

MONO LAKE

N E W S L E T T E R

Winter & Spring 2008



I never met David Gaines. In fact, none of the current staff ever did. This struck me at a recent staff meeting as we passed around a packet of newspaper clippings and other remembrances of him and his life. This year is the 20th anniversary of his tragic death, and the 30th anniversary of the Mono Lake Committee; bitter and sweet markings of time's passing.

"The legacy of David Gaines is life for Mono Lake" spoke the Honorable Richard H. Lehman to the House of Representatives in the somber winter of 1988. It's amazing to me how David touched so many people's lives with his passion; he came to embody the idea of doing the right thing for this place. Maybe more amazing still is that here we are, day after day, this group of people who never even met him, working on behalf of 15,000 Mono Lake Committee members, for that very same thing: life for Mono Lake.

Some things, I imagine, are the same—shoveling our way to work in the winter, taking anyone who will listen out for a canoe ride, turning visitors onto this unique place with books and tips of where to go, working with DWP, teaching Los Angeles about water conservation, going out to the streams and to the lake to see what's going on. There is a whole slew of new challenges too—the type that the Committee's founders could barely imagine back in the day. What are they? Start with the next page; this issue of the *Newsletter* is full of them.

I imagine meeting David Gaines would feel something like the awe I feel when sitting in staff meeting with this humble and dedicated staff, knowing each careful decision we make is our level best for the whole Mono Lake Committee, and for Mono Lake. It's an honest mission that has been 30 years in the making, and is now 30 years strong.

—Arya Degenhardt, Communications Director



COVER PHOTO, WILLOW FLYCATCHER ON RUSH CREEK, COURTESY OF CHRIS MCCREEDY

GREG REIS

Calm after the storms at Old Marina. Mono Lake reaches a near-perfect reflection—even the newly installed lake level gauge is mirrored.

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.



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Founded by David Gaines in 1978

MONO LAKE
NEWSLETTER

Winter & Spring 2008 ~ Volume XXIX, Numbers 2 & 3

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FERC issues ruling on Mill Creek hydropower project

Key issues sidestepped, but settlement agreement advances

by Geoffrey McQuilkin

Mill Creek, Mono Lake's third largest tributary, once supported a rich fishery and amazingly productive streamside forests and wetlands, including rare bottomland wildlife habitats that have been virtually eliminated elsewhere in the Great Basin. For over a century, most of Mill Creek's water has been diverted for local uses, leaving little if any in the stream. A recent ruling by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) brings ecological restoration of the creek one step closer.

Long time Mono Lake Committee members know that the Committee has been working for more than a decade to restore Mill Creek by assuring that it receives adequate flows of water. In most years, nearly all of the streamflow at the Lundy Dam is diverted to a hydropower plant, and from there little returns to the creek. The Committee has long argued that the power plant "return ditch," which has a very low capacity, impedes

the return of water to the creek, and that, as a result, nearby water rights holders are receiving much more than their legal allotment. The solution: fix the return ditch between the power plant and Mill Creek so it can deliver the water the creek needs—and is entitled to.



The Mill Creek return ditch.

GEORGE MCQUILKIN

The Committee has tackled this issue by participating in the federal relicensing of the hydropower plant, a process which began, remarkably, back in 1981. Other FERC process participants include Southern California Edison (the hydropower plant owner), the Department of Fish & Game, the US Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, CalTrout, and American Rivers. Additional interested parties have also weighed in, such as Mono County, which holds

water rights for use on nearby Conway Ranch.

To make a long story short, after a substantial amount of controversy, FERC asked all stakeholders to get together

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Committee Annex and Field Station mortgage—PAID!

We're celebrating here in the office and hope you will do so at home! Thanks to a fantastic outpouring of member support, we exceeded our goal and raised over \$100,000 to pay off the mortgage on the Committee's Annex property in Lee Vining. We mailed off the final payment in January!

There's only one thing to say: *Thank you Mono Lake Committee members!*

Mono Lake supporters responded enthusiastically to the opportunity to retire the debt on the property, saving thousands of dollars in annual interest payments and laying the groundwork for the continued success of all the Committee's programs that use the property. The next time you're in Lee Vining, stop by and we'll point you toward the Annex so you can see it yourself!

The Committee purchased the Annex property back in 2003. We jumped at the opportunity to acquire the former King's Inn—two small houses, five cabins, and six motel rooms—close to our headquarters and right next door to the house David and Sally Gaines built when they first arrived in town to fight for Mono Lake's protection. The Annex provides workspace and housing that allow the Committee to successfully run our protection, restoration, and education programs, and has given us room to create the Mono Basin Field Station, which supports scientific research in the Mono Basin.

We can't say it too many times: *Thank you Mono Lake Committee members for making this happen!*

Twenty years later

A Gaines family update

by Sally Gaines

January 11, 1988 was the day my husband, David Gaines, was killed in an auto accident on Highway 395, leaving me a widow with two young children, ages two-and-a-half and five. He also left a big hole in the Mono Lake Committee since he was the main founder and spokesperson.

Adjustments were made by all and life went on.

The kids and I stayed in Lee Vining until the bigger middle school of Mammoth Lakes lured us there. In 1998, I married a wonderful man, Rick Kattelmann, hydrologist and photographer, who shares many of my outdoor hobbies.

The kids turned out fine (in spite of being teenagers for a while): Vireo, now age 25, will graduate from Northern Arizona University in May with a degree in Environmental Studies, while Sage, age 22 ½, works part-time and studies cinematography at Santa Barbara City College.

Obviously, as you can tell from the newsletters, the Committee has had one success after another in saving, restoring, and protecting our favorite lake due to the incredible teamwork of scientists, legislators, lawyers, general public, members, and

exceptional (though underpaid) staff.

I remain on the Board of Directors, keep an eye on business at the Lee Vining headquarters, write the chatty notes to Guardians of the Lake who donate monthly, and get trotted out for various events, ceremonies, and field trips.

Dave would be proud of the efforts and accomplishments of loyal members and very competent staff over the past twenty years.

Long Live Mono Lake. ❖

Sally Gaines is a co-founder of the Mono Lake Committee and the current Board Chair.



David, Vireo, Sage, and Sally Gaines in 1987.



Rick Kattelmann, Vireo, Sally, and Sage Gaines, 2007.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SALLY GAINES

FERC from page 3

and come up with a plan and, ultimately, the parties did: a settlement agreement was filed with FERC in early 2005. It set out a negotiated plan in which the hydropower plant would continue to operate with full flows and the return ditch would be upgraded to carry 40 cubic feet per second or more of water, thus allowing it to deliver adequate flows to Mill Creek.

Early indications were that FERC would accept the plan without major modifications. However, when the final ruling came out in late 2007, something else had happened. FERC adopted some, but hardly all, of the settlement provisions. However—and this is the key point—FERC did not reject any of the settlement provisions either. Rather, it noted that elements of the settlement, including the improvements to the return ditch, lay outside its authority. “The allocation of flows to satisfy water rights,” wrote FERC, “is not a valid basis for the exercise of our regulatory authority.”

On the face of it, this would seem a major setback—but it isn't. The settlement agreement is a negotiated compromise

designed to settle many issues, and breaking it apart would reopen numerous controversies, to the detriment of all the parties involved. For this reason, the settlement includes requirements that the signatories will implement all the provisions of the settlement, including any that FERC declares to be outside its scope of authority. The return ditch improvements fall into this latter category.

Committee staff have met with the settlement parties and progress is being made toward implementation of the return ditch improvements as outlined in the settlement agreement. Southern California Edison has reaffirmed its commitment to the agreement and more news is expected by summer on how construction will proceed.

With FERC's ruling the long and winding path to Mill Creek's restoration has taken another turn, but the end goal—restoring the creek's bottomland forest and wetlands, renewing its fishery, and bringing back a healthy delta for waterfowl—remains within reach. ❖

State Water Board approves low flow variance for Rush Creek

Additional winter monitoring is key

by Lisa Cutting

A stream flow variance sought by the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power (DWP) has Rush Creek running 10 cubic feet per second (cfs) lower this winter than it would otherwise. While the variance has the potential to provide useful information for the adaptive management creek restoration process, it remains unclear if the additional winter monitoring will happen before spring arrives.



CalTrout's Mark Drew on a recent outing to measure stream flow in Rush Creek.

Why a variance?

DWP requested this variance in order to hold back 3,500 acre-feet of water in Grant Lake Reservoir. In their request, DWP proposed that this additional water would be used to maximize operational flexibility this spring.

The Committee was somewhat surprised by

DWP's last-minute request since the dry year designation had been determined back in April and this sort of operational change is typically discussed as a group at the restoration meetings that all parties attend twice a year.

The Committee's position

The Committee immediately confirmed that the water "saved" by lowering flows would remain in the Mono Basin, would not be exported in the LA Aqueduct, and would only be used to fulfill the goals and objectives of the Water Board's restoration orders. For example, the water might be used to augment springtime "peak" flows to enhance stream channel

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More changes in agency personnel

by Lisa Cutting

As reported in the Spring 2007 *Newsletter*, several key individuals associated with the ongoing restoration in the Mono Basin have moved on to other responsibilities or to retirement. Since that report, the Mono Lake Committee has continued to experience change in key agency positions responsible for on-the-ground restoration activities both at the State Water Resources Control Board and the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power (DWP).

State Water Resources Control Board

Staff member Matt Myers had been working closely with long time Mono Lake overseer Jim Canaday, attending meetings and learning the history and detailed workings of restoration in the Mono Basin. Before Canaday's well-

deserved retirement in late 2007, and before the planned transition of duties could officially occur, Myers accepted a position with the California Department of Fish & Game. The State Water Board staff lead was then passed to Steve Herrera, a knowledgeable but busy veteran of Mono Lake issues, and his point person, Greg Brown, a new State Water Board staff member.

Los Angeles Department of Water & Power

Last spring Kim Yapp assumed responsibilities for Mono Basin restoration from Mark Hanna, who had been DWP's primary point person for four years. Yapp's transition had barely begun when she accepted a promotion to another

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Letter provides insight on future of remaining Cunningham property

Committee undeterred by accusations

by Geoffrey McQuilkin

Last fall, an attorney representing Bill and Robin Cunningham sent a lengthy letter to the Mono Lake Committee outlining plans for the Cunninghams' land near Mono Lake, accusing the Committee of poor behavior, and attempting to shore up an unpersuasive legal claim to ownership of the exposed bed of Mono Lake.

