



# WILDERNESS RECORD

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION

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## Freel Roadless Area Trail Refused

### Forest Service Says No To Off-Roaders

By Stephanie Mandel

Hundreds upon hundreds of letters have appeared on Don Lane's desk. Piles of them demand that he do one thing, and other stacks demand the opposite. "We're caught in the middle," he says.

Lane works for the Forest Service, and his jurisdiction is the Lake Tahoe basin, where few roadless lands remain and some people love to ride off-road vehicles (ORVs).

Lane's biggest problem is Armstrong Pass, within the Freel Roadless Area. In 1987 local Forest Service staff recommended the Freel area for wilderness designation, but the Regional Forester and his staff nixed this advice. Now local ORV user groups want to build a trail through the pass. The Forest Service has been resisting this proposal in favor of maintaining the status quo—allowing snowmobiles, hiking, fishing, and horses.

Tom Martens of the League to Save Lake Tahoe claimed, in a guest commentary in the *North Lake Tahoe Bonanza*, that opening the Armstrong area "would cause unprecedented environmental damage to high mountain meadows, streams, and Trout Creek, which flows into Lake Tahoe."

Motorcycle club member Bill Dart, however, calls these claims "total fallacy." He says "equestrian use is much harder on maintained trails than off-highway vehicles." The noise and dust created by the vehicles are part of a "philosophical" difference, he adds.

Lane, however, counters that the actual physical impact on trails is not the only issue. He feels noise is more than a philosophical problem—"if there's anything we get tremendous complaints on, it's the noise issue." Lane also raises the issue of the "appropriateness" of certain uses over others, and his experience is that horses "stay on riding trails with a little more dependability."

"In any activity there's a small percentage of people who will break the rules," Dart admits. He feels, however, that ORV users would be benefitting the area since trail improvements and enforcement would be funded through the "green sticker" funds they contribute to through vehicle registration. "We feel we're doing a lot to solve problems," he explained. When an area is designated wilderness, there's no money to maintain trails, he ventured.

The High Sierra Motorcycle Club is adamant in their demand for an off-road vehicle trail through Armstrong Pass because such a corridor would lead to trails located south of the mountains, in the Toiyabe National Forest.

About 100 miles of off-road terrain and

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The Freel Roadless Area south of Lake Tahoe.

Photo by Kathy Blankenship

## Ski Plans Still Plague Mounts Shasta & Eddy

Mount Shasta and Mount Eddy, the two immense mountains that flank California's northern geographic gateway, are faced with the greatest development threats they have ever known. Ski resorts and logging may eliminate most of the finest remaining undesignated wilderness on these peaks.

Both mountains are the largest in their respective ranges. Mount Eddy is not only the largest in area, but at 9,025 feet, is the highest peak in the Klamath ranges, which include the Trinity Alps, Siskiyou and Marble Mountains, and numerous smaller ranges. Like

other Klamath mountains, Eddy has unusual plants and vegetative associations as a result of its climate and ultramafic geology (low in silica, rich in iron and magnesium).

Mount Eddy is the polestar of Northern California rivers. Draining its flanks are tributaries of the Sacramento, Klamath, and Trinity rivers. No other unprotected mountain shares this distinction. The Pacific Crest Trail traverses the

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**Fires '88**—Although not as devastating as last year's, the 1988 fire season had its own problems, especially in the wake of the Yellowstone fire scare. See pages 4 & 5.

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# COALITION PAGE COALITION PAGE COALITION PAGE

## Report

By Jim Eaton

As most of my friends know, I am not a morning person. Considerate acquaintances know I like to start the day with lunch and don't bother calling me (or at least asking thought-provoking questions) too early. I plan on getting a "I Don't Do Mornings" tee-shirt to wear to the office.

So it was one of those rare mornings that found me arising at five a.m. (you know, it's still dark then!) for the long drive to Garberville. I arrived at the famous Garberville International Airport by the appointed ten o'clock, only to realize that my cohorts all were on Northcoast time. I think that is about twenty minutes slower than Pacific Coast time.

Anyway, while waiting I looked around the nearly deserted airport trying to figure out what plane we would be flying. There were only a few there, including the one in which the mechanic had the engine disassembled on the runway.

Mel Lynn, our local pilot, arrived in his pickup with the Lost Cst [Lost Coast] license plate. "Looks like they're still working on our plane," he remarked.

Sierra Club activists Lynn Ryan and Julie Verran showed up, and eventually our engine was reassembled. After an argu-

ment with the mechanic for more gasoline, Mel got us airborne. I don't know about you, but if the pilot wants more gas, I'm with him.

We spent two hours flying over the Lost Coast. The main purpose was to look at the recent fires in the King Range, but we also got a good view of Sinkyone Wilderness State Park.

