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Mt. Shasta ski area debate taken to court

A coalition of environmental groups filed suit on March 13 against the U.S. Forest Service (FS) to block construction of a massive new ski development on environmentally-sensitive public lands on Mt. Shasta in northern California.

The suit, filed in the U.S. District Court in Sacramento by the California Wilderness Coalition, The Wilderness Society, and the Sierra Club's Mother Lode Chapter, contends that the Forest Service has violated various statutes, including the National Environmental Policy Act and associated regulations.

Specifically, the Forest Service failed to consider alternatives adequately, did not demonstrate a need for the project, and illegally issued special-use permits for the project to a former agency employee. The coalition is asking the Court to void the agency's approval of the ski area proposal and to prohibit its startup until the Forest Service goes back to the drawing board and corrects past mistakes in the process.

The coalition also seeks to reverse an unprecedented decision by the Forest Service to bar any further administrative appeals of the proposal.

"The Forest Service has continually disregarded environmental law in its attempt to justify a predetermined decision based on biased and weak analyses of the potential impacts of this project," said Louis Blumberg, Assistant Director for The Wilderness Society in California and Nevada.

BACKGROUND

The Forest Service issued the permit for the new ski development in 1985 to Carl Martin, a 20-year agency veteran, after cursory environmental review. Martin's proposal calls for a ski area of 7,300 skiers. In 1986, Shasta-Trinity National Forest officials issued an environmental assessment for the project, but in an administrative appeal environmental groups successfully argued for a more comprehensive environ-



Mt. Shasta

Photo by Michael Zanger

mental impact statement (EIS) on the project. As directed, the Forest Service prepared an EIS, but environmental groups appealed that document on the grounds that it was completely inadequate under the law. For example, the EIS did not adequately address the impacts of private development on public lands, nor did it consider any alternative projects. Forest Service Chief Dale Robertson

ordered forest officials to prepare a supplemental EIS that specifically examined alternatives and analyzed the impacts of adjacent private development.

In the supplemental EIS, issued in October 1990, the agency ignored most of the Chief's directives and stuck to its original decision to award the permit to Martin. Furthermore, the FS illegally ruled that it would not accept any further appeals on the project.

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Wilderness funding misused

By Stephanie Mandel

Congress has never been more generous in its funding for Forest Service wilderness management. Over the past four years, 80 percent more money has been appropriated for wilderness rangers, education, and other management.

You didn't notice? That's probably because a good bit of the money has not been getting spent...at least not on wilderness.

This fact gained national attention in March, when the General Accounting Office (GAO) released its finding that 37 percent of Forest Service wilderness funding never reached wilderness programs.

The GAO was tipped off by Bill Worf, president of Wilderness Watch, a watchdog group based in Missoula, Montana. After making phone calls to each Forest Service Regional Office, Worf presented his data and asked Representative Bruce Vento, Chair of the National Parks and Public Lands Subcommittee, to initiate an investigation of how wilderness funds are being spent.

In response to the GAO's report, Rep. Vento criticized the Forest Service. "Year after year, the Forest Service has told this subcommittee it needs more funding for wilderness management," he said. "Now we find out that more than

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COALITION PAGE

MONTHLY REPORT

What a difference a month makes! At the end of February, there was no snow at Donner and Echo summits. Local creeks were dry. My winter garden was withering, and I was wondering what, if anything, I should plant this summer.

I just talked to someone who was skiing down to the shore of Mono Lake. Friends in Siskiyou County are off on a ski tour. Steve Evans gave up on a planned backpack to Ishi country due to the conditions and continuing unsettled weather.

And my garden? The snow peas and up and blooming, potatoes are poking through the soil, and lettuce is growing. New growth is showing up on the citrus trees stripped of their leaves by the "great freeze." Cherries and apples are in full bloom.

But mostly the weeds prospered. When the March miracle rains finally abated, I spent a lot of time trying to locate my vegetables and flowers amidst the "undesirable" flora known as weeds. My compost heap now is full, warm, and happy with the sweet smell (at least to me) of decomposing vegetable matter.

Although the reservoirs will not fill this season, and the drought-stressed forests still are adjusting to the dry years we are experiencing, at least things are not as bleak as they were a short time ago.

Not that the Forest Service has noticed that heavy rains and snows have blanketed the

mountains. We just got a letter from the Kings River Ranger District noting that they are experiencing a "fifth year of below average precipitation." They expect their salvage sale (why do my fingers keep typing "salvage?") program to be four times larger than normal.

