



# SIERRA CLUB



## RANGE OF LIGHT GROUP

Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club  
Inyo and Mono Counties  
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Email: [rangeoflight.sc@gmail.com](mailto: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>

## March 2020

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### **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!*

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\*\*\*\***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](#)

- **Thursday, April 2, 7:00pm, free film showing.** "Happening: A Clean Energy Revolution" (2017) at the USFS Auditorium in Mammoth Lakes. Followed by a panel discussion and Q&A about solutions to fight climate change. Mark your calendars! If you would like to help out, please contact Lynn, [chairrolg@gmail.com](mailto:chairrolg@gmail.com).

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\*\*\*\***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](mailto:rhihn@skidmore.edu).

**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, March 1, Mammoth Scenic Loop West Side.** If going or need information, please RSVP to Vivian at 510-414-9948. Meet at ML Union Bank parking lot, 10am. Explore the west side of the Mammoth Scenic Loop on a 5 or 10 mile loop depending on weather, snow conditions, and the interest of the group members. Ski through trees, gently rolling meadows, and around an earthquake dome at a pace of about 3 miles an hour. Well-behaved dogs welcome.



- **Sunday, March 22, Ski Knolls Or Inyo Crater Area.** For information, please contact Ann Leithliter 760-934-9721, [annleithliter@gmail.com](mailto:annleithliter@gmail.com). Meet at ML Union Bank parking lot, 10am. Hoping for a Miracle March, we will be heading out on a wonderful spring ski in the Mammoth Knolls or Inyo Craters area. The itinerary will be determined by the snow conditions, so more information will be available closer to the date of the outing. We will go 5-6miles and be out for 3-4 hours, depending on the group. Well-behaved dogs are welcome.

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

- **Support us!** At the March 17, Mono County Board of Supervisors meeting in Mammoth, ROLG will be asking the board to hire a consultant to put together a plan for developing a micro-grid for the new Civic Center facility. Please come and show your support. The Civic Center is the county’s command center in a disaster, and essential services could island off the grid with microgrids. It is important that the building function in a limited capacity during a grid failure or power outage. Adding solar panels to the facility helps offset the energy bill and greenhouse gasses. Battery storage creates backup power and more importantly lowers the energy bill by using battery storage instead of the grid during peak times. Learn about microgrids at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVlIPoV3Va4>. More: Lynn, [chairrolg@gmail.com](mailto:chairrolg@gmail.com).
- **Get your voice in! March 26 Mammoth Lakes ESSRP Workshop**—come! The goals of the Eastern Sierra Recreation Partnership (ESSRP) are to “design, plan, implement, and report out projects to improve and maintain recreational opportunities as well as restore ecosystems to their natural resiliency and functions.” ESSRP needs to hear from those concerned with the impacts of recreation and the need for *eco*-sustainable recreation. More: Inyo Register, [https://www.inyoregister.com/sites/default/files/IR%20E-01.16.20\\_0.pdf](https://www.inyoregister.com/sites/default/files/IR%20E-01.16.20_0.pdf), <https://www.essrp.org>, Lynn, [chairrolg@gmail.com](mailto:chairrolg@gmail.com).
- **Write a letter! One and only chance to comment!** USFS’s Notice of Proposed Action for Woolly’s Adventure Summit and snowmaking expansion on Mammoth Mountain, more information at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54453>. MMSA is asking for permits to install additional snowmaking equipment on existing ski runs (206 more acres), 2 new wells, expand Woolly’s tubing area and the snow play area, add a mountain coaster, add a zip coaster, add 2 ropes course, expand the parking lot, build a lodge at Woolly’s, and relocate Mammoth Snowmobile Adventures to Woolly’s. Comments are due by **March 16**. Possible discussion points: Could MMSA buy carbon offsets for increased greenhouse gases? Will the new lodge be all-electric and LEED certified? Why is the groundwater modeling going to happen after the project begins? What are the impacts of a 20% loss of the pumped water not going back into the ground over a prolonged drought? Is anything added to the water for snowmaking that would seep back into the ground with recharge? Will there be any groundwater testing for salt? Was

evaporation factored into the recharge calculation? Will the USFS have a groundwater management plan to monitor all the wells that MMSA uses and set trigger points or caps when well water levels drop too low? Should this NOPA be broken into two projects: Woolly's and snowmaking? More: Lynn, [chairrolg@gmail.com](mailto:chairrolg@gmail.com).

