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WILDERNESS RECORD

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION

ISSN 0194-3030

Vol. 19, No. 11

2655 Portage Bay East, Suite 5 Davis, CA 95616

November, 1994

Wilderness comes to the desert



Joshua tree, Mojave Wilderness

Photo by Rose Certini

Desert bill's well-kept secret: Sierra wilderness

In the mid 1970s, when desert activists throughout California were sketching the first drafts of what would eventually become the California Desert Protection Act, four people did something revolutionary. Charged with identifying potential wilderness areas in the western portion of the California Desert Conservation Area, the four activists—Bob Barnes, Joe Fontaine, and Mary Ann and Ron Henry—decided not to stop at the boundary of the conservation area. Desert plants and animals don't recognize administrative boundaries, they reasoned, so why should they? In the wilderness proposal they later forwarded to then-Senator Alan Cranston, they included lands around Walker Pass, lands that are, by any reckoning, in the Sierra Nevada.

Then they waited for the uproar.

But Senator Cranston liked the idea, and the six Sierra wilderness areas the conservationists proposed for the desert bill—Bright Star, Chimney Peak, Dome Land additions, Klavah, Owens Peak, and Sacatar Trail—have been in every version of the bill ever since (see map following page 5). A seventh parcel, the Staff (or Woolstaff or Piute Mountains) Roadless Area of the Sequoia National Forest, is not in the desert bill but Barnes hopes to see it protected in future legislation.

By today's standards, including the southern terminus of the Sierra—a land of single-leaf pinyon, Kern Joshua trees, silver cholla, pinyon jays, cactus wrens, and ladder-backed woodpeckers—in a desert bill may not seem startling. But as Barnes recalls, few people in the 1970s and '80s were talking about wilderness and intact ecosystems, let alone wilderness and biodiversity, in the same breath.

The wildernesses of the southern Sierra occupy a unique ecological niche. They are situated at the junction of three major ecosystems: the Great Basin Desert, the Mojave Desert, and the Sierra Nevada. In addition to their desert and montane character, the wildernesses also contain southern California chaparral and, along the South Fork Kern River, cottonwoods and willows typical of Central Valley riparian zones. This area, the only place in Canada and the United States where five major vegetative ecoregions coalesce, is home to California's greatest floral species diversity, 110 butterfly species (unparalleled in California), and over 200 breeding bird species including the state's largest population of yellow-billed cuckoos, willow flycatchers, and summer tanagers—all federal or state sensitive or listed species.

The low elevation of Walker Pass and the southern

continued on page 3

By Lucy Rosenau

The numbers alone are giddy: With a few strokes of the presidential pen, California will have 70 new wilderness areas and another four wilderness areas will be enlarged, for a whopping total of 7.6 million acres of wilderness—more than double the state's existing wilderness acreage and more new wilderness areas than were established by all of California's previous wilderness bills.

But remarkable as they are, the numbers don't begin to convey the importance of the California Desert Protection Act, both as a political victory and as an ecological landmark. In shepherding the largest public lands bill since 1980's Alaska Lands act through an exceptionally intransigent Senate, Senator Dianne Feinstein impressed political observers and environmentalists alike. "Senator Feinstein's determination to see this legislation enacted was what got it through in the final hours," the Wilderness Society's Norbert Riedy said. "She was committed from the start and never wavered." So big a victory in the face of an extended Republican filibuster can only bolster Senator Feinstein in her quest for re-election.

The bill's passage bolstered a lot of weary spirits. It has been eight years since Sen. Alan Cranston introduced the first legislation to protect the California desert, only to be frustrated, again and again, by Republican opposition. Activists working to protect wildlands and wild rivers outside the desert have been told, again and again, to wait until the desert bill passes. On Friday, October 7, at 2:09 in the morning, the House of Representatives passed the desert bill. Some 30 hours later on Saturday morning, the Senate voted first to end a filibuster and then to pass the desert bill, and champagne corks began popping all over California.

The celebration was all the sweeter because the bill that passed is considerably larger than desert activists had hoped for when they began their campaign to protect the California desert in the 1970s. A preliminary recommendation for Bureau of Land Management (BLM) desert wilderness compiled by activists in the early 1980s included about three million acres. Judy Anderson, one of the organizers of the environmentalist campaign, said, "every year the opposition delayed, the bigger the bill got."

The desert bill marks a turning point for wilderness legislation in California. Unlike the wilderness bills of the past, future legislation will be designed to protect lands of ecological, rather than primarily recreational, significance. With this bill finally behind them, wilderness activists can turn their attention to developing wilderness proposals for the remaining unprotected and little-known wildlands throughout the state.

continued on page 3

In this issue:

**California's 70 new wilderness
areas, and the map you've been
waiting for.....4-8**

Coalition news

Monthly Report

I had gotten up in the Saturday morning darkness to watch the final drama of the California Desert Protection Act. As I nervously downed half a pot of coffee, the debate dragged on. Finally, it was time to break the Senate filibuster. We needed 60 aye votes to win passage of the bill.

You fellow C-Span junkies know that the House votes electronically, with totals continuously shown on the screen. The Senate calls the roll. Over and over, until time expires.

I had prepared to keep score with a list of senators in front of me, but I couldn't keep up with the vote count. I could tell it was going to be close.

As the end of voting neared, I looked to see which side of the aisle was celebrating. Neither. Everybody looked anxious and concerned.

Senator Dianne Feinstein walked over to a table, asked a question of a fellow senator, and looked at the vote tally. She jerked away from the table and clapped her hand to her forehead in exasperation. My heart sank and tears started flowing as I perceived we were about to lose.

But only seconds later, Senator Carol Moseley-Braun burst into the Senate chamber to cast the deciding vote. Delayed by a recalcitrant garage door, she saved the day. With the filibuster broken, a number of Republicans (and one turncoat Democrat) then joined the winning side.

Jubilantly, I woke Wendy to tell her the result. I called Lucy to tell her we had good news for this issue of the *Wilderness Record*, and I phoned Bob Barnes in Porterville to let him know another huge chunk of his beloved Kern Plateau was safe. While I was off the phone for a minute, Jim Dodson called to share the glad tidings.

The rest of the morning was spent spreading the news to friends. I especially wanted to share the joy with desert activists beyond the first branch of the wilderness grapevine: Sally Kabisch, now in Homer, Alaska; Tom Jopson in Etna; and the CWC board of directors.

During the course of the morning, someone asked me when I first got involved in desert protection. It set me to thinking.

My parents told me of their desert camping trips along the Colorado River, but those must have taken place when I was an infant or before I was born. I do remember wandering around the Inyo Mountains with my rockhound mother, searching for amazonstone and other gems.

But it was while I was in college that my housemate Roger Scholl discovered the desert and began hauling his friends out to the dry wildlands.

By the time the Coalition formed in 1976, there were a number of desert supporters. Tom Jopson and Jim Trumbly, the first editors of the *Wilderness Record*, were such champions that we adopted a desert mountain range and sand dunes as our logo. They worked with the Desert Protective Council to produce the *Desert Deadline*, an eight-page *Record* supplement on the fight to save the desert.

We also published a map of potential wilderness areas throughout California. Phil Farrell pored over maps and discovered scores of desert roadless areas. But to show you how little we knew of the desert, that initial inventory missed 18 of our new wilderness areas.

The Coalition began organizing southern California wilderness activists in 1977, first with a weekend workshop at the Sierra Club's Harwood Lodge and then at a working meeting at the College of the Desert. Harriet Allen provided invaluable assistance by setting up those meetings and introducing me to Judy Anderson, Jim Dodson, Lyle Gaston, and Elden Hughes.

Since then, a steady stream of *Record* articles, training workshops, statewide conferences, and congressional hearings has marked the Coalition's involvement with the desert. We are proud to be part of the massive alliance that pulled together to make this desert bill possible.

In addition to the names mentioned above, there is another who must be acknowledged. The Wilderness Society's Nobby Riedy has dedicated the last few years of his life to getting this legislation enacted. I have no idea what more he can do for an encore.

I was in high school when the Wilderness Act passed, establishing the first 1.3 million acres of California wilderness. Since then, I have had the pleasure of working on every wilderness bill affecting our state. But never have I experienced the unmitigated joy that the desert bill brought, adding 7,663,069 acres of wilderness in California and pushing the National Wilderness Preservation System over 100 million acres.

