



2013 MONO LAKE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT



FROM THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIR

Autumn 2013

Together we stand 16,000 members strong, ready to speak on Mono Lake's behalf whenever and wherever necessary—thank you for your support!

We're excited to report that visitors to the Mono Lake Committee headquarters in Lee Vining have been enjoying our fully renovated building exterior. New features include a public gathering space, greywater system, handicapped access, and additions such as a water bottle filling station and concrete Mono Lake map, all thanks to a generous bequest from Mono Lake enthusiast Grace de Laet. This remodel provides enhanced public services and shows our commitment to the future of the Committee.

One standout project from last year is our focused effort to assure that the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power implements the science-based stream restoration program required by the State Water Board. As of August 2013, we are happy to report success, with many details reported in the *Mono Lake Newsletter*! Now to the implementation: as members know, we'll be working to get on-the-ground results for many years yet.

We have to tackle critical Mono Lake issues as they arise, and as a result our enclosed financial numbers for 2012 show us running a deficit for the year. Our revenues are strong, but our expenses exceeded income as we deployed the resources we need to achieve stream restoration solutions. We're prepared financially for these situations and have been working carefully to steer 2013 back into balance.

As important as financial reports are, they do not cast much light on our success in achieving our real purpose as an organization: making positive change for Mono Lake, its tributary streams, and its surrounding lands. Are we succeeding? The answer is clearly yes, and resources like the *Mono Lake Newsletter* and Mono Lake Website (monolake.org) chronicle our projects both small and large.

The greatest measure of our work together for Mono Lake can only be illustrated here in the Eastern Sierra: the rising waters of Mono Lake, the streams returning to health, the phalaropes skimming over lakeshore tufa, the Los Angeles youth learning why water conservation matters, and the scientists studying the issues that will be our future work. Long Live Mono Lake!



Geoffrey McQuilkin



Sally Gaines



MONO LAKE COMMITTEE



2012 Staff

Geoffrey McQuilkin, Executive Director
Lisa Cutting, Eastern Sierra Policy Director
Bartshé Miller, Education Director
Arya Degenhardt, Communications Director
Rosanne Catron, Office Director
Ellen King, Membership Coordinator
Greg Reis, Information & Restoration Specialist
Betsy Reifsnider, Sacramento Policy Associate
Santiago Escruceria, Outdoor Experiences Manager
Herley Jim Bowling, Los Angeles Education Coordinator
Jennifer Odum, Los Angeles Outreach Education Coordinator
Elin Ljung, Communications Coordinator
Jessica Ashley, Information Center & Bookstore Manager
Donnette Huselton, Bookkeeper
Carolyn Weddle, Project Specialist
Jackie Williams, Jessica Workman, Retail Assistants
Jessica François, Terry McLaughlin, Outdoor Education Instructors
Gary Nelson, Canoe Tour Supervisor
Angie Glaser, Canoe Coordinator
Erica Tucker, Birding Intern
Benjamin Hand, Max Henkels, Nick Holt, Erik Lyon,
Whitney Patterson, Lynette Villagomez, Mono Lake Interns

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For 35 years, the Mono Lake Committee has been inspired by our love for this beautiful place, where a remarkable salt

lake lies at the center of a landscape and ecosystem unmatched elsewhere on earth. Our vision since 1978, shared among 16,000 members, is of a healthy, protected, and wild Mono Basin and of an organization that seeks positive, principled, proactive solutions to problems. As our founder David Gaines often said, the lake speaks for itself and it touches people's hearts.

To make sure the right thing happens for Mono Lake, the Committee works in diverse arenas including public policy, ecological restoration, public education, water conservation, scientific research, and hands-on stewardship.

We are an optimistic community of people who strive for thoughtful solutions to problems—an approach that has been consistently successful for Mono Lake. With a base in science, we seek out principled solutions to watershed-wide problems and advocate for them strongly.

The Committee's landmark success—saving Mono Lake from destruction due to the excessive diversion of water to Los Angeles—is internationally known. We revitalized California's Public Trust doctrine through a precedent-setting state Supreme Court decision, launched programs to meet Los Angeles' real water needs through water conservation and reclamation, and achieved an extraordinary revision of water rights in the Mono Basin that assures Mono

Lake will thrive and its tributary streams prosper.

Along the way hundreds of thousands of citizens united in support of Mono Lake, and we realized that protecting this place requires us to do even more. Today the Committee tackles new political challenges, advances the restoration of the lake and its recovering streams, shares this special place through innovative education programs, and broadens Mono Lake knowledge through scientific research. As always, we provide constant vigilance to protect our hard-won victories.

