

MONO LAKE

N E W S L E T T E R

Fall 2008



There have been numerous accounts of large flocks of birds on Mono Lake of late—more than usual, it seems—thirty-five hundred Northern Shovelers in one spot, thousands of American Avocets, Red-necked and Wilson's Phalaropes in the largest flocks ever seen. Sometime between the end of the swooping flocks of phalaropes and the beginning of the splashing flotillas of Eared Grebes, fall arrives.

These anecdotal accounts can't necessarily be turned into scientific conclusions, but I think we're seeing the turning of a page in the history of Mono Lake. On a recent visit former Executive Director Martha Davis remarked that it used to be unusual for interns to get to see phalaropes at all. The very next week Intern Morgan Lindsay brought the following poem to staff meeting:

My very first phalaropes

how to describe?
The far-off whisper of wings
speaking long forgotten bird secrets
turn your head, just in time
to see the swoop-dart-whooshing flock
break around our kayaks like a wave, pure energy
only to flutter-pause and
with a joyful slight splash, rustle-wriggle
then disappear into early morning mist magic.
All that remains to prove to your unbelieving
eyes you saw them at all is the happy
peep-hoot of the phalarope community glide.

—Morgan Lindsay

What I do know is that Mono Lake is on the mend, thanks to countless members and friends, and we are, in one way or another, seeing it happen. For 30 years now the Mono Lake Committee has worked day in and day out for these beautiful moments. Thank you, and here's to many more to come.

—Arya Degenhardt, Communications Director



COVER PHOTO COURTESY OF DR. DAVID WINKLER

BARTSHE MILLER

Wilson's Phalaropes in flight near the Tufa State Reserve Boardwalk at County Park.

Mono Lake Committee Mission

The Mono Lake Committee is a non-profit citizens' group dedicated to protecting and restoring the Mono Basin ecosystem, educating the public about Mono Lake and the impacts on the environment of excessive water use, and promoting cooperative solutions that protect Mono Lake and meet real water needs without transferring environmental problems to other areas.



Mono Lake Office Information Center & Bookstore

Highway 395 at Third Street
Post Office Box 29
Lee Vining, California 93541
(760) 647-6595

info@monolake.org
www.monolake.org
www.monobasinresearch.org

Los Angeles Office

322 Culver Boulevard
Playa Del Rey, California 90293

Staff

Executive Director..... Geoffrey McQuilkin
Eastern Sierra Policy Director..... Lisa Cutting
Education Director..... Bartshé Miller
Communications Director..... Arya Degenhardt
Office Director..... Erika Obedzinski
Membership Coordinator..... Ellen King
Information Specialist..... Greg Reis
Sacramento Policy Associate..... Betsy Reifsnider
Outdoor Experiences Mgr..... Santiago Escruceria
Los Angeles Education Coord..... Herley Jim Bowling
Communications Coordinator..... Elin Ljung
Information Center & Bookstore Mgr..... Duncan King
Book & Map Buyer..... Laura Walker
Bookkeeper..... Donnette Huselton
Retail Assistants..... Jessi DeLong, Alayne Meeks
Outdoor Education Instructors..... Becky Clough,
Caron Kotalik
Canoe Tour Supervisor..... Gary Nelson
Canoe Coordinator..... Forrest English
Mono Lake Interns..... Katherine Getts,
Lara Hamburger, Nick Holt, Morgan Lindsay,
Nora Livingston, Claire Skinner

Board of Directors

Sally Gaines, Mammoth Lakes, Chair
Tom Soto, Santa Monica, Secretary
David Kanner, Redwood City, Treasurer
Martha Davis, Riverside
Andrea Lawrence, Mammoth Lakes
Richard Lehman, Fresno
Sherryl Taylor, Mammoth Lakes
Doug Virtue, San Pedro

Directors Emeriti

Helen Green • Ed Grosswiler
Grace de Laet • Genny Smith

Brent Coeur-Barron, Corporate Counsel

Founded by David Gaines in 1978

MONO LAKE
NEW SLETTER

Fall 2008 ~ Volume XXX, Number 1

The *Mono Lake Newsletter* is a quarterly publication of the Mono Lake Committee. Written material contained in this newsletter may be quoted or reproduced for review, reporting, educational purposes, or related non-profit uses; a copy of the publication is requested. Reproduction or quotation for other purposes may be approved upon written request.
ISSN #0275-6633. Copyright © 2008 Mono Lake Committee.
Printed on 100% recycled paper.

Conflict over Mono Lake's protection erupts, resolves

Committee responds forcefully

DWP reaffirms value of collaborative restoration process

by Geoffrey McQuilkin

Amidst the bustle of the Committee's many programs, we always stand ready to respond to any challenge to the protections that have been put in place for Mono Lake. This past summer that challenge arrived in the form of a Los Angeles Department of Water & Power (DWP) letter to the State Water Resources Control Board (Water Board), requesting modification of the landmark 1994 Mono Lake decision. Specifically, DWP proposed suspending the 26-year-old Mono Lake limnological monitoring program.

Any suggestion that Mono Lake's protections be reduced triggers the Committee to leap into action, to put it mildly. In addition, this request was particularly alarming because it was made on short notice and without the benefit of prior discussion or review in the established collaborative restoration meeting process.

The monitoring program is important because it is the only detailed and recurring source of data about the chemistry of Mono Lake (including lake salinity and stratification), the health of the brine shrimp population, and the shoreline meteorological data. It is a critical measure of the success of the Water Board decision in achieving its goal of protecting the health of Mono Lake and its Public Trust resources. And because the information is fundamental to understanding the lake ecosystem it is also essential to numerous other scientific studies of the lake and its wildlife.

Perhaps most importantly, there is just no good reason to argue that this information is no longer needed. Committee staff and experts quickly got to work building a case to document the value of the program and to demonstrate that there was no scientific basis for granting the request. We compiled all this in a detailed eight-page letter to the Water Board that called for rejection of DWP's request. Additionally, we highlighted another reason to be concerned: in making the request, DWP departed from the long established collaborative principles that underlie the Mono Lake restoration process and that are centered on science-based decision making. We explained in further detail why



Over the summer, DWP proposed suspending limnological monitoring at Mono Lake.



Monitoring salinity is critical for understanding the health of the organisms that live in the lake.

this, apart from the merits of the matter, was reason enough to reject the proposal.

With the Committee's rebuttal filed at the Water Board in July and letters of support on the way from management agencies and non-profit allies, the issue then took an interesting—and commendable—turn.

We engaged in a series of conversations with senior DWP staff, including General Manager David Nahai, in an attempt to resolve the situation independently of the Water Board. For the 14 years since the Water Board decision there have been a number of contentious issues that have arisen, but the Committee and DWP have always been able

to negotiate a resolution and a dispute has never escalated to the level of hearings and debate before the Water Board.

The results were good. DWP and the Committee agreed that preservation of the science-based collaborative working relationship in implementing the Water Board decision is extremely important. As a result, DWP has withdrawn its proposal from the Water Board and the Mono Lake limnology monitoring program will continue.

This particular issue reinforces key strategies the Committee uses in working with Los Angeles. First, DWP, with its 8,500 employees and position as the nation's largest municipal utility, is a very large bureaucracy. As is inherent to the nature of bureaucracies, balls get dropped, precedents get forgotten, and past procedures get overlooked, especially in times of transition. This underscores the continuing need for the Committee to be vigilant and deeply involved in all aspects of DWP's Mono Basin operations.

Second, even as we mount a strong response on matters like this we must also remember to continue to search for opportunities for discussion and resolution. In this case, that strategy has kept the lake's restoration on track. ❖

PHOTOS BY ARYA DEENHARDT

Outdoor Experiences: 15 years of making connections

Los Angeles' Infrastructure Academy visits the source of their water

by the Education Staff

As the Mono Lake Committee celebrates its 30th anniversary of protecting the lake and educating the public about the importance of Mono Lake and water conservation, the Outdoor Experiences Program (OE) celebrates 15 years of reaching out to Los Angeles' youth and sharing the wonder of the Mono Basin. The OE program is committed to education and water conservation, while building on a positive and long-lasting relationship with the City of Los Angeles.

OE primarily works with youth from the Los Angeles area to introduce them to the source of their water, 350 miles north in the Mono Basin. The OE program integrates conservation education with life skills development (cooking, cleaning, taking responsibility for one's achievements as well as mistakes). To do this, instructors lead muscle-powered activities that include guided walks at South Tufa, canoeing on Mono Lake, and hikes in the Sierra. Team building activities, games that stress ecological concepts, and activities that encourage self-reflection are also a part of an OE group's experience. OE students are challenged to move outside their comfort zones to experience the Mono Basin by learning about themselves, each other, nature, and conservation of natural resources.

In the field with OE

A student's morning in the OE program might include a canoe tour on Mono Lake, a hike up Panum Crater, or a walk at Mono Lake County Park or South Tufa. During these excursions students participate in discussions and activities that highlight the effort to protect Mono Lake, the creative solutions that came from that effort, and how those solutions are relevant to today's limited water resources.

After lunch and a break from the sun, OE participants venture back into the field for more focused activities. Resident researchers are often guests of the OE program, leading hikes and talks and providing a specific scientific glimpse into the world of Mono Lake. This summer mountain lion tracker Jeff Davis introduced students to the world of predators and the need to study them as the endangered Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep recover. Chris McCreedy of PRBO Conservation Science introduced students to the struggle of endangered Willow Flycatchers on Rush Creek as these birds cope with nest-parasitizing Brown-headed Cowbirds. Programs like these are followed by hikes along Mono Lake's tributary streams or meditative activities such as journal-writing and solo walks.

The last full day for an OE group involves a challenging, all day hike up a Sierra peak overlooking Mono Lake or Yosemite, or a long walk past the historic mining town of Bennettville through the headwaters of Lee Vining Creek, the farthest reach of Los Angeles' aqueduct.

At the end of the last day students participate in a closing circle, an important reflective time in which each student shares their most poignant moments, their appreciation of what they've learned with their friends and leaders, and their personal triumphs. These reflections are some of the most profound and touching moments for both OE staff and students at the closing circle.



OE Instructor Becky Clough explains elements of Mono Lake's protection to students from the Los Angeles Infrastructure Academy.

Continued on page 5

Los Angeles Infrastructure Academy and OE

Out of the 18–20 groups that participate in OE each year, most return the following year. This year, the program welcomed a new partner group, the Los Angeles Infrastructure Academy. The Infrastructure Academy is an after-school program that prepares students for careers in technical engineering and skilled trades, specifically in industries that provide water, energy, and infrastructure. Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa launched the Infrastructure Academy just over a year ago to target hard-working students in gang-ridden areas of Los Angeles. It is designed to prepare these students for high-paying jobs and an alternative path that will serve both students and the future of the City. Not knowing anything about Mono Lake and the Eastern Sierra, most students expected their trip to Mono Lake to be a mundane, mandatory field trip, but it turned out to be a very meaningful experience.

