

WORDS OF the WILD

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

Multiple Nevada bills in Congress for Wilderness

Gold Butte National Conservation Area Act introduced

In late May, Nevada Senator Harry Reid introduced legislation in the U.S. Senate to protect Gold Butte in southeast Nevada. The legislation would provide permanent protection to Gold Butte as a National Conservation Area with wilderness. Gold Butte's beauty, wildlife and archaeological wonders may finally get the protection they deserve.

On introducing the bill to create the Gold Butte National Conservation Area in Clark County, Reid, Nevada's senior senator and Senate Majority Leader, stated: "Gold Butte is Nevada's piece of the Grand Canyon. It is home to an amazing array of ancient

must protect these resources for future generations while continuing to allow recreational opportunities we enjoy today. I look forward to continuing to work with Nevadans and the delegation to improve this proposal through the legislative process."

Highlights of S.1054, the Gold Butte National Conservation Area Act include:

- Creates the Gold Butte National Conservation Area (NCA), which is approximately 350,000 acres, to be administered by the BLM.
- Within the NCA, there will be approximately 220,000 acres of Wilderness designated.
- All currently open roads within the

NCA will remain open for access.
• The Gold Butte area is rich with ancient rock art, historic mining and ranching resources, prime Desert Tortoise habitat and scenic desert vistas.

New Nevada Congressman Steven Horsford (D-NV4) in June introduced a

companion House bill, H.R.2276 -- Virgin Valley Tourism and Lake Mead Preservation Act, that contains the same protection for Gold Butte. (see public meeting article, p 2.)

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House bills with wilderness

The bipartisan Pine Forest Recreation Enhancement Act, first introduced in Congress in 2011 by the entire Nevada delegation, is back and again enjoys full bipartisan support, which should encourage its passage by the House of Representatives.

Introduced in late January by Rep. Mark Amodei, (R-NV2) the Pine Forest bill was heard in subcommittee on July 23 along with other wilderness bills. After the August Congressional recess, the bill will be heard by the full committee, and then go to the full House. This bill would designate 26,000 acres within the Blue Lakes and Alder Creek Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) in northwest Nevada as the Pine Forest Range Wilderness. It went through a detailed two-year local public process which brought together local landowners, sportsmen, conservationists, and other stakeholders in Humboldt County.

New this year is the Lyon County Economic Development and Conservation Act, H.R.69, which includes the important 48,000 Wovoka wilderness. Introduced in February by Rep. Steven Horsford (D-NV4), it is cosponsored by all three of his House colleagues, Reps. Dina Titus (D-NV1); Mark Amodei (R-NV2), and Joe Heck (R-NV3.) After subcommittee hearings in April, the Lyon County bill was approved by the House Natural Resources Committee and should be taken up by the full House after the August recess.

Also pending

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photo: Par Rasmusson

Gold Butte: gonzo-like rock sculptures

Native American petroglyphs, historic mine sites, wild sandstone formations and critical wildlife habitat. As more and more people discover this remarkable place, we

Senator Reid has introduced two other significant public lands bills into the current Congress:

S. 342, the Pine Forest Range Recreation Enhancement Act of 2013, introduced 2/14/2013, is a Senate counterpart to H.R.433, the House bill introduced this past January by Rep Mark Amodei and cosponsored by the entire Nevada delegation.

S.974, the Las Vegas Valley Public Land and Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument Act of 2013, would protect unique paleontological resources north of Las Vegas. An equivalent House bill is cosponsored by all four of Nevada's House representatives.

Background on Gold Butte

Gold Butte lies east of the Overton Arm of Lake Mead, west of the Arizona border, south of Virgin Peak, and north of the Colorado River. In this region, the Great Basin, Mojave, Sonoran and Colorado Plateau ecoregions all meet, each contributing a colorful piece to the region. The Bureau of Land Management has designated several Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) in the region to protect critical habitat for desert tortoise and 77 other plant and animal species, fragile rock art and other cultural resources, historic mining districts and unique scenery. But since ACECs are administrative, they can be removed and don't offer permanent Congressional protection like wilderness or national conservation area designation.

