

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

Norman Hill
802 West Manning Avenue
Reedley
California 93654

21 Feb 72

Dear Norman,

Herewith is a list of areas Frances and I have decided should be studied for possible inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. It seems to us it would be desirable to discuss these ideas with those of others, and particularly to discuss criteria to be used in identifying areas for study recommendations. The logical forum would be your Wilderness Subcommittee; if Ed Gammon has not approached you regarding arrangements for postage and telephone expenses, I think it would be quite appropriate for you to take the initiative and ask him. It seems this should be done rather quickly in order that the Wilderness Subcommittee could have a recommendation to present to the March meeting of the Conservation Committee, little more than two weeks away.

SIERRA NATIONAL FOREST

South Fork Merced River--Hite Cove to Yosemite (incl. National Park land?)
(This is below the Henness Ridge fire lookout.)

White Chief-Quartz Mountain. (Contains Iron Lakes, Raymond Mountain, Fresno Dome) This area may not qualify for wilderness, but at least we should find out.

Chiquito Creek headwaters. (Contains Red Top and Madera Peak.)

San Joaquin (defacto) Wilderness.

South Fork San Joaquin River--Heitz Meadow to Mono Hot Springs.
(Sometimes referred to as the Pincushion area, but this is overly limited in its implications.)

Kaiser Peak

Quadruple Divide (defacto) Wilderness. Otherwise known as The Big Dinkey. These are names we have come up with to try to characterize and identify the area at the headwaters of Big Creek, Dinkey Creek, Helms Creek, and tributaries of the South Fork of the San Joaquin. It includes Mount Givens south through the Dinkey Lakes area to Eagle Peak. It appears to be the largest piece of defacto wilderness left in the Sierra N.F., outside of the San Joaquin Wilderness and the contiguous defacto parcels. It also tends to get overlooked because it is hard to characterize

Wishon--Courtwright east. (Areas east of the two reservoirs.)

Rancheria Creek. (Sometimes erroneously referred to as "Crown Valley" area.)

Spanish Mountain south. (Contains Garlic Falls, Deer Ridge, etc.) This should perhaps be treated as an addition to the High Sierra Primitive Area, which is currently under review. Strategy on this calls for discussion, and perhaps outside advice from Sierra Club members who have had more experience on Wilderness boundary strategy.

INYO NATIONAL FOREST

San Joaquin (defacto) Wilderness. We are sometimes so overwhelmed with the problems of trying to deal with the Sierra N.F. that we tend to overlook the fact that a significant portion of the San Joaquin Wilderness proposal lies in the INyo N.F. (This is still entirely within the Tehipite Chapter boundaries.)

We have not reviewed those portions of the Stanislaus N.F. and Sequoia N.F. which lie within Tehipite Chapter. This obviously should be done, although I think the possibilities are probably not too great. Tehipite Chapter has that portion of Stanislaus N.F. which lies in Merced and/or Mariposa Counties. We have that portion of Tulare County which lies north of a line drawn due east from Kingsburg, exclusive of Sequoia National Park.

I would like to comment on criteria, and the problem of how to avoid looking like we are asking for too much, but feel this could best be done in a subcommittee meeting. Perhaps we can do this soon.

Sincerely,

George & Frances

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

3 March 1972

Lowell Smith, Chairmen NCRCC

Dear Lowell,

In the "Resume and Synopsis" of the January 8 NCRCC meeting at Davis I find an item which I feel requires clarification.

Item 12.c., WILDERNESS SUBCOMMITTEE, Mining and Wilderness Act, states "...consensus that (seeking for elimination of the mining provisions in the Wilderness Act) is not a feasible action at this time."

Actually there was a consensus on this at the June 1971 meeting in Santa Rosa. But because the problem of staff activities p toward this objective persisted, the Tehipite Chapter felt that stronger action by the NCRCC was needed. This is why we requested this as an agenda item for the January 1972 meeting.

At the January meeting the Tehipite Chapter presented its resolution, the issue was debated, and a formal vote was taken. I do not have my notes readily available, but I believe there was not a single dissenting vote. In any event, our motion passed with relative ease following significant discussion.

I would like the record to so indicate, since this was the whole purpose in bringing the matter up.

