

MONO LAKE

N E W S L E T T E R

Winter & Spring 2021



Stream Restoration to Advance

South Tufa Reopens

DeChambeau Ponds Project

Field Seminars

As I write this note it feels like spring is on its way. The sun's a little warmer and the birds a little more vocal. It feels like we're turning a corner in this pandemic too. And there's good news about Mono Basin stream restoration.

All we have to do is wait for spring. But unlike the changing season, almost everything else—certainly everything in this issue of the *Newsletter*—happens because of human efforts. Sometimes those efforts are monumental; more often they're incremental and together, they add up.

That's certainly the case with stream restoration. We have made incremental efforts for years against DWP's deliberate delay tactics. Persistent phone calls, letters, and meetings are finally leading up to a monumental change—amended water export licenses for DWP that will benefit Mono Lake's tributary streams.

Insisting that the controversial Tioga Inn development become a better project is an exercise in incremental efforts: read the lengthy documents, show up to each meeting, comment every time. On the Tioga Inn issue we're proud to be working with the Mono Lake Kutzadika'a Tribe, who undertake the monumental effort to preserve their Tribal heritage every day.

In a parallel story, at a sister terminus lake, our friends at Walker Lake know years-long incremental efforts well. Their efforts have just won a monumental court victory.

Our planning for this summer is incremental: hire a few interns, develop COVID-19 guidelines for in-person programs, activate Mono Lake Volunteers. We hope it will add up to a monumental effort over the summer to ensure that visitors protect the Mono Basin while enjoying and learning about it.

We'll wait for spring and bask in sunshine and birdsong. And we'll keep up the incremental efforts—stay on trail at South Tufa, wear masks, wash hands—to reach the monumental goals of protecting ourselves and Mono Lake.

—Elin Ljung, Communications Coordinator



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NORA LIVINGSTON

Late January's massive storm dropped a record 54.7 inches of snow on Lee Vining in 48 hours. Without a "Miracle March," however, this winter will still end up dry (see page 12).

Mono Lake Committee Mission

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



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Stream restoration poised to leap forward in 2021

Overcoming DWP delay clears path to action

by Geoffrey McQuilkin

Stream restoration is back on track for Mono Lake's tributaries, despite drastic attempts last summer by the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power (DWP) to avoid the mandate to heal damage done by its past excessive diversions. Mono Lake Committee staff and attorneys mounted a firm response, and City of Los Angeles leaders pushed compliance forward in October 2020.

Now momentum is building quickly. The California State Water Resources Control Board, which created the stream restoration mandates as conditions of DWP's licenses to divert water from Rush, Lee Vining, Parker, and Walker creeks, has released a preview of new restoration measures. The next-level stream restoration activities, developed by independent expert scientists, include modification of aging aqueduct infrastructure at the Grant Lake Reservoir Dam to deliver the high streamflows essential to Rush Creek's fisheries and streamside forest habitat.

Absent further delays from DWP, the long journey to implement science-based requirements to advance stream restoration could conclude this summer.

DWP's latest delay tactic

Last spring, DWP staff abruptly decided the Department wouldn't fulfill obligations to restore Rush, Lee Vining, Parker, and Walker creeks unless it received new water export guarantees in the entirely separate matter of restoring Mono Lake to its healthy management level (see Fall 2020 *Mono Lake Newsletter*). The problem took off in May when DWP announced that it would not release a long-delayed, yet nearly complete, environmental document despite a scheduled commitment to the State

Water Board to do so. The document is a straightforward, but essential component of the ongoing process of implementing science-based improvements to the stream restoration program ordered by the State Water Board.

DWP had previously promised delivery of the document in 2016 and had even completed the public review process before holding it up internally. The result has been substantial delay in implementing the landmark 2013 Stream Restoration Agreement. The Agreement was an outcome of three years of negotiations between the Mono Lake Committee, California Trout, and California Department of Fish & Wildlife (DFW) with DWP, and overcame DWP operational objections to new stream restoration measures.

Although we're accustomed to DWP delays, the new 2020 tactic was an alarming turn of events. We

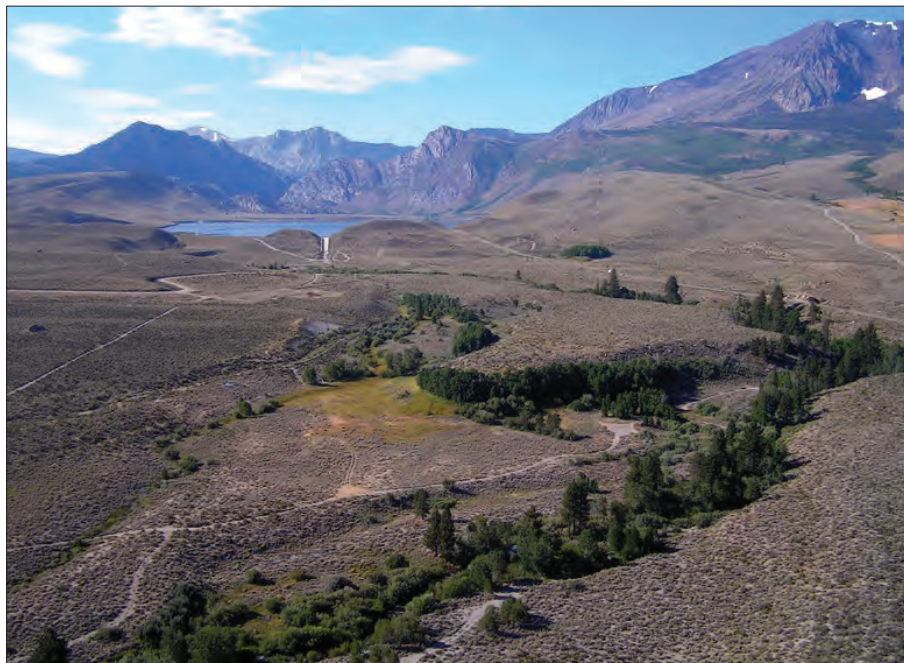
mobilized staff, attorneys, and expert advisors to meet with Los Angeles and DWP leaders to review DWP's long-established obligations to restore the streams to health and, separately, to raise Mono Lake.

DWP Commissioners embrace stewardship

City of Los Angeles leaders broke the logjam before Thanksgiving, pushing forward compliance by releasing the languishing environmental document for public comment and setting a timeline for final approval and delivery to the State Water Board.

Cynthia McClain-Hill, President of the Board of Water & Power Commissioners, reflected on the situation during the October 27 meeting of the DWP Commissioners: "I mean to acknowledge the extreme, sometimes

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Aerial view of Rush Creek, the Grant Lake Dam, and Grant Lake Reservoir.

GEORGE MCQUILKIN

difficult, and often contentious process that has surrounded these issues ... but nevertheless we have stepped up and embraced the strongest tenets of conservation and environmental stewardship... We will be releasing the environmental documents this week and look forward to the next phase.”

The Mono Lake Committee commends the Commissioners as well as Mayor Eric Garcetti and his staff for putting the process back on track. Healing Mono Basin streams provides vast benefits to fish, birds, wildlife, and all Californians at a time when the state’s natural habitats are under increased stress from climate change, drought, and fire.

State Water Board acts to expand stream restoration mandate

With the DWP environmental document close to final certification, the State Water Board accelerated its own process. As the authority that

allows DWP to divert water from Mono Lake’s tributary streams into the Los Angeles Aqueduct, the State Water Board’s rules—which already contain stream and lake restoration mandates—govern DWP operations.

Now the Board is moving forward to amend DWP’s water licenses with the enhanced stream restoration requirements that apply science-based restoration to Mono Lake’s tributary streams. In February 2021, the Board published the much-anticipated draft requirements, a key step toward finalization.

The Board’s action signals that a giant leap forward is close to happening for the recovery of the long-suffering Mono Lake tributaries as well as implementation of the landmark 2013 Stream Restoration Agreement. It brings years of scientific analysis, legal negotiations, and public policy work closer to the goal: restoring 20 miles of self-sustaining fisheries, healthy streamside forests, and thriving wildlife habitat.

A hopeful next chapter for Mono Basin streams

It has been seven years since the Stream Restoration Agreement was completed, and 27 years since the State Water Board’s historic Decision 1631—the original modification of DWP’s licenses that directed DWP to restore damaged Mono Basin habitats.

The State Water Board mandated a science-based restoration process, with a plan to amend and improve requirements using the results of intensive scientific studies. When the independent scientists released their Synthesis of Instream Flow Recommendations report in 2010, DWP raised operational objections, notably to

modifying its facilities at the Grant Lake Reservoir Dam. The Board asked the Committee, CalTrout, DFW, and DWP to develop an agreement with detailed solutions, which was accomplished without losing any of the scientific recommendations along the way.

When the Los Angeles Aqueduct was built in the 1930s, it had one purpose: take all the water from four of Mono Lake’s tributaries and deliver it to the city of Los Angeles. The enhanced stream restoration requirements will change that singular operational goal into two: to deliver water to the people of LA *and* to protect and restore Mono Basin streams by operating in an ecologically aware and scientifically informed way.

The draft amended licenses incorporate the direction of the State Water Board and the details of the Stream Restoration Agreement and will, when finalized, obligate DWP to the next chapter of Mono Basin stream restoration.

The benefits of the revised licenses are wide ranging. They include fully implementing the Stream Ecosystem Flows designed by independent scientists after a decade of study, constructing an outlet at Grant Dam that will reliably deliver restorative flows to Rush Creek, a clear path for scientific monitoring of recovery in the coming years, adaptive management to apply the knowledge gained through monitoring to annual operations, and a new mechanism to reliably manage the restoration program budgeting and contracting.

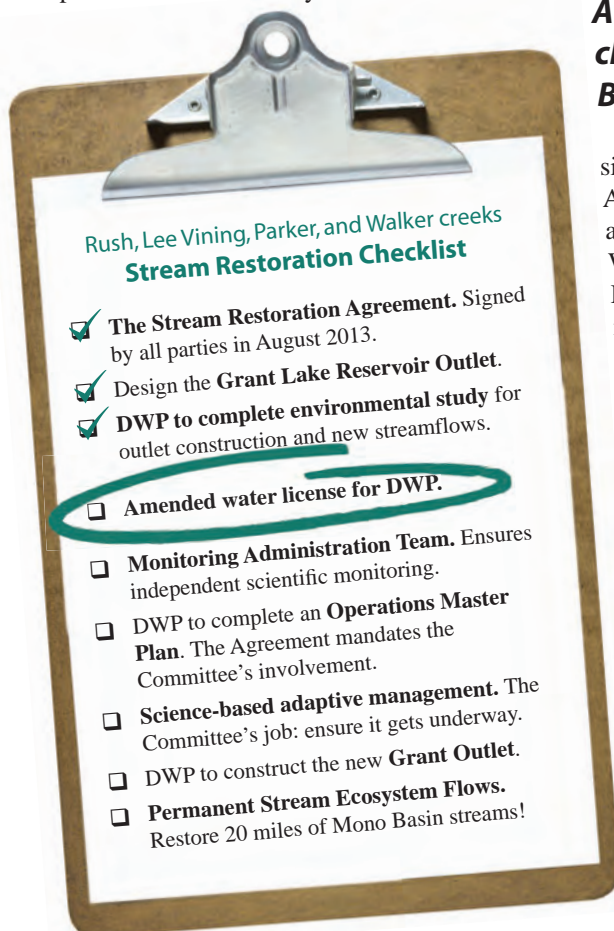
The Committee expects the State Water Board to order the license amendments by the end of summer, assuming no new time-consuming surprises from DWP.

