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# WILDERNESS RECORD

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION

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## Fire Season Ignites Worries Over Timber Sales & Salvage

By Stephanie Mandel

Environmentalists told their concerns about timber salvaging practices, spotted owl habitat, and other post-fire forest management issues to Paul Barker, California's new U.S. Forest Service Regional Director, at a meeting held in San Francisco on October 17. Forest activists came from all over the state to hear what actions Barker will take to ensure that the overall fire recovery effort is not negated by timber salvage operations.

The harvesting of timber in burned areas should cease until environmental impacts are reassessed, environmentalists urged Barker. Barker said that the majority of sales underway are not in fire areas, and that Environmental Assessments (EAs) will be done for areas that were burned.

Barker also said that the harvest of green timber will not be reduced as a result of the increase of charred timber salvaging. For this year the Forest Service plans to sell 1.9 billion board feet, 1.3 billion of which is salvage, compared to 1.6 billion sold last year.

The timber industry is unwilling to switch charred timber for green timber in Forest Service contracts, according to Barker, since burned wood has no pulp value. The Forest Service's ability to renegotiate contracts within sale areas boundaries is small, he added.

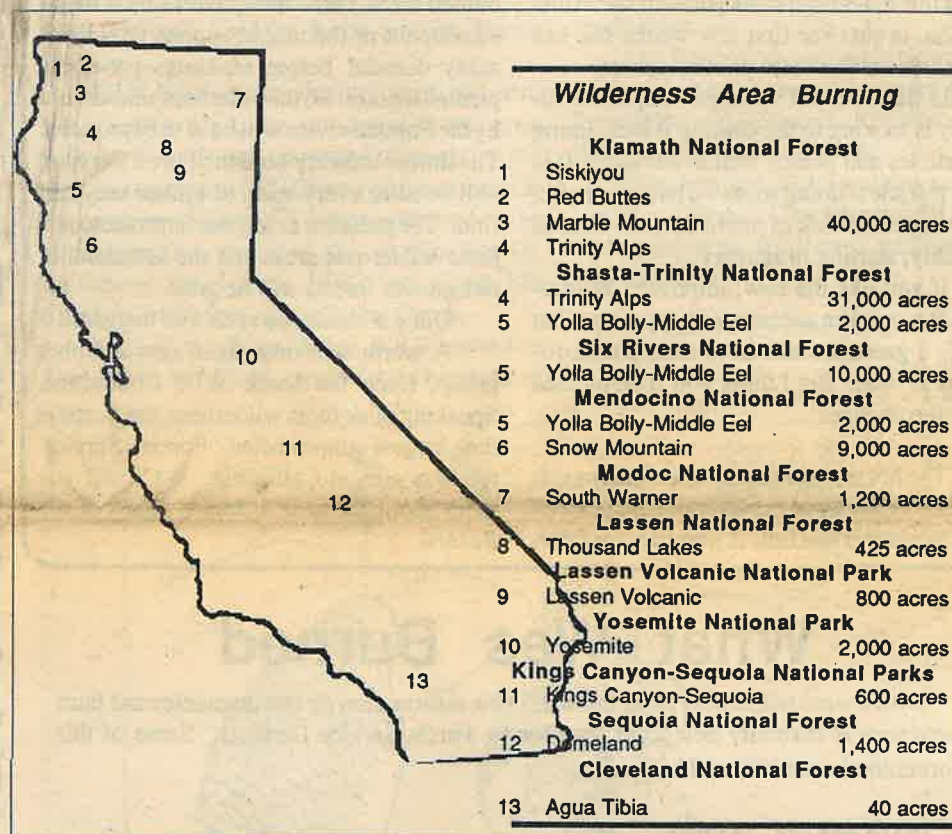
Patricia Schifferle, Regional Director

of The Wilderness Society, asked if the Forest Service would have access to funds for what is known as "environmental modification" of contracts. This is a way that the Forest Service can buy back or substitute timber already under contract. Barker said that the Forest Service's 1988 budget does include money for a salvage program and that additional monies may come from Congress.

Environmentalists in the Klamath National Forest area are pushing for the use of environmental modification to save old growth and other green trees from being cut. Felice Pace, Conservation Chairman of the Marble Mountain Audubon Society, said that his group is trying to get the county to take a position on green trees. Post fire green sales were advertised in early October. Pace and his group have asked the Forest Service not to sell this timber.

The cutting of green timber that's mixed in with burned in a salvage area was another area of concern. Steve Beckwith of Forest Issues Task Force in the Tahoe region asked Barker for hard data on how much timber is burned in salvage zones. Barker expressed that he wasn't "overly concerned" about green islands being lumped in as salvage because people understand that the prices are different.

In disagreement was Kenoli Oleari of Salmon River Concerned Citizens, who



said that timber contract officers are anxious to sell, and direction is needed from the main office. Oleari and others favor the "double entry" cutting plan, where only those trees that are undoubtedly dead are cut now. The stand is checked again for dead trees the following spring. This practice reduces the chance of cutting trees that would have survived.

### Spotted Owl Management Areas (SOMAs)

Out of 500 SOMAs, 50 were affected by fires. Spotted owls have been protected in California, Oregon, and Washington through a contiguous network of old-growth forest areas. (Old growth is the only type of forest that the owls inhabit.)

Forest Service general policy is to replace these areas, but environmentalists are afraid that potential replacement areas, which must be contiguous with existing areas, may be logged before they can be considered. David Edelson of the Natural Resources Defense Council asked Barker to halt green cutting until additional SOMAs are studied, to which Barker replied that the

first green sales will be off areas that weren't impacted by fires; "we'll do the easy ones first."