The pages that follow illuminate our programs, their achievements, the challenges ahead, and the dedicated team of staff, volunteers, and members who are working on behalf of this most remarkable place.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mono Lake Committee is a non-profit citizens' group dedicated to protecting and restoring the Mono Basin ecosystem, educating the public about Mono Lake and the impacts on the environment of excessive water use, and promoting cooperative solutions that protect Mono Lake and meet real water needs without transferring environmental problems to other areas.



Top: OE participants from South El Monte High School visit the County Park boardwalk.
Middle: Staff from the Bureau of Reclamation along Mono Lake's south shore in May 2012.
Bottom: Arya Degenhardt steers a canoe for employees of Patagonia clothing company.

PROTECTION



Protecting Mono Lake, its streams, and its surrounding lands requires nimble advocacy,

thoughtful planning, and continuing vigilance. Mono Lake needs ongoing citizen involvement to assure that protection remains in place and strong.

Mono Lake faces many challenges familiar to natural areas across the state: increasing demand for water, poorly-planned development, increasing recreational use, shifting politics, underfunded management agencies, and climate change, to name some big ones. Other challenges are unique to this place, such as maintaining the lake's balanced water plan within the extended watershed of Los Angeles.

At times our protection work requires us to speak strongly on behalf of Mono Lake's interests. California's budget woes, for example, lead to the 2011 proposal to close the state park at Mono Lake, despite the low savings that would result and the high economic and resource value of Mono Lake remaining a protected water body and special visitor designation. We worked with the local community, policymakers in Sacramento, our attorneys, state park officials, and thousands of letter-writing members to help craft a parking fee solution to keep the park open and operating for years to come.

Our long history of engagement with Mono Lake water issues provides the critical expertise needed to assure that promised protections are put into place. For example, the Committee is still engaged in an



intensive, multi-year analysis and discussion about the Los Angeles Aqueduct system in the Mono Basin. We expect the outcome to be infrastructure upgrades that result in modern aqueduct facilities. The amount of water flowing to Los

Angeles will remain unchanged, but Mono Basin streams will finally get the amount of water they need in the seasons when they need it most. This will meet State Water Board mandates to maximize the recovery of stream health while minimizing the impacts of continuing water diversions to Los Angeles.

In late 2011 the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power proposed to cease the annual Mono Lake monitoring program required by the State Water Board. Since monitoring the lake is essential for measuring its ecological health and recovery status, not to mention legally required, the Committee responded swiftly. In the summer of 2012 the State Water Board ruled that DWP must continue the monitoring program without interruption.

The Committee also seeks to respond rapidly to developing situations, such as a proposed Caltrans

project to reduce rockfall danger from roadcuts on Highway 395 near Old Marina. Committee staff met with Caltrans to discuss the project, provided extensive feedback and guidance, and recommended a vegetation expert to help with rehabilitation. The resulting project will make the highway safer for motorists, stabilize eroding roadcuts, and assure revegetation success, all without harming Mono Lake.

The Committee is politically active to ensure that the Mono Lake protections we have already won are not eroded. We are engaged with policymakers at the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power (DWP), the Mayor's office, and the City Council, and we speak for Mono Lake in the Green Los Angeles coalition. The Committee works to assure that water conservation solutions are implemented in Los Angeles and continues to serve on DWP's



Recycled Water Advisory Group. In Sacramento we work with legislators, agencies, and conservation leaders, and we continue to advance Mono Lake as a model solution for other California water conflicts.

MORGAN LINDSAY POLICY COORDINATOR



Morgan Lindsay was drawn to the Mono Basin after learning about the public trust in a class about water policy at Mt. Holyoke College in Massachusetts. "I was captivated by the story of how a small group of people were able to change the course of history

and protect Mono Lake," she says.

Morgan ran the canoe program for a summer before working as Policy Coordinator, and she remembers that powerful moment during canoe tours—"the look on someone's face when *they get it*; the formation of a real emotional connection." She also read the lake level gauge each week, becoming "intimately familiar with how the climate inscribed itself in the lakebed and what was revealed and concealed with each inch of water."

For Morgan, one of the most surprising aspects of working at the Mono Lake Committee was "realizing the true meaning of constant vigilance. The Committee is the trusted voice of reason in all decisions regarding Mono Lake."



Top: Staff from CalTrout, the Mono Lake Committee, and the California Department of Fish & Wildlife at the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power headquarters in LA.
Middle: An OE group from Casa Esperanza visits the Lee Vining Creek diversion facility.
Bottom: Every year the Tioga Pass Run starts in front of the Mono Lake Committee.
Left: Caelen McQuilkin birds in Lee Vining during the Bird Chautauqua.

