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1899-03-10

**Letter from Binger Hermann to John Muir and Warren Olney, 1899
Mar 10.**

Binger Hermann

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,

COPY

General Land Office,

WASHINGTON, D. C. March 10, 1899.

Mr. John Muir, President, and

Mr. Warren Olney, Vice-President, Sierra Club,

San Francisco, California.

Gentlemen:-

Replying to your telegram of March 7, 1899, I have to say that the evidence before this office is overwhelmingly against sheep-grazing in the Sierra Forest Reserve.

The reasons stated for opposing the pasturage of sheep within said reserve are of the most substantial and convincing character, and come from what appears to be disinterested sources. The Forest Superintendent and Supervisors have made exhaustive reports opposing it.

There are four petitions from Madera County signed, respectively, by 40, 32, 105 and 117 citizens, and two from Tulare County signed by 72 and 120 citizens, all opposing sheep-grazing in the reserve.

In reply to letters of inquiry by Superintendent Newhall, Mr. Marion Medley of Lodge, Mr. F. Pammons of Gertrude, Mr. George Telford, Mr. W. P. Hedgepeth, and Mr. A. W. Frederick, make statements which indicate that sheep should be excluded from the reserve. This office is also in receipt of letters from Mr. Wm. Hoskins of Lodge, Mr. Geo. Selby of Kingsburg, Mr. John S. Eastwood of Fresno, and Mr. John G. Eckles of the Weekly Review, Porterville, to the same effect.

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The only letters favoring the sheep come from Mr. L. J. Miller. He says that sheep-grazing has no serious effect "upon the water flow in any way, but has a tendency to prolong the water flow, as the snow rests longer upon clean ground than upon ground encumbered with brush". He says that sheep men are willing to pay as high as five dollars per season for each 640-acre government tract, and that the public interests would be best served by permitting sheep to enter the reserve, and argues generally in favor of allowing limited pasturage within the reservation.

In view of all the facts as presented to this office, Superintendent Newhall was advised, by letter of February 13, 1899, that no modification of the existing regulations would be made and that the sheep must be excluded from the reserve.

Very respectfully,

Binger Hermann,

Commissioner.