



1908-05-02

Letter from John Muir et al. to [Theodore Roosevelt], 1908 May 2.

John Muir

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to explore, enjoy, and render aid to the mountain regions of the Pacific Coast; to publish authentic information concerning them; to enlist the support and co-operation of the people and the Government in preserving the forests and other natural features of the Sierra Nevada Mountains."



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To The President of the United States
and the Governors of the States assembled
in Conference, Greeting:

We, the undersigned, Directors and Officers of the Sierra Club, have been gratified to learn of the Conference of Governors called at the White House for the purpose of considering the Conservation of Natural Resources. Acting upon the conviction that this is a matter of utmost public concern we wish to record, in connection with this Conference, our strong sense of the paramount value of scenic beauty among our natural resources. The moral and physical welfare of a nation is not dependent alone upon bread and water. Comprehending these primary necessities is the deeper need for recreation and that which satisfies also the esthetic sense. The establishment of gardens and parks is the immemorial expression of an ever present human desire. Our country has a wealth of natural beauty which is far beyond the power of human hands to create or restore, but not beyond their power to destroy. It is an untaxed heritage that may be had for the lifting one's eyes; whose influence upon the life of the nation, physically, morally, mentally, is inestimable, and whose preservation is the greatest service that one generation can render to another. Nor are we unmindful of the incalculable economic value of our scenic resources. Consular reports indicate that the stream of tourists attracted to Europe by its scenic, no less than its mural, beauty is worth \$550,000,000 annually. America affords the newest, and in many respects the finest, of the

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worlds natural pleasure-grounds. Tourists of wealth and fashion, as well as mountain climbers and lovers of out-door life from all over the world are flocking in constantly increasing numbers to the Cordilleran system of mountains on our Western coast. Even from a purely economic point of view it would be extremely unwise to administer our scenic resources in such a way that comparatively private gain results in universal public loss. In taking this stand we express the sentiment of our membership of more than a thousand persons, who have subscribed not only to the purposes of the Sierra Club, "to explore, enjoy, and render accessible the mountain regions of the Pacific Coast; to publish authentic information concerning them; to enlist the support and co-operation of the people and the government in preserving the forests and other natural features of the Sierra Nevada Mountains," but who follow with intelligent and appreciative interest every effort to secure to our and coming generations the benefit of our scenic resources.

Respectfully yours,

May 2-1908
Attest: *Wm E Colby*
Secretary.

JOHN MUIR.
A. G. MOADIE.
J. N. LECONTE.
WM. E. COLBY.
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