STREAM RESTORATION



Ecological restoration attempts to heal the damage caused by fifty years of excessive water

diversion to Los Angeles. Tributary streams were entirely dewatered, eliminating fish and destroying delta bottomlands full of meandering stream channels, cottonwood forests, and wet meadows rich with wildlife. The diversions lowered Mono Lake by 45 vertical feet, doubled the lake's salinity, drained shoreline lagoons, and ravaged delta marshes. Our success in winning the return of water to Mono Lake and its streams gives us reason to hope that this damage can be healed.

The goal of ecological restoration in the Mono Basin is to rejuvenate the dynamic natural processes of Mono Lake and its tributary streams. In turn, these processes—such as springtime flooding, natural reseeding, and ponding of lakeshore lagoons—will reestablish natural conditions. The goal isn't to recreate an exact replica of what existed a century ago; instead we seek to achieve healthy, self-supporting lake and stream systems that will thrive into the future.

The Committee plays a critical role in transforming the restoration actions required by the State Water Board into on-the-ground rejuvenation. In this ongoing work we use our hydrological, legal, engineering, and restoration science expertise to ensure that goals are achieved and DWP restoration projects are the best they can be. We are also the

“eyes and ears” of restoration, using our local presence to verify required streamflows and monitor critical restoration indicators.

In 2010 the Committee began a facilitated negotiation process with DWP, California Trout, and the California Department of Fish & Wildlife designed to find feasible ways of implementing the science-based restoration flows that have been prescribed for Rush, Lee Vining, Walker, and Parker creeks. The process, under direction from the State Water Board, follows a decade of intensive scientific study. It should result in Mono's tributaries receiving the amount of water they need in the seasons when they need it most to assure their return to health.

Reconstruction of the Lee Vining Creek diversion dam some years ago shows a path forward for this process—its upgraded infrastructure allows stream sediment to pass downstream and better delivers mandated streamflows. It shows what could be done at Grant Lake Reservoir's dam as well, where DWP's World War II-era infrastructure hampers delivery of critical streamflows to Rush Creek. Planning for a modern outlet



Top: Lynette Villagomez and Max Henkels lead restoration volunteers at Old Marina.
Middle: A volunteer group from the Patagonia clothing company visits Mill Creek.
Bottom: Girl Scout Troop #8341 celebrates a good day of pulling out invasive plants.
Right: Committee Board member Sherryl Taylor pitches in to remove invasive plants at Old Marina.

structure at the Grant Dam is a critical component of the facilitated process.

The long-running Committee effort to restore Mill Creek, Mono Lake's third-largest tributary, continues as we work with agencies and water rights holders to advance a win-win solution that will restore the downstream complex of riparian forests, wet meadows, and delta marshes. Southern California Edison will soon be making critical improvements to their hydropower facilities that will result in Mill Creek getting its fair share of water. In anticipation of that happening, in 2012 the Committee devoted over 100 hours to clearing out invasive plant species white sweet clover and bouncing bet so that native tree seedlings can grow successfully.

Restoration is the work of experts and volunteers both, and the Committee leads numerous hands-on projects that enhance the effort, such as planting trees with both local elementary school students and Los Angeles youth. Over the past two decades the Committee has led the planting of over 5,000 trees on Mono's tributaries.



ERIK LYON MONO LAKE INTERN



Whitman College's Semester in the West program first brought Erik Lyon to Mono Lake. The Mono Lake internship fit perfectly with his studies in economics and biology—he says “the opportunity to engage in

sustainable resource use and environmental education of an incredible ecosystem was too good to pass up.”

Erik took to South Tufa tours like a grebe to salty water. “It’s great to see visitors get excited, whether they are watching tufa form, catching brine shrimp, or hearing about the water story. People are smiling, asking great questions, and they’re just jazzed about Mono Lake!”

The Rush Creek delta is Erik's favorite Mono Basin spot. He says, “my visits there have almost always been solitary, either early in the morning or just before dusk. Every time I've been there, I've been surprised by a chance encounter: a buck crossing the creek 15 feet in front of me, a harrier elegantly flying low above the marsh, or a cadre of young coots venturing tentatively out of the reeds.”



Top: OE students from Roosevelt High School remove invasive sweet clover at Old Marina.
Middle: Morgan Lindsay works at Rush Creek.
Bottom: Volunteers from Patagonia's Reno warehouse pull invasive sweet clover at the David Gaines Memorial Boardwalk near Old Marina.
Left: Lynette Villagomez measures streamflow in lower Mill Creek.