Thank you all for making this happen.

By Jim Eaton

Next month in the *Wilderness Record*:

The scoop on Mono Lake;
An update on Mammoth-June;
News from the Modoc;
More on fish;
and Wuerthner on fire.

CWC T-shirts

George (left) models our six-tone landscape shirt now available in jade and fuchsia as well as the ever-popular light blue and pale green for \$15. Kris wears a design by Bay Area cartoonist Phil Frank; it comes in beige or light gray for \$12. All shirts are 100 percent double-knit cotton. To order, use the form on the back page.

Forest Service concedes in Toiyabe appeal

Plans to log the wildlands east of Hope Valley in the Toiyabe National Forest are on hold until the Forest Service properly analyzes how the proposed Woodfords salvage sale would affect the Raymond Peak Roadless Area. The decision results from an appeal of the logging plan filed by the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund for the California Wilderness Coalition (CWC), Wilderness Society, and Sorensen's Resort (see article in September 1994 *WR*).

In his October 11 decision, the Forest Service's reviewing officer agreed with the appellants' contention that an environmental impact statement is required for any proposed logging in the roadless area. The supervisor of the Toiyabe National Forest had maintained that the less comprehensive review the agency had performed, an environmental assessment, was adequate.

Although the CWC routinely objects to logging plans for roadless areas, the proposal to log Raymond Peak Roadless Area, which adjoins the Mokelumne Wilderness, was particularly objectionable. Slopes clothed in old-growth drop precipitously to the West Fork Carson River, and the roadless area supports a population of pine martens. The steepness of the terrain has protected the old-growth ponderosa and Jeffrey pine forest from logging until now, and it is that same steepness that makes logging so inappropriate. Steep slopes are especially vulnerable to erosion.

The CWC will continue to monitor the Forest Service's management of these pristine wildlands.



A testament to wilderness

Putting the California Wilderness Coalition in your Will is an excellent way to assure we can continue protecting and preserving California's precious wildlands far into the future.

Currently, the Coalition's Smoke Blanchard fund, an endowment honoring the late mountaineering guide, supports wilderness preservation efforts on the Sierra Nevada's East Side, an area Smoke particularly loved.

To leave a bequest, simply add a paragraph to your Will stating: "I bequeath to the California Wilderness Coalition the sum of ____ Dollars [or, for insurance policies, land, or other property, please specify]."

If you would like to discuss leaving a bequest to the Coalition, please call Executive Director Jim Eaton at (916) 758-0380. All information will be held in strict confidence.

Wilderness Trivia Questions

Which four federal agencies have wilderness designated by the California Desert Protection Act?

If that was easy, try: Which new BLM desert wilderness was never identified by the agency as a wilderness study area?

Answer on page 9



California Desert Protection Act

Desert bill passes, at long last

continued from page 1

And the bill is just as important to some of California's other residents. The desert bill protects in perpetuity the habitat of the desert tortoise, Mojave ground squirrel, bighorn sheep, golden eagle, clapper rail, free-tailed bat, slender salamander, barefoot gecko, and foxtail cactus from the depredations of motorcycles and dune buggies, from housing developments and roads and new mining claims.

Specifically, the desert bill establishes two national parks (Death Valley and Joshua Tree), one national preserve (the Mojave), and 70 wilderness areas (the list begins on page 4). Much of the new wilderness will be administered by the BLM, but the National Park Service and Fish and Wildlife Service each gained two wilderness areas. In addition, four existing wilderness areas—Dome Land, Joshua Tree, San Geronio, and Santa Rosa—are greatly enlarged. The bill also closes the area around Bodie to new mining claims (see sidebar on page 8), assigns water rights to most of the new wilderness areas and all the wilderness additions, and designates the largest wilderness outside Alaska (Death Valley Wilderness, at more than three million acres).

The bill is not without disappointments, however. Designating the Mojave a preserve rather than the national park conservationists wanted means hunting can continue. Since only a small number of animals are killed there by hunters each year, preserve status should not affect how the Mojave Wilderness is managed, however. Existing grazing allotments in Mojave and in Death Valley will be honored, making Death Valley California's only national park where livestock graze. Rights-of-way in the Argus Range and Cleghorn Lakes wilderness areas adjacent to military reserves may be opened to military use if the Department of Defense requests the access. And wildlife and law enforcement agencies will be exempt from the prohibition against most vehicle travel in wilderness areas.

Leavening the disappointments is the news that federally owned wildlands around Lanfair Valley in the Mojave Preserve, lands mistakenly dropped from an earlier version of the desert bill, have been restored. The desert bill also grants wilderness status to two roadless areas that had been dropped from the 1984 California Wilderness Act as part of a compromise necessary to pass that legislation. The Scodles Roadless Area of the Sequoia National Forest is now the center of the Kiavah Wilderness, and the San Bernardino National Forest's Granite Mountain Roadless Area, which was not only dropped but provisionally released from further consideration as wilderness by the 1984 act, forms part of the Bighorn Mountain Wilderness. Activists working to protect the other wildlands dropped

in the 1984 compromise now have a precedent behind them.

Some BLM wilderness study area (WSA) lands in the Avawatz Mountains, Kingston Range, Soda Mountains, South Avawatz Mountains, Death Valley, Great Falls Basin, and Cady Mountains that were not designated as wilderness will retain their WSA status, and a BLM holding in the White Mountains is accorded WSA status for first time. WSA status is meaningful if temporary protection for wildlands because the BLM is required by the Federal Lands Policy Management Act to preserve the wilderness character of its WSAs.

The other BLM wildlands in the California Desert Conservation Area, some 900,000 acres in all, are stripped of their WSA status and released from mandatory consideration as potential wilderness areas. WSAs in the desert bill but outside the boundary of the conservation area are not released, a distinction that is unlikely to be significant since a preliminary analysis shows that little, if any, of the potential wilderness acreage of those lands was left out of the bill.

Although the desert bill mostly protects lands within the conservation area, the legislation also establishes wilderness areas in the southern Sierra (see article on page 1). That those wilderness areas were included in the desert bill is testament to the legislation's emphasis on protecting critical parts of the desert ecoregion, irrespective of administrative boundaries. Although some activists feared that including the southern Sierra in the desert bill would prove controversial, the expected opposition never developed.

Jim Eaton, executive director of the California Wilderness Coalition, thinks the Mojave "took the heat" from the wilderness. Particularly in the last Congress, opponents of the desert bill focused their sights on the proposal to designate the Mojave a national park. With hot issues like Lanfair Valley, hunting, and grazing on the front burner,

the 7.6 million acres of wilderness in the desert bill enjoyed an unexpected and benign neglect.

As this Congress drew to a close, however, the debate on the desert bill was less and less about specifics and more about politics. By making the desert bill a partisan stand-off and strenuously employing the filibuster, Senate Republicans, led by retiring Senator Malcolm Wallop (R-Wyoming) achieved two things. They tortured desert bill proponents, who watched in dread as decades of work hung on the brink of dissolution, and, ironically, they augmented what could have been a comparatively mundane victory for Senator Feinstein into a stellar one just

continued on page 9



Lamont Peak, Owens Peak Wilderness

Photo by Pete Yamagata

Sierra wilderness

continued from page 1

Sierra's situation as an ecotone or transition zone, with its variety of plants and animals, may account in part for the wealth of cultural sites that have been documented in Kiavah and some of the other wilderness areas. Kiavah, in fact, is so rich in undisturbed sites that the segment of the Pacific Crest Trail that passes through the wilderness had to be rerouted to protect them.

The Pacific Crest Trail tends to concentrate recreational use in the areas it bisects: Chimney Peak, Kiavah, and Owens Peak. The southern Sierra also is used for livestock grazing, mining, and pinyon nut gathering, activities that are not decisively prohibited by either the Wilderness Act or the California Desert Protection Act. Some other uses that have been allowed, like off-road vehicle travel and Christmas tree cutting, will be banned in the designated areas when the desert bill is enacted.

Two agencies will be responsible for managing the new wilderness areas. The Forest Service currently manages the Dome Land Wilderness and the portion of Kiavah Wilderness (formerly the Scodles Roadless Area) that lies within the Sequoia National Forest. The remainder of Kiavah, the Dome Land additions, and all of the other Sierra wildernesses in the desert bill will be administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Initially, the Forest Service and BLM each will manage its own wilderness areas, but the agencies recently have begun discussing cooperative stewardship of the southern Sierra wildernesses. Ultimately, land transfers between the agencies to consolidate their holdings in the area may be the best solution to the present mosaic of land ownership.