In 2002, the Clark County public lands bill designated two small wilderness areas in Gold Butte — Lime Canyon and Jumbo Springs. These two areas comprise only 28,000 acres of this sweeping landscape. Many other roadless places, such as Billy Goat Peak, the Million Hills Wilderness Study Area, Black Ridge and North Bitter Ridge are also home to wonderful biological, cultural, scenic and historic resources that deserve protection from excessive, uncontrolled off-road vehicle use and other careless human activities.

Why legislation is important

- Designating Gold Butte with a combination of NCA and wilderness will enhance the region's status as a destination for tourism,
- Designation will rectify Gold Butte's status as the unprotected orphan of Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument and the missing piece of the Grand Canyon ecoregion, just across the border in Arizona. Gold Butte's equally beautiful and valuable landscape, wildlife and cultural history is set apart only by a state line.
- Legislation will help protect numerous wildlife species, including desert tortoise, desert bighorn sheep, the banded Gila monster, great horned owls and a great variety of reptiles, birds and mammals.
- Designation will provide greater protection for Gold Butte's abundant archaeological resources, including rock art, caves, agave roasting pits and camp sites at least 3,000 years old.
- Designation will help the public preserve, protect and understand Gold Butte's historical resources, including Spanish and pioneer mining camps dating back to the 1700s.
- Designation will help eliminate uncontrolled off-road vehicle use, which ravages sensitive soils and desert tortoise habitat. Irresponsible vehicle use, vandalism, theft and littering are destroying rock art and Gold Butte's archaeological heritage.
- A combination of wilderness and national conservation area status will provide Gold Butte the management presence and information visitors need in order to learn how to respect this national treasure.

Local support has been demonstrated: In May 2010, the Clark County Commission overwhelmingly voted to support the Gold Butte National Conservation Area with Wilderness. Also in May 2010, the Moapa Band of Paiute Indians passed a resolution supporting protection of Gold Butte. The Mesquite City Council passed Resolution #649 in support of Gold Butte in October 2009. ↩

(Friends of Nevada Wilderness provided background material for this article.)

Local area public meeting on Gold Butte bill

-- by Par Rasmusson

The Gold Butte region is close to – literally – making it on the map! Many who have visited this special wild area of public lands in Nevada's faraway southeast corner have expressed amazement that such a beautiful place isn't even marked on most maps.

But two recent bills in Congress may change that. Introduced by U.S. Senator Harry Reid in the Senate and by Nevada Congressman Steven Horsford in the House of Representatives, the two bills call for making approximately 350,000 acres of federal land managed by the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service into a National Conservation Area (NCA) with six Wilderness Areas. Gold Butte is northeast of Las Vegas and southeast of Mesquite, and touching on the Arizona border.

Freshman Congressman Horsford held a community meeting in Moapa Valley, where I live, to discuss the bill and answer local residents' questions.. More than 50 people attended his first public meeting in the area after he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives last November, and it was the first chance most of us had to find out more about the recently introduced bill. Gold Butte is in our "backyard".

In the one-hour meeting, Congressman Horsford first described the new bill and told why he had drafted it the way he did. It is interesting that the title of the House bill doesn't mention Gold Butte, but is called the "Virgin Valley Tourism and Lake Mead Preservation Act". Its National Conservation Area and wilderness provisions are the same as in the Reid Senate bill, (see adjacent article) but it also contains additional provisions emphasizing tourism values and benefits to local communities. Rep. Horsford's bill calls for establishment of The Virgin Valley Tourism and Economic Advisory Council to give input to the administration on appropriate economic development measures to be taken in the area. The Gold Butte NCA Advisory Council would provide input on the development of the federal management plan for the new NCA. These councils would be made up of appointees from -- to next page

our local communities and from Clark County—the nearby surrounding region.

There are a lot of off-road vehicle (OHV) users in our valley, and the question most often asked in the Q&A second half of the meeting was about road closure. The Congressman assured everyone that no road closures of currently legally open roads were planned. The meeting closed promptly when the hour was up, and Congressman Horsford and his staff stayed to answer questions one-on-one. I congratulated the congressman on his well-drafted bill and his smooth handling of the meeting [other meetings on Gold Butte in that community center building had gotten rather contentious]. I then tried to talk to his staff member who was instrumental in drafting the legislation--no doubt working closely with Sen. Reid's office--but could not get a word in edgewise as five cowboy-hatted neighbors of mine were hammering him --questioning any Wilderness designation.