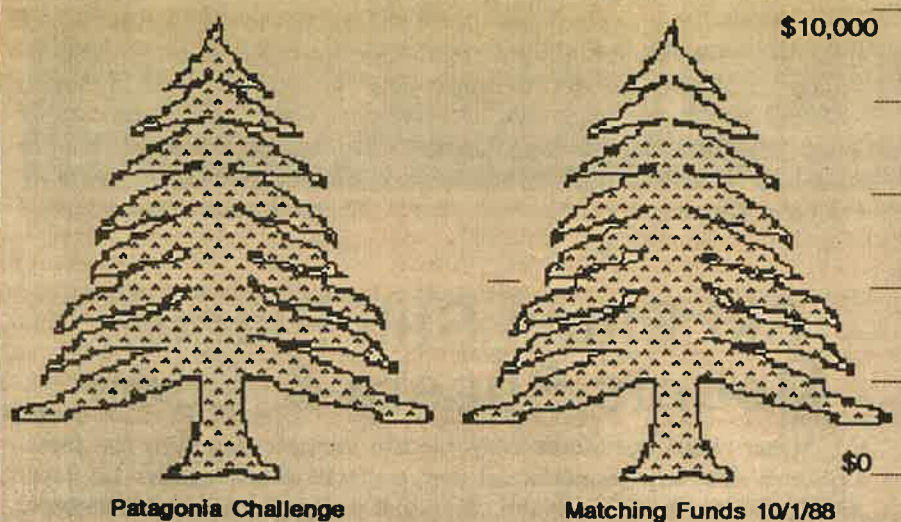
You can get an interesting perspective from the air. It was clear that the King Range fires were not nearly as bad as I had feared but that the roads fire breaks were much worse than I had anticipated.

You also find that looking through a camera lens while the airplane is bumping along leads to strange feelings on the part of your stomach. The amount of chatter with which we began the flight was inversely proportional to the green tint of our faces.

Finally Mel gave us a final thrill landing at the airport sandwiched among the redwoods on a bluff above the Eel River. After reacquainting ourselves with terra firma [the more firma the less terror], we had a *light* lunch and proceeded to examine the burned areas on foot.

Another day in the exciting life of an environmentalist.

## Matching the Patagonia Challenge Grant



## Setting the Record Straight:

### Errata in the October Wilderness Record

Apologies to Rich Renouf for spelling his name "Renous" in the Mount Shasta trail article, page 5. Blame it on a poor telephone connection between Mt. Shasta City and Davis.

Also to Phil Rhodes for crediting his wonderful photo of Mount Shasta (page 5) to Steve Johnson.

And thanks, Phil, for pointing out that—much to our embarrassment—the Inyo Na-

tional Forest does not, as was claimed in the forest planning article on page 4, contain "the southernmost glacier in the northern hemisphere." The Andes and the Himalayas are two glacial mountain ranges more southerly than the Inyo National Forest. Our source for that misguided claim, by the way, was the Inyo National Forest's Land & Resource Management Plan.



## Oil & Gas Leasing Stopped in Three Forests

The Sierra Club and California Wilderness Coalition won a long-sought victory to halt oil and gas leasing in three northern California national forests when the appeal filed by the groups was not contested by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

In 1986 the Forest Service filed an "Environmental Analysis" (EA) for the issuance of oil and gas leases in the Lassen, Klamath, and Shasta-Trinity national forests, although BLM actually issues the leases. The Sierra Club and the Coalition then protested BLM's decision to implement the Forest Service recommendation to lease the forests.

The conservation groups argued that the leasing recommendation was selected without any honest balancing of mineral values and surface impacts, and without observance

of the processes required by law. They stated that the EA did not comply with the National Environmental Policy Act and that a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was necessary for the proposed leasing program.

On September 9th BLM State Director Ed Hastey dismissed the protest of the Sierra Club and the Coalition. The groups promptly filed a notice of appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals. BLM then caved in and requested that its decision be remanded.

The Forest Service now will prepare a complete EIS for the leasing program. According to Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund attorney Bill Curtiss, "it is plain that the agency was testing us. Upon learning that we would appeal, they folded their tent."

"A win is a win, by any means," Curtiss concluded.

## Shasta & Eddy

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west side of Mount Eddy, while numerous natural lakes grace its glacially carved basins.

Shasta is the largest of Cascade Range volcanos, with broad-sweeping slopes covering over 150,000 acres. The mountain has had so many superlatives applied to it by people as eloquent as John Muir and Joaquin Miller, that this writer will make no attempt to compete. One quarter of Shasta's area, 38,000 acres, was designated wilderness in 1984. The rest of the mountain remains essentially unprotected.

### THREATS TO EDDY

Less than 20,000 acres of *de facto* wilderness remain on Mount Eddy. Much of this is timberline country, but even poor soils, steep slopes, and a short growing season have not averted logging plans here. Several logging operations, both Forest Service and private, threaten the near-timberline forests of Mount Eddy.

Trees on private land along the Pacific Crest Trail are marked for cutting. A Forest Service timber sale on the northern edge of Mount Eddy's unprotected wilderness is under appeal, and a proposed logging road into the Mount Eddy Further Planning Area will be appealed for the second time this year.

Originally proposed in the 1970s, a fourteen-chairlift ski area that would handle an estimated 10,000 skiers is still a possibility on several thousand acres of the most fragile terrain on Mount Eddy. Proponents of this development said they would not revive their ski resort proposal until the status of the Further Planning Area is determined by the Shasta-Trinity National Forest in their upcoming forest plan. Unless the Forest Service or Congress gives Mount Eddy an iron-clad protective designation, massive ski development is certain to occur as long as the Forest Service continues its open arms attitude toward speculative development of public lands.



