

WILDERNESS RECORD

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION

Vol. 1

P.O. Box 429, Davis, Ca. 95616, September - October, 1976

California Wilderness Legislation Faces Critical Period

What happens in the House of Representatives in the next two months will decide the fate of three wilderness study proposals for this Congress. The three bills - for Snow Mountain, Kaiser, and Sheep Mountain Wilderness Study Areas - will die at the end of the 94th Congress if not passed by December, and would have to be revived again for the 95th Congress. Wilderness study means the areas would get a study of wilderness values, public hearings, and a Congressional decision before any development could take place.

These bills have passed the Senate, but are currently stuck in the Public Lands Subcommittee of the House Interior Committee.

The Kaiser area of 28,000 acres (H.R. 3656) east of Fresno on Sierra National Forest awaits consideration by the Public Lands Subcommittee. The area, perhaps the most controversial of all California's wilderness study proposals this year, faces a difficult struggle. Congressman B.F. Sisk (D.-Merced, Fresno) has fought the bill despite the fact that the area is outside his district and has overwhelming state Democratic party support. Sisk's opposition means that proponents need to work even harder

for passage.

The 37,000 acre Snow Mountain area (H.R. 5589) in the coast range west of Willows also is holed up in the Public Lands Subcommittee. Like the others, it needs to be passed by the Subcommittee, the full House Interior Committee and House. Snow Mountain has received overwhelming local support from Glenn, Colusa and Lake Counties.

The 52,000 acre Sheep Mountain area (H.R. 10618) on San Gabriel and San Bernadino National Forests northeast of Los Angeles also has widespread popular support, but could get lost

in Congressional shuffle of wilderness proposals nationwide.

The key to all three bills lies in what happens in the Public Lands Subcommittee. Chairman John Melcher (D.-Mont.) can move these bills, but he must be encouraged to do so by local Congressmen.

Write your Congressman (U.S. House of Representatives, Washington D.C. 20515). Ask him or her to contact Chairman John Melcher and ask him to pass **quickly** the three California areas. If action is not taken by October, it could be too late.



North State Wilderness Comm. co-ordinator, Biff Ingels, checking vehicle damage to meadows at High Lakes.

ORV Controls Needed

HIGH NOON AT HIGH LAKES

Public meetings are expected in September to allow citizen input to the development of an off-road vehicle control plan for the Lassen National Forest. Conservationists believe that strict controls must be placed on the use of vehicles off-the-road in the Lassen National Forest, especially in two key areas: the proposed Ishi and Feather River Wilderness Study Areas.

The West (Chips Creek) unit of the proposed Feather River Wilderness Study Area is located within the Lassen National Forest, along the N. Fork Feather River. Most of the land within the Chips Creek unit is canyon country, too steep and erosive to permit off-road vehicle use. The Forest Service appears ready to close such lands to vehicle use.

However, the southern part of the Chips Creek unit, known as the High Lakes, is an open glaciated plateau which is presently suffering from considerable off-road vehicle use. This use is causing great damage to the physical as well as the wilderness resources of the area. Large wet meadows are being churned into mudbowl by vehicles. Erosion is creating deep ruts and exposing tree roots on

some jeep trails. Numerous trees are scarred by winching.

Primitive recreation values in the High Lakes are also being destroyed by increasing vehicle use. Except for the presence of vehicles, the area appears wild. It is quite scenic, and contains a variety of attractions - lakes, streams, mountain peaks - all within a short distance of each other over

rolling terrain. But its trail network is being taken over by vehicles. Some present jeep trails were only foot trails three years ago.

Because of the damage to physical and wilderness resources which is occurring throughout the High Lakes, conservationists feel that the entire area should be closed to vehicle use. A single jeep road provides

cont. on pg. 4

WE NEED MEMBERS!

Join CWC and help strengthen the organization which is co-ordinating the efforts of people all over the state

on behalf of wilderness! Your membership will bring you the **Wilderness Record** and other information

about wilderness issues.

Please use the application below to **join today!**

CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION P.O. Box 429, Davis CA 95616

I wish to become a member of the California Wilderness Coalition. Enclosed is \$_____ for membership dues and \$_____ special donation.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ ZIP _____

ANNUAL DUES (NOT TAX DEDUCTIBLE)

Individual	\$6	Non-profit Organization	\$25
Low-income Ind.	\$3	Patron	\$500
Sponsor (business) memberships individually negotiated			

Note: One dollar of annual membership dues supports the **Wilderness Record**

108

Wilderness Act Ignored at Rancheria Creek

The Sierra National Forest has submitted a draft environmental impact statement for the Rancheria Management Unit. These lands have been proposed for wilderness study by conservationists, but the Forest Service prefers to intensify harvest timber in the area.

Forest Service officials made their decision to log the Rancheria Creek area years ago, and they refuse to recognize the unit as an inventoried roadless area. Conservationists argue that not only is the area roadless and undeveloped, it is contiguous to the High Sierra Primitive Area and therefore protected by the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Wilderness Act required Primitive Areas and adjacent wild lands to be studied by the Forest Service and preserved until Congress makes a final decision.

The Forest Service Environmental Justification Statement recommends intensive timber harvesting, wildlife habitat "improvement," and dispersed recreation management in the unit. Four other alternatives are considered, including the "wilderness advocate proposal" (Alternative D) that would have the entire area designated a Wilderness Study Area.

While admitting wolf-rine sightings within the

unit and nearby sightings of California condor, pine martin, and fisher, the Forest Service concludes that timber harvesting will "improve habitat" conditions for game and non-game animals by producing more diversified vegetation, while still maintaining more than 50 percent of the area for wildlife requiring climax conditions." The question of whether or not the endangered and sensitive species will tolerate disruption of half of their habitat is answered by "investigations have not shown the Rancheria Creek Management Unit to be a critical habitat area for either rare or endangered wildlife species or wildlife favoring climax forest habitat." The Forest Service goes on to explain why the wilderness study alternative will not provide the benefits to the King River Deer Herd that

cont. on pg. 4

Alpine PU

D-line Extended

The Toiyabe National Forest has extended the deadline for comments on its Alpine Planning Unit until October 9. So, if you have received either the Environmental Impact Statement or the Wilderness Coalition Flyer, you still have time to comment.

Forum Exchange of Letters

USFS

Mr. Jim Eaton, President
California Wilderness Coalition
P.O. Box 981
Davis, CA 95615

Dear Jim:

I was recently given the May-June issue of the **Wilderness Record** to review. The articles concerning California National Forests were of interest, particularly the supplement on Forest Service planning. It is obvious that considerable time and effort has been spent preparing this Communication to your membership.

In April, Bill Graham, Land Use Planning Staff Director, wrote you seeking means to offer his services in the spirit of coordination and cooperation. After reading your latest issue, I wonder why his assistance was not sought. Some of the articles about land use planning are misleading or non-factual and Bill or his staff could certainly have helped you communicate reliable information to your people. If review time was critical to meeting publication dates, I would be hopeful that in the future more time is allotted for composition before printing such complex subject matters.

Allow me to call two articles to your attention to illustrate my point. First, the article titled "Business as Usual, Planners Nix Marbles Addition" (Page 2). No mention was made that the draft environmental statement clearly states that the proposed alternative involves 1,800 acres of existing and proposed Wilderness Study Area. Also, the statement is made "The EIS fails even to list the alternative of a Wilderness Study for the entire roadless area."

Someone certainly did not read Alternative B very closely! This type of reporting does nothing to create a harmonious working relationship between your organization and the Forest Service. I submit that factual reporting builds trust and confidence.

The article on Page 4, "One letter will do it, Nor Cal Planning Guide" is very misleading. The article is premature, as the draft planning area guide has not yet been completed for public review. Considerable time has been spent answering letters to this effect; time that should have been spent readying the document. The article insinuates that an antiwilderness position could be taken (by the Forest Service). This certainly is misleading. Mr. Farrell should know, through his involvement with the planning guide team, that every alternative to come forth gives consideration to the wilderness resource.