Will the two bills get through both the House and Senate and be combined into one bill and voted on by end of this Congress? Will the Gold Butte area make it onto the map as the Gold Butte NCA? Our hopes are high. We know that both Rep. Horsford and Sen. Reid and their staffs are working hard to make it happen. ❧

(Par Rasmusson is Sierra Club Southern Nevada Group Gold Butte Liaison)

House bills for Nevada -- from page 1

is a public lands bill for Douglas County, including wilderness for the Burbank Canyon Wilderness Study Area. This has been approved by the Douglas County Commissioners but has not yet been introduced in the House of Representatives. Rep. Amodi may consider it soon.

The Burbank Canyons WSA, managed by the Bureau of Land Management, is located primarily in Douglas County, Nevada, five miles northwest of Wellington and 15 miles southeast of Gardnerville. The area consists of three deep, scenic canyons with scattered riparian areas and in Red Canyon a small perennial stream and trout fishery Sagebrush, pinyon pine, and juniper are abundant. Riparian vegetation covers about 300 acres and is important wildlife habitat ❧

Nevada Proclamation honors 2014 Civil Rights and Wilderness 50th Anniversaries

Toiyabe Chapter Wilderness chair Marge Sill sends us this ceremonial proclamation issued by the State of Nevada at the behest of two progressive State senators. (They passed it in 2013, because the legislature meets only every other year.)

❧ **PROCLAMATION** ❧
Nevada State Senate, 77th Regular Session

WHEREAS, January 1, 1964, marked the beginning of one of the most important and eventful years in the later history of the United States, a time when Americans worked hard to come together and make the positive changes envisioned by a President we had lost just 40 days earlier, with the tragic assassination of President John F. Kennedy; and

WHEREAS, A national purpose emerged in 1964 as our population, particularly our younger citizens, realized that America was not Camelot and the changes and reforms that were needed required the work and support of all of us, and not just our elected leaders; and

WHEREAS, The American people and the leaders of our democracy focused on crucially important issues of the day such as racial equality, environmental protection, and national security; and

WHEREAS, Following many years of segregation, voter suppression, and private acts of violence, all of which degraded the citizenship rights of African Americans, a civil rights movement supported by America's black population, and many white citizens, evolved in the United States using both direct action and forms of nonviolent resistance to accomplish the goal of racial equality; and

WHEREAS, On June 11, 1963, President Kennedy addressed the nation and asked for legislation that would give "all Americans the right to be served in facilities which are open to the public," including hotels, restaurants, theaters, retail stores and similar establishments, and the United States Congress and President Lyndon B. Johnson took a major step to achieve racial equality through passage and signing, on July 2, 1964, of landmark legislation known as the Civil Rights Act of 1964; and

WHEREAS, The year 1964 was a time of increased political involvement among America's citizens on...diverse topics,

such as the war on poverty, voting rights, and the need to protect some of the most pristine and environmentally sensitive lands for the enjoyment of generations to come; and

WHEREAS, Following many years of work by citizens involved in conservation and environmental protection, including members of organized groups such as The Wilderness Society, Sierra Club, and National Audubon Society, a bi-partisan Congress passed and President Johnson signed the Wilderness Act on September 3, 1964, which created the National Wilderness Preservation System, initially composed of 9.1 million acres; and

WHEREAS, The Wilderness System has been enhanced over the years to designate over 106 million acres in the United States, including over three million acres of magnificent wild land in Nevada, of some of the most special and unspoiled lands administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management; now, therefore, be it

PROCLAIMED, That the members of the Senate of the State of Nevada do hereby commend the efforts of so many Nevadans and other Americans that led to the passage of two historic pieces of federal legislation in 1964, the Civil Rights Act and the Wilderness Act, which were similar in the purpose of promoting the common good; and be it further

PROCLAIMED, That the people of Nevada are urged to conduct public events and inform the public as we recognize and celebrate in 2014 the 50th anniversary of these two monumental laws.