The two programs working in partnership illustrates just how much the relationship between the Mono Lake Committee and the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power (DWP) has changed, from one of adversity to one of cooperative solutions. For 15 years now, the Committee and DWP have been partners in education at Mono Lake.

Water conservation from a meaningful connection

OE welcomes students who don't have the chance or means to easily travel beyond the city, and normally would not have the opportunity to experience the Mono Basin and the Sierra Nevada. Participants come from a variety of programs and schools: community-based organizations, Girl Scouts, high schools, substance abuse rehabilitation programs, and after-school academic programs such as the Infrastructure Academy. The OE program challenges its participants to think about watersheds in a place that is very much connected to the City through water, but is disconnected from the city in other



BECKY CLOUGH

OE Manager Santiago Escruceria prepares Infrastructure Academy students for a team building exercise.

ways. Water takes its time as it melts from snow and travels hundreds of miles to a kitchen faucet. Students also benefit from slowing down and taking their time, disconnecting for five days from the digital world, big-city pace, and information overload.

For the Mono Lake Committee, conservation education goes beyond the basics of water conservation. It's about letting the students get out of their complicated daily lives and drop the personal front they need to put up while living in the city, allowing them to relax and establish their own relationship with Mono Lake and the Eastern Sierra. As Santiago Escruceria, the Committee's Outdoor Experiences Manager says, "What good is conservation education, if a student does not first see value in themselves? How does the earth matter if they do not matter?"

Immersing students in a new environment and allowing and challenging them to come face to face with who they really are as individuals helps make this connection possible. To do this, instructors work hard to earn the students' trust by carefully guiding them through activities such as the night walk through the Jeffrey pine forest or an all day hike they would otherwise be reluctant or even afraid to do. The various outcomes of earning this trust make for emotional closing circle conversations. As one student recently said, "I want to thank you, because you believe in me and make me think I can do anything."

The quality of the relationships that students establish during their five days at Mono Lake influences how relevant water conservation is to their daily lives. Our relationship with the landscape, and the people at both ends of the Los Angeles Aqueduct, ultimately determines how far we can stretch our water supply. The OE program teaches that positive relationships matter. Water conservation is just one tool in the box for improving one of our biggest relationships, and one we often take for granted: water = life. ❖



BECKY CLOUGH

Infrastructure Academy students getting into hiking during their Outdoor Experiences week.

Flow study on Rush Creek

Scientists evaluate the effects of low flows for future management

by Lisa Cutting

Summer is always a busy time for Mono Basin restoration but this past August was an especially eventful one for Rush Creek. State Water Board-appointed stream scientists combined expertise and nine years of experience to propose and implement a comprehensive instream flow study for Rush Creek. The purpose of the study was to analyze summer and winter base flows to determine if changes to the present flow requirements could improve winter fish habitat and reduce elevated summer water temperatures—both of which negatively impact trout and cause reduced growth rates.

Rush Creek has shown restoration progress through the years but trout continue to lag behind other physical improvements such as riparian vegetation recovery and stream channel development. The fish scientists conducted another pool survey this summer to assess changes from the 2002

survey. The 2008 survey results confirmed that the physical energy of the high runoff events of 2005 and 2006 improved quality of pool habitat on Rush Creek by 35%. Deep pools are important for brown trout as holding areas, especially in the low flow periods in winter. And stream restoration flows—the high spring runoff flows ordered by the State Water Board—continue to be the single most important restoration action.

With support from the Mono Lake Committee and other parties, the State Water Board approved a flow variance for the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power to systematically alter the flow in Rush Creek so scientists could evaluate habitat conditions and collect information. The experimental flows ranged from 90 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 15 cfs and therefore deviated from the required summer base flow amount of 31 cfs. The flow of 15 cfs was the lowest flow in Rush Creek since November 1982 when the creek was dry, followed by November 1984 when the average flow was 16 cfs. For a photo comparison from the 2008 study turn to page 13.

In predetermined reaches of Rush Creek and for each flow amount scientists walked the creek channel, mapping information on aerial photos and recording measurements. Data was collected for the following:

- Winter holding habitat (defined by water velocity, depth, and cover)
- Summer foraging habitat (defined by depth and velocity)
- Water temperatures, especially during the lower flows
- Stream channel width
- Connectivity between pools in low flow regimes
- Habitat conditions for benthic macroinvertebrates

Committee staff were also busy out on Rush Creek collecting information. In addition to measuring groundwater levels at each flow, assessing side channel flow amounts, and making general observations as the flows changed, staff also spent time with the scientists to better understand the protocols and procedures they were using to collect information.

The Committee expects a flow recommendation to emerge from this process and the challenge will be to interpret the information and collectively arrive at the appropriate decision. Rush Creek is a managed stream system in need of flows that mimic the natural hydrograph to the greatest extent possible in order for the system to fully recover and thrive. ❖

Lisa Cutting is the Committee's Eastern Sierra Policy Director. She now knows that an automated efficient water supply system is critical to balancing gardening with summer hiking!

Stewardship Ranger at work



Mono Basin Stewardship Ranger Justin Hite leads a bird tour at the Tufa State Reserve Boardwalk at County Park. Ranger Hite has assisted in restoration projects, organized volunteer work days, led naturalist tours, and spent time helping and educating visitors at visitation sites around the Mono Basin. The US Forest Service, Friends of the Inyo, and the Mono Lake Committee partnered to develop the Stewardship Ranger position in light of declining agency field presence and increased visitation in the Mono Basin. The project was made possible by a two-year grant from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

Policy notes

from the Policy Team

Mono County makes a move on Mill Creek

In an unusual split vote, Mono County Supervisors recently took action to oppose Southern California Edison's efforts to implement the settlement agreement that is the basis of the license for its Mill Creek hydropower plant. In particular, the county asked regulators to deny ratepayer funding for construction of the critical "return conveyance" that would facilitate restoration of long suffering Mill Creek, Mono Lake's third largest tributary. Without a return conveyance, the county would continue to see excessive Mill Creek water diverted to land it owns in amounts that quadruple its legal water rights—while infringing on the rights of others and leaving Mill Creek with 10% or less of its natural flow. Watch for further analysis of this surprising move in the next *Newsletter*.

Mono Lake Trail update

Over the summer work began on a 1.3-mile-long trail that will connect the Scenic Area Visitor Center with the Old Marina lakeshore access site, and will include a spur route to the David Gaines Memorial Boardwalk. The first phase of heavy equipment work has been completed for now but will resume in certain sections once the California Conservation Corps (CCC) trail crew completes their work. Statewide fires of early summer called the CCC crew away from the project for fire fighting which, understandably, has delayed the project. The revised schedule has the CCC crews here until early December (fire activity permitting), and then again early next spring. The Mono Lake Trail should be completed by early next summer.

One of the most notable features of the project is that a significant portion—starting from the Old Marina site—will be an Americans with Disabilities Act accessible trail.



The new Mono Lake Trail construction includes an upgrade of the existing David Gaines Memorial Boardwalk along the route between the Scenic Area Visitor Center and Old Marina.

Other components include the use of boardwalk near the shore of Mono Lake to protect sensitive wetland habitat and the installation of interpretive panels situated in strategic clusters to avoid visual impacts and to promote a self-discovery experience. The Committee was instrumental in offering expertise to help resolve planning issues related to the rising lake level. Collaborative solutions included the actual routing of the trail and using removable boardwalk in sections that will eventually be inundated by Mono Lake.

As is often the case in the Mono Basin, many groups have partnered to make this project a success. California State Parks and the US Forest Service have been the primary agencies responsible for project planning and implementation. The Los Angeles Department of Water & Power has allowed the project to cross over land owned by the City of Los Angeles, and the Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association is funding all the interpretive panels for the project. Also, Friends of the Inyo and the Mono Lake Committee have organized volunteer work parties to help restore areas adjacent to the trail by removing invasive plant species. Future restoration plans include reseeding and mulching,

which will help to improve the visual quality of the project area.

Opportunities to help out on the Mono Lake Trail will continue this fall and next spring. Contact Lisa Cutting (lisa@monolake.org) at (760) 647-6595 for more information.

Exploring the former Cunningham property

Committee members know the saga behind the Committee's work to protect 112 acres of scenic west shore land from subdivision in violation of federal law—and last summer's success when the property was purchased by Mammoth Mountain for permanent protection through a trade to the Forest Service. Since then the property, long privately held and off limits to the public, has become a place to search out new Mono Basin secrets.

Mammal expert John Harris has begun documenting the four-legged inhabitants of the land and looking for signs of endangered mountain beaver, which have been documented previously in the area. Birders have been scanning the large aspen grove for songbirds, raptors, and other avian visitors. And scientific exploration along the small perennial stream and deep canyon that cross the property is still to come. ❖

Another piece of the Mono Basin protected

Private landowner establishes landmark conservation easement

by Lisa Cutting

Anyone who has driven east on Highway 167 knows that the northeast portion of the Mono Basin is a wild and expansive place. Few homes dot the landscape and it seems the sagebrush rolls on forever. In fact, most of the Mono Basin, with the exception of the Highway 395 corridor, is largely undeveloped and natural—a combination that defines the scenic vistas and the rural nature of the area.

This past summer, the view east across Mono Lake and the wild lands that comprise that view became even more securely protected. A 480-acre private parcel of land northeast of the lake had been for sale for several years. The owner, while hoping to maintain the parcel's natural integrity, was under increasing pressure to complete a sale.

Concern mounted that the parcel might fall prey to developers seeking quick subdivision profit. The property is about one mile from the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area boundary, is surrounded by Bureau of Land Management property on three sides, and consists of alkali dune scrub and scattered juniper trees that provide habitat for many species of wildlife. Working in coordination, the Committee and

the Eastern Sierra Land Trust (ESLT) began searching for solutions that would keep the land private and undivided.

Enter Ted Yednock, Bay Area entrepreneur and the Mono Basin's newest landowner. Yednock, who is also a Committee member, approached the purchase from the start with conservation in mind and a strong appreciation for the natural value of the land. Working with ESLT, which specializes in conservation easements, Yednock has now placed deed conditions onto the property that provide for an appropriately placed owner residence and assure the larger property will remain intact and undeveloped for the future.

After completing the purchase and easement, Yednock began cleaning up the land. For many years junk vehicles had been accumulating on the parcel, along with other discarded items. Much of the clean-up work has been completed and the view from the highway is now free of old cars. Additional cleanup remains to be done but it's clear that Yednock cares deeply about the land and has set a high standard for its future preservation. ♦

Mono Basin lands proposed for wilderness designation

by Geoffrey McQuilkin

A bipartisan bill is moving forward in Congress to designate over 430,000 acres of federal land in the Eastern Sierra as wilderness, including over 50,000 acres in the Mono Basin. The designation would preserve the existing roadless status of these wild areas while allowing for continued recreation and assuring habitat protection for sensitive wildlife species.

Known as the Eastern Sierra and Northern San Gabriel Wild Heritage Act, the bill was jointly introduced by Mono County Congressional Representative Howard "Buck" McKeon and Senator Barbara Boxer. Senator Dianne Feinstein has also joined in support of the legislation, which has been crafted and recrafted to resolve virtually every concern that has been raised.