Mono Lake friends are well aware that the Cunninghams previously owned approximately 120 acres of land near the west shore of Mono Lake. Their proposed subdivision of the property to develop up to 30 resort homes had long been a concern, one alleviated when Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA) purchased the bulk of the scenic property last year. MMSA plans to place the land into public ownership through a land trade with the US Forest Service.

However, the Cunninghams retained ownership of a small slice of the property located east of Highway 395, between the road and the boundary of the Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve. The letter shed light on their intentions for this property: "the Cunninghams

intend to realize the development potential value from the property when it is sold to some government agency, conservancy, trust or other third party, and not be forced to develop the property themselves."

This leads the Committee to conclude that, at this time, the Cunninghams do not intend to pursue development of the property themselves, and that they hope to sell it at a price they consider fair to someone who would preserve the parcel—a desirable outcome. It also leaves open the possibility of selling the land to an unspecified "third party," possibly a developer, if necessary to achieve the price they desire for the land.

More dramatically, the letter also accused the Committee of "grossly inaccurate and potentially actionable disparagement of the Cunninghams' property rights." The offense? The Committee's comment in the media that the Cunninghams' claim of ownership of the exposed lakebed of Mono Lake is "shaky." The letter then attempted to lay a legal groundwork for the claim to such ownership. In an apparent attempt to limit the Committee's willingness to

talk about the property and associated issues, the letter also promised that Committee publications will be monitored in the future.

Not wanting to leave the allegations unanswered, Committee staff and attorney Winter King at Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger drafted a response. The reply noted that the Committee has spoken factually about these issues in the past and expressed legal opinions which are substantiated by state, local, and federal rulings and law, leaving the organization well within its rights to speak on such matters of public interest. The reply also pointed out that legal attempts to silence the Committee would be subject to counter-suit under anti-SLAPP statutes.

On the facts of the matter, the Committee's letter provided a response to the claim that the Cunninghams, and not the State of California, own the exposed lakebed of Mono Lake. Although ownership of these lands is a specialized area of law, it is well established that the State owns all lands exposed by the artificial recession or draining of water in navigable lakes. Mono Lake supporters are acutely aware that today's artificially low lake level is the direct result of the diversion of tributary streams to Los Angeles; thus the exposed lakebed belongs to the State.

The Committee's letter went on to point out that the Cunninghams' claim is weak for another reason. Back in 1937, it was a known fact that Los Angeles' water diversions would lower the lake, expose the State-owned lakebed, and thus cause the prior owner of the land to lose direct access to the lake. Litigation ensued, Los Angeles lost, and substantial payment was made to the prior property



GEORGE MCQUILKIN

Looking across the halted subdivision to the remaining Cunningham property and Mono Lake.

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Policy notes

by Emily Prud'homme

Critical habitat proposed for bighorn sheep

The US Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) released its proposal for designation of critical habitat for the Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep in July 2007, as required under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Critical habitat contains those components necessary for a listed species to live—food, shelter, safe places to breed and raise offspring—to help ensure the survival and eventual recovery of the species. The designation requires federal agencies to consult with the FWS for any permitted or special uses they oversee on public and private lands.

Parts of the Mt. Warren and Mt. Gibbs critical habitat units are located in the Mono Basin. Bighorn in this area were translocated from other Sierra herds in 1986, as part of ongoing population restoration efforts. There are currently 23 individuals in this local herd, and survival of all four lambs born in the summer of 2007 is helping this small population rebound.

The FWS is slated to release its draft economic analysis on the designation of critical habitat early in 2008, with a final ruling on the designation of critical habitat expected in July. The Committee supports the establishment of critical habitat to further the efforts of bighorn recovery in the Sierra Nevada.

US Forest Service route designation

For the past two summers, the Forest Service and concerned local groups have inventoried over 3,000 miles of existing roads in the Inyo National Forest, including those in the Mono Basin, as part of a nationwide Motorized Route Designation process. The Mono Lake Committee submitted 44 route-specific comments to the Forest Service, both supporting proposed route closures and recommending the closure of additional routes where riparian or lakeshore habitat concerns exist. The Committee



Illegal OHV use in the Mono Basin's roadless areas.

stressed the need to balance travel and recreational uses with habitat and resource protection in the Mono Basin. Illegal route proliferation is widespread along the Mono Lake shoreline, and in generally roadless areas such as the Mono Craters. The Committee is urging the Forest Service to actively patrol, manage, and restore those areas where off-route use is highest, for the protection of vegetation, habitats, and scenic views.

The next steps of this process include a draft Forestwide Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) due out this spring, followed by the final EIS in fall 2008, and publication of official maps in 2009.

Penalties for illegal OHV use

Off-route off-highway vehicle (OHV) use has been a problem in the Mono Basin, and readers may recall the issue of dirt bikers riding illegally along the lakeshore and even in the lake itself (see the Summer 2007 *Newsletter*). After the three perpetrators were identified and brought to justice through a citizen's arrest, the guilty off-route riders were each sentenced to a day in jail, 50 hours of community service, three years of

probation, and a fine of \$1,040. The Committee hopes that this legal action will set an example and help to prevent more egregious destruction around the lake in the future.

Noise over Mono

While enjoying a quiet moment at a favorite spot in the Mono Basin, one can almost always witness jets and their contrails streak high across the basin and over Tioga Pass. This flight path will likely become more crowded in the future with the addition of commercial air service between the Mammoth Yosemite Airport and the Bay Area. While these flights are not anticipated to begin until 2015, the Committee is concerned about preventing the increased noise generated by turboprop planes en route over the Mono Basin.

There is mounting evidence that aircraft noise interferes with communication among animals, including spadefoot toads along the eastern shore of Mono Lake. Many visitors are drawn to Mono Lake because of the opportunities for quiet solitude, and the Committee is working

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Stop and listen

Stories from the Outdoor Experiences program

by Molly Hucklebridge

Stop and listen to the creek tell you a story. The handwritten laminated card rests on a cobblestone path next to Lee Vining Creek. As the wind sings through the pine needles and water cascades towards Mono Lake, the creek tells a different story to each student passing by.

On this “trail of beauty” hike, over thirty inspirational quotes and nature-related questions are left on laminated cards along the trail. One by one, participants from the Outdoor Experiences (OE) program follow the cards on a self-guided trek. It is an opportunity for the students to reflect, meditate, and use their imagination.

At their final destination, an overlook of Mono Lake, the students sit and write about their solo hike. OE participants, many of whom are high school students from inner-city Los Angeles, reflect on the activity and their surroundings.

A chance to engage

From day one in the Mono Basin, OE staff encourage visiting students to engage with nature and to disconnect from their lives in the city. Electronics, junk food, and city conveniences are put aside for a week of living and learning in the outdoors.

Part of orientation includes a welcome gift: an OE field journal. The 24-page journal contains maps of the Mono Basin and Los Angeles aqueduct system, the ecology and geology of Mono Lake, a review of the area’s natural history, tips on using water wisely, and ample unstructured space for



OE students with their field journals on the Mt. Dana trail.

SANTIAGO ESCHUCERNA

personal reflections.

Throughout the week, students use the journal to document their outdoor experiences. Though a typical academic setting might discourage using “I” or “we,” here the OE staff encourages personal narratives and self-expression through art and poetry.

As an OE Instructor, I’ve seen the benefits of applying

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On the last night of each Outdoor Experiences week students are encouraged to share poems written on their final all-day hike, typically at the top of a mountain peak. Below are some vertical poems that capture students’ thoughts and experiences from their five-day trip to the Mono Basin.

M - Motions of waves move

O - On a once in a life time trip

N - Nature isn’t what I thought

O - Obstacles that make a better lake

L - Learning many new different things

A - Attitude is what makes this trip

K - Kindness is what this lake needs

E - Enjoying the life of nature

by Enisha, 17 years old

LACC Clean & Green (Los Angeles)

F - Fantastic hike, with an

A - Amazing sight

B - Bright beautiful sky, we’re

U - Unbelievably high, so

L - Lovely, I can’t say goodbye, I’ve

O - Opened my heart and mind, to this

U - Unforgettable time, because I’m

S - Satisfied without being high

by Eddie, 18 years old

Olympic Academy (Los Angeles)

F - Feeling of peace

R - Running between the trees

E - Euphoric sensations running
through my veins

E - Each and every breath

D - Departures soon to come

O - Onto insane streets

M - My life was not the same,
when I came to Mono Lake

by Edgar, 17 years old

Olympic Academy (Los Angeles)



MOLLY HUCKLEBRIDGE

Delia and Taylor from Silverado High School in Las Vegas conduct water quality tests at Mono Lake.

personal narratives and art activities in the outdoor classroom. I remember a tenth grader with the reading and writing level of a third grader. He shared his poem about tackling a peak, and impressed his peers and himself. Instead of focusing on grammar or the facts, writing became less intimidating and a subject where he could succeed.

Some studies suggest that personal narratives may require a higher level of thinking. A first-hand account requires OE participants to open their hearts and minds in this unique place.

For some students it is difficult to share thoughts and feelings with their peers. However, by creating a safe space—free from put downs and teasing laughter—OE staff enable participants to share poems and excerpts from their journal entries during the week’s final evening activity. Much to the participants’ surprise, the personal reflections help them relate to their classmates and relish in their shared experiences. ❖

Summer 2007 was Molly Hucklebridge’s second season with OE. An avid autobiographer, she has a picture and journal entry from every day she’s lived in the Mono Basin!

Outdoor Experiences meets More Kids in the Woods

by Bartshé Miller

In an effort to reverse the nationwide disconnect between children and nature, the US Forest Service is trying to get more kids to experience the natural world, beyond the fast-food, video game culture of today’s youth. Called More Kids in the Woods (MKIW), this program awards thousands of dollars in matching funds to outdoor programs around the country. The Mono Lake Committee’s Outdoor Experiences (OE) program received assistance in 2007.

Last year more than 250 groups across the country competed for funding. The OE program received a \$15,000 grant, which was matched by the Committee and partners to help with travel scholarships, new life vests for canoeing, and staff time. Partners in the grant included the Inyo National Forest, the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power, the Water Replenishment District of Southern California, and a multitude of Los Angeles area school and community groups.

