



TRAILS

FALL
ELECTION
& HOLIDAY
Issue

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

From the Chair

Where there's fire, there's smoke (& vice-versa)

BY DAVID VON SEGGERN
(vonseg1@sbcglobal.net)

Living and breathing in Reno, Nevada, during August 2013, with the smoke-filled days and nights, surely makes one reflect on wildfire in our modern circumstances. The Rim Fire on the western Sierra Nevada is already a part of history, being the sixth largest recorded fire in California history (and probably moving up in the days after I write this).

Fifteen of California's top 20 wildfires (as measured by area) have been in the last 25 years. At the beginning of that 25-year period, the Sierra Club officially recognized a century of fire suppression as one of the leading causes of the infernos now taking place in our forests far too frequently. I quote from the Sierra Club conservation policy Fire Management on Public Lands (adopted 1989): "Areas managed for their natural values often benefit from recurring wildfires and may be harmed by a policy of fire suppression. Long-term suppression of small wildfires may build up conditions making occasional catastrophic conflagrations inevitable."

We have seen the scientific basis for this conclusion and have backed it since. Although not all Sierra Club advocacy positions rest on such a

Please see FROM THE CHAPTER CHAIR, page 2.



Point of Rocks Boardwalk Trail, Ash Meadows. Please see Ash Meadows article on page 7. Photo: Dennis Ghiglieri.

Nevada trapping issues

BY TAJ AINLAY, S. NEVADA GROUP CHAIR &
TRISH SWAIN, COORDINATOR, TRAILS SAFE NEVADA

Trapping is a legitimate concern for Sierra Club members. Hikers encounter hidden, camouflaged, unmarked traps on the trail, putting companion dogs and themselves at risk.

What's more, the Sierra Club Board of Directors adopted a national Trapping Policy on May 19, 2012. This national policy applies to both chapters and groups: "The Sierra Club considers body-gripping, restraining and killing traps and snares to be ecologically indiscriminate and unnecessarily inhumane and therefore opposes their use."

Trapping is not wildlife management. It is not tightly regulated like hunting, nor is it disease prevention, as some trap advocates claim. Trapping is a business: selling the pelts of our native animals to wholesalers for export to Russia, China and other countries. There are no bag limits and very few regulations. A small number of citizens profit from trapping wildlife, which by law belong to all. In fact, trap licenses are fewer than 1% of all licenses sold by the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW).

New laws & regulations. Since 2007, TrailSafe authored, lobbied for, and

achieved passage of two laws and three state regulations in the interest of public safety and humane consideration of animals. Most recently, SB213 mandates the Wildlife Commission to reinstate registration numbers on traps. This long-needed improvement should take effect smoothly. But TrailSafe foresees more roadblocks with another mandate of SB213: shorter, more humane trap visitation intervals.

Nevada requires traps to be visited within 96 hours. This means a trapped animal endures hunger, thirst, pain, fear, and the elements for four days before the trapper comes and slays her/him. Thirty-three U.S. states mandate a more humane 24-hour visitation. Five of those are large western states comparable to Nevada. Yet trappers and many in the Nevada power structure resist shorter visitation, because it would cause trapper inconvenience. A trapper will set as many as 300

traps in a "line." Their complaint: it takes time, gas, and money to visit all

Please see NV TRAPPING ISSUES, page 6.



Luna, owned by Steve Brittingham who lives in Mt. Charleston, Clark County. They couldn't get the trap off, so had to drive her to the vet with it still attached. She lost a lot of blood.

Chapter & Group Elections

BY DAVID VON SEGGERN

The Chapter ExCom invites any interested individuals to inquire about serving on the ExCom. Elected terms are two years, with quarterly meetings at four locations around the state. ExCom members meet to:

- form and take positions on conservation issues
- handle the Chapter's administrative business
- disburse Chapter funds for various campaigns and activities

There are nine elected ExCom members and voting representatives for each group, making the total 13 members. This year we will be electing five members, as the elected terms are staggered five and four. All Chapter members are eligible to view the vote count on January 2; contact the chair for details.

Toiyabe Chapter Election Schedule 2013

- Oct. 21**, nominating committee submits its report of candidates
- Oct. 26**, ExCom approves the slate of candidates at quarterly meeting
- Oct. 26**, ExCom approves the Election Committee members
- Nov. 8**, deadline for petitions to be submitted to ExCom (petition candidates are placed on ballot)
- Nov. 22**, mailout of ballots to chapter elections mail list
- Dec. 31**, closing date for acceptance of ballots at chapter post office box
- Jan. 2**, vote count

Toiyabe Chapter Nominating Committee. David von Seggern, Chair (vonseg1@sbcglobal.net); Christa Keyes, Member (ckeyes@minervaoffice.com); Rose Strickland, Member (rosenreno@sbcglobal.net); Taj Ainley, Member (tajainley@aol.com).

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TOIYABE CHAPTER DIRECTORY

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FROM THE CHAIR . . .

continued from page 1

clear science basis, this is obviously one. What other advocacy issues in the forefront of the Sierra Club rest on a firm science basis? I will point to global warming as one prominent example.

The evidence has been building for decades, and the Sierra Club states in the conservation policy Energy Resources (adopted 2006) that: "Dependence on fossil fuels is causing global warming, the depletion of energy resources, and severe damage to human health and the environment. The impacts of burning fossil fuels threaten the security of our nation, the survival of species, and impairs the Earth's capacity to sustain life."

This finding is based on overwhelming evidence coming from research nationally and internationally. We can be satisfied that the Toiyabe Chapter has been heavily involved in both the fire management and GHG emissions issues. But, in both of these important cases, being on the side of the scientific facts does not guarantee that we can easily change public policy. Since the 1989 fire management policy, progress has been slow in moving to active management plans that will reverse over a century of fire suppression.

Since the 2006 energy resources policy, we have seen entrenched interests impede the adoption of policies to shrink GHG emissions nationally and to obfuscate the issue in the minds of the public. So, science backing is not sufficient in itself; and we depend on thousands of dedicated volunteers to continually promote the fact-based messages to the public and to officials.

GMOs. Looking ahead, another prominent issue now rising is the GMO issue. Although the science is not totally clear on this yet, we must monitor it carefully and look for the facts on which to base action. I am willing to be educated on this by members, some of whom I know are passionate about the issue because of the potential for widespread, endemic harm. For more information on the Sierra Club's look at GMOs, visit <http://www.sierraclub.org/biotech/intro.aspx>. Perhaps you would like to be part of the Club's development of a policy on this issue?



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.

DEADLINE!
DECEMBER 1FOR
JAN-FEB-MAR ISSUE

President Obama proclaims September 2013 as Wilderness Month

On August 30, 2013, the President signed a proclamation designating September 2013 as Wilderness Month. To see the full text of the proclamation, go to: www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/08/30/presidential-proclamation-national-wilderness-month-2013.

— contributed by Marge Sill

National Public Lands Day Outings

FRIENDS OF NEVADA WILDERNESS invites Sierra Club members to join volunteers across the Nevada celebrating the 20th anniversary of National Public Lands Day, the nation's largest annual volunteer event. The Friends will be hosting four separate worksites across the state where volunteers can help restore the beauty and vitality of our public lands in Nevada. This is a great opportunity for families to get outdoors and experience what our public lands have to offer.

September 20-22

Friday-Sunday

Soldier Meadows Hot Spring (N. Nevada). Friends of Nevada Wilderness will be partnering with BLM, Friends of Black Rock, and Nevada Outdoor School to clean up and restore Soldier Meadows Hot Spring. All ages welcome! Contact: Pat Bruce (pbruce@nevadawilderness.org, 775-324-7667).

September 29-29

Friday-Sunday

Santa Rosa Mtns, Paradise Valley (N. Nevada). Friends of Nevada Wilderness will be partnering with U.S. Forest Service and Nevada Outdoor School to remove old rusted fence in wild areas of the mountain range. Ages 16 years and over are welcome. Contact: Renee Aldrich (renee@nevadawilderness.org, 775-324-7667).

September 28

(Saturday)

Desert Nat'l Wildlife Refuge (S. Nevada). Time: 7:30a-2:30p. Volunteers will deconstruct and remove an unsightly and now unused fence that was installed in the 1960s near Corn Creek Road. Ages 16 years and over are welcome. Contact: Jose Witt. (jose@nevadawilderness.org, 702-203-1720).

September 28

(Saturday)

South McCullough Wilderness (S. Nevada). Time: 8a-4p. Volunteers will install fence posts, naturalize disturbed areas from illegal roads, and remove old debris. This is a remote work spot so volunteers are advised to call 2 weeks in advance to RSVP and for carpool options. Contact: Jesy Simons (jesy@nevadawilderness.org, 530-598-0121).

Info. For more information about future projects with Friends of Nevada Wilderness, please visit our website at www.nevadawilderness.org/calendar_of_events.

Fall Desert Trips

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

OCT 12-13 (SAT-SUN)

EXPLORE AND SERVE IN CARRIZO PLAINS

Part of continuing project to aid mobility of pronghorn antelope in Carrizo Plain National Monument. Saturday, either remove or modify several sections of fence which impede antelope progress. Sunday, choice of group, either hike in Caliente Range or tour popular viewing areas in plains. An opportunity to combine car camping, day hiking, exploring, and service in relatively unknown wilderness. Leader: Craig Deutsche (craig.deutsche@gmail.com, 310-477-6670).

CNRCC Desert Committee

OCT 24-26 (THU-SAT)

DEATH VALLEY WILDERNESS RESTORATION

Join us as in restoring wilderness values in this beautiful and remote national park. Meet early Thursday afternoon and work on Darwin Falls trail, then drive to our primitive camping area and set up camp. Work Friday picking up debris from an airplane crash. If needed, continue work on Saturday – otherwise, participants will be free to enjoy park. Leader: Kate Allen (kj.allen96@gmail.com, 661-944-4056).

