



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

From the Chair

National Sierra Club Leaders' Meeting

BY DAVID VON SEGGERN (vonseg1@sbcglobal.net)

ANNUALLY, IN THE AUTUMN, Sierra Club convenes its Council of Club Leaders in San Francisco at the Club's headquarters. This meeting is normally in conjunction with a meeting of the Board of Directors. The leaders' Council consists of a representative from each of the 63 chapters, and I was proud to represent the Toiyabe Chapter. Here are some reflections on the meeting, important to you as members:

- The Board of Directors passed a resolution saying that SC opposes fracking. The exact wording of the resolution will come out in the published minutes. This resolution leaves it open to chapters as to how they will implement it.
• The Board of Directors passed a resolution to have the U.S. become 100% renewable on the electricity grid by 2030 and 100% renewable in the overall economy by 2050. Again, the exact wording will be available when the minutes are published. This is an aspirational goal, but the Board felt it was appropriate to put it into the record. The resources of the Club are being marshaled to meet these goals.

Please see FROM THE CHAPTER CHAIR, page 2.



Male sage grouse in full mating regalia. Photo: Ted Schroeder.

Nevada's sage grouse management plan

BY TINA NAPPE*

In 2010, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USF&WS) announced that listing sage grouse as threatened or endangered was warranted, but currently precluded; however, the USF&WS would decide by September 2015 whether to propose a listing. Former Department of Interior Secretary Ken Salazar suggested that the 11 western states hosting sage grouse populations develop plans on how they propose to retain state sage grouse management.

In April 2012, Nevada Governor Sandoval convened an advisory group to create a sage grouse management plan. In 2013 the Nevada State Legislature endorsed the Governor's effort by establishing the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council and the Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team within the Department of Conservation & Natural Resources. See <http://sagebrush-eco.nv.gov/> for all documents.



The sage thrasher is also dependent on the sagebrush ecosystem. Photo: Fred Petersen.

With expected approval of the Conservation Credit System (CCS) on December 4, Governor Sandoval will be able to present a package of documents to BLM, the USF&WS, and the upcoming 78th Nevada State Legislature. The documents will describe Nevada's proposal to retain management of the greater sage grouse while supporting current and new development.

If the sage grouse is listed as threatened, the 2014 Greater Sage Grouse Nevada Plan, the sage grouse map (prepared by U.S. Geological Survey), and the CCS will be important tools. They

will be able to help assure continuance of not only sage grouse but other sagebrush-dependent native species, such as the sage thrasher, pronghorn antelope, pygmy rabbit, and mule deer - along with permitting economic development.

Nevada's goal is to slow and ideally reverse the decline of sage grouse. In low elevations, hot fires, followed by weed invasions, have been identified as the primary impact. The expansion of pinyon-juniper into sage brush country is another. Federal, state, local, and non-profit organization must coordinate to reduce fire impacts and restore habitat.

The CCS applies to new developments such as mines, roads, utility corridors, and cell phone towers, within sage grouse habitat. The CCS Manual lays out a process for evaluating credits (habitat improvements) and debits (habitat loss). A team of experts created a companion document - the Habitat Quantification Tool - Scientific Methods

Please see SAGE GROUSE, page 7.

Quarterly meeting Toiyabe Chapter ExCom Saturday • January 24 • 2015

Place: Las Vegas, NV

Address: 2330 Paseo Del Prado, Building C, Suite 109, Las Vegas, NV. This is the staff office for the Sierra Club.

Time: 9 AM

Members are welcome to attend the ExCom meeting. The agenda always includes a period for member comments at the beginning.

For details, contact the Chair, David von Seggern (vonseg1@sbcglobal.net, 775-303-8461).

Document -- which lays out the criteria for estimating the value of habitat. For instance, improper grazing (cows or horses), OHVs, rights of way, or mining claims may thwart a proposed CCS project.

The Conservation Credit system (CCS) officially opened for business on November 14, seeking "credit" creators. Land owners who want to improve their properties in sage grouse country can check the new website at <https://www.enviroaccounting.com/NVCreditSystem/Program/Home>.

* Tina Nappe represents Conservation on the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council.

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* Chapter ExCom member

CALIFORNIA DESERT PROTECTION ACT'S 20th! . . .

continued from page 7

and hikes in between.

Many a glass was raised to desert wilderness at their first campout dinner at Hole in the Wall in the Mojave National Preserve. On Nov. 1, they joined the Preserve's big Mojavefest celebration at the Kelso Depot — followed by a star gazing party at Hole in

the Wall. On November 2, Desert Act leader Judy Anderson organized a Sierra Club celebration in the Mecca Hills for volunteers, allies, and BLM staff.

Thursday, Nov. 6, was the big celebration with Desert Congressional champion Sen. Dianne Feinstein. The Wildlands Conservancy generously

FROM THE CHAIR . . .

continued from page 1

• The Club is continuing a broad diversity outreach. This is really called “**Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion**” (DEI). The staff and Board have determined that we must do this to attain our goals and to remain relevant in the years ahead. You will hear more on this. I am looking for a Chapter leader to spearhead our effort on this.

• The Board and staff again emphasized that chapters must do c4 fundraising, and they are providing more tools to accomplish this. We have already experienced a higher level of support with our annual appeal letters and, for the first time, a year-end appeal letter. We need to get our fundraising strategy in order.

• The SC database **HELEN** will be replaced in 2016 by an entirely new database which will enable broader outreach and better membership and supporter tracking. The digital world moves rapidly, and the now aging HELEN database cannot provide the level of capabilities needed.

• I led an informal meetup of western states' representatives to discuss the **public lands take-over** issue. We are not alone on this, as other chapters are deeply concerned about this challenge. We will be seeking to get affected chapters to pass similarly worded resolutions opposing this take-over as a start, and a cooperative effort is likely.

• The **annual awards ceremony** was marked with a speech by environmental writer Terry Tempest Williams, an awardee this year. It was truly inspirational, and we hope to have a video to share in the near future.

Our New Year's resolution. As we enter 2015, I ask every member of Toiyabe Chapter to make a resolution to participate in at least one event, outing, or other Club activity this year.

Peace and prosperity for 2015!

hosted a gala lunch for more than 200 invited guests at its Whitewater Preserve north of Palm Springs, at which the senator lauded leading volunteers— such as Judy Anderson, Jim Dodson, and the late Elden Hughes — who made it happen. She and other speakers reminisced about the historic campaign and looked ahead to a new desert bill.

On the Nov. 8-9 weekend the Wilderness Committee joined the Desert Committee's fall meeting at Saddleback Butte State Park in the Antelope Valley; it featured another buoyant Desert 20th celebration.

—from *Words of the Wild*, December 2014

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Create an Environmental Legacy.



Bequests have played a key role in Sierra Club's environmental successes over the years.

Planning now may make your gift more meaningful and reduce taxes on your estate. We have many gift options available. We can even help you plan a gift for your local Chapter.

For more info and confidential assistance, contact:

Sierra Club
Gift Planning Program
85 Second Street, Second Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105
gift.planning@sierraclub.org • (800) 932-4270



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.

Birthday coming up? Give a tour of Channel Islands National Park!

YOU CAN'T WRAP IT UP BUT IT WILL be one of the best presents you give — a tour of a precious area of our state not seen by many.

This spring and summer, you can experience the Channel Islands, including hiking and kayaking, with Sierra Club members and a park naturalist.

And it's a gift that gives twice because your tour benefits the political work of Sierra Club California, the environment's strongest voice in the State Capitol.



While you are floating about the islands, you will be helping to protect them and other natural resources found only in California.

Enticingly within view of Ventura and Santa Barbara, one of California's (and the country's) most unique environments is part of Channel Islands National Park and National Marine Sanctuary. Because Channel Islands NP is only accessible by boat or plane, it is also one of the least visited national parks in the U.S.



The trips are organized by Sierra Club member Joan Holtz. Trip tickets cost \$615 and include meals and lodging aboard the tour boat that leaves from Santa Barbara.

2015 Trip Schedule

March 28-30
April 5-7
May 3-5
June 14-16
(Bird Lovers Special!)
July 19-21
August 23-25
September 27-29

Please contact the trip leader, Joan Jones Holtz, for more information at jholtzhln@aol.com.

Winter 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

JAN 29-31 (THU-SAT)

DEATH VALLEY WILDERNESS RESTORATION

Join us in restoring wilderness values in this remote, beautiful National Park. We couldn't access the area on our last trip, so work this time is again clean up of marijuana grow site. Gthen ather early Thursday afternoon, work on an as-yet-undecided project, work on grow site on Friday, possibly Saturday. Group size limited. Leader: Kate Allen, kj.allen96@gmail.com, 661-944-4056.

CNRCC Desert Committee

FEB 13-14 (FRI EVE-SAT)

SOUTHERN NEVADA VALENTINE'S DAY SERVICE TRIP

Give our public lands a valentine by helping on a Feb 14 service project with CA/NV Wilderness Committee. We'll work together with BLM Las Vegas office and Friends of Nevada Wilderness to enhance wilderness characteristics in one of southern Nevada BLM wildernesses. Sociable campout Friday night. More details & sign up: Vicky Hoover (415-977-5527, vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org).

CNRCC Desert Committee

MAR 6-9 (FRI-MON)

DEATH VALLEY EXPLORATION

Four days of hiking and touring. Hikes include Golden Canyon, Amargosa Canyon, Mosaic Canyon, Natural Bridge, Mesquite Sand Dunes. All are 4 mi or under. Visits to China Ranch, Salt Creek, Zabriskie Point, Artist Palette, Badwater. Two nights of primitive camping, one night at a developed campground. Potluck Saturday night. Contact leader: Carol Wiley (desertlily1@verizon.net, 760-245-8734).

Mojave Group/CNRCC Desert Committee

MAR 14-15 (SAT-SUN)

GHOST TOWN EXTRAVAGANZA.

