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# WILDERNESS RECORD

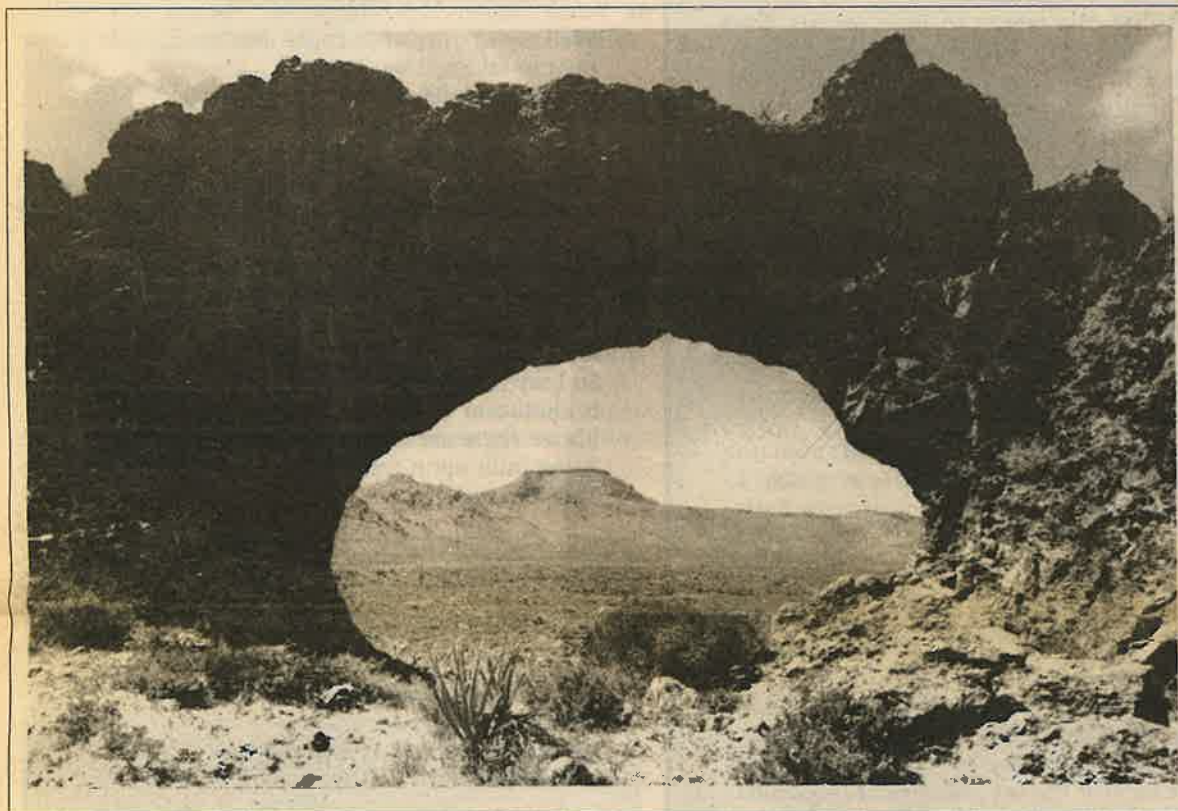
PROCEEDINGS OF THE CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION

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An unusual formation of volcanic breccia in the proposed East Mojave National Park. Table Mtn. WSA can be seen in the background. Photo by Jim Eaton

## ORV ride stalled by letter-writing campaign

By Sally Miller

On August 19, Inyo National Forest District Ranger JoEllen Keil (White Mountain Ranger District) announced that the off-road vehicle (ORV) group California Trail Rides had withdrawn its application for a special use permit to conduct the 1991 Inyo 250 Dual Sport Motorcycle Ride in the Inyo and White mountains on October 5 and 6.

California Trail Rides was denied access to a sacred area in the Inyo Mountains and a sensitive riparian drainage in the White Mountains in the special use permit for their 1990 event. Ninety riders nonetheless partook in a "protest ride" in the forbidden areas, at the encouragement of California Trail Rides organizer Larry Langley.

Witnessed by the District Ranger and members of the public, the 1990 protest ride outraged environmentalists and local citizens. Larry Silver of the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund and Desert Survivors attorney Doug Kari contested Forest Supervisor Dennis Martin's assertion that he lacked the authority to take punitive action against Langley or the riders.

In response to strong public criticism and following discussions with members of the Big Pine band of Paiute Shoshones,

*continued on page 6*

## Eyewitness account of desert hearings

By Jim Eaton

An hour before the start of the hearing, seats in the House Interior Committee room were filled. By the time the hearing began, the members of the press not lucky enough to claim one of the dozen chairs reserved for them had lined up along one wall of the chamber. In the back of the room and along the other wall stood an odd assortment of environmentalists, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) officials, military brass, and miscellaneous lobbyists.

The Subcommittee on General Oversight and California Desert Lands held the hearing on H.R. 2929, the California Desert Protection Act (Levine, Lehman), and H.R. 3066, the California Public Lands Wilderness Act (Lewis). Environmentalists support the Levine-Lehman bill, which is a refinement of Senator Alan Cranston's legislation, S. 21.

