

·HORSE LOGGING
·GASQUET MINING

·THE KLAMATH-SISKIYOU
·PLANNED PARENTHOOD

SISKIYOU country



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The Klamath-Siskiyou Mountain region of the Pacific Northwest encompasses some 13 million acres of the earth's wildest terrain. The uplifted mountains forge the moist air masses moving eastwards off the Pacific to rise and cool, and as the water vapor condenses the raindrops beat upon the land -- but in no even way, carving the twisted, faulted, uplifted rock. Climates have shifted countless times over the ages as waves of boreal and subtropical weather have washed back and forth over the landscape. During the recent million years of the Pleistocene, ice caps grew only to recede with today's warmer climes. The modern forest arrived here at least 50 million years before the first peoples, and today's trees, shrubs and flowering herbaceous plants -- legacy of that forest -- comprise one of the most diverse plant communities of the temperate world.

Inhabitants of the Klamath-Siskiyou live mostly on the coastal margins and broad highland valleys. We on the coastal sub-region often think of ourselves as living behind the "Redwood Curtain", away from the mainstream of California life. You know you have arrived on the north coast when the few access roads seem to sink into the prehistoric redwood forest. Beyond the ancient groves the landscape harbors mountains and hills teeming with valleys and canyons -- watersheds all -- of this wet land where ridgetops receive as much as 140 in. of precipitation per year.

The Indians who lived here were oriented towards the flow of the water -- their four directions upstream, downstream, uphill and downhill. Their spheres of influence were often delineated by hydrographic boundaries. Even the whites, in a small way, oriented towards the rivers, attempting to make sense of the confusion of mountains drained by subtending branches

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the klamath- siskiyou mountain region