Old growth forest in the Klamath National Forest, however, was sold to timber companies before the fires. Out of 79 SOMAs 26 have been impacted, and local environmentalists are concerned that the timber under contract may be needed to replace the owl territory. The Marble Mountain Audubon Society and other groups have asked the Forest Service to use environmental modification of the existing contracts to prevent cutting of these areas.

See FIRE WORRIES, Page 2

### INSIDE: -----

- Fire restoration plans
- Mother Nature's restoration
- Kings, Merced, Kern Rivers
- Wilderness Quiz Question



Frannie Wade examines what was once dense vegetation in the King Range Wilderness Study Area. A series of helispots and miles of 20 foot wide fire breaks were cut through the area in October to stop a fire that was contained before reaching the ridge.

Photo by Jim Eaton



## COALITION REPORT

By Jim Eaton

Last issue we advertised a job opening with the CWC. A number of well-qualified people applied, and this issue we are announcing our choice.

So thanks to a grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Coalition has hired Stephanie Mandel as the editor of the *Wilderness Record*. And for the first time in ten years, I have not had to drop everything for a week to get the newsletter assembled, printed, and mailed.

I really expected that I still would have to spend a lot of time with this issue while Stephanie learned the ropes. Much to my surprise, I have been relegated to writing this column and a few news briefs. As you will see in this edition, in just her first few weeks she has found new writers and photographers.

If that weren't enough, Stephanie already is looking to the coming issues, lining up articles and photos well in advance. It is well that she is doing so, as we have given her the formidable task of publishing the *Record* monthly, starting in January.

If you like the new, improved *Wilderness Record*, I'm sure she will appreciate fan mail. I guess we will even read your criticisms as well. But I think you'll be pleased with the changes.

The hot news in California wilderness is the rash of fires that burned three quarters of a million acres this fall. A number of wilder-

ness areas were burned, and a lot of commercial timber [trees] have been blackened.

Wilderness areas burn. Mother nature has been setting fire to the wilds for a long, long time. I am anxious to monitor some areas to see how the flora and fauna adjust to the changes brought on by fire (I'll probably spend some time wandering on the slopes of my old friend Snow Mountain).

The scorching of the timber [trees] is another story. A major effort to salvage to wood is underway. Our job will be to herd the loggers into already logged forests and steer them away from the roadless areas.

But after a few years of furious logging burned trees, there will have to be a major adjustment of the timber supply. It will be many decades before seedlings yet-to-be-planted mature. So the volume of timber sold by the Forest Service will have to be reduced. The timber industry (and the Forest Service) will be after every stick of timber they can find. The pressure to log our unprotected *de facto* wilderness areas and the last stand of old-growth forests will be great.

Quite a challenge to us tree huggers!

A warm welcome for a new member group, Keep the Sespe Wild Committee. Speaking of *de facto* wilderness, the Sespe is the largest unprotected Forest Service roadless area in California. We'll tell you more about the area in future issues of the *Record*.

## What Was Burned

Where were wilderness areas burned? New information on fire intensities and burn boundaries is currently being put together by Forest Service Districts. Some of this information is consolidated below.

### Wilderness Areas

**Siskiyou**— Adjacent to Clear Creek.

**Marble Mountain**— At Ukonom Lake, Moorhouse Meadows, and Elk Creek.

**Trinity Alps**—20,000 acres on the North Fork Trinity River; Grizzly, Canyon, upper Eagle and St. Clair creeks; near Bear Lake, and Doe Flat.

**Trinity Alps**—(See Klamath National Forest)

**Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel**—Lazy Man Butte, Red Mountain Creek in the west.

**Snow Mountain**— On the south and east side of Snow Mountain, including Milk Ranch and Trout Creek down to Fouts Springs.

**South Warner**— Near Eagle Peak and Cole Canyon.

**Lassen National Forest**— All of the Lost Creek Roadless Area.

**Thousand Lakes**— Near Eiler Lakes.

**Lassen National Park**— Between Rainbow and Snag Lake.

**Yosemite**— At Frog Lake, Eleanor Creek, Yosemite Creek, and Mono Meadows.

Information provided by Eric Gerstung and from the Sierra Club *Bonanza*, October 1987.

## FIRE WORRIES, continued from page 1

Miles of fire roads were cleared in national forests as well as in "released roadless areas," which are Bureau of Land Management land that can be used for multiple uses.

New roads concern among environmentalists because once they are forged into these regions, off-road vehicles can get in and wilderness and other recreational values can be imperiled. In March 1988 the Forest Service's report of roads to be built in roadless areas will be completed.

## UPDATES

### Kings and Merced Rivers Only a Signature Away from Wild and Scenic Status, Kern Close Behind

President Reagan's signature is all that is needed to secure Wild and Scenic status for California's Kings and Merced Rivers.

Approved on October 13, the House of Representatives omitted 11 of the 92 miles that were originally included in the Kings legislation. The 11-mile stretch will be part of the Kings River Special Management Area that was created by the bill. Dam construction will not be permitted in the Management Area. The Kings River flows through Kings Canyon National Park and the Monarch Wilderness.

The Merced River Wild and Scenic legislation includes 125 miles of river. The lower eight miles will not receive Wild and Scenic status but will become a "study river," a designation that carries all the protections of Wild and Scenic status for an interim period of six years. Three years are given for a report to be filed plus three years for action by Congress. The Merced River flows through Yosemite National Park, 2 released roadless areas. The "study river" portion contains the Merced River Wilderness Study Area.

A Wild and Scenic bill for the Kern River was passed by the House National Parks and Public Land Subcommittee on October 27, and awaits action by the full House. The Senate has already approved the bill, S.247. The legislation includes 70.8 miles of the North Fork Kern and 60.5 miles of the South Fork. The South Fork Kern flows through Domelands, South Sierra, and Golden Trout wilderness areas.