CNRCC Desert Committee

OCT 26-27 (SAT-SUN)

GHOST TOWN EXTRAVAGANZA

Spend Halloween weekend with ghosts of California's colorful past. Primitive camp at historic ghost town of Ballarat in eerie desert landscape near Death Valley. Saturday, challenging hike to ghost town of Lookout City with historian Hal Fowler, who will regale us with tales of this wild west town. Return to camp for Happy Hour and potluck feast, followed by midnight visit to Ballarat's graveyard. Sunday, quick visit to infamous Riley townsite before heading home. Group size strictly limited. Leader: Lygeia Gerard (760-868-2179).

CNRCC Desert Committee

NOV 2-3 (SAT-SUN)

LATE AUTUMN IN CARRIZO PLAINS: SERVICE & EXPLORATION

Part of continuing project to aid mobility of pronghorn antelope in Carrizo Plain National Monument. Saturday, either remove or modify several sections of fence which impede antelope progress. Sunday, choice of group, either hike in Caliente Range or tour popular viewing areas in plains. Opportunity to combine car camping, day hiking, exploring, and service in relatively unknown wilderness. Leader: Craig Deutsche (craig.deutsche@gmail.com, 310-477-6670).

CNRCC Desert Committee

NOV 9-12 (SAT-MON)

WESTERN UTAH EXPLORATION EXPERIENCE

Join countdown to 50th anniversary of Wilderness Act with national Utah Wilderness Task Force and Utah Chapter in visit to western Utah's Mountain Home Range and San Francisco Peaks, which are under consideration as new wilderness in new BLM resource plan. Help document wild values in these remote ranges and enjoy car camping with central commissary over Veterans Day weekend. Experience desert solitude, darkest night skies, and beauty of pinyon pine-covered desert peaks. Leader: Vicky Hoover (415-977-5527, vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org).

CNRCC Wilderness Committee

**DEC 29, 2013-JAN 2, 2014
(SUN-THU)**

HOLIDAY SERVICE TRIP IN CARRIZO PLAIN

Once again, return to Carrizo Plain to cele-

Water issues intensify threats to Nevada species (Part II)

BY ROB MROWKA

Amphibians. Also affected are the amphibians, with a notable example being the northern leopard frog. Protection for this species was sought under the ESA in 2006, but was found to be not (yet) warranted due to its wide range and uncertainty as to whether the western population is distinct from the more common eastern population. Nonetheless, it remains an FWS "species of concern" in western states. The leopard frog is found at many springs and wetlands to be impacted by the water grab. At Keegan Spring, for example, the expected decline in flows is estimated to range from 58-100%; at North Millick Spring the impact is 31-75%. In addition to these spring and stream impacts, the FEIS estimates that over 5500 total acres of wetlands will be lost.

Upland Species

Upland animals & plants. Unaccounted for in the FEIS (except in the broadest of terms) are the hundreds of species of upland animal and plant species that will be displaced, extirpated, and in some cases driven to extinction. The FEIS estimates that 131,000 acres of Great Basin shrublands, along with their associated species, will be lost. Left unsaid is that these biologically

Please see *THREATS TO NV SPECIES*, page 5.

brate year end and offer service to pronghorn antelope in this National Monument. Lying between Bakersfield and San Luis Obispo, this vast grassland is home to pronghorn antelope, tule elk, kit fox, and wide variety of birds. Welcome hike on Dec. 29, 2.5 half days of service modifying barbed wire fencing, and full day for hiking and exploring are planned. Use of accommodations at one of old ranch houses is included. Limited to 12 participants, \$30 covers four dinners and breakfast on New Year's morning. For more information, contact leader: Craig Deutsche (craig.deutsche@gmail.com, 310-477-6670).

CNRCC Desert Committee

WILD & SCENIC[®] FILM FESTIVAL

Las Vegas

Thursday, November 14

Doors Open at 6 pm
at the **Historic Fifth St. Schoolhouse**

Details and Film Trailers
www.NevadaWilderness.org/Wild_Scenic_Film_Fest

Range of Light Reflections

Range of Light Group



Group News

Letter from the Chair

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

ExCom. Next meeting is Tuesday, Oct 22, 2013, 6 pm, Malcolm Clark's home.

Meetings. In June Harry Williams of the Bishop Paiute Tribe spoke about tribal water and environmental issues. July and August were our summer cook-outs (no program).

Outings. ROL outings are ended for the season. Cross-Country ski and snowshoe outings will begin in January, snow permitting.

Blue Diamond Trails. ROL members have been making new blue diamond signs to mark cross-country ski trails. Mary Kay Prentice coordinated this project with the Forest Service. Melissa

Swan oversaw making the signs. Actual installation begins in September and will continue next year.

NEEDED. Volunteer to be Conservation Chair. ROL presently has no organized way to respond to many important conservation items. In the meantime, submit conservation items to rangeoflight.sc@gmail.com.

NEEDED. Highway Cleanup Chair to coordinate our three highway cleanups each year (May, July, September).

Conservation Updates

Bodie Coalition has hired Jeff Hunter as organizer for the partnership (which includes ROLG). More on page 5.

Sierra Club announced in August a search for a **Sierra Club staff organizer** to work with Sierra Club members and other local environmental groups on the Inyo National Forest plan revision process.

BLM and Inyo National Forest issued a Record of Decision giving the go ahead for **Casa Diablo IV geothermal expansion project** in Mammoth – with minor changes from the FEIR. As of September 1, the GBUAPCD had not yet approved the project. Mammoth Community Water District was likely to appeal the decision over issues of water quantity and quality. ROL had submitted comment letters on the project pointing out a number of other concerns.

U.S. Dept. of Fish & Wildlife proposed listing of **yellow-legged mountain frog** has engendered considerable local opposition by those who fear this would negatively affect access to tourist areas. Extended comment deadline

Group ExCom meetings

WE USUALLY MEET quarterly (January, April, July, October). The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct 19, 2013, 6 pm, at the home of Malcolm Clark. All are welcome but please confirm date, place and time, as meeting date may change in order to assure a quorum at the meeting or because of weather.

Any action items should be submitted to the chair (Malcolm Clark) in time for consideration prior to meeting by ExCom members. On items requiring a vote, please include text of proposed resolution (subject to revision by ExCom).

Normally ExCom acts on proposals between meetings only when a deadline (e.g., comment letter on BLM or Forest proposal) precludes waiting to next ExCom meeting.

Submissions or more info. Malcolm Clark, 760-924-5639 or malcolm.clark@gmail.com.

RANGE OF LIGHT GROUP

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* Voting ExCom member

Range of Light Group on Facebook!

TO CHECK US OUT, search "Range of Light Group" on Facebook and "Like" us. (Be sure to include "Group.") Check Facebook for updates for group outings, group events, and area conservation news.



ROL Group Website
<http://nevada.sierraclub.org/rolgroup/>
 &
 Chapter website
<http://toiyabe.sierraclub.org>

ROL ExCom Nominations & Election

We are seeking candidates for our group ExCom election in November. The three members whose terms end this year are: Sandy Burnside, Lesley Bruns, and Mike Shore. Continuing members (term not expiring) are Mauriça Anderson, Jean Dillingham, and Malcolm Clark.

When possible, we like to offer a choice by fielding more than three candidates. Please send your suggestions for someone you think could make a valuable contribution to our ExCom and who might be willing to serve (get the nominee's permission first). Don't hesitate to suggest yourself (self-nomination) if you have time and willingness to serve. The ExCom normally meets four times a year. It is the voting and final decision-making body of the Range of Light group.

ROL ExCom nominations. In order to have material submitted to the Chapter in time, our deadlines differ slightly from Chapter deadlines. Please submit nominations by Oct 18 so they may be considered at our Oct 19 ExCom meeting.

Petition nominations. ROL deadline for those not included in the ExCom's candidate slate is November 1.

For more info or to submit nominations. E-mail Rangeoflight.sc@gmail.com or snail mail Range of Light Group, PO Box 1973, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546. Ballots for both group and Chapter ExCom elections will be mailed about Nov 22 and must be received by Dec 31 to be counted.

Fall 2013 Outings Schedule

BY JOANNE & DICK HIHN

Thursday outings. These ROL summer outings end Oct. 1. They will resume in May, 2014, when weather allows and days are longer.

Sunday outings. These day trips also end as of Oct. 1. They will resume in January, 2014, with x-c skiing and snowshoeing trips.

Unscheduled hiking trips. These are NOT sponsored by the Sierra Club Range of Light Group, but may be possible from October through December, 2013. If interested, contact Joanne and Dick Hihn for details (760-709-5050, rhihn@skidmore.edu).

You're Invited!

Range of Light Group Monthly Meetings Everyone welcome!

For all potlucks please bring a dish for 6-8 people and your own *non-disposable* table setting. For months with potluck and program, you are welcome to skip the potluck and come only for the program. NO food allowed when we meet at Mammoth Lakes Community Library.

October 15 (Tuesday)
Potluck & Social, 6:15 pm,
Crowley Lake Community Center
Program: 7 pm

"All about Friends of the Inyo"

Laura Beardsley, Executive Director, FOI, will address the history of the FOI, talk about their current projects, and discuss the Inyo National Forest Plan.



November 19 (Tuesday)
Crowley Lake
Community Center
"Big Horn Sheep"

John Wehausen, recently retired from the

White Mt. Research Station, will discuss big horn Sheep in California. His talk will cover sheep population trends, habitat, and survival difficulties.

December TBA

HOLIDAY PARTY!

Date, time, & place to be announced in the ROL Newsletter, Facebook, & Website!



Please submit suggestions for program topics and/or speakers to our program chair, Mary Shore (mary.shore@gte.net). We always need fresh ideas!