Senator Alan Cranston led off the testimony, stating that the California Desert Protection Act is "one of my highest legislative priorities." He noted that the House

measure includes many compromises which he could support, but added, "I have serious reservations about continued grazing in the East Mojave."

Subcommittee Chairman Richard Lehman said that "business as usual in the California Desert is not an option." Lehman said he and Representative Mel Levine had agreed to a number of compromises, including the longer phase-out of grazing, but believed nonetheless that "we should let the grazing rights continue."

Rep. Levine supported H.R. 2929, stating "the land we seek to protect is wilderness in its rawest form. The Wilderness Act," he said, "functions as an enduring challenge to this institution—protect the public domain—or forsake the richest of all legacies we could leave for our children."

Reps. Jerry Lewis and William Thomas, who could not attend the hearing, submitted statements for inclusion in the hearing record. Lewis' statement characterized

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# COALITION PAGE

## MONTHLY REPORT

Five years ago I attended the first Senate hearing on California Desert legislation in Washington, D.C. It was July. It was hot. So hot it broke records, even for July, with temperatures at or above the century mark (and humidity to match).

So it was with great relief that I learned this year's House hearing on the Desert Bill had been postponed from July to September. But it was *déjà vu* all over again. Well, it wasn't 100°, but a couple of 96° days were nearly as bad.

Most of you know what I'm talking about. But if you are a California native who hasn't experienced humidity, put on your coat and tie and roam around the bathroom when someone is taking a hot shower.

Aside from wandering around smelling like a gym, it was fun to see old friends.

I stayed with Debbie Sease, a colleague from my Wilderness Society days who now is the Sierra Club's Public Lands Program Director, and her husband Russ Shay. Russ is a former CWC director who once was the Club's Northern California Representative.

Another former director, Jay Watson, works for The Wilderness Society there. Two current directors were in town; Nobby Riedy was back working on the desert bill, and Frannie Waid was lobbying on behalf of ancient forests.

I ran into Alaska activist Karen Fant. Karen attended our first wilderness workshop in Davis 20 (!) years ago and went on to found the Washington Wilderness Coalition. Former Sierra Club forestry lobbyist Tim Mahoney dropped by the desert hearing to say hello. I had a beer with another Washington activist, Chuck Sisko, now a legislative aide to Rep. Jim Jontz. And former Davisite Sue Rodriguez-Pastor treated me in honor of my birthday to a vegan Chinese dinner (during which a lobbyist for the Fund for Animals quizzed me unmercifully on how I could claim to be an

environmentalist and *not* be a vegetarian).

There was a slew of Californians in town for various reasons, including Harriet Allen (on the Coalition's Advisory Committee), Judy Anderson, Deborah Reames, Elden Hughes, Sally Miller, and Howard Chapman. I missed former CWC director (now living in Alaska) Sally Kabisch by a day.

Iron-grip Howard Chapman greeted me with "you're even grayer than the last time we met," not the sort of thing one wants to hear on his 43rd birthday. I would have responded with a snappy comeback, but I was momentarily stunned by the blinding reflection from his shiny pate.

There were other Californians in town as well, mostly to oppose the California Desert Protection Act. I traded good-natured jibes with Jeff Jarvis, the state wilderness coordinator for the Bureau of Land Management, when he payed a courtesy visit to the Sierra Club office.

The desert hearing went extremely well. Our witnesses knew their stuff and were quite articulate. Maybe our mock hearing the previous day helped. (I got to play the role of a hostile member of Congress.)

The final four days Sally Miller and I spent our time walking the marble halls to pay visits to Congressional aides. I was impressed with Sally; she is one of the best citizen lobbyists with whom I have had the pleasure of working. Coming from Lee Vining to Washington, D.C. was like visiting another planet for her, and she did not like walking the streets at night. But inside those legislative edifices she was in her element.

Our final day made us a little sad to leave: it was cool, sunny, and clear. Besides, with the busy schedule we had during our seven days, we never got a chance to visit the art galleries or museums.

Washington, D.C.: it's a nice place to visit, but I sure wouldn't want to live there.

BY JIM EATON

## ROADENTS

A song by Glen Waldeck

I was in the woods, feeling good  
Surrounded by family and friends  
It was a nice slice of paradise  
I was glad for the place I was in  
When my peaceful joy was destroyed  
I'm telling you it was no joke  
It was a rumble the grumble  
smell of the diesel smoke

Well my oh me, what could that be  
I got to take a closer look  
It turned a hillside into a mud slide  
It choked a babbling brook  
It uprooted trees, such blasphemy  
A down and out destructive mode  
It was a front end loader coming in to build a road

Well they might say that access way  
Is there for the good of the land  
But we insist on wilderness  
And that road ain't part of the plan  
So I say that old blockade  
is a solution to the problem at hand  
'Cause there are too many roads  
Being built upon this land  
Tear 'em up!

Now some of the atrocities  
That occur when a roadbed's down  
Are the lives that are lost  
While they try to cross  
'Cause there's no other way around  
See the feathers fly, kiss your hide goodbye  
Another one bites the dust  
All in the name of a progress game  
Where the players either make it or rust

You may not care, say life's unfair  
You gotta play the hand you're dealt  
Then place yourself in the middle  
Of a road with a turtle  
That's older than the road itself  
So I say the old blockade  
is a solution to the problem at hand  
'Cause there are too many roads  
Being built upon this land  
Tear 'em up!

