



SIERRA CLUB
BULLETIN *September*
1950

Miscellany

Palo Alto, Sept. 1

Editor: Having been scooped by the editor on my project of the "El Capitan-Three Brothers Dam" to produce the Oscar Ewing Lake in the now overcrowded thoroughfare known as Yosemite Valley, I hasten to inquire (before he again "scoops" me) how extensive are the present plans of the Club in carrying out the aim "to explore and enjoy the mountain regions of the Pacific Coast . . .?"

Does not the coast of the Pacific extend along both sides of the Bering Straits, southward to Antarctica?

DELL T. LUNDQUIST

• To split an editorial hair, "Pacific Coast" with a capital C refers specifically to the U. S. coastal states. The lower-case c, but not the Sierra Club, takes care of all the rest.—Ed.

The exhibit of photographs taken on Sierra Club outings will be held as follows:

November 9 to 25 at the headquarters of the Sierra Club in Los Angeles.

December 1 to 29 at the San Francisco Main office.

Dates for other chapters will be arranged.

It is hoped that all who took photographs on the 1950 outings will exhibit their albums. The usual procedure is:

1) Have the albums at the Los Angeles of-

fice before the opening date.

2) Identify your photographs. It saves a lot of argument. [Of course, it may subject you to one, too.]

3) Number your photographs, too, so that others may order copies directly from you. Give your address, the cost, and a deadline for orders if you wish. Or specify that you cannot take orders if that is the case.

4) Be prepared to have the editor of the SCB abscond temporarily with photographs worthy of publication in the annual *Bulletin*.

New in the Library—

STORIES OF LASSEN'S PLACE NAMES:

The Origin and Meaning of the Place Names in Lassen Volcanic National Park with Relevant Annotations. By Paul E. Schulz, Park Naturalist. Loomis Museum Association. Lassen National Park, 1949.

One of a series of booklets prepared for use and enjoyment of visitors to Lassen Volcanic National Park. All the names known to have been applied to the lands now within the boundaries of the park are listed, and the booklet is full of interesting stories of the origin of these names.

Cover: Sierra stream. By Cedric Wright.

THE SIERRA CLUB, founded in 1892, has devoted itself to the study and protection of national scenic resources, particularly those of the mountain regions of the Pacific Coast. Since these resources receive best protection from those who know them well, the club has long conducted educational activities, under the committees listed below, to make them known. Participation is invited in the program to preserve wilderness, wildlife, forests, and streams.

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Sierra Club Bulletin

VOLUME 35 SEPTEMBER, 1950 NUMBER 8

... TO EXPLORE, ENJOY, AND PROTECT THE NATURAL MOUNTAIN SCENE...

For the September Record

Nor by Dams Alone

[The following is an excerpt from testimony given by Charlotte E. Mauk at a conference held by the President's Water Resources Policy Commission in Berkeley on June 23-24, 1950 (See *SCB*, July, 1950). We commend it to readers of the *Bulletin*.]

I am not speaking for any organization, but I am a member of about six different groups whose concern, either locally or nation-wide, is with the natural scene or the appreciation and enjoyment and perpetuation of at least some parts of it.

Now, the commission members and many of the people who have spoken so far are largely economists, and engineers, and people who are by the nature of their business highly practical people.

What I'm about to say may sound impractical and quixotic, but I do feel that somebody has to say it, so my neck is stuck out.

There should perhaps be on the commission at least one member who is a philosopher or an aesthete. Each of us has aesthetic experiences. We perhaps don't talk about them to everybody. Since there is no person here who is exclusively concerned with matters of the soul, shall we say, we have to appeal to that part of each individual which is concerned with things that are not entirely "practical."

The whole man is not exclusively practical. And in some part of his being there is something that is unmechanical and de-

parts from purely practical matters. Man does not live by bread alone.

Perhaps nobody here is too young to remember with a sense of loss and regret some little stream, on whose banks he played, that is now running through a culvert, or some green meadow that has become the bottom of a muddy reservoir—in the name of progress.

Of course, we do have to have buildings—industrial structures, houses for dwelling. We do have to make provision for them even at the expense of altering a considerable portion of the landscape. However, the houses that we build still have windows, and we look out through those windows to another part of the world. We still find it worthwhile to reserve space around those buildings for gardens. Now, what economic return is there from a garden—unless you are going to grow radishes and potatoes? But what about camellias and roses and forget-me-nots? (They take water, by the way!)

There is room in our planning, nationwide, for some unaltered scenes that can be compared to the gardens around our houses. And it is too bad, in cities, if we are so deeply concerned with providing housing for great numbers of people in congested areas that we can't leave a park or a garden somewhere. It is too bad, in this planning for the utilization of our natural resources, if we consider only those things that have a highly practical application or those for which the greatest number of people may be clamoring.

