



KS WILD

Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center
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SAVE THE DATE: SEPTEMBER 27
KS Wild's Annual Dinner & Auction!

Non-Profit
US Postage
PAID
Permit 348
Medford, OR

PRINTED ON SAKURA 100% POST CONSUMER WASTE, CHLORINE-FREE PAPER

KS News is produced by the KS Wild staff

KS WILD NEWS

The Journal of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center
Spring 2008



Inside: A New Gold Rush and an Outdated Law
Spring and Summer Hike Schedule
Wildlands and Wildlife in Northern California
OHVs Threatening Public Lands...

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Cover Photo:
Lupine thriving after
the Biscuit burn
in the Kalmiopsis.
Photo by George
Sexton.

Book Release Celebration...

THRILLCRAFT:

THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES
OF MOTORIZED RECREATION

May 14th at 7pm

Bella Union Restaurant and Saloon
170 West California Street, Jacksonville

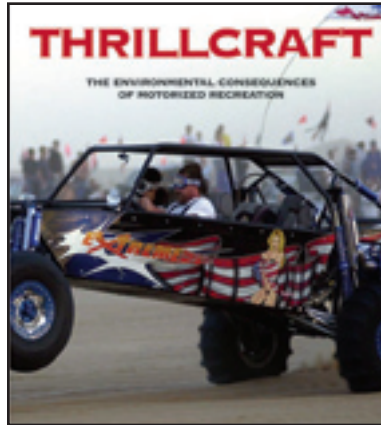
Join editor George Wuerthner for a reading from his recently published book *Thrillcraft*. With over 100 stirring color photographs and powerful essays from policy experts, scientists, and environmental activists, *Thrillcraft* bears witness to the immediate and long-term impacts of motorized recreation on the beauty, silence, and splendor of our

country's natural world. George Wuerthner is a professional photographer and the author of more than two dozen books on natural history and other environmental topics.

As the Bureau of Land Management considers 13 OHV "emphasis areas" in southwest Oregon and the U.S. Forest Service is undertaking a Travel Management Plan process, *Thrillcraft* could not be more timely and relevant. The event is free and will include a raffle for *Thrillcraft* books.

Support KS Wild and get a copy of Thrillcraft!

Join KS Wild with a \$50 membership, or sign up for our automatic monthly program at \$5/month, and receive a copy of *Thrillcraft*. A great gift idea! Email lesley@kswild.org.



KS WILD'S MISSION:

KS Wild is an advocate for the forests and wildlife of the Klamath and Rogue watersheds of northwest California and southwest Oregon. We use environmental law, science, collaboration and education to defend healthy ecosystems and help build sustainable communities.

MANY THANKS TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS

VOLUNTEERS AND COLLABORATORS:

Michelle Adams, Ralph Bloemers, Frank & Stella Bungay, David Calahan, Cascadia Wildlands Project, Regina Chichizola, Holly Christiansen, Al Collinet, Roger Dorband, Marianne Dugan, Francis Eatherington, Forrest English, EPIC, Kyle Haines, Aubyn, Jeff & Rowan Heglie, Timothy Ingalsbee, Melanie Jessee, James Johnston, Andy Kerr, Spencer Lennard, Brian Litmas, Sally Mackler, Erin Madden, Duane Martinez, Malena Marvin, Erik Meldrum, Beverly Moore, Ken Morrish, Jeff Nadler, Rich Nawa, Dang Ngo, Northwest Ecosystem Survey Team, Oregon Wild, Oregon Sierra Club, Pacific Environmental Advocacy Center, Stephanie Parent, Tim Ream, Red Buttes Wilderness Council, Lauren Regan, Rolf Skar, Barry Snitkin, Laurel Sutherland, Barbara Ullian, Erin Volheim, Pete Wallstrom, Greg Walter, Sarah Wilson & many others.

