



Wilderness Record

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION

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New Tahoe Area Wilderness Recommended

A 13,600 acre Dardanelles Wilderness is recommended for protection by the U.S. Forest Service in a recently released plan. The new wilderness proposal comprises about 30% of the roadless acreage of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

The fate of 45,100 acres of "further planning" RARE II roadless areas lying within

the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) is described in a final environmental impact statement completed this spring. Three different roadless areas along with wild lands adjacent to Desolation Wilderness were studied.

3,380 acres of the Dardanelles roadless area

are being designated as "non-wilderness" with 8,000 acres in Eldorado National Forest remaining in "further planning" status. These 8,000 acres will be considered during the development of a forest plan for the Eldorado. The area also is known as the Upper Truckee and as Echo-

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In Washington

Burton Bill Praised

Ten Californians journeyed to Washington, D.C., to testify at congressional hearings on June 18-19. The subject was wilderness—Rep. Phillip Burton's H.R. 865 and H.R. 859 were before the Public Lands and National Parks Subcommittee of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs.

Speaking on behalf of the California Wilderness Coalition were John Amodio of Arcata and Sally Reid of Pacoima.

Amodio spoke about wilderness proposals in northwestern California. He told the Subcommittee members that Mahatma Ghandi's comment on human nature appropriately describes the current dilemma over national forest land use: "There is enough for every man's need, but not his greed."

"A proper balance of recreational lands, resource protection, and resource utilization must be maintained if California is to continue as a leader, culturally and economically, in our country. I believe the decisions worked out by California's congressional delegation in H.R. 856 and H.R. 859 strike such a balance."

**Dianne Feinstein
Mayor
City and County
of San Francisco**

Reid covered the southern California "Rim of Wilderness" concept, a proposal to protect over a million and a half roadless acres within a 100-mile radius from the Los Angeles civic center. "We are asking

that this remarkable and unique series of mountains, valleys, ridges, and drainages be protected from development before it's too late," she said, adding, "before the skills of the technologists increase the capability of the mechanical assailants to reach even the steepest and most remote slopes, leaving scars, eroded soils and muddied waters, and remnants of wildlife scattered by the noise and stench, dislocated from the chains and webs of relationships on which they are dependent."

Other Californians included Sierra Club President Joe Fontaine, Ginny Smith of the San Joaquin Wilderness Association, Elizabeth Meyer of San Diego, George Whitmore of the Golden Valley Ecological Society, Mark Bullock of Central Sierra Audubon, Richard Chamberlain representing the Porterville Environmental Council and the High Sierra Stockman's Assn., and Andrea Mead Lawrence, two-time Olympic gold medal winner in downhill skiing.

Additional supporters of Burton's bills were Cathy Smith of Friends of the Earth, Destry Jarvis of the National Parks and Conservation Association, National Audubon's Brock Evans, and Larry Moss and Ron Tipton from the Wilderness Society.

Chief opponent of wilderness was Assistant Agriculture Secretary John B. Crowell, who announced the administration's decision to rescind wilderness recommendations for Red Buttes, Boundary Peak (White

Mtns.), and Portuguese (Marble Mts.). Crowell's opposition to wilderness was based mostly on perceived loss of opportunities to harvest timber, extract minerals, build additional ski resorts, the "development of picnicking, camping, and other types of recreation, and for the improvement of wildlife

"I support Congressman Burton's HR 859, California Wilderness Act of 1981, and feel that Senator Haya-kawa's proposed bill is unacceptable. burton's bill is a balanced approach thoroughly worked out with many groups who are interested, while the Senator's is a anti-wilderness, special interest bill with no consideration or compromise."

**Tom Bradley
Mayor
City of Los Angeles**

and fish habitat, including instream improvements for anadromous fish habitat."

National Park Service Director Russ Dickenson asked that additional acreages of wilderness be added to the Burton bill, especially near Mineral King.

Speaking against the Burton proposals were representatives of the National Forest Protection Association, U.S. Ski Association, and the U. S. Chamber of Commerce.