In the Mono Basin the bill addresses land in two areas. First are high country Sierra additions to the existing Hoover and Ansel Adams Wilderness areas, including Mt. Conness, Lee Vining Creek headwaters, bighorn sheep habitat with panoramic lake views, and mountainous terrain adjacent to the Tioga Pass road. Second is a portion of the remote area east of Mono Lake, featuring Granite Mountain and including approximately 35,000 acres of sagebrush steppe, spectacular scenic views of the lake and Sierra, and important

Sage Grouse habitat. The bill as a whole also includes critical Eastern Sierra areas such as the Owens River headwaters, ancient bristlecone pine forest, John Muir Wilderness additions, and the White Mountains.

The Mono Lake Committee has weighed in to support the bill in light of the protection it will provide to Mono Basin lands, the Mono Lake watershed, and the local tourism-based economy. The Committee has also urged decisionmakers to reconsider provisions of the bill that would remove the designation of the existing "wilderness study areas" in the Waford Springs vicinity east of the lake. Elimination of the study areas would leave the lands in federal ownership but eliminate the protections currently in place.

After several public hearings, including one filled with public testimony that stretched to over five hours in length, and much fine tuning of the boundaries, Mono County Supervisors voted unanimously in August to support the bill. Time is short for action in this Congressional session but the bill is reportedly high on the docket. Current maps of the additions can be found on Representative McKeon's website at www.mckeon.house.gov. For further information on the wilderness effort, visit www.easternsierrawild.org and www.californiawild.org.

A friend in need

by Gary Nelson



It was the splashing that first caught my eye. A four-foot circle of thrashing water appeared around two hundred yards to the north, off my port bow. Focusing in, a rhythm emerged from the briny water, a motion familiar yet strangely out of place. I glanced over at my fellow guide, Intern Nora Livingston, and said “Let’s check it out.” The sight of blazing yellow eyes and curving beak rising above the roiling patch of water soon told the tale. A fledgling Osprey had unsuccessfully attempted its first flight from a nest atop a tufa tower several hundred yards offshore. Wings that should have gracefully soared through the clear desert air now struggled against the heavy brine.

Our eleven o’clock tour, with only two canoes carrying a total of five passengers, should have been a leisurely ending to a perfect day of canoe tours. Instead, a myriad of questions—practical and ethical—flashed through my mind: should we try to save the Osprey? How? What about the passengers? Where do we take it? Another look at the flailing Osprey shoved all of these concerns into the we’ll-make-it-up-as-we-go category.

Here was a friend that needed our help.

We came in on either side of the bewildered bird. Nora and I slid our paddles underneath the Osprey, and to my relief, it accepted our offer of help and climbed onto them. As we lifted the bird out of the water it spread its wings and jumped into Nora’s lap. Many people, upon becoming the personal recipient of four pounds of beak and talons, might tend to react in an animated fashion. Nora however, seemed to channel the maternal energy of Mono Lake into an aura of loving wonderment. The bird sat down, calmly folded its wings and looked at me with a piercing gaze that seemed to say “Okay, what now?”

Since Nora’s Osprey-sitting duties precluded her being able to paddle or steer her canoe, I tied her bow rope to my stern rope and began towing her towards shore. Nora reminded me that the kiosk at South Tufa would be staffed, so I set course for the end of the South Tufa boardwalk.

The sight of Nora’s canoe careening back and forth behind mine attracted the attention of the many visitors along the shoreline. When a sharp-eyed tourist spotted the Osprey, we became the object of rabid interest, and were surrounded

immediately upon landing by inquisitive onlookers. At this point the Osprey began to freak out. Nora suggested that we cover it up, so I literally gave the bird the shirt off my back. As Nora carried the covered bird up to the kiosk, I informed our passengers that the tour was over, and while somewhat abbreviated, it was the most unusual one I had ever experienced. It was only a short walk to where their cars were parked—I got no complaints.

State Park Ranger Jim Pence arrived quickly to take charge of the bird. Jim has previous experience in Osprey rescue (see Winter 2007 *Newsletter*), and suggested that we set it out on open ground to see if it would fly. Although the Osprey had placidly accepted Nora’s company, it objected to Jim as he moved it to a clearing amid the rabbitbrush. His hands, punctured by talons, soon ran with blood. Removing my shirt revealed a bird both fierce and bedraggled, its feathers still wet with salty water, but its head projecting an

air of regal dominance. After it became obvious that the bird was not going to fly, Jim (wearing gloves this time) moved it into one of the restrooms to let it calm down.

During the 9:30AM Committee canoe tour the next day we encountered Jim and Jon Kazmierski of the Forest Service in their canoe. They had just returned the Osprey to its nest on the tufa. They could not get it all the way up onto the nest and had to leave it on a ledge not quite two feet above the water. As I turned back to Navy Beach, I saw the Osprey sitting on the side of the tufa looking rather forlorn. We had done all that we could, and I hoped that our friend received more successful flight instruction from its parents before its next flight.

Later that night I ran into Jim and Nora at a concert in Lee Vining. Jim said that our Osprey had flown off of the tufa and was doing fine. Nora was beaming like a proud step-mother, and with justification—she was the true hero of our adventure. The instant empathy she established with the Osprey made the rescue possible. Nora will be returning next year as the Committee’s Birding Intern, a position she has proven to be eminently qualified for. I am looking forward to seeing Nora next summer, as well as our feathered friend. ❖

“Admiral” Gary Nelson is very proud to have completed his 20th year of canoe tours on Mono Lake for the Mono Lake Committee. He is still waiting for his gold watch.



NORA LIVINGSTON

Mayor unveils visionary LA water strategy

City to meet all future increase in demand with water conservation and recycling

The Mono Lake story comes full circle

by Geoffrey McQuilkin

In 1978 the Mono Lake Committee had just been founded and Mono Lake faced imminent destruction due to the excessive diversion of its tributary streams to the City of Los Angeles. The question was how to solve this problem—how to protect the lake while allowing the City the water it needed without transferring Mono’s water woes to other sensitive areas?

“There is,” wrote Committee founder David Gaines in this very *Newsletter* 30 years ago, “a way to preserve Mono Lake that is environmentally and economically sensible: water conservation.” Gaines provided examples such as improved design of plumbing fixtures, more efficient irrigation of lawns and gardens, and greater use of dry climate plants. But the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power (DWP) was uninterested, dismissing conservation as “unreasonable” and a strategy with “little potential ... without regular water rationing.”

How times have changed! While it took decades of dedicated persistence to successfully forge the link between water conservation and Mono Lake’s protection, the wisdom of the concept has never diminished. Today, a new generation of Los Angeles leaders is embracing water conservation and recycling as the path to meeting the City’s water needs in an environmentally sound way.

Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa recently published a 20-year water strategy for Los Angeles that is the most dramatic demonstration of the City’s turn toward conservation. And with it, the Mono Lake story has come full circle.

“The City has long relied on imported water from sources located hundreds of miles away—the Owens Valley and Mono Basin,” states the strategy document. “We must look closer to home, and set a new course for meeting our water demands. ... That’s why the City is making a promise to every resident of Los Angeles to meet all new demand through a combination of conservation and recycling.”

The strategy is, quite simply, a sea change. In a city where the powerful DWP has not always followed the Mayor’s lead, it is notable that DWP, too, embraces the strategy. “This is a bold and visionary strategy for securing LA’s water supply today and in the future by developing a locally sustainable water supply,” said David Nahai, DWP CEO and General Manager.

What the plan includes

The Los Angeles Water Plan states that “...the City will meet all new demand for water ... through a combination of conservation and water recycling.” That single sentence is

tremendous news for Mono Lake. The 20-year plan calls for a number of short- and long-term strategies to achieve its goals. Here are details on three of these key strategies.

Water conservation

Following on the success of the ultra-low-flush toilet retrofit program, in which the Committee and numerous community organizations were closely involved, the Water Plan highlights installation of appliances, equipment, and landscaping systems to “build in” further water savings. Rebates for water efficient clothes and dish washers, for example, are important plan elements for homeowners. Retrofitting commercial equipment such as cooling towers and X-Ray machines offers surprising benefits.

The plan also tackles reducing water use outside of homes since 30% of the City’s water is used outside for lawns and landscaping. “Smart” sprinkler systems that adjust watering schedules based on actual conditions (no more watering while it is raining!) are being tested in parks in preparation for residential use. Further measures include promoting landscaping with native plants and modifications to City parks.

Water recycling

The water recycling goal is ambitious—and appropriate—calling for a sixfold increase by 2019. The City currently discharges about 430,000 acre-feet of highly treated wastewater each year into the ocean—in other words, roughly 65% of annual water imports see only a single use.

The push is to reactivate dormant plans to use recycled water for groundwater recharge. Such efforts have generated controversy in the past, but solutions are available and the recent launch of a large water recycling facility in Orange County has charted a path that DWP can follow. Recycled water use is targeted to rise to 50,000 acre-feet per year by 2019.

Stormwater capture

Local groundwater currently provides the city with 11% of its water supply. However most of the rainfall that arrives in the City is channeled to the ocean, when it could replenish local groundwater instead. Capture programs will hold back that stormwater to allow for groundwater recharge, making it available for later use. The plan’s goal is to increase stormwater capture by 20,000 acre-feet on average through five projects, three of which are already under construction.

“Securing L.A.’s Water Supply” is available online; see www.monobasinresearch.org for links to the full document. ❖

Mono Lake arrives on LA doorsteps

by Elin Ljung

As copies of the *Los Angeles Times* hit front steps in Southern California on Thursday, July 24, Mono Lake's salty waters were lapping quietly at the shore while Yellow Warblers flitted busily along Rush Creek gathering food for their chicks. *Times* readers opened their papers to find a feature-length article on Mono Lake and its dry history, returning bird populations, and continuing road to recovery.

In the article, "A Mono Lake success story," *Times* staff writer Louis Sahagun weaves a summary of Los Angeles' water diversions and the Mono Lake Committee's successes with glimpses into Rush Creek's recovering ecosystem. Online readers can also enjoy a five-minute video by Don Kelsen—Committee staff Santiago Escruceria, Bartshé Miller, and Geoff McQuilkin guide viewers through tufa towers, along the shore, and near Rush Creek. PRBO Conservation Science's Chris McCreedy bands a Yellow Warbler, and visitor Gary Suttle enjoys the insect life at County Park.

The timely article preceded the Los Angeles City Council vote to approve Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's "drought busters" program by just two weeks. With widespread concern about the state's reservoirs and long-term drought, the article is a reminder of how important water conservation is for humans and the environment alike.

To go along with the article, the Committee designed a

doorknob hanger for LA residents to use in promoting water conservation. Two different versions of the hanger allow Angelenos to either let their neighbors know how much they notice and appreciate their water-conscious habits, or to encourage them to improve their habits.

