



WILDERNESS RECORD

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION

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RARE III?

Forest Service Axes Roadless Review

Blaming a recent California court decision, the U.S. Forest Service has thrown out the decisions made in the Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE II). Environmentalists charged that this move is simply a ploy to remove more lands from protection and to obtain legislation to "release" the Forest Service from the lawsuit.

"This is another Reagan Administration attack on wilderness," said Russ Shay, Northern California Representative of the Sierra Club. "It totally stands the court decision on its head."

RARE II resulted in Forest Service roadless

areas being recommended for wilderness or non-wilderness with some areas scheduled for further study. These "further planning" areas are considered in forest-by-forest planning studies.

A State of California lawsuit over 47 non-wilderness areas is the excuse given for reviewing all roadless lands - including those already recommended as wilderness - in forest plans. This is being ordered despite the court's ruling that the wilderness recommendations were done correctly.

The Forest Service decision to disallow RARE II wilderness rec-

ommendations will allow plans to go ahead for development in non-wilderness areas. John Crowell, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, agreed that there is "a logical inconsistency in allowing activities to proceed in some areas that we simultaneously are reviewing for possible wilderness designation."

Rep. John F. Seiberling, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Public Lands and National Parks, criticized the Crowell plan, calling it "a clumsy attempt to revive the moribund effort for nationwide release legislation."

"In my opinion, such

legislation has zero chance of enactment in this Congress," Seiberling said. "However, we are planning to proceed expeditiously to advance National Forest wilderness bills for California, Oregon, and Washington and other states where there is a sufficient consensus."

Seiberling pointed out that "if the Administration had not blocked in the Senate the California RARE II Bill passed by the House in two successive Congresses, the California case would have been moot, and the asserted justification for this RARE III proposal would not exist."



Lassen Volcanic Nat. Park

Photo by Dave Izzo

Pine Martin Slain

Snowmobiles Roar Through Lassen Park

By Steve Evans

Despite continued overwhelming public opposition, National Park Service officials have again succumbed to the political maneuvering of Interior Secretary James Watt and authorized a second "test" for snowmobile use in Lassen Volcanic National Park. The decision allowing another season of snowmobile use in the Park was apparently made against the recommendations of local Lassen Park officials with one anonymous Park source describing the decision as "a highly political" one.

Conveniently announced after the November election, the

"test" will allow snowmobile use along a 19-mile segment of the main Park road starting from the Manzanita Lake entrance during the first week of every winter month. Only 84 snowmobilers utilized last year's "test" while competing for the same popular road segment with more than 2,400 cross-country skiers.

Only four snowmobilers drove the road during the first day of this second "test" year. On New Year's day, a group with 64 vehicles paraded up and down the road in a noisy attempt to "assert their rights," according to one driver.

Official public comments last year were ten to one against snowmobile use in the Park but the public was not invited to comment on this second year of "testing." Last year's "test" failed to document noise pollution, air pollution, soil and snow compaction, as well as impacts on wildlife, since no studies were made except "visual surveys" carried out by Park rangers. But 26 "after the fact" illegal instances of off-road use were noted (although no one was cited), resulting in the flattening of several trees and shrubs. Visitor counts done by the Park

Service indicate that cross-country ski use at the Manzanita Lake entrance was down considerably from previous years and that public sentiment continued to run high against snowmobile use.

Most of the "test" results from last year had to be forced from the Park Service through Freedom of Information Act requests. Mike Sherwood of the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, after reviewing the information, stated, "Given the test results furnished us by the Park Service, a decision to open Lassen to snowmobiles on a permanent basis would be unreasonable, arbitrary, and capricious."

Recently Park rangers came upon the bloody, mangled body of a pine martin run down by a snowmobiler. Rangers determined the snowmobiler came from National Forest land and passed a Park boundary marker

before killing the animal. Hoping to avoid controversy, Park officials did not publicly release information on this incident.

Despite the unpopularity of snowmobile in Lassen Park, the "test" nature of Watt's decision makes legal challenge difficult. Various conservation groups, including the Sierra Club, have indicated their intent to pursue legal remedies if snowmobile use in the Park is approved on a permanent basis.

Anonymous sources within the Park Service have stated that approval of a second "test" year without asking for public comments may be a key Watt strategy to make it appear that public outrage concerning snowmobiles in Lassen Park has lessened. Despite this attempt to circumvent public participation in major decisions affecting public lands, the California

Wilderness Coalition is asking the interested public to continue to write letters to the National Park Service in opposition to snowmobiles in the Park and protesting the killing of the pine martin. More letters during this second "test" year will provide a solid base of support for legal action if snowmobiling is permanently established in Lassen. Address your letters to Howard Chapman, Regional Superintendent, National Park Service, 450 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102.

Concerned citizens are also urged to write their Representative in Congress since it became increasingly obvious that this highly politicized decision may only be reversible in the political arena.

Steve Evans is the California Wilderness Coalition's new president.

Coalition Report

By Jim Eaton

Tighten your belts. As you can see by this issue of the Record, wilderness is facing a multitude of threats around the state.

Not that I'm particularly pessimistic; I really believe that we have a fair chance of passing the California Wilderness Bill this year which will remove a lot of the problems facing numerous wild places. But we can't rest easy until that legislation is passed and signed by President Reagan (who became the first president to veto a wilderness bill when he sent back the Florida Wilderness Bill recently).

We do have many battlefronts to watch. James Watt is using every trick he knows to

eliminate wilderness, from amending the Desert Plan to just outright dropping Wilderness Study Areas by executive fiat. John Crowell is coping his tactics on a broad scale by ordering national forests to conduct a version of RARE III. And at the state level we have a Resources Secretary who says, "I'm not absolutely convinced that the automobile is the real culprit" when it comes to smog. Van Vleck blames poor air quality on the weather.

What can we do about folks like that? We must rededicate ourselves to working harder for wilderness. Work on the California Wilderness Bill or adopt a roadless area. Money is important, too, and before

long you'll be getting a request from the Coalition for a special donation to keep us paying our bills.

But while you're doing more for preserving wilderness, don't forget to visit the same. Check out some of California's wilderness - you'll come back refreshed and committed to help the wild remain wild.

We would like to welcome the Acorn Alliance in Redway as our newest member group.

Last issue gremlins moved Sam Camp's name from his article "Siskiyou Walk" and dropped it on an article on the G-O Road from Econews. We regret the error.

