

WORDS OF *the* WILD

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Newsletter of the Sierra Club's California/Nevada Wilderness Committee

July 10, 2015: President Obama gives our region TWO national monuments!

Celebrating Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument

-- by Charlotte M. Orr, Tuleyome

Using his authority under the Antiquities Act of 1906, and in response to strong local support, President Obama has designated the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument, a 100-mile stretch of federal lands that stretches from Berryessa Peak, the second highest summit in Yolo County, to Snow Mountain Wilderness in the Mendocino National Forest. Special features are the remarkable plate tectonic geology, biological diversity, and Native American cultural history. The monument designation will safeguard the area's water, wildlife habitat, and recreational resources.

The Sierra Club Redwood and Mother Lode Chapters, Sierra Club California and the national Club worked in collaboration with Tuleyome and a number of local citizens, business owners, land owners, elected officials, and other environmental and recreational groups to permanently protect the region. In Congress, legislation was sponsored by California Congressmen Mike Thompson, John Garamendi, and Jared Huffman, and Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein, but inaction by Congress prompted President Obama to act.

"The designation of this unique area as a national monument will help preserve the region's natural splendor for future generations," said California State Assemblymember Bill Dodd. "The national monument will provide recreational opportunities and bring enhanced visitation. This is a great example of how we can protect our environment and support our local economy." This is the first national monument in California to receive a declaration of support from the State Legislature.

The new national monument includes parts of Lake, Napa, Yolo, Solano, Mendocino, Glenn, and Colusa Counties. The area is an important migratory corridor between Snow Mountain, Cedar Roughs, and Cache Creek Wildernesses. The

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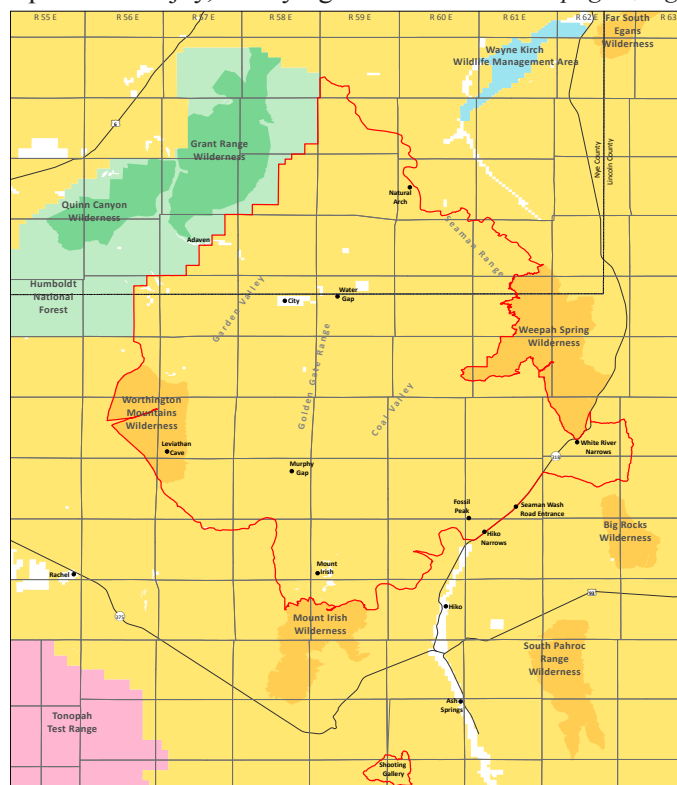
Basin and Range Designation — a gift of Wildness

-- by Christian Gerlach

For all too many people, modern day-to-day life consists of trips to a climate controlled building from another climate controlled building in a climate controlled car only to end when we return to our own four walls that shut out any semblance of the sky. Our ordinary lives no longer connect us to what is wild or natural in the world. That is why it is pivotal to the future of our species to hold on to every inch of the natural world — a gift that has made our species what we are today.

The State of Nevada received such a gift to maintain our wild side in Basin and Range, a national monument that will keep a wild public landscape for future generations to explore and enjoy, clarifying

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Basin and Range Monument: boundaries (red)

