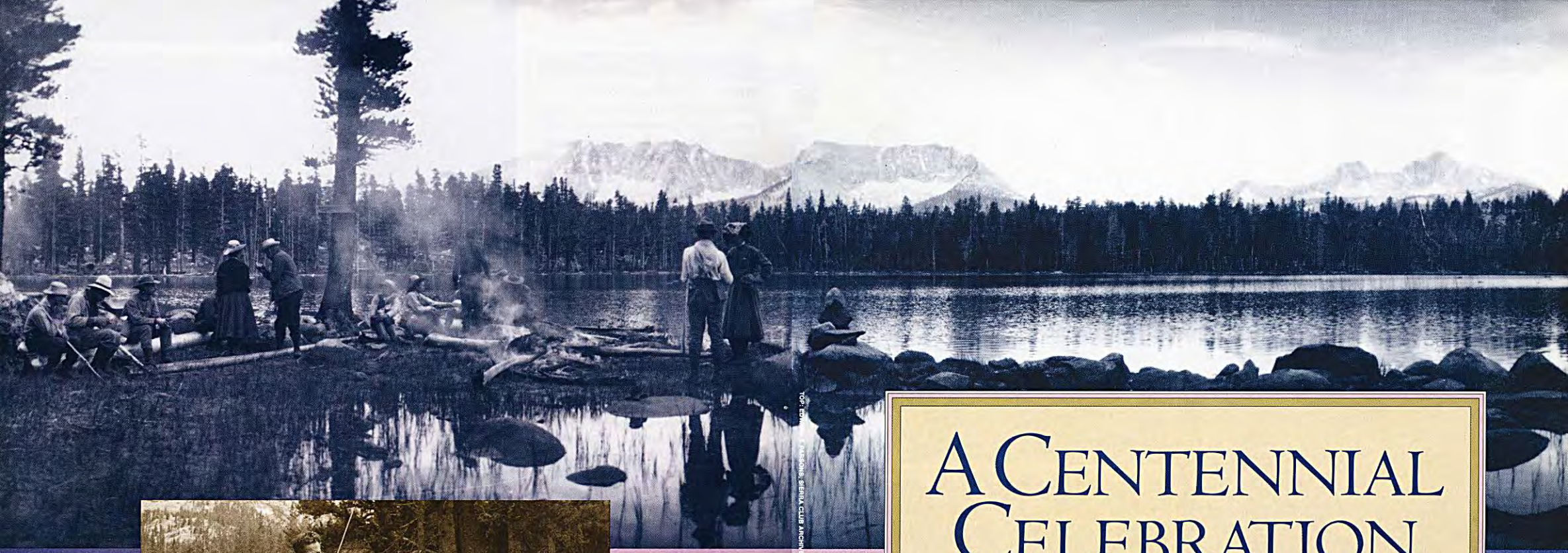


TOP: EDWARD T. PARSONS, SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES. BOTTOM: PAT O'HARA. INSET: CEDRIC WRIGHT COLLECTION, SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES.

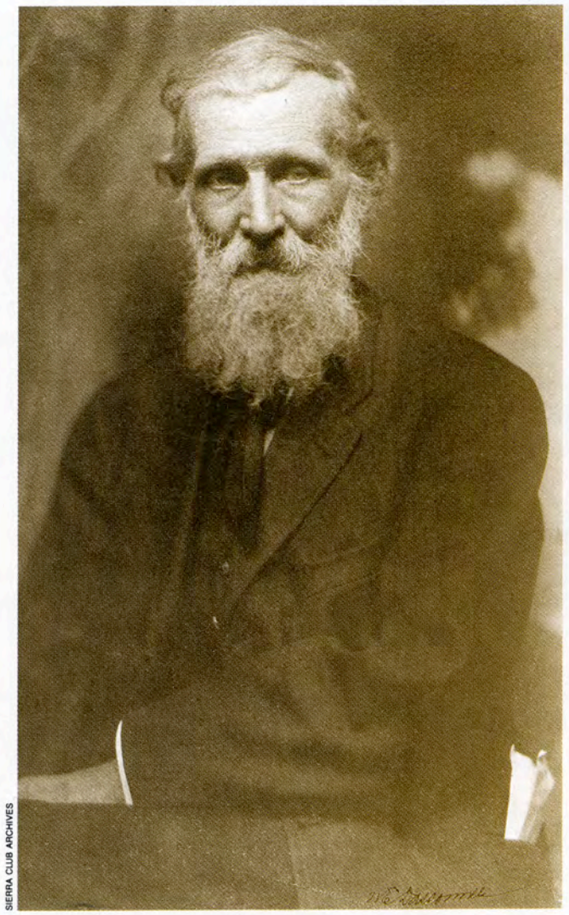
A Centennial Celebration

1892 ~ 1992

The Sierra Club was born of the passion a small group of people held for the mountains of California. We envy them their simpler love, untroubled by our own dark fears for the planet's future. They marked the path, scouted the passes, and discovered the springs; they taught us to honor the wilderness. They are our parents, literally and figuratively. We celebrate what they did for us, rejoice in what they saved, and hope to do as much for those who follow.

SIERRA CLUB CENTENNIAL 1890~1899

Through his widely read magazine articles, naturalist John Muir became the nation's best-known advocate for the Sierra Nevada. In the spring of 1892, he and a number of prominent Californians founded the Sierra Club, a corporation with the following purposes: "To explore, enjoy, and render accessible the mountain regions of the Pacific Coast; to publish authentic information concerning them; to enlist the support and cooperation of the people and government in preserving the forest and other natural features of the Sierra Nevada Mountains."



SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES

JOSEPH N. LECONTE, SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES

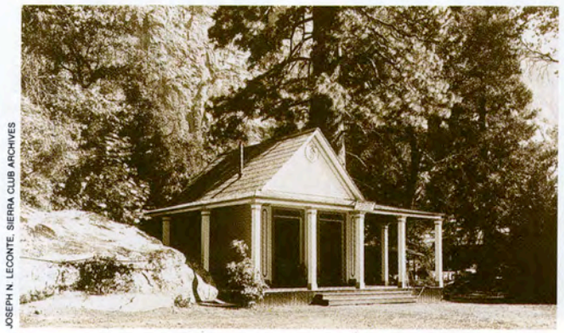
Yosemite National Park, established in 1890, did not include Yosemite Valley, which remained under the control of the state of California (where it had languished since 1864). In 1895 Sierra Club President John Muir first urged that the state return the valley to federal management, a theme he would pursue for a decade.

JEFF GNASS

JEFF GNASS

The infant Club supported the establishment of forest reserves and parks that would protect scenic resources throughout much of the Sierra Nevada; conducted surveys of potential long-distance trail routes; appropriated money for trail improvement and marking; produced a periodic journal (the *Sierra Club Bulletin*); and published maps of Yosemite and the Kings River region. Club members also pioneered mountaineering routes throughout the Sierra, inaugurating a climbing tradition that would endure for generations.

In 1898 the Sierra Club established a "headquarters" in Yosemite Valley—a rustic counterpart to the Club offices at San Francisco's Academy of Sciences. The Yosemite building had a live-in attendant—a young man named William E. Colby, who would play a central role in Club affairs for the next half century, eventually serving 47 years as secretary of the Board of Directors.