Update

Cranston Introduces New California Wilderness Bill

Senator Alan Cranston has introduced S. 5, the 1983 California Wilderness Act. The bill would designate as wilderness 2.1 million acres of national forest land and 1.4 million acres of national park land.

Senator Cranston sponsored a nearly identical bill last Congress. He added the 18,200-acre Tuolumne

River Wilderness this year.

Senator Pete Wilson has not yet indicated his views on wilderness legislation for California.

On the House side, Rep. Phillip Burton is expected to introduce a statewide wilderness bill early in February. Burton plans to make major improvements to

last year's compromise measure that passed the House without a single negative vote. Better protection for the Siskiyou and Granite Chief are expected, along with several additional National Forest areas and Bureau of Land Management Wilderness Study Areas recently axed by Interior Secretary James Watt.



Mendocino County's Red Mtn.

Photo by the man who walks in the woods

Coalition in Action

New Officers

At the last Board of Directors meeting, Steve Evans of Chico was selected as the president of the California Wilderness Coalition. Steve swapped positions with Bob Barnes who is now vice-president. Bob did an excellent job as president during the previous two years.

Beth Newman succeeded Bob Schneider as secretary. Wendy Cohen retained the post of treasurer. Both are Davis residents.

1982 FINANCIAL REPORT

The pie chart below shows the disbursements and income for the California Wilderness

Coalition last year. All bills except for staff salaries and expenses were paid. Paychecks are about three months behind.

Issues, primarily national forest and public lands projects, make up the bulk of disbursements. The publications costs are mainly those of the Wilderness Record. Rent (\$165 per month) and telephone are the major office expenses, and membership services and development is the other major cost category.

More than half of CWC's income comes from donations. One quarter of the money flow comes from renewals.

The Board hopes to

increase the income from new members in 1983. Also, special effort will be made to expand our group and sponsor member ranks.

Obtaining grants is the other major goal for the 1983 budget. Grants for a major organizing effort on forest planning is a top priority, along with a proposal for improving the Wilderness Record.

The Board trusts that CWC members feel their money is wisely spent. With new attacks on wilderness already occurring this year, the Board hopes to increase the Coalition's income and activity to meet these threats.

Red Mtn. Wilderness Study Underway

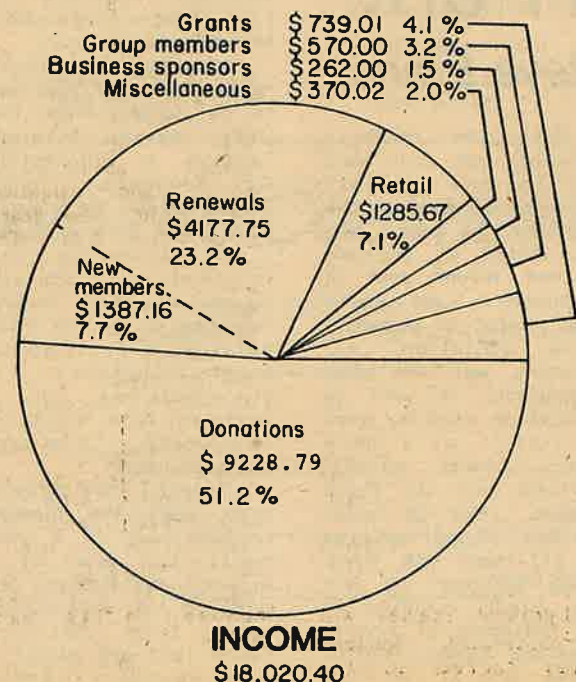
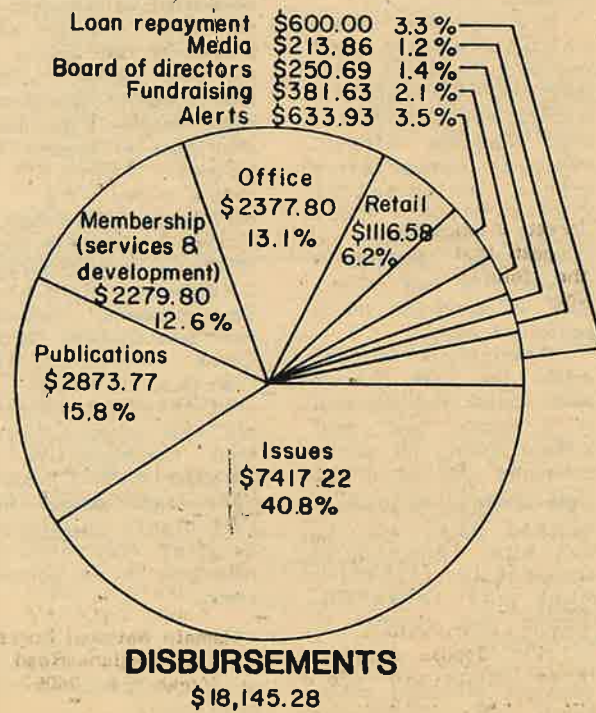
The Ukiah District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is conducting a wilderness suitability study of the Red Mountain Wilderness Study Area.

The 6,173-acre WSA is located on Red Mountain northeast of Leggett in northern Mendocino County. It is an area of unique soils

that support rare plants. There is one federally listed plant species, Arabis macdonaldiana, and three candidate species for federal listing that are found only on Red Mtn. or Little Red Mtn. It also supports the northernmost stand of Sargent cypress.

The draft environmental impact statement

for the wilderness study is scheduled for release in June 1983. To obtain a copy, contact the BLM at 555 Leslie Street, Ukiah, CA 95482. Also, drop a note to either the CWC or the Red Mountain Association so you can receive a wilderness alert when the document is released.



Graphic by Marcia Cary

Reader's Opinion

Dear CWC:
I was sorry to see David Foreman's article, "An Environmental Strategy for the 80's" in the Wilderness Record. His hatred lies right at the surface, poisoning him and me and the Record. Yet he wants us to believe that his heart is pure and just, somewhere behind his conniving and posturing and just plain bad writing.

The principle he mentions cuts both ways. It's people like him - unreasonable, uncompromising, violent, and filled more with themselves than the high principles and ideals they espouse - who push people like me toward a more compromising and less environmentally idealistic

position, figuring that with people like David Foreman in the movement the environmental position can't be all that sound.

Save us from the True Believers - they believe only themselves.

-Cress Kearny
Oakland

Notice to Readers

The Wilderness Record encourages reader response and comment. We hope you will feel free to express yourself concerning wilderness issues of interest to you or in response to articles and opinions appearing in the Record. The Editor reserves the right to condense or edit any letter received.