LOGGING AND SKI AREA PLANS FOR SHASTA

Several timber sales are planned adjacent to the designated wilderness on Mount Shasta. One could impact a *de facto* wilderness forest containing a Jeffrey pine overstory and whitebark pine understory.

Most of what unprotected wilderness remains on Mount Shasta is on the southwest slope. These 4,000 acres include the finest remaining old growth Shasta red fir forest on the mountain, but the Forest Service has just announced plans to log the heart of this forest at Sand Flat. Logging is also planned at Cascade Gulch north of Sand Flat, and at the Wagon Camp area, often described as the

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## Uncle Jim's Wilderness Trivia Quiz Question:

Name the eight California Wilderness Areas named for people [not counting Saints e.g. San Gabriel]. (answer on page 7)





Mt. Shasta can be seen from Little Crater Lake in the Mt. Eddy Further Planning Area.  
Photo by Phil Rhodes

## Mt. Eddy Action Alert

By Steve Evans

The Shasta-Trinity National Forest has decided to grant a right of way across public land to Southern Pacific Land Company so that the corporate giant can log a private inholding within the Mt. Eddy Roadless Area. A scenic area of alpine lakes, many trails and rare plants, Mt. Eddy also offers magnificent views of nearby Mt. Shasta.

Less than 10,000 acres in size, Mt. Eddy is the only roadless area in the massive Shasta-Trinity National Forest currently being considered for wilderness designation in the forest planning process. Thousands of acres of roadless lands elsewhere in the forest were released to development in the 1984 California Wilderness Act. Apparently, Mt. Eddy's status as a roadless area under study for wilderness designation offers little additional protection.

Southern Pacific (SP) wants to build a 50-foot road across the roadless area to log approximately 25 acres of their private inholding in the Wagon Creek drainage. The proposed logging is less than a mile from scenic Little Crater Lake, a favorite campsite for hikers.

The Forest Service has suggested a land exchange with SP to consolidate public land within the roadless area but the proposal came too late. Although the company is strongly interested in the proposed land exchange, SP is unwilling to delay their "management" activities because of past foot-dragging on the part of the Forest Service in regards to exchanges. In fact, in a unique agreement with the Sierra Club, SP indicated their willingness 10 years ago to exchange their lands. The Forest Service never acted to implement the agreement.

The Sierra Club will probably appeal the Forest Service's decision to grant the road right-of-way but it is a difficult action to challenge because federal law grants "reasonable access" to owners of private inholdings. An ideal solution is to pressure the Forest Service to accelerate the land exchange process so that SP's right-of-way is

not needed.

Personal letters from concerned citizens are urgently needed to Forest Supervisor Robert Tyrrel, Shasta-Trinity National Forest, 2400 Washington Avenue, Redding, CA 96001. Letters should mention the unique wilderness values of Mt. Eddy (alpine lakes, trails, rare plants, and views of Mt. Shasta), its small size, and the adverse impact the proposed SP right-of-way and logging plan will have on the area (impacting nearby recreation areas, decreasing the size of an already small roadless area). **Strongly encourage Supervisor Tyrrel to accelerate the exchange process with SP so the private inholding can be acquired and the right-of-way will become unnecessary.** For more information, contact Steve Evans at (916) 753-5579.

*Steve Evans is President of the CWC and a Conservation Director of Friends of the River.*

## UPDATES

### "No Dams in Parks" Bill Dies

[from the July, 1988 *Record*]

A measure to establish a firm river protection policy for this country's national parks and monuments died in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in the closing days of the 100th Congress. The bill, H.R. 1173, by California Congressman Rick Lehman, had unanimously passed the House of Representatives in 1986 and 1987 and had been supported by both of California's senators.

Senate Republicans, led by Wyoming's Malcom Wallop and Alaska's Frank Murkowski, stalled the measure in the Energy Committee by proposing a series of weakening amendments until time ran out. The amendments reflected some of the key concerns of H.R. 1173 opponents. Wallop and Murkowski called for exemptions for enlargement proposals, on existing National Park dams and permission for the Secretary of Interior (i.e. the Bureau of Reclamation) to authorize new construction within parks such as Grand Canyon National Park.

—*Friends of the River*

### FERC Keeps Authority For Hydro Permits

[from the April & May, 1988 *Records*]

In the face of opposition from major electrical utilities and Congressional supporters of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, H.R. 3593 was killed in the House Energy and Commerce Committee at the end of the 100th Congress. The bill, championed by California Congressman Rick Lehman, would have clarified and strengthened the role of the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management in hydroelectric permitting decisions on dams and diversions affecting federal lands. Friends of the River and other conservation groups had testified in favor of the bill at Congressional hearings early in 1988.

