



WILDERNESS RECORD

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION

Vol. 10

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May - June 1985

No. 3

New Wilderness Permit Rules

The U.S. Forest Service no longer requires wilderness permits in 28 California wilderness areas. This is a major change as permits previously were required in all wilderness areas.

In addition to areas not requiring permits, other areas have seasonal restrictions or exemptions for day use. Some areas have a quota system for peak season use. The new requirements are summarized in a map on Page 3.

A campfire permit is required throughout the state for the building of campfires. A wilderness permit, now called a visitor permit, does not substitute for a campfire permit.

Twenty-five new forest wilderness areas were designated by Congress last

fall with the passage of the California Wilderness Act of 1984. Although many of these areas are exempt from visitor permits, eleven wilderness areas that existed before the 1984 Act no longer require permits.

The change is seen as a cost-cutting measure. Some conservationists worry that wilderness use statistics will now be meaningless. Other users are concerned that the agency will not know who is in an area in case of emergency.

National Park wilderness areas, for the most part, still require permits for overnight camping. The same is true for wilderness in State Parks.

Although there is coordination between different agencies, some adjacent wilderness areas have dif-



Permits no longer needed for the Marble Mtn. Wilderness Photo by Jim Eaton

ferent rules. For example, permits are required in the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness but not in the adjacent Caribou Wilderness. The

same situation occurs in the Golden Trout and South Sierra wilderness areas, despite both being managed by the U.S. Forest Service.

Once Again, Court Halts G-O Road



The rights of indigenous peoples and ancient forests received greater protection late June when an appeals court upheld the 1983 decision to stop the Gasquet-Orleans (G-O) Road and halt logging in the Siskiyou high country.

The Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals sustained Judge Stanley Weigel's decision to halt the logging road, which had been built in sections over 20 years. This decision was based on First Amendment religious rights for three Indian tribes.

The case involved the

uncompleted six-mile-long, \$2 million segment, called the Chimney Rock section after the holiest of the sacred medicine areas for the Tolowa, Yurok, and Karuk tribes.

Judge Weigel's decision also prevented timber harvesting in a 76,000-acre area of the Eightmile-Blue Creek planning unit until completion of an environmental impact statement focusing on water quality issues. Since then some 26,000 acres of Blue Creek, which flows into the Klamath River, have been added by Congress to the national

wilderness system.

The circuit court reaffirmed that the water quality studies (mainly concerning prime fish habitat) still had to be done before the Forest Service could plan or approve logging.

The Forest Service could not say immediately whether it would appeal the latest ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court attorneys for the plaintiffs, a coalition of Native American and conservation groups, including the Northcoast Environmental Center, were optimistic that the decision would stand.

-Econews

Coalition Report

by Jim Eaton

This summer I have embarked on a physical improvement program. It is reviewing forest plans.

We should probably demand to know the volume of timber necessary to print these behemoths. "The forest had to be cut down in order to save the trees." My arms (and bookshelf) haven't had such a workout since the California Desert Plan (and eleven appendixes).

I wouldn't mind so much if there was some substance to the plans. But federal agencies now have discovered word processors. If what is true for Alternative 1 goes for 2 through 9, then whir, click, with the push of a few buttons nine times the verbiage can be written.

In a fit of pique I used my trusty TRS-80 to generate 14 pages of comments to the Bureau of Land Management recently. Every time one of their boiler-plate misstatements appeared, my standard reply rolled off a floppy disk in reply.

My favorite plan to date

is the Toiyabe. UPS arrived with the do-it-yourself plan in several sections wrapped in plastic. Find your own binder (at least they punched the holes). The largest one I had around was 3½ inches thick and now looks very pregnant.

I guess the Forest Service finally discovered that many environmental groups never help the economy by buying binders. We recycle! Someday they'll find out that they keep us supplied with large manilla envelopes, too.

The exercise comes from trying to understand the plans. I have hauled the Toiyabe leviathan home several evenings in a vain attempt to decipher it. I was hoping to find a rationale as to why parts of only five of 57 roadless areas are recommended for wilderness designation. I am still searching.

We welcome the Planning and Conservation League as our newest group member.