DATED this 22nd day of May, 2013.

Carson City, Nevada

-- Aaron D. Ford, Nevada State Senator, Senate District No. 11;

-- Patricia (Pat) Spearman, Nevada State Senator, Senate District No. 1 ❧.

As three important national forests in California's Sierra Nevada seek public input in their current management plan revisions, the California/Nevada wilderness committee is working closely with the Club's Sierra Nevada campaign to assure that many comments on the plans will urge the agency to recommend significant roadless areas on all three forests – the Sierra, the Sequoia, and the Inyo-- for wilderness. These are three of the eight national forests identified by the Obama Administration as "early adopters," models to initiate the implementation of the new National Forest management planning regulations issued last year.

New Sierra Forest meeting schedule

The Sierra National Forest conducted public engagement meetings for its initial Forest Assessment in February and April 2013 and recently announced a new series of public meetings for Friday, August 16 and Saturday, August 17, and an online webinar on Tuesday, August 20.

The Sierra Forest meetings are:

1. Technical In-Person Meeting on Friday, Aug 16, 2013, from 1 to 4 p.m. Location: Sierra National Forest Supervisor's Office, 1600 Tollhouse Road, Clovis, CA 93611;
2. General Public Meeting Saturday, Aug 17, 2013, from 1 to 4 p.m. Location: Holiday Inn - Fresno Airport, Fresno, CA. 5090 E. Clinton Way, Fresno, CA 93727; (Web address: www.fresnoairportthi.com);
3. Public Meeting via webinar on Tuesday, Aug 20, 2013. The webinar address will be announced at a later date on the SNF planning website at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/sierra/home/?cid=STELPRDB5407995>.

For questions related to involvement in these public meetings, please contact Rebecca Garcia, SNF Public Affairs Officer at (559) 297-0706 extension 4804 or by email at rebeccagarcia@fs.fed.us.

May and June planning meetings held

On May 9th, the Sierra Club held a meeting in Visalia for people interested in working to protect the Sierra and Sequoia National Forests.

Sierra Nevada campaign staffer Sarah Matsumoto reported on the event: "Representatives of the Sierra Club, The Wilderness Society, Defenders of Wildlife, Sierra Forest Legacy and California Wilderness Coalition gave presentations and led discussions on important forest protection issues related to the Southern Sierra.

"The 26 people who attended were a combination of Sierra Club volunteer leaders, and representatives of other organizations including Audubon, California Native Plant Society, Tree Fresno, Sequoia Forest Keepers, Mariposans for Environmentally Responsible Government, and the Yosemite Sequoia Resource Conservation and Development Council.

"The participants identified common conservation and recreation priorities to work on together during the Sierra and Sequoia National Forest plan revision process and formed several working groups to concentrate on particular issues--wilderness and other designations, watersheds, wildlife, illegal marijuana farms and their impact on the environment and public safety, and outreach to surrounding communities, especially underserved communities and Native American tribes.

"Thanks to Sierra Club volunteer leaders Joe Fontaine, Richard Garcia and Chip Ashley for helping to plan the meeting and recruit participants; to Richard and Beverly Garcia, our hosts in Visalia, for arranging the meeting space and giving a tour of downtown Visalia; to Ashley Allison and Roger Singer for organizing support; and to presenters Joe Fontaine, Chip Ashley and Vicky Hoover for Sierra Club, Pam Flick of Defenders of Wildlife, Sue Britting of Sierra Forest Legacy, Stan Van Velsor of The Wilderness Society, and Ryan Henson of the California Wilderness Coalition."

In early June, Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society, Defenders of Wildlife and Sierra Forest Legacy, in coordination with the Forest Service, hosted an evening meeting at the Sierra Club's



photo: Sarah Matsumoto

Active attendees in June forest plan gathering at Sierra Club HQ.

San Francisco headquarters to engage our members and the public in Sierra Nevada national forest planning concerns. About 60 conservation-minded people attended the meeting and heard about ways to get engaged in efforts to protect forests, watersheds, wilderness, wildlife and sustainable recreation in the Sierra Nevada.