Klamath Forest Plan

By Steve Evans

The U.S. Forest Service is asking for public comments on the recently released Klamath National Forest Draft Land Management Plan. The proposed plan will guide the management of the Klamath National Forest for the next ten years. Comments are solicited until March 31.

The Plan calls for development of numerous popular roadless areas: part of the Trinity Alps, Siskiyou, Red Buttes, Russian Peak, and Marble

Mountain Wilderness additions. This development will be mainly roadbuilding and logging. The destruction of these proposed wilderness areas will permanently degrade the environment of the Klamath Forest as we know it today.

The preferred alternative in the Plan commits the Forest Service to logging more timber than the forest can produce over the next 20 years. In "departing" from an "even

flow sustained yield" of timber, the Forest Service is proposing to clear-cut 10,000 to 14,000 acres per year from the Klamath National Forest.

This "departure" is proposed as a means to increase timber production to over 300 million board feet per year, an increase of 20 percent from the present. This will result in the conversion of 30 percent of the existing old growth timber stands into brush fields while

leaving only five percent of the Klamath National Forest (outside designated wilderness areas) natural in appearance.

By and large, the environmental impacts of this plan are hidden away, but a careful reviewer soon discovers the real impacts. These problems, along with detailed descriptions of the roadless areas that would be lost, are summarized in following articles.

Predictably, the Klamath Forest Plan has been blasted by various segments of the public, including independent foresters, economists, and conservationists. One forester has labeled the Plan a "political miracle" since it claims to increase outputs of everything (timber, water quality, recreation, etc.). An independent economic analysis has shown that two-thirds of the land that the Forest Service considers capable of producing timber "does not warrant public investment at this time." In other words, most of the logging proposed by the Forest Service is uneconomical unless massively subsidized by our tax dollars.

None of more than 460,000 acres of roadless land is recommended for wilderness by the Forest Service. In addition, there are numerous other problems with the Forest Service's proposed plan. For example:

* The preferred alternative will result in the spraying toxic herbicides on 4,800 acres per year while "intensively

managing" timber for commodity production on unstable slopes and marginal lands.

* The preferred alternative will reduce habitat quality for blacktail deer, black bear, gray squirrel, pileated woodpecker, goshawk, and elk.

* The preferred alternative recognizes seventeen species of rare or sensitive plants that may decline into extinction due to the management outlined in the Plan while ignoring over 50 species that are regarded as rare or sensitive by the California Native Plant Society.

All listed alternatives, including the preferred alternative, will increase erosion and sediment on the Forest.

All listed alternatives, including the preferred alternative, will supposedly maintain adequate levels of salmon and steelhead, but internal Forest Service documents indicate that they may, in fact, decline because of the increased erosion and sedimentation caused by intensive timber management.

□ Natural Features Dominate Landscape

■ Manmade Features Dominate Landscape



EXISTING VISUAL CONDITION 1980



ALTERNATIVE WLD Wilderness



ALTERNATIVE CE Commodity Emphasis

Forest Service Given Yellow Light on G-O Road

In a surprise pre-Christmas court decision, the U.S. Forest Service won the right to open bids on January 14 to complete the last six miles of the controversial timber-access highway known as the Gasquet-Orleans Road (G-O Road).

The construction contract will be awarded soon thereafter, though rain and snow are expected to delay construction until spring.

A trial concerning the G-O Road and logging Blue Creek is set to open in San Francisco on March 14.

Native Americans and environmentalists were angered and dismayed over the go-ahead decision by Federal District Court Judge Stanley Weigel, who refused to issue a preliminary injunction.

Traditional healer Bobby Lake said, "Our

people have trained in the high country for thousands of years, and many of us will never permit the G-O Road to violate these spirit lands."

The sentiment was echoed by the Siskiyou Mountains Resources Council (SMRC), which said that even if the courts found the Forest Service actions to be legal, completion of the road would amount to "another moral and

ethical tragedy of the United States."

SMRC not only will continue the fight to block construction of the uncompleted section, it also is seeking support from Reps. Doug Bosco and Phil Burton to "effectively decommission the G-O Road by tearing up some 8.3 miles of completed asphalt."

-Econews

Forest Headquarters Picketed By Siskiyou Supporters

On Friday, January 28 at high noon, a group of about 100 wilderness supporters from several western states staged a peaceful protest against the planned completion of the Gasquet-Orleans Road (G-O Road) at the U.S. Forest Service regional headquarters in San Francisco.

At the same time, a spontaneous, peaceful vigil against the G-O Road and in favor of wilderness designation for the Siskiyou Mountains was held at the Six Rivers National Forest office in Eureka. This event was attended by about 100 north coast

residents unable to make the storm-drenched trip to San Francisco.

The purpose of the protests, as well as a two-week "road show" tour throughout California by the Earth First! group, was to consolidate and publicize the resolve of environmentalists to prevent the completion of the controversial Chimney Rock section of the G-O Road by the Forest Service.

Completion of the last six miles of this high-speed road for timber hauling will cut off the diverse and densely-forested Blue Creek unit of the citizen-

proposed Siskiyou Wilderness from contiguous roadless portions of the Siskiyou to the north. More than 200 miles of logging access roads are planned to facilitate the logging of over 700 million board feet of timber from the steep and fragile watershed of Blue Creek. Resource values such as extremely high botanical diversity, wilderness character, salmon and steelhead spawning grounds, and wildlife habitat for wolverine, fisher, goshawk, and other "old-growth" species will be obliterated. Spiritual sites sacred to the,

indigenous Yurok, Karok, and Tolowa peoples also will be destroyed by completion of the G-O Road.

Conservationists and Native Americans have managed to stall the completion of the G-O Road for several years through administrative appeals and litigation. These tactics have nearly been exhausted. The situation has become urgent, with construction expected to begin when snow conditions allow.

Siskiyou supporters now are organizing for a non-violent blockade of the G-O Road construction site this spring. The blockade will be patterned after the successful, long-term blockade by Australian Earth Firsters to prevent logging of a tropical rainforest in New South Wales.

-Dennis Coules

WHAT YOU CAN DO

A coalition of conservation groups currently is working with the Forest Service to create a "environmental alternative" to the Klamath Plan. In the meantime, the public has until March 31 to comment on the existing proposal. It is extremely important for letters to be written as early as possible in support of wilderness and rational forest management. We suggest that you mention the following points in your letter:

1) Support Alternative WLD (Wilderness) and highlight these endangered roadless areas: the Orleans-Coffee Creek additions to the Trinity Alps, the entire Siskiyou roadless area, the entire Red Buttes roadless area, Russian Peak, and the Snoozer, Portuguese, Shackelford, and Grider additions to the Marble Mountains Wilderness.

