations have declined in almost all parts of the California desert over the last fifty years. As of a 1972 study, bighorn had been extirpated from 16 former desert mountain ranges, declined in 17 ranges, and were transient in 24 other ranges, at least six of which had supported permanent populations in the past. No more than eight viable populations remain-

ed, and only 18 ranges had permanent populations that appeared to be holding their own against extermination.

Since 1972 the situation has deteriorated. Even the most stable population—60 individuals in the Last Chance Range—are threatened by a proposed road which would cut their territory in half.

Stable plant communities are necessary for survival of the bighorn; the sheep are not adapted to conditions on disturbed lands. Migration corridors must remain free of obstructions (such as roads), since solitude seems to be a basic requirement of the herd.

Another negative factor in the bighorns' struggle for survival, in addition to the decline in suitable undeveloped habitat, is the effect of expanding burro populations and overgrazing by livestock. Feral burros inhabit 39 percent of the remaining bighorn habitat and compete for water, space and forage. Grazing allotments in the BLM's California Desert Conservation Area cover 27 percent of the bighorn habitat. Competition between cattle and bighorn has been reported in the Kingston, Clark and Nopali Mountains, and cattle use of the Last Chance Spring in the Last Chance Mountains has deteriorated the water source and reduced bighorn use.

Unless the California Desert Plan provides for habitat preservation (such as wilderness recommendation for remaining ranges), removal of feral burros, and reduction of grazing and water source fouling by livestock in the remaining bighorn ranges, this characteristic desert inhabitant may slowly decline into oblivion.

## EXTINCT FROG AND A FISH

The San Felipe leopard frog was first discovered in the 1950s, at which time it was considered an unusual population of the leopard frog species that ranges

throughout North America. By the time biologists realized that this frog was actually a distinct species, with its closest relative living in Guatemala, no more frogs could be found. Introduced bullfrogs had destroyed the lower Colorado River populations and most waters of former habitats in the Salton Sink had become too salty. Only two springs in San Sebastian Marsh, near the southwest corner of the Salton Sea, are fresh enough for egg development. But this species may already be extinct.

San Sebastian Marsh and the San Felipe Creek drainage also harbor the desert pupfish, which has been proposed for federal endangered listing. In a 1978-79 survey of all potential desert pupfish habitats, only 5 percent of the fish found in samples were pupfish. all

provisions for these and other creatures if they are to survive.

Minimum requirements for the public lands are:

1. preserve remaining large, isolated, undeveloped areas, particularly bighorn ranges, as wilderness (water developments for wildlife may be permitted in legislated wilderness areas);

2. consolidate public holdings in low elevation areas that support high tortoise populations and eliminate ORV use, grazing, and development;

3. eliminate or greatly reduce feral burro populations throughout the desert and limit the spread of other introduced vertebrates (i.e. fish) and weeds;

4. eliminate overgrazing by livestock through the establishment of more



of the rest were of 13 different exotic species such as the sailfin molly, released by tropical fish fanciers, and *Tilapia*. These introduced fish compete with pupfish and prey on them. Thus, the most stable pupfish populations are now confined to San Sebastian Marsh, where exotic fish populations are relatively low. Land ownership of the creek and marsh is 50 percent public (BLM) and 50 percent private. A single landowner planning to sink wells for irrigation may deplete groundwater supplies and possibly dry up the marsh.

Other rare or endangered fish in the California desert, including other species of pupfish, are presently in less immediate danger than the desert pupfish, but require careful, close monitoring.

## OTHER WILDLIFE

Numerous other animals in the California desert are threatened - reptiles such as the Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard and flat-tailed horned lizard, birds including the prairie falcon, mammals like the Mojave ground squirrel and mountain lion—all have a questionable or unknown future in the desert. The California Desert Plan must make

reasonable grazing allotments;

5. prohibit recreational vehicle use off roads except in a few designated areas of low biological significance;

6. allow neither yucca harvesting (which greatly reduced bird habitats) nor chaining nor other vegetation-type conversions;

7. designate habitats of rare, threatened, or endangered species, or habitats with high densities and diversity of more common forms as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), to be managed in ways totally consistent with wildlife perpetuation.

