

# Committee's Co-Executive Directorship merges into one position

September has brought long-planned changes to the Executive Director leadership of the Mono Lake Committee. Co-Executive Directors Frances Spivy-Weber and Geoffrey McQuilkin have merged the two positions, with Geoff taking over as Executive Director and Fran becoming a senior advisor to the Committee in Los Angeles.

"We're very fortunate," said Board of Directors Chair Sally Gaines, "to have had Fran's leadership for nearly ten years, as well as Fran and Geoff's joint management of the Committee. We're going to miss Fran's daily presence but we're excited because we know Geoff will be successful in accomplishing our Mono Lake protection, restoration, and education goals."

## From Fran ...

After almost ten years as (first) Executive Director and (for the past six years) Co-Executive Director for Policy of the Mono Lake Committee, I am leaving to focus most of my time on Southern California programs and projects that will increase water supply and improve water quality in the region. These are issues that the Mono Lake Committee has strongly supported since its founding, and I am honored to be able to carry on this mission.

When I became Executive Director of the Committee in January 1997, I joined the organization because it was different from any other environmental organization I knew. It had the Information Center & Bookstore that supported programs and provided environmental information to visitors; it was the Chamber of Commerce headquarters for Lee Vining; it had true partnerships with inner-city organizations in Los Angeles and a cutting-edge outdoor education program; and there was a unique commitment to finding solutions that would not transfer problems to other areas. The Committee knew how to sue and win, but also how to negotiate and win.

What am I most proud of? Without hesitation I can say: the Committee staff. As members of the Mono Lake Committee, you should know that you have the most outstanding, dedicated staff, completely prepared to defend Mono Lake and the Mono Basin and able to find creative solutions to any challenge. On this high note, it is my pleasure to turn the reins over to Geoff McQuilkin, who will now be the sole Executive Director of the Mono Lake Committee.



Frances Spivy-Weber, former Committee Co-Executive Director.

Rest assured, I will always be close to Mono Lake. My husband Michael, and Martha Davis, and I have our property in Lee Vining, and I will continue to work with Geoff and staff on special projects. I will always enjoy hearing from the Committee's dedicated members. My phone number remains (310) 316-0041, and you can reach me at [frances@monolake.org](mailto:frances@monolake.org).

## And from Geoff ...

Over the past ten years I've been tremendously fortunate to learn so much from Fran and her skillful, people-oriented approach to protecting Mono Lake. I am honored to now merge her duties into my own and take the lead as the Committee's Executive Director.

This is an exciting time for the Mono Lake Committee!

We are a successful organization of people who value Mono Lake, its unique ecosystem, and the inspiring landscape of the Mono Basin, and we have so much to do.

Big challenges face us: accomplishing the restoration of Mono Lake and its tributaries, assuring that excessive land development never takes away what we love about the Mono Basin, and tackling new issues that threaten the lake.

And we have great opportunities as well: to bring more youth to Mono Lake to learn about the source of their water and why it deserves to be protected; to foster a new generation of scientific inquiry that reveals more of Mono's mysteries and informs our management choices for future generations; to involve people in a hands-on way through volunteer projects; and to build a new relationship with Los Angeles based on the water linkage between urban residents and Mono Lake.

The Committee's staff and I are already deeply immersed in these issues and more. We've got a strong new strategic plan in place. We've got tremendous support from you, our 15,000 members. We have smart, dedicated staff. We have a track record of winning every issue we take on. And (fingers crossed), we may even have a new roof on the office soon!

My new duties will take me more frequently across the state to speak on Mono Lake's behalf to policy makers and leaders in Los Angeles, Sacramento, the Bay Area, and beyond. But I will happily continue to be based at Mono Lake, living in view of tufa towers with my wife Sarah and our young daughters Caelen and Ellery. Please feel free to contact me at (760) 647-6595 or [geoff@monolake.org](mailto:geoff@monolake.org). ❖



PHOTOS BY ARYA DEGENHARDT

Geoffrey McQuilkin, Mono Lake Committee Executive Director.