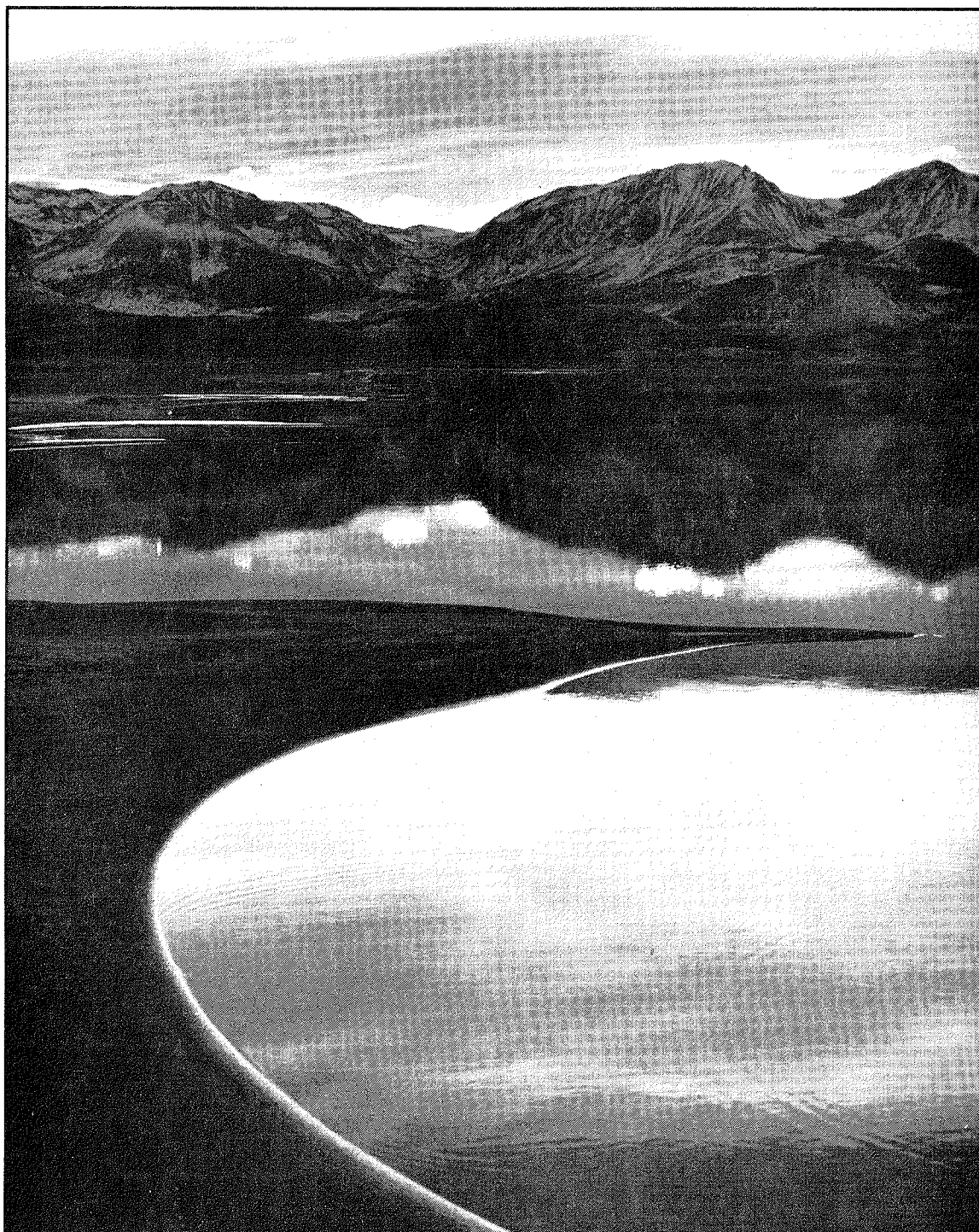


Spring 1989

Vol. 11, No. 4

MONO^{the} LAKE

N E W S L E T T E R



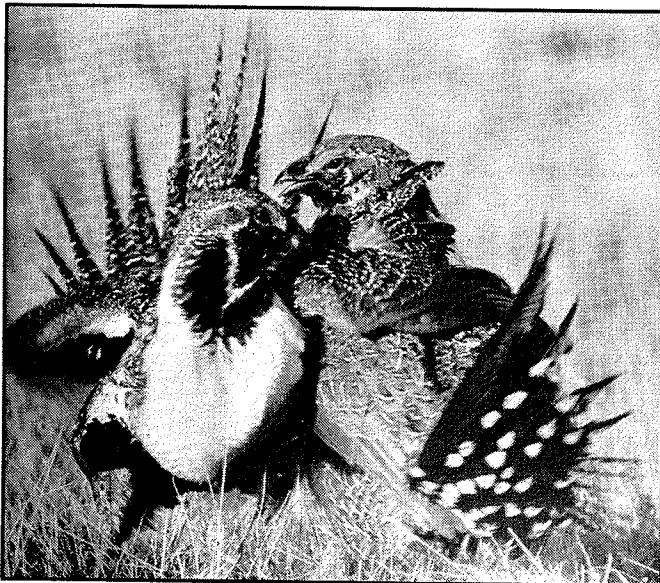
Lauren Davis

On The Cover

These sandbars were exposed along Mono's southeast shore as the lake dropped to 6377 feet in mid-winter. Usually the Sierra crest would be solid white with snow at this time of year. Instead, the snowpack in February resembled the view in late spring.

Mono Lake Supporters Travel Alert

Greenland's icy mountains and Indonesia's coral strand are just two of the exotic places you can go on a Mono Lake benefit group tour. Tour/treks to Bhutan or Nepal, or almost anywhere else, can also be arranged. If you're interested, please contact Mildred Bennett, 2719 Marin Ave., Berkeley, CA 94708, (415) 526-1260.



A skirmish between male Sage Grouse signals the beginning of their mating season. For more on the spring rites of grouse, see page 8.

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

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This newsletter is partially funded by a grant from the *Mono Lake Foundation*, a non-profit, tax-exempt organization dedicated to studying and protecting the Mono Lake watershed. If you wish to make a tax deductible contribution to the effort to save Mono Lake, please write your check to the "Mono Lake Foundation."

Almanac

APRIL

April 29 - July 2. "At Mono Lake." Exhibit of Mono Lake photographs by the West's great landscape photographers. Sierra Nevada Museum's new facility, the E.L. Wiegand Museum, 160 W. Liberty St., Reno. Tues.-Sat., 10-6, Sun., 12-4. (702) 329-3333.

MAY

May 1-7. "Water Is Life." Water Awareness Week sponsored by the California Water Resource Awareness Committee. Watch for events in your area.

May 19. *Mono Lake Fine Wine Cellar Drawing, San Francisco.* Enter to win one of four wine cellars and other prizes! Please see page 12 for more details.

JUNE

June 10. *Mono Basin Spring Bird Count.* All are welcome regardless of birding experience. For more information, call (619) 647-6620.