My apologies to Ramona for not leaving (or sending) her a copy of the resolution, and I accept most of the blame for the item not having been recorded correctly. For the record, it was:

"WE are gravely concerned about the wisdom of mounting a campaign at this time to amend the Wilderness Act. Attempts to eliminate mining and grazing activities from existing or potential wilderness areas could make it much more difficult to incorporate new areas by arousing more intense opposition from those interests."

Since I failed to leave a copy of this with you also, you probably did not find it easy to convey the sense of it to Mike McCloskey and/or Ray Sherwin, as you had intended. I trust that this can now be done. Such action would be more timely than ever, as in the January issue of one of the chapter newsletters I noted still another instance of a staff member agitating for abolition of mining from wilderness areas. This is the fourth instance I have noted in the past half year; I am sure there have been others which have not come to my attention.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

29 April 1972

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

Dear Mike,

Enclosed you will find a clipping from the Fresno Bee in which you are quoted in such a way as to make it appear that the Sierra Club has endorsed the Forest Service's ultimate objective of establishing a restrictive permit system for wilderness use.

I realize that you would have said much more to the reporter than appeared in print, and that your statement in its entirety would be quite acceptable and consistent with Club policy. But the fact remains that, as it appeared in the Associated Press account as published in the Fresno Bee, your statement comes across in a way that is definitely not consistent with Club policy.

To save you the trouble of looking it up, I am enclosing a copy of the resolution on this subject passed by the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors on June 8, 1971. I am quite certain that this is the only policy statement which has come from the Board on this subject.

The reason I am certain of this is because I have had an intense personal interest in this problem and have been following it very closely. Because of this, I am fairly familiar with the "legislative history" of the Board's resolution. As a matter of fact, I was the one who moved adoption of the NCRCC resolution upon which the Board's action was based.

The subject of wilderness permits came to a head in the NCRCC, and ultimately with the Board, because there was an intense difference of opinion within the Club on the subject. Some members felt that we should endorse a restrictive permit system, while other members were adamantly opposed to it. The NCRCC resolution which came out of these discussions was an attempt to bring together the opposing points of view, and Board action was requested in an attempt to establish a Club policy within which everyone could work without undue sacrifice of his own personal views.

Like most resolutions which are formulated with the purpose of bringing together opposing points of view, this one was significant for what it did not say as much as for what it did say. Even though there had been intense pressure to endorse a restrictive permit system, both the NCRCC and the Board refused to do this. They also refused to oppose a restrictive permit system. What they did do was to take a position which left our options open.

This is why I am now extremely unhappy to find a major wire service reporting that the Sierra Club is supporting the Forest Service's drive to establish a restrictive permit system.

If I were not personally involved in this problem I would not bother to write you. But I have been, and continue to be, involved with Forest Supervisors, Park Superintendents, and the USFS Regional Office on this particular problem. This was previously in my capacity as conservation chariman of Tehipite Chapter, and presently as a member of Dick Sill's Impact Dialogue Committee which the Board resolution of 8 June 1971 established. In these capacities I have found that establishing and maintaining my personal credibility with the various public agencies is absolutely vital to achieving any meaningful communication with them.

Add the Associated Press version of what you said has just dealt a severe blow to my personal credibility. For the past year I have been struggling to get the Forest Service to accept the fact that the Club does not endorse the concept of a restrictive permit system. I have found that the present Supervisor of the Sierra National Forest simply refuses to believe this. More recently I found that Doug Leisz and others in the Regional Office also seem to have the feeling that the Club really endorses the restrictive concept, and that people like Dick Sill and myself are not reflecting Club policy when we try to tell them otherwise.

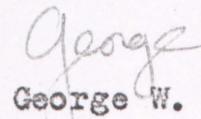
For God's sake, Mike, will you please write Doug Leisz immediately and let him know that you were quoted out of context. Remind him what the Club's position (Board Ex. Comm. resolution of 8 June 1971) really is, and point out to him that this does NOT constitute an endorsement of a restrictive permit system.

It would help if you would send copies of such a letter to all the Forest Supervisors in the California Region. And would you please send me a copy of your letter so I can see to it that the agency people I have had contacts with will see it.

Unless you do this my credibility with the USFS and NPS will have been irreparably damaged. Some damage has already occurred, and every day of delay will simply compound the problem.

Thanks for your help in straightening out this mess. I realize you are busier than most of us, but I feel very strongly that your immediate attention to this is absolutely imperative.

