

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

6 April 1973

Honorable Raymond J. Sherwin
727 Ohio Street
Vallejo
California 94590

Dear Ray,

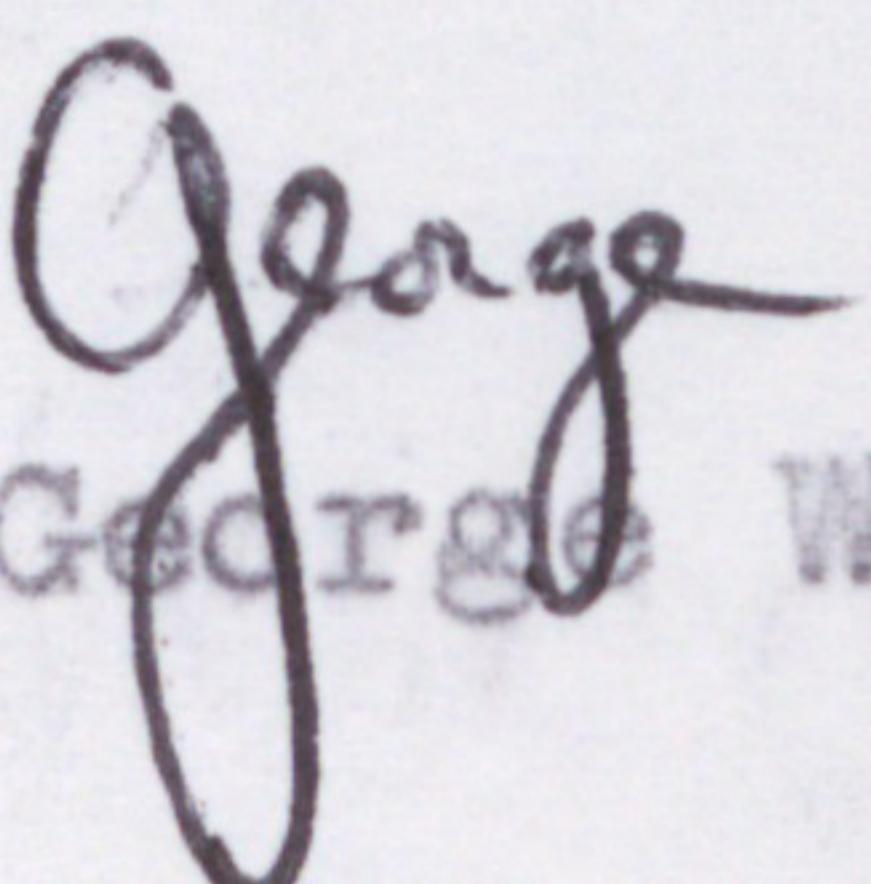
I trust that the enclosed letter from Alan Cranston in which he states that he "will cosponsor a (San Joaquin Wilderness) bill that Senator Tunney plans to introduce" will be as pleasing to you as it is to me.

As you know, Cranston had been dragging his feet. To my knowledge this is the first time he has committed himself in writing.

Tony, Larry Moss, and the many others who have worked long and hard to get this commitment can well take pride in the results of their effort.

Now if we can just make sure that the Cranston-Tunney bill includes Chasteen Creek within its boundaries!

Sincerely,


George W. Whitmore

cc. Ike Livermore
Larry Moss
Tony Chasteen

P.O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

12 April 1973

Bev Steveson

Dear Bev,

Some time ago our Topics staff asked us to send you a copy of the January issue (enclosed), in which they had made excellent use of one of your San Joaquin Wilderness photos.

In the meantime, the March and April issues also made use of other SJW photos of yours, but we do not have any extra ~~issues~~ copies of those issues. Perhaps we can get extra copies in due course. In the meantime, here is the January issue.

Many thanks for your continuing interest and help on the San Joaquin.~~issues~~ As you can see from the use of your photos in the Topics, your help is proving invaluable.