Now if things aren't what they seem  
It's simply because they're not  
They're turning our national forests  
Into a clearcut parking lot  
They got roads galore, four times more  
Than the total of Interstate  
It's time for remission and reclamation  
It's time to revegetate

Well if Smokey the Bear really cared  
This story'd tell a different tale  
The habitat would stay intact  
And they'd axe those timber sales  
But until that day the old blockade  
is a solution to the problem at hand  
'Cause there are too many roads  
Being built upon this land  
Tear 'em up!

Obliterate, revegetate, obliterate, revegetate, obliterate, revegetate, obliterate, revegetate, obliterate, revegetate, obliterate, revegetate, obliterate, revegetate, obliterate, revegetate.

### Uncle Jim's

### Wilderness Trivia Quiz Question:

Courtesy of Elden Hughes

"What constitutes a mountain range has been previously agreed to by a bunch of drunks around a campfire.

"There are eleven mountain ranges in California over 10,000 feet in elevation. If the Southern Cascades (Lassen and Shasta) and the Sierra Nevada are two of the ranges, can you name the other nine?"

Answer on page 7.

## Corrections

The name of the law firm—Morrison & Foerster—that successfully guaranteed environmentalists their right to appeal a proposed ski resort on Mt. Shasta was misspelled in the September issue. We regret the error.

A photo by Emilie Strauss was poorly reproduced on page 3 of the September issue. Our apologies to Emilie, a fine photographer.



## BLM's Wilderness Study Areas

# BLM sees gold mine in Cache Creek

By Jim Eaton

Sometime before 1832 a group of Hudson's Bay Company trappers wandered down from Canada into California's Central Valley. They stopped to hide some traps along the bank of a stream, calling the place *Rivière la Cache*, now known as Cache Creek.

Draining Clear Lake, Cache Creek slices eastward through the Coast Range to reach the Sacramento River near the state's capital. Clear Lake floods a broad valley that originally drained westward into the Russian River until a large landslide plugged the drainage sometime within the last few thousand years. The water rose behind the landslide, forming the largest natural lake entirely inside California. (Lake Tahoe and Goose Lake are bi-state lakes, and the Salton Sea was created when canal builders lost control of the Colorado River.) The lake eventually spilled through a new outlet into Cache Creek.

Although the lower stretches of Cache Creek are paralleled by Highway 16, the upper 20 miles of the creek flow through a steep, wild canyon. The core of this area is the 35,000-acre Rocky Creek-Cache Creek Wilderness Study Area (WSA) managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The WSA is in Lake and Yolo counties. (See map.)

Wildlife abounds within the WSA. The state's second largest winter concentration of the endangered bald eagle is here, as well as the second largest herd of tule elk, a "sensitive" species. Golden eagles and prairie falcons soar above land populated with black bear, mountain lion, bobcat, coyote, and deer.

Bald eagles fly from as far as Alaska and Canada to winter along Cache Creek. Some 55-70 eagles feast on the large numbers of carp found in the stream.

The Cache Creek tule elk herd was established in the early 1920s to reintroduce a species nearly driven to

extinction in the previous century. About 500 elk roam the WSA's ridges and valleys, and the Wilson Valley area is closed to public entry during calving season. In recent years, the California Department of Fish and Game has instituted a controversial hunt of this herd.

Most of the WSA's vegetation is chaparral and chemise, an ecosystem not represented in the National Wilderness Preservation System. There are also oak woodlands and savanna, isolated serpentine barrens, and some groves of Sargent cypress.

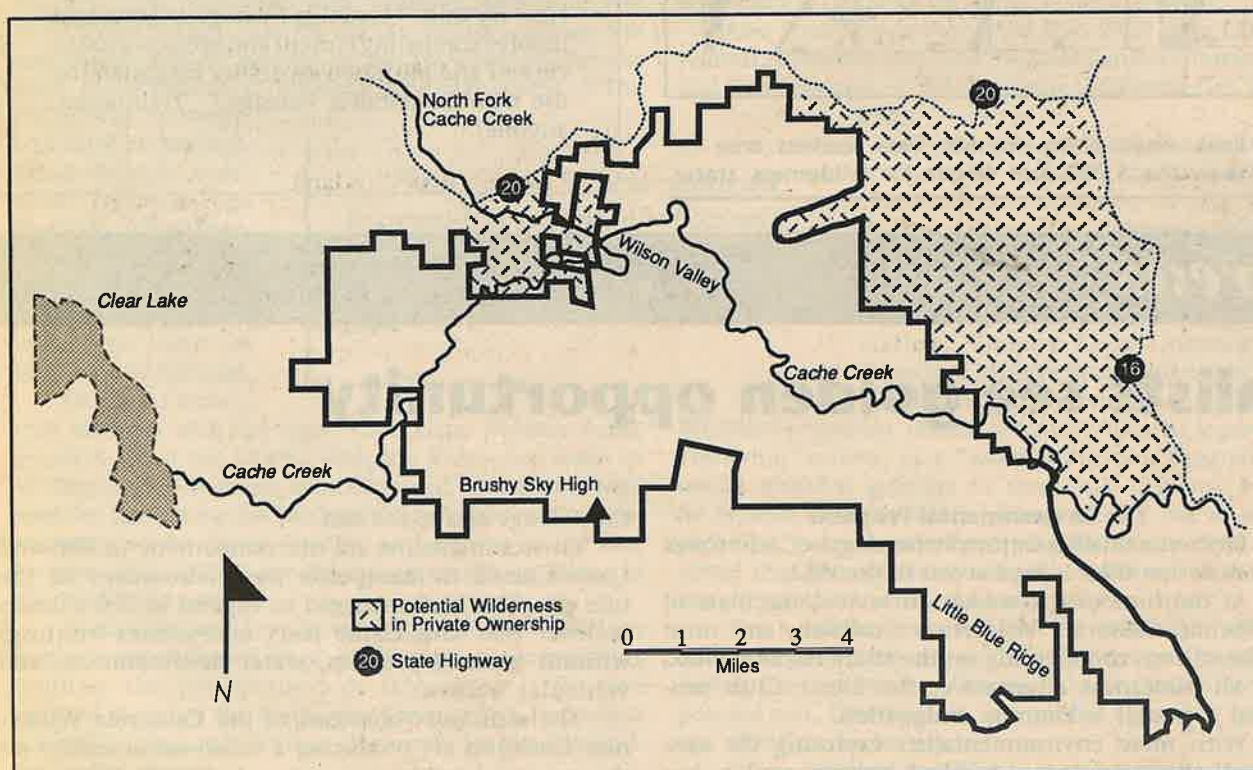
Recent investigations indicate extensive use of the area by early Americans. Some of the only undisturbed cultural sites in northern California lie in Wilson Valley.

