

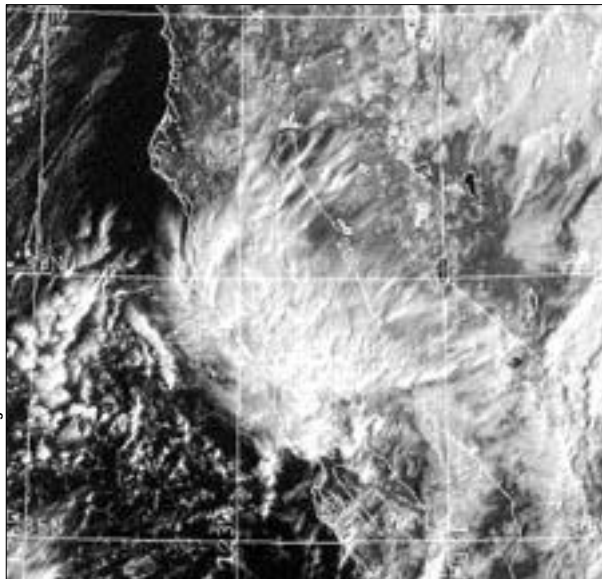
Mono Basin Journal

A roundup of less political events at Mono Lake

by Geoffrey McQuilkin

It's been a season of upslope anomalies, weatherwise. Not that they've been missing in winters past, but it seems that everyone is noticing strange snowstorms that drop more snow in the Mono Basin than on Mammoth Mountain. The clues started to stack up back in January when winds from the northeast whipped froth across the lake and the June Lake loop reported significant snowfall. Then came the big storm, rolling in on the March 3 weekend, leaving four feet of snow in Lee Vining but less in the Mammoth snow magnet zone to the south. Avalanches thundered down steep chutes, closing the highway for over a day, and we all got to revel in the fact that we weren't just hearing about big snowfall, we were living it.

The wet snow of the storm buried bushes, tufa, houses, cars, and mountains. Nearby, the craggy, convoluted top of Obsidian



Goes-10 Satellite Image

Mono Lake has a brief moment in the sun between winter storms.

Dome looked like a frothy meringue topping; throughout the basin, sagebrush flats looked like fields of fresh whipped cream. All until the clouds cleared, the sun reemerged, and the snow, slowly, began to settle.

It's also been a fine time for somewhat confused avian inhabitants. A warbler left a body print in the snow on my windowsill as it tapped at the glass, looking in longingly, I supposed, at the fire burning warm and orange in the woodstove. An osprey swooped down dramatically onto the yellow striped lines of the highway, looking for food, no doubt wondering where the streams of the Mono Basin—they used to be here before all this snow—had gone. Meanwhile, owls

hoot plaintively through the night and bald eagles—more accustomed to all this cold weather—spin circles over the lakeshore, reveling in winter, guiding, perhaps, the next snow-laden storm into the basin.

Benchmarks



Photo by Geoffrey McQuilkin

Inside the Mono Lake Committee Information Center and Bookstore in the midst of the the store 1993 remodel.



Photo by Arya Degenhardt

Inside the Mono Lake Committee Information Center and Bookstore today. Now we're gearing up for the office remodel!