JOSEPH N. LECONTE, SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES

The Club incorporated the image of the great Sierra sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) into its official seal (where it remains today). But the Club also concerned itself with California's other titanic tree species: In 1898 it urged that parks be established to preserve the majestic coast redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*). Thus began an 80-year campaign that culminated in the designation of Redwood National Park in 1968 and its 48,000-acre enlargement in 1978.

1890 Yosemite, Sequoia, General Grant national parks established.

1891 Federal Forest Reserve System set up.

1892 Sierra Club founded in May; John Muir named president.

1893 *Sierra Club Bulletin* Vol. I, No. 1 published.

1894 John Muir publishes *The Mountains of California*.

1895 First Sierra Club annual meeting.

1896 Club publishes map of Yosemite Valley.

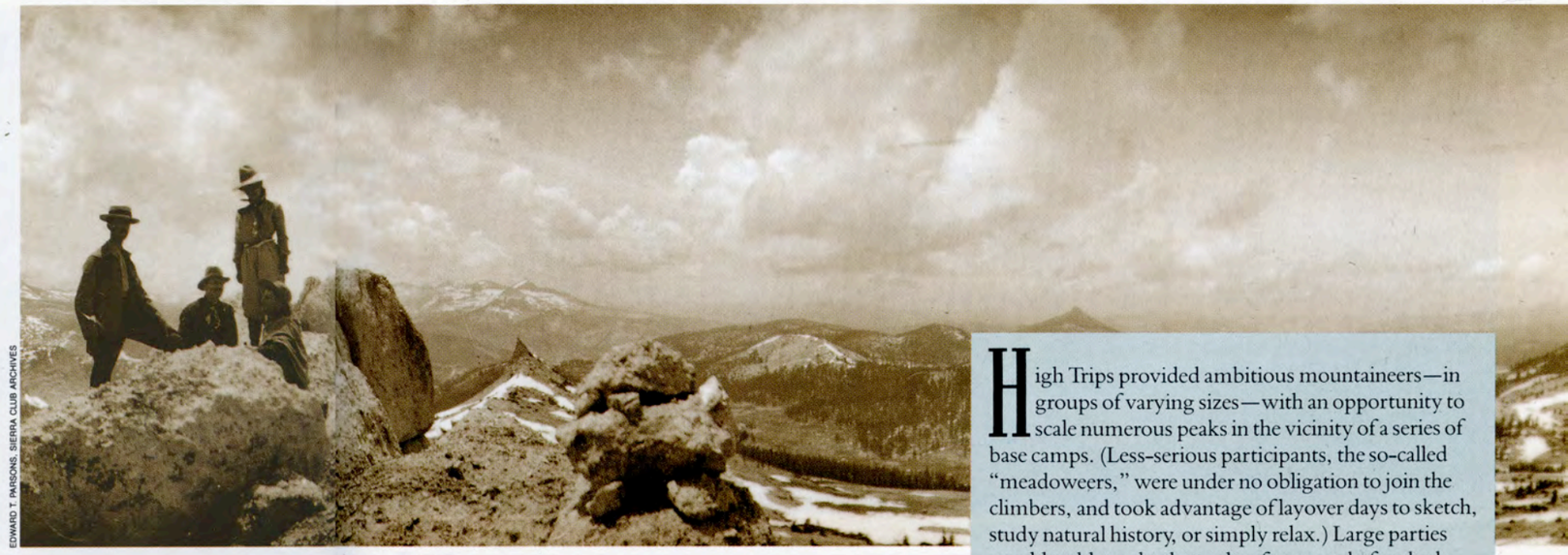
1897 Membership reaches 350.

1898 Joseph N. LeConte begins 42 years of service on Sierra Club Board.

1899 Century's-end balance in Club treasury: $46.05.

The first large-scale Sierra Club outing to the Sierra Nevada was conducted in 1901. The several-week-long "High Trip" was for generations a fixture in Club life, introducing thousands to the glories of the range over the next seven decades. In proposing the initial excursion, Will Colby predicted that "if properly conducted [it] will do an infinite amount of good toward awakening the proper kind of interest in the forest and other natural features of our mountains, and will also tend to create a spirit of good fellowship among our members." The trip was judged a great success—Colby estimated that at least 50 new members were acquired thereby.

SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES. BANCROFT LIBRARY



EDWARD T. PARSONS. SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES

High Trips provided ambitious mountaineers—in groups of varying sizes—with an opportunity to scale numerous peaks in the vicinity of a series of base camps. (Less-serious participants, the so-called "meadoweers," were under no obligation to join the climbers, and took advantage of layover days to sketch, study natural history, or simply relax.) Large parties would tackle peaks that only a few years before had been the object of individual or small-group efforts. In the summer of 1903, for example, two Sierra Club parties reached the summit of Mt. Whitney. The first was limited to 40 climbers, but the second, led by Will Colby himself, numbered 103 hardy souls.

In 1903 President Theodore Roosevelt and California Governor James Pardee visited Yosemite and the Mariposa Grove of Sierra redwoods in the company of John Muir (right) and Will Colby, who took the opportunity to call again for return of Yosemite Valley to the federal government. Roosevelt, impressed by the valley's scenic glory, agreed to support the Club's lobbying effort. The state and federal governments got in line shortly thereafter (though Congress did take the opportunity to reduce the park's area by 12,000 acres), and in 1905 the "magnificent valley" was restored to federal control.

SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES

The first High Trip outside California took place in 1905—an excursion to the Pacific Northwest that took in Mts. Rainier and Hood, among others. A party of 56 Sierrans reached the summit of Rainier, which had been protected within a national park in 1899. The Club party that day included Stephen P. Mather, who a decade later was named the first director of the National Park Service.

CEDRIC WRIGHT. SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES

CEDRIC WRIGHT. SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES

In 1908 three Club members completed the first high-mountain route between Yosemite and Kings Canyon, realizing a goal originally envisioned by pioneering pathfinder and geographer Theodore Solomons 15 years earlier. They covered 278 mostly trailless miles in 27 days, traversing a route that later became the basis for the John Muir Trail, which was completed in 1931.

1900 Stanford University president David Starr Jordan assumes editorship of *Sierra Club Bulletin*.

1901 The *Bulletin* begins to accept advertising to defray expenses.

1902 The second High Trip explores the Kings River region.

1903 Club constructs LeConte Memorial Lodge in Yosemite Valley.

1904 Local walks program begun in the San Francisco area.

1905 Club bylaws amended to allow formation of sections (now called chapters).

1906 Club offices, library, and records destroyed in San Francisco earthquake and fire.

1907 High Trip visits Yosemite Valley, Tuolumne Meadows, and Hetch Hetchy Valley.

1908 Sierra Club membership reaches 1,000.

1909 High Trip to Yosemite; 220 participate—a record.

SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES, BANCROFT LIBRARY

The High Trip matured into a tradition during the Club's third decade, as dozens of members each summer combined exploration and mountaineering with socializing and relaxation on multi-week excursions to various scenic wonderlands. The group at left is seen on an early-season trek to Mt. Lyell, near Tuolumne Meadows, in 1913. On other occasions High Trippers became intimately familiar with the terrain around the Kings-Kern Divide and within recently established Sequoia National Park. It was during this decade that the Club began pressing for expansion of Sequoia to include the Divide, a campaign that finally bore fruit in 1926. But the Club's commitment to comprehensive protection for the Kings River region would not be rewarded by national-park designation until 1940.