Whitewater rafting is an increasingly popular activity on Cache Creek. Although most of the use is downstream of the WSA, when the water flow is adequate rafters can start on the North Fork of Cache Creek and float through the WSA.

For years the Cache Creek area has been ringed by private ranches, limiting public access. But since the BLM acquired a right-of-way and built a trail (subsequently publicized in *Sunset Magazine*), a multitude of hikers, equestrians, backpackers, hunters, and, regrettably, mountain bikers are discovering the remarkable recreational oppor-



The Franciscan formation typical of the Coast Range, with its alternating layers of sandstone and shale, is apparent along this creek bank. Photo by Tom Jopson



Cache Creek WSA.

Map by Jim Eaton

tunities of Cache Creek.

### BLM's Proposal

As with most of the WSAs in Northern California, the BLM did not recommend any wilderness for Cache Creek. Although admitting that the area qualifies for wilderness designation and has other outstanding features, the agency declared the WSA "not-suitable" to be classified as wilderness.

Mineral potential was one reason the BLM did not opt for wilderness. The WSA is two miles from and adjacent to the Homestake gold mine, and hundreds of claims have been staked in the area. None of the claims has been patented, and the BLM estimated that only 200 acres of surface disturbance would occur if they were mined.

Former Interior Secretary James Watt allowed most of the area to be leased for oil, gas, and geothermal resources, but the potential for development is considered low.

The tule elk were another reason the BLM did not want wilderness in Cache Creek, mostly because the California Department of Fish and Game wants to "improve and expand habitat" by providing irrigated pasture for the animals in Wilson Valley. The BLM also wants "development of a dependable water system," apparently Cache Creek does not qualify.

The BLM reports that military overflights "must be considered to maintain the integrity of the existing and future national defense mission as well as the wilderness

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## Roadless Areas

# Decision to bisect Mt. Vida roadless area appealed

On September 6 The Wilderness Society (TWS) filed an appeal of a Forest Service (FS) decision to permit construction of a road through the Mt. Vida Roadless Area in the Modoc National Forest (see map). TWS is appealing the Record of Decision for the Mt. Vida Planning Area, which was based on an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) deemed inadequate by TWS. Regional Forester Ronald Stewart must respond to the appeal within 90 days.