What about restoring Mono Lake?

Amidst DWP’s 2020 delays to the stream restoration program, it also began making false claims that Mono Lake has “largely been restored.” This was puzzling, to say the least.

Decades of past excessive water

Continued on page 23



Los Angeles' plan for a Green New Deal and a great deal of water

Is DWP on board?

by Bartshé Miller

The City of Los Angeles and Mayor Eric Garcetti have bold plans to reduce LA's carbon footprint, scale up water and energy efficiencies, grow the economy, and protect the environment. Called the "Green New Deal Sustainable City pLAn," the Local Water chapter of the pLAn calls for a 50% reduction of imported water purchases, sourcing 70% of LA's water locally, capturing 150,000 acre-feet per year of stormwater, reducing potable water use by 25%, and recycling 100% of wastewater for beneficial reuse. All these water goals have a 2035 deadline.

Planning opportunity

2021 is significant because the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power (DWP) is releasing its newest Urban Water Management Plan, which is required by California law every five years to ensure adequate water supplies for current and future needs. Water suppliers must "include a description of all water supply projects and water supply programs that may be undertaken by the urban water supplier to meet the total projected use." The DWP Commissioners must approve the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan by this summer.

pLAn momentum

Meanwhile, the mayor's pLAn is driving positive change. In February 2019, the mayor announced Operation Next, an initiative to recycle 100% of treated wastewater at the Hyperion Water Reclamation Plant by 2035. In July 2020,

the city began installation of a pilot project to test membrane bioreactors at the plant—a first step on a multi-year path that ultimately has the potential to deliver 200,000 acre-feet of water, a meaningful amount that represents more than one-third of the city's 2020 water demand. It's also more than the average annual volume of water that DWP delivers via the Los Angeles Aqueduct, and over 12 times greater than the 16,000 acre-feet exported from the Mono Basin last year.

Los Angeles water mythology turned upside down

With a population larger than 23 individual US states, Los Angeles has emerged as a major leader in water efficiency. People in the city have reduced their individual water footprint by 43% over the past 50 years. Despite a population increase of 1.2 million people over those five decades, total water use has declined by 100,000 acre-feet. The landmark 1994 Mono Lake decision, Owens Lake dust mitigation, drought, and climate change have certainly influenced this change, but the city also deserves credit from within—from city leaders to Angelenos creating unprecedented change through water conservation. If the mayor's goals are reached by 2035, and the city's water demand holds steady or continues to fall, Los Angeles will have a very secure, flexible, and robust water supply portfolio.

Will DWP embrace the change?

How the pLAn goals translate into available water within the details of the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan will reveal the level of DWP's commitment to the mayor's Green New Deal. The Mono Lake Committee, stakeholders in the Eastern Sierra, community groups in Los Angeles, and ratepayer advocates will all be carefully analyzing how DWP incorporates the goals into the plan. Traditional water supply buckets (groundwater, imported State Water Project, and the Los Angeles Aqueduct) will always be important to the city, but the potential for stormwater capture, assertive conservation, 100% water recycling, and Operation Next can afford Los Angeles the choice to dedicate water to important environmental needs and reduce its reliance on imported water from all sources, including the Los Angeles Aqueduct. ❖



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Water from the Mono Basin and Eastern Sierra enters the Los Angeles Basin at the "Cascades."

Find the pLAn online at plan.lamayor.org. Visit monolake.org/urbanwaterplan to see DWP's draft 2020 Urban Water Management Plan.

Tioga Inn decision delayed into 2021

by Bartshé Miller

On December 15, 2020, the Mono County Board of Supervisors held their third public hearing on the Tioga Inn project and postponed a final decision until an unknown future date.

At the hearing the Board considered final approval of the Tioga Inn project and deliberated the Mono Lake Kutzadika'a Tribe's request to delay. The Tribe had made a formal request to postpone final consideration until they had an opportunity to meet with the developer and consult with Mono County regarding impacts to Tribal heritage—impacts which, according to the Tribe, were not adequately reflected after Tribal consultation during the project planning.

Two months earlier the Board had approved the project's Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report by a 3–1 vote. However, the Board deferred a vote on final project approval, specifically to provide time for two items: 1) additional consultation and discussions related to resolving the Kutzadika'a Tribe's concerns, and 2) potential solutions with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) that might address the project's failure to develop a safe route between the project site and the town of Lee Vining for pedestrian and bicycle use.

Board's direction for Tribal consultation goes unfulfilled

The County scheduled the December hearing despite knowing that the Tribe and the developer had been unable to meet, first due to weather and then due to COVID-19 concerns. Mono County staff asserted that the County had “responded promptly to any interest by any Tribe” and that they had “completed consultation with the Kutzadika'a Tribe in good faith.”

In addition, when the County scheduled the hearing they had only recently heard from Caltrans about a potential path between the project site



The Tioga Inn project site includes the existing Mobil gas station, Whoa Nellie Deli restaurant, a cell phone tower, and several housing units, among other infrastructure.

and Lee Vining. Caltrans sent a letter stating that it supports “development of a multi-use path project connecting Lee Vining with other business services and the transit stop along SR 120,” but that it “has no funding for a project at this location.”

Despite a strong statement in support of postponing the hearing from Supervisor Bob Gardner, who represents the project's district, plus more than 50 written and verbal comments urging the County to delay, the hearing began at the recommendation of County staff and the other Supervisors.

An abrupt end, no conclusion

After thoughtful comments of concern from members of the Tribe, the community, the Lee Vining Fire Department, and the Mono Lake Committee, the momentum of the hearing appeared to be going in the direction of a 3–1 final approval. However, the hearing's tenor changed abruptly when a representative from the State Attorney General's Bureau of Environmental Justice spoke during

public comment, stating that the Bureau had recently been made aware of the issues raised by the Tribe and was in the process of evaluating the record for compliance with Tribal consultation requirements. The Board immediately delayed the rest of the hearing.

A future hearing date is unknown as this *Newsletter* goes to press. Mono County and the Kutzadika'a Tribe met in January of this year, and further meetings may take place between the County, the Tribe, and the developer before a hearing is scheduled. The Mono Lake Committee submitted a letter to the County in support of the Kutzadika'a Tribe's original request to reschedule, and supports the Tribe's request for consultation and analysis of impacts on Tribal heritage. The Board should be presented with a project that addresses these important concerns. ❖

Stay tuned at monolake.org/tiogainn for the latest developments and the next hearing date.

South Tufa after the Beach Fire

Lightning-caused wildfire brings new resource management challenges in Scenic Area

by Rose Nelson

On the evening of August 16, 2020, as a rare series of massive summer thunderstorms brought a siege of dry lightning across California, lightning struck the dry summer sagebrush at Mono Lake. The Beach Fire was ignited at the southeast side of Mono Lake and unusual easterly winds pushed the fire toward the beloved South Tufa area (see Fall 2020 *Mono Lake Newsletter*).

Firefighters from the Inyo National Forest and Bureau of Land Management responded quickly. Fortunately, many at the scene knew the importance of protecting the iconic tufa towers. They were successful in this feat, yet thousands of acres to the east, including some of the Navy Beach area, were thoroughly burned (see page 13).

The fire was completely extinguished in the weeks that followed, yet South Tufa remained closed for months. California State Parks and Inyo National Forest officials took time to assess the damage and strategize how to protect the now-visible tufa that had for so long been hidden by dense vegetation. New signs were installed to remind visitors of the fragility of the tufa. Work took place to stabilize trails, especially the trail between South Tufa and Navy Beach.

The fire also made the area exceptionally vulnerable to off-highway vehicle damage from people driving off established roads, which is prohibited in the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area and could be catastrophic to the landscape. In order to decrease this threat, the Inyo temporarily closed some four-wheel drive dirt roads that lead around the south shore to the east.

South Tufa eventually reopened in early January 2021. The four-month closure was much longer than the Mono Lake Committee, local residents, and visitors expected.

Historically, fire has been part of the cycle of life throughout most of California's ecosystems. Salt grass, which prefers to inhabit the saline shore of Mono Lake, has already returned as bright green ribbons on the otherwise charred landscape. However, with nearly 3,800 acres of sagebrush, rabbitbrush, bitterbrush, and greasewood burned, there is a real threat of invasive species like cheatgrass out-competing native vegetation in the area, which poses a new management challenge.

The road down to the iconic tufa groves and views to the east look strikingly different. Even now, more than six months later, the smell of ash still remains. Next time you visit South Tufa, be it this summer or years from now, you will notice the scars left by the Beach Fire.

Stewards of the lake will have to be even more vigilant to remind visitors to only gaze upon the newly exposed tufa near Navy Beach and across the acres of sandy landscape surrounding this area. Once naturally protected by thick vegetation, acres upon acres are now vulnerable to wandering feet and off-highway vehicle abuse.

Committee education program leaders will be incorporating fire ecology and landscape recovery into the way we teach the ever-unfolding Mono Lake story. It is going to be up to all of us to explore responsibly—to stay on the trail, and to remind others to do the same, so that we can all protect this place for the countless years, and visitors, to come. ❖

Rose Nelson is the Committee's Education Director. She is glad to be back in the magnificent outdoor classroom that is South Tufa, giving virtual tours and lessons to students from all over the country.



Staying on established trails and roads at South Tufa and Navy Beach is especially important to allow the area that burned in last year's Beach Fire to recover.

Landmark achievement at the DeChambeau Ponds

Community collaboration key to project's success

by Robert Di Paolo

For the first time in nearly a decade, all four of the DeChambeau Ponds are receiving water thanks to a collaborative local effort. Community members, the DeChambeau Creek Foundation (DCF), Mono Lake Committee, Inyo National Forest, Friends of the Inyo, and Mono County staff worked together to replace aged and broken pipe with 1,700 feet of new pipe designed to deliver on-site hot water from a century-old artesian well to the ponds. This water source is critical for the DeChambeau Ponds to provide valuable waterfowl habitat and recreation opportunities (see Fall 2020 *Mono Lake Newsletter*).

The Los Angeles Department of Water & Power's (DWP) historic excessive water diversions in the Mono Basin destroyed waterfowl habitat at Mono Lake. While the six acres of ponded water managed by the Inyo National Forest cannot fully compensate for the magnitude of habitat destruction caused by DWP, the DeChambeau Ponds have provided valuable, managed waterfowl habitat for decades. Since the early 1990s, the Committee has partnered with the Inyo and other stakeholders to help maximize the resource value of the DeChambeau Ponds.