We have to have dams. We have to have conduits. We have to have powerhouses. We have to have irrigation systems. Nobody is going to deny it. But we do hope that in all the bargaining and agreements and balancing of these various things that we have to have we can also find time to remember about the small part of our country now set aside—we hope to remain undisturbed—for “impractical” purposes, and that it will not be invaded.

I'm referring to the wilderness areas—our national parks and forests, the remote sections in which our watersheds have their very beginnings—and in which we can afford to leave some part of the stream or stream system unharnessed better than we can afford to work every bit of it in between concrete walls.

Now, although we have less than one per cent of our land in these natural areas dedicated for continuing human enjoyment, there are on every hand plausible-sounding schemes for invading them. Some groups wanted to build a power dam that would flood a large portion of a national park. They selected the site that they were talking about because it already belongs to the government and would be cheaper. It would be cheaper to flood thousands of acres of land that belong to all of us than to have to pay for the damage done to land outside the national park which would perhaps, from an engineering viewpoint, be equally suitable to the purpose. In the name of flood control, among other things, one particular project would inundate some of the caves in Mammoth Caves National Park. In the name of fishing some would build dams flooding high-mountain meadows and releasing the water only a little later than the snow melt releases it anyhow.

Every one of these things has what sounds like a good reason, and if you are too close to the reason for which you are presenting the project you do not see its effect on the other things for which that land could perhaps be used. It is hard to get away from a problem far enough to see it in the whole. Perhaps I'm too close to the problem and am giving too much importance to wilderness, but it is important to a lot of people for its recreational values—and for something more than the kind of recreation that we indulge in when a thousand people go fishing from boats on one lake or when hundreds of people ride a roller coaster at an amusement park or when thousands upon thousands of people drive in their cars over fine highways and stop at resorts. There is something beyond it that we don't ordinarily talk about, but something that should be there at the justifiable expense of a small fraction of one per cent of our public land reserved from development.

Cannot the planning include a balance that will give recognition to what could be called spiritual values, and to the continuance of things that, once changed, cannot be changed back again within any of the generations we can foresee now?

King Midas (whose story everybody knows) was so concerned—so preoccupied—with material considerations that he found to his horror he had destroyed something that he realized too late was more dear to him than material possessions. I'd like to make a plea, on behalf of the various groups throughout the country who are interested in natural lands, that some consideration be given to the retention of natural values in those areas dedicated to individual and quiet forms of recreation lest we realize too late that they are lost.

Board of Directors Meets at Norden

Quorum

At the call of the President, the regular fall meeting of the Board of Directors of the Sierra Club convened at 1:25 p.m. at Norden, California. All directors were present except Ansel Adams, and Francis

P. Farquhar, who were duly excused.

Approximately thirty visitors were also present, including: P. A. Thompson, Regional Forester for the California Region of the U. S. Forest Service; Earl Bachman, Chief of the Division of Recreation of the

Regional Office of the Forest Service; Frank Kittredge, Chief Engineer, National Park Service, Washington, D.C.; Aubry Neasham, Regional Historian, National Park Service, Region IV; Harlean James, Executive Secretary, American Planning and Civic Association; Harry James, President, Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs; Joe Momyer, Chairman, Riverside Chapter; Emerson LeClercq, Chairman, San Francisco Bay Chapter; Arthur B. Johnson, representing the Southern California Chapter; Milton Hildebrand, Chairman, Natural Sciences Committee; Ruby D. Howes, Chairman, Loma Prieta Chapter; Norman B. Livermore, Jr.; and many others.

Dinosaur National Monument

It was explained that the Secretary of the Interior had decided June 26, 1950, to authorize the Bureau of Reclamation to present to Congress bills to authorize construction of the Echo Park and Split Mountain dams within the Dinosaur National Monument. A week after the Secretary's decision Leonard had been fortunate to spend three days in the heart of the monument with the Superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park and Dinosaur National Monument. The trip was in connection with the annual meeting of the Council of The Wilderness Society and included the officers of the Society. All agreed that the area was of high national park calibre and that every effort should be made to protect it. Miss Harlean James was then called upon to explain the conference held in Washington shortly after that to determine upon a course of policy for conservation organizations. It was agreed there to fight the dams as strongly as possible and to prepare a joint pamphlet in the names of all cooperating conservation organizations, to be distributed by them to the public to call upon congressional support for the primary purposes of our national parks and monuments and to make it clear that power and water projects should not be developed within the monument.

The Board unanimously agreed to con-

tinue full opposition to the proposed Echo Park and Split Mountain dams within Dinosaur National Monument.