Sincerely,


George W. Whitmore

(Although it is a peripheral matter that does not directly involve Club policy, I thought you would be interested in the wilderness permit discussions which took place recently at the first meeting of the joint NCRCC/SCRCC Sierra Nevada Task Force. I have extracted the minutes of that meeting and a copy is enclosed. I find that the great concern over the implications of a restrictive permit system which was reflected at that meeting is indicative of a growing trend within California--even some of those who originally argued for endorsement of a restrictive permit system are beginning to have doubts about the wisdom of doing so.)

P.O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

12 June 72

Dear A & B,

As you see, we are not doing the Rae Lakes Loop. None of the Hiking Club members wanted or were able to go on a trip.

So we were at the S.N. Task Force meeting at Lodgepeople Saturday, and learned the following:

The S.C. Board's Ex. Comm. is meeting on Saturday the 17th at 1:00 p.m. in open session at the Colby Library.

The second item on their agenda has to do with wilderness permits.

Supposedly this is for the purpose of considering the NCRCC resolution which requests the Board to have a study of the entire problem done.

But I fear that if people who are concerned over the big picture of wilderness permits and all that they imply are not adequately represented, the Board Ex Comm just might do something which we would all end up regretting. Like putting the Club on record as saying a restrictive permit system would be just dandy, and they don't see any need to do the study requested by the NCRCC.

If this seems unlikely, it may be because you have not seen a couple more pieces of correspondence which have come my way recently from highly placed Club officers. Having seen it, I am greatly concerned over the possibility of bad things happening next Saturday.

I think Lowell Smith is also concerned, as he indicated that he felt it would be highly advisable for me to be at that meeting. I am under the impression that he feels it would be advisable for all concerned people to be present, as it may be necessary to let the Board Ex Comm know in some way that there is a significant element within the Club that is concerned about wilderness restrictions.

So I will be starting the SJW trip no earlier than Saturday evening. Possibly Sunday a.m. It appears that Frances will start with some others Saturday a.m., and I will have to overtake the group somewhere along the trail.

As you can see, this has great potential for a real snafu unless it is handled carefully. It appears that the thing for you to do is to decide now where you want to go for the first couple days, then phone us and let us know. I think it would be unwise to count on leaving a message at the car, especially when we don't even know now where the cars will be left. A note could be removed by natural or

unnatural causes before I found it, thus posing somewhat of a problem.

Presumably Frances will be able to get a ride with the people going from Bakersfield so we won't have two cars sitting up there for the vandals to work over. (We experienced vandalism at the Granite Creek campground last year--an attempt to steal gas, resulting in destruction of the gas cap and marring of the paint job on the truck.)

Ideally Tony would be at the Board Ex Comm meeting too, in accordance with Lowell's advice and wishes. It might also help to impress Ray Sherwin with the fact that ~~the~~ the great concern over wilderness permits is coming from people who count, not just a few eccentrics who have somehow managed to make themselves unpopular with the Board and staff both. (I fear that that is the current impression of the Club leadership.)

PLEASE PHONE.

G & F

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

15 July 1972

Harvey M. Seeley, Supervisor
Rogue River National Forest
333 West 8th Street -- P.O. Box 520
Federal Building -- U.S. Post Office
Medford
Oregon 97501

Sir:

Regarding the ongoing USFS review of undeveloped roadless areas, I presume the Pacific Northwest Regional Office of the USFS has issued a packet of information, including maps, for the entire Pacific Northwest Region.

Since I do not have the Pacific Northwest RO's address, I would greatly appreciate it if you could see to it that they send me one of the information packets.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

16 July 1972

Honorable B. F. Sisk
House Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

Sir:

I am writing to ask your assistance in obtaining copies of several bills. The problem is that I do not know either the author or the number of the bills, but I believe that you would have some way of identifying the bills and having copies sent to me.

All of them are the administration proposals for adding various areas to the National Wilderness Preservation System. They were introduced at the request of the President upon the recommendation of either the Forest Service or the National Park Service.

Because they are the administration proposals, it is possible that Mr. Aspinall has authored them in his capacity as chairman of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. But this is only a guess on my part.

The areas for which I would like copies of the bills, along with supporting maps and reports or communications ~~fax~~ from the President, are:

Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks
North Cascades National Park
Pinnacles National Monument
Emigrant Basin Primitive Area (proposed Emigrant Wilderness)

The first two listed areas (Sequoia-Kings and North Cascades) are described in House Document No. 92-102 (Parts 4 and 2, respectively). These two documents have maps and descriptions, but do not contain a bill number or author's name. I presume that similar documents are available for Pinnacles and Emigrant, but do not know. In any event, I would like copies of these documents in addition to the bills.