To ensure that all aspects of the California Desert Plan are consistent with these goals, concerned persons must participate in the public review of the Plan. Public review is scheduled to extend for 3 months after the Plan's release on February 15, 1980. To receive a copy of the California Desert Plan, write to: California Desert Plan, P.O. Box 5555, Riverside, CA 92717 (see related article in this issue). Also write to the California Wilderness Coalition, P.O. Box 429, Davis, CA 95616, to be placed on our Desert Plan Alert list.

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The *Wilderness Record* is the bi-monthly publication of the California Wilderness Coalition. Address all correspondence to: P.O. Box 429, Davis, CA 95616 (916) 758-0380. Articles may be reprinted. Credit would be appreciated.

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## PURPOSES OF THE CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION

... to promote throughout the State of California the preservation of wild lands as legally designated wilderness areas by carrying on an educational program concerning the value of wilderness and how it may best be 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.

# Wild Rivers Update

Government agency actions are currently affecting the management or status of three rivers in California. The North (Main) Fork of the Kern River is undergoing a Wild and Scenic River Study by Sequoia National Forest. In addition, the Salmon and Scott Rivers are the subjects of separate Waterway Management Plans released by the California Department of Fish and Game. These plans were first proposed in 1976 and 1977 respectively, and have now been revised.

## KERN RIVER

The Kern River has its headwaters at over 13,000 feet in Sequoia National Park and drops to 2,600 feet before entering Isabella Reservoir. The Kern is the southernmost river in the Sierra Nevada, and is the only Sierra river that flows from north to south. Included in the watershed are Sequoia National Park, Golden Trout Wilderness, and both roadless and developed lands of Sequoia National Forest.

The North Fork Kern River (74 miles from its source to Isabella Reservoir) was

mandated for Wild and Scenic River study in Rep. Phil Burton's (D-CA) omnibus parks bill of 1978. The study is scheduled for completion by 1982. A booklet describing the river and explaining the river study process is available from *Sequoia National Forest, 900 W. Grand Ave., Porterville, CA 93257*. Comments are solicited from the public on issues to be considered in the planning by March 7, 1980. Citizen participation is important because the final study will make recommendations to Congress concerning the suitability of the river for legislative classification as a Wild and Scenic River.

## SCOTT RIVER

The Scott River is found in Siskiyou County, near the California-Oregon border, flowing from the Scott Mountains to its confluence with the Klamath River near the town of Hamburg, California. The surrounding region is renowned for its beauty and for its relative isolation, in addition to supporting a significant anadromous fishery. Sport

fishing has declined in recent years due to sedimentation, the result of road construction upstream and low flows caused by diversions and upstream groundwater pumping. The Scott River watershed maintains a great diversity of wildlife, with a variety of habitat types, willow-alder-wild grape riparian. The southern bald eagle and peregrin falcon are two endangered species sometimes found in the region.

The Scott River became a component of the State Wild and Scenic River System in 1972. The objectives of the Scott River Waterway Management Plan are to maintain the free-flowing character, to protect and enhance the water quality, to preserve the scenic character, to protect and enhance fish and wildlife, to provide recreation, and to provide for development and use of natural resources consistent with protection. The Scott River planning area includes 73 square miles and only that area where actions could result in a direct and immediate detrimental impact on the river. The Plan

includes recommendations to a multitude of agencies involved in management of the region, including Klamath National Forest. Also included is a recommendation to include the Scott River in the Federal Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

Written comments will be accepted until Feb. 27, 1980 (receipt date) by the Dept. of Fish and Game, Wild and Scenic Rivers Program, 1416 Ninth St., Sacramento, CA 95814. Copies of the Plan are also available from this address. After consideration of public comments, the Plan will be submitted to the Legislature for approval.

## SALMON RIVER

The Salmon River drains a steep, mountainous watershed in the Klamath Mountains of northern California. Located totally within Klamath National Forest, the river ranges from an elevation of 9,000 feet in the Trinity Alps to one of 500 feet at its confluence with the Klamath River. The watershed is primarily undeveloped and contains numerous roadless (RARE II) areas, as well as the Forest Service-proposed Trinity Alps Wilderness and the Marble Mountain Wilderness. The immediate vicinity of the river is dominated by mixed evergreen forest. The Salmon River and its tributaries are of high importance for salmon and steel head. Wooley Creek provides critical summer holding pools for steelhead.