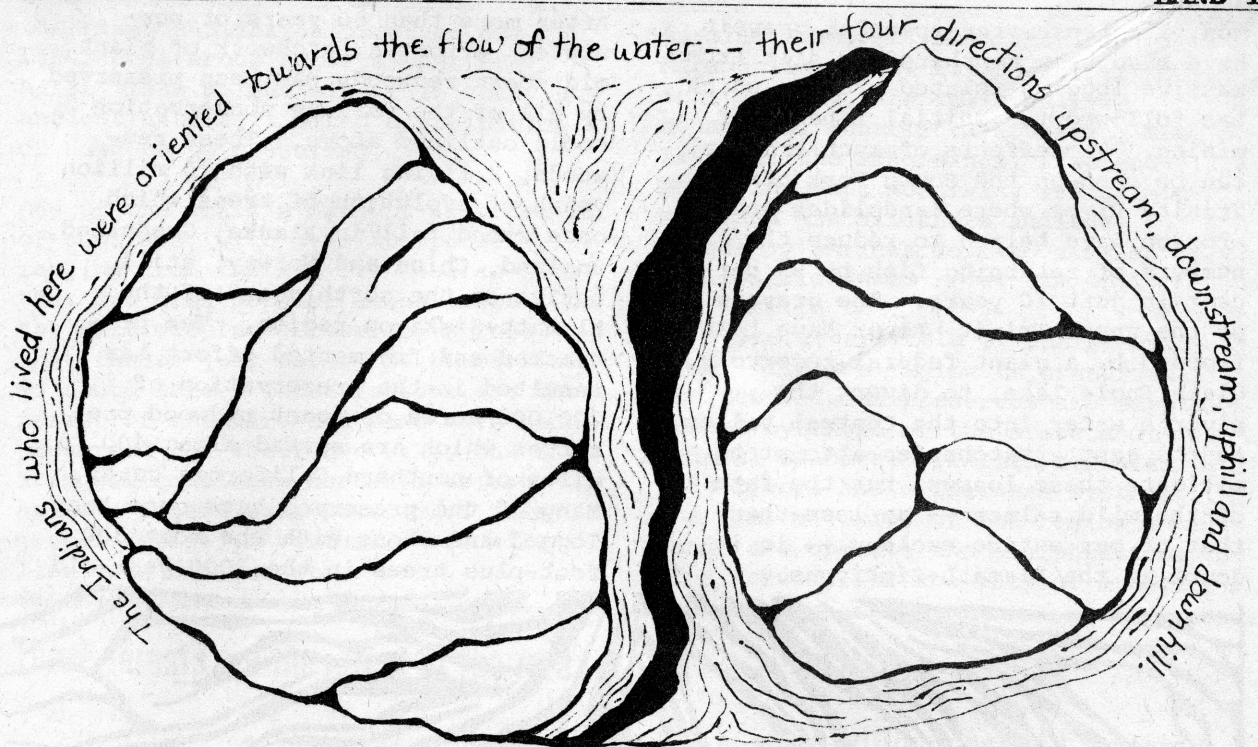
by Tim McKay

of the Klamath, Trinity, Eel, Mad, Van Duzen, Smith, Chetco, Illinois, and Rogue Rivers.

Mythic beasts, such as Bigfoot, in the imaginations of many at least, still roam the mountains which actually include portions of the Coast Range, the Siskiyou, Kalmiopsis, the Marble Mountains, the Cascades, Trinity Alps, the Eddys and the Yolla Bollys. Many Native Americans -- the Tolowas, Yuroks, Hupas and Karoks -- still live beside the great streams and catch the magnificent salmon as they have for centuries -- a seeming paradise lost.

But there's trouble in this paradise where industrial demand for our natural resources is leaving turmoil in its wake. In many ways the thorny problems of environmental protection epitomize those in other parts of the country, if not those of depleted colonies around the world.

Our region is now the site of confrontation between basic values of how people perceive the land -- as a living or non-living entity. The dominant paradigm holds the land to be servile, inanimate and apart from its inhabitants. But, over the last 114 years, a new paradigm has emerged which is quite different. It is in-



fluenced heavily by a more Native American and eastern philosophy and embraces an environmental ethic. The revolution of John Muir confronts the notion that the living landscape is separate from our humanity or that living systems can be broken and shaped in the image of man.

Recent human relations with the Klamath-Siskiyou region can be largely categorized as resource extraction in the form of logging, mining, and fishing, though tourism has become increasingly popular.

The Indians lived by the rivers and ocean where they gathered abundant natural foods, such as chinook and silver salmon, oak acorns, roots and berries. Animals like the Roosevelt elk, the California sea lion and small game were hunted to supplement the foods which could be gathered. Large canoes and houses were manufactured from fallen redwood and cedar logs, and the various perennial plants provided an array of natural fibers with which to weave nets and baskets.

The first whites came to the Klamath-Siskiyou region in search of gold in 1852. In their quest for the yellow metal they pushed the Indians aside, diverted streams out of their banks and washed the alluvial valley top-

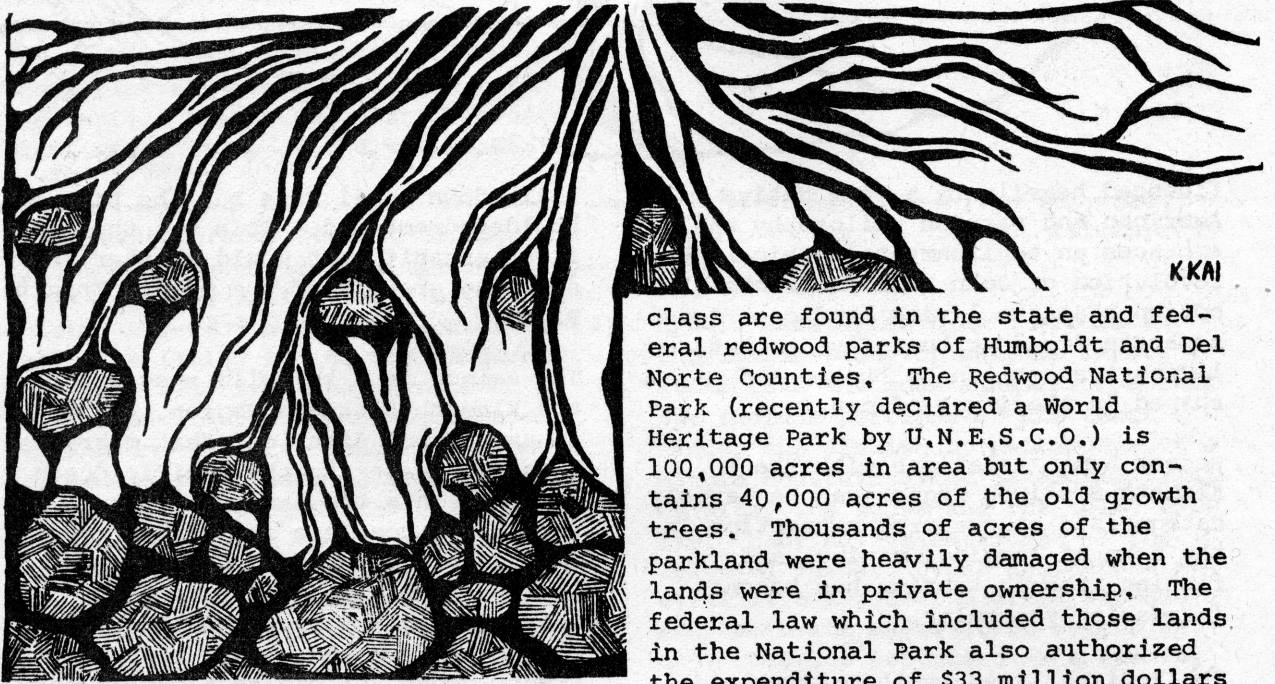
soils down until none but the biggest boulders remained. This was the first assault that would smother the spawning gravels of the mighty Trinity River.