At the June evening event, as Sarah Matsumoto again reported, "three Forest Service staff, Amanda Cundiff, Mary Beth Hennessey and Judy Tapia, described California's national forests and the benefits they provide, the forest planning process in the Sierra Nevada, and opportunities for people to be involved. Conservation community representatives outlined the conservation priorities in the Sierra Nevada. Thoughtful questions and comments showed that meeting attendees cared about special places in the forests, and were eager to get engaged in efforts to protect Sierra Nevada forests. Concerned citizens can help via outings, volunteer teams, public meetings and sending written comments.

"The evening was a good relationship building opportunity with agency officials and campaign partners and a recruiting opportunity for new volunteers. Sierra Club's Alan Carlton was the meeting MC. Thanks to interns Ian Rowbotham, Matt Libassi and Mark Sommer for phonebanking participants in advance and staffing the event." ❧

BLM Invites Public Comments on King Range Fee Proposal

Agency seeks to charge fee for overnight visits to wilderness

The Bureau of Land Management is seeking public comments on a proposal for a new permit and fee system in the King Range National Conservation Area on northern California's Lost Coast. The proposal would institute a new overnight use fee for the King Range National Conservation Area (NCA) backcountry and wilderness, and a fee increase for developed campgrounds.

This proposal will charge a day fee (\$5 per person per day) for each overnight visitor in the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area. So if you camp in the wilderness for one night your fee would equal \$10 plus the "reservation fee" The "reservation fee" amount depends on how the person made the reservation (ranging from \$2 to \$6.50). The fees would be collected by Recreation.gov. Only 60 starts per day (from any of the ten

to the public. Fees at the Mattole, Honeydew Creek, Horse Mountain, Tolkan, Nadelos, and Wailaki campgrounds would be increased from \$8 to \$15 per night.

All fees would be used in the King Range to maintain and improve facilities and services, increase law enforcement and fund natural resource conservation and improvement.

Written comments are due by **Sept. 9, 2013**. They should be sent to Bureau of Land Management, King Range National Conservation Area, PO Drawer 189, Whitethorn, CA 95589 or sent by email to ca338@blm.gov. Put "King Range Business Plan" in the subject line.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Please comment to BLM by Sept 9 as specified above and suggested below to let them know how you feel about their charging fees to visit wilderness.

Sierra Club opposition to Public Lands fees

Sierra Club strongly opposes charging fees for use of public lands traditionally free to the public. Public lands are a unique American value—a proud American tradition. Imposing fees fundamentally alters the people's

relationship with their public lands. Access to our public lands and waters is our birthright. Outdoor recreation must not be treated like a marketable and saleable commodity like grazing, logging, or mining.

Fee moneys coming in have not added significantly to federal agencies' recreation budgets, partly due to high collection and administration costs, but also because fee revenue has been followed by further reduction in regular appropriations. And, unfortunately, an

agency relying on fees will be forced to prioritize the types of recreation which bring in the most money, which may well not be those that are easiest on the land or are most in tune with the public's desire for quiet recreation to "get away from it all".

Fees also discriminate against low income forest users, who don't have the choice of going to private resorts. Making hiking, fishing and camping an expensive pastime could also impact the health of millions of working class Americans. Public libraries and public schools are open to users at no cost because it is a public benefit for Americans to read and be educated. Public lands also should enable all Americans to exercise when they wish, and to be inspired by nature. Fees make it more difficult for families and working people in this country to catch a fish, take a walk, pick berries in the fall or otherwise be part of the great out of doors. The Sierra Club does not oppose fees for developed areas like campgrounds and marinas.

Wilderness and fees: Of all fees for public lands use proposed recently or currently in agency planning, the worst, the most egregious fees are fees imposed for visiting Wilderness. Charging a citizen money to go to wilderness is completely counter to the principles of freedom expressed in the concept of wilderness. Sierra Club is deeply disturbed by the trend toward commercializing a wilderness experience that such a fee plan represents. This downgrades wilderness and is not the way for wilderness stewardship to go. Although agencies are strapped for funds, emasculating the wilderness concept is not the answer. This is like throwing out the baby with the bathwater. (However, an administrative fee for a wilderness permit advance reservation is reasonable. (VNH) (*Visit the national recreation Issue Team's page on the Sierra Club's main website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/committees/recreationissues/>*)



Pay to hike at the Lost Coast?

trailheads) would be permitted.