How the vote was won

The Jewish sabbath and a malfunctioning garage door don't figure in many wilderness stories, but they were two of the last-minute complications as the desert bill neared the end of its torturous, eight-year journey through the U. S. Senate. Only a novelist could have written a more suspenseful finale to the epic of the California Desert Protection Act.

By early October, with senators eager to leave Washington to campaign and Republican filibusters stymieing every attempt to pass the desert bill, all bets were off. When Senate leader George Mitchell (D-ME) announced he would keep the Senate in session through the weekend of October 8-9 if necessary, Senator Joseph Lieberman (D-CT), an orthodox Jew and a supporter of the desert bill, moved into a hotel on Friday so he could walk to the Capitol and not break the sabbath injunction against riding in a car.

Some other senators may have wished they'd had Senator Lieberman's foresight. Democratic Senator

Jim Sasser, who had already left to campaign in his home state of Tennessee, got back to Washington just minutes before the crucial Saturday morning vote to end a Republican filibuster.

But even Senator Mitchell, who booked charter flights back to D. C. for some of the senators who had already left, could not have foreseen that a garage door would almost do what eight years of Republican opposition could not. The cloture vote was already underway when Senators Mitchell and Feinstein discovered they were one vote shy of the 60 needed to end the filibuster. As they looked at each other in dismay, Senator Carol Moseley-Braun (D-IL), barreled through the Senate doors and into Feinstein's embrace. With her car imprisoned by a stuck garage door, Senator Moseley-Braun arrived at the Senate by cab, just in time to cast the all-important 60th vote.

Shortly afterward, the Senate easily passed the desert bill by voice vote.

California Desert Protection Act

The wilderness of 1994

Never before has California gained so many wilderness areas at one time. We can't do full justice to the many wonders of the state's 70 newest wildernesses in the pages that follow, but you will find a brief description of each area and the address of the managing agency that can provide more information. For Bureau of Land Management wilderness areas, the contact refers to one or more of the agency's field offices (Barstow, Caliente, El Centro, Needles, Ridgecrest, or South Coast); those addresses are on page 8.

Argus Range The Argus Range north of Trona contains a great diversity of terrain and geological features: alluvial fans (or bajadas), broad canyons and washes, and narrow, steep-walled canyons. Because of its elevation, the area gets higher-than-average rainfall. Stands of pinyon and juniper adorn the upper slopes, and permanent streams, springs, and waterfalls support dense riparian vegetation. The range also is home to many rare birds and rare plants. 74,890 acres. Contact: Ridgecrest.

Big Maria Mountains These steep, rugged mountains west of the Colorado River are exceptionally wild and largely inaccessible except by foot. They are home to a multitude of inhabitants, including sheep, bald eagles, and fringe-toed lizards. 47,570 acres. Contact: South Coast.

Bigelow Cholla Garden This area near Needles includes the desert's largest concentration of Bigelow cholla, a rare "teddy bear" cactus covered with spines that impart a golden sheen. Many small animals live among the very dense cholla stands, using the cholla's needles as protection from predators. Prairie falcons, desert tortoises, and cactus wrens can be seen in the area. 10,380 acres. Contact: Needles.

Bighorn Mountain The bighorn sheep for which the mountains were named are locally extinct, but other species—mule deer, mountain lions, bobcats, and golden eagles—remain. Topography and vegetation vary, from the rugged, desert-like Bighorn Mountains to the pines of Granite Peak in the San Bernardino National Forest. Rock art, middens, metates, caves, and village sites bespeak the area's prehistoric occupants. 39,185 acres. Contact: Barstow or Big Bear Ranger District, San Bernardino NF, P. O. Box 290, Fawnskin, CA 92333; (909) 866-3437.

Black Mountain This small wilderness is big in cultural value. In fact, the entire area is listed as sensitive. Aboriginal remains include trails, rock art, and camp sites. The endangered cactus, *Sclerocactus polyancistrus*, is found among the lava flows of Black Mountain. Other inhabitants include the desert tortoise and the state-listed Mojave ground squirrel. Raptors using the area include prairie falcons and golden eagles, and an eagle aerial has been found. 13,940 acres. Contact: Barstow.

Bright Star Most of the terrain of this southern Sierra wilderness consists of steep-sided ridges separated by narrow canyons, at elevations of 3,500 to over 5,000 feet. The vegetation represents a transition between the conifers of the Piute Mountains in the Sequoia National Forest to the west and the desert to the east. Bright Star is noteworthy for its numerous overlapping ecosystems. 9,520 acres. Contact: Ridgecrest.



In the Funeral Mountains, Death Valley Wilderness

Photo by Phil Farrell

Bristol Mountains The Bristol and Granite Mountains are a geological wonderland on the western edge of the Mojave Wilderness, with rock jumbles, fault lines, plutons, pinnacles and spires, and, of course, mounds and mountains of granite. A surprising number and variety of plants and animals make their home amid all that rock: among them, the desert shrew, Mexican free-tailed bat, and dusky-footed woodrat. 68,515 acres. Contact: Needles.

Cadiz Dunes This is one of the few truly unstable dune systems in the state. The dunes are unusual in containing pockets of water and vegetation in the hollows between ridges. These pockets support a variety of wildlife and, in particular, more mammals than normally inhabit dune systems. Wildflowers bloom at Cadiz Dunes long after the spring show has faded elsewhere in the desert. 39,740 acres. Contact: Needles.

Carrizo Gorge This area, an ecotone where the the Colorado Desert and the Peninsular Range ecosystems converge, is bordered on the east and north by the wilderness of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. A fan palm oasis and populations of Jacumba milkvetch, mountain springs lupine, Parish's larkspur, and California barrel cactus are noteworthy botanical features. Visitors also are lured by the extensive, hundred-mile views. 15,700 acres. Contact: El Centro.

Chemehuevi Mountains A large, rolling valley carpeted in cholla, ocotillo, and agave is surrounded on three sides by the Chemehuevi Mountains; the fourth side adjoins Havasu Wilderness on the Colorado River. The mountains themselves are a contrast in shading: pale granite peaks are succeeded by dark volcanic spires. Desert bighorn sheep and mule deer occupy the area, which also is rich in archaeological sites. 64,320 acres. Contact: Needles.

Chimney Peak Chimney Peak is characterized by steep-sided ridges and narrow canyons covered, for the most part, by pinyon pine forest at elevations from 5,000 to 8,000 feet. This remote wilderness of the southern Sierra has attracted anthropologists looking for artifacts of isolated populations of Native Americans. 13,700 acres. Contact: Caliente.

Chuckwalla Mountains The Chuckwalla Mountains, jutting abruptly from the surrounding flatlands of the Colorado River Basin, are home to raptors, bighorn sheep, coyotes, desert tortoises, foxes, and snakes. An array of desert plants—nolina, creosote, yucca, ocotillo, cholla, and barrel cactus—grows among steep canyons, bajadas, valleys, and slopes. 80,770 acres. Contact: South Coast or El Centro.

Cleghorn Lakes The gigantic boulders of the Bullion Mountains in the northern portion of this wilderness are classic scrambling terrain. The western portion is prime wildflower country; the vast flats and gentle slopes up to the boulder fields provide a spectacular spring wildflower display of yellows, oranges, and blues. 33,980 acres. Contact: Barstow.

Clipper Mountains These mountains west of Needles bear a striking resemblance to a clipper ship with sharp prow, blunt stern, and three masts suggested by peaks. The vast Fenner and Clipper valleys lap at the base of the mountains and provide habitat for desert tortoise, Mojave yucca, creosote, and a variety of cacti. Desert bighorn sheep and mule deer are attracted to the area by its abundance of springs. The springs not only draw wildlife, but also drew Indians who left many signs of their presence in the area. 26,000 acres. Contact: Needles.

Coso Range Southeast of Owens Lake are two large interior valleys surrounded by volcanic tablelands. Extensive evidence of volcanic activity is found throughout the range, and large obsidian outcrops were used by the Piute Indians. A variety of large mammals live in the wilderness: bighorn sheep, mule deer, burros, and wild horses. Naturalists also have noted the presence of a rare black toad. 50,520 acres. Contact: Ridgecrest.