Representative Robert Lagomarsino spoke in favor of the proposed Dick Smith Wilderness, a proposal he has separately introduced as H.R. 1116. Rep. Norm Shumway

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Proposed Dardanelles Wilderness

Photo by Kathy Blankenship

In Weaverville

Huge Turnout For Wilderness Hearing

On May 22nd over 1,000 people crowded into the Weaverville High School gymnasium to hear testimony for and against Rep. Phillip Burton's California Wilderness Act of 1981. Lumber mills were closed to allow workers to attend the hearing, and they came wearing red flagging armbands and carrying signs such as "You Want Recreation? Try to Drive Your Winnebago in a Wilderness." Wilderness supporters came with "I Like Wilderness" buttons and balloons proclaiming "Wilderness is Multiple Use."

Although 357 people signed up to testify before the House Subcommittee on Public Lands and National Parks, only 163 people were given a chance to say their two minute's worth. Chairman John Seiberling pointed out that wilderness supporters had signed up four times more witnesses than opponents, but that out-of fairness the list had been cut down to a two-to-one ratio.

Strong support for the Burton bill came from Trinity County Supervisors Jim Smith and Roger Adrian who fended off loaded questions from Reps. Don Clausen and Eugene

Chappie with facts and figures. Mendocino County Supervisors Dan Hamburg and Norman deVall spoke in favor of wilderness, as did Arcata Mayor Dan Hause. Opposition came from supervisors from Shasta, Siskiyou, Sierra, Plumas, and Humboldt counties, although a supervisor from Humboldt County representing a district with most of the roadless areas stated that H.R. 859 "is a good compromise."

Support for the Burton bill and the Trinity County wilderness position was widespread. Commercial and sport fishing groups, Native Americans, and Huey Johnson representing the State of California all gave strong pro-preservation statements.

The Trinity Wilderness Coalition came armed with charts and testimony explaining their position which goes beyond the Burton bill. Dave Van de Mark asked that additional areas be designated wilderness, especially roadless lands in the South Fork Trinity watershed. Numerous speakers later endorsed this position.

Rep. Jim Weaver questioned Milton Schultz, president of the Western Timber Assn., about the

correct balance of wilderness against non-wilderness that the industry keeps harping about. Asked if 95% of lands in timber production and 5% in wilderness was a good enough balance, Schultz replied, "that is getting close, but still too much wilderness."

Rep. Chappie later stated that "this bill isn't going anywhere this year; it will be buried so deep they'll have to find some light for it."

A timber industry official charged that Burton's bill set aside far too much land "for hippies to grow marijuana in."

Alice Jones of Weaverville, who said she was nearly 70, said, "One often hears statements that wilderness is for the selected few. This is not true. It is not just for the young and hearty. Grandmothers like me spend many hours hiking the trails of the Trinity Alps each year."

Timber mills in Weaverville, Hayfork, Burnt Ranch, Mt. Shasta, and Anderson either shut down or sent workers to the hearing. Nevertheless, by early afternoon the majority of the audience appeared to be wilderness supporters.

Coalition Report

By Jim Eaton

First, on behalf of the directors and staff of the California Wilderness Coalition, I would like to thank the scores of CWC members who responded to our plea for donations last month. Your generosity is propelling the Coalition into a busy summer in good financial shape. In fact, this funding drive has raised five times more money than any previous attempt. Jim Watt, keep up your asinine public land policies—you are getting the wilderness movement organized better than ever.

Special thanks to Clarence Heller, Tom Winnett of the Wilderness Press, Frederick B. Turner, Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Barnes, and Jack Regan for their special gifts. Especially gratifying is the large number of CWC members who answered our request. Even if all you could afford to donate was five or ten dollars, your check was matched by that of other wilderness supporters to add up to a significant amount.

The Hooper family also made a major contribution to the Coalition by conceiving and organizing a benefit party in San Francisco last month. John

and Molly arranged for a Sunday evening event aboard the historical ferry Eureka. They got permission from the National Park Service, lined up live Dixieland jazz by the San Francisco Medicine Ball, addressed invitations, brought food, beer, and wine, and cleaned up afterwards. CWC Director John's parents, John and Patricia, and sister Helen, pitched in with more food and ICE, a very precious commodity on a very warm San Francisco night. Thanks also to Maud Schroll, Robin Senior, and Winky Miller for additional help. And, of course, thank you all who attended the fun evening and made the event a success.