The main stream of the Salmon, as well as the South Fork, North Fork and Wooley Creek, was in-



cluded in the 1972 Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Objectives of the Salmon River Waterway Management Plan are similar to those for the Scott River. Differences include the goal of preserving the more pristine nature of the Salmon, a concern for threatened and endangered plant species within the boundaries of the Salmon River Plan, and a goal to "maintain the community setting and lifestyle of rural isolation and solitude within the Salmon River area." Noting that logging is the major commercial activity in the Salmon River Watershed, the Plan gives recommendations to minimize the conflicts between logging

and maintenance of the natural character of the river environment. Poor logging practices and road construction are currently contributing to a high erosion and sedimentation rate.

Citizens have the opportunity to review and criticize the Plan, its recommendations, and its classifications of river segments as "wild", "scenic", or "recreational". Written comments must be received by February 27, 1980 by Department of Fish and Game, Wild and Scenic Rivers Program, 1416 Ninth St., Sacramento, CA 95814. Also contact them for copies of the Plan.

## CWC Business Sponsors

Like any political organization, California Wilderness Coalition depends on sponsorship and support. The organization is grateful to the following businesses that have been able to see beyond just selling their products to the great need to preserve the wilderness in which their products are used.

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**Mammoth Maintenance Service**  
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## BLM State Inventory (cont.)

areas adjacent to U.S. Forest Service RARE II lands in the Kern Plateau region, Pit River Canyon, numerous areas in the Sierra foothills, and desert areas in the Riverside BLM District including several adjacent to Anza-Borrego State Park.

The BLM is now beginning the wilderness study phase of the wilderness review. Through this process the BLM will determine which of the WSAs will be recommended to Congress as suitable for wilderness designation and which are unsuitable. Wilderness val-

ues of each WSA will be compared with other resource uses which are incompatible with wilderness designation.

The study schedule will vary by individual district office but must be completed by October 21, 1991. To become involved in district planning studies for WSAs, contact the BLM district office which administers the area. A list of district offices, as well as copies of the Final Wilderness Inventory, are available from the State Director, BLM, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825. Any protests of non-WSA decisions must also be addressed to the State Director.

To become more involved, start your own wilderness study on a favorite area. Most BLM WSAs will have no large constituency, so your work will be vital. Areas must be shown to have greater wilderness values than development values that are incompatible with wilderness designation. *Action for Wilderness* by Gillette (Sierra Club) is a good guide for conducting wilderness studies.

California Wilderness Coalition, P.O. Box 429, Davis, CA 95616

Yes I wish to become a member of the California Wilderness Coalition. Enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for first-year membership dues.

Here is a special contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to help with the Coalition's work.

ANNUAL DUES:  
Note: two dollar of annual dues supports the Wilderness Record

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## Enclaves Removed

# YOSEMITE WILDERNESS IMPROVED

The final plan for Yosemite National Park finally was released on February 15, more than two months after Director Bill Whalen announced changes in management from the draft plan.

While the lack of a transportation plan and the retention of resort facilities in Yosemite Valley do not please environmentalists, improvements to the park's wilderness proposal are lauded.

For years, conservation groups have advocated preserving 692,447 acres of Yosemite's backcountry as part of our National Wilderness Preservation System. The National Park Service first proposed 624,000 acres, and in 1972 they added lands to make a 646,700 acre plan. Now they are suggesting a 666,125 acre wilderness.

