



1875-11-20

## Letter from John Muir to [William C.] Hendricks, 1875 Nov 20.

John Muir

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C17  
1419 Taylor St -  
San Francisco  
Nov 20<sup>th</sup> 1875 -

My dear Sir.

I write you chiefly  
to thank you for the kind &  
painstaking interest - You are taking  
in my friend Keith, & to ask  
whether your sister is still on  
our coast, & to say how  
do you all do. Has your  
sister quite recovered from  
the Yosemite trip which proved  
so fatiguing. I have just

C21  
descended from my summer  
studies in the Sierra, having  
been engaged mostly on the  
head waters of Owens River & the  
Middle San Joaquin, & in  
the Lava floods of Mono &  
Owens Valleys. I also spent two  
& a half months in studying  
the grandest of all our forest  
trees Sequoia gigantea, tracing  
its limits, estimating the area  
which it occupies, & reading  
its history as a species. When  
I publish results - I will send  
you copy. One of my most val-  
uable discoveries is the origin



of the quartz sands & gravels  
of your deep places -

Keith has just received a  
check from Wilson of Cinne-  
=ati for \$25,000.00 gold for a  
painting 4 1/2 ft by 4, & though a  
large price, the landscape is  
well worth the money.

I wish something could be  
done this session by your  
law builders for the preservation  
of our magnificent forests.  
No part of the resources of our  
young State is so little appre-  
=iated, & so ruthlessly destroyed.  
Destruction in this particular  
is infinitely greater than fair use

& once destroyed can never  
be fully restored.

The forests should be carefully  
explored, & the area of each  
kind of timber, together with  
its value, & the means necessary  
for its preservation carefully  
studied & estimated.

So also as regards the available  
water supply for mining &  
agricultural purposes, &  
the methods for securing it,  
the greatest ignorance &  
confusion prevails.

It seems to me that the first  
labors of a scientific survey  
ought to be directed towards  
finding out - what nature has  
bestowed, what minerals, what



evils what forests, then  
how to make the most of  
them. But I will not  
weary you with these  
desultory remarks, no  
doubt you are overlaid  
with business on the approach  
of the opening of your work  
at Sacramento.

I might call your attention  
to an article of mine in the  
November number of Harpers  
Magazine on the Living  
Glaciers of California. You  
may have seen it.

Prof Hayden writes me from  
Washington that he would

like me to write a memoir  
of Western Glaciers for  
Government publication.  
I am not however quite  
ready for this work.

Thanking you again  
for your genuine kindness  
to my friend Keith - I

Remain very truly yours  
John Muir

To Senator Hendricks