Discover the California Wilderness Act of 1984

The California Wilderness Act of 1984 is the subject of the California Wilderness Coalition's first book. The 48-page booklet describes the 25 new national forest wilderness areas and 14 additions to existing wilderness areas, the two new national park wildernesses, the wild and scenic Tuolumne River, and the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area.

It is a source book, not a trail guide. The wilderness areas are briefly described, the needed topographic maps are listed, and if trail guides exist they are mentioned. The address and telephone number of the federal agency managing each area is given, a useful feature with the new complicated wilderness permit system now in effect. The

address of a local environmental group working in the region also is listed.

Discover the California Wilderness Act of 1984 was made possible by a grant from the Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI) Environmental Committee. The booklet evolved from a search for a community project to commemorate the tenth anniversary of REI's Berkeley store. The four California REI stores sell the booklet for \$5.95, with all proceeds coming to the Coalition.

If you cannot pick up a copy at REI, you may order directly from the Coalition. Just use the T-Shirt order form on Page 8, and be sure to add \$1.55 for tax, postage, and handling for a grand total of \$7.50.

Update

No Road in Clark Mountain WSA

Amselco Exploration, Inc. has agreed to abandon plans to build a road across the Clark Mountain Wilderness Study Area in the East Mojave National Scenic Area. The road was part of a proposal to reopen the Colosseum Mine.

Conservationists felt that the road proposal clearly was illegal, but

they feared that the Bureau of Land Management would recommend this route anyway. They made it plain that the road proposal would be fought at every opportunity. The mining company apparently determined that using a longer existing route would result in fewer delays and be less expensive in the long run.

Lassen Geothermal Appeal

The Sierra Club, California Wilderness Coalition, and the National Parks and Conservation Association have appealed the Regional Forester's decision to lease over 100,000 acres of national forest land for geothermal development. The lands to be leased are adjacent to Lassen Volcanic National Park.

The Forest Service environmental assessment admits that potentially severe impacts on national park resources could result from geothermal development outside Lassen.

Leasing would not occur in the Heart Lake and Wild Cattle Mountain further planning areas or the Caribou Wilderness Area.

Coalition Appeals Dodge

Ridge Ski Expansion

The California Wilderness Coalition has appealed the decision to expand the Dodge Ridge Ski Area in the Stanislaus National Forest. The CWC feels that the decision to allow expansion is premature since the Forest Plan will be out for public review in a matter of months. The Forest Service argues that they provided

for expansion of the resort in a 1979 plan.

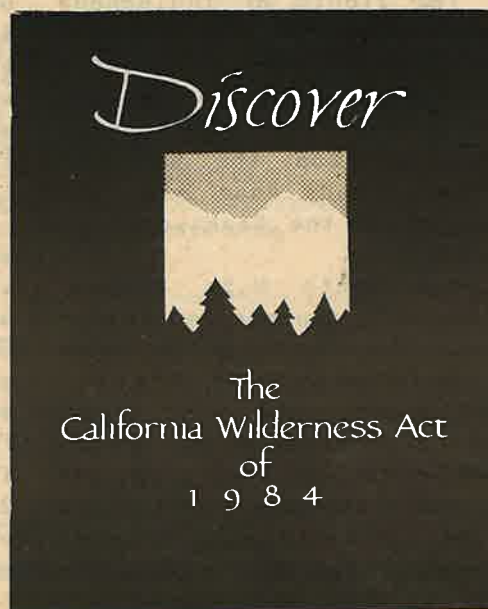
The Coalition also is concerned about wolverine and other animals which inhabit the roadless lands adjacent to the Emigrant Wilderness. The CWC does not believe that the environmental analysis of the impact of the project on these species was adequate.