PLEASE SUPPORT THESE BUSINESSES BECAUSE THEY SUPPORT US:

Amazon Herb Shop, Ashland Food Co-op, Ashland Lock & Safe, Ashland Remodeling, Ashwood Senior Homes, Inc., The Book Exchange, Claudia Beausoleil Mediation, Contempl8 T-Shirts, Crystal Clear Satellite, Dagoba Organic Chocolate, Dan the Backhoe Man Excavation, Deluxe Awning Company, DeRiemer Adventure Kayaking, EcoTeas, Eric Strong Furniture, Euro-Mek Auto Repair, Fourth Corner Fine Quilt Gallery, Freeburne's Honey, Full Circle Bison Ranch, Full Circle Real Estate, Greenleaf Restaurant, Herb Pharm, Horizon Herbs, Jefferson State Financial Group, Kalb Chiropractic, Master Craft Wood Floors, Inc., Morning Glory, Morningstar Healing Arts, MyCommunityMatters.net, Naturals of Ashland, Nimbus, Northshore Productions, Northwest Biological Consulting, Pacific Domes, Pinao Construction, Plant Oregon Nursery, Quail Run Vineyard, Sandy Bar Nursery, Stellstone Masonry, Sunday Afternoons, Sunshine Natural Foods, Sweetgrass Natural Fibers, Talent Cafe, Tree Star, Trillium Natural Foods, Williams General Store.

DEEP GRATITUDE GOES TO:

1% for the Planet, Janet Boggia, Paul Christensen, Elizabeth Coker, Romain Cooper, Alexandra Dilworth, Clint & Mary Driver, Jo Ferneau, David Gasser, Ryan Ginn, Ken Himes, Brad Horwitz, Andy Kerr & Nancy Peterson, Dorothea Hover-Kramer, Jeff Kahn, Tracy Parks Lamblin, Bud Lininger, Walter & Conny Lindley, Suzan R. Mackler Fund, Erin Madden, Katherine Mechling & Jim Gurley, Lewis Nash, Dia Paxton, Tom & Maud Powell, Florence Prescott, Margaret Purves, Lundy & Fredric Reynolds, Matt Riley, Gene Rhough, Edward & Gloria Robin, Peter & Karen Salant, Melissa Schweisguth, Randi Spivak, Joyce Stahmann, David & Leann Tourzan, Ted & Ginger Wilson.

THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING FOUNDATIONS:

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FOCUS ON OUR KS WILD FAMILY

1% FOR THE PLANET

In 2001, Yvon Chouinard, founder of Patagonia, and Craig Mathews, owner of Blue Ribbon Flies, were passionate environmentalists that happened to be running successful businesses. More importantly, they understood it was good business to protect the natural resources that kept them in business. The two hatched a plan to encourage more businesses to donate 1% of sales to environmental groups and “1% for the Planet” was born. One percent for the Planet is about businesses recognizing that industry and ecology are inherently connected. It’s about realizing the positive effects of connecting businesses, consumers and nonprofits through philanthropy.



Today, with the total company membership nearing 800, donations approach \$30 million. More than one new member company joins every day. KS Wild is grateful to have three businesses donate their 1% to us: Eric Strong Furniture, Full Circle Real Estate and North Shore Productions. **We thank them for their support** and encourage other businesses to join the movement to give 1% for the Planet. This growing alliance of companies is given the opportunity not only to see their self-worth rise, but their net worth climb as well.

OREGON SPOTTED FROG - RANA PRETIOSA

In March, KS Wild and conservation partners filed suit against the Forest Service for driving the Oregon spotted frog to the brink of extinction, failing to conduct proper environmental analyses, and violating the Clean Water Act by allowing continued grazing on the Antelope Allotment of the Fremont-Winema National Forest.



William Leonard

The spotted frog has been precipitously declining in recent years, and has been a candidate for federal Endangered Species Act protection since 1991. Based on its small remaining population, and the severe threat to its survival, it has been assigned the highest possible listing priority. Overall, the frog is gone from 90% of its range.

Under the Bush administration, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been notoriously slow at protecting candidate species. There are currently 280 species on the candidate species list. Since passage of the Endangered Species Act, at least 24 candidate species have gone extinct.