From the moment that the growing city of San Francisco first proposed damming Yosemite's Hetch Hetchy Valley to provide a permanent water supply, John Muir and the Sierra Club fought back with every available resource, including legislative lobbying and a national campaign to turn public opinion toward preservation. Hetch Hetchy was considered nearly the scenic equal of Yosemite Valley itself, and its flooding, the Club maintained, would render meaningless the notion of protecting landscapes for all time within a sacrosanct national-park system. The long battle ended disastrously in 1913 when Congress passed the Raker Act, authorizing a dam on the Tuolumne River at Hetch Hetchy's lower end. It was the tragic denouement to John Muir's career; he died, brokenhearted, the following year.

SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES, BANCROFT LIBRARY

Marion Randall Parsons (far right) succeeded her husband on the Sierra Club's Board upon Edward Taylor Parsons' death in 1914, continuing to serve there for 36 years. The Club's first female director holds the further distinction of being its first Washington, D.C., lobbyist, having made her way east in 1920 to argue for the designation of a Kings Canyon National Park. Parsons was also a frequent contributor to the *Sierra Club Bulletin,* as well as editor of John Muir's posthumous classic, *Travels in Alaska.*

JOSEPH N. LECONTE, SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES

W.F. BADE

In 1913 the Club sponsored its first snow trip, to the northern Sierra. The following year's trip was written up by Hazel Wolf for the *Sierra Club Bulletin*: "Put on your skis and go up to the mountain top. There pause; gather yourself in a crouching position, just as a bird does before it leaps into the air; then straighten out . . . with life and freedom tingling from your toes . . . [and] you will fly over that white world. . . ." Seven years later Harold Bradley completed a trans-Sierra expedition that ushered in a brilliant era of ski-mountaineering for the Sierra Club. That experience paid off in World War II, when Club skiers helped develop training regimens for U.S. mountain troops in Europe.

1910 Club aids in establishment of Glacier National Park, Montana.

1911 Southern California (now Angeles) Chapter organized.

1912 Club urges establishment of a national park service.

1913 Southern California Chapter completes Muir Lodge in Big Santa Anita Canyon.

1914 High Trip visits Hetch Hetchy Valley for the last time.

1915 Parsons Memorial Lodge in Tuolumne Meadows built.

1916 With Club support, National Park Service Act passed by Congress.

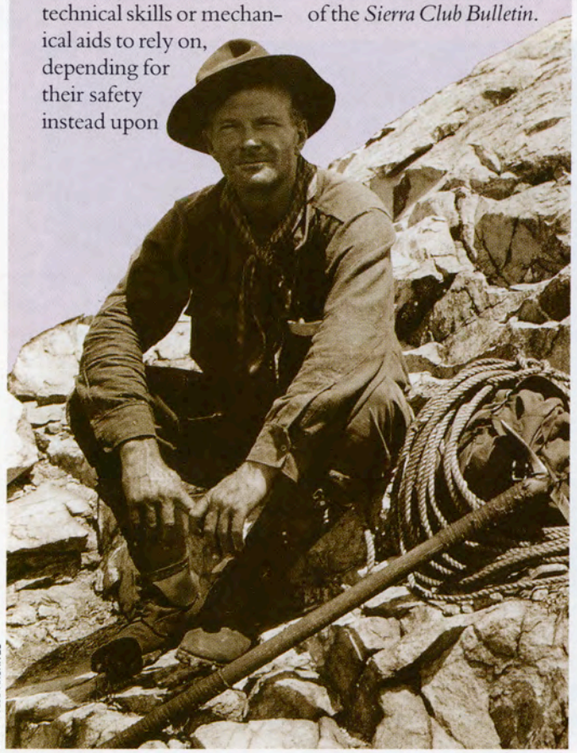
1917 Club protests wartime livestock grazing in national parks.

1918 One hundred forty members are in military service in WWI.

1919 Stairway to summit of Half Dome completed under Sierra Club auspices.

Sierra Club mountaineers continued to log first ascents of increasingly challenging peaks. In 1921 the 14,049-foot Middle Palisade—one of the high points on a ridgecrest in the eastern Sierra—was scaled by two Club climbers who, typically for the period, climbed unroped. They had little else in the way of technical skills or mechanical aids to rely on, depending for their safety instead upon fine weather, good hand- and footholds, unerring judgment, and not a little luck. Seven years later neighboring North Palisade (left) was climbed via a difficult east-side route by a roped Sierra Club party led by Norman Clyde (below), a legendary mountaineer whose annual inventory of peaks scaled was a regular feature of the *Sierra Club Bulletin*.

ED COOPER

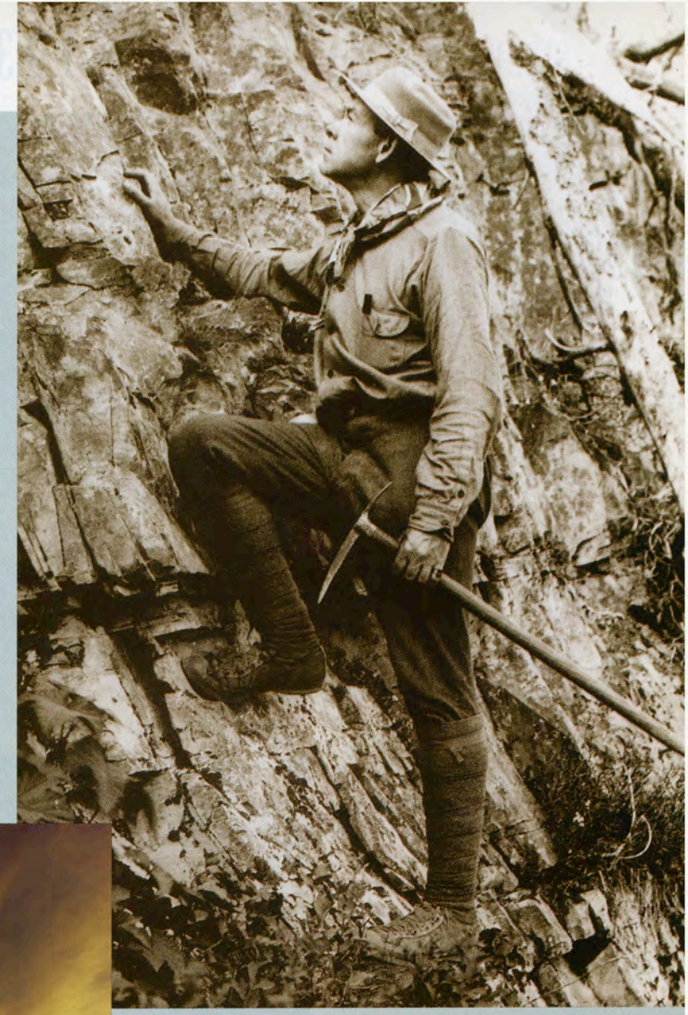


SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES

The High Trip detoured from the Sierra Nevada on several occasions in the 1920s. In 1924, dozens of members rode in style in a special railroad car to Glacier National Park. Two years later, a trip to Wyoming took in the Tetons and Yellowstone National Park—the latter having been the focus of a Sierra Club lobbying campaign in 1920, when a proposal to build dams in the park brought back painful memories of Hetch Hetchy. Though the mountains of California remained the Club's primary concern (and its primary playground) throughout this period, such "exotic" excursions as these and the 1928 season's trips to Baja California and Jasper and Robson parks in Canada (above) familiarized members with scenic treasures around the continent—many of them as threatened as the Sierra.