Where do we go from here? This summer your Coalition is working closely with the Sierra Club and Desert Protective Council to develop detailed wilderness proposals for the California Desert. As mentioned elsewhere in this issue, Secretary Watt and the Bureau of Land Management are working to dispose of lands they don't think deserve wilderness protection. We are going to counter their efforts by garnering

widespread public support for our priority desert wilderness proposals. This will be a long-term project, but we are beginning now.

We also are launching a major drive to reach more users and supporters of wilderness who just aren't aware of the problems our wild lands are facing. Have any ideas on how we can spread the conservation message?

Our Davis office now is located in a solar office building in Village Homes. Please feel free to drop by, but since we will be travelling a lot this summer a phone call first will confirm our presence.

Archie Douglas resigned his position to take an extended trip this spring. Thank you Archie, for your help and companionship during our chaotic period of reorganization and growth this year.

We welcome three new member groups this month: the San Francisco Ecology Center, Friends of Plumas Wilderness, and Orange County Sierra Singles.

We have a new business sponsor, Yes Electric, to add to our list. Our thanks to owner-contractor Tim Jeffries for signing up his firm.

Wild Kern Trip

Coalition President Bob Barnes rafted "the finest white water rapids in North America north of Mexico" with agency and industry representatives last month. The Kern River, under study for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, has the largest number of class 5 rapids in a short stretch in this country.

The segment of river between the Forks of the Kern and Johnsondale Bridge is a potential wild river. Dams, however, have been proposed to flood this stretch of free flowing water.

Along with Bob Barnes, participants included Joe Brown, Supervisor of Sequoia National Forest, Bob Rice, Sup. of Inyo Nat. Forest, Boyd Evison, Superintendent of Sequoia National Park, and Bill Lamb, Asst. District Manager of BLM's Bakersfield district. Other employees of Sequoia Nat. Forest were Norm Arseneault, Chief Recreation Officer, Jim Allen, Chief Engineer, and Mark Dymkoski, Asst. Recreation Officer. Bob Brown of Southern Calif. Edison came along, as did rancher R. J. Owen.

A representative from Rep. Bill Thomas' office had to cancel out of the trip. The party was guided down the river by Bill McGinnis and

his crew from Whitewater Voyages of El Sombrante.

The 17 mile stretch of river is a spectacular reach of almost continuous white water. Three days often is recommended for the trip so that ample time can be devoted to visiting side waterfalls, fishing for trout, and enjoying the scenery.

A 600' high dam has been proposed near the Forks of the Kern that would inundate five miles into the Golden Trout Wilderness. Another proposed dam

near Johnsondale Bridge would back up water nearly to the Forks. Southern California Edison is among the power companies looking at the dam sites.

The Forest Service is completing the study of the potential wild river designation of the Kern and is expected to release their report and recommendations in August.

Bob Barnes has promised a detailed report of his adventures in the next issue of the *Wilderness Record*.

Reader's Opinion

To the Editor:

I read with great amusement that James Watt finds the national parks in a state of "shameful . . . deterioration" and wishes to apologize to the American people (Fresno Bee, May 8). Mr. Watt can begin by making amends for his own idiotic decisions during his brief service as secretary of Interior. His blatant anti-environmentalism has made a farce of our country's natural resource policies, and by stubbornly ignoring widespread public opinion favoring stringent environ-

mental protection, he has made a sham of democracy itself.

Mr. Watt's asinine statements are not without a grain of truth, however. I have been to the national parks and seen this deplorable mess he refers to. Sticks, stones and pine needles litter the wilderness in vast, chaotic disarray. I suggest we give Mr. Watt a broom and set him to work cleaning up our woods, a task much more appropriate to his mentality than his present position.

Bob DeNike, Jr.
Porterville

Middle Fork Saved Again

By Steve Evans

Conservationists have been successful for the second time in three years in defending the Middle Fork Feather Wild and Scenic River from large scale gold mining.

In April, Forest Service Chief Max Peterson upheld the appeal of several conservation organizations and ordered the reversal of a plan of operations which would have allowed an extensive gold mining operation within the "Wild" zone of the Middle Fork. Peterson's affirmation of the appeal was the second time that conservationists had to take their grievances all the way to Washington D.C. in order to stop the mining.

