

**Inyo Forest Plan Revision Objection Resolution  
Wild and Scenic Rivers  
February 20, 2019**



Middle Fork San Joaquin. Photo by Darin McQuoid



Theresa L. Simsiman  
California Stewardship Director  
7969 Madison Avenue #1706  
Citrus Heights, CA 95610

[www.americanwhitewater.org](http://www.americanwhitewater.org)  
[theresa@americanwhitewater.org](mailto:theresa@americanwhitewater.org)

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February 20, 2019

Deputy Regional Forester Barnie Gyant  
USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region  
1323 Club Drive  
Vallejo, CA 94592

**RE: Inyo Forest Plan Revision Objection Resolution – Wild and Scenic Rivers**

Dear Regional Forester Barnie Gyant,

American Whitewater would like to both ensure sections of the Middle Fork San Joaquin are included in the Inyo National Forest inventory of eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers and that whitewater boating on these segments is added as an outstandingly remarkable value. Four segments of the Middle Fork San Joaquin River were determined eligible and suitable for Wild and Scenic designation in the 1991 Sierra National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. Two of the identified segments are located within the Inyo National Forest and make up the first 11.5 miles of the 32.5 mile whitewater reach known as Devil's Postpile.

Since the first whitewater paddling descent of Devil's Postpile by Reg Lake, Doug Tompkins and Royal Robbins in the summer of 1980, this multi-day Class V river has become the ultimate pinnacle for paddlers around the world. In 2004 Devil's Postpile was chosen by paddlers hailing from North Carolina, Idaho, New Zealand and Australia for a significant whitewater undertaking which was documented in *The 7 Rivers Expedition*. A film by professional paddler John Grace and sponsored by whitewater companies Werner Paddles, Shred Ready Helmets, Immersion Research, Astral Buoyancy and Teva.

Today when asking paddlers to describe this 32.5 mile adventure on the Middle Fork San Joaquin phrases like "bucket list", "once in a lifetime", "fabled" or even "Shangri la" are used to describe this unique multi-day trip. Included with this letter are comments that American Whitewater requested from paddlers to help demonstrate the unique attraction of the Middle Fork San Joaquin River. These are paddlers who aspire to run Devil's Postpile or have firsthand experience to share. They have also provided photographs of their expeditions that depict the fabled granite vertical walls, the crystal clear water and the challenging rapids that have become legend in the whitewater boating world.



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A well-known blog on Devil's Postpile by photographer Darin McQuoid can be found on this web-link:

<http://darinmcquoid.com/middlesanjoaquin.html>

Additional video links to more recent expeditions can be found below:

Devil's Postpile

David Maurier

Taylor Cavin, Kevin Smith, Thomas Moore and David Maurier kayak the Devil's Postpile Run on California's San Joaquin River

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRD76fGZnXI>

Devil's Postpile of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin

Tom Janney

<https://vimeo.com/28392716>

Devil's Postpile: Middle Fork of the San Joaquin (Entry#16 Short Film of the Year Awards 2017)

Kayak TV (Kayak Session Mag)

<https://vimeo.com/224072136>

Please keep these comments, photos, blog and videos in mind during your deliberations for including segments of the Middle Fork San Joaquin in the Inyo National Forest inventory of eligible and suitable Wild & Scenic rivers as well as adding whitewater boating to this river's outstandingly remarkable values.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Theresa Simsiman'.

Theresa Simsiman  
California Stewardship Director  
American Whitewater  
916-835-1460





Locked in the Gorge. Photos by Darin McQuoid



Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Devil's Postpile - San Joaquin River

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**Dave Farkas** <dave.farkas@firstdescents.org>  
To: theresa@americanwhitewater.org

Wed, Feb 13, 2019 at 7:28 AM

Good morning,

I am writing to you to address the Devil's Postpile section of the San Joaquin River in central California. It's come to my attention through American Whitewater that this section of river is up for re-evaluation for Wild and Scenic and also to determine the continued use for whitewater kayaking.

I have been paddling for 30+ years and have been on just about every California river including all the High Sierra multiday runs. I hold certifications in Swiftwater Rescue, ACA Whitewater Kayak Instructor, Canada Level II Kayak Instructor, NZ Level II Kayak Instructor and have been teaching and guiding kayaking for as long as I remember.

I grew up in western Canada and relocated to the four corners area in Durango CO many years ago. I have been making the California kayak pilgrimage since the early 90's at last twice a year to immerse myself in the unique natural environment and geology that the Sierras provide. There simply is nothing like it anywhere on earth.