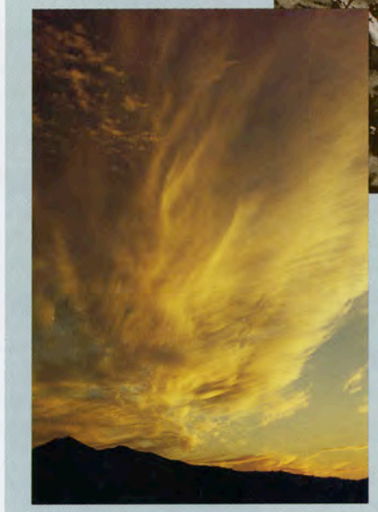
TOP: CEDRIC WRIGHT, SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES. LEFT: SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES, BANCROFT LIBRARY

The Sierra Club's first female president was Aurelia Harwood, who occupied that post for the 1927–28 term. For more than half a century no other woman was elected to the position until Michele Perrault of California (1984–86) and Susan Merrow of Connecticut (1990–91) served terms as the Club's top leader, chosen by their peers on the Board of Directors.



In the 1920s, William Colby was only halfway through a long and distinguished Sierra Club career—though many members considered it the end of an era when he led his last High Trip in 1929. His name lives on in the Sierra Nevada, appended to a peak, a pass, and a grand meadow.

A man of many facets, Colby was an attorney who specialized in mining and water law; his other passions included gardening and Chinese art. Ansel Adams wrote of him: "You knew who he was without inquiry—he carries with him a deep humanity, and the mood of rivers and forests and clean white stone." He also served as the first chairman of the California State Parks Commission, established in 1927; in that role he oversaw the designation of Mt. Tamalpais State Park, which protected the Coast Range peak (left) just across the Golden Gate from San Francisco—then as now a favorite hiking spot of Bay Area Sierra Club members.



RIGHT: SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES, BANCROFT LIBRARY. LEFT: JED MANWARING

1920 Ads appear in *Bulletin* for Kodak cameras, Horst's evaporated vegetables, Del Monte canned beans, and accident insurance.

1921 Club-supported trail between Yosemite Valley and the park's northern wilderness partially completed.

1922 Club constructs alpine lodge on Mt. Shasta in Northern California.

1923 Sierra Club float appears in the Rose Parade.

1924 San Francisco Bay Chapter organized.

1925 Club begins building a collection of mountain photographs to loan for exhibition.

1926 Appalachian Mountain Club and Sierra Club members team up on outing in Sierra Nevada.

1927 Ansel Adams publishes first photo portfolio, *The High Sierras*.

1928 Felix Salten's *Bambi* reviewed (favorably) in *Sierra Club Bulletin*.

1929 Financial report shows year-end balance of $7,007.45 in Club account.

CHRISTINE ALCINO

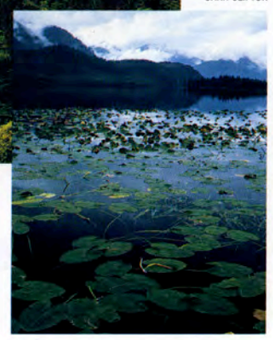
One of the greatest Sierra Club mountaineers was Walter A. Starr, Jr., whose *Guide to the John Muir Trail and the High Sierra Region,* published by the Club in 1934, remains in print. Even among his peers his feats of endurance were legend: In 1930, for example, he covered 143 miles of Sierra trails and passes between 12 noon on September 6 and dawn on September 10. His route, as reported in the *Sierra Club Bulletin,* took him "via Merced Lake over Isberg Pass to the Middle Fork San Joaquin, thence to the Devils Postpile under Mammoth Pass. He came back via Thousand Island Lake, Island Pass, Donohue Pass, Tuolumne Meadows, and Lake Tenaya to Yosemite. The return from the Devils Postpile to below Tenaya, forty-eight miles, was made between 1:30 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. of the same day. The finish of ten miles to Yosemite was made by 6:00 a.m. the following morning." Starr fell to his death in 1933 while on a solo climb in the Minarets (above).

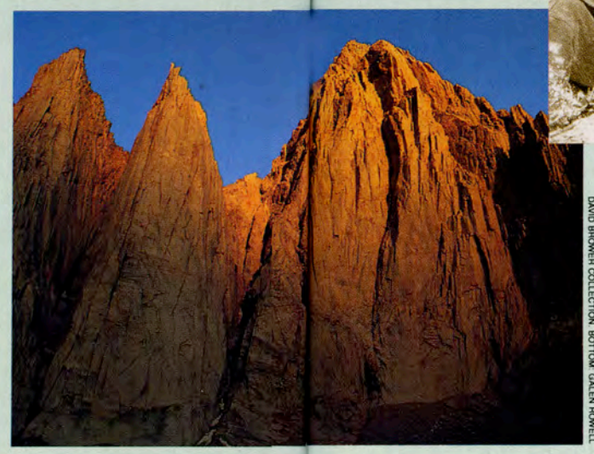
CARR CLIFTON

The Club, though still primarily concerned with the fight for an expanded central-Sierra park that would protect the Kings River region, continued to advocate preservation of natural areas across the continent as well. In 1932 the Club urged the National Park Service to investigate the designation of Alaska's Admiralty Island (inset) as a park whose primary purpose would be wildlife preservation; three years later it supported designation of Washington's Olympic National Park (right), which was finally established in 1938. During this period the Club also weighed in against two ambitious development schemes that would have violated existing parks: a water-diversion tunnel under Rocky Mountain National Park, and a dam on Yellowstone Lake.

PAT O'HARA

CARR CLIFTON





TOP: CEDRIC WRIGHT, SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES. INSET: DAVID BROWER COLLECTION. BOTTOM: GALEN ROWELL

In the summer of 1931 Robert Underhill, a philosopher and mathematician who had learned Alpine climbing techniques in Europe, accompanied the Sierra Club on its High Trip to the Sierra Nevada. He was one of four climbers to scale Mt. Whitney from its sheer east side (bottom left) for the first time; he also guided Club members on climbs of Mts. Ritter and Banner that year.

These technical advances made possible first ascents of previously unscalable walls in Yosemite Valley, mostly by Sierra Club climbers from the San Francisco area, who practiced on outcrops in the Berkeley Hills when not in the mountains. A leader among them was Richard M. Leonard (in center of photo at left), an attorney who was one of three climbers to make the first ascent of Higher Cathedral Spire in 1934, using the dynamic belay and other advanced techniques (including, on this climb, the first use of pitons in the Sierra Nevada). It was Leonard—today the Sierra Club's honorary president—who organized local rock-climbing practice under Club auspices in 1932, a tradition that would continue (top) for more than half a century until rising insurance premiums forced the Club to suspend its technical-climbing instruction and activities.