A business plan analyzing the fee proposal and various alternatives is available online at www.blm.gov/ca/arcata, or by contacting the King Range National Conservation Area at (707) 986-5400, or by emailing a request to ca338@blm.gov. The plan's executive summary is useful.

The BLM proposes to begin collecting fees in 2014 at campgrounds or other areas where equipment or services are provided



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 (As seen in Range of Light Group newsletter)

August 25 - Sun Channel Islands view hike, to Carpinteria

Join Los Padres Chapter's Santa Barbara Group on a day hike near Santa Barbara: start from Rincon Beach Park, hike a bluff trail above the beach with great views of the Channel Islands. After crossing the railroad tracks, we ascend to the Carpinteria Bluff Trail, follow it to the seal viewing overlook. Lunch at Tarpits Park. Return by beach if tide permits. 4m rt, easy to moderate. Meet 9 am at Bank of America parking lot, Hope Ave & State St. For more info, call Gerry Ching (805)964-5411, or gching@cox.net.

September 14-15 -- Sat - Sun Indian Wells Canyon Service

North of Ridgecrest and next to Owens Peak Wilderness, this canyon has been impacted by erosion and illegal ORVs. On Sat assist BLM Wilderness Specialist Marty Dickes to put up barriers, conceal illegal routes, and place signs. Sun finish work or hike in the Wilderness perhaps to Owens Peak. Delightful ponderosa forest and chaparral. CNRCC Desert Committee Leader: Craig Deutsche, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, (310)477-6670. Contact: Tom Budlong, TomBudlong@roadrunner.com, (310)476-1731.

September 21 - Sat "Coastal" Clean-up Day

Range of Light Group teams up with Friends of the Inyo and MLTPA (Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access) for a morning clean-up in part of the Mammoth Lakes Basin—6th and final Summer of Stewardship (SOS) event. We need many helpers--last year we got over 1300 lbs of trash! Meet 8:30am at Horseshoe Lake parking lot; end around 1:30 pm. For more info, contact: Malcolm (760)924-5639, wmalcolm.clark@gmail.com or Drew@FriendsoftheInyo.org.

September 27-29 -- Fri - Sun Carrizo Plain. Service and Hike

An opportunity to visit and to assist an outstanding relatively unknown national monument. Optional scenic hike high in the Caliente Mountains Fri. Sat, join

other volunteers in doing trail maintenance for National Public Lands Day. Sun, tour historic, prehistoric, and geologic sites in the Monument. Desert Committee Leader Craig Deutsche, see Sept 14-15.

October 5-6 -- Sat - Sun Black Rock Desert Hot Springs

Tour hot springs in the Black Rock Desert, about 100 miles n. of Reno. Probably camp at a spring close to Gerlach (pop. 150) Fri night then relocate to a prettier spring on Emigrant Trail Sat. A great time to visit very remote Black Rock country as it starts to cool off and crowds are gone. 2WD high clearance. Primitive camping, sorry, no RV's or Trailers. For more info, call after 9/15, David Book (775)843-6443.

October 12-13 -- Sat - Sun Carrizo Plain--explore and serve

We continue to aid the mobility of pronghorn antelope in the Carrizo Plain National Monument; on Sat remove or modify several sections of fence to benefit pronghorn. Sun group choice-- hike in Caliente Range or tour popular viewing areas in the plains. Carcamping, day-hiking, exploring, and service in a relatively unknown wild place. Leader: Craig Deutsche, see Sept 1-15.

October 24-26 -- Thurs - Sat Death Vly Wilderness Restoration

Join us as we restore wilderness values in this beautiful dessert national park. Meet early Thurs afternoon to work on Darwin Falls trail, then drive to our primitive camping area. Fri work picking up debris from a plane crash. If needed, continue work on Sat; otherwise, just enjoy the park. Leader: Kate Allen, kj.allen96@gmail.com, (661)944-4056.

