

WILDERNESS RECORD

News Journal of the California Wilderness Coalition

WINTER 2005



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**CALIFORNIA
WILDERNESS
COALITION**

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The California Wilderness Coalition protects the pristine landscapes that make California unique, providing clean air and water, a home to wildlife, and a place for spiritual renewal.

CWC is the only organization dedicated to protecting and restoring California's wild places and native biodiversity on a statewide level.

Since 1976, we have empowered local communities and conservationists to be the voice for wild California.



JIM ROSE

In 2004, CWC and our allies saved Duncan Canyon, an old-growth forest near Lake Tahoe, from catastrophic logging.

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History Is On Our Side

It would be disingenuous to say that the results of the November elections will be good for California's landscapes. Our public lands are resources that belong to the American people, which means that decisions regarding both their protection and their development are made by elected officials and government policymakers. Unfortunately, the environment was not a winner in November. Our conservation work at the California Wilderness Coalition and that of all of our allies will be doubly difficult for the foreseeable future.

All was not lost in November, though. During that time Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein were tireless in negotiating a successful agreement with Senate Republicans in support of the Northern California Coastal Wild Heritage Wilderness Act. CWC has been working diligently for years now for this bill's passage, which would protect 300,000 acres of pristine lands from Sonoma up to the Oregon state line. In the final hours of the last Congress the bill passed the Senate, but it did not have time to move in the House. The momentum from last year's work, however, will buoy the prospects for the bill's passage in the new Congress. And since the Wilderness Act's passage in 1964, every Republican president has signed a California wilderness bill into law, even President George W. Bush!

CWC will continue to fight for wilderness in 2005. You can see that we have revamped our Wilderness Record to provide the same information on California's lands, but with more photographs to better illustrate their beauty and importance. We also have started an on-line activist center on our website at <http://www.calwild.org/resources/center.php> to make our advocacy more immediate and effective. You can also sign up to receive content from the Activist Center via email so you can easily stay informed and take action on critical California wilderness issues. It's with your support and participation that conservation in California will succeed!

Mary Wells is the Executive Director of CWC



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT PHOTO



Headwaters Forest.

Senate Victory for North Coast Wilderness Bill

The Northern California Coastal Wild Heritage Wilderness Act (also known as H.R. 1501 in the House and S. 738 in the Senate) passed the Senate this year in the last minutes of the 108th Congress. While we will need to reintroduce the bill in both houses of Congress in 2005, this year's Senate victory marked a major milestone in the struggle to protect threatened northwest California wild lands.

Proposed by Congressman Mike Thompson and Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein, S. 738 is CWC's highest legislative priority. This year our advancement of the bill started with Senator Feinstein championing the bill and continued with a successful hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Passage in the Senate in December capped a year of hard work and steady progress.

S. 738 would designate over 300,000 acres of wilderness along California's spectacular north coast, including the longest stretch of undeveloped coastline in the continental United States. Conservationists are extremely grateful to Senators Boxer and Feinstein and Representative Thompson for their leading the effort to protect these wild lands.

CWC and its partners in the California Wild Heritage Campaign are already building the momentum needed to pass the Northern California Coastal Wild Heritage Wilderness Act in 2005. To help with this effort, please contact Josh Buswell-Charkow, Regional Outreach Organizer at josh@calwild.org.



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Home of California's second-largest wintering bald eagle population, the unprotected wilderness of Cache Creek is located less than two hours from Sacramento and the Bay Area.

COALITION news



JIM ROSE

The Yuki Proposed Wilderness in Mendocino County.

Celebrating David Brower

In honor of the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, CWC hosted two Bay Area screenings of *Monumental: David Brower's Fight for Wild America*. This recently-released film from Kelly Duane documents David Brower's relentless efforts to protect America's wild places. The screenings were held on November 15th in Berkeley and December 2nd in Palo Alto. CWC would like to thank our guests and the following food and beverage donors:

Acme Bread Company, Arizmendi Bakery & Pizzeria, Berkeley Bowl Marketplace, Great Harvest Bread Company, Miette Cakes, Nabolom Bakery, Natural Grocery Company, Rainbow Grocery, Trader Joe's—Emeryville, and Whole Foods Market—Palo Alto

For more information about *Monumental*, please visit:
www.loteriafilms.org
www.bullfrogfilms.com

Good Luck Pete!

After three years of outstanding work developing a biological blueprint for California conservation, Pete Nichols has departed from his post as CWC's Wildlands Project Coordinator. Continuing the fight for wild California, Pete has founded a new organization, the Humboldt Baykeeper, to protect water quality in the north coast's Humboldt Bay. While we will miss his insight and warm personality, we wish him the best of luck in his work to preserve the natural heritage of the north coast.

Welcome Josh Lazarus

CWC is excited to welcome Josh Lazarus as our new Geographic Information Systems (GIS) specialist. Josh is an experienced and dedicated conservationist, as well as an expert fly-fisherman. In addition to previous work in GIS analysis and community outreach for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Josh served as a fly-fishing guide for Southern Yosemite Mountain Guides and led trips in Chile for Ancient Forests International. Alongside his work with CWC, Josh serves as a fisheries technician for the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, working to monitor fish stocks around the Bay Area. With his GIS skills, extensive knowledge of the California landscape, and ties to the angling community, Josh will be a great asset to CWC.