"WHOPPER" HIKE SERIES

In 2007, the Bureau of Land Management released a draft proposal called the Western Oregon Plan Revisions, also known as WOPR, which would guide the management of 2.5 million acres of public forests in western Oregon. The WOPR would remove these forests from the scientific framework of the Northwest Forest Plan. The agency's preferred alternative calls for widespread clearcutting, reduced stream and salmon buffers and a sevenfold increase in logging old-growth trees. In addition, the plan proposes 13 OHV "emphasis areas" for southwest Oregon where motorized recreation would take priority over other uses. Join KS Wild for a hike to Medford District BLM public lands that would be affected by this whopper of a plan.



Joseph Vaile

MAY 3: ILLINOIS VALLEY

Lone Pine Prospect trail, west of Selma. This historic trail offers an overlook of the Squaw Creek drainage, old-growth trees, wildflowers and rare serpentine plant communities. We will walk through part of the Medford BLM's Anderson West Timber Sale. Easy-moderate, 3 mile roundtrip. Meet at the Ray's Market in Selma at 10am.

JUNE 21: LITTLE APPEGATE VALLEY

Sterling Mine Ditch Trail, south of Jacksonville. This historic trail offers scenic views of the eastern Siskiyou Mountains. This area was designated as an Adaptive Management Area under the Northwest Forest Plan, and under WOPR it is proposed as a Timber Management Area. The trail is also in the proposed Anderson Butte Off-Highway Vehicle Emphasis Area. Moderate-difficult, 7 miles roundtrip. Meet at the Ruch Market at 9am.

AUGUST 16: MOON PRAIRIE, INDIAN PLATEAU

Visit a relic stand of old-growth east of Ashland. Moon Prairie is currently designated as an "Area of Critical Environmental Concern" for its fish, wildlife, scenic and educational values. The BLM would eliminate this designation under all proposed WOPR alternatives. Moderate, 4-5 miles. Meet at Shop 'n Kart in Ashland at 9am.

SEPTEMBER 20: LONG GULCH, APPEGATE VALLEY

A one-way hike off-trail from the top of Long Gulch down the drainage of this trellised watershed that is home to one of the largest blocks of low elevation old-growth in the Applegate. Local residents submitted a proposal under WOPR to have the area designated as an "Area of Critical Environmental Concern," but it was rejected. This area was designated as an Adaptive Management Area under the Northwest Forest Plan, and under WOPR it is proposed as a Timber Management Area, as well as an OHV Emphasis Area. Difficult, 7 miles. Meet at the Ruch Market at 9am.

*Bring good hiking shoes, water, food and clothing layers. For more information, call 488-5789 or email lesley@kswild.org. ****See page 12 for more hikes.***

BLM STILL WANTS TO CUT OLD-GROWTH IN SOUTHERN OREGON

SUCKER AND ALTHOUSE CREEK WATERSHEDS TARGETED

The Medford BLM is wrapping up plans for logging old-growth forests near Cave Junction, Oregon. Known as Althouse Sucker, the timber sale is located in the Illinois River Valley, along the route to the Oregon Caves National Monument. The Althouse and Sucker Creek watersheds are popular recreational destinations in southwest Oregon, now threatened by the Medford BLM's old-growth logging program.



COMPOUNDING PAST MISTAKES: Rather than convert more native forests into tree plantations, as proposed in Althouse Sucker (pictured here), federal agencies should thin existing plantations on public lands.

A MAGNIFICENT PLACE

One should visit Althouse and Sucker creeks to appreciate these exemplary Pacific Northwest watersheds. Not only do they provide increasingly rare habitat for old-growth dependent animals such as the Pacific fisher and the red tree vole, but botanically, the area is extremely rich and home to unique species such as Howell's mariposa lily.

Perhaps most striking about these watersheds are the swift, cold waters tumbling off the Siskiyou Crest, providing a haven for species such as coho salmon, winter steelhead and fall Chinook salmon. Together, Althouse and Sucker creeks comprise some of the most productive salmon habitat in the Illinois River basin.

A CHECKERED PAST

Even with all their charm, visitors don't need to look hard to find scars of decades of clearcut logging and mining on public land in these watersheds. Ongoing short rotation forestry - clearcutting of a forest about every 50 years - on industrial timberland is certainly evident. Some people are sure to remember Forest Service land high up in the Sucker Creek watershed, the subject of rancorous debate and protests in the mid-1990s when ancient forests were leveled in the Sugarloaf timber sale.

AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

In the Althouse Sucker project, the BLM proposes several square miles of "vegetation management" (aka logging) and several miles of new road construction. In addition to the roads, the most alarming thing about the BLM's plan is the 600 acres of old-growth

GOVERNORS SPEAK UP FOR THE ROGUE

In a March letter to Senator Ron Wyden, Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski stated that Oregon is "ripe" for Wilderness and Wild & Scenic designations. The Governor's letter lists areas throughout the state that he believes deserves such protection, including the Wild Rogue, Copper Salmon and Kalmiopsis Wilderness additions.



BUILDING MOMENTUM: Help strengthen our efforts to protect the Wild Rogue and take action today.

One week later, *The Oregonian* printed an opinion editorial from former Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber that read, "Rep. Peter DeFazio and Sens. Ron Wyden and Gordon Smith are in a perfect position to continue Oregon's great tradition of river protection by expanding the wild and scenic designation for the Rogue River in the coming year. Let all of us who know the Rogue support this effort and commit to preserving this special river for all those who will follow."

HIKE THE WILD ROGUE

Join KS Wild and Siskiyou Project on the last Saturday of every month for a hike into proposed Wilderness along the Lower Rogue River. Enjoy diverse wild forests, extraordinary wildlife viewing and clear creeks tumbling into the mighty Rogue.

Mark your calendars: May 31, June 28, July 26, August 30, Sept. 27, Oct. 25

Carpools leave the Gooseberries Natural Foods parking lot in Grants Pass at 10am. Bring hiking shoes, clothing layers, food and water. Moderate, approximately 5-7 miles. Learn how you can help to Save the Wild Rogue at www.savethewildrogue.org.

PLEASE JOIN KS WILD TODAY!

✓ Yes, I want to support KS Wild's efforts with a tax-deductible membership donation of:

\$20 \$35 \$50 \$100 Other \$ _____

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

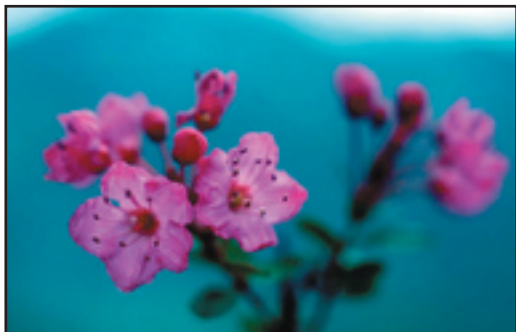
Mail this form along with your membership donation to: KS WILD, P.O. Box 332, Williams, OR 97544

FEATURED HIKE: **BABYFOOT TO BAILEY CABIN**

REVISITING THE **KALMIOPSIS WILDERNESS AFTER BISCUIT**

Following the 2002 Biscuit fire, and the subsequent Forest Service clearcutting, I recently made the long hike from the Babyfoot Lake trailhead to the old Bailey Cabin site to see what had changed, and what remained the same.

The Babyfoot Lake trailhead, and portions of the Babyfoot Lake Botanical Area, have been clearcut by the Forest Service as part of the Fiddler timber sale. Believe it or not, the stump-field at the trailhead is classified as a protected Late-Successional (old-growth) Reserve by the Forest Service.



Lee Webb, U.S. Forest Service

HOLY GRAIL OF WILDFLOWERS: Kalmiopsis leacheana is an ice age relic, living in the Kalmiopsis for more than 10,000 years.

For the hiker, it is a tremendous relief when the trail leaves the stumps and enters the un-logged forest in the Wilderness Area that is naturally recovering from the fire. The trail splits about 1/4 mile from the trailhead and I followed the route less-traveled to the south, which leads away from Babyfoot Lake. The trail climbs sharply to a ridge, where Brewer's spruce trees survived the fire. The rare Brewer's spruce grows only in the Klamath mountains and was one of the last conifers discovered in North America.

The route then drops down to an old mining road that has been grandfathered into the Wilderness Area. Hiking on the road can be tough because of the number of trees that have fallen like pick-up-sticks along the route. But the lupine wildflower show on the recovering road in early spring is simply breathtaking (see cover photo).