I keep wondering what happened in previous droughts. Clearly many trees died, yet the forest remained. There must have been insect infestations and large wildfires. *But the forest endured.*

One concern I have with the current massive salvage sale program is the indiscriminate cutting of large tracts of forest. Surely there are numerous drought-resistant trees managing to survive this dry epoch. Are we destroying this genetic heritage in our rush to make commercial use of these "dead, dying, and associated" trees?

It is interesting to find relic forests and wonder what climatic factors favored these species. The white fir forests of the East Mojave come to mind, as does Cedar Basin in the Yolla Bollys. We may never know what particular sequence of weather and climate led to these stands.

The extremes of climate, the active geology, and resulting plant and animal evolution have brought us to the diverse and wondrous environment we have in California. Our goal is to save as much of this diversity as we can.

BY JIM EATON

Letters

Wilderness needs more money

Dear Wilderness Record,

As long as wilderness continues to cost the agency money with no income and its budget is ripped off for other functions, wilderness management will continue to be the lowest of all priorities—volunteers, etc.

Wilderness deserves support—one dollar per night with a five dollar per year, per person maximum for all wilderness campers and \$10 per pack animal for each use would be reasonable.

Mike Artemieff
Little Norway, California

Editor's note: We received this letter in February and it spurred interest that has resulted in the wilderness funding article on pages 1 and 5 of this Wilderness Record.

Uncle Jim's Wilderness Trivia Quiz Question:

What State Wilderness Area means "rain above?"

Answer on page 7.

Wilderness primer, part IX

The RARE II lawsuit: total vindication

In 1979 the State of California filed suit against the U.S. Forest Service's second Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE II) decision. The State specifically sought to protect 41 areas, totaling 991,247 acres, that were designated as "non-wilderness" by the federal agency.

On January 8, 1980, Judge Lawrence Karlton granted a summary judgement against the Forest Service in *California v. Bergland* (later *California v. Block*), ruling that the Forest Service failed to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Among the NEPA violations were:

- The RARE II Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) failed to examine, in anything approaching the detail required by NEPA, the site-specific wilderness values of the roadless areas. The EIS especially failed to examine the site-specific adverse environmental impacts that would result from the decisions to open areas to development through non-wilderness designation.

- The Forest Service did not examine a reasonable range of alternatives for the disposition of roadless areas. Of eleven alternatives examined in the EIS, ten allocated 34 percent or fewer of the total number of areas to wilderness and the other alternative allocated *all* of the areas to wilderness (conceded by the Forest Service to be "unrealistic"). The unexplained failure of the Forest Service to examine any alternatives that allocated more than 34 percent of the roadless areas to wilderness was a violation

of NEPA's requirement to study a broad range of reasonable alternatives to a proposed action.

- The Forest Service failed totally to solicit public comment on the actual RARE II proposal. This proposal did not appear until the final EIS was released in January 1979, and it differed considerably from the ten alternatives present in the draft. The Court held that the Forest Service should have circulated its final proposal for public comment as a supplement to the draft EIS.

Also, the Forest Service failed to respond to site-specific comments received from the public on RARE II areas. The agency had expressly asked for such comments in the draft EIS but only responded to general comments about the overall RARE II process. The Court held that the large number of comments received indicated not that the Forest Service should be excused from its NEPA duty to respond to site-specific comments, but that the agency simply had attempted to do too much at one time.

In ruling that the RARE II Environmental Impact Statement was inadequate, Judge Karlton pointed out that the opportunity for wilderness classification for non-wilderness or "released" roadless areas would be permanently foreclosed because development activities would change the nature of these areas:

"The statement never examines the impact of nonwilderness designations upon each area's wilderness characteristics and values. Instead, the statement merely

stated that development plans are unknown at the present time and thus developmental impact cannot be projected. The result is classically Catch 22. The development effect on wilderness is not considered now, and it is unlikely that any environmental statement in the future will discuss it. Thus the impact of development on the wilderness values of a particular area (e.g. this scenic area lost) or the secondary effect of the loss of wilderness (e.g. impact on water quality or wildlife, etc.), or mitigation measures that might protect wilderness values despite development plans (e.g. confining development allowed) will most likely never be considered."

Late in 1982, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld Judge Karlton's decision. In their decision, the justices stated:

"We concede that conducting a detailed site-specific analysis of the RARE II decision will be no simple task and will be laden with empirical uncertainty. The scope of the undertaking here, however, was the Forest Service's choice and not the court's. NEPA contains no exceptions for projects of national scope. Having decided to allocate simultaneously millions of acres of land to nonwilderness use, the Forest Service may not rely upon forecasting difficulties or the task's magnitude to excuse the absence of a reasonable analysis of the decision's environmental consequences."