COURTESY OF JOSH LAZARUS



Josh hooks a big one!

CWC Launches Alliance for Responsible Recreation

One of the most serious challenges facing California's fragile desert is the growing popularity of off-road vehicles (ORVs). Irresponsible ORV use can trigger devastating impacts on the land, wildlife, opportunities for natural quiet, and quality of life in rural communities. More than 70% of off-road vehicle recreation in California occurs in the desert region, and the ATV Safety Institute in Los Angeles claims that regional sales of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) have increased 263% since 1994. Illegal off-road vehicle trespass on both public and private lands has reached crisis proportions, and government agencies have been slow to respond. CWC is now organizing a new coalition, called the Alliance for Responsible Recreation, in order to bring together private landowners, community groups, conservation organizations, and other parties that share our concerns about the off-road vehicle crisis. The Alliance will work to change policy and attitudes about off-road vehicle use throughout the California desert.

Ten Year Desert Wilderness Celebration

Throughout the months of October and November, local desert communities and conservationists across the state celebrated the tenth anniversary of the historic California Desert Protection Act (CDPA). The CDPA was signed into law on October 31, 1994, and protects over 9 million acres of desert wildlands. In addition to creating the Mojave National Preserve and 69 new wilderness areas, the bill enlarged and re-designated Joshua Tree and Death Valley national monuments as national parks. The far-reaching protections are certainly cause to celebrate, but much work still remains. CWC joined in many of the celebrations and was greatly inspired by the enthusiasm and dedication of all those working to protect the great deserts of California.

HOWARD WILSHIRE



COURTESY OF
NATIONAL PARKS
CONSERVATION
ASSOCIATION



Senator Dianne Feinstein commemorates the 10th anniversary of the California Desert Protection Act.

Increasingly, off-roaders stray from established legal routes into open desert, leaving an ever-growing network of new routes in their wake.

Wilderness Advocates Converge on Washington

In celebration of forty wonderful years protecting America's wilderness, activists from every corner of the country flocked to Washington, DC for a week of education, advocacy, and celebration. Wilderness Week, as it was called, was held from September 18–22, 2004 with the goal of raising awareness of our country's rich tradition of wilderness preservation. In addition to celebrating four decades of achievements, delegations from each state took the opportunity to storm the halls of Congress seeking support for new wilderness across the country.

Nearly the entire CWC staff packed their best business attire, hopped on a plane, and prepared to join the forces assembled in our nation's capitol to propel our efforts forward for another 40 years.



COURTESY OF HOLLY OWENS

The California wilderness delegation.

Alongside our California contingent, wilderness activists were gathered from Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona, Washington, Utah, Alaska, Idaho, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, South Dakota and Colorado. Over the course of the week, volunteers participated in training sessions hosted by wilderness heroes, a rally in front of the capital, a citizens' hearing on wilderness, and dozens of meetings with congressional staff and lawmakers. We also attended a gala at the National Press Club to commemorate forty years of wilderness legislation. Speakers at the event included actor Robert Redford, Michigan Congressman John Dingell, West Virginia Senator Robert Byrd, and author Terry Tempest Williams.

In addition to CWC staff, the California delegation included representatives from organizational partners such as the Wilderness Society, Friends of the River and the Sierra Club, as well as activists from across the state. In all, about 35 Californians from all corners of the Golden State helped to create quite a buzz on Capitol Hill.

COURTESY OF HOLLY OWENS



Members of the California delegation with Senator Barbara Boxer.

The timing of Wilderness Week was also critical. While we were walking the halls of Congress, discussions were underway in the House Resources Committee to grant a hearing for a bill that threatened to undermine the very essence of the Wilderness Act that we were there to commemorate. The bill would have amended the broadly supported "Wild Sky Wilderness Act" of Washington State to exclude 13,000 acres of crucial low elevation forests. These areas would have been given the misleading designation of "Backcountry Wilderness," allowing logging, motorized vehicle use, and other inappropriate activities. A terrible precedent for all other pending wilderness legislation would have been set, including our own in California. While meeting with congressional offices to thank them for their support of wilderness, all advocates made sure to expose this phony wilderness bill. Thankfully, as a result of our efforts, the bill was pulled from the agenda.

Special thanks to all the California Wild Heritage Campaign activists who made this week a great success!



Investing in Wild California

With California's population expected to double by 2040, this is a critical time to plan for the future of our state's public lands. California's magnificent wilderness lands are our last remaining wild places. They are the lands that have inspired, sustained, and revitalized us for centuries. They are truly our natural heritage.

The California Wilderness Coalition is investing in wild California so that generation after generation, we will always be able to reap the rewards of a clean and healthy environment. Please join us in investing in the future of our Golden State. Please consider a major gift to the California Wilderness Coalition.

How to Contribute

Checks should be made payable to the California Wilderness Coalition.

While most major gifts are cash donations, the California Wilderness Coalition also greatly appreciates other forms of contribution, including:

- Stock certificates
- Real or personal property
- Land
- Deferred gifts

If you are interested in learning more about deferred gifts, the California Wilderness Coalition will be happy to have a representative contact you with specific information.

Now is the time to protect California's last wild places. They are irreplaceable treasures, our refuge from urban life, and a home to our wildlife.



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