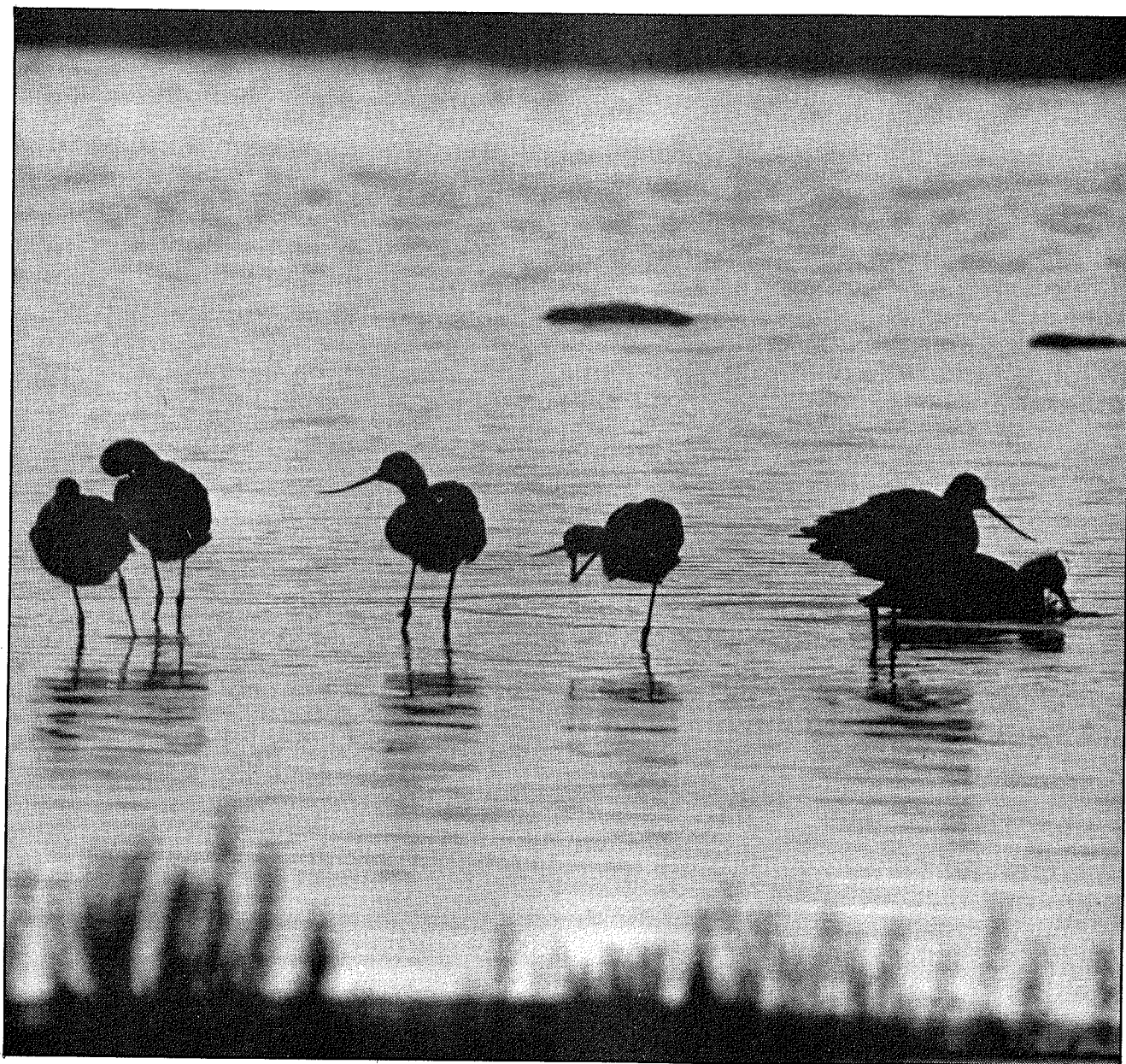


Summer, 1987

Vol. 10, No. 1

# MONO <sup>the</sup> LAKE

NEWSLETTER



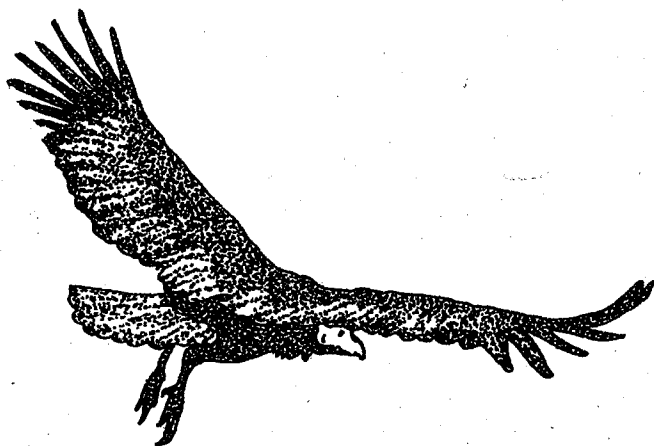
Larry Ford

## TO THE CONDORS

This spring, biologists captured the last free-flying California Condor. The "Thunderbirds" no longer soar the skies of wild California. They have left a great emptiness.

There is room on this planet for people, condors and places like Mono Lake, if only we learn to limit our numbers, curb our appetites and share with other living beings. In this spirit, we dedicate this newsletter to the 27 Thunderbirds incarcerated in the Los Angeles and San Diego zoos: may their dreams continue to soar, and may we find the vision and strength to heal their habitat, respect their homes, and set them—and ourselves—free once again.

*Dave Gaines*



**The Mono Lake Committee** is a non-profit citizens' group dedicated to saving Mono Lake from the excessive diversion of water from its tributary streams. We seek a compromise that will meet the real water needs of Los Angeles and leave our children a living, healthy and beautiful lake.

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## By Mono's Shore

I am dreaming in the city of the mystic land of Mono,  
With its hills of thistle poppies and its pallid desert vales;  
I am listening to the lyrics of soft winds and haunting  
streamlets

Where Tioga's snow-crowned mountains rear their dizzy  
sky-flung trails.

Morning breaks and like the Dead Sea, silvered Mono  
weirdly flickers;

Distant isles like phantom vessels ride a sea of mystery;  
On the steeps above Tioga ancient glaciers gleam and  
glisten--

Spire-tipped pines shed balm-filled fragrance, roses flaunt  
their finery.

Midday, Mono preens a peacock, jade and amethyst her  
plumage

While her guardian craters quiver in the parching sage-  
drenched air;

On Tioga's gold green meadows penstemons and mauve  
hued iris

Glow among the trembling aspens where the torrents  
downward fare.

Twilight comes and spectral Mono dimly glints, her blue  
grey waters

Lave the ashen shore in silence as the vagrant birds depart;  
From Tioga, rose-tinged, purling, comes the night wind  
softly sighing,

Bringing peace and bringing gladness to the lonely, weary  
heart.

*Arthur W. Kinney*

This poem originally appeared in  
The Bridgeport Chronicle-Union, August 29, 1923.

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# Mono Lake Watch



*"Watching the animals come and go, and feeling the land swell up to meet them and then feeling it grow still at their departure, I came to think of the migrations as breath, as the land breathing. In spring a great inhalation of light and animals. The long-bated breath of summer. And an exhalation that propelled them all south in the fall."*

Barry Lopez, *Artic Dreams*

The summer solstice marks the height of Mono Lake's spring: flowers in colorful bloom, islands covered with gull eggs, sagebrush brimming with bird song...

The swell of life is contagious, and we, too, delight in the land and lake's rebirth. It works in our blood. It tears us away from desks, papers and telephones, and propels us into the real world of sprouts, buds and singing birds. The office can't contain us. We move our weekly staff meeting on to the lake, where we can include desert peach blossoms, spadefoot toads, yellow-headed blackbirds and brine shrimp.

Outside my window, house wrens are singing incessantly. They can't sit still, and neither can I. Yesterday I bicycled to lower Rush Creek, where one of the tufa-nesting ospreys was fishing for trout. The day before I joined avocets, phalaropes and winnowing snipe on Mono's north shore. Piles of papers wait impatiently while I count the clouds, take Mono's pulse and align myself with the changing seasons.

I'm a newsletter refugee. Today, instead of writing about lawsuits, I ambled to the summit of the ridge behind Lee Vining. From a small patch of tundra where horned larks nest, the world drops into water and space. Mono Lake sprawls across the landscape like a giant amoeba.

These ramblings connect my work to the land. They bring me face-to-face with what the poet Wallace Stevens called "point-blank reality." Sometimes I'm led to epiphanies, but more often to questions and insights which are not always simple or comfortable.

