

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

Noel Frodsham
Editor, Yellowbill
4015 N. Sherman Street
Fresno
California

2 January 1970

Dear Noel,

Usually I find your editorial to be one of the more interesting parts of the Yellowbill, and that for the January issue was no exception. I have often been on the verge of writing a note by way of response or counterpoint, but somehow have not done so. Until now.

Regarding your January editorial, I think a good followup for the February issue would be for you to do a short piece on the sins of the various governmental agencies. You have already outlined the problems of trying to deal with corporate entities, and there is a striking parallel with the shortcomings of governmental entities. They, too, tend to be obtuse, euphemistic, and very definitely prone "to delay and obstruct the publication of any data which may find its way into the hands of the conservationists and the news media." And is corporate lobbying any more objectionable than lobbying by administrative agencies? Many of us feel that the executive branch of our government should be just that, and that governmental lobbying should be the prerogative of our legislators.

Of course one could go on at great length, but would not the conclusion be the same as you drew with regard to corporate offenders--that the guilty parties should be prosecuted, fined, and maybe jailed?

If you want a specific case, how about Mineral King? The more we learn and observe about this case, the more difficult it becomes to conceive a more flagrant example of perversion of the public trust by an administrative agency, and that extends right through to the breaking of laws by the very agency which is supposed to be administering them! If you want some good quotes, how about Congressman Burton's "perversion of public land to private profit", or the New York Times' "hideous project" which would "rape, pollute, and desecrate". (I was prevented from using part of that Times' quote in the Tehipite Topics--was told it was unfit for family reading.)

Speaking of Mineral King, I am certainly glad to see FAS taking an interest in the problem and am enclosing separately my response to the survey which Garth Spitler requested. I am quite curious as to why he wishes to know whether or not the respondents are members of the Sierra Club. Perhaps there is some perfectly rational explanation for it, but I must confess that it appears to me to be a matter of prejudice against the Club. But not having heard the explanation, I guess it would not be in order for me to elaborate. (I would appreciate any enlightenment you might be able to give me.)

Sincerely,

George Whitmore

letter book

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

7 Feb 70

Karl M. Kidder
The Fresno Bee
1559 Van Ness Avenue
Fresno
California

Dear Karl:

At your request, I have asked the Sierra Club's Board of Directors to take formal action on the San Joaquin Wilderness proposal as introduced by Congressman Waldie.

As I indicated to you in our conversation last month, and as indicated in the enclosed letter, the Board's approval will be a mere formality. This is because wilderness classification for this area has been considered to be consistent with previously established Club policy, and consequently direct action of the Board is not really necessary.

This will probably be the first time in history upon which the Sierra Club's Board of Directors will have taken actions at the request of the Fresno Bee.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore
Conservation Chairman

encl.

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

8 Dec 70

David Van de Mark

Dear Dave,

Regarding our plan to meet with Wayne Cone on Wednesday the 16th.

I called Cone to try to set this up, but things just didn't want to work out. I am completely tied up this week, he is the following week, then the holidays would interfere (he felt), then he will be taking a couple weeks vacation the first half of January.

We will try to get together with him the last half of January.

Thus part of the reason for your coming down here no longer exists, at least for the time being. I think it would be better to wait until something more specific is in the mill. In the meantime, I would like to suggest that you send us (at your leisure) an outline of your responsibilities, function, and modus operandi. Then we could make suggestions as we might see fit. There are certainly plenty of conservation problems around here, but the best way of applying the club's resources to them is far from clear.

Specifically, do the chapters contribute toward maintaining your position, or is the entire tab picked up ~~in~~ by the club? Also (and it might sound strange), I was not even aware that your position encompassed our chapter--I was under the impression that "Northern California" meant just the sparsely populated ~~far~~ nether regions much farther to the north. So the geographic bounds of your responsibility certainly need to be spelled out at least for my benefit; is it perhaps the same as the NCRCC?

And how are priorities within your area selected? This is perhaps the most fundamental question of all.