Explore ruins of California's colorful past in this spectacular desert landscape near Death Valley. Camp near historic ghost town of Ballarat (flush toilets). Saturday, enjoy challenging hike to ghost town of Lookout City with expert Hal Fowler, who will regale us with tales of this Wild West settlement. Return to camp for Happy Hour, special St. Patty's Day potluck, campfire. Sunday morning, a quick visit to infamous Riley townsite. Group size strictly limited. Info: contact leader, Lygeia Gerard (760-868-2179).

CNRCC Desert Committee

MAR 14-15 (SAT-SUN)

SERVE & DISCOVER

CARRIZO PLAINS

We pray for winter rains! If they arrive, we can look forward to spring wildflowers in Carrizo Plain National Monument. Our service on Saturday will either remove or modify sections of fence to help pronghorn antelope move from place to place in their natural range. These residents prefer to crawl under rather than jump fences to escape predators. Sunday will be, at choice of group, either a hike in Caliente Range or else a tour of popular viewing areas in plains. Contact leader for details: Craig Deutsche (craig.deutsche@gmail.com, 310-477-6670).

CNRCC Desert Committee

MAR 18-22 (WED-SUN)

DEATH VALLEY NAT'L PARK: SPRING WEEKEND

Our car camping trip is planned when temperatures are mild and wild flowers may be blooming. We'll hike to waterfalls, including oasis-like Darwin Falls, through stunning desert canyons, such as Titus Canyon. We'll also visit ghost towns and mining areas, explore some lesser known, but truly fantastic, areas outside of the Park. A tour of Scotty's Castle is also on the agenda. Hikes are rated moderate to strenuous, with several hikes off maintained trails. Strenuous hikes to most interesting locations require short sections of rock scrambling, minor exposure to heights. Hikes will be 5-10 mi, with gains up to 500 feet. Fees: \$60/person includes 4 nights camping and tour of Scotty's Castle. Group size limited to 15 people. Contact leader for info: Rich Juricich (rich.sierraclub@pacbell.net, 916-492-2181).

Sacramento Group/CNRCC Desert Committee

MAR 27-29 (FRI-SUN)

OLD WOMAN MOUNTAINS SERVICE TRIP

Join Mojave Group and CA/NV Wilderness Committee for our annual desert wilderness service project with Needles office of BLM. This year's is in Old Woman Mountains, where we'll work on restoring a 5-mi stretch of Sunflower Spring Road or developing an interpretative trail in area. BLM is partnering with Native American Lands Conservancy, so we'll enjoy a joint campfire and stories with their tribal elders on Saturday night. Central commissary. Contact leader for info: Vicky Hoover (415-977-5527, vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org).

CA/NV Wilderness Committee

APRIL 10-13 (FRI-MON)

MOJAVE NAT' PRESERVE OUTING

Meet at noon on Friday, April 10, at Amboy Crater. Hike up crater for lunch. Primitive

7.35% & your New Year's resolutions

CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT the Club's 2014 Board of Directors election had only a 7.35% turnout? Did you know that if the turnout falls below 5%, the Club has to redo the election at great expense?

If you are one of the 92.65% who didn't vote in 2014 (you know who you are), **resolve** to shuck your bad habit in 2015 and **VOTE!**

Keep in mind that everyone eligible to vote will either receive a ballot in the mail or by Internet (if you choose the electronic delivery option, which the Club hopes you will). The ballot includes information on the candidates and where to find additional information on the Club's web site.

To request an electronic ballot, which will save the Club money and paper, please sign up at: https://secure.sierraclub.org/site/SPageNavigator/Membership/EBallot_Information.html.

For more info on the candidates, ask questions of your Group and Chapter leadership and other experienced members. And/or you can find info at the Club's election web site: <http://clubhouse.sierraclub.org/people/committees/board/board-election-2015.aspx>.

camping Friday night near Granite Pass. Saturday, head to Kelso Dunes for a hike up dunes. Sunday, visit Kelso Depot, then Lava Tube, with camping at Midhills Campground. Monday we can hike to Cima Dome on way out. All hikes are moderate (easy to some). Optional Saturday night potluck. No services in preserve. Contact leader for info: Carol Wiley (desertlily1@verizon.net, 760-245-8734).

Mojave Group/CNRCC Desert Committee

APRIL 25-26 (SAT-SUN)

SERVICE IN CARRIZO PLAINS NATIONAL MONUMENT

This trip is scheduled late in wildflower season and we hope very much that rains will have produced a wonderful, long-lasting display. Our service on Saturday will either remove or modify sections of fence to help pronghorn antelope move from place to place in their natural range. Sunday will be, at choice of group, either a hike in Caliente Range or a tour of popular viewing areas in plains. This is an opportunity to combine car camping, day hiking, exploring, and service in a relatively unknown wilderness. Contact leader for details: Craig Deutsche (craig.deutsche@gmail.com, 310-477-6670).

CNRCC Desert Committee

JUNE 19-24 (FRI-WED)

COYOTE GULCH BACKPACK

Backpack 30 mi through some of Utah's best red rock, with sheer high-walled canyons, cathedral-like campsites. Trip starts with obtaining permits at Escalante visitor center. 4-5 mi of travel each day. Most of hiking is moderate, but requires wading back, forth across creek. One steep trail to bypass waterfalls. There are side trips, so bring a small day pack. This is the warm season, but usually quite pleasant. Trip details, agenda available on sign-up. Limit 12. Leader: David Hardy (email preferred -- hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, 702-875-4826).

S. Nevada Group/CNRCC Desert Committee

Range of Light Reflections

Range of Light Group



Group News

Letter from the Chair

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

ExCom. Meets January 21 at the Hihns' Home. See details, this page.

Program Meetings. Sept 16: Jeff Hunter, organizer for the Bodie Hills Conservation Partnership, presented "A Photo Perspective of Wilderness." October 21: members met at Wynne Benti's Coons Gallery in Bishop to learn about "Art in the Eastern Sierra," focusing on Eastern Sierra plein air painters. November 18: Inyo National Forest botanist, Michele Slaton, brought us up to date on the condition of the "Forest

in the Eastern Sierra," historically and at the present.

Outings. Winter outings begin in January. See outings listings beginning on this page.

NEEDED. Volunteer to be Conservation Chair. In the meantime submit conservation items to rangeoflight.sc@gmail.com.

Conservation Updates. Fran Hunt, our Sierra Club organizer, continues to mobilize member involvement in the *Inyo National Forest (INF) plan revision process*, including meetings on Sept 18 and Nov 20. Fran and other ROLG members also participated in the four meetings of the Eastern Sierra Recreation Collaborative, intended to present to the INF the values (especially recreational) that area residents hope to see emphasized in the new forest plan.

On Sept 27, ROLG submitted comments (favoring "preferred alternative C") on the *Devils Postpile National Monument* Draft General Management Plan and Environmental assessment.

On September 26, BLM and other agencies released the Draft Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP). The plan is intended to focus RE (renewable energy) projects on the most suitable areas for industrial scale RE projects in the desert southwest counties of California and to protect the most sensitive desert eco-systems (by not including them in the focal areas). Meetings on the plan were held in October and November. The comment deadline has been extended to

Please see FROM THE ROL CHAIR, page 5.

Group ExCom meetings

WE USUALLY MEET quarterly (January, April, July, October). The next meeting is Wednesday, January 21, at the home of Dick and Joanne Hihn. All are welcome but please confirm date, place, and especially time, 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 before the meeting. 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 information. Malcolm Clark (760-924-5639, wmalcolm.clark@gmail.com).

RANGE OF LIGHT GROUP

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Webmaster Emeritus	Owen Maloy	760-934-9511

* Voting ExCom member
** Owens River Watershed Conservation Chair

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/>>

Range of Light OUTINGS

BY JOANNE HIHN & DICK HIHN

WINTER WEDNESDAY & SUNDAY OUTINGS

ALL OUTINGS INCLUDE CONSERVATION EDUCATION ACTIVITIES!

All phone numbers are 760 unless otherwise noted.

CST2087766-40. Registration as seller of travel does not constitute approval by State of California.

NEW LEADERS! For the 2015 winter season, we have added Wednesday outings, led by our newest leaders, **Rob and Liz Baum**, who come to us from San Diego Chapter. Range of Light Group welcomes Rob and Liz to the Eastern Sierra and is excited to join them on their *Wednesday Wanderings*.

WHAT TO BRING ON WINTER OUTINGS. Prepare for variety of conditions. Bring water, lunch, and snacks, layered clothing, hats, gloves, sunglasses, appropriate footwear, as well as skis/snowshoes, if appropriate.

CHECKING FOR UPDATES. In addition to contact information listed in the *Trails*, check for updates on . . .

- our WEB PAGE at <<http://Nevada.sierraclub.org/rolgroup>>
- on FACEBOOK, search "Range of Light Group"
- on MEETUP at <<http://www.meetup.com/ROLG-SierraClub-Outings-Meetup/>>
- in LOCAL MEDIA (newspapers, etc.), where we submit outings information (note that it does not always get included in their calendar of events and sometimes published information is not accurate).

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JANUARY 7 (WEDNESDAY)

Ski from Aspendell. Enjoy mod. paced ski tour up road from Aspendell. Meet near Bishop, 9:30am, corner Pleasant Valley Dam Rd and 395. Skis and snowshoes welcome. Pre-registration required. Limit: 12 participants. Dress for cold weather in warm layers. Outing contingent upon conditions. Contact Rob (619-772-5615, robertbaum99@gmail.com).

JANUARY 11 (SUNDAY)

Destination TBA (depends on weather conditions). Cross-country skiers and snowshoers welcome. Meet 10am, Mammoth Union Bank. Contact Mary K (760-934-0355, mkp@npgcable.com).

JANUARY 14 (WEDNESDAY) NO OUTING.

JANUARY 18 (SUNDAY)

Destination TBA (depends on weather conditions). Cross-country skiers and snowshoers welcome. E-mail for time and destination. Contact Sandy (714-336-8729, kburnsides@aol.com).