### Mountain Lion hunt decision due

The mountain lion hunting season was delayed for one month but may begin soon. At a hearing scheduled for November 10, the Superior Court will review a finding by the state Department of Fish and Game (DFG) that a mountain lion hunting season will have no significant impact on overall lion populations.

The Court ruled in late September that the DFG needed to submit a "cumulative impact" finding and allow a 30-day public comment period on the finding before the hunt could be approved. At the hearing San Francisco Judge Lucy Kelly McCabe must either accept the Fish and Game finding, allowing the hunt to begin, or require more study.

Cumulative impacts are the hunting season's impacts on lion populations in conjunction with the impacts of other activities that are taking place in lion habitat. The Department found that the killing of 190 lions would have no significant impact on their overall population.

Sharon Negri, Director of the Mountain Lion Protection Foundation (MLPF), contended that Fish and Game studies cannot support this claim, describing the analysis submitted to the court as "haphazardly put together." One criticism of the document she listed is the Department's base count of 5,100 cats, which Negri called "heavily disputed and highly controversial." She also said that the Department did not address the impacts of the loss of mountain lion and deer habitat throughout the state.

The MLPF has been working to fund a 5-year study to be conducted by Dr. Morris Hornocker, a respected expert on mountain lions. Negri expects the study to begin next fall, with funding from private donors.

Terry Mansfield of the DFG explained the Department is supportive of the Hornocker study but in the meantime does not "have the luxury of standing dead in the water" regarding "management action." (i.e. the hunt) He said that the Department has studied the lion question and has plenty of material to support their finding of no significant impact.

The MLPF is discussing legal action if the hunt is approved.

### Wilderness Record Gains New Editor

Hired with funds from the Packard Foundation, Stephanie Mandel is the new editor of the *Wilderness Record*.

Mandel has worked for Friends of the River, the Davis Food Co-op, and Access Books and Information Inc. in Davis. She has also been an active volunteer with the California Action Network, an agricultural issues group, and as a whitewater river guide on the South Fork of the American River.

Mandel has a B.A. in Environmental Studies from Pitzer College in Claremont, California. She lives in Davis with several housemates.



Stephanie Mandel at her desk.  
-Photo by Jim Eaton



## Public Lands

### Lassen Timber Sales Under Fire

By Steve Evans

After a decade of virtually controversy free logging, the Lassen National Forest may be heading for a showdown with local environmentalists over several proposed timber sales.

In the Almanor Ranger District east of Chico, four proposed timber sales threaten roadless areas that environmentalists would like to see protected as wilderness. These sales include:

**Maverick:** This sale would allow logging of more than half the Wild Cattle Mountain roadless area adjacent to Lassen Volcanic National Park. Impacts on spotted owl habitat and potential degradation of the Mill Creek watershed and anadromous fisheries are concerns. During a region wide wilderness study in 1979 (RARE II), over 62 percent of the public response supported wilderness status for this area.

**Polk:** This sale proposes logging in the Polk Springs roadless area on Deer Creek just upstream of the Ishi Wilderness. Impacts on cultural resources and potential degradation of Deer Creek and its anadromous fisheries are primary concerns. Over 73 percent of the public response in 1979 supported wilderness status for this area.



**Saint:** This sale proposes logging in the Butt Mountain roadless area. Impacts on water quality, scenic views and the Pacific Crest Trail are important concerns. Over 64 percent of the public response in 1979 supported wilderness status for this area.

**Alder:** This sale proposes logging in the Cub Creek roadless area and sensitive portions of Deer Creek canyon. Environmentalists are concerned about impacts on spotted owls, fisheries, recreation, cultural resources and scenic views. Over 64 percent of the public response in 1979 supported wilderness status for the Cub Creek roadless area. The Alder sale is also likely to impact Deer Creek canyon which provides recreation for thousands of people every year.

The Yahi Group of the Sierra Club and

the Butte Environmental Council have submitted extensive comments concerning these sales. As a result, the Saint sale has been put on "hold" until the forest wide Lassen Land Management Plan is completed sometime next year. The other sales are still under study. The public will have another opportunity to comment when environmental analysis reports (EAs) are completed on each sale.

North of Lassen Park, at least one sale threatens the roadless character of the Cypress roadless area directly adjacent to the Thousand Lakes Wilderness. An EA is being developed on the proposed Wilcox 2 sale and the public will have an opportunity to submit comments in the fall. Environmentalists are concerned about the potential destruction of the roadless area which is a potential addition to the Thousand Lakes Wilderness.

In the meantime, Lassen Forest planners have been reviewing public comments submitted in response to the draft Land Management Plan last summer. The Forest is working to update at least three alternatives for final consideration including their own Preferred Alternative, the Conservationist Alternative, and an alternative to be submitted by the timber industry.

Some site specific issues that the Forest

Service is considering at the moment include the possibility of allocating Soda Ridge in the Chips Creek roadless area to timber management, how much logging will be allowed in the Upper Mill Creek canyon, and whether the Antelope Creek drainage will be added to the Ishi wilderness area. These and other decisions will have great impact on whether the timber sales currently being criticized by environmentalists will be allowed to destroy the Lassen's dwindling wilderness, old growth forest, and wildlife resources.

Letters to Almanor District Ranger Keith Crummer opposing the Maverick, Polk, Saint, and Alder timber sales are appropriate. His address is P.O. Box 767, Chester, CA 96020.

Steve Evans is a Chico activist and is president of the California Wilderness Coalition.