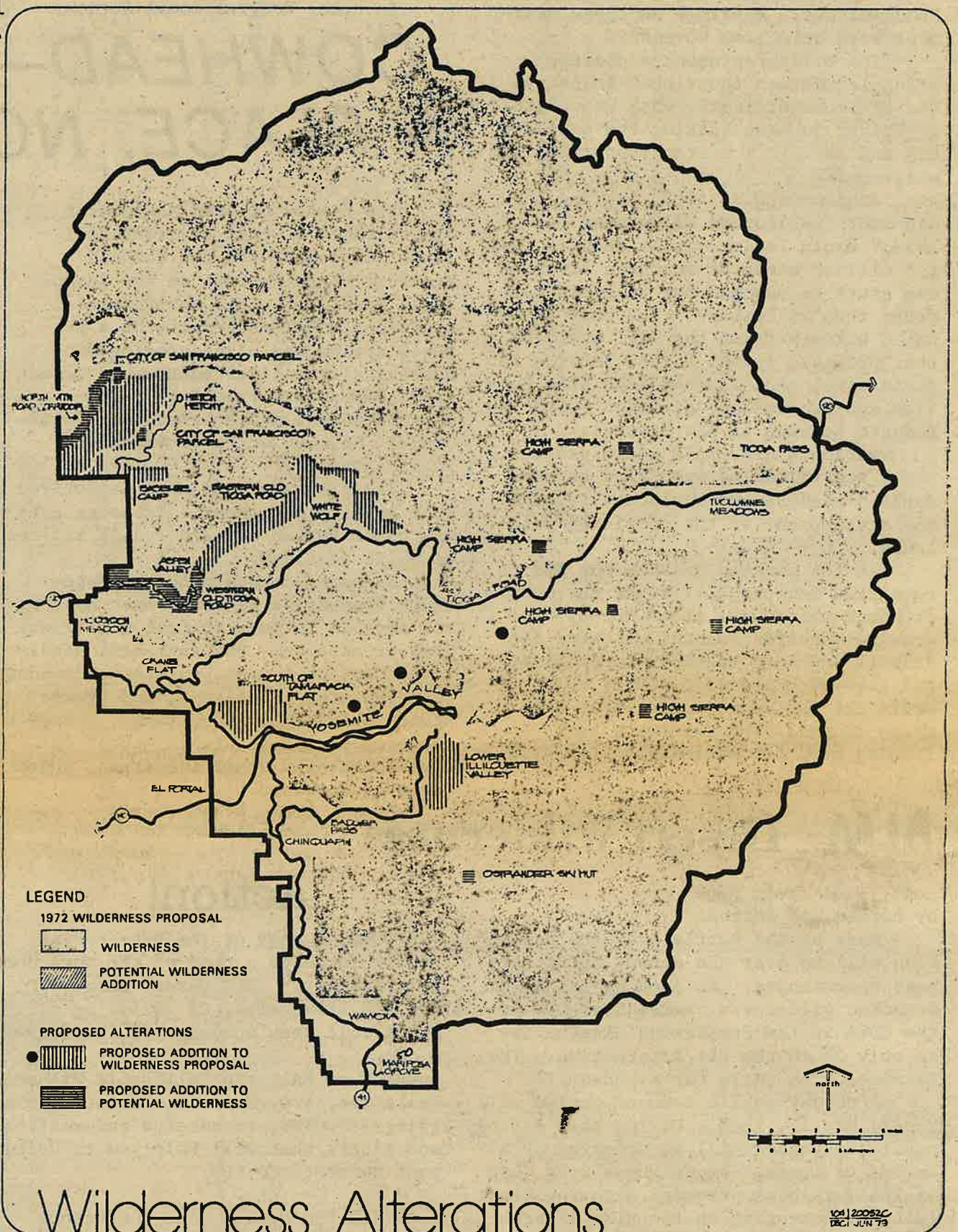
While the acreage between the conservation proposal and the park service has never been great, a number of very important areas originally not included by the service have been at issue.

The major remaining difference remaining between the two positions is the elimination of Little Yosemite Valley from the park service plan. The park service argues that special management measures may have to be taken here due to the heavy backpacking use in this fragile area. Conservationists respond that such measures may be done within a wilderness area.

The park service proposal also does not come down the cliff faces of Yosemite Valley. This results in a small, detached unit of wilderness north of the road to Glacier Point.

All additional lands proposed by the park service for potential and actual wilderness classification will be protected from further development. If Ostrander ski hut and the High Sierra camps need increased technological support, they will be eliminated and that land will be added to wilderness. Areas that will not undergo physical alterations as a result of the reclassification are the lands south of Tamarack Flat, the lower Illilouette Valley, the Hetch Hetchy roadless area, the city of San Francisco parcels, and the enclaves on the north rim of Yosemite Valley (3 areas once proposed for new High Sierra Camps).