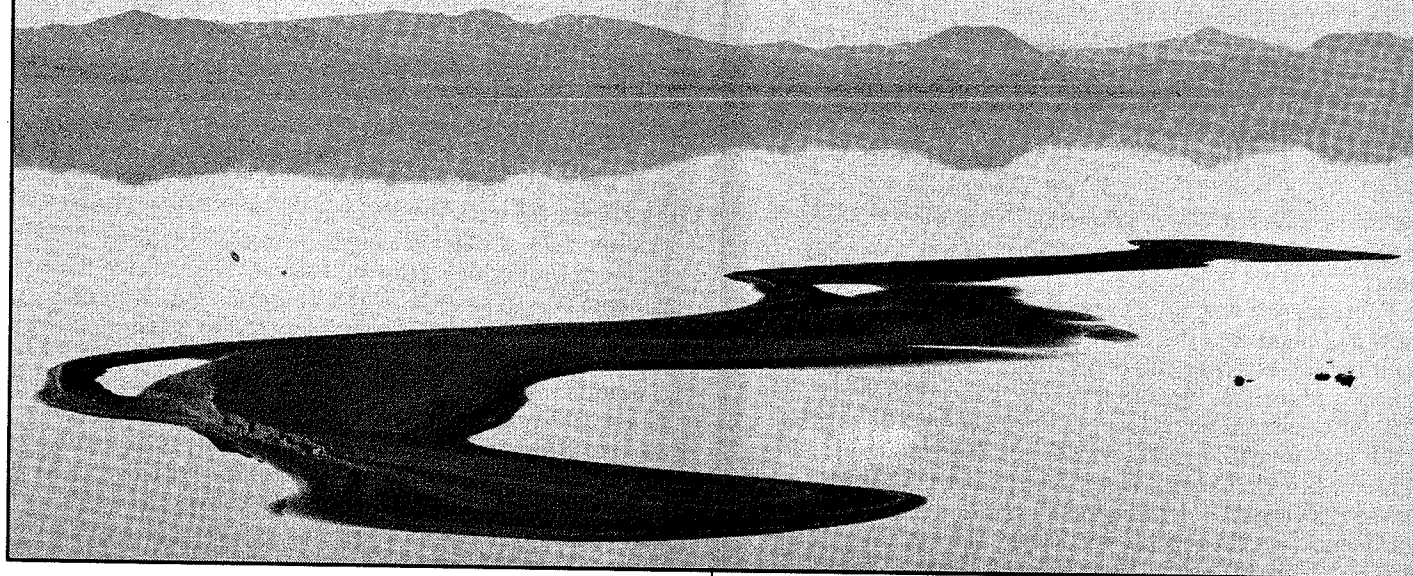
June 23 to June 25. *Birding and tufa-watching weekend with the San Diego Sierra Club.* Proceeds will help Mono Lake. Contact Mike Maghakian, 3549 Castle Glen Dr. #205, San Diego, CA 92123, (619) 565-2642.

June 23. *Sunset tours of Mono Lake begin.* Join an MLC guide for a stroll through tufa and time. 6:00 p.m. daily. *MLC Visitor Center summer hours, 9 to 9 daily.*

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Saunters by Mono Lake



"I cannot believe it is so far between knowing what must be done and doing it." – Barry Lopez

Slowly, old landmarks emerge from beneath Mono Lake. They are the places I've only heard about. Old Man Tufa, Caldron, Tip of the Landbridge, the Black Hole. They are like beached whales revealed by a receding tide – a low tide brought on by drought.

There's a certain curious fascination in exploring Mono's "tidepools." The newly exposed lakebottom, springs and tufa give one a sense of being privy to aquatic secrets, ephemeral shapes. But like looking at a beached whale, underlying the curiosity is a sobering awareness that one is only being allowed into this hidden world because it is dying.

For every mysterious upwelling revealed by the lowering lake, there's another favorite spring left stranded upshore in a mire of mud and alkali. Sandy beaches give way to muck. Any shoreline walker sympathetic to Mono's plight would wonder why this decline seems inevitable. We know the ecosystem will experience serious harm this year when Negit and other islets become connected to the landbridge. We know how much water is needed to stabilize and preserve Mono Lake at a healthy level. We know that water conservation technology and programs exist that can provide a realistic solution to curbing consumption of Mono's water resources. We know there are replacement sources of water to supply the city of Los Angeles. We have political, legal and public support for ransoming Mono Lake from desolation. Why does it seem "so far between knowing what must be done and doing it?"

Although we, meaning we humans, know what must be done, we don't seem to wholeheartedly *want* to do it. Sure, some of us do, but some are frightened by the

prospects of change. Perhaps we're experiencing the lag time inherent in a "shift of paradigm." Although all the "rational" scientific reasons are apparent for preserving Mono Lake, there is still a resistance to valuing the natural world at – what is mistakenly perceived as – the expense of a certain quality of life for some people. That the situation could even be conceived as a choice between three million people and three thousand fish – one of DWP's favorite arguments – or between people and birds, or brine shrimp, is an indication of a much deeper cultural flaw. If we continue to see our species as being in competition with the natural world, we continue to misunderstand the nature of our existence.

Dave Gaines understood this ecological principle to his bones. In autumn of 1986, he wrote:

"Mono's beauty, power and worth comes from more than birds, shrimp, tufa, islands or people alone. It comes from all these things together. It comes from wholeness. If we lose Negit Island, we maim this place. We make it ugly. We render it a mirror to our own greed."

Yes, we are emotional. We love Mono Lake. It has opened our hearts to beauties we hadn't imagined. It has, to quote Gray Brechin, made us 'acutely aware of being alive on the planet.' It has taught us we are brothers and sisters to all living things."

How can we help purge the selfishness of our species and avoid rendering Mono a "mirror to our own greed?" The simplest answer is to live beyond the self every day, no matter where we are. Remember the ecosystem at the other end of the tap. Restore and beautify the habitat around you. And be patient, but persistent, with the transformation from greed to green. With such devotion we, and Mono Lake, can survive this drought of the land and of the human spirit.

Lauren Davis

Regional Water Gathering Confronts Issues

It's a long-standing tradition in the Eastern Sierra to attend water hearings with gusto, especially when the topic has something to do with the Los Angeles Aqueduct. After all, Mark Twain lived in the Eastern Sierra when he penned the famous line, "Whiskey is for drinking and water is for fighting over." So, it was truly a historic event when citizens from Mono and Inyo counties gathered at the Eastern Sierra Water Symposium in Bishop to listen to speakers talk of mutual cooperation in water management.

February 4th was not a great day for travel. Heavy snow had blanketed the Sierra and Owens Valley the night before, but over 300 people filled Bishop High School auditorium. Featured speakers included Tony Cosby-Rossmann, Inyo County's lawyer in its case against DWP and an avid Mono Lake supporter; Greg James, Director of Inyo County Water Department; Martha Davis, Executive Director, Mono Lake Committee; Ellen Hardebeck, Eastern Sierra Air Pollution Control Officer; Dan Paranic, Mono County Supervisor; James Wickser, LA Department of Water and Power (DWP); and Richard Atwater, Metropolitan Water District (MWD) of Southern California.

The primary purpose of the symposium was to help inform the public about water management issues in Inyo and Mono counties. Of particular urgency was the upcoming deadline for agreement between Inyo County and DWP on a groundwater pumping plan. If a preliminary agreement can be reached by April 1 the parties will begin to prepare jointly an EIR on the effects of pumping in the Owens Valley. If they can't agree, the parties will go back to court to resolve the pumping controversy. (For more information on the Owens Valley water conflict, please see interview with Greg James in the Summer, 1987 newsletter.) Public involvement in this process, especially from Inyo county residents, is essential.

Several themes emerged during the symposium. A common view shared by MWD and DWP representatives was the feeling that new water projects were not going to provide the answer for Southern California's growing water needs. MWD representative Atwater said that future water supplies would come from wiser management of existing sources, such as reclamation and water conservation. DWP was less optimistic. Their representative Wickser said he wondered what was "going to happen when it comes to push and shove?" If Southern California or Los Angeles continues to grow at one to two percent per year, Wickser maintained that "those people will need more water than MWD or DWP can provide." He went on to say that water conservation isn't a permanent solution, and cited the fact that LA is currently conserving only "one, maybe two percent" over last year's use at this time.

DWP currently has a small water reclamation project Wickser said, however, the department was having problems finding businesses to use the reclaimed water

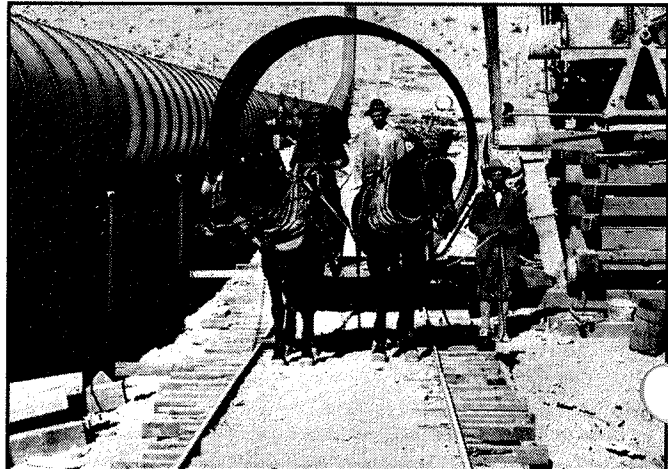
because of perceived health problems. They've priced it cheaper than unused water and have promised that users buying reclaimed water will not have to conserve "when we go to mandatory conservation."