Coyote Mountains In addition to several colorful gorges, the Coyote Mountains Wilderness next to Anza-Borrego Desert State Park contains sensitive plants, the rare peninsular bighorn sheep, and the magic gecko, a shy, primitive-looking reptile. The Painted Canyon area is a favorite of hikers and photographers, and Fossil Canyon contains the casts of hundreds of thousands of marine animals. 17,000 acres. Contact: El Centro.

continued on page 5



California Desert Protection Act

continued from page 4

Darwin Falls The terrain of this wilderness east of Lone Pine consists of two distinct parts: Darwin Canyon, with its stream and waterfalls, and the northern highlands. Most spectacular is Darwin Falls, where perennial streams from the plateau feed a lush growth of ferns, mosses, and other riparian plants. Numerous species of birds nest in the canyon. 8,600 acres. Contact: Ridgecrest.

Dead Mountains Contrary to its name, this wilderness at the junction of California, Nevada, and Arizona supports much life. The mountains harbor spectacular communities of Bigelow cholla, yucca, red barrel, creosote, annual grasses, and Colorado River Basin plants. Hawks, eagles, bighorn sheep, hares, quail, and coyotes abound amid the rugged chocolate and rust peaks. In addition, the area hosts a very high concentration of desert tortoises which may be the source of populations in the surrounding area. Other points of interest are Red Springs, an active spring on a large mound, and Picture Canyon, with its hundreds of carefully chiseled petroglyphs. 48,850 acres. Contact: Needles.

Death Valley The wilderness units of our new national park include the Saline, Eureka, and Panamint dunes and the Panamint, Owlshead, Avawatz, and Greenwater mountains. How great is this Great Basin wilderness? At 3,158,038 acres, it's the single biggest U. S. wilderness south of Alaska. Contact: Death Valley National Park, Death Valley, CA 93238; (619) 786-2331.

El Paso Mountains Southwest of Ridgecrest, these badlands—volcanic mesas and red buttes intersected by narrow canyons—have attracted a surprising number of visitors, from the early human inhabitants who left significant remains to the raptors which breed here still. The 5,244-foot Black Mountain is vegetated with creosote and Joshua trees. 23,780 acres. Contact: Ridgecrest.

Fish Creek Mountains The Fish Creek Mountains are sufficiently forbidding as to remain partly unexplored. Limestone chutes channel rain into tinajas, natural tanks, that are a year-round source of non-potable water. Little is known about the plant and animal species of the mountains, but the range is considered likely habitat for barefoot geckos, raptors, and peninsular bighorn sheep. 25,940 acres. Contact: El Centro.

Funeral Mountains The name and the proximity to Death Valley notwithstanding, the Funeral Mountains Wilderness supports creosote, burrobrush, cheesebush, spiny hopsage, and Mormon tea. Red Amphitheater is an enclosed valley; other scenic features include rugged canyons and rocky, banded peaks. The Bureau of Land Management termed the area "an exquisite representation of desert wilderness." 28,110 acres. Contact: Barstow.

Golden Valley Golden Valley, 20 miles south of Ridgecrest, is embraced by Almond Mountain to the southeast and the Lava Mountains to the northwest. Wildflowers make an extravagant display each spring; the rest of the year visitors have to content themselves with the varicolored sedimentary rocks that cut through the Lava Mountains. The rare Mojave ground squirrel and the desert tortoise abide here, and artifacts of human residents have survived. 37,700 acres. Contact: Ridgecrest.

Grass Valley A range of low, rolling hills rises up in the center of a wide grass valley southeast of Ridgecrest. One is struck by a sense of great distance as the valley drops gently toward Cuddeback Dry Lake. Joshua trees dot the landscape, and the Mojave ground squirrel frequents the entire wilderness. The abundance of small rodents attracts golden eagles; the flats provide desert tortoise habitat. 31,695 acres. Contact: Ridgecrest.

Havasú The Havasú National Wildlife Refuge is home to Topock Gorge, where the Colorado River narrows dramatically. As a waterfowl refuge, Havasú also is home to a lot of bird life, including protected species like bald eagles, clapper rails, and possibly peregrine falcons. The Havasú Wilderness and its neighboring Chemehuevi Mountains Wilderness occupy the uplands on the California side of the river (there is a wilderness on the Arizona side as well). 3,195 acres. Contact: Havasú NWR, P. O. Box 3009, Needles, CA 92363; (619) 326-3853.

Indian Pass Locally known as Julian Wash country, the Indian Pass Wilderness is part of the "other" Chocolate Mountains (the California desert has two ranges with that name). Together, BLM and Fish and Wildlife Service lands form a California-to-Arizona wilderness spanning the Colorado River and affording recreation opportunities (like canoeing) unexpected in our desert wilderness. California ditaxis, a sensitive plant, and such rare-to-California species as the tree lizard and Colorado River and great plains toads are found here. 33,855 acres. Contact: El Centro.

Inyo Mountains Between Owens and Saline valleys east of the Sierra, the Inyo Mountains peak at 11,000 feet. Low desert vegetation gives way to Joshua trees, which yield to pinyon and bristlecone pines as the terrain rises. The mountains are steep and rugged enough to deter all but the most persistent visitors today, though ancient Americans gathered pine nuts here. Desert bighorn sheep, Inyo Mountain salamanders, and rare plants populate the slopes. 205,020 acres. Contact: Bishop or Ridgecrest or Inyo National Forest, 873 North Main St., Bishop, CA 93514; (619) 873-2400.

Jacumba The Jacumba Mountains on the California-Mexico border have been likened to a stairway running from the Peninsular Coast Range down to the Colorado Desert. As a transitional ecosystem, Jacumba is rich in botanical and biological value, containing such disparate species as lupine, chaparral, and fan palms. Archaeological sites, rare plants, and rare animals, including one otherwise confined to Mexico, the Trinidad Merriam kangaroo rat, combine to make this wilderness unique. 33,670 acres. Contact: El Centro.

Kelso Dunes The 600-foot-high Kelso Sand Dunes north of the Granite Mountains (and adjacent to the Mojave Wilderness) are part of the Devil's Playground, an extensive and varied complex of sand formations. These singing, shifting, booming sands support a profuse as-

sortment of flowering plants, endemic insects, and specialized animals, making the area a smorgasbord for scientists and nature lovers alike. 129,580 acres. Contact: Needles.

Kiavah Most of this southern Sierra wilderness (also known as the Scodles) is covered by a magnificent pinyon pine forest. Archaeological sites are so abundant that it was difficult to locate an acceptable route for the Pacific Crest Trail through this area at the southern end of the Kern Plateau. 88,290 acres. Contact: Caliente or Ridgecrest or Cannell Meadow Ranger District, Sequoia NF, P. O. Box 6, Kernville, CA 93238; (619) 376-3781.

Kingston Range Creosote scrub gives way to pinyon woodlands and relict white fir as you travel uphill in the Kingston Range, a range that also supports the only Eastern Mojave population of giant Nolina wolfii. The area is renowned for its rare fossil sequence; petrified wood attracts visitors to Sperry Wash Canyon. Virginia's warbler and the hepatic tanager, infrequent occupants of the desert, inhabit the stands of white fir, and the gila monster, rare in California, has been spotted in the range. 209,608 acres. Contact: Barstow or Needles.

continued on page 6








Calochortus flexuosus blooms among branches of Mormon tea, Kingston Range Wilderness. Photo by George M. Clark

Hollow Hills To the southwest of this wilderness is a long bajada sloping to Silver Dry Lake and the community of Baker. The lake is noted for the mirages it produces as the whole shimmering surface ripples with heat waves. The wilderness itself contains habitat for the Mojave fringe-toed lizard. 22,240 acres. Contact: Barstow.

Ibex The Ibex Hills' horizontal rock layers of brown, bright yellow, red, and black produce a unique scenic effect on the southeast edge of the Death Valley Wilderness. Excellent views of the coloration of the Ibex Hills can be had from Greenwater Valley, which supports a good creosote bush community. Eight square miles of the wilderness contain cultural artifacts. 26,460 acres. Contact: Barstow.

Imperial Refuge The Imperial National Wildlife Refuge spans 30 miles of the Colorado River, reaching into the Colorado desert uplands of Arizona and California to provide migration and wintering habitat for migratory birds. California's Imperial Refuge Wilderness adjoins the Indian Pass and Little Picacho wilderness areas. 5,836 acres. Contact: Imperial NWR, Martinez Lake, P. O. Box 72217, Yuma, AZ 85365; (602) 783-3371.

