

*A set of the material was sent to Ed Royce  
on 15 January, following discovery right of 14 January  
that he was new NCRCC chairman.*

P. O. Box 485  
Kingsburg  
California 93631

14 January 198870

Claude A. Look, Chairman  
Northern California Regional Conservation Committee  
411 Los Ninos Way  
Los Altos  
California 94022

Dear Tony,

The sole purpose of this letter is to attempt to bring the NCRCC mailing list into agreement with reality, insofar as this relates to Tehipite Chapter.

I am commencing my third year as Tehipite Conservation Chairman, and I am still not on your distribution list. Except for a couple mailings sent out by Ramona Wascher during your absence this past summer/fall, I have never received notification of any NCRCC functions during my entire tenure as Tehipite Conservation Chairman. This is in spite of repeated requests by myself and others that I be placed on the distribution list.

Perhaps the problem is that you have my name, but not the address. The only address I have had for more than three years is the one given above. Some conservation mailing~~s~~ lists distributed earlier last year gave a completely fictitious address for me. This unfortunate error seems largely to have been corrected by now, although perhaps you are still trying to use the fictitious address.

As I said, my correct address is given above.

I would appreciate the opportunity to attend NCRCC meetings.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore  
Conservation Chairman  
Tehipite Chapter

(Our chairman informs me that he has just received a request from Mills Tower for names and address of our new chapter officers and committee chairmen, council representative, etc. However, they did NOT make any inquiry on behalf of the NCRCC; I fear that this is an indication that past errors will be perpetuated. Please note the enclosed lists.)

Tehipite Chapter officers (NCRCC related) for 1970:

George W. Whitmore (Conservation Chairman) (209) 897-3692  
P. O. Box 485  
Kingsburg  
California 93631

(Miss) Barbara Johnson (Conservation Chairman, Merced Group)  
2259 E. Childs Avenue  
Merced (209) 723-1836  
California 95340

Charles Cehrs (Chairman) (209) 227-7667  
3035 E. Buckingham Way  
Fresno  
California 93726 (zip code not correct on current List 24)

Charles Ostrander (Chairman, Merced Group) (209) 358-2596  
1786 Eucalyptus  
Atwater  
California 95301

The following information is listed on the chance that you might be interested in clearing out some of the dead wood from List 24"A" (Associate Members, NCRCC).

Ed Daubs - no longer ~~has~~ any official standing or capacity in Tehipite Chapter.

Mark Massie - no longer chairman (he is now membership chairman only, which would not appear to be NCRCC related).

Leota Massie - not a member of Tehipite Chapter (I believe she is affiliated with Loma Prieta Chapter).

James Kiriara - no longer chairman of Tehipite's Merced Group (he is their outings co-chairman, which would not appear to be NCRCC related).

Marsh Pitman - no longer has any official standing or capacity in Tehipite Chapter, or in our Merced Group.

Regarding List 24 (NCRCC Members), X I believe Norman Poitevin has not been able to attend a meeting for at least the past two years. It would appear that appointment in perpetuity is a questionable procedure.

Charles Cehrs has not been in attendance for quite some time, but at least he is interested and has made some effort to try to have Tehipite Chapter represented at the NCRCC meetings. Since he is now our chapter chairman, his interest probably will assume a different perspective.

P. O. Box 485  
Kingsburg  
California 93631

15 January 1970

Ed Royce, Chairman  
Northern California Regional Conservation Committee  
842 S. Livermore Avenue  
Livermore  
California 94550

Dear Ed Royce,

I believe the enclosed copies of material which I sent to Tony Look yesterday are self-explanatory. At a meeting last night I learned that Tony is no longer chairman of the NCRCC, and that you are now the fortunate one.

I have not been receiving some (all?) of the Mills Tower distribution, probably because Tehipite Chapter was deleted from mailing list No. 12, and my name was listed as Conservation Education Chairman for the Southeast Chapter! Otherwise I would have known earlier that you are now the NCRCC chairman.

Could you please send me a notification of the January 25th (Sunday?) NCRCC meeting. Someone told me there is to be one, but I did not have an opportunity to read the announcement, which apparently contains quite a bit of other information.

Of course I would also appreciate receiving an agenda, if one is available.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore  
Conservation Chairman

(Our chapter is greatly concerned over the Tuolumne River Conference Report, with regard to both its present and future status. Contrary to what you will have been told, we have not participated in the drafting of this report, nor have we had the opportunity to do so. May I emphasize that this is contrary to what you will have been told. Since a sizeable portion of this river lies in our territory, and since this portion bears the burden of the Eleanor and Hetch Hetchy dams in Yosemite National Park, we feel that it is misleading--in fact dangerous--to promote the Tuolumne River Conference Report on the basis that it has been to date. Can this matter be placed on the NCRCC agenda for clarification?)