Next: Congress tries to resolve the issue

Wilderness legislation

Vento's ancient forest bill lacks protection of Jontz'

Congress was offered a choice with the reintroduction of Representative Bruce Vento's ancient forest legislation in late March.

Rep. Vento's bill, H.R. 1590, is compared with Rep. Jim Jontz's Ancient Forest Protection Act, H.R. 842, which enjoys the support of the environmental community. Compare for yourself the solutions each bill offers to the Pacific Northwest's ancient forest crisis.



Cache Creek closed for tule elk calving

Wilson Valley in the Cache Creek Wilderness Study Area (WSA) will be closed to human visitors from April 1 to June 30 so that tule elk may calve in peace.

All public lands south of the main fork of Cache Creek and south of Stemple Creek are off-limits.

The State Department of Fish and Game (DF&G) and Bureau of Land Management, who are responsible for closing the area, contend that a similar closure last year encouraged more elk to use the valley for calving. Fred Botti, a biologist with the DF&G, estimates that roughly 60 to 80 elk live in the Cache Creek area, although he said exact numbers are not collected. Although the elk were once reduced to very low numbers, today there are approximately 20 herds in California. The elk's historic range is from the Central Valley to the California coast.

Tule elk are large, and Botti says that bulls in "perfect habitat," such as Grizzly Island in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, can weigh 8-900 pounds.

For more information, contact the BLM's Ukiah office at (707) 462-3873 or the Dept. of Fish and Game's Yountville office at (707) 944-5500.

Rep. Jontz's H.R. 842:

Requires Congress to designate ancient forest reserves, based on a scientific committee's recommendations. Only Congress can change the boundaries once they are designated.

Protects all California, Oregon, and Washington ancient forests for the years between passage of the legislation and designation of the reserves.

Does not limit the scope of the reserve system to the Douglas fir region.

Does not mandate logging until after the reserves are designated.

Includes no provisions for retraining or economic assistance.

Rep. Vento's H.R. 1590:

Requires the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to designate ancient forest reserves, based on a scientific committee's recommendations. Only Congress can change the boundaries once they are designated.

Protects 15-20 named ancient forest tracts in Oregon and Washington and all spotted owl Habitat Conservation Areas until the reserves are designated.

Limits the reserves' scope to the Douglas fir region; no ancient forests in the California's Sierra Nevada, eastern Oregon, or eastern Washington would be protected. Puts a 6.32 million acre cap on the reserve system.

Mandates an annual timber cut of 2.6 billion board feet for Forest Service Region 6 and 450 million board feet for the BLM for the three years between passage of the legislation and designation of the reserves.

Establishes a fund to retain workers anywhere in the country displaced by declining timber cutting levels. The fund is indexed to timber cutting levels.



One of many lakes in the Grouse Lakes roadless area.

Photo by John Moore

Public purchase of private lands would save Grouse Lakes RA

By John Moore

About 9,000 acres of privately owned land in the 20,000-acre Grouse Lakes Roadless Area in the Tahoe National Forest presently are available for public acquisition. Few of the thousands of visitors to this beautiful area and its dozens of lakes realize that every other square mile is privately owned as a result of 19th century railroad land grants. Development and/or logging of the private lands would ruin this roadless area by threatening the wilderness quality of the adjacent public lands and also would limit public access to major lakes.

Preservation of this outstanding roadless area is far from assured. The lands offered for sale are currently owned by Sierra Pacific Industries, a timber company which recognizes their great recreational value and has offered them for public acquisition. The options granted

to allow public acquisition, however, expire next year, and the company has stated that the options will not be renewed. If the lands are not purchased by public agencies, the most likely of which is the Forest Service, they will be sold for "mountain retreat" private estates and resorts.

The rugged granite of the Grouse Lakes has been carved by glaciers into spectacular scenery with over 125 jewel-like lakes and ponds. The many peaks and ridges offer breathtaking panoramic views of the northern Sierra Nevada. The area offers diverse recreational opportunities for hikers, skiers, campers, equestrians, anglers, and hunters. An extensive trail system offers families easy access to many lakes. Seekers of solitude can find it at the many other lakes accessible only by cross-country hiking. In its management plan, the Tahoe National Forest has

committed the area to recreation uses and banned motorized vehicles.

The Grouse Lakes area is just a few miles north of Interstate 80 and just a few hours' drive from the San Francisco Bay and Sacramento metropolitan areas, from which thousands of visitors come every year.

Broad grassroots support is needed to convince Congress to allocate \$6.6 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to save the Grouse Lakes in this year's appropriations for land acquisition. There is intense competition for the limited LWCF funds among worthy projects all over the country.