But, after all, that's why I'm trying to save this place: because it can teach us and put us in our place.

Looking down on Mono's cerulean waters, I think of burgeoning cities at the other end of the aqueduct. I think of a civilization estranged from the earth that sustains it. I think of the waste and pollution that, as Harold Gilliam warns in this newsletter, threaten us all. I think of the fate of birds, rivers and children when the ozone layer is gone, the rains stop falling, and the bombs do.

I think of my life. I have not lived lightly on this earth, but have consumed, directly or indirectly, more than my share or need of water, topsoil, oil and other resources. I

have fathered two children who also will burden this overcrowded planet.

But as long as the birds return and the flowers bloom, I will dream of a time when we value blue skies more than new automobiles, count our wealth in joy rather than possessions, and dwell in peace and balance with the earth. I am not without hope.

The growing support for saving Mono Lake inspires that hope. While I can't entirely explain that support, a random survey of Californians suggests it has less to do with personal recreation than with altruistic values like protecting wildlife habitat and "knowing future generations will have Mono Lake as it exists today." That survey, conducted by Dr. John Loomis of the University of California, Davis, also found that California households are willing to pay an average of \$7.90 more per month on their water bills to keep Mono Lake higher than it is today—36 times the cost of replacing the water and hydropower (see p. 7). While I do not think the lake should or can be valued in dollars and cents, I find this willingness to pay a hopeful reflection of growing, broad-based concern for the health of our land.

The growth of the Mono Lake Committee is also a heartening sign. In 1978, I sent the first Mono Lake Newsletter to approximately 300 people. Now, nine years later, we number more than 10,000. I wish I could walk Mono's shores with each of you, sharing visions and dreams of a less troubled future.

I hope you will visit the lake this summer. Insurance permitting, we will be offering short, free canoe trips at South Tufa. Please stop at our Mono Lake Visitor Center to say hello and discuss our strategy and progress with myself or the Lee Vining crew. In particular, we encourage you to join our ninth annual bucket walk, meeting and picnic on Saturday, Sept. 5 (see p. 14).

And wherever you live, don't neglect to listen to the voices and rhythms of the earth. Let's deepen our roots as we grow. For by planting ourselves, we renew our senses, our direction, our motivation, our resourcefulness—in sum, the spiritual tools we need in the courtroom, the legislature and before the public.

Dave Gaines

# Greenhouse California

by Harold Gilliam, reprinted from *The San Francisco Chronicle*, March 22, 1987

First the bad news: At the rate we're going, California could dry up permanently. An expected global temperature increase might cause California's annual rainfall to diminish steadily, beginning in the next 10 years, and continuing indefinitely until the flow of its rivers and streams is cut by more than half and the entire state slowly turns into a desert.

The good news is that any such potentially calamitous climatic changes will be manmade—a result of things we are doing right now—and probably can be forestalled if we have the wit and the courage to make some decisive changes in our habits. But if we don't begin to make those changes soon, the processes we are setting in motion will be irreversible, and our luckless descendants will have reason to call us a generation of vipers.

***Industrialism, has turned the human race into a geologic force, changing the face of the planet and the chemistry of the atmosphere in ways we never intended.***

Scientists have been talking for years about the greenhouse effect resulting from excess carbon dioxide produced by industrialism, but little information has reached the public about its possible impact on particular regions. In general, the global climate is expected to get hotter, and rainfall patterns would shift northward. If that happened here, California and most of the West could develop a climate closer to that of the Sonoran deserts of Mexico.

Southern California's aqueduct from the Colorado River would probably suck air from a dry riverbed; its water from Owens Valley, Mono Lake and the east side of the Sierra would dwindle to almost nothing; 10,000 swimming pools would be empty; and there would be anguished cries for more Northern California water to be sent south. But Northern California would be suffering from its own shortage.

In all the cities of California, north and south, there would be a permanent drought, as lawns and parks turned to dust. At current rates of use, California would be able to support less than half its present population.

Carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is increased by burning fossil fuels. It is also increased by leveling great areas of forest. From both of these principal sources the carbon dioxide in effect forms a greenhouse roof in the sky, admitting the rays of the sun but not letting the heat escape so rapidly. That roof is reinforced by other greenhouse gases released by technology—methane and nitrous oxides from agriculture; sulfur from power plants, cars, factories, metal

smelting and the burning of coal and oil; freon from aerosols, sprays, refrigerators and air conditioners.

There is general agreement that if we continue to pour all this stuff into the air, the level of carbon dioxide will double (over pre-industrial levels) within the coming century... Even though the doubling of carbon dioxide might not take place before the middle of the next century, the initial climatic changes occurring in the next 10 to 20 years could make a dramatic difference in regions such as California, now living close to the limit of their water supplies.

Even a minor climate warming... would be of concern not only to water officials but to skiers and snow-resort operators. Peter Gleick, a visiting research scholar at the University of California at Berkeley's Energy and Resources Group, has made a special study of altered precipitation patterns resulting from climatic warming. "Precipitation in the Sierra would consist of less snow and more rain. The snowpack would be much smaller and the snow that did fall would melt off much earlier."

"Without a substantial snowpack to store the water until spring and summer, the winter runoff would be much greater. Our water systems were built to handle today's climate, and they might be totally inadequate to cope with a climate even slightly warmer."

Sooner or later we're going to have to bite the bullet: To avoid the potentially disastrous consequences of the greenhouse effect, which could include either the desertification or the inundation of California and the disruption of goods-producing systems elsewhere on the globe, we're going to have to stop the large-scale destruction of forests, cut the emission of greenhouse gases and phase out fossil fuels.

That's what you might call a tall order. But the colossal scale of the industrial system's impact on the planet—much greater than we have been able to imagine until now—requires efforts of comparable magnitude to preserve our biological life-support systems.

Obviously there is no way to halt the use of oil or coal in a hurry. Meantime, the oil people say, if we don't get the offshore oil, we'll have to buy that much more from OPEC.

The answer is that there is a domestic source of oil far greater than the amount believed to be offshore, a source that does not result in more carbon dioxide or contribute to the greenhouse effect. That source is conservation: more efficient use of the oil we already have, now wasted in oceanic quantities.

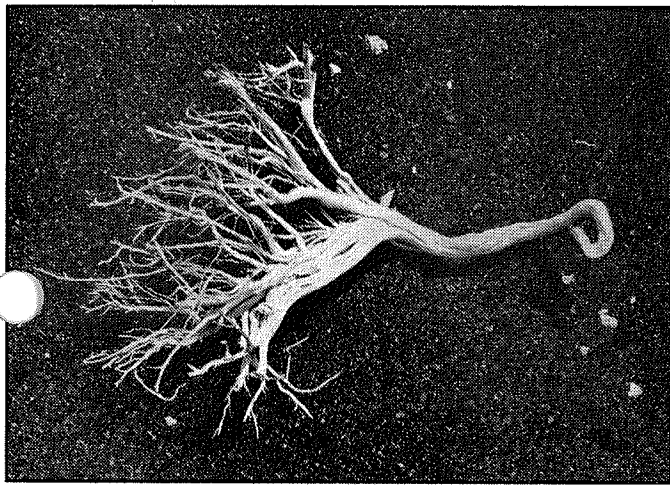
***Requiring autos to burn 27.5 mpg would, within 17 years, save the entire amount of oil in the untapped areas off California.***

A Harvard Business School report has indicated that conservation measures—simply using energy more efficiently—could cut our oil consumption by 40 percent without reducing our standard of living. John Steinhart of the University

Wisconsin has calculated that if we made some lifestyle changes, including greater use of public transportation, the amount of energy we would save would be closer to 55 percent. Some moderate belt-tightening could reduce the figure further.

The precise amount is less important than the fact that we would be able to cut our consumption of oil—as well as natural gas and coal—by immense magnitudes if we quit wasting the stuff. Similar decisive methods could be applied to reducing other greenhouse gases and slowing the rate of deforestation... All these measures would but time to convert to non-fossil sources of energy.

Efforts to stave off the greenhouse effect would require a measure of international cooperation unprecedented in peacetime. Perhaps just such a global project to preserve the Earth's life-support systems could supply the long-sought moral equivalent for war.



## Dry Winter,

### *Diversions Spell Shrinking Lake*

As I write, a rare spring thunderstorm is moistening Mono's shores and coaxing fragrance from the sagebrush. But a few spring showers cannot reverse a stingy winter. By June, most of the Sierra's sparse snowpack had already melted away. In April the snowmelt runoff was projected at a measly 51 percent average. Due to an exceptionally hot and dry spring, the runoff will actually be even less, close to the record lows of the 1976-77 drought.