Duane Bucholz, DWP Assistant Engineer in Charge of the Los Angeles Aqueduct, said that any water DWP gives up in the Owens Valley or Mono Lake would have to be made up from the Western Sierra. When asked what the role of water managers is in controlling Southern California's growth, Bucholtz replied that their mandate was to provide all the water needed. Limiting growth was "more the responsibility of the mayor and city council."

Another argument often used by DWP against preserving the Eastern Sierra environment is that the water issues are a matter of "three million people versus three thousand trout." Martha Davis, speaking for MLC, made it clear that all parts of the state have a right to protect their environment and should only export truly surplus water. Quality of life in one part of the state cannot come at the expense of any other part. "Conversely, no other place, such as Inyo County or the Delta, should be held ransom for Mono Lake," Davis said.

Davis also cited the important connection between Inyo and Mono counties and credited the League of Women Voters, Enid Larson and the Owens Valley Committee for inspiring David Gaines to start the Mono Lake Committee ten years ago. She said that Dave would never have had the courage to initiate the Mono Lake battle if he hadn't been able to follow the example set by the people of the Owens Valley.

By the end of the day, the overwhelming sense at the symposium was one of solidarity between the people of Inyo and Mono counties. As MLC's Ilene Mandelbaum said, "We need to find the bottom line in terms of environmental protection for areas all along the aqueduct, and then stick together to work out an acceptable water management agreement with DWP." Mono County



The L.A. Aqueduct under construction, ca. 1910. Photo LADWP.

Supervisor Don Rake said, "there's no county line in Eastern Sierra water issues."

The suggestion to hold an Eastern Sierra Water Symposium as a yearly event met with applause. Special thanks go to Leah Kirk, symposium organizer, as well as the sponsoring groups: the Boards of Supervisors of Inyo and Mono County, the California Native Plant Society—Bristlecone Chapter, Eastern Sierra Audubon Society, the Owens Valley Committee and the Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club. (MLC also helped sponsor the symposium.) Perhaps the coming decade will see the people of Inyo, Mono and Los Angeles counties prove Mark Twain wrong about the uses of whiskey and water.

Lauren Davis

Transcripts of the Eastern Sierra Water Symposium will be available from Leah Kirk, Box 263, Independence, CA 93526.

Legal Update

Court Upholds Ruling: DWP Licenses Must Be Reissued

On January 26th, we received great news. The 3rd District Court of Appeals reissued their ruling that the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's (DWP) licenses to divert water from Mono Lake's tributaries must be brought into compliance with state laws to protect downstream fisheries. The initial decision on the case, brought by Caltrout and MLC, had been reached in May of 1988, but DWP asked for a rehearing and the court agreed. This second decision is even clearer and stronger than the first, which may have DWP wishing they'd never asked for a rehearing.

In a nutshell, the court ruled that the State Water Board, in 1974, failed to require DWP to let enough water pass around, over or through their dams on Walker, Parker, Rush and Lee Vining creeks to protect the streams. Most years, the creeks have been completely dried up. The decision is based on State Fish and Game Code Section 5946 which was enacted in 1953. This code requires all dam operators in Inyo and Mono counties to release enough water downstream to "keep fish in good condition."

The court rejected DWP's arguments that it had established vested rights to take the entire flow of the four streams. Finding that DWP never had the right to take the water needed by the creek's fisheries, the court concluded that application of the law "will require reduction of diversions."

According to the court decision, to obtain vested rights to water "the permittee must diligently commence and complete construction of the project and apply the water to beneficial use in accordance with the law and the terms of the permit." Although DWP completed the original aqueduct under its first permit in 1941, it didn't have the capacity to take all the water authorized by that original permit. The expansion of the aqueduct in 1973 al-

lowed DWP to consistently divert all the water in question from the Mono Basin, but this "new project" was completed 20 years after the effective date of Section 5946.

The court found that DWP and the Water Board had violated Water Board regulations by allowing DWP to tarry "interminably" and then commence a "new project" (the second barrel of the aqueduct), which should have required a new permit, under the guise of "extending" the original project. Thus, DWP was allowed to put into "cold storage" the appropriative water rights on Mono's streams, taking decades to finally be able to demonstrate it could put all the water to "beneficial use." The court flatly stated that "such cold storage is not permitted by law."

DWP is appealing the water license case to the State Supreme court. We should know by late spring whether the higher court will hear the case.

Meanwhile, the Public Trust litigation is moving along. This litigation requires that the needs of the Mono Basin ecosystem must be balanced with those of the City of Los Angeles. Currently there is a motion to combine our three lawsuits based on the public trust doctrine: the original Audubon case on the lake, and two other cases on Rush and Lee Vining creeks. Judge Terrence Finney of El Dorado County has been assigned as the coordination motion judge who will decide if the lawsuits should be combined.

Ilene Mandelbaum and Lauren Davis

If you'd like more information, MLC has prepared a two-page summary of the water license decision which is available from our Lee Vining office.

Dry Conditions Continue In The Eastern Sierra

Mono Lake's elevation has remained relatively stable at 6377 through the winter. However, the lake has dropped over two feet in the last year, and is four feet lower than its recent high, 6381 feet in August 1986. By December, Mono Lake could be as low as 6375 feet. A landbridge connecting Negit Island and the mainland would form, and coyotes would have access to the Negit Island and Pancake Islet nesting areas.

This winter's weather pattern is similar to the previous year's. At the beginning of the year, we experienced record cold temperatures and the snowpack was near normal. However, January and February's precipitation was substantially below normal. As a result, the March 1 forecast for spring and summer runoff was about 70% of normal. Storms in the first half of March eased the Northern California water shortage, but unfortunately did not bring as much precipitation to the Eastern Sierra.

Peter Vorster and Emilie Strauss

Looking Ahead: Mono Lake Defense Trust

Although Mono Lake continues to shrink with every year of drought and diversions, the lake's legal clout continues to expand. With the public trust case moving ahead, two preliminary injunctions on Rush and Lee Vining creeks, and the second win on the water license challenge, optimism grows. It is sobering to realize however, that our successes in the courts are always met with increased threats in the legislature from DWP's lobbyists and allies. Sad but true, the closer we come to gaining water for Mono Lake, the heavier is the attack on the laws, such as the public trust, that uphold the court cases.

Our attorneys advise us that future legal costs in bringing just the public trust lawsuit to fruition may exceed \$300,000. The Committee's share of this staggering burden could surpass \$150,000. And that's only one of our lawsuits. So, while we are getting close to putting larger flows down Mono's streams, we anticipate that the most intense and most expensive part of our struggle is just around the bend. To help us get through this challenging time, the Committee has set up the Mono Lake Defense Trust. This special trust is a fund that will be used to

defend Mono Lake in the courts, the legislature and wherever else our efforts take us.

The support of our members through the past ten years is the prime reason we have been able to inch ever closer to saving Mono Lake. Now, will you seriously consider helping in this all-out effort to build up a special fund for the legal battles that lie just ahead? Contributions to the Defense Trust represent a heart-felt commitment to Mono Lake. Contributions of any size are needed and appreciated. By making a gift of \$250 or more you will join the founding members of the Mono Lake Defense Trust. We need your direct contributions to the Mono Lake Committee for lobbying, but if you need to make a tax-deductible contribution, you can do so through the Mono Lake Foundation.

A contribution to this special fund will help pay our legal bills and keep our lawsuits rolling along. Your donation represents the courage to stand up to L.A. Department of Water and Power and insist they comply with state law. Your support *will* make a difference.