The door hangers are intended to be a positive effort to influence change in Los Angeles, for we are all in the water-saving game together: friends, neighbors, utility companies, and government agencies. Reminding people that all of California's water comes from amazing places like the Mono Basin, the Sierra Nevada, the Bay Delta, and the Colorado River will help bring conservation home to the doorsteps of LA.

To read "A Mono Lake success story" online and watch the video, please visit www.latimes.com/monolake. To print out a door hanger, please visit www.monolake.org. ❖

Elin Ljung is the Committee's Communications Coordinator. She is excited to attend the 12th Living Lakes conference in Italy this fall—gelato here she comes!



Thank you Mono Lake Volunteers!

The fifth class of Mono Lake Volunteers graduated on June 5, 2008 and spent many hours this summer at the lake helping visitors enjoy their Mono Lake experience. The Mono Lake Volunteer program is sponsored in partnership by the Mono Lake Committee, California State Parks, the US Forest Service, and the Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association.



Left to right: Volunteer Coordinator Janet Carle, Igor Vorobyoff, Geoff McQuilkin of the Mono Lake Committee, Steve Lauritzen, Dave Marquart of California State Parks, Kay Nelson, Ron Nelson, Dorothy Burdette, Lee Vorobyoff, Mel Pereira, Anna Mills, Nancy Devon, Mike Schlafmann of the US Forest Service, Debbie Eilts of the Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association. Not pictured: Debbie Kielb and Maggie Wahl.

Thank you to all of our 2008 volunteers: Mary Ahnger, George & Nancy Appel, Jo Bacon, Phyllis Benham, Maxine Binn, Sharon Bluhm, Stan Bluhm, Dorothy Burdette, Elizabeth Corathers, Ken Corathers, Pat De Sota, Nancy Devon, Jean Dillingham, Judy Erb, Hank Garretson, Edyth Irvine, Debbie Kielb, Leslie Klusmire, Linda LaPierre, Steve Lauritzen, Anna Mills, Helen Mockel, Karen Murphy-Schlaepfer, Kay Nelson, Ron Nelson, Mel Pereira, Mary K. Prentice, Bonnie Reinhold, Rhonda Starr, Nancy States, Sherryl Taylor, Igor Vorobyoff, Lee Vorobyoff, Maggie Wahl, Mary Jo Whritner, and Jim Williams.

And of course a big thank you to our wonderful Volunteer Coordinator, Janet Carle—we couldn't do it without you!

We also give special thanks to the following volunteers, who lent a hand to help water trees, help with the new Mono Lake Trail, pull invasive plant species, and monitor the water in Mono's streams: Caroline Anayac, Brigitte Berman, Lynn Boulton, Janet Carle, Susanna Domancich, Hannah Drew, Mark Drew, Colin Egolf, Jeff Egolf, Cindy Foxfoot, Iris Foxfoot, Ralph Henson, Doug Jung, Pam Klemke, Perry Mills, Jori Mills, Marilyn Missimer, Donna Sheckter, Kylea Tucker, Laura Tucker, Bryce Wheeler, Wilma Wheeler, and Steff Zurek.

Streamwatch

Dry conditions in a “Normal year” lower Grant Lake Reservoir levels and challenge Jeffrey pine seedlings

by Greg Reis

Aside from a wet week in May when 1.2 inches of rain fell, there has been less than 0.25 inches of precipitation in Lee Vining since February. This dry weather makes the 86% of average snowmelt runoff forecast likely an overestimate.

Preliminary runoff for April–July for Lee Vining Creek is close to its forecast, but Rush Creek runoff is only 70% of the forecast.

The April 1 forecast of 86% of average runoff was just above the threshold that requires the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power to provide “Normal year” streamflows to Rush Creek, while inflow to Grant Lake Reservoir has fallen into the “Dry year” category. More

water leaving the reservoir than entering it, partially due to a full Gem Lake Reservoir holding back water upstream, and on the heels of the second-driest year on record, has resulted in a very low Grant Lake Reservoir.

Pine plantings

This spring the Mono Lake Committee, with the help of volunteers, planted approximately 81 Jeffrey pine seedlings along Rush Creek just below Highway 395, and watered them every couple of weeks throughout the summer. As of mid-August, only 28% are surviving. This survival rate is lower than expected, and while the “Normal year” streamflows certainly improved

their chances, the lack of growing season precipitation could have a lot to do with the low survival rate.

The last two years have been challenging for newly-planted seedlings, with dry weather and cold winters. The 2006 pine plantings on Rush Creek had only a 15% survival rate as of August 2008. This could also reflect the fact that there are fewer good planting sites left. Next year will be the Committee’s last year planting pine seedlings, due to the fulfillment of the Water Board’s pine planting requirement. We will plant cottonwood cuttings on Rush Creek in future years, since cottonwoods are currently spreading very slowly there. ❖

Lakewatch

NASA studies tufa formation in Mono Lake

by Greg Reis

Since 1995, when the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) put a submersible in Mono Lake, there have been many NASA-funded studies in the area. Some of the studies have been to test methods for finding evidence of microbial life on Mars—in a place that could be similar to past Mars environments.

Gusev Crater, Mars, during a wetter time, could have been much like Mono Lake, Earth.

The latest studies have been led by Mike Thomas of Arizona State University who has been studying biological influences on tufa formation. Thomas shared some of his findings—and beautiful underwater photos—in an evening presentation at the Scenic Area Visitor Center on August 1.

Thomas explained a few of the common characteristics of tufa towers. The tops of exposed tufa towers are smooth because they get eroded by rainwater. The black center in a chunk of tufa is created by bacteria in acidic and anoxic conditions—that’s right—localized acidic conditions in alkaline Mono Lake! And the popcorn texture of downward-facing surfaces of towers is created by a biofilm that grows on the underside of underwater tufa.

Direct precipitation of tufa is associated with springs. However, in the absence of spring flow, tufa formation is associated with biofilms. Photosynthesis alters the chemistry with a pH change and promotes precipitation of tufa. Microbes such as algae get entombed in the crystals (hence NASA’s interest).

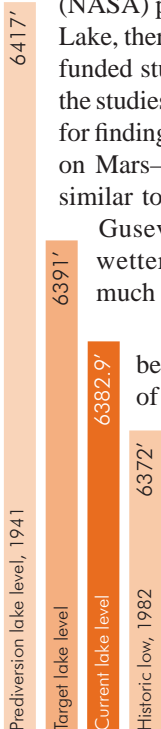
Deeper than 55 feet, due to lack of sunlight, there are no more green pigments in the algae. There, a purple organism is much more efficient at photosynthesis. Thus, the kinds of

organisms in the crystals can provide information about the environment in which the tufa grew.

Tufa crystals enlarge as depths increase—at 40 feet deep the crystals are very large. Ikaite, a precursor to the ice age tufa found on prehistoric shorelines high above the current lake, only forms in winter, and is a good geothermometer of past lake temperatures. So the crystals can tell us much as well. This might not only help with Mars research, but also help us understand our favorite lake here on Earth.

As for the lake level, in mid-August, Mono Lake’s elevation was 6382.9 feet above sea level and was dropping a tenth of a foot per week; the lake is 1.2 feet lower than mid-August of last year. With no upcoming La Niña or El Niño, there are no predictions regarding how snowy the upcoming winter will be. ❖

Greg Reis is the Committee’s Information Specialist. He will be admiring East Coast foliage this fall.



Mono Basin Journal

A roundup of quiet happenings at Mono Lake

by Geoffrey McQuilkin



GEORGE MCQUILKIN

Huell Howser of *California's Gold* was on his way to shoot a new Mono Lake episode (see the back cover for air dates) and my mission was simple: find the lakeshore of 15 years ago. But how? At the Committee we have a lot of experience poking around in the sagebrush looking for evidence of old shorelines long abandoned by the falling lake. But this was a new challenge, because the 1993 shoreline is, happily, covered by eight vertical feet of water. So I searched my garage for the right tool: tape measure? Too flexible. A weighted rope? Not very dramatic. Extendable metal pole? Now we're getting somewhere. Add markings every foot and a red felt flag from the kids' craft box and we've got a custom Huell Howser lake measuring device. And we used it, too, leaning out of canoes offshore from South Tufa. Will it make the cut for the final show? Tune in to find out.

One of the largest, and yet most elusive, items in the Mono Basin is the Los Angeles Aqueduct. Sure, the diversion dams are easily located, and there's virtually nowhere you can go without seeing the effects of water diversions etched

into the landscape. But what about the aqueduct itself—that great concrete pipe constructed in the 1930s? It's buried underground. Until this summer, that is, when an improvement project kicked off and crews unearthed the conduit to install new Rush Creek release valves. Suddenly sunlight shone on the thick concrete walls of the aqueduct after 70 years of darkness. The construction feats of those distant days remain impressive—more so when you can gaze at the huge pipe and imagine the labor its construction required. Closer inspection revealed, pressed into the concrete, the grain and knotholes of the many, many four-inch boards used in the wood forms when the pipe was built. Today, of course, things have changed; plywood sheets are used in concrete forms and, more importantly, valves are placed in aqueducts to assure that streams and lakes have the water they need. ❖

Geoff McQuilkin is the Committee's Executive Director. He has enjoyed the recent opportunities to get out canoeing with various media this year—a perfect way to celebrate the Committee's 30th anniversary!