Bodie Hills has new Conservation Organizer

BY MALCOLM CLARK
(WMALCOLM.CLARK@GMAIL.COM)

JEFF HUNTER IS THE NEW Conservation Organizer for the Bodie Hills Conservation Partnership. After a candidate search earlier this year, Jeff was hired as the California Conservation Organizer, working primarily to direct the efforts of the Bodie Hills Conservation Partnership to secure protected status for the Bodie Hills. The position is funded by the Conservation Lands Foundation thanks to the efforts of its California Program Director, Sam Goldman.

The Range of Light Group has been active in the Partnership since it was organized several years ago. Initial efforts of the Partnership were focused on preventing a proposed gold mining operation by Cougar Gold in the Bodie Hills. With the gold mining threat receding (for now), the coalition turned its efforts to securing permanent protected status for the Bodie Hills.

In the job search announcement, the position was summarized as one that “requires frequent travel, comfort working with colleagues in remote locations, working in a remote, rural area, and considerable flexibility. The successful candidate will possess a keen sense of humor, a passion for organizing in a community campaign and a spirit for protecting wild lands. The position seeks a talented individual who enjoys working on short and long term goals and possesses visionary leadership to direct a coalition of organizations working to protect lands in the Eastern Sierra California focusing on the Bodie Hills.”

Jeff has relocated with his family to June Lake; he took up his new position on August 21. For the past five years, Jeff led the Tennessee Wild Coalition and its campaign aimed at securing wilderness designation for 19,558 acres in the Cherokee National Forest. Having already hiked the Appalachian Trail in 2000, Jeff hiked the John Muir Trail in 2006.

Please welcome Jeff and support his efforts when he calls on ROLG members to help in the effort to gain protected status for the Bodie Hills. Watch for updates in future issues of Toiyabe Trails. Jeff’s email is:

DEADLINE!
DECEMBER 1
FOR
JAN - FEB - MAR ISSUE

Range of Light SUMMER PHOTO GALLERY

Photos by Joanne Hihn



June 18, 2013, Owens River Paddle.



July 12, 2013, McGee Creek Thursday Evening Outing.



August 26, 2013, Young Lakes Plateau Hike.

THREATS TO NV SPECIES ...

continued from page 3

diverse shrublands will be replaced by invasive species and only a few native grasses and forbs. As the vegetative protection for the soil surface is lost and the ground increasingly exposed to wind erosion, the FEIS estimates that over 11,600 TONS of new dust will be generated annually and sent downwind to rural communities and Salt Lake City.

Sage grouse & flycatcher. Two rare and greatly affected species worth mentioning are the greater sage grouse and the southwestern willow flycatcher.

The sage grouse is currently being considered for protection under the ESA, with a decision expected by 2015. This relatively large bird is a “sagebrush obligate species” – one of many in the affected area. The grouse relies on sagebrush for cover from predators and shelter from the weather. It is also both a direct source of food and a nursery for the many insect species that the bird consumes. Sage grouse also need wetlands, particularly as habitat for raising their young.

The FEIS states that over 164,000 acres of sage grouse priority habitat – that living space needed for courting, nesting and brood rearing – would be adversely affected, along with an additional 100,000 acres of general habitat. Extirpation of the grouse from an area the size of Vermont surely will not bode well for its long term survival, or for the effort to prove it can be protected without the constraints of the ESA.

The Southwest willow flycatcher has been listed as Endangered since 1995. It breeds in relatively dense riparian tree and shrub communities associated with rivers, swamps, and other wetlands. It needs vegetation 10 to 13 feet above ground, and habitat patches at least 0.25 acres in size and at least 30 feet wide. In the area of the water grab, the Pahrnat National Wildlife Refuge is critical habitat. The bird is also found at other locations in the prehistoric White River Flow System, including the Pahrnat and Muddy Rivers and the Meadow Valley Wash.

“Big game” animals. Lastly, I would be remiss not to mention the iconic big game animals of the Great Basin, such as the pronghorn, mule deer, elk, and desert bighorn sheep. One or more of these animal species inhabit every part of the area impacted by the water grab. With the expected dramatic changes in the landscape, vegetation, and water availability, it is expected that all will suffer major declines in population or outright extirpation from large areas. These well-known animals are the face of Nevada’s wildlife and wildland heritage, so while they are not at risk of extinction, they are perhaps the best species to carry to the general public the story of the destruction that will occur if the project goes forward.

SUMMARY. The proposed SNWA water grab is the greatest environmental threat to Nevada and the eastern part of Utah. If it is implemented, scores of species will go extinct, many others will be eliminated from their traditional homes, and the natural heritage of the region will be irreparably damaged. The only gain will be the allowance of further unsustainable growth of the human population in Southern Nevada. This ancient, irreplaceable ground water is not a long term solution – it will go dry. Any long term solution must include limits to growth, increased

Please see *THREATS TO NV SPECIES*, page 12.

CONSERVATION ROUNDUP

An early-morning walk is a blessing for the whole day.
— Henry David Thoreau

Conservation Briefs

BY MARGE SILL

Resource Management Plan for BLM* Winnemucca District. This Plan is now available online at the District's website. This RMP will replace the current Paradise-Denio and Sonoma-Gerlach Management Framework Plans which were implemented in 1982. The 8.4-million-acre RMP excludes the Black-Rock Desert/ High Rock Canyon National Conservation Area which is guided by a separate RMP approved in 2004. A Record of Decision for the final RMP is expected to be issued in 2014.

Fish & Wildlife Service to protect Webber's ivesia. The FWS wants to protect this ivesia, found in Washoe and Douglas Counties, as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. At the same time the agency has determined that the threat of extinction no longer exists for the Soldier Meadows cinquefoil, and it will be removed from the list of candidate species.

Nevada BLM 150th anniversary. The agency will celebrate its anniversary in 2014 with a photo contest. Entries will be accepted until Sept. 30. Photographs must have been taken between Jan. 1, 2011, and Sept. 30, 2013. Categories include "Adventure & outdoor recreation," "Scenic landscapes," and "Wildlife." For further information contact Kaitlin Godbey (kgodbey@blm.gov) or call 775-861-6471.

Restoring threatened Paiute cutthroat trout. A project to restore the fish to 11 miles of Silver King Creek

in the Carson Iceberg Wilderness in Alpine County began in August. This is a joint project effort by the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and the Calif. Dept. of Fish & Wildlife. The objective is to recover and reestablish the Paiute Cutthroat in its small historic range and prevent hybridization with other trout species.

DEIS for bi-state sage grouse.** The Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and the Carson City District of the BLM published the DEIS for the sage grouse which are located in both western Nevada and eastern California. The proposed amendment's standards and guidelines are meant manage habitat in such as way that the species is maintained or increased. For copies of the DEIS, contact James Winfrey of Humboldt-Toiyabe NF (775-355-5308).

Yosemite Rim Fire. Smoke from this terrible wild fire has seriously impacted recreational and outdoor activities in northwestern Nevada and eastern California, keeping our members from enjoying the spectacular trips and scenery of late summer. The fire is scheduled for containment by Sept. 20. This fire is a reminder to all of us to be extremely careful about our activities in this very dry land and to follow the fire season regulations issued by the U.S. Forest Service.

* BLM = Bureau of Land Management
** DEIS = Draft Environmental Impact Statement

NEVADA TRAPPING ISSUES . . .

continued from page 1

of them.

The future. A series of hearings are expected before the Trapping Committee of the NBWC, and TrailSafe is urgently encouraging Sierra Club members to participate.

What you can do. By subscribing to the *TrailSafe Newsletter*, members will receive alerts when e-mails or testimony could make a significant difference. Please e-mail info@trailsafe.org for a free subscription.

More instances of trapping abuses. Photos below contributed by Trish Swain of TrailSafe.



This Oregon bobcat, named Freedom by Predator Defense, was snared around his body and the trap was placed illegally. This story has a happy ending – Predator Defense was able to liberate him. Photo: Predator Defense.



Non-target species caught by Nevada trappers, 2002-2013

BY DON MOLDE (SKYSHRINK@AOL.COM)

THE NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF Wildlife recently provided TrailSafe, a trapping reform group started by two Sierra Club members, with some data regarding non-target species caught by Nevada trappers during 8 of the last 12 years.

Although only a small number of trappers self-reported (probably fewer than 20% of all trappers, statewide), the numbers of unintended animals and birds caught were still remarkable: over 4000 rabbits, 195 dogs, 116 cats, 172 mountain lions, 9 golden eagles, 11 hawks, 1 owl and assorted others, for a total of 5372 critters. Many did not survive the experience.

TrailSafe successfully obtained passage of its bill, SB 213, in the last legislature. The bill now forces the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners to consider modifications to trapping practices in Nevada, including the state-wide trap visitation interval of 96 hours.

What you can do. For those interested in more details, or in helping out, contact me via email.

Water shortage update

Will buckets of federal dollars solve the problem?

BY ROSE STRICKLAND

THAT IS WHAT PAT MULROY, general manager of the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA), publicly asserted in August as the solution to worsening water shortages on the Colorado River. Mulroy proposed a federal bailout for Southern Nevada's drought disaster, just as the feds provide assistance for other natural catastrophes. The details, however, are mysterious – both the amount of funds needed and how they would be spent to fight the drought is unknown, or at least not public.

Federal drought assistance. Mulroy, as usual, ignored the reality of federal drought assistance programs which have operated for decades, including U.S. Dept. of Agriculture assistance to farmers, Small Business Administration to businesses and non-profits, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on waterway programs, and U.S. Geological Survey's assistance to state, local, and tribal governments to address drought-related water information needs.

Water rates to go up? Local critics questioned this latest SNWA brouhaha over yet another water crisis. At the same time, SNWA has ended its drought restrictions and substantially reduced its water conservation budget, while threat-

Ash Meadows NWR

"Where the desert springs to life"

BY DENNIS GHIGLIERI

SEVEN LARGE DESERT SPRINGS are the life blood of this refuge. Thirty species of endemic fish and plants are supported by the spring water and geology of this unique part of the Mojave Desert. Fall is a good time to visit this largest remaining oasis in the Mojave Desert just east of Death Valley National Park and about 90 miles from Las Vegas.