With conditions dry throughout California, it is hardly surprising that the DWP is diverting every drop it legally can from Mono Lake's tributary streams. To the south, in the Owens Valley, it is also pumping more groundwater than ever before (see Greg James interview, p. 9).

Court orders are keeping water trickling down Rush and Lee Vining creeks, but not enough to halt Mono's decline. By fall, we expect the lake to drop from 6380.5 feet to at least 6379.0—18 vertical inches.

Meanwhile Los Angeles' per capita water consumption continues to rise. Between July 1, 1985 and June 1, 1986, Angelenos consumed 676,000 acre-feet of water, 56,000 acre-feet more than projected "with conservation" in DWP's *Urban Water Management Plan*, and 100,000 acre-feet more than the city used as recently as 1980. In a future newsletter, we'll take a look at the abysmal and predictable failure of DWP's conservation program.

*Dave Gaines and Jim Parker*

## *Still Quiet on the Legal Front*

While something could break any day, our four lawsuits remain bottlenecked in a legal system that moves about as fast as a glacier. The public trust suit—cornerstone of legal efforts to save Mono Lake—has been languishing in the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals for two years. Our action challenging DWP's Mono Basin water licenses has been before the state 3rd District Court of Appeals for nine months. The Lee Vining Creek case still awaits the appointment of a judge. The Rush Creek case has been deferred until stream studies are completed in 1988.

But as we wait for the wheels of justice to start turning again, we can take heart from our past victories. In Rush and Lee Vining creeks, 29 cubic feet per second of water continues to flow into Mono Lake instead of down the aqueduct to Los Angeles. While not enough to save the lake, we at least have cracked the dams.

Meanwhile our attorneys are attempting to recover the hundreds of thousands of dollars we spent between 1979 and 1983 on the public trust case. In 1983, the California Supreme Court not only upheld our claim that Mono Lake's "public trust" environmental and recreational values must be protected "as far as feasible." It also ruled that our associated court costs and legal fees must be borne by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

But how much must DWP pay? Our attorneys are asking for \$2.8 million, which includes three times the full cost for over 5,000 hours of legal time. According to MLC-Audubon attorney Palmer Madden, "It is a policy of the State of California to encourage public interest lawsuits. Where you have served the public interest, you should be given something above what you spent in the case...multiples are not inappropriate." DWP terms this amount "excessive, unreasonable and unfair," and claims the plaintiffs are entitled to only \$194,000.

Alpine County Superior Court Judge Hillary Cook faces the unenviable task of considering bulky briefs that have more to do with accounting procedures than with the law or the environment. There are 1,300 pages of billing records, alone!

Hopefully we'll have more to report in our autumn newsletter. For background on our lawsuits, write our Lee Vining office for a free copy of our 16-page *Field Guide to the Mono Lake Lawsuits*.

*Dave Gaines*



## DWP Blames County For Stalling Crowley Expansion

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power chose the opening weekend of fishing season to blame the Mono County Board of Supervisors for holding up the expansion of Crowley Lake dam. Tens of thousands of anglers--many of them bound for Crowley--read the local newspaper headline proclaiming "Crowley expansion project dropped."

"There's been no support from the Mono County Board of Supervisors," complained Assistant DWP Engineer Dennis Williams. "We've taken the money out of the budget for the project, and its on hold."

In fact the Mono County Board and the Mammoth Lakes Town Council do not oppose the enlargement of Crowley Lake, but have conditioned their support on reaching agreement on "minimum desirable elevations of Mono Lake." In response, Williams said that DWP "felt it would not be appropriate for us to try and maintain the water level [of Mono Lake]." DWP has even balked on including the Mono Basin in a Crowley Environmental Impact Report.

Enlarging Crowley Lake could aggravate Mono Lake's plight, or be part of a solution. With a bigger reservoir to fill, DWP could divert more water from Mono's tributary streams. Or, alternatively, it could store more runoff from the Owens River, and reduce diversions from the lake (see Greg James interview, p. 11). To date, DWP has refused to consider the latter possibility.

## Golf Course, Condos Proposed for Mono Basin

For the highway traveller, Conway Summit affords the most dramatic, expansive view of Mono Lake and its cradling mountains and volcanoes. U.S. 395 suddenly breaches the basin's northern rim, revealing the lake and its islands 1,600 feet below. Beyond rise the 14,000-foot White Mountains and the steep, glacier-sculpted peaks of the central Sierra Nevada. No wonder there are usually mini traffic jams and elbow-to-elbow camera fans at the vista point.

In years hence, travellers may also look down on an 18-hole golf course, artificial lake, equestrian center, restaurant and 600 to 900 housing units. Triad Engineering of Mammoth Lakes is preparing a "Joint Specific Plan and Environmental Impact Report" for the Conway Ranch project, which would transform 1,000 acres of private sheep pasture, stream and sagebrush into an "all-season resort geared primarily to second-home owners." The Conway Ranch property lies just east of U.S. 395, and extends from the base of the mountains to Hwy. 167, i.e., virtually to the edge of the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area.

Project proponent Rich McIntire has told the Mono County Board of Supervisors that "we want it [the Conway Ranch development] to blend in, not to be a scar on the

landscape." Supervisors Tim Alpers and Andrea Lawrence however, have voiced concerns about its impact on the visual corridor. Were the Conway Ranch within the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area, such large-scale development would not be permitted.

The Mono Lake Committee will be taking a thorough look at the Conway Ranch project, especially its impact on Wilson Creek, one of the few basin streams that has not been diverted by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. A golf course, artificial lake and residential landscaping will reduce the stream's flow. At present, Wilson Creek brings Mono Lake approximately 10,000 acre-feet of water each year.

Dave Gaines

## Mono Lake: A County Concern

The Mono County Board of Supervisors is working actively to protect the county's future environmental and economic well-being through its support for the protection of Mono Lake and other county resources.

In its most recent action, Mono County supervisors adopted a resolution urging Congress to provide funding for the construction of a multi-million dollar visitor center for the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area. Annual visitation to Mono Lake has increased by 239 percent since the formation of the Scenic Area, and is expected to continue its dramatic growth. The proposed educational and interpretative facility, to be located in Lee Vining, is urgently needed to address this expanding year-round public interest.

In a second motion, the supervisors approved a resolution urging Congress to support the purchase of over 1,300 acres of private inholdings in the ecologically sensitive Simon's Spring area near Mono's southeast shore. Protection of these lands will ensure the preservation of key wildlife habitat for ducks, geese and many shorebirds.

The Mono County supervisors are also standing firmly by their resolution tying the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's proposed enlargement of Crowley Lake Reservoir to the maintenance of a healthy water level at Mono Lake. Despite gratuitous criticism leveled by DWP (see p. 6), the supervisors have funded a study to assess the impacts of DWP's proposed Crowley enlargement, and determine how this project might benefit Mono Lake.

Public concern over the future management of Mono County's embattled water resources has prompted the county to embark on a revision of the "Conservation Element" in its *General Plan*. U.C. Berkeley graduate student Peter Holton has been hired to work with the county's Natural Resource Policy Committee to develop a comprehensive water policy this summer. By planning now, the supervisors are seeking to ensure that the county's natural and recreational resources, the key to the county's economic future, are protected.

## U.C. Survey Reveals Strong Support for Lake

### Californians Would Pay Many Times Cost of Replacement Water

A random survey indicates that most Californians—especially Angelenos—want a living Mono Lake, and are willing to pay much more than it would cost to fund water conservation or purchase replacement water.

The survey, conducted by Dr. John Loomis of the Division of Environmental Studies, U.C. Davis, attempts to quantify the "total economic value" of Mono Lake in terms of the average Californian's maximum willingness to pay for its preservation. Last year, Loomis sent questionnaires to 1,670 California households selected randomly from telephone directories, and distributed over 1,000 more to visitors at Mono Lake. The questionnaires briefly described the lake and the water diversions, then outlined three alternatives:

**ALTERNATIVE #1:** Reduce diversions from 100,000 to approximately 25,000 acre-feet per year, raising lake level to approximately 6,388 feet, facilitating recreational access, preserving Negit Island, protecting gull rookeries, alleviating dust storms, etc.

**ALTERNATIVE #2:** Reduce diversions to 50,000 acre-feet per year, stabilizing lake level at its 1982 elevation of 6,372 feet, hindering recreational access, losing Negit Island, harming gulls and brine shrimp, increasing dust storms, etc.

**ALTERNATIVE #3:** Continue diverting 100,000 acre-feet per year, lowering lake to approximately 6,338', turning shores into alkali mud, losing brine shrimp, devastating bird populations, creating health hazards, etc.

