



**SIERRA
CLUB**



RANGE OF LIGHT GROUP

Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club
Inyo and Mono Counties
P. O. Box 1973, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
Email: rangeoflight.sc@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/toiyabe/range-light>

Meetup: <http://www.meetup.com/ROLG-SierraClub-Outings-Meetup/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Range-of-Light-Group/464737966890277>

January 2020

TO RANGE OF LIGHT GROUP MEMBERS AND FRIENDS,

You are receiving this message because you are a member of the Range of Light Group, have recently attended one of our activities, or have requested our e-newsletter. If you wish to be removed from the list, click reply, and put "remove me from the ROLG list" in the subject line. Please ignore the spam block message you may receive - your message will get through. Thanks!

*****MONTHLY MEETINGS/EVENTS** – *"If by some fiat I had to restrict all this writing to one sentence, this is the one I would choose: The summit of Mt. Everest is marine limestone."* [John McPhee](#)

Let us know – what topics you would like to hear about from a climate-change related speaker. Email chairrolg@gmail.com, 760-914-9016, with your thoughts. Here are some starter ideas: micro-grids, purchase power agreements, community choice aggregates, building green, upgrading your home to conserve energy, climate change impacts in the Eastern Sierra, biomass energy...

*****OUTINGS, ACTIVITIES** – *"In all things of nature there is something of the marvelous."* Aristotle

Become an outings leader and share your love of those special places! New leader? It only requires taking a short online training and a CPR/First Aid certificate. Let Dick know if you can lead a winter outing: rhihn@skidmore.edu.



*Pick up a **blue diamond** route map at the Mammoth Lakes Visitor's Center and XC ski the **blue diamond** routes this winter.* Please report any snowmobile violations that you see while skiing or snowshoeing. Take photos and note the date and location. We need to let the Forest Service know about conflicts between skiers and snowmobiles. Send comments to the Forest Service Supervisor of the Inyo National Forest, Tammy Randall-Parker, tkrandallparker@fs.fed.us.

It would also be helpful to use the Mountain Hub app to record your non-motorized recreational outing: <https://app.mountainhub.com/explore?lat=40&lng=-111&z=4>.

WHAT TO BRING ON WINTER OUTINGS: Prepare for a variety of conditions. Bring water, lunch and snacks, layered clothing, hats, gloves, sunglasses, sun-block, appropriate ski or snowshoe equipment.

Watch for information on ROLG WEBSITE <http://www.sierraclub.org/toiyabe/range-light>, FACEBOOK <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Range-of-Light-Group/464737966890277>, OUTINGS MEETUP <http://www.meetup.com/ROLG-SierraClub-Outings-Meetup/>, and LOCAL MEDIA (not always accurate.).

IMPORTANT: WINTER OUTINGS DESTINATIONS ARE DEPENDENT UPON WEATHER CONDITIONS. ABOMINABLE WEATHER CANCELS. PLEASE CONTACT LEADER AHEAD OF TIME. ALL OUTINGS INCLUDE CONSERVATION EDUCATION.

- ***Sunday, January 12, Ski Inyo Craters.*** Explore the Inyo Craters area, both off and on groomed trails, depending on the snow conditions, covering 5-6 miles in about 3 hours, with a break for lunch. Advanced-beginner ski level, and well-behaved dogs welcome. Meet and carpool from ML Union Bank parking lot, 10am. For more information, contact leader, Ann annleithliter@gmail.com, 415-939-5303.
- ***Sunday, January 19, Snowshoe Knolls, Scenic Loop Rd. To Shady Rest.*** A 5-mile leisurely snowshoe hike in the Knolls from the Scenic Loop Road trailhead to the ballpark parking lot at Shady Rest, returning mid-afternoon. The first half is mostly flat to rolling terrain, and the remainder is mostly downhill. Car shuttle required. Adjustments may be made for snow conditions and car availability. Meet ML Union Bank parking lot, 9am, to carpool. Well-behaved dogs OK. Skiers welcome, but group will travel at a snowshoeing pace. For more information, contact leader, Dick rhihn@skidmore.edu, 760-709-5050. Please RSVP!
- ***Sunday, January 26, Ski Lookout Mountain Loop.*** Cross-country ski or snowshoe the relatively flat, groomed snowmobile trail east of Hwy 395 on a 5.4 mile view loop around Lookout Mountain. Plan to be out about 4 hours including a lunch stop. Well-behaved dogs welcome. Snow conditions may require alternate plans. Meet ML Union Bank parking lot, 10am. For more information, contact leader, Vivian barrontoo@gmail.com, 510-414-9948. RVSP's appreciated so we know to wait for you at the bank!

