

October 9, 1991, at McClure Meadow
To Doug Morris, Chief Ranger
From Randy Morgenson
Through Sierra District
Re Unmaintained trails in Evolution Region,
vis-a-vis stock use, per your request.

Unmaintained trails in Evolution Region
possible for stock to travel on are:
Muir Trail to Darwin Lakes, Colby Meadow
to M'Gee Lakes, McClure Meadow to Lake Double-
Eleven-Oh (aka 11106), Hell-For-Sure Pass jctn
to Martha Lake. None of these trails receive
any maintenance. The Goddard Cyn trail to
Hell-For-Sure Pass receives primitive
maintenance.

I support your concept of no stock travel
on truly unmaintained trails (& support a
concept of reduced hiker group size on
unmaintained trails). This would mean
these four trails closed to stock travel.

Darwin Bench/Lakes trail: Closed to
stock now & should remain so. About one
outlaw stock party per year rides up there.
There is some deep erosion in parts of that
trail which I hope can be fixed during the
years trail crews are working in Evolution
Basin.

Randy M. to Doug M.: trails

M'Gee Lakes trail: Presently stock parties can ride to 10,400 ft. in M'Gee Cyn. This is through the meadows to the base of the climb up to the lakes. The lakes (fish) are why parties go there, so they either ride to the lakes anyway or tie to trees at 10,400 ft. Neither is very good, nor is riding through the meadows of M'Gee Cyn where there is hardly any trail at all. Below M'Gee Cyn there is some deep erosion which I hope can also be fixed.

I don't think stock should be allowed to go above 10,000 ft (\approx lower end of M'Gee Cyn) to protect the wet meadows in M'Gee Canyon. But then, that's not much above Colby Mdw so we could go with the policy & not allow any on that trail. This will affect few stock users as the area is lightly visited by them (& popular with hikers); no stock there this year that I know of. I don't think Cunningham or Muir Trail Ranch goes there at all. Certainly if that area ever got very much stock use there would be serious impact because there is no maintained trail, & it's a meadowy, flowery, highly vegetated place.

Randy M. to Doug M. : trails

Lake Double-Eleven-Oh trail: This may be a little more challenging. The issue is fishing. Cunningham seems to average 2 or 3 parties a year up there (day rides only) & may argue for a continuing ability to do so. The trail is on dry forest soils, & they don't seem to be doing harm around the lakeshore.

I feel the present level of use is tolerable.

Are you willing to do something like let them have this ride in exchange for less grazing elsewhere, such as none in McClure Mdw.?

I could support this. So long as present use level isn't greatly exceeded & we don't begin to see erosion damage on the trail or vegetation damage at the lake.

Maintaining the status quo in exchange for protecting McClure Mdw. would seem a good deal.

Hell-For-Sure jctn to Martha Lake: If truly there is to be no stock on unmaintained trails, then this trail would have to be closed to stock travel. Presently, I estimate 2 or 3 parties a year go up there. They are not

Randy M. to Doug M. : trails

causing appreciable damage, but again, there is no place for them to ride but through the meadows & across the creeks. (It could be argued that the hikers who build campfires near Martha Lake cause more damage.)

Since there isn't a maintained trail, & within a mile or two of Martha Lake hardly any trail at all (just meadows), & since we restrict cross-country stock travel, it makes sense not to allow stock travel above Hell-For-Sure jctn.

A related problem is camping with stock at that trail jctn. The camp you & others used at No. Goddard Creek does not get used. Stock parties camp within a quarter mile above the jctn. There is no place large enough for several people & there is no unvegetated place to tie stock. Vegetation damage nearly always results. Is it possible to designate your campsite as a "stock users campsite" & publicize this in our regulations & information? And to require that stock parties camp below the Hell-For-Sure Pass trail junction? (No stock travel above the jctn)

These things would prevent & reduce stock impact in upper Goddard Canyon.