- ***NEPA threatened.*** The Trump administration recently announced changes to the National Environmental Policy Act that would seriously weaken both the Act and an average person's ability to learn about and comment on federal government decisions. Our clean air, water, wildlife and special wild places are at stake. Comments on these damaging changes are due March 10. More information and how to submit comments: <https://mailchi.mp/3f4c8652766c/protect-your-voice-for-the-environment?e=9ac4213852>, or Fran Hunt at [fran.hunt@sierraclub.org](mailto:fran.hunt@sierraclub.org).
- ***Tuesday, March 3, 6-8pm Public workshop: at the Lee Vining Community Center.*** The last public opportunity to learn about the Tioga Inn project. The project proposes a major expansion to the Tioga Gas Mart that will adversely impact the Mono Basin and the community of Lee Vining. [More](#)
- The BLM and Inyo National Forest will be submitting to the California State Parks **Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR)** preliminary applications for grant funds to enhance and manage motorized recreation. Comments due by May 4, detailed instructions about the process and how to comment at [www.ohv.parks.ca.gov/](http://www.ohv.parks.ca.gov/).
- **VOLUNTEERS SOUGHT** to help table in Bishop - Banff Film Festival, March 27 and 28; and Earth Day, April 18. More: Lynn, [chairrolg@gmail.com](mailto:chairrolg@gmail.com).

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\*\*\*\***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](mailto:wmalcolm.clark@gmail.com), or Lynn, [chairrolg@gmail.com](mailto:chairrolg@gmail.com).**

- ***Quick updates on current issues:***
  - **LORP:** The 2019 Draft LORP Annual Report is out and this year it includes an overview of the project after 13 years of re-watering the lower part of the Owens River. (See [all annual reports here](#).) Recommendations for this year are: 1) to pole-plant or seed willows and cottonwoods, 2) move the timing of the seasonal habitat flow up to early May when water is cooler, 3) reduce the amount of water in summer in the Blackrock Waterfowl and Delta Habitat areas and increase them in fall and spring, and 4) do an electro shock fish survey. The ROLG supports these recommendations.
  - **8 USFS Road Segment Transfers to Inyo County:** Inyo County is asking for an easement or a 5-year conditional use permit for 8 segments of roads that are in the USFS. These are all existing roads that are maintained by Inyo County. This transfer would allow the County to expand the Adventure Trails Pilot Program to include routes that would include these segments. ROLG, FOI, CBD, SNBS Foundation and School of Lost Borders submitted comment letters along with many individuals asking for an environmental report, expressing concerns for the proposal, or opposing it. [For more information](#).
  - **Haiwee Pumped Storage:** FERC recently sent Premium Energy a letter requesting more information i.e. where the soil surveys, core holes, test pits, rock/soil structure surveys, etc. would be done. Premium Energy responded, but provided general areas where tests would be conducted; not specific locations. [Premium Energy's letter](#)
  - **Panamint Valley Lithium Exploration:** Drilling at the four sites started. Two of the drill holes have been done: the northern most one by Indian Ranch Road and one across the playa from Ballarat. The last two are probably in progress.

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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](mailto:wmalcolm.clark@gmail.com), or Lynn [chairrolg@gmail.com](mailto:chairrolg@gmail.com).

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- **Keep Long Valley Green**
- **Radius Gold exploration activity in the Bodie Hills**
- **Gold mining on Conglomerate Mesa**
- **Exploratory wells in the Panamint Valley (Inyo County)**
- **Tangle Free Waters project**
- **Pumped Storage projects**
- **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**

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

- In a major win for environmental organizations and Indigenous groups, JPMorgan Chase announced that it will not finance **oil and gas extraction in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge**, nor will it continue financing many coal-related enterprises, including thermal coal mines and coal-fired power plants across the world. [Read more about this great news.](#)

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\*\*\*\***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

- **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](mailto:chairrolg@gmail.com).***
- **Next ROLG ExCom meeting:** Friday, March 27, 2:30 pm, Starbucks on 203, Mammoth Lakes. Open to all members.
- **Next Toiyabe Chapter meeting:** Thursday, March 26, 7 pm as a conference call. Members are welcome to attend. For more information contact Lynn Boulton: [chairrolg@gmail.com](mailto:chairrolg@gmail.com).
- **Next deadline** for submissions to the Chapter newsletter, *Toiyabe Trails*, June 1. More: Lynne, [lfoster@schat.net](mailto:lfoster@schat.net).
- **Join Our Conservation Team and help save your favorite Sierra places!** More: Malcolm, [wmalcolm.clark@gmail.com](mailto: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!