



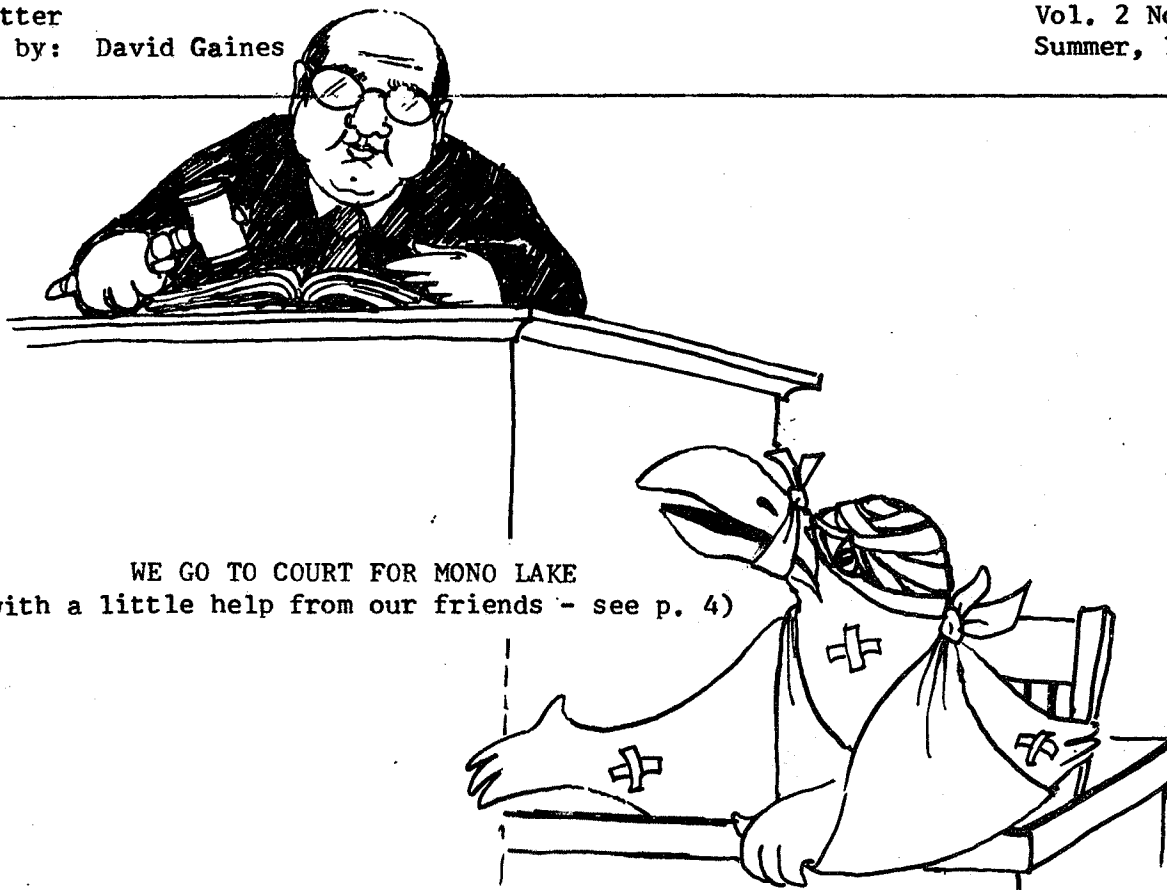
# THE MONO LAKE COMMITTEE

Newsletter

Edited by: David Gaines

Vol. 2 No. 1

Summer, 1979



WE GO TO COURT FOR MONO LAKE  
(with a little help from our friends - see p. 4)

**DISASTER ON NEGIT ISLAND: 30,000-35,000 GULLS DRIVEN FROM NESTING AREAS  
MORATORIUM NEEDED NOW!!!**

June 1, 1979. Bleak news from Negit Island. Only empty nests and scattered egg shells could be found over much of the California Gulls' principal nesting area at Mono Lake. At least half of the gull population will not raise young this year.

Coyotes apparently crossed the land-bridge and drove the gulls from their ancestral nesting grounds. The April attempt to protect the birds by blasting a channel between Negit Island and the mainland has not deterred the predators.

Despite above-average runoff, the level of Mono Lake has dropped three more inches since the blasting. All of the spring runoff from Rush, Lee Vining, Parker and Walker Creeks is being shunted south into the Los Angeles Aqueduct.

The voices of the gulls sound like pleas for help and cries for their lost young.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Insist, through letters, phone calls, telegrams and personal entreaties, that our public servants and elected representatives act now to halt the ongoing destruction of Mono Lake. Emphasize the urgent need, proven by this year's gull disaster, for an immediate interim moratorium on water diversions.

If you have written before, please write again. Just a few handwritten sentences can be very effective. This may be the gull's last chance!

Turn to Page 3 for further information on whom to contact.

**MONO LAKEWATCH: ARMAGEDDON ARRIVES  
FOR MONO'S GULLS**

The Mono Lake Committee has failed to attain its most critical immediate objective: a moratorium on water diversions this year. And the California Gulls are paying the price.

Let's begin by quoting from a May 10th letter from Sara C. Stivelman, President of the Los Angeles Water and Power Commission, rejecting the Committee's plea to forego diversions this year (MLC Newsletter 1(4): 14):

"We believe it is highly unlikely that any irreversible ecological damage will occur over the next few years with continued diversions... Substantial nesting habitat for the gulls will continue to be available at the lake even though Negit Island is connected to the mainland. In addition to Paoha Island and the newly forming islands which are available for nesting areas, it appears possible to protect the Negit Island rookery during a research period by maintaining a channel between the mainland and the island..."

Unfortunately the course of events has proven Ms. Stivelman tragically mistaken. When University of California biologist David Winkler visited Negit Island on the weekend of May 12-13, he observed what he assessed as normal numbers of nesting gulls. When he returned on May 27, the important high density "Greasewood Colony" was almost entirely deserted. Subsequent surveys revealed that at least 25,000 gulls, half of Mono's total population, are not nesting this year (see map and table on page 7).

Despite the optimistic forecasts of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power officialdom, none of the evicted Negit gulls have moved to Paoha Island, and only several thousand have moved to the lake's other small, already crowded islets.

The arduously blasted channel between Negit and the mainland is now eight feet wide and three to four inches deep. A highway of coyote tracks leads across the channel and ramifies throughout the island's deserted gull colonies. The island has also been invaded by large numbers of White-footed Mice (Peromyscus maniculatus).

The plight of the remaining nesting gulls is precarious. For the next four to six weeks their eggs and flightless chicks will be exceedingly vulnerable. It is doubtful that the 4,800-8,600 gulls still attempting to breed on the southeastern perimeter of Negit Island will successfully fledge many, if any, young. Even those on the islets to the northeast may be subject to raids by hungry coyotes swimming across from Negit.

The full magnitude of the disaster will not be known until mid-July, when young birds can be censused. There can be no doubt, however, that a major nesting area has been grossly depleted in size. The repercussions extend far beyond Mono's shores. How many gulls that would be consuming bushels of agricultural pests in the fields of the Central Valley and scavenging Sierran streams and lakes and coastal bays and beaches will now never be born?

The answer lies with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. If the lake level is raised and Negit Island restored as a nesting sanctuary, there is hope that the gulls will reoccupy their ancient citadel. If diversions continue at their present rate, even the key islets northeast of Negit will be engulfed by the mainland within the next several years. Emmigration to Paoha Island will only stave off by a few years that tragic day when increasing salinity and alkalinity dooms, not only gulls, but all of Mono's millions of water birds.

The seagulls are only the tip of an imminent ecological disaster of major proportions. Unless diversions are curtailed, we could lose more than gulls in the next few years. In place of birds and breathtaking beauty, we can look forward to clouds of toxic alkali dust blowing off thousands of acres of exposed, sterile lakebed.

**DWP IGNORES CENSUS DATA, DENIES GULL CRISIS**

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power reacted to the California Gull situation by claiming that the birds had "merely moved from Negit to smaller islets in the lake." In response to this skullduggery, MLC Chairperson David Gaines addressed the following letter to Duane L. Georgeson of the L.A.D.W.P., dated June 6th:

Dear Mr. Georgeson:

Enclosed is a copy of the data sheet we distributed to newsmen at the L.A.D.W.P.'s press tour of the Mono Lake gull colonies on June 4th. The figures given are conservative estimates extrapolated from transect counts of adults, nests, eggs and/or chicks conducted by David Winkler and other biologists during 1976, 1977, 1978 and the past month of 1979. In sum, at least 50 percent of the Mono Lake gull population is not nesting this year.

In light of this carefully documented information, I was shocked to learn that the Department claims, without any substantiating data whatsoever, the "the gulls have merely moved from Negit to smaller islets in the lake" (L.A. Times, 6/5/79).

How can the department, in all conscience, so blithely ignore the obvious impact of their Mono Basin water diversions on this year's nesting seagull population?

Now that half of the state's breeding California Gulls have been driven from their ancestral nesting grounds, it is time that the Department of Water and Power acknowledge the ecological consequences of its Mono Basin diversions. The department may be entitled to its view that Mono's water is more important to the future growth of Los Angeles than it is to the people and birds who live at or visit Mono Lake. But to muddy the issue with half-truths in the hope, I suspect, that the birds will disappear before anyone notices anything amiss is criminal, especially from a public utility that should properly be a neutral observer.

