



ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS OF NEVADA AND THE EASTERN SIERRA FROM THE TOIYABE CHAPTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB

From the Chair

BY JEAN STOESS

Looking back at 2011

Members of Toiyabe Chapter were involved in a variety of issues this year, some highly controversial and many involving time-eating reading of reports, writing, lobbying, etc.

Our losses . . .

- we opposed the Nevada Dept. of Wildlife's and the Wildlife Commission's ill-advised bear hunt to no avail (however, see this page for National Sierra Club support of our position)
members north and south testified before the Legislature and did media interviews against SB 271, the bill threatening to remove Nevada from the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, but we lost when it passed in the final 15 minutes of the Legislative session
we sent a mailer to all Sierra Club voters in Congressional District 2, and telephoned and canvassed for Kate Marshall's unsuccessful run for the CD 2 open seat

On the positive side . . .

- Toiyabe Chapter members deeply involved in opposing the Southern Nevada Water Authority's attempt to pipe water from central Nevada counties to Las Vegas won a major court case and attracted media coverage of the large, vocal turnouts they generate for hearings on this issue
a Sierra Club Tahoe Task Force was formed to help defuse SB 271 (see above) by cooperating with other Tahoe non-profits - the TF tabled at the Lake Tahoe Summit
the Chapter's dedicated Energy

Please see FROM THE CHAIR, page 2.



Yet another good reason to enjoy and protect the Bodie Hills: their Fall colors! (Photo: Drew Foster.)

Chapter & Group 2011 election results

BY JEAN STOESS

OUR CHAPTER'S 2012 EXCOM HAS three new faces and broader geographical representation for the coming year. Election Committee members Jean Stoess, David von Seggern, and Mary Winston counted the ballots returned on December 11 at Marge Sill's house in Reno and released the results the following day.

Chapter Excom results. New members of the Chapter Excom are Laurel Ames, K.C. Brekken, and Laura Cunningham. Erik Holland and David Hornbeck were re-elected. These newly elected and re-elected Sierra Clubbers will join incumbent Excom members

Please see EXCOM ELECTION RESULTS, page 2.

Joe Johnson wins Golden Pinecone Award

BY JEAN STOESS

"JOE JOHNSON WAS THE PIED PIPER OF THE RENEWABLE power movement before it was fashionable. He has great institutional knowledge of what works and doesn't work in renewable energy in the Legislature," said emcee Assemblyman David Bobzien at Nevada Econet's Golden Pinecone Ball on November 16 in Reno. Assemblyman Bobzien presented long-time Sierra Club member Joe Johnson with a Golden Pinecone plaque.

Nevada Econet cited Joe's instrumental role in developing and guiding Nevada's growing energy regulatory and incentive structure. They also lauded his representation of private non-profit interests in the Legislature and his service on the Nevada Environmental Commission.

This wasn't Joe's first public compliments of the week. Two days earlier, at a meeting of the Legislature's Oversight Committee on TRPA, Senator John



Joe Johnson accepting the Golden Pinecone Award from Assemblyman David Bobzien (left). (Photo: Dave Hornbeck.)

Lee unexpectedly called on Joe to speak about the Sierra Club's position, and complimented him at length about his lobbying skills as the red-faced lobbyist walked to the podium.

Toiyabe Chapter and other Lake Tahoe lovers will rely heavily on Joe's lobbying skills to keep us informed and effective in dealing with the

legislative fallout from SB 271, the bill threatening to remove Nevada from the TRPA.

National Sierra Club Wildlife Committee opposes Nevada bear hunt

The statement below was prepared by Renee Owens, M.Sc. for the September 2011 Nevada Wildlife Commission Meeting.

We, The Sierra Club Wildlife & Endangered Species Committee, are writing this letter to inform you (State Board of Wildlife Commissioners) of the position adopted by the Wildlife & Endangered Species Committee of the National Sierra Club in regard to your Board's proposal to support a continuing annual black bear hunt in the state of Nevada. Please enter our comments into the public record.

Please see NEVADA BEAR HUNT, page 2.

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DEADLINE! MARCH 1 FOR APR-MAY-JUNE ISSUE



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FROM THE CHAIR ...

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Committee meets by teleconference every Tuesday evening and digests reams of material about energy, particularly renewable energy

- work continues on issues begun in previous years, such as the Ruby Pipeline, conservation, wildlife, wilderness, public lands, water quality and availability

- work also continues on administrative tasks such as fundraising, public relations, internal elections, and political campaigns

- our four vibrant groups have interesting and well-attended programs and activities, which include outings, meetings, fun get-togethers

- all the above information continues to be available from our Toiyabe Trails newsletter, both in hard copy and on the internet

It has been a busy year for me as Chapter Chair, and I am honored to have served with so many knowledgeable and dedicated Sierra Club people.

NEVADA BEAR HUNT ...

continued from page 1

After careful consideration and investigation of all the information at hand, we strongly oppose the pending authorization by the Wildlife Commission of an annual black bear hunt in Nevada, based on the following:

1. The Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) has not satisfactorily met the burden of proof that an annual hunt of the resident black bear population is sustainable.

2. There is no evidence to show that either by direct action or by the utilization of fees collected for hunting permits that an annual hunt will reduce the number of nuisance bear incidents.

3. A decision by the Wildlife Commissioners to authorize an annual bear hunt would not support the interests of the majority consensus nor the public trust.

— contributed by Tina Nappe

EXCOM ELECTION ...

continued from page 1

Ann Brauer, Jane Feldman, Launce Rake, and Mary Winston at the January 21 Excom meeting in Las Vegas.

Great Basin Group ExCom results. Those elected to Great Basin Group's Excom are *Jeff Hardcastle, Jen Huntley, Martin Mace, and Graham Stafford.*

Range of Light Group ExCom results. Members elected to the Range of Light Excom are *Lesley Bruns, Sandra Burnside, and Michael Shore.*

S. Nevada Group ExCom results. The first four highest vote-getters of Southern Nevada Group's new Excom members, who were elected to two-year terms, are *Taj Ainlay, Jr.; Jane Feldman; Eric King; and Brian Fadie.* *Gecko Benjamin and Scott Stevens* were elected to one-year terms.

DEADLINE!
MARCH 1
FOR APR-MAY-JUNE ISSUE

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Environmental
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Toiyabe Trails



SERVING NEVADA
& CALIFORNIA'S E. SIERRA

Toiyabe Trails is published four times each year by the Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club, P.O. Box 8096, Reno, NV 89507, to help keep our members well-informed and better able to protect the environment—for our families, for our future.

Editor – Lynne Foster (94 Mountain View Drive, Swall Meadows, Bishop, CA 93514-9207; 760-387-2634; lfoster@schat.net).

Assoc. Editor – Kathy Morey (760-938-2050). Kathy usually does one issue each year.

Deadlines – Contributions are due by the 1st of the month for publication in the following month's issue: December 1 for January-February-March; March 1 for April-May-June; June 1 for July-August-September; September 1 for October-November-December.

Submissions – Call or e-mail editor before deadline for late submissions. Submit news, story ideas, photos, and letters-to-the-editor to the editor (contact info above). Please include your name, phone, e-mail address, and group with all contributions. Please send your contributions by e-mail. If you don't have a computer, please ask a friend to help you. For photo return, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The *Toiyabe Trails* reserves the right to edit all contributions for reasons of space, clarity, slander, or libel.

Subscriptions – *Toiyabe Trails* is free to all Toiyabe Chapter members. Subscription cost for non-members is \$12 per year. To subscribe, send check for \$12, payable to "Toiyabe Chapter," to *Toiyabe Trails* Subscriptions, Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter, c/o Treasurer. Contact Treasurer, Glenn Miller (775-846-4516) for address.

Change of address – Postmaster & Members, please send address changes to Sierra Club, Change of Address, P. O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968 or <address.changes@sierraclub.org>.

Membership information – There is a membership coupon in each issue of *Toiyabe Trails*. You can also call the Chapter Membership Chair (see Chapter Directory, this page) or the Sierra Club office in San Francisco (415-977-5663).

Other Sierra Club information. Call the Toiyabe Chapter Chair or Conservation Chair (see Chapter Directory, this page) or the Sierra Club Information Center in San Francisco (415-977-5653). Also, see group pages for website addresses of groups.

In Memoriam

Elden Hughes

Years ago, Elden Hughes, accompanied by his wife Patty, prowled the halls of Congress with rescued desert tortoises in their care, speaking out for the protection of the Mojave Desert. The tortoises were the come-on, the words came from Elden in his unmistakable baritone. The message achieved its goal: the passage of the California Desert Protection Act first introduced by Alan Cranston and then carried to its fulfillment by Dianne Feinstein.



This iconic photo of Elden in communion with a baby tortoise was taken when he was a guest of President Clinton at the 1994 signing of the California Desert Protection Act. (Photo: © Axel Koester.)*

Elden, along with colleagues Judy Anderson and Jim Dodson, was later honored with the Sierra Club's highest honor, the John Muir Award.

When Elden died in early December 2011, at the age of 80, he could look back upon leading the protection of even more lands than the Desert Act. Working behind the scenes, he helped to engineer the purchase of former railroad lands in the desert by the Wild Lands Conservancy. He foresaw the opportunities to acquire land now called Wind Wolves in the the southern San Joaquin Valley and the need for a conservancy to protect the connecting lands of the huge Tejon Ranch.

.....
"Get what you can, can what you get, and sit on the can."

— Elden Hughes

.....
 He was a visionary, yes, but he was also a practical, down-to-earth environmental activist who made the phone calls, wrote the letters, and organized the effort. Like John Muir he could talk to senators and dusty desert rats without patronizing or condescension.

My connection with Elden began about 40 years ago at Fossil Falls, south of Olancho on Highway 395, climbing rocks and singing bawdy songs. Many years later I was privileged to appoint him as Chair of the California Nevada Regional Conservation Committee's Desert Committee.

Elden built that committee into a vital force in the Sierra Club. Its quarterly meetings continue to attract environmental leaders from throughout the West as well as BLM and National Park Service staff.

He and Patty conceived, developed, and published the Desert Report ([Winter Desert Trips](http://www.deser-</p>
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The CNRCC Desert Committee's purpose is to work for protection, preservation, and conservation of California/Nevada desert.

All Desert Committee activities, unless stated otherwise, are suitable for anyone who enjoys the outdoors. The average car or high clearance vehicle will be adequate for most trips. For a good guide to desert travel we recommend the Sierra Club book, *Adventuring in the California Desert*, by Lynne Foster.

For questions about, or to sign up for, a particular outing, please contact leader listed in write-up. For questions about Desert Committee outings in general, or to receive outings list by e-mail, please contact Kate Allen (kjallen96@gmail.com, 661-944-4056).