My overall assessment of this issue is that both good and ill-advised information are presented. Hopefully, future issues will present more of the constructive endeavors that are taking place, stating factual information and less misconceptions. You are encouraged to build on the positive facets of our working relations. This is not to say that the Forest Service resents constructive criticism when due. Let us have "both barrels" when necessary. Finally, let me encourage you and your staff to take advantage of Bill Graham's offer. He has extended an invitation that I fully subscribe to. Let me also say that I will be looking forward to reading future issues of the **Wilderness Record**.

The interest of your organization in National Forest Administration is appreciated. Let's strive for a stronger relationship that is mutually advantageous.
Sincerely,
DOUGLAS R. LEISZ
Regional Forester

CWC

Dear Doug:

Thank you for your letter of June 18th. We greatly appreciate the efforts you and your staff have made towards opening lines of communication between the California Wilderness Coalition and the Forest Service. We look forward to

working more closely with you in the future.

I am sure you recognize that our two organizations will be representing opposing points of view from time to time. Articles in the **Wilderness Record** have already addressed several of these differences. We will, of course, attempt to be as factual as possible in our reporting.

I would like to respond to several points you raised in your letter. First, in regard to seeking assistance from Bill Graham and his staff, within a week of receiving Bill's April letter I journeyed to San Francisco to meet with his staff. Dick Joy and I spent several hours discussing methods of improving communication between the Coalition and his office. It was agreed that when the Coalition had material regarding the Forest Service that we were not completely sure about, we would check with Dick's office.

Next, I would like respectfully to disagree with your assessment of our **Wilderness Record** article regarding the King Planning Unit. While we must admit that we did not point out that the proposed plan provided for 1,800 acres of Wilderness Study Area, it should be noted that half of this was already scheduled for study and the remaining 900 acres represents a whopping 5 percent of the remaining roadless lands in the unit.

We also feel that we did carefully read Alternative B, and we stand by our statement "the EIS fails even to list the alternative of a Wilderness Study for the entire roadless area." Alternative B would designate 10,500 acres of roadless lands as Wilderness Study Areas, while the total available roadless area is 22,000 acres (Johnson 900 acres, Ten Bear 13,000 acres, and uninventoried roadless 8,100 acres). Even allowing for the portion of the Ten Bear roadless area that was erroneously inventoried, Alternative B calls for only about 50 percent of the roadless lands in the unit to be studied.

Finally, we apologize for the trouble caused by our article on the Northern

California Planning Area Guide. However, we did hold off publishing this article until the very last minute to assure that the planning area guide would be available. Phil Farrell checked with your office and was assured that this document would be released by the middle of May.

As far as this article insinuating that an antiwilderness position could be taken by the Forest Service, this was intentional. It is our understanding that two of the alternatives being proposed would allow consideration for wilderness **only** if wilderness is the most economic use of an area. Considering past economic analyses by the Forest Service, we cannot conceive any instances where wilderness would meet this criterion. Even if recreation were the highest use of an area, we can foresee that some alternative classification - backcountry, perhaps - would be higher rated since the primary purpose of wilderness is not recreation.

I am not trying to say that we never make mistakes. We do, and we also have a ruthless editor who chops away at our verbose articles, occasionally removing some clarifying material. We try our best to assure that our articles are timely and accurate, and in the articles you have cited we believe that our facts are correct although we might have been more explicit if we had the space.

If you feel it might serve a useful purpose, we would consider printing our exchange of correspondence in a future issue of the **Wilderness Record** so our readers can read our points of view and see that we do communicate.

Thank you, Doug, for your criticisms and comments. Although we may disagree with your conclusions, we do appreciate discussing your points of view. We will continue to work with Bill Graham and his staff and do our best to work with the Forest Service towards common goals that we share.

Sincerely,
Jim Eaton
President

National Forest Management Legislation Proposed

Bills are before Congress which would set the management policy of National Forests with regards to harvesting trees.

Unfortunately, the timber interests have had most success influencing the legislation. The Senate (S. 3091) and House (H.R. 13832) bills leave many crucial questions of National Forest Management up to the Forest Service, which has proven to be extremely sensitive to timber industry pressure. Conservationists are pressing for amendments to the bills which would provide reform of timber management practices and provide the Forest Service with legal guidelines. The Senate and House bills are being readied by Agriculture Committees in both houses for action by the full Senate and House in September. Conservationists are supporting strengthening amendments to be introduced in the House by George Brown (D.-Calif.) and in the Senate by Senator

Jennings Randolph (D.-West Va.).

The Brown-Randolph amendments will be offered to accomplish each of the following:

- to encourage the Forest Service to practice uneven aged management of timber stands, especially in the eastern National Forest hardwoods
- to discourage the post harvest transfer of hardwood forests to softwoods.
- to urge improved care and protection for wildlife and fisheries in the National Forests.
- to establish prudent requirements for the marking and designating of those trees to be cut and those trees to be left standing in harvest operations.

Write your congressman and Senators Tunney and Cranston urging them to support and vote for these five amendments. (Congressman, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington D.C. 20515; Hon. Senator, U. S. Senate, Washington D.C. 20510)

Forest Service Rejects Disney Exchange

Regional Forester Douglas Leisz, saying that the Forest Service wishes to stay involved in management of recreation lands, has rejected Walt Disney Productions' proposal for an 8,500 acre land exchange at Independence Lake on Tahoe National Forest.

Disney plans a large scale recreational development at Independence Lake, north of Truckee. The Company had stated that if they were unable to acquire public lands surrounding the proposed development, it would drop its plans. However, after the Forest Service rejection, Disney modified its proposed land exchange. The Company is now asking for 2,800 acres in four sections around the lake.

Regional Forester Doug Leisz is expected to make a decision soon with regard to the new exchange proposal. Any development or land exchange would require an Environmental Impact Statement.

You can get on the list to receive any information of the progress of planning for the project by writing: Robert Lancaster, Supervisor, Tahoe National Forest, Hwy 49 and Coyote St. Nevada City, CA 95959



Calypso orchid

We Change Our Address, Have You?

The mass of daily mail has forced the California Wilderness Coalition into a larger box, P.O. Box 429 in Davis. Box 891 is being retained by Jim Eaton for his and The Wilderness Society's use.

Your changes of address are important, too! If you do not send a change of address it will cost one of us 25 cents when the **Wilderness Record** is mailed.

We have been having incredible hassles with the U.S. Postal Service. Numerous copies of the **Wilderness Record** were held up and later returned to us for various bureaucratic reasons. We have attempted to straighten this matter out and see that all our members are receiving our newsletter. If you are missing an issue, drop us a line and we'll ship another copy.

Staff

Editor - Tomas Jopson

Jim Trumbly

Phil Farrell

Mary Tappel

Maureen Pennisi

Marilyn Lemmon

Photos by:

Richard Murray

Northstate Wilderness

The **Wilderness Record** is the bi-monthly publication of the California Wilderness Coalition. Address all correspondence to P.O. Box 429, Davis, CA. 95616. Telephone is 916-758-0380. Articles may be reprinted. Credit would be appreciated.

Officers of CWC

President - Jim Eaton

Vice-Pres. - Phil Farrell

Treasurer - Bob Schneider

Secretary - Jeff Barnickol

Fifth Director - Don Morrill

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.

MYTH OF THE BI-MONTH

Vanishing Options



Editors note: Those people who oppose wilderness preservation have promoted and gained wide acceptance for certain ill-founded or untrue contentions that disparage wilderness and its uses. In this column, we will attempt to expose and refute these myths about wilderness. We welcome suggestions from our readers for topics to investigate.

"Wilderness classification prevents a land administering agency from acting to manage and protect recreational, range, timber, watershed, wildlife and fish, and other resources within the classified area."

We often hear from Forest Service people that designating an area as Wilderness "ties their hands" in administering the area, and therefore is an undesirable option. We have been told that Wilderness designation prohibits land managers from providing minimum toilet facilities when necessary, clearing streams to protect rare trout habitat, or doing other things to protect valuable and disappearing resources. At such times we often wonder whether the people making the statements have ever sat down and read the Wilderness Act, which governs Wilderness Areas. If they had, they would have seen that the Act takes a practical, flexible and realistic approach to management of Wilderness Areas. The Act says:

"...except as necessary to meet minimum requirements for the purposes of this Act (including measures required in emergencies

involving the health and safety of persons within the area) there shall be no temporary road, no use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment or motorboats, no landing of aircraft, no other form of mechanical transport, and no structure or installation within any such area." Sec. 4(c) (emphasis added)

The Act means just what it says - as long as an action is "necessary" and the "minimum" to protect the wilderness resource or health, and safety of wilderness users, it can occur in a Wilderness.

