

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

16 January 1971

Bev Steveson
418 Brookhaven Drive
Bakersfield
California 93304

Dear Bev,

Until last month I had not seen the San Joaquin Wilderness display which Barbara Chasteen put together from your photos. I saw it then at the Board meeting in San Francisco, and was greatly pleased by the high standards of excellence which I feel it shows. It really far surpassed my expectations, and should do much to help further the SJW effort. Thanks for your help on this.

It was on display at our Merced Group's annual dinner last month, and ~~on~~ at our Tehipite Chapter annual dinner last night. We now have it in Kingsburg, and are planning on taking it down to Visalia this coming Wednesday so that you or someone else who might be there can take it on down to Bakersfield, as Tony indicates that you are offering to have it on display at the Kern-Kaweah annual dinner. The only problem might be if you came to Visalia in a small car, as we find it just barely fits into the back seat of our Ford Fairlane; I doubt that it would go into a VW beetle.

Perhaps the Kaweah Group would like to have it on display Wednesday night. But sending a copy of this letter to Lynn Hulen (their new Conservation Chairman) I will make that suggestion. If you feel it would detract from your Galapagos program you could so indicate to Lynn.

See you Wednesday night in Visalia. And thanks again for your continuing interest in and very considerable efforts on behalf of the San Joaquin Wilderness.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

27 January 1971

Francis Walcott
3500 Fulton Street, Apt 14
San Francisco
California 94118

Subject: San Joaquin Wilderness

Dear Francis,

In yesterday's mail I sent you four copies of a San Joaquin Wilderness map, but there was no cover letter. I feared that if I delayed the mailing in order to include a letter the whole thing might miss your connections. Herewith a letter, but still necessarily quite brief.

Regarding the maps. The red line encompasses what we feel to be the ideal boundaries. Within the red you will see a yellow portion; this is the area which our chapter's executive committee recommended adding to the original proposal, as described in my letter of December 25th to Mike McCloskey.

You will note a green line depicting the Fresno-Madera County line. This is to facilitate understanding the problem with regard to Congressman Sisk. Our position is that the county line should be used as the boundary if it would weaken Sisk's opposition at all, but that since this is a matter which we are not equipped to judge, we defer the decision to higher authority--probably Congressman Waldie or whoever else introduces the new bill.

Of course Tehipite Chapter's executive committee is in whole-hearted support of the SJW proposal, and formally so resolved about a year ago. (The chapter was involved in boundary recommendations almost as far back as two years ago.)

The Board of Directors resolved in support of the SJW proposal on their consent calendar at their meeting ~~at~~ in Los Angeles last February.

The NCRCC has been sympathetic to the proposal. At their meeting in Modesto last June 6th, they resolved "that a statement be transmitted to the Board of Directors to the effect that club efforts on this should be expedited, with copies to the endorsing Congressmen." I fear that the congressmen were never notified, although Ed Royce did mention this NCRCC interest and support in his verbal report to the Board at the Board's December meeting in San Francisco.

Additionally, the NCRCC Wilderness Subcommittee--at their October 4th meeting in Davis--selected the San Joaquin as one of three wilderness areas in Northern California for which they were recommending "immediate political action". "These three areas

(Siskiyou and Emigrant were the other two) received priority for getting bills introduced and in mounting campaigns to assure passage of such bills." In view of the fact that the Wilderness Subcommittee had at that time a list of some twenty or thirty potential additions to the National Wilderness Preservation System, I feel their support of the San Joaquin to be quite encouraging.

The matter of acreage is very important. An error was made in the course of getting the original bill (H.R. 15019) introduced, and the erroneous figure was widely disseminated. It is essential that the acreage be clarified before the incorrect figure is even more widely used.

The original proposal made by this chapter (which was identical to the one introduced as H.R. 15019), encompassed an area of close to 48,000 acres. Through typographic or clerical error this appeared as "43,000" acres in the bill. The additional area we are now recommending for inclusion in the proposal is about 2,500 acres in extent (the yellow area on the map). This would thus give a correct total of about 50,500 acres.