It would seem unwise to take the time answering such questions individually. It seems the thing ~~for~~ for you to do would be to develop a hand-out sheet which ~~would~~ contain all such information. Distribution of such ~~sheet~~ a sheet would then assist in developing the most efficient utilization of your position.

We will look forward to having better contact with you in the future.

Sincerely,

George Whitmore

(I tried to phone you several times without success, so thought I better put this in the mail to assure timely contact.)

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

Fresno Audubon Society
c/o 4015 N. Sherman Street
Fresno
California

2 January 1971

Gentlemen:

In response to your request for opinion on the Mineral King development as presently proposed by the U. S. Forest Service and Walt Disney Productions.

1. I am a member of the Fresno Audubon Society.
2. I am opposed to the development as proposed.
3. I am also a member of the Sierra Club.
4. I have studied the views of the Forest Service and the Sierra Club, as well as others.
5. I have not studied the views of the Supervisors of my county (Fresno); I have studied the views of the Supervisors of Tulare County.

Yours truly,

George W. Whitmore

(I question the propriety and/or relevance of some of the questions you have asked, but have answered them anyway.)

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

18 January 1971

Noel Frodsham

Dear Noel,

Thanks for your letter of January 7. It looks like you are getting into something which intrigues me greatly--namely the relationships (if any!) between an individual's socio-political philosophy and his environmental philosophy. And your mention of the Cehrs reminds me of the additional question of religion; they were certainly more religious than most of us, yet many people consider Christianity and conservation to be irreconcilable. Were the Cehrs really such a total paradox, or were there factors involved there which most conservationists are somehow overlooking?

*Autumn (1970)
issue
"attitudes
toward conservation
in the Soviet Union"*
You will probably have already spotted the the "Living Wilderness" article which I am enclosing. Please keep it.

Note also paragraphs five, six, and seven of the book review by Robert Rienow which appears on pages 85 and 86 in the January (1971) "Audubon".

I was glad to see you and your wife at Tehipite's annual dinner. I'm sorry we arrived too late to get to talk with you.

Sincerely,

George
George Whitmore

letter leaf

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

7 February 1971

Mrs. Jan Dapelo
3624 East Hammond
Fresno
California

Dear Jan,

Enclosed is various material which I had meant to get to you much earlier.

Frances told me when you phoned about not being able to come to Wednesday night meetings. But this constitutes no problem whatsoever, as you can pick whatever time, place, frequency, etc seems most appropriate for your subcommittee to transact its business. In fact it should be sometime other than the regular Conservation Committee nights.

Ideally the way we should function would be for various subcommittees to be meeting and transacting business on their own, each one under a different subcommittee chairman. These subcommittee chairmen would then report periodically to the Conservation Committee at its regular monthly meetings, or in your case you could delegate someone from your subcommittee to report to the full committee. Or you could meet with me at sometime other than the regular Conservation Committee meetings. Or (and this is what I am hoping will eventually come to pass) the various subcommittees which deal with conservation problems which are more or less urban oriented in nature (as opposed to the traditional wilderness-type problems) will be organized under a completely independent Conservation Committee. In other words, I hope that in due course we will have two completely separate Conservation Committees--one for the more traditional wilderness-type problems and the other for the newer urban-type problems. (There has been discussion about this at the Executive Committee meetings the past few months.)

In the meantime, you could proceed with your subcommittee. Pending organization of the new independent full committee, you could keep in contact either with me or with our Executive Committee. (Since the latter meets on Wednesday nights too, perhaps it would be just as simple for you to keep in contact with me, either directly or via your delegate.)

The only reason we don't function as described above is simply because I have been almost totally unsucessful in getting people to accept the subcommittee chairmanships. Your offer was very unique, in case you were not aware of it. I certainly hope you will see your way clear to getting something going on this problem of subdivisions. You just might, by setting an example, stimulate others to take on similar responsibilities. And please don't feel under pressure to

get an effective subcommittee functioning at an early date. These things take time and patience. I think it is much better to have something meaningful develop slowly over quite a period of time than it is to have some flash-in-the-pan effort which might look good on paper but which doesn't amount to beans. We have had too many of the latter, and not enough of the former.

