

STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF EL DORADO

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MINUTES December 8 19 80

The Board convened in a continued meeting from November 25, 1980, to consider adoption of an Interim Management Plan for the Streams and Rivers of El Dorado County. Present: Supervisors Arliene Todd, William V. D. Johnson, W. P. "Dub" Walker, Joseph V. Flynn, and Thomas L. Stewart. Also present, Dixie L. Foote, Assistant Board of Supervisors Clerk. Chairman Todd presided.

Mr. Ken Milam, Planning Director, reviewed the purpose of the public hearing, but did not go into detail in reviewing the Plan itself as Dr. Roberts had done so before the Board on November 18, 1980.

Supervisor Flynn read into the record, a letter dated December 3, 1980, from Mr. D. Keith Caldwell of Coloma, wherein he stated his views of the proposed Plan and offered suggestions for improving same.

The following persons (26) were present and spoke to the matter: Bill Center, on behalf of himself and his campground; Ted Loman of TJ's Raft Rentals; John Luddington, San Juan School District; Dave (last name unclear) of Lusal Whitewater Rafting Trips; Monty Osborne, owner of river-front property and a commercial rafter; Burl Duardin, Sierra Western River Guides; Martin Healty, land owner, Norm Shownoff, private user now forming a commercial rafting company; Craig Calhoun, going into business with Mr. Shownoff; Joseph Ellering, rafter; Nyron Smith, fisherman; Ham Boling, fisherman; Bob Rogers, landowner; Doug Stodie, landowner; Chief Jim Goldthorpe, Coloma-Lotus Volunteer Fire Department; Bob Harvey, landowner; Philip Cuff, landowner; Cheri Hillenga, landowner; Richard Bellam, State Department of Fish and Game; Tom Bray, fisherman; George Jennings, fisherman; Greg Armstrong, rafter; Terry Wright, geologist; Steven Lyle, rafter; Ed Boar, rafter; and Mr. McGinnis, author of book on white-water rafting.

Those representing commercial rafting companies generally agreed that some kind of control is needed, however, they pointed out many faults with the proposed Plan, stating it does not really address the problems at hand. Those who have been operating rafting businesses, without insurance, feel it is unfair to require that they had to have had insurance in 1980 to obtain a permit to operate on the South Fork of the American River in 1981. Many have already gone to the expense to obtain the required insurance for 1981, and feel they should not be denied permits. This objection is based on the fact that no one was advised in 1980 of this new requirement for 1981. In addition, some stated that those businesses previously operating on the river (with or without insurance) should take precedence over new-comers as they are well established businesses that have already proven themselves. Commercial rafting representatives also pointed out, again, that the problems on the river are not really being caused by commercial operations, rather, it is the private user, usually inexperienced, that endangers himself and others and violates the rights of the landowners in the area. Many felt that 1981 should be an "open probation year" for rafting companies obtaining permits. Then as repeated violations occur and are documented, those companies responsible can be eliminated by non-renewal of their permits.

Mr. Monty Osborne, who owns river-front property and is also a commercial rafter, stated he has a problem with illegal parking near his residence by local people using the beach. Because of this illegal parking, emergency vehicles cannot always obtain access to his property. He asked that the County put pressure on the State Department of Transportation to have "No Parking" signs posted in the problem area, specifically on Coke Road, Baine Road, and Bassi Road. Chief Goldthorpe of the Coloma-Lotus Volunteer Fire Department supported Mr. Osborne's concerns.

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Those present who own land on the river spoke to their problems with noisy disruptive weekends during the rafting season, trespassers, and litter on their property. They object to the heavy commercial use of the river which is increasing every year. Fishermen in the area object to rafters taking over the river, making it impossible for them to fish. They stated it is not only physically impossible to fish, but they encounter verbal abuse and threats from rafters. It was suggested that the river be closed to rafting at least two weekends a month to allow the fishermen an opportunity to fish the river. These people felt, generally, that the proposed Plan does not offer any real immediate solutions to the problems and, in fact, encourages continued commercial use of the river. It was pointed out that very few of the rafting companies are local people paying County taxes; and the County residents are bearing the burden of the costs that the rafting industry is putting on our law enforcement agencies, etc.

Representatives of the rafting industry pointed out that, since the closing of the Stanislaus River to rafting, the South Fork of the American River is the only river in the State of this category, but there are many other rivers for fishing. One man stated that there are many more people who desire to raft on the South Fork than those wishing to fish there. Mr. Terry Wright, a geologist, stated that in ten years of research in the American River canyon, he has not witnessed any degradation of the American River as a result of rafting.

Supervisor Johnson pointed out that, if they are to consider numbers of people, the number of people to benefit from harnessing the river to generate energy would far outnumber the fishermen or rafters.

Everyone having had an opportunity to speak to the matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

The Supervisors agreed that, having heard the testimony this date, they were not prepared to adopt the Interim Management Plan for Streams and Rivers in El Dorado County as written. Supervisors Todd, Walker, and Flynn voiced their concurrence in objections to the 1980 insurance criteria for 1981 permits.

The Planning Director advised the Board that, if it does not adopt the Plan this date, it must consider extending the December 31, 1980, deadline for commercial rafting companies to apply for 1981 river use permits. On motion of Supervisor Flynn, seconded by Supervisor Stewart, and unanimously carried, the Board extended said deadline to January 31, 1981, and directed the Planning Department to proceed with developing an alternative Plan to bring back to the Board during the first two weeks of January, 1981.

Further, on motion of Supervisor Walker, seconded by Supervisor Todd, and unanimously carried, the Board requested the Sheriff and Supervisors Flynn and Stewart to work with the Planning Department in developing the aforementioned alternative Plan.

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There being no further business to come before the Board this date, the Board adjourned to Tuesday, December 9, 1980, at 10:00 a.m.

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APPROVED:


N. ARLIENE TODD, Chairman

ATTEST:
DOLORES BREDESON, County Clerk &
ex officio Clerk of the Board

By:  Deputy - 513 -

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