—*Friends of the River*

### Fee Now Charged At Death Valley

A \$5 per vehicle fee is now being charged for entering Death Valley National Monument. The famous desert valley in the northeastern California Desert contains the lowest point in elevation in the state, 280 feet below sea level, at Badwater. For more information on Death Valley, which is now beginning its fall visiting season, contact: National Park Service, Death Valley National Monument, Death Valley, CA 92328, (619) 786-2331.

### Turn In Poachers

Rewards of up to \$1,000 are being offered for information that leads to the arrest of animal poachers. The California Department of Fish & Game is operating an anti-poaching program to prosecute hunting, fishing, or other violations. Callers to the toll-free hotline number remain anonymous during the entire prosecution process.

The CalTIP phone is staffed seven days a week during normal business hours, 1-800-952-5400. After 5:00 pm the public can still help by calling their local law enforcement agency, which can contact a local game warden.

### New Support, New BLM Staff Offer Hope For Soda Mountain

New support and a change in Bureau of Land Management (BLM) staff have brought new hope to people who want to save the wilderness at Soda Mountain.

Eighteen miles southwest of Ashland in the Cascade Mountains of southern Oregon and northern California are the 33,000 acres of wilderness land at Soda Mountain. This area has been an arena of land use debate between the BLM and several environmental and special interest groups for the past three years.

A recent battle has been over a BLM timber sale, known as the Hobart sale, above Camp Creek.

As was reported in the *Wilderness Record* last February, the Soda Mountain Wilderness Council (SMWC) was elated when the BLM reversed its earlier position and recommended to Congress that 5,640 acres in the core of the Soda Mountain area be designated as wilderness.

Since that time, the SMWC has been

working towards getting such a recommendation for the rest of the surrounding area, as well. However, Mark Prevost, vice chairman of the SMWC, believes that the BLM will stand firm on their decision not to designate any more area. Prevost and others are determined to prevent any logging in the area so that it will maintain its wilderness integrity until Congress can evaluate it. They argue that the area's wilderness values should be given the chance to be recognized before they are destroyed.

According to Layne Lange, a Natural Resources Supervisor for the BLM, a decision has not yet been reached on the Hobart timber sale. A new Area Manager, Richard Drehobl, was appointed after the first Hobart Environmental Assessment (EA) was filed. According to Lange, Drehobl has been reassessing the whole situation, consulting with all of the people and agencies involved. He also said that Drehobl will not make a decision until he has thoroughly studied the

issue.

In particular, Drehobl has been looking at the issue of vegetative thermal cover (vegetation serving to temper effects of weather) for large animals. Both the Oregon State Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) support the larger wilderness proposal and oppose future logging projects in the Soda Mountain area due to the detrimental effects of the loss of vegetative thermal cover on local wildlife populations.

Rick Werner of the ODFW stated in a letter to David Jones, the BLM District Manager, on September 13 that, "timber is already in short supply around Soda Mountain, and this is the area that summers part of the deer that winter down toward the Klamath River. Those units on the south side of Soda Mountain should not be cut until adjacent areas are fully stocked and

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# Nature, Neglect Burn Lost Coast

By Jim Eaton

Last year a freak lightning storm set two small fires in a canyon inside the King Range National Conservation Area, part of the "Lost Coast" of northwestern California. The fires were small and did not spread out of the canyon inside the proposed King Range Wilderness. Some fire lines were cut by hand, but on the whole the damage from fire suppression actions was not great. Manzanita, sprouting from the roots left in the firebreaks, grew three feet high this summer.

This fall two more fires burned the King Range. Both were started by hunters bearing cigarettes. But because of the wind, and probably due to post-Yellowstone fire paranoia, the fire fighting efforts were much different.

The first fire in the north end of the Conservation Area quickly was spotted and extinguished. Fire fighters arrived so quickly that the guilty hunter apparently hid out until the fire was suppressed before making his or her escape.

The other fire started south of King's

Peak. Winds whipped it south towards the hamlet of Shelter Cove where fire fighters prepared to make a last stand on a ridge north of the town. "We were within 20 minutes of evacuating Shelter Cove when the winds shifted," said Area Manager John Lloyd.

The fire burned back north. This year there was no cutting fire lines by hand. Bulldozers came in to clear vegetation in wide swaths.

A decision was made to try to hold the fire along appropriately-named Fire Ridge where a hand line was cut last year in fighting the lightning-caused fires. Heavy equipment was used to scrape away the newly-sprouted manzanita and other plants as a wide strip was plowed half way down the steep ridge towards the beach. Backfires were set to further widen the fuel break.

The fire was stopped. A mosaic pattern of unburned, lightly burned, and heavily burned areas remains. The legacy of this fire, though, will be the eroding furrow slashed down the sheer spine of Fire Ridge.



A bulldozed firebreak scars the King Range Wilderness Study Area.

Photo by Jim Eaton

## Debate Flares Up Over "Let Burn" Policy

By Jim Eaton

The newspaper headline declared: *Report: Yellowstone 'not a blackened moonscape.'* Despite press reports to the contrary, Yellowstone National Park is alive and doing quite well, thank you. Please disregard the hype you heard from the media all summer.

That's good news for the park, but the legacy of the fires will live on. You need only look at the other articles on this page to see that fire suppression efforts changed in the aftermath of the Yellowstone inferno.