Sincerely,

George & Frances

P.O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

2 May 1973

Norman B. Livermore, Secretary
Resources Agency
State of California
1416 - 9th Street
Sacramento
California 95814

Re: Minaret Summit Highway/San Joaquin Wilderness

Dear Ike:

The enclosures reflect renewed pressures from the Nevada area for a Minaret Summit crossing, perhaps in conjunction with an extension of Interstate 70.

The timing of these moves makes it appear that their immediate purpose is to prevent the San Joaquin area from being included on the Forest Service's final list of New Study Areas.

In order to counter this, I would urge that your comments to John McGuire regarding the Forest Service's Roadless Area Review emphasize the impracticality of routing a major highway over Minaret Summit. In case there are still any lingering doubts in McGuire's mind regarding the wisdom of President Nixon's directive, such reassurance from you should help to settle the matter once and for all.

Sincerely,

George Whitmore
George W. Whitmore

enclosures: Nevada State Journal clipping, 3/25/73
Nevada Senate Joint Resolution No. 27

cc. Ray Sherwin
Tony Chasteen

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

9 May 1973

Bob Jennings, District Representative
Office of Congressman Bob Mathias
1724 "M" Street
Merced
California 95340

Dear Bob Jennings:

It was good to talk with you last Monday. You were very generous with your time, and I really appreciate that.

I have been reviewing our discussions in my mind, and this has given me a much sharper perspective on the San Joaquin Wilderness issue. It appears to me that Congressman Mathias has available to him a course of action which could make practically everyone happy--or at least keep them from being unhappy!

This would be for him to write a firmly worded letter to Forest Service Chief John McGuire, in which the Congressman would vigorously urge retention of the "North Fork San Joaquin" unit on the New Study Area list. Of course in this same letter it should be pointed out that the "North Fork San Joaquin" boundaries are really neither logical nor desirable, and that the Study Area boundaries should be expanded to include the "San Joaquin" unit on the Inyo National Forest, and at least the northern portion of the "South Fork San Joaquin" unit on the Sierra National Forest.

Such an action by Bob Mathias would be consistent with your thinking that perhaps the best course of action would be a moratorium, followed by study and a final decision at some time in the future. This would be precisely what would happen if the San Joaquin Wilderness area were to be included in the final version of the New Study Area list.

Of course I realize that you would prefer to avoid any possible controversy by simply letting this come to pass without actually endorsing or encouraging it. But the flaw in standing aside in this way would be that it would appear to the environmentalists that you didn't care about them, and perhaps even that you were letting them down.

My thought is that, by writing to John McGuire a letter such as I have proposed, you would then have a basic "position paper" that you could fall back on every time you received a letter from someone wanting you to sponsor a San Joaquin Wilderness bill. By sending the citizen a copy of your "position paper" (ie. your letter to John McGuire), you could show the citizen that you had already taken steps to assure the adequate consideration of the very thing the citizen is asking for.

In other words, it would get you off the hook. It would remove from you the pressure to seek immediate Wilderness classification for

the area, because you would already have expressed your support for a moratorium, followed by a study and Congressional review.

I feel confident that such a position from Bob Mathias would satisfy most of the environmentalists, and I gather it would not be overly distasteful to the highway boosters. Of course there would be a few dissidents on both sides, but I feel that it would satisfy most of the people.

Apparently you are familiar with the inadequacies of the Study Area boundaries as presently proposed by the Forest Service, and the ways in which the boundaries could be improved. If you would like details on this I would be happy to provide them. There seems to be general agreement that the Study Area should be extended to the south, with the main bone of contention simply being over the question of "How far?"

Of course John McGuire had asked that comments on the proposed list of New Study Areas be submitted by April 18. However, the Forest Service also stated that comments submitted after that date would be considered. I am confident that a letter from Bob Mathias most certainly would receive McGuire's close attention, provided it was received fairly soon.