CHRISTINE ALCINO

Sierra Club chapters (or sections, as they were originally called) spread throughout California during the 1930s. Toward the end of the decade, the first chapter newsletter appeared: The San Francisco Bay Chapter's *Yodeler.* This and other chapter (and, later, group) newsletters fulfilled functions that the *Bulletin* could not: they appeared more frequently, and could better serve the needs of an increasingly dispersed membership. They provided a forum for announcements of hikes and other activities, as well as alerting Sierrans to conservation issues of local concern. They continue to serve these twin purposes today, with 57 chapter and some 300 group newsletters now in regular production across the continent. The *Yodeler* itself is still going strong, reaching 42,500 Bay Chapter members each month. It recently survived a campaign by some chapter members to change its name, which they thought undignified.

1930 Muir Pass stone shelter constructed in the Sierra.

1931 Two Club parties swim through Yosemite's Muir Gorge.

1932 Riverside Chapter in Southern California organized.

1933 Loma Prieta Chapter organized on the San Francisco peninsula.

1934 Clair Tappaan Lodge, at Donner Summit, constructed and dedicated.

1935 Mt. San Antonio ski hut constructed in Southern California.

1936 Ansel Adams lobbies Congress on behalf of Kings Canyon National Park.

1937 Club party makes first ascent of East Temple in Zion National Park.

1938 Knapsack Trips added to outings program.

1939 Mother Lode Chapter organized, serving 50 members in Stockton/Sacramento area.

As war clouds gathered, the 1940 Sierra Club High Trip to Kings Canyon (which was finally granted park status that year) was a reflective affair. "In these days," wrote participant Weldon Heald, "we cannot help feeling that the energies of men are turned towards hatred and destruction. But our faith in human nature is restored when we find that a group of people, isolated from the world and held together only by a common love for the mountains, is composed of kindly, helpful, good-natured beings, each willing to contribute his share in a true and voluntary democracy."

CEDRIC WRIGHT, SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES

These years marked a period of deep involvement in Sierra Club affairs for David R. Brower, a member since 1933. One of the Club's leading climbers (his first ascent of New Mexico's Shiprock in 1939 helped introduce the use of expansion bolts on otherwise unclimbable faces), he edited 1942's *Manual of Ski-Mountaineering*, intended to serve as an aid in the training of mountain troops. The designation of Kings Canyon National Park was due in some measure to 1939's *Sky-land Trails of the Kings*, a movie that Brower and Richard Leonard edited from thousands of feet of film they had shot on that year's High Trip. (It was followed in 1942 by *Skis to the Sky-land*, a paean to civilian ski-mountaineering.)

After the war, in 1946, Brower assumed the editorship of the *Sierra Club Bulletin*, a job he held until 1953, when he resigned from the Board to become the Club's first executive director. He never lost his belief in the combined power of the image and the printed word, helping to create such innovations as the Exhibit Format book and the Sierra Club calendar. To this day he continues to write widely and agitate forcefully on behalf of the global environment.

DAVID MUENCH

In 1946 the Sierra Club urged designation of Joshua Tree National Monument, today a mecca for lovers of the California Desert as well as rock-climbers from around the world. The Club continues to lobby Congress on behalf of this fragile region, supporting establishment of an East Mojave National Park, the upgrading of Death Valley and Joshua Tree national monuments to national parks, and designation of more than 4 million acres as wilderness.

PAT O'HARA

The Club conducted the first of 14 biennial wilderness conferences in 1949, under the supervision of Charlotte Mauk; its themes included the impact of wilderness travel on meadows and trails and—on a related note—"keeping the wilderness wild." Two years later conference attendees witnessed a historic moment, as The Wilderness Society's Howard Zahnhiser called on Congress to establish a national wilderness preservation system. (Thirteen years would pass before Zahnhiser's visionary proposal was realized.)

Less dramatically, but of great future import to the Sierra Club, early attention was paid in 1953 to the need for protection of Alaska's Arctic (above). Subsequent conferences explored the wilderness theme from innumerable angles, among them "Wildlands in Our Civilization," "The Meaning of Wilderness to Science," and "The American Heritage of Wilderness."

In 1948, Francis Farquhar—who had served as Sierra Club President from 1933 to 1935—was elected to a second term. Farquhar was a link to the Club's early days; he had joined the organization in 1911, while John Muir still lived, and participated in that year's High Trip to Tuolumne Meadows. It was the Harvard graduate's first encounter with California, and it made a great impression on him: As he wrote 60 years later, "Not only the character of the country itself, but the people associated with it, convinced me that this was the place I wanted to live for the rest of my life, which I have done."

Farquhar was a sterling mountaineer—one of two Club climbers to make the first ascent of the Middle Palisade in 1921—as well as a noted geographer; his *Place Names of the Sierra Nevada* was published by the Club in 1926. In that same year he became editor of the *Sierra Club Bulletin*, continuing in that capacity until 1946.

Farquhar and his wife, Marjorie (right), are among several married couples who have sat on the Club's Board of Directors. In addition to Edward Taylor and Marion Randall Parsons (who never served together), that category includes Ansel and Virginia Adams and, in 1992, two former presidents, Phillip Berry and Michele Perrault.

CEDRIC WRIGHT, SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES

1940 Club opposes bill that would open national monuments to mining.

1941 *Bulletin* rates the Sierra's passes: Cartridge the roughest, Copper the most spectacular, Glen the "all-'round champion."

1942 Sierra Club's Golden Anniversary.

1943 Club has 600 members on active duty in WWII. ◆ Outing program suspended for the duration.

1944 Club successfully opposes construction of Kearsarge Pass road in Sierra Nevada.

1945 Club establishes a Conservation Committee of local activists to advise the Board on policy matters.

1946 Club purchases two Sierra lakes near Donner Pass for $5,000. ◆ *Southern Sierran* chapter newsletter appears.

1947 *The Sierra Club: A Handbook* published.

1948 San Diego Chapter established, with 53 members.

1949 Preliminary edition of *A Climber's Guide to the High Sierra* published.

SIERRA CLUB CENTENNIAL 1950~1959

The Sierra Club's commitment to the integrity of the national-park system was tested in the 1950s by a proposal to construct two dams within Utah's little-known Dinosaur National Monument. Determined to prevent another Hetch Hetchy, the Club threw everything it had into the Dinosaur campaign, including a special issue of the *Sierra Club Bulletin* and two movies (*Wilderness River Trail* and *Two Yosemites*). It also organized raft trips for members, hundreds of whom floated the Green and Yampa rivers (right) to experience Dinosaur's scenic glories first-hand. The controversy was resolved in conservationists' favor in 1956, but the victory was hardly decisive: Focused exclusively on Dinosaur, the Club had offered no opposition to the intentions of federal engineers to build a huge dam at Glen Canyon on the Colorado River—a redrock labyrinth even more obscure than Dinosaur, and protected by no national park. In a consummate irony, Glen Canyon ("the place no one knew") has come over time to be viewed in the same light as Hetch Hetchy—a sacrifice to industrial development that might have been avoided had enough people known about and fought for it.

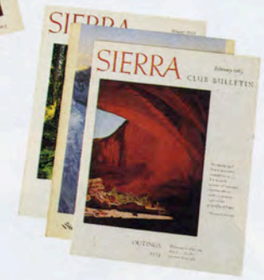
PHILIP HYDE

PHILIP HYDE

Dinosaur was not the Club's only public-lands battle of this era. In the late 1940s it had successfully opposed construction of a dam in Glacier National Park that would have flooded 20,000 acres. In 1950 the Club's multi-year defense of Wyoming's Jackson Hole National Monument was rewarded when Grand Teton National Park was expanded to include it. Four years later a tramway planned for Mt. Rainier National Park was defeated.