From this point it's a long slog down into the remote Chetco River watershed. Eventually the trail splits and I stayed to the right climbing a ridge towards the old Bailey Cabin site. Here lies the holy grail of wildflowers: the endemic pink Kalmiopsis flower that grows only in this Wilderness. Looking at the Kalmiopsis flower is like looking back in time; since this mountain range was spared the most recent ice age, the flower community has been in this wild country for more than 10,000 years. Like many wildflowers, it appears to have benefited from the natural fire event of the Biscuit burn.

Finally the trail reaches the Bailey cabin site, nestled in a gorgeous saddle on the ridge. Fortunately, the spring at the site is still there and running strong. It's the first running water of the hike, and the filtered spring water tastes divine. From the cabin site, one can hike trails either north or south down to the Chetco River.

Unfortunately, even these remote wilderness watersheds are threatened; in addition to the proposed suction dredge mining in the wilderness (see page 7-8), recently out-of-state developers have been using helicopters to encourage high-end "recreational mining" along the pristine headwaters of the wild Chetco River.

- G. Sexton

forest that would be removed or "downgraded" through aggressive logging of large trees. The BLM also proposes logging several units near streams, on very steep slopes, and across some of our last, best examples of old-growth forest in southern Oregon.

WHAT TO DO?

KS Wild will challenge the portions of the "Althouse Sucker Landscape Management Project" that harm old-growth forests and salmon. We continue to support portions of the project that would remove roads, place large wood in streams to enhance salmon spawning habitat, and thin small diameter trees in thick second growth forests.

Please visit www.kswild.org to learn more and get involved.

- J. Vaile



George Sexton

A HAVEN FOR FISH: Together, Althouse and Sucker creeks comprise some of the most productive salmon habitat in the Illinois River basin.

COLLABORATING AND RESTORING

If you are a regular *KS Wild News* reader, you know we often oppose projects that harm public lands. Over the past several years, KS Wild has also been working with some of the very parties we regularly butt heads with to come up with common ground solutions to public land management problems.

By working with local communities to collaboratively develop restoration projects, KS Wild is helping to provide jobs that employ a community workforce while identifying and advocating for restoration funding. For example, KS Wild is working with the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest on the Butcher Knife Slate project, which would thin overgrown tree plantations and fire suppressed forests. We continue our participation with the Southern Oregon Small Diameter Collaborative and are analyzing our first pilot project located in the Upper Applegate Valley.



Lesley Adams

KICKIN' DIRT: KS Wild staff, Applegate Valley residents and the BLM discuss the "White Hat" project.

FOREST SERVICE TRASHES THE UNDERWOOD ROADLESS AREA

WILDERNESS OR CLEARCUTS?

The wild and rugged Underwood Roadless Area is prized for its native forests, pristine creeks and wilderness characteristics. Indeed, the forests and watersheds of the roadless area are a haven for both recreation and rare species. Underwood Creek flows into the renowned Wild and Scenic South Fork of the Trinity River, providing essential cold-water refugia for at-risk populations of coho, Chinook and steelhead. The importance of the Underwood wildlands is so widely recognized that in 2005 Senator Barbara Boxer proposed permanently protecting the watershed as wilderness, and in 2006 Underwood very nearly gained protection as a federally designated Wilderness area.



David Rose of the South Fork Trinity River Land Conservancy

WILD AND ROADLESS: The Underwood Roadless Area offers stunning scenery, important habitat and a spectacular backcountry experience.

Unfortunately, the Forest Service has a long and tragic history of “wilderness preclusion” road projects that are quickly undertaken in order to destroy the irreplaceable wilderness characteristics of special wildlands before they can be protected by legislation. In the Klamath-Siskiyou mountains, one routinely encounters hastily constructed “roads to nowhere” that were punched in by the Forest Service when it feared that Congress might protect the area from the agency’s logging agenda. The “GO” road through the High Siskiyou Wilderness Area, the “5103 road” bisecting the Grassy Knob Wilderness Area (which runs through the actual “Grassy Knob” itself), and the numerous mining roads throughout the Kalmiopsis Wilderness Area are but a few examples of the lengths that the Forest Service will go to thwart the public’s desire for untrammelled wildlands.