Benchmarks



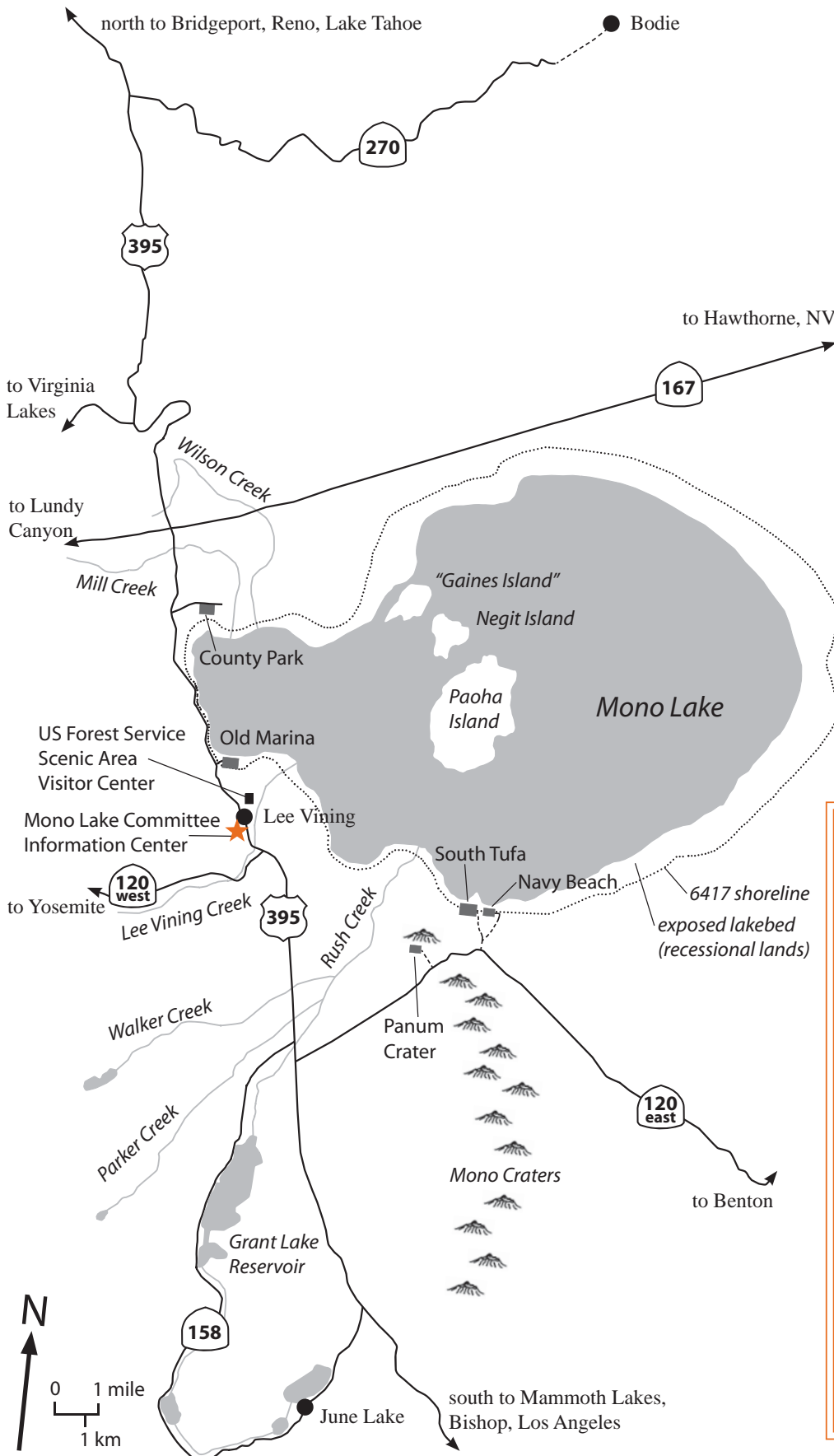
August 20, 2008: The Rush Creek 4bii channel flows at 30 cubic feet per second (cfs) during DWP's flow study (see page 6).



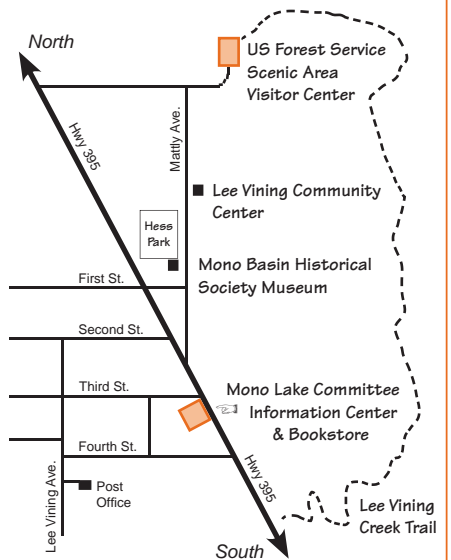
August 21, 2008: What a difference 15 cfs makes! With a flow of only 15 cfs coming down Rush Creek, the 4bii channel is dry.

PHOTOS BY GREG REIS

Mono Lake and vicinity map



Lee Vining town map For walking around town



How far is it?

Remember to check for road closures before you travel!

1-800-GAS-ROAD

Distance from Lee Vining to:

South Tufa	11mi	18km
Yosemite Park entrance	13	21
Tuolumne Meadows	21	34
Mammoth Lakes	27	44
Bodie	32	52
Bishop.....	66	106
Yosemite Valley.....	77	124
Lake Tahoe.....	110	177
Reno.....	140	225
Death Valley.....	177	285
San Francisco (via 120)	250	402
Los Angeles	303	488
Las Vegas	326	525

Autumn in the Mono Basin

Fall travel tips

Autumn is a wonderful time to visit the Mono Basin! While the weather and road conditions are often mild and safe, it is important to remember that conditions can change quickly. Rain, snow, and road closures are real possibilities for fall in the mountains, so be sure to plan accordingly. Since 1933 Tioga Pass has closed as early as September 4 and as late as January 1. Helpful information on current Mono Basin conditions can be found at www.monolake.org.

Fall colors

There's no telling when the fall colors will be at their best, but keep your eyes out for colorful groves as you drive along the Eastern Sierra highways and you'll be sure to find some. Check out the following locations for some of the best fall color in the Mono Basin. You can also stop by the Mono Lake Committee Information Center &

Bookstore and our knowledgeable staff can help with the most up-to-date regional fall color reports.

- **Lundy Canyon:** Take a stroll up the trail to see big aspen groves, beaver ponds, and waterfalls. The canyon walls display a patchwork of fall colors as low shrubs and alpine plants turn orange, brown, red, and gold. From Lee Vining take Hwy 395 north for 7 miles, make a left at the turnoff for Hwy 167, and follow the road past Lundy Lake Reservoir to the trailhead parking.
- **June Lake Loop:** A drive around the June Lake Loop will treat you to views of steep canyon walls, golden aspen groves, and beautiful mountain lakes. The Loop is one of the best places to see fall color in the Mono Basin by car, or you can take one of the many trails away from the road to get into the fresh fall air and see more wildlife.
- **Mono Lake County Park** is a good spot to admire the golden fall color spilling from Sierra canyons. Follow the boardwalk down to the lakeshore to see tufa towers, migrating birds, and a beautiful view of Mono Lake.

Visitor centers

- **The Mono Lake Committee Information Center & Bookstore**, located in the center of Lee Vining, offers a free video, educational exhibits, and an art gallery. The bookstore offers an excellent selection of regional books, maps, T-shirts, local crafts, CDs, and specialty gifts. The Committee also houses the Lee Vining Chamber of Commerce with information on lodging, dining, and recreation opportunities as well as weather and road conditions. Open 9:00AM–5:00PM daily, or call (760) 647-6595 for more information.
- **The Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area Visitor Center**, located just north of town, features an excellent view of Mono Lake, interpretive displays, and natural history trails. A dramatic film on Mono Lake shows regularly in the theater. Open Thursdays–Mondays 9:00AM–4:30PM, closed Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The Visitor Center closes for the winter in mid-November; for more information, call (760) 647-3044. ❖

Regional travel resources

- Mono Lake Committee Information Center
(760) 647-6595 www.monolake.org
- Lee Vining Chamber of Commerce
(760) 647-6629 www.leevining.com
- US Forest Service Scenic Area Visitor Center
(760) 647-3044 www.fs.fed.us/r5/inyo/about
- Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve
(760) 647-6331 www.cal-parks.ca.gov
- Bodie State Historic Park
(760) 647-6445 www.cal-parks.ca.gov
- Mammoth Lakes Visitor Center
(760) 924-5500 www.visitmammoth.com
- June Lake Chamber of Commerce
(760) 648-7584 www.junelakechamber.org
- Bridgeport Chamber of Commerce
(760) 932-7500 www.bridgeportcalifornia.com
- Devils Postpile (760) 934-2289 www.nps.gov/depo
- Inyo National Forest 24-hour Wilderness Permits/Info
(760) 873-2408 www.fs.fed.us/r5/inyo/passes/
- Yosemite National Park www.nps.gov/yose
Information by phone (209) 372-0200
Campground Reservations (800) 436-7275
Hotel and Motel Reservations (801) 559-5000
Wilderness Permit Reservations (209) 372-0740
- White Mountain Ranger District–Bishop (760) 873-2500
- Lone Pine Interagency Visitor Center (760) 876-6222
- Manzanar National Historic Site and Interpretive Center
(760) 878-2932 www.nps.gov/manz
- Death Valley Reservations (760) 786-2345
- Bridgeport Ranger Station–Toiyabe National Forest
(760) 932-7070
- California Road Conditions (800) 427-7623

Mono Lake Committee Information Center & Bookstore



Fall Catalog

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



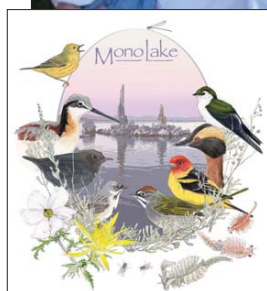
JACK LAWS MONO LAKE T-SHIRT

Our best-selling shirt this year, modeled by Executive Director Geoff with his family Caelen, Sarah, and Ellery, features a design created by John "Jack" Muir Laws especially for the Mono Lake Committee. A unique gift idea: a Laws shirt and book (page 23) combo for all the Mono Lake and Sierra Nevada enthusiasts you know!

Women's Jack Laws Mono Lake T-shirt, S-XL: \$19.00, XXL: \$21.00

Men's Jack Laws Mono Lake T-shirt, S-XL: \$20.00, XXL: \$22.00

Youth Jack Laws Mono Lake T-shirt, S-L: \$16.00



30TH ANNIVERSARY T-SHIRT

Membership Coordinator Ellen and Information Center & Bookstore Manager Duncan look smashing in these special anniversary edition shirts. The unisex, organic, natural-colored shirts have the 30th Anniversary logo in front and the timeless Committee logo in royal blue in back.

Adult 30th Anniversary T-shirt, S-XL: \$19.00, XXL: \$21.00



LOVE MONO LAKE WOMEN'S V-NECK T-SHIRT

Interns Claire and Morgan loved modeling this shirt for us, especially since this was Morgan's winning T-shirt contest design! The bright red, 100% preshrunk cotton shirt has the outline of Mono Lake incorporated into the design on both front and back.

Women's Love Mono Lake T-shirt, S-XL: \$19.00, XXL: \$21.00



30TH ANNIVERSARY LOGO DRINKWARE

Sip your favorite drink from one of our three 30th Anniversary logo mugs with the Committee logo on the reverse. The Klean Kanteen stainless steel water bottle is a healthy alternative to plastic bottles. The stainless steel insulated travel cup with a spill-proof sip top is great for the car. The ceramic mug comes in a creamy natural color.

30th Anniversary Klean Kanteen, 27-ounce: \$19.95

30th Anniversary Stainless Steel Travel Cup, 18-ounce: \$12.95

30th Anniversary Ceramic Mug, 12-ounce: \$9.50

Call (760) 647-6595 to order

LONG LIVE MONO LAKE BAR AND LUFFA SOAP



This wonderful soap is handcrafted from rainwater, vegetable oils, and essential and/or fragrance oils in the traditional cold process soap making method.

The folks at The Soap Makery cure the bars for eight weeks and then hand cut and emboss each bar with "Long Live Mono Lake." Available in five delicious scents. Also available is a special soap-filled luffa bar that gently exfoliates as it cleans as well as a soap sampler of six scents.

