TO: Joe Fontaine, Mike Weege, Pete Nelson, Larry E. Moss, Jim Moorman, Chuck Clusen, Jake Miller, Marge Sill, June Dailey, Luis Ireland, Phil Farrell, Nick Van Pelt, Jerry Meral

FROM: George Whitmore

SUBJECT: USFS Forest Reestablishment draft EIS

DATE: 21 January 1974

Enclosed is a copy of our comments, dated 12 January 1974, on the above subject.

In an attempt to achieve a coordinated response, we were in contact with various Sierra Club people throughout the sixty day comment period. Contacts included individuals in positions of responsibility within the SCRCC and the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund.

A primary consideration was to avoid making remarks which could be harmful to the brushland management lawsuit.

We hope we have succeeded in this, and that Phil Farrell's comments will prove to be constructive and useful.

Your comments on any aspect of this situation--including the draft EIS itself, our procedures, or our comments--would be appreciated.

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg, CA 93631

8 Feb 74

Eileen Devine

Dear Eileen:

This will go out in today's mail, and hopefully reach you in tomorrow's mail.

We will be in Fresno tomorrow, and will phone you to see whether or not you will have received this. If you have not, we will have a copy of it with us and will bring it to you at that time.

By the time I finished making all the notes I wanted to, I found that I had practically written the letter. So I went ahead and typed a rough draft in letter form.

There may be things you would like to add. Or perhaps you feel that something should be changed. Or you may find ways of improving upon the syntax, etc. That is why I double-spaced this draft; that makes it easier to insert alterations.

The final draft should be single-spaced in the text of each paragraph in order to conserve space and paper. Of course double-spacing would still be used between paragraphs and in other appropriate places.

After seeing what I had written, I decided it would be better if you did not sign your name to it. Sotero already hates my guts, so I can say anything I want and have nothing to lose. It will not take too long before you become a member of Sotero's fan club, and when that time comes then you, too, will be more free to say what you really think. But in the meantime you are of more value to the cause if you you maintain as low a profile as possible.

To make the point clear, I should point out that membership in Sotero's fan club is open to all who differ with him philosophically, and who he finds are effective in implementing their philosophy to the detriment of his. This includes the Sierra Club as an organization, and those members within it who are effective in implementing its goals.

The only way to get along with Sotero is either to agree with him, or to be a weak and ineffectual person. I don't think you are willing to pay either of those prices, and that is why your eventual membership in the fan club is inevitable.

I don't think Harold Thomas would hesitate to sign this letter, although you could phone him to discuss it if you want. His number is 299-6379. It is a local call for you, but long-distance for me.

Since we are planning on putting it in the mail next Wednesday night, please make sure that you have Xeroxed several sets of it before bringing it to the meeting. I would like a copy, and I would like to send copies of it to several other people. Of course you can be reimbursed for such costs, so do not skimp on the copying for reasons of money.

I would like perhaps a ~~do~~ half dozen sets; others wanting a set will be Norman Hill, Harold Thomas, yourself, Bert Woodruff (so it can be filed with the chapter minutes), and possibly others. So I would suggest a full dozen copies anyway.

Since I have gone ahead and more or less written a full letter to Sotero, you might feel that you have not accomplished what you set out to do. I hasten to assure you that you have. Starting with your review of the maps, followed by your review of the previous correspondence, and then by your very meticulous compilation of the information into the three-page document you distributed at the last ex comm meeting, you laid the groundwork which made it possible for me then to dash off the enclosed comments. I referred to your compilation repeatedly while I was writing my comments. It saved me an immense amount of time--and consequently it provided the incentive which I had been lacking (since last April) to sit down and write the comments. Thank you.

Sincerely,

George Whitmore

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg, CA 93631

11 Feb 74

Eric Gerstung

Dear Eric:

Luis Ireland has sent me a copy of a (undated) letter from you to him. The subject was the Stanislaus N.F. TMP draft EIS.

You made some extensive remarks regarding large clear-cuts in red fir forests. I found these very interesting in relation to my observations on the Sierra N.F.

You mentioned that it has been found (at least by the Tahoe N.F.) that the red fir does not re-seed itself too well if the patches are more than two acres in extent. In this regard, I am under the impression that the California Region of the USFS is now recommending strip-cutting in order to keep the edges of the cut fairly close together, but still permit a fairly large acreage per cut. In other words, if the USFS is correct on this, then acreage alone could not be used as a valid criterion. It would depend largely on the configuration of the cut.

You also mention that hand planted seedlings have been dying because of excessive sun and drying of the soil. Apparently you were referring to red fir seedlings, because in your next sentence you mention that the Tahoe N.F. is now planting Jeffrey pine seedlings "as a last resort and are not really sure they will grow well in a red fir area."