The San Joaquin presents a unique and amazing opportunity for whitewater enthusiasts and kayakers. Putting in at the PostPile you instantly realize that you are in for an adventure. I've done this stretch 3 times and each one has been thrilling, memorable, challenging, and completely worthwhile. Of all the Sierra multiday kayak runs, this one is the most unique because of the challenge of the whitewater, the solitude of the canyon, how seldom it's run yearly, and the fishing/hiking opportunities. Once downstream of the hiking paths from the Monument, you're greeted with an intimate canyon experience with no traffic from others. The fishing is world class and the wildlife abundant and obvious. I've seen countless deer, many bear, and a lot of birds of prey on each run. The water runs crystal clear down the river bed with many side streams and waterfalls. The place is a shangrila for a kayaker. Another thing of note is that the Devil's Postpile section of the San Joaquin has it's place in history among the whitewater community. No other stretch of river in California demands as much respect from paddlers or creates as much angst among would be kayakers. It's place in kayaker lore is firmly cemented as one of THE challenges for multi-day expeditionary boaters.

I know that the San Joaquin is worth protecting and ask any Grade V paddler who has done the run or has it on their list of runs to do and you'll receive the same feedback. A must do and take it seriously. Protecting this stretch provides future generations the opportunity to witness its beauty.

Cheers and thanks for all your efforts.

David Farkas  
Lead Staff  
**First Descents**  
970 317-7291  
[dave.farkas@firstdescents.org](mailto:dave.farkas@firstdescents.org)



Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Devil's Postpile - Middle Fork San Joaquin

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Evan Garcia <ev\_gar@hotmail.com>

Mon, Feb 11, 2019 at 1:29 PM

To: "Theresa L. Simsiman" <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

Hello Theresa,

My name is Evan Garcia I am a professional 30 year old Paddler from Bozeman, Montana. I now live in White Salmon, WA for the access to year round rivers. The best kayaking in the world is found in California during Spring and Summer's peak run off. This is a very little known fact around the world where most people hear California and think LA, The Bay Area, and Wine Country. Every year for the past 13 seasons I have made it tradition to head South to California and explore it's unique and perfect rivers. I first ran the Devil's Postpile section of the Middle fork San Joaquin in June of 2007, as an 18 year old fresh out of High School. It was the first time a river truly challenged me to my core. I came out after four days on the water not only a changed kayaker, but I felt like a new person. The sheer beauty and wild nature of the Gorges and wilderness area below Rainbow Falls are indescribable to people not well versed in California's High Sierra. There is not another place in the world that shares the same geology and commitment as Ballon Dome Gorge and the upper reaches of the San Joaquin River. It's the kind of place that every cast lands a fish and every day holds a glorious adventure for the few lucky enough to experience it. This is 100% a full world class one of a kind river that needs to be protected and enjoyed as a wild and scenic area. It will forever be a milestone in the hardcore whitewater world and a stunning example of just how powerful and beautiful the Sierra Mountains truly are. Thank you for your consideration and time. -Evan Garcia





Floating on air. Photo by Evan Garcia



Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Devil's Postpile comment

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**Russell Gartner** <russell.gartner@gmail.com>

Fri, Feb 15, 2019 at 8:09 AM

To: theresa@americanwhitewater.org

To:

Deputy Regional Forester Barnie Gyant

USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region

[1323 Club Drive](#)

[Vallejo, CA 94592](#)

Re: Inyo National Forest Plan Revision – Middle Fork San Joaquin

My name is Russell Gartner, I am from Durango Colorado. I'm writing to comment on the MF San Joaquin preservation and access.

I am a class 5 kayaker and have paddle throughout the world. Our community of enthusiasts know this section as a classic and a gem. To do anything but preserve the protection and access of this River for the people who actually use it would be the wrong thing to do. This river is unique and offers an experience of top-level adventure and scenery unequaled throughout our planet. Please do your best to ensure protection and access for us. Thank you.





Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Re: Inyo National Forest Plan Revision – Middle Fork San Joaquin

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Joni Gore <gorejoni@gmail.com>  
To: theresa@americanwhitewater.org

Thu, Feb 14, 2019 at 9:09 PM

Hi Theresa,

Below is my comment to the Deputy Regional Forester, regarding whitewater boating as an ORV for the MF San Joaquin. Best of luck with your conversations with Inyo NF!

Cheers,  
Joni

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Dear Deputy Regional Forester Bernie Gyant,

My name is Joni Gore and while I currently live in the Puget Sound region of Washington state, I am originally from California. I fell in love with rivers, for both protecting and paddling, while attending the University of California in Davis, and have been paddling for almost 5 years since. At UC Davis, I commercially guided rafting trips on rivers such as the South Fork of the American, Klamath, and Tuolumne, and now in Washington, I kayak on local Class III-IV stretches.

It has come to my attention that the Inyo National Forest Plan is up for revision and that the eligibility of the Devil's Postpile run of the Middle Fork San Joaquin River is being considered. Based on my understanding of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, I believe this section of river is eligible due to its free-flowing waters, good water quality, and most importantly, to its outstandingly remarkable recreational value for whitewater paddling that is significant on a national--if not worldwide--comparison.