Seventeen groups from Southern California, comprising over 300 youth, participated in OE during 2007. Participants hiked, climbed, canoed, and assisted with restoration and service projects during their stays in the Mono Basin. Service projects included hands-on restoration work at Rush and Lee Vining Creeks. A new OE activity in 2007 gave students the opportunity to post their outdoor experiences online, helping to keep their connection with Mono Lake and the Eastern Sierra continue well after returning home.

With the assistance of MKIW, more kids than ever before hiked, paddled among tufa towers, and got their hands dirty in the magnificent Eastern Sierra landscape. For many of them it

was the first time they had visited the Mono Basin, slept under a full canopy of stars, or trekked to the top of a mountain peak. For all, the trip to Mono Lake provided a clean break from a cityscape of concrete, noise, and electronic stimulation. At Mono the natural, not the artificial, prevails on the senses. When this happens kids have a chance to self-reflect in ways they might never do at home. They have time to heal the disconnect with nature. Thanks to the More Kids in the Woods grant, more kids from Los Angeles did just that in 2007.



SANTIAGO ESCOBEDERA

Catching brine shrimp from a canoe is one highlight of Outdoor Experiences supported by More Kids in the Woods.

Defender of the Trust Award celebration

by Ellen King

September 28, 2007 marked the 13th anniversary of the historic State Water Resources Control Board decision D1361. The Mono Lake Committee's Board of Directors would be in town for their annual in-basin meeting, as would the Mono Basin Science Council, an independent group of scientists who provide guidance to the Committee on policy decisions. Since the Committee was planning to honor Jim Canaday with the Defender of the Trust Award, we decided to have a party!

Committee staff planned a weekend of events and activities that would allow visitors to experience autumn in the Mono Basin, to see first-hand the changes at the lake, and to get a chance to meet fellow Mono Lake enthusiasts while attending the Defender of the Trust Award dinner. A group of Defense Trust members—supporters who have made a significant financial commitment to the Committee—joined us in advance of the dinner to meet Committee staff and experience programs first hand.

Festivities started on Friday with hors d'oeuvres at the Mono Inn. The lake, shining in the late afternoon sun, and the canyons aglow with colorful aspens held the promise of a beautiful weekend.

However, the following day started inauspiciously with clouds and white caps threatening the morning's scheduled activities. What to do? Fortunately the ever-changing Mono Basin weather soon turned to blue skies and groups successfully paddled on Mono Lake, visited fall color spots, and checked out stream restoration progress. Everyone convened at Cain Ranch, home of the Committee's Outdoor

Experiences program, for a delicious warming lunch of homemade stew and cheerful conversation.

Three o'clock marked the start of the Around the World wine tasting and silent auction organized by Randy Arnold of Barefoot Winery, at the Lee Vining Community Center. Magically transformed with paper lanterns and manzanita branches by our friend Nicole Godoy, the room was a beautiful venue for dinner. Presentation of the Defender of the Trust Award followed, honoring Jim Canaday, a key figure in the fight to save Mono Lake.

Rounding out the evening Education Director Bartshé Miller and hydrologist Peter Vorster revealed previously-unknown live-auctioneer talents for the evening's finale. Marc del Piero kicked off

the bidding on the first item—a small aquarium of “sea monkeys” (brine shrimp)—creating a lively bidding war. Heidi Hopkins won a canoe excursion on Mono Lake with Sally Gaines; Doug Virtue and Kathy Day won a field trip to pull up the subdivision stakes on the Mono Lake parcel with Martha Davis; and Sherryl and Tony Taylor as well as Chris Lizza won a day of exploring the Mono Basin with ornithologist David Winkler!

On Sunday morning Committee staff greeted folks who stopped by the Lee Vining office for a delicious brunch and an office tour before heading home. One couple had been Committee members for 20 years, but had never visited the lake before. Others were frequent visitors. All told us that they had enjoyed the weekend's events and the opportunity to meet others who share their commitment to preserving Mono Lake and the Mono Basin ecosystem. ❖



Committee Executive Director Geoff McQuilkin with retired State Water Board member and Defender of the Trust awardee Jim Canaday.

ELLEN KING

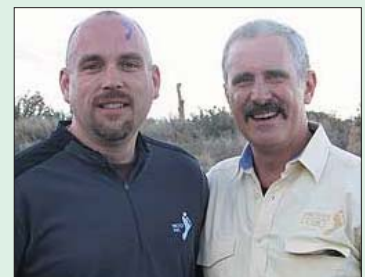
Around the world at Mono Lake

Celebrated “Barefooter” Randy Arnold (also of Mono Lake Committee Birding Intern and Wine Flight fame) out-poured himself once again for the Defense Trust weekend's Around the World Wine Tasting. The Committee was honored to work with this expert who recently surpassed his goal of pouring wines at 1,000 philanthropic Barefoot Wine Tastings.

With wines from Barefoot, Muir-Hanna, Louis Martini, Ecco Domani, Bella Sera, Black Swan, Mattie's Perch, Bridlewood, Red Bicycleette, Whitehaven, Redwood Creek, and Rancho Zabaco, tasters experienced wines from California, New Zealand, Australia, France, Italy, and Germany—it was a trip around the world ... with no jet lag!

The silent auction and raffle organized by Randy and his wonderful crew raised over \$2,500. Thank you Randy!

Also in attendance were friends from Muir-Hanna Vineyards. Descendants of John Muir, the Muir-Hanna family has a long-standing connection with the Mono Basin. Many thanks to Bill and Claudia Hanna for being a part of the event and for providing wine for the Defense Trust Award dinner!



Barefooters Greg Knight and Randy Arnold at Mono Lake.

Statewide water droplets

by Geoffrey McQuilkin

New leadership at DWP

The Los Angeles Department of Water & Power (DWP) has a new General Manager and Chief Executive Officer. H. David Nahai was appointed by the Mayor last October and confirmed by the City Council in December. Nahai, who previously served two years on the DWP Board of Commissioners, including one as president, brings a very interesting background to the General Manager position.

A lawyer by training, he has degrees from the London School of Economics and UC Berkeley. He served ten years on the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, including four as president, under appointments from three different governors. On the Regional Board he led major initiatives that protected water quality and reduced stormwater and urban runoff pollution. He also served for many years on the Board of the California League of Conservation Voters, and he has been Vice Chair of the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission.

On the day of his City Council hearing, an unprecedented event occurred: Nahai featured his environmental credentials as a qualification for the top job at DWP—one traditionally held by engineers and utility executives. At that same hearing, when asked about Los Angeles' future water supply, Nahai said "We can't look to more water imports. We have to develop water self sufficiency,"

including, he listed, storm water capture and water recycling—two excellent strategies that have important connections to the protection of Mono Lake. All this signals that Nahai is on a mission to bring positive change to DWP.

Meeting with Villaraigosa

Committee Executive Director Geoff McQuilkin joined Los Angeles environmental leaders in a meeting with Mayor Villaraigosa in December designed to review the Mayor's environmental achievements and discuss next steps on important campaigns. Of particular interest to the Committee: water consumption, particularly after last year's scant snowpack in the Eastern Sierra.

The Mayor stated his interest in expanding the use of recycled water within the city, as well as implementing further conservation measures for outdoor water use. He also emphasized that he wants to see more progress on water conservation and, referring to David Nahai, said "that's why I appointed an environmentalist for the first time in LA history." We're also glad to report that the Mayor left the meeting with a Mono Lake calendar in hand.

MWD's contingency plan

The Metropolitan Water District (MWD), the provider of water to much of Southern California, is creating a contingency plan to reduce water deliveries to member agencies,

including DWP, in light of reduced supplies due to drought and cutbacks in exports from the Bay Delta region of the state. The drought has decreased Colorado River supply and Bay Delta export reductions have been ordered to protect the endangered Delta smelt. As a result, Southern California water agencies may not receive all the water they request from MWD. The plan considers the agencies' use of water and success in water conservation, among other factors. So far the current winter is wetter than expected, so it's possible that the plan will not be needed this year. Still, points out MWD Board Chairman Timothy Brick, "We're getting good numbers on the rainfall this year, but that doesn't relieve the long-range pressure."

Newest State Water Board member confirmed

In a unanimous vote on January 14, the State Senate confirmed Frances Spivy-Weber to a seat on the State Water Resources Control Board. Fran, who previously served as Mono Lake Committee Co-Executive Director, has been an active member of the Board for nearly a year but was awaiting final confirmation from the Senate. Among many projects, she has been leading development of a statewide policy on recycled water that will provide direction to the state's nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards on how to consistently implement recycling projects. ❖

Policy notes from page 7

to maintain that quiet for the benefit of visitors, residents, and wildlife.

Inyo National Forest welcomes Jim Upchurch

Starting on September 30, 2007, Jim Upchurch assumed the role of Supervisor for the Inyo National Forest, replacing Jeff Bailey who retired in 2007. Most recently a Legislative

Affairs Specialist in the Forest Service's Washington DC headquarters, Upchurch has engaged in issues on recreation, wilderness, and alpine ski areas, and has worked to resolve differences between human-powered and motorized recreational uses on National Forest lands. The Committee is pleased to see many of the full-time Inyo National Forest positions filled with qualified

staff; we look forward to partnering with them on many different projects in the Mono Basin in the future. ❖

Emily Prud'homme is the Committee's Policy Coordinator. She took advantage of the snow by training for the 51k American Birkebeiner cross country ski race in Wisconsin!

Rush Creek variations: high times and deep blues for the Mono Basin's endangered songbird

by Chris McCreedy, PRBO Conservation Science

Editor's note: Chris McCreedy is a Staff Biologist with PRBO Conservation Science. His ongoing work on Willow Flycatchers is one example of scientific research facilitated by the Committee's Mono Basin Field Station.

An unexpected result of the revival of Mono Lake's tributaries has been the return of Willow Flycatchers to Rush Creek. Willow Flycatchers are small brown songbirds that overcompensate for their dull appearance with attitude and verve.

Willow Flycatchers depend on riparian habitat to breed, and with our own attitude and verve, we Californians have destroyed 95% of California's riparian habitat over the past two hundred years. As a result, once-common Willow Flycatchers are now a State Endangered species in California, and only around 1,000 adults remain to breed each summer in the state.