You should contact the Fresno County Planning Department and get from them a copy of their Handbook on Agricultural and Scenic Land Use Programs as Implemented in Fresno County. It is basic to an understanding of the current status of the Williamson Act and open-space preservation.

I think I mentioned earlier that you might want to contact Mrs. Elizabeth Davis since she was the chapter's representative in connection with the ~~Sierra~~ Fresno County adoption of the Sierra General Plan. Since I mentioned this (I think) our Executive Committee appointed her to be the Chapter's delegate to the Fresno County Planning Department in following through on the development of the implementing ordinances. So there is a very definite need for the two of you to be aware of what the other is doing. I included her name and address on the list of interested ~~up~~ people which I sent you earlier.

You might have some need for Chapter letterheads. Let me know if you think you want some.

Thanks for your help.

Sincerely,

George Whitmore

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

20 March 1971

Joe Fontaine
Star Route
Tehachapi
California 93561

Dear Joe,

*Mark Morris to Don Harris
18 March 71
re. Wells Ranch*

The enclosed letter^s seems not to have received adequate distribution, so I am taking it upon myself to send one to you and to Bill French. I hope the action reported therein meets with your approval and makes more sense to you than it does to me-- it is still not clear to me in what way our chapter is supposed to be involved. (I have not seen any of the correspondence--if I did perhaps all would be clear.)

Incidentally, the Three Rivers delegation which visited us seemed to be unaware that the Kaweah Group is a part of the Kern-Kaweah Chapter. In fact they were thinking in terms of the "Kaweah Chapter", the "Bakersfield Chapter", and the "Fresno Chapter". It appears that a certain amount of education regarding the organizational structure of the Sierra Club is in order.

I might mention that the reason our executive committee passed the resolution was because the Three Rivers delegation assured us that they had the blessings of Bill French and yourself. I hope this was correct.

Sincerely,

George Whitmore



SIERRA CLUB

TEHIPITE CHAPTER P. O. BOX 4102 FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93741

FOUNDED IN 1892

5396

93755

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg, Calif. 93631

15 April 1971

Maynard Munger, Jr.

Subject: Proposed policy on socially and economically
disadvantaged peoples and their problems

Dear Maynard,

As you are undoubtedly aware, the Northern California Regional Conservation Committee discussed the above subject at their March meeting in Concord. A resolution was passed expressing support for a proposal made by Fred Gunsky. At the same time, Chairman Ed Royce asked for input from the chapters.

Our Conservation Committee considered the matter last night. First I read to the committee your statement, which you had presented at the February Board meeting; then I read Fred Gunsky's proposal. Then I asked for comment, explaining that it had been requested of us. I was quite surprised both by the readiness with which everyone spoke to the subject, and also by the unanimity of feeling.

Without differentiating between your statement and Fred's, everyone turned out to be quite definitely opposed to the Sierra Club taking a stand on such issues, and they were particularly opposed to the Club diverting any of its resources into this new area. The feeling was that, even though these primarily urban problems must be dealt with, there are a number of organizations with vast resources working in this area. On the other hand, although there are many organizations dealing with what might be termed the "natural" environment, these organizations typically are confronted with an abysmal lack of resources with which to pursue their overwhelming task. The conclusion was that the Sierra Club cannot afford to splinter its resources any further than it already has.

The vote was unanimously opposed to the proposals--five against and zero in favor; as chairman, I abstained.

Having observed the discussion at the NCRCC meeting, and taking into account our discussion last night, I am inclined to conclude that the intent of the proposals made by you and Fred is really not clear. There is some indication that people are reading into them quite a variety of things, perhaps not all of which are really intended by either you or Fred. My own personal feeling is that the Directors had better make entirely certain that at least they know precisely what it is that they are saying. I don't feel that this is always the case.