Sierra Club California/Nevada
Regional Conservation Committee

JAN. 20-22 (FRI-SUN)

DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK
WILDERNESS RESTORATION

Come help restore wilderness values in this beautiful and remote desert area. Work with Death Valley Wilderness Coordinator, Charlie Callagan. Past projects have included re-landscaping former OHV routes now in wilderness, trail repair, and cleaning up around historic cabins. Meet early Friday afternoon and begin working. Happy hour potluck Saturday night. Friday and Saturday night camping may be primitive or may be in one of the Park's campgrounds. Leader: Kate Allen (kj.allen96@gmail.com, 661-944-4056).

CNRCC Desert Committee

JAN. 28-29 (SAT-SUN)

WINTER ESCAPE IN CARRIZO PLAIN

Combine a day of assistance to Carrizo National Monument with a day of sightseeing and/or hiking. Weather can be cold, gray, and rainy, or it can be warm and bright -- we take our chances. The service will be in removing or modifying fences to give pronghorn greater mobility on the Plain. Recreation will be determined by the group's wishes. An opportunity to combine car camping, day hiking, exploring, and service in a relatively unknown wilderness. Leader: Craig Deutsche (craig.deutsche@gmail.com, 310-477-6670).

CNRCC Desert Committee

FEB. 18-20 (SAT-MON)

EXPLORE & SERVE IN
GRASS VALLEY WILDERNESS

Slightly east and south of Ridgecrest, CA, Grass Valley Wilderness was created in 1994. It features rolling hills and a few higher rock outcroppings. As it is no longer available for grazing we will join a group of college age SCA interns in removing old fence poles and disguising an illegal

treport.org), a publication sent to local, state, and national political leaders and bureaus as well as many of you. Check out the early issues for Elden's columns.

One of my favorite Elden sayings on land protection is: "Get what you can, can what you get, and sit on the can." My favorite statement about Elden came from some corporate insider attending a hearing in Los Angeles at which the water resources of the Mojave were up for grabs. Reportedly, that guy was overheard whispering to another corporate type, "This man is dangerous."

— by Cal French

road. Saturday and Sunday are for work. Monday, President's Day, will be reserved for hiking and exploring the Wilderness. An opportunity to combine car camping, day hiking, exploring, and service in a relatively unknown wilderness. Leader: Craig Deutsche (310-477-6670, craig.deutsche@gmail.com).

CNRCC Desert Committee

MARCH 3-4 (SAT-SUN)

DEATH VALLEY AREA TOUR

Meet in Shoshone, S of Death Valley, at 8 am Saturday morning, or camp overnight nearby. Tour will take us to stops at Badwater, Natural Bridge, Golden Canyon, and Artist's Palette. Short hikes and lunch stop along the way. Camp Saturday night at Texas Springs (fee). Sunday morning, visit Zabriskie Point, then drive through 20 Mule Team Canyon. Continue to Death Valley Junction, then to Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge. If time allows, go south to Amargosa Canyon and China Ranch for a hike and date shakes. For those wanting to stay over Sunday night there will be primitive camping in the area and we could do more hiking in Amargosa Canyon. For reservations and trip details, contact leader: Carol Wiley (desertlily1@verizon.net, 760-245-8734).

MARCH 16-18 (FRI-SUN)

WHIPPLE MOUNTAINS
DESERT SERVICE

Join CA/NV wilderness committee and Mojave Group's annual service trip with the Needles office of BLM. For this patriotic greening of the desert, we'll return to the Whipple Mountains, home of the elusive saguaro cactus. Central commissary, usual exorbitant fee. Actual work project details still a secret, to be revealed to those who sign up with leader Vicky Hoover, (415-977-5527, Vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org).

* EDITOR'S NOTE. This photo of Elden Hughes is printed in the *Toiyabe Trails* under a one-time use license and may not be reproduced in any other place without permission of the copyright holder, Axel Koester (www.axelkoesterphotography.com).



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DONNER SUMMIT'S CLAIR TAPPAAN Lodge is a great place to call home for winter fun. World-class downhill and cross-country skiing are only five minutes away via a free shuttle service. Sledding, snowshoeing, and miles of groomed cross-country trails are right outside the back door, ready and waiting.

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Hot food! When your mittens are soggy and you're done for the day, a roaring fireplace, a mug of cocoa, and a hearty meal await you in the dining room. In fact, every day, The Lodge creates delicious family-style meals for both breakfast and dinner. In the mornings, The Lodge puts out a generous spread on a "make-your-own-lunch" table allowing guests to take along a nutritious option and skip the \$18 ski resort chili.

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www.sierraclub.org/outings/lodges/ctl/

Range of Light Reflections

Range of Light Group



Group News

Letter from the Chair

BY MALCOLM CLARK (wmalcolm.clark@gmail.com)

ExCom. Our next meeting is Monday, January 16, 5:15 pm. In January we'll welcome new ExCom members Sandy Burnside, Lesley Bruns, and Mike Shore. Thanks to outgoing members Brigitte Berman, Rosemary Jarrett, and Mary K. Prentice. See details below.

Conservation Committee. Next meeting is likely to be on January 9, at Mary Kay Prentice's home. Confirm date/time before coming. Conservation issues go to the Conservation Committee before being put on the ExCom's action agenda. The committee is working on a check list/guide to help in evaluating environmental effects of projects that come to our attention. (mkp@npgcable.com).

Program Meetings. In September, Bill Burke told us about his 2009 ascent of Mt. Everest from the south, Nepal side of the mountain. He became the oldest American to climb the highest mountain in the world! He also told us about his coming 2012 effort to summit from both the Nepal & Tibet sides.

In October, Urs Willimann told us about his experience of building a straw bale house in Bridgeport.

In November, District Ranger Jon Regelbrugge updated us on Inyo National Forest (INF) matters, including decrease in funding, fire policy, and OHV staging

area plans at Shady Rest.

Outings Chairs Needed. Winter outings begin in January. A committee of outings leaders has planned our January-February-March winter outings. ROL needs both summer and winter Outings Chairs -- please let us know if you'd like to step into either of these very important positions!

Conservation.

- **Bodie Hills.** Continuing efforts to preserve the Bodie Hills.

- **Owens Lake Bed Master Plan.** A draft is expected by late December.

- **Inyo National Forest land exchanges.** A proposal from INF would give Mammoth Mountain ownership of much of main facilities land in exchange for a number of properties including the "Cunningham" property at Mono Lake.

- **Tufa State Reserve at Mono Lake.** A promising proposal to enable the Reserve to stay open involves the Bodie Foundation collecting a parking fee at the Old Marina, with the funds then being used to operate the reserve.

- **Inyo National Forest road closures.** Implementation of road closures specified in the motorized Travel Management Plan has caused

Group ExCom meetings

We usually meet on a Monday in January, April, July, and October. Tentatively, our next meeting is January 16, 5:15 pm, at Malcolm Clark's home. All are welcome but please confirm date, place and time (Malcolm Clark, 760-924-5639 or rangeoflight.sc@gmail.com), as meeting dates frequently are changed in order to assure a quorum at the meeting or because of weather.

RANGE OF LIGHT GROUP

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* Voting ExCom member

ROL Group Website

<<http://nevada.sierraclub.org/rolgroup/>>

&

Chapter website

<<http://toiyabe.sierraclub.org>>

Range of Light Calendar

CROSS COUNTRY SKI & SNOWSHOE CONDITIONING & EXPLORATION TOURS

BY JOHN WALTER, WINTER OUTINGS LEADER

Get out your snow dances and invoke your favorite snow gods. After a promising early November storm or two, the storm track moved north, then south, leaving us not much more than a dusting of great powder over rocks. Then December brought the winds that blew what was left all the way to Texas. BUT, based on last year's gigantic snows under the same La Niña conditions we are optimistically planning for another great season.

The basic winter outing schedule will be the same as the last few years: short conditioning trips on Thursdays (through April) with everybody welcome regardless of skill level, longer more demanding trips on Sunday (switching tentatively to Saturdays in May), requiring at least strong beginner skills.

Unless otherwise noted, Thursday and Sunday trips will meet at 10 am at the parking lot behind the Union Bank in Mammoth. There may be a secondary meeting area closer to the trailhead, so check your ROL e-mail newsletter, the ROL website, or call a leader. Abominable Weather Automatically Cancels.

We will pick the final itineraries and leaders depending on snow conditions and leader availability as the winter progresses, then publish them in the local media, in the ROL e-newsletter and on the ROL web site (<http://nevada.sierraclub.org/rolgroup>). For more information (including whether dogs are allowed), call the leader listed or John Walter (salt1143@gmail.com, 760-934-1767), Jean Dilling-

ham (dillinghamjean@gmail.com, 760-648-7109) or Mary Kay Prentice (mkp@npgcable.com, 760-934-0355).

Thursday Morning Outings. These generally cover 3-5 miles and last about 2.5 hours, but are flexible depending on the strength and desires of the group. We concentrate on conditioning, technique, and learning about our local natural history and conservation issues. All skill levels welcome. We like to help beginners get started. Bring water, snack, ski equipment or snow shoes, sunscreen, sun glasses, hat, gloves, and layered clothing.

Sunday Outings. These generally cover 5-7 miles and are back about 3 pm. Intermediate or advanced beginner skill levels and endurance required. Snowshoers must be able to keep up -- but based on past experience this is usually not a problem, particularly uphill. Most of these trips will spend some or most of the time off groomed trails. If you're unsure of your abilities try a Thursday morning trip first. Dress

You're Invited!

Range of Light Group Monthly Meetings Everyone welcome!

Please note the following changes: the Crowley potluck now begins at 6:15 and the program begins at 7 pm.

For all potlucks bring your own *non-disposable* table setting. (We only provide table settings for the speaker.) For months with a program, you are welcome to skip the potluck and come only for the program. There are no potlucks allowed when we meet at the Mammoth Community Library but you are sometimes asked to bring "finger food" -- appetizers or desserts.

January 17 (Tuesday)

Social & Movie Night, 6:15 pm
Mammoth Lakes Library
(no food, please)

Movie: Earth Days, 6:30 pm

"Earth Days" traces the origins of the modern environmental movement through the eyes of nine Americans who propelled the movement from its beginnings in the 1950s to its moment of triumph in 1970 with the original Earth day -- and to its status as a major political force in America.

February 21 (Tuesday)

Social & Movie Night, 6:15 pm
Mammoth Lakes Library
(no food, please)

Movie: Ansel Adams, 6:30 pm

"Ansel Adams" traces the growth of an awkward, nervous, home-schooled boy from the discovery of his precocious talent for music to his world wide recognition as a nature photographer. A documentary film written and directed by Ric Burns and co-produced by Sierra Club Productions and Steeplechase Films.

March 20 (Tuesday)

Potluck & Social 6:15 p.m.
New Crowley Lake Community Ctr
(next to Crowley Lake Store)

Please bring a dish for 6-8 people.
Program: 7 pm

"Two Weddings, a Funeral, & a Festival, or How We Ate One Horse, Two Cows & One Sheep" is a travel narrative by Nancy and John Walters relating their most recent travels in Kyrgyzstan.

Range of Light Calendar

continued from page 4

in layered clothing and be prepared for changeable weather. Bring sunscreen, sunglasses, hat, gloves, lunch, water, and ski or snowshoe equipment.

