

CALIFORNIA WILD HERITAGE CAMPAIGN

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Eagle Peak Wilderness (4 units) San Diego River & Cedar Creek Wild & Scenic Rivers

(potential Wilderness and Wild & Scenic Rivers)

San Diego County

California Bear Republic Flag



Watershed of the San Diego River : clean drinking water

Federal species of concern : two-striped garter snake & southwestern pond turtle

Remote, rugged region with dramatic canyons: waterfalls, pools, and lush riparian habitat.

Four potential Wilderness areas.

Two potential Wild & Scenic Rivers.

Cleveland National Forest
20,000 acres-approx.

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Located within an hour's drive of over two million people, this 20,000 acre wildland consists of four distinct units (from north to south): San Diego River Gorge, Eagle Peak, Sill Hill, and No Name.

In addition, two Wild and Scenic River segments will complete the protection of this unique natural area: San Diego River and Cedar Creek.

The region is rugged, seldom-visited and undisturbed, providing a breathtaking variety of geology and plant and animal life at the eastern edge of San Diego's growing communities.



Relaxing along the San Diego River



Deep canyon in Eagle Peak

The eastern edge of the wilderness complex touches Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, increasing the area's preservation potential. From the western face of Cuyamaca Peak at over 6,000 feet, the land falls quickly to a 10-mile-wide, west-sloping bench carved by isolated, nearly inaccessible canyons.

Cedar Creek is so remote that visitors have the feeling they are truly the first ones there, reporting "no trails, no trash, no footprints, *not even the signs of broken branches from previous passersby.*"

Exploration of this re-

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Cedar Creek waterfall

...mote area has revealed unsurveyed archaeological sites, rugged creeks and rivers broken by dramatic waterfalls and deep pools, and numerous species of special concern.

Two federal species of concern, the two-striped garter snake and the southwestern pond turtle, live in the area's creeks.

Once common in California, these species have fallen victim to development in their wetlands habitat; protecting this area will ensure that it remains a good home for them in perpetuity.

High species diversity in the Eagle Peak area is likely due to the lack of development nearby, the inaccessibility of the chaparral-clad slopes and steep gorges, and the presence of water year-round, a rarity in southern California.

Preserving this de-facto wildlife refuge should be the highest priority for the US Forest Service, and for San Diegans.

The Eagle Peak Complex protects the headwaters of the San Diego River, one source of San Diego's local water supply.

Indeed, the Cleveland National Forest was created originally to assure watershed protection, and wilderness status will give this protection forever.

The four units of the wilderness complex are separated only by maintained dirt roads, and these will remain open to provide access for low-impact recreation in the wilderness areas themselves.

Illegal entry of off-



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highway vehicles is a major threat to this fragile and biologically vital landscape. t this possibility.

This federal protection will allow present and future generations to experience these last remnants of San Diego's remarkable and beautiful wild river gorges and rugged mountain slopes in their natural condition.