John Moore is a member of the Conservation Committee of the Mother Lode Chapter of the Sierra Club and a 15-year member of the CWC.

More wilderness legislation

Drought panic may delay river protection

By Ron Stork

It's decision time on the lower Merced River. Senator Alan Cranston has reintroduced a good lower Merced River Wild and Scenic River bill (S. 549), that would protect miles of river, much of which plunges through the heart of the Merced River Wilderness Study Area (WSA). Congressman Gary Condit (who carried identical legislation last year) and freshman Senator John Seymour are under intense pressure from a drought-panicked Merced Irrigation District to preserve the District's options to build more dams on the Merced.

One option, the Bagby Dam, would drown the lower Merced River and WSA lands from Bagby to Briceburg. Another option, raising Exchequer Dam, would bring high water about half as far upstream, nearly to the Merced's North Fork. Neither option could squeeze much more water from the Merced, and the Merced Irrigation District has not given any serious attention to either option since the decision to build New Exchequer Dam in the early 1960s.

Thirty-two miles of the Merced River already are inundated behind New Exchequer and McSwain Dams. In most years, approximately three-fifths to two-thirds of the Merced's total annual flow is diverted to Merced area farms.

Perhaps in recognition of the scant benefits of more big dams on the Merced, the mid-March hearing in the Senate Energy Committee focused on the Irrigation District's misapprehension that part of their reservoir was being designated as a Wild and Scenic River—thus preventing them from storing their full ration of the Merced during times of plenty. Of course, the District is quite wrong, and should be assured by the undisturbed operations of nearby Oroville and Don Pedro dams, which are just downstream of the Wild and Scenic Middle Fork Feather and Tuolumne rivers.

But real fears are not always based on realistic analysis. And local governments and farming organizations back in Merced County are getting their view of reality from the Irrigation District.

But one of the ways that political courage is best expressed is for elected officials to take a stand when the time is right. The merits of the case are obvious to informed participants in a mature debate.

For newly-appointed Senator John Seymour, his position on the Merced River issue will be the first test of whether he intends to follow the pro-river sympathies of former Senator Pete Wilson (who joined Senator Cranston in sponsoring Wild and Scenic River legislation for the lower Merced in the last two Congresses). Unlike former Senator Wilson, Seymour is on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and may be positioned to actively shape the fate of the nation's rivers and public lands by virtue of his committee assignment.

For Rep. Condit, his stance on sponsoring a good Merced River Wild and Scenic bill in the face of organized opposition from a powerful irrigation district in his district will be the first real test of his commitment to protecting and preserving the recreational wildlands of his Congressional District.

Ron Stork is Associate Conservation Director of Friends of the River Conservation Director and Secretary of the CWC's Board of Directors.



Pityrogramma triangularis

Mining law reform bills in the hopper

New bills to reform the 1872 Mining Law were introduced in the U.S. Senate (S. 433, by Senator Dale Bumpers (D-AR)) and the House (H.R. 918, by Representative Nick Rahall (D-WV)) early in the 102nd Congress.

Both bills apply to "hardrock" minerals—copper, gold, silver, molybdenum, etc.—on public lands.

In California, many threatened and endangered plant species occur on limestone, a hardrock mineral. Ray Butler, Vice President of Conservation for the California Native Plant Society, explains that limestone mining was recently responsible for the destruction of key populations of rare plants in the San Bernardino National Forest. The plants, which were located next to a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Wilderness Study Area, were destroyed while a petition for listing them as endangered was sitting in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service office. "These species being proposed as threatened and endangered is a clear admonition that the Forest Service has failed to provide proper management for their persistence," Butler says.

Both of the reform bills have been improved over versions debated in last year's Congress, according to the Mineral Policy Center. The Center, known for its conservationist stance, has found that the House bill has serious flaws, while the Senate bill "is more complete in its solution of the 1872 Mining Law's problems."

Some of the major reforms included in both bills are that each would:

- Require reclamation of sites when mining is completed, but not require restoration of original landscape topography (as is required for coal mining). Require financial guarantees to make sure that funding will actually be available for reclamation.
- Create a new hardrock reclamation fund to clean up environmental damage from old (non-coal) mining. The fund could be spent on private as well as public lands.
- Make the Forest Service directly responsible for controlling mining in national forests.
- Establish a uniform permitting and review process based on the agency's land use plans for the project area, which must be completed before mining can commence.
- Prohibit further "patenting" of claims—the process whereby miners can purchase public land which has valuable minerals for \$5.00 or less per acre.
- Grant citizens the power to sue to enforce the law when agencies are not upholding it.