Another intense struggle also centered on the Pacific Northwest. The 12-year campaign that ended with the establishment of North Cascades National Park (left) began in 1956, when the Club led its first outings in the area. The following year a series of studies of the range's public values was undertaken, and the Club completed filming of a major conservation movie, *Wilderness Alps of Stehekin*. But Club leaders were by no means unified on their approach to the Cascades: Though many believed that only park designation would fully protect the region from the shortcomings of "multiple use" management, others feared that their work on behalf of a comprehensive national wilderness bill might be subverted if the Club were perceived as moving aggressively onto Forest Service turf. Unlike the Dinosaur campaign, where everyone agreed that the principle of park inviolability admitted no real compromise, the fight for the North Cascades threw into sharp relief the growing tensions within the Club between the traditional strategy of conciliation with government and an opposing sentiment in support of criticism and confrontation.

The Club's most vocal critic of federal wildland management was its increasingly controversial executive director, David Brower. His oversight of the *Sierra Club Bulletin* was becoming controversial too. Though the introduction of a larger format to make better use of color photography was well received, many old-timers wondered why topics they viewed as tangential to the Club's core concerns (such as the growing population crisis) were being covered in its pages. They also feared that Brower's no-holds-barred criticism of government resource agencies could jeopardize not only the Club's political alliances but its tax-exempt status as well. In 1959 the Board passed a "gag rule" that forbade Club representatives to "expressly . . . criticize the motive, integrity, or competence of an official or bureau"—the first of many attempts over the course of the next decade to rein Brower in.



CHRISTINE ALCINO

In 1951 Stewart Kimball began a 21-year stint as the Sierra Club's outing chairman—the longest service of any, save for Will Colby himself. The program had already expanded, under Dick Leonard's leadership, beyond the annual High Trip to include a six-week-long Base Camp excursion, four annual burro trips, several knapsack trips, and a saddle-horse trip. Other innovations included a 1956 High Trip to Colorado's San Juan Mountains that experimented with lightweight gear and freeze-dried foods, and a 1959 Wilderness Threshold outing that provided families with children an opportunity to enjoy Base Camp trips.

The 1950s saw the introduction of another type of outing that would become increasingly popular: the Work Party (now Service) trip, dedicated to trail maintenance, campsite cleanup, and other activities intended to lessen the impact of increasing numbers of enthusiasts on the nation's wilderness areas.

LEFT: RONDAL PARTRIDGE. RIGHT: GEORGE BYRNE

1950 Atlantic Chapter established—the first outside California. By 1958 it has 430 members in 17 states.

1951 Club reprints Volumes I to V of the *Sierra Club Bulletin* and publishes a 57-year index.

1952 Los Padres (Santa Barbara) and Kern-Kaweah (Fresno/Bakersfield) chapters established.

1953 Tehipite Chapter (central San Joaquin Valley) established.

1954 Pacific Northwest Chapter formed, as nationwide membership reaches 8,000.

1955 *This Is the American Earth* goes on exhibition in San Francisco and Yosemite; Wallace Stegner's *This Is Dinosaur* published by Knopf.

1956 Sierra Club Council created by vote of the membership to deal with internal affairs.

1957 Toiyabe Chapter (Reno/Carson City) formed.

1958 Redwood Chapter formed. ◆ Club fails to prevent re-routing of Tioga Road through Tenaya Lake area in Yosemite backcountry.

1959 Great Lakes Chapter formed, serving 200 members in eight states.

SIERRA CLUB CENTENNIAL 1960~1969

The Sierra Club's publications program expanded dramatically during the 1960s. The decade's signature project was its first: *This Is the American Earth,* lavishly produced on the basis of a traveling photo-and-text exhibit created by Ansel Adams and Nancy Newhall, and published in 1960. The Exhibit Format series of books that it initiated brought the Club increased exposure outside traditional conservation circles, acquainting millions with the scenic splendors of the continent (and beyond), building conservation sentiment, and in all likelihood (though this can never be measured) contributing to the Club's membership growth.

But the publishing program also had a downside—for within a few years it came to dominate the Club's budget, providing a focus for growing dissatisfaction with the non-collaborative (and fiscally risky) managerial style of its patron, Executive Director Brower.

Determined that the twin tragedies of Hetch Hetchy and Glen Canyon not be repeated, the Sierra Club spearheaded an aggressive campaign against two dams proposed for the Grand Canyon as part of the huge Central Arizona Project. A high point was the publication of a series of full-page ads in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*—the refinement of a technique employed to good effect during the Dinosaur and Redwood National Park battles. The most famous such ad was headlined "SHOULD WE FLOOD THE SISTINE CHAPEL SO TOURISTS CAN GET NEARER THE CEILING?"

The newspaper ads, with their clip-out coupons addressed to legislators and President Lyndon Johnson, had several effects. First, they cost the Club its tax-deductible status—though that blow, long anticipated, had been offset by creation of the Sierra Club Foundation in 1960. But they also led to a sharp increase in membership, from 39,000 to 67,000 in little over a year, then doubling to more than 135,000 by 1969. And ultimately they proved effective—as citizens outraged by the dam proposals flooded the capital with coupons and letters. In 1968 Congress prohibited dams anywhere in the Grand Canyon between Glen Canyon and Hoover Dam.

A nine-year campaign in support of a federal wilderness-preservation system came to a close in 1964 when President Johnson signed the Wilderness Act. Congress passed the act after a tumultuous campaign, as Sierra Club members and others, suspicious of a "multiple-use" wildland-management policy that seemed always to favor extractive industries over wildlife and recreation, expressed their displeasure with the status quo.

The Wilderness Act was acknowledged from the start as the product of compromise. While it set up a system that protected more than 9 million acres outright, and provided for the review of another 5.4 million over the coming decade, it also grandfathered in grazing and permitted mining activities to continue until 1983. Indeed, the act (in David Brower's words) was "not the end of a series of problems, but a beginning." Though millions of acres of additional wilderness have been designated in the years since 1964, Sierra Club activists continue to fight on behalf of pristine areas in Montana, Colorado, Idaho, southern Utah (above), the California Desert, and elsewhere.

SCOTT T. S

The full-page newspaper ad was Dave Brower's brainstorm, and it ultimately cost him his job. In 1969 he spent $10,500 on a *New York Times* ad announcing a new campaign for an "Earth National Park." The Sierra Club Board, already in an uproar over the interrelated issues of staff autonomy and fiscal management (with special concern focused on the mushrooming publications program), had had enough. In January, President Edgar Wayburn suspended the executive director's authority to make financial commitments for the Club, and the following month the full Board decided that Brower should take a leave of absence. Brower was soon thereafter nominated to run for a seat on the Board in that year's membership election—an acrimonious competition between pro- and anti-Brower factions. The latter won decisively in April, and Brower formally resigned in May. He was replaced as chief of staff by J. Michael McCloskey, the Club's conservation director, while Wayburn was succeeded as president by Phillip Berry, an erstwhile Brower acolyte ultimately dismayed by his mentor's indiscretions.