Thank you very much for your assistance. I am sorry if this is unintelligible, but I have tried as best I can to make it clear.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

16 July 1972

Honorable Henry M. Jackson
Chairman, Senate Interior Committee
Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20510

Sir:

On May 5 Senator Frank Church's Public Lands Subcommittee held hearings on an ~~amnibus~~ wilderness bill which involved Sequoia-Kings Canyon, North Cascades, Isle Royale, Shenandoah, Farallons, etc.

It is my understanding that you are the author of this bill, and that its number is S. 2453, although I am not positive of these two facts.

But because I think it is your bill, I am asking you to send me a copy of it.

I am not sure whether it is part of the bill or a separate supporting document, but there apparently exists detailed reports and maps explaining the proposals for each of the areas individually. I would greatly appreciate it if you could provide me with this information for Sequoia-Kings Canyon and for North Cascades.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

(As a separate but related item, bills have been introduced in Congress to incorporate the existing Emigrant Basin Primitive Area and Pinnacles National Monument into the National Wilderness Preservation System. I do not know the authorship or numbers of these bills, but presume that they have been referred to your committee. Since they are proposals submitted by the President at the request of the Forest Service and Park Service, it is entirely possible that you have authored these bills in your capacity as Interior Committee chairman. I would appreciate any assistance you could give me in obtaining copies of these bills, including the maps and detailed explanations. Thank you.)

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

16 July 1972

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

Subject: Pacific Crest Trail
and John Muir Trail

Dear Everett Towle:

Quite recently, while in the Sierra National Forest Office in Fresno, I was inspecting a map labeled "Pacific Crest Trail".

Several questions immediately came to my mind regarding portions of it in the vicinity of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River, and the fellows in the Fresno office suggested I write you about it since they were unable to answer my questions. To try to facilitate your response, I will enumerate the questions individually.

1. The section from Thousand Island Lake to a point near Minaret Falls (on Minaret Creek) does not follow the present route of the John Muir Trail. Instead it follows the high trail on the northeast side of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin as far as Agnew Meadow, then follows along the valley bottom. I had been under the impression that a policy decision had been made to the effect that the Pacific Crest Trail would be routed along the John Muir Trail throughout that stretch between Yosemite and the Whitney area in order to avoid spreading the impact presently found along the John Muir Trail. In essence, people within the Forest Service had told me that they didn't want to create/a second major thoroughfare that would attract heavy usage in the wilderness--that one John Muir Trail was enough. With this philosophy I heartily agreed. Could you please clarify this point for me? Has a decision really been made to create two major named thoroughfares in the section immediately north of Devil's Postpile? (Pacific Crest in addition to a separate John Muir?) If so, was any consideration given to the problems of doubling the area that would be impacted through overusage?

2. Of course I realize that you may have simultaneously re-routed the John Muir Trail so that it would follow the same alignment as the Pacific Crest Trail, but that the location would be a new one. If this is what you have done, I would commend you for having removed the heavily used thoroughfare from the more fragile country on the ~~the~~ opposite side of the Middle Fork (Garnet Lake, Shadow Lake, etc.) Is this what you have done? If not, could you indicate whether you considered it. If you have not considered it, I strongly urge that you do so.

3. Last month I found that you have re-routed the John Muir Trail in the vicinity of the Rainbow Falls parking lot so that the John Muir now goes around the end of the road instead of

senselessly crossing the road a couple hundred yards farther up. I was very pleased to discover this, and commend you for having removed the John Muir Trail from the needless influence of motor vehicles on the Rainbow Falls spur road.

But at the same time, I now find that the map indicates you have routed the Pacific Crest Trail (and perhaps the John Muir also?) across the spur road which dead ends at Agnew Meadow. Hopefully the line had simply been drawn somewhat inaccurately, and you have really run the trail around the end of the road rather than across it. Could you please clarify this for me? If you really have routed the trail across the road at Agnew Meadow, I strongly urge that you route it around the end of the road, exactly as you had previously done in the case of the John Muir Trail near Rainbow Falls.