Differences between the bills are that:

- Discretion to disapprove mining in unsuitable areas is explicit in S. 433, while under H.R. 918 mining could not be disapproved in areas not identified as unsuitable in the national forest plan or BLM land use plan for the site.
- "Diligence" work to hold a mining claim is not required by S. 433, which will eliminate a source of damage on the lands. H.R. 918 still calls for "diligence" work during the first five years of a claim's life.
- Royalty payments of five percent on mineral production from public lands would be charged by S. 433, while H.R. 918 has no royalty provision, so minerals can be taken for free.

The Mineral Policy Center is asking those with personal experience with the 1872 Mining Law to testify at hearings, the last of which will be held in Santa Fe, New Mexico on May 4. Call the MPC at (202) PDQ-1872.

Wilderness management



The Mouth of the Mattole River, at the northern end of the King Range. Photo by Sam Camp

King Range visitor plan lacks analysis

By Jim Eaton

You are a BLM planner. Your task is to write an environmental analysis for visitor services for the King Range National Conservation Area.

You must consider off-road vehicle (ORV) conflicts, sanitation, use capacities, inholders and trespass, fire, commercial uses, information and education, wildlife habitat, historical and cultural resources, and primitive values. You have to

examine proposed wilderness areas, threatened and endangered species of wildlife and plants, livestock grazing, and all aspects of recreation management.

Your detailed environmental analysis will be at least—eight pages long?

Well, that is the length of the environmental analysis for the draft King Range plan submitted by the BLM for public comment. In all fairness, it is part of a 51-page visitor services plan (plus appendices). On the other hand, of the 24 citations under "References," 19 are for archaeological surveys—important, but just a small part of a visitor services plan. I am reminded of Tom Leherer's song about Nicolai Ivanovich Lobachevsky: "Index, I copied from old Vladivostok telephone directory."

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Wilderness funding misspent

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half of the money we intended for wilderness management has gone to other activities. This is mismanagement of the worst kind and our wilderness areas will suffer immensely because of it."

Part of the blame goes to the agency's failure to account for wilderness spending as a separate category. Up to now it has been lumped in with the recreation budget. Under this system, money Congress appropriates for wilderness can legally be spent on recreation uses other than wilderness. Worf points out that spending for recreation includes salaries for landscape architects and archaeologists for timber programs—uses that are clearly inappropriate for wilderness funds.

While such expenditures are legal, Worf believes that there is a "moral constraint" against it. "I wouldn't feel so bad if it was spent on wilderness kinds of purposes," he added. The Forest Service is unable to identify just how the missing wilderness funds were spent.

The GAO also found that of the 63 percent of the funds that were spent on wilderness programs, only about two-thirds reached the district offices, where the on-the-ground wilderness work begins. The other third was used primarily for salaries and administrative costs at other organizational levels.

The GAO listed two California national forests as examples of wilderness fund misuse. The Shasta-Trinity was cited for "reallocating wilderness funds to developed recreation because the Forest had decided that was a higher priority." The Eldorado National Forest, which jointly manages Mokelumne Wilderness and Desolation Wilderness, was singled out for "reallocating funds to summer home administration and running the wilderness program with volunteers."

Bob Henley, Recreation Assistant for the Eldorado, scoffed at the GAO's accusation, but admitted that tracking wilderness funds has been a problem. This year wilderness funds will be earmarked so that, as Henley put it, they "won't get lost in some other function." Henley believes the accounting change is "a good thing." He suggests that at the Eldorado National Forest, increased funds should be used to hire more seasonal and permanent rangers, to update the Desolation Wilderness plan, and to

mark the Mokelumne Wilderness' boundaries.

Forest Service Associate Chief George Leonard acknowledged that the Forest Service's wide latitude in spending recreation funds has at times resulted in wilderness being shortchanged. Leonard was quoted in the *San Francisco Examiner* saying, "We've taken steps this year to improve wilderness planning and to ensure this money does support wilderness projects."



Funding for wilderness management is especially important in places like Rockbound Lake in Desolation Wilderness, one of California's most popular wilderness areas.

Photo by McClellan Air Force Base

South Sierra Wilderness plan favors cows

By Canyon Fred Dougherty

On March 4, the Inyo and Sequoia national forests released the South Sierra Wilderness (SSW) Implementation Plan. The South Sierra Wilderness was designated by Congress in 1984 in order to preserve the values of 62,700 acres of the southern Kern Plateau.

Overall, the plan is very general. Although some visionary "goal statements" are included, they are often not supported by tangible management direction.