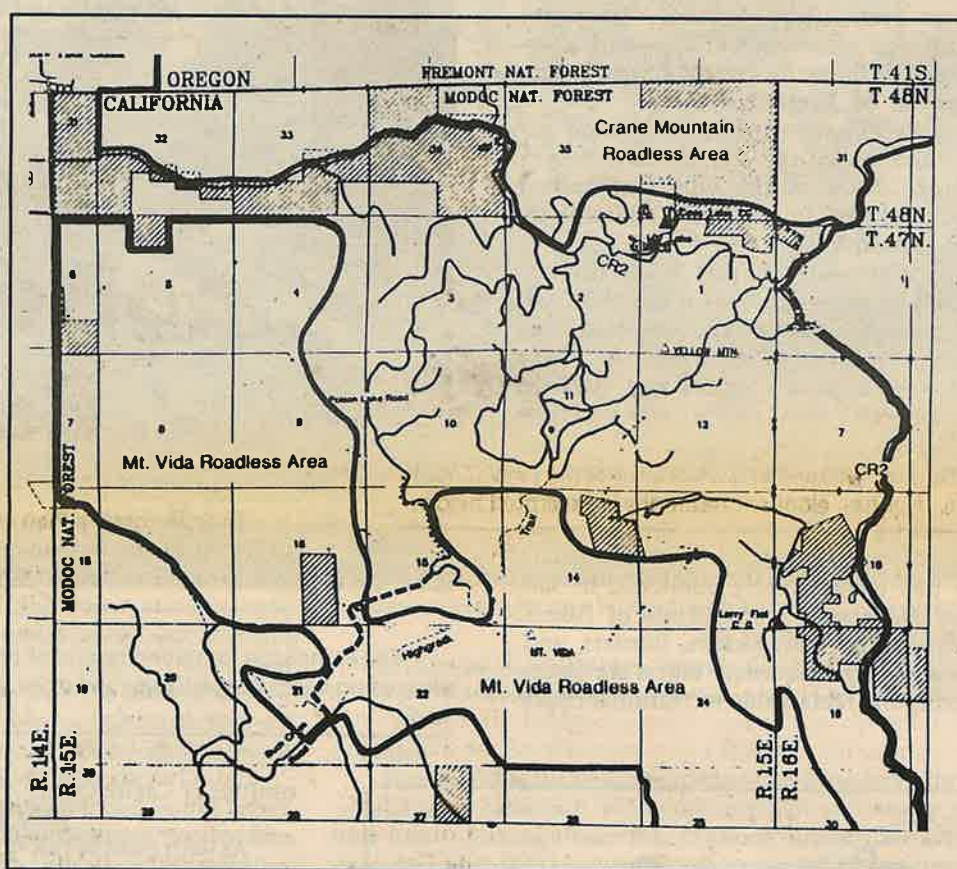
Environmentalists had objected to the draft EIS because it considered only consumptive alternatives. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that a full range of alternatives be considered in an environmental review. In addition, the alternative preferred by forest planners and since adopted in the Record of Decision was not included in the draft EIS despite a NEPA requirement that "environmental information [be] available to public officials and citizens before decisions are made." (See WR article, December 1990.)

Most troubling to environmentalists is the prospect of an arterial road bisecting the Mt. Vida Roadless Area. In its appeal, TWS questions the need for the road and contends that the FS has not considered the environmental impacts on the roadless area. One likely impact is that the road would preclude the possibility of wilderness status for Mt. Vida, since neither of the two parcels the road would create would meet the 5,000-acre guideline for inclusion as federal wilderness.

Other problems identified in the appeal are inad-

equately monitoring of the effects of logging on water quality, insufficient mitigation of grazing impacts to riparian areas, and an emphasis on clearcutting.

Had the FS responded to environmentalist concerns earlier in the review process, the appeal would not have been necessary, according to Louis Blumberg, Assistant Regional Director of TWS. "Although the Modoc is far from urban centers, it deserves as much public scrutiny as forests in our own backyard. We are pledged to working with CWC and local activists to ensure that the Modoc gets the protection it sorely needs," vowed Blumberg.



The proposed road (dotted line) would divide the Mt. Vida roadless area into two parcels, each smaller than the 5,000-acre target for wilderness status.

## The definitive roadless area, or Conundrums along the Modoc

Most government documents are more likely to generate yawns than guffaws. The Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Mt. Vida Planning Area in the Modoc National Forest is a notable exception, however. In the introduction to a section on roadless areas, the authors provide some curious definitions and ingenious constructions.

Among the qualities identified as part of the "roadless experience" are solitude and remoteness. "Solitude emphasizes the feelings of loneliness and desertion," the authors intone, feelings which "allow the roadless area user to become part of the natural, physical, and biological processes and to understand that human behavior can change the course of these natural processes."

Remoteness is defined as "a feeling that the motorized world is far away. The smell of diesel smoke, the sight of a road, the sound of an engine, even low-flying aircraft can affect the feeling of remoteness. These sites [sic] and sounds remind the roadless user of the nearness of the motorized world [emphasis added]."

Weird maybe, but not incomprehensible. Now try this: "Assessing manageability might involve comparing current and projected use to current and projected capability for sustaining use without resource damage." Translation, anyone?

## Wilderness Study Areas

# Environmentalists see golden opportunity

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resource."

Although unwilling to recommend wilderness for the WSA, the BLM did designate about 8,200 acres of land along Cache Creek as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). Within this ACEC, however, the BLM proposed not only an access road, but grazing, mining, and energy development as well.

At the time of the original wilderness study, Wilson Valley was in private ownership. Since the acquisition of this significant parcel, BLM officials have indicated that they are less opposed to wilderness designation.

### The Environmental Proposal

Environmentalists are just discovering the Cache Creek area now that there is legal access to the WSA.

At the time of the wilderness review, the State of California, California Wilderness Coalition, and most of the citizens commenting on the study recommended the all-wilderness alternative; the Sierra Club proposed a partial wilderness designation.

With more environmentalists exploring the area and discovering its outstanding values, a plan has arisen to expand the proposed wilderness beyond the WSA boundaries. Two areas of special concern are the lands along the North Fork of Cache Creek and the Cache

Creek Ridge area to the east.

Environmentalists are not sympathetic to Fish and Game's desire to manipulate the environment for the tule elk. The herd managed to expand to 500 animals (a level Fish and Game feels necessitates hunting) without planted pastures, water developments, and vehicular access.

The staff and volunteers of the California Wilderness Coalition are producing a video documentary on the proposed wilderness area. Anyone interested in helping with this project or with the development of the Cache Creek wilderness proposal should contact the Coalition for more information.