New CA Monument-Berryessa Snow Mountain --from page 1

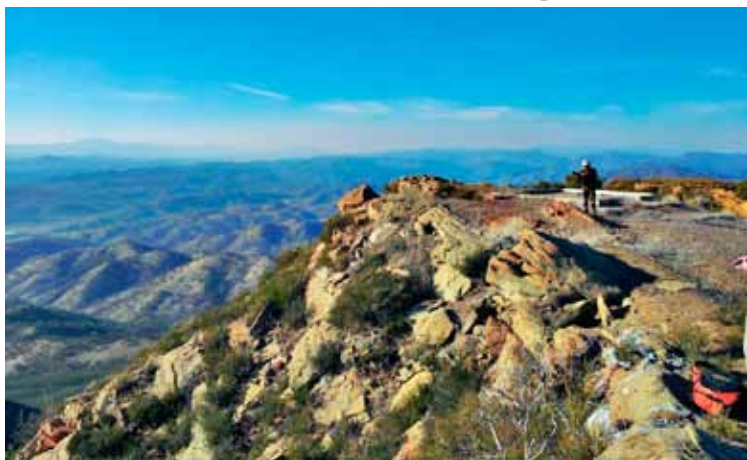
designation includes only federal lands and will not affect private properties or existing water rights. Outdoor recreation and sports groups are also applauding the designation, saying it will allow future generations to enjoy its spectacular hiking trails, whitewater rafting, mountain biking, horseback riding, hunting and fishing, legal OHV use, and other recreation. (WOW, April 2010, Aug 2012.)

“We are ecstatic that President Obama has recognized the importance of these special lands,” said Sara Husby, Executive Director for Tuleyome - the regional conservation organization that spearheaded the protection efforts. “Together, with our congressional champions and the many supporters of the Berryessa Snow Mountain region, including our partners at the Sierra Club, we got this done. I am overjoyed.”

Tips for planning your next trip to the region:

Ideal months to hike on these lands are October-May. In summer, which can be very hot and dry here, the best places to visit are higher elevations in the Mendocino National Forest.

Fall hiking generally starts at the end of deer hunting season, which is around the last weekend in September.



On top of Berryessa Peak

In winter, visit California’s second largest wintering bald eagle populations at Cache Creek. The Ukiah Bureau of Land Management provides guided bald eagle tours each year.

Spring is a beautiful time of year for nature viewing and photography in the region. Wildflower displays are at their best, and boating on Cache Creek begins. In any season, be careful and safe: pack plenty of water, use sun protection, and watch for ticks, rattlesnakes, and poison oak. You may also check CalFire’s website for fire closures and restrictions.

Redwood Chapter lauds the new monument

“Permanent protection of Berryessa Snow Mountain has been our top conservation priority since we sponsored the public rollout in Lower Lake in January 2008,” said Redwood Chapter Chair Victoria Brandon. “National monument designation gives this ‘undiscovered landscape’ a name, provides collaborative tools and additional funding to the Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service, augments the region’s recreational potential in ways consistent with good stewardship, and protects its outstanding biological diversity for our children and grandchildren. It’s good for the land and good for the people.”

New NV Monument-Basin and Range --from page 1

their view of nature. On Friday, July 10, President Barack Obama proclaimed Nevada’s second national monument: Basin and Range. This beautiful expanse of over 1100 square miles of Great Basin desert, that has been inhabited on and off by humans for almost the last 10,000 years, will now forever remain as it is today. Basin and Range, in remote south-central Nevada—northwest of Alamo and Hiko, northeast of Tonopah, southwest of Caliente, well south of Ely—is home to majestic wildlife that hardly fear man as they lack virtually any interaction with our species. (See WOW, April 2015.)

Thus, the President’s proclamation states that “*The area is one of the largest ecologically intact landscapes in the Great Basin region, providing habitat connectivity and migration corridors for a wide variety of animal species and affording researchers the ability to conduct studies over broad scales.*”

The pronghorn deer, mule deer, pygmy rabbits, and red-tailed hawks would agree with the President. Even the small canyon bat that wouldn’t stop trying to land on my father and me would probably assert the same.

The several excursions I have been fortunate to experience in this far-away area have changed my perspective on the enormous scale of the natural world in which we live. Although I have lived all my life in Nevada, experiencing vast views of the land, the sheer immensity of these landscapes makes me second guess my own eyes. As you traverse the valleys on entering or leaving the new monument, you catch sight of distant rolling hills separating Coal and Garden Valleys--only to find that, as you approach, the seemingly small hills grow to dumbfounding proportions and become the sheer cliffs of the Golden Gate Range. The absolute quiet makes this immense landscape magical. Every young person I have taken to Basin and Range is always taken aback by how silent the natural world is without humans.

The Sierra Club’s Our Wild America campaign worked hard in Las Vegas to secure Basin and Range. In spite of this success, the work of the Sierra Club is never done, as we fight interests that would like to develop nearly every corner of this planet. The next effort for a national monument in Nevada, one already long sought by our friends and members, is Gold Butte. This BLM land northeast of Las Vegas already has two small wilderness areas, but the entire 350,000 acre area needs protection. This iconic landscape of transition between the Sonoran, Mojave, and Great Basin deserts will be Our Wild America’s focus in Nevada until the end of the Obama administration. The fight to protect Gold Butte is not easy as we have some very vocal opponents.