Ash Meadows got its name from the velvet ash trees (*fraxinus velutina*) which are still found around springs and



Velvet Ash Tree fall color at Ash Meadows Nat'l Wildlife Refuge, NV. Photo: Dennis Ghiglieri.

meadows. Honey mesquite and the more common screw-bean mesquite trees are found throughout the 23,000 acre refuge, forming forests of green in

meadows. Restoration efforts at the refuge have largely eliminated exotic tamarisk trees that dominated the landscape when the refuge was created nearly 30 years ago. Spring outflows have been restored to be more like they were before the development of farms siphoned water into irrigation canals in the 1960s. Likewise, meadows once drained of water so that peat could be mined are now being restored to their original wetland habitat.

Once slated by developers to be a "mini-city" in the desert, Ash Meadows was purchased by the Nature Conservancy and finally by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. It became a wildlife refuge in 1984. Visitors to the refuge today are able to experience this unique desert landscape much as it was prior to development.

Boardwalks at Crystal Spring and Point of Rocks are recently completed with murals and signs explaining the wildlife and plants of the area. Water in the springs is considered to be 'fossil' water flowing underground from a great distance from interior mountains in Nevada over many millennia to emerge in the ice-blue springs. Pupfish found in the warm water are visible year round. Ash Meadows has four species of endemic and endangered desert fish. You're sure to get a good view of the Ash Meadows Amargosa pupfish at Point of Rocks boardwalk. Male pupfish are blue in color and the females are more olive green.

At the refuge website you can find brochures including lists of the 30 endemic species, the 340 plant species, and the nearly 300 species of birds found at the refuge. Go to: www.fws.gov/refuge/Ash_Meadows.

Please see WATER SHORTAGE, page 12.

*Everybody needs beauty
as well as bread, ... where
nature may give strength*

— John Muir

Saving the biodiversity program

BY TINA NAPPE

SINCE 2002, A FEDERAL WILDLIFE Program has provided matching funds to help underwrite state department of wildlife biodiversity programs. States provide one-third of the funding; the federal government two-thirds. Without this federal incentive, most state wildlife agencies receiving no general tax dollars are totally dependent on sportsmen's contributions. Last month the House Interior, Environment, & Related Agencies Subcommittee eliminated funding for this program.

The Nevada State Legislature is currently providing the Nevada Dept. of Wildlife (NDOW) \$500,000 in general funds. With the match NDOW has focused these limited funds on sensitive species. Below are some of NDOW's programs.

Wildlife Action Plan. NDOW, with the help of other conservation organizations, created the original and amended the first inventories of Nevada wildlife. A recent amendment incorporated the impacts of energy development and climate change.

Protected habitat for Amargosa toad. In central Nevada this toad was proposed for listing. But with assistance from the Nature Conservancy and local government, the Amargosa toad now has a protected habitat and some notoriety as a destination for visitors.

American pika and pygmy rabbit inventory. These two animals have been subject to extensive inventory work throughout their ranges and so far have not needed listing.

Multi-state partnerships. Nevada and other western states have joined in multi-state partnerships to ensure that several frog species, such as the Columbia spotted frog and the Relict leopard frog are monitored and habitats maintained to keep the species off a threatened list.

Biodiversity funding. A number of relict fish species live in Nevada, the result of evaporation of Lake Lahontan. They survive because of partnerships of protection. Biodiversity funding has been helpful in providing match funds for research.

Lake Tahoe environmental programs. Since 2002 when the program was initiated, funds have been invested in Lake Tahoe's Environmental Improvement Program, the GIS system so critical and useful in today's need to share information and pinpoint areas, and the Landowner Incentive Program which provides wildlife improvement funds on private lands.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE. Given the small amount of federal funds directed to these programs and the contribution they make to preserve our natural resources, we hope Congress will rethink the subcommittee's decision and continue this program.

Speak up for sage grouse!

BY TINA NAPPE

AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will be releasing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) providing alternatives to stop the decline of sage grouse populations. In Nevada, almost 17 million acres are identified as prime or general habitat for sage grouse. The challenge will be to save this critical sagebrush country while incorporating other existing uses.

Since Europeans first arrived in the 1850s, the Great Basin has been filling up with different uses. Among them are, of course, livestock grazing and mining. But other uses have been added: recreation enthusiasts, wild horses and burros, transportation and utility corridors. We Sierra Club members also cause impacts. As we camp, hike, and bicycle, we trek in weeds, disturb the cryptobiotic soil, and cause stress to wildlife.

Can BLM stop the decline of sage grouse? At issue is whether BLM has sufficient consistent "regulatory mechanisms" to keep sage grouse off the threatened list. Among the proposals included in the BLM EIS are two conservation-based alternatives and



Sage grouse in full mating regalia. Photo: Ted Schroeder.

an 11 western states alternative designed to maintain state management of sage grouse. Each state with sage grouse populations has submitted its own proposal. Nevada's plan addresses the increase in fires, spread of weeds, and pinyon-juniper expansion as primary reasons for loss of the sagebrush steppe.

Nevada's sage grouse problem. Fires scorch thousands of acres; in 2012, 600,000 acres burned in Nevada. With a warming climate, the fire season begins earlier in the year; fires burn hotter and longer. After a fire, the exotic cheat grass often replaces native plants,* especially in lower elevations. Cheat grass, which thrives on fire, dominates 1 million acres in Nevada and is the primary understory for 9 million acres.

Sage grouse, horses, & cattle. In Nevada, BLM authorized about 1 million AUMS (Animal Unit Months) in 2012 to support livestock and over 20,000 horses and burros. An AUM is the amount of forage that a horse, cow, or domestic sheep eats in a month. Cows and horses weighing from 800-1200 pounds consume 26 pounds of forage a day. The livestock/horse consumption can impact food for wildlife and survival of plants. Will reducing horses and cows help sage grouse?

What you can do. We all appreciate public lands. We like to travel unimpeded. We like the wildlife and the wild horses. We rely on electricity, coal, gas, and oil to drive our cars and turn on the lights. We contribute to the warmer temperatures. So when the EIS is released, please review the options and help the Toiyabe Chapter select the best choice.

* Nationwide, the pinyon-juniper forest has expanded into sagebrush country from an estimated 3 million acres in the late 1800s to 30 million acres today.

It's getting mighty warm in here

Global warming marches on

BY DENNIS GHIGLIERI



A July 2013 report from the World Meteorological Organization (www.wmo.int) documents that the first decade of the century (2001-2010) was the warmest decade since modern measurements began in 1850. More high temperature records were broken in countries around the world than in any previous decade. Further, there were many warmth-related events such as heat waves in Europe (2003) and Russia (2010), as well as droughts in the Amazon Basin, east Africa, and Australia. Also, there were huge floods in Pakistan.

In addition, it was the warmest decade for both hemispheres – for both the continental land masses and the oceans' surface temperatures. Other events included a loss of Arctic sea ice extent and thickness and a quickening loss of the mass of ice sheets in Greenland, Antarctica, and continental mountain glaciers. The rate of global sea level rise increased to 3 mm per year (0.12 inches

per year) or nearly double the trend in the 20th century of approximately 1.6 mm per year.

What you can do. See <<http://summitcountyvoice.com/2013/07/05/wmo-unprecedented-global-warming-from-1990-to-2010/>> for a more detailed article on the WMO Report. Download the report at <http://library.wmo.int/pmb_ged/wmo_1119_en.pdf>.

How BLM manages water for burros & wild horses

BY TINA NAPPE

DURING A GREAT BASIN CLIMATE Forum, held in Reno on May 3, 2013, Alan Shepard, BLM's Wild Horse Coordinator, provided an overview of the impacts of drought on BLM's management of wild horses and burros.

There are 179 Herd Management Areas in 10 western states; Nevada hosts 93 of them. Nationally, there are 40,000 wild horses and burros on public lands; this is in excess of the 26,000 horses BLM estimates can be sustained within a healthy landscape. Nevada hosts 21,000-23,000 horses, almost double the 12,688 BLM guideline. Sixty percent of BLM's wild horse and burro budget now goes to maintain 49,000 horses and burros in short and long-term holding.

BLM is in a difficult position; wild horse activist groups oppose removal of excess horses and burros; ranchers and wildlife activists support BLM's limits. The drought this year is worse than last, but horses, according to Shepard, adapt. Water is a limiting factor; many water sources are insufficient to supply the number of horses lined up – stallions first. There were 400 head of horses at one site. Mares with foals suffer the most because the foals drain the mares. The young mares and the older mares (15 years +) are in the worst shape.

BLM is hauling 10,000 gallons of water a week; the cost to date is \$200,000. The land around the water sources is devastated. Horses are eating dry cheat grass and may travel 15-20 miles for forage and come to water every few days. Horses are consuming their fall or winter food supplies now.

BLM is required to provide water but not food. BLM can monitor herd health, euthanize sick horses, conduct removals if there is a place to put them, or let them starve.

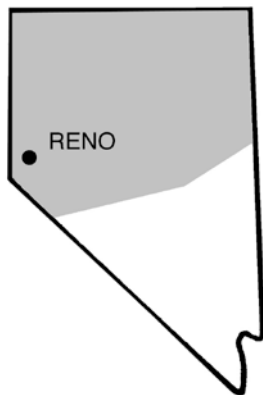
Adoptions have dropped to 2500 a year. Vasectomies and gelding (stallions), as well as birth control drugs, have not worked. BLM is considering spaying (mares) but the research may take some years.

According to a story on National Public Radio, horse activists maintain that gathers* of wild horses and burros, by sustaining a healthy landscape, encourage the 20% reproduction rate. If there were no gathers, the quality of the range would suffer, horses would starve, and the reproduction rate would drop. By then, however, wildlife and plants would be devastated. Even now wildlife can't access limited water supplies dominated by horses.