The people of this state and this nation have a moral obligation to future generations to carefully weigh the human, wildlife, scenic and scientific values of Mono Lake against those of the water export. Unsubstantiated and, in this case, false information from so prestigious a source as the Department of Water and Power, however, is poisoning any hope for a fair public hearing.

In closing let me reiterate the urgent need for an immediate moratorium on water diversions until the people can decide, in light of such alternatives as water conservation and reclamation, the degree of protection Mono Lake deserves.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP THE GULLS  
AND MONO LAKE LIVE ON:

1. MOST IMPORTANT! If you live in Los Angeles, please get in touch with your councilman.

2. ALSO IMPORTANT! Wherever you live, please contact:

Huey D. Johnson, Secretary, Resources Agency, 1416 Ninth St., Sacramento, CA 95814 (916/445-4545)

Edmund G. Brown, Jr., Governor, State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814 (916/445-2843)

Cecil D. Andrus, Secretary, Department of the Interior, Interior Bldg., Washington, D. C. 20240

Tom Bradley, Mayor, City Hall, Los Angeles, CA 90051 (213/485-3311)

Jimmy Carter, President, The White House, Washington, D.C. 20240

3. JUST AS IMPORTANT! Contact your elected representatives in the California Senate and Assembly and in the U. S. Congress. Ask your congressman to investigate why the Bureau of Land Management has not protected the gulls nesting on its Negit Island Natural Area.

Letters to California Senators and Assemblymen should be addressed to: State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814.

...Those to Congressmen to: House Office Bldg., Washington, D. C. 20515, or Senate Office Bldg., Washington, D. C. 20510.

Express, in your own words, why Mono Lake, its gulls, scenery and wildlife, must be protected. Emphasize that critical damage to the Mono Lake ecosystem is occurring right now, and will continue unless the lake is permanently stabilized at a higher level. Explain the pressing need to protect the lake, through an interim moratorium on diversions, while the government, legislature and courts grope towards a solution. Point out that, in this year of above-average precipitation, replacement water is readily available to Los Angeles at relatively moderate cost. Ask that the almost 60,000 acre-feet currently being conserved annually by the people of Los Angeles (compared to 1976 consumption) be allotted to Mono Lake.

The MONO LAKE COMMITTEE is a not-for-profit citizen's group.

**OUR PURPOSE:** To preserve the scenic, wild-life and scientific values of Mono and other Great Basin Lakes by limiting water diversions to levels that are not environmentally destructive, to further public interest in the natural history and preservation of these lakes, and to facilitate relevant research.

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**IN THIS ISSUE...**

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Plus our usual babbling reflections.....

**THE SECRETARY TREASURER SPEAKS by Sally Judy**

We are presently incorporated, but I am still struggling with the maze-like applications for tax exempt status, e.g., trying to decipher things like Section 170(b)(1)(A)(vi). To allow your contributions to be tax-deductible, checks are still deposited to the Mono Lake Committee sub-account of the Santa Monica Audubon Society, our parent organization.

Urgent business mail should be sent directly to me at PO Box 29, Lee Vining, 93541, but routine subscriptions, petitions, etc. should be addressed to the Oakland postal box.

**Field Trips and Seminars**

Our free half-day (8am-2pm) field trips at the lake have begun. They meet every Saturday and Sunday through September 9th at 8 am at the Mono Lake County Park five miles north of Lee Vining. To give us an idea how many people to expect, we ask that you write to us in Lee Vining with a first and second choice date. Because of the uncertainties in the gasoline supply west of the Sierra, and last minute contingencies, however, we consider these reservations tentative. Please come whenever you can. For more information on what to bring and where to meet, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Mono Lake Field Trip, PO Box 29, Lee Vining, CA 93541.

**NOTE:** All trips start at the lake. Please use the Golden Gate Audubon Society (415/843-2222) as a carpooling switchboard.

Also do not forget that David Gaines and David Winkler are teaching 4 day (Fri. noon - Mon. noon) field seminars (\$30-\$40) on various natural history subjects: ecology of Mono Lake, natural history of Mono-Tioga Pass, botany, bird birds, bird migration, and mammals (with John Harris).

Support your local naturalists and keep our conservation crusaders alive. Write to us in Lee Vining for more information...

## WHATS HAPPENING

### We Go To Court With a Little Help From Our Friends)

Mono Lake may eventually get the water it so desperately needs if a major new lawsuit against the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power proves successful. The complaint alleges that the department's diversions of Mono's tributary streams violate the state's "public trust" over navigable water and are creating a "public and private nuisance." This test of the public trust doctrine will affect the fate, not only of Mono, but of lakes and wetlands throughout California.

The lawsuit, however, offers little hope of securing the immediate relief the lake urgently requires.

The Mono Lake Committee joins Friends of the Earth, National Audubon Society, Los Angeles Audubon Society, and several Mono County property owners as plaintiffs in the suit.

Much of the credit for the initiation of the suit belongs to Friends of the Earth, who made contact with the law firm of Morrison and Foerster in San Francisco, and secured the services of Timothy Such. Despite the lack of a formal law education, legal eagle Such has spent years researching legal arguments in Mono's behalf, and played a germinal role in developing the suit (see Palmer Madden's letter below).

We are extremely grateful to the law firm of Morrison and Foerster, and especially attorneys Bruce Dodge and Palmer Borwn Madden, for committing its resources to this important environmental litigation on a Pro Bono basis. This means that the plaintiffs will not have to pay attorney's fees. We will, however, have to pay for such incidental expenses as phone bills, witness fees, travel, etc., which will amount to thousands of dollars a year.

The National Audubon Society and Mono Lake Committee are sharing responsibility for raising the necessary funds. We have already allocated \$1000 to the cause, and have set a legal defense fund-raising goal of \$10,000 for this year. To date we have raised \$168.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Contribute whatever you can afford to the Mono Lake Legal Defense Fund. Arrange, or help us arrange, fund-raising benefits to pay for the lawsuit.

P.S. Palmer Madden sent us a copy of the following letter addressed to Timothy Such, Courthouse Steps, Bridgeport, California, May 18, 1979:

Dear Tim,

I asked you to carry this letter along with you to open as soon as you had filed the Complaint in the Mono Lake matter. I hope at this moment that you feel a tremendous sense of accomplishment. There's no question in my mind that, but for your inspiration, this complaint would not have been filed.

### Sierra Club, NRDC Petition for Federal Action to Preserve Mono Lake

The Sierra Club and the Natural Resources Defense Council have filed an administrative petition requesting the Secretary of the Interior to exercise his duty to protect Mono Lake and Negit Island. Specifically the "petitioners seek a determination from the Secretary that the federal government has a right to amounts of water sufficient to prevent undue and unnecessary degradation of Mono Lake and Negit Island, and request that he take action to protect Mono Lake and Negit Island from environmental harm by limiting excessive upstream diversions of water from the lake."

We are grateful to Larry Silver and Ric Oberlink of the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, Jim Frankel of the Natural Resources Defense Council, and their associates for coming to the defense of Mono Lake.

### Interagency Mono Lake Task Force Report Due

By June 30th the Interagency Task Force on Mono Lake will have released their "plan of action" to preserve and protect the natural resources in Mono Basin.

Hundreds of people attended the May public workshops convened by the task force in Lee Vining, Palo Alto and Los Angeles. Those present overwhelmingly favored maintaining the lake at an elevation of at least 6376 feet, and most favored a level ten or more feet higher. Statewide water conservation and reclama-

mation was generally endorsed as an integral part of the long-term solution. Practically no one wished to have additional water taken from other watersheds, such as the Owens Valley, the Walker River drainage or northern California, to preserve Mono Lake.

The Mono Lake Committee has recommended to the task force that the lake be stabilized at a mean surface level of 6388'. Our full recommendation is presented in the "MLC Conservation-Reclamation Alternative" on Page 12.

#### Mono Lake Bill

AB 367 has been referred to the Subcommittee on Resources and Transportation of the Assembly Ways and Means Committee. A full hearing on the bill has been postponed until August or September. Its author, Assemblyman Norm Waters, will be considering the incorporation of recommendations from the Interagency Task Force in an amended version of the bill.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Now is the time to educate members of the Assembly Ways and Means Committee about Mono Lake. If your assemblyman is on this committee, please contact him by letter, phone or, better yet in person as soon as possible.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS: Goggin (D-San Bernardino), Levin (D-Los Angeles), Ryan (R-L.A.), Statham (R-Butte Co.), Waters (D-Lodi).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Boatwright (D-Contra Costa), Roos (D-L.A.), Sterling (R-L.A.), Berman (D L.A.), Young (D-L.A.), Duffy (R-Tulare Co.), Chacon (D-San Diego), Egeland (D-San Benito Co.), Ellis (R-San Diego), Hart (D-Santa Barbara), Hayden (R-Santa Clara Co.), Imbricht (R-Ventura Co.), Knox (D-Contra Costa Co.), Mari (D-Almador Co.), Nestande (R-Orange Co.), Vasconcellos (D-Santa Clara).