Sincerely,

George

George W. Whitmore
Conservation Chairman

cc. Board of Directors
Fred Gunsky
Mike McCloskey
Ed Royce

P.S. I am asking our Executive Committee to discuss this matter at their regular meeting next week. They may or may not support the Conservation Committee. I am mailing this now because any output from our Executive Committee would probably reach the Directors too late to be of any value.

letter head

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

Heather Jones
Sierra Club
926 "J" Street
Sacramento
California 95812

17 April 1971

Subject: S.B. 504
(Lagomarsino)

Dear Heather Jones:

I would like to request that the above bill be included in your next supplement to the Environmental Legislation Summary.

It is apparently intended to clarify the law with regard to public access to private lands. I gather that recent court rulings have caused private landowners to close ~~xxxthxxxpukis~~ lands which had previously been open to the public, and that S.B. 504 would ~~xxx~~ nullify the undesirable effects of these recent court rulings.

In my own mind the problem of public access to private land is definitely an environmental issue. If there is any question about it, perhaps it could be brought up at the meeting next Saturday in Millbrae. (I don't anticipate that we will have anyone there.)

Thank you.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore
Conservation Chairman

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

18 April 1971

John Anderson
256 East 13th Street
Merced
California 95340

Dear John,

Now that you have had some exposure to the workings of the Northern California Regional Conservation Committee, it seems an appropriate time to confirm your offer to serve as one of Tehipite Chapter's official delegates.

If you have had second thoughts on the matter, or if you have any reason to feel that you wouldn't be able to serve for at least the better part of a year^{1/2}, know is the time to speak up.

Since you seemed to be quite willing^{1/2} to take this on, I am taking the liberty of notifying Ed Royce (via a copy of this letter) that you are now one of Tehipite Chapter's official delegates. Unless he hears from you directly, he will proceed to include your name and address on the NCRCC roster.

Thanks for your interest. Your efforts in getting a conservation effort under way once again in the Merced area are certainly appreciated.

Sincerely,

George Whitmore

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



SIERRA CLUB

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

Larry E. Moss
Southern California Regional Representative
Sierra Club
427 West 5th Street Room 430
Los Angeles
California 90013

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

29 April 1971

Dear Larry Moss:

Through Joe Fontaine we have learned of your interest in the proposed timber sales in the Rancheria Creek portion of the Sierra National Forest. We have been aware of these proposals for quite some time, and because of certain considerations which distinguish these sales from others in the Sierra National Forest, we have been concerned over their implications.

Primarily because the more critical tracts are not scheduled for sale for another four years yet, we had not previously established a formal position with respect to them. But when we learned, through Joe, of your interest, we decided that the time was ripe to pursue the matter in greater depth with the Sierra N.F. personnel.

It was thus quite a shock, and a source of embarrassment to all of us, when I learned from the Sierra N.F. people that the Angeles Chapter had already gone on record in opposition to these sales, and was demanding--via a letter-writing campaign--that the Supervisor change his plans.

Even so, we went ahead and discussed the timber sales with the Sierra N.F. people. We let them know our concern, and the basis for it, and suggested that they should produce an environmental impact statement for three of the sales in particular (Rancheria, Wet, and Spanish). They seemed to agree that further study and evaluation of these sales was appropriate, particularly since the District Ranger is new to that District and does not have a first-hand familiarity with those portions. Considering snow conditions and other factors, this will obviously take time, and we feel it is appropriate to allow ample time for them to make such additional studies.

So our position at present is that we have grave reservations regarding the wisdom of the proposed Rancheria, Wet, and Spanish sales. We suspect that the long-term public good would best be served by drastically modifying the present proposals, if not removing them from the calendar in their entirety. We feel that the Forest Service just might come to these same conclusions on their own. And, since they are thinking in terms of further study and evaluation, we should give them a chance to do this without subjecting them to premature harrassment.

If you feel that this is not a reasonable position for us to take, we urge you to make use of established channels within the Sierra Club which are available for the resolution of such differences.