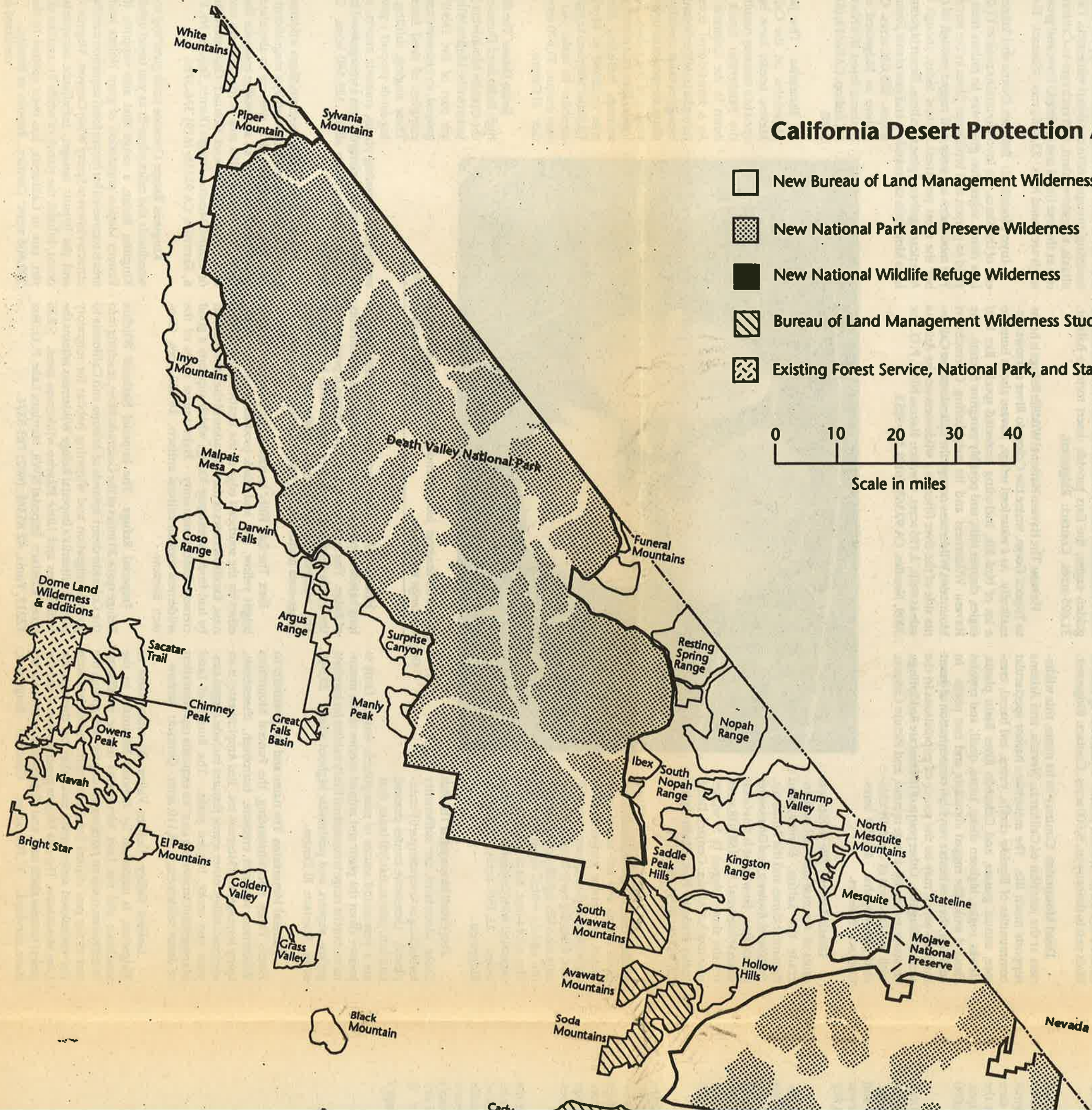
California Desert Protection Act

-  New Bureau of Land Management Wilderness
-  New National Park and Preserve Wilderness
-  New National Wildlife Refuge Wilderness
-  Bureau of Land Management Wilderness Study Areas
-  Existing Forest Service, National Park, and State Park Wilderness



Scale in miles

Map by Jim Eaton





Black Mountain

Barstow

Newberry Mountains

Cady Mountains

Soda Mountains

Kelso Dunes

Bristol Mountains

Trilobite

Clipper Mountain

Piute Mountains

Dead Mountains

Bigelow Cholla Garden

Chemehuevi Mountains

Havas

Bighorn Mountain

San Geronio

Cleghorn Lakes

Sheephole Valley

Cadiz Dunes

Old Woman Mountains

Stepladder Mountains

Turtle Mountains

Whipple Mountains

Arizona

Joshua Tree National Park

Mecca Hills

Orcopla Mountains

Santa Rosa

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park

Chuckwalla Mountains

Little Chuckwalla Mountains

Palo Verde Mountains

North Algodones Dunes

Indian Pass

Imperial Refuge

Picacho Peak

Little Picacho

Fish Creek Mountains

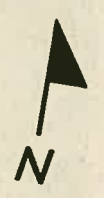
Coyote Mountains

Jacumba

Carizo Gorge

Sawtooth Mountains

Mexico



California Desert Protection Act

continued from page 5

Little Chuckwalla Mountains The beauty of this wilderness lies in its vast open spaces. The vegetation—creosote bush, scrub, and desert microphyll woodland—represents a transition between the low Colorado Desert and the high Mojave Desert. In addition to mule deer, the wilderness supports a collection of sensitive, rare, threatened, and endangered wildlife including bighorn sheep, desert tortoises, prairie falcons, golden eagles, and fringed lizards. 29,880 acres. Contact: South Coast.

Little Picacho Flat expanses contrast with jagged peaks and deep canyons. Situated along the Colorado River, the washes have an abundance and variety of vegetation, including dense stands of smoke tree, palo verde, and mesquite. On the bajadas are ocotillo, creosote, and cholla with their exuberance of colorful flowers in spring. 33,600 acres. Contact: El Centro.

Malpais Mesa The top of the mesa offers a spectacular 360 degree view of Owens Lake to the west, the Inyo Mountains to the north, the Coso Mountains to the south, and the Panamint Mountains to the east. Joshua trees dot the volcanic slopes and mesa. No other nearby wilderness offers such stark contrasts of sky and rock. 32,360 acres. Contact: Ridgecrest.

Manly Peak The variety of vegetation is extensive, beginning at the lower elevations with sparse desert shrubs, such as creosote, and annual plants in the canyons. Some canyons host riparian plants such as desert willows, cottonwoods, and cattails. One rare plant species, *Brickellia knappiana*, is found in Pleasant Canyon. This wilderness on the west border of Death Valley National Park includes 24 square miles of bighorn sheep habitat. 16,105 acres. Contact: Ridgecrest.

Mecca Hills The San Andreas Fault has contributed new and dramatic wrinkles to these old, eroded hills near Indio. Ironwood, ocotillo, palo verde, and smoke tree clothe the washes and lower slopes, and numerous rare plants and animals (including the rare spotted bat) can be found, but it is the colored, fractured strata and otherworldly rock formations that attract most visitors. 24,200 acres. Contact: South Coast.

Mesquite On the slopes of the Mesquite Mountains near Nevada is a transition zone from the Mojave to the Great Basin, where Utah yuccas and Joshua trees are found. The Mesquite Wilderness contains many archaeological sites, including rock shelters, stone works, ceramics, and agave roasting pits. Limestone and dolomite formations have formed caves and grottos in the porous rock. 47,330 acres. Contact: Needles.

Mojave From the Kelso, Providence, and New York mountains to Castle Peaks on the Nevada border, the Mojave Wilderness is a stunning union of California's three desert ecosystems: the Mojave, Great Basin, and Colorado. Granite peaks, cinder cones, sand dunes, petroglyphs, and Joshua trees are just a sampler of this wilderness's many wonders. 695,200 acres. Contact: California Desert Information Center, 831 Barstow Rd., Barstow, CA 92311; (619) 256-8313.

