



# Salem Scene

by Jack Zimmerman

The environmentalists are suing the federal government. If they win, Oregon could lose a couple of billion dollars! If they lose, it could mean bankruptcy for one of the world's largest and best known outdoor organizations. To be more precise, the Sierra Club—along with three other conservation groups and a Colorado guide and outfitter—is seeking an injunction against the U.S. Forest Service. Suit has been filed in U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C.



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Other plaintiffs are the Natural Resources Defense Council, New York; Colorado Open Space Council, Denver; North Cascades Conservation Council, Seattle, and Coloradoan William R. Mounsey. Named as defendants are Sec. of Agriculture Earl L. Butz and USFS Chief Forester John R. McGuire. The squabble involves hundreds of so-called "de-facto" wilderness parcels of National Forest land as yet free from roadways. Combined, the tracts of 5,000 acres or more apiece represent an area larger than the whole State of Washington.

Heat for the legal action was generated prior to passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964, which lumped together certain untrammeled National Forest lands as Wilderness Areas—never to suffer mechanized invasion by man. It also paved the way for designation by

Congress of other lands deemed suitable for the Wilderness distinction.

There's been a continuing harangue ever since between environmentalists on one side, those who would manage National Forest resources on the other and the Forest Service right in the middle. Environmental groups pressed for more Wilderness. Opponents argued the necessity of balancing more Wilderness "lock-up" against the nation's growing demands for housing and other products that stem from managed, harvestable forests. Allied with these interests—and against the preservationist-minded environmental groups—were a wide range of recreationists, such as skiers, snow-mobile enthusiasts, hunters, anglers, and campers who prefer driving instead of walking to their favorite forest haunts. Opposition to expanding the Wilderness also came from those who depend on National Forest lands for livestock grazing and utilization of mineral and water resources.

In 1967 the USFS outlined procedures for determining which of the remaining roadless portions of its 187 million acres of National Forest were best suited for Wilderness designation. By July 1 this year each USFS region was to select Wilderness "candidate" areas and pass the information on to Forester McGuire. By the first of next year the USFS chief was to announce which of the candidate areas would be subjected to further scrutiny over a period of years and possibly passed on to Congress for Wilderness Area designation.

As most Northwest residents know, Forest Service leaders in Oregon and Washington have been mulling their assignment for some time. This spring they conducted 34 public meetings to get an idea of how people feel about locking up 279 roadless areas in the two states.

Oregon's share of the area involved comes to 2.5 million acres. Of that total, some 250,000 acres were deemed appropriate for further study and were withdrawn from multiple use management status until the Chief Forester makes his decision.

Meanwhile, it was business as usual in the remaining roadless areas and forest management personnel proceeded with routine plans calling for a portion of it to be included in the annual timber harvest. Similar activity took place in other National Forests throughout the country. And environmentalists got upset. Hence, the Sierra Club suit. Plaintiffs claim the Forest Service didn't follow its own rules in determining which areas should be considered for further study. They claim also the public didn't have adequate opportunity to express itself on the matter and that some regions didn't even bother to get involved in the matter at all.

In the meantime, there are some sizeable economic factors involved. The nation needs housing and the wood products industry is dependent to a large degree on availability of federal timber. Industry has been gearing up to satisfy the demand throughout the long controversy and the vast bulk of the involved timberland is situated right here in the Northwest.

Those who would manage the forests for multiple use of their many important resources—greatly alarmed by the Sierra Club suit, including a temporary restraining order that halted pending timber sales—became "intervenor" in the suit. If the injunction were granted, all roadless areas could be locked up for as long as from eight to ten years.

The economic impact in Oregon is staggering. Industrial Forestry Association figures it would mean the loss of 3,103 industry jobs and 6,211 more in related trades and services. This would involve some 34,458 people directly and greatly inflate rolls of both welfare and the unemployed. Annual business income loss to the state would be \$201,390,000 and counties would lose some \$3,606,100 a year in receipts. The in-lieu property tax impact alone would be an estimated \$9,025,100 yearly. At stake are some 2,481,000 Oregon acres bearing nearly 35.5 billion board feet of commercial timber.

Consequently, a group of wood products industry associations and seven individual companies are seeking to have the suit dismissed or heard in the West instead of the nation's capital. And they want up to \$20 million in damages from the environmentalists.

Many key points in the suit will come to a head in the weeks to come and residents of

# GATES

By Betty Kelle

This is a little delayed news but still might be news to some of you, it was to me when I heard it. Dick and Helen Cox over the Fourth weekend went to Mt. Shasta to visit with the Vick Herron's. Vick and Dick and another fellow took a drive up in the hills to check out the countryside for deer hunting this fall. Vick was driving his pickup and managed to wrap it around a tree, totaling the pickup. Dick was thrown up against the windshield cutting himself quite badly. He hit his chin on the dash, knocking out two front teeth and hoping to save two others. His chin was cut very deeply.

The third man that was with them walked seven miles out for help and made it out in just over an hour, so that is really traveling. Dick celebrated the Fourth spending three hours having dental surgery, and stayed overnight in the hospital. He also had an ear almost cut off and his glasses got broken.

Vick and the other man were not injured, just shaken and bruised.

Recent visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Walt McCausland were his brother and wife, Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd McCausland, of ElCerrito, Calif. While here they also visited a cousin, Lynden McCausland and family, in Gladstone.

The McCauslands are an old time Oregon family and Walt McCausland, was a volunteer in the first contingent of troops leaving Oregon City during the Spanish American War.

Dick Wilson and family of Los Angeles, spent several days last week visiting at the Theron Wilson home.

Monday the Theron Wilsons spent visiting his sister, Mrs. Joe Quinn, at Waterloo.

Last Friday Mr. and Mrs. G. J. Gestson went to Milwaukie where they stayed overnight at the home of his sister, Mrs. Margaret Geston. They returned home on Saturday after attending funeral services in McMinnville for the

Rice girl.

Sunday visitors at the Gestson home were a son and family, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Jacobs, and a granddaughter, Mrs. Herb Williams, and three children from Cottage Grove.

Spending the weekend over on the North Fork camping were Sam and Lorraine Bibler and two sons. They were way up at the end of the road and went into the huckleberry patch to pick a good mess of berries.

Have you noticed the nice face lifting Murphy's drive-in has been having? Sure looks great.

My intentions this week were for an extra long column but due to the fact that we had to take my son-in-law, Skip, to the hospital yesterday and it was definitely an all day procedure, I just didn't make any phone calls. Skip had been ill for several days, just getting worse and ends up he has pneumonia. He will be in the hospital several days, depending on how he responds to treatment, and then the doctor says several weeks or more recuperating at home.

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