#### Negit Island Signs

Coyotes are not the only enemies of nesting seagulls; human intruders, however well-intentioned, can be just as harmful. To prevent such well-intentioned, but uninformed people from crossing to Negit Island, Mono Lake Committee volunteers have erected five signs on the landbridge with the following warning:

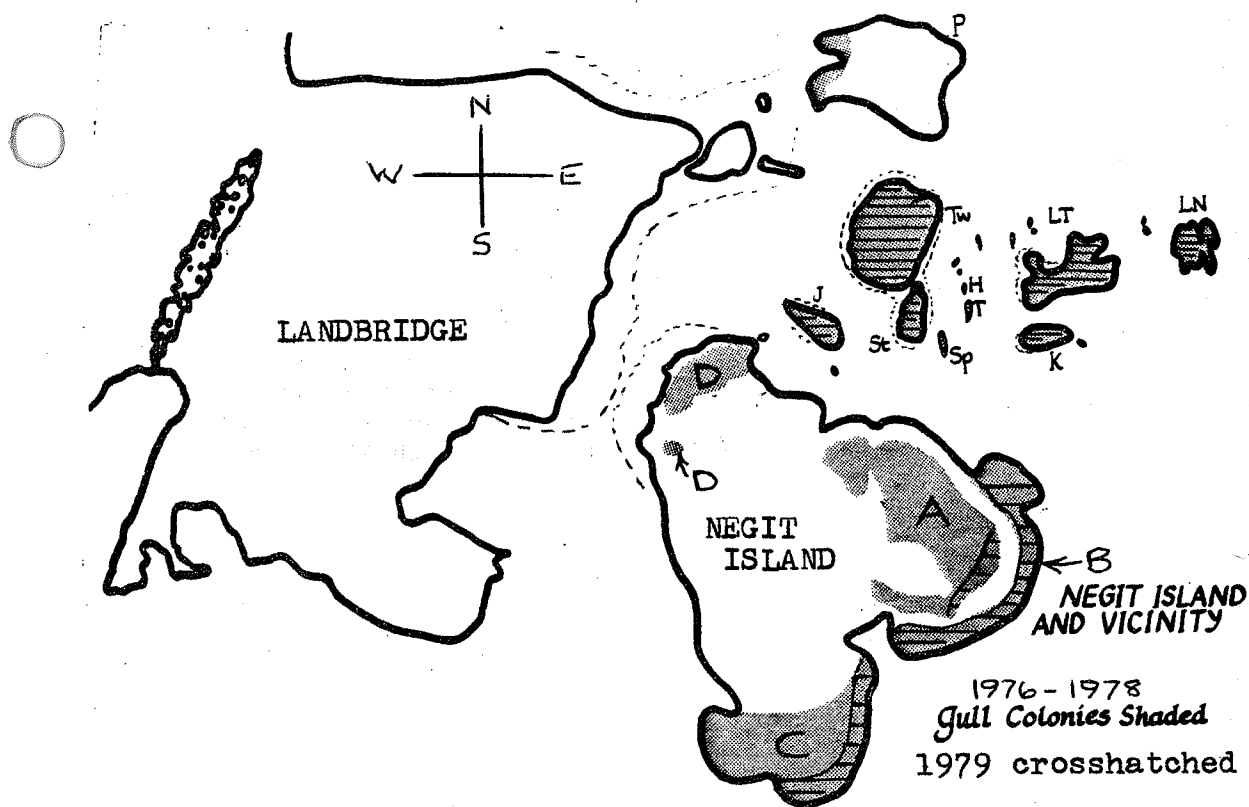
"Your presence on Negit Island will cause severe disruption to the seagull rookery, which is fatal to baby gulls. Please stay off the island. Thank you."

On behalf of the gulls we thank Steve Busch, Elliot Burch, Thom Curdts and Juli Rosenstein for helping get these signs into the alkali.



Photo: D. Goines

MLC Director Peter Vorster crossing the channel between Negit Island and the mainland, April 10, 1979; coyotes were not far behind...



LOCATIONS AND EXTENT OF MONO LAKE GULL COLONIES 1976-79  
(islets west of Paoha Island not shown)

Colony Location	Approx. No. of Breeding Adults*	
	1976-78	1979
<b>I. Negit Island</b>		
A. Greasewood Colony	27,000	1,000-3,000
B. Southeast Shore Colony	4,800	3,400-5,000
C. South Shore Colony	4,200	400-600
D. White Rock Colony	2,400	0
Totals	38,400	4,800-8,600
<b>II. Islets Northeast of Negit Island</b>		
A. Twain (Tw)	3,800	5,000
B. Little Tahiti (LT)	1,100	1,100
C. Pancake (P)	1,000	0
D. Little Norway (LN)	700	700
E. Steamboat (St)	600	600
F. Java (J)	600	600
G. Spot (Sp)	200	200
H. Tie (T)	200	200
I. Krakatoa (K)	100	100
Totals	8,300	8,500
III. Islets west of Paoha Island	0	4,000
IV. Paoha Island	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>46,700</b>	<b>17,300-21,100</b>

Sources: 1976-- Winkler, D, ed., 1977, Univ. Calif. Davis Inst. Ecol. Publ. 12: 88-113; 1977-78-- D. Winkler, pers. comm.; 1979-- Negit Is. surveyed by D. Winkler, J. Anderson, S. Morse on 5/27, E. Burch and T. Curdts on 5/30, A. Baldwin and D. Gaines on 6/2; islets northeast of Negit by Winkler, S. Wakeling, J. Anderson, S. Morse on 5/12-14 and 5/26-27; Paoha Is. and islets to west by Burch and Curdts on 5/30; figures based on or extrapolated from counts of adults, nests, eggs and/or chicks



## SIERRA CLUB FIGHTING FOR MONO LAKE

The Sierra Club is taking a leading role in the fight to preserve Mono Lake. If you belong to the club and would like to help, please contact: Bruce Barnbaum, Chairman of the Sierra Club Mono Lake Task Force, 24332 Trailway Lane, Agoura, CA 91301; 213/889-9498.

## ANGELES SIERRA CLUB CRITICAL OF L.A. COUNCILMAN'S STAND ON MONO LAKE

by Bruce Barnbaum

Several weeks ago, AB 367 was introduced into the State Assembly to curtail the amount of water Los Angeles diverts from Mono Lake and stabilize the declining lake level...

Zev Yaroslavsky, a member of the Los Angeles City Council, spoke against the bill. He claimed that Los Angeles needs all the water it now diverts from the lake because the city has been on "a water conservation binge" since the days of the recent drought. He then suggested that the gulls who nest on the islands that will soon be subject to predation when the water level falls could employ "American ingenuity" to find other nesting sites. In addition, he suggested that the indigenous brine shrimp can similarly use "American ingenuity" to learn to live in the more saline waters of the lowered lake.

The following are excerpts from a letter sent to Councilman Yaroslavsky by the Angeles Chapter of the Sierra Club:

...Your remark that gulls can employ "old-fashioned American ingenuity" to find new nesting sites exhibits indifference to a very real, and very unfortunate situation. Your further remark that the indigenous brine shrimp can be induced to live with the increased salinity of the reduced lake further underscores your lack of understanding, interest, or concern for the problem.

If any creature can use old-fashioned American ingenuity to adapt to new situations, it should be man. If any creature can be induced to live with reduced water supplies, it is man. It is man, you must understand, who is altering the natural flow of streams, the natural level of the lake, and the natural environment. Man can easily adapt to living with less water than the water merchants would have us consume. And we can do it with little change in our life style. The gulls cannot. The brine shrimp cannot, either.

Today's crisis that the gulls face at the hand of man can easily become tomorrow's crisis that man brings upon himself. The man-made decline of Mono Lake may well be a major step in that direction....

## HISTORICAL MONO LAKE LEVEL HIGHER THAN WE THOUGHT

Recent research by Scott Stine of the Geography Department of U. C. Berkeley indicates that the 1857 shoreline elevation of Mono Lake was considerably higher than has previously been supposed. Stine's work demonstrates that in that year the lake stood at 6407 feet (plus or minus one foot), fully 41 feet higher than the generally accepted figure. The lake shoreline in that year was in places well over one mile upslope from the position stated in the geological, hydrological and climatological literature.

This new information drastically alters our conception of the size and chemistry of 19th century Mono Lake. The historical lake level was seldom, if ever, below 6400 feet before water diversions began; it is now at 6374.5 feet. A complete report on Stine's research and its important biological ramifications will highlight our next newsletter.





HISTORY OF THE MONO LAKE GULL COLONIES  
by David Winkler and David Gaines



Mono Lake in the early 1920's, Negit Island in center. At this time two miles of water separated the island from the mainland, protecting its nesting gulls. Photo by Arthur E. Larson, contributed by Enid A. Larson

"Immense swarms of gulls visit these islands during the spring of the year and deposit their eggs on every available spot. Myriads upon myriads of them hover over the rocks from morning till night, deafening the ear with their wild screams, and the water is literally covered with them for a circle of many miles."

J. R. Browne, 1865

Substantial numbers of California Gulls are nesting on Mono's islands when the first whitemen settled near the lake in the mid nineteenth century. Unfortunately the early accounts do not allow us to estimate the numbers of birds or even to delineate the precise locations of the colonies. The Paiute word "Negit," which has been translated as "blue-winged goose" but more likely means "gull," hints that the main nesting colony has always been on Negit Island. Browne's reference to more than one nesting island, and Mark Twain's account of boiling seagull eggs in Paoha's hot-springs, however, suggest that some gulls were nesting on Paoha Island as well.