A system in jeopardy

A pipe that previously pushed water through the whole DeChambeau Ponds system ruptured in 2018 so that only one of the ponds could receive water from the artesian well. In November 2018, when community members, land managers, and non-profit partners together stood around the ruptured pipe, it was unclear what exactly it would take to restore the system back to its original design. How could it be funded? How much labor was required? And possibly worst of all, what kind of paperwork would be involved?

Plans become actions

Fast forward to 2020—the group of partners that formed and the quick work to complete the pipe repair is truly remarkable. DCF provided substantial funding and worked to unite interested parties so that by the fall, the coalition had an achievable action plan. Inyo staff completed relevant documentation and paperwork, conducted surveys,

facilitated volunteer agreements, and green-lighted the project. DCF, the Committee, the Bannerman Foundation, and Lee Vining resident Chris Lizza together contributed \$51,000 to purchase specialized CPVC pipe and valves. Tim Banta and Wayne and Brad Beaver provided excavation equipment and expertise. Once the pipe was delivered, participants got to work transporting, staging, and assembling the new pipe system. The Beaver family (Margie, Wayne, and Brad), Tim and Bill Banta, DCF staffer Paul McFarland, Committee staff, Inyo Wildlife Biologist Thomas Torres, Mono County's Matt Paruolo, and Friends of the Inyo's Alex Ertaud all pitched in and on January 21, 2021, the new pipe began delivering artesian water to a pond that had been dry since at least 2013.

Next steps

The work is not finished at the DeChambeau Ponds, but the momentum generated by this project bodes well. There are additional infrastructure improvements and grant opportunities in the works and monitoring and maintenance of the system will be ongoing. The Inyo, DCF, community partners, and the Committee will continue collaborating to accomplish valuable next steps that improve and manage the DeChambeau Ponds as important waterfowl and wildlife habitat. ❖

Robbie Di Paolo is the Committee's Restoration Field Technician. He's looking forward to monitoring conditions at the DeChambeau Ponds this summer given recent and ongoing infrastructure improvements.



The local community collaborated to install 1,700 feet of new pipe at the DeChambeau Ponds this winter to revive the ponds' valuable waterfowl habitat.

Policy notes

by Arya Harp, Elin Ljung, & Bartshé Miller

New Forest Supervisor familiar with Mono Lake

Last fall, the Inyo National Forest appointed Lesley Yen as the new Forest Supervisor. Yen is no stranger to the Eastern Sierra, having worked on grazing management on the Kern Plateau, and having served as the Deputy District Ranger for the Mono Lake & Mammoth Ranger District in 2012.

Yen replaced Acting Forest Supervisor John “Pancho” Smith, who stepped in to fill the role after Tammy Randall-Parker departed the Inyo last summer.

Under Yen’s direction, the Inyo will be filling a critical Forest Service position in the Mono Basin—the Mono Lake Ranger District will once again have a dedicated District Ranger. This important leadership position has been missing since it was consolidated with the Mammoth Ranger District ranger position. For more than two decades the Lee Vining Ranger Station and the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area have lost critical Forest Service staff due to dwindling budgets. The District Ranger position will allow the Forest Service to spend more time and attention on issues north of Mammoth Lakes, including within the specially designated Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area.

Long Valley meadows get tentative good news

In January 2021, the Superior Court of Alameda filed a tentative ruling in favor of Mono County and the Sierra Club, directing the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power (DWP) to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) before it would be permitted to make any changes to its historic water use on 6,400 acres of wetland meadow ranchland and wildlife habitat in Mono County.

In spring 2018 DWP abruptly informed lessee ranchers that DWP was going to stop delivering water necessary for the ranchers to irrigate Long

Valley—reversing a well-established, 80+ year land management practice of delivering irrigation water to land adjacent to Crowley Lake Reservoir. In August 2018 Mono County and the Sierra Club filed the lawsuit against DWP to comply with CEQA for the drastic change in water delivery.

At stake in Long Valley are wildlife habitat, notably for Greater Sage-Grouse, and two major economic engines in Mono County—recreation tourism and agriculture. The Keep Long Valley Green coalition, made up of ranchers, environmental non-profits, local tribal members, and representatives from a diverse set of recreation interests, has raised awareness about the impacts of DWP’s abrupt unilateral action. CBS News covered the story in December 2020; see it online at monolake.org/cbsnews.

Should the ruling stand, it would mean that DWP, as a public agency, is required to study the impact of its “project” to propose changes in historical water use on a much-loved piece of historic city-owned ranchland that benefits Sage-Grouse and agriculture. A final ruling is expected soon, but as of press time, no date has been set.

National Forest closures due to fire danger

During a week of explosive wildfire growth in early September 2020, the US Forest Service took an unprecedented

step and closed all of California’s National Forests to public entry, including the Inyo National Forest.

The decision was made in order to reduce the potential for human-caused fires during a time of dangerous fire weather conditions and a lack of firefighting resources. Extreme fire behavior also played a role. The Creek Fire, which started on September 4 near Shaver Lake and grew by 36,000 acres in a single day, became the largest single-source wildfire in California’s history, ultimately burning nearly 380,000 acres and blanketing the Eastern Sierra with heavy smoke for weeks before it was contained in late December.

Though the Forest-wide closures made sense to prevent further wildfires, limiting access to public lands was difficult for people already limited by pandemic-safety restrictions looking for safe ways to be in the outdoors, and for the businesses and industries that provide services related to public lands access.

As the fire danger lessened, parts of the Inyo began reopening starting on October 3. But because the Creek Fire continued to burn toward the Eastern Sierra, it took until January 12, 2021 for the high Sierra backcountry portions of the Inyo to reopen.

Unfortunately, increasingly dangerous fire weather due to climate change could make Forest-wide closures a more common event in the future. ❖



Ranchers riding on horseback in the irrigated meadows of Long Valley.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HVA / KEEP LONG VALLEY GREEN

Cautiously optimistic

Mono Lake Committee plans mix of virtual and in-person programs for 2021

by Claire Landowski

After the new year, our staff collectively took a deep breath, flipped open our new calendars, and began to talk about the summer of 2021 in earnest. After a year of pandemic-related cancellations, postponements, and rearrangements, we all have our fingers crossed for a summer that affords more opportunities than last year. We know it won't be possible to do everything the Committee regularly does, but we're cautiously planning a selection of outdoor, small group, in-person programs and tours as it becomes safer to do so.

As always, *monolake.org* will have up-to-the-moment information, but our current plans are to open the Mono Lake Committee Information Center & Bookstore at least five days per week, offer sunset South Tufa tours, lead some weekend birding walks, and hold several Field Seminars. These in-person events will be complemented by virtual offerings so that members and friends can still join the fun from anywhere with internet.

The Mono Basin Bird Chautauqua (June 18–20) will be entirely virtual this year. We are excited that it will be accessible to a much wider set of people than usual, and we are planning for it to be interactive and fun. The schedule and session descriptions are online now at *birdchautauqua.org* and registration opens on Friday, April 30, at 9:00AM.

Our plans for Field Seminars parallel the path we foresee (or at least hope) the global health climate will chart: as COVID-19 vaccines are steadily distributed and in-person activities become safer, we will offer more of them. In April and May, Nora is teaching a series of virtual seminars focused on birds, and for July through October we'll offer a selection of in-person seminars (see page 19). In the fall, we'll return

to virtual seminars. In an effort to make them accessible to all, we are planning to make some virtual seminars a regular feature of the program, particularly during seasons when fewer people typically visit the basin. Specific details of the Field Seminar workshops and registration are at *monolake.org/fieldseminars*.

Regardless of coronavirus conditions, we anticipate that the Eastern Sierra will be busy with visitors this summer. In tandem with our regional partners we are working to improve outdoor information stations at the Committee and the Mono Basin Visitor Center in order to answer more questions and offer more visitor education. We are all—especially the Committee—planning to have a strong presence at the lake and at South Tufa in particular. Sunset tours at South Tufa will be part of this presence, in addition to some general roving by interns and staff. Similarly, the Mono Lake Volunteer Program is ramping up to be part of the expanded presence—see more about those plans on page 26. Be sure to check *monolake.org/freetours* or call ahead for the tour schedule and to register for a spot, as the timing and capacity are likely to change throughout the season as safety and availability demands.

Sadly, we will not be offering weekend canoe tours this year. Workshops that require close contact between instructors and participants, like photography and basketry, are on hold as well. However, we are offering custom guided trips throughout the year, so don't hesitate to ask about how we can facilitate your favorite Mono Basin activity, whether it's a Panum Crater walk or a special birding expedition. See page 18 for more information, and all the details about how to request a custom trip are—you guessed it—on the website: *monolake.org/trips*. ❖



This summer we plan to open the Mono Lake Committee Information Center & Bookstore with new safety measures at least five days a week.

Original coyote fence removed

Mono Lake's eventual rise will cover last remnants and ensure California Gulls' safety

by Claire Landowski

In late August last year, California State Parks and the Mono Lake Committee joined forces to remove the remains of the 1980s-era coyote fence that once protected Negit Island's nesting California Gull colony. Taking advantage of the low lake level, as well as a short reprieve from wildfire smoke, a crew of nine—six from State Parks and three from the Committee—spent a morning sawing off dozens of steel poles at the waterline. When the lake rises to its management level of 6392 feet above sea level, the poles will be deeply submerged and will no longer be an unsightly hazard to paddlers.

The fence was erected in 1980 after the lake level had dropped so low that a landbridge to Negit was fully exposed, opening a pathway for coyotes to cross to the island and prey on nesting California Gulls and their chicks. Until 1979, Negit was the primary nesting site for the gulls, but that year not a single chick survived to adulthood—all were killed by coyotes or abandoned by fleeing adult gulls. In response, the California Department of Fish & Game appropriated funding to build a barrier across the landbridge, and in early spring of 1980 a half-mile of chain-link fencing was installed. But gulls have a long memory, and in 1980 they crowded onto other smaller islets to nest, remembering the previous years of devastation on Negit.

The fence proved ineffective anyhow and the lake level continued to drop, exposing more and more land. In 1981, when the lake reached its historic low of 6372 feet, the coyotes simply went around the ends of the fence.

Despite its impracticality, the fence remained, growing thick layers of rust and salt rinds from the alkaline water of Mono Lake. The goal this year was to entirely remove the fence poles (the chain linking disintegrated or was removed at some point), but complete removal proved impossible: most poles were sunk into cement footings in water too deep for wading. We tugged, and we wiggled—like five-year-olds with a loose tooth—and eventually decided that, lacking scuba gear and underwater tools, cutting the poles as short as possible above water would have to do.

Using a battery powered Sawzall and leaning out over the gunwale of the Committee boat, Bartshé and I cut the poles while State Parks summer interpretive aide Claire DesBaillets



Last summer the Committee and State Parks removed the remaining poles of the fence installed in 1980 to protect California Gulls nesting on Negit Island from coyote predation.

guided us from section to section. In the State Parks boat, Catherine Jones, Courtney Rowe, and rest of the State Parks staff worked on another section of fence line. Santiago prowled the Negit shoreline with his camera and documented the process.