### "No Wilderness" Alternative For Eden Valley & Thatcher Ridge

By Jim Eaton

The Bureau of Land Management [BLM] has released its final environmental impact statement for the Eden Valley and Thatcher Ridge Wilderness Study Areas [WSAs] in Mendocino County. BLM is supporting their "no wilderness" alternative despite strong public support for protecting the areas.

BLM studied the two WSAs as separate wild areas despite the fact that they are contiguous through roadless lands in Mendocino National Forest. If combined with the Mendocino's roadless areas, a single wilderness of more than 55,000 acres is possible. Conservationists feel that the wilderness values of this larger unit should have been studied rather than the piecemeal approach used by BLM and the Forest Service.

Thick brush covers most of the 6,674-acre Eden Valley WSA, but some grassy meadows with hardwoods are dispersed throughout the area. A large stand of Sargent cypress extends to the north beyond the WSA represents one of the most extensive stands of this species known. Elevations range from 1,000 feet along Elk Creek to 2,800 feet above Toney Creek.

Most of the Eden Valley WSA burned in September, but BLM expects the chaparral to

recover without a problem.

The Middle Fork of the Eel River flows through the 17,187-acre Thatcher Ridge WSA. Most of the WSA is on a west-facing chaparral covered slope. Hardwoods, conifers, and a few grassy meadows are found in the area.

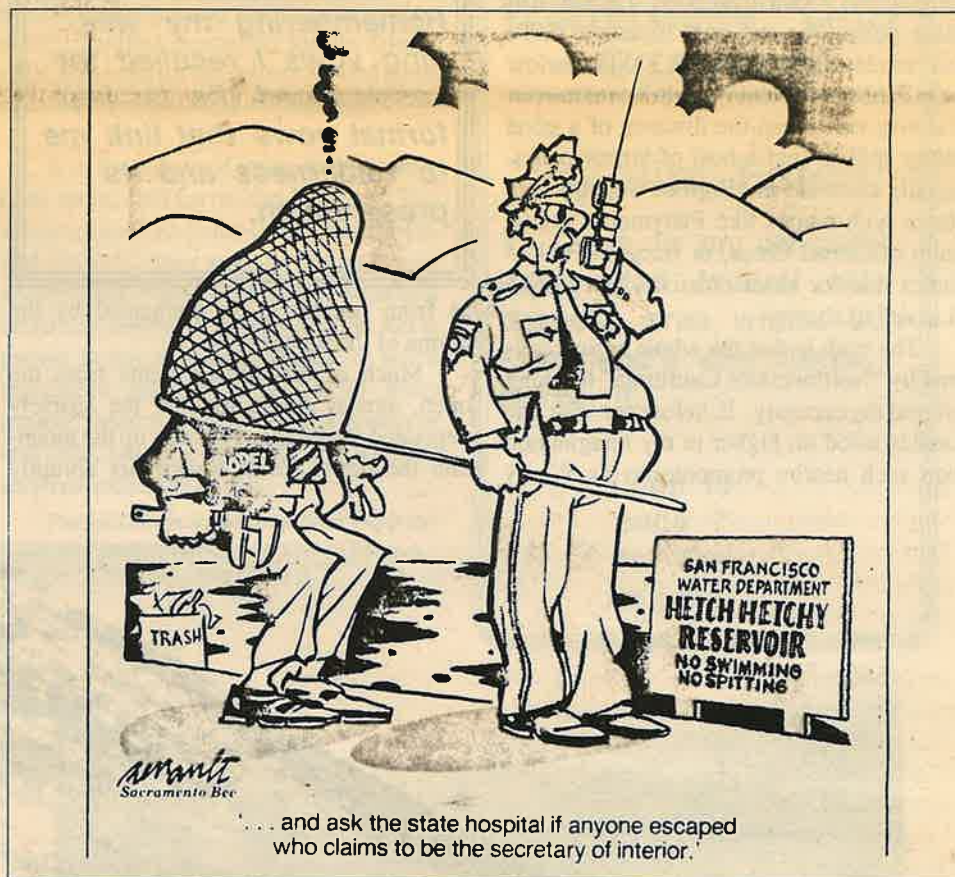
Two endangered species, the peregrine falcon and the bald eagle, may be found in the WSAs. Suitable habitat is present for the golden eagle, black-shouldered kite, ringtail cat, river otter, and mink. The fisher has been sighted in the vicinity of Elk Creek. The WSAs are important winter deer range, and tule elk have been observed. Eden valley is probably the northernmost limit of the roadrunner.

The watersheds are important anadromous fish spawning and nursery areas for salmon and steelhead. Resident rainbow trout also may be found.

Conservationists are working to convince members of Congress that BLM is wrong about the wilderness attributes of this wild country.

Jim Eaton is the Executive Director of the California Wilderness Coalition.

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and ask the state hospital if anyone escaped who claims to be the secretary of interior.

Courtesy of Dennis Renault, The Sacramento Bee

#### Why does Hodel want to restore Hetch Hetchy Valley?

Distinguished environmentalists have been at a loss to explain Secretary of the Interior Donald Hodel's recent interest in restoring the flooded Hetch-Hetchy Valley of Yosemite to its pre-1915 grandeur (See WR, July-August, 1987). While the *Wilderness Record* sincerely hopes that Hodel's only motivation for making this proposal is his love of that which is wild and beautiful, suggestions of other reasons have been offered. Justification for building Auburn Dam as an alternative water source for San Francisco is one idea; distracting environmentalists' attention from critical issues is another. If you have a guess, we'd love to hear it, no matter how imaginative. Send your idea to the California Wilderness Coalition, 2655 Portage Bay East, Suite 5, Davis, CA 95616.