For example, goals for cattle grazing include "minimizing conflicts" with recreation and other wilderness resources. Yet the management direction outlined in the plan calls for continued cattle grazing at "carrying capacity" levels. (Currently, about 1,300 cattle annually graze in the SSW.) The only methods of adjusting livestock grazing to "minimize conflicts" with recreationists are to "consider recreational stock needs" and to prepare a fact sheet entitled "Grazing in the Wilderness."

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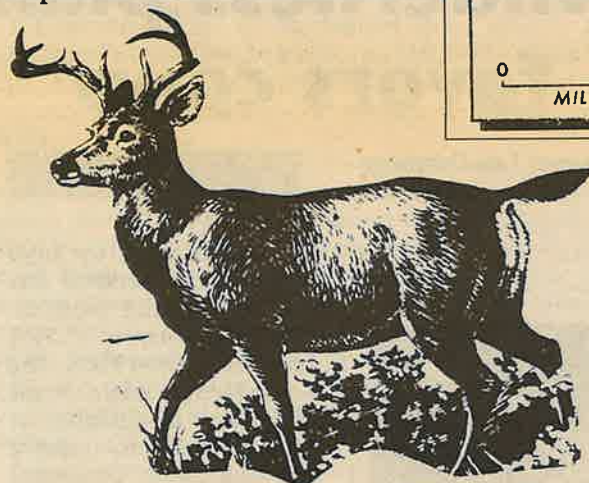
Mt. Shasta lawsuit filed

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Furthermore, the FS illegally ruled that it would not accept any further appeals on the project.

Environmentalists support the expansion of the nearby Mt. Shasta Ski Park. That view is shared by the Environmental Protection Agency, which has urged the Forest Service to give serious consideration to the Mt. Shasta Ski Park expansion plan. The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Board, which has jurisdiction over sewage treatment for the area, has also expressed concerns about their ability to effectively treat the effluent from such a large new development.

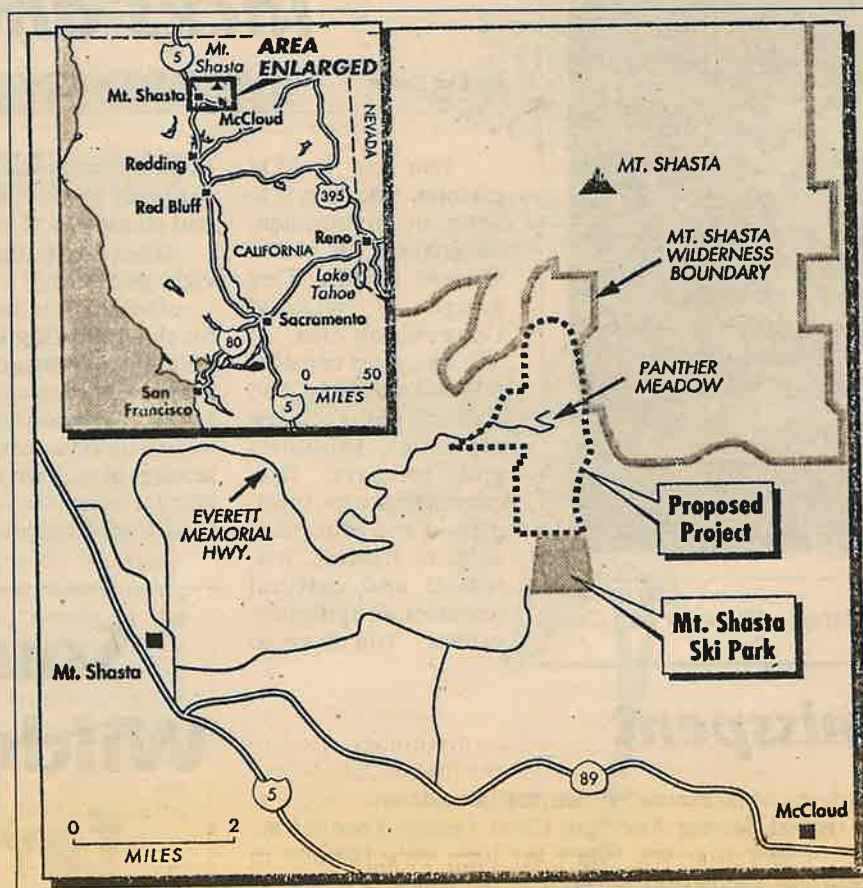
Former State Attorney General John Van De Kamp filed an appeal of the ski area EIS on the grounds that the skier demand figures and economic analysis were faulty and unrealistic. He also cited an inadequate estimate of growth-inducing impacts on the local communities.