Newberry Mountains Multicolored rock formations and soils, rugged crags, and labyrinthine canyons are the hallmark of this scenic wilderness southeast of Barstow. Bighorn sheep once roamed the Newberry Mountains; prairie falcons and golden eagles nest here still. 22,900 acres. Contact: Barstow.

Nopah Range Stretching 18 miles along the California-Nevada border, the Nopah Range is itself bordered by bajadas, badlands, playas, and plains. Desert willow, cacti, creosote, ivory-spined agave, and mesquite soften the contours of this rugged land, the only home of the Nopah desert bighorn sheep. 110,860 acres. Contact: Barstow.

North Algodones Dunes A national landmark (alternatively known as the Imperial Sand Hills), this wilderness near the Arizona border features steep, shifting, and bewildering dunes that are difficult for humans to traverse. Other animals, including the endemic Andrews dune scarab beetle and two lizard species, manage just fine. The dunes also nurture a number of rare or endangered plants. 32,240 acres. Contact: El Centro.

North Mesquite Mountains Here, creosote bush blends into the vegetation of the Great Basin, blackbrush. The limestone outcrops support a plant endemic to limestone soils, *Buddleja utahensis*. Springs in the foothills attract itinerant populations of birds. The alluvial areas to the south are desert tortoise habitat. 25,540 acres. Contact: Needles.

Old Woman Mountains This massive, fault-lifted wilderness west of Ward Valley is a wonderland of rock walls, deep canyons, sandy washes, enclosed valleys, and steep spires. The flora of the area is equally diverse. There are 16 freshwater springs that support a herd of desert bighorn sheep and a large mule deer population. The valley floor is desert tortoise habitat and part of the Fenner-Chemehuevi Desert Tortoise Core Area, one of four core breeding populations recognized in California. 146,020 acres. Contact: Needles.

Orocopia Mountains The Orocopia Mountains near the Salton Sea have been molded and fractured by the San Andreas Fault. A large herd of Nelson's bighorn sheep inhabits the wilderness, as do a number of rare plants, including the Orocopia sage. A sacred site, Pa-Ha-Pe-Che, in the northeast corner shows evidence of ancient habitation. 40,735 acres. Contact: South Coast.

Owens Peak Granite peaks, the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail, and perennial streams attract rock climbers and hikers to this wilderness east of Sequoia National Forest. Pictographs and other archaeological sites date back 6,000 years; modern Native Americans consider the area sacred. At higher elevations grow pinyon, juniper, and a sensitive plant, Ninemile Canyon phacelia. 74,060 acres. Contact: Caliente or Ridgecrest.

Pahrump Valley Sweeping, open, undisturbed valleys are densely covered with creosote, yuccas, and Joshua trees. This is almost unique in the California desert today, since most such valleys are crisscrossed with roads and vehicle tracks. This wilderness near the Nevada border was used by five different Native American groups. 74,800 acres. Contact: Barstow.

Palen/McCoy South of the Granite Mountains, pencil cholla, pygmy cedar, and barrel and cotton-top cactus are scattered on a landscape dominated by creosote, brittle brush, and cheese bush. The Palen and McCoy mountain ranges slope down into bajadas, canyons, and valleys. Coyotes, kit and gray foxes, bobcats, mountain lions, bighorn sheep, and mule deer roam the land. 270,629 acres. Contact: South Coast.

Palo Verde Mountains This Imperial County wilderness is characterized by rugged volcanic peaks, sheer cliffs, caves, arches with narrow canyons, and small, enclosed, intimate valleys. The mountains provide habitat for mule deer, desert tortoise, bighorn sheep, and prairie falcon. The Bureau of Land Management has recorded an average of ten prehistoric sites per square mile. 32,310 acres. Contact: El Centro.

Picacho Peak In the Chocolate Mountains near the Colorado River is a small area of uncommon significance. Steep arroyos cut through these benchlands, making travel difficult. Where desert meets river, outstanding habitat for Nelson's bighorn sheep and mule deer results. Desert tortoises hibernate in the loose volcanic soils. Potsherds and cobblestones etched with petroglyphs are mute evidence of former inhabitants. 7,700 acres. Contact: El Centro.

continued on page 7



Saline Valley dune, Death Valley Wilderness

Photo by Rose Certini

California Desert Protection Act

continued from page 6

Piper Mountains From the top of Piper Peak at 7,300 feet to the floor of Eureka Valley, plants and animals are as varied as the topography. The wilderness is home to the pale kangaroo mouse, desert bighorn sheep, a large number of deer, and the rare black toad. In addition, the most northern Joshua tree forest in California is found within the area. 72,575 acres. Contact: Ridgecrest.

Piute Mountains Bighorn sheep, mule deer, quail, and doves all can be found amid the rough, rocky ridges and deep canyons of these mountains west of Needles. An extensive system of connecting washes bisects the wilderness. Lush creosote stands, outstanding cactus displays, and yucca are scattered throughout. This is part of the Fenner-Chemehuevi Desert Tortoise Core Area, where concentrations of tortoises are high enough to assure reproduction. 36,840 acres. Contact: Needles.

Resting Spring Range In parts of this wilderness on the Nevada border, rocks display colors ranging from subdued brown and tan to more intense pinks, reds, greens, and black. Wildlife includes bighorn sheep, prairie falcons, and golden eagles. The wilderness contains many Native American sites from the Panamint-Shoshone and Chemehuevi cultures. 78,868 acres. Contact: Barstow.

Rice Valley North of the Big Maria Mountains, the valley itself, the largely untouched central portion of this wilderness, has retained its natural condition. The southern portion of the area represents a territorial subdivision between the Chemehuevi and Serrano Indians. Notable here are occupation sites, ritual collection areas, rock art, and springs. 40,820 acres. Contact: South Coast.

Riverside Mountains These mountains were traversed by early humans moving along the Colorado River and for the most part are still accessible only by foot. As a result, many artifacts are intact; rock alignments, intaglios, and petroglyphs are just some of what remains here. 22,380 acres. Contact: South Coast.

Rodman Mountains Southeast of Barstow, an ancient lava flow appears today as a long, sloping mesa through the Rodman Mountains. Water collects in natural basalt tanks in the mesa; the mesa also holds several thousand superb petroglyphs depicting lizards, bighorn sheep, tortoises, snakes, and mythical beings. The wilderness is a prime breeding site for raptors which, together with Joshua trees, populate a stark, dramatic landscape. 27,690 acres. Contact: Barstow.

Sacatar Trail On the east side of the Sierra stretching south from the Inyo National Forest, this country of deep, branching canyons and rugged ridges is traversed by Sacatar Trail. Joshua trees predominate, interspersed with desert scrub, cacti, and pinyon pine. The wilderness has long been used by the Native American groups of the Owens Valley. 51,900 acres. Contact: Caliente or Ridgecrest.

Saddle Peak Hills The mountainous northern section of this wilderness lies close to the Amargosa River, which attracted native peoples. In the southern sand flats leading up to the mountains are Mojave fringe-toed lizards. Creosote scrub dominates the vegetation in both portions of this strip of wilderness on the east side of Death Valley Wilderness. 1,440 acres. Contact: Barstow.



Sawtooth Mountains Between the Cleveland National Forest and Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, the Sawtooth Mountains are a critical transition zone where wildflowers bloom riotously each spring. More than 80 species of flowering plants have been identified in a single square mile. The San Diego horned lizard, loggerhead shrike, willow flycatcher, and assorted raptors, all imperiled species, live among the mountains. More than 100 cultural sites have been documented. 35,080 acres. Contact: El Centro.



Mopah Peak, Turtle Mountains Wilderness Photo by Tom Jopson

Sheephole Valley This vast, remote, almost untouched wilderness takes the visitor back in time thousands of years. Creosote, galleta grass, and mixed shrubs dominate the valley vegetation. Bighorn sheep, desert tortoises, and prairie falcons inhabit this Sahara-like wilderness. 174,800 acres. Contact: Needles.

South Nopah Range Limestone and dolomite interspersed with older Precambrian deposits lend color and variety to the striations of rock in the South Nopah Range Wilderness. Mesquite and catsclaw acacia grow in woodlands along the drainages, where wildlife also concentrates. A rare agave has been found here, along with two invertebrate fossil sites and Indian trails, villages, and artifacts. 16,780 acres. Contact: Barstow.