What were the results of that conflagration? According to the *New York Times*, a total of 1.4 mil-

lion of the 3.5 million acres in and around the park were within the perimeters of the fires. But of the fire area, only 30 to 70 percent actually was touched by the flames. *Less than one-tenth of one percent of the 1.4 million acres—less than 1,400 acres—was burned severely enough to wipe out all life.*

The national debate over the "let burn" policy in the park is in full swing. Politicians are looking for a scapegoat to take the fall for the "destruction" of Yellowstone. Interior Secretary Donald Hodel supports the limited reforestation of the national park.

Does anyone want to look at the facts?

• Only a few of the blazes in the park were "let burn" fires. The majority of the fires were fought from the day they ignited. These fires were not stopped either.

• Yellowstone was not the only place to catch fire. Major fires were burning not only elsewhere in Wyoming, but also in Idaho, Montana, Utah, Nevada, California, and other western states. More than two million acres of land burned in Alaska.

• The mosaic pattern of vegetation left after burning is beneficial to most wildlife and plant species. Besides, the majority of Yellowstone was untouched by flames.

• National Parks are not static museum pieces. They are dynamic lands where nature should be allowed to take its course.

Some of the blame for the fires lies with Smoky the Bear. Decades of putting out small fires that would have reduced fuel loads has resulted in intense fires.

The main reason for the fires, though, is that conditions were right. Several years of drought has left the West dry. Just as the California forests burned last year, when lightning struck the Rockies this summer they ignited. The forests and ranges burned until weather conditions changed.

Droughts and fires have happened in the past. But if the greenhouse effect is changing our climate, this may mean that we ain't seen nothin' yet. The fires of the past two years may just be a sign of things to come.

Fire suppression is not an easy issue. As people increasingly build their homes in the rural parts of America, the odds of lives and structures being lost increases. But a return to Smoky the Bear days of putting out all fires as soon as smoke is smelled will result in really disastrous fires occurring someday.

*Ryan Henson is a student of Political Science at American River College in Sacramento.*



Lynn Ryan and Inyo walk up a steep fire break in the King Range Wilderness Study Area.

Photo by Jim Eaton

## Loggers Start Fire, Roadless Area Logging May Result

By Ryan Henson

Beginning at Clear Lake and running north to the Yolla Bolly Mountains, the coast ranges are the source of the Eel, Russian, and Black Butte rivers, as well as the North Fork of Cache Creek. These unique and little-known mountains are dominated by hardwoods and brush fields.

Only two designated wilderness areas exist to preserve some of the rugged Interior Coast Range lands. There are 153,000 acres of *de facto* wilderness lands left, but they are being logged and roaded very quickly.

In late September a group of loggers

cutting old growth stands directly adjacent to a roadless area and wilderness in the coast range accidentally started a fire that consumed 7,500 acres. The fire entered the Yolla Bolly/Middle-Eel Wilderness in the southern portion of the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, where it was contained by hand-crews. In the Penney Ridge Roadless Area, however, heavy equipment was used.

According to the Forest Service, road construction was avoided in suppressing the fire, and watershed stabilization efforts began immediately. The fire burned thousands of acres of old growth habitat and has raised

the threat of extensive salvage logging in the roadless area next year. Already Robert Tyrrel, Forest Supervisor for the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, has appointed an interdisciplinary team to determine where salvaging can take place.

An Environmental Impact Statement is presently being written to log in Penney Ridge. A draft is expected to be released in the fall of 1989.





# Forest Service Lets It Burn In Treacherous Monarch Wilderness

By Bill Burrows

Three months and 8,000 acres later, the Obelisk fire has finally all but burned itself out. The blaze started on July 24th when lightning struck Obelisk Peak in the Monarch Wilderness in the Sierra National Forest.

On September 19th it was reported that 8,000 acres had burned from Obelisk Peak down into Kings River canyon, and as of October 21, the Forest Service (FS) reported that the area was still smoking in some spots but that no more acreage had burned. According to Forest Service Public Affairs Officer Sue Exline, the fire will not be considered "out" until after the first rains have come.

Exline said the FS debated whether to send in a team of Park Service repellers (advanced rock climbers) but decided not to because "there were no safety zones to retreat back to in case the fire blew up, and there were no escape routes, either." There are no trails maintained in this steep area. The FS evaluated the area's terrain, the firefighters' safety, and the financial costs involved. Since the fire was in a wilderness area and threatened no private property or commercial timber land, the personal safety of the firefighters was the main concern.

The drop in elevation from 9,700-foot Obelisk Peak to the bottom of Kings Can-

yon is roughly 7,200 feet, and the slopes are as steep as 60 percent in the river canyon. Kings Canyon is the deepest river drainage in North America, dropping 7,500 feet from Spanish Mountain (10,000 feet) to the Kings River.

Exline emphasized that the FS's "let-burn" strategy is actually a "confine, contain, control" strategy. They assess the fire situation and then choose one of the three strategies. Confining the fire means letting the fire burn within established natural barriers, like rivers, ridges, or old burn lines. Containing a fire is letting it burn within man-made barriers such as fire breaks cut by fire crews or bulldozers. The control strategy is to immediately suppress a fire using fire crews and helicopters dropping water and retardant.