Even as we celebrate the exciting Basin and Range designation, we’ll call on your help to join the call of the keeping Gold Butte wild! ~

(Christian Gerlach is Sierra Club staffer in Las Vegas)

New Potential Wilderness in California: Rep. Knight introduces Castaic bill

-- by Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel

After ten years of working to preserve special places in the Castaic region, I am grateful that our new Congressman, Steve Knight (R-25) introduced a bill in Congress in July that includes 69,812 acres of wilderness. Four roadless areas north of Los Angeles would be made wilderness: Fish Canyon/Salt Creek, Tule, Elderberry Canyon, and Red Mountain. The areas are known for their endangered species, the towering red rock cliffs and mountains, a large black oak forest, and dozens of intermittent creeks that contribute to the local water supply. One creek runs year round and has native trout in it!



photo: Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel

Castaic's Red Mountain Roadless Area

H.R. 3153 is the freshman congressman's first lands bill: not only does it have potential wilderness in the Angeles National Forest, but he's also included a National Memorial and Monument for the St. Francis Dam, which broke in 1928, killing everyone in its path from Santa Clarita to the ocean. This massive civil engineering disaster changed the way that dams were built ever since. In terms of loss of life in California, it was surpassed only by the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire.

On a short hike to a rocky overlook in Red Mountain, you can see the dam ruins below. If you find yourself in the Santa Clarita area, come visit the St. Francis Dam ruins and the gorgeous Castaic Wilderness. You won't believe you are in Los Angeles County. ♪

Editor's note: Sierra Club welcomes Castaic wilderness and is reviewing bill language for potential support.

(Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel is a Santa Clarita community activist.)

Latino Conservation Week Lake Mead Event -- by Christian Gerlach

To recognize and promote "Latino Conservation Week", in mid-July, Sierra Club's Our Wild America Campaign joined forces with the Hispanic Access Foundation to get local Las Vegas Latino and Hispanic youth and church groups out to explore, enjoy, and protect our natural world. We worked with almost forty local youths to help restore native plants to the shores of Lake Mead.

Many of the Las Vegas participants had never before been to Lake Mead National Recreation Area. Lake Mead's new superintendent Patrick Gubbins welcomed the group with some area history, including the story of Raphael Rivera, a Mexican scout and the first non-Native American to set foot in the Las Vegas Valley. Isaac Barron, North Las Vegas City Councilman and the teacher advisor to Rancho High School's Hispanic Student Union, told stories about his own upbringing that lacked any visits to the spectacular public lands of Nevada. Isaac asked the young volunteers to commit to educate people in their lives about the natural treasures around us and how we are responsible to protect them. The youngsters were happy to agree to Isaac's call for lifelong advocacy for conservation, and some even made the same statements to the local press covering the event. Our volunteer Jose Loya, age 16, commented: "The Latino community is doing a great thing by preserving life and planting new ones". ♪



NPS staff brief Las Vegas youth -- Lake Mead event

Celebrating Marine Sanctuary Expansion

-- by Victoria Brandon

On Sunday, June 28, several hundred exultant coastal advocates gathered in Gualala, on the California coast south of Mendocino, to celebrate the huge expansion by President Obama of the Cordell Banks and Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuaries. More than doubling in size, these protected areas now extend north up the Sonoma and Mendocino coast beyond Point Arena, providing permanent protection to a breathtaking stretch of coastline that provides rich habitat for fish and other marine life. Sanctuary designation will prevent any energy or mineral development from Bodega Head north to Manchester Beach and Pt. Arena.

Now the protected area, which was first given special status in 1981, will include a crucial segment of the ocean floor where an unusual upwelling of cold

water brings nutrients to the shallow water along the shoreline, encouraging intense plankton blooms that provide food for fish, marine mammals, rare turtles and countless birds. (See WOW, April 2015.) "Greater Farallones" is the new name for the former "Gulf of the Farallones" Sanctuary—because it now vastly extends beyond the Gulf itself.

The speech-filled ceremony at the Gualala Arts Center was marked by nearly constant rounds of applause, with cheers and standing ovations. One of the loudest shout-outs came when Congressman Jared Huffman speculated about pushing the boundaries even farther north. Noting numerous proposals to protect the whole California coast, and maybe Oregon as well, he said: "Think big: "there's no logical stopping point short of the Arctic." ♪

(Victoria Brandon is Redwood Chapter chair.)