It felt great to remove the poles—evidence of a time when the lake was perilously low and the gulls' survival at Mono Lake hung in the balance. It seemed like the closing of one chapter of Mono Lake's story, and an affirmation of how far we've come in the intervening 40 years: a State Water Board decision reached, ten feet of lake-level rise realized, and a stream restoration program making steady gains all attest to this progress.

But the trip to the island was also a stark reminder that the lake is still much lower than it should be, and that even electric fences, like the one successfully deployed in 2017, are ultimately not the best protection we can offer the California Gulls. The hard reality is that we're still just one drought away from needing to re-deploy that electric fence to protect the gulls' nesting grounds. Mono Lake's surface elevation is still nearly 11 feet too low. In the long term, the best we can offer the gulls—and all of Mono's ecosystem—is a steadily rising lake that reaches the management level.

In the meantime, here's to incremental improvements, and a Scenic Area that grows more scenic year after year. ❖

Despite extraordinary storm, a drier-than-average year

by Greg Reis

During most of January, the snowpack was trending toward one of the driest years on record. Then a cold late-January atmospheric river dumped a record 54.7 inches of snow on Lee Vining in 48 hours.

Highway 395 shut down, and due to the avalanche hazard and logistical challenges, Southern California Edison was unable to perform the February 1 snow surveys. The Gem Pass snow sensor also failed, and there was no Airborne Snow Observatory flight over the Mono Basin to provide snowpack

data. Since Lake Mary (near Mammoth) and Gem Lake had similar precipitation percentages for the season, the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power (DWP) used Mammoth Pass's 69% of average as a surrogate for the missing Mono Basin surveys.

Despite the extraordinary storm, it will still be a drier-than-average year—DWP's February 1 preliminary runoff forecast for the 2021 runoff year (April 1, 2021–March 31, 2022) is for 69% of average runoff. This is close to last year's final April forecast of

71% (which was approximately 20% too high) and a hair over the 68.5% of average breakpoint for an officially "Dry" year type.

Following a dry February, the March 1 Mono Basin snow surveys reported 61% of average snow water content, but there is no updated March runoff forecast as this *Newsletter* goes to press. The final forecast is issued in April or May, but it will take a "Miracle March" to significantly change the outlook for a dry runoff year. ❖

Lakewatch

Mono Lake likely to fall more than a foot this year

by Greg Reis

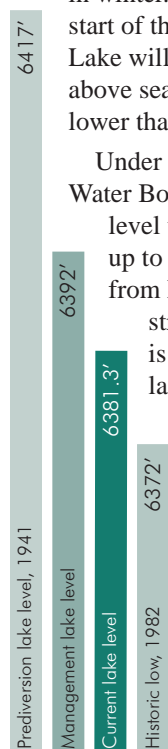
Mono Lake rose a little over a tenth of a foot due to the big January snowstorm, and as of March 1 stood at 6381.3 feet above sea level. After dipping to its annual end-of-year low point, Mono Lake typically rises slowly in winter. On April 1, 2021, the start of the new runoff year, Mono Lake will be close to 6381.5 feet above sea level—about a foot lower than it was last year.

Under the current rules in State Water Board Decision 1631, this level will allow DWP to export up to 16,000 acre-feet of water from Mono Lake's tributary streams. If runoff year 2021 is a Dry year type—like last year—Mono Lake will drop more than a foot, to right around 6380.0 feet, by April 1, 2022.

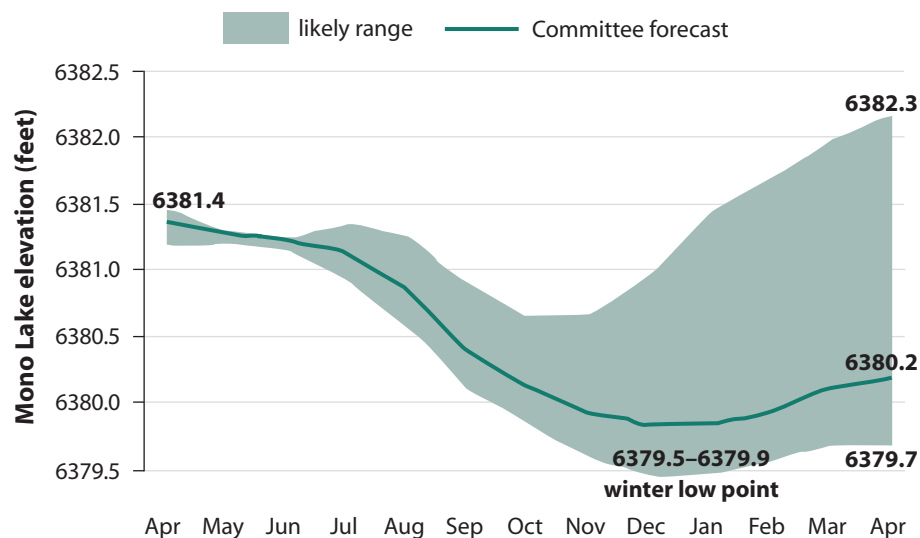
As long as Mono Lake stays above 6380.0 feet on April 1, 2022, water exports can remain at 16,000 acre-feet in runoff year 2022, regardless of whether the year is Dry and the

lake is dropping. And since most years are drier than average, there is a better than 50% chance that Mono Lake will fall below 6380 feet in runoff year 2022—although in this scenario the mandatory cutback to 4,500 acre-feet of export wouldn't occur until the lake is measured below 6380 feet on April 1, 2023. ❖

Greg Reis is the Committee's Information & Restoration Specialist. The pandemic-related travel restrictions have resulted in the longest period he has gone without visiting the Mono Basin since moving there in 1995. He really misses the desert.



2021–22 Mono Lake level forecast



This graph shows the Committee's March 1 Mono Lake level forecast for the 2021 runoff year. The green line shows the projected lake elevations and the shaded area shows the range between the elevations likely to result from a drier and wetter year.

Mono Basin Journal

A roundup of quiet happenings at Mono Lake

by Geoffrey McQuilkin



NORA LIVINGSTON

*H*ydrologically speaking, the winter of 2020–21 may not turn out to be impressive thanks to some extended storm-free stretches. But the three days of continuous snowfall in late January will be remembered for a long time. Opening the front door to knee-deep snow is fun, but when you lose sight of entire cars parked in your own driveway, well, you realize the snow is seriously stacking up. Highway 395 closed for days, everyone hunkered down, and when the sun finally returned the extensive shoveling work gave us all new muscles.

Storms this big put sagebrush and everything else under a smooth-surfaced snowy blanket. Instantly the new conditions

produced thick poconip, the ice fog that rises off Mono Lake and fills the Mono Basin with upside-down clouds. The lake and points close by disappear into their own cold, murky world, a mysterious look from higher-elevation sunny viewpoints. Then the next weather system arrives, sweeping the fog away and revealing a landscape coated with ephemeral ice crystals that sparkle and shine and quickly melt away. ❖

Geoff McQuilkin is the Committee's Executive Director. He's excited about his daughter Ellery's science project that uses field measurements and 3D modeling to quantify the volume of the Dana Glacier at the headwaters of Lee Vining Creek.

Benchmarks



September 2016: Looking toward South Tufa from Navy Beach, thick stands of vegetation including rabbitbrush, sagebrush, bitterbrush, and greasewood surround the shore of Mono Lake.



PHOTOS BY ANDREW YOUSSEF

February 2021: Last August, the Beach Fire burned much of the vegetation between Navy Beach and South Tufa (see page 7). Small tufa once hidden by shrubs were scorched and are now visible.

Naturalist notes

by Nora Livingston

In fall, the days were getting shorter, the air getting crisper, so we wrapped ourselves in warmth by the fire, settled in like pikas under rocks and snow with our carefully gathered haystacks to sustain us. At solstice we celebrated what has been, what we have been through, and what is to come; we celebrated winter, the coming of new light, longer days, and new beginnings.

October: The aspen leaves stayed bright for weeks, well into late October: pineapple, pumpkin, and raspberry hues high up in branches, glowing amidst the smoke-stained sky ... as I took my last swim of the year in Mono Lake a late-migrating Osprey flew above, heading south ... a young Snow Goose accompanied an American Coot in the muddy shallows, as if missing its flock.



NORA LIVINGSTON

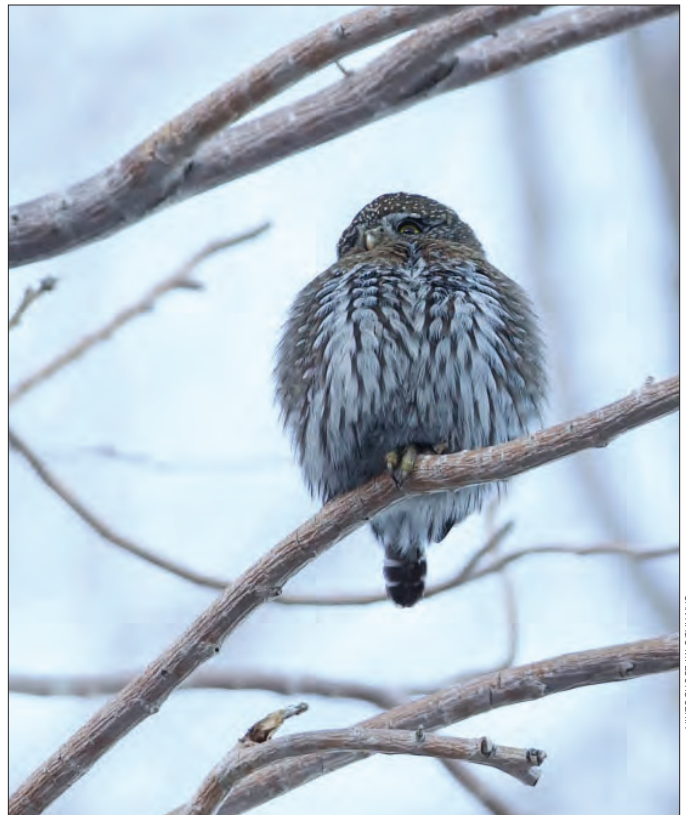
One of the black bear tracks in December with Nora's hand for scale.

November: A snowstorm in early November dropped 12 inches and reminded us that winter was approaching ... on a Mono Lake Committee staff retreat day we hiked to the Mill Creek delta and saw beautiful reflections of the Mono Craters on the mirror lake, the great expanse looking back at us ... freshwater springs trickled out from gravel banks and down into the salty brine below, swirling patterns so faint you had to squint to see them.

December: Volunteers counted birds after a night of exhilarating wind; birds were scarce, quiet, still hiding, but the wind blew in a Long-billed Curlew, never before seen on a Mono Lake Christmas Bird Count ... a lost Fox Sparrow decided to try to stay the winter in my driveway ... days lengthened, light returning ... the final full moon of 2020 was robed in soft clouds: cotton candy pink and serious gray took our breath away ... a black bear lumbered around town after a fresh snow and then made its way up into the mountains before daylight.