During the 1860's and 1870's, at least, Mono's gull colonies were ruthlessly exploited as a source of eggs for sale at Bodie and in the county's other booming mining camps. "It is a common practice," writes Browne, "for the settlers to go over in their boats, and the course of a few hours gather as many eggs as they can carry home." In 1860 gull eggs were selling for 75¢/dozen (Alta Calif., July 7, 1860). Several decades of "egging" probably devastated the colonies.

In 1976, almost a century after the heyday of the eggers, a team of biologists from Stanford University and the University of California at Davis undertook the first systematic census of the Mono Lake gull colonies. They found the main colony of about 38,400 adults ensconced on Negit Island, and an additional 8,300 birds on the small islets to the northeast. No gulls were nesting on Paoha Island (Winkler 1977).

The gull colonies were resurveyed in 1977 and 1978. The density and extent of the colonies was similar to that in 1976 (Winkler, unpubl. data).

The 1976-78 figures for the numbers of nesting gulls are about ten times higher than those reported by the few earlier ornithologists who had visited Mono's colonies. These previous visitors, however, either spent little or no time in the colonies or estimated the numbers of nesting gulls from the water or from the cove and large cone on the south end of Negit Island. Not only would large numbers of nesting gulls have been hidden beneath shrubbery, but the minor cone and the large plateau to its north would have been invisible as well. These latter areas supported the bulk of Negit's nesting gulls until this year.

With this in mind, let us review the scattered observations of ornithologists between 1916 and 1973. In 1916 Dixon reported at least 1000 pairs breeding on the north end of Paoha Island, and none at all on Negit (field notes, Mus. Vert. Zool., Berkeley). This is the only indication that the main colony has not always been on Negit. Its reliability is uncertain, however, since Dixon may have explored only the area around the big cone.

In 1919 Dawson (1924) found the main colony on Negit, but did not attempt to estimate its size. He did estimate that 850 pairs were nesting on the lava flow at the north end of Paoha Island. Between 1938 and 1940, when Nichols was banding nestling gulls, the main colony was on Negit (Nichols 1938; Woodbury and Knight 1951). Young (1952) and Johnston (1956) found nesting gulls only on Negit, and estimated their numbers at 750 to 1500-2500 pairs respectively. In 1972, Jurek (pers. comm.) found the main colony on Negit and the small islets to the northeast-- the same areas occupied in 1976, 1977 and 1978. Jurek's 1973 aerial survey estimate of 42,500 gulls correlates well with the 1976-78 Winkler estimates.

In sum Mono Lake has supported large numbers of nesting gulls from before the time whites settled along its shores until this year. It is probable that the population was severely reduced by egging in the nineteenth century, and has gradually recovered since that time. Although the principal colony has probably always been on on Negit Island, about one thousand pairs previously nested on the lava flow at the north end of Paoha.

Now that most of the gulls have been driven from their ancestral stronghold on Negit Island, what are the chances they will colonize Paoha? Nobody knows. Most of the island may be unsuitable for nesting gulls because its violent dust storms would bury eggs and chicks. Even the small lava flow on the north end may no longer be habitable because, due to the shrinking lake, it is now too far from the shore to be effectively cooled by Mono's waters. The island still harbors a small band of feral goats, which may be deterring the gulls.

References: Browne, 1865, Harpers New Monthly Mag 31: 411-419; Dawson, 1924, Birds of California; Johnston, 1956, Condor 58: 134-162; Nichols, 1938, Condor 40: 262; Winkler, 1977, U.C. Davis Inst. Ecol. Publ. 12; Woodbury and Knight, 1951, Condor 53: 57-77; Young, 1952, Condor 54: 206-207.

#### OUR FRIEND THE COYOTE by David Gaines

The coyote is not to blame for the plight of Mono's gulls; it is man.

But now that Negit Island is Negit Peninsula, we must grapple with the problem of protecting the gulls until an adequate predator-barrior can be re-established. A foot-deep channel is not going to be sufficient. Nor is a chain-link fence. Coyotes can dig under fences. They can swim, even in Mono's brine.

We of the Mono Lake Committee find it difficult to acquiese in the killing of our friend the coyote, even to protect the nestling gulls. We could support such trapping only as a temperary means of protecting the gulls until a rising lake level restores a natural coyote-proof water barrior between Negit Island and the mainland.

We invite your comments on this issue.

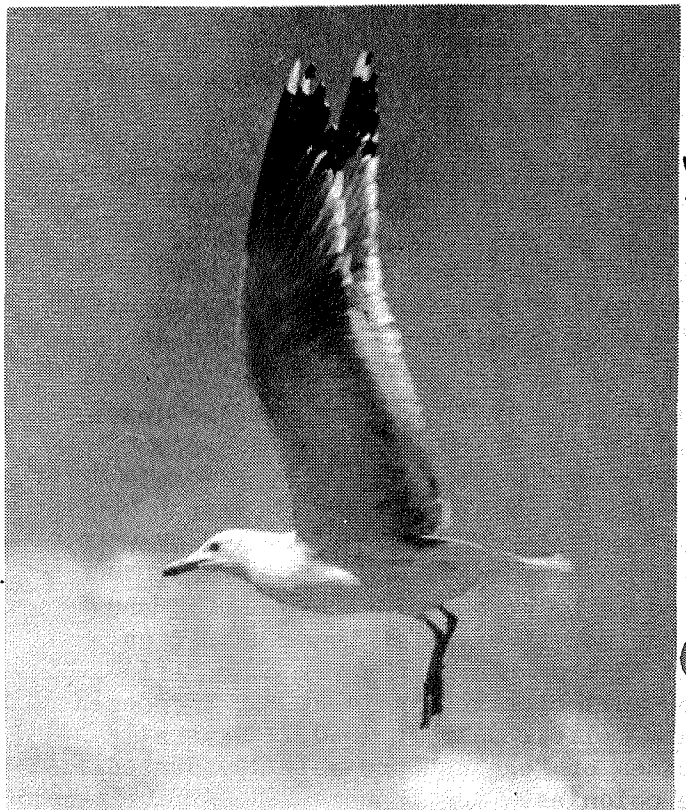


photo: J. Stroup

THE FALL OF MONO LAKE, 1978: WHY THE WET WINTER WAS NO REPRIEVE  
by Peter Vorster and David Gaines

In the MLC's Autumn, 1978 newsletter, we lamented that between April and October of 1978, one of the greatest runoff periods in recent memory, Mono Lake fell "about two feet." Our estimate was based on the fact that the channel blasted between Negit Island and the mainland, which was said to have been two feet deep in April, was dry land by October.

The official records of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, with which we are in agreement, indicate that Mono Lake fell about 15 inches during this period. The net drop during the 1978 calendar year (Jan. 1 - Dec. 31) was 7.8 inches.

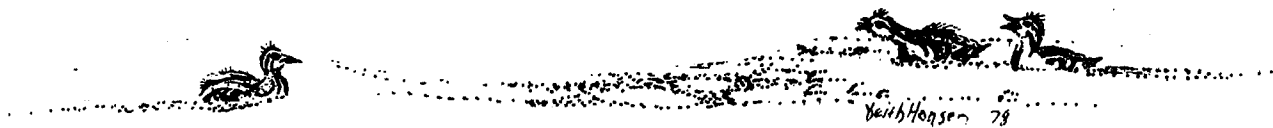
Mono Lake naturally follows an annual pattern of rising and falling water levels which are determined by (1) winter precipitation, (2) spring and early summer runoff from the Sierra, (3) summer and autumn evaporation, and (4) since 1940, the amount of water diverted from Mono's tributary streams. Prior to diversions the lake rose through the winter, spring and early summer, reaching a peak between May and early August depending on climatic conditions. The lake then fell during the summer and fall until evaporation from its surface was once again exceeded by inflow and precipitation.

Since diversions the winter/spring rise in the lake level has failed to keep pace with the summer/autumn fall except during the exceptionally wet years of 1952, 1958, 1967 and 1969. The lake still rises 2-12 inches during the winter and early spring, reaching a peak level sometime in April. But then increased diversions cause the lake to steadily drop 1-2½ feet until the following winter, when the cycle repeats itself.

During the record wet year of 1969, Mono Lake enjoyed a net lake level rise of over two feet. Yet in the almost equally wet year of 1978, the lake lost almost eight inches. Why the difference?

In 1978, thanks to the completion of the second aqueduct, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power was able to shunt a record 140,511 acre-feet south to Los Angeles. In 1969, by comparison, only 20,550 acre-feet were diverted.

If only the Department had been more generous with its water during the bountifully wet 1978 season, the level of Mono Lake would now be 2-3 feet higher, and the Negit Island seagulls would still have a place to raise their young.



#### PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITS

Steve Johnson is coordinating two photographic exhibits on Mono Lake: (1) an educational/documentary display of black-and-white and color prints, and (2) a fine art exhibit of black-and-white prints by some of the country's finest photographers, including Ansel Adams and Brett Weston. Contact Steve (209/722-5662) if you would like more information or can assist with funding.