Many Wildernesses have become crowded to the point where human disturbances and waste could harm the wilderness resource, or even endanger the health of other users. While some restrictions of use are probably necessary in such cases, an agency can also install primitive, but effective toilet facilities. They are fine under law as long as they are the **minimum necessary** to accomplish their purpose. In addition if they can only be serviced by helicopter, then that too, is okay under law.

Land administering agencies, including the Forest Service, can also manage to preserve and protect wildlife and fish and other important resources in Wilderness Areas. The Wilderness Act is defined in law as being consistent with the purposes for which the National Forests were created - that is for outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed and wildlife and fish (Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act Sec. 2). While no one claims that the Wilderness Act allows for any and all management options, it clearly is flexible enough to allow practical solutions for most manage-

ment problems (it even calls for a little creative thought - good for everyone including bureaucrats). The purpose of Wilderness is not to completely restrict management, nor is it to establish 100 percent "pure" wilderness, untouched by man - unfortunately that's an unrealistic goal in today's world. Rather, it is to provide an enduring resource of area kept wild, and to **strengthen** the hand of the federal agency to protect that area.

Protecting fish and wildlife is part of the job of the U.S. Forest Service mandated by law within a Wilderness as well as outside on National Forests. Fish and wildlife management and protection programs can be carried out in National Forest Wilderness as long as the tools used are the minimum necessary. This includes projects such as stream clearance, construction of rough fish dams. It also could include prescribed burning done to recreate natural conditions which could be more advantageous to wildlife as well as wilderness values.

Designating an area as Wilderness means that wilderness values of the area will be paramount, but not the only concerns. Other activities can take place if they conform to the primary purpose of the Wilderness Act.

The Wilderness Act is vitally important because it provides a practical means by which some areas can be set aside to remain essentially wild. It assures that we will have a workable alternative to the sad fate of developing every last acre of our wild heritage.

P.S. For a free copy of The Wilderness Handbook, including text of the Wilderness Act, write the C



Dixon Creek in Mowhawk P.U., article on page 4.

Photo by Richard Murray

USFS Area-Wide Plans Near Completion

Crucial public involvement steps have now been reached by the Forest Service in the development of the Northern California, San Joaquin, and Mission Planning Area Guides.

These Area Guides are general land use plans that will guide the course of future management for almost all of California's national forests (the Inyo and part of the Toiyabe National Forests are to be included in a future Area Guide - Basin and Range).

The Area Guides will provide important overall direction for the future use of roadless and undeveloped areas. Unit Plans will then provide specific management direction for specific roadless areas within the guidelines of the Area Guide.

Here is the status and action needed for each of the Area Guides:

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA AREA

After considerable delay in production, a draft of the "Environmental Analysis and Alternatives" for the Northern California Planning Area Guide (hereafter NCPAG) was finally published on August 6, 1976. The May-June **Wilderness Record** carried an article describing the NCPAG. At that time, we anticipated publication in May.

The NCPAG draft proposes several alternative ways of managing Northern California's national forests (from Eldorado N.F. north). These range from preservation of all remaining roadless areas with restrictions on logging and recreational developments to all-out development of forest resources to enhance the regional economy.

The Forest Service does not endorse any one of the alternatives in this draft. The final management will probably combine features of several alternatives.

Letters are needed in response to the draft NCPAG urging that the roadless areas on northern California's national forests

be preserved in order to have a varied and plentiful wilderness resource in northern California. The timber and developed recreation resources of these roadless lands could be made up elsewhere on the national forests or on private lands, but there is little substitute wilderness outside the national forests in northern California.

Comments on the "Environmental Analysis and Alternatives" for the NCPAG will be accepted until September 30. They should be addressed to William H. Covey Team Leader, Northern California Area Guide, care of Klamath National Forest, 1215 South Main Street, Yreka CA 96097.

If you wish to see the full document, copies can be reviewed at all Forest Service offices in northern California. A few copies may still be available for distribution from national forest offices or from the Forest Service Regional Office at 630 Sansome St., San Francisco, CA 94111.

SAN JOAQUIN AREA

A review draft of the San Joaquin Planning Area Guide (hereafter SJPAG) was published in mid-July. The San Joaquin Planning Area covers the central and southern Sierra Nevada from Alpine County to Kern County.

The SJPAG draft proposes a single preferred Forest Service Management program. Alternative management programs were considered at a previous public involvement step. The Forest Service is now anxious to see if there is general public acceptance of their proposed management.

The draft SJPAG proposes that future management of the national forests in this region be oriented toward producing goods and services at output levels in a narrow range around present levels. It contains no strong direction for wilderness preservation, suggesting only that Wilderness classification be "con-

sidered" for the roadless areas in the preparation of specific Unit Plans.

The Forest Service needs to be informed that the public wants stronger direction in the SJPAG to preserve the wilderness values of the remaining roadless areas in the Sierra Nevada. The draft Guide itself points out that primitive recreation demands alone (not to mention other uses of wilderness) are likely to greatly exceed the capacity of existing Wilderness areas in the Planning Area in the years to come, and that other resource output goals can be met even if all the roadless areas are classified as Wilderness.

The original comment deadline for the SJPAG was September 1. It has now been extended until September 27, which is the final deadline. Comments should be addressed to San Joaquin Area Guide, Land Use Planning Group, U.S. Forest Service, 630 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA 94111.

Copies of the draft SJPAG can be reviewed at local Forest Service offices. Unfortunately, copies are no longer available for public distribution.

MISSION AREA

Work is progressing on the Mission Planning Area Guide (hereafter MPAG). The MPAG is expected in September or October.

Citizens will have a chance to express their concern that these steep rugged watershed lands of southern California be preserved in their wild state as a response to the management alternatives document.

To find out more about the MPAG, or to get on the mailing list for the soon-to-be-released management alternatives document, contact Warren Walters, Land Use Planning Group, U.S. Forest Service, 630 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA 94111.

CALIFORNIA CONDOR WINS ONE

The California Condor won the first round of a battle over proposed phosphate mining within condor habitat. At a July hearing, public comment was overwhelmingly in favor of protecting the endangered bird.

Interior Secretary Thomas Kleppe will make a final decision on the mining proposal this fall.

Since 1969 U.S. Gypsum has had an application to lease 2,434 acres of land in the Pine Mountain area of Los Padres National Forest. The area, northeast of Santa Barbara, lies between two condor sanctuaries.

In June of this year, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) filed a Final Environmental Impact Statement for the mining

project. Although admitting that the future of the condor might be adversely affected by the mining, the BLM recommended approval of the project. A public meeting was held in Ojai on July 23rd.

Many people turned out to protect the condor.

Senator John Tunney, Congressman Robert Lagomarsino, Sen. Omer Rains, Assembly Ken MacDonald, Ojai Mayor John Fay, and Ventura County Supervisor John Flynn all testified against the U.S. Gypsum proposal. Numerous citizens and environmental organizations also spoke in favor of the California condor. Only a spokesperson from U.S. Gypsum and a few miners



testified in favor of mining the phosphates.

Several elected representatives took immediate steps to assure the preservation of the endangered condor. Cong. Robt. Lagomarsino introduced H.R. 10867 to prohibit the issuance of the lease. Senators Cranston and Tunney introduced S.J. Res. 297 to withdraw all mineral leasing in the area. Thank you letters to these legislators will no doubt be appreciated.

Interior Secretary Thomas Kleppe can be reached at the Interior Building, between 18th and 19th Streets, N.W. Washington, D.C.

off-road vehicle plan round up

The use of off-road vehicles is causing considerable destruction of wilderness values in California. Proposed plans for control of off-road vehicles are thus of much interest to wilderness conservationists.

All National Forests in California will make final plans for regulation of Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs) by December 31 of this year. In 1973, President Nixon signed an executive order requiring that such plans be completed by the end of this year.