Bridge Canyon Dam

The Board of Directors then carefully reviewed their position with respect to the proposed Bridge Canyon Dam within the Grand Canyon National Monument of Arizona. It was noted particularly that the offer of compromise presented in the minutes of the Board of Directors in December, 1949, had never been given recognition by any of the proponents of the bills now pending before Congress. The Board unanimously opposed the construction of any dam within the Grand Canyon National Monument.

Dams in Parks, Monuments, and Wilderness

It was noted by the Board of Directors of the Sierra Club that the Act of Congress approved August 25, 1916 expressly provides that "the fundamental purpose" of the national parks and monuments "is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations" (16 USC 1).

That basic act of the National Park Service was strongly reaffirmed by acts of Congress approved March 3, 1921 and August 26, 1935, amending the Federal Power Act, which acts expressly prohibit the granting of permits for storage of water or development of power within the national parks and monuments (16 USC 796-2). Pursuant to acts of Congress, the regulations established by the Secretary of Agriculture prohibit the development of water storage projects which involve road construction within wild, wilderness and primitive areas established pursuant to such regulations.

Despite these clear enunciations of policy, many attempts are currently being made to invade our national parks, monuments, and wilderness areas with dams for

various purposes, directly contrary to the long-established policies of the Congress of the United States, examples being within:

Cloud Peak Wild Area, Dinosaur National Monument, Glacier National Park, Grand Canyon National Monument, Grand Canyon National Park, Kings Canyon National Park, Mammoth Caves National Park.

The Board of Directors of the Sierra Club fully recognizes the urgent need for efficient use of our water resources, but also believes that greater public values will be realized if these resources are developed outside of the outstanding scenic areas, with park, monument, and wilderness watersheds being retained in their natural condition to provide effective, natural, and inexpensive regulation of water flow.

It was therefore unanimously resolved that the Sierra Club hereby earnestly urges the Congress and the President of the United States strongly to reaffirm the national policy that our national parks, monuments, and formally dedicated wilderness areas shall be held only for their primary purposes as set forth above, so that they may be passed on in their natural condition "unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

Kings Canyon Road

The National Park Service reported that the bids for construction of the bridges across the Kings River en route to Copper Creek had been recalled in order to comply with the President's directive to conserve steel for the war effort.

Mount Dana-Minarets Wild Area

Careful discussion brought out the need for a legal opinion on two points:

a. Can the Federal Power Commission overrule the Secretary of Agriculture and grant a permit for power development in spite of higher public uses as determined by the Secretary.

b. Can a valid mining claim existing prior to creation of a national park, be carried through to *patent* under the usual

clause protecting "all valid existing rights?"

Whitney Outpost

The Sierra Club had been fortunate that Pat Thompson, Regional Forester, and Neal Rahm, Supervisor of the Inyo National Forest, had been on the last week of the High Trip in the Mount Dana-Minarets Wild Area. While on that trip, Rahm raised a question affecting the High Sierra Wilderness Area farther south. He pointed out that the roadhead on Mount Whitney was at an elevation of 7,500 feet at a point called "Whitney Portals." The boundary of the High Sierra Wilderness Area is just back of that point where the wilderness begins. Four miles and 1500 vertical feet above, at Ibex Park, there has for many years been a semi-permanent camp site maintained by the local packers to assist people on their climb of Whitney. This has been called the "Whitney Outpost" and is four miles within the High Sierra Wilderness Area. Rahm pointed out that either the boundary of the Wilderness area should be withdrawn four miles so as to exclude that area, or the permanent camping which has been permitted there should be terminated. The Mount Whitney Pack Trains now hold the special use permit and Ike Livermore was present to discuss their point of view. He pointed out that it is an eleven hour round trip by horseback from the Portals to the summit, which is too much for consecutive trips of the animals and a very hard day for people. It is quite too much for most people who desire to climb the mountain. He stated that they have had 150 man-nights of use at the Whitney Outpost thus far this season. He added that they do not desire a building at the location, but only some type of inconspicuous structure in which to store things for the winter.

Farquhar, Bernays, Kehrlein, and Robinson felt quite strongly that the outpost served a useful public purpose in making it possible for people from all over the country to climb the highest peak of the United States. Brower, Dawson, Kimball, Leonard, Mauk and some others felt that it was a matter of general principle and

that no exception should be made simply because the highest peak of the country was the point of interest.

Thompson brought out two points for consideration:

a. Would overuse destroy the wilderness?

b. Does a "mecca" have any place in wilderness policy?

It was clear that considerable further discussion was necessary to determine the policy on this borderline question. It was therefore referred to the Conservation Committee for study and report back to the Board of Directors.