2) Oppose departure from sustained yield forestry. Intensively

managing timber resources beyond what the land can produce to the detriment of other resources is poor forestry and is totally unacceptable as an alternative in National Forest management.

3) In order to meet the departure option proposed by the Forest Service, Alternative WLD sacrifices visual quality. Support the protection of visual quality in the middle and foregrounds of major travel corridors.

4) Alternative WLD only will protect six of thirteen Research Natural Area candidates and sixteen of twenty-four Botanical areas. Support protection and study of all thirteen Research Natural Areas and twenty-four Botanical areas.

Send your letter by March 31 to:

Robert L. Rice
Forest Supervisor
Klamath National Forest
1312 Fairlane Road
Yreka, CA 96097

Roadless Areas in the Klamath National Forest

Siskiyou Roadless Area

The Siskiyou are the remote wild mountains of northwestern California where the geologies of the Coast ranges, Sierra Nevada, and the Cascade Mountains come together. They are the headwaters of the Smith River, the only undammed river in the state, whose cool and clear waters support famous runs of salmon, trout, and steelhead.

The roadless area has a wide range of physical and biological environments. Elevations range from 800 feet to 7,309 feet at Preston Peak, the highest mountain in the area. The topography is predominately steep and dissected. Approximately sixteen percent of the area is classified as being unstable with a high erosion hazard. The area generally receives considerable amounts of precipitation, up to 100 inches annually.

Lower elevations of the Siskiyou are vegetated generally with Douglas fir, white fir,

pine, cedar, and a mixture of hardwoods, while the upper elevations are red fir and white fir with some white pine.

The area contains a diversity of cone-bearing trees which may not be equaled anywhere on the planet. Redwoods occur in scattered groves in Blue Creek, and the rare weeping spruce occurs at the headwaters of the south fork of the Smith River. Over thirty rare species of wildflowers can be found, and hundreds of others abound.

The Siskiyou have an animal community to match its diverse plant community. The old growth forests in particular are important for many cavity-nesting species such as the northern flying squirrel, pileated woodpecker, spotted owl, martin, and fisher. The Siskiyou also are home to the black bear, mountain lion, wolverine, and Bigfoot.

Certain parts of the Siskiyou are traditional

power centers for three groups of Native Americans -- the Karok, the Yurok, and the Tolowa. They have been fighting to stop road building and logging in their sacred lands which their shaman use for spiritual renewal ceremonies.

The Forest Service shows the size of the Siskiyou roadless area to be 210,851 acres in the Klamath, Six Rivers, and Siskiyou national forests. Environmentalists also add the un-inventoried Blue Creek area which would be cut off from the main roadless area if the Gasquet-Orleans road (G-O Road) were to be completed.

During RARE II, 99,832 acres of the roadless area were recommended for wilderness protection. In the Forest Plan, none of the remaining 111,019 acres is proposed for wilderness designation under the preferred plan. With this alternative, development would occur on

approximately 90 percent of the area, adversely impacting wilderness resources. Wilderness values would be maintained on about ten percent of the area, primarily the higher elevations, which are rocky, open areas along the Siskiyou Crest near the head of Dillon Creek.

The California Wilderness Bill will designate 101,000 acres of the Siskiyou as wilderness and establish special study areas for the Dillon Creek and Blue Creek areas.



East Fork Illinois River, Siskiyou Photo by John Hart

Russian Peak

The 34,400-acre Russian roadless area lies between the Trinity Alps and Marble Mountains. Steep slopes and broad, U-shaped valleys characterize this area, with many lakes in the cirque basins. There is considerable vegetative

variety in this area, which has been known and studied for its botanical variety for many years. Seventeen different conifer species are found in Sugar Creek. White and red fir are common, along with Douglas fir, pine (including foxtail pine), brewer and Englemann spruce, alpine fir, and mountain hemlock.

Wolverine have been spotted in the area, which also provides habitat for deer, black bear, spotted owl, goshawk, pileated woodpecker, band-tailed pigeon, and western gray squirrel.

Recreation use is high, and the area has many recreational attractions. Fishing,

hiking, and backpacking are most popular, but nature study (primarily botanical) also is very popular because of the variety of vegetation. The Pacific Crest Trail passes through the area.

Because of their earlier RARE II decision, the Forest Service already has eliminated half of the Russian roadless area from consideration. Now the Forest Service proposes development for 48 percent of the remaining 16,574 acres. They will maintain wilderness values on about 8,500 acres, primarily the forested east slope and the open, rocky, scattered tree environment at the higher elevations, but they do not recommend wilderness designation for this portion.

The proposed 12,000-acre Russian Peak Wilderness is part of the California Wilderness Bill.

Orleans Mountain Roadless Area

This 183,089-acre roadless area occurs on

three national forests and is adjacent to the Forest

Service's proposal for the Trinity Alps Wilderness. Orleans Mountain, the Forest Service Trinity Alps recommendation, and additional roadless areas in the Shasta Trinity National Forest make up one block of land over 600,000 acres in size.

The Orleans Mountain roadless area wraps around much of the old Salmon Mtns.-Trinity Alps Primitive Area. It has varied topography, with much of it steep, broken, and rugged. Elevations range from near 600 feet in the Somes Bar area to about 7,800 feet. Vegetation is primarily red and white fir at upper elevations and Douglas fir, pine, live oak, and tan oak at lower elevations. There is some digger pine in a few locations.

Wolverine have been sighted in the Orleans Mountain roadless area. Other species present include deer, black bear, spotted owl, western gray squirrel, band-tailed pigeon, peregrine falcon, and pileated woodpecker. Salmon, steelhead, and trout are found in the streams.

The Pacific Crest

Trail traverses the eastern portion of the area and receives considerable use. There are numerous trails that provide easy access to the many recreation attractions within the area. The area also has trails that penetrate deeper into the proposed Trinity Alps Wilderness. Some helicopter salvage logging has occurred within a portion burned during the Hog Fire.

During RARE II, 9,700 acres of the Orleans Mountain roadless area were recommended for wilderness designation. In the Klamath Plan, the Forest Service recommends none of the remaining 173,389 acres for wilderness. Instead, the Forest Service plans to develop 80 percent of this area, although 72,750 acres are dominated by nonforested alpine meadows, rocky areas, and brushy areas with scattered trees.