January: A New Year, new hope ... mountain lion tracks in the snow at the Outdoor Education Center and along Parker Creek ... a tiny yet fierce Northern Pygmy Owl glared down from a naked elm as if to say, "what are YOU looking at?" ... in late January, the sky opened after many weeks of dry weather and dropped more than four feet of snow on Lee Vining, a massive storm that took days to dig out from ... with it came a rare American Tree Sparrow eating cornmeal with a flock of Dark-eyed Juncos and a Loggerhead Shrike lurking nearby, ready to snatch up a sparrow ... poconip fog enclosed the basin, freezing sharp ice crystals on thin branches and shrubs, decorating the world in silver glitter ... even with snowshoes you dropped into the powder knee deep ... the Mule Deer knew it, trudging in snow that pushed against their chests while looking for buried treasure—bitterbrush stems ... all this snow means water for Mono, a quenching gulp after weeks without.

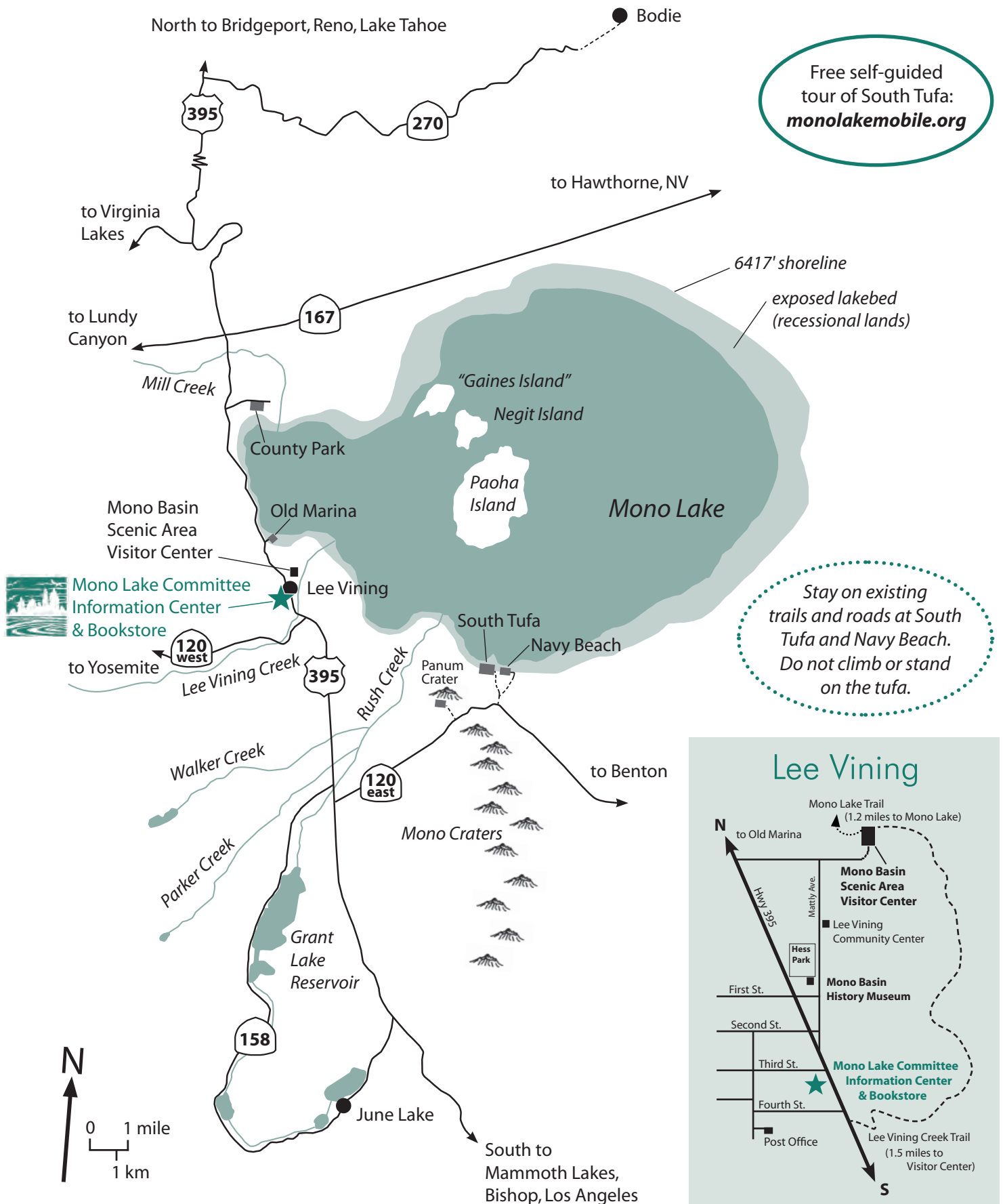
February: Deep snow still blankets the basin, slightly melted and compressed, glistening in the chilly winter sun ... windy nights knocked out electricity, quieted the birds ... a mountain lion with a radio collar crossed Highway 395 near Wilson Butte, its long tail trailing behind; days later it was east of Mammoth, heading south ... soon the Violet-green Swallows will return, and it will all begin again. ❖



SANTIAGO M. ESPINOZA

January's Northern Pygmy Owl perched in its elm tree.

Mono Lake map





MONO LAKE COMMITTEE

INFORMATION CENTER & BOOKSTORE



NEW!

MONO LAKE PATTERNED FACE MASK

Show your love for Mono Lake like Robbie and Lily with this three-layer face mask from ChicoBag printed in a playful pattern of birds, brine shrimp, mammals, and flowers. Made from high-quality, durable cotton and polyester, it's machine washable and convenient to use. It fits snugly against your face, comfortably around your ears or head using an optional clip to relieve ear pressure, and the contoured adjustable nose piece means it won't fog up your glasses. The "sun" color has shades of blue and orange on a light yellow background, and the "sage" color has pinks and creams on a sage green background. Each mask comes with a pouch to safely stash your used mask for washing later. *Mono Lake Committee exclusive.*

Mono Lake patterned face mask, one size fits most, please specify color sun or sage: \$12.50

Please understand that our face mask is not a replacement for medical-grade personal protective equipment and is not intended to replace other recommended COVID-19 protective measures.

MONO LAKE PATTERNED INSULATED BOTTLE

Keep your favorite drinks the perfect temperature at home or on the go with a vacuum-insulated bottle from Klean Kanteen printed with our newest Mono Lake pattern of birds, brine shrimp, mammals, and flowers. This BPA-free bottle is constructed of food-grade stainless steel with a leak-proof to-go lid and carry handle for easy drinking and transportation. The wide-mouth design makes adding ice cubes easy and simplifies cleaning (it's also dishwasher safe). This versatile bottle will keep beverages hot up to 14 hours and cold up to 47 hours. The bottle has the Mono Lake pattern in reds, pinks, and blues on a sunny yellow background. *Mono Lake Committee exclusive.*

Mono Lake patterned insulated bottle, 16 ounces: \$29.95



NEW!



WINGSPAN

DESIGNED BY ELIZABETH HARGRAVE
ILLUSTRATED BY NATALIA ROJAS, ANA MARIA MARTINEZ, AND BETH SOBEL

This award-winning board game is perfect for bird enthusiasts and fans of tabletop games alike. 170 North American bird species are featured in this game as beautifully illustrated cards that have their own unique abilities inspired by each bird. As you place a variety of species into different habitats they create combinations that help you eat food, lay eggs, and hopefully win the game by creating the best wildlife preserve.

Mono Lake Committee staff favorite!

Wingspan, Stonemaier Games, 1–5 players ages 10 and up, play time 40–70 minutes, 11½" x 11½" x 3": \$60.00

WE ARE WATER PROTECTORS

BY CAROLE LINDSTROM

ILLUSTRATED BY MICHAELA GOADE

Inspired by Indigenous-led movements like Standing Rock, *We Are Water Protectors* tells the story of a strong female protagonist rallying her people to protect the safety of their water. Through lyrical text and vibrant illustrations created by Indigenous women, children ages 3–6 will be inspired to become water protectors themselves.

We Are Water Protectors, hardcover, Roaring Book Press, 40 pages, 10½"x 10¼": \$17.99



BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA

EDITED BY FRANÇOIS VUILLEUMIER

This beautiful, new edition of the American Museum of Natural History's *Birds of North America* contains detailed full-page profiles for commonly seen birds with close-up, full-color photographs. It also includes images of plumage variations and subspecies, information on similar birds, artwork of birds in flight detailing their outstretched wings, and the most current migratory and habitation maps. Rare birds and vagrants are also included, making this book a gorgeous and comprehensive addition to your birding library.

Birds of North America, hardcover, DK, 752 pages, 8¾"x 11¼": \$40.00



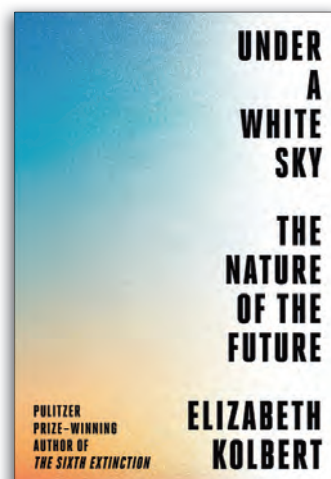
UNDER A WHITE SKY:

THE NATURE OF THE FUTURE

BY ELIZABETH KOLBERT

In her newest book, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Sixth Extinction* explores the transformative influence that humankind has had on our planet and the new world we are creating. Kolbert's dive into the Anthropocene brings her into conversation with biologists, engineers, and researchers seeking to use the same human capacity for invention and intervention that has imperiled our planet as a means of saving it. Her coverage of the unique challenges of this era is both inspiring and unsettling with a dash of dark humor.

Under a White Sky, hardcover, Crown, 256 pages, 5¾"x 8½": \$28.00

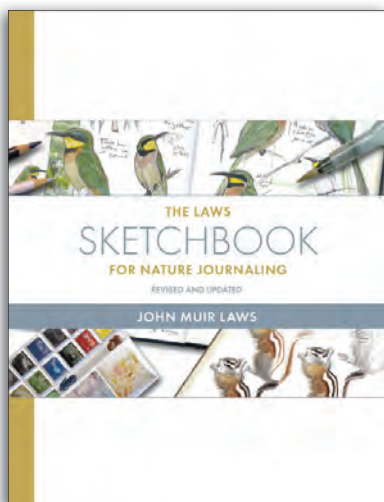


THE LAWS SKETCHBOOK FOR NATURE JOURNALING

BY JOHN MUIR LAWS

This newly re-released, beautifully designed, and functional sketchbook was created specifically for nature journaling by one of our top-selling naturalists and illustrators. The sturdy cover and lay-flat binding make sketching in the field a breeze, while the high-quality paper allows for the use of pen, pencil, and even a light wash of watercolor paint. This journal also includes Laws' tips and techniques for capturing your observations and tools for measuring and quantifying what you see while out on the trail. This sketchbook is great for artists of all skill levels who are interested in the practice of observing and recording the natural world.

The Laws Sketchbook for Nature Journaling, hardcover, Heyday, 96 pages, 7"x 9": \$22.00



See these products and more in color and place your order online at monolake.org/shop or call (760) 647-6595.