Willow Flycatchers were found to nest throughout the Eastern Sierra in the early twentieth century, but heavy water diversions and rampant livestock grazing in riparian areas have nearly eradicated these birds from the region.

Municipal water diversions (such as those to Los Angeles in the Eastern Sierra) simply erase riparian vegetation's water supply, which in turn erases the riparian vegetation.



Chris McCreedy banding a Willow Flycatcher nestling on Rush Creek.

This is what happened on Rush and Lee Vining Creeks, Mono Lake's primary tributaries, over the second half of the twentieth-century.

Riparian grazing demolishes low vegetative cover that Willow Flycatchers (and many other species of songbirds) depend upon to hide their nests, which are often built lower than waist-high, or approximately four inches under a cow's tongue. This has eliminated huge amounts of potential Willow Flycatcher habitat in the Owens Valley along the Owens River, along the Walker River north of the Mono Basin, and in the Mono Basin prior to a grazing moratorium that began in 1994. As a counterpoint, recent removal of livestock from northern Sierra meadows (such as at Warner Valley), has resulted in quick and dramatic increases in Willow Flycatcher numbers.

In addition, Californians subsidize Brown-headed Cowbirds, which rely on agriculture, livestock manure, and sod and bird feeders in urban areas for easy foraging opportunities. Cowbirds are not able to subsist in desert environments without humans providing this "free lunch." In turn, Brown-headed Cowbirds lay their eggs in the nests of small songbirds like Willow Flycatchers (their "hosts"), and cowbird eggs and young nearly always develop faster than the host young. When host eggs do manage to hatch in time, Willow Flycatcher young develop very slowly, and nearly always perish in the presence of a competing cowbird baby.

The Point Reyes Bird Observatory (now known as PRBO Conservation Science) has been studying the Mono Basin Willow Flycatcher population since 2000. This is the only known population remaining in the Inyo National Forest. By 2004, the Willow Flycatcher population had increased to 16 adults, and their future looked bright. But in each subsequent year, the population has decreased. In 2007, the population was down to ten adults.

Why? The question is important, because in a sense, Rush and Lee Vining Creeks, while still far from historic natural conditions, are in some ways "as good as it gets" for riparian habitat in the desert southwest. Water diversions are far less now than in previous decades, there is no livestock grazing to eliminate vegetation, and no grazing and agriculture nearby to support cowbirds. If Willow Flycatchers cannot survive here, how can we ever hope to save this wonderful species, and hundreds and thousands of other riparian-obligate plant and animal species in arid areas throughout the world?

Cowbirds are the most obvious culprit to the Willow Flycatchers' recent decline. The great majority of Willow Flycatcher nests in the Mono Basin have been parasitized by cowbirds over the past three seasons. In short, the number of fledged young produced over the past five years has not been

Continued on page 13

Owens Lake is returning to WILDlife

by Mike Prather, Owens Valley Committee

Editor's note: Many members of the Mono Lake Committee are also interested in Owens Lake, so we include an update here from Mike Prather, Owens Valley Committee Outreach Coordinator and Eastern Sierra Audubon activist.

The final build out of the Los Angeles Owens Lake Dust Control Project will begin in late summer 2008. More than nine additional square miles of dust control ponds and sheet flooding will bring the total of habitat-creating control methods to nearly 35 square miles by April 2010.

Attracted to this rich new habitat created by the water-based dust control methods, tens of thousands of shorebirds and waterfowl are once again using Owens Lake for food, rest, and nesting. Spring and fall migration numbers as well as wintering and nesting populations (the lake is the largest Snowy Plover nesting site in California) have exploded dramatically. Coupled with the 900-acre Lower Owens River Delta Waterfowl Area (a component of the Lower Owens River Project), the flooded dust control areas on the lake have restored much of the shorebird habitat acreage that once existed at Owens Lake when it was one of the West's most important wildlife locations.

Audubon-California has listed Owens Lake as one of its priority Important Bird Areas. Highlights include 36 species of shorebirds, 27 species of waterfowl, 16 species of raptors and 15 "Bird Species of Special Concern." Planning is underway for public access to the lake for wildlife viewing once the dust control construction is completed in 2010. This will hopefully include interpretive sites that will share the rich wildlife and geologic heritage of Owens Lake.

Willow Flycatchers from page 12

enough to sustain the population.

An amusing, though tragic reason for Willow Flycatcher decline thrives in Willow Flycatcher behavior. Simply put, they get too excited around each other when they are fixing to mate. They make much more noise around the nest than other, closely related songbirds. Like ruinous voyeurs, cowbird females simply listen and watch, and quickly parasitize most fresh Willow Flycatcher nests.

But where do these cowbirds come from? As said, there hasn't been grazing along the creeks for over ten years. There is little agriculture in the Mono Basin.

As a Master's student at Humboldt State, a friend and collaborator named Chris Tonra studied cowbird movements in the Mono Basin, placing color bands on cowbirds to follow them. Banded cowbirds that were seen hunting for host nests on riparian reaches of Rush, Lee Vining, and Mill Creeks were also observed gorging at open bird feeders in Mono City and Lee Vining. As long as



Sulfate Road at Owens Lake with a large expanse of habitat-creating shallow flood dust control.

An opportunity to protect this enormous wildlife return has presented itself, but is in no way assured. Current threats to the lake's bird populations include a reduction or elimination of water use for dust control resulting in habitat loss and the pumping of local groundwater that feeds springs, seeps and wetlands around the lake. A balance must be achieved between the water needs of Los Angeles and the public trust wildlife populations that belong to all Californians.

For more information or to arrange field trips at Owens Lake, please contact Mike Prather at mprather@lonenet.net or www.ovcweb.org. ❖

residents continue to provide food for cowbirds, cowbirds will continue to exist in high numbers that will threaten host songbirds in the Mono Basin.

To boil it down, the problem is still us, because we are dealing Willow Flycatchers a hand of cards that they can't play. In time, if they can manage to survive cowbird parasitism long enough to evolve anti-cowbird behaviors (such as abandoning cowbird eggs, burying cowbird eggs with nesting material, and most important, zipping their birdlips), they may succeed at recovering their populations. If they can't, we'll lose them a second time, maybe for the last time.

The restoration of Mono Lake's tributaries provided the first, most critical step for the return of this species: habitat. The more I ponder it, the more I find it a miracle that this species has returned to us. The next steps are being played out each summer, in chaotic thickets of vegetation across Mono Lake's tributaries, and at bird feeders in our own yards. ❖

Lowest streamflow in 15 years; lowest runoff in 30

by Greg Reis

2007 had 42% of average runoff: the lowest April-to-September runoff since 1977 (the driest year on record). The dry year minimum flow for lower Rush Creek for October through March is 36 cubic feet per second (cfs). This is the first winter since 1995 that this flow was released. But due to a variance granted by the State Water Board, on November 2, 2007, the flow released into Rush Creek from Grant Lake Reservoir was lowered to 26 cfs, and will stay at that level until April 1, 2008.

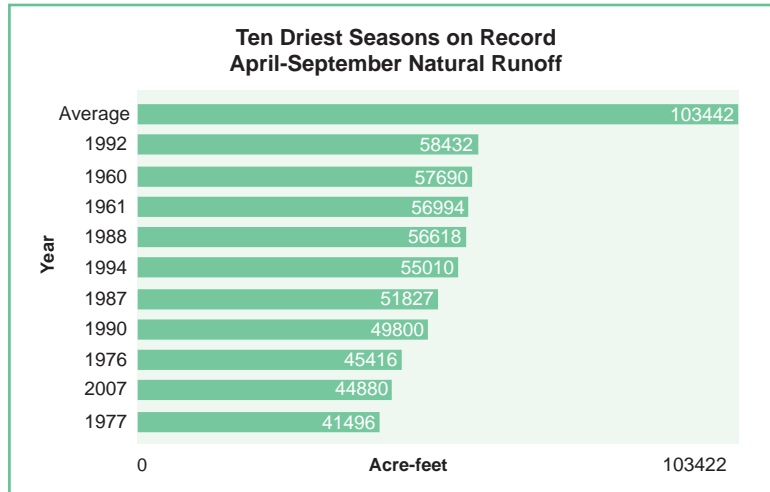
This is the lowest flow since September 25, 1992, when lower Rush Creek dropped to 27 cfs for one day. During October 1991, it was at 20 cfs for a fish study. In the fall of 1990, after running at 100 cfs for a year in order to comply with the new lake level

injunction, the Grant Lake reservoir hit bottom, and the outflow was adjusted to match the inflow, with lower Rush Creek getting as low as 27 cfs at times.

But the last time the flow was as low for as long was in 1989, before court-

ordered limits on exports, when only 19 cfs was required to be released down Rush Creek and 4 cfs was released down Lee Vining Creek.

See the article on page 5 for details on this year's flow variance for Rush Creek.



Lakewatch

Mono Lake drops 2.4 feet since 2006 high point; meromixis ends

by Greg Reis

A very dry fall ended with December storms that brought 6 inches of snow to the Mono Basin. These storms were unable to abate the continuous drop in lake level since April, which ended when the lake hit a low of 6382.7 feet above sea level around New Year's Day. The last time the lake was at that same level was in February 2006.

The falling lake level caused meromixis (a chemical stratification in the lake that prevents wintertime mixing of the water column) to end by mid-December. This two-year period of meromixis is the shortest one that has been recorded, due to two extremely wet years (causing the stratification) followed by an extremely dry

year (breaking down the stratification).

A major winter storm arrived the weekend after New Year's, bringing 3.5 inches of water (mostly slushy snow) in a single day (4.14 inches for the storm's total precipitation), and causing Mono Lake to rise about 0.2 feet. Near the end of January, some lake-effect snow and additional storms made January the snowiest calendar month on record and brought the precipitation for the month to 7.77 inches, the fifth-wettest month in Lee Vining's 20-year record. Mono Lake rose 0.4 feet in January thanks to the change in the weather.

In fact, it could be a very big change—all the years when Lee Vining had more than 5 inches of precipitation in one month turned out to be wetter than average runoff years. On the other hand, except for 1994, all of the years other than 2007 in the ten driest years (see graph) came in strings of multiple dry years. So either way, 2008 will chart new territory.

The higher elevations have gotten two-thirds of their average winter snow that usually falls by April 1. February and March weather could turn things either way, or just make it come out average. An average year could result in a small rise in lake level by next winter.