This section of whitewater is considered the most difficult and committing run in the Sierra Nevada mountain range, which is already world-renown for its paddling quality. There are numerous paddlers in our community, within the western United States and the world, who seek this intense level of adventure and risk in this navigable waterway. These paddlers are the ones who could best attest to the desired experience only available in the United States on the Devil's Postpile run of the Middle Fork San Joaquin. Moreover, the recreational value is completely river-related, owing its existence entirely to the river, which is another contributing factor for considering an outstandingly remarkable value.

Though this stretch of whitewater is far beyond my technical boating abilities, I have technical expertise on the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to express my fellow paddlers' sentiment about the unique qualities this run provides. I hope this provides a quality description to aid in your consideration of adding whitewater boating as an outstandingly remarkable recreational value for the Devil's Postpile segment of the Middle Fork San Joaquin.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Joni Gore

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University of California | Davis  
B.S. Hydrology  
(408) 386-0856



Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Devil's Postpile Comment

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**Nicholas Gottlieb** <ngottlieb@gmail.com>

Wed, Feb 13, 2019 at 7:26 AM

To: theresa@americanwhitewater.org

Dear Deputy Regional Forester Barnie Gyant,

My name is Nick Gottlieb. I'm an expert kayaker originally from New York and now living in the Pacific Northwest. I've paddled rivers all over North and South America including some of the most challenging and stunning multi-day sections, but unfortunately, I've never made it to the High Sierra region when the water levels were right for the rivers in the area.

Of all of the "classic" High Sierra runs (Middle Fork of the Kings River, Upper Cherry Creek, etc.), the Devil's Postpile of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin stands out in commitment, beauty, and whitewater, which puts it at the top of my list for when I do get the opportunity to paddle in the area. It's the only major kayak descent that traverses the Sierras completely and in so-doing, it travels through incredible sheer-walled granite canyons filled with classic whitewater. Paddlers have been using it for a few decades now, but it hasn't lost any of its mystique -- it still draws the best of the best, and specifically from within that group, it draws those who are looking for a true adventure river run. As far as multi-day river trips in the Lower 48 go, the Devil's Postpile ties with the Box Canyon of the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone at the top of my to-do list.

I hope that this river remains protected and is ultimately added as a Wild & Scenic river both for its intrinsic merits and for its outstanding quality as an expert-level whitewater run.

Thanks for your time,

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-- Nick Gottlieb



Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Inyo National Forest Plan Revision – Middle Fork San Joaquin - Devil's Postpile comments

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Joseph Hatcher <hatcherjoseph@gmail.com>

Fri, Feb 15, 2019 at 7:49 AM

To: Theresa Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>, steveb@calforests.org, lbmurphy@fs.fed.us

To Whom it may concern,

I am writing concerning the inclusion of the Devil's Postpile section of the Middle Fork San Joaquin River in the Wild and Scenic distinction.

I am a avid river person currently living in Oregon but have lived in various parts of the US. Having guided rafts for many years and done may exploratory river trips in a kayak through out the US. I bet I have paddled at least 50 of the designated Wild and Scenic rivers though out my paddling endeavors.

Paddling through a Wild and Scenic section is similar to backpacking through a wilderness. It allows the participate the chance to travel through a pristine environment.

The Devils Postpile in my eyes and experience meets or exceeds all the qualities of Wild and Scenic. Remote, untouched, big boulders, hard to access, beautiful landscapes, rocks that pop with color. Beauty that takes your breath away.

Please be persistent in including and fighting for this section, of river to be crowned part of the Wild and Scenic distinction.

Thanks  
Joseph Hatcher

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"Nearly all of my best memories really sucked in the moment"



Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Comments on Mf San Joaquin

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**connor herdt** <connor@bootjuicejams.com>

Thu, Feb 14, 2019 at 3:01 PM

To: theresa@americanwhitewater.org

My name is Connor Herdt, and I am a whitewater kayaker and commercial river guide from Northern California. I have been lucky enough to spend hundreds of days paddling on rivers throughout the United States, Canada, and Central and South America. Everywhere I go, when I tell other paddlers that I am from California, their eyes light up. The granite wonderland that exists in the canyons of the High Sierras is known to paddlers around the world! Their scenery, and remoteness, combined with the awesome quality of their whitewater, is something found in only a handful of places in the world.

The Devils Postpile section of the San Joaquin, along with the Middle Fork of the Kings, are the pinnacle of California kayaking. Even as an expert kayaker, I have not been able to run the Postpile, and it is something that I strive to accomplish. It's challenging rapids, crystal clear water, and moonscape scenery are unmatched anywhere. Standing on Mammoth Mountain, I have looked into the canyon and dreamed of getting to spend the five days necessary to descend one of the few truly wild rivers left in California. It deserves our protection and our appreciation, from recreational and conservational stand points. Thank you for considering my comments, and for helping to preserve a unique and awesome river.

