

November 20, 1973

Dear Doris:

Thank you for your lovely letter of November 10. How good of you to try to reach me by phone.

Gaylord is remarkable: is running up and down ladders, putting the roof on a huge temporary rain shelter, so some of our home addition work can continue thru the winter, but where some materials will be out of the wet. We both haul very heavy lumber - and generally, though behaving sensibly, are doing extremely well. On a slightly altered medication program, my gout (sounds so silly!) doesn't hurt often. However, we heed your words and do not intend to press our luck too far.

It was most heartening indeed to have you correct the oversight, and to know that the Dunes are indeed still on Conservation Associates' list of continuing concerns. Great!

I certainly believe I would be free to tell you what TNC has in mind for the dunes if I knew - or if they knew. Their Land Steward, young and interesting Gerald George, spent all of November 13th with us: we invited him to breakfast at 7 a.m. Went over maps and some stuff in our files after breakfast by a warm fire, which seemed particularly to cheer him! (He had had rather a damp night in Oceano State Park Campground.) Then we set out in our car and took every back road and a few main roads to show him everything from Pismo Beach to Point Sal. The night before, due to rain Nov. 12, we decided we simply had to enlist help to negotiate the Pt. Sal road, which is the slipperiest adobe anywhere. Luck was with us: we got Bill Denneen, who teaches natural sciences at Allan Hancock College in Santa Maria. He met us at 2:00 with his 4-wheel drive jeep. Very lucky. No passenger car could ever have made it. (We had that same sort of situation the time Larry E. Moss came up from L.A. and we gave him "the grand tour", starting in 2 jeeps to Pt. Sal.) Bill Denneen loves that whole central coast passionately: beaches, dunes and bluffs. Perhaps his favorite place is Pt. Sal. He is most knowledgeable - and communicates well. We had not told him he was doing this favor with his jeep for TNC, but Gerald George told him - and he said he just about guessed as much. They had a good time talking.

Yes, Gerald George told us about the NCCRP case and about taxes going up. There could be trouble ahead if TNC acts on this acquisition.

On top of the highest, most scenic point ... and we had an idyllically clear day ... Gerald George asked all 3 of us: if you had to choose just one area of all this to save right now, where would it be? That was a tough question to put to Gaylord, to Bill Denneen and to me. We were all 3 completely silent. Finally, I spoke up in favor of the whole Oso Flaco area: creek outlet, big lake, swamp, creek, little lake, and described the habitat (which Gerald had already seen with us), described its natural area possibilities, and said it should never be included in an ORV recreation area - the ORV people couldn't care less about the scenic loveliness nor the rich and unique environmental values. Bill Denneen reluctantly agreed that Pt. Sal "will be safe for a while because it is isolated, but Oso Flaco area is a goner if it goes into Recreation Area classification." We 3 finally agreed on Oso Flaco. It is hard not to push and push to save "the highest dunes in California" at Mussel Rock. But one has to take what one can get. Gerald George, of course, is only now looking, and reporting back to TNC. So we know nothing more.

I want to comment on all your interesting projects, but must get on with other things.

My best to you and Dick and to George - and all the good things you are doing.

Ever, *Kathy*