In this latter regard, to my knowledge the Sierra N.F. has not been attempting to re-stock with red fir seedlings. Instead they have been planting Jeffrey pine quite extensively in their clear cut openings from which they took mostly mixed fir. (red and white, ie. true fir). I have asked them what makes them think the Jeffrey will grow in an area which is naturally red and white fir. Their answer has been that the fir is a climax species, and that there was undoubtedly Jeffrey and other species in the area at some earlier period. All they are doing, they claim, is what nature would eventually do on its own anyway. That is, repeat the species cycle following the devastation of the climax forest.

I must admit that the Jeffrey seedlings I have seen have generally been establishing themselves very nicely. In many areas it appears that there has been practically no loss whatsoever of the seedlings...that is, essentially a 100% survival. And this is in the midst of a fir forest.

Actually, I was under the impression that the reason they were planting Jeffrey instead of replacing what they removed was simply that Jeffrey is a higher valued species at present. But perhaps they got into this after failures at re-stocking with fir. I will try to inquire about this.

If you know of specific malpractices in this area we would appreciate knowing about them so we could check it out. Also please let me know if my above remarks indicate that I need clarification on something.

cc. Luis Ireland

Sincerely,

George Whitmore

TO: Those concerned with National Forest land management problems, <u>including roadless areas</u>.*

FROM: George Whitmore, Co-Chairman of NCRCC Federal Lands Committee.

SUBJECT: USFS Unit Planning process.

DATE: 15 February 1974

The enclosure speaks for itself. The purpose of this cover letter is to encourage you to recognize the extreme importance of our participation at the earliest possible time -- like now.

Although circumstances will vary from one Forest to another, there are indications that much of the planning will be far more intensive and meaningful than in the past. Consequently, if we fail to involve ourselves in this we will be suffering the consequences many decades hence, in fact forever in some cases.

Please assume a personal responsibility in this matter. Provided we get the troops involved, it <u>can</u> be a winner!

* This is going to NCRCC Federal Lands Committee members and to other individuals in Northern California. It is also going to Joe Fontaine, Claus Engelhardt, Jim Stewart, Mike Weege, and Bruce Patrovsky.

TO: Those concerned with National Forest land management problems, including roadless areas. *

FROM: George Whitmore, Co-Chairman of NCRCC Federal Lands Committee

SUBJECT: USFS Unit Planning process.

DATE: 20 February 1974

The enclosure is a follow-up to the mailing which I sent you a few days ago.

It provides an explanation of the USFS Unit Planning process as seen from our point of view, and should help to make this extremely important subject more clear

I share Shelley's judgment that "The importance of public involvement cannot be stressed enough," and that the Unit Planning process must be "our high priority involvement for this year."

* This is going to NCRCC Federal Lands Committee members and to other individuals in Northern California. It is also going to Joe Fontaine, Claus Engelhardt, Jim Stewart, Mike Weege, Bruce Patrovsky, and Martha Voght. I realize that some of you have already received it because you are chapter conservation chairmen. Faced with continual changes in chapter officers, I chose to let duplicate mailings go to some rather than run the risk of completely missing others.

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

12 March 1974

Everett Towle, Supervisor
Inyo National Forest
2957 Birch Street
Bishop
California 93514

Dear Mr. Towle:

In accordance with the "to whom it may concern" letter which Doug Leisz sent out in January of this year, I am hereby contacting you to let you know that I "would like to participate in land use planning" for at least some of your planning units.

Listing the units in chronological sequence, I would like information on

Horseshoe Meadow
Bishop Creek
Monoplan
Mount Whitney
June Lake.

If draft or final EIS's have already been issued for any of these units, I would appreciate receiving a copy.

I presume that you have developed some method of facilitating citizen involvement at fairly early stages in your planning (ie. long before the draft EIS is written). Whatever method you have devised, I would appreciate being plugged in.

In addition to the listed planning units, I am also exceptionally interested in management of the Mammoth Lakes/Agnew Meadow/Reds Meadow area. I was under the impression that you had been working on a plan of some sort for this area, but do not find it listed among the named planning units. What is the status of your planning for this area?

In particular, what ever came of the "Porter Plan", the various ideas for closing the road and substituting some mode of public transportation beyond Minaret Summit, the plans for ski development of Sherwin Bowl, etc?

How does all this relate xxxxxxx to your unit planning process which was described in Doug Leisz' letter of January 1974? I guess what I'm trying to askx is, why wasn't this area listed as one of the ones for which you will use the unit planning process?