The long-term outlook for the next three months is for La Niña to continue, which tends to bring wet weather to the north and dry weather to the south. The Mono Basin is currently lumped into the drier region. If these outlooks are correct and the rest of the winter is below average, (assuming evaporation is average), the worst case scenario would be a small drop in lake level this year.

And of course, if it is wet—as it looks out the window at press time—then the lake will rise!

Greg Reis is the Committee's Information Specialist. He has taken advantage of the deep snow behind town—hiking up and skiing down from the Warren Bench!

6417'

Prediversion lake level, 1941

6391'

Target lake level

6383.7'

Current lake level

6372'

Historic low, 1982

Mono Basin Journal

A roundup of quiet happenings at Mono Lake

by Geoffrey McQuilkin



GEORGE MCQUILKIN

There are local legends that grow wherever people live and work and in the world of the Mono Lake Committee, there's a large set of them connected to leading public walks at South Tufa. It's well known, for example, that the summertime evening tour leads up to a wonderful and often dramatic sunset that spreads oranges and reds across the sky. And it's certainly true that stormy weather adds drama, with dark clouds rumbling overhead and swaths of grey rain wavering across the lake. Now I'm pretty sure it's true that one group, exploring on such an evening, made the call to cancel the tour due to lightning when people's hair started to stand on end. But really, did lightning ever strike a spotting scope forgotten in the rush of this fateful eve, vaporizing it never to be seen again? So the legends grow.

Another kind of legend is built through repetition of a wish. Wouldn't it be great, on one of those walking tours, to have one of the nesting Osprey fly overhead, creating the perfect entrée to talk about the restoration of Rush Creek? And wouldn't it be better if it had a fish clasped in its talons

(yes, I'm pretty sure this did happen)? And wouldn't it be even better if the Osprey flew by with that fish at sunset while the clouds glowed orange and lightning struck Negit Island?

So, knowing these legends, let me risk reporting that I was on the west shore of Mono Lake at sunrise recently, a cold morning with mist drifting along over wetland cattails and the islands hazily visible in the thin first light of day. There was a crunching sound of frozen grasses underfoot, and a coyote came into view, trotting along the water's edge, glancing at the lake, then moving purposefully ahead. It was unexpected, a reminder of the web of life that Mono Lake supports. And then, as the coyote faded into the glowing mist, I looked up, and there I saw a bald eagle, soaring along, white head bright in the sun, flying, perhaps, to one of the restored creeks. It's true, that's what I saw. Really. ❖

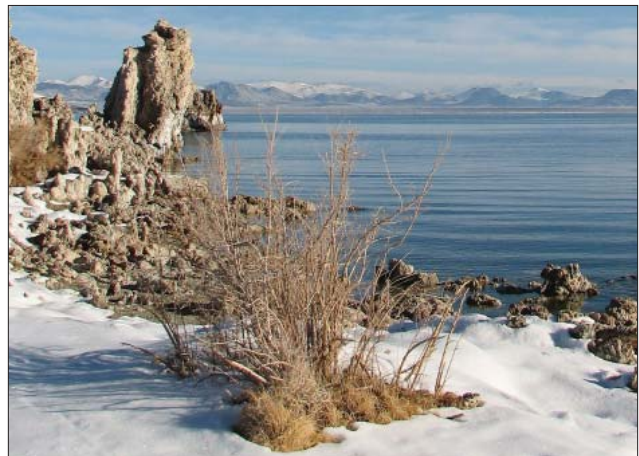
Geoff McQuilkin is the Committee's Executive Director. He has also been a "ski dad" on his daughter's school trips to June Mountain this winter.

Benchmarks



ELIN Ljung

February 2007: Frozen foam and poconip fog frame a South Tufa view with Mono Lake at 6384.6 feet above sea level.



ELIN Ljung

February 2008: A clear morning reveals more lakeshore exposed with the lake at 6383.1 feet above sea level.

BLM moves forward with Conway Ranch plans

Historic building restored

by Lisa Cutting

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recently completed restoring one of the historic ranch houses in the north part of the Mono Basin on Conway Ranch. In addition to completely restabilizing the foundation and structural integrity of dwelling, the BLM has also installed an interpretive sign for visitors.

In 1998 the Trust for Public Land (TPL) purchased the property as an interim measure to thwart a proposed 440-unit commercial and residential development plan that had been approved to move forward. Public opposition to the development was so significant that Mono County and the BLM worked to secure a cadre of federal grants—primarily open space and habitat protection funds—that allowed the two parties to acquire the parcel from TPL in 1999. BLM holds title to 220 acres of the total 1,025 acres, with Mono County owning the remainder.

The two entities have developed a Memorandum of Understanding that includes goals and uses such as open



The restored historic ranch building and interpretive sign at Conway Ranch.

space preservation, wildlife habitat preservation, historic and cultural preservation, sheep grazing, and fish-rearing facilities on Mono County's portion of the Conway Ranch adjacent to Wilson Creek.

The Conway Ranch has a long and

colorful history. The original Conway Ranch house was built by James Wilson and Harlan P. Noyes in 1872. John Conway and his family bought the property to graze cattle, raise hogs, grow hay and vegetables, and run a dairy to supply the mining towns of Bodie and Lundy. In 1939 Ritchie Conway, John's son, moved several of the ranch structures to the east and named it "Little Conway Ranch," where the first building restored by the BLM sits today.

Both the BLM and Mono County believe that the rich history of the property should be shared with the public. The BLM's recent accomplishment in showcasing this history and making it accessible to visitors is a solid step toward similar projects in the future. The best way to access the site is still being discussed.

For current information on visiting Conway Ranch, stop by the Mono Lake Committee Information Center & Bookstore or contact Lisa Cutting (lisa@monolake.org) at (760) 647-6595. ❖

Agency staff changes from page 5

position within the City of Los Angeles this past October. DWP quickly filled the position and the Committee is looking forward to working with Bruk Moges.

How do these changes affect the Committee?

Simply put, the Mono Lake Committee must spend a lot more time and energy bringing new agency staff up to speed. Committee staff now hold a large percentage of the institutional memory related to the court proceedings, the intent behind Decision 1631, and the working details of the restoration orders. Committee staff and consultants have been working intimately on these issues for decades, and in some cases since the

very beginning, which has established expert knowledge that simply cannot be acquired within a year or two.

This means the Committee is spending additional time to remind agencies of key issues that need addressing, explain the history of issues, reestablish working procedures and informal commitment to attempt to reach consensus, and remind key players of the previously-agreed-upon protocols for working through a disagreement. All of this just underscores the importance of the Mono Lake Committee's role in ensuring the State Water Board Decision remains firmly in place and that all activities progress according to the restoration orders.

Cunningham from page 6

owner in compensation. As such, the matter has already been litigated and resolved, precluding the Cunninghams from attempting a second round of litigation in the present day.

The future of the land still owned by the Cunninghams seems, once again, to be about the monetary value of the land. As the Committee's legal letter concludes, the Mono Lake Committee "fully supports the Cunninghams' continued efforts to ensure that their property is purchased by the United States or some other entity intending to preserve the land in its current, undeveloped state. In this respect, it appears that the interests of [the Committee] and the Cunninghams are aligned." ❖

Mono Lake travels the world with Water, H₂O = Life

by Emily Prud'homme

I was roaming through the dark and misty wilds of an unknown place, swarmed by the shrills and shrieks of the local denizens, when I rounded the last corner and found myself surrounded by tufa towers with a lone California Gull wheeling in the breezeless air above me ... wait a minute, a California Gull in early December?!

Far from the real Mono Basin, I was in New York City, in a re-creation of the Mono Lake shoreline at the American Museum of Natural History's exhibit, "Water, H₂O = Life." (The local denizens were the dozens of schoolchildren touring

the exhibit with me, an experience not unlike being near a colony of gulls at the real Mono Lake in summer!)

The tufa towers are featured near the end of the exhibit, in a quiet and spacious room, strangely reminiscent of the real place. A wall-sized image of sunset at South Tufa sets the tone, and among the life-size tufa are several text panels that describe the Mono Lake story, abundant bird life, conservation, and restoration efforts. Mono Lake is featured as one of three examples of "Regeneration"—projects aimed at mending aquatic systems after years of damage.

The Committee provided much of this information to the museum curators, sharing species lists, photographs, and details about Mono Lake's history. This exhibit highlights the many successes at Mono Lake, and is a fitting tribute for this year, the Mono Lake Committee's 30th anniversary.

Water, H₂O = Life will show in New York until May 26 when it moves to the San Diego Natural History Museum, featuring additional information on Southern California water issues. The exhibit will be on display in San Diego from July 19 to November 30, 2008, and continues to other US and international venues through 2011.

For more information on the Water, H₂O = Life exhibit visit www.amnh.org/exhibitions/water/ and www.ngwa.org/about/ngwref/water_exhibit.aspx. ❖



EMILY PRUD'HOMME

Present and past Policy Coordinators Emily and Clare meet for a tufa reunion in New York City!

Rush Creek variance from page 5

development. It was agreed that all the interested parties would discuss and agree in advance before the water was used for any one particular application.

The 1994 State Water Board decision clearly established streamflow, lake level, and ecological restoration requirements that DWP must follow. Any proposal to deviate from the streamflow requirements of D1631 must have a special justification. In the past the Committee has supported reasonable variances to accommodate short-term situations such as facility maintenance or scientific inquiry within the adaptive management context.

In this particular case, there is scientific interest in understanding how the stream functions at a range of low winter flows in dry years, so the Committee did not oppose the variance. However, the variance is useful only if wintertime data is gathered and the Committee has been insistent upon an additional monitoring plan that includes fish studies, groundwater measurements, flow measurements, and field observations.

Reaching agreement with DWP on the specifics of the winter monitoring has been problematic. Factors such as consultant contracts, limited budgets, pre-established work plans, and a fundamental difference of opinion on the

importance of this unique data-gathering opportunity has made reaching consensus challenging.

The Committee is holding strong to the importance of adding supplemental monitoring and, with the help of CalTrout, is out in the field this winter helping to monitor parameters such as groundwater levels and streamflow. Additional indices that DWP and the fisheries scientists will monitor include temperature fluctuations, the extent of ice, and most importantly, the effects of a reduced flow on trout populations. Effects on the trout are of particular interest because scientists hypothesize that the trout will do better with a reduction in the velocity of winter stream flow—expending less energy battling currents under already stressful winter conditions.