On some questionnaires, Loomis asked for the maximum additional amounts people would pay on monthly water bills to preserve Mono Lake as described in Alternative #2 instead of Alternative #3, and as described in Alternative #1 rather than Alternative #2. On others, he asked for the maximum amounts they would be willing to pay into a special annual fund for the same purposes.

According to Loomis, this technique, called the *Contingent Value Method*, creates "a realistic but hypothetical market for 'buying' use and/or preservation of a non-marketed natural resource." In less abstruse terms, it presents recipients with the hypothetical opportunity of "buying" Mono Lake's preservation as described in given alternatives. Compare, for example, the opportunity to donate to the Mono Lake Committee. The funds we receive increase the probability of saving the lake, but carry no guarantees. The contingent value method, in contrast, offers hypothetical but "tangible products" in the form of specified lake levels. How much would you pay for 6388'?

Based on the Contingent Value Method, Loomis found that Californians were willing to pay many times the cost of replacement water to preserve Mono Lake as described in Alternative #1. They would pay an average of \$7.90 more per household on monthly water bills, 36 times the cost of

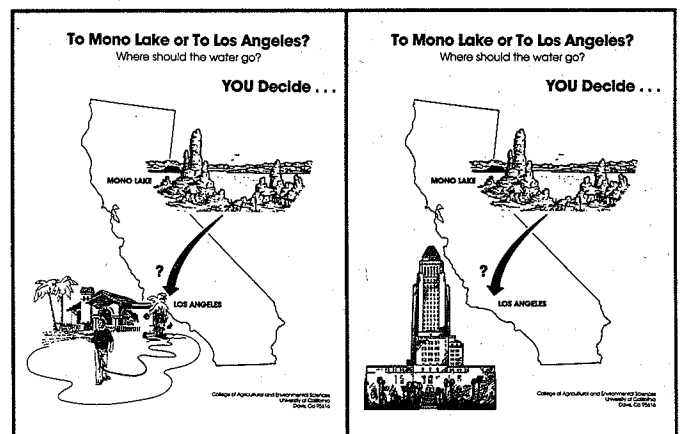
replacement water. They would pay an average of \$42 per household into a special annual fund, 16 times the cost of replacement water. Moreover, households in the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power service area were willing to pay more than the state average.

Visitors who received their questionnaires at Mono Lake were willing to pay approximately twice as much as those who received them by mail. Again, Angelenos would pay the most, followed by visitors from the Pacific Northwest. Those from the East Coast and Midwest would pay almost as much as those from the rest of California.

The validity of these results depends on at least two factors: (1) the accuracy and bias of the questionnaires, and (2) the amount people would pay in a real rather than simulated situation. In regard to the latter, there is empirical evidence that people will actually pay as much as they state, and sometimes substantially more.

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, however, criticized the questionnaire's content and presentation. In response, Loomis distributed a second version. On the cover, he replaced the drawing of a suburbanite watering his lawn with one of the Los Angeles City Hall (see illustrations). He reworded Alternative #2 to reflect scientific uncertainty over biological and air quality consequences. For example, he deleted the statement "bird populations decrease and bird diversity is reduced," and replaced it with "some biologists feel gull populations and gull chick survival will decrease due to reductions in food and nesting habitat."

Moreover, Loomis decided to address the effect of scientific uncertainty in a third version. He accepted the unlikely possibilities—forwarded by DWP consultants and in-house scientists—that Mono's brine shrimp may adapt genetically to the lake's rising salinity, and that even should brine shrimp decline, the effect on birds may not be serious. In this version, recipients are asked how much they would pay for Alternative #2 rather than #3, but are also told there is a slight chance that, even should they choose not to pay, #3 may not harm the ecosystem. In this



Original and revised covers of survey questionnaire. At the behest of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the drawing of a suburbanite watering his lawn was replaced with one of the Los Angeles City Hall. The two versions produced identical results: overwhelming support—especially in Los Angeles—for saving Mono Lake.

version, paying purchases "insurance"; not paying gambles Mono's future.

The results validated and strengthened the original survey. Changing the cover and contents did not significantly alter the outcome. Nor did suggesting that brine shrimp and birds might adapt to increasing salinity. Loomis concludes, "California households seem to be willing to pay an insurance premium in the form of a higher water bill to maintain Mono Lake rather than take a risk of ecological degradation."

Loomis rejected, however, DWP's criticism that he failed to address the environmental "trade-offs" of obtaining replacement water from elsewhere in California, or its long-term availability. Loomis contends that "investments in water conservation and recycling can make up part of the replacement needed," that pricing water at its replacement rather than average cost (marginal cost pricing) can reduce demand, and that economical, environmentally sound new supplies can "likely be obtained from transfers of water from irrigated agriculture."

In addition to how much people would pay, Loomis also investigated why they favored Mono Lake's protection. He found a large majority more concerned with aesthetic, ecological and bequest values than with personal use and recreation. For example, 72 percent thought "protecting water, air and scenery" was "very important"; 66 percent thought likewise about "protecting habitat," and 64 percent about "knowing future generations will have Mono Lake as it exists today." In contrast, only 19 percent thought "providing recreation" was "very important."

Those who received the survey at the lake were also queried about recreational activities. The average visitor, Loomis found, spends about four and one-half hours along Mono's shores. The majority come to gaze at the tufa towers and "sight-see," though photography, birdwatching and hiking are also powerful lures. Most appreciate interpretive signs and displays, established trails, ranger-led walks and bathrooms, but are neutral or negative about paving parking areas and establishing campgrounds. The University of California at Davis has published Loomis' study, *An Economic Evaluation of Public Trust Resources of Mono Lake*, as Institute of Ecology Report #30.

Dave Gaines

## DWP Water Plan Subverts Planning Process

Opinion by Randy McClure

Randy McClure, an active MLC member whose academic training is in future studies, has analyzed on his own the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's Urban Water Management Plan. Here are some of his conclusions.

If Mono Lake is to be preserved, DWP's long-term water management planning must allow for that preservation. It takes many years to develop new water sources and institute conservation measures.

A careful reading of the *City of Los Angeles Urban Water Management Plan's* "Executive Summary" shows that DWP's projected demands are clearly exorbitant. Present usage of the estimated 3.1 million city of Los Angeles residents is 620,000 acre-feet per year, or 178 gallons per person per day. In the year 2010, DWP expects 3.4 million residents to need 670,000 acre-feet per year, or 175 gallons per person per day. [In fact, L.A.'s annual consumption has already exceeded this amount...ed.].

The summary emphasizes that this meager three gallon per person per day decline over the next 23 years is the result of "water conservation" and "increasing population density." Almost one half of the 16 page summary—pages seven through 13—herald and explain water conservation programs that will save merely 1.7 percent of the per person usage after two decades of implementation. This is less than the amount of water saveable by one flush of a water efficient toilet.

DWP is doing two things wrong: heaping self-praise on its extremely modest water conservation program, and corrupting the long-term planning process.

Long-range planning requires the formulation of alternative future projections. But DWP has developed only one future projection which in fact justifies its own philosophy. This projection becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy—common fare among large businesses and utilities with profits and 'modus operandi' to protect. It is done to pacify or mislead opponents, and it often works.

Instead of presenting only one future projection, DWP should have explored many scenarios ranging from "uncontrolled water usage" (say, 800,000 acre-feet of annual consumption) to "extreme water conservation" (say, 300,000 acre-feet of annual consumption). Each scenario should include implementation measures, costs and impacts.

For example, the "Extreme Water Conservation" scenario might eliminate watering of cemeteries, restrict residential lawns and require a percentage of waterless toilets. It might include the collection of rainwater, water reclamation and recycling, and passive solar desalinization. It might eliminate imports of water from Mono Basin entirely, and curtail those from the Owens Valley, Colorado River and Northern California.

Under the Extreme Water Conservation scenario, water rates would have to be raised to pay for the conservation programs, but less usage would keep customers' bills down. DWP would profit by not having to purchase as much water from outside sources ("avoided costs").

Under a system of good long-range planning, DWP would present these varied scenarios to the Los Angeles City Council and city residents, who would then decide the approach to pursue. L.A. citizens might reject the wasteful plan DWP undemocratically and unimaginatively presents in its *Water Management Plan*, and choose to use water far more efficiently. If DWP's "closed future" is allowed to stand, Mono Lake will remain in jeopardy for a long time to come.