Stateline The north slopes above Mesquite Lake are noted for outstanding mesquite thickets, a highly valued food source for the early native inhabitants. This wilderness near the Nevada border contains many archaeological sites including rock shelters, stone works, ceramics, and agave roasting pits. A herd of about 40 bighorn sheep frequents the area. 7,050 acres. Contact: Needles.

Stepladder Mountains The Stepladder Mountains east of Ward Valley provide a rich, unique habitat for many species of birds and mammals. Desert tortoises are present in extremely high densities. Bighorn sheep, prairie falcons, golden eagles, Brazilian free-tailed bats, doves, quail, and rabbits all thrive amid the diverse mountains, bajadas, and washes. The wilderness is heavily vegetated, abounding in cactus gardens, ocotillo, Mojave yucca, and fine creosote flats. 81,600 acres. Contact: Needles.

Surprise Canyon This wilderness adjoining the Panamint Range in Death Valley National Park has rugged ridges, high peaks, and deep, narrow canyons with extensive riparian zones. The Panamint daisy, a rare and endangered plant, grows in rocky areas. The indigenous Panamint alligator lizard also is found here, as are bighorn sheep. 29,180 acres. Contact: Ridgecrest.

Sylvania Mountains On the Nevada border, dramatic elevation changes, with peaks of almost 8,000 feet, and limestone formations provide a wide diversity of flora, including many rare endemic species. The elevation range also promotes a diverse group of fauna such as the pale kangaroo mouse and prairie falcon. 17,820 acres. Contact: Ridgecrest.

Trilobite The rugged terrain, though almost waterless, supports bighorn sheep and prairie falcons. This San Bernardino County wilderness contains the Marble Mountains, named for their colorful striations, and is one of the few desert wilderness areas with fossil trilobites. 31,160 acres. Contact: Needles.

Turtle Mountains South of Needles is a vast land where volcanic cliffs flow into broad plains. The Turtle Mountains are spectacular both as scenery and habitat. Rock collectors come from across the country to gather "Mopah roses" and climbers test their mettle on rock spires, but beyond the springs where human visitors concentrate, golden eagles, prairie falcons, bighorn sheep, and desert tortoises flourish. 144,500 acres. Contact: Needles.

Whipple Mountains In the Whipple Mountains near the Colorado River, grayish green sedimentary deposits cap natural lava bridges. Domes, spires, outcrops, and a canyon a thousand feet deep are part of a complicated landscape blanketed with scrub and, in some places, concentrations of palo verde, smoke tree, saguaro, and Mojave prickly pear. Golden eagles, red-tailed hawks, screech owls, and prairie falcons dot the sky. 77,520 acres. Contact: Needles.

The desert bill also enlarges four established wilderness areas:

Dome Land Natural ecological extensions of the Sequoia National Forest's Dome Land Wilderness, the additions include the South Fork of the Kern River, an outstanding candidate for wild-and-scenic river status. Elevations in the additions range from less than 3,000 feet in the south to over 7,000 feet farther north. Most of the area is covered by pinyon pine forest. 36,300 acres. Contact: Caliente.

Joshua Tree Additions include the Coxcomb Mountains, a recreational paradise of granite jumbles, spiky peaks, and labyrinthine canyons; the Eagle Mountains, with their sheets of desert pavement, hidden valleys, petroglyphs, and rare Alverson's foxtail cactus; and the Pinto Mountains, a series of dark, granite masses banded with lighter rock. 131,780 acres. Contact: Visitor Center, Joshua Tree National Park, 74485 National Monument Dr., Twentynine Palms, CA 92277; (619) 367-7511.

continued on page 8

California Desert Protection Act

Resources

Bureau of Land Management

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) now has basic, one-page maps of each of its 66 new desert wilderness areas. You can request them from the California Desert Information Center, now operated jointly by the National Park Service and BLM, at 831 Barstow Road, Barstow, CA 92311; (619) 256-8313.

The maps and wilderness information also can be obtained from field offices. Detailed wilderness maps will not be available for some time. Management plans for the wilderness areas are a long way off too, but you can contact wilderness managers at field offices if you want your name added to their mailing lists. The addresses are:

Barstow Resource Area
150 Coolwater Lane
Barstow, CA 92311
(619) 256-3591

Needles Resource Area
101 West Spikes Rd.
Needles, CA 92363
(619) 326-3896

Callente Resource Area
4301 Rosedale Highway
Bakersfield, CA 93308
(805) 391-6000

Ridgecrest Resource Area
300 S. Richmond Rd.
Ridgecrest, CA 93555
(619) 375-7125

El Centro Resource Area
1661 S. Fourth St.
El Centro, CA 92243
(619) 353-1060

South Coast Resource Area
P. O. Box 2000
N. Palm Springs, CA 92258
(619) 251-0812

Mojave Wilderness

If you want to be notified about public meetings and management plans for the Mojave Wilderness, for the time being you should contact the BLM's Public Affairs Office at 6221 Box Springs Blvd., Riverside, CA 92507; (909) 697-5215. For visitor information, contact the California Desert Information Center, 831 Barstow Rd., Barstow, CA 92311; (619) 256-8313.

Wilderness of '94

continued from page 7

San Geronio This addition to the popular wilderness in the San Bernardino National Forest includes the extremely wild east flanks of Mt. San Geronio, the highest peak in southern California and a haunt of black bears, bighorn sheep, mountain lions, and many other wildlife species. 37,980 acres. Contact: South Coast.

Santa Rosa The addition links the Santa Rosa Wilderness in the San Bernardino National Forest to the Santa Rosa Mountains Wilderness in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. Combining montane and desert ecosystems, the Santa Rosa addition is home to the great horned owl and the desert slender salamander, to juniper-pinyon woodlands and palm-lined oases. 64,340 acres. Contact: South Coast.

Bodie protected from new mining claims

As if designating seven million acres of wilderness weren't enough to accomplish with one piece of legislation, the California Desert Protection Act also establishes a Desert Lily Sanctuary, a Dinosaur Trackway Area of Critical Environmental Concern, and a New Orleans jazz park (Senator Bennett Johnston's support doesn't come cheap). More important to wilderness advocates, however, is the closure of the Bodie Bowl to new mining claims.

The Bureau of Land Management has five wilderness study areas around the ghost town of Bodie, north of Mono Lake. Since the Bodie wildlands are outside the scope of the desert bill, they are not designated as wilderness by the bill. But 6,000 acres of the area are withdrawn from mineral entry, an action that means no new mining claims or leases will be allowed. The closure is welcome news to Bodie defenders who feared that the lure of gold—and of privatizing the land where gold is found—would imperil the historic site and its surrounding wildlands.

The Desert Hall of Fame

Legislation as ambitious as the California Desert Protection Act doesn't just happen. It represents decades of work—lobbying, making phone calls, writing letters, drawing maps, researching, and political bargaining—by thousands of people.

On the occasion of the bill's passage, we want to honor and thank those activists, legislators, scientists, volunteers, and professionals whose extraordinary efforts brought us seven million acres of wilderness.

Harriet Allen
Dolph Amster
Judy Anderson
Sharon Apfelbaum
Michelle Arend-Ekhoff
Omar Bacon
Bob Badaracco
George Barnes
Mabel Barnes
Bob Barnes
Katy Barrows
Eckhart Beatty



Judy Anderson

California League of
Conservation Voters
staff & canvassers
Alan Carlton
Patty Carpenter-Hughes
Bob Cates
Jim Catlin
Rose Certini
Howard Chapman
Greg Collins
James Cornett
Dennis Coules
Sen. Alan Cranston
Kim Cranston
Buford Crites
Brien Culhane
Gray Davis
Mary DeDecker
Marty Dickes
Jim Dodson
Julian Donihue
Gloria Durant
Shelley Duval
Jim Eaton

Tasker Edmiston
Beula Edmiston
Nina Eloesser
Leslie England
Nick Ervin
Rep. Anna Eshoo
Morgan Fairchild
Phil Farrell
Sen. Dianne Feinstein
Frank Fetscher
Joe Fontaine
Betsy Ford



Jim Dodson

Lynne Foster
Tim Frank
Larry Freilich
Cal French
Letty French
Adria Garabedian
Lyle Gaston
Tom Gerold
Earl Giddings
Donald Goldbloom
Mike Gonella
Sup. Jim Gonzalez (SF)



