Arcata, CA:

Welcome to California’s North Coast Country

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Home of the awe-inspiring giant redwoods and with the mighty Pacific Ocean in its backyard, the North Coast is known for its broad visitor appeal and mild climate. Summer-time average high temperature ranges between 65 to 70 degrees.

Humboldt County, home of Humboldt State University and site of the 1987 SRM Summer Meeting, is one of the 3 places in the world with the most shore birds. Indian Island in Humboldt Bay, a National Wildlife Reserve, is a nesting area for the graceful white egrets commonly seen along Highway 101 between Eureka and Arcata.

Historical buffs and architectural fanciers will find many fine examples of Victorian, Queen Ann and Carpenter Gothic homes. Constructed of redwood and more than 75 years old, these homes show off the towers, cupolas, steeples, and balconies of days gone by.

Historical Settlement

California’s North Coast lies in an area rich with history. Native Americans of the region lived near streams flowing through rugged mountains and redwood forests. The exploration of northern California promised new lands for Spain and England. Sir Francis Drake, an English privateer aboard the Golden Hind, is believed to be the first explorer to land near here in 1542. Shortly after, Sebastian Rodriguez Cermeno was sent to reconnoiter northern California by ship to find California ports suitable for hiding Spanish galleons from English raiders.

In January of 1603, Sebastian Vizcaíno reached Cape Mendocino. Swollen rivers are common during winter in north coastal California, and it is believed that the powerful stream described by Vizcaíno may have been the Eel River.

The threat of Russian traders operating within Spanish territory caused the Spanish Governor to order Juan Fran-
cisco de la Bodega y Cuadra and Don Bruno de Heceta to sail north. Like Drake and Cermeno, Bodega found his way to Trinidad Bay. Yurok Indians from a small village near the bay swarmed to the ship to trade skins, baskets and dried fish.

On Trinity Sunday 1775, a Roman Catholic Holy Day, the Spaniards ascended the rocky headland to its highest point and celebrated Mass. They named the bay Puerto de la Trinidad and raised a wooden cross to claim the territory for Spain.

Today visitors may easily view beautiful Trinidad Bay, located 15 miles north of Arcata on U.S. Highway 101. By following signs leading to the harbor, a memorial lighthouse dedicated to those lost at sea also may be seen. A trail has been developed on Trinidad Head and leads to a large stone replica of the cross dedicated by Bodega. Excellent views extending as far south as Cape Mendocino may be had from this vantage point.

In the early to mid-1800's, while searching for furs, new land, and gold, trappers and adventurers opened wilderness trails throughout the region. The first of such mountain men was Jedediah Smith, an American trapper of the Missouri Fur Company, who April, 1828, led a party of 20 men overland from near present-day Red Bluff, California, to the Trinity River and a camp near the sea.

In 1848, Major Pierson B. Redding discovered gold while prospecting gravel bars along the Trinity River. Thousands of opportunists flocked from the Sacramento Valley to the strike, and shiploads of miners soon descended on Trinidad Bay from San Francisco. They followed the overland trail to the Trinity River and quickly spread to other streams.

**Development, Lumbering, and Preservation**

Trails and roads were carved through the wilderness to link major seaports such as Crescent City, Trinidad, and Eureka with the gold fields. It was not until 1894 that Eureka and Arcata were linked by a narrow, plank road, dusty in summer and muddy in winter.

As settlers and miners descended, the coast redwood were felled by lumbermen who realized the commercial potential of the big trees. Despite lack of suitable equipment for handling the giant logs, the first redwood lumber was shipped from Humboldt Bay in 1855. In a few years, thousands of board feet of timber made their way to ports around the world.

Alarmed in 1918 by continued logging of many fine stands of old-growth coast redwood, John Merriam formed the Save-The-Redwoods League. The league has purchased thousands of acres of redwoods that have been given to the State of California, some donated directly by private benefactors. Today these stands form the core of the California State Park System's redwood parks and memorial groves.

**Establishment of Redwood National Park**

Redwood National Park was established in 1968 to preserve a superlative example of prime coast redwood forests, coastline, and rivers in northern California. Here, in a narrow corridor of parklands along Redwood Creek, grow the world's tallest known trees.

After park establishment, extensive logging continued on private timberlands around this narrow corridor. Logging of the unstable Redwood Creek watershed increased landslid-
reaching wood. Sierra redwood than Rangelands 9(1), February
comprise almost 4,600 square miles, bounded extreme northwestern
mature rain has been measured ping rarely exceeds 2,000 years of age. The tallest tree found, at 367.8 feet, is in the Tall Trees Grove along Redwood Creek in Redwood National Park.