These figures retain their Sierra Club ties today. Dave Brower was elected to the Board of Directors in 1988; though he later resigned, he remains an honorary vice-president. Phil Berry has just completed a one-year term as Club president, while his vice-president, Ed Wayburn, now 85, continues as a director. And Mike McCloskey, after 17 years as executive director, was named the Club's first chairman in 1985. In that capacity he's heading to Brazil in June to represent the Club at the U.N.-sponsored Earth Summit. Also in Rio, on behalf of his Earth Island Institute, will be Dave Brower—though he hasn't told anyone if there's another proposal for Earth National Park up his sleeve.

SIERRA CLUB ARCHIVES

McCloskey and Brower (both facing right at center rear) listen as Wayburn (standing) presides over an early-'60s Board of Directors' meeting.

1960 Sierra Club membership hits 15,000.

1961 First annual John Muir Award presented to William E. Colby.

1962 Annual Club dues raised from $7 to $9.

1963 John Muir (Wisconsin), Rio Grande, and Ventana (central California coast) chapters formed. ◆ Club opens office in Washington, D.C.

1964 First South American outing, to Peru, Chile, Argentina.

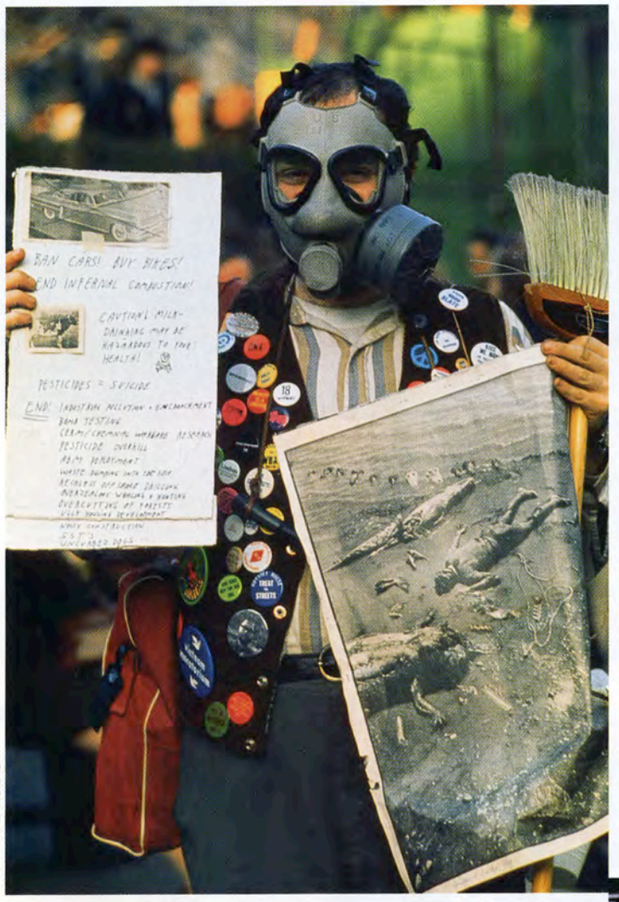
1965 Rocky Mountain, Lone Star, and Grand Canyon chapters formed. ◆ Membership passes 30,000.

1966 Club loses tax-deductible status over Grand Canyon ads. ◆ Publications program runs deficit of $119,144.

1967 Membership passes 57,000. ◆ First Sierra Club calendar published. ◆ Mackinac (Michigan) Chapter formed.

1968 North Cascades and Redwood national parks, federal Wild and Scenic Rivers System established.

1969 First Inner City Outing for urban youth conducted. ◆ Activist news digest *National News Report* debuts.



DAVID GAHR / TIME MAGAZINE

The Sierra Club celebrated Earth Day 1970 along with some 20 million other Americans (left and right). The Club greeted that year's outpouring of recruits to its cause by publishing *Ecotactics: The Sierra Club Handbook for Environmental Activists,* which called on readers to go beyond parades and protests in their support of "political action to change public policy."

It was a good year for such an exhortation. The National Environmental Policy Act made environmental protection an explicit goal, requiring government agencies to prepare "environmental impact statements" on a variety of proposed projects, from rangeland fencing to nuclear power plants. Activists were henceforth happily buried in paper, with access to the information they needed to dog federal decisionmakers. December saw the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency, which initially lured a number of idealistic young professionals to its staff. As 1970 drew to a close, activists felt better equipped, both inside and outside government, to take on the dauntingly complex task of defending the environment.

TED POLUMBAUM / TIME MAGAZINE

BILL PIERCE / TIME MAGAZINE

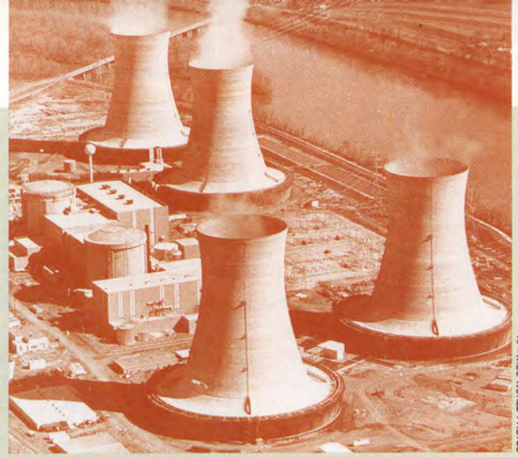
Nineteen seventy-three will be remembered as the year of lengthy, expensive, and resentment-filled journeys to the nearest open gas station. The OPEC oil embargo (directed at the U.S. in part for its support of Israel) spawned public interest in energy efficiency and renewable resources. Though some progressive programs were instituted, the new consciousness did not become deeply enough entrenched to withstand the combined disincentives of declining oil prices and, in the 1980s, the hostility of Ronald Reagan.

In 1972 the Sierra Club presciently called for adoption of a national energy strategy based on efficiency and conservation—a goal it has doggedly pursued through five federal administrations, with limited success.

GARY BRAASCH

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act, passed by Congress in 1976, belatedly decreed that the Bureau of Land Management's job is to *care for* its more than 300 million acres of public land, not to give them away to miners and homesteaders. It also asked the BLM to decide how much of its land belonged in the national wilderness system—a task it took up with great reluctance, and has yet to complete.

Through the National Forest Management Act, Congress that same year instructed the Forest Service to consider the wishes of a public broader than just timber executives: to cut only as much wood as it grows, to protect biodiversity, and to prepare long-range forest plans that consider the importance of water, aesthetics, wildlife, forage, minerals, and recreation as well as of wood. Both these laws raised conservationists' expectations—which were dashed four years later with the election of Ronald Reagan.

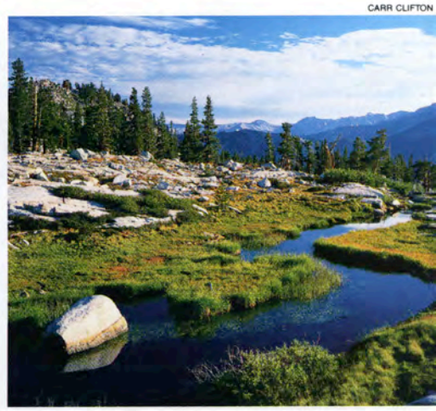

AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

On March 28, 1979, a cooling-system valve failed to close in Unit II at the Three Mile Island nuclear-power plant near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, setting in motion the worst commercial atomic-power accident in U.S. history. A pall still hangs over the industry: Ballooning costs, intractable waste-disposal problems, and persistent fears about safety have led U.S. utilities to order no new plants since 1978.

