

Mr. Eliot Porter
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Dear Mr. Porter,

Please excuse the long hand, but I am rewriting this over the weekend so that I can get it out to you right away.

Some time ago there was an article in Audubon on the California Condor by Roger Caras. It was an incredibly powerful and beautiful piece of literature - certainly something that would convince the reader that the California Condor should be saved from extinction. But - when you think of it, most everyone reading that article in Audubon was already convinced that the Condor should be saved. So, for the most part, the article didn't shock anyone or expose ~~some~~^{any} thing unknown, but I am sure that everyone reading it was impressed with the literary style and more discouraged about the plight of this great bird. It may sound cross to you, but that article would have done much more for the California Condor if it had appeared in Field and Stream.

The only way in which the trend to destroy our environment is to be stopped or really slowed down is to make more

people aware of what is happening. I consider myself a hard core and fairly well-informed conservationist, but I realize that the real strength of a powerful conservation movement will have to come from people who aren't conservationists now. After a time people expect the hardcore conservationists to protest and to petition and I believe much of the impact of this protest is lost in the very reality of the expectation of it. This in no way is meant to downgrade the National Audubon Society, or the Sierra Club or any other conservation organization; the purpose they have served and will continue to serve is invaluable. By the way, I consider Audubon Magazine to be one of the most beautifully put together magazines in publishing.

Perhaps this may serve as a better example of what I am talking about - a couple years ago there was a three part article by Jack Olsen in Sports Illustrated called Poisoning of the West. If you read it, you will remember that it was about western ranchers using poisons indiscriminately to kill predators. That piece has probably been one of the two or three most controversial articles to have

appeared in Sports Illustrated. — Letters to the editors in the tens of thousands and the subject was immediately picked up by the news media all over the country. I can't help but think that the same piece in the Sierra Bulletin would have had no where near the excitement — for one thing it would have been expected there and the reader would have already been familiar with the subject.

I'm sure you are ~~saying~~ asking "Why doesn't this fella get to the point." What I am getting to is that our magazine will dramatically expand the level of awareness. Seven months ago our idea was to create an international ecology magazine, but I quickly realized that this would be very limiting where we would end up talking to the same people who read Audubon and Sierra Bulletin. So our editorial thrust has evolved to this — to be a well written and very high quality guide ^{for} to the active, sensitive and intelligent outdoorsman. A guide that will always talk to the reader as a participant — attempting to enhance the reader's enjoyment of nature, to make his or her nature experience more meaningful. Our magazine will create a

very active, responsive relationships with its reader. Man will be shown as part of nature, not apart from nature. Man will not be portrayed battling or conquering nature, but at one with nature in exhilaration, adventure, exploration, satisfaction and peace. The magazine will cover all those outdoor activities where unregulated nature plays an essential part. Hence, we will cover cross-country skiing, but not snowmobilers, sailing but not motorboating. In addition, outdoor activities like mountain climbing, hiking, ~~out~~ nature photography, underwater diving, gliding, skiing, and wild river boating will be covered with a unique and refreshing approach. In all this we will talk to the reader as if he or she would like to do something different, somewhat unusual, off the beaten path. At the same time we talk about the somewhat adventuresome activities, we won't forget about a walk in the back woods, a quarter mile stroll down a quiet beach, sitting by a gurgling creek behind the house - to awaken people's senses in small things as well as the grand ones, to help people notice all the beautiful things that are happening all around them when

they are in nature.

As a guide to the sensitive outdoorsman, the magazine should keep the reader abreast of anthropology. We will have leading anthropologists probing the life patterns of primitive tribes. Pertinent conservation problems will be reasonably, lucidly and forcefully talked about as they arise. But never to the extent that people could call us a conservation magazine. — this would limit us. We will have wildlife articles, photographic essays on beautiful natural areas around the world, we will talk about people who have left high corporate jobs to get back to nature. But whatever we talk about the magazine will never be an armchair magazine — we want to stir the reader, ~~to~~ turn ~~their~~ ^{his} senses on, help him relate to nature in a more meaningful way.

I could go on and on talking about the editorial product, but I will save that until we get together.

Since my call to you really came out of the blue, allow me to give you a little of my background. Out of graduate business school I went to work with Time Incorporated. I spent four

years there working for both Life and Sports Illustrated. While at S.I. I was offered the opportunity to get involved with New York Magazine in the early stages. I spent two very interesting years at New York. In the summer of 1971 my wife, 6 month old baby and I took off from New York to spend eight months in East Africa and Europe. While in East Africa I was completely overwhelmed by the incredible beauty and diversity of the country, and by that time unwound enough from city life to appreciate it. At the same time I was struck by the fragility of nature's balance. To make a rather long story short, I decided against returning to a very profitable ^{family} business in Virginia and for working to publish a magazine on nature which I would consider worthwhile.

A magazine, as you may know, is a very difficult operation to get off the ground — there have been over the last seven months some very discouraging times, but the conviction that the concept is sound ~~kept~~ kept me going through the rough periods. Now we are close — in the process of testing the demand for the magazine — this we will accomplish with a direct mail

test in ~~late~~ late February. The last two weeks I have spent much of my time raising the money to execute this — I got the go ahead financing on Friday. With the direct mailing test we are putting all our eggs in one basket. If the returns come in above the percent we have established as go head we have been assured of the \$2,000,000 we will need for adequate capitalization. If the percent is below our projected number, we will fold the corporation at that point. Since our magazine is not an offshoot of an established publication, we need to instill confidence in the quality of the publication by our contributing editors and their credentials. Much of the direct mail piece will talk about these people. I called you because we need an excellent nature photographer. I know you are not the only excellent nature photographer, but you are the one who I believe brings the dimension we need to the image of the magazine we need. We plan to not only have excellent photographs in the magazine, but we will also do a lot on the art and skill of nature photography. As I may have mentioned, the material for the direct mail piece will go to the printer the middle of January. With that in mind, you can see why I am in such a hurry to

get things lined up.

Mr. Porter, I am persistent because the magazine we are creating is needed. If you could work it out with your schedule, I know that I can convince you of its need. Any association you have with making this magazine happen will, I am sure, give you a good feeling.

If someone called you and asked if you could give us aside several hours for a meeting that would help in creating something which would make a great many more people aware of the threats to the environment, I am sure you would do it. I can assure you that the magazine will do that.

I must go to California this week or next. I would gladly work the trip around to arrange for a few hours in Santa Fe with you. Please call me collect at 212-535-2985 or 212-889-1670 so I can arrange my schedule around yours. I hope that this letter has been more enlightening than my phone calls in conveying the importance of our getting together.

I look forward to meeting you in person.

Best Regards
 Frances Y. Sieg