## Wilderness news

### Clarion call for wilderness...and some peculiar logic against

continued from page 1

his bill, H.R. 3066, as the "true compromise" since it is the proposal developed by the BLM and recommended by the Bush administration. Thomas wrote that "H.R. 2929 does not provide for the same level of vehicular access to the desert H.R. 3066 provides, meaning the ordinary people will not be able to see or enjoy this resource."

BLM Director Cy Jamison, flanked by BLM State Director Ed Hastey and National Park Service Regional Director Stanley Albright, testified against H.R. 2929. He said that the bill fails to recognize "heritage aspects" of the East Mojave because "it would eliminate family-based recreational touring, access by hunters, grazing, and limited, carefully controlled mining operations." When asked whether he would support the bill if the Mojave National Park were removed from it, Jamison replied, "it would go a long ways."

#### Staking out wilderness

Six environmentalists testified in support of the Levine-Lehman legislation. Howard Chapman, who was the Regional Director of the National Park Service for fifteen years, countered Jamison's assertion that the East Mojave did not meet National Park standards. He cited a National Park Service report that "unequivocally stated that...[the proposed] Mojave National Park and additions to Death Valley and Joshua Tree [warrant] protection as components of the National Park System." In response to criticisms that the proposed Mojave park has too many roads and powerlines, Chapman pointed out that several of the areas bounded by these developments within the proposed park are themselves larger than 21 of the 50 existing national parks.

Representing the Desert Protective Council, Harriet Allen countered Rep. Thomas' assertion that H.R. 2929 would restrict access by reminding the committee that 85 percent of the proposed wilderness areas are within three miles of vehicular access. "The difference between [the bills] is that H.R. 3066 selects scattered, museum-type samples of wilderness; H.R. 2929 designates whole ecosystems, units which can stand on their own," Allen said.

Deborah Reames, staff attorney with the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, testified about her battles with the BLM over roads in Wilderness Study Areas, destruction of land by off-road vehicles (including the Barstow-to-Las Vegas race), extermination of the desert tortoise, and mining in the East Mojave. H.R. 2929 is needed "to stiffen the backbone of the BLM," she said.

Duke University botany professor William Schlesinger stressed that protection of ecosystems requires the preservation of large areas. He also pointed out that the California Desert is an important scientific laboratory and a classroom for understanding global change.

George Frampton, president of The Wilderness Society, supported H.R. 2929 but asked that no further compromises be made. Frampton told the committee that



Elden Hughes (left) and Rep. Mel Levine at the 1989 CWC Wilderness Conference. Hughes' eloquent testimony is excerpted below.

"we have reached the point at which any further reduction in protection for the desert would significantly undermine the purposes of the Act."

The California Desert Protection League was represented by Elden Hughes who testified that he has been in every wilderness area proposed in the Levine-Lehman bill. Hughes also represented the San Jacinto Mountain Chapter of the Izaak Walton League.

Also testifying on behalf of H.R. 2929 were Charles Warren, executive officer of the State Lands Commission, and Gus Sebenius of the Southern California Gas Company.

Opponents of the Levine-Lehman compromise included the president of the California Division of the Izaak Walton League, the California Wildlife Federation (not affiliated with the environmentalist National Wildlife Federation), the California Mining Association, Viceroy Gold Corporation, Friends of Mojave Road, and a rancher.

Jeff Buck, representing the California Wildlife Federation, offered the most unusual argument. Testifying in favor of a "water mitigation program" to install artificial guzzlers to store and dispense water, he implied that mountain springs are dry due to lower-elevation ground water pumping by desert cities. He stated that ground water use will continue "unless you are prepared to wipe humanity off the map."

The subcommittee is expected to "mark up" the bills and pass them on to the full Interior Committee during the first week in October. As Chairman Lehman pointed out, "the bottom line is that there is a subjective decision to be made."

Guam delegate Ben Blaz, a member of the subcommittee, praised Elden Hughes for his most stirring testimony. Hughes' statement concluded:

"Miners started staking claims in the California Desert

in the 1850s. No one staked out scenery. The railroads staked their claims across the desert in the 1880s. No one staked out primitive recreational opportunities. The Imperial, Coachella, Lucerne, and Mojave valleys were homesteaded at the turn of the century. No one staked out wildlife habitat. Populations of coastal towns have grown from hundreds to millions to tens of millions. The population is spilling over the passes into the desert. It is time to stake out wilderness.

"It is time for Congress to stake out real wilderness. Not just representative samples! Not just mountain tops! But real wilderness. Wilderness and Parks to save the California Desert ecosystem. Wilderness and Parks that will endure for our children's children's children."

## Drills poised over Bodie

In September, a Plan of Operation to perform mineral exploration on one and a half acres within the Bodie Wilderness Study Area (WSA) was submitted to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The BLM has recommended opening the Bodie WSA to mining and other development.

Bodie (and all WSAs administered by the BLM) must be accorded interim wilderness protection until released by an act of Congress. An unidentified company has "grandfathered" rights to the old Paramount Mine, however, rights which preceded the establishment of the WSA and consequently remain active.