For the Obelisk fire, the FS chose the confine strategy. They planned to let it burn within Spanish Ridge to the north, the Middle Fork of the Kings River to the south, Tombstone Ridge to the east, and Deer Ridge to the west. Fires can cross large barriers like a river when hot embers are blown across them, and on August 18 the fire crossed over the southern boundary (Kings River). The FS then shifted to a full suppression control strategy at that boundary.

According to Exline, the area burned in the Obelisk fire had not burned for fifty to sixty years. The vegetation growing from the top of Obelisk Peak down to 5,000 feet was primarily Ponderosa pine, oak and bear clover. Ceanothus and manzanita were dominant below 5,000 feet.

Exline said that this fire was not a "hot fire" for most of the area, and that there are probably still seeds in the soil that will germinate naturally. "Hot fire" is the term used to describe fires of extremely intense heat, fires that destroy all vegetative cover as well as the nutrient-rich upper layer of the soil, leaving it virtually sterile.

Congress has approved construction of a trail from Garlic Creek in the Kings River Special Management Area through the Monarch Wilderness to Little Tehipite Valley in Sequoia Kings Canyon National Park.

*Bill Burrows is an intern with the CWC who is studying English and Environmental Studies at the University of California at Davis.*



The Forest Service decided it was not safe to send firefighters down into the steep Kings River Canyon in the Monarch Wilderness. Photo by Jim Eaton



most botanically sensitive area on Mount Shasta.

Perhaps more ominous than the timber sales are two major downhill ski resorts proposed for Mount Shasta. One proposal would triple the size of the existing Mount Shasta Ski Park, which currently can handle 2,000 skiers. Environmental analysis of this proposal is still in its early stages.

The other proposed development is the Mount Shasta Ski Area, designed to accommodate 4,800 skiers per day. The Final Environmental Impact Statement for this project was released September 30. This document has been appealed by the California Wilderness Coalition, the Mother Lode Chapter Sierra Club, and The Wilderness Society.

Issues in the Mount Shasta Ski Area (MSSA) appeal include:

1. impacts to designated and *de facto* wilderness on Mount Shasta;
2. cumulative impacts to a wide range of natural and cultural values;

## Shasta & Eddy Threatened

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3. financial feasibility of the ski area (top ski area consultants have strong doubts about the feasibility of MSSA, since the site's ski terrain is mediocre);

4. loss of ski touring terrain;

5. air and water quality deterioration;

6. the potential for "alpine village" development adjacent to the ski area.

San Francisco attorney Roger Beers has been retained by the appellants to coordinate the complex appeal and go to court if necessary, should the ski area developer attempt to begin construction this fall or winter. The appellants are seeking donations to cover legal fees and assistance from professional economists and ski area planners whose assistance may mean the difference between winning and losing this appeal.

The CWC has set up a special fund to help cover MSSA appeal costs. Donations may be sent to: California Wilderness Coalition, P.O. Box 429, Davis, CA 95617.

## Two Out Of Eight BLM Study Areas Recommended for Wilderness

To be wilderness or not to be wilderness—that was the question facing the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Final environmental impact statements (EIS) recently released for eight wilderness study areas (WSAs), encompassing 10,994 acres, recommended that 84 percent of the land *not* be designated wilderness and 16 percent be designated wilderness.

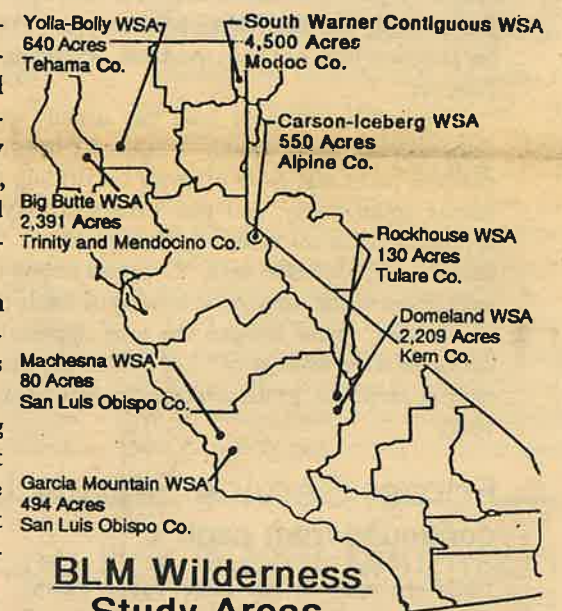
Each of the WSAs, which range from 80 to 4,500 acres in size, border a previously designated or proposed wilderness area.

The rationale for not recommending six of the eight areas was, the BLM report reads, that (1) the wilderness values of the area are not outstanding and (2) "current management has proven effective in maintaining the area's existing resources."

For several of the areas not recommended for wilderness, the awkward shape of the WSA boundaries in relation to the adjacent wilderness area makes them "unmanageable," according to the report. For example, the BLM report says that the addition of the Rockhouse WSA to the U.S. Forest Service Domeland Wilderness Area "will contribute to a potentially unmanageable boundary with the WSA protruding like a finger with no specific topographic delineation."