*excess animals are transported to holding facilities



Great Basin Gatherings



Great Basin Group

Message from the Chair

BY DAVID VON SEGGERN

Cooler fall hiking coming up. Prime summer hiking season is drawing to a close as I write, but there will be plenty of chances to enjoy the fall beauty and more moderate temperatures of October through December. Check our outings schedule for ways to get outside with like-minded people as winter draws upon us again.

Our regular mid-week hikes will wrap up in October as dark comes too soon. On the dark theme, consider the "Dark Skies" overnight on October 5-6 in our schedule. Do you know that northern Nevada is one of the darkest spots in the nation on the Bortle Dark Skies index? What better place to connect to the universe than just a few tens of miles north from the light pollution of Truckee Meadows?

Thank you, Graham! We bid farewell to Graham Stafford as our Conservation Chair on the ExCom. Graham has a long record of dedicated conservation work with the club, and we are sure we will be seeing him on conservation

activities in northern Nevada for a long time to come.

You can run for GB ExCom. We are seeking ExCom candidates in earnest. If you are interested in serving on the Great Basin ExCom, please let one of the current ExCom members know. Nominations are due by October 21, so they can be scheduled for the annual election. Several important positions need to be filled: conservation chair, programs chair, membership chair. We welcome new ideas along with new people in the leadership circle.

Program/General meetings. Due to our adhoc approach to scheduling programs – because we don't have a Program Chair – you will notice that the published schedule of general meetings on the second Thursday of the month is generic. Please consult our web page, our MeetUp schedule, or our Facebook page for details of these meetings as the time approaches.* As always, we'll have interesting presenters to entertain and inform!

* WEBSITE: <<http://toiyabe.sierraclub.org/gbgroup/>>

FACEBOOK: <<https://www.facebook.com/groups/scgbg/>> (Sierra Club GBG)

MEETUP: <<http://www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Hiking-Reno/events/calendar/>>

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.

OCT 2 (WEDNESDAY) 5:30P

Wednesday Conditioning Hike. Join us on this after-work outing to get or stay in shape, learn about trails in our local area. Call hike hotline for details. DOK. Leader: Holly Coughlin (473-1445). Co-Leader: Jim Call (473-1445). Moderate.

OCT 4-6 (FRIDAY-SUNDAY)

CALL FOR TIME

Last Hot Springs Trip of Season. It's Fall, crowds, weather are tapering, it's cooling off, making it great time to visit Black Rock. New moon on Saturday, so expect great stars. Probably meet up Friday night, head up, camp Friday at spring near Gerlach, then re-locate to more remote spring for Saturday. Leader very familiar with area! Most likely have potluck Saturday night. If you bring a dog, be prepared to pick up after it, keep it on leash. No RVs or trailers. DOK. Leader: David Book (775-843-6443). Easy.

OCT 5-6 (SATURDAY-SUNDAY) 4P
Dark Skies Appreciation Overnight. Travel to Kumiva Valley NE of Pyramid Lake to stargaze on new moon night from Blue Wing Playa. Kumiva Valley is one of darkest valleys in overall dark NW corner of Nevada. Recommended reading is "The End of Night" by Paul Bogard. Find out why dark sky is one of our most crucial environmental losses and what we can do about it. Optional peak bag next day to Blue Wing Peak. DOK. Leader: David von Seggern (775-303-8461; vonseg1@sbcglobal.net).

net). Co-Leader: Jim Call (420-6363). Mod. Easy.

OCT 7 (MONDAY) 6P

ExCom Meeting. Discuss conservation issues, general meeting programs, and other administrative items. All members welcome to attend and bring issues to the attention of the ExCom. Info & location: David von Seggern (vonseg1@sbcglobal.net, 775-303-8461).

OCT 10 (THURSDAY) 6:30P

General Program Meeting. Held at Bartley Ranch Regional Park in Reno. Note: this time we occupy the Schoolhouse building, not the Western Heritage building. Social with refreshments, 6:30p; program, 7p. Check our website. MeetUp, or Facebook pages for details.*

OCT 19 (SATURDAY) 8A

Buckland Station Day Hike . Buckland Station is S of Silver Springs. This nearly 10 mi loop hike, on flat ground, will start at historic Buckland Station. Proceed downstream along Carson River enjoying riparian habitat, fall leaves. Return on segment of Pony Express Trail route. Learn some history of area. Fee: \$1 per person State Park walk-in charge. Option to tour remains of Fort Churchill on your own after hike. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Moderate.

OCT 20 (SUNDAY) 8A

Babbitt Peak Day Hike. From Stam-

Please see GB CALENDAR, page 9.



Bob Sumner – first List Finisher for the Great Basin Peak Section. Photo: Sharon Marie Wilcox.

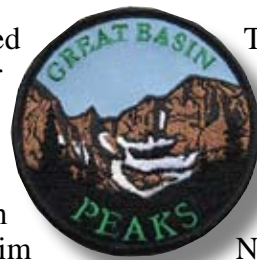
Great Basin Peak Section News Bob Sumner goes gold!

BY SHARON MARIE WILCOX

This July we celebrated Bob Sumner, our first member to finish all 116 peaks on the Great Basin Peak Section list. Bob's July 5th list finish on Mount Gilbert earned him the distinction of first Gold Circle Member. Congratulations, Bob! We had a fun List Finish Potluck (feeding frenzy) in celebration of the many hours his boots hit the trail.

Who will be next? This summer

GBPS members have summited many peaks on both our list and on other peak lists. Some memorable trips included Mount Augusta, Thomas Peak, and Piper Peak. Those working on the



Tahoe OGUL list hiked Signal Peak, South Sister, Pyramid, and Adams Peak. Our upcoming exploration to eastern Nevada features North Schell, Cave Mountain, and Mount Moriah. Additional trips are in the works before the snow flies.

While peak planning don't forget that besides being our first Gold Circle Member, Bob Sumner wrote *Hiking Nevada County High Points*. His book is a great asset for directions to these peaks that are all on our GBPS list.

Join us! For details on membership, recognition categories, peak list, and trip reports check out Great Basin Peak Section at: <<http://toiyabe.sierraclub.org/GreatBasin-Peaks.html>>.

Great Basin Peak Members Celebrating Bob Sumner's completion of our 116-peak list. Bob Sumner (front). From left: Tioga, Sharon Marie, Bill, Randy, Bob R. Sue, Mary, Larry D., Rich, Vic. Photo: Ed Corbett.



GREAT BASIN GROUP

OFFICERS

Chair	David von Seggern*	775-303-8461	vonseg1@sbcglobal.net
Vice-Chair	Jen Huntley	775-232-8847	drjenhs@gmail.com
Secretary	Sue Jacox*	775-849-1890	suejacox@nvbellnet
Treasurer	Martin Mace*	775-745-4703	mace.martin@gmail.com
Conservation	Open		
Energy	Jeff Hardcastle*	775-313-8442	jeff.hardcastle@sbcglobal.net
Membership	Open		
Outings	Holly Coughlin	775-331-7488	
Political	Open		
Programs	Open		
Webmaster	Peter Johnson	775-250-2576	peter.j.johnson@charter.net

* ExCom member

pede Lake to 8760-ft Babbitt Peak, view fall colors, forests, mountains, meadows along way. Babbitt Peak is site of classic fire lookout tower. About 12 mi RT, gradual 3000 ft gain. Good trails, roads, with bit of x-c. DOK. Leader: David von Seggern (775-303-8461; vonseg1@sbcglobal.net). Mod. Strenuous.

OCT 20 (SUNDAY) 9A

Spooner Summit Fall Colors Hike. Through aspen groves around Spooner Summit. Head N toward Marlette Lake, or S along TRT, depending on weather/trail conditions. Expect to see turning trees, busy squirrels, Clark's Nutcrackers preparing for winter. About 10 mi RT with up to 1500 ft gain. DL. Leader: Ridge Walker (853-8055). Co-Leader: Karen Todd (225-2805). Moderate.

OCT 25 (FRIDAY) 8:30A

Nevada Day Hike. Celebrate our State and ourselves making it through one more year -- with traditional peak bag of our local landmark, Peavine Mtn (8300 ft). We'll try to find a good route up "backside." About 10 mi, 3300 ft gain. Expect to learn a lot



Bob Ralston, Mary Brooks, and Randy McNatt with Tohakum Peak in the background. Photo: Sharon Marie Wilcox.

about diverse habitats we climb through. If lucky, we'll see some migrating mule deer. DL. Leader: Ridge Walker (853-8055). Co-Leaders: Holly Coughlin & David von Seggern (331-7488; 303-8461). Mod. Strenuous.

OCT 26 (SATURDAY) 8A

El Dorado Canyon Day Hike. Near Dayton, about 12 mi RT, under 600 ft gain. Riparian habitat with many crossings of small streams. Lunch at natural arch. Also small slot canyon to view on way out. Learn some history of area. High clearance vehicle needed (?) or ride share. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Moderate.

NOV 2 (SATURDAY) 8A

Mt. Davidson Day Hike. First for this season in series of highest peaks in local mountain ranges. Mt Davidson is in Virginia Range at 7664 ft, overlooking Virginia City. About 7 mi in loop, 1000 ft gain. Portions off trail, steep with brush. See segment of one of wooden flumes which brought water to VC. Daylight Savings Time ends tomorrow, so get out, enjoy one more long afternoon today. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Mod. Strenuous.

NOV 4 (MONDAY) 6P

ExCom Meeting. Discuss conservation issues, general meeting programs, and other administrative items. All members welcome to attend and bring issues to the attention of the ExCom. Info & location: David von Seggern (vonseg1@sbcglobal.net, 775-303-8461).