# A Wilderness Wedding Anniversary in the Lassics

By Patrick Carr

Our first wedding anniversary reminded me of the Lassic Mountains. Four days after we were married on a brilliant September afternoon, and on our way to a rainy honeymoon in Oregon, we stopped for a day and a night on the edge of this seldom visited roadless area in the Six Rivers National Forest.

I did not know much about the Lassics, but for years I had noticed them on my copy of Triple A's "Northwestern California" map. Increasingly frayed by repeated folding, that map had helped guide me on many trips to the Yolla Bolly, Trinity Alps, and Marble Mountain wildlands and was regularly consulted for idle breakfast examination.

Northwest of the map's dotted Yolla Bolly Wilderness boundary is the cluster of peaks called Lassics; at the end of a road and straddling the Humboldt/Trinity line is one called Lassics Lookout. Two miles north is Signal Peak, within yelling distance of Red Lassic. Northernmost and not shown on Triple A's map is Black Lassic.

In the jumble of names and elevations on "Northwestern California," the Lassics' distinctiveness is hard to pinpoint. The tallest of these peaks (the red one) measures 5,903 feet, an elevation that puts it 300 feet below Lake Tahoe's waves. I wouldn't need to scan that map more than the distance of a good coffee spill to find a host of higher peaks. Equally common in "Bigfoot Country" are places with names like Pattymocus Butte, Balm of Gilead Creek, or Beegum Peak—names that for sheer creativity put simple "Lassic" to shame.

The truth is that the whole region covered by "Northwestern California" has long spurred my curiosity. If, before our visit, the Lassics stood no higher in my imagination than such nearby promontories as Windy

Nip, Chicago Rock, or Bug Creek Butte, it is because I wanted to see them all.

The Lassics were more distinctive to my new wife, however, for she had spent a summer roaming these peaks and the nearby Mad River canyon in search of a rare plant—Tracy's Sanicle, or *Sanicula tracyi*. The Lassics conjured good memories for her. Up 101 we drove, and onto winding Highway 36 past Bridgeville, Dinsmore, and the Van Duzen River, finally rattling up a steep gravel road unknown to Triple A's emergency road service, or for that matter, their map.

Cresting a rise on the road, I was startled by a stark, black prominence soaring in the distance above the for crown of a lesser ridge. Black Lassic has the shape of the Matterhorn, but one dipped in tar and a little plump around the midriff. Its steep, bare rock, itself unusual in Six Rivers' well-watered forests and brushfields, abruptly juts several hundred feet from the fir below. Our road wound upward to reach the windswept, haggard-looking trees that cling to Black Lassic's glacially carved north slope. Blocks of dark gray rock periodically lay on the road in front of us, demanding our attention and keeping

**Remembering my wedding vows I recalled the Lassics and the far less formal vows that link me to wilderness and its preservation. . .**

us from becoming too enchanted by the drama of the scenery.

Much of that drama stems from the open, almost alpine look of the sparsely vegetated landscape. Halfway up the mountain the dense Coast Range firs abruptly

disappear and are replaced by an austere, Sierra-like scattering of Jeffrey pine and chaparral. In some places the Jeffrey's vanilla-scented bark grows directly from bare rock unsoftened by soil or ground-covering plants. The rock ranges in color from dark gray to red, and in the most barren places it

**I was startled by a stark, black prominence soaring in the distance above the crown of a lesser ridge. Black Lassic has the shape of the Matterhorn...**

shows the deep green of a mineral called serpentine.

Botanists love serpentine, even though few of the objects of their study can tolerate it. Serpentine exposures usually have a baked, arid look to them, full of splintered green or red rock and decrepit-looking plants for which you have to search to notice. The large serpentine areas of the Lassics are no exception. But it is not water the plants thirst for here, where snow may lie 15 feet deep in March; it is basic plant nutrients like phosphorus and potassium that serpentine lacks. It is a mineral desert.

But life in a desert has its advantages. Those plants that can outsmart their cousins and find a way to live with serpentine's lacks are given a big edge over the competition, which looked pretty sparse on Black Lassic. For some plant species, that lack of competition is vital. Virtual hermits of the plant world, they become so dependent on the wide open spaces of the serpentine desert that they are found nowhere else.

The lack of competition on serpentine allows other plants, like the Jeffrey pine to grow in places that are otherwise far different in altitude or rainfall from where they are usually found.

Mountain-size blocks of serpentine and the plants that have adapted to grow on them are not rare in California, but the Lassics' flora is one of the most unique. When Tom Nelson, then a botany graduate student and later curator of Humboldt State University's arboretum, began studying the Lassics, he found the sort of thesis topic for which other students might have given their first-born children for. At last count Nelson had named three new species and a new genus lurking

among the crags and open forest, and had not yet found time to formally describe a new species of *Ceanothus* he had found there.

When I asked him what rare plants grew on the Lassics, Nelson rattled off a list of exotic-sounding names like a Thai waiter reciting his menu. *Lathrus biflorus*, *Lupinus constancei*, and *Minuartia decumbens*, the three new flowers he discovered, grow only on the Lassics and are proposed for federal endangered species listing. Nelson pried the genus *Minuartia*, a sandwort, from the stems of another genus where less observant taxonomists had failed to notice it.

Other plants, like *Allium hoffmanii*, a rare onion featuring a beautiful calyx of white flowers, and purple-blossomed *Penstemon purpusii*, are found elsewhere on rare occasions. The list of such plants, rare but not limited to the Lassics, goes on quite awhile: *Carex gigis*, a sedge; *Lomatium ciliolatum*; *Lilium rubescens*, a lily; the succulent *Sedum laxum* subspecies *flavudum*; *Epilobium oregonum*; *Claytonia saxtoxia*; *Collinsia greenii*. With enough time, each population of these plants might diverge enough to warrant being called their own species.