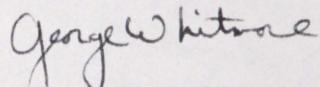
If any errors have been made, I feel that they are largely matters of timing. Our discussion with the Sierra N.F. was perhaps delayed a little too long, but this was balanced by a somewhat premature pushing of the panic button in the Southern Sierran. Perhaps we averaged out alright on balance!

The main point I would like to make in this regard is that we feel the Sierra Club's response to potential problems ideally should be a graded one. The first step should always be an open discussion with the public agency, and this should be based upon a mutual respect for the intelligence and integrity of one another. This doesn't always work because sometimes the public agency doesn't have intelligence or integrity, or simply doesn't feel that citizen groups have any role to play in the decision-making process. But we have never had these problems with the Sierra National Forest. Their people have always been reasonably capable and responsive. The new supervisor, Sotero Muniz, is no exception. There will be many things on which he and we will never come to agreement, but at least he listens--and I mean "listen" in the true sense of the word. (Of course he also listens to the loggers and the road builders, but that is only as it should be.)

But as long as this mutual give and take is working, we feel that the powers of friendly persuasion should be supplanted only gradually by stronger measures, and then only as needed. To do otherwise jeopardizes any chance we might have of winning over to our point of view people like Sotero Muniz. For this reason we were particularly distressed to find Mr. Muniz characterized as making policy decisions "nonchalantly". This comes perilously close to being a personal attack, to say nothing of the fact that he doesn't operate this way. Perhaps the editor inserted the word in order to spice things up a bit. In any event, I think it would be appropriate if the responsible party let Mr. Muniz know that it was intended merely to stir up the readers, and that nothing personal was meant by it. (I did notice that the offensive word was not in the draft copy which you sent to Joe Fontaine.)

To sum up, I think that I have made it clear that nobody is mad. Merely hurt, puzzled, embarrassed--and anxious that the Sierra Club avoid getting its wires crossed in the future. Perhaps this learning experience will prove beneficial in the long run. I earnestly hope so.

Sincerely,



George W. Whitmore

cc. Sotero Muniz, Supervisor, Sierra N.F. ~~Conservation Chairman~~
Joe Ragsdale, Kings River District Ranger
Joe Fontaine

4/30/71

Have just received the Kern-Kaweah Roadrunner and find that the "call for action" which appeared in the Southern Sierran was published in the former newsletter also. How many more newsletters has it appeared in? And how many editors will pick it up from the original sources and re-publish it next month?

Did no/one pause to inquire as to what the Tehipite Chapter's position was on this matter?

I am incredulous at the complete breakdown of what I had assumed to be established Sierra Club procedures.

I had hoped the problem would blow over quickly and be forgotten. But if the article received widespread distribution this may prove to have been wishful thinking.

Does anyone have any suggestions as to how the matter can be rectified? The Tehipite Chapter's credibility with the Sierra National Forest is apparently being further diminished with every day's arrival of protesting letters.

We appreciate the help of other chapters, but that doesn't mean we espouse a state of anarchy within the Club.

G. Whitmore

To: Wilderness advocates

From: George W. Whitmore (P.O. Box 485, Kingsburg, Calif. 93631)

Subject: Wilderness

Date: May 19, 1971

One aspect to current developments which concerns me greatly is the tendency for the Forest Service to consider Wilderness as being a piece of pristine scenery which is to be held essentially inviolate. Only very limited numbers of people will be allowed into it, and those chosen few will be harrassed in various ways for the duration of their visit. On the other hand, the Forest Service says, if you want merely to ramble through the mountains searching out the challenges of solitude, exploration, and discovery, then they have places called "Backcountry" (or "Frontier Areas", or "Pioneer Areas"). You will be free from harrassment in those areas because the damned preservationists haven't made the Forest Service's job of management so difficult there.

