

2047 Friendly Street
Eugene, Oregon 97405
October 4, 1977

Mr. Eliot Porter
Tesuque, New Mexico

Dear Mr. Porter,

It is with some anxiety and intense desire that I write to you. By way of introduction, I am Byron H. Dudley. I am a 39 year old landscape photographer who lives and works in Eugene, Oregon. At the present time, I make most of my living by working as a school administrator. I make the most of my being by working as a photographer. I have not yet alligned my vocation and my avocation, "as my two eyes make one in sight."

For many years, since April of 1963 when I first discovered In Wildness... in the University of Oregon Bookstore (I had just arrived in Eugene from La Grange Park, Illinois), your work has had a significant impact upon me. Through your work, your subsequent books, your images and your words, I have learned of you and learned from you. You have contributed to my heightened sense of awareness and appreciation for the small elements of the immediate landscape. In time, I have come to understand what Thoreau means when he wrote, it is not how far but how well one travels that matters more. Your vision has enriched my experience as an emerging landscape photographer.

I now write to you, I now seek you out, because of my desire to acknowledge to you your contribution to the development of my vision. I admire your work and your personal persistence in the pursuit of photographic excellence. More simply stated, you are a fine photographer.

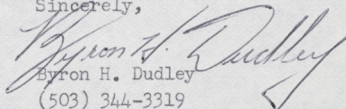
You are now, nearly twice my age. I am very aware that half a lifetime ago, you began your career as a serious photographer. I am very aware also that we are all limited in our efforts by the limits of time and energy. What matters most are the choices we make as to how we use our limited time and our talents.

What I seek, at this time, is the opportunity to meet with you, to talk with you of your work and your life. It may seem strange for me, a stranger, to write to you with such a request. However, you are no stranger to me, but a distant friend I seek to know better.

I would be happy to make arrangements to meet you in Santa Fe, or I would be pleased to meet with you should you be traveling to or through San Francisco, Portland, or Seattle in the next few months.

Should you be unavailable for such a personal meeting, your wishes will be accepted and respected. However, I hope there may be, before too long, an opportunity to talk together.

Sincerely,


Byron H. Dudley
(503) 344-3319