Mono Lake Defense Trust Members

Jeanne Adams
Ellery Akers
Beverly Allan
Mrs. Dorothy S. Babington
Randy and Susan Des Baillets
Richard and Blanca Barrell
Cameron and Katie Barrows
Karen Batten
Betty Bean
Reid Bennett
Jerome and Judy Blackman
E. Clark Boli
Robert Braden
Governor Edmund G. Brown
Ken Brunges
Walter Buhl
Dale R. Burger
Neil T. Burton
Audrey Buym
Robert Carr
Meg and Will Challis
Mr. and Mrs. Leslie D. Charles
Arleen Chin
Ruth Cole
Jeff Conrad
Peter H. Hackett, M.D.
Jean and Louis Dale
Frank and Janice Delfino
Richard Derevan
David Devine
Dr. Michael L. Dillon
Cliff Drowley

Dr. Clyde Eriksen
Hans Ernst
The North Face
Jewish Community Federation
Jerry Feldman
Harold Feters
The Homeland Foundation
The Sam and Helen Walton
Foundation
Susan and Jim Fousekis
Gerald Ganz
E. Louise Gooding
William Gourley
Paul and Helen Green
Ruth Greenberg
R. J. Greensfelder
Ed Grosswiler
Robert Gruner
Dorothea Hardy
Mrs. W. S. Henderson
Robert Henigson
Peter and Bonnie Herman
Mrs. Ward Hinkson
Jenny Holliday
Mark and Doniphan Howland
Ron and Barbara Indra
Eugene and Leann Johnson
Ted Kipping
Mr. and Mrs. E. N. Langbauer
George Larson
David C. Lauritzen
Michael Graff and Nancy Lerman

Rudolph Light
David Livermore
Jack Bertman, M.D.
James and Catherine Marron
Phillips H. Marshall
William and Joyce Miller
Richard A. Mona
Jean Herner Moore
Sandy Moore
Virginia B. Mudd
Nora Norden
Francis Odell
William F. Jones, P.E.
Paul and Katherine Page
Thomas Peters
Jesse M. Phillips
Herbert Ploch
Ann Reimers
John F. Rigter
Lois W. Rosebrook
Miriam and Thomas Schulman
Anthony Sloss
Laguna Hills Audubon Society
Doris Statham
Dwight Strong
Jan Tarble
Otto Teller
Don H. Tibbits
Felicia Titus
Carole Tunley
George Turpin
James West

Mono Basin Air Quality Monitoring Increased

"Dusty skies, I can't see nothin' in sight..."

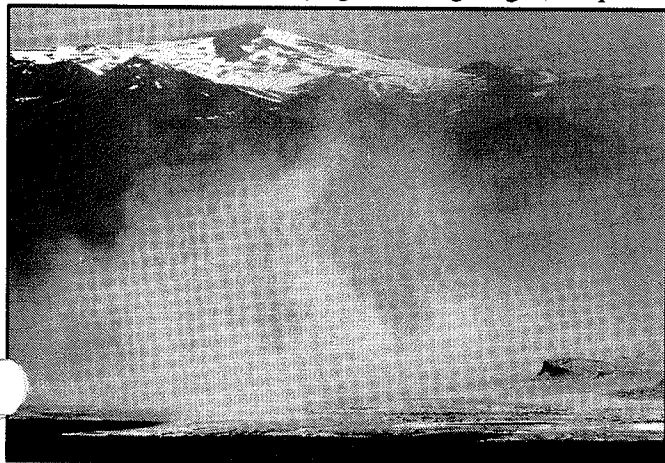
Directors of the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District Board voted unanimously to increase air quality monitoring in the Mono Basin. Public testimony about the increasing frequency and severity of toxic dust storms prompted the action at a meeting February 15.

The District, a commission made up of two supervisors each from Alpine, Inyo and Mono Counties, decided to increase monitoring activities from two to six days per week. They will also add another monitoring station in Nevada and move the existing monitoring station to more accurately measure the blowing dust.

Mono County residents, the Forest Service's Scenic Area Manager and the MLC presented testimony at the meeting. All stressed the importance of improving air quality in the Basin. John Denny, a resident of the north-east shore, stated that only putting water back in the lake could eliminate the dust storms that coat his furniture and sicken his horses. Carol Herzog of the June Lake Reservation Service pointed out that tourists won't want to vacation near an air pollution problem.

The continuing decline in Mono Lake's level has exposed over 20,000 acres of lakebed. Its powdery, alkali surface is vulnerable to agitation by strong winds at virtually any time of year. There have already been several dust storms already this year in the eastern part of the Basin due to minimal snow cover. None of these were recorded by the single monitoring station, since winds carried the dust south of the equipment.

The Mono Basin was given a Group II classification by the Environmental Protection Agency last June, meaning that the area may be in violation of air quality standards and so merits further study. If monitoring discloses two or more violations of these standards, classification will change to Group I, requiring that the District take action to improve air quality. Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) is required by the State Legislature to pay for studying and mitigating the impacts



Paoha Island takes to the air in a Mono Basin dust storm.

of its water diversions on air quality in the Eastern Sierra. In this instance, mitigation is defined as carrying out measures to bring an area into compliance with federal air quality standards.

A similar situation exists at the Owens dry lakebed, where severe dust storms have occurred since the 1920's. Owens Lake dried up after LADWP began diverting the Owens River in the early part of the century. The District is currently considering a combination of mitigation strategies for this area, including revegetation, sand fences, flood irrigation with pumped groundwater, application of chemicals and spreading gravel over the lakebed. These mitigations would cost millions of dollars.

While the MLC supports the increased monitoring efforts, we believe that raising Mono Lake's elevation, thus covering the relicted lands with water, is the most effective way to minimize Mono Basin dust pollution. This is also probably the least expensive "mitigation."

Readers are encouraged to send personal accounts and/or dated photographic evidence of Mono Basin dust pollution to the MLC at Box 29, Lee Vining, CA 93541.

Steve Schmidt

Officials Praise Forest Service Scenic Area Plan

Letters from California public officials were among over 2,500 responses to the Mono Basin Scenic Area Draft Management Plan. We at the Mono Lake Committee appreciate their eloquent support for the lake. Highlights are excerpted below.

Ira Reiner, Los Angeles County District Attorney:

"Mono Lake is an ecological treasure...Continued and increased emphasis on water and energy conservation in the DWP service area will benefit Mono Lake and the people of Los Angeles."

Terry B. Friedman, Assemblyman, San Fernando Valley:

Southern California's water needs are critically important, a fact that, as a Los Angeles area legislator, I acutely understand. However, we must take great care to protect Mono Lake's sensitive ecology as we plan for the future."

Phillip Isenberg, Assemblyman, Sacramento:

"As a long time admirer and occasional visitor to the Mono Lake Basin, I applaud your commitment to provide greater protection for the area. Mono Lake is more than unsurpassed in scenic grandeur, it is a fragile world with a variety of wildlife that needs delicate handling by humans. Mono Lake, in fact, has become a unique symbol in California (and the nation) for the need for increased protection of our natural resources."

Burt Margolin, Assemblyman, West Los Angeles:

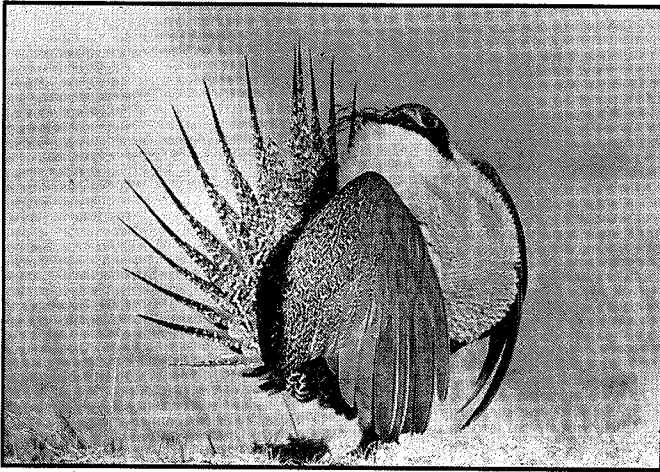
"As a Los Angeles area legislator, I have closely monitored the debate over the fate of Mono Lake and am convinced that we can meet the need for water of both Mono Lake and Southern California."

Spring Rites for Sage Grouse

An excerpt from *The Birds of California, Vol. IV*, by William Leon Dawson, 1923.

Dawson was a favorite author of MLC founder David Gaines. Dave had planned to republish part of the massive four-volume set of The Birds of California along with a biographic sketch of Dawson. The elder ornithologist was an eccentric but passionate lover of birds whose Victorian-style prose still educates and entertains contemporary naturalists.