Of course it won't take long for the general public to realize that they would be much better off with more "Backcountry" and less "Wilderness." After all, parks are for people, remember? "Wilderness" isn't doing anybody a bit of good-- it's just tying up a lot of fine country that people need in order to escape the pressures and frustrations of civilization.

Do we really think we are ever going to get a San Joaquin, a Dardanelles, a Snow Mountain, a Siskiyou, or any of the dozens of others?? The Forest Service is in the process of giving the public plenty of reason not only to deny us these, but also eventually to repeal the Wilderness Act itself.

And many of our best people are falling all over themselves in their zeal to support the Forest Service in this magnificent endeavor.

From Sierra Club Bulletin, March 1971, pp. 4-7 ("Desolation Wilderness" by Robert S. Wood)
(Emphasis provided in selected places.)

"Beginning this summer all visitors...must carry a 'Wilderness Permit' or risk citation for a misdemeanor."

"...a new permit will be required for each trip..."

"The...Wilderness Permit...will be required this summer in all of California's Wilderness and Primitive areas..."

"The Permit has three purposes: (1)...(2)...(3) prepare the public for the more stringent regulations which will likely be needed in the future."

"...the Wilderness Permit must be carried by dayhikers and picnickers as well as overnighters."

"...failure to produce a permit on demand can result in a citation."

"To administer the program in the field there will be at least five Patrolmen in Desolation Wilderness this summer."

"Like Fish and Game Wardens, they will make random checks..."

"Enforcement...is not liable (sic) to be rigorous--at least at first."

"Penalties will range from a polite warning or letter of reprimand to a maximum fine of \$300."

Specifically with regard to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area:

"After five seasons with Wilderness Permits...the public response to the program is described as 'good', although some twenty per cent of the visitors sampled last summer had no permits."

"Beginning this year it will be a misdemeanor to carry cans and bottles..."

"Beginning this year...failure to produce a permit will result in an automatic \$25 fine."

(Some subjects might be Wilderness Permit System, Rancheria Creek timber sales, status of Granite Creek developments, location of auto-oriented campgrounds and recreation in relation to F.H. 100, the enclosed letter--and you probably have some things you would like to bring up.)

letterhead

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

12 June 1971

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

Dear Sotero,

Enclosed is a letter to you which I wrote about a month ago, but which I wanted to think about a while before sending. (I also wanted to get the opinions of others.) I have concluded that the letter is appropriate, so have dated it today and included it with this one.

The main reason for writing at this time is that I would like to see you to talk over various things which have been accumulating. For the past six weeks my work schedule has been "impossible", I will be gone the week of June 14-18, and then again during most of July and August.

Would it be possible to see you during the week of June 21-25? Either the first of the week or the end of the week would be best for me; if necessary, the first of the following week might do. If you will be gone during this time, perhaps I could talk with Al West or someone else.

I hope we can work something out.

Sincerely,

George W. Whitmore
Conservation Chairman

(Some subjects might be Wilderness Permit System, Rancheria Creek timber sales, status of Granite Creek developments, location of auto-oriented campgrounds and recreation in relation to F.H. 100, the enclosed letter--and you probably have some things you would like to bring up.)



SIERRA CLUB

FOUNDED

IN 1892

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

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93755

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

15 July 1971

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

Dear Sotero,

This letter is the first of what I hope will be several in which I will expand upon some of the subjects we discussed when Frances and I met with you last month.

At that time I reported to you the essence of an action the Sierra Club's Board of Directors had taken with regard to the USFS Wilderness Permit System in California, but was somewhat handicapped in that I did not have anything in writing at that time. Several days ago I received the minutes of that Board meeting, and am enclosing a copy of the Board's action with regard to the Wilderness Permit System. (For your convenience, I am also enclosing a copy of Tehipite Chapter's resolution of May 19, which had been sent to you earlier.)