County benefits from logging overstated

The Forest Service often misleads counties by saying that they will benefit economically from logging and mining within their borders, says a study by a New Mexico conservation group. The Forest Service makes two types of payments to counties: a fixed, annual compensation for tax-exempt federal lands within county lines, and a 25 percent share of gross receipts from projects like logging. The Forest Service emphasizes the latter revenue, the Forest Trust's Lane Krah explained, "and starts telling counties, 'We've got to cut timber here or the county won't get any money.'" The catch is that the amount of the logging payment is subtracted from the fixed compensation. As a result, the county receives no more money that it would if it refused to allow the logging. "What the federal government gives to counties with one hand, it takes away with the other," says Krah. "The bottom line is that logging does not directly benefit most counties."

Reprinted from the March 25, 1991 issue of High Country News.



By the San Francisco Chronicle

South Sierra plan

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The plan admits that soil erosion rates in the SSW are high, due in part to past grazing practices. The plan also admits that soil disturbance is currently occurring from cattle trails, but dismisses erosion from continued grazing as "insignificant."

The plan's selected alternative lists three specific management actions which may be necessary to mitigate grazing impacts: increased herding, increased fencing, and monitoring. The plan admits that additional fencing will "dilute" wilderness values, and that "conflicts with recreationists will remain." Nowhere does the plan state that the Forest Service will consider curtailing or eliminating grazing where identified conflicts occur.

The Wilderness Act of 1964 and subsequent legislation make it very clear that livestock grazing shall not be eliminated from an area solely due to wilderness designation. However, the Forest Service is required (regardless of land designation) to manage rangelands in the public interest, which includes curtailing grazing where resources such as soils, vegetation, wildlife, and/or recreation are threatened. This is a point which is largely ignored in this (and most other) wilderness management plans.

Perhaps the plan's most serious threats to the wilderness values of the SSW are contained in its vague statements about future developments. Although specific sites are not listed, the plan states that additional trails, trailheads, and bridges may need to be constructed. As written, this plan could become a blueprint for the piecemeal development of the SSW.

Anyone who has journeyed into the SSW knows that there is a serious problem with low-flying jet aircraft. Yet the goal stated in the plan is not to minimize or eliminate overflights. So we can expect continued overflights, and perhaps a new sign at the trailhead.

To comment on the South Sierra Wilderness Implementation Plan, write to the Forest Service by April 29. (See "Dates to Remember" on page 7 for address.)

King Range visitor plan lacks data

continued from page 4

At least the BLM is consistent. For the past fifteen years, they have tied all their planning to an antiquated 1974 King Range Management Plan. Like a handcuffed escape artist in a straight jacket, BLM planners have had limited mobility. They are working under planning assumptions that mandate a road bisecting the proposed wilderness area and logging in old-growth forests with spotted owls.

More issues are dodged by this plan than considered. For example, although ORV use along a portion of the King Range beach is highly controversial (not to mention the continual trespass of ORVs into the closed portion of the coast), this "historical" use is not addressed in the plan.

An interesting portion of the plan explains the "zone specific management objectives and design parameters" of five visitor management zones. The most restrictive zone, Visitor Management Zone 1, requires a "high probability of experiencing isolation from the sights and sound of others, with not more than 6-8 group encounters per day between users." [Will this count ORV groups illegally



using this zone?] Elsewhere it is stated that "frequency of contact is low (1-2 parties per day at commonly used sites)." How these numbers were determined is not explained in the document. Zone 1, in the heart of the proposed King Range Wilderness, appears to be drawn on section lines, not the greatest method for developing ecological boundaries.

Although the word "quota" is not used, the plan calls for establishing visitor use capacities for each management zone. When a zone receives more than 95 percent of its use capacity, mandatory permits will be required.

BLM also proposes to construct low-profile, inconspicuous weather shelters and toilets at popular primitive camping areas along the beach. How these facilities will be maintained is not discussed, although I strongly suspect motorized vehicles would be used.

Since the plan lacks so many needed details, the California Wilderness Coalition is requesting an extension to the thirty-day review period. But as it now stands, BLM wants to have comments in writing by April 30th.

To comment or receive a copy of the plan, contact:
Daniel Averill, Acting Manager
Arcata Resource Area
1125 16th Street, Room 219
Arcata, CA 95521

Book review

Snyder begs thorough reading

The Practice of the Wild

By Gary Snyder, North Point Pr., San Francisco, 190 pp.

This is probably the most difficult book review I've written. It is not because I did not enjoy *The Practice of the Wild*; it is because I think it is a marvelous work. Maybe it is because I am afraid someone will read my comments and say, "wow, he completely missed the point of the whole book!" Snyder does require you to use both sides of your brain; if you are primarily a spiritual or scientific person you may miss the coalescence of the two spheres of thought as you read.