EPA to Protect Wilderness Air

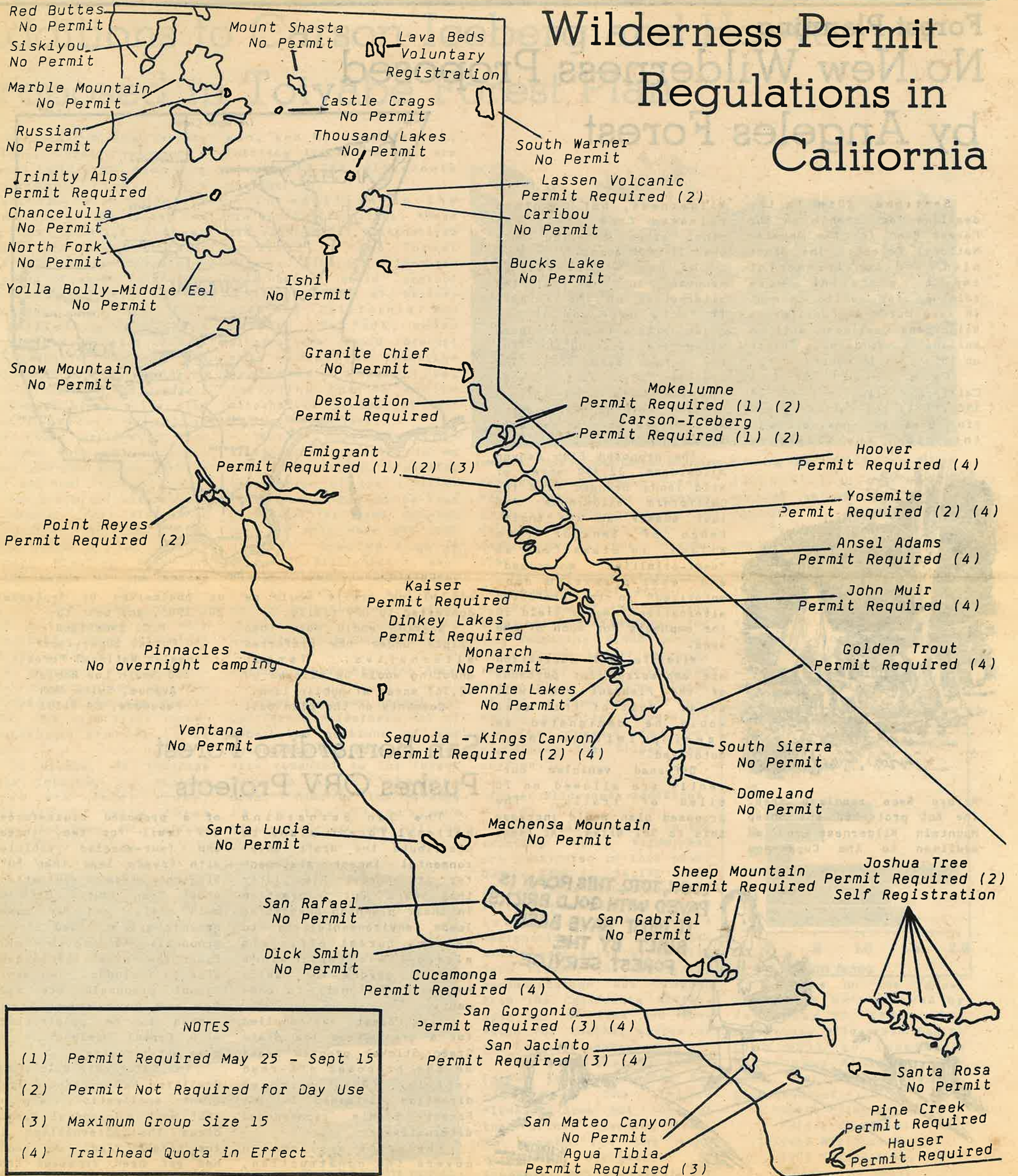
The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has

decided to run programs aimed at protecting visibility around national parks and wilderness areas in nineteen states, including California. If a state submits required revisions to its air pollution control plans, EPA would withdraw its own rules.

As it now stands, any proposal that would cause air pollution and hurt visibility in a nearby national park or some wilderness areas requires a review by the EPA and the National Park Service, or the the agency managing the wilderness. The project could be stopped or altered if it would impair visibility.



Wilderness Permit Regulations in California



Forest Planning No New Wilderness Proposed by Angeles Forest

September 20th is the deadline for comment on the Forest Plan for the Angeles National Forest. The draft plan and environmental impact statement were released for public comment in late May. The California Wilderness Coalition will be mailing a Wilderness Alert on this plan in August.