As you will note, the Board's action is not only consistent with the spirit of our Chapter resolution, but goes beyond it to make entirely clear that the Sierra Club does not support a restrictive permit system. This point is quite important, as it finally clarifies a point which had been under contention within the Club for some time. Since there had been some uncertainty as to just what the Club's position in this regard was to be, I urge that you now make full note of what the ultimate decision has been. It would probably be helpful if you would spread this information within the USFS California Region, as it is entirely possible that Sierra Club headquarters has not notified the USFS Regional Office of the position they have taken.

Of course no one is advocating a laissez-faire attitude. Most of us realize that visitor usage of wilderness areas has to be managed in some way in order to preserve the resource. But we feel that there are much more acceptable ways of achieving that management than by resorting to a restrictive permit system.

We are working on a list of suggestions in that regard, and I hope that will be the subject of my next letter to you.

Sincerely,

George

George J.W. Whitmore, Conservation

... To explore, enjoy, and protect the natural mountain scene ...

Chairman

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

28 November 1971

J. Elizabeth Davis
4235 N. Moroa
Fresno
California

Dear Elizabeth,

I have received notification via Mills Tower re. a public hearing on air pollution, one phase of which is to be held in Fresno on December 10. The Air Resources Board is seeking public input on several different issues which they identify.

The "plan" is on file for inspection at the Fresno County Air Pollution Control District office, 515 S. Cedar Ave, Fresno.

Besides yourself the following have indicated an interest in air pollution:

Winifred Hollingsworth
3666 N. Van Ness Blvd
Fresno 93704
227-4602

Shirley Valett (Mrs Robert E.)
2617 West Bullard Ave
Fresno 93705
439-82339337

Joe Stanislawsky
73 E. Robinson
Fresno 93705
229-0049

Sydney Bluestone
2655 W. Morris
Fresno
439-8233

Dennis Olswang
P.O.Box 4232
Fresno 93744
264-4853

Tehipite Chapter has never (at least in recent years) had anyone really effective and interested in air pollution. Or willing to organize a subcommittee. Do you have any suggestions?

If you would like a copy of the five-page notification I received, let me know. Quickest way to get information would presumably be to contact the local Air Pollution Control office (above).

If you want to work on this as an individual, that would be fine. But it would still leave the problem of how to involve the Sierra Club. If you want to take that on, please let me know.

Thanks.

Sincerely,

George Whitmore

(Do you have a phone yet at your new address?)

P. O. Box 485
Kingsburg
California 93631

1 April 1972

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

Subject: Club mailing lists

Dear Mike:

I would like to make two suggestions with regard to distribution of certain materials to the Club mailing lists.

The first is that chapter conservation chairmen (List 9) should receive meeting notices and agendas of the Board's Executive Committee.

I have just finished a four-year stint as a chapter conservation chairman, and this was under five different chapter chairmen. I often felt the need for notices and agendas of the Board's Ex. Comm. meetings, but was not aware that anybody at the chapter level was receiving them. From everything I have observed, this breakdown of communications between key chapter officers is not unique to our chapter, but is actually rather frequent and widespread. The reasons for this breakdown are varied and not worth going into; the important point is that it happens. Rather than trying to change human nature, I think the solution is to revise the Club mailing lists to allow for human nature.

My second suggestion is that the distribution for List 40 be expanded to include (1.) notices and agendas for the Board Ex. Comm. meetings, (2.) agendas for the quarterly Board meetings, (3.) agendas for the quarterly Council meetings.

It is hardly any secret that the Club is often stuck with do-nothing officers in the chapters, as well as at other levels. I think the creation of List 40 could go a long way toward solving this particular problem, and was very glad to see the creation of this list. But in order for List 40 distribution to be fully effective, I feel that it must include the above additional materials.

I realize that these suggestions, if implemented, would cost money. My response to that is that inclusion on List 40 should be by subscription. I think most people who should be on List 40 would be more than willing to pay for the privilege.

I eagerly await more meaningful distribution of materials to List 40, and will be the first in line waiting to pay for the privilege of having my name placed on such a list.

Sincerely,

cc: Susan Miller

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
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

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 ~~Sierra~~ ~~Sierra~~ 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