According to Mike Ferguson, Area Manager for the BLM's Bishop Resource Area, the BLM could approve the plan solely on the basis of the grandfathered rights, without environmental review. Instead, the BLM has elected to take a "conservative approach," Ferguson said, and will write either an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposal. Which form of environmental review will be chosen has not yet been decided because the Plan of Operation submitted is incomplete.

Local environmentalists, who have not yet been granted access to the proposal, are highly concerned about its potential impacts on the wilderness character of the area, according to Sally Miller, an activist with the Sierra Club's Toiyabe Chapter. Jim Eaton, Executive Director of the California Wilderness Coalition, echoed Miller's sentiments, adding that the Bodie area is of statewide concern. Eaton disputed Ferguson's assertion that grandfathered uses are exempt from environmental review. "The National Environmental Policy Act requires an environmental review for any project that would significantly affect the environment," he said. Public controversy also can trigger environmental review under the terms of the Act.

As part of either an EA or an EIS, public comment will be solicited. To get on the BLM's mailing list for information regarding the proposal, write to: Mike Ferguson, Area Manager, BLM-Bishop Resource Area, 787 N. Main St., Suite P, Bishop, CA 93514.



## Land Conservation

### Progressive environmental vision for California in Assembly report

"One hundred fifty years ago, magnificent redwood trees grew to 300 feet tall and 30 feet in diameter. Grizzly bears, gray wolves, and red foxes roamed majestic mountains and rolling prairies. Condors with nine-foot wingspans and bountiful flocks of waterfowl flew across beautifully clear blue skies, above noble green forests, toward rich freshwater wetlands....A thousand varieties of wildflowers and rare plants glorified purple hillsides. With natural colors, natural resources, and natural wonders, California was known as the 'Golden State.'"

Earth First! propaganda? Hardly. Rather, it's the introduction to a report, "Biological Ghettos," released by the state Assembly Office of Research in July. Predicated on the realization that human activity is relegating wildlife to isolated pockets of habitat, or ghettos, the report addresses flaws with land management and conservation in California and recommends timely and sweeping changes.

The report's assessment of the current situation is mixed. Although a great deal of California's land has been preserved, the criteria historically used in determining which lands to conserve have not been based on the needs of species. Consequently, some habitat types are well-represented among public lands, but others, such as wetlands and riparian woodlands, are fast disappearing. Many agencies are unable to adequately protect habitat and wildlife because they lack funds and have contradictory missions. The Department of Fish and Game, for instance, has the paradoxical function of simultaneously protecting wildlife and promoting hunting and fishing.

If the problems the report identifies are longstanding and unsurprising, the recommendations are refreshingly ambitious.

The report proposes first that data bases now scattered among various state agencies be consolidated in a single clearinghouse accessible to anyone. With integrated data bases inventorying land use and ownership, wildlife habitat, endangered species, natural areas, soil vegetation, farm land, and available water, officials would be better able to make informed decisions.

Second, the report recommends that a Land Conservation Coordinating Council be established "to provide a comprehensive view of the state's critical land conservation needs." Under the aegis of the state Resources Agency, the council would identify critical habitat, acquire the land necessary for such habitat (including corridors between habitats), and set management guidelines for the protection of habitat and species.

Third, the report addresses the impacts of population growth by proposing the creation of regional agencies which would formulate land use plans specifically tailored to regional needs. Each land use plan would incorporate a resource assessment, maps detailing which areas—private and public—must be conserved or restored, and, as necessary, restrictions on new construction.

Fourth, because California lacks an agency exclusively devoted to the protection of species and habitat, "the state should rename the Department of Fish and Game and redefine its mission." The proposed "Department of Wildlife Conservation" would focus more on conservation of critical habitat than on preservation of individual species, in the expectation that this focus will better assure the viability of both plant and animal



An oak tree dominates this riparian forest. Photo by Mark Palmer

wildlife.

Finally, the state would fund these land conservation programs by assessing "land consumption and resource user fees." Resource user fees (hunting licenses are one example) would be raised to "more accurately reflect...costs associated with natural resource protection, management, and restoration." Developers would be assessed land consumption fees to fund conservation; developments that promote conservation by design would be assessed at a lower rate.

To obtain a copy of the report, #0389A, send \$4 plus tax, payable to State of California, to: Assembly Publications Office, State Capitol, Box 942849, Sacramento, CA 94249-0001.

### Refuge imperiled: will opposition sink Stone Lakes?

An orchestrated campaign may sink the proposed Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. Envisioned to protect 20,000 to 30,000 acres of vernal pools, wetlands, and riparian woodlands south of rapidly-growing Sacramento, Stone Lakes would provide refuge to migratory waterfowl and shorebirds, protect biological diversity, and serve as a link to other area refuges. Delays won by refuge opponents may prove sufficient to forestall the project because burgeoning development would drive land prices beyond what the government can afford.

In August, refuge opponents won a delay of environmental review, potentially precluding Stone Lakes from funding consideration until the 1993 appropriation. Staff from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which proposed the refuge, and refuge opponents have indicated that Senator John Seymour was instrumental in extending until October 15 the deadline for public comment; Seymour's office denies any involvement by the Senator.

Refuge supporters identify Charles Cushman, Executive Director of the National Inholders Association, as the driving force behind the delay. Cushman has been active in California before. He is credited with

undermining proposals for parks at Lake Tahoe and Big Sur and is currently working on behalf of grazers seeking an extension of grazing in Mt. Diablo State Park.