The claims in question are located at Hanson Bar on the Middle Fork in Plumas National Forest. In 1977, the owners of the claims, Continental Quicksilver of Oracle Arizona, were given approval by Plumas Forest for a plan of operations that called for the dredging of over 1¼ miles of river gravel along the Middle Fork with a 12 inch suction dredge. Several conservation groups immediately declared their opposition to the project because of the impacts that large scale mining would have had on the wilderness resources, water quality, and fisheries of what was then, the only National Wild and Scenic River in California.

The Federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968

does allow placer mining of valid existing claims. Other than valid existing claims, the Act withdrew the Middle Fork from further mineral entry after 1968. In the case of the so called "Neptune Claims" at Hanson Bar, Plumas Forest administrators felt that their regulatory power to actually prevent the dredging was negligible because of the mining loophole in the Wild Rivers Act as well as the pro-development orientation of the 1872 mining law.

Consequently, Plumas Forest approved Continental's plan of operation in 1978. Three conservation groups; the Northstate Wilderness Committee, Friends of the River, and the Northern California Flyfishers for Conservation, appealed for the approval of the plan to the Regional Forester in San Francisco. Meanwhile, Continental was enjoined from dredging the Neptune Claims until the merits of the appeal could be decided upon by the Forest Service.

Three years and several layers of Forest Service bureaucracy later (including two denials from the Regional Forester, a remand from the Chief for more information, and an additional appeal filed by the conservation groups last year), Chief Peterson finally affirmed the appeal and denied the plan of operations submitted by Continental.

In his decision, Peterson

basically ignored the issues raised by the conservation groups concerning the impact of the mining on wilderness resources, primitive recreation values, water quality, and one of the finest trout fisheries in the state. Instead, the Chief based his decision primarily on the question of validity of the Neptune Claims.

Since the inception of Continental's plan in 1977, the conservation groups had maintained that the claims had not been proved to be valid as of the 1968 mineral withdrawal mandated by the Wild Rivers Act. Because the Act withdrew the river from mining entry except for valid existing claims, working claims must be proven to be valid before 1968. The conservation groups supported their argument against validity with a vast amount of data gleaned from the county, state, and federal records.

After reviewing this data, Peterson determined that more than one person owned the claims when they were sold to Continental in 1974 and that the current legal ownership of the claims were in question. He also found that one of the Neptune Claims was void because the state required assessment work had not been performed for over six years.

In evaluating the validity of all the Neptune Claims, Peterson states, "while there is evidence that gold was found on the claims,

the information available is insufficient to support a conclusion that valuable deposits of gold (in terms of quantity and quality) had been discovered prior to the . . . withdrawal." Discovery of some gold on a claim does not make it valid. A claim is valid only when a prudent investment proves to be profitable.

Peterson concluded that, "Because Continental Quicksilver has failed to present adequate proof that a valid existing right was established . . . prior to the withdrawal, proposed mining activities on . . . (the) Neptune Placer Claims must be denied."

Peterson made his decision without prejudice against Continental Quicksilver; allowing them to re-submit additional information concerning validity if and when it became available. Evidently, no new evidence could be found by Continental, as the Chief's decision was reviewed and approved by the Secretary of Agriculture without protest from the firm.

The impact of the Chief's decision concerning the Middle Fork appeal goes far beyond the fact that one of California's most wild and scenic rivers has been preserved from large scale mining project. The decision effects all rivers within the Federal wild and scenic system, including the recently designated North Coast rivers, some of which suffer extensive placer mining.



Middle Fork Feather River

Photo by Brad Richards

Coalition in Action

May and June have been busy months for the volunteers and staff of the Coalition. Highlights of this period have been:

—the search for a new office. The end of June was a hectic period when the Coalition's office was moved across town to a solar office building.

—President Bob Barnes lined up a number of appearances for Sierra Club President Joe Fontaine (also a member of the CWC Advisory Committee) during his stay in Porterville. In addition to a full house at the city hall, Bob set up 2 TV interviews, 2 radio interviews, and 5 newspaper interviews for Joe.

—Bob Barnes also

conducted a successful search for a person to represent the Southern Sierra before the House Subcommittee on Public Lands and National Parks at their Washington, D. C. hearing by finding Richard Chamberlain. The Coalition was represented there by John Amodio and Sally Reid.

—Executive Director Jim Eaton is expanding the wilderness outreach by agreeing to serve on Charles Warren's Toxics Responsibility Advisory Committee, the Central Valley League of Conservation Voters board of directors, and a special task force on minimum impact camping in cooperation with the National Park Service.