The Sierra Club, which in 1974 had opposed further construction of nuclear-power plants, strengthened its position after the TMI accident by calling for a phased closure and decommissioning of existing reactors. It was a radical departure from its stance of the previous decade, when the Board of Directors, concerned only that reactors not be built in environmentally sensitive areas, endorsed the siting of a nuclear facility at Diablo Canyon on the California coast in order to preserve the scenic Nipomo Dunes.

The 1970s saw environmentalists increasingly willing—and able—to seek redress in the courts. This process was highlighted by two late-'60s cases, over Storm King in New York and Mineral King (right) in California, in which organizations such as the Sierra Club sought standing to oppose management agencies' actions both administratively and in federal court. Legal maneuvering became an effective activist tool, and in 1971 the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund was established to litigate not only for the Club (it was and remains an independent organization), but for others.

Environmentalists went on to tackle a wide range of ills, from air and water pollution to pesticides, hazardous wastes, and threats to endangered species. During this era federal legislators responded to post-Earth Day public opinion with a barrage of environmental laws and regulations. But passage of legislation by Congress and its diligent enforcement by the agencies charged with that responsibility proved to be two different things—leading the Sierra Club and other groups to spend much of the past two decades using their hard-won legal leverage to compel the government to comply with its own directives.


CARR CLIFTON

1970 Club chapters represent members in every U.S. state.

1971 Club wages successful campaign against the supersonic transport (SST).

1972 Western Canada Chapter formed. ◆ The last High Trip, to Kings Canyon.

1973 Laurence I. Moss the first non-Californian elected Club president.

1974 Board of Directors issues resolution on tropical-forest preservation.

1975 Club sponsors International Earthcare Conference in New York City. ◆ Membership reaches 154,000.

1976 Sierra Club political-action committee organized.

1977 *Sierra Club Bulletin* changes name to *Sierra.*

1978 Sierra Club wins National Book Award for children's literature for *The View From the Oak.*

1979 Urban-environment conference co-sponsored by Sierra Club and National Urban League.

Longtime Sierra Club director Edgar Wayburn convinced the organization to make preservation of Alaska's wildlands a priority in 1967, a notion he and his allies steadfastly promoted for the next 13 years. In 1980 their Alaska Coalition got its reward: passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, a law granting permanent protection to some 103 million acres. ANILCA was the largest land-preservation act in U.S. history—"a conservationist's Louisiana Purchase," some called it. The landmark bill instantly doubled the size of the nation's park and wildlife-refuge systems.

CARR CLIFTON

FRED WARD/ BLACK STAR

The change in emphasis from a classic "conservation" agenda to the panoply of issues known today as "environmentalism," begun in the 1950s, meant that by its tenth decade the Sierra Club was deeply involved in solving new and challenging problems. Air quality in many U.S. cities was causing lung disease, industries poured wastes into the nation's waterways with impunity, and nearly every day someone discovered children playing on an abandoned toxic-waste dump. Throughout the Reagan era, pollution politics were in the forefront of environmental concern; during those long years the Club's volunteers and lobbyists worked tirelessly to help pass the Superfund law as well as amendments to the Clean Air and Clean Water acts.

The Sierra Club's debut in the federal electoral realm in 1982 was a smashing success: 132 of the 168 congressional candidates it endorsed won at the polls. In 1984 Walter Mondale received the first (and to date only) Sierra Club presidential endorsement, a controversial move among the Club's bipartisan membership despite the abysmal record of the first Reagan administration. (A great many Club-supported candidates did better in November than the unfortunate Minnesotan.) In 1992 the Club expects to endorse a record number of candidates on the local, state, and federal levels.

Sierra Club political activists present a check to a congressional candidate.

SIERRA CLUB POLITICAL COMMITTEE

Ronald Reagan's Interior Secretary, James Watt, shared his superior's visceral dislike for governmental regulation, and approached the dismantling of environmental-protection programs with missionary zeal. Watt became the darling of the "Sagebrush Rebellion," a movement led by Western loggers, miners, and ranchers who hoped to see the public lands sold off to private interests.

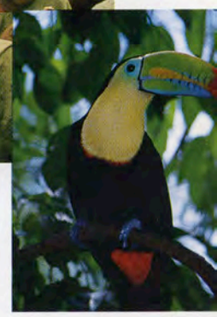
Environmentalists, appalled by Watt's excesses, were eventually joined in their calls for his removal by members of Congress from both parties. (GOP defeats in the 1982 elections did much to build that bipartisan support.) The Sierra Club, whose membership rose dramatically in the early 1980s, led a nationwide "Dump Watt" petition drive (left) that gathered upward of a million eager signatures. This outpouring—and Watt's unrelenting churlishness—led to his resignation in 1983.

LEFT: WILLIAM CAMPBELL/ TIME MAGAZINE. RIGHT: JED MANWARING

In the 1980s, news of a widening hole in the ozone layer over Antarctica and a steady increase in average global temperatures began to command public attention. The cause of the ozone hole was identified as the use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) by industry and consumers, while global warming is believed linked to the increase of atmospheric carbon dioxide associated with the burning of fossil fuels.

The United States recently joined many other industrialized nations in signing an international protocol, pledging to phase out and find substitutes for CFCs by the year 2000. Even so, the ozone hole will continue to expand—and as it does, the incidence of skin cancers and other maladies is expected to increase.

The global-warming problem will be tougher to solve—whether or not appropriate steps are taken now—because any solution will require fundamental changes not only in our industrial economy but in our daily lives. The Sierra Club rose early to the challenge, but has been unable to compel the federal government to take meaningful action (such as a commitment to energy conservation and renewables) despite the fact that a solid majority of Americans wants the U.S. to show leadership in this area. The Bush White House has even been hostile to initiatives from within its own administration, such as one for an international conference on global warming proposed by EPA Administrator William Reilly, but opposed by top budget and staff officials.



The North American public has learned that virtually no ecological crisis is contained neatly within one set of national borders. The staff and volunteers associated with the Sierra Club's Washington, D.C.–based International Program focus on issues ranging from population stabilization and rainforest protection to development-lending abuses and global climate change.

The Sierra Club's first century comes to a close with our view having widened from the mountains of California to all seven continents, and on into the highest reaches of the atmosphere. Our second century may well see that gaze embrace still broader horizons, as all that we learn about the environment—and humanity's niche within it—provides further proof of John Muir's maxim: "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe." ■

1980 — *Sierra* photo contest introduced.

1981 — Membership passes 200,000 in April, 260,000 by year-end.

1982 — Club adopts urban transportation as one of its 11 national priorities.

1983 — More than 1,000 attend Sierra Club International Assembly in Snowmass, Colo.

1984 — Sierra Club membership tops 353,000.

1985 — Douglas Wheeler appointed executive director; Michael McCloskey becomes Club's first chairman.

1986 — Sierra Club Board declares ending the arms race and preventing nuclear war a national priority.

1987 — Michael L. Fischer appointed executive director.

1988 — Club awards "clean-air medals" to 270 members of Congress. ◆ John Muir's 150th birthday.

1989 — *The Sierra Club: A Guide* (latest edition of member handbook) published.

1990 — Club-supported bill to limit logging in Alaska's Tongass National Forest passes.

1991 — Club helps defeat Johnston-Wallop energy bill, protects Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

1992 — Sierra Club Centennial.