To save Stone Lakes, a mosaic of dwindling remnants of habitat types once common in California's Central Valley, and to counter opposition tactics, proponents are urging environmentalists to write letters supporting Alternatives 'C-1,' 'D' or 'E' of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) under consideration. Form letters are available from Defenders of Wildlife at (916)442-6386. To comment on the DEIS, write to: Pete Jerome, Refuge Manager, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2233 Watt Ave., Suite 375, Sacramento, CA 95825-0509. Comments must be received by October 15.

## Ride canceled

continued from page 1

Supervisor Martin on July 1 closed the Papoose Flat area in the Inyo Mountains to ORVs "until further notice." The Forest Order states "restrictions are being imposed to protect existing archaeological sites in the area pending evaluation." District Ranger Keil noted that the closure could stay in effect for several years.

Keil warned that the ride was not a dead issue, however. California Trail Rides intends to apply next year, and

is considering other ways to conduct a two-day ride in the area.

Local activists believe that the combined work of attorneys Silver and Kari, the Big Pine Tribe, and letters from the public forced the Forest Service to take some action to prevent a repetition of last year's fiasco. Special thanks go to George Barnes of the Sierra Club's ORV Task Force.

Sally Miller is an activist with the Sierra Club's Toiyabe Chapter and with Friends of the Inyo.





## Book review

### The allure of mountains, and of Reid

#### Mountains of the Great Blue Dream

By Robert Leonard Reid, North Point Press, San Francisco, 184pp., \$21.95

In this collection of essays, climber Robert Leonard Reid meditates on the allure of mountains. Like poets, Reid writes, mountaineers "engage in bold adventures of the imagination" and "experience the world as an ever-changing interplay of shadow and light, of tranquility and storm. Mountain and poem...stand as lasting monuments to the futility of ultimate explanation."

Reid's answer to the non-climber's inevitable question "why" is, therefore, predictably inadequate. The grace he brings to the task, however, the range of thought, and the felicity of language are ample reason to read this book.

For Reid, climbing was less a sport than a life. Climbers "experience unimaginable hardships and then, at the ends of their ropes...plumb their souls for meaning. They emerge from their excursions to the edge of unknowing with insights into their spiritual natures that transcend the possibilities of mere sport."

In essays rich with personal and historical anecdotes, Reid traces his enduring connection to moun-

tains, seeks the religious significance of mountains, and probes the climber's acceptance of peril. Climbing, to Reid, represents "a voyage into the unfamiliar. If you know what you're doing, it isn't an adventure. An adventure is the baring of your soul, not your wallet, an agreement to trust your wits rather than your digital homing device."

Reid writes beautifully; his agility stopped me in his tracks. Consider his description of New Mexico's Black Range: "a vast backland of ridge-and-canyon corduroy still running on primordial standard time." En route to Glen Aulin in Yosemite, he enters "an intriguing world of deadfalls and dry streambeds, boulders great and small, crazy twists in the canyon, rises and dips, dry flowers dying, lightning-downed trees sliced lengthwise like French bread." And again: "After a week of rain the lustrous countryside is smiling bashfully, shaking itself like a poodle after a bath."

Want more? Read the book.

—Lucy Rosenau

#### Wilderness Trivia Quiz Answer:

1. Peninsula (San Jacinto)
2. San Bernardino
3. San Gabriel
4. Panamints
5. Inyo
6. White
7. Glass
8. Bodie Hills
9. Sweetwater

from page 2



## DATES TO REMEMBER

**October 15** COMMENTS DUE on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Stone Lakes Wildlife Refuge. Mention your support for Alternative C-1 or the stronger Alternatives D or E. Send to: Pete Jerome, Refuge Manager, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2233 Watt Ave., Suite 375, Sacramento, CA 95825. (Article on page 6.)

**October 28-30** SYMPOSIUM ON BIODIVERSITY IN NORTHWESTERN CALIFORNIA in Santa Rosa. For more information or registration materials, write to: Drs. Richard Harris and Don Erman, Biodiversity Symposium, 163 Mulford Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720.

## Grin and bear 'em

Lucy likes our six-tone anniversary shirt; it comes in light blue, yellow, light green, or peach for \$15. The animal design Diane models is by Bay Area cartoonist Phil Frank; it comes in beige or light gray for \$12. All the shirts are 100 percent double knit cotton. To order, use the form on the back page.



**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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The *Record* welcomes letters-to-the-editor, articles, black & white photos, drawings, book reviews, poetry, etc. on California wilderness and related subjects. We reserve the right to edit all work. Please address all correspondence to:

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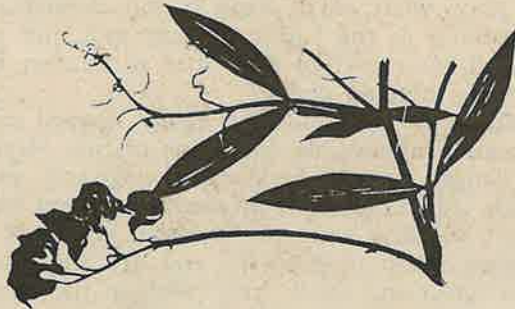
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