November 9-12 -- Sat - Mon Western Utah Exploring Experience

Join the countdown to the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act with national Utah Wilderness Task Force and Utah Chapter in a visit to western Utah's remote Mountain Home Range and San Francisco Peaks—under consideration as new wilderness. Help Utah wildlands guru Jim Catlin document wild values and enjoy Veterans Day week-

end car camping with central commissary. Experience desert solitude, darkest night skies, and pinyon pine-covered desert peaks. Can meet Fri eve. Contact Vicky Hoover, (415)977-5527, vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org.

Outing Report: From July 26 to 29, CA/NV Wilderness Committee volunteers worked with wilderness staff of the Ely, Nevada, BLM office. It was our second service outing to the Becky Peak Wilderness, at north end of Eastern Nevada's Schell Creek Range. Seven Sierra Club volunteers were joined at camp in a mountain mahogany grove at the edge of the Wilderness, at 8000-plus feet—with views into Utah—by four BLM Ely staffers. In addition to John Miller and Emily Simpson, with whom we've worked in the past—we had the help of archaeologist Renee Barlow and range specialist Craig Hoover. And Emily's



Simpsons with wilderness baby on Becky Peak summit

wilderness baby, Abigail, 5 months, came with her dad, Joshua Simpson (Forest Service wilderness staffer) for Sunday's ascent of Becky Peak.

Saturday's job was putting permanent steel posts at both ends of a closed vehicle route into the wilderness, obliterating the first few hundred feet of each end of the road by raking, seeding, and transplanting grasses and forbs. After the peak ascent Sunday, Ranger John took the group off to rehab another route. Join us next summer to help Nevada wilderness stay wild and to enjoy it too. ♪

--Vicky Hoover

Eradicating Invasive Weeds in Wilderness: the Cache Creek Ravenna grass Project

--by Victoria Brandon

A remarkable partnership project recently made great strides in eradicating a potentially devastating infestation of Ravenna grass (*Saccharum ravennae*) from some 70 miles of Wild and Scenic Cache Creek in Lake and Yolo Counties. This invasive weed, which was deliberately introduced to California as an ornamental and has been described as “pampas grass on steroids,” could profoundly degrade riparian areas throughout the region if not controlled, and control is particularly difficult because so many

of the plants were found in steep, inaccessible terrain



photo: Victoria Brandon

Ravenna grass

deep in the Cache Creek Wilderness.

Primary management responsibility for the project was shared by the East Lake and Yolo County Resource Conservation Districts and Bureau of Land Management. To delineate the problem, volunteers from the Woodland-based environmental advocacy group Tuleyome (which had conducted a successful tamarisk eradication project a few years previously) paddled down the creek in kayaks with GPS equipment to pinpoint hundreds of clumps of Ravenna grass, many too high on the canyon walls to be reached from creek level.

The density of the infestation was far worse than anyone had imagined. Working together, the Yolo and Lake County RCDs then obtained funding through an American Recovery and Reinvestment (ARRA) grant, with supplementary money from the Rose Foundation. Work on the section downstream from Cache Canyon proceeded uneventfully, but the upstream portion

remained daunting: not only was the terrain remote and rugged, its designation as federal Wilderness precluded the use of any form of motorized transportation. This meant that work crews faced the prospect of long off-trail hikes, carrying massive quantities of gear, merely to reach the work site. In the words of East Lake RCD District Manager Greg Dills, “This was one of the most tactically difficult projects we have been involved with to date.

There were multiple project partners, some of the most rugged terrain in Northern California, restrictions due to Wilderness designation, multiple landowners (both private and public), and bears.”

The conundrum was solved by Cache Canyon River Trips from Yolo County, which provided two large rubber rafts—rafts that usually carry white water recreationists—to transport equipment, supplies, and work crews down the creek from the Clear Lake dam and through 25 miles of project area. Lake County’s Back Country Horsemen also offered to pack in gear. Although the job remained difficult, it was no longer impossible; late in the summer of 2011 an estimated 90 percent of the Ravenna grass on Cache Creek was eradicated, and mop-up treatments the following spring took care of the few clumps that resprouted.

Taken as a whole, the project provides a model for successful collaboration, and a demonstration that we can protect the biodiversity of a precious wilderness area while simultaneously guarding the special values that make wilderness unique.