Custom guided trips

The Mono Lake Committee offers custom guided trips for those looking for a personalized experience. Let us do the planning—we will craft a trip tailored to your specific interests, your group, and your schedule. Our staff has more than 100 years of collective experience in the region, so whether you are looking for a natural history adventure, a new hiking spot, a special canoe tour, or a birding trip, we've got you covered. See more, do more, and learn more on a custom guided trip!

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, all custom guided trips will take place entirely outdoors. Participants and guides will caravan to field locations rather than carpool. All participants, including those who have been vaccinated, are expected to wear masks and socially distance for the duration of the trip. Additionally, participants will need to complete a health screening before arriving in the Mono Basin and again at the start of the trip. Keeping you and our staff guides safe is our highest priority.

Visit
monolake.org/trips
or email guides@monolake.org to
set up a trip.

Better birding

Working on your life list? Hoping to take great bird photos? We'll take you to the best habitats, help you make the most of your time birding, and dive into the natural history of the birds we see.

Mono Lake: The whole picture

Alkaline brine and otherworldly tufa towers host myriad mysteries. Spend a day learning about the natural history of the lake while exploring the basin with an expert.

Ice & fire

Delve into the Mono Basin's fascinating geology and transport yourself millions of years into the past. From glacial moraines to volcanoes, there is plenty to explore.



ANDREW YOUSSEF

Nora is an expert in describing the lake features and the wildlife. She paced our excursions well to meet my needs. Our trip was totally delightful and I feel like I can look at a photo now and 're-live' the experience. The excursions expanded my already deep dedication to the preservation of Mono Lake and its surrounding ecosystems." —anonymous custom trip evaluation



ANDREW YOUSSEF

A note from the Lead Naturalist Guide

Before I became the Mono Lake Committee's first ever Lead Naturalist Guide, I had a pretty good handle on the birds of the Mono Basin—having birded the area extensively for eight years—and a solid understanding of Mono Lake's ecology. I had bits and pieces of other natural history knowledge, but was by no means an expert on plants or mammals, and had barely even dipped a toe into the world of butterflies and other insects. Passion and enthusiasm for learning new things brought me to where I am today: still not a capital-E expert, but a collector of knowledge, an observer of mysteries, and a gentle guide to seeing and understanding. Each year I pick up more and more about this incredible basin that I can share. Thanks for joining me on this journey.

Yours in nature, Nora Livingston

2021 Field Seminars



Mono Basin Natural History: Aquatic & Terrestrial Habitats

July 9–11 • David Wimpfheimer
\$182 per person / \$167 for members

The Mono Basin is one of the most diverse ecosystems on the continent; this field seminar will be an overview of the varied habitats found here. We will enjoy the myriad mammals, butterflies, wildflowers, trees, and other plants as we explore the Mono Basin, and a major focus of this seminar will be the identification and ecology of birds that breed here. We will also discuss Mono Lake's unique and productive aquatic habitat. David Wimpfheimer has been an educator and interpreter for more than 25 years, focusing on birds and California's natural history.

Mountain Botany & Ecology

July 23–25 • Michèle Slaton
\$182 per person / \$167 for members

In this seminar we will explore the Mono Basin's varied plant communities, from the shore of Mono Lake to the forests and meadows at the high elevations of Lee Vining Canyon. We'll learn the basics of flower and plant anatomy and how to use a plant key, discuss soils and geology, and examine the adaptations that enable plants to tolerate the extremes of mountain environments. Michèle Slaton is an Ecologist with the US Forest Service and has lived in the Eastern Sierra since 2001. She has worked as a botanist in Colorado, Death Valley National Park, and the Inyo National Forest.

Mono Basin Mammals

August 6–8 • John Harris
\$182 per person / \$167 for members

This class will cover the many mammals found in the Mono Basin, from desert sand dunes to forests and alpine meadows of the high Sierra. More mammals occur here than in many states, and the group will try to see as many as possible by live-trapping and field observation. Participants will look for tracks and learn to identify skulls, focusing on identification and adaptations to Mono's varied environments. John Harris is a Professor Emeritus of Biology at Mills College whose interest in Mono's mammals began in 1975 while studying chipmunks as an undergraduate.

Falling for the Migration: Bridgeport, Crowley, Mono

August 20–22 • Dave Shuford
\$182 per person / \$167 for members

The east slope of the Sierra Nevada is a major migration route for birds traveling from northern nesting areas to warm southern habitats. As a result, August is the time of year to see late summer migrants and early arriving wintering birds in the Mono Basin, Bridgeport Valley, and Long Valley. Dave Shuford is an expert birder and retired professional ornithologist. His bird research in the region includes a long-term study on the ecology of Mono Lake's California Gull colony, an atlas of breeding birds in the Glass Mountain area, and surveys of Snowy Plovers at Mono and Owens lakes.

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

Restoring Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep

September 10–12 • John Wehausen
\$182 per person / \$167 for members

This field seminar will discuss the fascinating biology of the federally endangered Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep, their relationships with other mammals (including mountain lions and humans), and their conservation in the field. While there is no guarantee of seeing bighorn sheep, past participants have seen them during all but one of the past 20 years of seminars. John Wehausen has been studying the Sierra Nevada bighorn and working for their conservation since 1974. *Please be aware that this seminar involves very strenuous hiking at the 10,000-foot elevation and above.*

Geology of the Mono Basin

September 24–26 • Greg Stock
\$182 per person / \$167 for members

From volcanic craters to glacial moraines, earthquake faults to tufa towers, the Mono Basin displays some of the most unique, spectacular, and accessible geology anywhere in the world. This seminar, consisting of field visits to the premier sites, will present in understandable fashion the geologic stories of the Mono Basin. Greg Stock is the first ever Yosemite National Park geologist. He has authored or co-authored more than 50 papers and abstracts on Sierra Nevada geology and is co-author of the book *Geology Underfoot in Yosemite National Park*.

Arborglyphs & Aspen Natural History

October 2–3 • Richard Potashin & Nancy Hadlock
\$172 per person / \$157 for members

A century of sheep grazing brought Basque sheepherders into the Mono Basin's aspen-bordered meadows, and they left numerous carvings—arborglyphs—on the aspens. Join the instructors for an enchanting journey into the aspen groves to explore this historical art form and to learn about the wildlife, insects, and birds that are drawn to the groves. Richard Potashin has been discovering and documenting aspen carvings for many years. Nancy Hadlock is a retired naturalist, interpreter, and educator for the National Park Service and US Forest Service with more than 30 years of experience.



Arborglyphs carved on trees hint at this area's sheepherding history.

Field Seminar Information

Field Seminars will look a little different this year to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Keeping participants, instructors, and our staff safe is our highest priority.

All seminars will be limited to ten participants and will take place entirely outside. Participants will caravan to each field location rather than carpool. All participants, including those who have been vaccinated, are expected to wear masks and socially distance for the duration of the seminar. Additionally, participants will need to complete a health screening before arriving in the Mono Basin and again at the start of the seminar.

Because statewide and region-wide conditions will continue to change, we may have to cancel seminars, possibly last-minute. Full refunds will be issued in that case.

No pets are allowed on any Field Seminars. Please consider this in advance and find boarding accommodations for your pets or leave them at home; do not leave pets in your car during seminars. Service animals assisting people with disabilities are allowed on seminars and must be leashed.

Field Seminars are open to all, but Mono Lake Committee members get to register early and receive discounts. All instructors are experts who have received high ratings from past seminar participants. We emphasize a spirit of learning and camaraderie in this magnificent outdoor setting for a reasonable cost. Proceeds from Field Seminars benefit research and education in the Mono Basin.

Visit monolake.org/seminars to register for a Field Seminar, see complete itineraries, cancellation and refund policies, and to learn more about our COVID-19 guidelines and protocols.

All Field Seminars and custom trips operate under Inyo National Forest and California State Parks permits.

Questions? Email fieldseminars@monolake.org or call us at (760) 647-6595.

A year of creative, COVID-safe operations

by Claire Landowski

In October 2020, when I wrote about the ways the COVID-19 pandemic had affected the everyday operations of the Mono Lake Committee, I didn't imagine it would become a *series* of articles, but here we are—a redux.

By the time this *Newsletter* reaches you, the Committee will have marked one year of remote operations. It's a solemn anniversary: one year of working largely from home; the bookstore being mostly closed; the Outdoor Education Center lacking the laughter of students; the office remaining dark and oddly quiet. For a staff that is used to being essentially shoulder-to-shoulder in the office, it has been an adjustment.

But, like other parts of the country, we are starting to see some rays of hope. The first few eligible members of our staff have received vaccines. We are carefully planning some outdoor, in-person tours and Field Seminars. We have hired a few interns! With our partners in the Mono Basin, we are preparing for what's anticipated to be a busy summer season.

And, as in the past year, our creativity is helping propel us forward. When California reissued a strict regional stay-at-home order on December 3, 2020 that included Mono County, we momentarily felt stuck. We were supposed to be working entirely remotely, but we still needed to send out thousands of calendars to members and friends, in addition to everyday tasks like answering the phones, filling holiday bookstore orders, and sorting mail. Without the usual help from volunteers, we were dreadfully behind. So in a stroke

of genius, Bartshé set up Disney+ on the television in the gallery, and we took solo shifts assembling calendar mailers while watching the likes of *The Mandalorian* and *Hamilton* in the evenings.

To be able to answer the office phone line remotely, I packed up several of our office phones and sent them to live at people's home desks. Some innovative setups have resulted: Elin strung a 50-foot ethernet cable through her house; Nora's phone is perched atop a bookcase in her living room; and mine lives in the loft next to my partner's seismic instrument lab. I hope that when you call, you can imagine us greeting you from our desks or dining tables, pets at our sides.

I'm also happy to report that we even managed to have a holiday party—virtually, of course. We played winter-themed charades, drank hot cocoa, and told funny stories of holidays past. It was like old times with Sage Gaines in on the virtual fun, only now he's an adult. We raised our mugs to all of you, our friends who generously supported us in 2020.

And as we pinned up our shiny new Mono Lake calendars and opened to that gorgeous photo of South Tufa in the snow, we marveled at how, once again, as the world around us changes in myriad ways, we can still count on the beauty and wonder of Mono Lake to keep us grounded and focused. We are grateful to be coming out the other side of this pandemic with good health, good energy, and good goals for 2021. We wish the same for all of you. ❖



Last fall we adapted our annual staff retreat for COVID-19 times, with virtual and outdoor portions. During the field day we hiked, staying socially distant, to the Mill Creek delta, enjoying the calm day and a chance to see water flowing into Mono Lake—always a treat.

Public trust doctrine on the horizon for Nevada after Walker Lake legal victory

by Gary Nelson

In a new twist to a long and winding legal battle, a recent Ninth Circuit Court decision offers a possible path to restoration for the long-beleaguered Walker Lake.