4. The map shows the Pacific Crest Trail following the existing alignment of the John Muir Trail along the chain of lakes (Purple, Duck, etc.) above Fish Valley to its north. I had been led to believe (again, by Forest Service people) that a combined Pacific Crest/John Muir was to follow a new alignment through Fish Valley. The reason for that was to have been to get the heavy usage ~~imme~~ ~~thm~~ away from the more fragile high altitude lakes and into the lower (and highly scenic) Fish Valley because the latter could take a lot more usage (ie. accomodate more people). It appears that this decision was reversed, and I am wondering whether you can give me the reasons for maintaining the status quo? (It is worth noting, I feel, that the John Muir Trail originally went through Fish Valley. It would appear that there are strong reasons for letting it revert to its original route--and the Pacific Crest Trail along with it.)

5. As a final point, the map I saw showed the Pacific Crest Trail running along the west side of the Middle Fork in order to avoid the congestion and influence of civilization near the Devils Postpile formation. But it was suggested to me that the line may have been inaccurate here. Could you please clarify this for me? If the alignment is along the west side of the Middle Fork, at what point is it planned to build the new bridge which would be required? There would appear to be strong reasons for locating it as far downriver as practicable, but the map I saw showed it otherwise. Also, if the Pacific Crest Trail has been routed on the west side of the Middle Fork, has the John Muir Trail also been routed in that location? If not, I would strongly urge that this be done for the reasons alluded to above.

Thank you very much for your assistance. I hope I have conveyed the depth of my concern to you, and I anticipate corresponding further with you on these particular issues.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

7 October 1972

Pacific Crest Club
Camp Research Foundation
P. O. Box 1907
Santa Ana
California 92702

Subject: "family" or "spouse"
memberships

Gentlemen:

You asked for opinion on the above subject, and described a proposed change to permit such memberships.

I am in favor of such a provision, and see no objection to making it retroactive in order to permit "founder membership" for a spouse or even an entire family.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

10 October 1972

Stewart M. Brandborg, Executive Director
The Wilderness Society
729 Fifteenth Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20005

Dear Mr. Brandborg:

As a member of both the Sierra Club and The Wilderness Society, I am extremely concerned over the policies of these organizations on the subject of restrictive permit systems for Wilderness entry or use. I spoke briefly to Mr. Curtis in a phone call last Friday. I expressed my concern, and I believe he conveyed this to you via a written note.

It is my understanding that the Wilderness Society Council discussed and possibly acted upon this subject at their annual meeting this week.

You are perhaps aware that the Sierra Club Board of Directors plans to discuss the subject at their meeting ten days hence.

In order that I will have the benefit of knowing what action, if any, the Wilderness Society Council took on this subject, I am asking that you write me the gist of their action. I realize it may not be in final form yet, but I would greatly appreciate knowing at least in a general way what direction the Council's discussion took.

Your response would have to be made very shortly if it is to reach me prior to the Sierra Club Board of Directors meeting.

If they are not already aware of the Wilderness Society Council's action, I am sure Mike McCloskey and Ray Sherwin would like to receive copies of your response to me.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

cc. Ray Sherwin
Mike McCloskey

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

10 Oct 72

Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund
311 California Street, Suite 311
San Francisco
California 94104

Re. De Facto Wilderness Suit - Trial Preparation
(Sierra Club v. Butz)

Attention: Cynthia Wayburn, your letter of 11 Sep 72 to Lowell Smith.

Referring to your points in sequence,

1. I have tapes of some of the statements which were made at the Fresno hearing. (About one hour total of tape.)

4. In the Sierra National Forest the Rancheria Creek area was omitted from the inventory because of the presence of a motor vehicle way. I walked this MVW in its entirety last Sunday and found that its impact is minimal--it certainly would not disqualify the area for Wilderness classification. It could revert to a natural appearance very easily and quickly.

I know of two other areas in the Sierra N. F. where this same situation is true, but Rancheria Creek is of greater concern, and also is a larger area than the others.

Rancheria Creek is of considerable interest to various people in the Sierra Club (Larry Moss in L.A., Luis Ireland, Joe Fontaine, Lowell Smith, etc.). Many people want to see it protected as Wilderness, and it might be worth making a case out of this particular example for that reason.

The Forest Service plans the first of several timber sales in the lower end of the Rancheria Creek drainage this December. (The present injunction permitting!)