Tentative plans are being formulated and made public now, and will be finalized with public comments during the next several months.

The plans which have been proposed so far have been very weak. The tendency on the part of the National Forests has been to allow ORVs wherever use in already established, even if damage is being done. The Forest Service is taking the attitude that if a closure to ORVs cannot be adequately enforced, it will not be proposed. Needless to say, such a policy precludes strong regulations even where they are clearly necessary to protect public land.

Without strong public response, the plans will be simply administrative ratification of the status quo. We need a massive response from conservationists on National Forests with which they are familiar.

Conservationists have called for ORV closures in all inventoried and uninventoried roadless areas (wilderness resource lands), as well as closures in areas being damaged. In the rest of the National Forests, vehicles should be restricted to currently designated trails.

Each Forest will be making its own ORV plan so write today to the National

Forest(s) that interests you. Time is growing short.

Mendocino ORV Plan

The Mendocino National Forest has issued a master-piece of bureaucratic obfuscation; their off road vehicle "alternatives" booklet. The proposed alternatives are (1) ORV's will be operated only on designated routes, (2) ORV's will be operated only within designated areas, (3) Administer ORV's by developing a set of administrative controls as judged necessary by each District, and (4) Administer ORV's with a plan that is a combination of Alternatives 1, 2, and 3.

The big question is where are the specifics? What does the Mendocino National Forest propose for ORV controls? The only clue to the Forest Service position is "regardless of which alternative is chosen, existing

regulations and local rules will continue to be enforced."

"Existing regulations" would indicate that portions of the proposed Snow Mountain Wilderness will continue to be open to ORV's and that the only closed areas will be the Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness, Frenzel Creek Botanical Area, and Castle Peak-vehicle control area. The rest of the Forest would be open to ORV's in one form or another.

Comments will be accepted until September 17th.

Modoc ORV Plan

The Modoc National Forest has issued alternative No. 5 for managing off road vehicle use. This new plan is apparently a result of the "voting" contest held on the first four alternatives.

Alternative 5 closes very little of the Forest to off road

vehicles. The goal of the Modoc's Supervisor is to "leave the Forest as open as possible." In accordance with this philosophy, vehicles are assumed to be innocent until proven guilty. This is a potentially disastrous (and illegal) policy with respect to known endangered and threatened species of wildlife in the area. Vehicle restrictions will be considered only after it is shown that such use will destroy habitat or seriously disturb these species during critical periods.

Comments on the proposed plan are requested by September 8th.

Tahoe ORV Plan

The Tahoe National Forest's proposed off road vehicle plan protects a few key locations from vehicles, although the plan falls far short of perfection. Areas closed to ORV's will be the Pacific Crest Trail, part of the proposed Granite Chief Wilderness, portions of the Castle Peak and Grouse Lakes roadless area, the Onion Creek Experimental Forest, Placer County Big Trees Grove, and the Foresthill seed production area.

Many other areas are left open to use by ORV's. These areas include the North Fork American River Wilderness Study Area, the southern portion of Granite Chief, and the Middle Yuba roadless area. The vast majority of the Tahoe National Forest will be available to ORV recreationists under the plan.

Written comments will be considered until September 30th.

Plumas ORV Plan

The Plumas National Forest ORV plan is scheduled to be released to the public sometime during September.

Addresses

Tahoe N.F.
Highway 49 & Coyote St.
Nevada City, CA 95959

Plumas N.F.
159 Lawrence St.
Quincy, CA 95971

Mendocino N.F.
420 East Laurel St.
Willows, CA 95988

Modoc N.F.
441 North Main St.
Alturas, CA 96101

Sequoia N.F.
900 West Grand Ave.
Porterville, CA 93257

Sequoia ORV Plan

A proposed off-road vehicle control plan for the Sequoia National Forest was released in July. The proposal is to adopt existing regulations until more specific direction is prepared in Unit Plans.

Under existing ORV regulations on the Sequoia N.F., only the Domelands Wilderness and High Sierra Primitive Area are completely closed to vehicles use. Some of the roadless areas on the Forest are completely open to vehicle use. In others, including the proposed 250,000 acre Golden Trout Wilderness, trailbike use is allowed on designated trails. A large number of trails are open to trailbikes.

Conservationists are urging elimination of vehicles from the roadless areas. Comments on the proposed plan may be sent to the Sequoia National Forest Supervisor. No specific deadline for comments is given, but the final plan will be adopted before December 31, 1976.

High Lakes

cont. from pg. 1

access to the whole area. It could easily be blocked to effectively close the entire area. Attempting to just limit vehicle use in the most damaged portions of the area would be difficult to enforce, because of the open nature of the terrain, and would allow presently pristine areas to be damaged in the future.

Open country in the Ishi area is also allowing vehicle use to spread there and again argues for a complete closure of the area. The Ishi area is in the Sierra foothills, east of Red Bluff. It has high wilderness and primitive recreation values which are being lost from spreading vehicle use. Conservationists believe that the Ishi area should be studied for possible Wilderness classification along with the Chips Creek area. At the very least, vehicles should be limited in the Ishi area to specific designated trails. Once again, enforcement would be facilitated and wilderness values better protected if the entire area were closed to vehicle use.

Your support of conservationists' proposals for the Ishi and Feather River areas at the public meetings - or in a letter to the Forest Service - is needed to convince the Forest Service to close these areas to ORV use. Stiff opposition to any controls on vehicle use is expected from local ORV enthusiasts.

To find out the date and place of the public meetings and to get on the mailing list for future information about the Lassen National Forest Off-road vehicle plan, write to Forest Supervisor James Berlin, Lassen National Forest, 707 Nevada Street, Susanville, CA 96130

Rancheria Cr.

cont. from pg. 1

will occur under their intensive logging plan.

Regardless of the debate over the management of the unit, conservationists argue that the Wilderness Act requires the Forest Service to study the Rancheria Creek area for wilderness potential as part of the High Sierra Primitive Area reclassification. Any Forest Service proposal that would change the wild nature of the area is illegal until Congress has determined the fate of the unit.

October 18th is the deadline for comment on the Draft EIS. Requests for copies of the document and comments can be sent to Supervisor Sotero Muniz, Sierra National Forest, 1130 O Street, Room 3017, Fresno, CA 93721.

NEW ADDRESS

for Cleveland N.F.

Cleveland National Forest
880 Front Street
San Diego, CA 92188

MOHAWK DRAFT EIS RELEASED

The Plumas National Forest has released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Mohawk Planning Unit.

The Mohawk Planning Unit is located in the southeast corner of the Plumas National Forest, in Plumas and Sierra Counties. It is approximately 20 miles southeast of Quincy and 50 miles northwest of Lake Tahoe and is situated in the headwaters of the Middle Fork of the Feather River.

Within the Planning Unit are a number of wilderness resource lands. The Lakes roadless area of 9,900 acres is a very popular recreation area with numerous lakes. The 11,100 acre Beartrap and 5,000 acre Dixon Creek roadless areas have few

lakes, but both areas have steep mountain uplands and deeply incised canyonlands.

The Forest Service also inventoried three smaller areas, the 4,050 acre Bluenose, 2,000 acre Chris Creek and 1,800 Penman Peak roadless areas.

The Forest Service's Preferred Plan provides for no wilderness studies of any roadless areas. Limited protection is given to the Lakes roadless area, although snowmobiles will be permitted and timber harvesting may be allowed. Most of the Beartrap roadless areas will not be developed pending a re-analysis when the Lavezzola Creek roadless area is studied by the Tahoe National Forest.

Five other alternative plans were offered by the Forest Service. Alternative 1 would protect all 33,850 acres of roadless lands pending an intensive wilderness study. 80 percent of the timber in the Preferred Plan will still be available for cutting under Alternative 1. Alternatives 2 through 6 provide for different mixes of preservation and use with Alternative 6 producing the greatest economic return (i.e., most timber harvesting). The Forest Service Preferred Plan is Alternative 5.

Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be accepted until October 3, 1976 by Supervisor Lloyd R. Britton, Plumas National Forest, P.O. Box 1500, Quincy, California 95971.