EDUCATION



To share the sense of wonder and connection that Mono Lake and the Mono Basin evoke,

the Committee's education program offers an array of popular experiential opportunities. This remarkable place is rich with diverse natural history, offering much to discover.

For students and youth, we use science-based learning to build awareness of the natural world and to foster a sense of stewardship. For dedicated Mono Lake enthusiasts, we provide specialized, expert-led opportunities. And for the general visitor, our goal is to increase understanding and appreciation of the Mono Basin ecosystem, the Mono Lake water issue, and the Mono Lake Committee's values.

In 2012, the Committee successfully provided education programs for tens of thousands of people. Some highlights: canoe tours and South Tufa walks introduced



over 2,400 people to Mono Lake. Forty-nine Field Seminar program days immersed enthusiasts in topics from basketry to bighorn sheep. The 11th annual Mono Basin Bird Chautauqua sold out with 264 participants. In our focused environmental education program, Committee staff worked with 29 groups and 703 students to enhance their Mono Lake visits. And the Mono Lake Volunteer Program placed 45 volunteers in the field for daily visitor interaction throughout the summer.

At the Information Center & Bookstore we helped more than 55,000 people enjoy their Mono Basin visits. On the internet, nearly half a million individuals accessed our Mono Lake Website (monolake.org). And the *Mono Lake Newsletter*, our flagship publication, continued to provide news of substance to our 16,000 members and the visiting public.

2012 marked the 19th year of our Outdoor Experiences program for Los Angeles youth. Through week-long visits, we provided 1,223 student days of education, connecting the following 23 groups with the source of their water at Mono Lake.

- Sierra Expeditionary School, Lake Tahoe
- South El Monte High School, South El Monte
- Port of Los Angeles High School, San Pedro
- Roosevelt High School, Los Angeles
- Neighbors Acting Together Helping All, Pasadena
- 3 Girl Scout Troops, Pasadena & Los Angeles
- Pico Youth & Family Center, Santa Monica
- Los Angeles Conservation Corps, Eco-Academy

Top: OE students from Sierra Expeditionary Learning School get a South Tufa tour.
Middle: South El Monte High School OE participants near Parker Creek.
Bottom: An OE group from Communities for a Better Environment look down into Lundy Canyon from high atop a Sierra ridge.
Right: A field seminar group learns about Mono Basin geology at the Aeolian Buttes.

- 2 Asian American Drug Abuse Prevention groups, Los Angeles
- Casa Esperanza, Panorama City
- The Renaissance School, Oakland
- Clark County School District, Las Vegas, NV
- Beyer High School's Global Lab, Modesto
- School of Communications: New Media & Technology, Los Angeles
- 6 Communities for a Better Environment groups, Huntington Park

In 2012 we developed an evaluation system for the Outdoor Experiences program to better understand and track participants' knowledge and personal growth during their time in the Mono Basin. Every group surveyed showed significant increases in knowledge of Mono Lake and their watershed as well as an increased willingness to conserve water. These results show where our teaching can improve, but gratifyingly confirm what we have always known: the program changes students' lives in meaningful ways.

If you visited in 2012, you probably noticed the major renovation project going on in front of the Information Center & Bookstore. Thanks to a generous bequest from longtime member and advocate, Grace de Laet, who passed away in 2009, we remodeled the outdoor space to include a wheelchair lift, a water bottle filling station, a scale model map of Mono Lake, an elevated deck with seating, and a greywater system, among other improvements. The exciting result is a welcoming space that invites people in to learn more about Mono Lake and what they can do to help. Thank you, Grace!

JESSICA ASHLEY

INFO CENTER & BOOKSTORE MANAGER



Jessica Ashley took a job at the Mono Lake Committee without ever having been here. She says, "The first time I laid eyes on Mono Lake was on my drive into Lee Vining from Boulder, Colorado. Coming out of the Jeffrey pine forest heading west on Highway 120 revealed a vastness that I was not expecting."

One of Jess' favorite parts of her job is "all of the field seminars that I am fortunate enough to be involved with." She loves the opportunity to "mix education with the opportunity to talk about Mono Lake with members."

In the bookstore, Jess gets to interact with visiting members every day. "Members support us in ways in addition to funding. They are the ones who show up for restoration projects, volunteer for the Bird Chautauqua, and walk into the door excited to show friends from all over the world our *Mono Lake Story* DVD. Members are why Mono Lake is still here," she says.