As a result of the California Wilderness Act of 1984, only one further planning area is considered in this plan, the 5000-acre

Wilderness, but Congress released from study ten other areas totaling more than 137,000 acres.

No new wilderness is proposed in the preferred alternative of the Forest. In fact, only one of the eight alternatives proposes wilderness designation for the Arroyo Seco area. The proposed plan would change the roadless area into a "roaded natural" area with water yield as the emphasis in management.

The proposed Fish Canyon Wilderness, 32,900 acres of wild lands dropped from the California Wilderness Act last summer at the insistence of Senator Pete Wilson, is classified as "semi-primitive motorized" and "semi-primitive non-motorized" in the preferred alternative. Water yield is the emphasis for much of the area.

Wildlife and recreation are emphasized for portions of the Pleasant View wild area. Most of this area would be designated as "semi-primitive non-motorized."

Off-road vehicles currently are allowed on 70 miles of trails. The proposed plan would increase this to 581 miles. At least



Arroyo Seco roadless area. The Act protected the Sheep Mountain Wilderness and an addition to the Cucamonga



six hiking trails would be converted to ORV trails.

Grazing would more than triple under the preferred alternative. Target shooting would be allowed on 48,363 acres of public land.

Comments on the plan must

be postmarked by September 20, 1985, and sent to:

P.C. Sweetland
Forest Supervisor
Angeles National Forest
150 South Los Robles
Avenue, Suite 300
Pasadena, CA 91101

San Bernardino Forest Pushes ORV Projects

The San Bernardino National Forest plans to distribute the draft environmental impact statement for its Forest Plan later this year. But information in their planning newsletter leads environmentalists to believe forest officials already have their minds made up before the public has an opportunity to comment.

The Forest has applied for a grant from the State Green Sticker program based on the proposed off-road vehicle (ORV) program direction contained in the Forest Plan's recommended alternative.

The grant application covers the construction, operation, and maintenance

of a proposed cross-forest ORV trail for two, three, and four-wheeled vehicles with treads less than 50". Staging areas, sanitation, short loop routes off the main trail, and two campgrounds are included in the proposal. Funding to administer the Forest ORV program also is included. Two additional proposals are made for new four-wheel drive routes to be constructed, with formal designation of some other routes.

The California Wilderness Coalition has protested this grant application, arguing that such a proposal prejudices the alternatives in the Forest Plan. No reply has yet been received from the Forest.



Courtesy Casper Star-Tribune

Additions to Carson-Iceberg and Hoover Proposed in Toiyabe Forest Plan

On June 5th the Toiyabe National Forest released a draft Land and Resource Management Plan. This Forest Plan will guide the management of the forest for the next ten to fifteen years. The Toiyabe contains 3,171,705 acres comprising portions of seven California counties and ten Nevada counties.

California wild lands affected by the plan include the Sweetwater Mountains and additions to the existing Carson-Iceberg and Hoover wilderness areas. The plan also considers potential wild river designation for the East Fork of the Carson River and the Walker River's east and west forks.

The preferred alternative recommends for wilderness designation in California 4,900 acres of the Carson-Iceberg Planning Area and 49,200 acres of the Hoover Planning Area. The remaining 127,044 acres of wild land are proposed for non-wilderness uses. Another 110,000 acres in nine areas were released from wilderness consideration by the California Wilderness Act of 1984. The wild river recommendations are yet to be made.

In Nevada, 54 roadless areas totaling 1.5 million acres are under study. Portions of only three areas, Arc Dome, Mt. Jeffer-

son, and Mt. Charleston, totaling 126,400 acres, are proposed for wilderness designation.

In addition to the preferred alternative, there are eight other alternatives analyzed by the Forest Service. The all wilderness alternative would protect 1,992,200 acres of wilderness in California and Nevada. In fact, seven alternatives would protect more wilderness than the preferred alternative, including the no action alternative (because of RARE II recommendations).

While the preferred alternative professes to be good for wildlife, a careful examination of the alternatives shows this to be true primarily for game species such as mule deer and sage grouse. Species such as goshawk, Williamson's sapsucker, hairy woodpecker, yellow warbler, and pine marten do better under other alternatives, including the all wilderness alternative.