JANUARY 21 (WEDNESDAY)

Ski Mammoth Pass. Join us for an intermediate ski up Mammoth Pass. Meet 9:30am, Mammoth Union Bank. Skis and snowshoes welcome. Pre-registration required. Limit: 12 participants. Dress for cold weather in warm layers. Outing contingent upon

Please see ROL OUTINGS, page 5.

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.

January 20 (Tuesday)

6:15p, Social & Announcements
(no potluck)
Mammoth Lakes Library
Program: 6:45p

"Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan"

Roundtable discussion of the Plan and answers to the most frequently asked questions about the Plan.

February 17 (Tuesday)

6:15p, Social & Announcements
(no potluck)
Mammoth Lakes Library
Program, 6:45p

"Blue Diamonds Are Back"

Guest, Sue Farley USFS, will take us back to the 1980s, when the x-country Blue Diamonds were first marked.

March 17 (Tuesday)

615p, Social & Potluck
Crowley Lake Community Center
Program: 7p

"Being Green: Energy Efficiency Is the Best Renewable"



Rick Phelps, of the High Sierra Energy Foundation, will bring us up to date on the best ways to conserve energy.

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

Range of Light OUTINGS

continued from page 4

conditions. Contact Rob (619-772-5615, robertbaum99@gmail.com).

JANUARY 25 (SUNDAY)

Destination TBA (depends on weather conditions). Cross-country skiers and snowshoers welcome. Meet 10am, Mammoth Union Bank. Contact Mary K (760-934-0355, mkp@npgcable.com).

JANUARY 28 (WEDNESDAY)

Bike Pleasant Valley. Bring your mountain bike for moderate, non-technical loop in Pleasant Valley. Take in great views of Mt. Tom and Sherwins. Meet near Bishop, 9:30am, corner Pleasant Valley Dam Rd and 395. Pre-registration required. Limit: 12 participants. Dress for cold weather in warm layers. Outing contingent upon conditions. Contact Rob (619-772-5615, robertbaum99@gmail.com).

FEBRUARY 1 (SUNDAY)

Destination TBA (depends on weather conditions). Cross-country skiers and snowshoers welcome. Meet 10am, Mammoth Union Bank. Contact Mary K (760-934-0355, mkp@npgcable.com).

FEBRUARY 4 WEDNESDAY

Skate/Ski Rock Creek Road. Come practice your skills on Rock Creek Rd. Ideal for advancing beginners and low intermediate skate skiers. Meet 9:30am at Tom's Place. Pre-registration required. Limit: 12 participants. Dress for cold weather in warm layers. Outing contingent upon conditions. Contact Rob (619-772-5615, robertbaum99@gmail.com).

FEBRUARY 8 (SUNDAY)

Destination TBA (depends on weather conditions). Cross-country skiers and snowshoers welcome. Meet 10am, Mammoth Union Bank. Contact Brigitte (760-924-2140, jungberman@mac.com).

FEBRUARY 11 (WEDNESDAY)

Destination TBA (depends on snow conditions). Cross-country skiers and snowshoers welcome. Well behaved dogs OK. Meet near Bishop, 9:30am, corner of Pleasant Valley Dam Rd and 395. Contact Rob (619-772-5615, robertbaum99@gmail.com).

FEBRUARY 15 (SUNDAY)

Destination TBA (depends on weather conditions). Cross-country skiers and snowshoers welcome. Meet 10am, Mammoth Union Bank. Contact Mary K (760-934-0355, mkp@npgcable.com).

FEBRUARY 18 (WEDNESDAY)

Destination TBA (depends on weather conditions). Cross-country skiers and snowshoers welcome. Well behaved dogs

FROM THE ROL CHAIR . . .

continued from page 4

February 23.

On December 2, the Inyo County Board of Supervisors (BOS) considered the *FEIR on the Adventure Trails system* which allows street legal OHVs to use certain county roads to access trail heads for OHV routes.

Also in December, the Inyo County BOS held public meetings on the Inyo County proposed *Renewable Energy General Plan Amendment* which, similar to DRECP, designates county areas suitable for Renewable Energy development.

OK. Meet 10am, Mammoth Union Bank. Contact Rob (619-772-5615, robertbaum99@gmail.com).

FEBRUARY 22 (SUNDAY)

Destination TBA (depends on weather conditions). Cross-country skiers and snowshoers welcome. Meet 10am, Mammoth Union Bank. Contact Brigitte (760-924-2140, jungberman@mac.com).

FEBRUARY 25 (WEDNESDAY)

Skate/Ski Lake Mary Road. Come practice your skills on Lake Mary Road. Ideal for advancing beginners and low intermediate skate skiers. Meet 9:30am, Mammoth Union Bank. Pre-registration required. Limit: 12 participants. Dress for cold weather in warm layers. Outing contingent upon conditions. Contact Rob (619-772-5615, robertbaum99@gmail.com).

MARCH 1 (SUNDAY)

Destination TBA (depends on weather conditions). Cross-country skiers and snowshoers welcome. Meet 10am, Mammoth Union Bank. Contact Jean (760-648-7109, dillinghamjean@gmail.com).

MARCH 3-4

(TUESDAY-WEDNESDAY)

Cerro Gordo Car Camp. Two moderate desert hikes in this geologically unique, historic area. Spend one evening car camping. Meet near Bishop, 8am, corner of Pleasant Valley Dam Rd and 395. Pre-registration required. Limit: 12 participants. Dress for cold weather in warm layers. Outing contingent upon conditions. Contact Rob (619-772-5615, robertbaum99@gmail.com).

MARCH 8 (SUNDAY)

Destination TBA (depends on weather conditions). Cross-country skiers and snowshoers welcome. Meet 10am, Mammoth Union Bank. Contact Melissa (760-937-0499, melissas1@verizon.net).

MARCH 11 (WEDNESDAY)

Hike Black Mountain. Hike/Snowshoe a jeep road to abandoned mine and scramble up to peak for sweeping vista of Owens Valley. Meet near Bishop, 9:30am, corner of Pleasant Valley Dam Rd and 395. Pre-registration required. Limit: 12 participants. Dress for cold weather in warm layers. Outing contingent upon conditions. Contact Rob (619-772-5615, robertbaum99@gmail.com).

MARCH 15 (SUNDAY)

Destination TBA (depends on weather conditions). Cross-country skiers and snowshoers welcome. Meet 10am, Mammoth Union Bank. Contact Jean (760-648-7109, dillinghamjean@gmail.com).

MARCH 18 (WEDNESDAY)

Destination TBA (depends on snow conditions). Cross-country skiers and snowshoers welcome. Well behaved dogs OK. Meet 10am, Mammoth Union Bank Contact Rob (619-772-5615, robertbaum99@gmail.com).

MARCH 22 (SUNDAY)

Destination TBA (depends on weather conditions). Cross-country skiers and snowshoers welcome. Meet 10am, Mammoth Union Bank. Contact Brigitte (760-924-2140, jungberman@mac.com).

MARCH 23- 24

(MONDAY-TUESDAY)

Ski June Mountain to Mammoth Lodge. Ski from June to Mammoth on this overnight backcountry tour. Good for intermediate skiers with solid winter skills Meet 9:30am,

Range of Light FALL PHOTO GALLERY

Photos by Joanne Hihn



October 22, 2014. We took advantage of snowless conditions and walked along the San Joaquin Ridge. This is a close-up and personal view of the Minarets from along the trail. (Above.)

Nov. 8, 2014. We weren't certain how far up Convict Canyon we could navigate because of recent snowfall. As it turned out, we were forced to turn back as we approached the top of the canyon because we neglected to bring microspikes. The returning views however more than made up for our disappointment at not making it to Mildred Lake. (Below.)



Mammoth Union Bank. Outing contingent upon conditions. Pre-registration required. Limit: 12 participants. Contact Rob (619-772-5615, robertbaum99@gmail.com).

MARCH 25 (WEDNESDAY)

Destination TBA (depends on snow conditions). Cross-country skiers and snowshoers welcome. Well behaved dogs OK. Meet 10am,

Mammoth Union Bank Contact Rob (619-772-5615, robertbaum99@gmail.com).

MARCH 29 (SUNDAY)

Destination TBA (depends on weather conditions). Cross-country skiers and snowshoers welcome. Meet 10am, Mammoth Union Bank. Contact Dick and Joanne (760-709-5050, rhihn@skidmore.edu).

CONSERVATION ROUNDUP

*The world reveals
itself to those who
travel on foot.*

— Werner Herzog

Bureau of Land Management plan revisions

BY MARGE SILL

Bureau of Land Management districts in both Nevada and California are preparing or have prepared Draft Resource Management Plan Revisions (RMP). This is particularly important for the Toiyabe Chapter because there is so much BLM land in both Nevada and Eastern California that needs protection of areas with special attributes.

In addition to designated wilderness and wilderness study areas, the BLM has instructed each district to inventory lands with wilderness characteristics. Several Sierra Club chapters have helped identify these lands, but the Toiyabe Chapter does not have the volunteers to do this. However, Friends of Nevada Wilderness staff and Friends of the Inyo volunteers and staff have done inventories of these lands in Nevada and Eastern California.

Lands with wilderness characteristics must comply with the definition of wilderness in the Wilderness Act. Many were not included when the Wilderness

Study Areas were designated because of private lands or mineral rights.

The most recent Draft RMP revision has been done by the Carson City District. Comments are not due until March on this revision and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). A series of public meetings will be held. For further information, please contact Marge (msill@juno.com), and the notice plus summary of draft will be sent to you. The Carson City District includes such areas as Tule Peak, which Friends of Nevada Wilderness has surveyed as an area with wilderness characteristics.

Another "Silent Spring"?

BY JAKE HIGHTON*

RACHEL CARSON WAS A PROPHETIC scientist. Her book, "Silent Spring," published in 1962, linked the sharp decline of songbirds and birds of prey to DDT, a pesticide widely sprayed to control insects.

Carson explained that DDT moved through the food chain from the insects to the birds that ate them. "Over increasingly large areas of the United States spring now comes unheralded by the return of the birds and the early mornings are strangely silent where once they were filled with the beauty of songbirds," she wrote. Even powerful predators like hawks, peregrine falcons, ospreys, owls and bald eagles were affected.

