

January 15, 1989

Dear Dean John Hendee:

Thank you for sending the letter to the Vice Presidents' Office about the budget situation at Taylor Ranch. We appreciate your support on this matter.

We are very concerned about the future of Taylor Ranch, considering the erosion of budgets over the last 3 years. As Oz has expressed to you, we have several very important safety related purchases that should be made immediately. We also need basic funding to continue such valuable programs as the Summer Student Internship. Jim and I have always been frugal with the Taylor Ranch budgets, tackling projects and learning new skills ourselves rather than hiring and flying in expensive specialists.

At this time we have been waiting 5 months to be paid for supervising and installing the gabion wall to prevent erosion of the airstrip. This, due to no money in U01-X077. The gabion project was originally planned for and budgeted for in FY1986-87. When the application was not completed that year, we anticipated that the designated money would be passed on to be used the following year, as had occurred in all previous years. Instead, the \$6000 remaining in this physical plant account was spent for another field station in CFWR. In FY1987-88 the gabion project was again budgeted for, but the application and filing process was delayed again. Meanwhile, the airstrip had eroded another 15 feet. On August 4, 1988 we were granted verbal permission from the state Water Resources Board to initiate the project before the permit was mailed since the project needed to be done immediately. We mobilized a crew of students that day and began work on August 5, working 7 days a week until school started. Jim and I finished the project alone.

Our confidence in the support structure of CFWR and U of I was severely eroded when we were told we could not be paid, now or possibly ever, for the gabion installation, because the X077 budget had already been exhausted due to a \$5000 cutback. Now, we feel very tentative about initiating new projects or acting on important problems which may require more than our allotted 20 hours per week each, since we may not be compensated. We must know what our role is to be.

We have taken your idea of a World Class Wilderness Research Station to heart. If Taylor Ranch is to move forward to become such a model, we need budgets which reflect the importance of Taylor Ranch. Not declining budgets, not pilfered budgets, not even maintained budgets, but upgraded budgets for making a dream become reality.

Jim and I need adequate salary money to reflect our skills and professional contributions, with a minimum of 1 and 1/2 time pay between us, so we can accomplish the everyday as well as "immediate need" projects at Taylor Ranch without wondering if and when we will be paid. Communication between CFWR/UI and Taylor Ranch must be improved and increased. A telephone system is an absolute necessity. We currently share 2 hours of radio time per day with 20 other backcountry ranches and businesses. Mail service is twice per month. This is totally inadequate. We cannot discuss any important business on the radio, it is exasperating to attempt to contact people during restrictive phone hours, and turn around time on letters is one month! A satellite phone system, or what ever it takes may be costly, but there are no other viable solutions to the communication problem.

We need your help and support. Will you take the lead and set Taylor Ranch on a course for World Class Acclaim.

Sincerely,

Holly Akenson Jim Akenson
Taylor Ranch Managers

cc: Oz Garton
cc: Bill McLaughlin