I really appreciate your knowledge of and concern for these problems, and look forward to hearing from you about this idea of a letter to McGuire.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

P.S. I checked on the questionnaire that Ernie Mobley conducted in 1968. His question, and the response, was,

	YES	NO	UNDEC.
"Do you favor a highway across the Minaret Summit?"	43%	36%	21%

This lack of enthusiasm, and the extent of opposition, is especially interesting when you consider that Mobley's district is comprised almost exclusively of the supposed primary beneficiaries of such a highway!

Minaret

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

21 June 1973

Norman B. Livermore, Jr., Secretary
Resources Agency
State of California
1416 - 9th Street
Sacramento
California 95814

Re: Minaret Summit Highway/San Joaquin Wilderness

Dear Ike:

You have perhaps already received a copy of the enclosed letter from Bob Mathias to John McGuire, dated June 6. But I have not seen your name on any of the distribution lists, and I am taking the liberty of sending you this copy now because of the extreme importance of the subject matter.

Of course we would have preferred that Mathias support immediate Wilderness classification, but it appeared unlikely that we would receive such a commitment in the foreseeable future. Rather than let Mathias remain silent on the subject, it appeared preferable at least to have him take a step in the right direction.

We feel his action constitutes a giant step in our direction, and trust that you concur. It will surely make his next step just that much easier.

There are definite indications that Mathias would appreciate a word of thanks. If he receives recognition for this first step, it should encourage him to move a step further in our direction in due course.

Sincerely,

George Whitmore
George W. Whitmore

N.B.

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

21 June 1973

Roger K. Mitchell
P. O. Box 671
Bishop
California 93514

Dear Roger,

I trust the enclosed is self-explanatory, although I want to expand somewhat upon the last paragraph in my letter to Livermore.

Mathias really feels he is caught in the middle on the Minaret Summit-San Joaquin Wilderness issue, and he feels that calling for inclusion of the San Joaquin on the final New Study Area list might get the issue off his back for a few years. This is not as good as backing a Wilderness classification bill, but it is probably the best we can get for ^{the} time being.

In the meantime, it is vital that we let him know we appreciate his action so far. If we don't thank him for this, it seems rather unlikely that we will ever get anything more.

In this vein, I should mention that he has let it be known that he is not hearing from his new constituency, and he is having trouble figuring out what they do and don't want. In other words, there is apparently a communications vacuum.

It seems that this presents us with an opportunity which must not be lost--to fill that vacuum before the opposition does. And if we don't fill it, there is the severe risk that the opposition will.

I have also heard, repeatedly, that Mathias dislikes anything which has the appearance of a letter-writing campaign. For this reason we should not be beating the drums via newsletters or special mailings to get letters to him. The word-of-mouth approach apparently would be much more effective. It will net fewer letters, but those we do get will be more effective because they will be spread out over a longer period of time and will appear more spontaneous.

There are also indications that one intelligent, well thought out letter carries far more weight with Mathias than a dozen which merely express an opinion. This is apparently because he gets so little mail that his staff actually reads it, rather than merely tabulating it and sending form responses. Again, this is a unique situation which we cannot afford to let slip by--a year from now he may be getting so many letters that this situation will no longer exist.

Can you spread the word among our friends on the east side? The packers, and others? Apparently they just simply are not writing.

Thanks, Roger.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

5 July 1973

Bob Jennings
Bob Mathias Office
1724 "M" Street
Merced
California 95340

Dear Bob:

I thought you would like to receive the enclosed copy of a letter I have written to Congressman Mathias, in which I have thanked him for his recent action on the San Joaquin Wilderness proposal.

I want also to thank you for your interest in and knowledge of this proposal, and for having discussed it with the Congressman.

Steps have been taken to include you on the mailing list for the Sierra Club's Tehipite Chapter newsletter. You may possibly already have received it, but I am enclosing a copy for good measure. The next issue will not come out until September.

I guess it is inevitable that there will be some things in it that we won't agree on, but I am betting that you will find lots of things in it that we will be in agreement on.

Here's to the latter!