Much of the land the Forest Service wants to log is in the California Wilderness Bill as part of the Trinity Alps Wilderness or a special Orleans Mountain Wilderness Study Area.



Dot Creek Meadow in Western Trinity Photo by Dave Van de Mark

Condrey Mtn.

The 15,000-acre Condrey Mountain roadless area is primarily in the Rogue River National Forest. It is near to the proposed Red Buttes Wilderness. The area is located on the Siskiyou Mountain crest between Copper Butte and White Mountain and is characterized by its broad, steep, rolling topography. Much of it is vegetated by mixed conifer, pine, and Douglas fir.

Condrey Mountain offers especially good habitat for species associated with late forest successional stages such as spotted owl and goshawk, and it offers

particularly good food and shelter for bear and band-tailed pigeon.

Currently, recreational use is associated almost totally with the Pacific Crest Trail which traverses the area. Some hunting also occurs.

Even though the Rogue River National Forest has the lead role in analyzing and assessing the resources of the total contiguous Condrey Mountain roadless area, the Klamath National Forest proposes to develop 29 percent of the area. They will postpone implementing this decision until the Rogue River forest finishes their study of the entire area.

Marble Mountain Wilderness Additions

The existing 213,728-acre Marble Mountain Wilderness is surrounded by nearly 100,000 acres of unprotected roadless lands. During RARE II the Forest Service recommended that 27,201 acres be added to the wilderness. The Reagan Administration whittled that amount down to 7,860 acres - a "balance" of about eight percent for wilderness and 92 percent for the loggers.

In the Forest Plan, most of the roadless areas around the Marbles were looked at again, but the Forest Service still is not recommending any additional wilderness.

GRIDER ROADLESS AREA

This 11,296-acre roadless area is adjacent to the northern boundary of the Marble Mountain Wilderness. It has steep, rough, broken topography and encompasses most of the Grider Creek drainage. Elevations range from near 1,300 feet to over 6,000 feet.

The Grider roadless area contains a variety of wildlife habitat which sustains diverse wildlife populations. Species include deer, black bear, peregrine falcon, and bald eagle. It offers particularly good habitat for wildlife species associated with late

forest successional stages: spotted owl, goshawk, and pileated woodpecker. Grider also has a large hardwood component which can support relatively large populations of band-tailed pigeon and western gray squirrel.

Grider Creek and some of its tributaries provide spawning and rearing habitat for king and silver salmon, steelhead, and rainbow trout. Summer steelhead have been reported in the drainage, but the extent of the run has not been determined.

The area is dominated by a densely forested valley with the Grider Creek Canyon and sheer limestone cliffs. The Pacific Crest Trail runs near Grider Creek in the valley bottom along most of its route.

The Forest Service proposes to develop 100 percent of this roadless area even though 22 percent of the area is classified as being unstable with a high erosion hazard.

JOHNSON ROADLESS AREA

This 9776-acre roadless area is adjacent to the northwest side of the Marble Mountain Wilderness. It is characterized by steep, glaciated topography with smooth, rounded ridges

and steep U-shaped valleys. It is located near the headwaters of Elk Creek, a summer steelhead stream. Elevations range from 2,800 feet along Elk Creek to 5,600 feet near Johnson's Hunting Grounds.

Although a relatively small potential addition to the Marble Mountain Wilderness, the Johnson roadless area has habitat for deer, black bear, elk, spotted owl, goshawk, and pileated woodpecker. Its hardwood component is capable of supporting a particularly large population of band-tailed pigeon. Streams in the Johnson area support fall, winter, and summer steelhead as well as king salmon and resident trout.

The Johnson roadless area shares about nine miles of border with the Marble Mountain Wilderness. Three wilderness portal trails pass through this densely forested area.

The Forest Service would like to develop 100 percent of this area. Approximately 15 percent of the area is classified as being unstable with a high erosion hazard.

PORTUGUESE ROADLESS AREA

This 40,424-acre roadless area is adjacent to the southwest side of



Marble Mountain Wilderness

the Marble Mountain Wilderness. It has steep, rough broken topography at low to moderate elevations. There are many creeks, all of which eventually drain into the Salmon River near the western boundary of the area. Wooley Creek, a summer run steelhead stream, is the most prominent creek.

Wildlife habitat supports spotted owl, pileated woodpecker, king and silver salmon, trout, and steelhead, including a summer run. Due to large areas of resprouting brush species caused by the 1977 Hog Fire, Portuguese offers particularly good habitat for bear, deer, western gray squirrel, and band-tailed pigeon. and salmon and steelhead occur in major tributary streams to the Klamath River.

Currently, this area receives considerable use, especially from southern Oregon. The Pacific Crest Trail traverses the eastern third of the area. Many people visit the eastern part to view and study the botanical diversity.

During RARE II the Forest Service designated the entire roadless area non-wilderness. President Carter altered this by recommending a portion of the area for wilderness, but President Reagan rescinded this proposal. The Forest Service's preferred alternative in the Forest Plan is for non-wilderness for the entire area. Nearly three quarters of the area would be developed, mostly the densely forested portion. Wilderness values would be retained on the rocky peaks and open meadows with scattered trees and fingers of forested land.

Red Buttes was in the original California Wilderness Bill but later dropped. It is not in Senator Cranston's California Wilderness Bill, but it is expected to be a part of a companion bill authored by Rep. Phillip Burton.

tailed pigeon.

During RARE II 14,850 acres of the roadless area were recommended for wilderness, but the Reagan Administration changed this to non-wilderness. The Forest Service now plans to develop 91 percent of the 40,424-acre area, adversely affecting wilderness resource values such as solitude, naturalness, and primitive recreation opportunities. About 18 percent of the area is dominated by nonforest alpine meadows, rocky areas, and brush areas with scattered trees; nearly 15 percent has been classified as extremely unstable with a high erosion hazard.

Part of this roadless area is in the California Wilderness Bill as the Marble Mountains Wilderness Additions.

SNOOZER ROADLESS AREA

During RARE II, 6,494 acres of the 30,162-acre Snoozer roadless area was recommended for wilderness. This is rugged country ranging in elevation from 2,000 to 6,800 feet. There are many rocky, sparsely vegetated brushy slopes in the North Russian Creek and North Fork Salmon River drainage portions of the area.

Wolverine have been spotted in the Snoozer area. Deer, black bear, spotted owl, goshawk, pileated woodpecker, western gray squirrel, and trout are found here as well.