The salmon is a key wild species for the Klamath-Siskiyou Region. It is an anadromous fish, one that migrates from freshwater to the Pacific Ocean and back into the same freshwater streams to complete its cycle. The eggs are laid in small but coarse gravels, where the clear waters bathe them with oxygen and they are protected from the hungry steelhead trout. When the sac is absorbed they emerge from the gravels as tiny fish called fry. They in turn grow to be smolts and return to the ocean where they will remain for two to four years before completing the cycle again.

California and Oregon recognize the salmon species as an over-used resource and attempt to regulate its taking to maintain its basic productivity. But, as with various other conservation schemes, the approach is fragmented and the effort to divide the fish among ocean-going commercial fishermen, sport fishermen and the Indian fishery has yet to achieve success. In addition to the intense pressures to take the spawning sal-

mon, its freshwater spawning gravels have also been smothered by silt from massive logging-related erosion which has followed the initial impacts of mining. The effects of such erosion can be seen on the South Fork of the Trinity River where landslides and erosion have helped to reduce the numbers of returning fish by 99 percent in just 10 years. The gravels of the upper Trinity River have been flooded by a giant federal reservoir, Clair Engle Lake, to divert the river's water into the Central Valley to the east. Hatcheries attempt to mitigate these losses, but the fate of the wild salmon -- no less than that of our entire ecology -- is in doubt in the Klamath-Siskiyou.

After more than 80 years of persistent effort a patchwork of giant old coast redwoods has been preserved by all of the various conservation tools outlined above. These redwoods, a living link with 70 million years of evolution of trees which once stood tall in Alaska, Greenland, England, China and Norway, still thrive on the north coast of the Klamath-Siskiyou region. The protracted and fragmented effort has resulted in the preservation of 200,000 acres of coast redwood preserves which are spread along 400 miles of northern California coast. Many of the preserves have once been logged and those with the most 300 foot-plus trees in the 2000-year-old



Despite the rise of the new Environmental ethic, California and Oregon have yet to adopt any comprehensive system for the preservation of nature. The natural preserves that do exist are generally the residual benefits of past conservation battles as opposed to a planned effort to rationally preserve the integrity of living systems. The systems to provide for the creation and maintenance of the various biological preserves span a spectrum of private, local, state and federal programs. Taken collectively, this spate of laws, parks, refuges, forests, wilderness areas and wild rivers is impressive but its scope is accidental rather than holistic by design.

class are found in the state and federal redwood parks of Humboldt and Del Norte Counties. The Redwood National Park (recently declared a World Heritage Park by U.N.E.S.C.O.) is 100,000 acres in area but only contains 40,000 acres of the old growth trees. Thousands of acres of the parkland were heavily damaged when the lands were in private ownership. The federal law which included those lands in the National Park also authorized the expenditure of \$33 million dollars to try to stem the erosion from the scarred mountainsides of the Redwood Creek drainage.