It is not a book that can easily be summarized or quoted from. The ideas are developed slowly and thoroughly so that a synopsis makes little sense.

For example, a book jacket note by Bill McKibben says "Gary Snyder's deep hope—that someday we might all be native Americans, at home in our grand place—is the only hope we have." Snyder is not suggesting that we all adopt the lifestyles of the original occupants of the continent. He is talking about a sense of place, an understanding of the "commons."

Although it may be sacrilegious to mention Gary Snyder and "Time-Life Books" in the same sentence, I am reminded of a contemporary commercial for *Mystic Places*. Each time one person shows an interest in the explanation

Essays by Gary Snyder

The Practice of the Wild



of a particular mystery, the other replies "read the book!"

That is the summation of this review. Trust me, the book is worth reading. Read the book!

If nothing else, you will get a better understanding of words we use all the time and often interchangeably. Snyder explains the genesis of and different meanings of "nature,"

"wild," and "wilderness." He writes about ancient forests and the South Warner Mountains. He also describes sacred places in Japan, native Australian dreamtime, and native American mythology. He tells of his own experiences throughout his life. All the time he is weaving a larger understanding of the practice of the wild.

By the end of the book, you should have an understanding of what Snyder means by the following:

"The critical argument now within environmental circles is between those who operate from a human-centered resource management mentality and those whose values reflect an awareness of the integrity of the whole of nature. The latter position, that of Deep Ecology, is politically livelier, more courageous, more convivial, riskier, and more scientific.

"It comes again to an understanding of the subtle but critical difference of meaning between the terms *nature* and *wild*. Nature is the subject, they say, of science. Nature can be deeply probed, as in microbiology. The wild is not to be made subject or object in this manner; to be approached it must be admitted from within, as a quality intrinsic to who we are. Nature is ultimately in no way endangered; wilderness is. The wild is indestructible, but we might not see the wild."

If this does not make sense to you, I have a suggestion: Read the book!

-Jim Eaton

Get cozy in a CWC T-Shirt!

The animal design that Lynn is wearing is by Bay Area cartoonist Phil Frank; it comes in beige and light gray for \$12. Bob is wearing our anniversary shirt; it has no less than six colors and comes in light blue, yellow, light green, and peach for \$15. All the shirts are 100 percent double knit cotton. To order, use the form on page 8.



DATES TO REMEMBER

April 15 EARTH DAY

April 29 DEADLINE FOR APPEALS of the *South Sierra Wilderness Implementation Plan & Environmental Assessment*. Appeals must be filed in duplicate with the Reviewing Officer, Ronald E. Stewart, Regional Forester, ATTN.: Appeals, 630 Sansome St., San Francisco, CA 94111. For more information, contact Dick Warren, Inyo National Forest, (619) 873-5841. (Article on page 5.)

April 30 COMMENTS DUE on the *King Range National Conservation Area draft Visitor Services Plan*. Send to: Daniel Averill, Acting Area Manager, BLM Arcata Resource Area, 1125 16th St., Rm. 219, Arcata, CA 95521-5580. For more information, contact Joe Williams at the BLM, (916) 246-5325. (Article on page 5.) (The CWC is asking for an extension of this deadline.)

Wilderness Trivia Quiz Answer:

from page 2

Cuyamaca Mountains State Wilderness.
Cuyamaca is Diegueño for "rain above."



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 *Wilderness Record* is the monthly publication of the California Wilderness Coalition. Articles may be reprinted; credit would be appreciated. Subscription is free with membership.

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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Focus: Save our Ancient Forest Ecology

Imagine rolling a snowball over a powdery while field. Starting small, it gains weight and momentum.

So grew the citizen voices calling for protection of the Stanislaus National Forest's ancient forests, until it made sense to give the group a name: Save our Ancient Forest Ecology (SAFE).

The CWC's newest member group has focused on generating comments on the draft forest plan. By the February 26, 1991 deadline, the agency had received over 5,000 comments.

The friend-to-friend growth of SAFE, which organizer Rob Schaeffer characterizes as a "disorganized grassroots movement," has included people of all walks of life. "Most participants

don't identify themselves as environmental activists," Schaeffer explains, attributing this breadth to the single-issue clarity of SAFE's purpose.

Moved by the quality of many of the letters sent to the Forest Service, the group is putting a selection of them together to be published as a book.

The group has no dues structure or budget. Schaeffer sees no immediate need for either—so far people have donated all the resources needed for mailings. "I'm afraid of dampening the spontaneity," he adds.

To help SAFE's efforts, write to: 225 West Granger, Modesto, CA 95350.

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