Connor Herdt





Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Devil's Postpile - Middle Fork San Joaquin

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Tom Michael Janney <Tom.Janney@colorado.edu>  
Reply-To: Tom.Janney@colorado.edu  
To: "Theresa L. Simsiman" <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

Sat, Feb 9, 2019 at 3:28 PM

Theresa,

Thank you for reaching out, this is one of the most unique river sections in the world and I'm glad to do what I can to help. I added a letter below, please let me know if you need anything else. It looks like Ben sent some photos, if you need more please let me know and I can send some over as well. I also took the liberty to forward your email to a few others in hopes we can get more input.

Thanks for the work you are doing

Tom

Deputy Regional Forester Bernie Gyant  
USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region  
1323 Club Drive  
Vallejo, CA 94592  
Re: Inyo National Forest Plan Revision – Middle Fork San Joaquin

Dear Mr. Grant,

I am writing you regarding the section of the middle fork of the San Joaquin river from the Devils Postpile National Monument to mammoth pool reservoir. I am a whitewater kayaker with over 20 years of experience on rivers all over the world from the mellowest stretches to the most difficult whitewater. I live in Colorado but have been fortunate enough to kayak this stretch of river 4 times. The middle fork of the San Joaquin offers something that almost no other river in the world can match. It combines amazing water quality, some of the most difficult whitewater in the world in a absolutely stunning wilderness setting which to me is what helps define a Wild & Scenic river. A trip down this river corridor is a once in a lifetime experience, that has, and will continue to draw people from across the US and the world. This river offers users an opportunity to experience one of the most remote and wildest river canyons remaining anywhere in the world, as such I hope that generations to come are able to experience this place in the same state that I have been able to.

Sincerely,

Tom Janney

[Tom.Janney@colorado.edu](mailto:Tom.Janney@colorado.edu)

[Quoted text hidden]



Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Devils PostPile Wild and Scenic River Comments from Rolf Kelly

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**Rolf Kelly** <rolfkelly@gmail.com>

Sun, Feb 10, 2019 at 3:05 PM

To: theresa@americanwhitewater.org

Cc: Kevin Smith <sixsevenkevin@gmail.com>, Brad Higginbotham <nefertiti@hotmail.com>, Meagan Higinbotham <meaganwatt@hotmail.com>, Lucas Glick <lucasglick@yahoo.com>

Hello Theresa,

I was recently forwarded your email from Tom Janney. I've cc'd a few kayaking companions who I have been on the river with.

Address Comments to:

Deputy Regional Forester Bernie Gyant  
USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region

[1323 Club Drive](#)  
[Vallejo, CA 94592](#)

Re: Inyo National Forest Plan Revision – Middle Fork San Joaquin

I have been kayaking since I was 14 years old, which is 26 years ago. I have kayaked all over the world; it is my greatest passion. Today I live in Denver Colorado. I frequently make the pilgrimage out to California to kayak, 2-3 times a year, every year. I have done the Devils Postpile run twice.

The Postpile is one of the most unique adventures in the world. After the first mile on the river...there are few signs of people for the next 40 miles. Animals are abundant. The geology, particularly the granite domes are spectacular. The river has incredible, locked in gorges. It takes a lot of experience and skill just to navigate the river and make it to the take-out. It is the most challenging run I have done.

I think it is absolutely worthy to preserve this run for kayaking. It would definitely make it easier/nicer to check in with park rangers at the Postpile Monument who understand what we are doing.

Kind Regards,  
Rolf



Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Devil's Postpile - Middle Fork San Joaquin

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Chris Korbolic <ckorbolic@gmail.com>

Mon, Feb 18, 2019 at 12:57 PM

To: theresa@americanwhitewater.org

Hi Theresa!

Apologies for the delayed reply here and hopefully this comment can still be of use!

To:

Deputy Regional Forester Bernie Gyant  
USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region  
[1323 Club Drive](#)  
[Vallejo, CA 94592](#)

Re: Inyo National Forest Plan Revision – Middle Fork San Joaquin

From:

Chris Korbolic  
Professional Kayaker and Photographer  
Rogue River, OR

As a whitewater kayaker of 20 years and professional I spend the majority of each year traveling to paddle, but I am always drawn to the rivers of the High Sierra and especially the Devil's Postpile of the Middle Fork San Joaquin. Around the world, I'm generally always looking for rivers like the San Joaquin with similar beauty, whitewater of the highest quality, and a remote wilderness feel free of major human impact. The Postpile is much more than a single use location, offering experiences far more than just a bus stop along a tour route. People come to California from around the world with paddling this river on their mind. It is truly a spectacular journey through the finest landscape and wilderness of the High Sierra!