## NEGOTIATING WITH LOS ANGELES

### A Chat with Inyo County Water Director Greg James

*Decades before the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power began diverting Mono Lake's tributary streams, it was taking every drop it could from the Owens River watershed to the south. Between 1900 and 1930, Los Angeles' unquenchable growth led to a bitter, devious struggle with Owens Valley farmers and residents. The burgeoning metropolis triumphed, leaving a legacy of abandoned houses and barns, weed-grown fields, empty ditches, dry streams and 100 square miles of barren alkali where there had once been a lake.*

*But worse was yet to come. In 1970, DWP completed a second Los Angeles Aqueduct. To fill it, the agency increased diversions from Mono Lake's tributary streams and began pumping as much as it could from the Owens Valley's groundwater basins. Dismayed by dying vegetation and desiccated springs, Inyo County went to court.*

*In 1984, the Owens Valley "water war" took a new turn. The Inyo County Board of Supervisors signed a five-year agreement with Los Angeles that calls for interim joint management and has as its primary goal the adoption of a long-term cooperative groundwater management plan.*

*On the eve of fishing season, Dave Gaines and Lauren Davis braved bumper-to-bumper RVs and boats to journey to Bishop, where we chatted with the Director of Inyo County's Water Department Greg James about negotiating with Los Angeles, the prospects for a long-term management plan, and the future of the Owens Valley.*

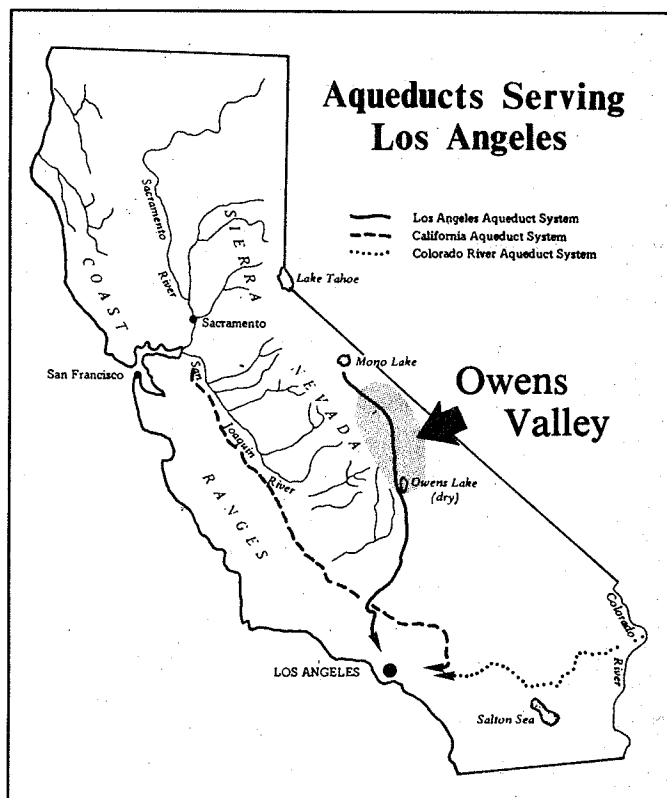
**DAVE:** At Mono Lake, we are still locked in litigation with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. In the Owens Valley, Inyo County and DWP are trying to resolve their differences out of court. You just negotiated how much Los Angeles will pump from the valley's groundwater basins this year. How did it go?

**GREG:** In this very dry year, the County and DWP began the negotiation process far apart. In January, DWP said that, should dry conditions continue, it would like to pump 230,000 to 250,000 acre-feet of water from Owens Valley. By comparison, the maximum amount ever pumped in a single year was 170,000 acre-feet in 1972-73.

On April 15, the County and Los Angeles finally agree that up to 210,000 acre-feet could be pumped—180,000 acre-feet for export and certain in-valley uses, and up to an additional 30,000 acre-feet for valley enhancement/mitigation projects.

This is still a lot of pumping. Due to high groundwater levels, however, we are confident that impacts will be limited. Even so, we will carefully monitor the valley's well fields to avoid or mitigate unforeseen effects.

This year's program also assures that Crowley Lake will hold at least 110,000 acre-feet of water in April, 1988. During negotiations, DWP had said that the level might drop as low as 60,000 acre-feet. At such a low level, fishing would be very limited, and there would be little carry-



*The Owens Valley begins 60 miles south of Mono Lake, and stretches another 100 miles along the eastern base of the Sierra Nevada. Streams and ground water that once fed the Owens River and Owens Lake are now diverted or pumped into the Los Angeles Aqueduct.*

over storage in the event of a second dry year. The higher level will hopefully reduce the pressure for a second year of high groundwater pumping and Mono Basin diversions.

**DAVE:** Could you give our readers some background on Inyo County's battles with DWP, and how the current five-year agreement came about?

**GREG:** When DWP completed the second aqueduct in 1970, they filled it from three sources: (1) diversions were increased from the Mono Basin, (2) irrigation water from approximately 20,000 Owens Valley acres was diverted into the aqueduct, and (3) pumping was increased from the Owens Valley groundwater basin. Inyo County sued in 1972 under the recently enacted California Environmental Quality Act. As a result, DWP was ordered to write an Environmental Impact Report and to limit groundwater pumping. In 1977, DWP completed its first EIR, but it only focused on pumping to supply water for in-valley use, and omitted discussion of the impacts associated with pumping for export. The court found that EIR inadequate.

**DAVE:** As I recall, the court called DWP's EIR "wishful" and "egregious."

**GREG:** (laughs) Yes, I believe the court's use of such forceful and descriptive language was justified. DWP then

wrote a second EIR that addressed groundwater pumping for export as well as for in-valley use, but ignored the impacts of the increased surface water diversions. Without question, the taking of 20,000 acres out of irrigation, particularly around the oasis-like towns of the Owens Valley, had a major impact. The court agreed, and, in 1981, rejected DWP's second EIR. The court said that the impacts of surface water diversions must be addressed as well as those of groundwater pumping. Its opinion also included a foot-note that seemed to say that impact of Mono Basin diversions must be discussed in the EIR as well.

DAVE: Do you think DWP is legally obligated to write an EIR that includes Mono Lake?

GREG: My personal opinion is that DWP is required to write an EIR on all water diversions and pumping that result from the second aqueduct, and that includes diversions from the Mono Basin.

DAVE: How did Inyo County get from litigation to the current five-year agreement?

GREG: From the time the EIR litigation began, there were periodic negotiations between Inyo County and Los Angeles. As of 1980, none of these discussions had resulted in an agreement.

In 1980, the Inyo Board of Supervisors submitted to the county's electorate the Owens Valley Groundwater Management Ordinance, which passed by a three to one margin. The ordinance mandated the protection of the Owens Valley's environment through the development of a groundwater management plan and the issuance of groundwater pumping permits. The ordinance created the county's Water Department and Water Commission. Los Angeles challenged the ordinance in court. While it failed to block the election, it did succeed in requiring the county to write an EIR on the impacts of the ordinance prior to implementing it. In a second suit, DWP attacked the county's right to regulate groundwater pumping at all.

In 1982, Inyo County entered into a cooperative agreement with the United States Geological Survey to conduct a groundwater investigation in Owens Valley. DWP joined as a third party in 1983, and the study was expanded to investigate the impact of groundwater pumping on the valley's vegetation. On the one hand, Inyo County and Los

Angeles found themselves working together with USGS to better understand the impacts of groundwater pumping, while on the other hand they were still battling it out in court. It became obvious that it would be difficult to litigate and cooperate at the same time.

In July, 1983, a superior court judge ruled that Inyo County's groundwater ordinance was unconstitutional. Shortly after that decision, the Inyo Board of Supervisors agreed to negotiate with Los Angeles. A five-year agreement was ultimately signed in April, 1984, but was not approved by the courts until January, 1985.

DAVE: If a long-term agreement is reached, will DWP still have to write an EIR?

GREG: The court made it very clear that, regardless of the outcome, an EIR must be written and submitted by February, 1989. Either Los Angeles will write another EIR on their second aqueduct operations, or Inyo County and Los Angeles together will write an EIR on a long-term joint management plan.

DAVE: Assuming Inyo County and Los Angeles do agree on a joint management plan and write an EIR, one of the decisions they will have to make is whether to include the Mono Basin.

GREG: Absolutely. A *Notice of Preparation* will be prepared, and comments that come from interested, responsible agencies and organizations will be very influential in determining the scope of the EIR.

DAVE: What does the agreement mandate?

GREG: The agreement has three major components. One, Los Angeles must implement certain environmental improvement projects—called enhancement/mitigation projects—in the Owens Valley. For example, 30 miles of the lower Owens River below the aqueduct intake is now receiving a permanent supply of water—this hasn't occurred since 1913; former agricultural lands have been re-irrigated; lakes, ponds, fisheries and waterfowl habitat have been created; and water rates in valley towns served by DWP have been reduced back to lower rates than those in Los Angeles.