...In the courting antics of this valiant son of the desert, Nature has indulged a fresh fancy. Indeed, it is to be suspected that the Dame takes a special delight in making some of the most staid and prosaic of her male progeny



appear in a ridiculous light, when under the influence of the tender passion. This grizzled veteran of the wormwood does not express his sentiment with either dignity or grace. No; he first inflates the air-sacs which line his neck until they assume alarming proportions, meeting in front and frequently engulfing his head; the tail with its spiny feathers is spread to the utmost and pointed skyward; then the gallant pitches forward and casts off for a belly-buster slide over the ground, not without much assistance of propulsive feet in approved "kid" fashion. As a result of this ridiculous dryland swim, the feathers of the breast are worn off at the tips till only the quills protrude. These ragged quill-ends, in being forced over the earth, produce a mild roar which passes for an aria by Caruso with the gray lady in the sage-box. La! but it is absurd! Do you suppose—now *do* you suppose we ever make such fools of ourselves?

...There are still Sage Grouse in California. How long they will remain does not depend so much upon the observance of our fairly decent game laws, as upon the esthetic attitude of that portion of our population which is in contact with the wilderness. If it is deemed a *sine qua non* of human happiness to arrange an annual slaughter of these lumbering fowls, they will surely disappear, even though the "bag limit" be reduced to one per season. But if our people can be brought to see that the glory of wilderness—that little portion of it still remaining to us—lies in the presence and abundance and *happiness* of its wild things—not in their destruction—then generations to come may make unceasing pilgrimages to their desert shrines, and they will find these quaint, ungainly, and most diverting fowls in the full enjoyment of their ancient tenure. It's up to us.

The Sagebrush-Scrub Society

Many people see the desert plants around the Mono Basin the way local resident Meredith Ford did before she moved here: brownish-greenish bushes that all look alike. After living here several months, however, her impression changed. In this excerpt from her upcoming book, Meredith describes a walk with her children and a visit with the members of the Sagebrush-Scrub Society. Like Meredith, you'll probably see desert plants differently and appreciate them even more on your next visit to the Mono Basin.

A great gray-green sea of scrubby bushes stretches out from the highway in all directions. When we first arrived, the sea seemed to be all the same bush. Then I thought perhaps it was hundreds of kinds of bushes. But after almost a year of living in their midst, faces and personalities have begun to emerge. There are, we've found, only six members in the Sagebrush-Scrub Society, chosen careful-



ly, I am sure, for cunning, courage, and toughness. They present themselves again and again as Jessie and I follow Eric at a two-year-old's pace up our road to allow Larry a nap this afternoon.

The matriarch of the Society is sagebrush, which we plunge through on a short cut from the cabin to the road. Our pants and Beta's fur will fill the cabin with the sagey pungency long after we're in bed tonight because there's so much of it around the cabin. In fact, it's the most common shrub of all North America because it knows more desert survival tricks than we.

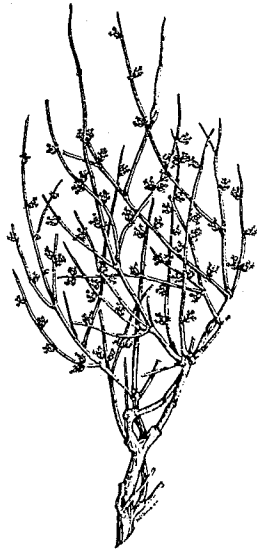
could invent. Like other desert bushes, it bares only tiny leaves to the hot sun. Its leaves are protected by fuzz and its roots are spread sideways to catch our stingy rainfall. They go deep to suck up water far below the desert floor.

But most desert plants know these tricks. Sagebrush knows more. By the end of the summer when water is gone, sagebrush pretends to die, but its only dropping its leaves to conserve water. The leaves poison the ground, stamping any seedlings trying to compete. To survive foragers, sagebrush leaves are hard to digest.

To people, sagebrush has been a basic medicine. Dried, the leaves were talcum for baby bottoms and a remedy for many ailments. Settlers who ranched near our cabin claimed it cured their typhoid fever.

I warn Eric against the thorns of a Desert Peach ahead. Three weeks ago, with the appearance of pink blossoms on the angular reddish branches, each bush became a delicate Japanese flower arrangement. But now most of the pink flowers have given way to the tiny, fuzzy green "peach". Eric stops to pick some to present to me and Jessie. When we tore open a wall of our cabin for repair, we filled a gallon jar with split peach pits hoarded there by mice and woodrats.

Emerging from the short cut onto the road, we stop to sniff the fragrant yellow sprays of Bitterbrush starting to shoot up around us. We always know antelope bush or Bitterbrush because instead of forming tidy round bushes like the others, new branches stick out helter-skelter above the bush itself, all the better to be eaten by the deer and antelope which depend on it.



The most ridiculous bush in the Society is Mormon Tea: a lifeless-looking collection of khaki twigs. It is virtually leafless, the ultimate drought-resisting ploy, but its many names—Mormon Tea, Squaw Tea, Mexican Tea, or Miner's Tea—tell how life-supporting it is. We break off a twig to chew as we walk, because it seems to make us less thirsty. Steeped in boiling water, the stem brews into a sweet, delicate tea said to soothe troubled stomachs, kidneys, and ulcers, as well as relieve colds. Ephedrine, the modern decongestant and anti-depressant, is made from a Chinese variety of Mormon Tea.

We amble on to stop by a bush covered with translucent greenish pink pods. Spiny Hopsage is decorated, not by its inconspicuous, petal-less flowers which have already come and gone, but with parchment-like discs which hold the seeds on the branches and enable them to sail away when they are released. I expect the serviceable crown shell approach to transportation here in the Great Basin, not fairy wings. By fall, the pods become straw-colored and crisp, reminding us of Kellogg's *Special K*.

Spiny Hopsage



We sit for a while at the cemetery surrounded not with sagebrush as I expected, but with Rabbitbrush, almost as plentiful. As Jessie nurses and Eric digs with a stick, I remember reading that Rabbitbrush is also called Rubberbrush and was considered a possible domestic source of rubber during World War II. It even burns as rubber burns, with a dense, black smoke. I think back to the Rabbitbrush seven feet tall and eight feet wide, taking over half the south porch of the cabin, which greeted us last September. Its wide, dense clusters of spectacular egg-yolk yellow bloomed until the first snowfall. Now its pale green stems and skinny, sparse leaves, good though they may be for water conservation, never get a second glance.

On our way back, I gather some Bitterbrush blossoms and Hopsage to decorate our table, a few sagebrush leaves for our stew, and a sprig of Mormon Tea to steep after supper. Eric stuffs a few desert peaches into his pocket for his sleeping father who'll be delighted, I'm sure. Quite a bounty from these desert look-alikes!



Rabbitbrush

Illustrations by Aida Montier, from *California Range Brushlands and Browse Plants*.

Sister to Mono Lake: Russia's Aral Sea

Mono Lake is not alone. In Soviet Central Asia, a similar fate has befallen the Aral Sea, which is slowly dying as the result of years of water diversions. The increasing salinity of its waters has severely disrupted a once thriving fishing industry, and in the past few years, immense dust storms of salt-sands whipped up from the exposed sea floor have become commonplace. As the shore recedes there has been a marked decline in native plant communities around the Aral, and delta ecosystems at the mouths of inflowing rivers have been substantially damaged.

The problem arises as the result of nearly 30 years of diversions from the two major rivers which flow into the Aral. At one time, the two great rivers of Soviet Central Asia, the Amu-Darya, and the Sir-Darya, poured some 70 cubic kilometers (or 236,544,000 acre-feet) of water into the vast inland sea each year. Since these diversions began, the Sea has lost 66% of its water and dropped 42 vertical feet. The surface area has diminished from 25,800 square miles in 1960, to scarcely 15,500 square miles today.

The Aral was once one of the Soviet Union's greatest fishing centers, its waters producing nearly 11 percent of the country's total annual fish harvest. The port of Mynak, which used to support 10,000 fishermen, is now 30 miles from the shore. Since the diversion operations began, the sea's salinity has nearly tripled, and 20 of the 24 native species of fish have disappeared. Today, the Soviet government must import frozen fish from the arctic in order to keep canneries operating.