******TAKE ACTION** – “*We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence is not an act but a habit.*” Aristotle

- **SHADY REST PARK WINTER USE AND RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP.** The Town of Mammoth Lakes and the Inyo National Forest are reminding residents and visitors about proper dog etiquette and to inform recreation users of the existing laws pertaining to responsible dog ownership in Shady Rest Park and on the Shady Rest Nordic Trails. The prevalence of dogs off leash at Shady Rest Park and the overwhelming amount of dog waste found there is not only a major safety concern for staff, but an escalating environmental issue and significant health risk for the community. Per Inyo National [Forest Order 04-93-1](#), it is prohibited to be on the Shady Rest Designated Cross-Country Ski Trail (those specifically groomed for Nordic skiing) without skis and allowing dogs to be on the trail (36 CFR 261.55(a)). [Leave No Trace principles](#) for visitors to national forest lands includes dogs. The Town of Mammoth Lakes Municipal Code “Prohibits dogs and cats on park property unless kept on a leash at all times and under full control of the owner. The removal of feces of animals who defecate on park property is required of the owner or custodian of the animal.” The fine for non-compliance is \$150 per violation. Per 36 CFR 261.16 (j) dogs must be on leash within a developed recreation site. U. S. Forest Service fines \$180 for failure to comply with these rules. More: <https://dogtrekker.com/yp/inyo-national->

[forest-Bishop-93514](#) , Stuart Brown, Parks and Recreation Director & Public Information Officer, 760-965-3696, sbrown@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov, www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov; Deb Schweizer, Public Affairs Officer, Inyo National Forest, 760-873-2427, debra.schweizer@usda.gov.

- Sign our “Ready for 100” petition to encourage Mammoth’s leaders to prioritize 100% renewable energy: [Mammoth is Ready for 100% Renewable Energy — AddUp.org](#). More: Lynn chairrolg@gmail.com, 760-914-9016.

******CONSERVATION** – “*The power of imagination makes us infinite.*” John Muir

For more information on any of the following items, contact Malcolm, ROLG Conservation Chair, wmalcolm.clark@gmail.com.

- **Well #385, in the Five Bridges area** near Bishop, was shut down more than 30 years ago because of negative impacts. When LADWP announced a drilling project for this well, Sierra Club and the Owens Valley Committee sued. An agreement was reached in December to allow a two-month test operation this winter of any effect of pumping from the deep aquifer on 29 area wells. More: <https://www.sierrawave.net/ladwp-inyo-agree-to-test-run-on-well-385/>.
- The LADWP is studying the possibility of storing large quantities of excess water runoff from the eastern Sierra in the **deep aquifer under Owens Lake**, to be used to mitigate dust pollution. More: <https://ktla.com/2019/12/29/1-a-may-store-water-under-an-owens-valley-lake-it-drained-to-fill-the-aqueduct/>.
- The National Park Service has been following up on the Trump administration directive to allow **e-bikes on public lands** trails which allow non-motorized bikes. In California, Death Valley National park is among the units listed for e-bike usage. This has led to a lawsuit supported by various environmental groups challenging the directive. More: <https://forestpolicypub.com/2019/12/05/lawsuit-filed-to-restore-e-bikes-ban-in-national-parks/>.
- The new 2019 **Land Management Plan** for the Inyo National Forest (replacing the 1988 plan) received final approval and is in effect as of November 24, 2019. More: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/inyo/landmanagement/planning>.
- **Owens Valley Groundwater Basin (OVGB) and the Groundwater sustainability act.** The basin was originally listed as a medium priority, requiring the formation of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan with responsibility to develop and administer the plan, leading to the formation of the Owens Valley Groundwater Agency. Subsequently, the OVGB was categorized as low priority, no longer mandated to have either a groundwater agency or plan. See the final prioritization report for all 515 groundwater basins at: <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Basin-Prioritization>.
- **Winter Travel Planning (e.g., use of Over Snow Vehicles – OSV) for the Inyo National Forest.** In the final Record of Decision for the 2019 Inyo Forest Management Plan, recreational travel planning will be done through completion of Subpart C of the Travel Management Plan. The scoping process should begin by October 2020. More: https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd673808.pdf, p. 17, 37. The process was suspended pending completion of the new Forest Management Plan. Development of a plan for winter OSV use is required by the Forest Service’s 2015 Over-Snow Vehicle Rule. More: <https://winterwildlands.org/winter-travel-planning/>
- Remember the **flooding in 2017** when the spillways at the Oroville Dam crumbled during heavy rains? The US Army Corp of Engineers has been looking at all of its 700 dams for possible dangers due to catastrophic climatic events. Recently the Corp announced that it was changing the risk characterization of the Mojave River Dam from low to high urgency of action, finding

that in an extreme storm event the dam could be breached and threaten Apple Valley, Barstow, Hesperia, and Victorville. More: <https://apnews.com/931458e0cb3c414eb9ebe6a25a98ad12>.

- Although **coal CO2 emissions** still exceed those of natural gas globally, CO2 emissions from natural gas have now surpassed those of coal in the USA and Europe. The irony is that natural gas was promoted as a replacement for coal power energy as a means of decreasing coal usage and emissions. Now we have CO2 from both sources in increasing amounts. More: <https://www.eenews.net/stories/1061760587>

Following is a list of environment issues that ROLG has been active in since the beginning of the year. ROLG is looking for members to become involved in one or more of these issues to help those currently addressing these issues. For more information contact Malcolm wmalcolm.clark@gmail.com, or Lynn chairrolg@gmail.com.