Leaders & specialty outings. This year we will have a greater variety of leaders and more specialty outings such as winter survival, snowshoe trips, GPS navigation, and (by popular request) some no-dog trips.

We intend to expand our itinerary of trips beyond our long-time favorites of Shady Rest, Obsidian Dome, Red Fir Forest (part of the newly designated Owens River Headwaters wilderness addition), San Joaquin Ridge, Inyo Craters, and the lower slopes of the Sherwins.

Recent additions are the areas behind Sunny Slopes leading over to the Owens Gorge and the slopes leading north through the Aspens from Conway Summit. If you have a favorite trip you'd like us to schedule, call one of the contacts listed above as soon as practical and we'll do our best to try and work it in, particularly if you are one of the many who have participated in our leadership training and can help lead the outing. The Thursday conditioning outings are a great chance to hone your leadership skills by teaming up with one of our old timers.

Some Highlights

Feb 19 & March 25 (Sunday)

Mono Basin Trips. Naturalist-ranger supreme, Janet Carle, will lead trips in the Mono Basin area – for example, Lundy Canyon, Lakeshore tour, and/or Conway Summit.

Feb 25-26 (Saturday & Sunday).

Winter Survival Workshop. Led by Eric Blumensaadt, Toiyabe Chapter Outings Chair, ski patroller, and back-country skier. Saturday we will have a sit-down and audiovisual session and Sunday we'll practice in the snow as part of our regular Sunday tour. Details

to follow. Phone or e-mail for more information.

March 18 (Sunday)

Easy Snowshoe along Rock Creek to the Lodge. New ROL ExCom member Sandy Burnside and her husband Keith will guide this trip of about 5 mi RT, 500 ft gain. Meet 9:30 am at turnoff to Tom's Place along Hwy 395. Carpool 6 mi to trailhead at Sno-Park kiosk (\$5 parking fee). Bring water, snack, snowshoes, sunscreen, sunglasses, hat, gloves, layered clothing. Ski option may be available. Leaders: Jean Dillingham, Sandy Burnside, Mei Kwan, Keith Burnside. Call 760-935-4004 or e-mail kburnsides@aol.com for updates, questions, and to confirm trip status. (Check the April-May-June 2012 Trails for information on the Burnsides' April 15 snowshoe-only outing at Hilton Creek).

General Trip Information

Check with leader or above contact information if you are bringing a dog, as some trips will be no-dog. Most track or touring cross-country skis will do fine, but waxless pattern skis seem to be easiest. The new lightweight snowshoes are generally preferred. Rental equipment is available all over Mammoth in case you can't find the pine tar for those old boards.

All trips give participants a chance to familiarize themselves with the natural history of the area and local conservation issues. We can judge the impacts of global warming by the depth and duration of the snow while mitigating the impacts by converting snowmobiles to the quiet sports.

Because many of our local wild critters, like the elusive pine marten, are nocturnal, winter snow tracks are often the only evidence of their presence. The first set of weasel tracks spotted on a trip will earn the sighter a Sierra Club t-shirt.

Mammoth Yosemite Airport: History, technical, & safety issues

BY STEPHEN KALISH

The Mammoth-Yosemite airport east of Mammoth Lakes along US 395 was originally an emergency airstrip for the U.S. Army Air Corps. Since that time, the airport has traveled a bumpy road.

1970s: Mammoth-Yosemite airport owned by Mammoth Mountain. The Mountain could not make a go of the airport, and sold it to Mono County. During this time the runway was extended to the east. Federal grants provided certain lands for the airport.

1991: Town of Mammoth Lakes buys airport. In 1991, the Town - which had been incorporated in the mid-1980s -- bought the airport from Mono County with the idea of making Mammoth a destination resort. Regional air service was successful for a few years, but ended in 1995. The Town was able to restore regional air service, but not service to remote airports. In fact, most destination travelers do not fly to rural airports, but use ground transpor-

tation from big-city airports. Failure to recognize that rural airports get mostly regional travel insured the Town's failure to get destination visitors.

1997 & 2000: Improper development agreements. The 1997 agreement encumbered federally-funded land. The 2000 expansion proposal, like that in 1997, was based on an incorrect layout and correspondingly incorrect cost estimates.

2002: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approves incorrect 2002 layout. The approval included a grant for about \$31 million, with 10% matching of funds from the Town. The Town was responsible for land side improvements such as a new terminal and parking lots, estimated at about \$10 million. These costs are in 2000 dollars, and are obsolete now because of the wrong layout and the recent jump in construction costs.

The approval and the funding were challenged by the State of California

Mule Packing: How to gain weight & enjoy it

BY LYNN LIVELY

As an old backpacker (both in experience and age), I pride myself on being Tough. I sleep on the ground, wear the same filthy clothes for a week, eat jerky and string cheese meal after meal, and have survived for seven days with just the thirty-five pounds on my back.

BUT, last year in the Sierra my travels took me by a campsite where the people were sitting (be still, my heart) on chairs! They had a lantern for light and (heavy) cans of food were lying around on a table. The lovely ruby color

even that was increased when the time got close. And that weight didn't include the group dinners, group toilet, stoves, etc. Packing was a joy. Big tent? Take it! Second set of nylon pants? Make it three! Camp shoes? But of course.



In this photo of an E. Sierra mule pack outing sponsored by Angeles Chapter, two of us are from ROL: Roberta MacIntosh and Rosemary Jarrett. Here, enroute to Summit Lake, we are holding a replica of an historic Sierra Club banner that Peter Ireland carried on the six-day mule trip just so we could have this great picture! Photo by Rosemary Jarrett.

of cheap wine sparkled in plastic cups. The tents were big. Clothes were hanging on a line. How did all this gear get to camp? "Mules", they told me. "Mules are the secret."

Fast forward to my friend telling me about a Sierra Club trip sponsored by the Mule Pack Section to Clark Lakes in late July, 2011. We paid our \$330 each and we were in.

What fun to prepare for the trip. Instead of thirty-five pounds, our limit was fifty-five pounds of personal gear. And

The trip was wonderful. The leaders did an excellent job of managing the camp and us. The hikers were compatible, and a good time was had by all. Do I recommend mule packing? Absolutely.

Here are a couple of tips from my first-timer's perspective.

1. Rent a second bear canister from the Forest Service for \$7 per week. That way you have plenty of room for toiletries and crunchy goodies. What do you care? It only weighs two pounds!! Throw it in.

2. Consider signing up with a buddy if at all possible. On our trip, the days were not organized. Most of our group wanted to scramble and do cross-country work that didn't particularly appeal to me as a retired climber. But luckily I had my compatible buddy, Sarah, along. We had a blast exploring the trails and our deepened friendship is one of my fondest memories of the trip.

3. Be aware that your seven-day trip may require eight days of your time. It is usually possible to drive home dead-tired the day you hike out, but an early morning hiking start may require traveling to your meeting point the day before. It did for us.

Please see MULE PACK SCHEDULE, page 11.

LETTER FROM CHAIR . . .

continued from page 4

much outcry by some OHV enthusiasts.

• **Other.** Mike Schlafmann, the Inyo National Forest deputy district ranger in Mammoth Lakes, has left for a position the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest outside of Seattle.

and others and have been overturned by a federal court.

2007: Small regional terminal begins service. After the above plan failed, a small regional terminal was built and regional air service begun in late 2007 (after the runway was repaved).

2011: Technical questions & upgrade of airport. Currently (December, 2011) the airport's critical design aircraft, the C-III Q400, exceeds the B-III airport reference code (ARC) rating for the airport. The Town has a draft Airport Layout Plan (ALP) which proposes asking the FAA to approve numerous and significant modifications to standards to do a paper upgrade of the airport.

After numerous technical questions were raised by local Sierra Club members, the Town is working to resolve compatibility issues between the "small" airport and "large" aircraft.

CONSERVATION ROUNDUP

*Do unto those
downstream
as you would have
those upstream do
unto you.*

— *Wendell Berry*

Conservation Briefs

BY MARGE SILL

Pine Forest Wilderness Bill. Introduced in both the Senate and the House on November 2 by the entire Nevada delegation. Now we are waiting for the committee hearings and passage of the bill. This will be the first wilderness designated in Nevada for several years, and is the result of great work by Jim Jeffress, retired Nevada Wildlife biologist.

Jim put together a coalition of environmentalists, hunters, ranchers, ORV enthusiasts, and community activists to come up with a proposal that was unanimously passed by the Humboldt County Commission and endorsed by the Legislature and the Governor.

The 25,000 acres of wilderness designated encompass Blue Lakes Wilderness Study Area and most of the Alder Creek WSA. This bill will assure the protection of some of the most beautiful wildlands in Northwest Nevada.

Gold Butte NCA? Although no bill has yet been introduced for a Gold Butte National Conservation Area with wilderness, there has been a great deal of community support for such a bill. Legislation is needed to protect an area of great cultural resources and startling desert beauty from illegal vandalism and unwise vehicular use. We are hoping 2012 will be the year of Gold Butte.

Sheldon Wildlife Refuge. November 8 was the deadline for comments on the

Sheldon Wildlife Refuge's Comprehensive Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The final EIS and plan should be released to the public sometime next spring. This plan will guide the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in their management of the Sheldon for the next 15 years. The Sheldon is the home of a large pronghorn population, pygmy rabbits, sage grouse, and other wildlife that need a well-managed habitat to survive.

Pine Cone Ball. The Ball was held in Reno on Nov. 16. *Steve Smith*, Wilderness Coordinator for the Nevada Bureau of Land Management, was honored with a Golden Pine Cone for his 39-years of work making sure that wilderness and potential wilderness on our vast public lands was protected and managed properly. Steve was nominated enthusiastically for this award by the Wilderness Committee of the Toiyabe Chapter and by Friends of Nevada Wilderness.

Moving from coal to clean energy in Nevada

BY VINNY SPOTLESON, SIERRA CLUB
BEYOND COAL ORGANIZER, LAS VEGAS

FOR MORE THAN A YEAR, Sierra Club's Toiyabe Chapter has been working with the National Club's Beyond Coal Campaign to retire Nevada Energy's Reid Gardner coal plant in Moapa. This 557-megawatt polluting eyesore is located about 45 miles north of Las Vegas on I-15.

Although thousands of drivers pass by the coal plant every day, few know that the plant sits only a few hundred feet from the Moapa River Indian Reservation, and less than a half-mile from the homes, Tribal Administration, pre-school, and senior center of the Moapa Band of Paiutes.

Club stops proposed coal plants in Nevada. The Sierra Club has already stopped three proposed coal plants in Nevada from being built. The most



Reid Gardner coal power plant. (Photo: Bill Corcoran.)

recent cancellation was the Toquop Coal Plant in Mesquite, which was
Please see CLEAN ENERGY, page 11.

The huge fight to prevent a water disaster in Nevada

BY ROSE STRICKLAND

IN A TREMENDOUS OUTPOURING of effort, the Great Basin Water Network (GBWN) marshalled its resources to present its vigorous protest case to the Nevada State Engineer throughout six weeks of water hearings in Carson City.