New Wilderness opportunities for Inyo National Forest

-- by Fran Hunt

The Inyo National Forest in eastern California and Nevada is home to a number of our nation's most iconic wilderness areas, including the Ansel Adams and John Muir Wildernesses, designated by Congress with the original passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964. Now, as the U.S. Forest Service revises the Inyo's forest management plan, we have an exciting opportunity for additional wilderness protections for the Inyo's special wildlands.

In June, Inyo National Forest Supervisor Ed Armenta hosted an open house to give the public a preview of six important "potential wilderness" areas the U.S. Forest Service will consider for possible wilderness recommendations in the Draft Inyo Forest Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) due out this fall. In addition, there are other special wild places on the Inyo National Forest worthy of wilderness protection. Here's a description of the six areas the Forest Service has identified as "potential wilderness" for the Inyo:

1. Glass Mountains (17,440 acres).

Located at the middle of the Inyo National Forest in Mono County, the Glass Mountains are ecologically and geologically unique as the only east-west trending mountain range in the Eastern Sierra. The high elevation and location of this range between the Sierra Nevada and White Mountains create an unusually rich mix of Great Basin, Mojave, and Sierran habitats.

2. White Mountain Wilderness Addition - East (2,505 acres). This area would expand the existing White Mountain Wilderness into Inyo County, CA. Most of this potential wilderness addition is in the Cottonwood Creek watershed and features, for example, Black Birch Canyon and Dead Horse Meadow. The Cottonwood Creek Wild and Scenic River corridor, which has outstanding fishery values and is the only stream in the Great Basin protected from its headwaters to its terminus, runs through the area's extreme northeast corner. Rare plants here include Booth's evening primrose.

3. White Mountain Wilderness Addition - West (5,065 acres). Also in Inyo County,

this area would expand the existing wilderness into the high elevations of the southern White Mountains. With elevations ranging up to 11,000 feet near Blanco Mountain, a soaring pyramid-shaped peak, this unit includes the western portion of the Blanco Mountain Roadless area. Perennial



White mountain West addition, Blanco Mountain

streams in Water Canyon and Mill Canyon are the main drainages. Much of this wild land is within the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest, with bristlecone pines scattered across the slopes of Blanco Mountain.

4. Deep Springs North (16,830 acres). At the southern end of the White Mountains in Inyo County—east of Westgard Pass—and bordering Deep Springs Valley, the agency is considering new wilderness for part of the Birch Creek Roadless Area and containing most of the Birch Creek drainage. Deep Springs North offers great opportunities for solitude and unconfined recreation and also would add an underrepresented ecosystem to the National Wilderness Preservation System. Pinyon-juniper forest or xeric shrub and blackbrush vegetation types cover the area.

5. Deep Springs South (11,840 acres).

Located at the northern end of the Inyo Mountains, Deep Springs South includes part of the Soldier Canyon Roadless Area, borders the Piper Mountain Wilderness, and is also known for its cultural resources, including rock rings. Like Deep Springs North, this entire wild area has pinyon-juniper forest or xeric shrub and blackbrush cover and likewise offers new wilderness protection to an underrepresented ecosystem.

6. South Sierra (18,150 acres). This area adjacent to the Sacatar Trail Wilderness managed by the Bureau of Land Management would be a great addition to the existing South Sierra Wilderness in the Sequoia National Forest. With steep slopes and forested canyons that descend to alluvial fans in the Mojave Desert and true Mojave Desert ecosystems and vegetation including Joshua trees, cholla cactus, and canyon live oak, this South Sierra Wilderness expansion would make a unique addition to the designated wilderness on the Inyo.

During forest planning, the Forest Service is required by law to identify and evaluate wild and roadless lands that may be suitable for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System and determine whether to recommend any such lands for wilderness designation. Only Congress holds the authority to create new wilderness. But if the agency recommends new wilderness, it will be required to include safeguards in the Inyo's new forest plan to maintain the wilderness character of all recommended areas until Congress acts.

You can find maps and other information about the six potential wilderness areas the Forest Service has identified by clicking the drop-down tab labeled "Evaluations" near the bottom of the agency's web page at: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r5/landmanagement/planning/?cid=STELPRD3803608>

Other wild areas for wilderness too?