Theresa L. Simsiman &lt;theresa@americanwhitewater.org&gt;

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## San Joaquin-Devil's Postpile

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Izzy Lidsky <izzy.lidsky@me.com>  
To: theresa@americanwhitewater.org

Thu, Feb 14, 2019 at 5:43 PM

Dear Deputy Barnie Gyant,

I am a twenty year old female paddler from Steamboat Springs, Colorado, and living and attending college in Tacoma, Washington and I'm writing about the status of the San Joaquin river as Wild and Scenic.

I started paddling my freshman year of college (two and a half years ago) and have not looked back. I learned to kayak on the mellow waters of Washington's Snoqualmie river (the class II powerhouse section). After my first year of college, I returned home and became quickly acquainted with Steamboat's own free flowing Yampa river as it runs through town and down to Hayden. I now regularly paddle the Skykomish, Green, Snoqualmie, East Fork of the Lewis, and White Salmon rivers in Washington, and the Green, Yampa, Colorado, and Blue rivers of Colorado and Utah. I have commercially raft guided the past two seasons on the Upper Colorado, Yampa (through Steamboat Springs, and Dinosaur National Monument), and Green (Gates of Lodore) rivers as well as rowed a trip down the Grand Canyon. I have taken swift-water rescue twice and hold guide licenses in Colorado and Utah. While I would be considered a class III/III+ kayaker and a class IV raft guide, I know what it is to run rivers that run through towns, rivers in National Parks and National Monuments, rivers where you're so far in the wilderness that flipping your raft puts you in survival mode, and rivers where seeing the bumper of a car stuck under a rock is not uncommon.

Two years ago, on a road-trip through California with one of my old kayak mentors, we ended up camping in the Sierra National forest one night. We arrived in the dark, and awoke the next morning to see the huge granite slides of the San Joaquin in the valley below us. We spent the whole next day exploring the river and surrounding areas and when we returned back to Washington, did our research to find out what this majestic river we had stumbled upon was and if maybe it was runnable in a kayak. The river, we found, is in fact runnable, although very difficult as it's initial explorers (including Royal Robbins, climbing and kayaking pioneer) had discovered. The next morning as we watched the sunrise over Yosemite valley, and heard the news that Royal Robbins had passed, my mentor looked at me and said 'I love California and I can't wait to come back with the boys and run that river.' I don't know if he ever did, but I know that since then, I have always improved my paddling with goals in mind. California has incredible whitewater to offer- Cherry Creek, Dinkey Creek, the American river, the Feather river, and the Smith river are



all high on my list for 'when I get to paddle class V.' The San Joaquin is also on this list. It is in a beautiful valley and the geology of the area is so unique, there is no other river that posses features like the San Joaquin. The Devils' Postpile is some of the stoutest whitewater in the country, and while kayaking past people's old beer cans and car parts provides a fun, new challenge (but not really), sections like Devil's Postpile that are so commiting and challenging and beautiful all at the same time is what us paddlers search for. Everyone wants to run the Grand Canyon because down there, it's just you and the river at the end of the day and that's all any of us paddlers are really looking for. The San Joaquin is the same.

So please, Deputy Gyant, to leave this river off the list of Wild and Scenic rivers would be a huge mistake. Protect this river so that by the time young paddlers like myself work our way up to class V and are finally off our parents insurance so we can actually run the class V, these rivers will still be there, still be protected, still be scenic, and still be as wild as they were when Royal Robbins first ran it.

Sincerely,  
Izzy Lidsky

Deputy Regional Forester Bernie Gyant  
USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region  
1323 Club Drive  
Vallejo, CA 94592

Re: Inyo National Forest Plan Revision – Middle Fork San Joaquin

In whitewater kayaking, there are several rivers in the United States that stand out as extraordinary and as cornerstones in the history of the progression of the sport. The Middle Fork of the San Joaquin is one of those rivers - for that reason, it is without a doubt, a river with outstandingly remarkable values for those who have the opportunity and skillset to visit it.

Here is a detailed description and photos of the outstanding qualities of the run that paddlers get to experience: <http://darinmcquoid.com/middlesanjoaquin.html>

I am from Oregon, and when allotted the vacation time, and weather conditions myself and my husband try to visit streams in California, and in other states. One of our most recent, and memorable trips included paddling the Upper Merced River in Yosemite National Park shortly after it was legalized to paddlers.

For paddlers like myself and my husband, who have rare time to enjoy incredible rivers outside of our state, and often have to travel great distances, and work for time off to enjoy them, it is important that these rivers be protected, so that when the opportunity to enjoy them does come to be, we are able to do so, and so that future generations of paddlers can also aspire to visit and experience them.

For these reasons, among many others I am certain you will read, we urge you to please ensure that the Devil's Postpile on the Middle Fork San Joaquin remain included in the inventory of Wild & Scenic eligible rivers and that whitewater boating on this reach is added as an outstandingly remarkable value.