The Pacific Crest Trail bisects the area, and there are several trail access routes to the Marble Mountain Wilderness. Hiking, backpacking, and fishing are the most common activities, and there is some hunting.

The 23,668 acres recommended for non-wilderness in RARE II would remain in that designation under the Forest Service proposed alternative. This plan would result in the

Photo by Jim Eaton

development of 100 percent of this roadless area, even though 25 percent of the area is dominated by nonforest alpine meadows, rocky areas, and brushy areas with scattered trees. Approximately 11 percent of the area is classified as being unstable with a high erosion hazard.

Part of this roadless area is in the California Wilderness Bill as the Marble Mountains Wilderness Additions.

SHACKLEFORD ROADLESS AREA

This 4,685-acre roadless area is adjacent to the Marble Mountains Wilderness and ranges in elevation from 4,400 feet to over 7000 feet. There are quite a few grassy and brushy meadows located on the upper slopes and on some valley bottoms adjacent to streams.

Wildlife habitat is found for deer, black bear, band-tailed pigeon, and western gray squirrel. Shackleford offers particularly good habitat for the wildlife species associated with late forest successional stages, such as spotted owl and goshawk. Elk were found in the area until the 1850's, but none are known to occur there today.

Shackleford is an important wilderness portal and is heavily used because it provides easy access into the Marble Mountain Wilderness. Three trails traverse it; of these, the Shackleford Creek Trail is by far the most commonly used.

The Forest Service plan calls for development of 20 percent of this roadless area. Although not recommended for wilderness designation, about 80 percent of the area would be retained for undeveloped, dispersed recreation.

Part of this roadless area is in the California Wilderness Bill as the Marble Mountains Wilderness Additions.

Red Buttes Roadless Area

This 67,771-acre area is named the Kangaroo roadless area by the Forest Service. It is characterized by very steep, rugged topography, with elevations ranging from near 1,400 feet to 6,739 feet at Red Butte. Vegetation is mostly Douglas fir, white fir, and

pine, with some cedar and hardwoods at the lower elevations. Upper elevations have mostly white fir and red fir. Brewer spruce is scattered throughout the eastern part of the area and at upper elevations.

Wildlife includes deer, black bear, elk, spotted

owl, goshawk, pileated woodpecker, band-tailed pigeon, and western gray squirrel. The siskiyou salamander, an amphibian listed as rare by the State of California, is found in some of the creeks along the eastern side. Rainbow trout are present in area streams,



Pyramid Peak near Swan Mtn., Red Buttes Roadless Area

Photo by John Hart

BLM Lands Lose Protection

Watt Whittles Away

By Russ Shay

Interior Secretary James Watt gave the nation his version of a Christmas present last year - he dropped 800,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management roadless areas from wilderness study. More than 120,000 acres of the lands are in California.

Some of these areas are well known as part of the proposed Trinity Alps, Ishi, Tuolumne River, and Scodies wilderness areas or additions to the existing Agua Tibia, Domeland, and Pinnacles wildernesses.

Six major environmental groups, along with Rep. Phillip Burton, have challenged Watt's decision in federal court. Some of the areas would be protected by passage of the California Wilderness Act, but the majority of areas will never even be studied for wilderness should Watt's ruling stand. It is particularly ironic as the BLM was planning to recommend several of the areas as wilderness.

- Editor

The Wards Ferry Road twists and turns unmercifully on its way down the side of the canyon. If you are driving down in the early morning, the sun peeks at you through the digger pines and oak trees on the rim. At the bottom, you are on the banks of the Tuolumne River.

Upstream, it is about 18 miles to the Lumsden Road; in between, the canyon is wild land. The canyon is deep, the sides steep. The sunny side is covered in tall grass, the north side in brush and trees. It's an impressive sight, looking upstream. It looks the same - is largely the same - as when visited by the Native Americans who gave the Tuolumne its name or when the first Gold Rush prospectors came to test the river's gravels.

Altogether, there are about 20,000 acres of still-wild public land here. And it's a rare piece. There is no designated wilderness this low in the Sierra Nevada. Most of what has been protected is up at the crest of the range, where the

Tuolumne begins its descent. This piece is in the foothills, at the base of the river's staircase from the heights.

The U.S. Forest Service owns most of the 20,000 acres and is studying whether to preserve it in its natural state or to allow for a dam that would flood the canyon. Forest Service policy is not to allow any development that would remove the preservation option until the final choice is made. The decision will not be easy - both sides have strong cases and public support - and the Forest Service wants it to be a deliberate one, based on careful study and weighing of the alternatives.

But not all of this land belongs to the Forest Service. The first three miles of river above Wards Ferry, about 3,000 acres, are managed by the Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management. But the fishermen who walk up the river from the road, seeking wild trout no hatchery produced, can't tell where the Bureau's land ends and the Forest Service land begins. The vegetation doesn't change; there is no ridge or fence line. The boundary exists only on a map, a straight line drawn decades ago to reflect a bureaucratic division of turf.

Interior Secretary James G. Watt recently decided that this piece of Bureau land, along with 55 others in California, was too small to study for protection, let alone to protect. Watt set up a 5,000-acre minimum. Earlier, Watt tried to get authority to remove protection from parcels larger than 5,000 acres. Congress refused. He tried to lease congressionally designated wilderness areas for oil drilling. Congress stopped him. Still, he keeps chipping away wherever he can.

In San Diego County, Watt threw out a 2,500-acre area of the Sawtooth Mountains on the western edge of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. The Bureau of Land Management already had studied and recommended that area for protection. It was the final, central piece of a jigsaw puzzle of wilderness, connecting two other pieces of Bureau wildlands with two other pieces of the Park already designated as wilderness by the state. Watt's new policy leaves 77,000 acres of

designated or recommended wilderness with an unprotected 2,500-acre hole in the middle.

Pinnacles National Monument, south of Salinas, was created to protect a piece of California's inner-coast range that contains spectacular volcanic cliffs. Congress later designated much of the Monument as a wilderness area. There are small parcels of Bureau lands on each side of the Monument. The Bureau completed a draft study of the wilderness situation and recommended, in a startling triumph of common sense over bureaucratic protection of turf, that Congress give those parts of Bureau land within the watershed of the Monument over to the Park Service. The Monument wilderness area would then end up with a more sensible boundary from the point of view of on-the-ground management. Now Watt's policy comes along, prohibiting the Bureau from protecting that land so that it stays in the condition that the Park Service would like.

Not every piece of land that Watt has decided not to protect or not to study is an important one with great value as wilderness. Not all of the lands that the Forest Service is studying for possible wilderness designation will be, or should be, protected by Congress. But at least the Forest Service will attempt to find out what value these still-wild lands do have before letting them be developed.