Carson-Iceberg Planning Area

When Congress passed the California Wilderness Act of 1984, two portions of the Carson-Iceberg roadless area were remanded to the Forest Service as a "planning area." Most of the acreage is in the Stanislaus National Forest and will be



Tower Pk. from Rainbow Canyon in Hoover Planning Area Photo by Dave Willis

considered in their Forest Plan. Part of the planning area (9,700 acres) is in Noble Canyon and is considered in the Toiyabe plan.

The preferred alternative recommends protection of 4,900 acres of the planning area and non-wilderness for the remaining 4,800 acres. Noble Canyon itself would be recommended for wilderness designation, but the slopes of Silver Peak are left out. Mining potential apparently is the reason for not protecting the Silver Peak portion.

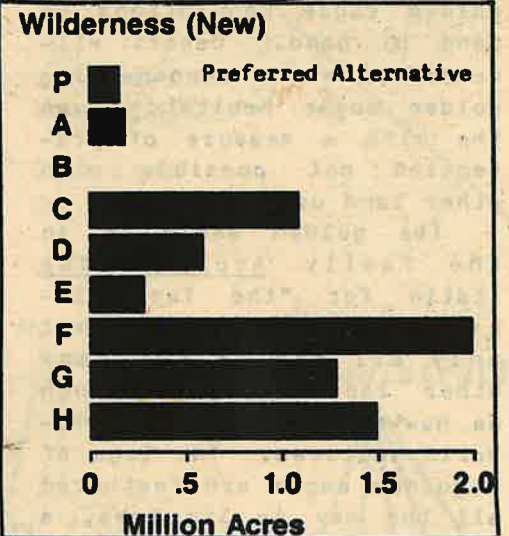
Hoover Wilderness Additions

Two areas adjacent to the existing Hoover Wilderness are considered in this plan. During RARE II, 54,132 acres of land were recommended for further planning and 49,200 acres for wilderness designation. Due to a last minute compromise by Senator Pete Wilson, the wilderness recommendation was dropped from the California Wilderness Act of 1984 and mandated for another review as the Hoover Planning Area.

The Toiyabe National Forest is recommending for wilderness the entire Planning Area but none of the Further Planning Area. No reason for the non-wilderness designation is apparent, but potential for

downhill skiing and some mineral values may be the reason.

The Hoover Planning Area includes the headwaters of the West Walker River. Wilderness designation will link the Emigrant Wilderness to the west with the Hoover Wilderness. Both areas are adjacent to the Yosemite Wilderness, and the total acreage of the combined areas is about 500,000 acres.



Comments on the Forest Plan must be received by September 23, 1985. The California Wilderness Coalition will be issuing a Wilderness Alert on this plan. For further information, contact:

Robert "Jim" Nelson
Forest Supervisor
Toiyabe National Forest
1200 Franklin Way
Sparks, NV 89431



Sweetwater Mtns. are not proposed for wilderness Photo by Phillip Farrell

Desert Wildlife

California's Golden Eagle Needs Desert Wilderness

by Mike McWherter

The golden eagle always has held a fascination to mankind. In ancient times the great bird was used in China by Kirghiz Tatars to capture antelope. The Romans called it the "king of birds." In Europe, during the height of falconry, it was flown only by kings. The American Plains Indians held the bird in high esteem and used its feathers in their headdresses and tribal ceremonies.

Today, the golden eagle may well symbolize all that remains wild in America. Indeed, many people consider the golden eagle to be the symbol of wilderness.

The California desert has many isolated mountain ranges which provide habitat for golden eagles. Many of these areas, managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as part of the vast California Desert Conservation Area, have been recommended as suitable for inclusion in our National Wilderness Preservation System. The concept of desert wilderness and the preservation of healthy golden eagle populations go hand in hand. Desert wilderness, when encompassing golden eagle habitat, gives the bird a measure of protection not possible with other land uses.

The golden eagle is in the family Accipitridae (Latin for "the fast fliers") which includes not only all eagles but many other raptorial birds such as hawks, harriers, and Old-World vultures. The legs of a golden eagle are feathered all the way to its toes, a characteristic found in other eagles which puts them in a group called the "booted eagles" or genus Aquila (Latin for "eagle"). Its golden-brown head and neck feathers give it its specie name, chrysaetos (from Greek chryso for gold).