NOV 11 (MONDAY) 9A

Veteran's Day Lahontan Shoreline Day Hike. Lahontan Reservoir near Silver Springs. Enjoy silence, stark beauty of

this area. About 5 mi total on in-and-out hike along "beach." View some tufa formations. Bring your U.S. flags; learn about cadence. Water represents Navy, Coast Guard; beach, Marines; land, Army; sky, Air Force. Fee: \$1 CASH/person State Park fee. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Easy.

NOV 14 (THURSDAY) 6:30P

General Program Meeting. Held at Bartley Ranch Regional Park in Reno. Note: back in our regular Western Heritage building. Social with refreshments, 6:30p; program, 7p. Check our website. MeetUp, or Facebook pages for details.*

NOV 16 (SATURDAY) 9:30A

Hunter Falls Day Hike. One of our favorite hikes to local waterfall. About 6 mi, slightly over 1000 ft gain. Learn about flora or fauna we sight along way. DOK. Leader: Holly Coughlin (331-7488). Co-Leader: Jim Call (420-6363). Moderate.

NOV 23 (SATURDAY) 8A

Cleaver Peak Day Hike. Near Silver Springs, 6711 ft, this is high point of Desert Mountains. OFF TRAIL with rock scrambling, some brush. About 8 mi

Desert Mountains. OFF TRAIL with rock scrambling, some brush. About 8 mi

Great Basin Peak Section News

A Tohakum tick fest

BY SHARON MARIE WILCOX

Mary Brooks, Bob Ralston, Randy McNatt, and myself left Reno at 6:30a to hike Tohakum Peak, the Lake Range high point near Pyramid Lake. We stopped in Wadsworth to buy the \$7 day use permit required on Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation (can purchase online).

We drove north on Highway 447, parking just north of the reservation boundary. Our hike route basically followed the ridge south of Groundhog Canyon up to the main ridge, leading us through a tick-infested bushwhack. Every trip report I read mentioned ticks, but how bad could they be? My worst tick hike ever! We barely started



Mary Brooks on the summit of Tohakum Peak. Photo: Sharon Marie Wilcox.

Great Basin Group Calendar

continued from page 8

**It's not just
a good basin,
it's a
GREAT BASIN!**

RT, 2400 ft gain, in-&-out hike. Great views from summit. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Strenuous.

NOV 25 (MONDAY) 6:30P

Outings Meeting, Potluck. Come help us plan outings for January, February, and March. Trips may include snowshoes, day hikes, or x-c skiing. Bring dish to share. All beverages provided. Location TBD. Call if you are interested, not on leader e-mail list, call to get directions or information. ND. Leader: Holly Coughlin (331-7488). Easy.

DEC 2 (MONDAY) 6P

ExCom Meeting. Discuss conservation issues, general meeting programs, and other administrative items. All members welcome to attend and bring issues to the attention of the ExCom. Info & location: David von Seggern (vonseg1@sbcglobal.net, 775-303-8461).

DEC 7 (SATURDAY) 8A

Churchill Butte Day Hike. Churchill Butte is near Silver Springs. Scale butte, overlooking historic Ft. Churchill, portions of emigrant wagon route, ancient, 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).

Strenuous.

DEC 7 (SATURDAY) 6:30-9P

Holiday Party! Join other Sierra Club members at our annual holiday party, held at Horseman's Park in southwest Reno. Food, drink, speeches, awards, and general good times. Bring a potluck dish to share (salads, entrees, side dishes, and desserts are welcome). BYOB on drinks (no hard liquor allowed). Want to help? -- come early at 6p to assist with setup. Contact any Great Basin Group ExCom member in the masthead for further details or check our website.

DEC 14 (SATURDAY) 8:30A

Skunk Harbor Snowshoe. Trek to scenic harbor and a historic house on Lake Tahoe. About 4 mi RT, 800-1000 ft gain. Parking limited, so we'll carpool. Bring plenty of water, gear, clothing for conditions. Bad weather cancels, but we'll reschedule. DL. Leader: Gail Myatt (750-1293). Co-Leader: Bill Myatt (233-3186). Moderate.

DEC 15 (SUNDAY) 9:30A

Kyber's Meadow Day Hike or Snowshoe. Hike or snowshoe, depending upon conditions. This very interesting historic area features an old basque oven, remnants of stage coach stop, rock with petroglyphs. About 5 mi RT, 600 ft gain overall. DL. Leader: Holly Coughlin (331-7488). Co-Leader: Jim Call (420-6363). Moderate.

DEC 21 (SATURDAY) 8A

Carson River Railroads Day Hike. Near Mound House. About 11 mi one way with vehicle shuttle. Gain of less than 1000 ft. Hike along scenic Carson River Canyon, learn about two railroads of Comstock era. Parts of hike are x-c. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Mod. Strenuous.

Great Basin Group Outings leaders stay informed

BY HOLLY COUGHLIN, GB GROUP OUTINGS CHAIR

SIERRA CLUB OUTINGS LEADERS met in August to plan outings for October through December, as well as to update skills needed to lead trips. Leaders in the photo are taking the OLT 101 quiz that Sierra Club National has posted online. After completing the quiz, our leaders had an informed discussion regarding various points. Our discussions help to keep us up-to-date and provide an opportunity to share ideas.

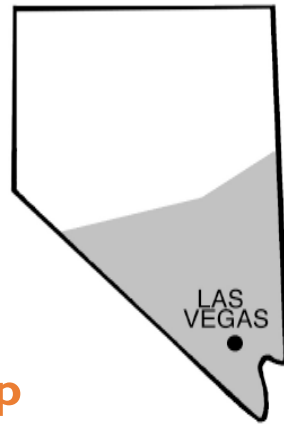
Our group is very active and always looking for people interested in becoming involved in outings. If you have an interest in learning about outings, please talk to one of our leaders or come to our next Outings Meeting in November.



sunset highlighting the Nightingale Range. With the exception of too many ticks and a few wild horses, we had the entire day all to ourselves.



The Mojave Monitor



Southern Nevada Group

Group News

Monthly ExCom meetings October 23 & November 20, 2013

OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS, the monthly meetings of our Executive Committee have moved to **Wednesdays** for the 2nd quarter. Meeting time is 6-8:30 pm at the Sierra Club Office, conveniently located downtown inside the PLAN Building between Garces and Gass at 708 South Sixth Street, Las Vegas, NV 89101. There is plenty of free parking on the street and in the rear. Join us on October 23 and November 20 (dark in December).

General Program Meetings



HOLIDAY POTLUCK!

Monday, December 9, 2013

THESE INTERESTING AND entertaining meetings are typically held on the **second Monday** of each month. They are also at the Sierra Club office (see above for details of location), unless otherwise noted on the accompanying Calendar of events. There will be **NO** program meetings in October and November this year, as the dates fall on holidays (Columbus Day and Veterans' Day). Please join us on Monday, December 9, for our annual **Holiday Potluck**. See Calendar for program details and times. All welcome!



S. Nevada Group Inner City Outings

2nd Annual Friendraiser

Friday • November 15 • 6-9 pm

We've been able to provide 11 outings for over 125 kids since we began. Our goal is to raise funds to double our events and participation in the upcoming year.

Our Friendraiser will be at the Las Vegas Bridge World Building, 5580 W. Flamingo, Suite 101, from 6 to 9 pm, and will feature . . .

- a light supper
- a speaker presentation
- a raffle
- an opportunity for members to learn more about our ICO group

SOUTHERN NEVADA GROUP

OFFICERS

Chair	Taj Ainlay*	702-682-9361	tajainlay@aol.com
Vice-Chair	Eric King*	702-265-2644	brianfadie@gmail.com
Secretary	Jane Feldman*		feldman.jane@gmail.com
Treasurer	Desiree Saporito	702-875-2668	
At Large	Gecko Benjamin*	702-505-0000	
At Large	Open		
At Large	Open		
Coal Power Plants	Jane Feldman*		feldman.jane@gmail.com
Conservation	Jane Feldman*		feldman.jane@gmail.com
Endangered Species & Wildlife	Jane Feldman*		feldman.jane@gmail.com
Energy	Jane Feldman*		feldman.jane@gmail.com
Global Warming	Jane Feldman*		feldman.jane@gmail.com
Inner City Outings	Charles Schneider	702-498-3224	charlie_nancy@cox.net
Membership	Taj Ainlay*	702-682-9361	tajainlay@aol.com
Outings	Par Rasmusson	702-215-9119	par@mvdsl.com
Outings	Open		
Parks, Refuges	Ed Rothfuss	406-756-0028	mroth9827@aol.com
Political	Teresa Crawford	702-526-8445	tailspinterry@hotmail.com
Programs	Taj Ainlay*	702-682-9361	tajainlay@aol.com
Publicity	Open		
Transportation	Jane Feldman*		feldman.jane@gmail.com

* ExCom member

We appreciate all who attended last year and look forward to another wonderful Friendraiser.

For more info, contact Rosie Vitavec (desertroseoflv@yahoo.com).

Please see "First visit to Mt. Charleston" article on this page for an account of how such outings can affect our young people.

Southern Nevada Group Calendar

All phone numbers are 702 unless otherwise noted.

All hikes and service projects are led by certified outings leaders.

(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.

OCTOBER 5 (SATURDAY)

Red Cap, RRCNCA (Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area). Gain of 800 ft on 3 mi RT hike. Short, challenging, and most of all 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). Limit 12 hikers. Level 4.

OCTOBER 5 (SATURDAY)

Southern Nevada Trails Day Celebration. Outdoor activities and trail use are increasing exponentially throughout the country. Local trails are used by walkers, runners, cyclists, families, seniors, competitive athletes, outdoor enthusiasts and equestrians daily. This event brings together trail and outdoor enthusiasts from Southern Ne-

vada to learn about local and regional trails. The celebration also includes informational exhibits and presenters, booths, activities for all ages, basic bike maintenance checks, and giveaways. We are a Gold Sponsor this year, so please stop by our booth at Cornerstone Park, 1600 Wigwam Pkwy, Henderson. Event hours are from 9 am - 1pm. Info: tajainlay@aol.com.