Although 72 people asked that



## Wilderness Alterations

Yosemite National Park, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Proposed Additions to Wilderness Yosemite National Park (in acres)		
	Wilderness	Potential Wilderness
1972 Wilderness Recommendation	646,700	121
Proposed Additions		
Lower Illilouette Valley	2,580	
South of Tamarack Flat	2,975	
7 miles of eastern Old Tioga Road corridor	6,400	
6 miles of western old Tioga Road corridor		3,020
Hetch Hetchy roadless area	7,380	
North Mountain Road corridor (near Hetch Hetchy roadless area)		830
3 enclaves on north rim of Yosemite Valley	90	
Baseline camp area		790
City of San Francisco parcels		240
High Sierra camps and Ostrander ski hut		180
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>19,425</b>	<b>5,060</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>666,125</b>	<b>5,181</b>



Hetch Hetchy Reservoir be drained, this proposal will not affect management or maintenance of Hetch Hetchy or the O'Shaughnessy Dam.

Four road segments will be abandoned and restored to a natural condition: 7 miles of the eastern portion and 6 miles of the western portion of the Old Tioga Road; the North Mountain Road between Wilderness Unit 5 and Hetch Hetchy roadless area, and the road to the baseline camp east of Mather. The North Mountain Road and the eastern portion of the Old Tioga Road have been closed to the public. The road to the baseline camp will be removed when the need to maintain the Mather water supply ceases. The western portion of Old Tioga Road will be closed after removal of the pavement from some areas, and private development will be removed before the road is abandoned. Historically significant drainage structures will be recorded before their removal or deterioration.

# RARE II MARK-UP SCHEDULED

Action is expected on the California wilderness bills now before Congress. March 13 has been set as the mark-up date on the bills by the Subcommittee on Public Lands of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs.

Two major bills are before the Subcommittee. Hearings on these measures were held last November.

The bills represent a classic struggle between the timber industry and environmentalists, with Rep. Harold T. "Bizz" Johnson backing the developers and Rep. Phil Burton supporting the wilderness.

Johnson's H.R. 5586, bearing the misnomer "California Wilderness Act of 1979," would legislatively require that 2.5 million acres of roadless areas in the state be managed for multiple uses other than wilderness. The only designated wilderness in the bill would be that proposed by the Forest Service in their final RARE II (Roadless Area Review and Evaluation) decision (with reduced acreage at Mt. Shasta).

Burton's H.R. 5578 would protect about four times as much land as the Johnson measure and would not require the development of the remaining wild lands.

At the mark-up session the Subcommittee members will cover the many proposed wilderness areas one-by-one, drawing specific boundaries where the RARE II boundary requires compromise. Examples of expected boundary adjustments are San Joaquin and Sheep Mtn. where downhill ski interests have lobbied hard for exclusions from wild-

erness.

After the mark-up is completed the new bill will be considered by the full Interior Committee before going to the House floor for a vote by the entire House of Representatives. A similar path will be followed in the Senate.

In other Congressional action,

## COWHEAD—MASSACRE: A PLACE, NOT AN EVENT

The Bureau of Land Management has released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Cowhead-Massacre Planning Unit on the Susanville District. This environmental statement examines impacts of a proposed action and eight grazing management alternatives that would affect 1,094,000 acres of land in northwestern Nevada and northeastern California, 769,000 acres of which are public lands.

The planning unit name is derived from local place names. Massacre Lake was named for an alleged Indian killing of white settlers.

The area is dominated by sagebrush vegetative communities. Most of the area is in poor to fair ecological range condition. Environmental sensitive types such as aspen stands, meadows, riparian areas, wetlands, and browse stands are in poor condition. Trend in range condition is stable except on environmentally sensitive areas, where trend is downward.

the Subcommittee on Public Lands passed on a 9-7 vote a strong environmental wilderness bill for central Idaho. A competing bill that included release language for wild lands did not pass.

H.R. 6070, the Foley nationwide release bill, is expected to undergo hearings in March before Foley's Agriculture Committee.

Wildlife is highly diverse, including deer, antelope, sage grouse, chukar, nongame birds, and numerous raptor nesting sites. Fish and wildlife habitat are generally degraded and in poor condition with downward trends.

Over 20,000 archaeological sites have been predicted. There are 40 known cultural resources of National Register quality.

Recreational use centers around wildlife and archaeological values. Over 34,000 visitor days occur annually, including sightseeing, rockhounding, and hunting.

The area is rancher/farmer dominated. Cedarville is the nearest social and economic center with a population of about 750.

Only four wilderness study areas have survived the intensive wilderness inventory. The only one in California is a cluster of small BLM parcels adjacent to the existing South Warner Wilderness.