California Legislators Sponsor Wilderness Bill

As reported in the July-August **Wilderness Record**, Senator Frank Church and Congressman Morris Udall have introduced bills in the senate (S. 3630) and House (H.R. 14524) which would protect hundreds of thousands of endangered de facto wilderness throughout the country.

Several California Congressmen have co-sponsored Udall's bill. They are: George Brown, Philip Burton, Don Edwards, John Krebs, Robert Leggett, Fortney Stark, Carlos Moorhead, Henry Waxman, and Charles Wilson. If any of these people are your Congressmen, write them a note of thanks. If yours is not on the list, write him and ask

him to co-sponsor this important piece of legislation. Also write Senators John Tunney and Alan Cranston with the same message. (See above for bill numbers.)

Included among the areas in the bills are: Golden Trout, Sequoia/Inyo National Forests, 240,000 acres; Santa Lucia-Lopez Canyon, Los Padres National Forest, 21,250 acres; Ventana Additions, Los Padres National Forest, 60,080 acres; Snow Mountain, Mendocino National Forest, 37,000 acres; Sheep Mountain, San Gabriel and San Bernardino National Forests; Kaiser, Sierra National Forest, 28,000 acres.

THE SISKIYOU

Logger's Boots in Bigfoot Country

A supplement to the Wilderness Record September-October, 1976

ASSAULT ON THE SISKIYOU

by John Hart

Almost any Californian is aware, if only dimly, of state and local efforts to plan the use of land. Less publicized, but of no less importance, is the work of the federal government - owner of nearly half the 100 million acres of land within our borders. Federal agencies, with their direct control of so much public domain, eventually can almost always do what they set out to do. Not necessarily for the better.

Then there are the federally owned timberlands, 20 million acres of them, where the United States Forest Service is planning on a momentous scale. This undertaking is worth a closer look.

The national forests, one-fifth of California, are watersheds and recreation lands for millions of people. They contain more wilderness than California's national parks; more endangered wildlife than our national wildlife refuges, more campsites than the state park system, more timber than all private ownerships combined. From these forested mountains flows most of the water that fills the state's aqueducts and irrigation canals. And enough wood was removed from these forests last year to build some 360,000 apartment units or some 125,000 free-standing houses. Within the next several years, the Forest Service intends to define the future use of every corner of its vast estates. It has divided the 17 national forests of California

into about 130 smaller "land-use planning units." Plans for these "units" - with massive environmental impact statements attached - are appearing at the rate of about three a month.

The national forests, of course, have been subject to land planning of sorts since their creation in the early 1900s. But this project, with public hearings and detailed documentation, is of another, more sophisticated order. Although plans adopted now may be modified later, the basic management of millions of acres will be determined by decisions made in the next few years.

This is true above all for some two million acres of especially controversial land in 110 "inventoried roadless areas." These are wild, undeveloped sections which have so far been in a sort of limbo. Not yet invaded by roads and logging, they are nonetheless without formal protection as "wilderness" under law. Conservationists value these lands for their wilderness, loggers for their timber, others for different resources. The Forest Service, weary of controversy, regards them as a nuisance and wants to decide their final use as quickly as it can.

Conservationists and state officials are following this planning project, at times with some distress. As it becomes clear that the new planning will not alter but instead further affirm some Forest Service policies which have been under

bitter attack for years, a new debate is growing.

This debate has many rallying points. One of the most important is the remote and lovely mountain range called the Siskiyou. Here - not for the first time - the Forest Service and the Sierra Club are facing each other in a dispute which seems certain to finish in court. Indian groups, calling the mountains sacred to their tribes, have joined their own arguments to those of the club. It is this circumstance more than any other that has brought the case into the headlines.

The setting

The Siskiyou Mountains rise from the north bank of the Klamath River and generally occupy the irregular strip of land between the river and the Oregon state line. Except for motorists crossing the eastern end of the range on Interstate 5, few people from the metropolitan areas have even seen the Siskiyou. Fewer still have walked among these mile-high, gaunt or green summits. Most of the curving length of the range is threaded with Forest Service logging roads and spotted with clearcut areas from which public timber has been sold to the private logging companies that actually cut and remove it. But in the most spectacular part of the Siskiyou Range, a lush and lofty section just east of Crescent City, there are still some 300 square miles of land that have changed little since early French trappers



Preston Peak

gave this region its modern name.

No doubt about it: This remnant of the primitive Siskiyou is an austere and beautiful area. Within it, stark granite cliffs and summits contrast with wide stretches of forest. There are streams and waterfalls, a scatter of lakes in glacier-cut basins, a fascinating freight of rare plants and endangered animals, a rich Indian history.

Nobody seems to question the value of this country, but observers differ widely as to where the value chiefly lies.

To tradition-minded members of the Yurok, Karok, and Tolowa Indian tribes, still living in the region, many sections of the range are historic and sacred. Indians still seek out the ancient wilderness sites for the spiritual exercises which, they maintain, give them good fortune, identity, or shamanistic power.

To scientists, and especially to botanists, the Siskiyou are an exciting field for research, nearly untouched, with many unusual plants - some species perhaps yet undiscovered - and extraor-

inary plant communities. The Siskiyou and adjacent ranges, the specialists say, make up one of the earth's most interesting botanical regions.

Wildlife experts know the Siskiyou as habitat for many endangered or restricted animal species, including the spotted owl, the pileated woodpecker, the tree-living pine marten and fisher, and -astonishingly- the fierce wolverine, which has almost vanished outside the Sierra Nevada.

To those who fish for

pleasure or for profit in the streams and rivers in and around the range, these mountains mean the most as productive, undamaged watersheds. The salmon and steelhead fishery has an estimated annual value in millions of dollars, which may equal or exceed the value of the timber in the range.

To conservationists nationwide, who add to all these concerns the worth of wilderness for its own sake,

cont. on pg. 5-3



Preston Peak



Bear Lake

Questionable Forest Service Tactics on Go Road

by Bill Devall

Should a Forest Service employee who makes information on the forests available to the Sierra Club be tried for treason against the United States? A top Forest Service administrator in San Francisco thinks so.

Phillip Shultz, assistant regional engineer for Region V made the above statement in a deposition to Sierra Club Legal Defense in reference to a report on the Dillon-Flint section of the G-O Road in Six Rivers and Klamath National Forests. The facts of the case are intriguing and raise important questions about the credibility of the regional office and the fairness of the administrative review process in the Forest Service. Indeed, Jim Moorman, of Sierra Club Legal Defense, in a letter to John McGuire, chief forester, stated that the facts "that emerged during those depositions (with Shultz) gave us grave cause for concern about the integrity of the Forest Service and the administrative review process."

The Geotechnical Materials Engineering branch of Region V had written a report on the Dillon-Flint section which strongly supported the Sierra Club position that environmental damage would occur from this road. Shultz, when he received the draft report, ordered all copies retrieved and destroyed on the ground the authors made statements "beyond their expertise" and because their statements were "against management philosophy." Shultz states, "My practice is to destroy a report which I have administrative responsibility to review as to their adequacy and compliance with management philosophy and

other reports that are unacceptable and I have authority to destroy them." Moorman asked Shultz why he ordered immediate destruction of these documents and Shultz replied "because I was embarrassed with it. I was embarrassed that they had taken the liberties to go beyond their field of endeavor and make some statements that were contrary to management philosophy."

What are interested citizens to make of these statements? Since 1970 the Forest Service policy has been to "involve the public in all phases of the decision-making process concerning public lands." Yet if relevant data and documents are not made available to the Sierra Club, which is certainly part of the interested public and indeed if documents are destroyed because they are "against management philosophy" how can the public, you and I, make informed opinions?

The sorry history of the G O Road shows bungle, secrecy and suppression of documents for years.

The Dillon-Flint contract for construction was given and construction began without any public notification and indeed this multi-million dollar contract was let without any environmental impact statement on the whole road. Only when the Sierra Club went to court was relevant information made available. But then the court ruled it was too late. Construction had begun, and the Sierra Club should have made a presentation before the fact. But Sierra Club couldn't, because they didn't know about the road-building.