#### MONO LAKE FESTIVAL

Come to the Mono Lake County Park, five miles north of Lee Vining, on Saturday June 30th for an all-day music, food, arts and crafts celebration of the wonders of the Mono Basin. Sponsored by a local businessman.

**A CONSERVATION/RECLAMATION PLAN FOR PROTECTING MONO LAKE AND THE OWENS VALLEY**  
Submitted by the Mono Lake Committee to the Interagency Task Force on Mono Lake

1. Maintain Mono Lake water surface elevation of 6388'. Maintaining the lake at this elevation would permit an average annual diversion of 14,500 acre-feet from the Mono Basin.

Rationale: A lake surface elevation of 6388' is ten feet above the 6378' minimum needed to protect Negit Island, and hence will provide an essential margin of safety for the gull colony in the event of dry year declines in lake level. This elevation will reduce alkali dust pollution without necessitating the spreading of volcanic cinders on the exposed shorelines and/or seeding the shoreline with salt-tolerant plants (neither may be feasible). The 6388' elevation would benefit wildlife populations by providing more freshwater habitat and reducing salinity/alkalinity of the lakewater. It would also restore much of the lake's pristine scenic magnificence.

2. Statewide urban water conservation of 15%. Savings in Los Angeles of 98,100 acre feet/year.

Rationale: Available information, e.g., DWR Bulletin 191, indicates this level of conservation in urban areas is a reasonable and easily attainable goal. We realize that L.A. per capita water consumption does not exceed that of most other Californians, i.e., we have all been wasteful. Hence we endorse a statewide water conservation program.

2a. Statewide agricultural water conservation.

Rationale: Available information indicates that substantial savings are possible in agricultural water use.

3. Statewide water reclamation. Water reclamation savings in Los Angeles of 115,000 acre-feet/year.

Rationale: This figure derives from the 1977 Phase I Report of the Orange and Los Angeles Counties Water Reuse Study. According to this report, water reuse is practical and a potential market exists. Many other areas are already using wastewater (Burbank, Pomona, Irvine Ranch). In fact, this 115,000 AF figure is conservative; a 1977 SCAG report projects that water reclamation will furnish the city with 200,000 acre-feet/year by the year 2000.

4. Allocation of the 213,000 acre-feet/year of water saved in Los Angeles through conservation and reclamation according to the environmental and human needs of the regions and watersheds which supply the city---

- a. 85,500 AF/year to Mono Lake
- b. 105,125 AF/year to the Owens Valley
- c. 22,475 AF/year to the Metropolitan Water District

The table below shows the projected impact of this proposal on the Los Angeles water supply in the year 2000.

Rationale: Mono Lake would be maintained at 6388'. Owens Valley groundwater pumping would be reduced to the pre-1970 level, protecting the valley environment. MWD purchases would be reduced. No replacement water would be needed from the State Water Project or any other sources. The Mono Lake problem would not be exported to other areas, such as the Walker River watershed. Conservation of water in Los Angeles will save more energy than that lost through reduced export from Mono Lake and the Owens Valley.

Source	Projected LA Use in Year 2000		Local Allocation	Reduction
	No Conservation	MLC Plan		
Mono Basin	100,000 AF/yr	14,500 AF/yr	85,500 AF/yr	85%
Owens Valley	382,000 AF/yr	276,875 AF/yr	105,125 AF/yr	28%
MWD	70,000 AF/yr	47,525 AF/yr	22,475 AF/yr	32%
Local Wells	102,000 AF/yr	102,000 AF/yr	0	0
Reclamation	0	115,000 AF/yr		
	654,000 AF/yr	555,900 AF/yr		

5. Immediate allocation of the 9% (58,500 AF) currently being conserved in Los Angeles to Mono Lake.

Rationale: Implementation of the conservation and especially the reclamation programs will take years; Mono Lake needs water now to protect the gull colony and prevent further deterioration of its environment.

6. State and federal funds be used to pay a substantial portion of the cost of implementation of water conservation and construction of water reclamation facilities in Los Angeles. Some of these funds to derive from revenues generated by levying a \$2/acre/year charge for withdrawal of federal lands for watershed values to the City of Los Angeles.

Rationale: We all benefit from the preservation of Mono Lake and the Owens Valley environments, therefore we should all help the people of Los Angeles bear the costs of conservation and reclamation.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### BIRDWATCHER'S BIG DAY BENEFITS MONO

On Sunday, April 29th, a group of ardent birdwatchers followed a carefully planned route across Fresno County. They began their mission well before dawn and continued on into the night. The purpose of this "Big Day:" To identify in a single day as many species of birds in Fresno County as possible.

How did all this benefit Mono Lake? Members and Friends of Fresno Audubon Society were asked to make a pledge-- a penny, a nickle or a dime-- for each species of bird tallied on April 29th. In this way, if 100 species were seen, everyone who pledged 5¢ a bird would donate \$5.00 to the Fresno Audubon Society's Mono Lake fund. There were two ways the big day could be successful-- if the birders saw a lot of bird species, and if a lot of folks pledged donations.

In fact 131 species were logged by ace birders Chuck Peck and Rob Hansen, netting about \$400 for the Mono Lake cause.

#### MONO LAKE BLASTING..WORSE THAN A FAILURE?

Opinion by Steve Busch, Lee Vining

April 10, 1979. Clark Busch, roving reporter, boarded the CH-47 National Guard transport helicopter (i.e., talked his way onto a "press only" helicopter ride; some people will do anything to get high). Mr. Busch joined his fellow newsmen in covering the ongoing Mono Lake channel blasting.

The reporters were shuttled to the blast site in order to witness the detonation of 1500 lbs. of dynamite and nitroglycerine. The outcome of this spectacle was "disappointing." Most of the mud fell straight back down into the hole from which it had been violently excavated. Consequently a man (or predator) can still walk across the landbridge and invade the seagull rookery on Negit Island...by merely getting his shoes or paws muddy. And, in an ironic sequence of event, not one photographer got an "after the blast" photograph! Most returned home without any evidence substantiating the effectiveness of the days activities.

Clearly the news coverage of the event (estimated by Fish and Game press coordinator David Dick to reach a staggering "50 million television viewers") will bring nationwide attention to the ecological destruction of Mono Lake. However, even if the current blasting was not a failure, it creates a highly publicized impression the "the problem is being dealt with," when in fact it does not begin to address the crucial dilemma of Mono Lake...saving the life that abounds in it's waters.

There is only one solution to Mono Lake's survival... more water in the lake... by less diversion of water from the basin on the part of L.A.D.W.P.! These "stopgap measures" such as the landbridge blasting are denuding the real issue and creating an illusion of remedial action in the public's eye. In this regard, the highly publicized blasting can do more harm than good...with all due respect to the people involved with the best of intentions.

BATHROOM SITE PROJECT: MONO LAKE

by Deborah Small



editor's intro: In April of this year our mailman brought us a porcelain brick objet d'art from Deborah Small, Los Angeles area artist. He also brought bricks to Jerry Brown, Alan Cranston, Duane Georgeson, Tom Bradley, Huey Johnson, Jimmy Carter and other public officials with the power to influence Mono Lake's destiny.

The Mono Lake bricks belong in recipient's toilets saving water. "Brick as art object. Toilet tank as gallery." Few, we suspect, will find proper homes until commode/art galleries are equipped with retrofit see-thru tops.

Accompanying the brick was an equally exceptional booklet, from which the following excerpts are taken. In the dedication Small relates an ancient Indian legend told by a friend:

The world will end when Mono dries up, and one can walk across the lake from the shoreline to the islands to the opposite shoreline...

It may be fiction, but it may be true nevertheless!

## Mono Lake/Water Conservation

According to Robert Jones, writing for the Los Angeles Times, California Resources Secretary Huey Johnson and other state officials feel that one method of stabilizing Mono's waters is conservation. Rather than looking to another source for water, Jones states that

During the height of the recent drought--when some conservation was mandatory--Los Angeles reduced its water use as much as 19 percent, somewhat more than the amount needed to keep Mono Lake level and only slightly less than the amount needed to stop diversions altogether.

Duane Georgeson, chief engineer for the Los Angeles Aqueduct, states that

If the citizens of Los Angeles felt a priority problem was to maintain the lake as it is, maybe you could get a commitment out of people on a long-term basis.

According to Jones, Georgeson does not believe such a commitment is likely. Perhaps Georgeson is underestimating us. Through increased dissemination of information in the media, through commitment on the part of officials, through awareness in the schools, perhaps Los Angeles would be willing to take conservation measures to save Mono Lake and the surrounding environment and wildlife.

This artwork is about commitment...

Toilets offer the largest individual potential water savings (Department of Water Resources)

The toilet tank is the site for my Bathroom Site Project: Mono Lake bricks. Conventional toilets use 5 to 7 gallons of water/flush. A flush of approximately 2 gallons should be satisfactory to carry waste from the toilet, through collection lines, sublaterals, laterals and sewers. Therefore a wide margin is left in the new Health and Safety Code addition that requires low flush toilets (3.5 gallons/flush) in buildings constructed after January, 1978. Most "retrofit" devices for conventional toilets, i.e., devices like the Mono Lake bricks, water dams, plastic bottles, etc., will not conserve as much as the low-flush toilets, but give a substantial savings.