Long Live Mono Lake Bar Soap, please specify Lavender Swirl, Sandalwood, Spring Spa, Sweetgrass, or White Sage: \$4.50

Soap Filled Luffa Bar, please specify Lavender Swirl, Sandalwood, Spring Spa, Sweetgrass, or White Sage: \$6.00

Six Soap Sampler: \$6.00



SACRED SAGE OIL, LOTION, AND MIST

These aromatic offerings are a synergistic blend of traditional purifying herbs made with hand picked, wild, and organically grown white sage, then put together in a soothing massage oil, moisturizing lotion, and aromatic mist. The smoke of white sage and cedar has been used for thousands of years to purify living areas, ceremonial spaces, and healing rooms.

Sacred Sage Oil: \$16.50

Sacred Sage Lotion: \$16.50

Sacred Sage Mist: \$17.95



JUNIPER RIDGE SOAPS, SACHETS, TEAS, AND SMUDGE STICKS

Juniper Ridge products have amazing fresh-from-the-mountains scents because they are made with 100% wild herbs and plant trimmings with no added perfumes. They're all sustainably harvested, and the company gives ten percent of their profits to groups that defend western wilderness. Juniper Ridge soaps are made with a mild all-vegetable oil base (olive oil for moisturizing, palm oil to make the bar hard, coconut oil for lather) and have shea butter and jojoba. Place a sachet in your dresser drawer, closet, or in storage items like crates of sweaters and sleeping bags. Smell frequently to relax and to be reminded of the outdoors! New this year—smudge sticks! Let them smolder to release their aromatic resins in scents of cedar or sage.

Juniper Ridge Soap, 3.5-ounce bar, please specify Western Juniper, Sierra Cedar, or White Sage: \$6.50

Juniper Ridge Sachet, 4-ounce bag, please specify Western Juniper, Douglas Fir, or Christmas Fir: \$8.00

Juniper Ridge Wild Herb Tea, 20 tea bags per box, please specify Douglas Fir Tip Tea, or White Sage & Wild Mint Tea: \$7.00

Juniper Ridge Smudge Sticks, please specify Sierra Cedar or White Sage: \$7.50

Call (760) 647-6595 to order

❁ Fall Catalog ❁



BRINE SHRIMP



CALIFORNIA GULL



BOBCAT



AMERICAN AVOCET



ASPEN



COTTONWOOD

BRINE SHRIMP ORNAMENT

New! Wild Bryde Jewelers designed a brine shrimp holiday ornament for us! Measuring three inches long, it is available in plated gold or rhodium silver. The tail of each shrimp bears the words "Mono Lake Committee" and "Mono Lake Brine Shrimp."

Brine Shrimp Ornament, please specify gold or silver finish: \$10.00

HAND PAINTED HOLIDAY ORNAMENTS

Artist Wendy Rismeyer hand paints unique Mono Lake scenes on glass holiday ornaments. This year's scenes are a California Gull at the lakeshore, a bobcat in a streamside setting, and an American Avocet in the lake. Add these to your family keepsakes for generations to come.

Hand Painted Ornament, please specify Gull, bobcat, or Avocet: \$15.95

LEAF ORNAMENTS

These beautiful ornaments are handcrafted from real leaves that are carefully gathered for their most natural shape. Electroplated with 18-karat gold or rhodium silver, each is a one-of-a-kind keepsake. Leaf ornaments are approximately three inches tall and because they are made with real leaves, sizes and shapes will vary slightly.

Leaf Ornament, please specify aspen or cottonwood and gold or silver finish: \$16.00



BIRDWATCHER'S KIT

ALL TERRAIN KITS

All Terrain makes quality natural and environmentally conscious remedies for outdoor enthusiasts. The Birdwatcher's Kit includes Hand Sanz (2 fl.oz.), TerraSport SPF 30 (1 fl.oz.), Herbal Armor Spray (2 fl.oz.), Aloe Gel Skin Repair (2 fl.oz.), and

Lip Armor with SPF 25 all in a mesh bag. The Outdoor Travel Kit includes Hand Sanz (2 fl.oz.), Herbal Armor Insect Repellent (2 fl.oz.), Recovery Rub (1 fl.oz.), TerraSport SPF 30 (1 fl.oz.), Aloe Gel Skin Repair (2 fl.oz.), and Lip Armor with SPF 25 all in a mesh bag. Packaging is made from recyclable and/or biodegradable materials.

Birdwatcher's Kit: \$24.50

Outdoor Travel Kit: \$30.60



OUTDOOR TRAVEL KIT

NAKED BEE PRODUCTS

This wonderful line features the motto, "All of the good stuff, none of the bad stuff." Paraben-free. No propylene glycol. No drying alcohol. No laurel sulfate. No dyes or pigments. No mineral oil. No EDTA. Phalate-free fragrance. No animal testing. Just great personal care products with a wonderful orange blossom honey scent. One of the bestselling products in the store!

Moisturizing Hand & Body Lotion, 2.25 fl.oz.: \$5.25

Gentle Cleaning Shampoo & Conditioner, 2.25 fl.oz.: \$5.25

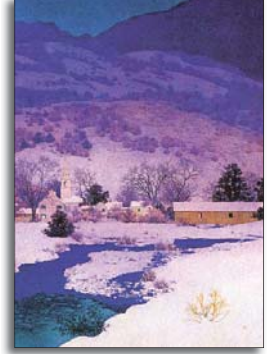
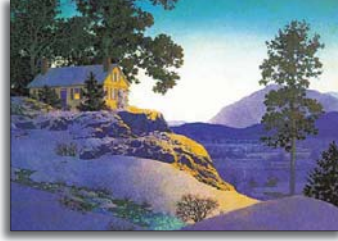
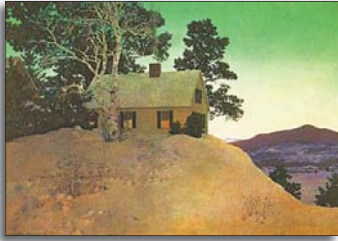
Oatmeal & Honey Triple-Milled Soap, 2.75 oz.: \$3.25

Lip Balm, SPF 15: \$2.95

Travel Kit Gift Set, includes one each of the above plus a travel candle tin, all in a clear travel pouch: \$19.95



Call (760) 647-6595 to order



MAXFIELD PARRISH HOLIDAY CARD SET

A popular artist of the 1920s, Maxfield Parrish painted romantic images in rich, luminous colors with incredible detail. These four lovely winter landscapes vividly capture the feeling of being in the mountains with a fresh blanket of snow all around. The set includes five cards each of four designs; the cards read "Season's Greetings" on the inside. Printed with soy-based inks on recycled paper.

Maxfield Parrish Holiday Card Set, 20 cards with envelopes: \$15.00



RICK KNEPP HOLIDAY CARD SET

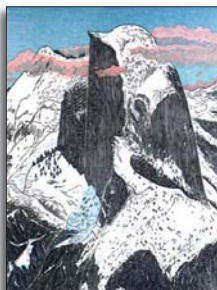
Our good friend Rick Knepp, former Committee staffer turned professional photographer, has created this eight-card holiday set for us featuring two each of "Winter Solitude," "The Mono Craters," "Winter at South Tufa," and "Poconip in the Mono Basin." All cards are blank inside.

Rick Knepp Holiday Card Set, 8 cards with envelopes: \$13.95

MONO CRATERS HOLIDAY CARD SET

Stephen Ingram's lovely photo of the snow-covered Mono Craters reflected in Mono Lake graces the front of this holiday card. Enjoy the holidays and wish for a big snowpack! Message inside reads "Best wishes for a joyous holiday season."

Mono Craters Holiday Card Set, 8 cards with envelopes: \$11.95



TOM KILLION HIGH SIERRA HOLIDAY CARD SET

A set of ten of Tom Killion's beautiful and popular High Sierra woodcut prints is perfect for mountain and snow lovers. The set includes ten cards, two each of Tuolumne Meadows, Half Dome, East Pinnacles Creek, Horse Creek Trail, and Kearsarge Pinnacles. Message inside reads "Peace on Earth."

Tom Killion High Sierra Holiday Card Set, 10 cards with envelopes: \$12.95



HAND-TURNED VASES

Eastern Sierra resident Ron Overholtz has been supplying the Committee store with his exquisite vases and bowls since 2003. Each piece of downed aspen is hand turned on a lathe to about ¾" thickness, waxed, and set aside for four months to dry. After the final turning, Ron adds his distinctive trademark turquoise to any nooks and crannies in the wood. Offered for the first time in the catalog, these vases are about four inches tall and the grain of the wood and the visible amount of turquoise vary with each piece.

Hand-Turned Vase: \$65.00

HARDWOOD CUTTING BOARDS

Brothers John & Mark Bakula have been making useful works of art for over 25 years. Their round and oblong cutting boards are made using up to thirteen different hardwoods joined with waterproof glue and sealed with a clear food-safe finish. The designs are as shown but the woods used vary slightly from piece to piece.

Hardwood Cutting Board, 8" round: \$25.00

Hardwood Cutting Board, 8"x 13" oblong: \$35.00



PINE NEEDLE BASKETS

Since 1987 Karyl Jo Hartsog has been creating these delightful baskets from pine needles that fall right at her front door in the Sierra. She quotes the legend, "If you breathe into a basket your soul will be kept there." No two baskets are exactly alike, but all are made of coiled pine needles with raffia stitching and a light wax finish.

Pine Needle Basket, 4½"x 3": \$45.00



SQUIRREL



JACKRABBIT



RAM



MOUSE



BEAVER



RACCOON



HUMMINGBIRD



WINGED PIG



HEDGEHOG



OPOSSUM



FOX



BEAR

FINGER PUPPETS

These adorable little puppets are soft, fuzzy, and guaranteed to bring a smile to any child's face. Most puppets are 4–7 inches in length. Available in squirrel, ram, winged pig, mouse, hedgehog, jackrabbit, beaver, opossum, raccoon, fox, hummingbird, and bear. Ages 3 and up.

Finger Puppet, please specify animal: \$6.00

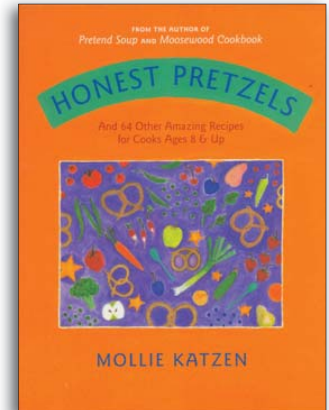
Call (760) 647-6595 to order

HONEST PRETZELS

BY MOLLIE KATZEN

This book is for making yummy food! As its sub-title "And 64 Other Amazing Recipes for Cooks Ages 8 and up" suggests, the 65 fully kid-tested and illustrated recipes include giant baked pancake puff, spaghetti pie, crunchy zucchini circles, and of course, honest pretzels. Some, but not a lot of, adult assistance is required and the aspiring cook might not realize it, but they will also be practicing reading, math, and logic skills in a real world environment. Watch your kids grow into creative and confident chefs.