Top: OE students from Communities for a Better Environment reach the top of the Mono Basin watershed near Yosemite.
Middle: West Tech High School students from Las Vegas get a South Tufa tour.
Bottom: Communities for a Better Environment participants go canoeing on Mono Lake with Santiago Escruceria.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH



The Mono Lake Committee believes science is a critical base for our policy positions, a

guide for restoration, and an inspiration for understanding Mono Lake. Since 1976, scientific research has provided ecosystem and landscape knowledge that is the foundation of Mono Lake's protection. We know that sound science will be the basis of land and recreation management decisions that will shape the Mono Basin for years to come.



For decades the Committee has worked closely with researchers, hosted a comprehensive research library, and supported well-established projects like the annual California Gull reproductive success study. We've created new programs to connect field science with youth education, and established a clearinghouse of Mono Basin scientific information at monobasinresearch.org.

After the 1994 State Water Board decision, we

catalyzed the formation of a cross-disciplinary science advisory council to advise us and others on the scientific side of the new policy challenges we knew were coming. One of the questions we faced was simple: how do we ensure that the tradition of scientific study at Mono Lake continues?

That led to the creation of the Mono Basin Field Station in 2004. Located a few blocks away from our offices in Lee Vining, the Field Station provides lodging, computing, and research support facilities for visiting researchers, office space for established long-term projects, and basic equipment in support of field studies.

We set three goals: (1) enhance the scientific knowledge of Mono Lake, its tributary streams, and the surrounding uplands, (2) foster collaboration and information exchange among scientists in diverse areas of expertise, and (3) infuse our diverse Mono Basin education programs with opportunities to engage scientists and participate in scientific work.

The facility filled immediately; in subsequent years we've pressed additional space into service and still find demand for the facility to be overwhelming.

Since its opening, the Field Station has supported 108 researchers working on 69 projects. Topics of study range from neotropical migratory birds, Greater Sage-grouse, swallows, and Willow Flycatchers to geology, paleoclimatology, and geomicrobiology. We're happy to be supporting teams from universities, public agencies, and fellow non-profit organizations.

The insight gained through science informs

Top: Julia Runcie and Morgan Lindsay scan Lundy Canyon's slopes for bighorn sheep.
Middle: Lee Vining High School students test Mill Creek's water quality.
Bottom: Mammal expert John Harris describes a chipmunk after catching it in a live trap.
Right: Bird researcher Kristie Nelson bands a California Gull chick.

management actions. For example, 2011 marked a critical season for the endangered Willow Flycatchers living along Rush Creek. After a peak of 16 breeding adults were observed in 2004, the population has declined steadily since, with only one nest fledging two chicks in 2009. This decline is due primarily to predation by Brown-headed Cowbirds, which thrive in unnatural numbers on birdseed in town. The Committee has implemented a program to reduce inadvertent cowbird feeding and protect the Willow Flycatchers—and we are working with land managers to assure that this once-common species continues to thrive in the recovering forests of Rush Creek.

Groundbreaking research happens in the Mono Basin as well. It's common to see graduate research assistant Guleed Ali working in the Wilson canyon, examining and dating ash layers from Mono Craters eruptions. He then searches for markers of ancient lake beach shorelines, allowing him to match eruptions with lake levels. In this way, he and his advisor are piecing together the Mono Basin's climatic history and can see how it affected water levels in ice-age Lake Russell.



2012 AT THE FIELD STATION

Archaeological Field School

San Jose State University
Dr. Charlotte Kay Sunseri
undergraduate students

High-resolution chemostratigraphic record of late Pleistocene lake-level variability, Mono Lake, California

Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory
Dr. Sidney R. Hemming, geochemistry
Guleed Ali, graduate research assistant

Mono Basin paleoclimatology studies

California State University—East Bay
Dr. Scott Stine, paleoclimatologist

Mono Basin Willow Flycatcher project

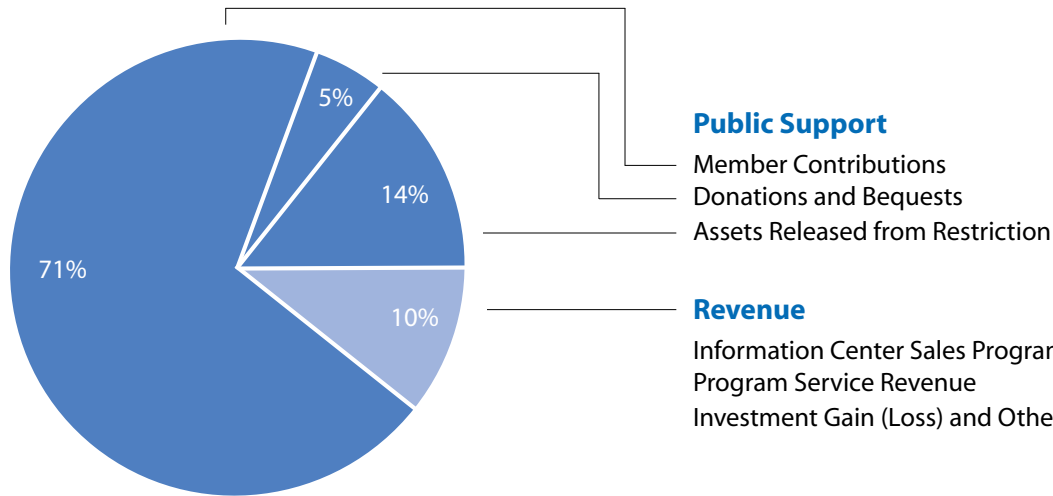
PRBO Conservation Science
Chris McCreedy, ornithologist