An additional rationale for not recommending the Garcia Mountain WSA was that "the geographic configuration of the two projecting 'fingers' of the WSA will decrease manageability of the USFS Garcia Mtn. area, which is recommended for wilderness, if the Garcia Mtn. WSA is designated for wilderness."

The Machesna WSA wasn't designated as wilderness partly because a trail for the annual Hi Mountain Enduro motor-



### BLM Wilderness Study Areas

cycle event runs through it. The route, according to the BLM report, "provides the only vehicle access along the northern boundary of the Machesna Wilderness."

#### What was recommended?

The 550-acre Carson-Iceberg WSA, which would adjoin the wilderness area of the same name on its east side, was recommended for wilderness designation. About one mile of the Carson River Trail runs through the WSA, which has second growth forest.

Partially recommended for wilderness was a WSA comprised of nine separate pieces of land on the east side of the South Warner Wilderness, along the base of the South Warner Mountains. Five of the parcels, adding up to 1,187 acres, were recommended while four others, totaling 3,313 acres, were not.



# Wilderness Inholdings: Waiting for Trouble

By Stephanie Mandel

The right to own property and do exactly as you please with it is one of the most sacred values in this country.

When the founders of the Wilderness Act were founding in the early 1960s, they had to be careful that that right was not infringed upon. On the other hand, the idea that a landowner could be allowed to do *anything*—log, build a skyscraper, play heavy metal music, mine—on their bit of property within a wilderness boundary was unsettling.

It would not have made sense to draw all wilderness boundaries so that they would exclude all private property. Pioneering the frontier had gone too far by then, and even many of the most primitive areas contained islands of private property.

The problem was settled with a hope. The Act recommends that public agencies managing wilderness areas attempt to acquire private inholdings within wilderness boundaries. The language does not demand, only suggests.

Twenty-four years have passed since the passage of the Wilderness Act, and in California almost 7 million acres have since been preserved as federal wilderness. Islands of private land remain within most of these areas, and different land managers have had different degrees of success in acquiring these.

Consider the chaparral-covered Los Padres National Forest (NF) on the state's central coast. The five wilderness areas there, adding up to around 413,000 acres, include 5,469 acres of private land. The Los Padres NF has been able to chip away at this acreage, purchasing some private land in the Ventana, Santa Lucia, and San Rafael wildernesses. For several years, however, funds for purchase have not been available, according to Assistant Lands Officer Bob Johnson.

Money to purchase land has usually come from the Land & Water Conservation Fund, which is collected from campground entrance fees in national parks and from offshore oil drilling revenues. Johnson knows that money is available, and that Congress may appropriate it—provided the appropriation is not vetoed by the President. "The Reagan administration has closed it off," Johnson says; "Congress knows it would be vetoed." Johnson's assessment of the situation is echoed by lands officers in other national forests.

In fact, under Reagan the total appropriation from the fund has only amounted to an average of \$224 million per year over the last seven years, a 40 percent reduction in the average amount spent each year from 1965 through 1980.



Trees catch the sun in the Freel Roadless Area.

Photo by Kathy Blankenship

Although purchases have been slow, and rare in recent years, so have conflicts. Bob Johnson has found that in the Los Padres NF "management [of private land in wilderness areas] is pretty compatible."

When a conflict in management does rear its head, the Forest Service has often been able to avert it, as in the Golden Trout Wilderness. Louisiana Pacific owns a 40-acre inholding there and in the early months of this

year proposed logging it. The Forest Service has been able to negotiate, however, to trade the inholding for national forest timber located elsewhere.

The trade is not yet finalized, but officials express confidence that they will be able to work something out. "Louisiana-

go to next page ➡

## Forest Service Stands Up to Off-Road Vehicle Groups continued from page 1

trails are open in the Lake Tahoe basin, according to the Forest Service, with nine of these miles in the south shore area. Dart, however, says that most of these miles are paved roads or developed roads for jeeps. He claims that only four miles of primitive trail exist in the entire Lake Tahoe basin. "As a motorcyclist, I'm looking for an opportunity to ride on a trail that's fun, a challenge, and goes somewhere I want to go," explained Dart, who runs a retail stereo equipment business.

Although the club has suggested another corridor route along State Highway 89, an Armstrong Pass trail is their best bet. The 89 route is on the fringe of a residential area, where conflicts between residents and off-roaders have arisen in the past.

Lane is not encouraging about other alternatives, either. "Physically, there isn't anything viable [for off-road vehicle routes] on the south end of the lake," he says.

One recourse the motorcyclists can take is to appeal the Lake Tahoe Basin Manage-

ment Unit's forest plan, which is expected to be released in November. Dart promises that they will do just that.



## ORV Commission Holds Forest Service Grants

The off-road vehicle users have found a way to make their views felt by the Forest Service. The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission controls the green sticker fund, and, "the commission is very sensitive to user groups," as Lane puts it. So sensitive, in fact, that they have cut the normal flow of grant funds to the recalcitrant Forest Service.