It surely goes without saying that we will all greatly appreciate your help in getting the Wilderness Society to endorse this proposal in principle. We will await word as to what action they take, and presume we will be formally notified of any endorsement so that we can give copies of the endorsement to legislators, etc.

Let me know if the Society wants specific information on any aspect of the proposal. Thank you.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore
Conservation Chairman



SIERRA CLUB

TEHIPITE CHAPTER P. O. BOX 4102 FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93744
5396 93755

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

31 January 1971

Honorable Raymond J. Sherwin
727 Ohio Street
Vallejo, California 94590

Dear Ray,

Thanks for your letter of January 22 to Roger Mitchell, in which you discuss the Porter Report. My immediate reaction was as follows.

It is not clear whether any Sierra Club representatives have had a chance to study the Report in detail. If this has not been done, then it would be extremely risky to endorse it, even in principle.

Also, as you bring out, endorsement of the Report would necessitate making an exception of that portion which recommends a ski development in Sherwin Bowl--for legal reasons if no other. I would be very reluctant to see the Club start going on record in opposition to ski developments simply because they exceed the 80 acre limit for permits. This is precisely what the skiing organizations have accused us of intending, and it is precisely the sort of issue they need to whip up massive opposition to us in Mineral King.

Would it not be much better to simply ignore other proposed ski developments which happen to exceed the 80 acre limit? In other words, simply avoid taking a stand on them. Unless, of course, we might find them objectionable for other reasons. I guess you might say I advocate letting this particular sleeping dog lie.

It seems to me the problem could be solved by limiting Club endorsement of the Report to "its realistic appraisal of the effect of motor vehicle traffic on sensitive environments and its bold proposals to restrict such traffic in the Mammoth Lakes and San Joaquin Canyon areas." In other words, endorse those parts we like, and ignore the rest.

Apparently the Report discusses the San Joaquin drainage, in which case it involves Tehipite Chapter directly. I am writing Joe Radel to see whether we can get a copy of at least that portion which deals with Tehipite territory, especially since Barbara Johnson indicates that he is welcoming public input.

cc. Roger Mitchell
Marjorie Sill
Irving Pressman
Barbara Johnson
Harriet Allen
Jonathan Ela

Sincerely,

George
George W. Whitmore
Conservation Chairman, Tehipite

Letter to Luis

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

24 February 1971

Luis G. Ireland
4414 San Ramond Drive
Davis
California 95616

Dear Luis,

The enclosed Forest Service announcement regarding the High Sierra Primitive Area (Monarch Wilderness) will undoubtedly be of interest to you. Note that they are proposing the boundaries be extended all the way down to the rivers, and to within five hundred feet (I don't know whether linear or elevation-wise) of the road. We had suggested this as a possibility to them, but I have no idea whether this affected their thinking or whether they would have done it anyway.

San Joaquin Wilderness bill has been re-introduced, as you will have noticed by now. (H.R. 4270, referred to Aspinall's committee)

We would certainly appreciate your noting carefully the enclosed clipping from the Fresno Bee of 19 February, as it illustrates very clearly how this wilderness proposal is very much at the mercy of congressmen ~~xxxx~~ with whom we have very little representation.

Although none of the proposed highway, and only a very small fragment of the proposed wilderness, lies within Sisk's district, nevertheless he is the only one making any noise on either issue. But he is so completely hostile toward the Sierra Club that most of us feel we are wasting our breath talking to him.

The real hope seems to lie in winning over Biz Johnson. But because of his friendship with Sisk, it would appear that our only change of winning Johnson is to convince him that is what his electorate wants--ie. wilderness classification for the corridor. We are not alone in hoping that you, and others in Mother Lode Chapter, can see to it that pressure is gradually brought to bear on Johnson from within his own district. (I say "gradually" because we have been led to believe that Johnson would rebel at any overt signs of pressure tactics; certainly a slower buildup would have more the appearance of a true groundswell of public opinion.)