Why groundwater should NOT be pumped. The GBWN attorneys representing the Sierra Club and 327 other protesters provided expert testimony to the State Engineer on why the 25 applications of the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) to pump groundwater in four rural valleys in eastern Nevada could not be approved.

GBWN argued that if SNWA were to pump its requested 41 billion gallons of groundwater, it would:

- (1) unsustainably mine ancient groundwater aquifers
- (2) cause unacceptable water table drawdowns, subsidence, and desertification
- (3) take water from existing water users, especially in Cave, Delamar, and Dry Lake Valleys
- (4) harm Great Basin National Park

GBWN experts also questioned the current need for pumping the rural groundwater and SNWA's ability to finance the project as well as SNWA's ineffective monitoring, management and mitigation (MMM) proposals. For these and many more reasons, we pointed out

how approving the applications would harm the public interest.

Indian tribes & others add their voices. Other strong protest cases were presented by three Nevada Indian tribes who argued that Spring Valley remains a critical part of their tribal cultural and traditional uses. They argued that pumping would:

- (1) destroy vegetation
- (2) destroy wildlife habitat
- (3) compromise ceremonial sites



Great Basin Water Network Attorneys Simeon Herskovitz & Iris Thornton (left) with Hydrologist Tom Myers (right), and Goshute Tribe Attorney Paul Echohawk (rear) discuss testimony during one of the breaks in the 6 week hearing. (Photo: Dennis Ghiglieri.)

Vegetation which would be lost includes the groves of swamp cedars in the valley bottom (sites of historic massacres) as well as many ceremonial sites sacred to the tribes. Tribal attorneys also argued that Federal agencies' lack of consultation with the tribes on federal agreements with SNWA on MMM violate federal trust responsibilities.

Many other organizations also conveyed their official opposition to the project, including the Great Basin National Park Foundation and the Nevada Wildlife Commission. In a unanimous vote these organizations were supported by representatives of County Game Advisory Boards all over the state.

The Latter Day Saints (Mormon) Church-owned Cleveland-Rogers Ranch in Spring Valley demonstrated how its vested water rights, which date back to before Nevada became a state or before

the state had any laws on groundwater, would be directly harmed by pumping at 12 of SNWA's well sites, mostly in northern Spring Valley.

Millard and Juab Counties of Utah and the Long Now Foundation also provided expert witnesses on how pumping in Spring Valley would adversely affect water rights and the environment in the downflow parts of Snake Valley. They also noted that the MMM proposals are woefully inadequate to address impacts of groundwater mining in Spring Valley.

Citizen testimonies & SNWA arguments. On October 11, 2011, nearly a hundred citizens from all over the state testified to the State Engineer about their concerns about the impacts of SNWA's project on their livelihoods, their communities, wildlife, and wildlife habitat in the four valleys, and how Las Vegas, with its depressed economy, did not need rural groundwater to be pumped and could not afford to pay for the project.

SNWA attorneys argued that there was plenty of available water and no pumping impacts which couldn't be managed. Patricia Mulroy, SNWA director, testified that if the applications were approved (by the State Engineer and by the Bureau of Land Management for a pipeline right-of-way), the project

Please see WATER DISASTER, page 11.

*You never
conquer a
mountain... you
conquer yourself
— your hopes,
your fears.*
— Jim Whittaker

Mammoth Yosemite Airport expansion

COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS at Mammoth Yosemite Airport, owned and operated by the Town of Mammoth Lakes, have expanded steadily since beginning with one Horizon Airline turboprop Q400 flight from LA in 2007. This regional service followed the abandonment of a large airport plan that envisioned long-haul direct flights using 187- passenger Boeing 757 aircraft. The change in approach came after the Sierra Club and others challenged the adequacy of the environmental review. Major issues included noise over National Parks and Wilderness as well as growth-inducing impacts.

Inadequacies & possible conflicts at airport. This year there are up to seven daily flights in the ski season and one flight the rest of the year. To help relieve congestion at the small terminal, a sprung structure (think tent like at Little Eagle) was recently installed. In addition to the terminal inadequacies, Stephen Kalish and Owen Maloy of ROL have identified potential conflicts between the current airport layout and FAA regulations that they feel should be corrected.

Airport layout plan being prepared.

In addition to the airport layout plan, a narrative update describing the current facility and a 20-year projected plan are also being put together. Yet another study considers a terminal design that will accommodate up to the eight flights per day in the currently approved environmental documentation.

Current & future passenger traffic. About 25,000 enplanements (people boarding flights) are anticipated this year -- up from 18,000 last year. Planning documents utilize the MMSA consultant's estimate of about 90,000 enplanements in five years and about 150,000 in 20 years. Many feel this forecast is overly aggressive and may lead to foolish decisions in terms of airport and terminal expansion.



ROL Group actions. The Group is closely monitoring the technical details of the airport layout, compliance with FAA regulations, and enplanement forecasts. As planning progresses we anticipate commenting constructively on environmental issues, particularly noise (with an emphasis on overflights of parks and other public lands), visual impacts, sage grouse and other wildlife, air and water quality, and growth-inducing impacts. We want to insure any further expansion is done in an environmentally responsible manner. Stay tuned.

What you can do. The airport layout plan and narrative, the enplanement forecast, and the terminal design study are currently under review by the Town staff. We encourage members to attend planned public workshops and hearings.

— contributed by Range of Light Group
Conservation Committee

Save the Date!
March 15-16, 2012

Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conference

FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS, the Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conferences have brought together a diverse group of attendees from labor, environmental, and industry to discuss solutions for a green economy that will create good green jobs. It's important that we, the environmental community, be well-represented to give environmental perspectives on global problems.

The BlueGreen Alliance was launched in 2006 by the United Steelworkers and the Sierra Club. Today, the BlueGreen Alliance has increased its membership uniting nearly 15 million people from organized labor, environmental, faith and human rights groups – all who understand the necessity for good jobs, a clean environment and a green economy.

The BlueGreen Alliance is focusing on the passage of comprehensive clean energy and climate change legislation, restoring the rights of workers in the United States to organize and bargain collectively, and toward establishing

Please see GREEN JOBS, page 12.

Mono Lake's State Park is off the closure list!

AFTER A SIX-MONTH GRASS-roots public effort, the Mono Lake Tufa State Natural Reserve has been officially removed from California's 70-park closure list.

For Mono Lake friends and supporters this is certainly a moment to be thankful for, and cause for celebration.

Upon hearing the news our Board of Directors Chair, Sally Gaines, said, "This is the best Christmas present we could ever wish for." I couldn't agree more!

Over 4000 letters and petition signatures were hand-delivered by the Committee to decision makers in Sacramento. This huge show of public support, combined with dedicated work from our Committee team, lead directly to this success.

You can read more details in the Monologue at <www.monolake.org>.

With Mono Lake off the state park closure list, now is a perfect time to make plans to visit the lake's unique tufa towers and scenic views, either this winter or with the migratory birds next summer.

— from the Mono Lake Committee

Great Basin Group promotes single-stream recycling

BY DAVID VON SEGGERN

Our regional trash collector, Waste Management, Inc. (WMI), has proposed a single-stream method of recycling pickup for Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County. We currently sort recyclables into green and yellow bins for curbside pickup. WMI would replace these bins with one large, wheeled container (similar to that for regular refuse) for all recyclables and would expand the list of materials to be placed in it. The contents would then be sorted at a central Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). In assessing a pilot project two years ago, WMI reported a twofold increase in participation in curbside recycling and a threefold increase in the volume of recycling materials.

Although recycling purists have issues with single-stream recycling, some of these issues are addressed by having a modern, well-equipped, and well-operated MRF which will cleanly separate materials into their respective types for eventual sale back into the manufacturing stream. WMI plans to build a new \$25 million MRF in Reno on land already purchased.

The Great Basin Group ExCom voted for a resolution to support adoption of single-stream recycling in our region. We have started a campaign to influence our elected officials to adopt this technology and to sway the public to support its adoption. One sticking point is



a possible increase in the recycling fee on residents' bills. We strongly advocate that this new technology should be brought to our area at no increased cost to residents who will be recycling more and should not

be dinged for doing so.

If you support single-stream recycling, visit our Facebook page at <www.facebook.com/pages/Northern-Nevadans-for-Single-Stream-Recycling/291048197596163>. Please "like" us. Additional description of the proposed technology is available at the WMI at <www.truckeemeadowsrecycling.com>. Contact David von Seggern at vonseg1@sbcglobal.net for more information on this campaign.

TrailSafe: Long slog to trap regulation

BY TRISH SWAIN (INFO@TRAILS SAFE.ORG)

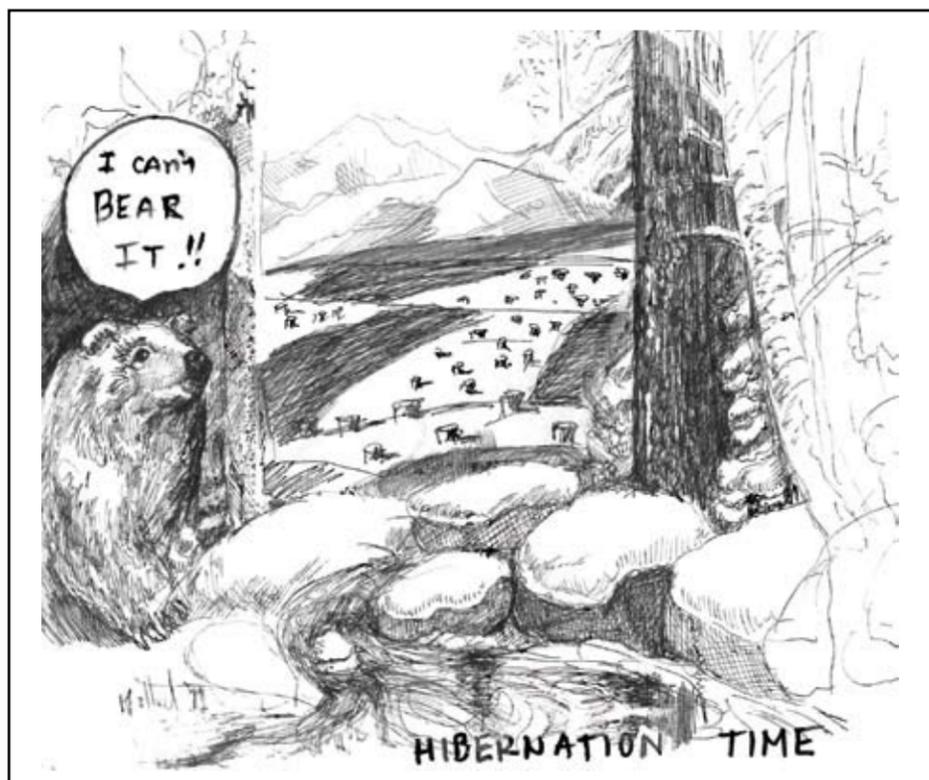


TrailSafe Nevada, <www.trailsafe.org>, seeks regulation of leghold, snare, and body-crushing traps within Firearms Congested Areas of Washoe County. The intent is public safety: to prevent accidental trapping of pets or unintended wildlife. Where it is unsafe to discharge a firearm, TrailSafe maintains it is unsafe to set indiscriminate traps which only need be visited every 96 hours — four days.