In California, there seems to be only the beginnings of a "water consciousness." Attitudes about the immediate availability and unlimited supply of water are entrenched in most of us to some degree. Yet conservation can be extremely simple to implement. For example, the Mono Lake bricks, once installed, will save .5625 gallons/water/flush without the recipient/consumer changing his/her user habitst.

A brick in every toilet tank...

## Mono Lake/Art

Artwork about a lake. The artwork is not neutral and cannot be. There is a stance. Not an attempt at "silence." The lake may leave a silence if I do not break that other kind of silence. The silence of condoning. The silence of denial. The silence of looking the other way, of saying it won't do any good. What can be said. What can be not said.

The reaction of many people to their own awareness of change is to pretend to ignore it... (Berger)

Israel Russell, the early geologist of Mono Lake, wrote that Owens Lake was in many ways the "homologue" of Mono Lake. He was referring to their water supply and their chemical histories.

I went to the library to research this homologous relationship further. "The Rape of Owens Valley" (Mayo). "Water's Dreadful Price" (chapter heading in Lavender's California: Land of New Beginnings). "The Water Seekers" (Nadeau).

Resentment and a vague sense of futility still linger, nevertheless. Owens Valley did not--does not--control her own destiny.... (Lavender)

There it is. Take it (William Mulholland on the opening of the Los Angeles Aqueduct in 1913).

The Owens Valley water. For the City of Los Angeles.

The water flows south... to fuel the illusion that growth can be unlimited... (Brechtin)

Don't blame anyone else... If there is an error in human judgement, I was that human (Mulholland after the collapse of the San Francisco Canyon Dam, 1928).



The University of California gave William Mulholland an honorary doctor's degree. Mulholland was the chief engineer for the Los Angeles aqueduct built to divert the Owens Valley water. The University also helped sponsor An Ecological Study of Mono Lake, California.

...the material need of civilization set against a growing belief that civilization might not prove worthwhile if it destroyed the natural world from which man himself had come (Lavender).

Gray Brechin today writes that Owens Lake is the image of Mono's future. Unlike Russell, he is not comparing their water supplies or chemical histories, but the fact that like Owens Valley, the Mono Basin water is also being diverted. The aqueduct is being extended. Mono Lake has been hooked up. And it is shrinking.

Size. Scale. These are artistic concerns.

Scale. It is "little ol' Mono Lake," according to Paul Lane (chief engineer of water works, LADWP, quoted in the L.A. Times). Little ol' Mono was larger before the stepped up diversions in 1970 and even larger before the initial diversions in 1941.

Israel Russell would be surprised to see what this Los Angeles aqueduct-created time is doing. Actually, he would probably roll over in his grave. He was correct when he wrote:

Could we look into the future with as much accuracy as we are now able to review the past, it would be evident that changes are now in progress that in time will equal the apparent revolutions which occurred during the Quaternary.

The aqueduct is not only speeding up this geologic time but altering it drastically. If the lake continues to shrink, the revolutions that occurred during the Quaternary will seem minute compared to those induced by an incredibly short period of man-induced time.

Several early writers saw Mono Lake as a work of art.

This lake and the region surrounding it come as near to the fictions of enchantment as any other known realities... The traveler in the vicinity of this lake is affected by constant illusion... (Shuck)

Art as illusion, art as unreality, art as fiction.

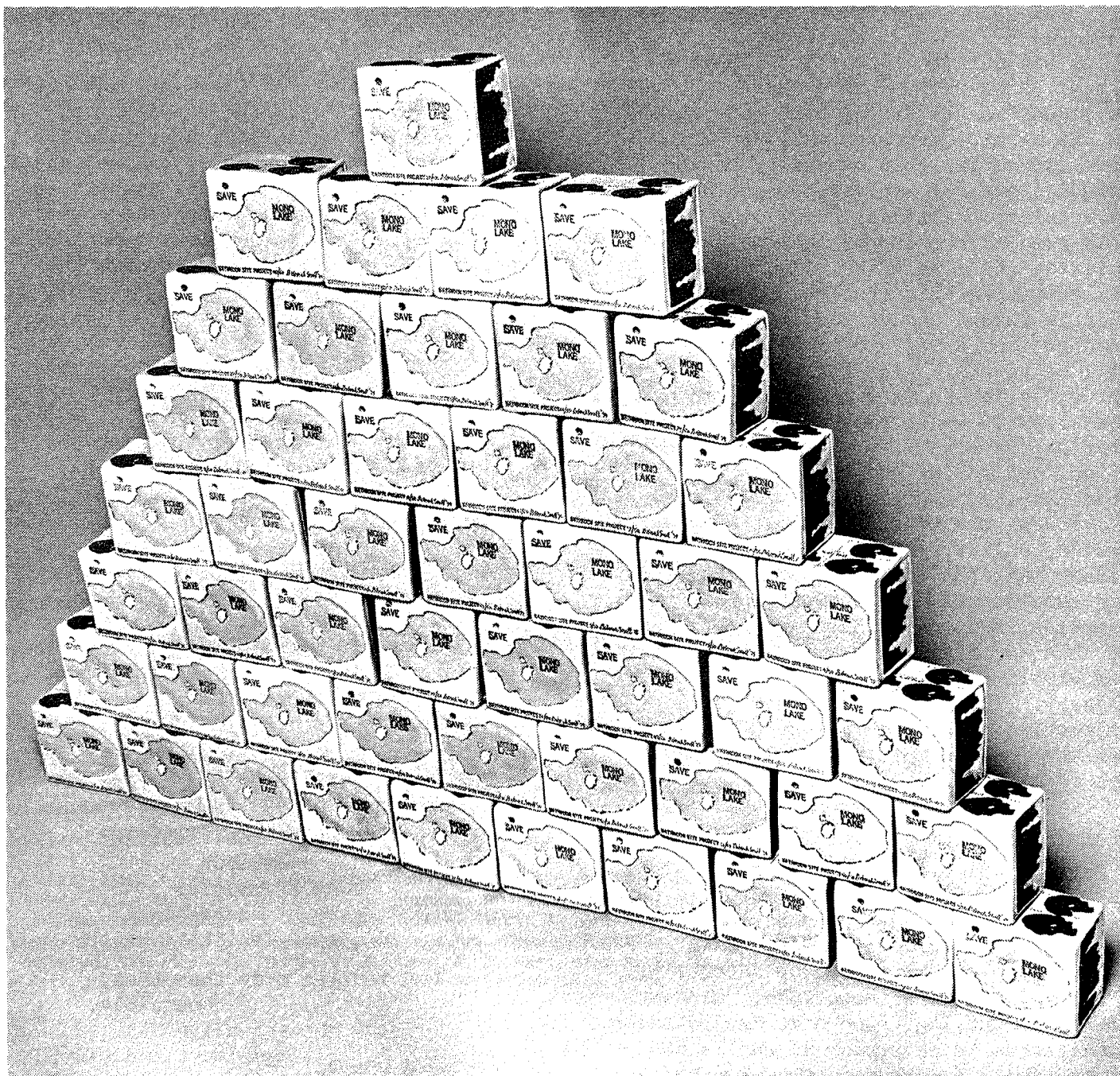
"There's Mono Lake." "Where?" "There-- the aqueduct." (Driving north about an hour out of Los Angeles). An interesting way to look at it. And there is Mono Lake again in the Van Norman Reservoir, right off Interstate 5. I no longer need to travel eight hours to see Mono Lake. In Los Angeles I can turn on the water faucet: processed, chlorinated pre-Mono Lake. No longer aesthetic. No longer a "fictitious scene," a "sheet of burnished metal" (Russell), and no longer reflecting anything but one's glass.

I recently purchased a map of the Mono area to see if the map has been updated to conform to the new shape and decreased size of Mono Lake. It hasn't been. Perhaps the map-makers are waiting for some result of the controversy, waiting for a compromise to be reached, before they alter the map. Perhaps they have faith that the people of Los Angeles will find a way to cut back the unrestricted diversions. But the map is now no longer accurate, not even close.

The bricks displace water. Can they displace our consciousness? Do they alter reality or our perception of reality? Do they disorient us?

Mono Lake will be saved in spite of this project and because of it.

Just as one artwork needs to be seen as a fragment of one's lifework, so Mono Lake is but a fragment of an issue much larger than itself.



#### MONO BRICKS FUNDRAISER

In order to raise much-needed funds, the Mono Lake Committee has received permission from Deborah Small to sell Mono Lake bricks. We have tentatively decided to offer the bricks in return for a new or additional contribution of \$100 or more. Hopefully the bricks will be available by early autumn.

## ON-GOING RESEARCH

### Brine Flies

The diminutive brine flies (Ephydra hians) which crowd Mono's shores are as important to the lake's bird populations as the better-known shrimp. Research being conducted this summer by David Herbst (Dept. of Zoology, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR 97331) will help predict the impact increasing salinity and alkalinity will have on the larvae of this species, which develop in the waters of Mono Lake. Through laboratory experiments Herbst will be investigating the response of brine fly larvae from Mono Lake and Abert Lake, Oregon to various concentrations of Mono Lake brine, Abert Lake brine, and sodium chloride salt water. Specifically he will be examining regulation of the salt content of body fluids, salinity-dependent changes in metabolism, the influence of photoperiod and temperature on the duration of pupation, and the lethal concentrations of lake water in which half the larvae die within a certain time period (LC50 values). The Mono Lake Committee is supporting this research through a grant for the purchase of essential equipment and chemicals.