Sorry we didn't make it to the Palo Alto Wilderness Subcommittee meeting--we simply got snowed under. Has a date been picked for the next meeting?

Sincerely,

George Whitmore
Conservation Chairman

filed with H.S. Primitive Area

letterhead

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

24 February 1971

Francis J. Walcott
3500 Fulton Street Apt 14
San Francisco
California 94118

Dear Francis,

The enclosed Forest Service announcement regarding the High Sierra Primitive Area (Monarch Wilderness) will undoubtedly be of interest to you. Note that they are proposing the boundaries be extended all the way down to the rivers, and to within five hundred feet (I don't know whether linear or elevation-wise) of the road. We had suggested this as a possibility to them, but I have no idea whether this affected their thinking or whether they would have done it anyway.

San Joaquin Wilderness bill has been re-introduced, as you will have noticed by now. (H.R. 4270, referred to Aspinall's committee).

The enclosed clipping from the Fresno Bee of 19 February is of considerable interest because of the comments on congressional interrelationships.

Sisk is so hostile toward us that I am sure there is not the slightest possibility that he would ever agree to wilderness classification for the corridor. Fortunately, practically none of it is in his district.

On the other hand, I am laboring under the impression that Johnson is not hopeless, and that a show of interest from within his own district might even swing him over to our side eventually.

You will note the Bee clipping states that the Wilderness Society backs the San Joaquin Wilderness proposal. Is this correct? Did someone beat us to it and already get the Society to endorse the proposal? Not that we would object, of course! But I would like to keep my facts straight.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore
Conservation Chairman

Letter head

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

10 March 1971

Lloyd Tupling
235 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E.
Washington, D. C. 20002

Subject: San Joaquin Wilderness
(H.R. 4270)

Dear Lloyd Tupling,

I thought you should have the enclosed clipping from the Fresno Bee. It is of considerable interest because of the relationships (and consequent problems for us!) which it outlines between Congressmen McFall, Bizz Johnson, and Sisk.

Thank you for inserting the notice of bill introduction in the National News Report. Because of the implications regarding the integrity of the John Muir Trail, this issue is proving to be of considerable interest over a very widespread area--our latest request for information and an offer of help came from Florida!

And please don't feel obligated to respond to this note.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore
Conservation Chairman

Letter head

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

10 March 1971

Norman B. Livermore, Jr.
Secretary, Resources Agency of California
Resources Building
1416 Ninth Street
Sacramento
California 95814

Subject: San Joaquin Wilderness
(H.R. 4270)

Dear Ike Livermore:

Enclosed are two recent clippings from the Fresno Bee concerning the San Joaquin Wilderness proposal. You have probably seen them already, but I am sending them on the chance you have not.

The clipping of February 19 is particularly interesting because of the relationships (and consequent problems for us!) which it outlines between Congressmen McFall, Johnson, and Sisk.

We would like to echo Mr. Waldie's thoughts, and hope that you will find it possible publicly to express support for wilderness classification for the "corridor", at least in principle.

While opposition to the road is obviously crucial, we feel that seeking wilderness classification for the area has the advantages of a positive approach and consequently should be pushed strongly--it gives us a chance to stop being defensive and to force Mr. Sisk into the role of being "opposed to progress".

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore
Conservation Chairman

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

20 March 1971

Allyn Saroyan
Route 1, Box 235 Apt 13
Fort Walton Beach
Florida 32548

Dear Allyn,

Your inquiry re. the San Joaquin Wilderness was most timely. The new bill had been introduced in this session of Congress just twelve days before you sent the post card. And support is very decidedly needed! From all over the country, and in great volume.

The biggest hang-up is that Congressman Harold T. (Biz) Johnson, in whose district the proposed wilderness lies, is not among the sponsors of the bill. This is probably largely because he and Sisk are pretty thick, and of course Sisk is violently anti-wilderness and is doing his best to ram Interstate 70 across Minaret Summit.