*Top: A volunteer prepares to band a California Gull on Mono Lake's islands.
Middle: Paleoclimatology researcher Guleed Ali discusses ash layers deposited by various Mono Basin volcanic eruptions.
Bottom: Bird researcher Chris McCreedy points out bird life along Rush Creek.
Left: Terry McLaughlin assists an Outdoor Experiences student with testing creek water.*

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

INCOME



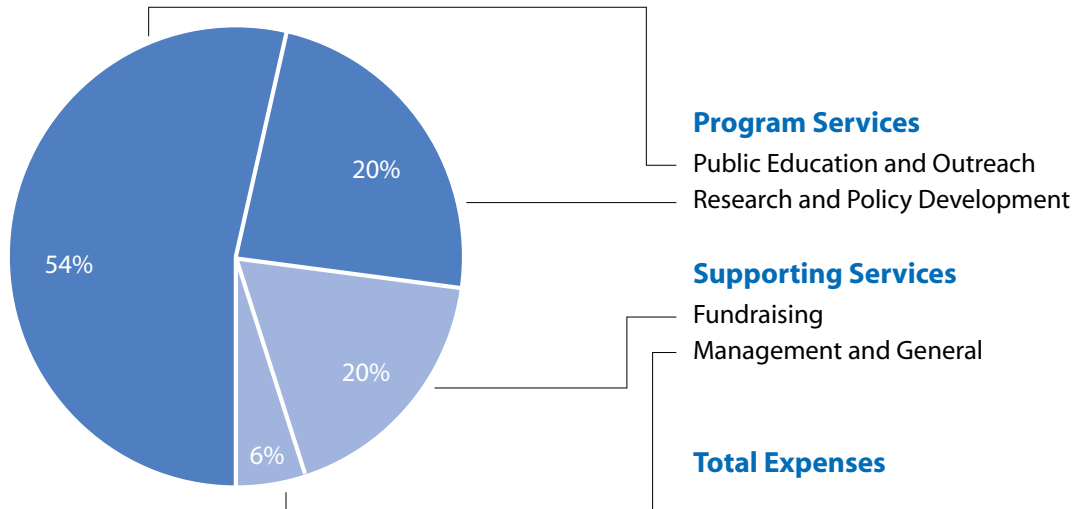
Public Support

- Member Contributions
- Donations and Bequests
- Assets Released from Restriction

Revenue

- Information Center Sales Program
- Program Service Revenue
- Investment Gain (Loss) and Other