Carson went farther, lamenting: "The most alarming of man's assaults on the environment is the contamination of air, earth, rivers and sea with dangerous and even lethal materials." Ten years later the United States and most of the world heeded her warning, banning DDT.

Now climate change is an even more threatening villain. A recent report by the National Audubon Society says that half of the 650 bird species in the United States could be driven to seek new habitat in order to feed and breed. If they cannot adapt to climate change they face extinction.

In a dire outlook, the *New York Times* reported: "The Baltimore oriole will probably no longer live in Maryland, the common loon might leave Minnesota and the trumpeter swan could be entirely gone."

Other threatened species are the three-toed woodpecker, the northern hawk owl, the northern gannet, Baird's sparrow, the rufous hummingbird and the western yellow-billed cuckoo.

Many Americans could not care less about the fate of birds. But roughly 50 million U.S. bird watchers care greatly. Birds are their passion, obsession, and pleasure. For many birders it's their

Please see SILENT SPRING, page 7.

Black Rock Desert targeted in water export scheme

BY ROSE STRICKLAND

DESERT LOVERS, BURNING MAN aficionados, Indian tribes, local ranchers, downriver farmers, and rural folks are keeping a sharp eye on a set of water applications by an Idaho farmer to the Nevada State Engineer to pump and pipe up to 14,000 acre-feet/year adjacent to two springs northeast of the main playa. Double Hot Springs and Black Rock Springs are in the Mud Meadows Basin, all northeast of Gerlach, Nevada. The destination of the pipeline? Several areas south of the Truckee River in Storey County are listed in an appendix. You can see the details of the applications including the appendix listing the proposed places of use of the exported water on the State Engineer's website.*

The pumping sites are on public lands in the Black Rock Desert High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area. The extremely hot and scenic springs were used by native Americans for thousands of years and by emigrants passing through on their way to California in the 1840s and '50s. They are enjoyed by thousands of year-round visitors to the Black Rock Desert, the summer Burning Man festival-goers, fall hunters, and local residents.

There are many unanswered questions about the pumping/pipeline proposal:

- Because the pumping request would exceed the perennial yield of the Basin, set by the State Engineer,

is that much groundwater actually available?

- Would pumping such huge amounts of water affect the senior water rights of existing water users? Or, the hot springs in Soldier Meadows on which endangered species depend?
- What would a water pipeline look like crossing the Black Rock Desert playa and would it disrupt the hydrology of the sometimes flooded area?
- Would the BLM provide a right-of-way for a pipeline through the National Conservation Area?
- What is the water quality of groundwater in the pumping sites and would it end up in the Truckee River, after industrial uses?
- While the applications list \$10,000,000+ as the cost of "well drilling, pump installation, pump house, electrical, pipeline and booster stations", how much would the project -- including an over 100 mile

pipeline and an Environmental Impact Statement -- actually cost? And . . . who is financing the project?

- What route would a pipeline take? Through public lands or through the Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation?

And how would water be transported across the Truckee River?

- Does the farmer have a contract with someone to buy water rights "south of the Truckee River" for industrial purposes?

And, one wonders, is this just the first of many pump-&-export groundwater schemes from rural areas to support growth and development in water-short urban areas of northwestern Nevada?

There has been a news blackout on this proposed water scheme. Despite the hoopla about Nevada landing the Tesla battery gigafactory by provid-



Spectacular Double Hot Spring in the Black Rock High Rock Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area. Looking southeast toward the Black Rock Range (September 2000). Photo: Dennis Ghiglieri.

ing over \$1.2 billion in subsidies, there has also been a black hole in the boosterism media coverage about how much water Tesla would need. Whether the industrial complex, south of the Truckee River, has enough current water rights to supply Tesla's water needs is unknown, despite the "no water worries" quotes in local newspaper accounts (See <http://truckeeriver.org/water-for-tesla-not-a-problem/>.)

Concerned counties, irrigation districts, tribes, emigrant trail and conservation groups, and desert lovers are considering filing protests against the two applications to the State Engineer because of the potential adverse impacts on local rural economies, existing users, the Truckee River, and the environment. Eventually, the State Engineer will schedule a hearing on the water right applications and protests and consider hydrological, economic and environmental evidence before approving or rejecting the applications and/or protests. Then, the legal battles will commence, as we follow the West's solid tradition of "whiskey's for drinking and water's for fighting over."

* <http://water.nv.gov/data/permit/permit.cfm?page=1&app=84429>, App #84429 and <http://water.nv.gov/data/permit/permit.cfm?page=1&app=84430>, App #84429

Great Basin drought deepens

BY DAVID VON SEGGERN

OVER THE THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY long weekend, I visited the Monte Cristo Range near Tonopah, Nevada, to view its spectacular geologic scenery. The geologic formations are truly photogenic, but what struck me just as much was the condition of plants across the range. This range lies north of the boundary of the high and low deserts in Nevada and is generally above 5000 feet, but it does have some botanical species which are more common southerly, such as cholla cactus and trumpet plants.

The following description is from one who is untrained in botany and only mildly familiar with plants across the Great Basin. I walked in the range for three days, taking mostly photographs of the geologic formations, but also several of the vegetation.

The photograph here shows an ephedra plant, for example. I noted that



almost all vegetation was in extreme stress, with much of it apparently dead. Sagebrush plants seemed dead; shadscale (aka saltbush) showed only limited signs of life; ephedra specimens seemed to be barely clinging to life; all grasses were totally desiccated. The cholla cactus community, here at the most northerly part of its range, was largely showing no signs of life, with many specimens clearly dead. This plant is a hardy survivor in the Mojave and Sonoran deserts southward where rainfall averages typically less than four inches a year.

I saw evidence of horses and sheep here and there throughout the range but did not see any actual animals. My inference is that the edible vegetation is so sparse that the distance traveled while foraging may require more energy than the scant forage could provide. This is truly a challenging period for our wildlife. Yet I did see a few rabbits and rodents and several recently dug badger holes. A few birds still inhabit the range. I saw no springs throughout my three-day visit and not even anything that could be described as a seep.

I have been tracking the rainfall in the Great Basin the past few years. Tonopah, Nevada, about 20 miles east from the Monte Cristo Range, has an official NOAA weather station (KTPH) with a complete record back to 1978. The graph shows the annual precipitation from 1978 through 2014. (2014 did not include the month of December at the time of this writing.) Since 1978, Tonopah had its lowest precipitation in 2011, followed by three successive years with three inches or less of precipitation. This is much less than normal, if the years 1978 through 2010

SILENT SPRING...

continued from page 6

most valuable "possession." If one bird goes extinct they feel diminished.

The passenger pigeon, once so numerous it darkened American skies, is now extinct. "The Sibley Guide to the Birds of North America" by David Sibley lists birds that have gone extinct in the past 185 years. Some examples are: the great auk (1830s), Labrador duck (1878), passenger pigeon (1900), Carolina parakeet (1905), heath hen (1931), Eskimo curlew (1962), Bachman's warbler (1962), the magnificent ivory-billed woodpecker (1950s) and the dusky seaside sparrow (1980).

Their extinction was a result of habitat destruction by the relentless American drive for profits at the expense of the environment. Some vanished habitats include: coastal dunes, freshwater wetlands and grasslands.

David Yarnold, Audubon president, asks pertinently: "What happens to a yellow-billed magpie in California that depends on scrub oak habitat? What happens as that bird keeps ranging wider and runs out of oak trees?" Answer: It becomes extinct, as the ivory-billed did when its habitat — hardwood swamps and pine forests in the Southeastern United States — disappeared.

Puffins, whose reintroduction off the Maine coast was an Audubon success story, are declining because of climate-driven changes in the ocean food chain. Black-legged kittiwakes, which thrive in the Antarctica, are not likely to survive if climate change continues to melt the ice.

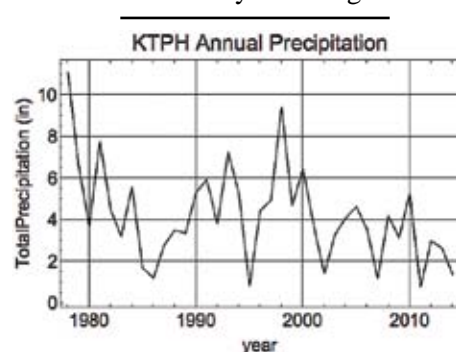
Alanna Mitchell, writing in Environmental Health News, reports: "In North America's breadbasket, populations of grassland birds such as sweet-trilling meadowlarks are in free-fall. Graceful fliers like swifts and swallows that snap up insects on the wing are declining sharply. Shorebirds like sandpipers, spoonbills, and red knots are declining on inland flats."

When I ran on the track team in high school

Please see SILENT SPRING, page 12.

are taken as "normal."

The national news carries many articles on the exceptional drought in California. At the time of this writing, Nevada is also undergoing exceptional or extreme drought throughout half of the state, with all of the state abnormally dry or worse, as seen on the drought map of 11/25/2014 (<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>). What is very significant in comparing the two states is that Nevada historically has much lower average rainfall in general, as seen at the Tonopah station, such that the four-year plunge in precipitation here is very damaging. Nevada's biological environment is truly suffering.



Mining desert history with T A Taro

BY TINA NAPPE

The trip description says, "Wear long pants. The trail will be steep with brush. See a segment of one of the wooden flumes which brought water to Virginia City in the Comstock days. View historical structures before BLM removes them."

Just another Saturday hike offering from T A Taro, a dedicated outings leader for Toiyabe Chapter.

T A's specialty? Exploring Storey, Lyon, Carson, Alpine and Churchill counties. Hidden in the characteristic low sage brush hills, we are sure to come across remnants of mill sites, prospector's diggings, or ranch memorabilia leading to speculation as to its purpose or T A's research.

Mt. Davidson, our destination, looms over Virginia City. We parked near the Comstock Motel. We soon left the gravel road and started up a canyon trail on what might have been a flume passageway. Despite the drought, a few pools of water fed thick willows. We viewed remnants of flumes (wooden troughs to convey water) along with some rock foundations to hold the troughs.