Redwoods collect the coastal fog on their needles, dripping the water down to the trunk to surface roots. This fog drip has been measured to collect the equivalent of 50 inches of rain a year. A fast growing tree, the coast redwood can reach heights of 120 feet in 20 years and is generally considered mature in about 40 years. Because coast redwood reproduces best by stump sprouting, you will often see a circle of new trees around the remains of a tree that has been felled or badly burned.

Since the coast redwood “follows the fog,” growing best at less than 2,000 feet elevation in areas of heavy winter rains and moderate year-round temperatures, they tend to grow in one long continuous belt rather than in isolated groves like the Sierra redwoods. As a result, in places like Humboldt Redwoods State Park’s famed “Avenue of the Giants” along Old Highway 101, you can drive for mile after mile through unbroken old-growth coast redwood forest.

Natural Resources

Humboldt and Del Norte counties are located in the extreme northwestern part of California. Together they comprise almost 4,600 square miles, bounded on the west by the Pacific Ocean and including the rugged Coast Range. Except for the communities of Eureka and Arcata in Humboldt and Crescent City in Del Norte, the counties are largely rural in character, and depend upon their natural resources for much of their economy.

Soils in this region may be broadly classed as either alluvial or upland. The former occur in the river flood plains and are used primarily for pasture and croplands, while the latter sustain both forests and open rangeland.

From October through April, precipitation may exceed 100 inches in some of the northern and southwestern portions of the region and decreases to less than 40 inches in the Eureka area. With extended rain, local rivers may flood. During dry summer months, the water supply is adequate for both irrigation of pastures and cropland and normal consumption.

The value of wood products exceeds 350 million dollars annually. The timber industry comprises almost 80 percent of the economy of the region. Commercial species are primarily coast redwood and Douglas-fir. Some 495,000 acres of land in the region is classified as rangeland and upland pastures. Livestock production contributes about 4 million dollars per year to the economy. Annual catches from the commercial fishing fleets amount to some 36 million pounds, contributing over 7 million dollars annually to the economy. Hunting and sport fishing contribute significantly to the local economy, too.

Forest Production

Humboldt County has the largest sawtimber inventory and the second largest commercial timber area of all California counties. Thus, it is largely responsible for the state’s position as the third leading producer of wood products in the nation. Together Humboldt and Del Norte account for 27 percent of California’s total timber production. The commercial forest lands of these two counties total 2.2 million acres and make up 75 percent of the total land area.

Douglas-fir occupies 34 percent of the commercial forest area; coast redwood 18 percent, almost wholly owned by the forest industries; hardwood forests, another 38 percent, are generally concentrated on non-industrial ownerships. The most abundant trees of this latter type are tanoak and Pacific madrone.

The forests in this region are in transition from old-growth to second-growth stands with attendant management problems. Management of second-growth stands has been made more complex by rules and regulations arising from present-day concerns about the environment and the preservation of natural resources.

Beef Production

Beef cattle production constitutes the third most important agriculture commodity in the county. Three types of operations exist in the county: the cow-calf operator, the stocker operator, and those that run a combination of the first two operations. In 1982 there were 876 farms totalling 648,820 acres with an average size of 741 acres. Only 109 farms had acreages in excess of 1,000 acres.

The Coastal Area, much of which is irrigated pasture, has a grazing capacity of 6 acres/animal/year while the lowest carrying capacity of 35 acres/animal/year is located in the Southeastern Area of the county. The most fertile soil series, the Mattole, has an annual herbage production of 5.9 tons/acre while the least fertile soil, the Wilder, produces 0.9 tons/acre annually.

Sheep Production

Sheep numbers have dropped from a 1954 high of 143,000 head to about 20,000 head in 1980. Total receipts for 1980 from sheep production was $797,000 and the sale of lambs made up about 75-80% of that income.

Historically, sheep production has been an important segment of the livestock industry of the county. In early days wool was the main source of income. Sheep production is well suited to the natural feed cycle of the Northcoast range-lands. The feed starts to grow with the first adequate fall rains. The spring rainfall with warmer temperatures brings on an abundance of high quality forage for the nursing ewes and foraging lambs. Most lambs are sold in June and July about the time the summer cure of the range forages begins to occur. The dry ewes are then able to subsist on the cured, mature feed and browse available until the feed becomes green again with the first fall rains.