As special as these six areas are, they are by no means the last wilderness quality areas on the Inyo National Forest. Late last year the Forest Service's own mapping and

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Inyo Forest -- from previous page

inventory effort identified some 791,000 acres of remaining roadless areas on the forest not designated as wilderness. Many wilderness advocates believe that the Inyo has at least a half million acres of remaining wilderness quality areas appropriate for designation by Congress. By comparison, the six key areas previewed at the June 9 public meeting total only about 72,000 acres. Sierra Club and others will promote further significant and worthy places on the forest during the official comment period for the DEIS and Draft Forest Plan, due out this fall. A few examples:

1. Excelsior. Straddling the CA-NV border northeast of Mono Lake, the beautiful Excelsior area hosts a massive pinyon-juniper woodland and has unique alkali wetlands, dune fields, and sagebrush steppe. Excelsior is exceedingly rich in archeological resources. Ecologically, the volcanic, pinyon-covered slopes are a northern extension of the White-Inyo Range.

2. Dexter Canyon. Comprising a rich and special part of the Glass Mountains—described above, Dexter Canyon, with outstanding wildlife, scenic, and ecological values, flows from a large meadow supporting aspen groves, willow thickets, and other native species. There are more than 25 miles of deeply incised rim-rock canyons.

3. Horse Meadows. This beautiful high Sierra Nevada meadow area adjacent to the Ansel Adams Wilderness features stunning views. A short distance from Lee Vining, Horse Meadows' mixed conifer forests and aspens exemplify important habitats.

Wilderness advocates will have a crucial opportunity to support these and other special wild areas during the anticipated 90-day public comment period for the Inyo's Draft Forest Plan and DEIS, due out this fall. To stay up-to-date on the latest developments on this wonderful national forest, please [sign up for](#) the Sierra Club's free monthly e-newsletter, *The Inyo Forest News*, or contact Eastern Sierra Organizer Fran Hunt at fran.hunt@sierraclub.org. ☺

Keeping Nevada's (and Western) public lands public

-- by Janet Carter

The fight over the ownership and management of public lands in the western United States has been a longtime concern to conservationists in Nevada. Today, Sierra Club's Toiyabe Chapter in Nevada and other conservationists are battling to defend the unique American heritage of extensive public lands and to keep this federal domain public. In the last session of the Nevada legislature, legislation was introduced that called for the transfer of large tracts of Nevada's federal public lands to state control. (The legislation was inspired by a pro-land-transfer task force created in the previous legislative session.) Although more binding and egregious legislation was not successful, the Nevada legislature did pass SJR 1, a resolution asking Congress to turn over large amounts of federal land to state control. Similar legislation has been introduced, debated, and in some cases passed in Utah, Arizona, Wyoming, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, and Colorado. In addition, Republican Congressman Mark Amodei (who represents most of northern and eastern Nevada) has introduced H.R. 1484 in the U.S. Congress, which "directs the Secretary of Agriculture and Secretary of the Interior to convey certain federal lands to the State of Nevada..." This past March the U.S. Senate passed a budget amendment sponsored by Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) that supported selling or transferring federal lands to the states. Much of this recent political activity has been promoted by the American Lands Council, a Utah-based group with ties to other anti-conservation



organizations.

The Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club has asked the Sierra Club's California/Nevada Regional Conservation Committee to join us in advocating for a "...national campaign to...oppose transferring public lands in large quantities." At the May CNRCC meeting, Chapter political chair Anne Macquarie

presented the request. The Toiyabe Chapter seeks national attention and allies to fight back against the state land-grab movement. We hope all Sierra Club members will join the fight to protect OUR public lands.

The term "Sagebrush Rebellion" was coined to describe an effort in Nevada and nearby states for local control of federal lands that began in the 1970s and 1980s and was sparked in part by local opposition to USFS RARE (Roadless Area Review and Evaluation) surveys and BLM roadless land evaluations to determine areas eligible for wilderness designation. Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah introduced legislation in 1979 and 1981 that would allow states to apply for control of certain federal lands. However, the election of Ronald Reagan as President (and his appointment of James Watt as Secretary of the Interior) slowed wilderness legislation and thus ironically dampened the sense of urgency for this "rebellion." Recently this campaign has re-ignited markedly.

All who care about wilderness and outdoor recreation should be informed and proactive about this debate, which goes to the heart of the Sierra Club mission to explore, enjoy, and protect our planet. The lands in question are enjoyed by hikers, anglers, hunters, and other outdoors enthusiasts. Public lands provide critical benefits, including wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and clean air. There is little evidence of valuable oil or other resources that could create revenue for the states. In reality, most western states cannot afford the cost of maintaining these lands and would probably be forced to sell them off should they control their management.