Sen. Dianne Feinstein

Hunter Gooch
Bette Goodrich
Hillary Gordon
Gary Gray
Nancy Green
Lu Haas
Edie Harmon
Bob Hartman
Bob Hattoy
Bill Havert
Priscilla Hawkins
Cole Hawkins
Marty Hayden
Stan Haye
Patti Hedge
Mary Ann Henry
Ron Henry
Dick Hingson
Katherine Hohmann
John Hohstadt
Bill Holden
Frannie Hoover
Vicky Hoover
Ken Horner
Elden Hughes
Larry Iwerks
Tom Jopson
John Joyner
Sally Kabisch
Doug Kari
Patricia Kelly
Annette Kregel
Kathy Lacey
Larry LaPre

Valerie Leathers
Kenton LeFore
Rep. Rick Lehman
Rep. Mel Levine
Frank Lewis
Phil Lindgren
Vic Maris
Drew Martin
Bard McAllister
Leo McCarthy
Bob McDowell
David McMullen
Mike McWherter
Aaron Medlock
Cary Meister
Rep. George Miller
Sally Miller
Paul Mitchell
Art Montana
Donald Moore



Sen. Alani Cranston

Camille Morgan
Dennis Murphy
Stan Murphy
Al Muth
George Myer
Sheila Myer
Brian Newton
George Ostertag
Marj Ottenberg
Wayne Pacelle
Bruce Pavlik



Rep. George Miller

Holme Peters
Phil Pister
Dave Polcyn
Mike Prather
Cheryl Rae
John Rasmussen
Deborah Reames
Betsy Reifsnider
Joan Reiss
Nobby Riedy
George Rippi
Don Roberge
Mel Ruben
Jan Salvay
Katherine Saubel
Patty Schifferle
William Schlesinger
Jim Schoedler
Roger Scholl
Bern Schween
Doug Scott
Debbie Sease
Russ Shay
Marge Sill
Dave Simon
Scott Simons
Robert "Skip" Smith
Genny Smith
Geoff Smith
Lori Sonken
Terry Sopher
Barbara Spolter
Robert C. Stebbins
Billy Steinberg

Buck Sterling
Jon Mark Stewart
Jeanine Stillwell-Haye
DeeDee Stone
Dan Stone
Dan Sweet
Steve Tabor
Annette Tarsky
Joan Taylor
Georgette Theotig
Robert Thorne
Rep. Esteban Torres
Jim Trumbly
Cameron Tucker
Maris Valkass
Jay von Werlhof
Linda Wade
Larry Walker
Bob Wallace
Hank Warzybok



Elden Hughes

Jay Watson
Stan Weidert
Frank Wheat
Nancy Wheat
Jeff Widen
Carol Wiley
Ray Williams
Dave Willis
Howard Wilshire
James Wilson
Chuck Youmans



Sen. Barbara Boxer

Melanie Beller
Susan Berger
Louis Blumberg
Barry Boulton
Sen. Barbara Boxer
Rep. George E. Brown Jr.
Joyce Burk
Peter Burk
Michael Burke
Jim Burns
Ray Butler
Lee Cahalan

Book review and other news

For desert explorers

Desert Hiking

By Dave Ganci, Wilderness Press, Berkeley, 1993, 169 pp., \$13.95.

With more than 7.6 million acres of wilderness designated by the California Desert Protection Act, more people will be interested in exploring these fascinating arid lands. *Desert Hiking* may be just the book to get you started.

Good news and bad for wild American River

By Steve Evans

In the last days of the congressional session, a House-Senate conference committee approved a final Interior budget that includes a \$1 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to acquire private inholdings along the North Fork American Wild River in the North Fork American Roadless Area of the Tahoe National Forest. Rep. Vic Fazio (D-West Sacramento) was instrumental in attaining the critical funding for the acquisitions. Unfortunately, the appropriation is insufficient to acquire all the private inholdings along the river, many of which may be logged under timber harvest plans submitted by the owners, High Sierra Properties, and approved by or pending before the California Department of Forestry.

Immediate logging of the private parcels is prohibited by a purchase option on the properties held by the Trust for Public Land. Faced with insufficient funds to acquire the properties and the imminent expiration of their purchase option, the Trust has signed an agreement with High Sierra Properties extending the option and its temporary protection through March 1996. If Congress appropriates at least \$1 million next year to acquire additional lands, the option would be extended through March 1997.

In exchange for the extension, High Sierra Properties would be allowed to log their land at Italian Bar and some of the land at Watson Crossing. In a major concession that would protect a narrow, 400-foot corridor along the river and the popular Mumford Bar trail, the landowners agreed not to log within the so-called special treatment area in the Watson Crossing parcel.

Negotiators for the Trust characterize the agreement as a "partial victory." Conservationists will have to work hard to ensure that Congress appropriates at least \$1 million next year to continue acquisitions and extend the purchase option through March 1997.

What you can do

Letters are in order thanking Rep. Fazio (House Office Building, Washington, DC 20510) for his efforts and urging him to continue his work to protect the North Fork American Wild River from further logging.

Written 15 years ago and now in its third edition, the book is aimed at beginners and does not assume the reader already is an experienced hiker. Author Dave Ganci explains the basics of selecting boots, clothing, packs, tents, and food.

The book is an interesting mix of hiking fundamentals laced with stories about the author's own experiences. Though his humor sometimes falls flat, many of his insights ring true. He recommends making friends with your camp stove because "they can be sweet, calm, efficient, and steady burning only to turn into irritable, mean, cantankerous, sputtering hunks of hot, heavy metal that you would just as soon kick over a cliff, especially when they turn on you in the middle of the main dish." As a Svea owner, I certainly can agree with that assessment.

Ganci believes that you must learn from trial and error, so he simply wants to get you started: "My goal is to provide you with enough information and inspiration to step away from the roadhead full of confidence and excitement." He does this by giving tips on needed gear, first aid, vehicles, and water, along with hiking and camping techniques.

Perhaps because I hike in the very dry deserts of California, I was surprised at the amount of detail explaining how to locate and use desert water sources. I tend to take my own supply, believing that what little is found in the desert is critical for wildlife. Ganci is properly obsessed with water, stating, "if there were only three things you could carry into the desert, they would be water, water, and more water."

A reformed off-road vehicle user, the author is strong on the need to preserve the desert and treat the land with respect. Though he mentions desert campfires, he does acknowledge the controversy about using scarce wood.

While there are more detailed guides to backpacking available, *Desert Hiking* may be just the book for the neophyte who wants to start exploring our magnificent desert wilderness.

—Jim Eaton



Desert bill

continued from page 3

weeks before election day. Ultimately, 14 Senate Republicans supported the desert bill by voting to end filibuster.

President Clinton has yet to sign the California Desert Protection Act, but there is no doubt that the legislation will be enacted.

DATES TO REMEMBER

November 8 ELECTION DAY

November 12 ACTIVISTS' MEETING to discuss environmental strategy in the wake of the election. For more information about the Davis meeting, call Steve Evans at Friends of the River, (916) 442-3155.

November 18 COMMENTS DUE on the Forest Service's wild-and-scenic river recommendations for the Tahoe National Forest. Send comments to: Forest Supervisor John Skinner, Tahoe NF, P. O. Box 6003, Nevada City, CA 95959. (See article in October WR.)

December 4 MEETING of the California Wilderness Coalition's board of directors in Davis. For details, call Jim Eaton at (916) 758-0380.

January 28 FOREST SEMINAR and conference organized by the Ancient Forest Task Force of the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter, in La Canada (near Pasadena). Speakers include Martin Litton, Jeffrey St. Clair, Chris Maser, Carla Cloer, and Elden Hughes. Pre-registration costs \$25, and scholarships are available. For more information, contact the Angeles Chapter at 3345 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 508, Los Angeles, CA 90010; (213) 387-4287.

Wilderness Trivia Answers

The Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Forest Service.

Cadiz Dunes.

from page 2



**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

The *Wilderness Record* is the monthly publication of the California Wilderness Coalition, but not all articles published herein reflect the views of the Coalition. Articles may be reprinted; credit would be appreciated. Subscription is free with membership.

The *Record* welcomes submissions on California wilderness and related subjects. We reserve the right to edit all work.

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Printed by the Davis Enterprise on recycled paper.

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"Every year the opposition delayed, the bigger the bill got."

—Activist Judy Anderson on the California Desert Protection Act

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