Most sheep production occurs in the Coastal Area of the county similar to that for beef cattle production. The second most important area for sheep production is the Mattole Valley, through which the summer meeting tour will pass on Tuesday, July 14. You will be provided a scrumptious lamb barbecue for dinner that night!
Humboldt State University

Humboldt State University is one of the 19 campuses which comprise The California State University System. The University was established as Humboldt State Normal School June 16, 1913, as a two-year institution.

In 1917, the California legislature appropriated $245,000 for the construction of Founders Hall. This campus landmark was completed and occupied in 1922. The school became Humboldt State Teachers College and control was transferred to the State Board of Education. Three- and four-year curriculums and the granting of a bachelor of arts degree in education were authorized. In 1935, the name was changed to Humboldt State College. The institution became California State University, Humboldt on July 1, 1972, and on January 1, 1974, Humboldt State University. The University is the largest single employer of the county with approximately 2,400 employees.

The University has been known for strong programs in natural resources and currently 15% of all students enrolled on are majors within one of the six Natural Resources degree programs. Approximately 6,000 students attend Humboldt State. Two national business publications recently ranked Humboldt among the “32 lesser-known colleges of high quality” in the United States. Humboldt was one of just three public universities to receive this honor and one of only two California schools selected.

Arcata—Home of Humboldt State University

Located on the north end of the Humboldt Bay, between the Arcata Community Redwood Forest and the Pacific Ocean, Arcata is one of the few remaining California cities which radiate from a central plaza. This picturesque plaza is only one of many unique features the community offers its visitors and residents.

Founded in 1850 as Union Town, Arcata was an early mining supply center and the setting for Bret Harte’s stories. The architecture of the city reflects its intriguing history and ornate Victorian homes, Greek Revival structures with the farms and buildings stretching from the eastern hillsides to the ocean. Jacoby Storehouse, located on the plaza, has been designated a California Historic Landmark.

Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary

The Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary is one of the first of its kind in the U.S. Formerly a sanitary landfill, it now provides 75 acres of fish and wildlife habitat through a series of four marshes and one recreation lake utilizing treated domestic wastewater.

The Arcata Bottom

A European atmosphere prevails along the miles of old country roads, crisscrossing lush grassy fields, separating one farm from the next. Extending from Humboldt Bay north to the Mad River and west to the Lanphere/Christensen Dunes Preserve, the Arcata Bottom provides endless scenes of beauty and serenity.

King Range: California’s “Lost Coast”

Large areas along the northern coast of California which have not been touched by major highways, towns, and subdivisions are few in number—Point Reyes National Seashore, Redwood National Park, and the King Range National Conservation Area. Extremely steep and rocky terrain forced the coastal highway route inland from the King Range. This obstacle to transportation and settlement remains today as California’s “Lost Coast.”

The King Range’s abundant grazing lands attracted the first settlers in the 1850’s, and livestock became the cornerstone of the local economy for nearly 100 years. The first oil well in California was drilled near Petrolia in 1865, with petroleum products shipped to market. But the quality and volume of oil were low, and little production took place.

Logging of Douglas-fir boomed during the 1950’s and 1960’s, but little commercial timber remains on private lands in the area today. By a curious combination of climate and topography few coast redwood grew within the King Range. The Tuesday Tour will enter the Mattole Valley and go along the northern end of the King Range.

The Avenue of the Giants

This world famous scenic drive is a 33-mile portion of old Hwy. 101 which winds along the Eel River and parallels Freeway 101. It is an outstanding display of these giant trees. The Rockefeller Grove is where indescribable beauty overwhelms the visitor. Founders Tree, 346 feet high, will be a stopping point on the Tuesday Tour.

Ferndale

This Victorian Village has been designated a California Historic Site in foto for its colorful period preservation of its Main Street and homes. In the 1800’s, the lush pastures surrounding the town were ideal for dairy cattle, and Ferndale soon became known as the Cream City. As business flourished, wealthy dairymen built fancy Victorian homes that became known as Butterfat Palaces. A majority of these homes and ornate stores are still here; in fact, many of the early settlers’ descendants still occupy them. Ferndale’s Main Street shops take full advantage of the preservation by offering period setting and goods in a unique way. The Tuesday Tour will allow for a visit of Ferndale.