5. An important staff member of the Sierra National Forest complained to me that the public was not being notified early enough (in advance of the hearings) to permit adequate participation. But I would not care to testify to that effect, as it would probably ruin the man's career. (He is one whose career should not be ruined!)

Anthony Chasteen (12505 Geysers Road, Cloverdale, Ca. 95425; work phone 707-542-9543; no home phone) has some letters ~~for~~ from California Resources Secretary Norman B. Livermore indicating dissatisfaction with the short time scale for input to the USFS.

Chasteen also has a most interesting exchange of correspondence between himself, the USFS, and Senator Cranston. The USFS told Cranston that maps and information were available to the public long before they actually were. Cranston told Chasteen all he had to do was ask for the material. Chasteen did, and the USFS still told him it was not available.

I highly recommend you phone Chasteen at work. He has a voluminous correspondence file with public officials, and he can almost always find the material when he wants it. He is the leading expert on the San Joaquin Wilderness proposal. The San Joaquin was inventoried, but inexplicably was not included among the "tentative candidate" areas. If any area deserved to be included on the list it certainly was the San Joaquin. The USFS failure to do so was truly incredible. Chasteen has quite a file documenting this whole matter. (Of course it is still possible the ~~SECRETARY~~ Chief of the Forest Service will include the San Joaquin on the list of study areas which he has yet to announce, but indications are that the Regional Office did not recommend it.)

Further comment re. your Point 4. The Sierra National Forest originally intended to inventory several areas which were ultimately not inventoried. I learned this when I was copying their inventory map. Underneath it, on the work desk where it was lying, I found an earlier version which included a number of areas which contained motor vehicle ways. But the final version, which was on top of the stack of maps, deleted all of those areas which contained motor vehicle ways. I copied all the information onto my own set of maps, so I have both their earlier version and their final version. I mentioned this to Jim Moorman when I saw him briefly at the NCRCC meeting last month, and he seemed to feel that this was quite significant.

Sorry this is so sloppy; it is done in haste. If you want to phone me at ~~my~~ work it is (209) 568-1614, 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. straight through (no lunch break). Midday or early afternoon is best, Monday through Friday. Before October 20, as my schedule is uncertain after that.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

SUBJECT: DeFacto Wilderness suit (Sierra Club vs. Butz)

TO: Jim Moorman
Larry Moss (western)
Duff LaBoyteaux
Ray Sherwin
Joe Fontaine

Lowell Smith
Luis Ireland
John Konior
Norman Hill
Tony Chastain

FROM: George Whitmore, P.O.Box 485, KIngsburg, Ca. 93631 (209) 897-3692 (home)
(209) 568-1614 (work)

DATE: 19 October 1972

Be advised that Duff LaBoyteaux phoned me last night seeking information re. Tehipite Chapter position on certain timber sales proposed by the Sierra National Forest, particularly as these might relate to an out-of-court settlement of the defacto wilderness suit. I consulted with our Conservation Chairman (Norman Hill) and returned the call this morning.

Duff was inquiring about three specific sales, all in the Sierra N. F. Pineridge District, these being

HOFFBROW (formerly Hoffman Meadow sale)
QUAIL
HOME CAMP

I gave Duff the gist of our positions on these sales, based upon the following.

In March 1972 Larry Moss met with Norman Hill and me and we discussed the F.Y. 1973-1977 proposed timber sale program of the Sierra N. F. We were concerned about a number of the proposed sales, and Larry accurately stated these concerns in a letter to the Sierra N. F. Supervisor in late March (his letter not dated---my copy was postmarked 31 March 72).*

Regarding the HOFFBROW sale, Larry's letter stated "...we are concerned... because of the proximity of the sale boundaries to...the river. We ask that particular care be given to the planning and execution of (this sale)..."

It should be noted that Larry's letter to the Sierra N. F. was not a definitive policy statement, since the matter had not been formally decided by any policy-making body of the Club. As such, it certainly could be changed. If anyone wishes to do this, I urge that he work through established Club channels.

The HOFFBROW sale is contiguous with the existing San Joaquin Wilderness proposal, but lies on the opposite side of the South Fork of the San Joaquin River from the present SJW proposal. Even if the SJW proposal is expanded, the HOFFBROW sale area need not necessarily be included---it is a fringe area. See remarks at end of this communication.

Regarding the HOME CAMP sale, Larry stated "I would also like to redirect your attention to the Tehipite Chapter resolution which requests an eight month delay before the Home Camp area is sold."