The water diverted from the two rivers is used to irrigate many crops, and since 1950, the area under cultivation in the Aral zone has more than tripled from 5 million to 17.5 million acres. This area provides the Soviet Union with 95% of its cotton, 40% of its rice, and 35% of its fruit. Crop productivity is threatened by increasing soil salinity; irrigation concentrates natural salts in the soils. This problem is intensified by excess minerals from artificial fertilizers. After crop irrigation, agricultural runoff waters were not returned to the Aral. Instead, they were allowed to collect in a new, manmade salt lake called Sarakamyush, which has formed in the desert of northern Turkmenia.

As the sea shrinks, former sea bed is exposed to the elements. Huge dust storms of salt-sand, sometimes up to 25 miles wide and 200 miles long, have occurred ten to 12 times each year since 1975. These dust storms, which loft more than 50 million tons of salt-sand into the air each year, are a direct threat to crops grown in the area, dropping as much as a quarter ton of dust onto each acre

of cultivated land in the main farming regions around the Aral. The dust also poses a threat to human health.

The ecological, economical and social problems associated with the slow death of the Aral Sea could extend far beyond the borders of the Soviet Union. According to Professor Erkin Yusupov, deputy head of Uzbekistan's Academy of Sciences, the Aral Sea plays an important role in the climate of all of Asia, and the problem could affect the weather, rainfall patterns, and eventually the food supplies of other nations, including India. Indeed, the climate in the immediate area has already been altered, summers having grown warmer and winters cooler.

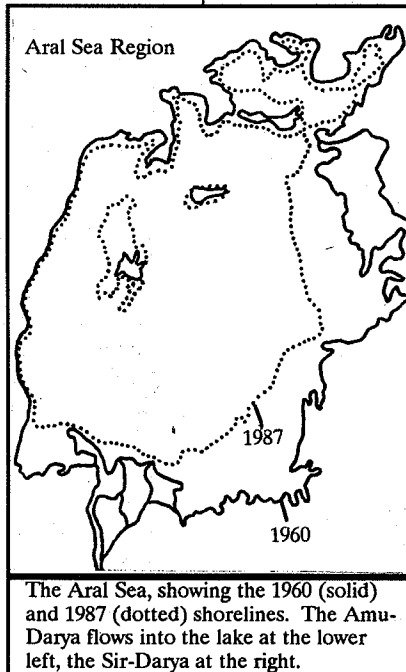
Clearly, the Aral Sea needs water. In fact, some 100 million acre-feet of water are required each year simply to maintain its present low level. Current efforts to conserve and reclaim water are unlikely to produce more than 67% of the needed 100 million acre-feet per year for the sea.

One solution to this ecological disaster, the proposed Soviet Central Asia irrigation project, could also have widespread global ecological and climatological implications. Under this scheme, waters from two large Siberian rivers that naturally drain into the Arctic Ocean, the Yenisey, and Ob-Irtysh, would be diverted and transported, via canal, to the Aral Sea, at one point passing over the Sir-Darya river in an elevated tunnel. Scientists fear that to reduce the flow of fresh water into the Arctic Ocean might increase its salinity, reducing arctic ice cover, further

altering the global climate. Another possible effect of such diversions would be to reduce the amount of nutrients introduced into the Arctic Ocean, which might effect its productivity. Under Gorbachev's leadership, these plans have been dropped, if only temporarily.

There is a growing concern among those who inhabit the Aral region for the sea's fate. Without irrigation water, agriculture on the current scale is impossible, yet to allow the Aral to continue to shrink can only increase the harmful effects caused by the dust storms, and accelerate climatological change. Some feel that it may be too late to reverse the degradation which has already occurred, while many continue to pressure the government to resurrect the river diversion scheme. Whatever the eventual outcome, what has happened to the Aral should provide a clear case for the dire consequences which may be expected from draining large inland bodies of water.

Everett King



The Aral Sea, showing the 1960 (solid) and 1987 (dotted) shorelines. The Amu-Darya flows into the lake at the lower left, the Sir-Darya at the right.

New Books from the Mono Lake Visitor Center

The Forever Land of Zanamontana

By Mavis Müller, \$5.00

"This tale was written for children, to cultivate the deep ecology ethic of spirited people who magically become the wilderness in defense of itself," says author Mavis Müller, and for adults "to remind them that when believing souls unite to challenge the destroyers, miracles can happen."

And a wonderful, magical tale it is! The story takes place in Zanamontana, a wildernessy place like no other, where humans and animals live in harmony. One day, forces of evil and destruction creep into Zanamontana, threatening the integrity of the land and its inhabitants. Animal and human must band together to save their land.

The tale, beautifully and simply written and illustrated, is one of strength, inspiration and hope. Early wilderness advocate Bob Marshall said that the only hope of preventing the selfish destruction of the earth was "the organization of spirited people who will fight for the freedom of wilderness." Mavis's tale vividly develops this theme, and we would all do well to live by these words.

Sally Miller

Fire Mountains of the West: The Cascade and Mono Lake Volcanoes

By Stephen L. Harris, \$15.95

Stephen Harris has revised his *Fire and Ice*, first published in 1976, to include the shock waves of new information following the Mt. Saint Helens eruption and the earthquakes here in the Mono-Long Valley region. This new edition offers over 300 pages of easily understood geology, natural history, mythology, and forecasts for the Cascade giants. The book is best used as a reference/guidebook after the introductory geology sections. The author describes each volcano individually, deciphering virtually all the published data for the layperson, and giving advice for exploring mountains, craters, and domes. There are plenty of photographs, diagrams, and charts along with complete glossary and bibliography.

Despite equal billing with the Cascades, the Mono Lake volcanoes are discussed in just ten pages. Paoha and Negit islands and Black Point are not elaborated on. Most of the information can already be found in the *Mono Lake Guidebook*. And when did Mono Lake become a wildlife refuge?

Although there are a few errors, the text does reward fans of the Cascades and amateur volcanologists with details of the Mt. Saint Helens eruption, fascinating fables about the Lemurians dwelling under Mt. Shasta, and knowledgeable predictions of which "fire mountain" may blow next. It might be a good idea to learn a little about your neighboring volcano!

Steve Holland

Wildflowers of the American West:

A Photographic Celebration of Nature's Beauty

By Rose Houk, \$14.95 paper

Opening this book is like coming over a rise of granite into an alpine meadow in full bloom. Rather than serving as a field guide, the entire book is designed to evoke the feelings, colors and associations of flowers both familiar and new. The photography and book design is stunning, and the prose lovingly binds the images together through flora descriptions, anecdotes and folklore. The super-saturated colors of the photographs and drawings give the illusion that the flowers are growing right out of the pages and into the reader's lap. The plants are clustered together by region, so the reader journeys with Rose from the coast, "Lotus Land"; to the deserts, "In the Shadow of the Rain"; to the mountains, "The Air the Angels Breathe"; and finally out onto the prairies beneath the "Smiling Sky." By the end of the journey, one feels refreshed by the simple glory of the world which flourishes all around us. This is a wonderful book to give or receive for spring.

Lauren Davis

The Education of Little Tree

By Forest Carter, \$7.95 paper

Orphaned at age five, Little Tree goes to live in the mountains with his Cherokee grandparents. So begin his adventures and his education. Besides reading and "figgering", Little Tree learns the life of the forest and the mountains. Most importantly, he learns The Way of the Cherokee.

In learning The Way, Little Tree learns to "think Indian." He follows others before him, both Indian and white, who gave themselves "to nature, not trying to subdue it, or pervert it, but to live with it. And so they loved the thought, and loving it grew to be it, so that they could not think as the white man."

This book has a heartening message, but it's full of plain good storytelling too. The lives of Little Tree and his grandparents are rich in love and humor, and touched by tragedy. Anyone who loves the mountains will also enjoy the delicate descriptions of plants and wildlife.

Peggy Nicholson

To order books, please send a check or money order for the amount of the book, plus state and county tax (if any) for Californians, and shipping charges (see below), to the Mono Lake Committee, P.O. Box 29, Lee Vining, CA 93541. For charge orders, please call us at (619) 647-6595.

