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Sierra Club
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SIERRA CLUB PUBLISHES NAVAJO WILDLANDS "As Long As the Rivers Shall Run",
FOURTEENTH VOLUME IN THE EXHIBIT FORMAT SERIES.

The Sierra Club has published each of its books knowing that if mankind's endeavors in all their beautiful variety are to continue, there must also continue, in all its variety, the natural world that provides the soil for man's genius to grow in.

There is a lesson in the Navajo country. Here the work of ancestral engineers still stands, but a millenium ago something essential was lost, and the people had to leave too. Once again perhaps man had lost touch with a law that simply cannot be violated--the law of the minimum. No matter how much brass or how many cymbals, nothing living can persist unless there is love, and the law of the minimum requires that there be love of the land, and respect for the miraculous, indispensable community of living things the thin skin of soil makes possible and that vanish if it does. The civilizations that thought soil was old-fashioned exist as fossil civilizations, not as living cultures. The purpose here is not to be didactic, but to raise the question with Navajo wildlands as counterpoint to our thoughts, and then to raise it again, rather often, as we look about us on this planet and celebrate what man must preserve if he wishes to remain here.

The figurative soil we have been talking about still surrounds Navajo Mountain, diminished though it may be by the overburdening of range forced upon the Navajo and upon others as well. The soil that can sustain genius still exists in other wild places, places that live on in some of the old states and in both the new, and in some other nations and on some other continents. But one simple prerequisite for genius--that there be a natural succession of organic variety--won't exist for long unless men of many nations, realizing they are capable of forcing it into oblivion, decide not to but to change their growth habits instead.

The Navajo consciousness is different from ours, and perceives a different world. If Navajo songs are true reflections of it, it is a consciousness with its eye always on the horizon. It is concerned with distance, sky, cloud, and mirage, with the direction of the wind--not so much with things close at hand. The great Navajo love is love of places, and for news of far places, and for the horses that will take Navajos there. The Navajo singers are ecstatic at the beauty of their world, too ecstatic for our taste. Their songs nearly always fall into the repetition of "Beauty before me, Beauty behind me, Beauty above me, Beauty below me, Beauty all around me, It is finished in beauty, It is finished in beauty," and the monotony of this puts us off.

For a thousand years the Navajo consciousness, or something like it, was the dominant consciousness in the Southwest. White Americans, in subduing the West, ended that, and nearly destroyed a way of looking at the world, but the Navajo consciousness endured.

As all Navajos once knew, and many Navajos still know: "The gods and the spirits of the Sacred Mountains created Man. He was made of all rains, springs, rivers, ponds, black clouds, and sky...The name of this new kind of being was 'Created from Everything.'"

How long has it been since we have been able to think of ourselves in terms as simple and heroic?

This book is an invitation.

In his foreword, the Executive Director of the Sierra Club, David Brower, tells us that the project for NAVAJO WILDLANDS began "as I sat next to Sam Day, not at a campfire, but at a dinner table, following his remarks to the First Conference on Southwest Wilderness. We had all liked what Sam Day said and I was quite eager to have the Navajo Tribal Council, the Tribal Park group Mr. Day headed, and the Tribal Museum help us with a book. The book could let everybody, Navajo or not, know what unspoiled scenic treasures there were in the Navajo Country, and what the place meant to the people who lived there.

"Everyone seemed to think the book could be good for the Southwest. I hurried home to invoke the power of Philip Hyde's camera. He has been one of our mainstays in letting people know the mood and the feel

of America's special places, the eons it took to perfect them, and the endless time it would take to begin to restore them were we ever to spoil them.

"Professor Stephen Jett has written from the deep knowledge of the Southwest and how to save it that he acquired from his detailed study of the recreational resources of the Navajo Country. His dissertation on the subject is an introduction to Navajo attitudes toward land, a guide-book, an inventory, and a series of recommendations, all in one. We would like to think that what this book has to say will lead to equal protection for the land, and for the beauty of things alive on the land, that gave grace to the lives of the ancient people whom the Navajo wild-lands were, as they are now, beautiful indeed."

Facts about NAVAJO WILDLANDS "As Long As the Rivers Shall Run"

TEXT: Stephen C. Jett.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Philip Hyde.

EDITOR: Kenneth Brower.

FOREWORD BY: David Brower.

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About the Sierra Club and its publishing program

The Sierra Club, founded by John Muir in 1892, is celebrating its Diamond Jubilee in 1967. It exists to help people explore, enjoy, and protect parks, wilderness, waters, forests, and wildlife. The club helps rescue places that make our planet beautiful and can keep it beautiful, places only as safe as people, knowing about them, want them to be.

Informing the public about areas that ought to be saved as parks for future generations is a major objective of the club's book publishing program. Book publishing is not an end in itself, but an integral part of the nonprofit, educational efforts that the club carries on as a public trust.

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Glossie Photos Available to Reviewers from NAVAJO WILDLANDS -- For
Reproduction in Newspapers and Magazines.

1. Page 44 - Tamarisk, Marble Gorge
2. Page 60 - Sourdough Pass, Monument Valley
3. Page 84 - Betatakin Ruin, Navajo National Monument
4. Page 155- Marble Gorge

For copies of the above, please write to John R. Schanhaar, Sales and Promotion Manager, 1050 Mills Tower, San Francisco, 94104