By 1857 there were 12,000 people in the Comstock area and two water companies collecting and distributing the minuscule water sources. Lumber for the flumes was brought from the Carson Range across Washoe Lake up the Jumbo Trail by oxen. In 1873 the first of three "water grabs" from the Carson Range reduced dependence on these limited water supplies.

Once up the canyon, we walked along a road to reach Davidson Peak, where we enjoyed lunch looking at Virginia City below us, across the valley to the spectacular Pine Nut Range, and behind us feral horses -- indifferent to our presence.

One piece of history we observed on return, which is soon to disappear, is American Flats, a mill site established in

1922 to process low grade ore; it closed in 1926. When I was growing up, the

Romanesque buildings served as a quiet picnic spot, ideal for exploring. Over time, the buildings deteriorated; the parties and graffiti increased. The site was closed this November 14 to remove



Remnants of a Virginia City flume. Photo: Rob North.

the buildings.

I recollect other hikes. Once we followed the Virginia and Truckee train track from Virginia City to Mound House. Or, starting at Buckland Station, we enjoyed the cottonwoods along the Carson River, returning via a sagebrush loop where we noted bric-a-brac from early ranching and mining days. More recently, an early summer hike was along the declining shoreline of Lake Lahontan.

History, views, and hiking with T A are memorable experiences. Sign up.

20th Anniversary celebrations for California Desert Protection Act

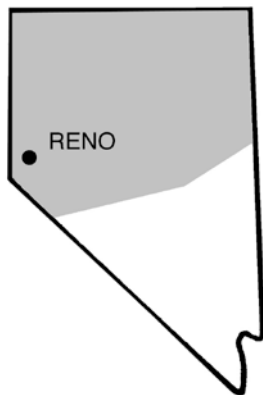
ON OCTOBER 31, 1994, President Bill Clinton signed the California Desert Protection Act.

This fall, from Oct. 31 to Nov. 9, members of the CA/NV Wilderness Committee were in southern California to take part in several Desert Act 20th celebrations. They enjoyed camping

Please see CALIFORNIA DESERT, page 2.



Great Basin Gatherings



Great Basin Group

Message from the Chair

End-of-the-year reflections

BY HOLLY COUGHLIN

AS 2014 IS COMING TO AN END, I find myself reflecting on the accomplishments and progress the Great Basin Group has made, as well as the priorities we still plan to work toward. The GBG ExCom is comprised of seven dedicated members who all contribute not only their time, but knowledge and expertise to the management of all our activities.

This past year, we succeeded in meeting technology challenges for our Program Meetings with the purchase of a better sound system and laptop for presenters to use for powerpoint or slide show presentations. Bartley Ranch has been a great location for Program Meetings and it has been secured for 2015.

If you haven't been to a program, we encourage you attend. Programs are geared to be informative and interesting with topics coming up that include long

distance hiking, urban roots, wildflowers, hiking the John Muir Trail, and a gear swap.

2014 brought an increase in outings, with Monday Conditioning hikes added to the existing schedule and membership on our Meet-Up site reaching over 2000. We hope to offer more conservation and family-oriented outings this coming year. As with any organization, growing our membership is a top priority. This is where you can make a difference! Please consider bringing a friend to an event. Also, we are always in need of volunteers, they are the backbone of everything we do.

What you can do. If you have an interest in helping, let any ExCom member know and they'll get you started. Thank you for supporting Sierra Club with your membership and we hope you have a wonderful new year.

Great programs for Great Basin Group

BY CARON TAYLOE, GREAT BASIN PROGRAM CHAIR

IT'S BEEN GREAT SEEING EVERYONE at the monthly general meetings. In **October** we had Ned Tibbits from

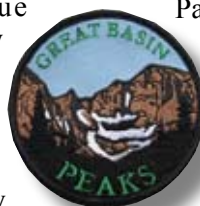
Mountain Education give a great talk about *outdoor safety*. In **November**

Please see GB PROGRAMS, page 9.

Great Basin Peak Section News Trips & List Finishers

BY SHARON MARIE WILCOX

IN NOVEMBER WE CELEBRATED THE newest List Finishers: Sue Wyman and Vic Henney. They finished the 116-peak list on their climb up Mount Gilbert in the Ruby Mountains. Their celebration included the regular yummy feeding frenzy potluck, plus a delicious and fun cake created by Mary Brooks. It even had real-looking candy coated chocolate rocks, made by local Kimmie Candy Company. (See next page for photo.)



In addition to autumn hikes up Mount Patterson, Snow Valley Peak, Ruby Dome, and Quartzite Mountain, we enjoyed a new series of wilderness hikes. Larry Dwyer has started a variety of explorations to Great Basin peaks in wilderness or wilderness study areas.

These interesting trips are joint Sierra Club and Friends of Nevada Wilderness trips.

The first trip took us to Bald Mountain, in the proposed Wovoka Wilderness

area. Larry presented information on both the wilderness designation process and status of this area. After a day of experiencing Wovoka's solitude and beauty, we hope it is des-

Please see GB PEAK SECTION NEWS, page 9.

GREAT BASIN GROUP

OFFICERS

Chair	Holly Coughlin*	775-331-7488	ladyhiker1@att.net
Vice-Chair	Katy Christensen*	702-755-2267	mabelnv@hotmail.com
Secretary	Sue Jacox*	775-849-1890	suejacox@nvbell.net
Treasurer	Martin Mace*	775-745-4703	mace.martin@gmail.com
Conservation	Jim Call	775-420-6363	freneticmarmot@gmail.com
Energy	Open		
Membership	Jim Call	775-420-6363	freneticmarmot@gmail.com
Outings	Holly Coughlin	775-331-7488	ladyhiker1@att.net
Political	David von Seggern	775-303-8461	vonseg1@sbcglobal.net
Programs	Caron Tayloe	775-813-3983	crntayloc@gmail.com
Webmaster	Peter Johnson	775-250-2576	peter.j.johnson@charter.net

* ExCom member

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.

JANUARY 1 (THURSDAY) 10AM

New Year's Day Hike. Join us for our annual New Year's Day Hike. Designed to accommodate most hikers, allow for minor impairments due to overindulgence night before. We'll be going to location suitable for weather and conditions. Finish by mid to late afternoon. Greet 2015 with healthy start. DOK. Leader: David von Seggern (775-303-8461; vonseg1@sbcglobal.net). Co-Leader: Cathy Schmidt (775-240-3785; cathsch256@aol.com). Mod. Easy.

JANUARY 1 (THURSDAY) 8AM

New Year's Day Hike. Leaders choice, depending on snow. Probably off Hwy 50 E or Alt 95 from Silver Springs. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Moderate.

JANUARY 3 (SATURDAY) 9AM

Beginners' Cross-Country Ski, Rose Meadows. Learn basics from other Sierra Club X-C skiers: How to fall down, how to get up, ski on flats. Must provide own equipment. Half-day trip. Bring lunch, water, sun-screen, warm clothing. ND. Leader: Ridge Walker (853-8055). Mod. Easy.

JANUARY 3 (SATURDAY) 8AM

Sawmill in Desert Day Hike. If you missed New Year's Day hike, it's time to "shake a leg" for 2015. Near Buckland

Station, S of Silver Springs, along lower Carson Riv going upstream. About 9 mi in loop; mostly flat. Check on beaver activity. See, ponder remains of sawmill in desert, then see current route of railroad, its 100-year-old bridge, which services Hawthorn. Hike on part of route of Carson, Colorado Railroad, circa early 1880s, including original wooden culvert. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Mod. Easy.

JANUARY 5 (MONDAY) 6PM

ExCom Meeting. Monthly meeting for Great Basin Group ExCom to discuss programs, outings, membership, other matters, at Swill Wine & Coffee. Members welcome to sit in. ND. Leader: Holly Coughlin (775-331-7488). Co-Leader: David von Seggern (775-303-8461). Easy.

JANUARY 8 (THURSDAY) 7PM

Monthly General Meeting. Program: Triple Crown hiker Nancy Huber. She has hiked the entire 2650-mile Pacific Crest Trail twice — in 2009 and 2014. In 2012 she hiked the Continental Divide Trail — 2700 miles through New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana. She completed the *Triple Crown of long distance hiking* with the Appalachian Trail in 2013. Meet at

Please see GB CALENDAR, page 9.

*GB GROUP 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/>>

Reno students explore nature

BY SUE JACOX, SUEJACOX@NVBELL.NET

"I like nature more than I thought I did," wrote an Anderson Elementary School sixth grader after spending four days with classmates on the shore of Tahoe with Great Basin Outdoor School's science camp this fall.

Sierra Club's Great Basin Group, the Community Foundation of Western Nevada, Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, the Nevada Division of Forestry, and Great Basin Outdoor School all contributed funding to make the trip possible. Students wrote that they loved looking at the stars, seeing coyote tracks, hiking, and birds. One

wrote, "I like how we played games to see how animals live their life," and others liked learning about the environment and how to help keep Tahoe blue.

The Great Basin Group's "Get Kids Outdoors" funding also helped Roger Corbett fifth graders hike and explore at Galena Creek this fall. One highlight

Please see GET KIDS OUTDOORS, page 12.



Anderson sixth graders thank scholarship supporters.

Bartley Ranch. Social: 630p; program, 7p. General Meetings are open to the public. See web page, <www.toiyabe.sierraclub.org/gbgroup/>, for details. ND. Leader: Caron Tayloe (crntayloe@gmail.com). Co-Leader: David VonSeggern (vonseg1@sbcglobal.net). Easy.

JANUARY 10 (SATURDAY) 9AM

Skunk Harbor Snowshoe. Join us for snowshoe trek to scenic harbor, historic house on Lake Tahoe. About 4 mi RT, 800-1000 ft gain. Parking limited, so we'll carpool to trailhead. Bring plenty of water, gear, clothing for conditions. Bad weather for day will cancel, but will reschedule. DL. Leader: Gail Myatt (775-750-1293; gailmyatt@hotmail.com). Co-Leader: Bill Myatt (775-233-3186; bill.myatt@gmail.com). Mod. Easy.