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P. O. Box 485  
Kingsburg  
California 93631

22 Jan 70

Ed Royce  
Chairman, NCRCC  
842 S. Livermore Avenue  
Livermore  
California 94550

Dear Ed,

Thank you for seeing to it that I received a copy of the revised Tuolumne River Report.

Bob Hackamaack had written a comment on the inside cover which indicated that he feared I would disseminate the information outside the Sierra Club. Relevant to this, note the copy enclosed of the letter which I am sending him.

This appears to be a reviving of an earlier accusation, one which I had assumed to be past history. Since some people are apparently not willing to drop the matter, you will apparently be hearing more of it.

In order to understand the problem, you would have to read the material which we distributed last fall in connection with the Emigrant Wilderness proposal. At the time, I sent copies of this to Tony Look and Hulet Hornbeck. However, you may not have inherited that portion of the files--or may not have had a chance to go through all of it. Thus I am enclosing a complete set of the copies now.

All of this relates to the Tuolumne River Report quite directly. Our proposal regarding modification of the Emigrant Wilderness proposal was more or less "tabled" by Mills Tower. They took the position that the matter could be straightened out when the Emigrant Wilderness proposal comes before Congress, and there was thus no necessity to rock the boat at that time (ie. during the period when the public hearing record was open for written submissions).

We didn't agree with the decision, but accepted it as a matter of necessity. What we now fear is that nobody will do anything in the interim to prepare the club's position when the matter does go before Congress. We also feel that it is a mistake to assume that the matter should be debated in Congress, and feel that it would be preferable to try to work behind the scenes before it gets that far.

Since this involves development and management of the Tuolumne

River as a complete entity, it obviously should be part of the Tuolumne River Report.

We are disturbed over the fact that we cannot seem to get anyone to think in terms of how high Cherry dam could be or should be from the conservationist point of view. Instead, people prefer to think only in terms of what San Francisco is planning, not what San Francisco should be planning.

To illustrate: The average annual run-off from the Cherry Creek watershed is something on the order of 400,000 acre feet. The storage capacity of Cherry Lake is 269,000 acre feet. The total storage capacity of the Colorado River reservoirs is more than four times the average annual run-off of the Colorado River. It would take someone more knowledgeable than myself to know what a reasonable ratio of storage capacity to average annual run-off would be for Cherry Creek. But that is precisely the point--this should have been determined by the Tuolumne River Conference, and it was not done.

There is also the question of whether Cherry dam can be raised. The report of San Francisco's consulting engineers states that they considered this possibility and decided against it on economic grounds, not technical ones. This seems to be a crucial point, but the ~~R~~ Tuolumne River Report seems to ignore it. Mr. Rino Bei of Hetch Hetchy Water and Power stated to me that it was not possible to raise the type of dam which now exists at Cherry Lake; if this is so, why did their consulting engineers even consider the matter? Also, an engineer in our own chapter has shown me how this type of dam not only can be but is raised. It appears that San Francisco does not want to raise the dam; but it appears to us that the question is whether they should raise it. The Tuolumne River Report does not deal with this question.

A further point re. the capacity of Cherry Lake. Since the reservoir has gone over the spillway only twice, I believe, in the thirteen years of the dam's existence, some people claim that the capacity is already greater than needed. However, if one inquires as to why the reservoir has spilled only twice, he finds that it is because of heavy draw-downs for power generation--NOT because of inadequate run-off. In other words, the reservoir is being managed for power generation (dollars) only. We feel the question should be whether it is not possible to manage the reservoir for ~~xxx~~ water supply purposes. The Tuolumne River Report does not deal with this question, to my knowledge (having received it only a half hour ago, I have not had an opportunity to study it in detail). While economics should enter into conservation decisions, we do not feel that economics should be the sole criterion--as it sometimes appears to be.

It is Sierra Club (Mills Tower) policy ~~p~~ that "if at any time the existing structures at Hetch Hetchy or Lake Eleanor are to be replaced or rebuilt, consideration should be given to removal of the structures entirely." (Master Plan statement, presented 13 Feb 68) upon the authority of the Board of Directors) (emphasis provided) (copy enclosed)

This appears to be a call for eventual removal of both dams, it being recognized that it would be rather difficult to seek removal

of either of them without allowing adequate time for them to be phased out of the water and power system. This is precisely the position of Tehipite Chapter; a copy of our Yosemite Master Plan statement, ~~is~~ presented on the same date (although the written copy is dated one day earlier), is enclosed.