The golden eagle ranges not only over the California desert but most regions of

North America, Europe, and Asia. In the United States its distribution is mainly in the West where it lives in mountainous and rocky areas. Cliffs, promontories, and crags provide both nesting sites and vantage points from which to watch for prey.

Worldwide there are eight races of golden eagles. The North American race, canadensis, ranges from Alaska and northeastern Canada to North Carolina, Tennessee, and central Mexico. The scientific name for the golden eagle of North America comes from combining its genus, species, and race names: Aquila chrysaetos canadensis. Some of its common names are mountain eagle, brown eagle, gray eagle, war eagle, and royal eagle.

Except for the golden eagle's golden brown head and neck feathers, adults appear entirely dark brown, even black from a distance. Immature birds also are brown except for light areas on the chin, lower throat, or upper breast and legs. Its tail has a dark terminal band and its basal two-thirds is whitish (giving rise to the local name ring-tailed eagle). The white diminishes with age. The size of golden eagles varies from 30 to 40 inches with a wing span of 80 to 90 inches. The females are larger than the males. They weigh from 8 to 13 pounds and have a life span of 25 to 30 years.

Much of the golden eagle's hunting is done while in flight. It soars at great heights making wide circles in search of prey. Eagles have been credited with the strength of carrying prey their own weight. This is very difficult for them and only possible if they are able to take off from an elevated point such as a cliff. The carrying capacity of an eagle is considerably reduced when it must rise from level ground.

Experiments have shown that an 11 pound eagle was unable to rise from the ground with a 5.25 pound weight. Despite this inability, absurd stories persist about eagles carrying off children. At times eagles do kill prey which they cannot possibly carry, but attacks on humans are very rare. Such attacks usually result from investigation of their nests. In the wild they are difficult to approach.

Golden eagles mate for life, but upon the death of a partner they soon re-mate. They build a large shallow nest (6 to 8 feet across) of sticks on cliffs or tall trees and will return to it year after year. A pair of eagles establish and defend a territory around the nest. Although nesting territories vary according to conditions, the average territory defended by a pair in southern California was found to be about 36 square miles. Courtship includes some breathtaking aerial acrobatics which may continue through the entire nesting season. Egglaying in California can commence as early as January. The eagles lay one to four large white eggs, mottled with brown, about 2.5 inches in diameter. The young, clad in white down, assume the dark brown juvenile plumage after about ten weeks and molt annually until the adult golden brown is acquired at four years.

The golden eagle was once considered to be an enemy of ranchers in the Southwest and was shot from airplanes in yearly roundups. In this century it experienced a rapid decline in numbers and was given protection by federal law in 1962. Once common throughout California its numbers have been reduced near human population centers. Even today a controversy exists over how much consideration should be given to the plight of the golden eagle in California. This controversy started back in the 1920's when it was reported that an "alarm-



Golden Eagle Photo by Mike McWherter

ing decrease" in the number of golden eagles in southern California had occurred. Others countered the argument claiming that the golden eagle was doing far better than could be expected considering the enormous number of hunters and human encroachment in its nesting areas.

By 1960 it became evident that more thorough studies of the golden eagle were needed to gather information on its status for future comparative studies. This would enable researchers to recognize declines in time to take necessary measures to maintain population stability. In a 1974 study of golden eagles in California, Carl G. Thelander of San Jose State University found that areas of continuous forest have fewer nesting territories than areas of prairie grassland, oak woodland, or sage-scrub vegetation. The mountainous regions of the California desert provide varying amounts of suitable nesting habitat.

Thelander found that nesting density within various areas in California was directly related to the amount of undisturbed, natural area which provides adequate foraging areas. For example, between Los Angeles and San Diego the nesting density is low in areas of urban development. On the other hand, the sparsely inhabited oak woodland vegetation in the coastal mountains between San Francisco and Los

Cont. on Page 7

Wilderness Conference Taking Shape

Cont. from Page 6

Angeles has relatively high nesting densities. In areas where human disturbance is minimal, the golden eagle may be assumed to have nesting populations approaching carry capacities. But those areas where human activity has included the destruction of golden eagle foraging areas, prey populations, or nesting sites, permanent exclusion of nesting golden eagles has occurred. This loss of nesting territories will continue as expansion of urban areas and the alteration of golden eagle nesting habitat continues.