JANUARY 17 (SATURDAY) 8AM

El Dorado Canyon Day Hike, near Dayton. About 12 mi on an in & out; under 900 ft gain. Riparian habitat with many crossings of small stream. Lunch at natural arches. Also small slot canyon to explore on way out. Enjoy viewing many and varied rock formations. Learn some history of area. High clearance vehicle needed, or ride share ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Moderate.

JANUARY 17 (SATURDAY) 8:30AM

Martis Peak Snowshoe. Vistas of Tahoe, Truckee area. About 10 mi, 2000 ft gain. Possible chickadees. Learn about peaks surrounding area from fire hut sitting on top of peak. DL. Leader: Bill Myatt (775-233-3186; bill.myatt@gmail.com). Co-Leader: Gail Myatt (775-750-1293; gailmyatt@hotmail.com). Strenuous.

GB PEAK SECTION NEWS...

continued from page 8

ignated wilderness by year's end. (See Wovoka trip report on page 3.

His second trip took us to Burro Mountain, in the Twin Peaks WSA near the Smoke Creek Desert. I called this the "Day of the Rainbows," because we've never seen so many rainbows. The entire trip was a continual rainbow display. We missed the local burros, but did observe a herd of 30+ pronghorn.

Stay tuned for Larry's next trips, which will be listed in both the Great Basin Outings schedule and the Friends of Nevada Wilderness event calendar.

Join the GBPS! For details on membership, recognition categories, peak list, and trip reports, check out Great Basin Peaks Section at <<http://toiyabe.sierraclub.org/GreatBasinPeaks>>.

Sue Wyman and Vic Henney, GPBS's newest List Finishers, with their incredible cake. (Created by Mary Brooks.)



Great Basin Group Calendar

continued from page 8

JANUARY 18 (SUNDAY) 9AM

Pah Rah Petroglyph Hike, Dry Lakes Basin of Pah Rah Range (E of Sparks). Hoping to find prehistoric petroglyphs, galloping antelopes, as on trips gone by. Bring lunch, water, wear layered clothing. About 10 mile RT, 1000 ft gain. DL. Leader: Ridge Walker (853-8055). Co-Leader: Jeannie Kettler (843-9828). Moderate.

JANUARY 24 (SATURDAY) 9:45AM

Kyburz Meadows Snowshoe. Fairly easy snowshoe, about 500 ft gain, 5 mi. Historic sites include location of stage coach stop, hotel, as well as basque oven that still stands. Leisurely lunch near oven. Call for details. Bad weather will postpone. DOK. Leader: Holly Coughlin

Ruby Dome Celebration. L to R: Eric Kassin, Bob Ralston, Mary Brooks, Jeff Casey, Al Sandorff, Ken Miller, Kay Komuro, and Sharon Marie Wilcox.



Great Basin Peak Section News Ruby Dome Backpack

BY SHARON MARIE WILCOX

GREAT BASIN PEAK SECTION MEMBERS joined Las Vegas Mountaineering Club to climb Ruby Dome, the highest point in Elko County (11,387 ft). The glaciated Ruby Mountains were misnamed when a garnet discovery was mistaken for rubies. Regardless of this mistake, the Rubys are a gem that offers wonderful hiking opportunities.

We met our trip leader, Eric Kassin, at the locked gate on Pleasant Valley Road off Nevada state route 227. He had the gate key, so we drove to the signed trailhead, saving 2 miles of hiking and 500 ft of elevation gain. (The key is available from the Spring Creek Homeowners Association.)

The trail began by going through a colorful display of aspen paralleling Butterfield Creek in Hennen Canyon. We arrived at Griswold Lake (9220 ft), a scenic glacial tarn, in time to set up camp in a leisurely fashion and watch the sunset. Eric and Kay demonstrated the matchless campfire while Jeff, the Backcountry Brew Master, prepared beer using an interesting kit he had purchased online. It was hard to leave

the fire and conversation, but after a last gaze at the starry sky, we retired to our tents planning an early morning departure to Ruby Dome.

In the morning, we followed a use trail to the ridge above the lake. From this point, we scrambled up the rocky slope to the saddle and then the summit. The shaded rocks still had a thin layer of frost which required care, as they were quite slippery. (Our route was similar to Route B in the Desert Peak Section Guide or Bob Sumner's route in Hiking Nevada's County High Points.)

Eric surprised us with champagne and cookies on the summit, celebrating my finish of the 17 Nevada county high points. (See photo above.) I could have sat and soaked in the phenomenal view for hours, but we needed to head to Ruby Pyramid and then back down to Griswold Lake to break camp and head home.

This was our first trip with the LVMC, and we'll definitely hike with them again in the future. Check out their upcoming trips at <<http://www.meetup.com/LasVegasMountaineersClub>>.

ly Coughlin (775-331-7488). Co-Leader: Jim Call (775-420-6363; freneticmarmot@gmail.com). Mod. Easy.

FEBRUARY 2 (MONDAY) 6PM

Ex Com Meeting. Great Basin Group Ex-

Com meets to discuss programs, outings, membership, other matters at Swill Wine & Coffee. Members welcome to sit in. ND. Leader: Holly Coughlin (775-331-7488). Co-Leader: David von Seggern (775-303-8461). Easy.

FEBRUARY 7 (SATURDAY) 8AM

Churchill Butte Day Hike, near Silver Springs. Scale butte overlooking historic Fort Churchill and parts of emigrant wagon route, ancient and modern Lake Lahontan, Pony Express Trail, Lincoln Hwy. Learn some history of area. About 9.5 mi, 2200 ft gain for day, all in first 4 mi. Part-

of hike are off trail, with steep descents. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Mod. Strenuous.

FEBRUARY 7 (SATURDAY)

TBD Petersen Mountain Day Hike.

Enjoy panoramic views from high point (7841ft) of Petersen Mountain Range straddling California-Nevada border just N of Reno. On Great Basin Peaks list. Learn about how area may be candidate for Wilderness designation, what Friends of Nevada Wilderness is doing, how you can help. Also, what's with all those bird houses...? Note: Significant snow accumulation and/or bad weather could modify our plans. ND. Leader: Larry Dwyer (775-745-6628; kdwyer31@charter.net). Co-Leader: Dorothy Hudig (775-323-4835; Hudig@sbcglobal.net). Mod. Strenuous.

FEBRUARY 12 (THURSDAY) 7PM

Monthly General Meeting. Program: Urban Roots speaker Brittany Palmer, the Development Coordinator at Urban Roots, will discuss her passions for *sustainable agriculture, education, and community development* for the future. She will be accompanied by Andrew Cervantes (development of school gardens across Washoe County) and Sarah Burton (FarmCorps crew leader). Meet at Bartley Ranch: 630p, social; 7p, program. See web page, <www.toiyabe.sierraclub.org/gbgroup/>, for details. ND. Leader: Caron Tayloe (crntayloe@gmail.com). Co-Leader: David VonSeggern (vonseg1@sbcglobal.net). Easy.

FEBRUARY 14 (SATURDAY) 9:30AM

Chickadee Ridge Snowshoe. One of our favorite snowshoe trips -- what a way to begin Valentine's Day! Start in Tahoe Meadows, climb about 800-1000 ft to Chickadee Ridge. About 6 mi to lunch spot with fabulous vistas. If we're lucky, little chickadees will be in attendance. Trip limit 20. Please call for details. Bad weather will postpone. DOK. Leader: Holly Coughlin (775-331-7488). Co-Leader: Jim Call (775-420-6363; freneticmarmot@gmail.com). Moderate.

FEBRUARY 15 (SUNDAY) 9AM

Echo Lakes Cross-Country Ski. Moderate x-c ski trip in glacially-carved basin. Expect to see gorgeous granites, great geologic terrain, hear "Echo." All day trip. Bring lunch, water, sunscreen, warm clothing. 6-7 mi, 200 ft loss or gain. Not for beginning skiers ND. Leader: Ridge Walker (853-8055). Moderate.

Please see GB CALENDAR, page 12.

GB PROGRAMS...

continued from page 8

David von Seggern presented his trek to *Bavaria*.

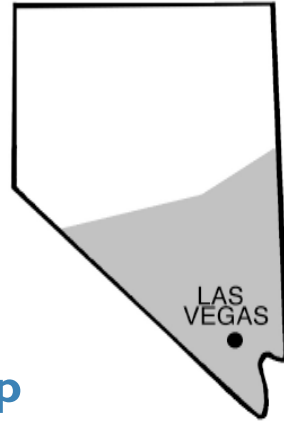
This **January**, I hope to see everyone at our meeting to hear Triple Crown hiker Nancy Huber.

February brings Urban Roots speakers to our monthly meeting.

In **March**, Sierra Club's own Raleigh Martin will present his trek on the *John Muir Trail*.

Hope to see all of you at these gatherings! All programs take place on the second Thursday of the month at Bartley Ranch starting at 7 pm. See details of all programs in our Outings calendar.

The Mojave Monitor



Southern Nevada Group

Group News

Monthly ExCom Meetings

January 14, February 18, & March 18, 2015

Open to all members, the monthly meetings of our Executive Committee (ExCom) are typically held on the third Wednesday of each month, unless otherwise noted. We meet from 6pm to 8:30pm at the Sierra Club Office, located just off West Sahara near Palace Station at Building C, Suite 109, 2330 Paseo del Prado, Las Vegas, NV 89102. There is plenty of free parking in the surrounding lot. Please join us on January 14, February 18 or March 18 – all second Wednesdays.

General Program Meetings & Membership Mixers

As in 2014, our General Program Meetings this year are being conducted as quarterly membership mixers. The first one of 2015 will be on **FRIDAY, JANUARY 23**, when we will meet and greet Sierra Club members and guests traveling to Las Vegas to attend the Toiyabe Chapter ExCom meeting the following day. The mixer is scheduled to start at 6pm and will be held at the Sierra Club office. Please mark your calendar and make a point of joining us for some fun and camaraderie. See details in Calendar, this page.