Watt does not want to know what value these lands might have for preservation. Preservation does not interest him, and he is very accomplished at disregarding what does not interest him.

He has dismissed continual congressional rebuffs of his policies, and regards the unprecedented weight of editorial disapproval as evidence that the nation's press is "manipulated" by his critics. He began his tenure in office by refusing to meet with leaders of national environmental groups, and dismissed their petition of one million signatures as "a fund-raising drive." He doesn't seem to care that public-opinion polls - even those commissioned by industry - show broad support for wilderness preservation and environmental protection among the majority of Americans.



Diamond Crossing

Photo by Jeff Schaffer

Road Approved at Granite Chief

Regional Forester Zane G. Smith has granted Southern Pacific Land Company a right-of-way across Tahoe National Forest lands in the proposed Granite Chief Wilderness. Southern Pacific has plans to build a road through the southern portion of the Granite Chief area in order to log its inholdings near Diamond Crossing.

The Granite Chief Task Force (a member of the California Wilderness Coalition) and the Sierra Club have filed a notice of intent to appeal the decision with the Chief of the Forest Service in Washington, D.C. The conservation groups support wilderness designation of the popular Granite Chief area, and they intend to pursue all

administrative and legal remedies to prevent the roading and logging of the area until Congress passes a California Wilderness Bill.

The road also will be opposed on procedural grounds because the Forest Service has not completed a formal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Forest Service regulations and existing legal precedents require an EIS before any developmental activities can be carried out in a RARE II "further planning" roadless area, a designation granted the Granite Chief area in 1979.

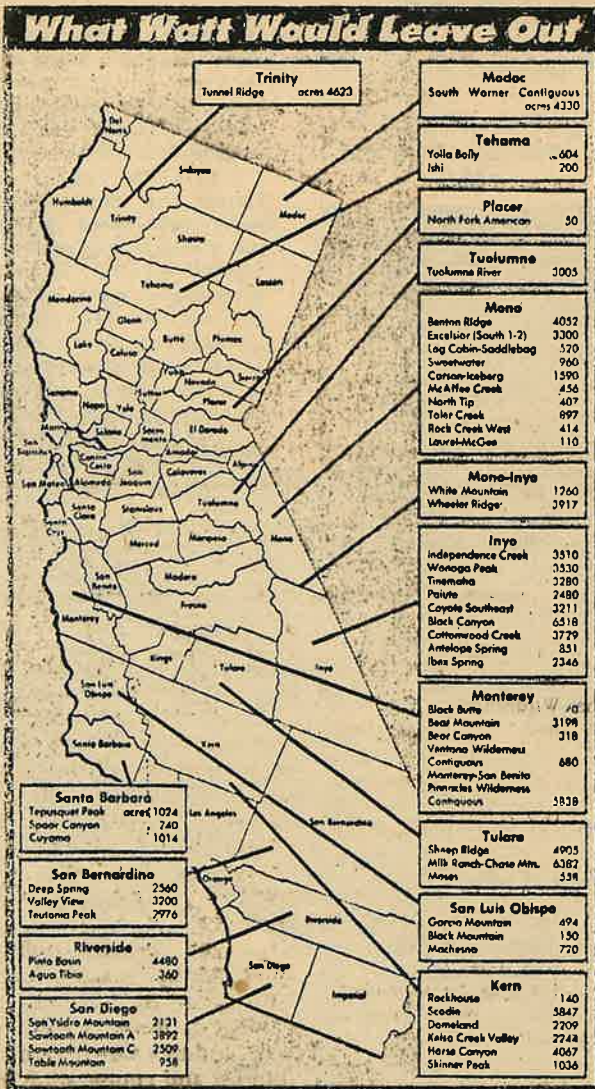
According to the Forest Service, the right-of-way has to be granted because an amendment to the Alaska Lands Act requires government agencies to provide "reasonable access" to private inholdings surrounded by public lands. Conservationists feel that destruction of the wilderness qualities of the Granite Chief area is not "reasonable." They propose that the Forest Service either purchase the lands outright (unlikely with the current budget crunch) or exchange other National Forest Lands for Southern Pacific's holdings. Tahoe Forest officials have opposed land exchanges elsewhere for the land in Granite Chief; they don't want to exchange valuable timber land elsewhere for the land in Granite Chief because of the probability of the area being designated wilderness.

The only person Watt does feel accountable to is his boss: President Reagan. Unfortunately, the President supports Watt and apparently shares his view of their legions of critics as misguided in their desire to protect the environment and preserve some of their wilderness heritage. History shows that this is a fragile heritage, and that if we do not tend to the bits and pieces of it, we can lose large chunks of it, chipped away incursion by incursion.

Watt keeps chipping away.

Russ Shay is the Sierra Club's Representative in Northern California.

Steve Evans



Here, listed by county, are the 56 California areas - a total of 123,600 acres - dropped from wilderness consideration

Wilderness Wildlife

California Rattlesnakes

By Dennis Coules

California is fortunate to host six species of rattlesnakes (genus *Crotalus*), a number exceeded only by Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. Arizona, a center of rattlesnake evolution, has ten species. Although not confined to "wilderness" areas, healthy rattlesnake populations occur in many of our roadless public lands.

DIVERSITY OF SPECIES

The most widespread rattlesnake in California, the western rattlesnake (*C. viridis*) ranges throughout California with the exception of the Mojave and Colorado deserts. A fairly nondescript, variably-colored, blotched snake, its major distinguishing characteristic is a light stripe extending from the corner of the mouth to the tip of the snout below the eye. It rarely attains over five feet in length. This is the only species of rattlesnake that a hiker in most of the Sierra Nevada, Klamath Mountains, or coast ranges north of Los Angeles is likely to encounter. Three subspecies are named for California, including the Great Basin rattlesnake found in extreme northeastern California and the region of Mono Lake. The rest of its range is divided between the northern Pacific and southern Pacific subspecies.