As far as the Committee is concerned, this situation provides all the more reason to collect as much information as possible this winter. Staff are working diligently to assure that DWP fulfills its monitoring duties; if they do, we hope to be able to report that new knowledge has been gained about Rush Creek. ❖

Lisa Cutting is the Committee's Eastern Sierra Policy Director. She's determined to magically transform her dirt yard into a productive vegetable garden, which means keeping her golden retriever Abbey away from the carrots and lettuce!



30TH ANNIVERSARY T-SHIRT

These new shirts bear our celebratory logo on the front in the left pocket area and our timeless Mono Lake Committee logo big on the back. Made of organic cotton, these five-ounce, Ts are pre-shrunk, and natural colored. The cotton is grown and harvested according to USDA-approved organic cotton certification which covers seed and soil preparation including water conservation needs, weed and pest control, and manufacturing, dyeing, finishing and assembly in a certified organic sewing facility.
 30th Anniversary T-shirt, unisex in natural, S-XL: \$19.00, XXL: \$21.00



SEE ALL STYLES AND COLORS (AND PLACE ORDERS TOO!) ONLINE AT WWW.MONOLAKE.ORG/BOOKSTORE

30TH ANNIVERSARY BASEBALL CAP

Our new baseball caps are made from recycled PET fiber! All those plastic soda bottles you've recycled have been turned into fabric fiber for these low-profile lightweight caps. They feature a six-panel soft structure design with an adjustable Velcro strap and have a wonderfully comfortable feel. The caps come in earth tones of olive or stone with the classic Committee logo in front and the 30th Anniversary logo in back.
 30th Anniversary baseball cap, please specify olive or stone, one size fits all: \$20.00



30TH ANNIVERSARY MUG

This elegant 15-ounce mug comes in a glossy natural color and features our eco-friendly inked blue and black celebratory logo on one side and the classic Committee logo on the other. Fits nicely in your left or right hand, depending which logo you prefer to display, and provides the perfect way to sip a warm beverage of your choice in honor of Mono Lake. Spread the word with this wonderful gift for family and friends!
 30th Anniversary mug, natural color: \$9.50



Order by phone: (760) 647-6595, fax: (760) 647-6377, or online: www.monolake.org/bookstore

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2008 Field Seminars



ELIN LIVING

Visions of the Past: First Discoveries

June 7–8

Terri Geissinger

\$140 per person / \$125 for members

The Mono Basin is filled with curious monuments to a bustling past. Take a journey back in time and discover the fascinating history behind the Mono Basin and the rich Bodie Hills. The past will come alive as you hear stories of the discoverers, the prospectors, and the families who settled here and made the Mono Basin their home. Visit Dogtown, Monoville, Bodie, Mono Mills, stage coach routes, railroads, gold mines, and the disappearing town of West Portal. Before fishing and tourism there was mining—from gold to water—and this seminar will focus on the people, the sites, and the stories that persisted long after the gold was gone. Terri Geissinger is a Bodie State Historic Park Historian, Interpreter, and Guide. She is active in the Mono Basin Historical Society, and has a talent for making history come alive.

South Shore Kayak

June 8

Stuart Wilkinson & Mono Lake Committee Staff

\$90 per person / \$80 for members

limited to 12 participants

Late spring reveals snow-capped mountains towering over a glassy Mono Lake—a great time to kayak! Join Stuart Wilkinson and a Mono Lake Committee staff member for a guided naturalist expedition along Mono's south shore. This natural history kayak tour will cover a wide variety of topics relating to this unusual Great Basin lake, such as geology, ecology, history, and politics. Expect to see underwater tufa towers, birds, brine shrimp, and lake-bottom springs. Some kayak experience is helpful, but not necessary; kayaks and safety equipment are provided. This seminar is being offered for the 12th year in a row, and is highly rated by past participants. Space is limited in this popular seminar, so register early!

Mono Lake Committee Field Seminars fill quickly every year—
call (760) 647-6595 or register online at www.monolake.org/seminars

Great Basin Wildflowers, Plants, & Habitats

June 14–15

Mark Bagley

\$140 per person / \$125 for members

Despite its proximity to the Sierra Nevada mountains, the Mono Basin itself lies in the arid Great Basin desert. This field seminar will focus on plants in the Great Basin sagebrush scrub, unique pumice flat habitats, piñon-juniper woodland, Jeffrey pine forest, and wetland habitats found in the lower elevations of the Basin. During short walks in the different desert habitats, we will identify wildflowers, trees, and shrubs; observe plant communities; and see and discuss plants' relationships with their environment. This seminar is for beginners as well as for dedicated wildflower enthusiasts. Mark Bagley is an independent botanical consultant in the Eastern Sierra and Mojave Desert and a long-time trip leader for the local chapter of the California Native Plant Society. He has lived in the Owens Valley for the past 22 years and has taught plant and natural history seminars for the Mono Lake Committee since 1988.

The Art of Wildflower Macrophotography

June 27–29

David Gubernick

\$250 per person / \$225 for members
limited to 8 participants

Learn to take creative and beautiful close-up images, further develop your artistic vision, and enhance your photographic skills in the warm and supportive learning environment of this workshop for beginning to advanced amateur photographers.

The weekend will emphasize the artistry of macrophotography and the technical means to render such images; this is not a course in botanical identification. Classroom instruction, demonstrations, and individual coaching in the field will help take your photography to the next level. Evenings will be spent discussing



Up close with a prickly poppy.



Fly fishing along Rush Creek's calm upper reaches.

Fly Fishing in the Mono Basin

July 11–13

Peter Pumphrey & Roberta Lagomarsini

\$165 per person / \$150 for members

Learn the basics of fly fishing in the Mono Basin's beautiful landscape! This introductory seminar will begin by covering the equipment involved, the varieties of flies and their uses, and basic casting technique. The class will then move to one of the Basin's many streams to consider trout habitat and habits, characteristics of a healthy stream environment, reading the water, fly presentation, and catch and release. On Sunday the class will move to another streamside location to work on refining the techniques from the day before. There will be time spent at high altitude (over 9,000 feet above sea level), and most of Saturday and Sunday will be spent on foot. Equipment is available for those who are not already engaged in the sport. Peter Pumphrey and Roberta Lagomarsini are guides licensed by the State of California and have been teaching basic fly fishing for over ten years. They will de-mystify fly fishing and provide a relaxed atmosphere in which to begin what can be a lifelong adventure in the outdoors.

www.monolake.org/seminars or (760) 647-6595 to register

The Art of Wildflower Macrophotography

July 18–20

David Gubernick

\$250 per person / \$225 for members
limited to 8 participants

Learn to take creative and beautiful close-up images, further develop your artistic vision, and enhance your photographic skills in the warm and supportive learning environment of this workshop for beginning to advanced amateur photographers. The weekend will emphasize the artistry of macrophotography and the technical means to render such images; this is not a course in botanical identification. Classroom instruction, demonstrations, and individual coaching in the field will help take your photography to the next level. Evenings will be spent discussing and providing feedback on participants' fieldwork as well as prior work. David J. Gubernick, Ph.D., is an internationally and nationally published and award-winning nature photographer and workshop leader. He provides fine art prints and stock images for the advertising, corporate, editorial, and home décor markets. His first photography book, *Wildflowers of Monterey County*, has been a best-seller, garnering rave reviews. He is currently working on several other photography books.

Summer Birds of the Mono Basin

July 25–27

David Wimpfheimer

\$150 per person / \$135 for members

This field seminar will concentrate on the identification and ecology of birds that breed in the Mono Basin and others that stop at Mono Lake during the summer. In sagebrush meadows and riparian and montane forests, the class will explore a number of sites intensively, mixing short leisurely walks with periods of observation and natural history discussion—taking time to learn about birds by watching them closely. Woodpeckers, corvids, flycatchers, warblers, and other passerines display varied behaviors, but a major focus will be Mono Lake and other special wetlands. These are unique areas for Wilson's Phalaropes, White-faced Ibis, and other waterbirds. David Wimpfheimer has been educating



PHOTO COURTESY OF BEN WINGER

A Yellow-headed Blackbird among cattails.

and interpreting birds and the natural history of California for over 20 years, and has a strong connection to Mono Lake. His seasoned focus and knowledge will make for an enjoyable and educational outing!

Capturing the Sageland in Pastel

July 26–27

Ane Carla Rovetta

\$165 per person / \$145 for members
limited to 12 participants

The sparkling light and radiant skies of the Mono Basin are pure inspiration. Add a set of brilliant pastel chalks and your own unique imagination, and you have an incredible weekend of color exploration and art. Landscape painter Ane Carla Rovetta is known for her realistic depiction of our golden western lands. She will guide students through a value system she modeled after Ansel Adam's work that will help organize the overwhelming hues of the summer terrain. Using materials she has carefully selected, the group will paint on location to create impressions of this majestic basin. Each participant will go home with at least one small finished painting and several sketches, color studies, and value experiments that will fuel future artistic endeavors. All materials are provided by the instructor. This is the Committee's newest seminar, so sign up quickly to reserve your spot!



BARBIE MILLER

White-faced Ibis in flight over Mono Lake.



EILIN LUIJING

A male blue copper butterfly lands briefly on sagebrush.

Introduction to High Country Plants & Habitats

August 8–10

Ann Howald

\$150 per person / \$135 for members

This class will explore the mosaic of habitats found in the Eastern Sierra high country—flower-filled meadows fed by meandering streams, sagebrush-covered slopes, lodgepole pine forests, subalpine lakes bordered by willows, and flowery rock gardens. Sight identification of common trees, shrubs, and wildflowers will be emphasized, as well as the many ways that plants, birds, insects, and other wildlife interact in high country habitats. Any chance encounters with wildlife will lead to impromptu talks about Clark’s Nutcracker, long-tailed weasel, Yosemite toad, pika, Caspian Tern, and other critters that may cross our path. The class begins Friday evening with a slideshow preview of the habitats and some of the plants and wildlife likely to be seen during field trips. Saturday and Sunday walks will be at 9,000- to 10,000-foot elevations, over moderate terrain, and are fairly slow-paced. Ann Howald is a consulting botanist who has taught plant classes in the Eastern Sierra for many years.