Much of the golden eagle's habitat in California already has been lost. Other threats exist from shooting, electrocution from power lines, and disturbance at nest sites during breeding season. But the most severe problem is continued loss of vital habitat. The golden eagle's natural densities and reproductive rates are very low. With

Register now for the California Wilderness Conference on October 25-27, 1985. The Visalia gathering will be uplifting, informative, exciting, and just plain fun!

Preregistration is only \$15 until October 1st. Registration at the conference will be \$20. A special sponsor registration for \$30 lands you a CWC T-shirt.

We highly encourage you to register now. The more people we know will attend, and the more money we receive in advance, the bet-

only about 500 pairs currently nesting in all of California we must consider their needs along with our own. The golden eagle, symbol of wilderness, could only benefit if more of its habitat in the California desert were to become wilderness.

Mike McWherter is a professional photographer and author who lives in Oxnard.

ter the conference will be. Travel costs must be paid for some of our speakers and exhibits, so if we have cash in hand we will bring in the best for you.

There still are booths available for organizations and businesses. Some smaller groups find it difficult to raise the \$75 fee for a booth, so you can be an angel to one by donating the cost of a booth.

Registration materials will be mailed out beginning in late July. Packets will be sent directly from our Porterville office.

We have confirmed the attendance of a number of the conservation leaders of today: David Brower, Doug Scott, Mark Dubois, Patti Hedge, Joe Fontaine, Nancy Pearlman, Dave Forman, Harriet Allen, John Amodio. Others will be added to the list.

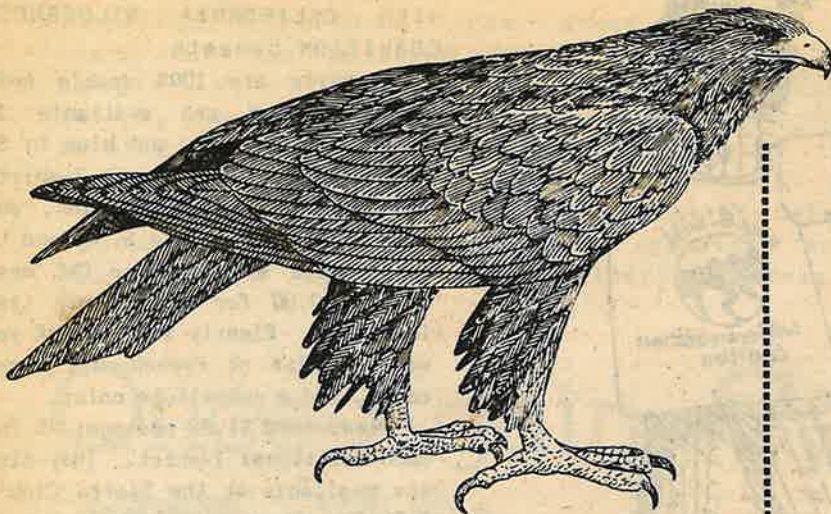
The Friday session is aimed at activists and professionals who will benefit from in-depth workshops on

several subjects. Working with the media, especially television and radio, will be taught by Nancy Pearlman. The mysteries of forest planning will be uncovered by a team from the Wilderness Society, including Peter Kirby.

You may think you have seen slide shows, but you will be amazed at the multi-projector experience highlighting problems off-road vehicles and population by Howard Wilshire and John Nakata.

Thousands of dollars of raffle prizes have been pledged. Would you like a trip for two down the Kern River or the American? Have a teenager who could benefit from an outdoor camp? Backpacking equipment, books, and dinners will be available. There will be lots of opportunities to win!

So get October 25-27 on your calendar now. And while you're at it, mail the registration blank in to our Porterville office.



CONFERENCE PREREGISTRATION

- Please send me a registration packet for the Conference
- Yes, sign me up for the Visalia Wilderness Conference **\$15.00**
- I would like to register as a sponsor (and get a T-shirt) **\$30.00**

Name _____

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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.