Shipping Rates:
Up to \$10 - \$2.50
\$10 to \$25 - \$3.00
\$25 to \$50 - \$4.00

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MLC NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

Fine Wine Cellar Drawing

Help your favorite lake and win one of four \$500 Fine Wine Cellars at the same time. Your donation of \$50 per ticket helps the Committee's effort to save Mono Lake. Those contributing \$100 or more will be entered in a special drawing for a Mono Lake Weekend for Two. Winners' names will be drawn on Friday, May 19, in San Francisco. You need not be present to win.

For advance ticket purchase, please use Mastercard, Visa, or personal check payable to the Mono Lake Committee. Please mail checks to the Mono Lake Committee, 1355 Westwood Blvd., Ste. 6, Los Angeles, CA 90024 or call (213) 477-8229. Your tickets will be sent to you.

The fine print: The Mono Lake Committee is a lobbying organization and greatly needs your contribution to support its work. Due to IRS tax code changes, donations to drawings such as this are no longer tax-deductible. Your contribution is not required to win. You must be over 21 to participate.

MLC Job and Intern Openings

LEE VINING: Educational Programs Coordinator

The Educational Programs Coordinator (EPC) will direct our interpretive and educational programs. Duties include creating educational materials, public speaking and training and supervising seasonal interns and interpreters. This is a full-time position, with a salary range of \$1,000 to 1,400/month depending on experience.

LEE VINING: Internships

We are hiring interns to staff the Visitor Center this summer. We are looking for people who want to learn about the day-to-day operations of a non-profit environmental organization. We require a commitment of 35 hours per week through Labor Day. A six month internship is possible. Housing and expenses will be paid.

For more information, contact Daria at (619) 647-6595.

Mark Your Calendars!

Next year's Mono Lake Calendars are already at the press, and will be available June 1st. These beautiful, professionally produced calendars make attractive marketing items and great gifts for clients or employees, and can be imprinted with your company name. Retail outlets also find that these calendars sell quickly. To order, contact the Mono Lake Coalition, c/o Sierra Club Bay Chapter, 6014 College Ave., Oakland, CA 94618, (415) 547-5755. Proceeds help your favorite lake.

Black and White Photos of Mono Lake Needed

We have an urgent need for more black and white prints for our photo files. The newsletter and our other publications could use new images. We are also receiving many requests for photographs from national and international magazines, journals and newspapers.

We are looking for photos of bird life and recreation at the lake, as well as unusual shots of the Mono Basin. Artistic close-ups are just as welcome as scenics.

MLC can't afford to pay for the use of photographs, but we'll be glad to give credit for all photos used. So if you'd like to see your images in the media, please send clear, high-contrast prints to Lauren or Peggy in our Lee Vining office, P.O. Box 29, Lee Vining, CA 93541.

Help!

How can those L.A. office folks be so delightful and congenial? We're not sure, because they work long days, elbow to elbow. They urgently need more space. If you know of 1,000 to 1,250 square foot or more of available office space, please contact our L.A. office staff at (213) 477-8229.

Accolades

Monomaniacs Jim Sayer and Stephen Osgood collected over 600 signatures on a petition to the U.S. Forest Service endorsing the Amenities alternative. Thanks to our friends who donated prizes for the Wine Cellar Drawing and the Free Drawing: Ken and Sherie Steege of the Gateway Motel, Susan Beck and Mary Pipersky of Anything Goes, Jeannie Adams of the Ansel Adams Gallery, The Mono Inn, Friends of the River, Rock Creek Winter Lodge, Tahoe-Donner Ski Area, Adventure-16 Wilderness Stores and the California stores of REI, Inc. We appreciate the continued support from Tom Winnett and the Wilderness Press, and we especially appreciate the temporary storage space.

Stephen Johnson and Nancy Ford designed a striking graphic showing Mono Lake levels which will appear in our summer issue, and gave us help and advice. We're grateful to Brian Day, Kim Fisher, Michael Dressler, Julie Klingmann, and Sally Barnett for housing MLC staff working in the Bay Area. Thanks to Jodie Aas, closet rocker, and George Larimore for donating headphones for those who like to rock, not whistle, while they work.

Fortune smiled upon Geoff Faragon, who worked on our computer — he won big in Reno en route to Lee Vining. Thanks to Amber's inductees into the Envelope Stuffers Hall of Fame: Mildred Bennett, Robbie and Laurie Davis, Sally Hackel, Ben and Pat Mosley, Betsy Reifsnider, Genny Smith, and Delphine Zeuli. Welcome to new volunteer Gary Nelson.

Oops! We apologize to researcher Dale Steele whose name lost its final e in our last issue. Debby Parker, we do know how to spell your name. Sorry!

In Memory

Thank you to Donna Diebolt who made a gift in memory of Katherine H. Quinlan. The Mitchell Junior High School staff made a memorial gift in honor of colleague Paul Hunt. Helen, Paul and Michael Green made a donation in memory of Harriet Stull of Olney, Illinois. Harriet became a devoted supporter through working on the Mono Lake Quilt in 1981.

Dick Riegelhuth 1922-88

"Dick was...a man who touched the hearts of everyone, and stood up for the best interests of this wild and beautiful park..."

Dick Riegelhuth, Yosemite's Resources Management Chief since 1972, died December 27. During his tenure, two endangered species, the Bighorn Sheep and the Peregrine Falcon, were reintroduced to the Park. He also helped restore fire to its natural role in Yosemite's forests and meadows.

He cared about Mono Lake, and understood how Mono's future affected Yosemite's environment. His first priority for donations made in his memory was that they be made to the Mono Lake Committee.

Garrett De Bell, Yosemite National Park

We are grateful for contributions made in Dick's memory.

The Ansel Adams Gallery
Frank Bonaventura
The Conversation Club of Yosemite
Garrett De Bell
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Mary and Terry Gess
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1989 Mono Lake Workshops

Sponsored by the Mono Lake Foundation and the Mono Lake Committee

Does a short visit to the Mono Basin leave you longing for more? If you ever wished you had more time to explore this fascinating area, then this summer's Mono Lake Workshops are for you. Spend a weekend with teachers who know the Basin well and want to share it with you.

Four new workshops have been added to the list of old favorites. Dave Herbst's *Ecology of Mono Lake* workshop will explore the lake's unique ecosystem. Students taking *Natural History Writing*, taught by MLC editor Lauren Davis, will travel the Eastern Sierra with John Muir, Mary Austin and other famous writers. Flowers and philosophy await those taking David De Sante's *High Country Wildflowers* and *Human Ecology: Thinking Globally, Acting Locally* workshops.

Also new this year are Richard Potashin's *Natural History Canoe Tours* each weekend from June 3 through September 3.

Astronomer Alan Stahler will be a guest star (pardon the pun) at several workshops. He will lead an evening of stargazing and talk about everything from ancient myths to the latest astrophysical theories.

Classes are kept small, so please register early to reserve your space. Upon request or receipt of registration, we will send a workshop outline, itinerary and information on what to bring and where to stay. Camping and motels are options for most workshops.

To register or for more information, please contact Sally Gaines, Mono Lake Workshops, P.O. Box 153, Lee Vining, CA 93541, or call (619) 647-6496 between 7:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Mono-Bodie Photo Workshop

May 27-29 Lewis Kemper \$75/person

Sunrise to sunset, Lewis Kemper, author of *The Yosemite Photographer's Handbook*, will help us explore and photograph the Mono Basin, a photographer's paradise. We will visit glacier-carved canyons, extinct volcanic cones, tufa towers and the ghost town of Bodie. Instruction is oriented toward both novice and experienced photographers. As a special treat, we have arranged by permit to stay after hours at Bodie and be guided into several historic buildings there.

Birds of the Mono Basin

June 10-11 Dave Shuford \$60/person

Dave Shuford of Point Reyes Bird Observatory is a master birder and patient instructor. The first day coincides with the annual Mono Basin Spring Bird Count. Beginners as well as experts will enjoy this intimate introduction to Mono's birdlife. We will learn to identify approximately 70 species by plumage and song, and to understand their roles in our environment.

Ecology of Mono Lake

June 24-25 David Herbst \$60/person

The instructor has been researching the lake's ecosystem since 1976. This will be an opportunity to explore the lake in depth and the fascinating organisms that populate its alkaline waters. We will take excursions to a variety of locations as we discuss the formation of the lake, how its ecosystem works, why it is so productive and its future.