OCTOBER 6 (SUNDAY)

Cathedral Rock, Kyle Canyon, SMNRA. Family hike: all ages (babies, too!). Friendly dogs welcome. Now that big fire is out, come enjoy nearby Spring Mountains again. Cool Fall temperatures, Autumn colors (golden aspen trees), awesome view of canyon, surrounding

Please see SN CALENDAR, page 11.

First visit to Mt. Charleston for ICO youth

BY BARBARA GERHARDT

CAN YOU IMAGINE GROWING UP in Las Vegas and at the age of 18 never having visited Mt. Charleston? That was the reality for the majority of the 10 young adults who went to Mt. Charleston with Inner City Outings on Saturday, June 22. Thanks to Nevada Partners affiliation with Inner City Outings, these young adults were able to experience the splendors of Mt. Charleston during a Las Vegas summer.

As we piled out of the vehicles, comments were made about how cool the temperature was and that the air smelled so sweet and fresh. I think they were "hooked" from the get-go. Our hike that day was into the lower section of Fletcher

and different environment. This was reflected in some of the first questions posed to the ranger -- "Are there bears up here?" "What about mountain lions and snakes?"

As we walked on and learned about the flora, fauna, and geology of the area, that initial trepidation seemed to float away and be replaced by comments of interest and fascination. "How can a tree bark smell like butterscotch?" "How do you know what kind of tree it is?" "Look at that butterfly!"

We had lunch in a shaded wash and enjoyed our camaraderie in this natural setting. As we walked back down the trail, I found myself thinking about what a beautiful gift we had just given to these young adults. They all talked about wanting to come back and explore the area more. Bingo! That is what Inner City Outings is all about . . . lighting the spark for an appreciation of and respect for the natural world.

As we ended our day, I asked for a show of hands of who had been to Red Rock, meaning the Conservation Area. One or two had but one humorous response, "Yeah, Red Rock Casino!" Hmm. I think I know where an outing will be this fall when the temperature cools.

New associate for LV ICO. Ne-

Please see ICO FIELD TRIP, page 11.



Enjoying Fletcher Canyon trails.

Canyon. We were fortunate to have a ranger who accompanied us for the first hour and provided excellent interpretative talks at various points.

Initially, there was a feeling of insecurity at being in such a new

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

mountains at top of "Rock." Learn a little geology, too. About 2.8 mi RT, 1000 ft gain. Leader: Gary Beckman (648-2983). Level 2-3.

OCTOBER 13 (SUNDAY)

Red Rock Canyon Overlook, RRCNCA (Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area). From Willow Spring, boulder up North Peak Canyon then up 'Canadian Canyon' to ridge line near North Peak. When we trek down ridgeline you'll feel richer than any king or queen hoarding gold. The 1200-ft gain is worth all the sweat for a majestic view. Leader: George McDonald (808-3855). Level 4-5.

OCTOBER 14 (MONDAY)

Columbus Day Observed. (No General Meeting).

OCTOBER 19 (SATURDAY)

Bristlecone Loop, SMNRA. Come see aspen in their fall colors. About 6 mi RT. Leader: Jack Sawyer (228-3857).

OCTOBER 19 (SATURDAY)

***Raven's Balcony-North Bowl of Fire, LM-NRA.** One of best hikes in north Bowl of Fire. Along 3.3 mi we see "Ant Eater Rock," pass under "Darth Vader," then hike on to "Raven's Balcony," with an awesome overlook of Lake Mead. After lunch, go through "Rabbits Hole," cross "Little Grand Canyon," then stop at 15,000-year-old camel and bird tracks. Leader: George McDonald (808-3855). Level 3-4.

OCTOBER 20 (SUNDAY)

Pine Creek. Scramble up main fork, then right fork. Should be more or less shady most of way except for trail leading into canyon. Bring lunch, water, jacket. David Hardy (hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, 875-4826, e-mail preferred). Level 3.

OCTOBER 27 (SUNDAY)

Morning hike. Half-day hike to one of several areas around Red Rock. Several possible trail hikes over top of Blue Diamond Hill, canyons in Blue Diamond Hill, x-c in Cottonwood Valley, trails in back of Blue Diamond. Done by noon. Start time depends on hike but may be anywhere from 7-9a. Bring water, snacks, jacket. Pace moderate to fast with breaks. Info: David Hardy (hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, 875-4826, e-mail preferred). Level 3.

NOVEMBER 2 (SATURDAY)

Adopt-a-Highway, Red Rock Southern Entry. Meet at Dunkin' Donuts, 8a. Lunch after

S. Nevada Group Calendar

continued from page 10

we spruce up local crown jewel. Leader: Jack Sawyer (228-3857).

NOVEMBER 2 (SATURDAY)

Afternoon hike. Half-day hike to one of several areas around Red Rock. Several possible trail hikes over top of Blue Diamond Hill, canyons in Blue Diamond Hill, x-c in Cottonwood Valley, trails in back of Blue Diamond. Done by sunset. Start time around 2p. Bring water, snacks, jacket. Pace moderate to fast with breaks. Info: David Hardy (hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, 875-4826, e-mail preferred). Level 3.

NOVEMBER 2 (SATURDAY)

Brownstone Canyon, RRCNCA. On this 6 mi RT hike, we'll discover pictographs and petroglyphs. Great hike to enjoy great outdoors. Leader: George McDonald (808-3855). Level 3.

NOVEMBER 4 (MONDAY)

New Member Orientation. Our second orientation of the year is open not only to new and prospective members but also to current members with an interest in learning more about the Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter, and Southern Nevada Group. We'll meet for one hour, 7-8 pm, at the Sierra Club Office. Light refreshments will be served. Info: tajainlay@aol.com. See location details on page 10 under "ExCom Meetings."

NOVEMBER 8-11

(FRIDAY-MONDAY)

Car camping trip: North Rim of Grand Canyon at Toroweap. The North Rim of Grand Canyon at Toroweap Point 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 are a constant reminder of human vulnerabilities.

The Tuweep Wilderness is one of most remote areas in the U.S., located in an isolated region of NW Arizona, along the Grand Canyon's North Rim. This is the western end

of Grand Canyon, just before it meets Lake Mead National Recreation Area.

Such a journey is not for faint of heart, nor feeble of vehicle. To arrive at Toroweap Overlook requires a 60+mi drive over unpaved, bone-jarring roads across Great Basin Desert. It's at least as far to get back. Here, you will find NO water, no habitation, and no services. Make sure you have a full tank of gas! (We will fill up at Pipe Spings.) Also, carry plenty of water and food. And...you must have a VERY reliable vehicle.

With nothing to obstruct your view into the inner gorge, Toroweap is probably the best place in this national park to get a sense of how big the Grand Canyon is. Further east at South or North Rim Visitor Center, you can sense its vastness in a more panoramic manner. The canyon sprawls before you, impressing with its horizontal size, but it never quite gives you an adequate sense of its vertical scale. At Toroweap, the drop is so deep and dramatic that you finally "get it." There are bigger places on earth than Toroweap - the glaciers of Alaska come to mind, as well as the enormous mass of Mt. McKinley (Denali) - but none can give a stronger impression of sheer immensity.

Nov. 8, Fri: Leave Las Vegas for Toroweap.

Nov. 9, Sat: Hike to river by Lava Falls Trail (1.5 mi RT, 3000 ft down/up).

Nov. 10, Sun: Hike to old mining smelter (about 6 mi RT).

Nov. 11, Mon: Drive out the back way by old school house, coming out in St. George, Utah.

Leader: George McDonald (702-808-3855, onecoolhike@yahoo.com).

NOVEMBER 10 (SUNDAY)

Morning hike. Half-day hike to one of several areas around Red Rock. Several possible trail hikes over top of Blue Diamond Hill, canyons in Blue Diamond Hill, x-c in Cottonwood Valley, trails in back of Blue Diamond. Done by noon. Start time depends on hike but may be anywhere from 7-9a. Bring water, snacks, jacket. Pace moderate to fast with breaks. Info: David Hardy (hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, 875-4826, e-mail preferred). Level 3.

NOVEMBER 11 (MONDAY)

Veterans Day. (No General Meeting).

NOVEMBER 16 (SATURDAY)

Afternoon hike. Half-day hike to one of several areas around Red Rock. Several possible trail hikes over top of Blue Diamond Hill, canyons in Blue Diamond Hill, x-c in Cottonwood Valley, trails in back of Blue Diamond. Done by sunset. Start time around 2p. Bring water, snacks, jacket. Pace mod. to fast with breaks. Info: David Hardy (hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, 875-4826, e-mail preferred). Level 3.

NOVEMBER 17 (SUNDAY)

Liberty Bell Arch, LMNRA. Join us on this 6-mi RT hike past an old mining tunnel and machinery, across arroyos, and on to Liberty Bell Arch. Bring your cameras for arch and view from mesa overlooking majestic, emerald green Colorado River. Leader: George McDonald (808-3855). Level 3.

NOVEMBER 28 (THURSDAY)

Morning hike. Don't have anything to do today? This hike follows a network of trails to top of Blue Diamond Hill with a 360-degree view. About 1600 ft gain. Are there any springs on this hill or in its deep canyons? Done by noon. Bring water, jacket, snacks. Info: David Hardy (hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, 875-4826, e-mail preferred). Level 2-3.

NOVEMBER 30 (SATURDAY)

Pine Creek, RRNCA. From scenic loop we'll meander up South Fork past fall colors, beautiful stream. Leader: Jack Sawyer (228-3857).

NOVEMBER 30 (SATURDAY)

River Mountains. Car shuttle required. Start near fee station out of Henderson, end up at Hole 33. Chance of seeing owls going through a slot canyon. Also, this is an area where we may see

bighorn sheep. Bring lunch, water, jacket. What is geology of these mountains? Info: David Hardy (hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, 875-4826, e-mail preferred). Level 2.

