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First name: Celia

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Organization: Wilderness Fly Fishers of Santa Monica

Title: Conservation Chair

Comments: Dear US Forest Service Friends,

My family has fished, camped and hiked along the Owens River for three decades. Its scenic beauty, ancient rock formations, clear and healthy waters, and the friendly commercial districts in Bishop and Lone Pine have kept their appeal for us since we moved to California in the 1970's. We are longtime members of the Wilderness Fly Fishers of Santa Monica.

We follow the planning initiated by the Friends of the Inyo. Although we do not live in the area, their scientifically-based actions in behalf of preserving the special environment along the Owens guides our thinking here:

Please provide for analysis of ground water pumping for Mammoth Mountain ski resorts: It is crucial to account for water extracted for snowmaking and housing and commercial development. Of course, climate change must be factored in: it is dismaying to see the lack of emphasis for this area! This has been problematic for many years.

Emphasize the area's ecology, scenery and the diversity of its river systems.

As Conservation Chair of the Wilderness Fly Fishers of Santa Monica, I am especially concerned at the state's lack of attention to California's unique cold-water fish, Salmonids. Endemic to our state are more trout and salmon species than any other state. Our geology and geography, some of which is exemplified in the Owens River watershed, engendered this unique array of species. Please incorporate strong protections for our salmonids in the Owens River watersheds. For 17 years, I worked with teachers to introduce students to the life cycles of wild trout through the California Trout in the Classroom program. It is very concerning that the state retain the means to assure these natural life cycles can withstand human impact. Future generations should expect no less of us.

I hope your plan will include plans for annual monitoring of the Owens River corridor. As our climate dries and warms, Californians have a right to expect the water quality of our wild rivers, and the status of indicator species to be scientifically monitored on an annual basis.

I know that these parts of a new plan will cost taxpayers' money. However, we taxpayers who love the wild lands of our state wish to assure that succeeding generations of Californians will be able to recreate in these lovely lands we share. This is the highest value.

Celia Carroll,

Conservation Chair, Wilderness Fly Fishers of Santa Monica