There was also my wife's old friend,

**Tom Nelson's new plants helped convince the Forest Service that it would be a mistake to turn the Lassic into a downhill ski resort...**

Tracy's sanicle, a carrot relative with small ball-like flowers. Tracy's sanicle is found at a number of locations in the Mad River region, but on the whole it is scarce enough to be proposed for federal endangered species status. If Nelson ever finds time to describe his new *Ceanothus*, a chaparral variety, it will likely also be proposed for such protection. For now it is still an unknown.

None of these plants were blooming or otherwise in evidence as we scrambled up the scree of Red and Black Lassics. After months without rain, the few plants we saw showed evidence of more than just mineral thirst. As a chill wind picked up, we contented ourselves with a mountain-top panorama: to the east was the virtually unstoppable line of South Fork Mountain, a 50-mile "hogback," and northward was the furrowed knob of Mad River Rock, a nesting site for peregrine falcons. Looking into the wind we saw a rising wall of fog and cloud sweeping inland from the Pacific, reminding us of the redwoods that grow just ten miles away.

Also in that direction was the bulk of the Lassics roadless area, dropping in fir- and grass-covered steps from our summit. I do not know when the road on which we had come severed the Lassics from the vast



The rocky hillside of Black Lassic is not an easy place for plants to live, and so many specially adapted species are found here. Photo by Patrick Carr





Valerie Gizinski stands atop Black Lassic.

Photo by Patrick Carr

wildland that once made up the Six Rivers National Forest, but by 1978, the year the Forest Service began studying the Lassics for possible preservation, the roadless area had dwindled to 6,150 acres.

In 1979 the Forest Service nominated the Lassics for logging and mining, not preservation. But the area won a reprieve—and precious time—in the victorious filed by lawsuit former California Resources Secretary Huey Johnson. Federal judges agreed with Johnson that the Forest Service had poorly documented the impacts of developing a number of RARE II areas recommended for non-wilderness. Meanwhile, Tom Nelson's new plants helped convince the Forest Service that it would be a mistake to turn the Lassics into a downhill ski resort, as one developer proposed. That man still complains about the unfairness of preventing his development "for a rare onion."

For all I know the architects of the California Wilderness Act may have been using the same Triple A map I have. From years of gazing at that map I can understand how they must have felt, facing a maze of strangely named places they might have wanted to visit but knew they would never find time for, places like Skeleton Glade, Heartbreak Ridge, Stoveleg Gap, Bakeoven, or the Las-

sics. In the inevitable tug of compromise the Lassics missed the haul.

The proposed forest plan for the Six Rivers National Forest nominates 3,640 acres of the Lassics for "special interest area" status. Mad River District botanist Tamara Wilton, who describes the Lassics as "one of the jewels of the Six Rivers National Forest," explains that the designation would encompass most of the serpentine, some of the white fir forest, and part of the brushfields, where Tom Nelson's still unnamed *Ceanothus* lives. A management plan would be developed for the area, but the designation would mainly serve to prevent activities "that might conflict with the botanic values," said Wilton. "We might want to provide some interpretation," she added. The rest of the area would be classified as "general forest."

Beyond simple opportunities for celebration, wedding anniversaries remind us of the vows that connect, and plant a milestone to measure from one year to the next what has been gained or lost. Remembering my wedding vows I recalled the Lassics and the far less formal vows that linked me to wilderness, its preservation, and to the tens of thousands of others who have worked to save wilderness out of a similar commitment.

The fruit of those unstated vows can be seen any day, even if you never leave the city. Just pick up the new, updated version of Triple

### Short term priorities set

## Forest Service Begins Restoration

When the smoldering stops, insects, birds, and the Forest Service move back into a scorched forest. Restoring California national forests will require \$150 million, according to the USFS.

The Forest Service's restoration plan starts with short-term rehabilitation. This effort is concentrating on 1) opening up blocked streams and cutting up material around streams to prevent flooding, 2) planting trees next spring, and 3) clearing trails. The stream work will be concentrated on steeper slopes and will include seeding from helicopters.

Reseeding work will also take place to prevent soil erosion where fire breaks were cleared to block the spread of fire. The Forest Service estimates that from 6-10 percent of the burned area will be reseeded with a mix of native grass species as well as the controversial annual rye grass.

Long term rehabilitation efforts will include planting seedling trees, restoring wildlife habitat, watersheds and recreation areas, and repairing forest roads and facilities.

### Wilderness Let Alone

In designated wilderness areas the rehabilitation plan is different. Vegetation is allowed to grow back naturally or, if reseeded work is done, there is a policy of using native species. Tractors are not allowed unless the regional office in San Francisco approves.

Fire fighting is also done differently in the wilderness. If no people or property are in danger fires are usually allowed to burn—generally up to 300 acres—before efforts are made to stop the flames.

A's "Northwestern California" map, and you will see enlarged dimensions of the Marble Mountain and Yolla Bolly wildernesses, genuine protection for the Trinity Alps, and even for the seldom visited areas called Chancellula and North Fork.

It is the nature of vows to be permanent, and to call for no end in effort. The Lassics joined Skeleton Glade, Bakeoven, and a host of other areas in failing to win protection in 1984. Who knows what will be left out when a Desert Protection Act is passed in the next year or two, or when legislation for the state's BLM areas passes? Marraige, whether to a person or an ideal, requires work, and my anniversary reminded me of that.

*Patrick Carr is a freelance environmental writer and former editor of Friends of the River's Headwaters magazine.*

## Wilderness Quiz Question

by Jim Eaton

1. There is an officially designated federal wilderness area within San Francisco's city limits. Name it.

Look to  
page 7  
for the  
answer.