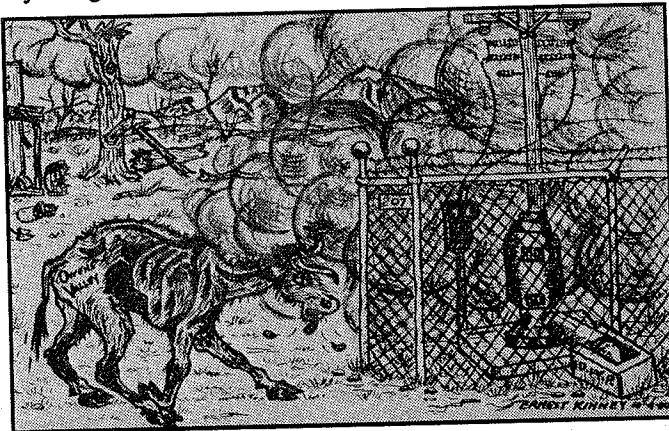
The second component are cooperative studies. Inyo County, Los Angeles and USGS are seeking to understand the impact of groundwater pumping on the Owens Valley environment. Los Angeles is funding the entire cost.

The third component is interim cooperative management. Each year, Inyo County and Los Angeles must agree on a pumping program, or the agreement would probably be terminated.

During the term of the agreement, litigation has been put on hold. If Inyo and Los Angeles cannot agree on a long-term groundwater management plan, litigation will resume.

DAVE: Are you optimistic?

GREG: I'm cautiously optimistic, but it's not going to be easy to agree on a long-term plan. The county would like an agreement for perhaps 25 or 30 years, and a commitment that the Los Angeles aqueduct will not be expanded further. But, as we've seen in a dry year like this, it's hard enough to establish a program for one year, let alone agree on one that will be in effect for decades. The outcome of the negotiations greatly depends on what is learned from



Cover of leaflet distributed by the League of Women Voters in Support of the Inyo County ground water ordinance, which passed overwhelmingly in 1980.

Ongoing studies, and unfortunately, there will inevitably be a certain amount of uncertainty in the results.

Inyo County is very aware that the negotiations will have as a backdrop the increasing population and water demand in California. When Arizona finally completes its Colorado River diversion system, the current surplus in the Colorado River reservoirs disappears, and Southern California's population grows from 13 to a projected 18 million in the next 20 years, the search for additional water supplies will intensify. Despite this backdrop, Inyo County hopes to reach a long-term management agreement that limits exports and protects this area in the future. It is my personal belief that it would be in everyone's interest to have the entire Eastern Sierran aqueduct system, including Mono Basin, under one cooperative management plan that protects all of the area's environmental resources over the long term.

DAVE: What happens if we have a prolonged drought?

GREG: That means trouble for us all. In a severe, prolonged drought, even with stringent conservation in Los Angeles, there undoubtedly will be a need to pump as much groundwater as possible. We hope that the mathematical models of the groundwater basin now being developed will allow us to accurately predict the environmental impacts. These predictions, along with other ongoing studies, will hopefully provide the basis for a management plan where all adverse impacts are acceptably mitigated. But, without doubt, a prolonged drought is the most challenging long-term management issue to be negotiated.

DAVE: Looking at drought potential and increasing population...

GREG: Throughout the West, population has exceeded, or is near to exceeding, the availability of water resources, while growth control measures generally remain unpopular. In Southern California, the pressure is on water suppliers to secure more water to meet projected growth. Of course, more water helps fuel more growth. For instance, if you're a major firm thinking of locating in Southern California, and you think that there may be future water shortages, you are going to consider locating somewhere else...

DAVE: Viewed from a resource perspective, the continued growth of Southern California is short-sighted and dangerous. Importing more water will drastically strain energy supplies as well as the environment, and diminish the quality of life in the cities themselves. Even in Los Angeles, many people are desperately concerned about the impacts of growth on transportation, air quality, crime and other urban problems.

Returning to Owens Valley, what are your immediate goals, and what is your vision for the future?

GREG: Prior to entering negotiations, our goal is to determine the amount of groundwater pumping that can occur without damaging the environment, or that can be feasibly mitigated in a manner acceptable to Owens Valley residents.

Inyo County's ultimate goal is to protect and improve Owens Valley environment and economy. At the moment, the county's leaders are still discussing their exact goals and objectives. The county has said, however, that it would like to improve the valley's recreational resources,

provide more trees and greenery, and increase the amount of irrigated acreage.

DAVE: Nobody wants to put water back in Owens Lake?

GREG: As strange as it sounds, water on the lake bed apparently causes more dust after it evaporates than would have occurred if no water had reached the lake.

DAVE: So, in wet years, it's better to store water than let it evaporate from the Owens Lake bed. A larger Crowley Lake to store that water might make sense.

GREG: Yes, and as we learn more about the Owens Valley's groundwater basins, we may be able to bank some water here too through groundwater recharge programs.

DAVE: But Owens Lake will always remain a sacrifice area. Are there other wounds that will probably never heal?

GREG: A real tragedy are certain springs in the southern half of the Owens Valley. In contrast to the surrounding desert, they supported unique, riparian vegetation. It is gone due to groundwater pumping drying up the springs, and there apparently is no way to restore it. The Independence spring field used to be a high groundwater area. Due to pumping and surface diversions, its verdant vegetation has died and not come back. It's probably the worst-looking place in the valley—an example in some residents' minds of what a lot of the valley might have looked like if the courts had not limited groundwater pumping in 1975. On the brighter side, however, an enhancement/mitigation project will re-green the spring field by establishing irrigated pasture.

DAVE: From dynamite during the '20s and litigation during the '70s, Owens Valley residents have turned to negotiation. Is this a promising development?

GREG: Yes, I think it is promising. Of course there was risk in entering the five-year agreement. There was opposition from many Owens Valley residents. A lot of people felt that the only way the valley ever would be protected was through litigation. Personally, I've never thought that litigation is the best way to solve problems, particularly among governmental agencies.

DAVE: And if negotiations fail?

GREG: The currently suspended litigation will resume. In the absence of a long-term agreement, the issue of basin management will be left once again to the courts and to the legislature. In such an event, the results of the studies conducted during the current five-year agreement will hopefully enable those entities to make fully informed decisions on the fate of the Owens Valley.

DAVE: Is there anything you would like to add?

GREG: I would like to emphasize that Inyo County is seeking public comment on the nature and content of a long-term agreement. We welcome letters, phone calls or personal visits. Our door is wide open.



# A VISIT TO THE GULL COLONIES OF MONO LAKE IN JUNE, 1919

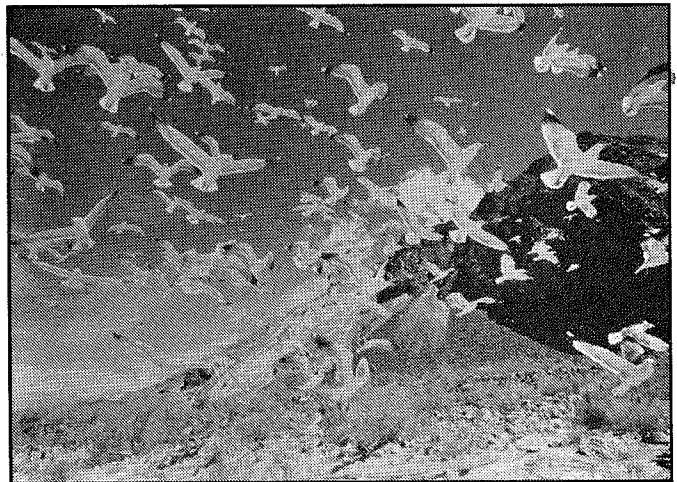
Excerpted from *The Birds of California, Vol.3*, by William Leon Dawson.

In the very early days, the California Gulls bred much more extensively upon the island fastnesses of our larger lakes than they do at present. One large colony, at least, is known to have persisted at a shifting station somewhere in the middle stretches of the Sacramento River until within very recent years. They breed on Lower Klamath Lake (in Oregon) and at Clear Lake. They have been found nesting in small numbers at Lake Tahoe and on Eagle Lake. But the classical home nesting-ground of the California Gull is Mono Lake. It was the author's privilege to visit this spot in June, 1919, and the following account chiefly involves observations made at that time.