A fellow terminus lake

Around 40 miles (as the gull flies) northeast of Mono Lake lies another terminus lake, also fed by Eastern Sierra streams. Walker Lake, in Mineral County, Nevada, is one of just a handful of freshwater terminus lakes in the world.

The lake once supported a thriving native fishery of Tui chub and Lahontan cutthroat trout, which served as an important food source for the Walker River Paiute Tribe. Every year the trout would swim back up the Walker River more than 100 miles to the Sierra to spawn. After upstream dams ended spawning, a stocked trout fishery supported tourism, which accounted for around 50% of Mineral County's economy.

Water diversions of the Walker River for upstream agriculture began in the mid-19th century, causing the elevation of the lake to drop 181 vertical feet between 1882 and 2016. Just like at Mono Lake, diversion of freshwater inflow caused the percentage of salts and minerals—total dissolved solids—to drastically increase. The last trout was fished out of Walker Lake in 2009. No native species currently survive in Walker Lake due to the poisonous effects of rising total dissolved solids.

Concerned citizens band together

The Walker Lake Working Group was formed in 1991. This non-profit citizens' group of concerned locals stepped into the role of a David facing off against a Goliath of upstream agricultural interests worth roughly \$330 million a year.

Fortunately, the Working Group had a powerful ally in Nevada's Democratic US Senator Harry Reid (see Summer 2002 *Mono Lake Newsletter*). Senator Reid helped push through Public Law 111-85 in 2009, which created the Walker Basin Restoration Program. The Walker Basin Conservancy was established in 2015 as a non-profit to administer this program.

The Conservancy works with willing sellers in the basin to acquire water rights and land, and convey this water to Walker Lake to reach the restoration goal of 3951 feet of elevation (the lake's current elevation is 3915.5 feet). Recent acquisitions gave the Conservancy more than 52% of the water needed to reach the goal level, which would allow reestablishment of the fishery. The Conservancy is responsible for the stewardship of more than 15,000 acres of land that was primarily used for agricultural purposes. This involves streambank stabilization, native plant restoration, and improving wildlife habitat. The Conservancy helps manage restoration efforts at the newly established Walker River State Recreation Area and the Mason Valley Wildlife Management Area.

Continued on page 23



PHOTO COURTESY OF RAQUEL BARANOW

Wave-cut terraces serve as mute testimony to Walker Lake's decline of more than 180 feet since the 1880s.

diversions by DWP caused the lake to fall 45 vertical feet and lose half its volume, imperiling the lake ecosystem and the millions of migratory and nesting birds it supports. The State Water Board's 1994 Mono Lake decision requires that DWP raise the lake to a long-term ecologically sustainable level—and the lake is only 40% of the way there.

The shortfall is a problem. With the lake nearly 11 vertical feet below the mandated level, the exposed lakebed is the source of the largest particulate (PM₁₀) dust storms in the nation, and the lake is only a drought away from falling to a level at which coyotes could once again walk the exposed landbridge to prey on one of the world's largest California Gull nesting colonies. These problems and others are exactly what the lake level mandate is designed to solve.

In fact, an important evaluation date has now come and gone. On September 28, 2020 Committee staff read the lake level (to see a video of the reading, go to monolake.org/september28), confirming that Mono is far below the mandated healthy elevation. Under the State Water Board's requirements, the date triggers a future hearing regarding the lake level situation and consideration of diversion criteria modifications.

Though a hearing date has not yet been set, a team of

Committee staff and hydrology experts is actively evaluating Mono Lake's hydrologic situation and paths to achieve the ecologically sustainable lake level.

2021 will be busy

This will be a busy year for stream and lake restoration. Seeing the stream restoration license amendments through to completion will be focal work for Committee staff and attorneys in the coming months.

The fresh momentum shows the power of perseverance in these efforts and we look forward to seeing the results materialize on the ground as healthier streams, more robust fisheries, and renewed riparian forests and wildlife habitats. ❖

Support the streams

Mono Lake supporters continue to make this progress possible—letter writing and advocacy actions may be needed to keep the pressure on. Please be sure we have your current email address at monolake.org/action.

A long and winding legal path

The early legal history of the fight for Walker Lake resembles the path of its river—meandering, beset by numerous diversions, wandering aimlessly away from its destination only to descend in an ever more arid arc towards eventual frustration.

Senator Reid found additional funding for legal efforts by the Working Group and Mineral County, allowing the ongoing public trust lawsuit to be filed in 1994.

The presiding Federal District Court Judge successfully delayed ruling on the public trust suit until his passing. The next Judge, Robert Jones, dismissed the public trust claim in 2015, but in finally issuing a ruling, broke the legal logjam.

The case was appealed to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, which reversed Judge Jones' ruling in 2018, disagreeing with several of his reasons for the public trust claim dismissal. The Ninth Circuit then sent the case to the Nevada Supreme Court, asking them to address whether the public trust doctrine applies to water rights already adjudicated or allocated under Nevada's prior appropriation system of water rights.

In September 2020 the Nevada Supreme Court ruled that while the public trust doctrine applies to all water rights and waters in the state of Nevada, it does not allow for a reallocation of those rights.

Latest legal victory provides opportunities

The Working Group and Mineral County regrouped, then

returned to the Ninth Circuit with a new request. In January 2021 the court proved to be amenable to this request: Senior Judge A. Wallace Tashima wrote, "the County may pursue its public trust claim to the extent that the County seeks remedies that would not involve a reallocation of such rights."

This opens up options such as: changing how surplus waters are managed in wet years and how flows outside of the irrigation season are managed, requiring efficiency improvements with a requirement that water saved be released to Walker Lake, mandating that the state provide both a plan for fulfilling its public trust duty to Walker Lake and the funding necessary to effectuate that plan. The Ninth Circuit has sent the case back to Federal District Court to consider such solutions.

Vermont Law School Professor John Echeverria, who has been closely following this case, stated, "It's a very significant decision. It creates a path for recognition and application of the public trust doctrine in Nevada to existing water rights."

For more information about the Walker Lake Working Group go to walkerlake.org; for more about the Walker Basin Conservancy visit walkerbasin.org. ❖

"Admiral" Gary Nelson is the Committee's Canoe Tour Supervisor. He has been gazing longingly at Mono Lake while the canoe fleet is in COVID-enforced dry dock, waiting for the time when social distancing once again means giving the Osprey nests sufficient space while paddling past.

Stories may save us yet

by Kristine Zeigler

Editor's note: Each year we ask a writer to contribute to the Mono Lake Calendar—this essay appears in the 2021 calendar.

Please, stop what you're doing and hop in. I am going to take you to Mono Lake, one of North America's oldest lakes, transporting you with my words to the other-worldly tufa towers poking out of the water, the volcanic craters like sentinels overlooking the basin, and the Sierra range, a wall of granite rising more than 7,000 feet from the shore. With all my heart and my abilities, I will endeavor to convince your brain that you're there, right now, wading in water that's more than twice as salty as the ocean. It isn't hard to do. As a human, you can't help but be pulled into a story.

But I'm not going to go on in that vein, showcasing the landscape, or posing rhetorical questions about animal behavior such as—*did you know that the California Gulls you see at the beach are probably hatched at Mono Lake?* I'm not going to make this a treatise on why a balance needs to be struck between the natural world and our own.

Descriptive nature writing that captures hearts and minds is not sufficient for the times we are in. Love of nature and its wonders is not enough, even though I appreciate nature writing and our nation's great authors such as John Muir and Henry David Thoreau. The best nature writers evoke wonder, astonishment, and reverence for the natural world, for wild places where salmon spawn to savannas where lions roam. But let's face it—nature writing isn't doing a great job of saving nature.

Nature writing needs to change. And the new nature writer must answer the question posed by poet Mary Oliver—how will we love this world? The new nature writer must embrace an elevated role, not just as poet and interpreter, but as wielder of neuroscience and storytelling. It's time for nature writing to evolve to its grandest possible purpose: to illuminate the path from a world in crisis to one of solutions and sustainability. Rachel Carson and Terry Tempest Williams have laid that groundwork.

The new nature writer need look no further than the story of how Mono Lake was saved—how activists and attorneys alike used stories rich with emotion and data in order to influence policy makers, judges, and supporters like you.

The new nature writer recognizes that the natural world and the human-built world are connected. All of it—the majestic places like Yosemite, and the freeways and skyscrapers in Los Angeles or Beijing, is our home. It's a home where information about public health, poverty, climate, and the economy can be shared faster than ever before. The new nature writer recognizes that the written word, the spoken story, contains a primal power to create social change. Indeed, it always has, since storytelling has been around. As it turns out, storytelling and Mono Lake are the same age.

Picture this: Some one-million years ago the first story was probably being told around a campfire in Africa. Meet our ancestors, *Homo erectus*. They just learned to make fires and cook meat from animals they hunted. Because of this, they

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PHOTO COURTESY OF ED CALLAERT

2020 Free Drawing: The winners are in

by Lily Pastel

While 2020 certainly didn't unfold as expected, the Free Drawing was still a bright spot in the year. Though the full staff didn't get to boisterously draw winning tickets all together in the office as has become the tradition, contacting the winners and the many generous businesses who continued to support this fundraiser during the difficult and uncertain year was still a pleasure. Congratulations to the winners and a huge thank you to all of you who participated in and donated to the drawing!

The early bird prize, an iPad Mini, went to Ron Kvaas of Los Angeles. Mono Basin Fun in the Field: Michael Leoni of Hanford. A Day on the Bay: Peter Hodgkin of Los Osos. National Park Vacation: Charles Barquist of Beverly Hills. Mountain Retreat: Robert Rodman of South Lake Tahoe. Lee Vining Getaway: Ron Kvaas of Los Angeles. June Lake Retreat: Stephen M. Fox of Pasadena. Bodie Exploration: John Gorham of Big Pine. Bird the Mono Basin: Steve Clark of San Juan Capistrano and Alan Dutra of Roseville. Golden Gate

Vacation: Bruce Bernbaum of El Segundo. Mono Lake Trip for Two: Janine Summy of Republic, WA. Bird the Owens Valley: Gary Feskens of Westlake Village.

Linda O'Keefe of Mountain Ranch and John E. Holing of Glide, OR, each won a Patagonia Nano Puff jacket. Camp Comfort Gift Pack: Christine Sorenson of Yorba Linda. National Park Pack: Patricia Scandlyn of Ventura. Outfit Your Eastern Sierra Adventures: Otto Hub of Tahoe City. Pentax Papilio binoculars: Ron Mead of Santa Margarita. Canoe Adventure on Mono Lake: Lia Shrewsbury of Sacramento and Richard Reed of Palm Desert. Patagonia 40L Black Hole duffle bag: Mark Huston of Escondido. Patagonia 25L Black Hole backpack: Danelle Johnston of Loma Linda. Photographer's Favorites Book Bag: William Bianco of West Sacramento. Experience the Channel Islands: Robert Kutner of Glendale. Mono Lake Committee Gift Pack: Steven Hazzard of Manhattan Beach and Steven German of Monrovia. Aquarium Experience: Donna Deaton of Mount Aukum. ❖

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need to talk at night and figure out what time of day they will go out to hunt, which tools they will use, and the role each person will play. That takes double the size of brain than what their predecessors, *Homo habilis*, had, from 500 to 1,000 cubic centimeters.