### California Gulls

David Winkler (Mus. Vertebrate Zoology, Univ. Calif., Berkeley, CA 94720) is currently studying the importance of food supply and prime nesting habitat in determining the reproductive success of California Gulls at Mono Lake. Winkler is (1) conducting brood-size manipulation experiments to determine if adults can successfully fledge more than two chicks, and (2) comparing order of territory occupancy, nesting density and nesting success in the four distinct habitat types available for nesting. The latter research, in particular, will furnish a basis for evaluating the extent to which available habitat (rather than food) is limiting the overall productivity of the colony. Equally important it will allow predictions of the effects that ongoing changes in nesting habitat availability will have on future gull breeding productivity.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

RAVEN, POEMS FROM NATURALISTS, VOLUME ONE  
(\$3 postpaid from: Raven, 4409 44th Ave.,  
Sacramento, CA 95824)

"A gathering of Northwest American birdwatchers, botanists, herpetologists, mammologists, astronomers, entomologists, mycologists, teachers, philosophers and dreamers having brought together their writings..." Proceeds donated to the Mono Lake Committee "to help save the magic lake."

### The Education of a Biologist

have you ever wondered what you are?  
you, or your brother, coyote,  
or your sister, sagebrush?

you are air  
and water  
and a little earth.

you are flesh  
flesh of protein, of carbohydrate,  
of lipid  
flesh of hydrocarbon  
hydro  
carbon  
hydrogen from water  
carbon from air,

and nerves of potassium and sodium  
blood of iron  
bone of calcium  
gene of phosphorus  
a little earth

but you are more than that,  
certainly.  
you are alive  
and laugh and play  
and work and rest  
and love.

you are fire  
the fire of the sun  
the energy of the cosmos.

you are starlight.

-Dave Desante-

ON BEHALF OF MONO LAKE AND ITS LIVING INHABITANTS WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK  
OUR NEW CONTRIBUTORS FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT...

ONOMANIACS. David Devine, Fred Euphrat, Marin Sierra Club

ONOPHILES. Jim Loughlin, Tulare County Audubon Society

PATRONS. Dale Claynoole, El Dorado Audubon Society, Mr. and Mrs. Ghiorso, Bill Kelley

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WE ARE ALSO GRATEFUL TO EVERYONE WHO HAS GENEROUSLY SENT US AN ADDITIONAL  
CONTRIBUTION....

PATRONS. Frank Capra, Gary Haas, Ellen Hardebeck, Kenneth Smith, Ken and Lynne Smith, Dolores Seielstad, Mr. Owen H. Ware

SPONSORS. Mary Jane Bateman, Mr. and Mrs. Bauer, Jean Bendt Durick, Paul and Mary DeDecker, Russel and Marilyn Fowler, John T. Howell, Joan Hottendorf, Stuart Klapp, Abigail A. King, Richard and Doris Leonard, Eugene and Akiko Makishimo, Maxine E. McCloskey, Rob Morris, Jeanne Pond, Cathy Rose, Grace Rolls, Steve and Stephanie Singer, Gordeon H. True, Jr., Karl Zeiler

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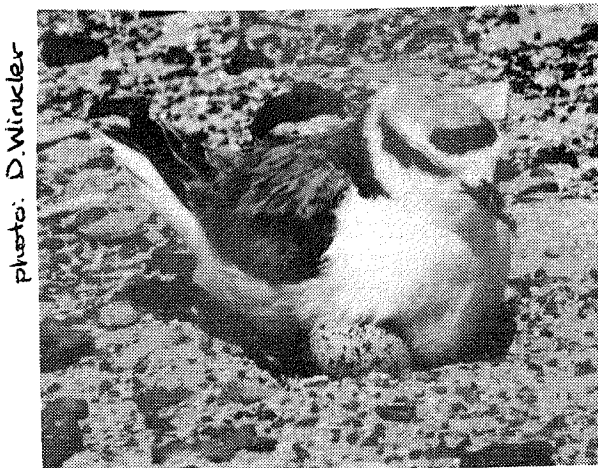


photo: D. Winkler

Snowy Plover - adult  
at nest along the  
east shore of Mono  
Lake, summer, 1978

## AMOK ON NATURE'S LANDSCAPE

Opinion by Mark Ross

While driving through the mid-western part of Los Angeles, down Olympic Blvd., on the northwest corner of La Cienega is an old style, somewhat peculiar-looking building. It is the Beverly Hills water works.

There are (or were-- I've been gone for six years) tennis courts over the reservoir and the pungent smell of a mineral spring wafts out over the city line, across Olympic and into Los Angeles proper.

Beverly Hills is an incorporated island completely surrounded by the city of Los Angeles. There are other pockets of independence such as San Fernando, Culver City and Santa Monica. It is the Beverly Hills water works and other such wells that have allowed these towns to stay out of the L.A. aqueduct and maintain their political integrity.

Meanwhile, many more towns than these few hold outs have long since been conglomerated into the mass of modern L.A. To get aqueduct water Southern California communities were obliged to become annexed into Los Angeles. The federal government made L.A. desist from such hegemony as a condition of the Boulder Dam Project.

At the other end of the pipeline there is the infamous story of J. B. Lippincott, an agent for the U. S. Reclamation Service, who in 1905 was able to get Owens Valley ranchers to sign away their water rights for the purpose of having the Federal Government build an irrigation system. Lippincott went instead to William Mulholland, turning over said water rights to the City of Los Angeles without ever revealing this fact to the people whose signatures effected the transfer. Thus began a bitter political war -- now being fought by the third generation of antagonists.

This is a struggle that continues to tear California apart. Mono Lake is the latest, and perhaps saddest, chapter in this story. And, thanks to the Mono Lake Committee, it may also be the best read chapter. Owens Lake died long

before conservationists and natural history enthusiasts could form an organized political constituency. In today's arena of events the eyes of California and much of the rest of America are keenly focused on Mono Lake. No dust storm is going to hide a single aspect of the ecological catastrophe that is now being manufactured by a rogue bureaucracy, amok on nature's landscape.

David Gaines and I grew up together in the Los Angeles of the fifties and sixties. The Department of Water and Power were linemen and meter-readers. Crowley Lake was always on the front page of the Times on the first day of fishing season. The aqueduct was an engineering marvel. We all felt sort of proud that we had a publicly-owned electric company and Mulholland was the road that took us into the nearest chaparral forest.

Somewhere in the brilliant fluorescent halls of the DWP building on Hope St. some faceless bureaucrat is biting the eraser off the end of his pencil. It is his job to monitor the opposition being brought by people outside the DWP against his agency's policies. It's not a very important job because it doesn't put any water into the aqueduct. But he is definitely getting busier what with this Mono Lake business on top of those cantankerous renegades in the Owens Valley. My mother writes "I save water for Mono Lake" on her DWP bill.

Saving Mono Lake will require the support of millions of Californians, Northern and Southern. We are trying to do this because we don't want to lose a rare and important part of the world. I am doing this also because I want to see a world where my relatives and friends in Los Angeles can live in peace with their neighbors -- where water is used and conserved with equity.

We all fight for our dreams. And people have many dreams worth fighting for. But the rogue bureaucracy that runs the aqueduct dreams only of more conquests; of Green Creek and its cousins to the North -- leaving even more exposed lake bottoms for the ghosts of birds to feed upon.

## ACCOLADES

We recently received, in lieu of their usual newsletter, a post-card from the Buena Vista Audubon Society. It read: "Yes, you're right! Instead of a newsletter this month you are receiving a postcard. The money saved has been sent to the Mono Lake Committee. We feel, as we hope you do, that the Mono Lake problem is important and urgent."

We would like to thank General Schober and the California National Guard, as well as the California Department of Fish and Game for their efforts in attempting to protect the Negit Island gull rookery. In particular the 16 men of the 132nd Combat Engineer Battalion deserve special praise for enduring adverse weather and working conditions. We also commend the L.A.D.W.P. for providing its Cain Ranch facilities as a base for the operation.

Larry A. Matthew, Earth Science Researcher at China Lake Naval Weapons Station, kindly donated several incredibly "dusty" slides of Owens (Dry) Lake during windstorms.

We are pleased to accept \$242.92 raised by our predecessor, "The Friends of Mono Lake," before our formation--thank you, Jan Simis!

Many businesses in Lee Vining, June Lakes, and Mammoth Lakes have stocked our leaflets and bumperstickers, and are taking the time to talk individually to tourists about Mono's plight.

A tufa award to Becky Shearin for designing our T-shirts, the sketches in this newsletter, and elegantly addressing envelopes (Sally should take remedial penmanship). Hurrah for Penny Dore of June Lake, who typed mailing cards for new subscribers. Three gull cheers for Harriet Hess, Lily Mathieu and the Auxiliary of the Lee Vining American Legion for addressing leaflets, and for Marcia Dore for helping to type this newsletter at the last minute.