Similar statements were presented at the same hearing by the National Parks Association, the Sierra Land Use Committee (an organization with which we sometimes differ quite strongly!), and the Active Conservation Tactics group at Davis. I presented a statement in the same vein, speaking as a private citizen.

No organizations and no individuals spoke in favor of retaining the dams, or even commented upon them in any way. The only comments were from those who are seeking the removal of the dams; As you can see, this was a rather sizeable and significant segment of public opinion.

It is unfortunate that the Tuolumne River Conference has not chosen to align itself with these other groups, or even to recommend those policies which would be essential to an eventual realization of the professed Sierra Club goal.

We feel the reason for this is that the TRC has been obsessed right from the start with the idea of preserving the white water on the middle river. The whole "study" was oriented toward this goal, and consideration of other goals, if any, was minimal.

"The Tuolumne River Conference is content, for the moment, with opposing any new dam construction in the national park, secure in the knowledge that time and deterioration will eventually take too much of a toll on the City's present dams. Eleanor Dam already is failing, and its future beyond 1990 is uncertain, according to the analysis of the City's own consultants. When it must be removed, there should be no new structures to replace it."

What about repair of the existing dams? With regard to Eleanor, Hackamack mentions ~~xxxxxx~~ "renovation" in his letter of transmittal, but I do not find any opposition to repair or renovation in the body of the report. (Again, I have not had time ~~xx~~ to do more than skim it,) What about O'Shaughnessy? I find no recommendation whatsoever.

There seems to be a certain complacency regarding the future of these dams--time and deterioration will solve the whole problem. But in the meantime the Sierra Club should be recommending policies which ~~xxxx~~ would permit the dams to be phased out of the system. I fear that, in their zeal to preserve the white water, the TRC may actually be making San Francisco more dependent than ever on the dams, especially O'Shaughnessy.

I quote a recent statement (written) by Hackamack: "Ironically, because of an existing and operating San Francisco power house, good flows, though fluctuating, can be counted upon in the Tuolumne all summer."

Does the TRC ~~x~~ really want to see the dams eventually removed, or are they afraid this would deprive them of kayaking during the summer months? And are they, perhaps, afraid that removal of the

dams within the park would result in pressure for construction of new reservoirs on the middle river? Conversations with these people indicates to me that both of these points are very much in their minds, although of course they will not come right out and admit it in so many words.

Enlargement of Cherry Lake would appear to be a possible solution which might permit removal of the park dams and preservation of the white water.

Unfortunately, our ~~propix~~ proposal for this met with intense hostility. At one point ~~ixxxxxx~~ (in writing) I was called ~~aii~~ a liar, and told that "Your suggestions are no longer welcome."

Perhaps you or someone else could bring up some of the above points at the NCRCC meeting. Coming from someone else, they might possibly be considered less disruptive. They might also be listened to instead of summarily rejected.

See you Sunday!

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore  
Conservation Chairman

enclosures:

letter to R. Hackamack, 22 JAN 70

complete set of Emigrant/Cherry mailings:

To Whom it May Concern, 16 Oct 69

M. MCCloskey, 16 Oct 69

pp. 2-5, proposed modification, 16 Oct 69

To Sierra Club Leaders (selected), 10 Nov 69

To Harry Grace, 29 Oct 69

Yosemite Master Plan statement, Mills Tower, 13 Feb 68

" " " " , Tehipite, "12" Feb 68

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P. O. Box 485  
Kingsburg  
California 93631

22 Jan 70

Robert W. Hackamack  
5100 Parker Road, Route 1  
Modesto  
California 95350

Dear Bob,

I have just received the Tuolumne River Report, November 1969 revision. Thank you for sending it. This should enable our discussion this coming Sunday to be more meaningful.

I note the comment you have written on the inside cover.

According to my records, I mailed you a copy of my letter to Harry Grace (29 Oct 69) and my letter to Sierra Club leaders (10 Nov 69). But apparently you never received it, for which I am sorry. I am enclosing copies of these letters now, which I believe should help to clarify matters.

I presume you will be at the NCRCC meeting Sunday, and will look forward to seeing you then.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore  
Conservation Chairman

P. O. Box 485  
Kingsburg  
California 93631

7 Feb 70

Lawrence C. Hadley, Superintendent  
Yosemite National Park  
California 95389

Your File: N16

Dear Larry,

This is to acknowledge your letter of December 30, in which you invited Tehipite Chapter to participate in the Yosemite Cooperative Deer Studies.

We are definitely interested in cooperating with you on this.

Primary responsibility for working with you rests with Tehipite Chapter's Merced Group. We have already discussed this with their Conservation Chairman, and I suggest you correspond directly with her.