See that tall teenager with a spear? He is telling the others about how he killed the antelope, step by step. See how he pretends to hide in a tree, then jumps down and jabs the unsuspecting antelope at close range? See the little children watching? They want to know how it's done. The young man with the spear starts over again. He is *telling a story*. It's one of the first stories ever told.

According to writer Ursula Le Guin, a story is something moving, something changing. But stories also have an evolutionary starring role in the history of humanity. Stories build cohesion between us, bring order to chaos, and warn us about danger—like animals that can hurt us, or plants we shouldn't eat. About 300,000 years ago, with the harnessing of fire, the meat, and the increasing amount of collaboration required to hunt, our cranial capacity jumps to 1,300 cubic centimeters. *Homo erectus* becomes *Homo sapiens*. Us.

Come, let's go to the year 1978, a classroom at Bishop High School. The guest speakers are a young couple. Hear that clicking? It's a Kodak Carousel slide projector. That's a picture of Mono Lake's seagulls and tufa. Normally these high school students are half-asleep, today they are asking questions. The lake, the man says, is in trouble. The woman says the odds of its survival are practically slim to none.

How are they going to save it? They won't save it by themselves. They need to tell more stories, to more people. The woman organizes a base of operations. There's risk that no one will believe them. But neuroscience tells us that people are unable to resist stories. True ones, made-up ones, we take them all in. We are alive as long as we tell each other stories.

When I was a girl growing up in the Owens Valley, I thought we would be living in a space station orbiting the Earth by the year 2021. I feared our planet would be uninhabitable after nuclear fall-out. Thankfully, the Cold War ended, but with climate change, pandemics, droughts, and catastrophic fires from California and the Amazon to Australia, the need for a new nature writer is clear.

My advice to the new nature writer, or to anyone who wants to create a new way of doing things: imagine the change needed, link it with neuroscience, figure out how the brain makes decisions. Build your time machine, test out your story. Take heart; you are the only animal that envisions a better future and figures out how to get there. ❖

Kristine Zeigler is the author of Cover This Country Like Snow and Other Stories. She is the CEO of Planet Women, which partners with women to create more inclusive and equitable approaches to solving global environmental challenges. She is also co-founder of New Nature Writers, which encourages, mentors, and supports nature writers. Her favorite shop to browse and buy fiction, regional guides, maps, gifts, and a diverse selection of nature writing titles, is the Mono Lake Committee Information Center & Bookstore.

Staff migrations

by Claire Landowski

A few nights ago I parked my car at the top of the South Tufa road and picked my way through the mile of ankle-deep snow, slush, and mud to the grand stands of tufa at the shoreline. The lake was as still as I've ever seen it, with mirror-perfect reflections of the Bodie Hills, Black Point, and the tufa towers. I dallied as the sun set behind the Tioga Crest, casting pastel shades over Paoha Island and Cowtrack Mountain. The stillness of the lake this winter has been remarkable, paralleling the stillness of Lee Vining and the Eastern Sierra front country.

In ramping up for a new-world summer season, we happily welcomed two part-time Project Specialists to help us through the busy spring. **Etta Gold** and **Caelen McQuilkin** volunteered at Mono Lake in 2020, helping answer visitors' questions at South Tufa and at the Mono Lake Committee's outdoor information station on the bookstore front porch, and they have already brought a much-needed boost to tasks like answering the phones, data entry, and website editing.

Looking ahead to the summer, we are excited to be welcoming just a few Mono Lake Interns this year: **Ryan Garrett**, **Will Hamann**, and **Trevor Lemings**. Trevor and Ryan are both alumni of the Mono Basin Outdoor Education Center program and cite their previous experience at Mono Lake as a pivotal part of their education. Will has been spending time in the Mono Basin since childhood and has been actively engaged with current Mono Lake Committee



Committee staff at the lakeshore on a blustery day.

issues over the past year. The interns will be working primarily in the Information Center & Bookstore, as well as leading South Tufa tours. ❖

Claire Landowski is the Committee's Office Director. She and her partner John recently welcomed two new additions to their family: ducklings Sheila E. and Tina Turner. Claire and John are looking forward to building them an outdoor coop and continuing to watch them grow.

Calling all Mono-philes!

The Mono Lake Volunteer Program is looking to expand its ranks in preparation for the summer 2021 season. In addition to offering regular tours at Mono Lake, the volunteer program is planning to increase the roving presence at Old Marina, County Park, and South Tufa, as well as help staff an outdoor information station at the Mono Basin Visitor Center. Volunteers are also needed to help maintain trails, pull invasive weeds, and assist with other projects around the Mono Basin and at Bodie State Historic Park.

The Mono Lake Volunteers are a tight-knit group of folks of all ages and backgrounds who are united by their stewardship for the Mono Basin. The program is a joint initiative of California State Parks, the US Forest Service, and the Mono Lake Committee, with additional support from the Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association and the Bodie Foundation.

In 2020, the volunteers played a particularly important role in the basin, as the COVID-19 pandemic had changed the ability of the Mono Basin partner agencies to provide

visitor services at Mono Lake. In 2021, the volunteers will be more important than ever as local agencies and organizations work together to educate visitors and protect the resources of the Mono Basin.

Volunteer training will take place June 4–6, in small, socially-distanced groups, at outdoor sites around the Mono Basin. New volunteers should plan to attend all three days of training, and should also be able to commit to volunteering a few hours per month during June through September.

If you are interested in joining the volunteer cohort, please contact Office Director Claire Landowski: claire@monolake.org or (760) 647-6595.





From the mailbag

News from members and friends

by Ellen King

Thank you to everyone who sent contributions in honor or in memory of friends and loved ones. Your support is what makes the Mono Lake Committee's work possible.

In honor

Sara Fousekis gave in honor of **Susan Fousekis**. **Amy Holm** gave in honor of **Fran Spivy-Weber** and "her passion to protect California's water for birds and people." **John Luther** gave in honor of **David Luther**. **Louisa Munger** gave in honor of **Kathy Munger**.

David Rorick gave in honor of **Bryan Wilson**. **Michael Vedder & family** gave in honor of **Richard & Colleen Vedder**. **Carol Winter** gave in honor of her daughter **Kirsten Winter**. **Joy Zimnavoda** gave in honor of **Janet Carle**.

Paul Brown and **Ellen Elleman** gave in honor of the engagement of **Nora Livingston & Kevin C. Brown**.

In memory

Christopher & Jane Adams gave in memory of **Joan Seear**. **William Adler** gave in memory of his mother **June Adler**. **Robert & Deborah Alberti** gave in memory of **Dorothy Mille**. **Anita Antler** gave in memory of "my beloved husband" **Gynt Antler**. **Laura Armor** gave in memory of her grandmother **Dorothea Susman**. **Bill Azevedo** gave in memory of **Barbara Azevedo**. **Catherine Billingsley** gave in memory of her husband **Robert Billingsley**. **Carol Blaney & John Sun** gave "in loving memory" of their daughter **Isabel**, "who loved Mono Lake."

Leslie Bowen gave in memory of "my dear mother" **Jean Alexander**. **Suzanne Chappell** gave in memory of **Karlene Campo**. **Robin Cox** gave in memory of **Roland & Elizabeth Smith**. **Adonis De Jesus** gave in memory of **Joshua De Jesus**. **Linda DeLong** gave in memory of her father **Antonio Arriola**. **Jo-Lynne DeNapoli** gave "in loving memory" of

Jeff Maurer. **Raymond Elliott** gave in memory of **Emily Gere**. **John Gant** gave in memory of **Mary Gant**. **Anne Gomes** gave in memory of **Bernard Baker**. **Fred Gottlieb** gave in memory of **Phyllis Gottlieb**.

Karen Hess gave "in honor of my people, the **Kutzedika'a**. They are the reason I am here. They lived in the Basin and survived from the Lake. It's an honor to be a **Paiute Kutzedika'a** descendant." **Mervin Hess** gave in memory of his parents **Barbara & Earl Hess**, "who are indigenous **Kusavi** natives of Mono Lake." **Robert Jacobs** gave in memory of **Edith Gaines**. **Barbara Kubarych** gave in memory of **Jack Copeland**. **Audrey Lin** gave in memory of "my larger-than-life brother" **E-Tom Lin**. **Mary Martinez** and **Marilyn Lockhart** gave in memory of **John Houtz**, "who loved hiking and skiing in the Sierra."

Beth Mendoza gave in memory of **Bill Mendoza**. **Zach Moe & Victoria Weaver** gave in memory of **Bill Askin**. **Angela Moskow** gave in memory of **Neil Lyons**. **David Myers** gave in memory of his wife **Anne Vaccaro**. **Nicole Nedeff** gave in memory of **Kevin Dummer**. **Corky Oakes** gave in memory of her sister **Joanne Simonds**.

Jack & Judy Obedzinski gave in memory of **Mary Ann Reis**. **Rose Reis-Jackson** gave in honor of **Charles & Mary Ann Reis**, who "always loved their time in nature, visiting **Greg** and seeing his important work in the Mono Basin."

Marc Picard gave in memory of **Richard Picard**. **Suzanne Portello** gave in memory of **Jane Neale**. **Ted Schade** gave in memory of "my hero"

Andrea Lawrence. **Kimberly Taylor** gave "to honor the life of **Rebecca Kuga**." **Georgette Theotig** gave in memory of **Genny Smith**. **Alison Turner** gave "in thanksgiving for **Hilda & Henry Jarvis Turner**." **Sherrill Van Sickle** gave in memory of **Kathy Scott**, "librarian and adventurer."

Robert Vestal gave in memory of his parents **Elden & Mary Vestal**, "for Elden's role in helping to save Mono Lake using documentation of his field work in the Mono Basin and for Mary's role in supporting Elden in saving his voluminous field notes for many years." **Peter Vorster** gave in memory of **Jim Matzorkis**. **Theresa Voss** gave in memory of **Lorraine Voss**. **Judith Williams** gave in memory of her grandmother **Clara Williams**. **Marlene Zoellner** gave in memory of her father **Donald Zoellner**.

Martha Davis, **Karen Hegtvedt**, **David Rorick**, **Peter Vorster**, and **Bryan Wilson** made donations in memory of **Patrick Flinn**.

Erica Buhrmann gave a gift in memory of **David Gaines**, "whose life was too short but who accomplished so much," as did **Stephen Cunha**, **Barry Eben**, **Marsh Pitman**, and **Jeff Burch & Christine Weigen**.

Karen Baiotto, **Mary & Bill Barham**, **Joe Hermida**, and **Eileen Oros** made donations in memory of **Kay Oswald**.

We received gifts in memory of **Bob Ulvang** from **Marcia Black**, **Richard Green**, **Mary Edna Harrell**, **Chris MacIntosh**, **Rebecca Robbins**, **David Rorick**, **Lorna Schwartz**, **Larry Silver & Sue Edelstein**, **Katherine Simmonds**, and **Renna Ulvang**. ❖



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