PLAYING FAST AND LOOSE WITH THE LAW

The Forest Plan for the Six Rivers National Forest prohibits new logging road construction in roadless key watersheds like Underwood. Not to be deterred by inconvenient plans that might protect wildlands, the Forest Service ignored its own regulations and scraped nearly a mile of new logging road through the roadless area with bulldozers in late 2006. The dozers were unleashed during the public commenting period for the Underwood Draft Environmental Impact Statement. In other words, the majority of the agency’s environmental analysis, and public input, occurred after the road had been already been punched through the roadless area.

MONITORING INDUSTRIAL FORESTLAND IN CALIFORNIA

The future management of 240 square miles of northern California industrial timberland is up for grabs as federal agencies wrestle with a timber company’s application to streamline threatened species management. The lands are primarily in tributary watersheds to the Klamath River near the Klamath National Forest.



KEEPING, NOT TAKING: We should safeguard threatened species, not permit their “taking.”

ACRONYM OVERLOAD

When approaching the topic of conservation policy, a litany of acronyms always comes streaming out. At KS Wild, you might overhear someone mutter, “that FGS HCP from USFWS and NMFS will jeopardize NSO and coho.” Does that sound like Greek to you? The translation makes more sense – the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service are preparing a Habitat Conservation Plan for 154,000 acres of private industrial land owned by the Fruit Growers Supply timber company. The HCP has the potential to do grave harm to the threatened Northern spotted owl and coho salmon.

HABITAT “CONSERVATION” PLANNING

Upon reading the words Habitat Conservation Plan, most folks imagine hard working biologists crafting well-intentioned plans to protect warm and fuzzy critters. Unfortunately, HCPs often have very negative consequences for threatened species. HCPs make it legal for landowners to “take” species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA-last acronym, I promise). Take means harming, harassing or killing a listed species, often by removing its habitat. Development, mining and timber companies seek HCPs so that they can ‘take’ listed species by mitigating habitat destruction elsewhere to comply with the ESA.

A BIG PROBLEM

The biggest problem is that this HCP will last 50 years. During this time, FGS will be protected by “no surprises,” a provision of HCPs. If something unforeseen occurs – say fewer owls survive on the property than forecasted, or coho salmon decrease at a faster rate than predicted, FGS is allowed to continue its habitat destruction. FGS and the regulating agencies are locked into the agreement they strike for half a century! Ensuring that rare species get the best deal possible is a priority for KS Wild in this HCP. NMFS and USFWS are preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS-I’m serious this time). Please visit www.kswild.org/thps to learn more.

FIRST CALIFORNIA WOLVERINE DOCUMENTED SINCE THE 1930S

The Associated Press reported in early March that a wolverine was caught on film in the Sierra Nevada mountains near Lake Tahoe. An Oregon State University graduate student set up motion-detecting cameras for a study of martens, but instead caught the first glimpse of a wolverine in California since the 1930s. Scientists had feared that this elusive animal was driven out of the Sierra Nevada long ago by human activity.



Gerald and Buff Corsi © California Academy of Sciences

ELUSIVE, FEISTY AND IN TROUBLE : Once widespread in the U.S, wolverines have been reduced to small, fragmented populations.

Meanwhile, on March 10, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released a decision denying protection under the Endangered Species Act for the wolverine. In 2006, KS Wild and other groups won a lawsuit that forced the Bush administration to assess the wolverine's status. Despite important new evidence that the wolverine is in desperate straits - including the fact that global warming is degrading its high alpine habitats - the agency declared that it will do nothing to assist the rare creature.

The wolverine once roamed across the northern U.S. and as far south as New Mexico and southern California. After centuries of trapping and habitat loss, wolverines have been reduced to small, fragmented populations. Wolverines occur in low densities and need huge tracts of wilderness to survive.