Although the Sierra N. F. Supervisor refused to grant the requested delay, events ultimately gave us the delay in spite of his refusal to cooperate. In the meantime, the Chapter took a more definitive position on the HOME CAMP sale. A copy of that position is attached. It can be summarized as being that we are not opposed to the HOME CAMP sale provided it is executed with exceptional care, and provided no permanent road ensues from the sale. We do not know whether the USFS intends to comply with these qualifying conditions which we imposed as the price of our not opposing the sale.

It should be noted that the Sierra Club Foundation (in June?) was considering funding a lawsuit against the HOME CAMP sale. The status of this suit is not clear

to me, but I am under the impression that a suit might have been filed by private parties with the assistance of a S. C. Foundation grant. If this has happened, it would appear that the Foundation's support of such a suit would be inconsistent with Chapter policy.

Regarding the QUAIL sale, we have had no discussion on it. This lack of discussion is because the sale appears to be in a non-controversial area astride an existing road, and is relatively small in extent.

It is my opinion that none of these proposed timber sales encroaches upon defacto wilderness lands which are worth fighting for. None of the sales would constitute an opening wedge into a significant roadless area. All of them immediately adjoin areas which have already been worked over. The defacto areas which would be lost are on the fringes of more important core areas of wilderness heartland.

It is my opinion that we should be directing our concern toward preserving these major blocks of wilderness and not be worrying about the fringes unless the fringes would be vital to the establishment of viable wilderness boundaries.

I don't feel that any of these three sales fall in that category.

* Legal Defense Fund was indicated as a "cc" on Larry's letter. The Sierra N. F. responded to the letter on 23 June 1972, their file 2400.

gsw

(attachment)

POSITION OF TEHIPITE CHAPTER ON HOME CAMP SALE

RESOLUTION (MSC by Ex. Comm. 7 June 1972):

"Tehipite Chapter does not oppose the Home Camp timber sale, but does oppose rock the roads or taking any other action that would facilitate further timber sales. Roads put in for the sale should be obliterated or put to bed after the logging of that sale is completed."

BACKGROUND (not in resolution, but was an integral part of the discussion preceding the resolution):

It was understood that the Forest Service has promised that this timber sale is to be a showcase example of good forest practices, and that they will conduct the sale with exceptional care in planning and execution.

JAW
(secretary)

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

6 November 1972

Douglas W. Scott
The Wilderness Society
729 Fifteenth Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20005

Dear Doug:

Many thanks for your letter of November 2 in which you outlined the thinking of yourself and others with regard to the Parker decision and its relationship to the Monarch proposal. This is very helpful, and I appreciate the detail you have gone into. Thanks also for giving your letter wide distribution.

I was also glad to receive a copy of your letter of November 3 to Chuck Clusen in which you point out the legal requirement for environmental impact statements from state agencies when they comment upon proposed federal actions. I am sure that some of us had been overlooking this, and I am giving your letter a somewhat expanded distribution in northern California.

The main purpose of this letter is to ask that you send us some extra copies of the Monarch mailer. I would like to have these to distribute at various meetings, and especially a sizeable quantity for distribution at the Monarch hearing in Fresno. (The USFS regional office seems to have given us the green light for such activity at their hearings.) These would be helpful in trying to get people to write letters after the hearing is held, so don't hold back on sending them just because it might appear unlikely that they would arrive here prior to the hearing date; they would still be very useful.

I was intrigued by the skill with which you had drawn the map. The extent of the proposed study area is quite clear, and still you avoided the hazards of showing an overly precise boundary line. Well done. I expect to make use of some of the cartographic techniques in future maps I might be doing.

The Tehipite Chapter had previously called for study of all roadless areas. It is clear that we now need to reaffirm that policy, and to make it explicit for areas that are contiguous to the ~~the~~ High Sierra Primitive Area. In addition, we have recently called for actual wilderness classification for the Rough Creek-Garlic Creek area and the Rancheria Creek area. I see no conflict ~~here~~ so long as we make it clear that in making a definite recommendation for those areas we are not implying a lesser interest in the additional study areas. We simply studied the Rough-Garlic-Rancheria areas first, and therefore we came to a conclusion on those first; now we can move on to the other areas, and make recommendations on those in due course.

