

Today is the first in five that Hwy 395 has been open both to the north and south of Lee Vining after severe winter storms. It's hard for many people to imagine what that really means—no driving, no mail, no restocking of the shelves at the Mono Market. When you're not shoveling, you're carefully watching the snowflakes fall while drying your gloves for the next round.

Around town teams of able-backed shovelers join plows to tackle the roofs and driveways of neighbors and friends. In the occasional break in the frozen deluge we rush for skis and snowshoes to get a glimpse of the lake—barely pausing when crossing the unusually quiet road. Sometimes you make it out there only to be shrouded in poconip, the ice fog that glistens in the air hanging right before your eyes. Other times you find you've seized just the right moment, and glide out into the stunningly quiet world of white and unbelievable blue. Most often, however, you make it out the door just when a big gust of wind filled with determined snowflakes turns you right back to the stash of hot chocolate by the stove.

The old timers smile and nod knowingly—this is how it always used to be, they say. Listening to their tales of big winters past, one can see how this much snow can define a town.

Skiing out unplowed Hwy 120 to the east, the only traffic equipped enough to travel here is that of rabbits, coyotes, and juncos. Climbing up the Mono Craters to catch a glimpse of the lake, I turn to find it staring right back at me. Of course, I think, this landscape too, is defined by snow. To me, it looks like the whole Mono Basin is smiling and nodding knowingly.

Like the snowpack, this Newsletter is a combined Winter & Spring issue, and will have to last through the spring runoff. Accordingly, we've packed it full of interesting updates and stories that will hopefully get you through the winter, wherever yours may be.

—Arya Degenhardt, Communications Director



COVER PHOTO BY GEOFF MCQUILKIN
ARYA DEGENHARDT

A snowy view of Mono Lake, Black Point, and the Bodie Hills from the base of the Mono Craters.

Mono Lake Committee Mission

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.



Mono Lake Office Information Center and Bookstore

Highway 395 at Third Street
Post Office Box 29
Lee Vining, California 93541
(760) 647-6595

info@monolake.org
www.monolake.org
www.monobasinresearch.org

Los Angeles Office

322 Culver Blvd.
Playa Del Rey, California 90293
Phone (310) 316-0041

Staff

Executive Director, Policy Frances Spivy-Weber
Executive Director, Operations Geoffrey McQuilkin
Eastern Sierra Policy Director Lisa Cutting
Eastern Sierra Policy Coordinator Jen Nissenbaum
Education Director Bartshé Miller
Assistant Education Director Santiago Escruceria
Communications Director Arya Degenhardt
Information Specialist Greg Reis
Office Manager Craig Pyle
Staff Assistant Douglas Dunaway
Retail Operations Manager Brett Pyle
Bookstore Manager Laura Walker
Membership Coordinator Erika Obedzinski
Controller Donnette Huselton
Canoe Tour Supervisor Gary Nelson

Board of Directors

Sally Gaines, Mammoth Lakes, Co-Chair
Ed Manning, Davis, Co-Chair
Tom Soto, Santa Monica, Secretary
David Kanner, Redwood City, Treasurer
Richard Atwater, La Cañada
Martha Davis, Riverside
Ryan Hiete, Los Angeles
Amy Holm, Los Angeles
Andrea Lawrence, Mammoth Lakes
Richard Lehman, Fresno
Doug Virtue, San Pedro

Directors Emeriti

Helen Green • Ed Grosswiler
Grace de Laet • Genny Smith
Brent Coeur-Barron, Corporate Counsel

Founded by David Gaines in 1978

MONO LAKE
NEWSLETTER

Winter & Spring 2005 ~ Volume XXVI, Numbers 3-4

The *Mono Lake Newsletter* is a quarterly publication of the Mono Lake Committee. Written material contained in this newsletter may be quoted or reproduced for review, reporting, educational purposes, or related non-profit uses; a copy of the publication is requested. Reproduction or quotation for other purposes may be approved upon written request.
ISSN #0275-6633. Copyright © 2005 Mono Lake Committee.

Printed on 100% recycled paper.