Honest Pretzels, hardcover, Tricycle Press, 177 pages, 11"x 8½": \$19.95

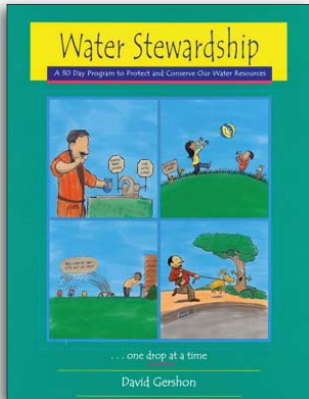


WATER STEWARDSHIP

BY DAVID GERSHON

A helpful hands-on guide, this book is perfect for individuals, neighborhoods, and communities wanting guidance for water conservation activities. Its 30-day program is designed to protect and conserve our water resources one drop at a time. Gershon presents the concept of Ecoteams and provides templates for coordination among members to achieve real results.

Water Stewardship, softcover, Empowerment Institute, 84 pages, 11"x 8½": \$12.95



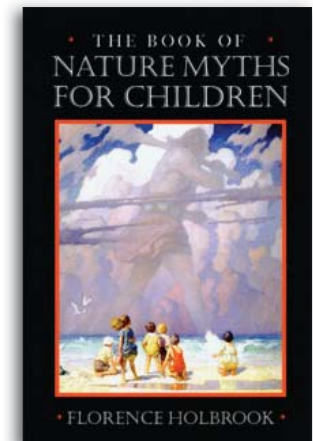
THE BOOK OF NATURE MYTHS FOR CHILDREN

BY FLORENCE HOLBROOK

A reprinted oldie but goodie, this 1902 publication contains 54 nature myths, mainly Native American stories such as "Why aspen leaves tremble" and "The story of the first hummingbird."

Holbrook was an elementary school principal who created this book as a progressive reading program with new words and phrases gradually introduced to build comprehension. Don't be alarmed though, this is a fun book! Ages 5 to 11.

The Book of Nature Myths for Children, softcover, Applewood Books, 215 pages, 9"x 6": \$14.95



THE KLUTZ BOOK OF MAGIC

BY JOHN CASSIDY AND MICHAEL "MAGIC MIKE"

STROUD, ILLUSTRATED BY H.B. LEWIS AND SARA BOORE

Klutz activity books are designed for kids of all ages and are perfect holiday gifts. This particular book is the leading guide to magic in print! Produce a scarf from a volunteer's dollar bill, vanish that dollar into thin air, or reincarnate a playing card inside an orange! The book comes with five props for the tricks, but two are too secret to mention here. Ages 3 and up.

Klutz Book of Magic, hardcover plus five props, Klutz, 98 pages, 9"x 6½": \$16.95

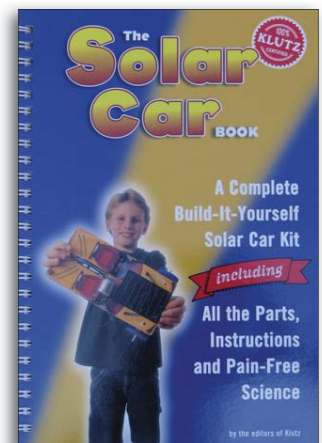


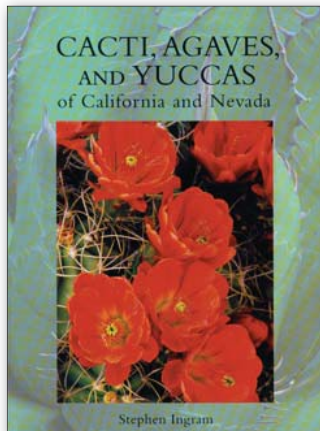
THE SOLAR CAR BOOK

BY THE EDITORS OF KLUTZ

A complete build-it-yourself solar car kit, this ensemble includes all the parts, instructions, and pain-free science to build a working car while simultaneously conveying some of the greener sides of life. Ages 3 and up.

The Solar Car Book, hardcover plus kit, Klutz, 40 pages, 9"x 6½": \$21.95





CACTI, AGAVES, AND YUCCAS OF CALIFORNIA AND NEVADA

BY STEPHEN INGRAM

More than just a field guide, this book examines the natural history, origins, ecology, conservation, and cultivation of 60 spiny succulents. It includes 16 botanical watercolors, 52 range maps, and 262 color photographs.

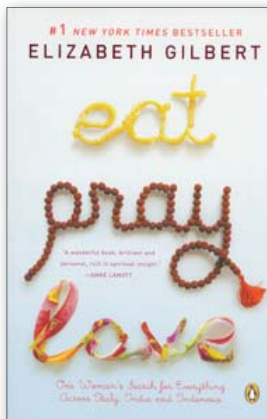
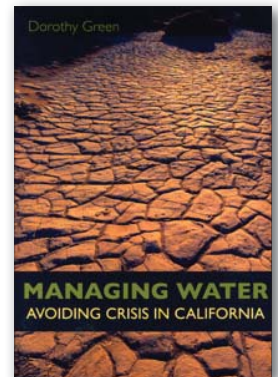
Cacti, Agaves, and Yuccas of California and Nevada, softcover, Cachuma Press, 244 pages, 9¼"x 6¾": \$25.95

MANAGING WATER

BY DOROTHY GREEN

This book leads the reader directly into the complex labyrinth of how water is controlled, stored, delivered, and managed within a network of cooperating districts. Using the Los Angeles area as a microcosm of the state, Green plunges into the issues that face elected officials, water and resource managers, and the general public.

Managing Water, softcover, University of California Press, 324 pages, 9"x 6": \$24.95



EAT, PRAY, LOVE

BY ELIZABETH GILBERT

This is a meditation on love by a woman consumed by the panic and confusion of modern American life. After a series of crushing personal events she sets out to examine life alternatives: pleasure in Italy, devotion in India, and on the Indonesian island of Bali, a balance between worldly enjoyment and divine transcendence. The journey is entertaining and the ending is ... lovely.

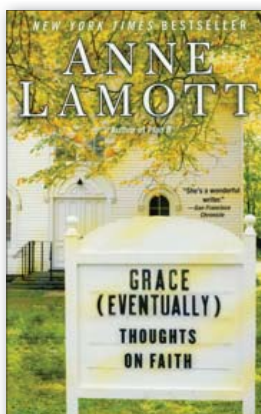
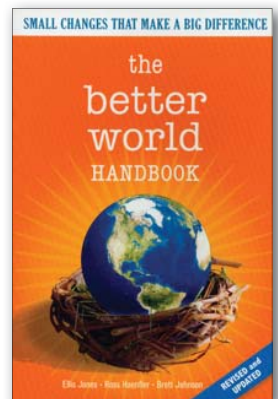
Eat, Pray, Love, softcover, Penguin Books, 334 pages, 8½"x 5½": \$15.00

THE BETTER WORLD HANDBOOK

BY ELLIS JONES, ROSS HAENFLER, AND BRETT JOHNSON

This revised edition is the essential guide for busy people who care about making the world a better place but aren't sure where to begin. Fourteen areas of life where we can make a difference culminate in the top ten actions we can take and a checklist to measure our progress. This friendly step-by-step blueprint can help us all improve as conscious global citizens.

The Better World Handbook, softcover, New Society Publishers, 300 pages, 9"x 6": \$19.95



GRACE EVENTUALLY

BY ANNE LAMOTT

Lamott's pursuit of faith led her from an aimless life to being fully human and alive. Her self-deprecating stories are refreshingly frank and endearingly fun. A moment of enlightenment in Bolinas led her to the series of adventures she chronicles.

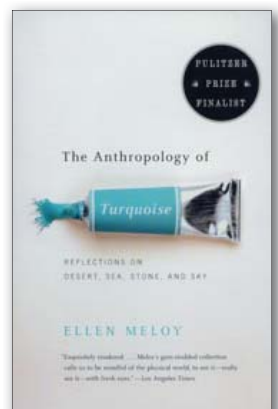
Grace Eventually, softcover, Penguin Books, 253 pages, 8"x 5": \$14.00

THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF TURQUOISE

BY ELLEN MELOY

Both a color and a gem, it is a sense of turquoise that leads Meloy from the Sierra Nevada through the Mojave Desert, the Yucatan Peninsula, the Bahamas, and back to the high plateaus and canyons of the Southwest. An invigorating mix of memoir, natural history, and adventure, Meloy's vision illuminates our profound human attachment to landscape.

The Anthropology of Turquoise, softcover, Vintage Books, 323 pages, 8"x 5": \$14.00



Call (760) 647-6595 to order

The Forgotten Season

Winter Photography in the Mono Basin



PHOTO COURTESY OF RICHARD KNEPP

January 16–18, 2009

\$220 per person / \$200 for Mono Lake Committee members

Winter at Mono Lake: a lifting morning poconip fog, tufa towers jacketed in snow and reflected in the mirror of the lake's surface, ice sculpting crystalline filigree along creek and lake banks. These elements combine to provide a very different photographic opportunity.

This photography seminar will be based in Lee Vining and will explore locations along the lake to photograph the serenity and beauty that is the Mono Basin in winter.

There will also be discussions covering composition and methods of proper exposure under the diverse variety of lighting conditions encountered during winter in the Eastern Sierra, the Zone System for color and black-and-white, visualization, filtration, and developing a personal vision. This field seminar is for the enthusiastic color and/or black-and-white photographer with a working knowledge of his or her camera.

Instructor Rick Knepp is a former Mono Lake Committee staff member whose autumn workshops have sold out for years running. He teaches photography and darkroom techniques, and directs and assists at workshops around

the Southwest. Rick is a veteran of Mono winters and his experience will allow participants to take advantage of many winter photographic opportunities.

Since winter dining options in Lee Vining are limited, dinner Saturday night will be a special meal catered by Linda Dore, former chef at the Mono Inn and Nevado's in Mammoth Lakes, who now owns Linda Dore Food Service.

Come prepared for cold winter weather. This seminar will take place regardless of weather or road conditions. Be prepared for the possibility of driving in snow, or the additional drive time that may be required when Sierra passes are either closed for the winter or closed temporarily due to snow.

Cost is for tuition only. Participants must arrange their own accommodation. There will be no refunds due to weather. This seminar is limited to 15 participants.

For registration or more information on the sixth annual winter photography seminar, contact Elin Ljung (elin@monolake.org) at (760) 647-6595.

Free Drawing to restore Mono Lake

Send in your tickets by November 28th!

A huge thank you to the generous folks who donate the wonderful prizes for the Free Drawing, the Mono Lake Committee's annual fundraiser! Send in your tickets today (find them in the center of this *Newsletter*) for a chance to win!



GRAND PRIZE: two round-trip tickets on Southwest Airlines, compliments of two Mono Lake Committee members!

An amazing brand-name camping package from Wilson's Eastside Sports of Bishop, including a tent, sleeping bag, sleeping pad, daypack, boots, trekking poles, stove, backpacking lantern, water purifier, and energy bars.



Wilson's Eastside Sports



Yosemite Association field seminar and one-year membership, with a stay at the Sunset Inn in Groveland.



The cushy and full-featured REI Trail daypack and Traverse daypack.

MAMMOTH

A skiing, snowboarding, or biking vacation at Mammoth Mountain, including lodging and equipment rental.