Thank you,

Priscilla Macy

[priscilla.macy@outlook.com](mailto:priscilla.macy@outlook.com)



Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Re: Inyo National Forest Plan Revision – Middle Fork San Joaquin

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Scott Perry <sdperry93@gmail.com>

Thu, Feb 14, 2019 at 2:26 PM

To: theresa@americanwhitewater.org

Theresa- Thank you so much for all of the work you do and making this so easy for us to send in! Let me know if you need anything else from me.

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Dear Deputy Regional Forester Bernie Gyant,

My name is Scott Perry, I am a California native now living in Washington state. I have been paddling for over 9 years and have explored a massive amount of California's waterways via kayak. Through guiding, instructing, and recreational kayaking I have found a sport that challenges me and allows me to explore the world in a way almost no other people can.

Growing up in the kayaking culture on the rivers of California included a lot of boating and possibly even more storytelling. The Devil's Postpile run of the Middle Fork San Joaquin is a fabled run among paddlers not only residing in California. Stories of inescapable vertical walls, miles of class V, and one of the best wilderness experiences ever captivated me the first time I heard about the run. This run is still above my paygrade but represents the beauty of kayaking which is the chase for something bigger than you. Having access to runs such as the Devils Postpile creates a long term relationship between the river and kayakers. With the amazing snow pack California has seen this year, I plan to visit this Spring and take soak in as much whitewater as possible getting me closer to the possibility of kayaking the Devils Postpile.

Through the hard work of people such as you and the Forest Service, I hope to be able to visit this magical place with some of my best friends in the future. Thank you for taking the time to read my comments and I hope you have a wonderful weekend.

Kind regards,

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Scott Perry  
SW Sales | Werner Paddles  
B.S. Fish Biology | UC Davis  
(530) 902-3786



Theresa L. Simsiman &lt;theresa@americanwhitewater.org&gt;

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## Comments on Devil's Postpile

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**Evan Smith** <smithlifeinwater@gmail.com>

Fri, Feb 15, 2019 at 9:23 AM

To: "Theresa L. Simsiman" &lt;theresa@americanwhitewater.org&gt;

Hello Theresa,

Thought I would give my insight on Devil's Postpile, one of the best kayaking runs in the world! I hope my comments are in time. Let me know if there is any change I need to make!

1) A brief summary of your boating expertise

I have been kayaking since 2003, and have paddled rivers on six continents and over 30 countries. I mostly focus on expedition style self-support overnight trips through remote canyons with difficult whitewater.

2) Where you are from

Born and raised in Coloma, California along the South Fork of the American. I most recently moved to White Salmon, Washington for work, but continue to visit my family, especially in the summer for opportunities to paddle in my favorite place in the world

3) Provide any comment that would help us demonstrate the unique or rare attraction of Devil's Postpile.

The Devil's Postpile run of the MF San Joaquin River is one of the most intrinsically beautiful places I have ever been. Stunning waterfalls from side-streams and on the river itself, glaciated granite domes, world-class fishing, and a remote feeling hard to match in the modern United States.

It is wholly unique that a river can pack that much consistently difficult whitewater of such high quality in a complete wilderness setting with no interruption for a 3 day trip. Deep gorges containing large rapids such as Boof-a-matic, and the fully committed Crucible will stick in my memories for my whole life.

I hope to return to this river year after year, and it is my hope to someday have my children and/or grand-children experience the same awe and wonder I hold for this amazing place.

Virus-free. [www.avg.com](http://www.avg.com)





Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Kevin Smith Letter For Middle Fork San Joaquin

1 message

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**Kevin Smith** <sixsevenkevin@gmail.com>

Tue, Feb 19, 2019 at 11:03 PM

To: "Theresa L. Simsiman" <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>, Brad Higginbotham <nefertiti@hotmail.com>, Meagan Higginbotham <meaganwatt@hotmail.com>, Lucas Glick <lucasglick@yahoo.com>, Rolf Kelly <rolfkelly@gmail.com>

Address Comments to:

Deputy Regional Forester Bernie Gyant  
USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region  
[1323 Club Drive](#)  
[Vallejo, CA 94592](#)

Re: Inyo National Forest Plan Revision – Middle Fork San Joaquin

The Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River provides a whitewater experience like no other in the world. As an 18 resident of Mammoth Lakes, I have been able to make the journey down the river from Devil's Postpile to Mammoth Pool Reservoir three times. There are many attributes that make this river special. In some spots, the granite walls rise a few thousand feet up straight out of the river. Many parts of the river are accessible only by kayak, providing a true wilderness experience. The rapids are demanding, aesthetic, and their challenge provides a genuine sense of accomplishment.

Living close to the start of the run has given me the opportunity to become an unofficial ambassador to the river. Every year, I am contacted by kayakers from across the country and around the world who are on their way to paddle the river. One kayaker, Jordy Searle, traveled all the way from New Zealand to paddle the San Joaquin. The river is a global destination for expert kayakers and is a test piece that almost every expert kayak hopes paddle at least once during their kayaking career.