Trails

A similar problem of drawing a line between wilderness and reasonable accessibility came up with respect to Walter Starr's fine report of May 31 to the Board of Directors. Starr, as Chairman of the subcommittee on Trails, had requested the views of the Directors concerning the proposal to construct four additional trails. Director Kimball had later added the proposal to place a trail over Longley Pass just south of Mount Brewer.

Again this problem was found to be too close a question for quick decision by the Board of Directors and was referred to the Conservation Committee for report.

The question also arose as to the exact wording of the signs being placed by the Forest Service and Park Service to mark the John Muir Trail. Some of the signs have been made up in the form, "John Muir Route."

This matter was referred to the Conservation Committee and the Editorial Board for joint consideration and report.

Flow Maintenance Dams

The Wildlife Conservation Board of the State of California, the sportsmen's organizations of the state, and many chambers of commerce have considered it to be of great benefit to the state to place small dams of native material on many little lakes throughout the High Sierra to impound sufficient water for gradual release to permit the maintenance of the flow of

streams that would otherwise go dry in the fall season. The third annual reconnaissance trip for such purposes had been conducted by the Natural Resource Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, and Pat Thompson, Regional Forester, had attended for the Forest Service, Harold Bradley being designated to represent the Sierra Club.

Bradley reported his conclusions that fish dams within wilderness areas were liable to be an entering wedge for later power and irrigation dams, and that all possibilities for protection of flow should be exhausted *outside* of the wilderness areas before entering into them. Kittredge pointed out that a proposal had been made twenty-one years ago to place a four-foot dam on Yellowstone Lake to regulate the flow. The proposal had been killed on a question of principle and had not been seriously considered since then.

The Board unanimously concluded that pending additional studies on flow maintenance outside of wilderness areas and national parks, the Sierra Club is opposed to any such dams within the boundaries of the wilderness areas or national parks. The matter was referred to the Conservation Committee for careful study and further report to the Board.

Motorized Vehicles in Wilderness Areas

An excellent proposal had been made by the Supervisor of the Inyo Forest that Section 332 of the California Fish and Game Code be broadened to cover the wilderness areas of the national forests throughout the state, rather than just those in southern California, as now listed. He pointed out that it is difficult to get the federal courts to take proper cognizance of the small misdemeanors that are involved in trespass by motorized vehicles. The Fish and Game Code would permit action by the local justice of the peace, rather than having to take it to federal authorities.

The matter was therefore referred to the Conservation Committee for study and report, since the Board of Directors did not have sufficient information on it.

Clair Tappaan Lodge

It was reported that a short-term loan of \$2,000 for a few months was needed for operating expenses and a \$2,000 long-term loan for construction pursuant to requirements by the public housing authorities. The loan was approved subject to approval of details by the Treasurer.

The Board urged the Lodge Committee thoroughly to explore all possibilities of avoiding having to floor over the ceiling of the main portion of the lodge.

Appreciation to Sierra Ski Club

The Board of Directors expressed sincere appreciation to J. S. Hutchinson, charter member of the Sierra Club, and to Harold Bradley for the courtesy of the members of the Sierra Ski Club in permitting the use of their fine accommodations at Norden.

The Board unanimously decided to meet in San Francisco at some time before the end of 1950 at the call of the President.

RICHARD M. LEONARD

“Shall We Let Them Ruin Our National Parks?”

“Shall We Let Them Ruin Our National Parks?” This is the title of an article in the *Saturday Evening Post* for July 22nd, an article which should be read by every Sierra Club member.

The author is Bernard DeVoto whose articles in *Harpers Magazine* for years past have made predators against our parks and monuments squirm. His theme is the proposed dams in Dinosaur National Monument in Utah; this project of the Reclamation Service has been approved by Secretary of Interior Chapman and is now before Congress.

What makes DeVoto's article of particular interest to Sierra Club members is his account of the devious political manipulations which are invariably the background of such a deal. He very emphatically pays his respects to the engineers of both the Reclamation Service and the Army Engineers Corps, showing as he does that so often their grandiose plans are not even economically wise.

In the case of these proposed dams, the benefits are questionable and designed to serve a relatively small area and thus

threaten ruin of a unique sample of American Wonderland. The engineers of these two services have hundreds of millions to spend and when they are on the track of a dam nothing but a thoroughly aroused public can stop them; and they are often rather cynical concerning the more intangible values of parks and wilderness areas.

DeVoto makes all of this clear and gives us much general and very useful information on other threats to our American heritage: The Glacier View Dam which would inundate 20,000 acres in Glacier Park is again before Congress after having once been rejected. The author bids us watch carefully the Bridge Canyon project on the Colorado to see that the proposed height is adhered to.

What can we do? Well, first of all, read this article. It is possible that the Dinosaur Monument proposal can be blocked in Congress, and here each member can make himself heard by letters to members of Congress.

—RALPH MOCINE

in *Southern Sierran*, September