Sketch by Sandy Slichter

Wilderness Wildlife

California Condor

By Dennis Coules

The California Condor (*Gymnogyps californicus*) is undoubtedly the most famous endangered species in California. As the largest North American bird, it is thought by many biologists to be doomed to imminent extinction unless drastic manipulation of the remaining population is undertaken. With a breeding range now restricted to Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, the condor has diminished alarmingly from a former range that reached from Canada to Baja California and Florida about a million years ago. Less than 30 condors are left, and the population is predicted to reach zero by 1995 if current trends continue.

The foraging range of the condor extends slightly south of the breeding range

into Los Angeles County and north as far as San Benito and southern Fresno Counties. Strictly a carrion feeder, the condor may fly many miles from its breeding territory to surrounding farms and rangelands in search of carcasses. Specialized for feeding on large carcasses in open areas, the condor subsisted primarily on the bodies of deer and elk before the introduction of livestock to the West by Europeans. Condors once utilized dead sea mammals such as whale and seals that had become stranded on Pacific beaches. Deer continue to be an important component of the diet, but cows now are more plentiful and cattle carcasses often are transported to condor feeding areas by humans as

part of recovery efforts. In one unusual case, an apparently very hungry wild juvenile was reported as having eaten a peanut butter sandwich, box of raisins, and the inside of a banana peel offered to it by a hiker.

Condors in remote areas appear to be curious about humans and have been known to fly from a mile or more away to circle a hiker closely, eyeing him intently. They also seem to be attracted to other condors, and may travel or roost together for reasons unrelated to the formation of mated pairs.

The California condor breeds in rocky caves along rugged cliffs primarily in the 53,000-acre Sespe Wildlife Area. It lays its single, pale blue-green egg on the floor of the nesting cave without constructing any sort of nest. The birds do not mate until they reach age six, and an egg is produced only every other year, resulting in a very low reproductive rate. Incubation lasts for seven weeks, and fledging does not occur for a least five months. Thus the nesting birds are vulnerable to human disturbance for extended periods of time. In 1980 only one condor chick was successfully raised—the other 50% of the known baby condor population was killed by biologists during a "routine nest check," which occurrence only added to the bitter controversy over management and recovery of this highly endangered species.

It now appears that in 1981 only one baby condor may even be hatched, as only one pair appeared to be incubating an egg by the end of April.

The range of the California condor was much larger as recently as the 1800's. The condor was familiar to many of the Indians of the southwest as the "thunderbird" (after

which the fine wine was named) and was recorded by the Lewis and Clark Expedition along the Columbia River in 1806. Condors were gone from this river system by the mid-1800's but survived longer along the Colorado River in Arizona, where bones and feather quills still are being discovered in Grand Canyon caves. Condors were seen in northern Baja California until sometime in the 1930's when the last were shot out, and there have been occasional unsubstantiated reports in Baja even in recent years.

The population decline in recent years points to impending extinction—50 to 60 condors in the late 1960's, only about 30 now. A study by the National Audubon Society found that recently the primary cause of decline has been illegal shooting. Poison put out by western settlers for wolves and coyotes also took its toll, as well as habitat development and many other human-related factors.

Due to their wide-range habits many condors now spend a large portion of their lives in areas that have been highly disturbed by man. Condors that fly daily over interstate freeways and roost at lakeside recreation sites overrun by noisy motorboats may become almost oblivious to human proximity. This unwariness makes them all the more vulnerable to malicious shooting.

The outlook for continued survival of the California condor in the wild is not good. Many involved biologists believe that a captive breeding program with eventual reintroduction to the wild—both of questionable potential for success due to lack of precedent—is the only hope for restoration or even existence of the species. Efforts in this direction have been set back by last year's death of the condor chick at the hands of researchers.

Habitat preservation and protection from human molestation is vital for both the remnant wild population and the success of any reintroduction efforts based on captive breeding. Wilderness designation for the 320,700-acre Sespe Frazier and surrounding RARE II roadless areas in Los Padres National Forest would be one step in this direction, but selected portions of the foraging range on private and other public lands must also be protected from overdevelopment.

Tahoe Wilderness

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Carson.