At July and September meetings the commission took no action on a Forest Service request for \$137,000 for off-road vehicle trail projects and enforcement. The Forest Service has received similar grants for the past several years.

The commission expressed concerns that the Forest Service is not doing enough to provide adequate off-road vehicle recreation in the Lake Tahoe basin, according to the *Tahoe Daily Tribune*. Another meeting will be held November 18, at which they may or may not take action on the fund request.

What will happen if the commission refuses to give the Forest Service any monies? According to Lane, it can't spell good news for the off-road riders. "We're not going to be able to develop new trail systems or manage what's on the ground," Lane says, explaining that his agency depends on these funds. He believes that the resulting lack of enforcement will have the "net result that other agencies are going to put pressure on the Forest Service to manage or close" some trails. "Ultimately, the OHVs are going to lose," he predicts.



## Private Inholdings continued from page 6

Pacific is not gung ho to harvest timber," judges Inyo NF Lands Officer Randy Karstaedt.

Karstaedt has been working primarily on land-for-timber trades for the past several years, successfully completing four or five exchanges.

Jack Darnell, Recreational Officer with the Klamath National Forest, has been working with wilderness areas for about 20 years. He has run into few problems with use, although he stresses that private landowners "can do anything" they want on their property, within zoning and state laws.

The problems Darnell has seen have had to do with "roads that could be required to access those private inholdings." The law states that the managing agency must provide "reasonable access" through wilderness to private land. "Reasonable access" can mean a foot path or paved road. It is defined as that which "will have the least-lasting impact on the wilderness resource and, at the same time, will serve the reasonable purposes for which state or private land or rights

is held or used." (Editor's note: see the Mt. Eddy article on page 3 for a good example of an inholding conflict.)

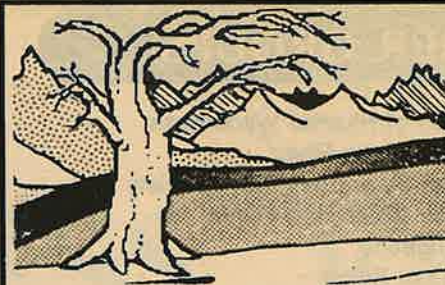
Darnell, however, believes that the best way to deal with these problems is to acquire the land and says that the Klamath NF attempts to "acquire them any time we can."

While most of California's national forests seem to have a similar policy, thousands of acres of private land remain within wilderness boundaries. Let us hope that until a less stingy administration is in office all remains peaceful inside the wilderness.

## New Hope for Sodas continued from page 3

are providing optimal thermal cover for big game."

Another argument against cutting is that logged areas in the surrounding lands have never regenerated as projected. Thus, the BLM should reexamine both the commercial value of their timber in the Soda Mountain area as well as the irreversible damage that



## Reminiscent Shadow

Twice this day a dead  
alpine lodgepole pine in the  
meadow  
recalls the depth of its dance  
and the heart in its twists

When the horizon sun sends it  
back into life  
on the ground again  
alive in the length of its shadow.

— Bill Burrows

could be the ultimate lasting result of their actions.

The change in BLM staff may be a good sign for concerned environmentalists because a fresh perspective has been brought in. Ultimately, it will be Drebohl's decision whether or not to go ahead with the present schedule of timber harvests. SMWC's Mark Prevost said, "I respect this man. I want to work with him."

However, the SMWC is prepared to appeal the sale and even go to court if necessary. Sierra Club Legal Defense has agreed to file the suit.

Five requests to designate the area as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern have been filed, but no decision has yet been made. According to Prevost, only one was acknowledged in the BLM's Hobart Environmental Assessment (EA). He also said that the Hobart sale EA failed to mention the fact that out of 330 comments filed, 327 were opposed to the BLM's harvest plan.

The increased interest and support for preserving the larger Soda Mountain *de facto* wilderness has been encouraging for the SMWC. The BLM's final EA on the Hobart timber sale will be issued in the spring, and the SMWC will be ready to fight to protect the area. This issue is not nearly settled.

## T-Shirts For Sale

With only a few individuals left, the California Wilderness Coalition's "Keep It Wild" T-shirts are destined to be collector's items—don't delay in ordering yours!



This design of black mountains beneath a blue sky with yellow sand dunes in the foreground comes in white, tan, light blue, and yellow in small, medium, and extra-large (no larges or med. yellows). French-cut style shirts are available in white, pink, and light blue in sizes small, medium and extra-large (except no x-large in blue or white).

The shirts are 100 percent double knit cotton, and cost \$8.00 for CWC members and \$10.00 for non-members (sales tax included). Use the order form on page 8, and clearly indicate if you want regular or French-cut, and a substitute color. Please add \$1.50 postage and 75 cents for each additional shirt.

## Wilderness Trivia Quiz Answer:

(from page 2)

Ansel Adams, Phillip Burton [Pt. Reyes], Kit Carson [Carson-Iceberg], Hoover [Pres. Herbert], Ishi, John Muir, Peter Lassen [Lassen Volcanic] & Dick Smith.

## California Wilderness Coalition



### 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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