Los Angeles Aqueduct Tour

August 9

Greg Reis

\$90 per person / \$80 for members

The Mono Basin extension of the Los Angeles Aqueduct began exporting water 350 miles south to the City of LA in 1941. Join Mono Lake Committee Information Specialist Greg Reis for an investigation of the north end of the aqueduct system. Visit all the major aqueduct facilities in the Mono Basin, and learn about the aqueduct’s effects on Mono Lake, its tributary streams, the Upper Owens River, and land

management in the area. The group will also discuss the history of water diversions, the effort to save Mono Lake, and where habitat restoration is headed in the future. Greg is the perfect guide for unraveling the Mono Basin’s complex and fascinating plumbing—he has over a dozen years of experience in Mono Basin hydrology and restoration and keeps close track of Mono Basin water management.

Mono Basin Restoration

August 10

Greg Reis

\$90 per person / \$80 for members

Get your hands in the dirt learning about ecosystem restoration! “Restoration” is a fuzzy word that has different meanings to different people. Instructor Greg Reis will explain what restoration means in the Mono Basin and discuss how different philosophies have resulted in the various projects that have been implemented over time. See the effects of restoration projects as well as areas that still need to be restored during a driving and walking tour of the Mono Basin—with Greg’s knowledge to fill in the history at each site. The afternoon will be spent helping with a current revegetation project by watering recent pine plantings. Greg is the perfect guide for unraveling the Mono Basin’s complex and fascinating restoration story—he has over a dozen years of experience in Mono Basin hydrology and restoration.



GREG REIS

Planting Jeffrey pines helps restore Mono Basin streams.

www.monolake.org/seminars or (760) 647-6595 to register

Miwok-Paiute Basketry

August 15–17

Lucy Parker & Julia Parker

\$185 per person / \$170 for members

\$80 materials fee

primitive group campsite included (no pets, please)

During this three-day seminar, participants will prepare materials and create a Miwok-Paiute burden basket out of California red bud, tule, and willow. Burden baskets were used for gathering pinenuts and acorns. This seminar is designed for weavers of all levels, beginning through advanced. You are encouraged (but not required) to camp with the group, and evenings will be spent around the campfire with traditional



ELYN LUNG

Julia Parker weaving a seedbeater basket out of tule and willow.

songs and stories. Lucy Parker is a descendent of the Yosemite Miwok, Mono Lake Kutzadika^a, and Kayasha Pomo Peoples. She learned traditional handiwork from her mother Julia, a master basket weaver. Julia Parker has dedicated her life to learning and teaching basketry as well as continuing the traditions of her people. She is one of the famous basket weavers of California, and the only weaver still practicing who was taught by women who wove in the early 20th century.

Fall Bird Migration

August 23–24

Dave Shuford

\$140 per person / \$125 for members

The east slope of the Sierra Nevada is a major migration route for birds traveling from northern nesting areas to warm southern habitats. As a result, early autumn is the time of year to see the greatest diversity of land birds, shorebirds, and water birds in the Mono Basin and on Crowley Lake reservoir. Dave Shuford has been a staff biologist at PRBO Conservation Science for 20 years. He has conducted numerous surveys and research projects in the Mono Basin and beyond and is well acquainted with where to find birds in the Eastern Sierra. This is one of our most popular field seminars, so register early!

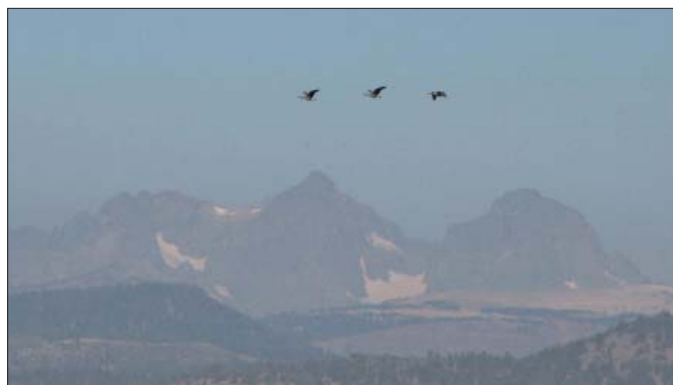
Living on the Edge: Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep in the Mono Basin

September 6–7

John Wehausen

\$165 per person / \$150 for members

The US Fish & Wildlife Service listed the Sierra bighorn sheep as Federally Endangered in 2000. This field seminar will involve discussions of the fascinating biology of these animals, their relationship with other mammals (including mountain lions and humans), and the conservation of these animals in the field. Past participants saw bighorn six out of the last seven years—while there is a very good chance of seeing Sierra bighorn sheep in the wild during this seminar, there is no guarantee. John Wehausen is a research scientist at White Mountain Research Station in Bishop who has been investigating various aspects of the Sierra bighorn and working for their conservation since 1974. In the late 1970s he initiated the restoration program that brought bighorn back to the Mono Basin. Some of the proceeds from this seminar will benefit the Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep Foundation. *Please be aware that this seminar involves very strenuous hiking at the 10,000-foot elevation and above.*



ELYN LUNG

Canada Geese migrate south in front of Mt. Ritter and Banner Peak.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE IMAGE SCIENCE AND ANALYSIS LABORATORY, NASA JOHNSON SPACE CENTER

The Mono Basin's fascinating geology stands out in an aerial view.

Mono Basin Landscape: A Trek Through Time

September 13–14

Angela Jayko

\$150 per person / \$135 for members

The Mono Basin is a dramatic landscape with both eye-catching views and subtle nuances that remind even casual observers of changes brought on by the long passage of time. This seminar will concern the Mono Basin's recent geologic history east of the Sierra Nevada crest. There are many well-known geomorphic features beloved by all in this region, land forms that tell tall tales about both the paleoclimate and the neotectonics (the active crustal processes at the surface of the earth). During the seminar we'll select several prominent landscape features on which to focus our discussion about the processes and the evolution of the area. Angela Jayko is a geologist based at the White Mountain Research Station who has worked in the Eastern Sierra region between Death Valley and Mono Basin for several years. She has worked on a variety of projects that concern the history of the Owens River System and local basin evolution, and she is a member of the Mono Basin Science Council.

Visions of the Past: Bodie, Masonic, Aurora

September 20–21

Terri Geissinger

\$140 per person / \$125 for members

This guided tour is for folks who love history, enjoy the outdoors, and think miles of dirt roads can be lots of fun. In the beautiful Bodie Hills, all within 20 miles, lie three ghost

towns. Their stories are filled with pioneer families, prospectors, muleskinners, heroes, and gunslingers. As you tour the town and the cemetery of Bodie, once the second-largest city in California, you will hear the fascinating stories of those who lived here and the ones who never left. Today Bodie is the largest unrestored ghost town in the west with over 170 buildings remaining. Next visit the rock cabins and foundations of Masonic, where nearly 500 people resided in a beautiful canyon, mining gold with great hope and eventually producing \$600,000. The last stop is Aurora, once a bustling town of 8,000 souls in the 1860s, which now rests forever in peace amongst the sagebrush and piñon pine. Your guide Terri Geissinger is a Bodie State Historic Park Historian, Interpreter, and Guide. She is active in the Mono Basin Historical Society, and has a talent for making history come alive.

Mono-Bodie Fall Photography

October 3–5

Richard Knepp

\$275 per person / \$255 for members

Autumn in the Mono Basin is one of the greatest photographic experiences in the country. Spectacular foliage and skies combine with exceptional light, presenting ample subject matter



PHOTO COURTESY OF RICHARD KNEPP

Bodie's general store provides abundant photographic opportunities.

www.monolake.org/seminars or (760) 647-6595 to register

for photographers in both color and black and white. And, for the fifth year, the class will spend Saturday at Bodie, inside some of the buildings—a very special treat! Join accomplished photographer Richard Knepp to explore varied shoreline locations at sunrise and sunset, fall color in nearby canyons, and the old ghost town of Bodie. Beyond his photographic expertise, Rick is intimately familiar with the Eastern Sierra and Mono Lake locale. Photographers of all levels are welcome; a

fully adjustable camera of any size or format is suggested. This photographic seminar is offered for the 14th year in a row, with the Bodie adventure continued for 2008!

Capturing Autumn on Canvas: Fall Painting in the Mono Basin

October 10–12

John Hewitt

\$160 per person / \$145 for members

The golden aspens, drying grasses, and bright blue skies of fall in the Mono Basin provide a myriad of opportunities for artists to capture the season on canvas. This weekend seminar will explore some of the best fall color locations around Mono Lake, and is designed for beginning through advanced painters who work with watercolors, oils, pastels, or acrylics. The class will spend Saturday painting in the field at locations like Lee Vining Canyon, Lundy Canyon, and County Park, with John offering technique tips and critiques of each individual's work. The group will share work in the evening and convene on Sunday morning for more fieldwork. Instructor John Hewitt is a nationally-acclaimed watercolorist and former Lee Vining resident who has taught classes and workshops for over 20 years in locations as far afield as the Italian Alps. John is a signature member of many watercolor societies, but he welcomes any medium in his classes.



ELIN LINDING

Instructor John Hewitt's example painting guides participants in pursuing their own artistic visions.

Field Seminar Registration Information

To register for a field seminar, please call the Mono Lake Committee at (760) 647-6595 and ask for the seminar desk, or register online at www.monolake.org/seminars.

More extensive seminar descriptions are available upon request or online at www.monolake.org/seminars.

We accept VISA, MasterCard, or Discover only. Sorry, we cannot accept personal checks or registration by mail or email. Seminars are limited to fifteen people except where noted. If a seminar receives less than six participants (with some exceptions) the seminar will be cancelled two weeks in advance, and full refunds will be issued. If you cancel three weeks prior to the seminar start date, we will refund your payment (less a \$15 processing fee). Unfortunately there are no refunds possible after that date, but tuition can be applied to another seminar in 2008.

Participants must sign a liability release form. All seminars operate under a permit from the Inyo National Forest.

The Committee works with instructors and field leaders who have received high ratings from past seminar participants. We emphasize a spirit of learning and camaraderie in a magnificent outdoor setting for a reasonable cost.

Proceeds from Mono Lake Committee Field Seminars benefit research and education in the Mono Basin.

Mono Lake Committee Field Seminars are open to everyone, but Mono Lake Committee members get advance notice and class discounts. If you are not a current member of the Mono Lake Committee, you may receive the discount by joining when you register.