Fire burned at varying intensities over this ridge in the Groveland Ranger District of the Stanislaus National Forest. Photo courtesy of Union Democrat



# Mother Nature's Fire Restoration

By Joe Bogaard

Few California Wilderness Coalition members were far from a forest fire during August and September as it seemed nearly the entire state was in flames. The dry season of 1986-87, followed by an abundance of lightning strikes, ignited hundreds of forests throughout the West, from Southern California to Washington and Idaho. The ecological role of fire is different in the various biomes, or habitat types of California that were charred.

Fire in nearly all wildlands, including California's, has naturally and historically played a crucial role in maintaining the health, numbers, and diversity of flora and fauna. Plant life derives a multitude of direct benefits from fire, such as preparation of seed beds, reduction of more intense fire hazards,



nutrient cycling within the system, and maintenance of a mosaic-like pattern of age classes and vegetation types. Some conifer species, such as the lodgepole pine, can propagate only after the high temperatures of a fire have popped open its cones, exposing the seeds.

Fire benefits wildlife by generating food and cover. The major advantages that wildlife gain are stimulation of shrubs, herbaceous plants, and trees that are useful to mammals and birds for food or protection, and the resulting openings made in the forest canopy and understory. Fires help to maintain parks or open space needed by deer and elk to browse. The creation of transient shrublands following a high temperature fire generates cover for smaller mammals and birds. Maximized diversity, a multitude of grasses, shrubs, and trees, and uneven-aged stands of different trees, all provide excellent sources of food and cover.

Succession in natural environments is the process whereby, over varying time spans, plant species will be replaced by others that are better adapted to the conditions. This series of modifications usually culminates with a climax species such as the giant Sequoia. The climax species will persist in a region indefinitely until a major perturbation, such as a severe shift in the climate, creates new conditions to which the species is not well adapted.

Primary succession begins very slowly at first, with lichen on a rock, for instance, which over many decades will develop a soil

bed that eventually supports larger shrubs and trees. Secondary succession occurs in regions that were previously established, diverse biomes but were remarkably altered and then allowed to return to a natural state over time. Removing agricultural land from use or a stand-replacing fire would result in secondary succession.

A very general outline of secondary succession is as follows. First, the pioneer species develops. Grasses and weeds with year-long life cycles are common pioneer species. In the next couple of years, shrubs and herbs infiltrate. This stage may last from 5 to 15 years prior to the deciduous and evergreen trees reassuming dominance. Eventually the original climax species should recover their domain until the next major disturbance occurs. The grass and shrub stages are often exciting times as exotic species not normally seen in the immediate area invade and survive for a number of seasons until the competition becomes too great.

Chaparral and oakbrush is a predominant biome in our state, concentrated in southwestern California and bordering the entire Central Valley. Common species are manzanita, chamise, poison oak, and scrub oak, with various sumacs and sages. These plants are common to the Los Padres, Angeles, and San Bernardino national forests.

The California chaparral is well adapted to fire occurring every 20 years or so to keep healthy and productive. A number of shrub and herb species as produce seeds that lie dormant until a fire removes all the established vegetation.

A diversity of small mammals and birds are often found in chaparral habitat. The fire repression policy in Los Padres National Forest is considered by some to have contributed to the decline in the California condor population by allowing the mass accumulation of chaparral. Shiny-leaf ceanothus, a chaparral shrub upon which deer feed, has seen a similar decline in numbers since it needs fires to persist.

The Pacific ponderosa pine is a tree frequently seen in California, often in the company of the Douglas fir and sugar pine. Its major distribution ranges from the Southern Sierra Nevada through the Cascade Range as well as the Shasta-Trinity and Mendocino national forest regions. Al-



Leave your mark!  
Write for the *Wilderness Record*

Do you know something  
about wilderness? Let others  
know about it too!

Just call the California Wilderness  
Coalition. Ask for Stephanie.

630,000 signatures gathered

## Parks & Wildlife Initiative Slated for Ballot

All of the 375,000 signatures needed have been gathered to put the Wildlife, Coastal and Park Land Initiative on California's June 1988 ballot.

The Initiative would provide \$776 million to permanently preserve fish and wildlife habitat, coast, parks, and open space lands throughout the state. Attempts to pass land conservation bond acts through the state legislature failed in 1985 and 1986. Most of the funds that would be provided will be used to acquire land, and some will be available to build trails and provide public access and facilities for public use. Local park agencies will receive funding to spend on their highest priority park and recreation projects. About half of the funds are earmarked for specific park and wildlife protection projects throughout the state.

The allocation of funds was worked out by a Steering Committee comprised of representatives of the Planning and Conservation League, Defenders of Wildlife, Sierra Club, Audubon Society, and California Water Fowl Association. The Committee consulted a large number of groups, including state agencies, in choosing projects to fund.

No organized opposition to the bill has emerged, while endorsers of the measure include U.S. Senators Alan Cranston and Pete Wilson and a statewide, bipartisan coalition of civic, conservation and business groups.

For the past five months conservation groups from all over the state have helped to gather over 630,000 signatures. Over 60 groups pledged to gather from 2,500 to 25,000 signatures each.

The Wildlife, Coastal, and Park Land Initiative campaign will be co-ordinated by Californians for Parks and Wildlife, 909 12th St., Suite 203, Sacramento, CA, 95814, 916-448-1786.

though responsive to disturbance, the ponderosa, or yellow pine, is a climax species in California.