The sidewinder (*C. cerastes*) is probably the second most abundant rattler in California, being common throughout the Mojave and Colorado (California section of the Sonoran) deserts. A small rattlesnake with a maximum recorded length of 31 inches, it is identified by its pale

color and cute, devil-like horns above the eyes. Its unique sideways method of locomotion gives it away immediately as a sidewinder, and makes it most suited to habitats of fine sand. It is most common in well-vegetated dunes or sand hummock areas but also lives on rocky slopes and other substrates. Chiefly nocturnal, it may be found coiled and half buried in a pit at the base of a bush during the

Mojave Desert in California. The venom of this rattlesnake is the most dangerous in our area, with a highly neurotoxic component which can cause respiratory failure. The ground color is usually greenish, with well-defined, light-edged diamonds or hexagons down the center of the back. Desert users should learn how to identify this snake in case of a bite, as therapy is much more critical than with other

The red diamond rattlesnake (*C. ruber*), a reddish relative of the preceding species, also has a "coontail." It is found only in the mountains (both coastal and desert slopes) of extreme southwestern California, but its range then extends south to the tip of Baja. It is generally smaller and more mild of disposition than *C. atrox*.

eat birds, lizards, frogs, etc. All species in our area bear live offspring.

ENVENOMATION AND TREATMENT

Although many people take the incision/suction method of treatment for granted, this technique has come under increasing criticism. Permanent damage after a snakebite is often the result of overreactions in application of first aid rather than of the venom itself. About 20% of bites are "dry," with no venom injected.

According to the October 1, 1982 issue of *The Medical Letter on Drugs and Therapeutics*, "Incision and suction over the wound is generally not an effective way of removing venom and can cause permanent damage. Tourniquets can cause necrosis and loss of a limb. The first-aid procedure recommended by the Australian Serum Institute seems sensible, and some case reports suggest that it has been effective: a broad, firm, constrictive bandage is applied immediately over the bitten area and around the limb, bandaging as much of the limb as possible; the limb is then splinted."

As for follow-up treatment, such techniques as ice packs, surgical excision of the wound site and large doses of corticosteroids are not recommended. "There is a general agreement that victims of serious poisonous snakebite should receive antivenom...some experienced clinicians use antivenom for all bites caused by the eastern coral snake or Mojave rattlesnake if the snake has been positively identified." (Write CWC for a copy of the *Medical Letter*.)

CONSERVATION STATUS

Rattlesnakes are much maligned, even by many so-called "animal lovers." Although rattlesnakes should not be allowed to inhabit your front porch or junior's sandbox (depending on your attitude toward infants), there is no sound reason to persecute them in natural habitats. They constitute an important component of natural communities, both as predator and prey.

Road-kills constitute a serious mortality source for rattlesnakes, especially during warm summer nights. Instead of aiming straight for the snake, I would suggest pulling off the road and nudging the critter to a safer spot with a long stick.

Subdivisions, land development and other forms of habitat destruction threaten many rattlesnake populations in California, particularly in rapidly-developing areas such as San Diego County.

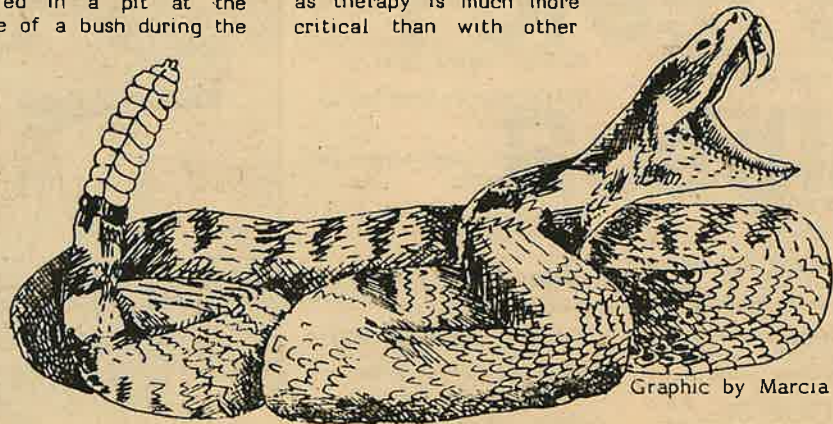
Off-road vehicles (ORVs) crush snakes and cause the collapse of their burrows and those of their prey, especially in sandy deserts and desert washes. ORV-induced vegetation destruction reduces the productivity of the entire ecosystem, reducing both prey and habitat available to snakes.

Finally, snake fanciers threaten the existence of some species or local populations by over-collecting. Particularly insidious is the destruction of habitat that may take place during a search, with boulders and rock flakes displaced by crowbars, hydraulic jacks, winches or explosives.

FURTHER READING

Many books and articles discuss rattlesnakes, but for field identification Robert C. Stebbins' *Field Guide to Western Reptiles and Amphibians* (Houghton Mifflin Co.) is standard.

Dennis Coules is the Coalition's consultant for wildlife and desert issues.



Graphic by Marcia Cary

day. Caution: it can strike quite suddenly from this position at photographers who annoy it by getting too close.

The speckled rattlesnake (*C. mitchelli*) is found in California in the Mojave and Colorado deserts as well as the ranges to the west of the desert in southern California where it continues well into Baja California. It has variable markings with an overall salt-and-pepper speckling. The speckled rattlesnake is most likely to be encountered at rocky sites such as boulder-strewn slopes, chaparral amid rock piles and rugged canyons--in other words classic "snake country." This species is said to be alert and active, and often holds its ground when cornered.

The Mojave rattlesnake (*C. scutulatus*) is a denizen of the

California species. The "Mojave green" is most common in areas of scattered creosote or mesquite.

Entering only the extreme southeast portions of our state (parts of the Mojave and Colorado deserts), the western diamondback (*C. atrox*) inhabits a much larger territory elsewhere including most of Texas and much of northern Mexico. Our largest rattlesnake, it may reach seven feet in length. The diamond-shaped markings are often indefinite but the distinct black and white-ringed tail has earned it the name "coontail." This snake inhabits a variety of arid and semi-arid habitats. It is dangerous due to the amount of venom a large individual may inject as well as its unabashed "don't tread on me" attitude.

RATTLER BIOLOGY

Rattlesnakes belong to the pit viper sub-family of the family Viperidae, which also includes such groups as copperheads, cottonmouths, the bushmaster and the fer-de-lance. The heat-sensory pits just behind the nostrils, which aid in locating warm-blooded prey and guiding the strike, characterize the group.

Vipers in general are characterized by triangular heads (enlarged to hold the venom glands), curved, retractable hollow fangs and vertical pupils. Vipers are considered to be the most highly evolved snakes, specialized for utilizing relatively large warm-blooded prey.

Besides mammal prey such as rabbits, mice and rats, California rattlesnake species also

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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 used and preserved in the public interest, by making and encouraging scientific studies concerning wilderness, and by enlisting public interest and cooperation in protecting existing or potential wilderness areas.