Even when interested citizens request informa-

tion, there may be roadblocks. The Northcoast Environmental Center has requested several documents on timber sales on wilderness land and other information used to write EIRs. The Forest Service, however, wants to charge for copies of these documents although federal regulations clearly state that charges may be waived for educational and public service organizations. Since the Environmental Center is a depository of information where many groups and individuals do research, the Center argued it could be exempted from charges. Klamath and Six Rivers National Forest disagreed. This is under appeal at the present time.

Not only is it difficult to get relevant information but sometimes no information is collected at all. When asked if the Klamath National Forest was going to do recreation surveys or even put trail registers in Clear Creek and other places before they wrote an EIS on the High Siskiyou Planning Unit, the forest supervisor explicitly and emphatically said "No."

Interested citizens are finding it increasingly difficult to get behind the rhetoric of "multiple use" and "people involvement in decision-making" to understand how decisions are made and data is used by the Forest Service. The Shultz case provides a behind the scenes glimpse of the Forest Service at work. Interested defenders of wilderness may indeed be apprehensive about how data is used on de facto wilderness areas of California and our vigilance is needed to protect these lands from decisions by the US Forest Service.



Chimney Rock

The Final Link

G O ROAD

The Dillon-Flint section of the G. O. Road is being completed, after some two years of delay and review. Without waiting for the dust to settle from the judge's decision, the contractors began and have completed a substantial part of the work. The lower court ruling was appealed to the ninth U.S. Court of Appeals. That court denied our request for a preliminary injunction because the contractors argued that the road work was substantially completed.

Though this battle has been lost, several good things were gained. Over one mile of the Dillon-Flint section has been relocated to avoid an area of critically unstable soil. During the trail it was revealed that a major geological report, critical of the road project and the Eight Mile-Blue Creek Environmental Impact Statement, had been destroyed by the Assistant Regional Forest Engineer, Phillip Shultz. As a result investigations of Forest Service management practices

at the regional and local level have been started. Third, the many pages of reports, sworn testimony and affidavits have documented the multitude of physical and social environmental problems involved in the exploitation of the Siskiyou Mountains. Lastly, never again will the Forest Service be able to claim that "nobody was opposed to the G. O. Road."

The Dillon-Flint section is almost complete but the G. O. Road is not. The Chimney Rock Section, almost seven miles long and named for a Native American religious site (adjacent to the road), has yet to be funded. Though there have been no contracts let, the engineering work is almost complete. So now is the time to start working to stop the Chimney Rock section of the G. O. Road. Just as the Dillon-Flint Section had so much momentum that it rolled on in spite of its tremendous flaws and problems, we can develop the momentum to prevent construction of this final destructive section of the G. O. Road. You can write to Richard Burke, Forest Supervisor, Six Rivers National Forest and tell him what you think of the Chimney Rock Section of the G. O. road and that you want to be kept informed as to the status of that proposed project. You can also tell Mr. Burke about the high hazards to be encountered in the exploitation of the Siskiyou Mountains and of the special religious and wildlife values that make the area unique and command protection.



SISKIYOU MOUNTAINS RESOURCES COUNCIL

P.O. BOX 4376, Arcata, Ca. 95521

The Siskiyou Mountains Resources Council (formerly S.O.S.) is a grass roots movement dedicated to the wise and prudent management of the southern Siskiyou mountains.

We seek to maintain the natural integrity and spirit of the Siskiyou, especially those lands described by the Forest Service as the Fox, Siskiyou, Dillon-Clear Creek, Five Mile, Slide, Eight Mile, and Blue Creek

planning units and other such lands as may be essential to unaltered, unsimplified ecosystems.

The southern Siskiyou mountains is an almost untouched area of nearly 200,000 acres comprised of portions of Six Rivers, Siskiyou and Klamath National Forests, containing 15 major peaks, 9 rivers, creeks and their tributaries, 12 lakes, 30 smaller ponds, and a unique association of trees and

plants, including several species found only in the Siskiyou area. In the words of the Forest Service itself, "The Siskiyou Study Area provides a variety of opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation including backpacking, camping, fishing, hunting and nature study. The solitude afforded by remote portions of the area is an important characteristic."

G-O Road



ASSAULT

cont. from pg. S-1

the Siskiyous are a cause.

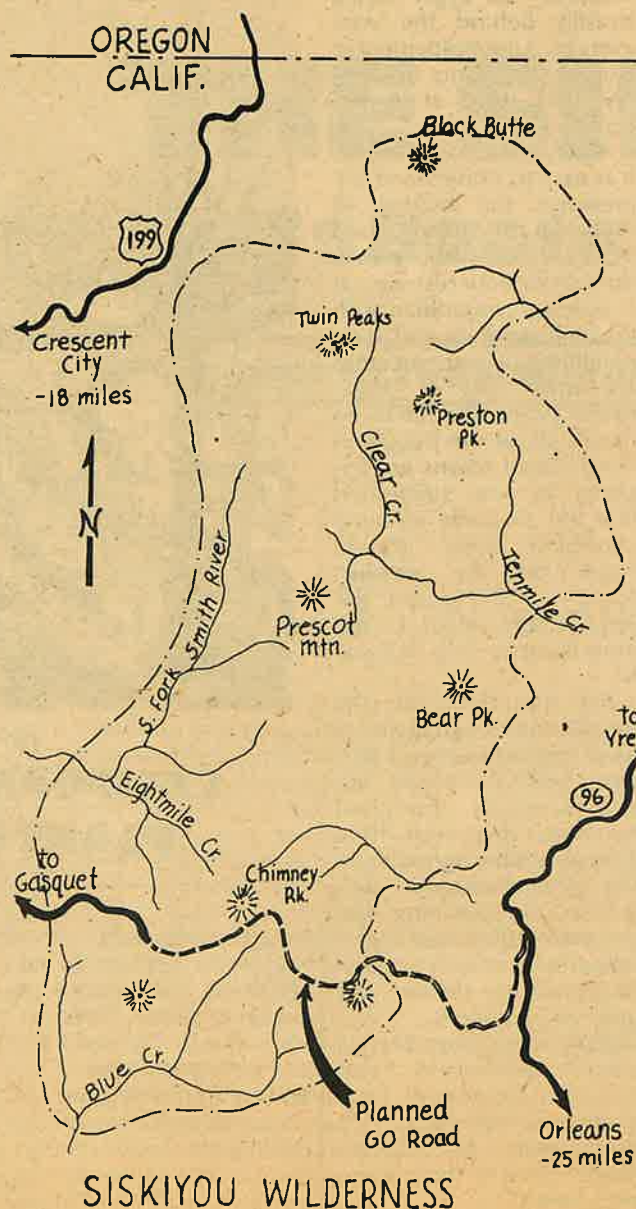
But to California's North Coast timber industry, the largest private employer in Del Norte, Humboldt and Siskiyou counties, the Siskiyous count mainly as a valuable stock of fir, pine, and cedar sawlogs for the mills in Eureka and Crescent City and Arcata, at Smith River and Brookings, at Willow Creek, Happy Camp, and Orleans. In fact, local industry may see in the Siskiyous one of its final hopes for survival as the end of the private old-growth forests, especially the phenomenal Coast Redwoods, comes closer each year.

The role of the Forest Service

The forest Service likes to think of itself as the balancer, the calm, analyzing mind-in-the-middle, taking immoderate pressures from every side and finding the workable center ground. This is a commendable position and even partly genuine. But in the case of the Siskiyous, at least, the difference between what the industry wants and what the Forest Service plans has thus far proved to be slight. Under the new planning program, it continues, so far, to be small.

In May of 1975, the service presented its latest plans for the two wild drainages, which form the southern tip of the Siskiyou Wilderness proposal: Blue Creek, a major tributary of the lower Klamath River, and Eightmile Creek, a branch of the South Fork of the Smith. With a few significant exceptions, the plans call for logging timber wherever there is timber to log. Eventually, 52 percent of the study area is to be cut over, mostly by clear-cutting. Two hundred sixty-five miles of logging roads will be built, largely in the next 20 years. A paved highway, long under construction, will be completed clear across the range. This controversial logging expressway, named for the two towns it is to link, is known as the "Gasquest-Orleans Road" or simply the "GO Road."