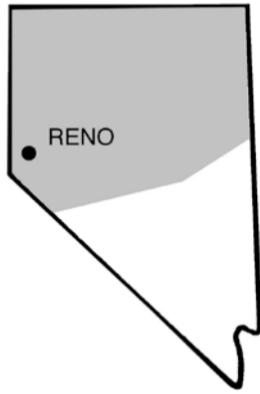
Our bill, SB226, became law in June, but all specific provisions were amended out of the bill. Therefore the Wildlife Commission is mandated to

regulate trapping in congested areas of Washoe and Clark Counties by the end

Please see TRAP REGULATION, page 12.



Great Basin Gatherings



Great Basin Group

Group News

Energy Committee reforming

BY JEFF HARDCASTLE (JEFFH2010@GMAIL.COM)

The Great Basin Group's Energy Committee is getting recharged. Charlotte Cox, Peter Miller, and Mary Winston have met with the ExCom to present their ideas for a committee to focus on energy conservation efforts. The overall goal of the committee is to help educate our membership and the general public about the importance of energy conservation.

Energy education can be approached in a number of ways which can be implemented at the individual level, especially at home. The group has already been participating in the Chapter's Energy Task Force with Jeff Hardcastle, Marge Sill, and Bob Tregilus participating in those calls.

Because this is a revitalizing of the Energy Committee, we are looking for a meeting space and the best times to meet. If you are interested in helping increase energy efficiency, the Beyond Coal Campaign, or renewable energy, please contact Jeff Hardcastle at jeffh2010@gmail.com.

Great Basin Peak Section News Mt. Grant 9/11 Memorial Challenge

BY SHARON MARIE WILCOX

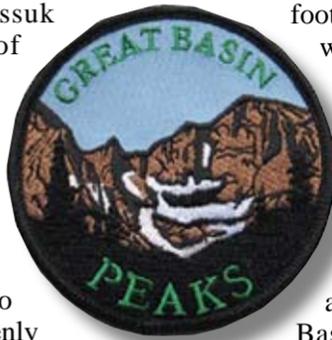
MT. GRANT, AT 11,239 FEET, IS THE highest point in the Wassuk Range and high point of Mineral County. Grant's summit is sought after by many peak baggers. Unfortunately, this area has been off limits since the events of 9/11.

After many fruitless attempts to gain permission to climb Mt. Grant, we suddenly got a flyer announcing a 9/11 Memorial Challenge Run that ended on the summit. Many immediately grabbed the opportunity to participate in this event.

The event allowed 100 participants this year, with a good chance that it would become an annual event. Event coordinators accommodated two groups: (1) runners and hikers going

the entire 16 miles with a 7000-foot gain and (2) others who would relay the distance in teams.

Eight hikers from the Reno area formed two relay teams: Great Basin Peaks 1, with Sharon Marie Wilcox, Bhe Wilson, John Ide, and Ron Moe; and Great Basin Peaks 2, with Rich Wilson, TA Taro, Larry Grant,



GREAT BASIN GROUP

OFFICERS

Chair	Catherine Schmidt*	775-240-3785	cathsch256@aol.com
Vice-Chair	David von Seggern*	775-303-8461	vonseg1@sbcglobal.net
Secretary	Sue Jacox*	775-849-1890	suejacox@nvdellnet
Treasurer	Martin Mace*	775-745-4703	mace.martin@gmail.com
Conservation	David von Seggern*	775-303-8461	vonseg1@sbcglobal.net
Distribution	Craig Mastos	775-348-1862	
Energy	Jeff Hardcastle*	775-313-8442	jeff.hardcastle@sbcglobal.net
Membership	Graham Stafford*	775-686-8478	graham@grahamstafford.com
Outings	Holly Coughlin	775-331-7488	
Political	Open		
Programs	Valerie Andersen	775-853-4769	mtnval@sbcglobal.net
Webmaster	Peter Johnson	775-250-2576	peter.johnson@charter.net

Sharon Marie Wilcox, Larry Grant, TA Taro, Dan Baxter, Ron Moe, Loretta Low, John Ide, Bhe Wilson, and Rich Wilson, preparing to hike Mt Grant.

Please see MT. GRANT, page 9.

Great Basin Group Calendar

All phone numbers are 775 unless otherwise noted. ALL events include conservation education activities.

CST Nevada Tour Operator – Registration Information, Nevada Tour Operator
Ref. No. 2008-0041 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

December 31 -

JANUARY 1 (SATURDAY-SUNDAY) TBA New Year's in Gerlach. Totally informal New Year's in Gerlach involving walking between three bars in Gerlach. Unless you are really hardy, stay at Bruno's Motel. Check in, make reservations at bar, 775-557-2220. We may have other activities. Hot springs if playa permits, local art gallery, scenic drive, etc. Dogs limited, prepare to clean up after your dog. Sign-up 12/15-12/28. DL. Leader: David Book (775-843-6443). Easy.

JANUARY 1 (SUNDAY) 10AM Annual New Year's Day Hike. Meet at Riverview Park, E end of 5th Street, Carson City, for our annual blow out cobwebs/start New Year right hike. Hike along Mexican Ditch Trail to Mexican Dam, back. About 6 mi, level. Depending on conditions you may need snow shoes or crampons. Bring

leftover goodies to share. DOK. Leader: Donna Inversin (775-315-6763; d_inversin@yahoo.com). Easy.

JANUARY 1 (SUNDAY) 1PM Annual New Year's Day Hike. Meet with fellow revelers to disperse cobwebs after NYE celebrations; make a fresh start on 2012! Mod. easy hike in Reno area until sundown. Locale depends on weather conditions. DL. Leader: David von Seggern (775-303-8461; vonseg1@sbcglobal.net). Mod. Easy.

JANUARY 2 (MONDAY) 6:30 - 8PM Ex Com Meeting. Join us for Ex Com meeting at Cathy's house. Cathsch256@aol.com for directions. ND. Leader: Cathy Schmidt (Cathsch256@aol.com). Easy.

JANUARY 7 (SATURDAY) 10AM Beginners' Cross-Country Ski. In Mt.

Please see GB CALENDAR, page 9.

GB GROUP 2ND THURSDAY PROGRAM MEETINGS

All programs open to the public

On the 2nd Thursday of each month (September - May), come and enjoy fun socialization and informative programs with the Great Basin Group. All programs are free and open to the public.

For details on program topics and location, go to the Sierra Club web site about a month before the scheduled date (<http://nevada.sierraclub.org/gb-group>). Also check our Calendar, which begins on this page of the Trails.

For more information, contact the program chair, Valerie Andersen (775-544-3061, mtnval@sbcglobal.net).

"The Making of Yosemite"

Date: Thursday, Jan. 12
Time: 7p social, 7:30p program
Location: Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada Building, 605 Washington St., Reno (S of Hwy 80). Contact: Valerie Andersen (775-544-3061, mtnval@sbcglobal.net).

Learn all about another side to the making of Yosemite National Park at this meeting, when **Jen Huntley** will discuss her book, *The Making of Yosemite*.

Decades before Ansel Adams, the Sierra Club, or John Muir, James Hutchings made Yosemite into a potent symbol of California's post-gold-rush greatness. Leader of the first tourist expedition into Yosemite in 1855, Hutchings became a tireless promoter of the valley – and of himself. Hutchings whetted public enthusiasm for this unspoiled land.

Although rooted in the particulars of Yosemite's origin, this story has widespread appeal to audiences concerned about environmental conservation and sustainability. It will spark spirited conversations about national parks, conservation, land policy, and the past, present and future of American environmental consciousness.

Jen A. Huntley, an environmental historian, designed the interdisciplinary University of Nevada Academy for the Environment and was its Associate Director for Education & Outreach until 2010.

"Earthquakes, Tsunamis, & Volcanoes: Is Someone Mad at Us?"

Date: Thursday, Feb. 9
Time: 7p social, 7:30p program
Location: Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada Building, 605 Washington St., Reno (S of Hwy 80). Contact: Valerie Andersen (775-544-3061, mtnval@sbcglobal.net).

Are geological disasters happening more frequently? Seems so. Recent giant earthquakes and tsunamis kill hundreds of thousands of people and cripple nuclear power plants. Volcanic eruptions bury whole towns in ash and disrupt air traffic over entire countries. Is this natural or, as some people believe, the beginning of the end...the apocalypse? If you're wondering, join geologist **Ed**

Please see GB PROGRAMS, page 9.

Don't forget to visit the Great Basin Group website
<<http://nevada.sierraclub.org/gbgroup>>
& the Chapter website
<<http://toiyabe.sierraclub.org>>

GB PROGRAMS . . .*continued from page 8*

Oakes as he explores the mechanics and frequency of earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanoes. He will also look through the often-muddy geological crystal ball at what the future may hold for Reno. (See Kolob Plateau photo, this page.)

Ed Oakes is a dynamic speaker with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. His lectures are so popular that often venues end up with standing room only, so get there early!

"Membership Mixer"

**Date: March 8,
Time: 7 - 9 pm**

Location: Bartley Ranch Regional Park.

Learn all about the Great Basin Group and how you can get involved at this fun social event! Go to the GB Group website at <http://nevada.sierraclub.org/gbgroup> for more details about a month before the mixer.

MT. GRANT . . .*continued from page 8*

and Loretta Low.

The event kicked off with a Saturday night registration and BBQ at Veteran's Memorial Park. Excited peak baggers had time to visit with old friends and make new friends. We were happy to meet up with other Great Basin Peak Section and Desert Peak Section friends -- James Barlow, Dan Baxter, Bob and Eric Morrill, Bob Sumner, Sue Wyman and Vic Henney.

At 6:30 am Sunday morning, participants gathered at Cottonwood Canyon near Walker Lake. You could feel the energy flowing through the crowd as everyone found their starting points. In the excitement of taking pictures and organizing team members, I missed wishing Sue and Vic well as they departed with the first group to hike and complete the entire distance to the summit.

The checkpoints provided sani-huts and snacks for the participants in addition to a well-organized shuttle system. A photo-taking frenzy occurred at about 3.5 miles when we saw a mother bear in a pinyon pine with her two cubs curiously exploring beneath her.

As the road climbed above the canyon of pinyon pines into the wide-open brushy area we could see the road switchbacks as they zigzagged towards the summit.

About 15 minutes before I arrived at the final checkpoint, a cloud blanketed the peak, so the 360-degree views were obscured. As I headed up the final rock scramble, an almost frozen Bob Sumner sat on a rock checking off those achieving the summit.

On the summit, busy cameras recorded smiling hikers as a few glimpses of view opened in the drifting clouds. TA served his patriotic cookies to celebrate our climb to the summit.

Shuttle buses continually transported participants back down the mountain and so we never gathered our entire group in a summit photo. A view of bighorn sheep added another bonus for the final shuttle bus riders.

