



January 28, 2016

Brenda Ehmann – Sequoia National Forest Planner
Mike Dietl – Region 5 Plan Revision Project Manager

**cc: René Voss
Alison Sheehy
Joe Fontaine, Kevin Elliott, and Al Watson**

SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY TO: <http://tinyurl.com/earlyadoptersfpr>

SUBJECT: Sequoia National Forest Rivers that Meet Eligibility Requirements to be Considered for Inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System

Dear Ms. Ehmann,

Sequoia ForestKeeper and the Kern-Kaweah Chapter Sierra Club provide the following comments with regard to potential areas to be considered for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. We recommend adding the perennial reaches of Salmon Creek and its tributaries to the Wild and Scenic Rivers System and the headwaters of the Trout Creek watershed, including its tributaries, to the Domeland Wilderness in the new plan. Both are on the Kern Plateau in Tulare County, California.

Salmon Creek drains to the Wild and Scenic North Fork Kern River. The upper tributaries of Salmon Creek support extremely diverse ecotypes within the Twisselmann Botanical Area and Church Dome Research Natural Area. The southernmost population of foxtail pine is found in the Twisselmann botanical area and is genetically distinct from its northern relatives. Although no systematic dendrochronological study of the foxtail has been conducted, one has been aged at 2,110 years and experts believe this tree may live up to 3,000 years.¹ The eastern part of the Salmon Creek watershed has been documented as having the southernmost breeding population of Black-backed Woodpecker. The headwaters of Salmon Creek drain into the approximately 600-acre Big Meadow, which is one of the largest meadows in the Southern Sierra Nevada. The Salmon Creek drainage supports the southernmost populations of white-tailed jackrabbit and yellow-bellied marmot. The area between Big Meadow and the Salmon Creek waterfall supports at least two territories of California Spotted Owl. The Salmon Creek waterfall is visible from Mountain 99 and is signed by the Forest Service as a roadside attraction. Salmon Creek with its spectacular waterfall and beautiful gorge would make a great addition to the National Wild and Scenic River System.

Trout Creek drains to the Wild and Scenic South Fork Kern River in the Domeland Wilderness. It supports the threatened Pacific Fisher and may have a remnant population of porcupine. Short-tailed weasel (ermine) have been documented along the reaches of Trout Creek. Two significant botanical areas drain into the Trout Creek watershed, the northern reaches of the Twisselmann

¹ Arno, Stephen F. and Jane Gyer. 1973. Discovering Sierra trees. Yosemite Natural History Association.

Botanical Area and the southern portion of Bald Mountain Botanical Area. The Trout Creek watershed has a significant amount of nutrient-rich metamorphic rock which contributes to an exceptionally diverse assemblage of plants. Dark Canyon to Woodpecker Meadow contain a beautiful old-growth conifer forest. Breeding populations of California Spotted Owl, Mount Pinos Sooty Grouse, and Black-backed Woodpecker have all been found along Trout Creek.

On June 25, 2015, our organizations met with Al Watson about our recommendation to add the remainder of the Trout Creek watershed to the Domeland Wilderness.

We request that Salmon Creek and Trout Creek and their tributaries be recommended as wild and scenic rivers in the new plan.

Respectfully submitted,



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