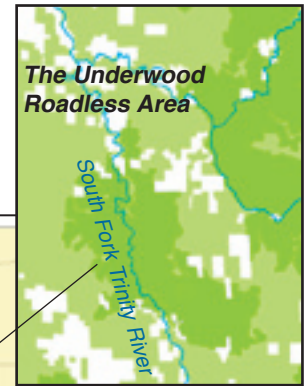
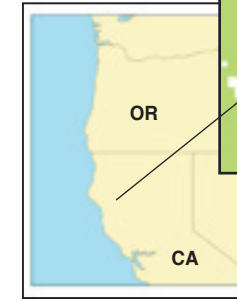
GOVERNOR TAKES A STAND ON LNG

Governor Ted Kulongoski sent a letter to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in February insisting that federal regulators halt all reviews of proposals to build liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals in Oregon until they study all alternatives for supplying natural gas to the region. There are currently three proposals to build LNG terminals in Oregon - two on the Columbia River and one in Coos Bay. The Coos Bay proposal includes a 223-mile pipeline crossing Coos, Douglas, Jackson and Klamath counties. Stiff opposition to LNG in Oregon centers around environmental impacts, property rights, eminent domain, necessity/benefit for Oregon, and the continued public investment in foreign fossil fuel dependence that impedes our conversion to renewable energy. According to a report released in March from PFC Energy, the U.S. will have almost four times more LNG import capacity than it can use by 2012 because of a shortfall in fuel supply.

To learn more, visit www.nocaliforniapipeline.com and www.ingpollutes.org

A MAKE BELIEVE EMERGENCY

The Forest Service's stated excuse for the premature road construction was that the road was needed on an emergency basis to provide access to fight the Panther Fire. An examination of the project records indicates that the "emergency" road construction was not in fact in the vicinity of the Panther Fire, and instead was simply used to access and establish a "staging" area. In an astounding coincidence, the location of the "emergency" road followed the exact footprint of the proposed Underwood Wilderness preclusion road.



Legend:
 Roadless Areas
 Six Rivers National Forest

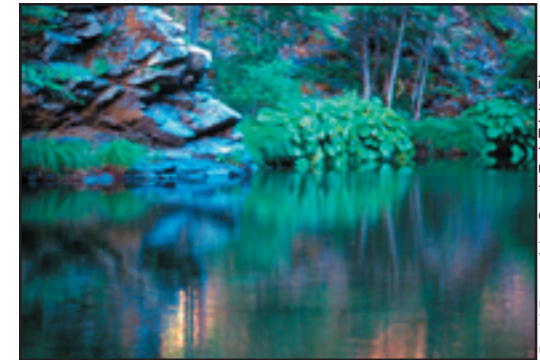
IN BED WITH BIG TIMBER

The "emergency" fire road bisecting the Underwood Roadless Area ends, conveniently enough, at a 160-acre forested inholding owned by timber giant Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI). Most reasonable people outside of the Forest Service (and no doubt some within the agency) realize that the real purpose of the road construction was not to facilitate fire suppression, but to preclude wilderness designation of the Underwood Roadless Area and to provide inexpensive road access to SPI logging operations at the public's expense.

THIS FIGHT AIN'T OVER

Fortunately, wilderness advocates are not easily dissuaded, and KS Wild's efforts to protect the Underwood Roadless Area are now in full swing. We have filed an administrative appeal of the Forest Service's decision to make the "emergency road" permanent and we are preparing litigation to challenge the agency's illegal road construction activities.

Working with our friends at the Western Environmental Law Center, the Environmental Protection Information Center, the California Wilderness Coalition, the Klamath Forest Alliance and the Northcoast Environmental Center, we will redouble our efforts to permanently protect the forests and creeks of the Underwood Roadless Area. Stay up to date and get involved by visiting us at www.kswild.org



SOUTH FORK TRINITY: Underwood Creek flows into the renowned Wild and Scenic South Fork of the Trinity River providing essential cold-water refugia for at-risk populations of coho, Chinook and steelhead.

David Rose of the South Fork Trinity River Land Conservancy

A NEW GOLD RUSH AND AN OUTDATED LAW

With gold trading for more than \$1,000 an ounce, the forests and watersheds of the Klamath-Siskiyou are seeing the effects of a second gold rush that is nearly as wild and wooly as the first. As reported on March 17th in the *Mail Tribune*, this renewed interest in mining gold in the Klamath-Siskiyou is widespread.