I support the designation of the Middle Fork San Joaquin for wild and scenic status.

Thank You,

Kevin Smith  
[2055 Old Mammoth Rd](#)  
[Mammoth Lakes, CA](#)  
760-709-1339



Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Devils post pile

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**Randy Speers** <kayakkootenaybc@yahoo.com>

Fri, Feb 15, 2019 at 8:07 AM

To: theresa@americanwhitewater.org

To whom it may concern,

The Devils Post pile section of the Middle Fork San Joaquin River is a very unique and special piece of white water and deserves the Wild and Scenic designation. It's one of the finest multi day trips in California and possibly in the lower 48. The remoteness and wilderness character of this river requires permanent protection and stewardship. Thank you American White Water for your continued role as guardians of our water ways.

Randy Speers  
Nakusp, BC  
Canada



Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Devil's Postpile - Middle Fork San Joaquin

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**Benjamin Stookesberry** <redonkulous2u@yahoo.com>

Sat, Feb 9, 2019 at 11:26 AM

Reply-To: Benjamin Stookesberry <redonkulous2u@yahoo.com>

To: ev\_gar@hotmail.com, Tom.janney@colorado.edu, ckorbulic@gmail.com, "Theresa L. Simsiman" <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

HI Theresa,  
I am out of the Country right now so I will be unable to mail theses comments.

Ben Stookesberry  
Professional Kayaker and Cinematographer  
323 Hazel Street  
Missoula, MT 59801  
541-621-7251 [redonkulous2u@yahoo.com](mailto:redonkulous2u@yahoo.com)

2/9/2019

Deputy Regional Forester Barnie Gyant  
USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region  
1323 Club Drive  
Vallejo, CA 94592

Re: Inyo National Forest Plan Revision – Middle Fork San Joaquin

Dear Barnie,

I am writing you in regards to the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River from it's headwaters in the Devil's Postpile National Monument 50 miles downstream to it's first impoundment at Mammoth Pool Reservoir. As a professional kayaker for 2 decades that has twice been recognized as a National Geographic adventurer of the year, I have explored rivers all over the world and can say with authority that this free flowing river is one of the top whitewater kayaking rivers on earth. It is a combination of amazing wilderness, crystal clear water, and extremely exciting rapids that making it one of the most talked about rivers in our sport and since early in my kayaking career kayakers from around the world have had this river on their ultimate bucket list. As a 15 year resident of California and a life long resident of the Western US, I have seen and experienced first hand both this river and the excitement and wonder of those who are lucky enough to experience the unmatched aesthetic and excitement of this place for themselves. Please feel free to contact me with any other questions or for any other media from my experiences in this one of a kind place.

Sincerely,

Ben Stookesberry



Vertical Granite Walls. Photo by Ben Stookesberry





Photo by Ben Stookesberry





Photo by Ben Stookesberry



Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Devils postpile

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**Bryan Tooley** <tooleybryan@gmail.com>

Fri, Feb 15, 2019 at 5:25 AM

To: "Theresa L. Simsiman" <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

I was lucky enough to be able to paddle the Devil's Post pile run on the San Joaquin in the early 90's having traveled down from Oregon just for the trip.

As a paddler who has kayaked all over the US and the world during my 45 year paddling career, the San Jauquin stands at the very top of my list of favorite places.

Now that I have sons paddling, the stories continue, the pictures captivate, and the dream continues to return to this amazing place.

This is a canyon that deserves to be protected above all others.

Bryan Tooley  
981-678-1096  
[Tooleybryan@gmail.com](mailto:Tooleybryan@gmail.com)

Sent from my iPhone



Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Postpile Comments, Featherfest Band?

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**Jeff Venturino** <jeffreyventurino@gmail.com>  
To: Theresa Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>  
Cc: connor@bootjuicejams.com

Thu, Feb 14, 2019 at 1:57 PM

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Dear Deputy Regional Forester Bernie Gyant,

My name is Jeff Venturino, I'm a Davis-based California whitewater recreationist, regulatory consultant, and kayak instructor. I've been paddling California whitewater for a little over 8 years, and feel strongly that the sport synthesizes respect for wild spaces, phenomenal recreation, and enables some of the truly finest picnic locations available in the West. I first started paddling in Humboldt County, and logged nearly 150 river days last calendar year alongside full-time employment.

A key component of being able to do that has been simple, convenient access to river systems in California and beyond. Devil's Postpile on the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin represents a lofty but attainable goal for dedicated California and global paddlers interested in testing themselves against phenomenal whitewater, challenging portages, and a major wilderness expedition in the heart of the Sierra. There are few river sections in the world that parallel the truly unique beauty, climate, and landscape of the Postpile, running in the summer in good snow years, both crystal clear and warm. The quality of the rapids is unreal, and the section deserves protections as the epitome of both incredibly wild and phenomenally scenic at the highest level. Find attached a single photograph of a paddler on the river that encapsulates the majesty and difficulty nicely.

