



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1908-05-23

**Letter from R[obert] U[nderwood] Johnson to John Muir, 1908
May 23.**

Robert Underwood Johnson

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EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT
THE CENTURY MAGAZINE
UNION SQUARE NEW YORK

May 23, 1908

R. W. GILDER, EDITOR.
R. U. JOHNSON,
ASSOCIATE EDITOR.
C. C. BUEL,
ASSISTANT EDITOR.

Private

Mr. John Muir,
Martinez, Cal.

Dear Muir:

I have done everything I can to save the Hetch-Hetchy but the opponents of that scheme are all considered sentimentalists. I shall have my say about it in print as soon as possible, though for that matter there is no haste.

I went to the White House Conference and it was a most significant gathering and has done great things for conservation. You, perhaps, do not know what Pinchot certainly knew and probably the President that on August 28, 1906 in a letter to the President I formally proposed that he should call a conference of all the Eastern governors to consider how to save the Eastern forests. He did not take to it but said he would speak to Pinchot about it, whereupon on September 15, I wrote to him even more explicitly repeating my formal proposition. In his address at the Conference no notice was taken of this, and the entire credit went to Pinchot, who says that he laid out the plan in May of last year, and that my letter may have been in the back of his head. I consider this all very shabby and petty, but it may not have been deliberate; however, I sent my two letters to Pinchot a fortnight before the Conference, so that if he had cared to have any acknowledgment made to me he could have done so. You know how loyally I have supported Pinchot's work from the start.

As to Hetch-Hetchy he and the President and Garfield are all of one mind. I told Garfield face to face that it was an irretrievable mis-

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take. I think you must feel, as I do, that a child of ours has been mutilated.

Please do not say anything about my relations to the Conference; some day it will all come out. I said nothing at Washington publicly and very little privately about it as I did not wish to mar the success of the Conference by any discordant or personal note.

I am sorry to hear that you have any family reasons for anxiety.

With undiminished regard,

Faithfully yours,

Ru Johnson

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