Staff migrations

by Erika Obedzinski

Here's the roundup on the comings and goings of Mono Lake Committee staff since last fall!

In addition to tours and counter time, dedicated intern **Jessi DeLong** tended and re-planted the Committee's garden, read the creek piezometers, and worked on invasive plant species removal. We're happy Jessi has not flown far away—she's spending the winter living, working, and climbing in Bishop.

Betsy Forsyth was once again an excellent member of the Outdoor Experiences program staff this past summer and fall and we are fortunate that she is living in the area and working in nearby Mammoth Lakes. We were also glad to celebrate Betsy's marriage to Jeff Johnson this fall. Congratulations Betsy and Jeff!

After her second season of bringing enthusiasm to the OE program, **Molly Hucklebridge** is now traveling and learning Spanish in Central America. Que le vaya bien Molly! And we know we'll see you back at Mono Lake before too long.

JJ Jenkins returned for her second summer to skillfully coordinate the canoe program so that hundreds of visitors had the unique experience of seeing Mono Lake by floating on its waters. After helping in the Bookstore this fall, JJ is spending her first snowy winter in Mammoth Lakes—we're glad we'll

be able to see her often!

We were lucky that Mono Lake Volunteer and local resident **Duncan King** spent last summer and fall as a Retail Assistant at the Committee. As a long time member and visitor to the area and now a full-time resident, Duncan is an excellent resource for visitors stopping by the front counter to ask questions. And we are pleased to have recently hired Duncan into a year-round position—he's now our Information Center & Bookstore Manager and takes the reins from long time staff member **Brett Pyle**, who will be moving to Colorado this summer. Since there's never any shortage of things to do around here, Brett is staying on through the winter and spring to help with various projects in the office, so we're glad we don't have to say goodbye quite yet!

A special thank you goes to our generous volunteers **George and Nancy Appel**, who returned for another season and made time to tend the Committee garden and answer visitors' questions on the front counter. Nancy and George are in Idyllwild for the winter, but we know we'll see them soon!

If you're interested in a seasonal job with the Mono Lake Committee please visit www.monolake.org/jobs for available positions and how to apply. ❖

2007 Free Drawing Winners

Congratulations to all the lucky winners in the 2007 Free Drawing! Thank you for supporting Mono Lake.

Wilson's Eastside Sports camping package: **John & Nancy Walter** of Mammoth Lakes. Mammoth Mountain rental package: **Melissa Williams** of La Mesa. Double Eagle Spa & Resort weekend: **Mrs. James Shone** of Littlerock. Wawona Hotel stay: **Robert & Nina Leslie** of Oakland. Fly fishing vacation: **Philip Lathrap** of Lafayette. Sorensen's Resort weekend: **Gail Bakker** of Grass Valley. Mammoth vacation package: **Ellen Hardebeck** of Bishop.

San Francisco Bay sailing tour: **Ellen McCauley** of San Francisco. Muir-Hanna Vineyards tour and wine tasting: **Phillip Ibach** of Pasadena. Bay Area gallery weekend: **Jean Abbe** of Alameda. Angel Island sailing trip: **Becky Bennett** of Castaic. Farallon Islands whale watching trip: **Ellen Ferguson** of Watsonville. Yosemite Association membership: **Laura Saxe** of Oakland. Friends of the River rafting trip: **Allen Santos** of San Francisco.

Wave Rave snowboard: **Robert & Tammy Dunn** of Coleville. Framed Tom O'Neill photograph: **Mr. & Mrs. Robert Gyori** of San Francisco. Patagonia clothing: **Margaret Coakley** of Cypress, **Karen Martin** of Simi Valley, and **Joel Wilson** of Santa Cruz. REI backpacks: **Liz Jepsen** of Auburn



Executive Director Geoff McQuilkin helps his daughter Caelen get a better angle as she draws winners in the 2007 Free Drawing.

and **Lisa Woodward** of Temecula. Whedon Products water-saving kit: **Richard Haines** of Kernville. *Up a Lake with a Paddle* guidebook sets: **Dale Laster** of Santa Monica, **John & Karin Leipelt** of Sunnyvale, **Jenny Pulliam-Bowman** of Mammoth Lakes, and **Michael Smith** of Keene. Mono Lake Committee gift packs: **Karen Haldeman** of Ojai, **Ruth Jordan** of Fullerton, and **Lorilee Sutter** of Modesto.

A huge thank you to all of the Free Drawing sponsors for their generous donations. Without them, this important fundraiser couldn't happen!



From the mailbag

News from members and friends

by Ellen King

Winter is a quiet time in the Mono Basin, but not at the membership desk! The response to the year-end “Burn the Mortgage” appeal was phenomenal. I opened more than 1,300 envelopes, almost every one containing a donation. Our members are simply wonderful!

Thank you to all of you who sent in contributions in memory or in honor of your friends and loved ones. Often these donations honor people who introduced family and friends to Mono Lake and the Eastern Sierra. We appreciate these gifts that help us carry on the work that will keep Mono Lake a special place for many generations.

In memory

We received an anonymous gift in memory of **Virginia Howald**. **David Adaskin & Irina Blyumina** and **Yvonne Lacroix**, all of San Jose, sent gifts in memory of **Arthur L. Walker**. **Stan & Sharon Bluhm** of June Lake made a contribution in memory of **Ray & Lillian Bluhm**. **John Callen** of Rancho Santa Margarita sent donations in memory of **Thomas Callen**.

Grace de Laet of Sausalito gave a gift in memory of **John Wood**, who supported Grace’s bus trips to Mono Lake along with his wife **Betty**. **John, Janet & Roxanne Decker** of Cupertino made a contribution in memory of **Rodney Caldwell**. **Ursula Hahn** of Brooklyn, NY sent a donation in memory of **Robert W. Miller**.

Betty Harrold of Chico gave a gift in memory of her son **Milton Harrold**. **Elgian & Dona Hurley** of Boron made a contribution in memory of their son **Kevin Hurley**.

Carol Heinz of Seattle, WA made a donation in memory of her mother **Peggy Heinz**, who loved Mono Lake, the gulls, and wild California. **Carol Mathews** of Walnut Creek made donations in loving memory of **Robert Mathews**.

Joseph & Marjorie Miller of Napa sent a contribution in memory of **John Hanna**. **Beth Robinson** of Langley, WA gave a gift in memory of **Shirley “Shi” Burger**. **Joan Weaver** of Chatsworth made a donation in memory of **Frances Weaver**.

In honor

Edith Gaines of Los Angeles gave a gift in honor of her son **David Gaines**, founder of the Mono Lake Committee, whose birthday was December 30. The Committee continues to be inspired by his vision for Mono Lake.

We received anonymous gifts in honor of **Tim Armstrong** and **Arthur Donaldson**. **John & Alex Allred** of Seattle, WA made a donation in honor of her parents, **Howard & Laurie Webb**. **George & Nancy Appel** of Idyllwild gave a gift in honor of what would have been the 100th birthday of their mothers, **Ruth Coverdale** and **Alice Mierlot**. **Craig Anthony “Tony” Arnold** of Louisville, KY sent a gift in honor of his mother **Shirley Arnold**.

The Bay Institute of San Francisco sent a contribution in honor of **Grace de Laet**. **Richard Beebe** of Tracy gave a donation in the name of his mother, **Marjorie Darnell**. **Doug & Lee Buckmaster** of Cambria made a donation in honor of **Stanley Ely’s** 75th birthday. **Mary Lou Freathy** of Maple Plain, MN sent a contribution in honor of **Grace Rolls**.

Sally Gaines made donations in honor of the 25th wedding anniversary of **Tom & Rosanne Higley** and the 30th wedding anniversary of **Dave & Janet**

Carle. **Ursula Hahn** of Brooklyn, NY sent a gift in honor of **Ray Des Camp**. **Alice Howard** of Placerville sent a donation in honor of **Jim Canaday**. **Kathleen Weber** of Torrance gave a gift in honor of **Frances Spivy-Weber**.

Volunteer support

Steff Zurek lent a helping hand to staff the Committee’s Mono Craters rest stop at the Fall Century bike ride. What a thoughtful thing to do on your vacation—thank you Steff!

Many thanks to volunteers and donors to the Tioga Pass Run: **Steff Zurek**, **Elizabeth Kennaday Corathers**, **Monique Leslie**, and **Kathie & Kyla Kortering**. The 12.4-mile run is staffed by the Mono Lake Committee, so we appreciate this extra support! ❖

Ellen King is the Committee’s Membership Coordinator. She perfected her snow shoveling technique during her first substantial June Lake winter.

Help the 2008 Free Drawing!

For the 2008 Free Drawing grand prize, we would like to be able to give away a trip for two to anywhere in the United States, including Hawaii and Alaska. If you are a frequent flier and would like to donate some of your miles to help us reach that goal for this important fundraiser, please contact Elin Ljung (elin@monolake.org) at (760) 647-6595.

Here comes the seventh annual...

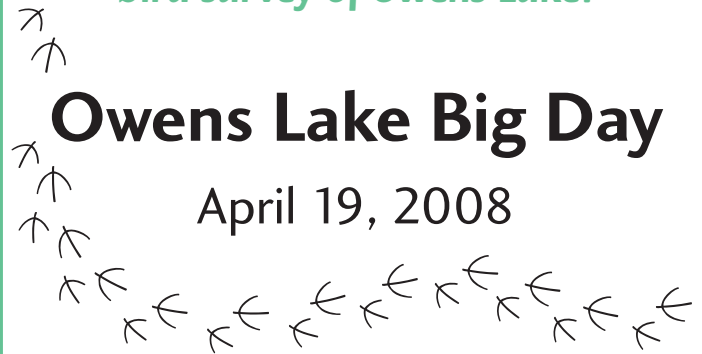
Mono Basin Bird Chautauqua

June 20–22, 2008



Registration begins April 15, 2008
at www.birdchautauqua.org

Be a part of the first ever complete
bird survey of Owens Lake!



Owens Lake Big Day

April 19, 2008

To sign up, please contact Mike
Prather at mprather@lonepinetv.com

Come work at Mono Lake this summer!

Now hiring for these positions:

- Mono Lake Intern
- Birding Intern
- Canoe Program Coordinator
- Information Center & Bookstore Assistant
- Outdoor Education Instructor

To apply, please visit www.monolake.org



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