Prior to humans' intervention with natural fire cycles, lightning would ignite the understory of a ponderosa stand every 4-6 years, thus preventing fuel build-up, clearing out competition by thinning smaller trees, and maintaining an open, park-like climax stand. The practice of fire repression allows dangerously high levels of fuel to accumulate and resulting fires may burn the entire grove. The fire repression practice, as with the yellow pine, results in high temperature, highly destructive crown fires. These fires

can result in the complete loss of stands and a lengthy successional recovery.

The Douglas fir occurs in a number of varieties, two of which grow in California. The coastal Douglas fir begins in the Mendocino region and extends through the Oregon border. The interior Doug fir first occurs in the northern Sierra Nevada and also reaches into Southern Oregon. The Douglas fir is usually not a climax species, though it is a dominant conifer in the West.

Fire has influenced both the coastal redwoods and the giant sequoia. Found in a thin north coastal strip, the coastal redwood sees only occasional fires at approximately 50-200 year intervals, which apparently play a less dramatic role than for the big trees of the Sierra Nevada.

Joe Bogaard is a writer and ex-intern with the Coalition and is majoring in zoology at the University of California at Davis.





## New desert book guides through California's treasures

By Vicky Hoover

**Adventuring in the California Desert: The Sierra Club Travel Guide to the Great Basin, Mojave, and Colorado Desert Regions of California**, by Lynne Foster. \$12.95 paperback, 448 pp., 10 black and white photographs, 11 line drawings, 10 maps.

Now, at last, the least known quarter of California—the desert—has its varied attractions described in a lively, readable guidebook. Long overdue, this fascinating desert guide responds to today's keen concern to preserve the fragile, still pristine wildlands of our desert and also should inspire further advocacy of desert protection.

Other guides do exist to specific known desert localities, primarily Death Valley and Joshua Tree National Monuments, but never before has the entire 25 million-acre California desert region been comprehensively treated as an integral whole. *Adventuring in the California Desert* is an idea whose time has come. With crucial protective legislation (Senator Alan Cranston's S. 7 and H.R. 371)

now before Congress to designate wilderness areas and establish three new national parks, Californians need to know why their desert is unique, astounding, and worth visiting and protecting. *Adventuring in the California Desert* explains why, and, with unprecedented thoroughness, explains how to visit the desert.

The devotion which long-time desert activist Lynne Foster brings to her task is evident in every page. Lynne Foster's goal—which the book clearly achieves—is to show people how to use the fragile desert without abusing it; to use it but not use it up.

The book is divided into two main sections, with the first giving general descriptions of desert features. The three separate desert regions of California (Great Basin, Mojave, Colorado) are well differentiated. Chapters on how deserts develop, on geology, and on plant and animal life help readers grasp the essence of arid regions. A practical survival chapter emphasizes avoiding hazards of desert travel, and another describes proper gear for foot or vehicle travel.



South Providence Mountains in the proposed Mojave National Park

Photo by Jim Eaton

The core of the book is its second and longest portion, which divides the California desert into nine "recognizable geographic regions," from Inyo-Mono in the northwest to Colorado desert in the southeast. These are individually described and then subdivided into a total of 38 distinct sections, with numerous trips discussed for each. The trips delineated are of three kinds—vehicle tours, hikes, and "destinations," generally a visit to a single feature. For each trip, the guide notes the degree of difficulty for hikes and backpacks and gives elevations, plus topographic maps and relevant county road map references.

Appendices list desert plants, accommodations, campgrounds, visitor centers and museums, chambers of commerce, and public land offices in the desert. There is a glossary and an extensive bibliography of recommended reading. While black and white photographs and a few fine line drawings grace the text the book could use more illustrations.

In the clarity of its exposition and in its passionate conviction of the unique value of the marvelous California desert, this book is a must for all who wish to enjoy thoughtful travel in California's desert. It may well be a must, too, for those who want a better understanding of why we want to protect the deserts now, through the California Desert Protection Act (S. 7 and H.R. 371).

*Adventuring in the California Desert* is a new tool in the hands of conservationists

working to preserve for the world's future a vital, unique part of the world's natural environment. As Lynne Foster says, "The primary purpose of this book is to help people get to know and enjoy the desert responsibly...to become intimate with wildlands in a nondisruptive way...What we're talking about is low-impact recreation—recreation that uses the desert without consuming it."

The San Francisco Bay Chapter Bookstore in Oakland and the Sierra Club Bookstore in San Francisco carry this valuable new addition to Sierra Club publications that play a key role in wilderness preservation.

Vicky Hoover is Chair of the Sierra Club's Bay Area Chapter Wildlife Subcommittee and works for the Sierra Club Alaska Task Force.

## A Perfect Fit - You In A CWC T-Shirt!

You'll lap up the compliments when you wear a CWC T-shirt sporting the Coalition's logo of black mountains beneath a blue sky, with yellow sand dunes in the foreground. KEEP IT WILD rings the top of the logo, with CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION beneath.

T-shirts are 100 percent double knit cotton. Regular T-shirts are available in white, tan, blue, and yellow in small [S], medium [M], large [L], and extra-large [EX]. A limited number of French-cut style T-shirts are available in white and pink in women's small, medium, and large.

[Sorry, we are out of tan in large size at present.]

T-shirts are \$8.00 for CWC members and \$10.00 for non-members (sales tax included). Use the order form on Page 8. Clearly indicate if you want regular or French-cut, size, color, and a substitute color. Please add \$1.25 postage and 75¢ for each additional T-shirt.



Inyo models his favorite shirt

### Wilderness Trivia Answer:

No, it's not in Golden Gate Park or the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. It is the 141-acre Farallon Wilderness. Most of the Farallon National Wildlife Refuge, a collection of small islands off the CA coast, are designated as wilderness. The refuge is within the limits of the city and county of San Francisco.

## California Wilderness Coalition



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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.



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