Another potential wilderness is adjacent to the Sheldon Antelope Refuge which has proposed wilderness areas.

The other two roadless areas are in the High Rock Canyon area. This is a large, undisturbed natural area where human activity is limited and transient. Miles of rugged, high, vertical canyon walls, numerous undisturbed side canyons, high frequency of raptor nesting, diversity of wildlife, numerous archaeological sites, and excellent opportunities for hiking, exploration, and wildlife observation enhance the area's wilderness values.

Well-preserved remnants of the historic Lassen/Applegate Emigrant Trail are found in the canyon. Captain John Charles Fremont travelled through the canyon on his epic exploration of western America in 1843-1845.

Comments on the draft statement will be accepted until April 15th.

## BLM Desert Wilderness

cont. from front page  
by horses and burros.

Much of the battle over the Desert Plan will be over the amount of wilderness recommended. As seen by Table W-2, proposed wilderness varies from 20% of the CDCA in the Protection Alternative to only 2% in the Use Alternative. The Balanced Plan calls for a modest 7%.

A 90-day public comment period will run to May 15, 1980. During this period public responses will be accepted by a number of means. Among these are: use of the work book provided with the Plan; letters commenting on the plan alternatives or environmental impact statement; use of the toll-free lines to make inquiries and phone in comments; and twelve public meetings in different locations to hear and record comments.

### Action!

--REQUEST a copy of the Desert Plan (which includes a copy of the work book) by writing to: BLM Desert Plan, P.O. Box 555, Riverside, CA 92517 or call BLM's toll free number, (800) 442-4946.

--WRITE or CALL the California Wilderness Coalition, P.O. Box 429, Davis, CA 95616, (916) 758-0380, to receive information and alerts that will help you to write your comments to BLM.

--ATTEND the Desert Plan Conference March 22-23 at the Raincross Convention Center, Riverside. Saturday will feature speakers sessions with a field trip on Sunday. \$10.00 for registration may be sent to Sierra Club, 541 Prospect St., Highgrove, CA 92507.

Table W-2

#### COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE ALTERNATIVES

	Protection Alternative			Balanced Alternative			Use Alternative		
	Acres (000,000)	Percent of Public Lands <sup>a</sup>	Percent of CDCA <sup>b</sup>	Acres (000,000)	Percent of Public Lands <sup>a</sup>	Percent of CDCA <sup>b</sup>	Acres (000,000)	Percent of Public Lands <sup>a</sup>	Percent of CDCA <sup>b</sup>
Wilderness Study Areas (WSA)	5.7	47	22	5.7	47	22	5.7	47	22
Areas Recommended as Suitable <sup>c</sup>	5.2	43	20	1.8	15	7	.6	5	2
Areas Recommended as Nonsuitable	.5	4	2	3.9	32	15	5.1	42	20

<sup>a</sup>There are 12.1 million acres of BLM-managed lands within the CDCA.

<sup>b</sup>There are 25.6 million acres in the entire CDCA.

<sup>c</sup>There are 2,630,000 acres of wilderness designated or administratively approved within the CDCA on lands managed by the National Park Service or the State of California. These wilderness areas represent 10% of the CDCA.



Alternatives for management, including ACEC designation, will then be made available for public comment. After public comment, the BLM district manager will propose a decision that "best serves the public interest." If the decision is to designate the ACEC, a proposed "ACEC Plan Element" of a proposed Resource Management Plan will be prepared which describes the special management requirements. After concurrence by the state director, designation will be made through adoption of the Resource Management Plan. If the decision is not to designate an ACEC, the decision "will be documented through the planning process and a public announcement made." No environmental assessment is required for non-ACEC designation decisions in the proposed regulations.

### Interim Mgt./Revisions

Areas with qualities that could be considered for ACEC identification, or areas that have been identified but not yet designated, are subject to interim management to ensure that such qualities are not damaged.

If at some time the local BLM district manager determines that the public benefits of adversely impacting an ACEC-protected resource "outweigh" the public benefits of protection, a revision can be made with the concurrence of the state director. An environmental assessment record (EAR) must be prepared for any proposed revision. If a revision would result in damage to a resource "to the extent that it would become a major Federal action significantly affecting the human environment," an environmental impact statement (EIS) must be prepared and filed for public review.