The 9/11 Memorial Challenge volunteers efficiently succeeded in getting a large number of eager peak climbers

Rose Meadows. Learn basics from other Sierra Club x-c skiers: how to fall down, how to get up, how to ski on flats. Must provide your own equipment. Half-day trip. Bring lunch, water, sunscreen, warm clothing. ND. Leader: Ridge Walker (853-8055; edc@unr.edu). Co-Leaders: Chuck Oliveira, Gracie Caudill (786-2988; 233-6404). Easy.

JANUARY 7 (SATURDAY) 8AM
El Dorado Canyon Day Hike Near Dayton. Scale Churchill Butte near Silver Springs, overlooking historic Ft Churchill, parts of emigrant wagon route, ancient and modern Lake Lahontan, Pony Express Trail, Lincoln Hwy. Learn some history of area. About 9.5 mi, at least 1800 ft gain for day; all in first 4 mi. Parts of hike are off-trail with steep descents. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Mod. Strenuous.

JANUARY 21 (SATURDAY) 8AM
John C Two Enigma. Discover some history of area as we visit two features possibly associated with old mining operations. One-way hike of about 8 mi with vehicle shuttle. Gain about 1200 ft for day. Scenic views. Return paralleling part of Carson River. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Mod. Strenuous.

JANUARY 22 (SUNDAY) 9AM
Snowshoe to Nevada Beach. About 2-4 mi level snowshoe through large meadow area to Nevada Beach. If lucky we'll get to see bald eagle that likes to hang out at Nevada Beach in winter. Walk along lake shore. ND. Leader: Donna Inversin (775-315-6763; d_inversin@yahoo.com). Easy.

JANUARY 28 (SATURDAY) 9:30AM
Sagehen Creek Snowshoe. Observe winter wildlife, animal tracks, as we wind our way along Sagehen Creek to end of Stampede Lake. If conditions are really good, trek over frozen ice bridges to witness some amazing ice formations along creek. About 5 mi, 300 ft gain. Some snowshoeing experience required. DOK. Leader: Holly Coughlin (331-7488). Moderate.

FEBRUARY 4 (SATURDAY) 8AM
Churchill Butte Day Hike Near Silver Springs. Scale Churchill Butte near Silver

up and down Mt. Grant. We thank them for their efforts and look forward to this annual opportunity for others to hike this sought-after summit.

Rich Wilson, Sharon Marie Wilcox, TA Taro, Ron Moe, and Loretta Low at the finish line.

**Great Basin Group
Calendar***continued from page 8*

Springs, overlooking historic Ft Churchill, parts of emigrant wagon route, ancient and modern Lake Lahontan, Pony Express Trail, Lincoln Hwy. Learn some history of area. About 9.5 mi, at least 1800 ft gain for day; all in first 4 mi. Parts of hike are off-trail with steep descents. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Mod. Strenuous.

FEBRUARY 4 (SATURDAY) 8:30AM
Tamarack Peak Snowshoe. Start at TRT trailhead, go long way around; "easy" way to summit. Enjoy rock formations, excellent views. Learn about flora, fauna we sight. No cotton clothing. ND. Leader: Lucrecia (851-9279; lucrecianature@gmail.com). Mod. Strenuous.

FEBRUARY 6 (MONDAY) 6:30 - 8PM
GBG Ex Com Meeting. Meeting location to be determined. Contact Valerie Andersen at mtval@sbcglobal.net for details. ND. Leader: Valerie Andersen (mtval@sbcglobal.net). Easy.

FEBRUARY 11 (SATURDAY) 9:30AM
Snowshoe in Mountains. Have fun, get exercise on this snowshoe geared for beginners to intermediate level. Location depends on snow conditions. Trail will be relatively level, not more than 5 mi. Learn about flora, fauna. Bring snowshoes, poles, warm clothes, sunglasses, water, lunch. DOK. Leader: Gracie Caudill (233-6404). Co-Leader: Chuck Oliveira (786-2988). Mod. Easy.

FEBRUARY 12 (SUNDAY) 8:30AM
Beginner's Snowshoe. Snowshoe around Donner State Park; about 2.5 mi. Enjoy forest setting, views of Donner lake. This site is historically significant. After lunch, second trip around park is an option. ND. Leader: Lucrecia (851-9279; lucrecianature@gmail.com). Mod. Easy.

FEBRUARY 18 (SATURDAY) 9:30AM
Chickadee Ridge Snowshoe. Learn about our little feathered friends, the chickadees, on this snowshoe to a ridge above Tahoe Meadows. Trip geared for snowshoers with some experience. Lunch on ridge overlooking beautiful Lake Tahoe. Outing about 5 mi, 800 ft gain. DOK. Leader: Holly Coughlin (331-7488). Moderate.

FEBRUARY 19 (SUNDAY) TBA
Coldstream Valley Cross-Country Ski. Mod. easy ski up U-shaped Coldstream Valley behind Donner Memorial State Park in Truckee. Most of route is fairly flat on roads, we should make it to Horseshoe Bend and beyond. Geared for "experienced" beginner, intermediate, x-c skiers. About 4-6 mi RT, depending on conditions; 200 ft gain. Learn about Emigrant Trail, rigors of Donner Party. ND. Leader: Ridge Walker (853-8055; edc@unr.edu). Mod. Easy.

FEBRUARY 25 (SATURDAY) 8AM
Lahontan Petroglyphs. Visit rock panels on shores of Lake Lahontan near Silver Springs. Learn some history of area. High clearance, 4-wheel drive vehicles recommended, or ride share. About 4 mi R/T, no significant gain. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Easy.

FEBRUARY 26 (SUNDAY) 9AM
Spooon Junction Snowshoe. Snowshoe about 2-4 mi with minimum gain. Learn about flora, fauna, enjoy great views of lake. ND. Leader: Donna Inversin (775-315-6763; d_inversin@yahoo.com). Easy.

MARCH 5 (MONDAY) 6:30 - 8PM
GBG Ex Com Meeting. Meeting location to be determined. E-mail Valerie Andersen at mtval@sbcglobal.net for details. ND. Leader: Valerie Andersen (mtval@sbcglobal.net). Easy.

MARCH 10 (SATURDAY) 8AM
Jumbo Falls near Washoe Lake. Visit elusive Jumbo Falls, "Post Pile" rock formation. About 12 mi RT; 2700 ft gain with ups, downs, mostly on jeep road with parts on historic Jumbo Grade. Learn some history of area. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Strenuous.

MARCH 17 (SATURDAY) 9:30AM
St. Patrick's Day Day Hike. Hike in Virginia Mountains on this Irish holiday. Exact location TBD by weather conditions. No matter where we go, views are fabulous, sure to please. About 6-8 mi, up to 1400 ft gain. Optional: bring an Irish brew and unbreakable, reusable "glass," for a little tasting at our lunch spot. May the luck of Irish be with you! DOK. Leader: Holly Coughlin (331-7488). Moderate.

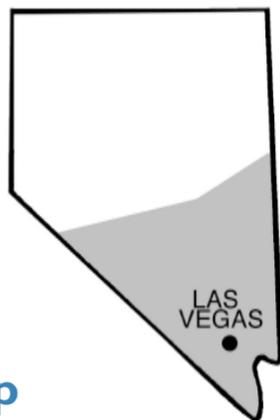
MARCH 20 (TUESDAY) TBA
Dogskin Mountain. Come celebrate early spring with a Great Basin Peak Section trip to High Point on Dogskin Mountain overlooking Winnemucca Ranch, McKissick Canyon, N of Sparks. About 5 mi, 2250 ft gain. Learn about flora, fauna in this area. DL. Leader: Sharon Wilcox (852-5075; kaweah7@gmail.com). Co-Leaders: Yvonne Jerome, Karen Todd (851-3043 / 225-2805; sjerome@att.net; kmtodd@gmail.com). Moderate.

MARCH 21 (WEDNESDAY) 5:30PM
Spring Fling River Walk. Welcome Spring with our first evening conditioning hike after work, along Truckee River Walk. Easy hike, about 4 mi, 50 ft gain. Opportunity to see early-blooming cottonwoods, hawks, falcons, other wildlife; learn about riparian environment. DL. Leader: River Walker (473-1445; edc@unr.edu). Co-Leader: Yvonne Jerome (473-1445). Easy.

MARCH 24 (SATURDAY) 8AM
Buckland Station Day Hike. Buckland Station is on S side of Silver Springs. About 10 mi loop hike on flat ground. Start at historic Buckland Station, proceed down-

The Mojave Monitor

Southern Nevada Group



Group News

ExCom meetings & new member orientation

Our **Executive Committee meetings** are held on the last Monday of each month in the Sierra Club office at 708 S. 6th Street, Las Vegas 89101. ExCom meetings are open to all members. Please feel free to join us on January 30, February 27 or March 26 from 6pm to 8:30pm.

Our next **New Members Orientation** will be held at 6:30pm on Wednesday, April 4, 2012, in the Sierra Club office at 708 S. 6th Street, Las Vegas 89101. Current and prospective members are welcome to attend. Light refreshments will be served.

Southern Nevada Group Calendar

All phone numbers are 702 unless otherwise noted.

(Please use email when leaders state that they prefer email, especially if you have a long distance telephone number.)

ALL EVENTS INCLUDE CONSERVATION EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Nevada Tour Operator – Registration Information, Nevada Tour Operator Ref. No. 2008-0041.

JANUARY 22 (SUNDAY)

China Ranch. Hike through canyons, even some slots, in fun hills near China Ranch. After that we can enjoy date shakes, date bread, or buying bags of dates. How do dates grow? About 8 mi. Leader: David Hardy (875-4826, hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, e-mail preferred). Level 2-3.

FEBRUARY 5 (SUNDAY)

Blue Diamond Hill. This 8-mi hike starts in Blue Diamond, goes up near top of hill, then down a narrow canyon which requires some rock scrambling. It comes out at Wheeler Spring, and then back to Blue Diamond. About 1200

ft gain. Are there any springs on Blue Diamond Hill? Leader: David Hardy (875-4826, hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, e-mail preferred). Level 2-3.

FEBRUARY 19 (SUNDAY)

Bowl of Fire to Anniversary Narrows. This 15-mi hike begins and drops into N end of Bowl of Fire, then over a low pass to drop into Anniversary drainage. Some rock scrambling required. What are some of major minerals? To be able to do this hike we need to get from narrows to cars in last 2 mi. Will have to check on that before hike as there is now a gate. Car shuttle. Leader: David Hardy (875-4826, hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, e-mail preferred). Level 4.

com, e-mail preferred). Level 4.

MARCH 18 (SUNDAY)

Bowl of Fire. Begin about Mile 20 and end at Mile 18 on this 10 -mi trip through colorful rock formations and narrow twisting canyons. Why do some rock formations have measles? Car shuttle. Leader: David Hardy (875-4826, hardyhikers@

S. Nevada Group Calendar

embarqmail.com, e-mail preferred). Level 3.