To receive current information and work with others on this issue, consider joining the Google Group "Stand by Your Land", sponsored by the Center for Western Priorities (www.westernpriorities.org). To join the group, please contact the moderator Jessica Goad (Jessica@westernpriorities.org). You can also find information on the Toiyabe Chapter website, www.sierraclub.org/toiyabe. ☺

(Janet Carter is Toiyabe Chapter Secretary)

The Gospel according to Dave Foreman
The Great Conservation Divide

Conservation vs. Resourcism on America's Public Lands

Dave Foreman's new book -- written for the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act -- is a history of the land conservation movement of our country, with the focus being on the 19th or "frontier century" and the 20th or "public lands" century. The book ends as George W. Bush is about to become president early in 2001.

If you think history is dull, think again. There is nothing dull about history according to Dave Foreman. Never irrelevant -- although almost always irreverent -- Dave lays out a distinct thesis. Which is -- after a Frontier or Landscaping century just about ruined America's lands, (slaughtering wild animals and chopping forests "to smithereens"), the reaction that set in was not one but two widely separate movements that became ever more sharply split.

The duality between John Muir's passion for preservation and Gifford Pinchot's urge for utility and use is only the beginning. The resourcists -- land managing agencies and the extractive industries -- constantly get farther away from the wilderfolks -- individuals and non-profit conservation organizations. (Dave also refers to wilderfolk as "cannots". Why "cannots?" -- because they're the people who cannot live without wild places!)

I think you have the picture -- the wilderfolk, the cannots, are the good guys in this story, and the federal agencies are the bad guys; and to make his points, Dave may exaggerate their wrongdoings--and

downplay any good that's done.

The resource agencies, Dave says, have "had an ideological--almost theological--mission to stamp human will on the land." The Forest Service bears the brunt of his attacks. They "hacked away" at ancient forests, ransacked critical habitat, plundered watersheds, and so on. Thus, "it was the "holy calling of foresters to block Wilderness designation through thoughtful road building...with malice aforethought" An "official" agency definition of a roadless area was "an area needing road construction."

The National Park Service by no means escapes unscathed: their ongoing antagonism for wilderness, footdragging on wilderness reviews, and "Mission 66" bulldozer rampages come in for heavy lashing. The Fish & Wildlife Service scores better for wilderness recommendations, but they are blasted for terrible failures to protect species and keep away extinction. The BLM also gets a more mellow treatment--partway: Dave says about vehicle damage in the California desert, "The BLM was so chickenshit on ORV harm that they gave dirt bike clubs permits to run the 1980s Barstow to Las Vegas race--shredding the landscape...."

The "Frontier" years to about 1890 Dave sees as the determined

effort to subdue nature. (He quotes a famed observer from abroad, Alexis de Toqueville, who, watching carefully, noted that Americans seemed to love nature -- once it's subdued.) The West was subdued less by individual settlers than by land speculators, profiting from Americans' land hunger.

The mid-20th century push for wilderness countered the road building frenzy that began to fragment the country and decimate the big wild areas. The Wilderness Act -- and its younger sister the ESA, were landmark victories. Dave extolls some final 20th century achievements -- the Clinton roadless rule, the return of wolves in places, the agencies' Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center and the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute, Secretary Babbitt's launching large-scale national monuments under the BLM, etc.

Dave notes a few members of Congress -- such as the "matchless" John Seiberling" and Harry Reid, whose fondness for Joshua trees brought us a wilderness that the BLM had failed to notice. But Dave really chews out "sawlog Congressman" Tom Foley and (not surprisingly) "the creepy James Watt"--a "nutcase evangelical".

Enough. Read this lively and avowedly opinionated history yourself. This opinion you'll want to know.

The Great Conservation Divide, Raven's Eye Press, Durango, CO. www.ravenseyepress.com. To order, go to www.rewilding.org. VNH



Come celebrate National Public Lands Day and the beauty and diversity of eastern California's Inyo National Forest Sept. 25-27. Well-known artists will offer plein air painting and photography workshops in beautiful forest and desert settings. A list of artists, schedules and workshops will be available soon, please email to learn more: Fran Hunt (fran.hunt@sierraclub.org or 703 424 3143.)

San Gabriel Mtns National Monument Planning underway

The Proclamation by which President Obama designated the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument requires the preparation of a US Forest Service 'Monument Management Plan' within three years of such date. (See WOW, Dec 2014). At this point the Forest Service has initiated a "Need to Change" analysis of their Angeles National Forest management plan to identify areas of the existing Forest plan that must be changed to meet the requirements of the National Monument proclamation. The Forest Service organized public open houses at five locations across Los Angeles County to let the community discuss the development of the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument Plan and to encourage them to participate in the process by submitting written comments. We are pushing for the Forest Service to go beyond the proclamation's minimum requirements and to meet the hopes of diverse community stakeholders, offering enhanced interpretation and education. We have organized our own events in predominantly Asian and Latino communities. In our Vision, the Monument would meet recreation challenges of urban, rural and interface communities, provide public transportation options such as a "Transit to Trails" system, and more. As the process unfolds--we'll send updates on how to get involved.