Mono Lake is a sheet of water some eighty-five square miles in extent, which lies about midway of the State at the eastern foot of the Sierras, at an elevation of over 6,400 feet, and which stretches away to the eastward into unreclaimed desert. Its water are strongly impregnated with potash, sodium sulphate, and other salts, and are, of course, not potable. In spite of this handicap, they swarm with "a small Branchipus-like Phyllopod [brine shrimp]," and the larvae of a certain fly. The former are ghostly pale creatures, which appear more like deserted casts than objects still animate. Yet it is upon these and the myriad flies which gather at the water's edge that the teeming bird life of the region must feed.

The expanse of the lake is broken by two islands, Paoha and Negit. The former, which has a land surface of nearly two square miles, is a low-lying sharply-rolling expanse of stratified materials, chiefly volcanic ash, sparsely covered with atriplex and other typically desert vegetation. The northern third of the island, however, is eruptive, the extreme tip being an almost impassable welter of recently cooled lava of a reddish black color. Negit Island is another example of the same eruptive movement, and stands hard by, a grim red sentinel, fit only for the tenure of hardy sea fowl.

Through the courtesy of the owner of Paoha, Mr. W.D. McPherson, who is transforming this desert principality into a model goat-farm, we were privileged to visit the two colonies of California Gulls on Paoha and the main colony on Negit. In the "lagoon colony" we found, on the 3rd day of June, 250 pairs of birds gathered upon the sloping banks of a small lagoon tributary to the lake. The birds rose as we approached but settled quickly and did not exhibit a great fear of our presence. It was a critical time in the gull calendar, for the eggs were hatching, and we felt impelled to make our reconnaissance as brief as possible. The sun was burning hot, and the birds had availed themselves as far as possible of the scanty cover of atriplex and artemisia in the location of their nests. The nests were in many instances mere shallow depressions in the earth, but they



varied from this negligence, or haste, up to elaborate structures an inch or more in thickness, composed of twigs, frayed stems and bark of atriplex or sage, and especially of feathers.

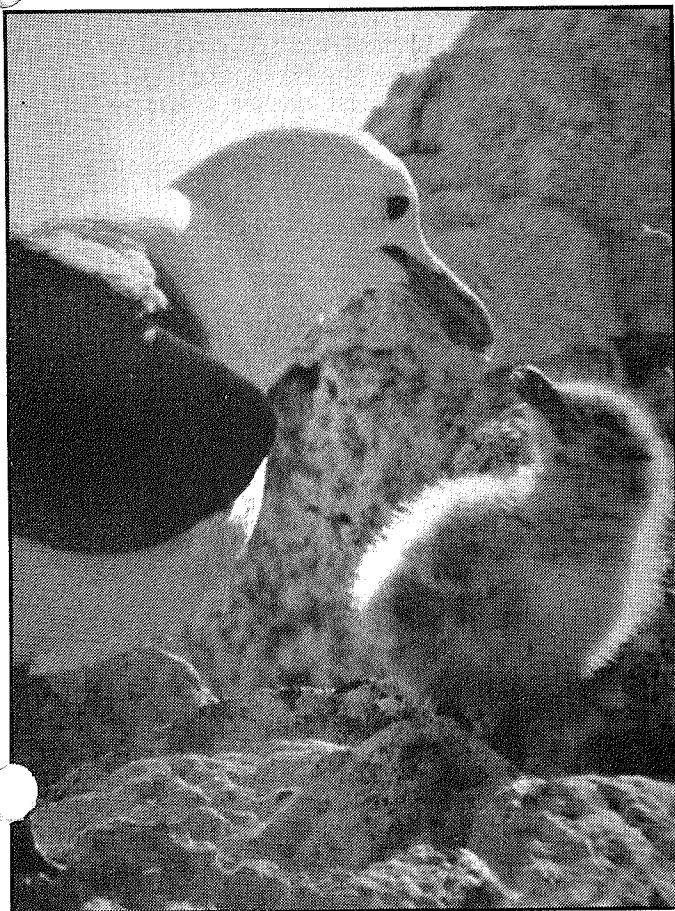
At the Black Rocks colony on Paoha we found a very different physical setting. The point consists of an exceedingly rough lava field whose cooling surface has been eroded into most fantastic forms of knob and minaret,—a veritable devil's post-pile. The lower hollows have in many instances been filled up by a combination of pumice and guano, and these false floors, in many places undermined by the rising waters of the lake, would suddenly give way beneath our feet.

Nesting for the most part is conducted along a strip within twenty feet of the water, and on a ridge a hundred yards in length, which projected itself into the water. Some minor detached rocks had tenants, and a gravel bar at the extreme tip of the island was crowded. Some birds had placed their nests so near the water's edge that the rise, very rapid, they say, during the past month, had engulfed them. As in the other colony, the season was near the hatching point, and perhaps one-third of the eggs were pipped.

On the occasion of a second visit to the Black Rock colony, we heard gull voices from Negit, half or three quarters of a mile distant. Accordingly, we importuned Mr. McPherson for passage, and were allowed three riotous hours upon the island on the following day (June 5th). We found here on the east point of Negit Island the most populous colony of all. Because our visit took place at high noon, and because fully half the eggs were either hatched out or were in the act of hatching, we made a very hasty survey and neither attempted to cover the whole ground nor to count the nests. An outlying ridge of rock, barely severed from the main shore, we did not visit at all, although it was crowded with birds.

The shore line at this place sloped rather sharply for, say, two-thirds of the distance occupied by the colony, running from the water's edge up to forty feet; but there was also a considerable flat which was densely covered with breeding birds. The shore here, although of volcanic origin, was largely covered with rounded rocks, probably water-worn, and further mitigated by the guanos of long occupation.

As I reviewed the matter later (seated in a pine grove at Mammoth—the first moment of notarial leisure allowed in that strenuous season) a gentle melancholy took possession of me—a regret that all this intensity of living could not have been better seized upon—this furious kaleidoscope of life caught red-handed and transmitted dripping to the page. Perhaps the camera will do that—or what is the camera? A mere mechanism whose record also requires to be interpreted, to be sympathetically considered, in other words, to be *lived*. And there was life at an intense node—a thousand irate fathers beating the air with futile wing, and venting their rage in incomprehensible cackles and kawks, while a thousand anxious mothers hovered or settled by turns, their hearts wrung by the importunities of a thousand chicks in very moment of entering this bubbling world. Oh, it is a tragic time, when you think of it! A thousand births in a day in a single community, and another thousand expected on the morrow. Little time and scant welcome for visitors on such a day. Prudence and good sense bid an early retirement, and I wish I had seen less rather than more.



Larry Ford

But what an armed truce is there also! Call it a “community”? To be sure the birds crowd together as close as they dare, and they act together in facing a common foe. But why do they crowd together? For every beak is turned against every other beak, and the space between nests is guaranteed in every instance to be greater than the distance which can be bridged by two craning necks tipped by two pairs of hostile mandibles. Crabbed tempers have these California Gulls, and the brandished beak is the sign of welcome and the notice of departure to any other of their own kind save their wedded partners, and not infrequently to them also.

In conspicuous exception to this churlish behavior, I recall two birds whom we dubbed “the lovers,” which during the whole period of our review (I was changing plates under the most awkward circumstances at the Black Rocks colony), stood side by side with their bodies in actual contact (such as birds rarely allow), the very picture of amiability. Perhaps gull nature varies as much as human nature, and there are happy exceptions to the universal grouch.

## In Memory

We are grateful to Dorothy and Kenneth Gardner, Jr. of Albuquerque, New Mexico for their contribution in honor of Horace M. Albright, founder of the the National Park Service.

## Letters

### Zero Population Growth

It hurts to see our fights go on and on. When I first began working for Zero Population Growth in 1968, I thought everyone would soon be convinced of the need to halt global population to save our fragile planet. I thought that every environmental group would work with ZPG to educate their members and the public about the population crisis. But we are fragmented, and I don't know who to blame. Meanwhile, world population continues to grow by one million every five days, and, if nothing changes, will swell by one billion before the turn of the century, making a mockery of environmental protections. Through dedicated persistence, you have made headway toward saving the most beautiful lake in all the Southwest; there is hope, through similar persistence, we can also defuse the population bomb.

*Elaine Stansfield, Director, ZPG-Los Angeles*

For more information about Zero Population Growth, please write Elaine at 2008 1/2 Preuss Rd., Los Angeles 90034.



## MLC NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

### ***Bucket Walk, Meeting, Picnic at the Lake, Sat., Sept. 5***

Join fellow monophiles Saturday, Sept. 5, for our ninth bucket walk, meeting, picnic and celebration.