The address is

Miss Barbara Johnson  
2259 E. Childs Avenue  
Merced  
California 95340.

Thank you for soliciting our cooperation, and we apologize for this somewhat belated response.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore  
Conservation Chairman

cc. Barbara Johnson

P. O. Box 485  
Kingsburg  
California 93631

9 April 1970

Lawrence C. Hadley, Superintendent  
Yosemite National Park  
California 95389

Dear Larry:

The MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING Covering the Yosemite Cooperative Deer Studies should be changed in two places.

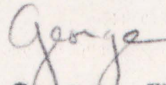
In paragraph two of page two, and in paragraph one of page three, the words "...and the Merced Group of the Sierra Club" should be changed to read "...and the Tehipite Chapter of the Sierra Club."

There are several reasons for this, most of them internal to the Club. From your point of view, however, the most important reason is that our Merced Group does not encompass all of the Park, merely most of it. (All of Yosemite lies within Tehipite Chapter.)

The Sierra Club by-laws do not permit a Group to formulate policy. That privilege is reserved to the Club's Board of Directors and to the Executive Committees of the Chapters. Thus, even though we hope that most of your contact with the Club at the working level will be through our Merced Group, this must nevertheless be within the framework of policy established by the Tehipite Chapter and the Club's Board of Directors. This is why we work with our Merced Group, rather than turning them loose to work independently.

My letter of February 7 probably did not make this clear, and I apologize for any confusion I may have caused.

Sincerely,



George W. Whitmore  
Conservation Chairman

cc. Barbara Johnson

(I will hand-carry this letter to your office in the morning, so there will perhaps be an opportunity to make the change in the Memorandum of Understanding before it is signed.)

P. O. Box 485  
Kingsburg  
California 93631

24 May 70

Gail Hansen  
866 Karo Court  
Sunnyvale, Calif. 94086

Dear Miss Hansen:

I have been given a copy of your letter of March 18, addressed to the California Conservation Council in Santa Barbara. It had been sent to their local representative, Mr. Healey Tondel, who in turn had asked me whether I could provide you with the requested information regarding the Peripheral Canal.

Perhaps your best source of information would be Mr. Peter Zars, 1320 St. Charles Street, Alameda, California 94501. He has been involved in extensive studies of various aspects of the California Water Project, particularly as they relate to the Delta and S.F. Bay. These studies have been under the auspices of the San Francisco Bay Chapter of the Sierra Club.

Hopefully he could provide you with copies of pertinent documents. In my own file (which is quite incomplete) I find two rather lengthy documents which seem relevant to your inquiry:

One of these is titled "Bay-Delta Water Quality Subcommittee Preliminary Report", dated June 1966; 24 pages, four of which list references which you would probably find quite valuable.

The other document is titled "Statement of the Sierra Club, In the Matter of Application 5625 and thirty-eight other applications to appropriate from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Water Supply", dated January 15, 1970, and presented to the State Water Resources Control Board; fifteen pages.

Both of these documents were prepared by the Sierra Club's San Francisco Bay Chapter.

I have only one copy of each of these documents, and am somewhat reluctant to turn loose of them. Perhaps Zars has additional copies of these or other documents which you would find even more helpful. Try writing him. If for some reason he is unable to help you, then contact me and perhaps we could work something out.

You are probably familiar with Grv California, the journal of California Tomorrow. In scanning back issues I find articles which might be of some value to you in the following: Summer 1968 (Vol III, No. 3); Spring 1969 (Vol 4, No. 2); Winter 1969/70 (Vol 5, No. 1). Many libraries carry this periodical.

As well as writing Zars, you might simultaneously write Ed Royce, 842 S. Livermore Avenue, Livermore, Calif 94550. He is chairman of the Sierra Club's Northern California Regional Conservation Committee, and is currently quite involved with the California Water Plan/State Water Project. (Zars has become involved in air pollution recently, and may not have current files on water problems.)

I believe you will find that the crux of the Peripheral Canal issue hinges on obtaining guarantees of adequate releases into the

Delta. Without such guarantees, we are faced with probable deterioration of the Delta. With guarantees, the Peripheral Canal actually could enhance water quality in the Delta--the question is not whether it could, but rather whether it will. Given political realities, it seems unlikely!

Check the current (May?) issue of Ramparts. The issue is devoted to ecology, and there is an article on the State Water Project. I haven't had a chance to read it, but a two-page color cartoon paints a very derogatory picture, and is worth the price of the magazine.