Conservationists, of course, dislike these proposals for the destruction of a wilderness they prize highly. The Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund (the legal arm of the club) has asked that the GO Road be halted and the logging plans reconsidered. The Club will take these appeals as far as it can in the federal bureaucracy. If all administrative decisions go against the club, the Legal Defense Fund will take its objections to court.



The objections

The legal grounds are various. But the basic argument is this: the terrain in this part of the Siskiyous is **simply not suited to logging**. On the one hand, it has values more significant than the wood of its trees; on the other, it is entirely too fragile. To log this country, the Sierra Club and its allies maintain, will be to ruin it to a great extent, even for the sustained yield of future times. If this is true, it follows that the plan is bad and the accompanying environmental impact statement a distortion.

If the timber is cut, there will be considerable damage to fishing, wildlife, water quality, and the quieter kinds of recreation. The wilderness landscape, itself a resource, will simply be cancelled out. On this much everyone agrees. The question is: Will the damage inflicted be within acceptable or, indeed, legal limits? The Forest Service insists it will. The critics doubt it; one of their main reasons is the instability of the landscape: the danger of erosion, landslide, stream destruction, and - most important - soil loss.

That is difficult country to work in no one disputes. The Siskiyous-like other ranges in northwestern California are young mountains still rising. As they rise, swift streams cut down into their soft stone, wearing precipitous v-shaped canyons. The average slope in

the Blue Creek and Eightmile Creek areas is 60 to 70 percent-about as steep as the steepest staircase. Such slopes are often literally too steep to hold together. They are, as geologists put it, "oversteepened." The result is landsliding, massive, widespread and continual, quite normal in this region. Even under the green of heavy timber, old landslides often remain, temporarily quiet or still slowly creeping.

Landslide

In stripping timber from this kind of land, even more in building roads across it, there is risk of speeding up enormously both landsliding and other, less drastic types of erosion. (A Forest Service study on another part of the Siskiyous found fresh clearcuts losing as much as 22 tons of soil per acre per year.) Most of the displaced earth eventually reaches the streams. Here it causes new problems. Sediments clog the gravel bars where salmon spawn (valued at \$25,000 per acre per year) and fill the deep pools on which such species as summer steelhead depend. The streams, broadened and slowed by such deposits, may begin to meander, undercutting their banks and bringing down still more landslides, still more deposits of sediment.

Geologist Robert Curry, formerly of the University of

California, is an acknowledged authority on erosion problems in the northern Coast Ranges and elsewhere. Sometimes even a seemingly minor disturbance, says Curry, can set off a series of changes damaging to entire watersheds. "The simplest analogy," he wrote in an affidavit prepared for the Sierra Club, "would be to imagine a row of dominos of progressively larger sizes, starting with those of conventional size and progressing to those the size of the monuments at Stonehenge. A stream drainage is a delicately balanced, progressively graded landscape unit than can be disequibrated, just as the dominos...by beginning with the smallest headward unit, the largest unit lower in the watershed can be toppled."

The chain of disturbances - erosion, sedimentation, bank undercutting, new erosion - eventually comes to an end. But there is a permanent cost. Each cycle of "disequilibration," Curry says, strips away untold thousands of tons of rich forest soil. And soil - unlike the timber which grows on it - is for all practical purposes a nonrenewable resource. "Rates of soil formation in the northern Coast Ranges are very slow...many thousands of years are required to regain productivity following loss or degradation of forest soils...this creates both an economic loss and a loss of habitat, as well as a direct loss of soil and water quality for millennia."

Curry and others believe this problem is so extreme in Blue Creek and Eightmile Creek that timber should not be harvested there at all, that drastic soil loss will prevent the complete restoration of the logged-off forests. (By law, the Forest Service must manage its land for **perpetual**, nondeclining yield. The forests must recover, not just once but repeatedly, harvest after harvest.)

The Forest Service questions the urgency, and at times the credentials, of critics such as Robert Curry. But the agency does not deny the problem. Its own figures show that 83 percent of the land in the two drainages is "moderately unstable" or worse. But the service insists it can log most of the land in these valleys without doing more than tolerable damage to the streams, to the wildlife habitat, and to the Indian values.

The defense

John McArthur of Six Rivers National Forests, head of the "Blue-Eight" planning team, strongly defends the land-use plan. He says it was developed with extreme care from detailed data. Maps in his Eureka office show the resources in this landscape - and the various hazards, problems, and constraints.

Adding overlay to overlay, the planners - timber experts, hydrologists, geologists, wildlifers, recreation managers and other specialists - worked out a composite map of "resource capability in zones." On these zones, says McArthur, the final plan is based. While logging is plainly the dominant use under that plan, there are zones in which logging - or at least clearcut logging - will not take place. Narrow buffers protect major and minor streams, and undeveloped pockets are left around the main Indian sites. These and other special zones mean that about 17 percent of the promising timber volume will not be harvested. Finally, McArthur points out, particular localized problems will be studied and solved when the crews actually go in to lay out roads and clearcuts.

He insists the results will be good. Some sedimentation will take place; some of

Conservation Council, contends the development plan puts roads and clearcuts on the least suitable areas just as often as on the most suitable. Farrell writes, tongue half in cheek: "Two conclusions are possible; either the various resource parameter constraints were largely ignored...or areas of high hazard ratings were consciously allocated...in order to achieve a high degree of degradation of the basic land resources."

Thinking that Farrell's seemingly rigorous approach might somehow be in error, I tried to find out how the planners proceeded in drawing up their "resource capability zones" and their final plan. But these steps in the planning process seem never to have been described in writing. Planner McArthur, to my surprise, does not contradict the logic Farrell used in reaching his harsh conclusions. Rather, McArthur's response is to point out the



Marble Mountain

the fishery will be lost; much of the habitat for such endangered species as the wolverine will be destroyed; but McArthur holds that the balance is reasonable and within the (unfortunately nebulous) limits set by federal law.

The Critics continue to doubt it.

They question the accuracy of the basic data. Curry thinks Forest Service researchers failed to map "at least a third" of the actually unstable ground. Dr. Rudolf Becking, a forest research consultant in Arcata, suggests that the timber-growth rates projected by the service "are based more on faith than on knowledge."

Critics also charge that the service, in its desire to harvest valuable trees, has come to conclusions that contradict the data it **does** have. Several researchers have gone to the original maps and made their own analyses, with this conclusion: nearly all the land in the two wild valleys is unsuitable as timberland. Some is too unstable. On some, the timber is marginal. Some has good timber, but poor soils or other deficiencies that make the reestablishment of forests difficult. Combine these and other constraints (the reasoning goes) and almost nothing loggable is left.

One investigator, Phillip Farrell of the American Land

greater training, skill, and experience of Forest Service workers. "Trust us," is the message. The Forest Service has laid out thousands of miles of road and thousands of clearcuts in northwestern California, sometimes on land as steep and unstable as Blue and Eightmile Creeks. Thus, the planning chief argues, it knows what can be done.

The record

It may be a little daring, however, to suggest that the validity of future plans can be judged by the past record of Forest Service logging. To say the least, that record is mixed. On occasion, harvest and road construction in risky areas have done little obvious damage to the land, but there are also ugly, disconcerting failures. Though these are dismissed by the service as one-time errors never to be repeated, they do not seem to happen less frequently.

More disturbing is the lack of basic information by which to assess the record. The figures used to estimate soil erosion from clearcuts, for instance, are still little more than guesswork. Competent professionals disagree about fundamental facts. On the major question of reforestation - just how well are the logged-off forests restoring them-

cont. on pg. S-4

ASSAULT

cont. from pg. S-3

selves? - there is an equally troubling lack of data. And how much effect has past logging had on fisheries, water quality, and soil in the North Coast counties? Dr. Eugene Kojan, head of the Forest Service office called the Geotechnical Services Division, has called for comparative studies of logged and virgin drainages: "Not only are such data exceeding scarce in the literature, they are **completely** lacking in the Northern Coast Ranges and the Klamath Mountains."

So both the Forest Service and its critics seem to be on quite uncertain ground as they argue the pros and cons of logging Siskiyou. The critics, however, have one great advantage in the argument: They are asking for inaction, deferral, delay. Land which is preserved now can always be developed later; land developed now cannot very well be restored if the costs turn out to be unreasonably high.