Barbara Ullian, Friends of the Kalmiopsis

SALMON STRONGHOLD: The Wild & Scenic Chetco River is a world class salmon and steelhead stream on Oregon's south coast. Proposed suction dredge mining along 24 miles of the river will impact its wild fishery and nationally outstanding water quality.

Unfortunately, gold mining has always come with a steep environmental cost, leaving the region replete with abandoned mines that leach poisonous metals into streams and creeks. Mining on our public lands is carried out under a woefully outdated law called the General Mining Act of 1872, which was signed by Ulysses S. Grant. The General Mining Act places no environmental restrictions on mining, requires no payment of royalties to the government, and allows prospectors to gain permanent property rights to public lands from the federal government, essentially for free. Its purpose, at its most essential, is to transform public lands into private lands in order to benefit the mining industry.

NOT EVEN THE KALMIOPSIS WILDERNESS IS SAFE

The most immediate threat the gold frenzy poses to our wildlands and watersheds is a new proposal to suction dredge mine an eight mile stretch of the Wild and Scenic Chetco River by David Rutan's Chetco River Mining & Exploration LLC (CRME). The proposed mining would occur along the Congressionally designated Wild and Scenic portion of the river and would extend several miles into the Kalmiopsis Wilderness Area. CRME's claims on the Chetco were staked just months before Congress forbade the location of mining claims on the river. CRME just barely snuck in under the wire and now wants to degrade a pristine river that rightfully belongs to all Americans.

The Chetco River is one of southern Oregon's most storied salmon fisheries. Originating in the rugged Kalmiopsis Wilderness, the Chetco runs just over 50 miles from its source to the Pacific Ocean at Brookings, Oregon, just north of the California border. The Chetco provides essential habitat to Chinook and steelhead, as well as the endangered coho salmon. It also supplies drinking water and a valuable recreation-based economy for the coastal communities of the state.

PUTTING THE WILD AND SCENIC CHETCO RIVER AT RISK

Suction dredge mining is a type of placer mining where sediment is vacuumed up from the bottom of a river by a gas-powered high-pressure pump, screened for gold flakes and then redeposited in the river. Suction dredge mining introduces significant sediment into the water, displaces the insect larvae that form the basis of the food chain, and can entrain (suck up) young and unhatched fish of all kinds. The released sediment can fill in valuable habitat, reduce salmon's ability to forage, and scour spawning areas. Gold isn't the only heavy metal in the sediment, and mining slurry can include copper, zinc, chromium and arsenic. Copper, in particular, is highly toxic for fish.



Siskiyou Project

RISKING CLEAN RIVERS: Suction dredge miners used helicopters to place 55 gallon barrels of gasoline in the streambed of Silver Creek, 1998.

The public interest in the Chetco is reflected in the maze of state and federal law that govern its use. I count no fewer than seven federal environmental statutes that relate directly to CRME's plan to dredge the river. In particular, the claims that lie in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness are difficult to reach, and the Wilderness strictly prohibits most mechanized activity; the Endangered Species Act prohibits the harm or harassment of listed coho salmon; the Clean Water Act requires permits both for the dredge of sediment and the discharge of pollutants back into the water; and the National Environmental Policy Act requires detailed study, consideration and public input.

Chetco River Mining & Exploration just barely snuck in under the wire and now wants to degrade a pristine river that rightfully belongs to all Americans.

With your support, KS Wild is prepared to fight this plan every step of the way. One of our most promising legal arguments is that the Chetco, as a navigable river through most if not all of CRME's claims, is actually owned by the State of Oregon and held in trust for the people. Hence, the Chetco has been state property since 1859. This means that no mining claim on the river staked under federal law is valid. If you want to help the Chetco, you can call or write the Oregon Department of State Lands and ask that they protect Oregon's property rights and water quality on the upper Chetco. For more information, visit www.kswild.org/KSNews/chetcomining

- C. Len

ANNUAL BOARD MEETING - MAY 5TH

Nuwandart Gallery - 258 A St., Ste 2, Ashland 5:30pm: social, 6pm: meeting

Meet our staff and Board of Directors and learn more about how KS Wild works.