No wilderness is recommended for the Freel Peak and Lincoln Creek roadless areas, nor the Pyramid roadless area adjacent to Desolation Wilderness. The portion of the Pyramid area in the Eldorado National Forest remains in further planning.

While only recommending 13,600 acres for wilderness, the Forest Service states that management on an additional 25,000 acres would not alter the characteristics of the area significantly, and thus portions could be available for future wilderness consideration. Off-road vehicles, including snowmobiles, would be allowed to use some of these "non-wilderness" lands, however.

An effort is being made to have the Dardanelles wilderness proposal added to legislation currently before the House of Representatives.

The following are

descriptions of the roadless areas in the Lake Tahoe Basin:

DARDANELLES

This 24,980 acre scenic area between Carson Pass and Echo Summit is characterized by a diversity of landscapes — brushy slopes, scattered forests, meadows, several small lakes, a sphagnum bog, granite outcrops, and steep volcanic cliffs. The area is very popular for primitive recreation in both summer and winter, receiving 17,500 recreation visitor days annually. The Pacific Crest Trail crosses the area from north to south. The LTBMU portion has been closed to motorized vehicles while Eldorado and Toiyabe portions receive a little motorcycle and snowmobile use.

FREEL PEAK

The 15,600 acre Freel roadless area is distinguished by Freel Peak, the

highest mountain in the Tahoe Basin at 10,881 feet. The characteristics range from the subalpine type with a plant community containing some endangered species, down to dense forests in lower elevations. Star lake, several small pot hole lakes, Hellhole Bog, and numerous small meadows create some additional diversity. Because access is restricted across private land, it is estimated that Freel only receives 5,300 visitor days of use annually including 600 days of snowmobiling. An additional 22,600 acres of contiguous roadless land previously was designated as "non-wilderness" by Toiyabe National Forest.

LINCOLN CREEK

This small (6,600 acre) area is the only roadless area on the Nevada side of the Basin. It is relatively unknown to the public, receiving only 2,200 visitor days of recreation use, 100 of which is snowmobiling. Steep terrain with many small ravines make travel

difficult. Zephyr Cove Resort does offer horseback rides on a few existing trails entering a small portion of the area. Spectacular views of Lake Tahoe are available from the area.

PYRAMID

This area is adjacent to the existing Desolation Wilderness. The southern end of the area is characterized by steep, barren granite slopes from Echo Lake to Emerald Bay. The north end consists of the steep timbered slopes above Rubicon subdivision and the gentler, lower elevation forest of the Meeks Creek and General Creek drainages. A portion of Sugar Pine State Park is included in the roadless area. Although Pyramid surrounds one of the most heavily used wilderness areas in the country, the area only receives an estimated 4,700 visitor days of use, including 300 days of snowmobiling. Most of the non-motorized use is trail use by people entering Desolation Wilderness.

California Wilderness Coalition

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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.

Wilderness Needs Help California Desert

Interior Secretary James Watt is working towards an end run around the wilderness study procedures affecting the California Desert. Watt has ordered the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to prepare legislation to release the agency's "unsuitable" wilderness recommendations prior to studies on "suitable" wilderness lands.

As part of last year's California Desert Conservation Area Plan, the BLM identified 136 areas totaling 5.7 million acres as Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs). In their final plan, the BLM declares 91 of these study areas as unsuitable for wilderness (3.6 million acres) and all or portions of 45 areas as suitable for

wilderness (2.1 million acres).

Federal law requires that all WSAs be managed "so as not to impair the suitability of such areas for preservation as wilderness" until Congress makes a final decision on which areas should be designated as wilderness and which areas should be available for multiple uses other than wilderness. Watt is attempting to coax Congress into accepting BLM's "unsuitable" recommendations without protecting a single acre as wilderness.

"This is sheer lunacy," declared Coalition Executive Director Jim Eaton. "Congress seldom has adopted forest service or park service wilderness

proposals without adding acreage," he said, adding, "it is an impudent decision by BLM to try to forclose Congressional wilderness options in this manner."

Eaton pointed out that only two of the 45 areas BLM has recommended as suitable for wilderness are complete proposals; the other 43 areas are only partially recommended as suitable. For example, only 10% of the Kingston Range WSA is recommended as suitable with 90% declared unsuitable. "It is a subversion of the mandated wilderness study process to dispose of these wild lands before BLM even has begun their wilderness study reports, let alone before Congress has had a chance to debate these issues,"

statements supporting Burton's bills. The California Nickel Corporation also supported the legislation.