The state's interest

Not all criticism of the Blue Creek-Eightmile Creek logging plan has come from outside government. Several state agencies are also concerned, and their concern raises some interesting questions.

The most outspoken is the Department of Fish and Game. Researchers from the department's North Coast district worked with the Forest Service to define the fish and wildlife resource of the study area. The state workers were impressed with what they

any stream...in quantities deleterious to beneficial uses." Since "beneficial uses" include "fish spawning area" and "migration route for anadromous fish," this might seem so broad as to rule out logging in the vicinity of Blue and Eightmile Creeks, or anywhere else for that matter. However, the standard is unenforced and unenforceable. More to the point is the quantitative rule: any action that produces a 20-percent increase in turbidity is a violation of board standards. The Forest Service argues that its stream buffers will prevent violation of this rule in the Siskiyou, though the margin for error will be small. But even if the critics are right and violations do occur, the Regional Water Quality Control Board seems unlikely to do much about it. The board is far more concerned with the vast areas of private forest under its jurisdiction - lands where pollution and erosion are so drastic and obvious that the condition of the federal forests, bad though some think it is, must seem good by comparison.

Both Fish and Game and the Water Quality Board are subdivisions of the state's Resources Agency. Agency director Claire Dedrick has asked for a delay in the completion of the GO Road, complaining on inadequacies in the environmental statement. The agency also plans to designate an official to represent the state's interest in roadless areas in the national forests.

and economic distress invariably given as reasons for more and faster logging in the public forests.

In the case of Blue and Eightmile creeks, the Forest Service maintains its plans must go forward in order to protect the timber industry in Del Norte and Humboldt counties.

Preserving that industry could be a large order.

Most North Coast lumber companies are still working chiefly on private land. Ninety percent of the timber cut each year in Del Norte and Humboldt counties is still private, and largely redwood. The great privately owned Coast redwood forests - old-growth forests of almost unparalleled value, whether for parks or for sawlogs - are richer by far than anything in the national forests.

But the end of that private wealth is no longer distant. In 1946, Del Norte County had about 6.5 billion board-feet of privately owned softwood timber in trees over 40 years in age; the figure is now about 2.4 billion board-feet. Humboldt County, which had 37 billion board-feet in 1946, is now down to less than 6.0 billion - and that stock is disappearing, assessor's records show, at the rate of almost one billion board-feet each year.

Industry points out that second-growth forests are coming on, however spottily; that new technology can allow use of much younger trees than were ever considered commercial before; that hardwood timber - not counted in tax inventories - may become more valuable.

counties has been falling steadily behind the state average. Unemployment in Humboldt County in January, 1974, stood at 18 percent.

Against this background, it is easy to understand the pressures for logging all timber in the Siskiyou and in the rest of the public domain without restraint. It is easy to sympathize with the mill workers and their neighbors whose incomes are either lost or threatened. Many, though by no means all, of the people in North Coast towns are angered by any suggestion that less than the absolute maximum yield should come off the national forests. "Stamp out the Sierra Club," reads a common bumper strip in Eureka.

Yet this claim on the forests comes up against a hard fact: the Forest Service, with its broad but comparatively marginal holdings, does not have enough timber to maintain the local economy. The service, in planning the harvest of Blue and Eightmile creeks, does not expect to prevent the decline, but only to modify it. "It is logical," says Forest Service planner McArthur, "that the diversification of basic economic activities...is a prerequisite to maintenance (even) of the present population."

The situation is only too familiar. How many times have we seen the participants in a one-crop economy, unable or unwilling to diversify, follow the cruel route of exhaustion and decline? In spite of a good deal of effort by many agencies on the North Coast of California, the old, old story seems ready to be told again.

Should Blue Creek and Eightmile Creek be committed to logging? There are both pros and cons. But the harvest of this or any other particular piece of public land is not even a partial answer to the problems of the North Coast counties. That answer can only be found by institutions that can see the regional predicament clearly and move with the authority to provide alternatives. An overall state plan, together with a comprehensive regional government, may well be the prerequisite. But whatever the formula, the movement toward it can no longer be delayed.

reprinted with permission from the Fall 1975 **Cry California** published by California Tomorrow, San Francisco

Photos by:
Doug Ayers
John Sawyers
Dave van de Mark



Twin Peaks

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

November 20, 1975

AN OPEN LETTER IN DEFENSE OF THE WILD KLAMATH REGION, ESPECIALLY THE SISKIYOU MOUNTAINS

To Whom It May Concern:

The Klamath Region, including the Siskiyou Mountains, is little appreciated by scientists since it is largely unknown. Only recently have students of botany, zoology, and geology begun to study in detail this area remote from urban universities and institutes. The area was collected by the pioneering botanists of over one hundred years past, but renewed interest in this ecological frontier began about fifteen years ago with a recognition of the Region's significance.

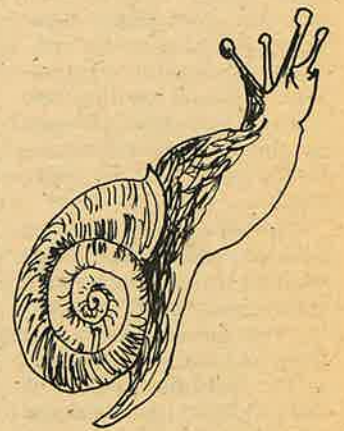
An ecological and phyto-geographic understanding of the vegetation and flora of the Klamath Region is critical to the understanding of the vegetation and flora of the western United States because of its central nature to the other western forest regions. There are two striking characters of the Klamath Region: the highly complex vegetation patterns, and an exceedingly rich flora for its latitude.

There are several reasons for the vegetational complexity and floristic diversity. The region is centrally located and hence an area of meeting and mixing of the northwestern and Californian species. The region is also characterized by many endemics and relict populations of widespread species of other western forest regions. The diversity is also due to the long vegetational history of the area including the shrinkage of the ancient Tertiary forests and the expansion and differentiation of the plant lineages into the area. Further diversity is the result of climatic and parent material diversity due to the

complex nature of the region's physiography and geology.

Within the Klamath Region certain areas stand out as those which command special attention, for they are relatively undisturbed. The Siskiyou Mountains is one of these areas where extensive, essentially natural landscape can still be found. Here the great variety of terrain, rock types, elevations, and habitats allow a microcosm of plant communities to form an intricate mosaic. Dense Douglas-fir forests grade into meadows, knobcone pine stands or chaparral in seemingly endless variety. And the pattern is little broken by man's technological workroads, culverts, clear-cuts, landings which destroy the essence of the whole scene. This is the scientific value of the present roadless situation which can be preserved in a large Siskiyou Wilderness.

Sincerely yours,
John O. Sawyer, Jr.
President



HERE'S THE
USFS
PROTECTING
WILDERNESS



say, especially in Blue Creek, "the best steelhead-producing creek in the entire Klamath drainage." R. J. O'Brien, regional head of the department, wrote to McArthur: "Protection of this valuable resource should not be compromised by lack of information, hasty decision-making, or in the interest of economic expediency. I would suggest that the area be retained in its natural state."

The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board also has an interest in the Siskiyou. The antipollution agency does have jurisdiction in the national forests. Its rules prohibit "the discharge of wastes associated with logging...to

The economic problem

In general, however, the state has rather little to say about what happens on these or other federal lands. If California had a statewide plan dealing, in part, with the management and conservation of the resources, including the economic results of resource decisions, it might be in a better position to influence federal land decisions. In the absence of such organized policy, the voice of the state is weak. But there is a set of related problems that the state could, and certainly should, be working with: the local unemployment

But none of these facts can dilute the overwhelming truth: the direction of the timber economy of the North Coast is **down**. Jobs in the mills and in the woods have already begun to drop, from 12,300 in 1959 to about 8,850 today. It is reported, though not confirmed, that industry planners privately reckon on the basis of a 50-percent drop in harvest within the next ten years.

If this is so, the North Coast economic outlook is bleak indeed. These counties have already been for years in a grinding recession that seems only likely to get worse. Per capita income in Humboldt and Del Norte