We feel the best course of action, given these circumstances, is for everyone throughout the country to write to his own congressman, and also to Aspinall, and send copies to Waldie. As described in the February Topics enclosed. There are indications that it would not be wise to try to pressure Johnson except from within his own constituency. If he is pushed too hard, he might turn against us. As it is, he is relatively neutral at this point. We feel ~~ik~~ he would be best approached by his colleagues, rather than by non-constituent citizens. (Johnson is caught in the middle on this issue because his constituency includes both sides of the Sierra and while there is some organized pro-highway sentiment on the Madera side, there is anti-highway sentiment on the Inyo side.)

Feel free to use the enclosed material in any way--plagiarize, condense, reprint, etc. I don't care what is done with it as long as it helps the cause.

This is truly a national issue because it involves the integrity of the John Muir Trail. Of course the entire High Sierra is a national resource, but people would probably respond more readily to a specific threat such as the present one of the John Muir Trail being severed.

In case somebody starts getting technical and says the trail is already cut by a road, you will recall that this is only a dead end dirt spur which runs down to a parking area ~~as~~ for ^{the} Rainbow Falls trail. And as a matter of fact it is my understanding that the Forest Service is in the process of re-routing the trail so it will ^{go} through Fish Valley instead of its previous high-level alignment. When this is done that dirt spur will be completely avoided, as the trail would then follow the (existing) route along the east margin of the Postpile/boundary. Of course any trans-sierra ~~crossing~~ highway crossing would cause unavoidable, irrevocable, and massive damage to the J.M. Trail's integrity (Sisk has claimed that it wouldn't matter, since the trail is already cut by a road.) But all these technicalities are probably best avoided

unless someone else brings it up, in which case knowledge of the facts makes it easy to handle the situation.

Of course I would like very much to see anything you are able to get into print. It sometimes is very depressing to struggle along in an apparent vacuum. Whenever I learn that someone, somewhere, is doing something for the San Joaquin Wilderness, the knowledge has a rejuvenating effect which overcomes the feeling of hopelessness which otherwise tends to settle in.

So far we have the support of The Wilderness Society, the National Rifle Association, the Spokane Mountaineers, and the Merced Fish and Game Club. We hope to be adding to this list. How about the Fort Walton Beach Association of Garden Clubs? (I mean it--a diversity of supporting organizations always looks good.)

Information re. where to send money for the Topics is in the issue I am sending you.

I will eagerly await a progress report.

Sincerely,

George Whitmore

(Forgot to mention that we feel the main emphasis should be on promoting the San Joaquin Wilderness on its own merits. We sometimes have difficulty with people looking upon it as a "stop-the-highway" measure, and they get so engrossed in stopping the road that they forget all about what a nice place the San Joaquin Wilderness is, and that is really why we were concerned about the road in the first place. Stopping the road is one issue, but incorporating the San Joaquin Wilderness into the National Wilderness Preservation System goes much beyond merely stopping the road. It also gives us a positive issue--we can be for the wilderness, and thus avoid the appearance of negativism which we are so often accused of.)

3/21/71

Minaret Summit Highway, west side (Granite Creek)
letter and map of 3/14/71 (authorship purposely omitted; it was
by G. Whitmore, Conservation Chairman, Tehipite Chapter, Sierra
Club)

DISTRIBUTION:

Ike Livermore (he received the original a week earlier than
the rest of you are receiving this copy)

Ray Sherwin

Mike McCloskey

Dave Van de Mark

Tony Chasteen

Barbara Johnson

Latest information seems to indicate that action of some sort
(possibly advertising for bids?) is imminent on the six to seven
mile segment from Jackass Rock past Squaw Dome to Clover Meadow.
This would apparently be by the Bureau of Public Roads with
Forest Highway funds. Tehipite Chapter feels that the esthetic
impact of this would be minimal, because it would largely consist
of upgrading an existing road and the nature of the terrain is
such that damage would be minimal. BUT, it may be advisable to
oppose it for political reasons--perhaps we could agree ~~xxxxxx~~
to give up opposition to that segment if the Forest Service would
give up their Granite Creek bridge project.

G. Whitmore