Eureka

In the days of the forty-niners, gold mines at the head of
several streams flowing to the West from Trinity and Siskiyou Counties attracted a large number of miners dependent upon the tedious and costly interior route for transporting supplies. In the hope of discovering some ways of serving the area from the coast, several expeditions were fitted out in San Francisco. One of these parties, under the command of Captain Douglas Ottinger of the "Laura Virginia" re-discovered the entrance to Humboldt Bay in 1850. Humboldt Point was the logical place to locate a city and it was called "Humboldt City" in honor of the great naturalist and explorer Baron von Humboldt. That same year the city of Eureka was founded on Humboldt Bay, about three miles north of the entrance.

The county seat was moved to Eureka in 1856 and business began to flourish. The city was linked to the outside world by two steamship lines and an overland stage route to San Francisco. Travel time to San Francisco by stage was three days in summer and four days in winter.

Eureka is a thriving city of 25,000 people. The tedious overland route to San Francisco has become a part of the famous all-year Redwood Highway and the trip that formerly took three to four days is now a five-hour drive. The entrance to Humboldt Bay, once one of the most dangerous along the coast, has been improved and channels have been deepened so that large ships from all over the world make Humboldt Bay a port of call.

**Prairie Creek State Park**

Magnificent groves of coast redwoods are the chief attraction in this 14,000-acre park. Some of these groves of tall redwoods grow right along the edge of a high bluff overlooking a broad sandy beach. This magnificent natural scene was upset briefly in 1851 when thousands of men poured into the area in pursuit of easy wealth. They left in frustration and despair after failing to discover an economical way to separate the gold from its mixture of sand and rock. The names of Gold Bluffs and Gold Bluffs Beach, where a major attempt was made to mine the elusive metal, are reminders of this forgotten excitement.

Fern Canyon, cut through the bluffs by Home Creek, is one of the most beautiful and popular attractions. Over 200 varieties of lush ferns cover the canyon's vertical walls, and moss carpets the fallen tree trunks.

**North Coast Fishing**

Salmon and steelhead are anadromous—that is, they are born in fresh water but go to the ocean to mature, returning to fresh water to spawn. The fish find a better supply of food in the ocean, but their eggs are safer in the freshwater streams and lakes.

King salmon, called chinook, mature at three to four years old and weigh an average of around 20 pounds when they return to fresh water to spawn. The young salmon migrate to the ocean during their first few months of life, but often stay near the mouth of their home rivers until their turn comes to spawn.

Steelhead have an average weight of around ten pounds. They stay longer in their freshwater birthplaces than salmon, and while their spawning routine is similar they do not necessarily die afterward.

**Events of the Meeting**

**Symposium**—Monday, July 13th: California Rangelands
**Tour**—Tuesday, July 14th: Redwoods - King Range - Ranches - Pacific Ocean - Ferndale

**Travel Considerations**

Arcata and Humboldt State University are conveniently accessible via U.S. 101 or California 299 by automobile or bus. Convenient air connections are available via United Airlines and United Express, which offer 10 flights daily from the Arcata-Eureka Airport to San Francisco. Least expensive air travel is 30 days prior to departure. "Best buys" on tickets will include stay-over one Saturday night. Conference participants are welcome to book an extra night's lodging Saturday, July 11 at the Jolly Giant Conference Center to avail themselves of lowest airfares.

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**Hats off to winners of the 1986 Membership Drive!**

Thanks to the dedicated effort of SRM members on October 24, the 1986 Membership Drive was a success. No matter how the word got out—through Section newsletters, personal letters, or phone calls—everyone was enthused and made a sincere effort to get more folks interested in the SRM.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you who worked to make the membership drive a success; the Membership Committee, Denver staff, and each SRM member. Without the help of every member promoting the SRM, this drive would not have succeeded.

The prizes and winners are as follows:

**Most solicitations from October 24 through December 1:**

1. **Dick Antonio**—lodgings, from Sunday night to Thursday night at the Annual Meeting, in Boise, Idaho
2. **Buddy Arnizo**—1-year SRM membership
3. **E. Tom Bartlett**—1 ticket to banquet at Annual Meeting in Boise

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**Section—Most members gained in 1986. (All increases figured on a percentage basis.)**

1. **Idaho Section**—$300.00
2. **North Central Section**—$200.00
3. **Colorado Section**—$100.00

These prizes were generously donated by various groups and individuals with special recognition to the Idaho Section for its contribution of lodgings at the 1987 Annual Meeting and Jack Bohning and Danny Freeman, who contributed the majority of the section cash award.

Congratulations to all winners and many thanks to each of you that did your part to promote the SRM. But, let's not wait until another October 24 for a membership drive—we can all make a pledge to be continually thinking of new members.—

**Meg Smith, 1986 Membership Chairman**