DECEMBER 7 (SATURDAY)

North Peak Via Rocky Gap Road, RRCNCA. From Rocky Gap Summit, hike to limestone North Peak then down to a breathtaking view overlooking Ice Box Canyon. After lunch we'll cross escarpment and overlook Pine Creek. Which is older limestone or sandstone? 6 mi RT, 1000+ ft gain. Leader: George McDonald (808-3855). Level 3-4.

DECEMBER 9 (MONDAY)

Holiday Potluck! General Program Meeting at 7pm at the Sierra Club Office. 'Tis the season to be jolly! Bring a dish to share with fellow members as we celebrate the end of 2013 and look forward to 2014. No program, just the perfect opportunity to socialize with music, food, drink, laughter, and fun. Info: tajainlay@aol.com. See location details on page 10 under "ExCom Meetings."

DECEMBER 14 (SATURDAY)

White Rock Loop, RRNCA. About 6 mi RT around mountain. On W side we're a thousand miles from Vegas. Leader: Jack Sawyer (228-3857).

DECEMBER 14 (SATURDAY)

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

DECEMBER 15 (SUNDAY)

Morning hike. Red Rock/Blue Diamond/Cottonwood Valley area. Mod. fast-paced hike of 6-8 mi. Done by noon. Bring water, snacks. Info: David Hardy (hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, 875-4826, e-mail preferred). Level 3.

DECEMBER 21 (SATURDAY)

Red Cap, RRCNCA (Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area). Gain of 800 ft on this 3-mi RT hike. Short, challenging, and most of all 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). Limit 12 hikers. Level 4.

DECEMBER 22 (SUNDAY)

Morning hike. Red Rock/Blue Diamond/Cottonwood Valley area. Moderately fast-paced hike covering 6-8 mis, will be done by noon. Bring water, snacks. Info: David Hardy (hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, 875-4826, e-mail preferred). Level 3.

DECEMBER 25 (WEDNESDAY)

Christmas morning hike. Red Rock/Blue Diamond/Cottonwood Valley area. Moderately fast-paced hike covering 6-8 mis, will be done by noon. Bring water, snacks. Info: David Hardy (hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, 875-4826, e-mail preferred). Level 3.

DECEMBER 28 (SATURDAY)

Morning hike. Red Rock/Blue Diamond/Cottonwood Valley area. Moderately fast-paced hike covering 6-8 mis, will be done by noon. Bring water, snacks. Info: David Hardy (hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, 875-4826, e-mail preferred). Level 3.

JANUARY 4, 2014 (SATURDAY)

Morning hike. Red Rock/Blue Diamond/Cottonwood Valley area. Moderately fast-paced hike covering 6-8 mis, will be done by noon. Bring water, snacks. Info: David Hardy (hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, 875-4826, e-mail preferred). Level 3.

ICO FIELD TRIP TO MT. CHARLESTON . . .

continued from page 10



Our ICO participants on the Mt. Charleston trip.

vada Partners just recently signed on as a new agency with Inner City Outings. The goal of their youth department, which serves over 1000 youth in the Las Vegas valley, is to build employment and leadership skills and also promote civic engagement. The 10 who made the trip to the Mt. Charleston area with Inner City Outings undoubtedly expanded their view

of Las Vegas' geographic diversity.

What you can do. The Las Vegas chapter of Inner City Outings is just about 18 months old. We are always open to new members joining us in planning, fundraising, outings, and so much more. If you are interested in learning more about our group, please contact Charlie Schneider at charlie_nancy@cox.net

DEADLINE! DECEMBER 1



FOR
JAN-FEB-MAR ISSUE

Bookshelf

THE END OF NIGHT: SEARCHING FOR NATURAL DARKNESS IN AN AGE OF ARTIFICIAL LIGHT

By Paul Bogard

Little, Brown & Company, 2013.

I met Paul Bogard in 2001 in Reno, Nevada, when he was a graduate student in the distinguished Environmental Literature Program under Dr. Scott Slovic. Since then, as evidenced by this latest book, Paul Bogard's career as an environmental writer and teacher has been very successful.

Extinction of species, loss and fragmentation of habitat, diminishing of natural quiet; development scars; fossil-fuel land exploitations; fading knowledge of outdoors and nature -- the challenges to conservationists are multiple and potent. And now Bogard brings yet another one: the loss of dark skies in mankind's relentlessly expanding artificial lighting of the night.

Bogard quotes Aldo Leopold in saying we conservationists live in a "world of wounds," and his book does a fine job of making the reader aware of one more particular type of wound. Bogard stays on point as he travels the world, experiencing night skies in every realm from the most lit to the least lit, indicating that

even the least lit almost always has some measure of degradation. His encounters and interviews with people across the globe give a sense of engagement to his narrative, bringing many voices to his arguments against unnecessary lighting.

No one can read *The End of Night* without having a new understanding of how lighting is wasted or ill-used in our society. Driving through Boulder, Colorado, at 4 am after finishing this book on vacation, I was struck everywhere by what degree of lighting seems grossly overdone for that time of night. It is symptomatic of a society where cheap energy has heretofore encouraged excess and where rampant commercialization has caused lighting competition. That energy situation has been changing, and Bogard's call for a serious assessment of lighting needs will surely fall on more and more receptive ears.

The author uses a unique chapter numbering, from 9 to 1 in that order, to reflect the Bortle scale of darkness ("1" being the most dark, natural sky). With Bortle-scale 9 skies, those

WATER SHORTAGE . . .

continued from page 6

ening to raise water rates, again.

SNWA's clout. Nevadans were shocked at the 180-degree turnaround in Mulroy's recent advice to the other six Colorado River states in which she urged other states to avoid water battles by negotiating deals in which there would be no "winners or losers." Unfortunately, Nevadans know that SNWA has already spent hundreds of millions of dollars pursuing its \$15.7 billion in-state water project to pump rural groundwater in Eastern Nevada and pipe it to Las Vegas.

Using its political clout and apparently unlimited financial resources, SNWA has bought up ranches in Spring Valley, paid for an Environmental Impact Statement (which showed significant adverse impacts of the water project) and attempted to overwhelm opponents in Nevada water hearings with its many attorneys and experts. Is this a

living in Las Vegas or New York City are totally deprived of any meaningful night sky. But the situation is actually grim for most of the inhabited earth. It is alarming to learn that only 20% of children born today in the world will experience dark skies of even 2 or 3 on the Bortle scale.

Population shift from rural to urban areas guarantees that there will be few who will know real darkness, and what it affords, on a personal level, just as few anymore know wilderness and wildlife on a personal level. Loss of dark skies is loss of our connection to the universe in a visceral way and is very different than other conservation losses. It has profound implications for how we view ourselves in vast space and time, and we risk distorting our perspective, confining it to a narrow view of our planet.

Bogard has produced a guidebook for us, by first helping us to realize the extent and implications of the loss of dark skies and darkness everywhere. Second, he encourages us to advocate for rolling back our artificial lighting across the Earth to levels that are truly commensurate with safety, social values, and our evolved need for natural darkness.

-- David von Seggern

THREATS TO NV SPECIES . . .

continued from page 5

outdoor and indoor conservation, a re-look at the terms of the "Law of the River" (the collection of documents that apportions Colorado River water), and the investigation of new technologies, such as water reclamation and desalination.

Rob Mrowka is an ecologist employed by the Center for Biological Diversity, and serves as the Center's Nevada Conservation Advocate. Mrowka was previously employed with the U.S. Forest Service, and later served as the Environmental Planning Manager for Nevada's Clark County. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Great Basin Water Network. He kindly gave permission for the Trails to use this article, which first appeared in the Desert Report's June 2013 issue. Desert Report is a publication of Sierra Club's California/Nevada Desert Committee.

matter of "do as I say, not as I do?"

River flow report & its challengers. The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) also made news this summer, releasing its annual report on river flows. Due to its estimates of declining water levels, the report announced a 10% cut in 2014 for water deliveries from Lake Powell to Lake Mead. This action, keeping Lake Powell's levels high, was endorsed by Mulroy in a 2007 deal, despite the danger in pushing Mead's water levels towards the 1075-foot level. This level was set by Mulroy to trigger the construction of the in-state project construction (assuming that financing for this speculative project could be secured). For more info, see: www.usbr.gov/newsroom/newsrelease/detail.cfm?RecordID=44245.

In the meantime, the amounts of Colorado River water on which these BOR calculations are based was challenged by hydrologist Dr. Tom Myers. In Myers' peer-reviewed study, published in the Journal of the American Water Resources Association, he estimated that, instead of being stored in the banks, up to 380,000 acre feet of river water each year is seeping into the porous sandstone around Lake Powell, but this loss is not counted in BOR's calculations on river flows and allocations. See: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jawr.12081/abstract>

And to make the poor water situation worse, climate scientists are warning that the severity of water shortages is being escalated by global warming, estimating that runoff and, consequently, Colorado River flows will decrease 10-30% in the next 50 years. The time for developing feasible and sustainable solutions to water shortages in the West is long past for water agencies such as SNWA.

What we can do. Real solutions to water scarcity in the desert have been delayed by decades of denial of the reality of declining water supplies while continuing profligate water uses. Long overdue are genuine efforts to substantially improve water efficiencies, solve environmental and energy problems associated with desalination, and remove institutional barriers to better management of the water we do have. Our lives and our futures in the desert southwest depend on it.



Toiyabe Chapter ExCom Meetings

Saturday

October 19, 2013

Lake Tahoe

For details,
contact the Chair,

DAVID VON SEGGERN
vonsel1@sbcglobal.net

775-303-8461

All Toiyabe Chapter members are welcome to attend these meetings, which usually begin at 9 am. We reserve a time slot for input from members; if you have an issue on which you want to address the ExCom, please attend. For ExCom members' contact info, see the Chapter Directory on page 2.



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