### Public Involvement

The draft guidelines state that "opportunity of public involvement will be provided at each step of the ACEC process." "Such opportunity includes, at a minimum, public notice by District Managers when an ACEC identification or designation process begins, and announcement of public meetings, workshops or other informational activity to explain the schedule and procedures, possible application of the ACEC process to particular local situations, and how interested persons and organizations may effectively participate."

The question of citizen proposal of ACECs for identification and designation is not addressed in the draft regulations. The initial consideration of areas for ACEC identification, apparently the responsibility of resource specialists, may or may not be open to public suggestions.

ACEC decisions will be subject to administrative review, including protests and appeals. Protests may be filed with the state director, as covered in section 1601.6-1 of the BLM's planning regulations. Unsuccessful protests may be appealed to the Department of the Interior's Board of Land Appeals.

Any questions concerning the BLM's ACEC process should be directed to Gary Cummins, BLM California State Office, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825, (916) 484-4636.

## California Desert Plan: A Special Case

Some of the first ACECs to be designated in California will undoubtedly be contained in the California Desert Plan. This document is released for public comment in draft form on February 15, 1980 and is to be finalized by October 1, 1980. Each of the Plan alternatives will contain the same list of 50 proposed ACECs. Originally, the Desert Plan Staff had identified 240 ACEC in the 12.5 million-acre California Desert Conservation Area. These were reportedly cut to the 50 remaining by BLM management personnel in a 48-hour cram session, with acreage of some of the remaining areas reduced by up to 80-90%. Resource specialists were not even consulted for this drastic cut, and the public certainly had no input.

Because the desert planning process started before the draft ACEC guidelines were available, only "those aspects of public participation (that are) applicable to the remainder of the sequence" are required according to the BLM's planning transition schedule printed in the Federal Register of December 3, 1979.

It will require a concerted effort on the part of the public to assure that the deleted ACECs are identified for public review and given the protective management they need/



## Current Events

MAR 7	DEADLINE:	COMMENTS ON KERN WILD RIVER STUDY
MAR 13	MARK-UP:	CALIF. RARE II WILDERNESS BILLS
MAR 15	DEADLINE:	COMMENTS ON SISKIYOU FOREST PLAN
MAR 22	CONFERENCE:	DESERT PLAN CONFERENCE - RIVERSIDE
APR 15	DEADLINE:	COMMENTS ON COWHEAD-MASSACRE DEIS
APR 20	MEETING:	CWC BOARD OF DIRECTORS - DAVIS
APR 22	HAPPENING:	EARTH DAY 1980 - 10TH ANNIVERSARY
MAY 10	CONFERENCE:	WILD RIVER CONFLUENCE - DAVIS
MAY 15	DEADLINE:	COMMENTS ON CALIF. DESERT PLAN

## Agency dubs 10 'least likely to succeed'

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has named the 10 plant and animal species that it says are least likely to survive the '80s.

A team of biologists from the federal agency, state conservation departments, universities and private groups are working together to save the species. But there are problems. Some of the 10 most endangered species can't find suitable mates. Several will soon lose their homes and will have to be moved to new wild sites or kept in captivity.

The following plants and animals were included:

Most endangered mammals — the black-footed ferret of the plains and the red wolf of the South.

Most endangered fish — the snail darter of the Little Tennessee River.

Most endangered mollusk — the bird-wing pearly mussel of the Tennessee River.

Most endangered insect — the lotis blue butterfly of Mendocino, Calif.

Most endangered birds — the dusky seaside sparrow of Cape Canaveral, Fla., and the Kauai-oo of the Hawaiian Islands.

Most endangered amphibian — the Houston toad of southeastern Texas.

Most endangered reptile — Kemps Ridley sea turtle of the Caribbean, Gulf and the Atlantic.

Most endangered plant — clay-loving phacelia of Utah County, Utah.

-High Country News



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# Citizen's Handbook BLM's Critical Area Program

In the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) Congress directed the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to give special management attention to "areas of critical environmental concern" (ACECs). These are areas where special management is required to (1) protect important and critical historic, cultural or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other natural systems or processes, or (2) provide protection from natural hazards. Unlike previous protective designations available to the BLM such as "research areas" or "natural areas," ACECs involve a commitment to provide special management on a continuing basis.