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

9 May 1974

Everett Towle, Supervisor
Inyo/ National Forest
2957 Birch Street
Bishop
California 93514

RE: Monoplan

Dear Mr. Towle:

On March twelfth I wrote you inquiring into various aspects of your unit planning processes, and requested that I be "plugged in" to these processes.

In particular, I expressed an exceptional interest in planning for the Mammoth Lakes/Agnew Meadow/Reds Meadow area. I received some descriptive material of a general nature outlining the "Monoplan" concept, and assumed that I would receive more specific information as it became available.

I have just learned that a plan proposal has been made public as part of Phase III, but I have received nothing from you or any other entity. I would greatly appreciate immediate receipt of whatever information has been made public. This would include, but not be limited to, plan proposals, plans, draft EIS/EIR, final EIS/EIR, etc.

I am requesting that, in the future, I receive such materials automatically as soon as they become available.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

BCC: Tony Chasteen
Hal Thomas

also known as "Congress." Sincerely, George

{ this line appeared at the bottom on the original.

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg, CA 93631

20 July 1974

Eileen Devine

Dear Eileen,

RE. Smith timber sale, Sierra N.F.

You have inquired several times as to why the Sierra Club did not oppose the Smith sale, but your inquiries have never come at a time when it was practical to go into the matter in the depth required.

I have gone through my file and selected those documents which I feel might best answer your question. I urge you to read them closely, with a map beside you for reference while you are reading. Then, with this background, it might be possible to handle specific questions you might have while on the trail or in the middle of a meeting.

I emphasized the word "closely" because some of the ideas expressed in the enclosed letters tread a rather narrow line, and a non-critical reading could easily result in misunderstanding.

In addition to reasons for non-opposition which I expressed in my letters, you will note additional reasons which, however, are not reduced to the written word. This includes the fact that neither Barry Fisher nor Jerry Mallett responded to my letters, aside from the fact that Barry asked me to refer the matter to the Sierra Club's consulting forester, who was in turn to give Barry his opinion. This didn't really work, as you will note; Al Goes' letter missed the point, and did not really address the issues I had raised.

The history of the Smith sale (and of other sales in the Rancheria area) is a good illustration of the fact that nothing happens within the Sierra Club unless some individual wants it to happen. Those people who were actively participating in the Club's functioning felt that opposition to the Smith sale would not be the wisest use of our resources; those people who might have felt otherwise were not active. Therefore, nothing was done--at least publicly.

In short, this is an illustration of the fact that the Club operates on the "squeaky wheel" principle. Just like U.S. society at large.

To return to your original question, "Why didn't the Club oppose the Smith sale?" Remember that our opposition couldn't care less what the answer to that question is. What they are asking is, "Why is the Club opposing the Three Springs, RanSpan, and Garlic sales?" I think that is a perfectly legitimate question. I also think that there are fewer than half a dozen people in the Club (out of 145,000) who could answer that question. And I am deeply disturbed by the fact that nobody within the Club is asking it. Instead, our members seem to be taking it for granted that we should be opposing all timber sales in virgin forest; but, at the same time, they can't express a viable rationale for such a view. By "viable" I mean an argument which would hold up in the court of public opinion--which happens to be the highest court in the land.

Remember that, while SCLDF is fighting the battle in the regular courts, we have to be preparing to do battle in that ultimate court, which is

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

21 August 1974

Sotero Muniz, Supervisor
Sierra National Forest
Federal Building - 1130 "O" Street
Fresno
CA 93721

Dear Sotero:

Re. Land Use Planning. Your file 8200.

You recently sent an undated form letter on the above subject. It was mailed to me by Fresno State University, and their postmark was dated July 23, 1974.

In that letter you stated that FSU people would be contacting me for information, and you concluded with, "May I count on your cooperation?"

At the time, I took this to be a rhetorical question, and so did not feel that any response on my part was called for. Ihave recently concluded that you might not have intended it in that way, and that perhaps you really did want a "yes" or "no" response. Accordingly, I am writing to you at this time to say that my answer is "yes."

My concern has been prompted by several factors. These include the amount of time which has elapsed since I returned the tear-out questionnaire which was in the land use planning booklet which you sent me. It also includes the fact that the August 20th date which had been anticipated for formation of the working groups has come and gone. But perhaps most importantly, I have heard via the grapevine that those who indicated a willingness to participate in the actual planning process were to be contacted by telephone. It seems entirely possible, if not likely, that your staff will fail to make contact with me if they rely on that particular means of communication. I am thus requesting that if your staff fails to reach me by phone, that they please use the mail as a back-up means of communication.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

P.S. Please do not feel obligated to respond to this letter unless, of course, there is some problem of which I should be informed.