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

P.O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

5 July 1973

Honorable Bob Mathias
House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Bob Mathias:

Thank you for sending me a copy of your June 6 letter to USFS Chief John McGuire regarding the San Joaquin Wilderness proposal.

I was very pleased to see the vigor with which you urged the Forest Service to study this area for its Wilderness potential. And I was especially happy to see that you recognize the desirability of including areas to the east and south within the study area.

Thank you very much for your concern for the protection and best possible management of our public lands.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore

Bcc: Bob Jennings

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

13 October 1973

Honorable Raymond J. Sherwin
727 Ohio Street
Vallejo
California 94590

Dear Ray:

At the Wilderness Conference last week end knowledgeable sources informed me that the Sierra Club has given testimony at Congressional hearings in support of legislation to eliminate from the Wilderness Act the present provisions for mining operations.*

The implications of any such amendment of the Wilderness Act have been discussed from time to time by Tehipite Chapter and by the NCRCC. A definitive position was stated by the NCRCC on 8 January 1972, and this was relayed to you, Mike McCloskey, and others in a letter from Lowell Smith on 12 January 1972.

The gist of the NCRCC statement was that, while they are opposed in principle to mining within Wilderness areas, they nevertheless felt that for the time being it would be very unwise in a political sense to attempt to achieve a blanket prohibition on mining, particularly if this would involve opening the Wilderness Act to other amendments. (On the other hand, I have never heard any objections to legislation directed toward control of mining in a specific Wilderness area--such as the Three Sisters problem in Oregon.)

What this boils down to is that attempts to "purify" the existing National Wilderness Preservation System would make it all the more difficult to achieve classification of the millions of acres of presently unprotected de facto wilderness lands.

Surely I don't need to point out to you the implications for the San Joaquin Wilderness proposal if the Sierra Club persists in pursuing this quest for a Pyrrhic victory. If we were forced to expunge the Iron Mountain intrusions from the San Joaquin proposal, our would-be Wilderness would be thoroughly gutted, and we would apparently be forced to leave a non-Wilderness corridor for access. Such a corridor would provide continuing impetus for a Minaret Summit Highway. Deletion of the Mark Mine would utterly destroy the integrity of the western boundary; and deletion of the Pincushion Mine and its access "road" would effectively gut the entire South Fork, making Wilderness classification of those 60,000 acres extremely difficult.

Even if such a disastrous "purifying" amendment were not imposed upon the Wilderness Act, our very attempts to achieve it would arouse even more intense opposition from the mining interests and their allies. The present level of hostility toward us seems more than adequate, and I just don't see that we can afford to generate any more.

In this vein, did you note the October 5th National News Report in which Peter Borrelli was quoted as saying that "We are witnessing a backlash from Congress, industry and the Administration regarding wilderness withdrawals...?"

Except in certain limited portions of the country, Wilderness is not yet a motherhood issue. A blind refusal to accept that reality is causing us needlessly to stir up the opposition.

There are times when we can strengthen our cause by accepting a low profile on certain issues. At present, one of those issues is the Wilderness Act's toleration of mining activities.

Under the Wilderness Act, I feel that we have a choice of preserving large amounts of land in a relatively natural condition, or of saving small amounts of land in a pristine condition. Certainly we need some of the latter, but attempts to subvert the Wilderness Act to achieve that end run counter to the intent of Congress and counter to the wishes of the society in which we must function. I would like to suggest that the purists go out and get themselves a new law. Meanwhile, the rest of us can be using the Wilderness Act for what it is--a very effective tool for achieving the preservation of large amounts of land which would otherwise be lost to the developers.

If you agree with the essence of my argument, as I trust you do, perhaps at the coming Board meeting you can delve into the problem of the staff's efforts to open the Wilderness Act to amendments.

Sincerely,

George

George W. Whitmore

cc. Larry I. Moss
Holway Jones
Mike McCloskey

* The bill was apparently one of Senator Jackson's, but I do not know which one. Nor do I know which Sierra Club staff member(s) testified.