The ACEC process will have its first test in the California Desert Plan, released in draft form on February 15, 1980. Thereafter identification and designation of ACECs will be done through the overall land use planning program authorized by FLPMA and carried out by "Resource Management Plans." (The BLM's new land use planning program, finalized August 7, 1979, will be the subject of a future Citizen's Guide.)

Draft guidelines for ACEC identification and designation were proposed in the Federal Register June 6, 1979 and public comments were accepted. To date, the guidelines have not been finalized. Until that time, the proposed guidelines will serve as interim procedures for ACEC identification and designation. It is questionable whether even these interim procedures will be used for ACEC identification and designation in the California Desert Plan, particularly their public involvement provisions.

## Purpose of ACEC

The draft ACEC guidelines stress that ACECs are not necessarily non-development areas. Thus, the ACEC process is considered a part of multiple-use management.

Each ACEC will receive a site-specific management prescription tailored to fit the individual critical resource or hazard involved. Although providing much flexibility, this "site-specific" management provision also leaves much management discretion to the local BLM district manager, which could result in an inconsistent program for protection of ACECs.

On the positive side, ACEC designation constitutes a commitment that even when the area's special management requirements call for a measure beyond BLM's authority to adopt or implement, the BLM "will do everything in its authority and means to secure the adoption of the measure and its implementation." This could include withdrawal from mining activity, cooperative agreements or acquisition of private inholdings.

To summarize the role of ACECs, the draft guidelines state that BLM has a mandate to "provide special management attention that will protect the most important and critical environmental resources... without unnecessarily or unreasonably restricting users of these lands from uses that are compatible with that protection." ACECs can overlay other land classifications.

## Identification/Designation

Identification and designation of ACECs are separate steps. There may be areas where environmental resources have been identified as eligible for ACEC designation that will not be designated as ACECs.

The proposed guidelines offer four criteria for identification of ACECs--relevance, importance, criticalness and protectability. All four criteria must be met before an area is determined to be eligible for further consideration for actual ACEC designation. The "protectability" criterion is a major Catch 22--if an area or resource is deemed not to be protectable, it may not even be identified as a potential ACEC, and adverse developments or activities could be permitted without knowledge of the critical resource. "Protectability" includes availability of sufficient funds and manpower to actively protect the resource--which is often an issue of priorities and politics.

After all identification criteria are determined to have been met, the decision whether or not to designate the ACEC will be made by the local BLM district manager. The decision is to be based on consideration of laws (FLPMA, NEPA, etc.), executive policy, resource-related policies of other government entities, and expressions of public concern (expressly including "residents of nearby communities, landholders, and users of the public lands.").

(continued opposite side)



# WILD CALIFORNIA

February, 1980

Number 8

PUBLISHED BY THE CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION AND THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

## No Recommendation

# BLM DESERT PLAN RELEASED

On February 15th the management plan for the California desert was released by Frank Gregg, Director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Environmentalists immediately charged that the plan was heavily weighted towards development.

The plan, required by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, covers the 25 million-acre California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA). The Act requires that the plan take into account the principles of multiple use and sustained yield in providing resource use, development, and maintenance of environmental quality, and that the plan be completed and implementation initiated on or before September 30, 1980.

The BLM has developed four draft plan alternatives: No Action, Use, Balanced, and Protection. Within each of these alternatives are four multiple use classes: intensive use and development; moderate use with competing resource tradeoffs; limited use favoring protection of sensitive resources; and controlled use preserving wilderness values.

While BLM claims to have no preferred planning alternative, they admit

they will develop a proposed plan from among features of all alternatives based on public response to the plan document, using the Balanced Alternative as a point of departure.

Conservationists argue that the "balanced" alternative is, in fact, little different from the Use Alternative. They believe that the Protection Plan is being portrayed as an extremist position when it is neither extreme nor unrealistic.

The Use and Balanced Alternatives show moderate to significant negative impacts on such important elements as air quality, soil and vegetation, cultural and Native American values, and especially wildlife. The Protection has positive impacts for most of the plan elements, although consumptive and developmental uses are restricted.

Other objections to the alternatives center on the mix of management guidelines that seem to be backwards. Wild horses and burros, for example, are to be kept at their highest populations under the Protection Plan even though most environmental groups favor strong control measures to reduce or eliminate these feral animals. Native species like bighorn sheep are adversely affected

cont. on page 2.

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