If one goal eluded generations of redwood preservationists, and points up the weaknesses of the contemporary preservation system, it was that out of nearly 2 million acres of old redwoods that existed prior to the coming of the whites no single watershed of the ancient trees could be preserved intact.

The "civilized" man's penchant for bigness brought attention to the effort to preserve the great redwoods but as one moves east from the coastal slopes to the mountainous uplands of

the Klamath-Siskiyou province one finds coniferous forests that are hardly less unique either in their ancient nature, limited distribution or need to be preserved.

One of the world's largest assortments of conifers, with over 20 species ranging from the 250 ft. Douglas firs that are most popular among loggers to the rare weeping (Brewer's) spruce that ranges just below the timberline, is found here. These forests are the rarest of the rare and none have been preserved for their own sake, but the struggle continues unabated to set aside a significant portion of this global refuge of virtually 100 million year old forests.

Russian Peak, Mt. Shasta and Mt. McLaughlin of the Cascades, Mt. Eddy, Shasta Bally, the Yolla Bolly Mountains, South Fork Mountain, the Lassics, the King Range, Kneeland Mountain, Hupa Mountain, and Salmon Mountain are all there and the geography shrinks down to envelop the consciousness -- we are one.

Precious little of the Klamath-Siskiyou region is preserved. The few redwood preserves are supplemented by those of the state and federal beaches, wildlife refuges, wild rivers and wilderness systems. The vast majority of the region's lands are open to the ministrations of a fervor, for the lack of a better

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virtually one hundred million year old forests.

The mountains under these forests are very much a mystery. Geologists disagree as to how they came to be but agree that the higher peaks are formed of granites similar to those in the Sierra Nevada range to the southeast. The similarities end there as a variety of formations of schists, serpentines, sedimentary deposits and cherts have been thrown up closer to the coast. At the mouth of the Klamath River rests a massive chunk of pink chert which geologists believe originated at 33 degrees south of the equator!

Thompson Peak of the Trinity Alps is the region's grandest at 9002 ft. and is more suggestive of the Sierran type. From the summit one looks out over what was believed to have been the vast Klamath peneplain which had been raised up and cut down in perhaps just the last 2 million years. Today the view falls away from polished, sheer, glaciated granites to tumbling mountain streams, meadows of mountain wildflowers, and to the forested canyons and valleys below.

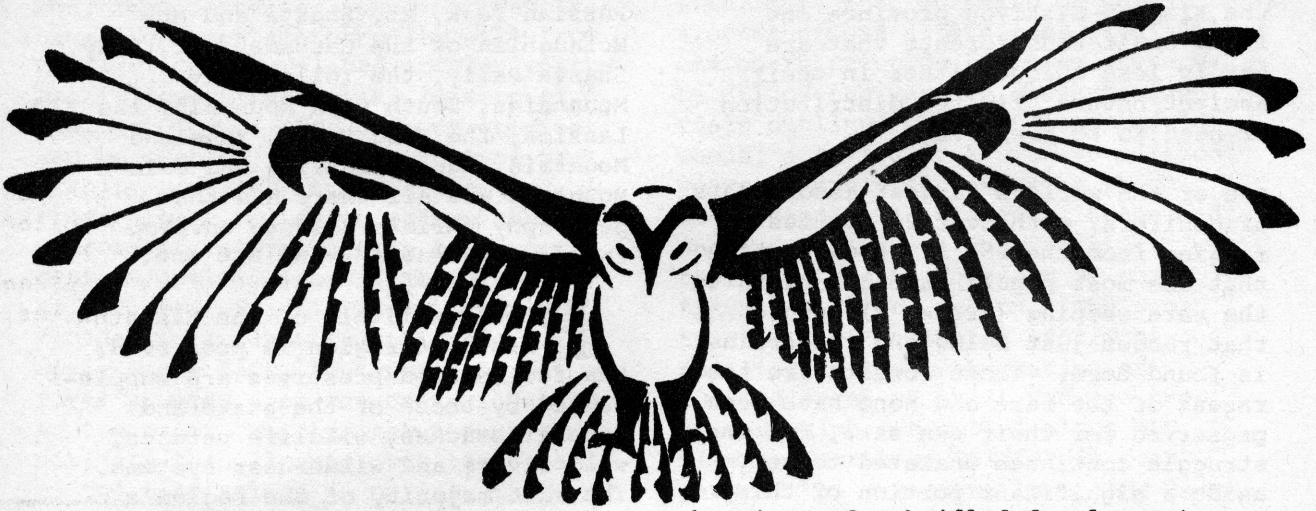
From the top of the Trinity Alps the macro view is inescapably personal -- Preston Peak and Mt. Ashland of the Siskiyous, the Marble Mountains,