A hearty thank you to everyone who has sent in petitions, penned letters to officials, contacted the press, presented slide shows, composed songs, posted fliers, and set up tables at shopping centers, conferences and schools. This is the kind of grassroots support Mono desperately needs; everybody's help is essential. David DeSante, Robb Fishman, Edith Gaines, Joseph Holmes, Steve Johnson, Ingrid Lustig, Julie Rosenstein, Mark Ross, Jim Stroup, Scott Stine, our officers and regional representatives, and many others have selflessly devoted long and weary hours to the Mono cause.

And what would we do without those hospitable folks who allow the roving MLC'ers to throw down sleeping bags, parasitize their phones, and infect them with monophilia?

So many have done so much, we're bound to fail to mention many deserving volunteers. Apologies to those we've omitted, and please keep on keeping it on for ol' Mono Lake!

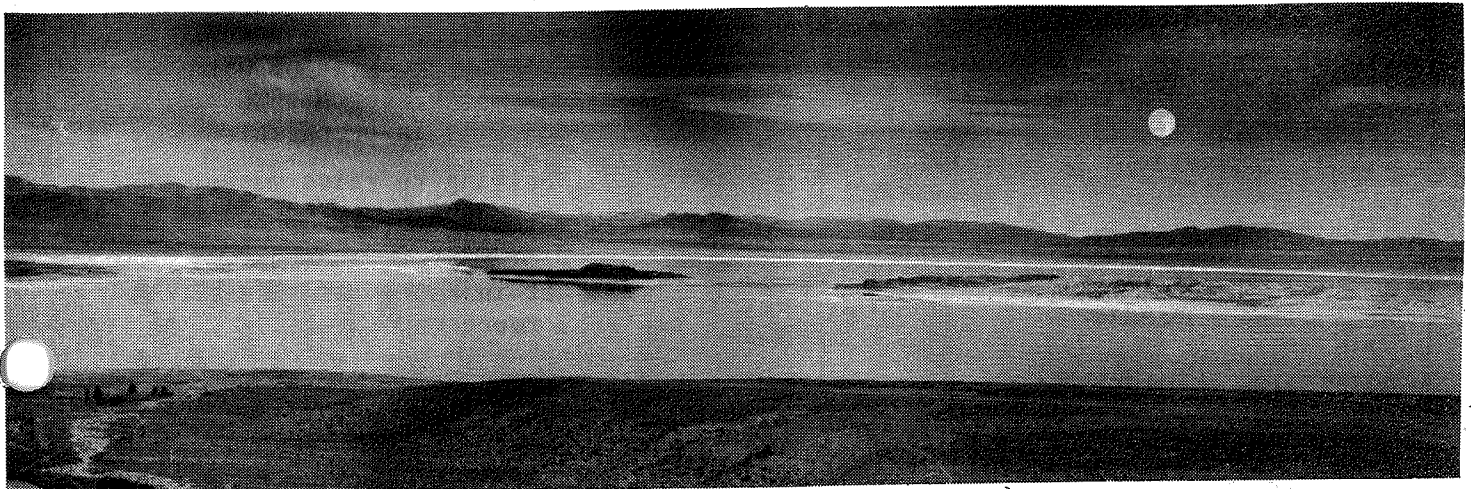


photo: J. Stroup



# MONO T-SHIRTS NOW AVAILABLE

Help publicize Mono's plight by wearing a "Mono Lake: Its Worth Saving" T-Shirt!

Please specify size (small, medium or large), style (women's frenchcut, mens or childrens) and color (beige or light blue), and send a check or money order to:

National Audubon Society  
Western Education Center  
376 Greenwood Beach Road  
Tiburon, CA 94920

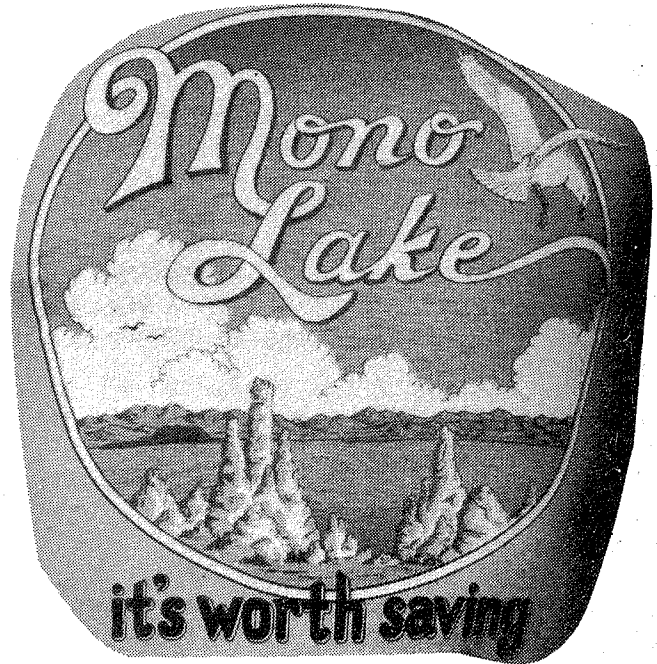
Prices are as follows:

Style	Unit Price	Plus Handling Charge*	
		Calif	Elsewhere
Children	\$5.50	\$7.08	\$6.75
Men	6.50	8.14	\$7.75
Women	7.50	9.20	\$8.75

\*\$1.25 handling charge; 6% sales tax in California

These shirts are thick, 100% cotton, so expect some shrinkage. Sizes run small; ladies dress size 12 = large. Shirts will also be available on field trips, at talks, at the Lee Vining Gift Shop, and at Kelty Backpacking in Glendale.

MONO LAKE COMMITTEE UNOFFICIAL FINANCIAL REPORT	
December '21, 1978 - June 10, 1979	
I. BEGINNING BALANCE	(\$178)
II. INCOME	
Contributions	\$12,668
III. EXPENSES	
Materials and Supplies	
Photographs (Slide Shows, Press Kits)	\$410
Office Supplies	141
Displays	61
Office Business	
Phone	515
Copying	316
Publications	
Printing (Typesetting, Paper)	4160
Postage	367
Bumperstickers	500
T-shirts	1000
Fees	
Secretarial	1000
Conferences	66
Travel	
Car Mileage @ 10¢/mile	1703
Air Fares	184
Toilet Bricks to Public Officials	200
Research	400
Lawsuit	1000
TOTAL	\$12023
BALANCE	\$472



Praise goes to Becky Shearin, Lee Vining artist, for a T-shirt design that truly evokes the magic of Mono.

## MORE HELP NEEDED

You can help spread the word about Mono's plight by:

1. Taking samples of our leaflets, bumper stickers and T-shirts to local backpacking and nature paraphernalia stores, conservation/ecology centers, etc.

2. Setting up and maning tables and displays at schools, libraries, shopping centers, etc.

3. Arranging slide talks for this coming autumn and winter; an 80-slide presentation with accompanying cassette tape commentary is in preparation.

4. Helping to raise much-needed funds to sustain our efforts on Mono's behalf.

Please get in touch with your closest regional representative.

For orders of 100 or more leaflets, please contact: Julia Rosenstein, 1981 Bonifacio St. #9, Concord, CA 94520; 415/689-8939



The following letter appeared in the Los Angeles Times on October 27, 1935. Mr. Litton was 15 years old at the time...

INGLEWOOD, OCTOBER 21-- FOR THE DISAPPEARANCE OF OWENS LAKE THERE IS SOME EXCUSE. LOS ANGELES REALLY NEEDED THE WATER. BUT WHEN OUR CITY OF THE ANGELS WILL WANTONLY DRY UP BEAUTIFUL, MYSTERIOUS MONO LAKE TO SELFISHLY ADD A FEW UNNECESSARY GALLONS TO AN ALREADY ADEQUATE SUPPLY, THINGS ARE GOING A LITTLE TOO FAR. THE PEOPLE OF THE OWENS VALLEY REGION ARE ALREADY DEEPLY RESENTFUL TOWARD THE GREAT CITY WHICH HAS MADE THEIR ONCE FERTILE AND PRODUCTIVE LAND INTO A BARREN DESERT WASTE. THE PEOPLE OF THE ENTIRE STATE SHOULD RISE UP AGAINST THE DESTRUCTION OF MONO LAKE. MONO LAKE IS A GEM-- AMONG CALIFORNIA'S GREATEST SCENIC ATTRACTIONS-- A BEAUTIFUL AND HISTORIC LANDMARK WHICH MUST NOT BE DESTROYED...

--Martin Litton



Please fill out this coupon and send to:

**MONO LAKE COMMITTEE**  
P.O. Box 2764  
Oakland, CA 94602

Make checks payable to:  
The Santa Monica Bay Audubon Society

Contributions are tax-deductable.

name

address

city

state

zip

I want to help Mono Lake live on.

Here is my contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_ for the Mono Lake Legal Defense Fund.

Here is my contribution for:

- ☐ \$10 regular membership
- ☐ \$5 "I can't afford more" membership
- ☐ \$25 sponsor
- ☐ \$50 patron
- ☐ \$100 monophile
- ☐ \$500 monomaniac
- ☐ I cannot afford to contribute, but I'm willing to write letters and I would like to receive *Action Alerts*
- ☐ I'm interested in promoting local publicity
- ☐ I am a new member.
- ☐ I already belong. This is an additional contribution (or renewal).

**Mono Lake Committee**  
**P. O. Box 2764**  
**Oakland, CA 94602**

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