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.

JANUARY 1 (THURSDAY)

Hangover Hike, Red Rock Canyon NCA. 3 mi RT, 400 ft gain. Start New Year right by joining fellow hikers on our traditional late morning hike to Calico Tanks in Red Rock Canyon. This is one of most popular hikes in Red Rock for its colorful rocks and scenic views. What is a tinaja? How does it form? Leaders: geologist Nick Saines (702-896-4049). Level 3.

JANUARY 4 (SUNDAY)

Rainbow Gardens, East Las Vegas. A 4 mi loop, moderate. Take walk on wild, east side of town. Walk amid thrust faults, with a little rock scrambling here and there. Walk up on ridge for terrific views of Lake Mead and Lava Butte. Why is it called Rainbow Gardens? Leader: Roger Olsen (702-506-5475). Level 3.

JANUARY 12 (MONDAY)

The Muffins, Red Rock Canyon NCA. About 3 mi RT, 1000 ft gain, mod. strenuous. Muffins, composed of Triassic conglomerate, are found on north end of Blue Diamond Ridge. They represent channels cut into exposed sea bed 250 million years ago. We reach Muffins on gentle switchback trail. From there we go E to fabulous overlook of Las Vegas,

then back down Skull Canyon Trail. What is the environment of conglomerate deposition? Leader: geologist, Nick Saines (702-896-4049, greatunc@aol.com). Level 3.

JANUARY 17 (SATURDAY)

North Valley of Fire. About 6-7 mi, very little gain, easy-going off-trail hike with some minor scrambling. Great opportunity to learn about recent and ancient human history in this long-inhabited area and explore spectacular geology of this little corner of southern Nevada. Dogs welcome. Leader: Bill Marr (702-433-0743, rmarrwilliam@aol.com). Level 3-4.

JANUARY 18 (SUNDAY)

Anniversary Narrows, Lake Mead NRA. About 5 mi, easy. One of most visually stunning half miles in southern Nevada. We'll explore lower wash and old mine ruins, walk narrows, then explore upper wash. How did Narrows form? Leader: Roger Olsen (702-506-5475). Level 2.

JANUARY 19 (MONDAY)

The Best of Valley of Fire: Prospect Trail. About 5 mi, mod. strenuous. Valley of Fire is Nature's gift to hikers of Las Vegas. Hike through strange and

Please see SN CALENDAR, page 11.

ICO* visits Death Valley National Park

BY BETTY GALLIFENT

The hottest, driest, and lowest place in North America — that was the destination for Las Vegas ICO's first trip to a National Park this mid-November. As 15 youth from Burk High School's Ecology Club ventured to the edge of the lookout at Zabriskie Point, their first stop at Death Valley National Park, their eyes opened to a whole new kind of desert landscape.

Here were flowing ripples of barren yellow siltstone and claystone foothills, covered by dark layers of lava flows. Only



Group picture at Furnace Creek Ranch.

of the abundant flowing springs in this Furnace Creek area, and did a Q & A with her eager listeners.

With daytime temperatures at 80 degrees, students walked leisurely through the salt flats at Badwater. The vast and varied salt crystal formations on this old sea bed bottom caught the attention and curiosity of all the young ecologists. They were now standing at a record 282 feet below sea level. Across the valley to the west was Telescope Peak, with a summit of 11,300 feet. Here they took time to investigate the crystal patterns in the soft salt, borax, and mud conglomerate.

By mid-afternoon, when there was still plenty of sun, everyone stretched their legs with a hike through the rich blue, violet, and green hills of Artists' Palette

two inches of rain falls here annually, students would learn, yet 1000 plant species inhabit the park, though none are apparent at Zabriskie Point. This is a land of contrasts, as would be revealed again and again throughout the day.

A tour through the new Death Valley Visitor Center exposed students to the history and artifacts of the Timbisha Shoshone Indians of this region, to the geological formations, to plant and animal life, and the history of Borax mining. Students dined with Ranger Rose of the NPS at a pre-arranged lunch. She passed out fur hides of a bobcat and rabbits, told a hair-raising story of her encounter with a rattlesnake, talked

Please see DEATH VALLEY ICO, page 11.

SOUTHERN NEVADA GROUP

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At Large	Open		
At Large	Open		
Coal Power Plants	Jane Feldman*		feldman.jane@gmail.com
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Outings	Open		
Parks, Refuges	Open		
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

colorful landforms. Let's watch for tracks in Jurassic rocks. What kind of tracks might we find? Leader: geologist Nick Saines (702-896-4049, greatunc@aol.com). Level 3.

JANUARY 23 (FRIDAY)

MEET & GREET with Toiyabe Ex-Com. Join us at the Sierra Club Office to welcome visiting members who have traveled to Las Vegas to attend the first Toiyabe Chapter Executive Committee of the year. We are hosting this event as a potluck, so please bring along a dish to share. There will be plenty of opportunity to get to know our guests from other regions within the Chapter, as well as a chance to renew friendships and catch up on local group activities as we start the New Year. The fun begins at 6pm and will continue till 8pm or later. For info, contact Taj Ainlay (tajainlay@aol.com).

FEBRUARY 1 (SUNDAY)

Potato Knoll, Red Rock Canyon NCA. About 5 mi loop, mod. difficulty. Stunning views of Cliff at Red Rock and desert terrain surrounding Knoll. We'll climb to top of Knoll and explore this little island in sky. Does Knoll look like a potato? Possible deer and burro sightings. Leader: Roger Olsen (702-506-5475). Level 3.

FEBRUARY 7 (SATURDAY)

Echo Bay Eagle Hike. About 5-7 mi, very little gain, mod. difficulty. Off-trail hike with some scrambling, but no exposure. Explore shoreline of Lake Mead on N end of Overton arm, keep an eye out for eagles and other birds that winter in this area. Great chance to learn about changing shoreline of this large body of water and the wildlife that lives there all year and seasonally. Dogs welcome. Leader: Bill Marr (702-

S. Nevada Group CALENDAR

continued from page 10

433-0743, wrmarrwilliam@aol.com). Level 3-4.

FEBRUARY 9 (MONDAY)

Red Spring Thrust Fault, Red Rock Canyon NCA. About 3 mi RT, 500 ft gain, mod. strenuous. Hike with geologist Nick to Red Spring Thrust Fault by way of Turtlehead Peak Trail. Red Spring Thrust Fault is part of Keystone Thrust System. We will see interesting petroglyphs and hike through beautiful sandstone terrain, including little slot canyon. How do we recognize fault in field? Leader: geologist Nick Saines (702-896-4049, greatunc@aol.com). Level 3.

FEBRUARY 15 (SUNDAY)

Sunset Park. Urban hike and lunch. About 5 mi loop, easy. Meet at near Flamingo & Eastern and meander through neighborhood to Sunset Park. Look at inner city flora (trees, flowers, shrubs) and observe wildlife: both two- and four-legged kind. Lunch at local eatery, determined by group. Are humans considered wildlife? Leader: Roger Olsen (702-506-5475). Level 2.

FEBRUARY 21 (SATURDAY)

Black Mountain Peak, McCullough Range, Henderson. About 7 mi RT, 1000 ft+ gain, mod. difficulty. Despite being next to city, this mountain range provides great habitat to reptiles, birds, small and large mammals. Are any residents of this mountain range using nearby golf courses as corridors?

Leader: Sasson Jahan (702-499-9218). Level 3-4.

FEBRUARY 23 (MONDAY)

Fire Canyon, Valley of Fire State Park. About 4 mi, mod. strenuous. Access to trail is through Mouse's Tank trail, famous for its petroglyphs. Then descend into red sandstone wilderness with only us, rock, sandy wash bottom, and wild things. Very few people have been in there to check for Jurassic tracks. What causes red color of rock? Leader: geologist Nick Saines (702-896-4049, greatunc@aol.com). Level 3.

MARCH 7 (SATURDAY)

Cottonwood Cove Marina Eco-Walk, Lake Mead NRA. Desert cleanup winter service project; 9am-noon, registration begins 8am. Volunteers clean from park boundary, along roadway, to Cottonwood Cove Marina. Lunch provided after cleanup. From center of Searchlight, go 13 mi E to Cottonwood Cove Marina, then follow Volunteer Event signs for parking. Held in conjunction with National Park Service and Lake Mead NRA. Lunch counts needed, please RSVP no later than February 20. After that, please come, but bring your own lunch. Contact: Par Rasmusson (702-215-9119, parasmusson@gmail.com). Level 1.

MARCH 9 (MONDAY)

Calico Hills Trail West, Red Rock Canyon NCA. About 3 mi RT, mod. strenuous. Trail goes through colorful

rock formations along La Madre Fault. Destination. Rock is covered with desert varnish containing petroglyphs and possibly early Jurassic bird tracks. What is relationship between birds and dinosaurs? Leader: geologist Nick Saines (702-896-4049, greatunc@aol.com). Level 3.

MARCH 14 (SATURDAY)

Gypsum Cave, Sunrise Mountain (east LV). About 4-5 mi, mod. difficulty sprinkled with a little hardness. Exploratory hike around Gypsum Cave. Walk on every uneven terrain with some rock scrambling, explore cave and surrounding area. What is gypsum used for? Leader: Roger Olsen (702-506-5475). Level 3-4.

MARCH 15 (SUNDAY)

Natural Arches, Sunrise Mountain (east LV). About 4-5 mi loop, difficult. Walking on ridge lines and VERY uneven terrain. Spring flower bloom will be a bonus. How are arches formed? Leader: Roger Olsen (702-506-5475). Level 4-5.

MARCH 21 (SATURDAY)

La Madre, Red Rock Canyon NCA. About 7 mi RT, 1000 ft gain, mod. strenuous. Celebrate vernal equinox of 2015 on top of La Madre. Hike has rapid gain and requires climbing small cliff face. Hike up to spring reservoir, then continue along bubbling brook which provides riparian ecozone, in contrast to arid surrounding landscape. Here, riparian vegetation thrives along margin. What are margins? Leader: Sasson Jahan (702-499-9218). Level 4-5.