I regret the delay you have been subjected to, but hope the above may be of some value to you.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore  
Conservation Chairman  
Tehipite Chapter  
Sierra Club

P. O. Box 485  
Kingsburg  
California 93631

29 May 70

Michael McCloskey  
Executive Director, Sierra Club  
1050 Mills Tower  
San Francisco  
California 94104

SUBJECT: Yosemite Valley Bridge

Dear Mike,

This is in response to your letter of March 30 to Barbara Johnson, our Merced Group Conservation Chairman, in which you asked for further information regarding the proposed new bridge across the Merced River in Yosemite Valley. In the interim, I had a lengthy discussion with a high-ranking member of the Yosemite administration about this subject, so I am the one who is answering your letter.

We are finding it difficult to obtain definitive and complete information regarding the Yosemite Master Plan. This difficulty appears to exist for several reasons. The foremost is that the Master Plan itself is apparently not definitive and complete. It appears to be what is sometimes called a "schematic" plan in that it is tentative and apparently not based upon precise surveys; thus the final version could differ significantly from what is being discussed now.

Keeping the above uncertainty in mind, we offer the following.

There is a firm decision to use a bridge as a means of connecting Highway 120 and Highway 41 so motorists would not have to do any backtracking. Aside from the question of providing for through traffic, it would provide the means of getting Highway 41 (South Entrance) traffic to the parking lots and transportation system terminus at Big Meadow.

Apparently more than one site for the bridge was considered, but it is felt that there is really only one possibility, and that is shown on the enclosed map. The bridge location might be considered to be fairly precise, but the road approaches are approximate.

This location, about half way from Turtleback Dome to Arch Rock, is farther down the gorge than earlier remarks had led us to believe.

We have been told that, in order to avoid the high towers, it would NOT be a suspension bridge. However, this statement did not appear to have the benefit of engineering studies behind it. Considering the length of the span (one-half mile) and the height above the gorge (one thousand feet), I am wondering whether anything other than a suspension bridge would be feasible.

The Plan apparently calls for a major new road connecting El Portal with Big Meadow. (Such a road exists at present, but it is very rudimentary and unfit for any volume of public traffic.) Thus traffic through Merced and Mariposa would still have direct access to Yosemite Valley.

Although present Master Plan thinking calls for a transportation system from Big Meadow down the route of the Old Coulterville road, it has been pointed out that a bridge would permit it to follow the existing route across Turtleback Dome and through the Wawona Tunnel. This latter alternative would appear to be esthetically superior on two counts: (1) it would keep the public conveyance from pre-empting the narrow gorge between Cascade Valley and Valley View; (2) it would retain the present magnificent vistas from Turtleback Dome and Tunnel View.

The existing Big Oak Flat road from the Big Meadow junction down to the Valley floor would probably be abandoned, obliterated, or designated as a "trail".

The Plan calls for a public transportation system (probably along the route of the existing road) to Glacier Point, but this would start from Badger Pass or vicinity, and not from Yosemite Valley.

Without a bridge, the only automobile access to Badger Pass, the Yosemite West subdivision, Wawona, and the Mariposa Grove would be from the south via Highway 41. We feel that public pressure and political realities would make it impossible to convert Highway 41 into a dead-end route.

Furthermore, if automobile access to these points were eliminated, a huge increase in scope of the public transportation system would be required. Considering the increased cost and inconvenience to the park visitor, we are wondering whether the visitor's experience might not be degraded rather than enhanced.

As an alternative to a bridge, permitting cars to pass through Yosemite Valley is not acceptable to us. It appears that a bridge, at least in the location and of the type proposed, would be less objectionable.

One alternative which we conceived, and to which we have devoted much thought, calls for abandoning Highway 41 as the major southerly approach route to Yosemite Valley. It would be replaced with a major new highway which would take traffic from Highway 99 in the Fresno-Madera area (or from Highway 41 near Friant) and route it through the Raymond area to Mariposa. Highway 140 from Mariposa to El Portal could be upgraded, and a new link from El Portal to Big Meadow would provide a through north-south connection with Highway 120. It appears that such a route would be very little longer than the present Highway 41; in any event, it would probably be faster because there would be fewer miles of tortuous terrain. Being at lower elevations than Highway 41, it would provide more reliable year-around access to Yosemite Valley, and the reduced maintenance costs would help to offset the construction cost.

But such a proposal still leaves the problem of providing for access to Badger Pass, Yosemite West, Wawona, and the Mariposa Grove. Again, a bridge appears to offer the only feasible solution.

We have invested a considerable number of man-hours in an attempt to come up with a viable alternative to a bridge. The attempt has been unsuccessful to date. If someone else has the solution to this complex problem, we would be happy to hear it.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore  
Conservation Chairman, Tehipite Chapter