-- by Roberto Morales, Associate organizer



Outings



Support wilderness the Sierra Club way!

--May your trails be crooked, winding, lonesome, dangerous, leading to the most amazing view. May your mountains rise into and above the clouds. -- Edward Abbey (from Range of Light Group newsletter)

September 20 - Sun Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve

Nearby Nature hike! Join Angeles Chapter Orange Cty. Singles for an easy paced, reasonably flat, 5-mile Newcomer hike, approx 3 hours, to enjoy natural beauty of Bolsa Chica, one of few last remaining wetlands in Southern CA. Meet 8:30 am. Contact leaders Donna Specht – (714)963-6345 donnaspecht@juno.com, or Ron Schrantz, (714)995-8240 rschranzsc@yaho.com

September 21 - Mon Pine Creek, Red Rock Canyon NCA

Nearby Nature hike! Southern Nevada Group offers a 4-mi RT, 300 ft. gain, moderately strenuous, morning hike starting 9 am, to one of the most beautiful canyons in Red Rock--just w of Las Vegas. Some boulder scrambling deep in the canyon. Why are there ponderosa pines at such a low elevation? Contact leader: geologist Nick Saines (702)896-4049 greatunc@aol.com.

September 26 - Sat Las Trampas Explore

Nearby Nature hike! Moderate, 3C, from Ringtail Cat Trail up to East Bay's Las Trampas Peak and back with San Francisco Bay Chapter hiking section. Rain or muddy trails will cancel. Bring lunch, two liters of water, snacks. Contact leader: Lutz Heinrich - (925)216-8672 ltz_hnrch@yahoo.com.

September 26 - 27 – Sat-Sun Point Reyes backpack

Nearby Nature! From Bear Valley Visitor Center we'll backpack 3 miles to our group campsite at Sky Camp. We'll then enjoy day hikes Saturday and Sunday. Join potluck Sat night. Sign-up with San Francisco Bay Chapter leader Tom Post - (415)690-6572 tpost123@hotmail.com.

October 8 - 10 -- Thurs-Sat Death Valley Wilderness restoration

Join us in restoring wilderness values in this remote and beautiful desert park by helping to clean up a marijuana grow site in Hunter Mtn area. 4WD required, possible carpools. Meet junction Hwy 190 and S. Saline Vly Rd. Work Thur. p.m. and all day Fri. Sat, more clean up or enjoy the park. Primitive camping, bring food & water. Leader: Kate Allen, kj.allen96@gmail.com (661)944-4056.

November 6 - Fri Topanga State Park hike

Nearby Nature! West Los Angeles Group offers regular Friday evening moderately strenuous conditioning hikes for fit hikers; spectacular views of Santa Monica Bay and LA Basin. 2 hr, 5 mile r.t., 1100' total gain on fire road. Meet and sign in at 6:45 pm. Los Liones Dr. at Sunset Blvd., Pacific Palisades. Optional restaurant dinner after. Contact leaders: Ed Lubin (310)826-2750 edlubin@gmail.com or David Haake (310)237-3447 dhaake@ucla.edu.

November 7 – Sat Maguire Peaks hike, Sunol

Nearby Nature! Join Mt. Diablo Group and Sierra Singles of S. F. Bay Chapter on a moderate ten mile/ nearly 2000 ft elev. day hike in



Sunol Regional Wilderness. Rated a long 2B. Moderate to leisurely pace (average 2 miles per hour)—for mellow hikers. Enjoy views of San Antonio reservoir, Mt. Diablo, and Mission Peak. Possible cold winds and mud. Bring \$5 Parking fee, lunch, liquids, well-fitting boots. For directions, before contacting leader, please go to <http://www.sierraclub.org/san-francisco-bay/activities> and click on the outing in the calendar view. Leader Steve Bakaley: slbakaley@lbl.gov.

November 26 - 29 – Thurs-Sun Ventana Lost Valley trail work

Celebrate the holiday with Ventana Wilderness Alliance to work on the Lost Valley Trail. Easy backpack in of one mile, camp at Indian Valley Camp on Marble Peak Trail. Short hike from camp to work site. Plenty of brushing. Contact Betsy McGowan, bmacgowan@hotmail.com.