If you see any problems with such an approach I trust you will let us know immediately, either directly or through Jerry Mallett.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

14 December 1972

Regional Forester
U. S. Forest Service
Attention 2100
630 Sansome Street
San Francisco
California 94111

Subject: Monarch Wilderness proposal

Sir:

In addition to the oral testimony I presented at the public hearing in Fresno on November 18, I would like to submit the following additional comments for the hearing record.

favor

Although I definitely/including the Forest Service proposal, and much of the adjoining roadless and undeveloped lands, within the National Wilderness Preservation System, I do not feel it would be wise to designate these lands as the "Monarch Wilderness".

It would be preferable to simply add these lands to the existing John Muir Wilderness. This would avoid drawing attention to the area by giving it a special identity, and would thus avoid the drawing to it of visitors who otherwise would not go there. Instead, the area would remain relatively untrammeled for those who wish to seek it out for its own values, rather than for the fact that it has an impressive name and special identification on maps, guides, and other documents.

This management principle is especially applicable to the lands presently under discussion. The greater part of these lands is not suitable for intensive human useage, and any great influx of visitors would inevitably be funneled into just a few small areas. The answer is to avoid encouraging the influx of visitors by inadvertently "advertising" ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ of the area.

I request that this particular idea (incorporation into the John Muir Wilderness instead of giving the area a special identity of its own) be tallied and made note of in your analysis of public testimony. I might note that others, including two major citizen organizations, presented this same idea at the public hearing.

I would also like to raise a question regarding the Kings Cavern Geological Area, which is in the roadless lands contiguous with the High Sierra Primitive Area. I have just received information which indicates that present Forest Service plans to log this area (as the Smith timber sale, Kings River Ranger District) could have an extremely adverse effect on the cavern area. This is especially true in view of descriptions of the hydrology of the cavern area, which would inevitably be disrupted by logging operations and the consequent alteration of forest vegetative cover.

Since the Forest Service appears to have been derelict in implementing its ~~xxxxxx~~ avowed intention to protect the geological formations, I recommend

George W. Whitmore

Monarch Wilderness proposal

14 December 1972

2.

that the Kings Cavern Geological Area be included in the wilderness proposal. In this way the public could be assured of the protection of this unique geological feature. I also recommend that enough land surrounding the cavern area be included in the wilderness ~~area~~ so that a natural setting will be provided for the caverns. The purpose of this natural setting would be to enhance the esthetic experience of the cavern visitor, as well as to protect the watershed values and underground hydrology which directly affect the caverns.

I would also like to request that this idea (inclusion of Kings Caverns and surrounding area into the wilderness proposal) be tallied and made note of in your analysis of public testimony.

To summarize, I have made two major points in this letter which are in addition to comments I presented orally at the November 18 hearing:

1. The area (surrounding lands as well as USFS proposal) be incorporated into the John Muir Wilderness instead of being identified as a separate entity.
2. The Kings Caverns and surrounding area be incorporated into the wilderness proposal.

I also request that these points be tallied in order that they will not become lost in the mass of verbiage which will make up the hearing record.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

George W. Whitmore

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

26 Dec 72

Lowell Smith
22 Doud Drive
Los Altos
California 94022

Dear Lowell,

This is to let you know that you will probably be receiving a letter from Inyo N.F. supervisor Everett Towle asking the Sierra Club's opinion on the matter of possibly rerouting the John Muir Trail in the Devils Postpile--Thousand Island Lake area.

This is a consequence of my phoning him to determine whether the USFS really wants our support for this action. You will recall that you brought up that particular aspect of the situation at one of the recent meetings.

In brief review, this matter deals with the possible rerouting of the John Muir Trail so that it would be identical in alignment with the present routing of the Pacific Crest Trail in the Devils Postpile--Thousand Island Lake area. The Tehipite Chapter executive committee, upon the recommendation of the chapter's conservation committee, resolved in favor of such action. The Sierra Nevada Task Force (resolved?) in favor of such action. It seems timely to now to bring the matter before the NCRCC, provided the forthcoming letter from Everett Towle is in the vein that appears likely.

This letter is also a request that the matter be put on the NCRCC agenda for the upcoming meeting, at least on an optional basis. (Ie. there may be some reason for not having it on the agenda, but at this time I do not anticipate this happening.)

I will plan on making a ditto map of the area so people can easily visualize the matter under discussion.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

(I realize this is a minor issue, but at the same time it can be easily disposed of and I would like to do so, thus clearing the calendar for some of the major issues.)