To join the bucket walk, meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Old Marina (parking area just east of U.S. 395 one mile north of Lee Vining). We will provide shuttles to the beginning of the walk. Bring snacks, signs and a small container for carrying water. We will tote water from above DWP's Lee Vining Creek diversion dam to Mono Lake, a downhill walk of four miles.

On the same day the L.A.-to-Mono Lake bike-a-thoners will arrive with water from downtown Los Angeles. We'll rendezvous at the lake for a "rehydration ceremony" led by Father Christopher Kelley.

Then we'll migrate to the Mono Lake County Park for a picnic and our annual meeting and rally. In addition to reports on our legal, legislative and grassroots activities, we'll have live music and dancing. Bring your own food and libations. See you there!

### ***Dakota Sid to Sing Sept. 5***

Singer-songwriter Dakota Sid will be joining this year's bucket walk and meeting, and regaling us with lyrics about the plight of our plundered planet. I first heard Dakota at an Earth First! rendezvous last year. His beautifully crafted tunes, leavened with wistful humor, struck home. He sings about eagles, coyotes, condors and ordinary folks caught or confused by our so-called civilization. He's a great artist and human being.

We will also have some fine local musicians and an old-time country dance (all dances taught). If you play or sing, and would like to participate, please get in touch.

If you can't make it Sept. 5, you can still listen to Dakota Sid on his two excellent tapes, *For the Birds* and *Small Towns and Tiny Faces*. Both are available at our Mono Lake Visitor Center, or mail order for \$9.00 each plus \$2.50 shipping (California residents please add six percent sales tax).

Dave Gaines

### ***Islands are "For the Birds"***

Please refrain from visiting Mono Lake's islands from the beginning of March until the end of July. Human disturbance, however well-intentioned, can wreak havoc among the nesting gulls.

### ***Wine Drawing Raises \$23,000***

Thanks to generous MLC members and 79 new supporters, our *Mono Lake Wine Cellar Drawing* raised over \$23,000 for saving the lake. Both wine cellars were won by monophiles: John McLean, an avid hiker who first visited the area in the late 1920s, and Mrs. Terry Henry, a bird-a-thon supporter.

On April 23, MLC board member Grace de Laet and husband Rick hosted an elegant reception at San Francisco's French Club that featured San Francisco columnist Harold Gilliam and political cartoonist Ken Alexander. Priscilla Wrubel of the Nature Company drew the two winning tickets.

We are deeply grateful to Gerald Asher of Gourmet Magazine, Herbert Cerwin of Cerwin and Peck Consultants, Ken and Darrel Alexander, the French Club and the many other monophiles who made this drawing such a success.

### ***Mono Internships, Volunteers***

Interns work full time staffing our Lee Vining Information Center, answering mail, leading field trips and working on special projects. We need interns for autumn, winter and especially spring. We provide housing and a small, monthly stipend. For more information, please contact Debby Parker in our Lee Vining office.

Our Los Angeles office also needs volunteers to help with office work, fund-raising, typing, bookkeeping and computer operation. If you can help, please get in touch.

### ***Audubon Wildlife Art Show***

Los Angeles Audubon Society's spectacular Wildlife and Environmental Art Show will benefit Mono Lake and other Audubon programs. July 15 is the deadline for entering. Entries will be exhibited at the Wilshire Ebell Art Salon in L.A. Sept. 11-18, and there will be over \$5,000 in cash prizes. For more information, contact: Ms. Linda Dantz, 603 S. McCadden Place, Los Angeles, CA 90005.

### ***Antarctica or Bhutan?***

For those who like to plan ahead, MLC trip coordinator Mildred Bennett has the following two trips in the offing: (1) a 16-day adventure to Antarctica with Society Expeditions in January 1989 (cruise cost about \$5,000-\$6,000, plus airfare), and (2) a tour and moderate walking (not backpack-

trek in Bhutan, probably in November, 1988 (cost to be determined). To receive information when available, please send a postcard to: M. Bennett, 2719 Marin Ave., Berkeley, CA 94708. Each trip is limited to 10 people, and about 10 percent of your cost will be a tax-deductible donation to help save Mono Lake.

## Staff Hellos

### MLC Builds In-house Fund-raising Team

Los Angeles will be the nexus of MLC's fundraising efforts as two new staff, Kathleen Yager and Nancy Desser, take over MLC's ever-growing fund-raising program. Development Director Kathleen Yager, previously an account manager with Benton and Bowles of Los Angeles, brings a wealth of marketing experience and new ideas. She will be assisted by Development Coordinator Nancy Desser, a native Angelina and MBA student who worked many years as a Santa Monica planner.

### Sacramento Office Open

Our Sacramento office is open, with Michael Gonazles our new Northern California Representative. Last summer, working with McElroy Communications, Michael helped implement a media campaign to draw public attention and garner support for saving the lake.

## 1988 Calendar Needs Photos

Just as the 1988 Mono Lake calendar is about to reach the shelves, the Mono Lake Coalition is starting production on the 1989 version. The calendars' splendid color photographs have won new friends and supporters while raising funds for the lake's defense.

Photographers—we need new, fresh images! There's more to Mono Basin than tufa towers. We want to portray the rich diversity of the landscape, not just the Mono Lake shoreline. So point your lenses at fauna and flora, people, clouds—the more variety, the better.

You don't need to be a professional photographer to contribute to the Mono Lake calendar. With imagination, luck and hard work your image could grace the calendar's 1989 incarnation. The next newsletter will include more details.

## Mono Historical Society Forms

Rallying around an endangered school house, local residents have organized a Mono Basin Historical Society. DWP will tear down the elderly building unless funds can be raised to move it. The historical society hopes to give it a permanent home in Lee Vining, and establish a museum and cultural center to preserve the area's rich Paiute and pioneer heritage. Contributions are welcome. For more information, write to P.O. Box 31, Lee Vining, CA 93541.

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# JOIN THE 1987 LOS ANGELES TO MONO LAKE BIKE-A-THON

The call is out: The Mono Lake Committee seeks one hundred committed bicylists to participate in our eighth Los Angeles-to-Mono Lake Bike-a-thon.

The six-day, 350-mile tour departs Aug. 30, taking the cyclists across the Mojave Desert, past Mount Whitney and through some of the West's most majestic scenery.

The Bike-a-thon draws attention to Mono Lake's plight, and, via sponsors, raises money to save it. Cyclists scoop water from the reflecting pool in front of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's downtown headquarters, and—as a symbolic act—return the water to Mono Lake.

This year, for the first time, the Mono Lake Committee is soliciting sponsorships and pledges from businesses and corporations. We encourage cyclists and supporters to approach their employers for pledges (many corporations will match your donation—ask and see!). To date, Strong Innovations, manufacturer of the Strong Shifter, has pledged support. Yakima, Bike-O-Matic and Wilderness Group have donated major prizes.

To ride, volunteer a support vehicle, pledge support or for more information, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Mono Lake Committee Bike-a-thon, 1355 Westwood Blvd., Suite 6, Los Angeles, CA 90024, or call Nancy Desser at (213) 477-8229. The registration deadline is Aug. 7.

## ***BIRD-A-THON SET FOR SEPT. 26***

Our bird-brained chairperson and founder Dave Gaines invites you to join him for an exciting day of Eastern Sierra bird-a-thoning between Bishop and Mono Lake on Saturday, Sept. 26. With luck, we can see approximately 100 species. Rank beginners are welcome.

There's a catch, of course. We need your help to surpass last year's net of over \$30,000 for saving Mono Lake. The rules are simple. You ask friends and neighbors to pledge a quarter, dollar or whatever they can afford for every bird species we tally on Sept. 26. If you wish to join me, I ask that you sign up at least \$2/species or \$200 total in pledges. That's really not so much, and you can even sponsor yourself. We'll contact your sponsors and collect the pledges. Just think how much fun we'll have befriending birds and raising money for a good cause!

Or, if you don't wish to participate as a counter, please consider supporting me. To pledge, or for more information, write or call me at: P.O. Box 119, Lee Vining, CA 93541; (619) 647-6496 or 647-6595.

*Dave Gaines*

## JOIN US!

Still not a Mono Lake Committee member? Join us, and increase our strength and effectiveness. We will keep you informed, through our quarterly newsletter and action alerts, of what's happening and how you can help. Regular membership is \$20/year (\$30 Sponsor, \$50 Supporting Member, \$100 Monophile, \$500 Monomaniac, \$8 "I Can't Afford More"). Checks should be payable to the Mono Lake Committee, and are not tax-deductible. If you would like your contribution to be tax-deductible, please endorse your check to the Mono Lake Foundation.



**The  
Mono Lake  
Committee**

Post Office Box 29  
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