



P.O. Box 603 • Georgetown, CA 95634 • 530-333-1113

December 5, 2009

Dear Friends,

As the Winter Solstice nears, and a week of rain and snow is on the horizon to bless the Sierra with much-needed water, the Center for Sierra Nevada Conservation's all-volunteer board and staff would like to take this opportunity to thank you for supporting our work in our twenty-third year of protecting the Sierra Nevada. We also ask that you invest once more in the little group that does so much with so little! In the past year, CSNC has been busier than ever before. Some of our campaigns include:

- **Eldorado National Forest Travel Management** – CSNC has been a leader in efforts to rein in Off-road Vehicle use that fragments wildlife habitat and pollutes our streams. It was CSNC's lawsuit in 2003 that forced the Eldorado to finally address the issue of vehicle damage to wildlife, riparian areas, meadows and streams. The Forest Supervisor's decision last year closes the forest to the damaging off-route travel that led former Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth to call ORV use one of the "Four Threats" to our forests and grasslands. Unfortunately, the Eldorado also chose an alternative that legalizes much of the illegal use. It also ignores the agency's own direction to protect sensitive streamside zones. Outside of Wilderness areas, it remains almost impossible for other forest users to find areas free of noise, dust and dangerously damaged trails. This spring, CSNC and other conservation groups filed a lawsuit challenging the Eldorado's decision. We are grateful to Attorney Dave Bahr and the Western Environmental Law Clinic for taking on this challenge on our behalf.
- **Dirt bike Racing** – This fall CSNC successfully appealed a 5-Year Special Use Permit issued by the Georgetown District Ranger that would have allowed two motorcycle enduro races per year for the next five years. The EA for these events was egregiously flawed; the race promoters refused to even allow the public to know what routes were included in the 100-mile race-course. CSNC appealed the decision to the Forest Supervisor and the District Ranger subsequently withdrew her decision. This is not the end of the story, however, as we are told she will issue a new decision in the spring. If it fails

to protect soils, wildlife habitat and water quality, we are prepared to challenge that decision also.

- **Industrial Logging** - In a convoluted process and twisted decision, CalFire (the old California Department of Forestry) approved a Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) logging plan near Lassen Volcanic National Park that further degrades a watershed already badly damaged from past logging. CalFire first ignored CSNC's comments regarding Cumulative Impacts on the Timber Harvest Plan and approved the logging. When we sued the agency over the approval, they re-opened the administrative record and allowed SPI a "do-over." This time, SPI acknowledged the damage, though CalFire still approved the THP. This case sets a terribly dangerous precedent: SPI and CalFire can ignore the State's logging regulations unless sued. Then CalFire will allow SPI to fix their THP and continue with the logging. It means citizens have to sue in order to get CalFire to comply with their own regulations. We are grateful to Attorneys Michael Graf and Sharon Duggan for their hard work on this case. We also thank Environment Now and the Rose Foundation for providing CSNC with the means to challenge this unconscionable agency action.
- **Oak Woodland Protection**- The El Dorado Board of Supervisors adopted an Oak Woodland Management Plan (OWMP) that violates its own General Plan and ensures the fragmentation of oak woodland habitat. It also directs spending on mitigation fees for purchase of conservation easements in remote oak woodlands that are not at risk of development, while allowing development on the habitat most valuable for maintaining wildlife corridors and movement across Highway 50. CSNC filed a lawsuit challenging the OWMP and a hearing on this case was held in a South Lake Tahoe courtroom on November 19th. We are now waiting for a ruling from Judge Suzanne Kingsbury. We thank Attorney Michael Graf for his great work on this case, and you our members for providing us the financial means to pursue it.
- **Pursuing vandals** - Following an act of deliberate destruction of Groundhog Meadow on the Stanislaus National Forest by a group of dirt bikers, CSNC raised a reward of \$1,500 for information leading to the conviction of the hoodlums. The vandalism seriously compromised a 4-year study of Yosemite toads, which lay their eggs in the meadow.

These are just a few of the many activities CSNC is currently pursuing. Our volunteers donate thousands of hours of their time, while holding down full-time jobs. CSNC relies on our members for most of our modest annual funding. We hope you will invest in the future of the Sierra, in healthy streams and wildlife habitat and in our quality of life by joining us, renewing your membership or making a year-end donation.

On behalf of CSNC's Board of Directors, I wish you and yours a joyful holiday season and the coming year full of Wildness!

Sincerely,

Karen Schambach
President

Yes! We want to support CSNC's work to preserve wildlife habitat and quiet recreation opportunity on our public lands.

Name _____

Address _____

Email: _____

Phone _____

Individual Dues \$25 _____

Supporting Dues \$50 _____

Family Dues \$35 _____

Sustaining Dues \$100 _____

Other _____

Please return this form with your check to:

Center for Sierra Nevada Conservation

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