Lake Tahoe escape at Sorensen's Resort in Hope Valley.



Enjoy a sailing tour of the San Francisco Bay on a private yacht, along with a two-night stay at the Golden Gate Hotel.



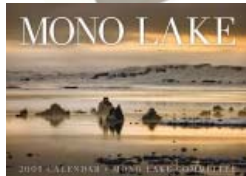
Golden Gate HOTEL

June Lake vacation at the Double Eagle Resort & Spa, including a massage and dinner.

A stunning framed painting of Mono Lake by watercolor artist Nicola Voorhees.

Two nights at the Wawona Hotel in Yosemite National Park, with dinner included!

Mono Lake gift pack: 30th Anniversary T-shirt, baseball cap, and mug, 2009 Mono Lake Calendar, and *The Laws Field Guide to the Sierra Nevada* comprehensive guidebook.



A wine tour of California's Alexander Valley with Randy Arnold of Barefoot Winery, including lunch on the square in Healdsburg.

BAREFOOT WINE



A relaxing High Sierra stay: lodging at Rainbow Tarns Bed & Breakfast, a massage at InTouch MicroSpa and a hearty meal at Base Camp Café in Mammoth!

Giovanni's INTOUCH
MASSAGE • MICRO SPA • BOUTIQUE

A spa weekend in Mammoth: two hour-long massages at InTouch MicroSpa, free meals at Base Camp Café and Giovanni's Pizzeria, and a cozy bed at the Cinnamon Bear Inn!



Patagonia clothing: a men's Island Hopper shirt, a men's synchilla vest, and a women's lightweight R4 jacket.

patagonia

Staff migrations

by Erika Obedzinski

What a full and productive summer it's been! Our seasonal staff did an excellent job leading South Tufa and canoe tours, working in the Information Center & Bookstore, answering phones in the office, helping with membership mailings, and with all of the pieces that make this organization run smoothly. A big thank you goes to each of them. Here are a few highlights of the projects they worked on:

Canoe Coordinator **Forrest English** calmly kept the canoe program running well all summer—even when the canoe trailer broke several times. He also put his wetland and riparian restoration background to use helping policy staff with restoration efforts on Mono Lake's tributary streams.

Katherine Getts organized and fulfilled information requests, made Federal Energy Regulatory Commission documents searchable in the research library, and did helpful research for Living Lakes and policy topics.

Lara Hamburger read groundwater levels on Rush and Lee Vining Creeks each week, monitored and removed invasive plant species, helped with Mill Creek monitoring and also helped out in the Information Center & Bookstore this fall.

Nick Holt meticulously researched new features for the Mono Lake Committee Website revision, fixed problems in JavaScript and cleaned up CSS code—we are forever grateful for his helpful computer knowledge!

Morgan Lindsay dove into a big research project investigating watershed land protection programs that could potentially be models for protection of Los Angeles' Eastern Sierra property holdings.

Nora Livingston kept busy with Mill Creek monitoring, taking weekly groundwater measurements along Rush and Lee Vining Creeks, coordinating volunteers to water trees, helping



Left to right, top row: Elin Ljung, Bartshé Miller, Duncan King, Geoff McQuilkin, Santiago Escruceria, Erika Obedzinski. Row two: Arya Degenhardt, Alayne Meeks, Ellen King, Lara Hamburger, Ellery McQuilkin, Caelen McQuilkin, Emily Prud'homme. Row three: Lisa Cutting, Greg Reis, Claire Skinner, Caron Kotalik, Katherine Getts. Row four: Morgan Lindsay, Nora Livingston, Jessi DeLong, Becky Clough, Forrest English. Not pictured: Herley Jim Bowling, Natalie Holt, Nick Holt, Donnette Huselton, Betsy Reifsnider, and Laura Walker.

with invasive plant species monitoring and removal, and researching composting solutions for the office.

Claire Skinner put her love of writing to use by helping with a letter to members, completing a photography and biography project introducing our staff to the public, and by moving us closer to finalizing a natural history brochure on the Lee Vining Creek Trail.

I don't know what we would have done without volunteer **Natalie Holt**, who eased scheduling glitches with her flexibility and enthusiasm for every job—whether on the front counter, leading tours, or helping scan valuable files.

In addition to patiently helping visitors on the front counter, Information Center & Bookstore Assistant **Jessi DeLong** kept the Committee gardens colorful and well-watered. No matter where Jessi's off to this fall we know she won't stay away from Mono Lake for long!

Information Center & Bookstore Assistant **Alayne Meeks** also helped countless visitors with her calm demeanor and her long love of Mono Lake. This fall she heads back to her home in Soquel and her business, Meeks Honey (www.meekshoney.com).

Emily Prud'homme, our Policy Coordinator for the past two years, is heading off to new horizons. Emily has done much for Mono Lake including running the Committee's invasive plant monitoring and removal program, leading the volunteer water quality testing program on local streams, working on multiple science and conservation issues, and leading public stargazing programs. We wish Emily the best and know she'll be back at the lake often. ❖

Erika Obedzinski is the Committee's Office Director. She has been cooking lots of squash dishes to keep up with her Community Supported Agriculture boxes.



Herley Jim Bowling, top, on an Outdoor Experiences trip with OE Manager Santiago Escruceria and Girl Scout Troop 493 at Mono Pass in the Mono Basin.

Herley Jim Bowling honored

Herley Jim Bowling, the Mono Lake Committee's Los Angeles Education Coordinator, was honored at *Communitas 2008* by the Church in Ocean Park. Bruria & David Finkel, Ross Altman, and Herley Jim were chosen as "hard working activists among us who have dedicated their lives to the building of community." Herley Jim works throughout Los Angeles to connect schools and community groups with the Committee's Outdoor Experiences program. Congratulations!



From the mailbag

News from members and friends

by Ellen King

Thank you to everyone who sent contributions in memory or in honor of friends and loved ones. Often these donations honor people who introduced family and friends to Mono Lake, and they help us carry on the work of keeping Mono Lake special for many generations.

In honor

In honor of **Frank Kimzey's** 80th birthday, we received donations from **Ann Beeson, Oscar Kimzey, Robert Kimzey,** and **David Kimzey.** **Edgar McCanless** of Laguna Hills sent a contribution to wish a happy birthday to **Mark Coolidge.**

In memory

John Callen of Rancho Santa Margarita sent donations in memory of **Thomas Callen.** **Alfred Covaia** of Brentwood gave gifts in memory of **Liz Covaia.** **Frank Delfino** of Castro Valley sent a memorial gift in honor of his wife **Janice Delfino.** **Carol Handelman** of Emeryville made a contribution in memory of **Anne Lewis.** **Greg Reis** made a donation in memory of his father, **Charles Reis.** **Leni Reeves** of Auberry

sent gifts in memory of **Jo Hanson** and **Rose Hacker.** **Joellen Williamson** of Los Angeles contributed in memory of **Don Williamson.**

Mary Vestal

Long time member **Mary Vestal** of Boise, ID died on June 2, 2008. Mary was the widow of **Elden Vestal**, whose meticulous records documenting the impact of DWP diversions on Mono Lake's tributary streams played a key part in the battle to halt those diversions and save Mono Lake. We received donations in her memory from **James N. Graham** of Boise, ID, **Susan Whaley** and **Bert Bowler**, also of Boise, the **Roy Stephens family** of Sacramento, and **Robert A. & Pamela R. Nelson** of Gualala.

Wishes granted

The Summer 2008 *Newsletter* included a wish list for three items, and our amazing members have granted two of them! We've had two offers of a plane and pilot for the fall Eared Grebe survey. The response to our request for two Trex picnic tables was so great

that we were able to get three, one of them ADA-accessible. Thanks go to the **Waldheim Family, Diane Diggins** of San Jose, **Tom Gray** of San Jose, and an **anonymous** San Jose donor as well.

Holy Toledo!

A **People to People** group of students (photo above) visited from Toledo, OH, and surprised us with an impressive check for \$1,001.00 that they had raised for Mono Lake through babysitting, bake sales, and other local jobs. Thank you!

Barefoot does it again

Members **Randy Arnold & Greg Knight**, representing Barefoot Winery, hosted a champagne tasting at Mono Lake. They poured three varieties of **Barefoot Bubbly**—Chardonnay, White Zinfandel, and Pinot Grigio (the first domestically produced). The champagne was delicious, the weather perfect, and all proceeds went to fund bird research in the Mono Basin. Thanks, Randy and Greg! ♦

Ellen King is the Committee's Membership Coordinator. She has adopted a new family member: Rosie the kitten!

Farewell Bill Mendoza

Mono Lake lost a lifelong friend and advocate on August 31, 2008 when William J. Mendoza, a teacher, devoted husband, and father of three, perished when extreme weather conditions overtook his kayak trip on Mono Lake. Bill joined the Mono Lake Committee in our first year of existence and participated in every Los Angeles to Mono Lake Bike-A-Thon from 1981 to the final Victory Ride in 1995. Since then he had been returning to the lake each Labor Day to paddle to the islands and renew his connection to the earth.

Bill had obtained a permit for the trip

from the Tufa State Reserve and was well prepared for the expedition with food, water, strong equipment, and a deep knowledge of the area. Nonetheless, he was overcome as severe winds peaked at over 70 miles per hour, turning the lake to a crashing sea of whitecaps and foam.

In 1993 Bill testified in Los Angeles before the State Water Resources Control Board, sharing his love for Mono Lake and calling for the lake's protection:

"I have seen Mono Lake at night under a full moon, and also on starry moonless nights. I have seen Mono Lake in its winter glory. I have snorkeled among

its submerged tufa towers and have swum through clouds of sparkling brine shrimp. I have listened to the gulls at sunrise on the shore near Black Point and have watched the alkali flies stir as the sun begins to warm their tiny bodies. Mono Lake has become a very special friend and part of me...."

Bill will be missed by his family, his Bike-A-Thon compatriots, all of us here at the Committee, and all those who knew his kind and gentle determination to see the right thing done for people and our planet. His spirit will live on in the rising waters of Mono Lake.

Huell Howser and California's Gold return to Mono Lake!



Watch for
the new episode this fall.
November 23, 2008 on KCET or
check your local PBS listings.

2009 Field Seminars

January 15, 2009: complete seminar
information available online

February 1: registration opens
for Mono Lake Committee members *only*

March 1: registration opens
for non-members



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

CARL DENNIS BUELL, ANNE CARLA ROVETTA

Committee Wish List

- a **canoe trailer** to carry our trusty fleet of six canoes to Navy Beach each weekend
- a 71-gallon capacity, Black Barrel brand **compost tumbler** for the food waste we generate in the office
- a **friend in the recycled paper business** to help us secure the most environmentally friendly paper options for our publications

Please contact Ellen King (ellen@monolake.org)
at (760) 647-6595 if you can grant a wish!



MONO LAKE
COMMITTEE

Highway 395 at Third Street
Post Office Box 29
Lee Vining, CA 93541

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Mono Lake Committee