November 26 - 29 – Thurs-Sun. Basin & Range Thanksgiving

Tour our newest national monument in southern Nevada. Comprising 700,000 acres, Basin and Range National Monument (*see article-p 1-2*) highlights the basin and range topography with dry dusty valleys and rocky, wooded ridges. Archaeological sites and the

City landscape-scale “art” of Heizer are preserved here. We'll tour the area mostly by vehicle, with some hiking. Primitive camping sites with no amenities. Leader David von Seggern, Chair, Toiyabe Chapter (vonseg1@sbcglobal.net, (775)303-8461).

Outing report:

Just south of Great Basin National Park, eastern Nevada's Highland Ridge Wilderness was the site of the Wilderness Committee's annual wilderness service trip, July 10 to 13, 2015, with Wilderness staff of the Ely office of the Bureau of Land Management. Saturday's project was to put up a post and rail barrier to keep vehicles out of a wilderness canyon. On Sunday some participants joined a day hike through that canyon led by BLM's Emily Simpson, and others joined wilderness project coordinator John Miller at an old Forest Service cabin just outside the wilderness – newly restored by John – to help stabilize the slope above the cabin with rock placements. Camp was the same idyllic aspen grove at 8000 feet that we'd enjoyed three years earlier. ♪ VNH



Highland Ridge aspen camp

photo: John Miller

Next Wilderness meeting

Saturday, October 24, Ojai, California, at Nordhoff High School, 10 a.m. till 4:30 p.m.. The meeting will be chaired by Jim Hines, Los Padres Chapter conservation chair and prospective wilderness chair. The main topic will be “Protecting The Great Wild Places of the Central Coast Region”. But all CA and NV wild areas are eligible for discussion as desired. Agency and Congressional staffs, as well as other conservation groups invited--YOU also! join us! Jim Hines: jhcasitas@gmail.com.

Sierra Club's California/Nevada Wilderness Committee mourns the passing of our dedicated longtime secretary, fervent supporter and dear friend, and we thank Cal French for this background on Letty:

Remembering Letty French

Baja California.

In the 1960s, Letty and her husband Cal joined the Sierra Club's Riverside Chapter (later renamed San Geronimo) and participated actively in its outing program, especially in Mojave car camps with kids. Encouraged by the stalwart Mary Coffeen, they both became outing leaders. Letty also organized family backpacks with her young nephews and started climbing peaks. She helped organize and teach a basic mountaineering course for the Chapter and later an outing leader training course.

In an effort to save a favorite rock-climbing area from construction of a dam (which would eventually create Lake Perris) Letty came to realize that wild places must be protected to be enjoyed and that organizing activists was vital. She became involved in Chapter governance, serving on the conservation committee, and eventually became Chapter chair for three years. Taking as an inspiration Alice Krueper, a chapter leader who worked tirelessly to create the San Geronimo Wilderness and protect it from a destructive ski development,

Letty worked with Bob McDonnell of the Angeles Chapter to help establish the Sheep Mountain Wilderness in the eastern San Gabriels, testifying before a Congressional committee and organizing letter writing campaigns.

In the midst of this activity, Letty returned to college, earned her RN and became a full-time nurse in intensive care and post coronary surgery care. She and friends from a mountain rescue unit organized a popular wilderness first aid course and a weekend refresher course that ran for fifteen years.

When Cal retired from teaching, he and Letty moved to northern San Luis Obispo County to their farm. She continued nursing into her seventies, but she also became program chair for the Santa Lucia Chapter, helped establish two dog parks, protected a bald eagle nesting area by helping the Ventana Wildlife Society acquire the land in a conservancy, volunteered at an adult day care center, and long served as the secretary of the California/Nevada Wilderness Committee. Perhaps more than anything else, many will recall her cheerful, optimistic personality and her inclusiveness. She was blessed with many friends. ♪



photo: Cal French

lost one of its long-time advocates and activists -- when Letty French passed away following an 18-month battle with pancreatic cancer.

Letty was a life-long

outdoors woman, starting with the Girl Scouts, and continuing with her brother and widowed mother as they visited national parks throughout the West, towing a tiny teardrop trailer. After college and several moves, she ended up where she was born in Upland, California. As a busy mother of three daughters, she organized family vacations to the Sierra Nevada, national parks in the Southwest, and deep into

WORDS OF the WILD

The Sierra Club California/Nevada Wilderness Committee, an issue committee of the CA/NV Regional Conservation Committee, advocates for preservation of unroaded, undeveloped public lands in a wild state, through legislation and appropriate management, and stewardship and wilderness study outings.

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