EXPENSES



Program Services

- Public Education and Outreach
- Research and Policy Development

Supporting Services

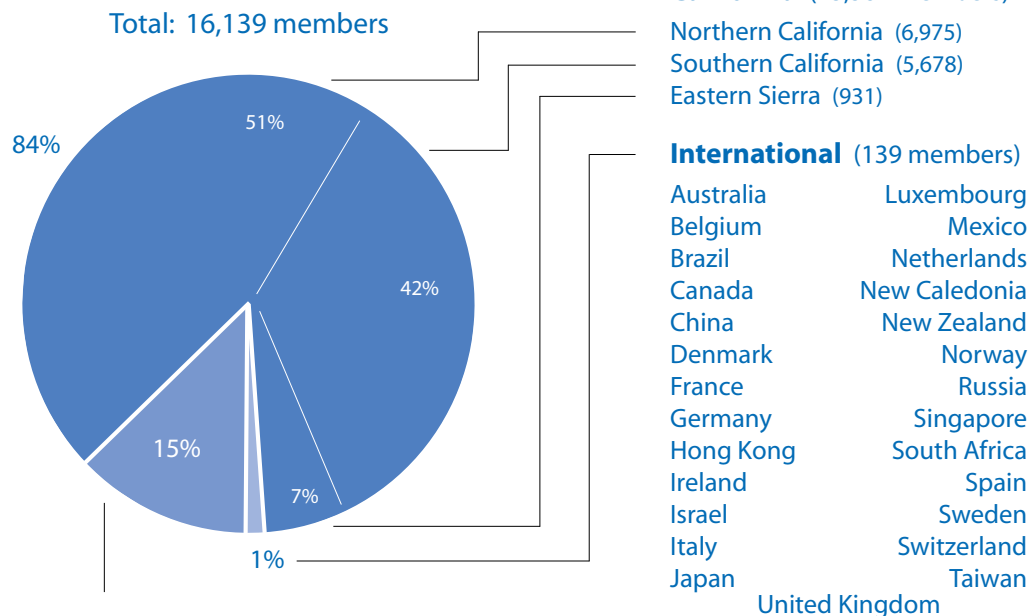
- Fundraising
- Management and General

	2012	2011	2010	2009
Public Support				
Member Contributions	1,186,450	1,109,429	1,030,456	1,060,633
Donations and Bequests	90,945	147,859	497,464	122,254
Assets Released from Restriction	158,444	102,265	149,312	147,752
	<u>1,435,839</u>	<u>1,359,553</u>	<u>1,677,232</u>	<u>1,330,639</u>
Revenue				
Information Center Sales Program	127,712	124,068	131,840	131,987
Program Service Revenue	82,835	82,411	62,247	72,300
Investment Gain (Loss) and Other	42,761	48,518	38,983	49,383
	<u>253,308</u>	<u>254,997</u>	<u>233,070</u>	<u>253,670</u>
Total Unrestricted Income	1,689,147	1,614,550	1,910,302	1,584,309
Program Services				
Public Education and Outreach	1,179,689	1,144,200	1,161,218	914,911
Research and Policy Development	354,492	300,627	258,091	273,417
	<u>1,534,181</u>	<u>1,444,827</u>	<u>1,419,309</u>	<u>1,188,328</u>
Supporting Services				
Fundraising	171,991	263,677	222,078	324,975
Management and General	54,158	64,313	73,530	67,301
	<u>226,149</u>	<u>327,990</u>	<u>295,608</u>	<u>392,276</u>
Total Expenses	1,760,330	1,772,817	1,714,917	1,580,604

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION & MEMBERSHIP

MONO LAKE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

	12/31/12
Assets	
Cash and Equivalents	15,710
Investments	1,503,148
Property and Equipment	1,335,145
Other Assets	250,816
Total Assets	3,104,819
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	108,560
Notes Payable	0
Total Liabilities	108,560
Net Assets	
Unrestricted	1,274,407
Temporarily Restricted	1,209,161
Permanently Restricted	512,691
Total Net Assets	2,996,259
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	3,104,819



Other States / Territories (2,378 members)

Alabama	Idaho	Michigan	New York	Tennessee
Alaska	Illinois	Minnesota	North Carolina	Texas
Arizona	Indiana	Mississippi	North Dakota	US Virgin Islands
Arkansas	Iowa	Missouri	Ohio	Utah
Colorado	Kansas	Montana	Oklahoma	Vermont
Connecticut	Kentucky	Nebraska	Oregon	Virginia
Delaware	Louisiana	Nevada	Pennsylvania	Washington
Florida	Maine	New Hampshire	Rhode Island	Washington, D.C.
Georgia	Maryland	New Jersey	South Carolina	West Virginia
Hawaii	Massachusetts	New Mexico	South Dakota	Wisconsin
				Wyoming

ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT



In the course of protecting Mono Lake it's important to evaluate the impact of our own activities. Each year we assess our primary areas of resource consumption in the office: our carbon footprint from electricity and fuel, and our water use.

Evaluating our footprint raises some tough questions. As a member-supported organization, we have to make sure that efforts to reduce our environmental impact are also reasonable expenditures of member donations.

For example, in October 2012 we installed 33 solar panels on our main office building, thus completing our transition to solar power that began in 2010 with eight panels on the ice house office building. With all the panels working hard under the bright Mono Basin sun, we've been able to cut our grid electricity consumption by more than 50%. Our friends and local experts at Sierra Solar did the installation—thank you Jim, Isabel, and TJ (pictured at left)!

Green investment like solar panels makes good sense, and we'll be using this ecological footprint analysis to continue to help us best focus our efforts.



WATER

The Committee's water comes from a local single-watershed system that serves the town of Lee Vining. Our office use of water is primarily for the public restroom and landscaping.

In May of 2012 we installed a water meter—the very first in our small town!—so we can monitor our use and be a regional example.