term, bordering on "divine right," if not "manifest destiny." Vast tracts of the region's ancient forests have been cut at least once even on the National Forests.

Conservation reforms early in the century brought creation of our National Forest system which is today comprised of 154 national forests on 183 million acres of land, mostly found in the western United States. Most of the remaining "old growth" forests of North America are found in these public forests although most of the ancient trees are slated for liquidation within the next 50 years and they become fewer with each passing day.

The core of the Klamath-Siskiyou Region is made up of some 6 million acres of federal forest and mountain land, mainly in the Klamath, Trinity, Six Rivers, Rogue River and Siskiyou National Forests. At present, only about 630,000 acres (10%) -- in the Marble Mountains, Kalmiopsis, Sky Lakes and Yolla Bolly -- of these public forests have been designated Wilderness.

Despite the pragmatic objectives of the conservation movement, which strives to balance development with



the preservation of water quality, air quality, sensitive landforms as well as plants and animals, a great deal remains to be done in the Klamath-Siskiyou. Almost 900,000 acres of the fragile Siskiyou and Trinity Mountains are widely recognized as deserving of protection as wilderness preserves. In the case of the Siskiyou a wilderness would create a biological and cultural preserve that would preserve, that would protect the ongoing and currently threatened Indian religious practice of the Tolowa, Yurok and Karok peoples; save the important salmon spawning areas, such as the Smith River, Blue Creek and Clear Creek, from destruction; and would protect over 140 species of wild birds and animals that are dependent on the ancient forests for habitat.

The wild animals of the region include the Columbian blacktailed deer, black bear, mountain lion, pine martin, fisher and wolverine as well as such rare birds as the spotted owl, peregrine falcon, goshawk and pileated woodpecker. These creatures find refuge among the lodgepole pine, western hemlock -- to name but a few members of the diminishing forest.

While the laws of the nation clearly intend to protect rare animals depending on the old growth for shelter, the religious prerogatives of ancient Indian peoples, and the few clear waters that remain, the political will to bring behavior in line with intention remains elusive and the struggle protracted -- "the road to hell is paved with good intentions." The

champions of unbridled development seem perplexed that as the threats to planetary wellness and stability proliferate, the tenacity and persistence of the earth's defenders grows too. While the manifestations of killing developments and environmental preservation are to be found around the world they are juxtaposed in our region, almost rifted like the San Andreas Fault.

We lie in the midst of Ecotopia, an extension of a number of progressive streams of thought which have been shaped by Native American religion, eastern philosophy, conservationists like John Muir, the industrial revolution (to be sure), the hydrogen bomb, the computer chip and the shrinking illusion of mountains and rivers without end. Writer Ernest Callenbach coined this term Ecotopia (title of his 1975 novel), while Joel Garreau made it one of the Nine Nations of North America (which is the title of Garreau's 1981 contemporary cultural geography). For Garreau, Ecotopia extends easterly from the Pacific to the Sierra-Cascades and northerly from Santa Barbara to Alaska. To the east, Garreau describes the "Empty Quarter" and to the south it is "Mexamerica." In the "Empty Quarter" the need to overcome the earth is carried forward with a religious zeal while in "Mexamerica" it is riding the crest of the fossil fuel wave. The Klamath-Siskiyou country, while clearly in the center of Ecotopia, has much of the politics of the "Empty Quarter" and in danger of being drained of its water by "Mexamerica." ▲