JANUARY 1 (SUNDAY)

Hangover Hike. Start New Year right by joining other hikers on traditional moderate, but scenic, hike to Calico Tanks in Red Rock Canyon. Begin late morning. Geology of Aztec sandstone will be discussed. Group limited to 15 by BLM. Leader: Geologist Gary Beckman (648-2983). Level 2-3.

JANUARY 2 (MONDAY)

Blue Diamond Hill to Wheeler Spring, RRCNCA (Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area). Another route on Blue Diamond Hill which includes deep canyons. Begin at horses and end up at Wheeler Spring. Where does the water come from? Leader: David Hardy (hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, e-mail preferred, 875-4826). Level 2-3.

JANUARY 7 (SATURDAY)

Brownstone Canyon, RRCNCA. Enjoy great outdoors while discovering pictographs and petroglyphs on this 6-mi RT hike. Leader: George McDonald (808-3855) Level 3.

JANUARY 8 (SUNDAY)

Kingman Wash, LMNRA (Lake Mead National Recreation Area). Over bridge for a 4-5 mi loop to explore old mining area. Leader: Roger Olsen (526-2181). Level 3.

JANUARY 9 (MONDAY)

General Program Meeting. Time & Place: 7 pm; UNLV Student Union Bldg, Rm 219, , 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89154 (SW Corner of Harmon & Maryland Pkwy). Program: "Conserving Our Mojave Desert Life: For Today, For Tomorrow." Local Las Vegan, Jim Moore, Mojave Desert Ecoregional Ecologist for Nature Conservancy, will be exploring and illuminating us on the great work they do here to protect and enhance our desert home. All members and general public welcome. Announcements, refreshments, door prize, free literature, too. Info: Eric King (677-4751).

JANUARY 14 (SATURDAY)

Echo Wash, LMNRA. Which variety of eagle are we most likely to see along lakeshore? About 6 mi RT. Leader: Bill Marr (433-0473). Level 3-4.

JANUARY 15 (SUNDAY)

Red Cap, RRCNCA . Gain of 800 ft on this 3-mi RT hike. It's short, challenging and, most of all, is fun. Scramble to one of highest points in Calico Hills. What species lies dormant in water pockets until rains come? Leader: George McDonald (808-3855). Level 4.

JANUARY 18 (WEDNESDAY)

Railroad Tunnels, LMNRA. Mid-week hike with dramatic tunnels and splendid views of lake. About 7 mi RT. Leader: Roger Olsen (526-2181). Level 2.

JANUARY 21 (SATURDAY)

Calico Tanks Overlook at RRCNCA. Start our 3-mi RT trek at second pull-out on Scenic Drive. Boulder up chute over saddle to Boy Scout overlook, then scramble to Tanks for lunch. Then past arch, pictographs, and head home. How can you tell a pictograph from a

petroglyph? Leader: George McDonald (808-3855). Level 3-4.

JANUARY 22 (SUNDAY)

China Ranch. Hike through canyons, even some slots, in the fun hills near China Ranch. After that we can have time for date shakes, date bread, or buying bags of dates. How do dates grow? Level 2-3, about 8 mi. Leader: David Hardy (875-4826, hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, e-mail preferred).

JANUARY 28 (SATURDAY)

North Valley of Fire, LMNRA. Is desert varnish we see on cliffs a result of biological or inorganic processes? About 6 mi RT. Leader: Bill Marr (433-0473). Level 3-4.

FEBRUARY 4 (SATURDAY)

Hidden Valley, Muddy Mountain Wilderness. Along this 5-mi loop in a majestic valley of Aztec sandstone, we'll discover natural springs, petroglyphs, pictographs, arrowhead chip-pings and much more. Need HCV to trail head. Leader: George McDonald (808-3855). Level 3-4.

FEBRUARY 5 (SUNDAY)

Blue Diamond Hill. This 8 mi hike starts in Blue Diamond, goes up near the top of the hill, then down a narrow canyon which requires some rock scrambling. It comes out at Wheeler Spring, and then back to Blue Diamond. Level 2-3, 1200 ft gain. Are there any springs on Blue Diamond Hill? Leader: David Hardy (875-4826, hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, e-mail preferred).

FEBRUARY 11 (SATURDAY)

Bowl of Fire Loop, LMNRA. Are these sandstone outcrops same strata as Red Rock or Zion? ~6 mi RT. Leader: Bill Marr (433-0473) Level 3-4

FEBRUARY 11 (SATURDAY)

TBA at RRCNCA. Leader George McDonald 808-3855 level 3-4.

FEBRUARY 13 (MONDAY)

General Program Meeting. Time & Place: 7 pm; UNLV Student Union Bldg, Rm 219, , 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89154 (SW Corner of Harmon & Maryland Pkwy). Program: Nick Saines will give a talk entitled, "When Dinosaurs Roamed Las Vegas," about the recent discoveries of dinosaur tracks in the Jurassic rocks at Red Rock Canyon and bones in Cretaceous rocks in Valley of Fire (with input from paleontologist Josh Bonde). The finds will be related to similar discoveries in CA, AZ, and UT. Nick will strive to recreate landscape and life in Las Vegas 190,000,000 years ago. Come learn the techniques hikers should use to make new discoveries in Red Rock Canyon, Valley of Fire, and Rainbow

Please see SN CALENDAR, page 11.

SOUTHERN NEVADA GROUP

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At Large	Gecko Benjamin*	702-505-0000	
At Large	Scott Stevens*	702-252-3223	sOs@mac.com
At Large	Roxanne San Jose*	702-505-1168	
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Programs	Eric King*	702-436-9088	teamprosperitylv@yahoo.com
Publicity	Desiree Saporito	702-875-2668	
Transportation	Jane Feldman*		feldman.jane@gmail.com
Webmaster	Par Rasmusson*	702-215-9119	par@mvdsl.com

* ExCom member

Don't forget to visit the Chapter website
<http://toiyabe.sierraclub.org>

S. Nevada Group Calendar

continued from page 10

Gardens. All members and general public welcome. Announcements, refreshment, door prize, free literature, too. Info: Eric King (677-4751).

FEBRUARY 18 (SATURDAY)

Sloan Canyon. Lots of petroglyphs on this 6 mi. loop. Leader: Roger Olsen (526-2181) Level 3.

FEBRUARY 19 (SUNDAY)

Bowl of Fire to Anniversary Narrows. This 15-mi hike begins and drops into the N end of Bowl of Fire, then over a low pass to drop into the Anniversary drainage. Some rock scrambling required. What are some of the major minerals? To be able to do this hike we need to get from the narrows to the cars in the last 2 mi. Will have to check on that before the hike as there is now a gate. Car shuttle. Level 4. Leader: David Hardy (875-4826, hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, e-mail preferred).

FEBRUARY 25 (SATURDAY)

Pinto Valley Car Shuttle, LMNRA. How long ago was the jeep trail closed in the valley? About 7-9 mi RT. Leader: Bill Marr (433-0473) Level 3-4

MARCH 3 (SATURDAY)

Fortification Hill, LMNRA. Great views of lake 6 mi. Leader: Roger Olsen (526-2181) Level 4

MARCH 4 (SUNDAY)

Bridge Mountain via Rocky Gap Road Summit, RRCNCA. One of best scrambling hikes at Red Rock. Gain 2000 ft over 5 mi RT. From Rocky Gap Summit, hike to escarpment a great view overlooking Pine Creek. Here's where fun begins, we'll climb up a chute to bridge then pass by hidden forest and on to summit. At summit of Bridge Mt. view of Red Rock and Las Vegas is breathtaking; you'll never forget this hike. Which are older: limestone or sandstone formations? Leader: George McDonald (808-3855). Level 5.

MARCH 12 (MONDAY)

General Program Meeting. Time & Place: 7 pm; UNLV Student Union Bldg, Rm 219, 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89154 (SW Corner of

Harmon & Maryland Pkwy). Program: "Wild Utah: Protecting Utah's Redrock Wildlands." Terri Martin, SW Regional Organizer of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, will share with us how to help protect the gorgeous Redrock Canyon country of S. Utah. Enjoy stunning images in a multimedia slide show narrated by Robert Redford and hear an insider's update about new opportunities to protect Utah's wild lands – including the campaign to convince President Obama to protect the Greater Canyonlands, the utterly magnificent wild region surrounding Canyonlands National Park. All members and general public welcome. Announcements, refreshments, door prize, free literature, too. Info: Eric King (677-4751).

MARCH 17 (SATURDAY)

Bitter Springs Cliff, LMNRA. Which cliff dwelling birds might we expect in this area? About 7-8 mi RT. Leader: Bill Marr (433-0473). Level 3-4.

MARCH 18 (SUNDAY)

Bowl of Fire. Begin about Mile 20 and end at Mile 18 on this 10 -mi trip through colorful rock formations and narrow twisting canyons. Why do some of the rock formations have measles? Car shuttle. Level 3. Leader: David Hardy (875-4826, hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, e-mail preferred).

MARCH 22, 23, 24, 25 (THURSDAY-SUNDAY)

Toroweap Point Camping Trip, Tuweep Wilderness, N. Rim of Grand Canyon. There is a special place to check your pulse and feel your heart beat. This place is as dangerous as it is stunningly beautiful. It's a vertical world where laws of gravity and nature remind us of our human vulnerabilities. Requires HCV, 60+ mile drive over unpaved, bone-jarring roads. There are bigger places on earth than Toroweap – glaciers of Alaska come to mind, as well as the enormous mass of Mt. McKinley – but none can give a stronger impression of sheer immensity. Leader: George McDonald (702-808-3855, onecoolhike@yahoo.com).

WATER DISASTER . . .

continued from page 7

would stay on the shelf until it was absolutely needed, a construction delay for many years to possibly decades.

Many thousands of letters of opposition from concerned citizens. The Sierra Club, the Center for Biological Diversity, and the GBWN successfully recruited over 23,000 concerned citizens and organizations to submit letters to the State Engineer during the written comment period ending December 2, 2011.

What happens next. During the next few months, the State Engineer will review all of the testimony and evidence from the water hearing as well as the massive amount of public comments on

this controversial water project. His decision is scheduled for March, 2012.

What you can do. For more information on the water grab proposal and how you can help, go to the Sierra Club website at: <http://toiyabe.sierraclub.org/> and the GBWN website at: [**DEADLINE!**
MARCH 1
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Great Basin Group Calendar

continued from page 9

MARCH 30 - APRIL 1 (FRIDAY-SUNDAY) TBA

Hot Springs in Winter. Meet up on Friday Night, head up to a hot spring near Gerlach, camp, then on Saturday camp at another, prettier hot spring in area. Exact itinerary will depend on playa and area conditions. We are also trying to set up access to a another hot spring on private land. Leader very familiar with area. New moon week before will mean good stars. Bad weather cancels. High clearance vehicles, no trailers, 4WD nice but not necessary. Sign up 3/10 - 3/28. DOK. Leader: David Book (775-843-6443). Easy.

stream along Carson River enjoying riparian habitat, possible beaver activity. Return on segment of Pony Express Trail route. Learn some history of area. Fee: \$1 /person State Park walk-in fee. Option to tour remains of Fort Churchill on your own after hike. Learn some history of area. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Moderate.