In addition, we connected the public restroom sink with our landscaping via a greywater system. The thousands of visitors to our store now help water the plants every time they use the sink, and we no longer need our irrigation system at all.

Between the water meter's installation in May and the end of 2012, we used 45,000 gallons of water in the public restroom and in our small back office kitchen.



CARBON

kilowatt hours
travel mileage
propane used (gallons)

CO₂ total (pounds)

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
kilowatt hours	21,704	23,599	24,747	25,130	28,859	29,998
travel mileage	35,551	29,888	47,466	69,065	48,697	40,718
propane used (gallons)	903	1,263	1,086	1,223	897	944
CO ₂ total (pounds)	53,006	54,495	59,850	60,813	69,398	69,770

Top: Outdoor Experiences participants from Global Lab at the top of Panum Crater.
Middle: A group learns about keeping field journals during the Bird Chautauqua.
Bottom: Sierra Solar installed 33 solar panels on the office roof in October 2012.

Sources: US EPA eGRID database; TerraPass.

MEMBERSHIP

You, our members, make the Committee successful year after year. From every corner of California, to every state in the country, to many countries around the world, people who care about Mono Lake have united to form the Mono Lake Committee.

We began 34 years ago with the names of a few concerned individuals stored on index cards in a recipe box. Today 16,000 members make the Committee a place-based advocacy organization of tremendous strength.

The Mono Lake website (monolake.org) continues to be a



popular way to easily stay in touch. Be sure to check out the photos and features—including the Mill Creek webcam, our blog called “The Mono-logue,” e-cards, an easy online donation system, and the ability to manage your membership details online.

Still, the Committee maintains a personal relationship with each member: your mail comes to us in Lee Vining, if you call we’ll answer the phone, and if you visit we are more than happy to share the latest news and bird sightings. We hope to see you here at Mono Lake soon!

BEQUESTS

Many members help ensure that Mono Lake will remain protected for generations to come by including the Mono Lake Committee in their wills and estate plans. Grace de Laet, a Mono Lake advocate from the earliest days, is one such supporter; her generous bequest enabled our exciting remodel of the front of the Committee bookstore.

Bequest gifts can be directed to particular programs, and they are a meaningful way to create a lasting legacy for Mono Lake. If you’re unfamiliar with the process, don’t worry—it’s less complicated than it might seem, and we’re happy to provide additional information.

MONTHLY GIVING

The Guardians of the Lake program offers members a convenient way to make regular monthly gifts to the Mono Lake Committee. This is an easy way to help the lake, and it includes special benefits!

Guardians make a monthly pledge by check, credit card, or bank transfer. In exchange, Guardians receive a special monthly letter from Committee co-founder Sally Gaines, offering news on the lake, the Committee, and local happenings. Guardians also receive fewer mailings, a special lapel pin, and recognition in the annual report. To sign up, contact Ellen King (ellen@monolake.org).



Top: Lee Vining Elementary School kindergartners visit the Committee’s brine shrimp tank.
Middle: The fall colors in Lundy Canyon are some of the best in the Eastern Sierra.
Bottom: An Outdoor Experiences student catches brine shrimp during a canoe tour
Left: Committee staff lead a hike at Panum Crater.

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Above: Committee staff and volunteers prepare snacks for cyclists participating in the High Sierra Fall Century bike ride.

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Above: The 2012 Mono Lake Volunteers.

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April 25



May 15



May 16



May 22

Above: The storefront remodel got started with granite boulders and progressed to concrete being poured for plaza-style seating. Next came the intricately-welded frame for the concrete map of Mono Lake.

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Above: Once the concrete Mono Lake map was completed, the storefront got Trex decking, the wheelchair lift, drinking fountain, redwood pergola, and planters.

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The Committee is proud to support the local community by awarding \$1,000 worth of scholarships annually to college-bound high school graduates.



2012 Mono Lake Committee Scholarship recipients Natasha McCullough and Alek McKee of Lee Vining High School. Cory Forbes (Lee Vining High School) and Cavanagh Gohlich (Coleville High School) also received scholarships in 2012.

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 Mr. Ray Winter •
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Above: The 2012 Mono Lake Committee staff. Long live Mono Lake!



**Mono Lake Committee
Office & Headquarters**

Post Office Box 29
Lee Vining, California 93541
(760) 647-6595

**Mono Lake Committee
Information Center & Bookstore**

Highway 395 at Third Street
Lee Vining, California 93541
(760) 647-6595

Los Angeles Office

1718 Wellesley Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90025-3634

info@monolake.org
monolake.org
monobasinresearch.org