

# MONO LAKE ALERT !!

March 13, 2000

Dear Mono Lake Friend,

**Letters to the Mono County Board of Supervisors are still urgently needed to express support for the Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve.** Even if you have already contacted your supervisor on this important issue (see below), it is critical that you send letters in support of the Reserve to the Board of Supervisors. Please let the Board know that you strongly support the presence of the Tufa State Reserve as a critical component of public trust protection at Mono Lake.

## Summary of the threat

On Tuesday, February 15, the Mono County Board of Supervisors approved a resolution urging our state legislators to "introduce legislation to amend the Tufa State Reserve Act to clarify the historic uses section and to move the boundary of the relicted lands from 6417 feet to 6392 feet..." Driving this action is a long-simmering dispute between several of the private property owners along Mono Lake and the State Lands Commission over use of the land between the prediversion lake level (6417 feet elevation) and the future lake level (6392 feet average elevation). The dispute between the landowners and the state is complex, but the point is this: it can be solved and is being solved by (admittedly slow) administrative processes. The action by Mono County supervisors, which was given grossly inadequate public notice, went far beyond the immediate need of addressing the landowners' situation. The action could threaten every aspect of the legislation that established the Tufa State Reserve and would reduce the land base of the Reserve to zero as the lake rises, thereby eliminating the Reserve itself. The good news is that on Tuesday, March 7, supervisors who had been contacted by their constituents (thank you!!) requested that the matter be reheard. The board set Tuesday, April 18, for the re-hearing, but no action was taken to recall the February 15 resolution. **Until the resolution is withdrawn or rewritten, the future of the Tufa State Reserve remains in question.**

## What's at stake

The Tufa State Reserve is a symbol of California's recognition of Mono Lake's ecological importance, and Reserve staff have done more to provide hands-on protection of Mono Lake's natural resources than any other entity. Mono Lake is the prime destination of summer visitors to Mono County, and the Reserve provides the consistent, personal, interpretive presence that visitors remember for a lifetime. Working under a cooperative agreement with the Forest Service, reserve staff patrol the entire area around Mono Lake, they provide for public safety, and they are the only year-round rangers in the field in the Mono Basin. Last year, approximately 250,000 people visited the reserve, contributing around \$3 million to the local economy.

## How you can help

**Please let the Mono County Board of Supervisors know that you support the presence of the Tufa State Reserve and existing protections at Mono Lake! Please send a copy of the letter to your legislators! Please plan to attend the April 18 re-hearing!** For more information about this issue, visit the Mono Lake Committee website at [www.monolake.org](http://www.monolake.org) or contact Heidi at the Mono Lake Committee ([heidi@monolake.org](mailto:heidi@monolake.org), 760-647-6595).

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Senator Tim Leslie  
State Capitol, Room 4081  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assemblyman Rico Oller  
State Capitol, Room 4208  
Sacramento, CA 95814

*Please also send us a copy of your letter: Mono Lake Committee, PO Box 29, Lee Vining, CA 93541.*