Date: February 25, 2013

SUPPLEMENT TO
Appeal Number 13-13-00-0007.

To:

Chief of the Forest Service
USDA Forest Service
Attn: EMC Appeals, Mail Stop 1104
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-1104

< appeals-chief@fs.fed.us >
By fax to: (202) 205-1012


Appellants:

WESTERN WATERSHEDS PROJECT (Lead Appellant)
Michael J. Connor, Ph.D.
California Director
P.O. Box 2364
Reseda, CA 91337-2364
Telephone: (818) 345-0425
Facsimile: (208) 475-4702
Email: mjconnor@westernwatersheds.org

SEQUOIA FORESTKEEPER
Ara Marderosian
Executive Director
P.O. Box 2134
Kernville, CA 93238-2134
Telephone: (760) 378-4574
Email: ara@sequoiaforestkeeper.org
February 25, 2013

Dear Chief:


A key focus of our appeal was the Forest Service failure to consider any livestock grazing alternatives in the EIS or to provide specific standard and guidelines to protect the Monument and its objects of interest. On February 14, 2013 the United States Fish and Wildlife Service transmitted its Biological Opinion for the Giant Sequoia National Monument Management Plan to the Forest Supervisor. Because this Biological Opinion includes information relevant to Appellants’ Appeal that was not available to us until this week, we are providing this very brief supplement. We raised this issue during our February 20, 2013 meeting with the Regional Forester.

The Monument’s “spectrum of ecosystems is home to a diverse array of plants and animals, many of which are rare or endemic to the southern Sierra Nevada”. 65 Fed. Reg. at 24095. One of these rare animals is the threatened Little Kern Golden Trout (Onchorhynchus mykiss whitei). The USFWS in its Biological Opinion states,

The Monument contains approximately 5.4 miles of streams that are potentially occupied by Little Kern golden trout, as well as approximately 4,582 acres of designated critical habitat for Little Kern Golden trout. Based on our review of the standards and guidelines as they apply to activities that are likely to adversely affect this species, our concern is limited to the potential effects of grazing. The proposed grazing standards and guidelines are likely to result in adverse effects of this species.

Biological Opinion at 3 (emphasis added).

This disclosure that the standards and guidelines would likely harm Little Kern Golden trout was made after the decision was made and appeals were filed. It reinforces the significance of Appellants’ concern for the need for Monument-specific standards and guidelines for livestock grazing. It also further illustrates the need for consideration of grazing alternatives. In this case, a comparison of grazing alternatives would certainly have helped to define the issues for both the decisionmaker and the public. 40 C.F.R. § 1502.14.

Yours respectfully,

[Signature]

Appeal of the Giant Sequoia National Monument Plan Supplement 2
Michael J. Connor, Ph.D.
California Director
Western Watersheds Project
P.O. Box 2364
Reseda, CA 91337
(818) 345-0425
<mjconnor@westernwatersheds.org>

Ara Marderosian, Executive Director
SEQUOIA FORESTKEEPER
P.O. Box 2134
Kernville, CA 93238-2134
(760) 378-4574
<ara@sequoiaforestkeeper.org>

CC: Randy Moore, Regional Forester
    Kevin B. Elliott, Forest Supervisor