Amodio presented excellent testimony that debunked the timber industry's arguments against wilderness. "How can the industry honestly predict massive negative impacts due to a wilderness resolution that still leaves them over 98% of the commercial forest land in northwest California?" Amodio asked. He continued, "Clearly, if the timber industry can't survive on the 98% of the commercial land base, the wilderness 2% will never save them and we will be needlessly sacrificing a whole range of natural

Eaton stated.

Among the areas considered entirely "unsuitable" by the BLM are the Algodones Dunes, Little Picacho Peak, Old Woman Mountains, New York Mountains, Mid Hills, Cima Dome, Clark Mountain, and Great Falls Basin.

Designation as suitable does not guarantee that the Secretary of Interior will recommend an area for wilderness after studies are completed. According to Secretary Watt, "if data show unexpectedly high mineral values of strategic or national importance, we will reconsider the suitability recommendation for wilderness."

Changes already were made between the propos-

values in a vain attempt to bail out a mis-managed industry."

No date yet has been set for mark-up of the bill by the Subcommittee. No similar legislation is yet introduced in the U. S. Senate.

ed and final Desert Plan in wilderness study areas. The following alterations have been made:

—In response to considerable public comment, the decision was reached to designate an approved route of travel to provide a route of access from the Eureka Dunes to Saline Valley, the largest WSA (405,215 acres) and top ranked WSA in the desert. This route will be identified as appropriate for vehicle travel in the legislative proposal to Congress.

—The southern boundary of the Palen/McCoy recommended suitable WSA was moved north to accommodate off-road vehicles in addition to a route of travel through the WSA from the north end of the Palen and McCoy mountains to the Interstate 10 offramp at Wiley Wells.

—In the Whipple Mountains, recent findings revealed active use of an historical mining site in the northwestern portion of the WSA. This area was changed from a recommended suitable WSA to "limited use."

—Three small portions of the Eagle Mountains WSA were changed from

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recommended suitable WSA to "limited or moderate" use due to recent expansion of patented mining claims and projected future expansion of the Eagle Mountain iron mine.

—The Mammoth Wash area adjacent to the North Algodones Dunes WSA changed from wilderness to intensive use. In the proposed plan this area was declared essential to the protection of the WSA. According to the BLM, "reassessment of demand for the area for continued traditional access, four-wheel driving and dune-buggy recreation, and sand and gravel mining indicated that the appropriate recommendation is Class I—Intensive Use."

—Much of the Funeral Mountains WSA (ranked 39th of 137) is now recommended for wilderness designation. The area is adjacent to proposed wilderness in Death Valley National Monument.

—All of the Little Sand Spring WSA is now recommended for wilderness designation. This area also is adjacent to proposed wilderness in Death Valley National Monument.

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expressed his concern over loss of timber values and routes for off-road vehicle users, although last year he supported the Burton compromise.

Reps. Phillip Burton, John Seiberling, and Jim Weaver attended most of the two-day hearing, and Don Clausen sat through a portion. Burton was quite angered at the testimony of Nancy Ingalsbee of the U. S. Ski Association. Although everything the downhill skiers want to develop has been left out of Burton's bill, Ingalsbee testified

against the measure, siding with timber, mining, and off-road vehicle interests. As a result, Burton vowed to place the proposed expansion of the Mt. Baldy ski area in the Sheep Mountain Wilderness (a position endorsed by conservationists). Seiberling also was annoyed at the ski industry's portrayal of him as anti-skiing even though he is a strong supporter of both downhill and cross-country skiing.

Both Mayor Tom Bradley of Los Angeles and Mayor Diane Feinstein of San Francisco submitted

CWC Member Groups

Our newest group members:

Friends of Plumas Wilderness
P.O. Box 584
Quincy, CA 95971

Orange County Sierra Singles
c/o Judith C. Ware
1681 Sherwood Vil. Cir.
Placentia CA 92670

San Francisco Ecology Center
13 Columbus Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94111

CWC Member Groups:

American Alpine Club

Bay Chapter, Sierra Club

Butte Environmental Council

California Native Plant Society

Citizens to Save Our Public Lands

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