- **Keep Long Valley Green**
- **Bi-state Sage Grouse**
- **Haiwee Geothermal Expansion**
- **Radius Gold for exploration activity in the Bodie Hills**
- **Gold mining on Conglomerate Mesa**
- **Exploratory wells in the Panamint Valley (Inyo County)**
- **Inyo-Mono Integrated Regional Water Management Group**
- **Tangle Free Waters project**
- **Pumped Storage projects**
- **Owens Valley Ground Water Authority**
- **USFS cattle grazing leases in Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest near Bridgeport**
- **Renewable energy and fighting climate change in Mono County**
- **Campaign to protect the Bodie Hills from mining**

******GREEN LIFE** – “We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.”
Native American Proverb

- **ICYMI: 2019, the Year in Good News. Get the whole list:**
https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/icymi/icymi-2019-year-good-news?suppress=true&utm_source=greenlife&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter
- **And The Most Important Environmental Stories Of 2019:**
https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/most-important-environmental-stories-2019?suppress=true&utm_source=greenlife&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter.
- **Read more green ideas on [The Green Life blog](#).**

******OF INTEREST** – “The difference between genius and stupidity - genius has its limits.” *Albert Einstein*

- In December, the California Fish and Game Commission approved five of six populations of foothill **yellow-legged frog** for endangered or threatened status under the California Endangered Species Act. More: <https://biologicaldiversity.org/w/news/press-releases/imperiled-yellow-legged-frogs-protected-under-californias-endangered-species-act-2019-12-11/>.
- In November, the US Fish and Wildlife Service responded to petitions to list the **California spotted owl** as endangered or threatened. More: <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/FR-2019-11-08/2019-24336>.

- Google maps has added to its ability to help you find an **electric charging station** for your EV (electric vehicle). More: <https://www.extremetech.com/mobile/303487-google-maps-can-filter-ev-charger-search-results-by-plug-type>.
- The California Air Resources Board has eliminated **rebates for electric and hybrid vehicles** that cost more than \$60,000. More: <https://apnews.com/fd8f133957b8e6675035f41025635510>.
- In December, **California temporarily banned insurance companies from dropping fire insurance** for people whose homes are in or adjacent to zip codes hit by recent wildfire. Insurance payments for 2017 and 2018 wiped out a quarter century of profits of the affected insurance companies. More: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/05/climate/california-fire-insurance-climate.html>."
- In October, California announced that beginning in January the state would stop buying vehicles from GM, Toyota and Fiat Chrysler – companies that have supported President Trump’s effort to rescind **California’s right to set its own vehicle mileage standards**. More: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-autos-emissions-california/california-to-stop-buying-gm-toyota-and-fiat-chrysler-vehicles-over-emissions-fight-idUSKBN1XS2B2>.

******YOUR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** – *“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader.” John Quincy Adams*

- **ROLG ExCom:** Lesley Bruns is retiring from the ExCom and Vivian Barron is coming on starting January 1. Lesley has put in many years of service to the group as secretary, organizer of some of our events, and contributor to and editor of comment letters that we send to agencies regarding issues. **THANK YOU, LESLEY**, we will miss you.
- **Volunteers Needed: *One person can make a big difference!*** The ROLG needs Executive Committee (ExCom) members, an Outings chair, and a Programs chair. The ExCom meets 6 times a year and can conference-in members from remote locations. Requirements? Be a current Sierra Club member, support the group’s activities when possible, and have a good heart for the environment. ***If interested in helping out in any of these positions, contact Lynn at 760-914-9016, chairrolg@gmail.com.***
- The **next ROLG ExCom meeting:** Monday, Feb 3, 11am at Vivian’s house. Open to all members. More: Vivian, barrontoo@gmail.com
- **Next Toiyabe Chapter meeting:** Feb 8, Las Vegas, 8:30am-4:30pm. All members are welcome to attend. More information: Lynn chairrolg@gmail.com, 760-914-9016.
- **Next deadline** for submissions to the Chapter newsletter, **Toiyabe Trails**, March 1. More: Lynne, lfoster@schat.net.
- ***Join Our Conservation Team and help save your favorite Sierra places!*** More: Malcolm, wmalcolm.clark@gmail.com, 760-924-5639.
- ***ROLG now has a donate button up and running on the website.*** Tax deductible donations go to the ROLG Foundation account, non-deductible donations go directly to the ROLG as unrestricted funds. Check it out!

******FROM SIERRA CLUB NATIONAL** – *“It is horrifying that we have to fight our own government to save the environment.” Ansel Adams*

- **Go Solar and Support the Toiyabe Chapter!** The Sierra Club has partnered with SunPower. When you contract with SunPower to install solar panels on your roof, you will receive a \$1,000 mail-in rebate. PLUS, the Toiyabe Chapter will receive \$500 to support our work. Now is a great time to take “charge” of your commitment to climate action. More: Lynn chairrolg@gmail.com, 760-914-9016.