MARCH 25 (SUNDAY) 9AM

Skunk Harbor Snowshoe. A somewhat more difficult snowshoe. Go down about 800 ft to lake level, visit historic Newhall Mansion, then climb back up to road. About 3.2 mi. ND. Leader: Donna Inversin (775-315-6763; d_inversin@yahoo.com). Mod. Easy.

COAL TO CLEAN ENERGY . . .

continued from page 7

cancelled in March 2010. Once this was official, Sierra Club began looking at the existing coal fleet in this state: the Valmy Plant outside Winnemucca, Newmont Mining's coal plant in Eureka County, and the Reid Gardner station in Moapa.

Reid Gardner plant & pollution.

After travelling the Moapa Reservation with the Tribal Chairman and meeting with Vernon Lee, a member of the Tribe and former employee at the plant, it became clear that everything was very wrong at Reid Gardner.

According to the American Lung Association, "The process of burning coal releases chemicals into the atmosphere that threaten not only the air Americans breathe, but the water they drink, the soil they live on and the food they eat."

Reid Gardner's first unit was built in 1965. Since then, the plant has polluted the Moapa Band of Paiutes as well as Southern Nevada and Southern Utah. Additional units were constructed until the 1980s, compounding the problem with each expansion.

Club brings legal complaints against Reid Gardner plant. Working with Dan Galpern of the Western Environmental Law Center in Eugene, OR, Sierra Club has brought several legal complaints against the facility. In November 2010, we sued the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for allowing the expansion of NV Energy's toxic coal ash landfill and wastewater ponds on several acres of land adjacent to the plant.

BLM completely ignored the Tribe's complaints, saying it wasn't possible to prove health effects from exposure to toxic coal ash. Despite the fact that the Environmental Protection Agency says coal ash is more likely to cause cancer than smoking a pack of cigarettes a day, U.S. Federal Judge Kent Dawson threw out our lawsuit in favor of BLM. No evidence was considered. Sierra Club has appealed this decision to the 9th Circuit Court in San Francisco.

In October 2011, Sierra Club and the Moapa Band of Paiutes brought a lawsuit against the Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD) when the

agency allowed Nevada Energy to continue adding coal ash to their 91-acre, unlined, landfill. In addition, Nevada Energy was granted an additional 21 acres and a permit to operate until at least 2046!

S. Nevada Health District allows Reid Gardner plant expansion. The SNHD was well aware of the problems in Moapa. The Tribe (which only has around 300 members) had submitted more than 55 comments against the expansion, and Sierra Club collected an additional 347. One letter is from a woman in Las Vegas which read, "I worked as an Environmental Scientist at Reid Gardner for several years. Regulatory compliance was consistently disregarded and ignored, and several times reports were submitted that were knowingly falsified."

Nonetheless, SNHD claimed they could not take the health of the Moapa Band of Paiutes community into consideration. SNHD continued to allow Nevada Energy to continue forward, and has never pursued an alternative health study to this day. In a letter from SNHD Chief Health Officer, Donald Kwalick, he states "Because of the small population size in Moapa, it is difficult to identify health problems related to the facility, even if true health problems exist." Despite these questions,

Reid Gardner plant expansion would be paid for by Nevada Energy customers. Nevada Energy has now asked the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada (PUCN) (a three-person quasi-judicial panel appointed by the Governor to regulate the electric, gas, and phone monopolies in Nevada) to allow them to operate all four units of Reid Gardner until at least 2023. To do so, Nevada Energy would have to spend at least \$200 million on upgrades to the aging, dangerous infrastructure at the plant, and would have to spend at least \$50 million on new pollution controls. That money is in addition to the tens, if not hundreds, of millions of dollars spent each year to ship in coal from Utah, Colorado, and Wyoming. All of

Please see CLEAN ENERGY, page 12.

Bookshelf

THE MAKING OF YOSEMITE

BY JEN A. HUNTLEY

University Press of Kansas, 2011

The Making of Yosemite, by Jen A. Huntley, is a profound contribution to the topic of our public lands, national parks, and wilderness areas. In weaving a narrative surrounding the life of James Hutchings, the first herald for Yosemite, the author provides more than the literal story by infusing insightful connections into every paragraph between Hutchings' own actions and the broader conservation issues they touched.

The Making of Yosemite is a "must" read for everyone active in preserving U. S. natural resources. In unburying the story of James Hutchings, the author goes to the original material: the man's own journals, his photographs, his published works. This is important because it presents a different story than what the media of the time and what later writers created around James Hutchings.

The author portrays a man deeply committed to the Sierra and to Yosemite in particular. Although he was eclipsed by John Muir, who was a more effective promoter of Yosemite as a public treasure, the author shows that Hutchings' awe of this splendid place was no less, although it may have

been framed somewhat differently.

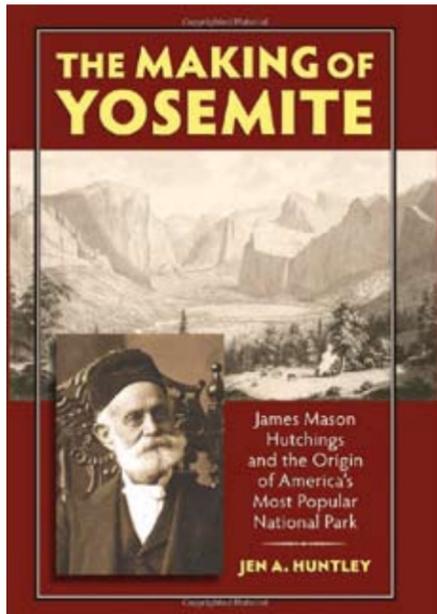
The book leaves the reader with the impression that Hutchings' efforts were no less important than Muir's in preserving Yosemite. We learn that Hutchings early supported tourism to bring the park to public attention and later supported national park designation. He also went on to help found the Sierra Club with John Muir.

The author's writing penetrates deeply into the juxtaposition of nature and man and has wider implications than for

just this piece of history. Conservation of our natural heritage henceforth may well profit by combining the views of Hutchings and Muir. This book certainly gives a necessary presentation of Hutchings' views.

Jen A. Huntley is an environmental historian of the Sierra Nevada and Pacific Rim. She taught at U. of Nevada, Reno for 10 years, designed the U. of Nevada Academy for the Environment, and served as its Assoc. Director for Education & Outreach until 2010.

— by David von Seggern



GREEN JOBS...

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new trade policies that promote growth and prosperity across all sectors of global societies while protecting public health and safety.

Those wanting to attend the Los Angeles conference at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel are encouraged to apply for scholarships to cover transportation, hotel, and registration fees. Volunteers from Angeles Chapter are planning to offer historic walking tours of downtown Los Angeles and Hollywood for out-of-town participants.

For more information. Contact Joan Jones Holtz (626-443-0706; jholtzhln@aol.com) or visit the website <www.greenjobsconference.org>.

— contributed by Joan Jones Holtz,
Sierra Club Trade, Human Rights, & the
Environment Team

TRAP REGULATION...

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of 2012, but there is no further definition of regulation.

There was a procedural Wildlife Commission meeting on Dec. 3; no votes were taken. The matter will also be heard February 3-4 in Las Vegas. There will be more public hearings in both Las Vegas and Reno. Public input is encouraged. Send e-mails to info@trailsafe.org We will make sure the Wildlife Commission sees every e-mail. See TrailSafe talking points at <www.trailsafe.org>.

Trap registration needed. TrailSafe contends the essential first step is reinstatement of trap ID and registration. About 15 years ago, NRS 503.452 was amended to make ID/registration of traps optional. The Wildlife Commission maintains they cannot alter NRS. TrailSafe maintains not only can they, they are mandated to do so. But, unfortunately the discussion so far is limited to defining exact boundaries of trap regulation.

Trap advocates resist making the entire Firearms Congested Areas trap-free and are lobbying to set the boundaries either 1000 feet or 1000 yards from any occupied dwelling within the congested areas. The boundary question is even more contentious in Clark County where firearms restrictions are extensive.

Trapped pets. Trap regulation is especially relevant for hikers. Many Sierra Clubbers have found traps near trails, and some have suffered trapped pets.

How to open traps. The TrailSafe

CLEAN ENERGY...

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the money to keep this plant operating would come from Nevada Energy ratepayers.

Some good news. In response to advocacy from Sierra Club, the Moapa Band of Paiutes, and the Western Resource Advocates, the PUCN has opened a full investigation into all aspects of the Reid Gardner power plant. This is very encouraging, because it forces Nevada Energy to reveal the dark history at Reid Gardner: decades of environmental violations and fines, broken agreements with the Tribe, capital expenditures made in the plant without PUCN approval, and plans that do not incorporate the true cost of remediation and clean-up of the groundwater.

Sierra Club will continue to work alongside the Moapa Band of Paiutes until the PUCN mandates an early retirement of Reid Gardner with fully mandated clean-up and strict compliance deadlines.

The Toiyabe Chapter believes that instead of spending hundreds of millions, if not more than a billion dollars to keep this old dirty polluter on life support, Nevada Energy should replace the facility with clean, renewable energy and energy efficiency projects that create jobs in Nevada.

The Moapa Band of Paiutes could very well lead this transition, as they are developing a solar project on their Reservation with K Road Power, with plans to be completed by 2014.

website presents instructions on opening traps — very difficult, especially when dealing with a hysterical animal. Fur trapping season is Nov. 1 - Feb. 29 so back country hikers may want to carry vise grips, pliers and bolt cutters during those months.

What you can do. The coalition negotiating trap boundaries in Clark County is Clark County Animal Advocates in Coalition with TrailSafe. Supporters welcome. Please contact them if (1) you can help the effort, (2) you need to report a companion animal trapping, or (3) you have any other trapping-related issue.

Contact details are: **Karen Layne**, lvvhs@cox.net, 702-434-2009 office, 702-354-8911 cell (for trapping calls), <www.lvhumane.org>; **Stacia Newman**, politicsforanimals@yahoo.com; **Gina Greiseng**, nevadavoters@nv4a.org, <www.nv4a.org>.



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Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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2012 Mule Pack Section trips

The Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter Mule Pack Section has seven fun trips planned for 2012.

Virginia Canyon: July 29-August 3

Humphrey's Basin: August 5-10

Thousand Island Lake: August 12-18

Saddlerock Lake: August 19-25

Treasure Lakes: August 23-26

Vogelsang: August 26-31

Big Pine Lakes: September 3-8

Sandy Burnside, a new member of the ROLG ExCom, and her husband Keith, arrange the Mule Pack outings for Angeles Chapter.

Please visit the Angeles Chapter website at <www.angeles.sierraclub.org/mps/>.

— contributed by Malcolm Clark



Toiyabe Chapter
ExCom Meeting

January 21, 2012
Las Vegas, NV

For details,
contact the Chair,

JEAN STOEES

jstoess@aol.com

775-322-5326