MARCH 23 (MONDAY)

Waterfall Canyon, Red Rock Canyon NCA. About 2.5 mi RT, strenuous in places. Waterfall Canyon is one of hidden gems of Red Rock Canyon. Canyon has series of waterfalls in Cambrian limestone, each getting higher and higher, going in more than 1 mi until final unclimbable falls over 20 ft high are reached. Springs emerge from valley walls at this point. Drive up Rocky Gap Road to trailhead, where there is an exposure of Keystone Thrust Fault. What conditions produce a waterfall? Leader: geologist Nick Saines (702-896-4049, greatunc@aol.com). Level 3-4.

SAVE DATE: AUGUST 2-7 (SUNDAY - FRIDAY)

Glacier National Park Volunteer service. Book your vacation time now for wonderful week of service in Glacier National Park. We'll be guests of the park, working with both Nursery staff and Citizen Science program staff doing pika, mountain goat, and bighorn sheep census-taking. Contact: Par (parasmusson@gmail.com). Level 1.

DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK ICO OUTING . . .

continued from page 10



Group hiking at Artists' Palette. All photos: John Blackwell.

— rock made from volcanic ashes and lavas — a photographer's paradise. At every turn, a new color emerged.

The group stopped in the shade for some conversation, then did a two-minute silent time just to listen (quite a while for teenagers to be quiet). "What did you hear?" — they were asked afterward. "Peace and tranquility" one student said.

There was time left to stop at Gold Canyon for another short hike. Now,

it was getting close to sunset, and the afternoon sun illuminated the gold sandstone. A ranger stopped and talked with the students for a while, quizzing them about the rock formations. He told them that they owned 1/320 millionth of this park. Wow, they had to think about that.

The group did a closing circle up in the canyon where everyone told their favorite part of the day and their biggest challenge. The favorite, hands down,

was Badwater. This concluded ICO's first venture into a national park. In the hipster language of two young participants, "Death Valley is OG." As translated to the ICO leader, that means Death Valley is "original," or "authentic."

The goal of this trip was to introduce students to the National Park System and its purpose of providing for the enjoyment and conservation of our nation's iconic wonders. It was intended that students would be motivated by these preservation efforts to continue conservation projects in their own Ecology Club back at school.

While those goals are far-reaching, the words of Sally Jewell, U.S. secretary of the interior, ring true. When asked how to get kids into the national parks, she stated, "First is play. Let the kids explore, satisfy the curiosity that all kids have. . . they build a comfort with being outside. Then comes learn."

ICO opened this door for the 15 students from Burk High School. They had time to play and explore in this majestic desert and they got to be part of a visiting group which worked together with NPS to preserve its natural scenery, historic objects, and wildlife.

What you can do. To find out more about Las Vegas ICO contact Betty Gallifent (egallifent@cox.net) or find us on Facebook at "Las Vegas ICO."

* "ICO" means "Inspiring Connections Outdoors."

**DEADLINE!
MARCH 1**



**FOR
APR-MAY-JUNE ISSUE**

Great Basin Group Calendar

continued from page 9

FEBRUARY 21 (SATURDAY) 8AM

V & T Route Day Hike. Hike along Virginia & Truckee rail bed between Gold Hill and Mound House. About 9 mi, downhill. Learn some history of area and railroad, plus impact railroads had on America. Vehicle shuttle necessary. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Moderate.

FEBRUARY 23 (MONDAY) 6:30PM

Outings Meeting & Potluck. Join us for our quarterly Outings Meeting where we will discuss, plan outings for April, May, and June. Bring potluck dish to share. Location TBD. Call if you'd like to attend. DOK. Leader: Holly Coughlin (775-331-7488; ladyhiker1@att.net). Easy.

FEBRUARY 28 (SATURDAY) TBD

Pah-Rump Peak (7608 ft) Day Hike. High point of Fox Range, situated just N of Pyramid Lake, provides views of Pyramid, both Smoke Creek and Black Rock Deserts. Hike is in BLM designated Wilderness Study Area (WSA). Discuss iWSA's current status as well as prospects for Wilderness designation. About 6 mi RT, over 2600 ft gain. Note: Significant snow accumulation and/or bad weather could modify our plans. Contact leader for details. ND. Leader: Larry Dwyer (775-745-6628; kdwyer31@charter.net). Co-Leader: Lucretia Belancio (775-410-1085; lucretianature@gmail.com). Strenuous.

MARCH 2 (MONDAY) 6PM

ExCom Meeting. Great Basin Group ExCom meets to discuss programs, outings, membership, other matters, at Swill Wine & Coffee. Members welcome to sit in. ND. Leader: Holly

Coughlin (775-331-7488). Co-Leader: David von Seggern (775-303-8461). Easy.

MARCH 7 (SATURDAY) 8AM

The John C Two Enigma Hike. Discover some more history of area as we visit two features associated with old mining operations. One-way hike of about 8 mi with vehicle shuttle. Gain of about 2000 ft for day. Scenic views. Return paralleling part of Carson River. Hiking poles recommended; long steep descent on "marbles." ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Mod. Strenuous.

MARCH 12 (THURSDAY) 7PM

Monthly General Meeting. Program: Sierra Club's own Raleigh Martin will present his trek on the *John Muir Trail*. Meet at Bartley Ranch: 630p, social; 7p, program. See web page, <www.toiyabe.sierraclub.org/gbgroup/>, for details. ND. Leader: Caron Tayloe (crntayloe@gmail.com). Co-Leader: David VonSeggern (vonseg1@sbcglobal.net). Easy.

MARCH 14 (SATURDAY) 10AM

Snowshoe to Dry Pond. Nice snowshoe in Galena Forest area. Cross White Creek, ascend about 800 ft to Dry Pond, where we will enjoy picnic lunch and view local flora, fauna. About 4 mi RT, but more difficult on snowshoes. Bad weather will cancel, but lack of snow will make this a hike. DOK. Leader: Holly Coughlin (775-331-7488). Co-Leader: Jim Call (775-420-6363; frenet-icmarmot@gmail.com). Moderate.

MARCH 18 (WEDNESDAY) 5:30PM

Spring Fling River Walk. Welcome spring with our first evening condition-

ing 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. Meet at Rock Park in Sparks. Directions: From I-80, exit on Rock Blvd, turn S. In about 0.5 mi, just past Greg Blvd., turn R at entrance to Rock Park. (Next to Rivers Edge RV Park, before you cross Truckee River.) More info at: <<http://www.Meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Hiking-Reno>> DL. Leader: River Walker Co-Leader: Jeannie Kettler Easy.

MARCH 21 (SATURDAY) TBA

Rawe Peak (8343ft) Day Hike. High point at N end of Pine Nut Mountains, overlooking Carson River E of Dayton and Walker River in Mason Valley around Yerington. Some people think this area a good candidate for Wilderness designation. Learn about what Friends of Nevada Wilderness is doing to make that happen. About 5-6 mi RT, 1500 ft gain. Note: Significant snow accumulation and/or weather could modify our plans. Contact leader for details. ND. Leader: Larry Dwyer (775-745-6628; kdwyer31@charter.net). Co-Leader: Lucretia Belancio (775-410-1085; lucretianature@gmail.com). Mod. Strenuous.

MARCH 21 (SATURDAY) 8AM

Two Ladies & Two Gents Day Hike. Come and meet these three peaks with summits in 6000-ft range: Rose, Kate Sutro, Grosch brothers. All are near Virginia City. About 1000 ft gain, 3 mi, in sort of loop. Mostly off-trail, some rock scrambling. Of course there's an enigma. ND. Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Mod. Strenuous.

GET KIDS OUTDOORS...

continued from page 8

was dip netting for aquatic macroinvertebrates and seeing what life forms dwell in the creek and the pond.

All the children from these schools need scholarship support to access programs outside their neighborhoods. As one contributing Great Basin Group member wrote, "For children to grow up never experiencing a forest hike, a stream, a lake, creatures in nature, and the mysteries of the night sky, is indeed a sad loss. It's important all children have the opportunity to connect with the soul of Mother Nature."



Roger Corbett fifth graders magnify water creatures.

What you can do. The Great Basin Group continues to host events and a holiday party "Giving Tree" to give members an opportunity to contribute. Thank you for supporting our "Get Kids Outdoors" fund with checks payable to "Great Basin Group, Sierra Club" and sent to Great Basin Group, Sierra Club, P.O. Box 8096, Reno, NV 89507.

DEADLINE!
MARCH 1



FOR
APR-MAY-JUNE ISSUE

**Toiyabe Chapter
ExCom Meetings**

January 24, 2015

Reno, NV

For details, see page 1
or contact the Chair,

DAVID VON SEGGERN
vonseg1@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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SILENT SPRING...

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school in Doylestown, Pa., I remember fondly the meadowlarks nesting in the grass of the fairgrounds track where we trained, their heads thrown back to reveal a black chevron across the chest and singing a joyous song. The field guide to birds by Roger Tory Peterson, which came out in 1934 and revolutionized bird watching, describes it as "a clear slurred whistle, tee-ya, tee-yeer."

More bad news from the *Environmental Health News*: eggs of the beautiful loon are not hatching and their chicks are dying. Acid rain and mercury are to blame. Extensive research in the state of Virginia shows that even the song of birds is being altered by mercury. Mercury, a potent toxicant, is emitted into the atmosphere by coal burning.

The common loon has been described as the "spirit of the North," with its piercing, plaintive wail. It is pictured on the Canadian dollar and license plates in Maine, Minnesota, and Montana. Thoreau described the loon's call as the "wildest sound" ever heard at Walden Pond, an "unearthly howl, probably more like that of a wolf than any other bird." (Here in Reno, Nevada, I have seen -- but not heard -- the common loon on the city's wide and broad Virginia Lake.)

Another "Silent Spring" could be on the horizon.

* Jake Highton is an emeritus journalism professor at the University of Nevada, Reno.