Monitoring will be necessary for several years to insure that seedlings are exterminated before another widespread stand can become established. Rafters, kayakers, equestrians and hikers are invited to assist this effort by surveying for regrowth as they recreate in the area. (Victoria Brandon is Redwood Chapter conservation chair.)

Next Wilderness meeting Thursday, Sept 5, Sacramento

The next meeting of the Sierra Club’s California/Nevada Wilderness Committee will be a joint combined meeting with staff of all four wilderness agencies and with other environmental organizations to plan 2014 California events for the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act; the meeting will take place at McClellan Field Interagency Center, East Sacramento, from 10 to 3:30 on Sept 5. **Please join us! All wildlands advocates invited to participate and help!** For details, directions and agenda, contact Vicky: vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org.

The Wilderness Land Trust protects 413-acres in Nevada’s Ruby Mountain Wilderness

-- by Aimee Rutledge

The 33-mile long Ruby Crest National Recreational trail, which leads through the heart of the Ruby Mountain Wilderness and its high alpine lakes, has a new extension with The Wilderness Land Trust’s purchase of the 413-acre Murphy Creek parcel. Murphy Creek runs out of the west side of the Ruby Mountain Wilderness south of Elko, Nevada. The Wilderness Land Trust recently purchased the parcel adjoining the creek and the access trail running along it. The parcel adds a westward link to the Ruby Mountain Trail and completes the northern boundary of the wilderness. The creek drainage provides critical habitat for big horn sheep, mountain goat, and mule deer habitat. Ruby Dome is the highest peak.

Financial assistance from two Nevada lenders made the purchase possible. Both wilderness-loving supporters have spent countless hours assisting with wilderness stewardship, mapping and designation. With this purchase, The Wilderness Land Trust has now protected over 1,000 acres of Nevada wilderness.

Nevada bristlecone Quarter

LOOK! This quarter features Nevada’s Great Basin National Park! This quarter was released into circulation on June 10th, 2013 and marked the 18th quarter issued as part of the United States



-- continued p. 8

Two landmark laws for freedom soon to turn 50

Freedom and Diversity of People and Places

--by Connie G. Myers, Director, Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center

In 1964 Congress passed two groundbreaking pieces of legislation which define us as a nation and set a standard for America's leadership in the world. In signing the Civil Rights Act of 1964 President Lyndon B.

Nevada bristlecone quarter -- from p. 7

Mint America Beautiful Quarters Program.

Great Basin National Park employee and Friends of Nevada Wilderness member Roberta Moore sent a whole roll of these new shiny quarters to Friends of Nevada Wilderness in Reno. Friends Executive Director Shaaron Netherton asked Roberta if she had done the sketch of the tree, because she recognized the drawing on the 'tails' side of the coin. It turns out that although the scene specific to the quarter was designed by Ronald D. Sanders and sculpted by Renata Gorgon, Roberta has in fact sketched that very same ancient bristlecone pine before. ♪

(from Friends of Nevada Wilderness)

Johnson said, "This is a proud triumph. Yet those who founded our country knew that freedom would be secure only if each generation fought to renew and enlarge its meaning." America is great because it recognizes and values the freedom and diversity of its people.

In passing the Wilderness Act of 1964, Congress also recognized and valued the freedom and diversity of America's natural heritage by establishing a small, humble portion of our public estate to be protected and managed so as to preserve its' natural conditions, untrammled, free. Upon signing the Wilderness Act President Johnson said,

"So it seems to me that this reflects a new and strong national consensus to look ahead, and, more than that, to plan ahead; better still,

to move ahead. We know that America cannot be made strong by leadership which reacts only to the needs or the irritations or the frustrations of the moment. True leadership must provide for the next decade and not merely the next day."

As the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act and the Civil Rights Act approach, we are humbly aware of the inextricable link between people and places and recognize that to flourish, both need to be free.

"America is great because it has as much diversity in its geography as in its people," said Aurora Raigne. The Carhart Center celebrates and values that diversity. ♪



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 sponsors stewardship and wilderness study outings.

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FIRST CLASS



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