Wildlife of the Mono Basin

June 24-25 Tina Hargis \$60/person

Join Tina, a Forest Service Wildlife Biologist, for a stimulating and educational weekend observing wildlife. The seminar will focus on techniques of interpreting wildlife signs such as tracks, droppings, bedding areas and middens. We will visit areas with high probabilities of viewing pronghorn, bighorn sheep, mule deer, and smaller animals as well as ospreys and waterfowl.

Insect Life of the Mono Basin

July 8-9 David Herbst \$60/person

A member of the original 1976 research team, entomologist Dave, AKA "Bug" will open our eyes to the strange but marvelous lives of bugs, butterflies, beetles, brine flies and other invertebrates and the roles they play in the Mono Basin environment. We will visit sand dunes, lake shores, hot springs, and many other habitats as we seek a myriad of creatures, and learn how they thrive in the high desert.

Birds of the Mono Basin

July 15-16 David Shuford \$60/person

Dave Shuford of Point Reyes Bird Observatory is a master birder and patient instructor. Beginners as well as experts will enjoy this intimate introduction to Mono's birdlife. We will learn to identify approximately 70 species by plumage and song, and understand their roles in our environment.

Geology of the Mono Basin

July 22-23 Jim Parker \$60/person

Join Jim, geologist/naturalist, to explore recently active volcanoes, earthquake scarps, tufa towers, hot springs, glaciers, Pleistocene glacial moraines and active mining claims. This workshop provides a fascinating introduction for the novice rockhound and a wealth of detail for those knowledgeable in geology.

High Country Wildflowers

July 22-23 David De Sante \$60/person

De Sante has spent the past twelve summers studying the ecology of over 250 acres of earthly paradise called the Harvey Monroe Hall Natural Area, located at the

headwaters of Lee Vining Creek. We will hike through subalpine forests, meadows, fell fields, along cascading creeks and quiet lakes identifying, photographing and appreciating as many as 150 species of flowering plants.

Natural History of the Mono Basin

July 28-30 Mark Bagley, David Herbst, Jim Parker

\$75/person, \$100/person for 1.5 UC units

Three instructors—a botanist, a zoologist, and a geologist—will be present each day for an interdisciplinary view of the Mono Basin. We will explore from Mono's shores to the crest of the Sierra visiting a variety of wet and dry habitats. Whatever we come upon be it plant, animal, or mineral will be discussed.

One evening of the class will feature stargazing with Alan Stahler who will cover starlore from ancient myths to the latest astrophysical theories.



Family Backpack Trip

July 29-30 Bob Roney

\$90 for family of four; \$10 extra for additional children

Did you ever want to take your young children backpacking, but were overwhelmed by the undertaking? Join Bob on a family backpack to the high Sierra. You will hike 1-2 miles and set up camp. There will be family activities, a campfire, nature games and an evening nature prowl. Yosemite Search and Rescue Team professionals will teach you how to deal with backcountry emergencies and first aid.

Human Ecology: Thinking Globally, Acting Locally

July 29-30 David De Sante \$60/person

Earth is facing a growing number of environmental threats of ever-increasing severity. What can people do in their own localities and with their own lifestyles to take positive steps to reversing these problems? Starting with the example of the Mono Lake Committee, we will expand our discussions to global perspective. Mother Nature will provide the grand auditorium for these talks.

High Country Birds

August 5-6 David De Sante \$60/person

Up-mountain drift brings large numbers of lower elevation species to the high country to associate with the breeding species already there. After twelve summers of intensive avian research in the Harvey Monroe Hall Natural Area, Dave has extensive knowledge of the birds in this area, including such specialties as Pine Grosbeak, Water Pipit, Rosy Finch and White-tailed Ptarmigan.

Mono-Bodie Historical Tour

August 26-27 Arlene Reveal \$60/person

We will journey with Arlene Reveal, Mono County's favorite historian and storyteller, back to the days of Paiutes, prospectors and pioneers, bringing Mono's rough-and-tumble past vividly to life. We'll explore mining camps, stamp mills, homesteads, and graveyards. Author Lily Mathieu will share her intimate knowledge of the Basin's history. The workshop concludes with a tour of Bodie's Standard Stamp Mill by State Park Historian "Bodie Jack" Shipley.

Natural History Writing

September 16-17 Lauren Davis \$60/person

Study the natural history literature of Mono Lake and the Eastern Sierra with Mono Lake Committee editor, Lauren Davis. Featured writers will include John Muir, Mary Austin, David Gaines and Idah Strobbridge. The workshop will focus on regional qualities in literature: how writing can relate to a specific landscape, community or culture. In addition to readings and discussions, we will spend part of the workshop writing and critiquing each others' work in such places as Bloody Canyon and remote areas of the Mono Basin.

Natural History Canoe Tours

Every Sat. & Sun., June 3-Sept. 3

Richard Potashin Price TBA

Join Richard at South Tufa for natural history from a unique perspective—on the lake itself. Canoe along Mono's shoreline through tufa spires and learn about this ancient, life-productive lake. These one-hour tours, given in the morning and at sunset, are by reservation only. Group tours can be arranged. Please make reservations early because tours will fill quickly. *All participants must wear life jackets, which will be provided.*

The Mono Lake Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the Mono Lake ecosystem through education and research. Workshop fees cover costs only. Contributions are welcome, and will be used to fund research and other educational projects.

Be A Part Of The
10th Annual
Los Angeles to Mono Lake Bike-A-Thon
August 28 through September 2

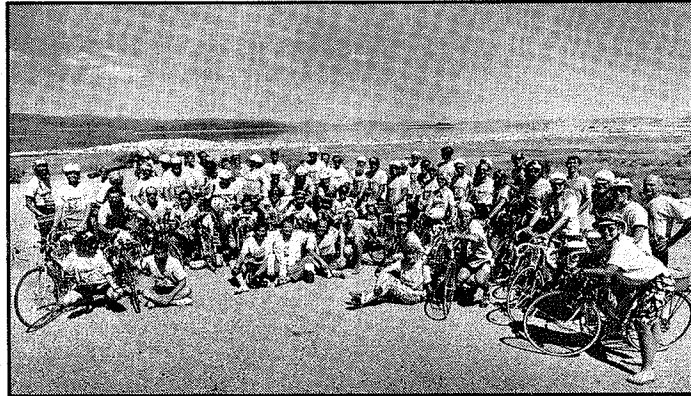
I am trying to help Mono Lake, but at the same time the Mono Lake experience lifts my spirit each year. Very often I am sure that places like Mono Lake need me, but even more often I realize I need places like Mono Lake.

— Bill Mendoza, Veteran Bike-A-Thoner

Ten years ago, only nine riders participated in the first Mono Lake Bike-A-Thon. Now people of all ages, some of them new to bicycle touring, come together for a week of camaraderie and cycling to help Mono Lake. Last year, 66 cyclists rode in the Bike-A-Thon.

Riders assemble at the downtown headquarters of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. They fill vials with water from the Department's reflecting pools, strap them on their bicycles and begin a six-day, 350-mile adventure. Following the path of the Los Angeles Aqueduct, cyclists cover some of the most challenging terrain in California to return the water to its rightful destination—Mono Lake. The event concludes with a rehydration ceremony and celebration on the lake's shore.

The Bike-A-Thon is the Committee's most visible way to let others know about Mono's plight. It is also our



most vital fundraising effort. Thanks to the dedication and commitment of the riders and those who sponsored their efforts, the 1988 event raised over \$65,000. This year, our goal is \$100,000. The money raised enables the Mono Lake Committee to continue its efforts to protect the scenic, natural, recreational and scientific values of Mono Lake.

Support vehicles carry gear and provide extra water

fruit and other high energy snacks along the course. Riders sleep out under the stars at campsites.

Won't you join us on this inspiring tour? If you'd like further information about participating on the ride, volunteering to drive a support vehicle, or helping in any way, call Shelly Backlar or Amber Rae at (213) 477-8229.

Photo of 1988 Bike-A-Thoners at Mono Lake by John Emmons.



**THE
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