Thanks so much for your support of this river section and others in your purview, and for everything you do for riparian and forest conservation every day.

Kind regards,  
Jeff Venturino  
1118 L St.  
Davis, CA 95616  
707-845-3499  
[jeffreyventurino@gmail.com](mailto:jeffreyventurino@gmail.com)



Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Inyo National Forest Plan Revision – Middle Fork San Joaquin

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**Sam Wells** <samuelstephenwells@gmail.com>

Wed, Feb 13, 2019 at 2:38 AM

To: theresa@americanwhitewater.org

Deputy Regional Forester Bernie Gyant  
USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region

1323 Club Drive  
Vallejo, CA 94592

Re: Inyo National Forest Plan Revision – Middle Fork San Joaquin

Dear Deputy Bernie Gyant,

It come to my attention that you are working on the Inyo Forest Management Plan Revision. Its is my hope to express what I see as the true value of the Middle Fork San Joaquin River (Devil's Postpile).

I have been kayaking for approximately 12 years and its a great passion of mine. I love all whitewater but in particular I love adventure paddling. The Devil's Postpile offers probably the most adventurous whitewater in the lower 48 USA. While i have not paddle the Devil's Postpile yet only in the last few years am I beginning to develop the skills needed to attempt this bucket list trip. This canyon has everything an adventure kayaker dreams of all in one trip. I will not be able to fully express the unique quality of this trip due to a short email but let me assure you there is nothing else like it. Just the idea of doing this amazing adventure brings me alive.

I think any trip near the Devil's Postpile will show its obvious beauty and value but the value of just knowing its there is another less commonly noticed. Knowing this trip is there keeps me up at night dreaming, I train harder and i am more driven because of it. This place brings value to my life because I can see myself there. It is a life goal. So please please protect this place so paddlers can continue to dream and accomplish those dreams.

Sam wells  
Boise, Idaho





Theresa L. Simsiman <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

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## Devil's Postpile

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h2owink@sbcglobal.net <h2owink@sbcglobal.net>  
To: "Theresa L. Simsiman" <theresa@americanwhitewater.org>

Fri, Feb 15, 2019 at 10:45 AM

To whomever it may concern,

I am a 51y/o professional firefighter/paramedic. Married, with a teenage son, most of my time is spent working, going to my son's sporting events, house chores and various family activities. Life is good, we get out as a family and enjoy the outdoors as much as we can. Skiing, rafting, kayaking, hiking, and various sports. The outdoors is my escape and is important for me to know that it exists even if I do not get to enjoy as often as I like.

But I am not writing to talk about my life now. I was once an avid kayaker, it consumed much of my young life. I instructed kayaking at a school in southern Oregon for many years, and traveled around much of the West paddling various rivers. Kayaking has also led me out of the county, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Costa Rica.

The pinnacle of my kayaking career however, has to be the first time I ran the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin. There was supposed to be 4 of us doing a 3-4 day self support trip, but 2 of our party were unable to go at the last minute. My partner had been down the week before with another group and we debated whether the 2 of us should do it alone. After much discussion we decided to go for it. What ensued was the most magical trip of my life. The beauty of the gorges, with the sheer granite faces that towered above us as we paddled below, sand beaches outlined with granite boulder fences, giant trees that contrasted the rock walls and gave structure, depth and color to our surroundings, and definitely not to be forgotten, the whitewater. So many rapids that no one will be able to give them all names. The slides are what I really remember, hundreds of feet long that often ended in a 10 to 15 foot drop with a beautiful pool at the bottom. It is a kayakers Disneyland, without the crowds.

The San Joaquin also holds the number one camping spot that I have ever stayed. Night 2 for Hayden and me found us stopping just short of a section called the Crucible. The Crucible is very committing and better tackled with rest and time. The spot we chose to camp had a great sandy beach with towering granite walls that rose at least 3-400 feet straight up. There were also several giant trees that gave us shade and helped block the wind. We also had a perfect view of Balloon Dome between the 2 canyon walls, towering up above us, truly spectacular. We watched from a giant boulder the huge trout darting back and forth in the clear water below, wishing for fishing pools. We had one of those incredible Sierra nights, clear, crisp with a thousand stars, and the river to sing us to sleep. I will never forget this incredible experience, and truly hope others will have the same opportunity that I did.

In all I kayaked the river twice, and although I would love to do it again, I doubt I will ever have the skill and temperament to be able to return. That however does not change my belief that this river should be protected. It is important that we preserve these wild places, it is one of the things that makes America the great country that it is. It is our heritage and should be preserved. I hope that this beautiful and truly unique area will be protected for future generation to enjoy.

Thank You.  
Graham Winkelman  
3316 Conifer Dr.  
Santa Rosa Ca. 95404