



SIERRA CLUB

TOIYABE CHAPTER

2020 Annual Report

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Membership changes.....	2
Staff changes.....	2
Volunteers.....	3
COVID Effects.....	4
Committees Accomplishments and Challenges	
5 R's.....	5
Conservation and Public Lands (CPL) Team.....	5
Communications	9
Development Committee.....	9
Equity and justice.....	10
NEJC (The Nevada Environmental Justice Coalition).....	11
Las Vegas ICO (Inspiring Connections Outdoors).....	12
Legislative Committee	12
Management Committee.....	12
Political Committee (TCPC).....	13
Transportation Team.....	14
Groups Accomplishments and Challenges	
Great Basin Group.....	15
Range of Light Group.....	16
Southern Nevada Group (SNG).....	17
Tahoe Area Group.....	17

Introduction

The Toiyabe Chapter has been undergoing extensive growth and change over the past several years, and 2020 is no exception. We began this process in 2017, when a substantial donation from Southern Nevada Group Executive Committee member Janet Carter, supplemented with other income, enabled us to hire our first-ever full-time Chapter Director, Brian Beffort, who is still with us after 4 years. This step coincided with the recruitment and

election of several new Executive Committee (ExCom) members who gave generously of their time and talents to re-start our Legislative Committee, Political Committee, Conservation and Public Lands Team, as well as start new teams working on racial equity, the “5R’s,” and development/fundraising.

Like any entity undergoing rapid change and growth, we have had growing pains. Our organizational skills and capabilities have lagged our growth. Fortunately, in 2020 we were able to begin to remedy this shortcoming with the aid of the national Sierra Club’s Chapter Support Team. Leaders in that team understood that the Sierra Club’s Chapters - the backbone of the organization - needed more help to meet their myriad goals and obligations, and to meet them well, so they proposed to the national Board of Directors a grant program, the “Chapter Strong Capacity Grant,” to help chapters with organizing tasks.

The Board of Directors approved an initial grant program for 2020, and the Toiyabe Chapter won one of the grants. A team consisting of Chapter Chair Anne Macquarie, Chapter Treasurer Lisa Tilzey, Conservation Organizer Jasmine Vazin, and Lead Organizer Kait Krolik worked for 4 months to systematically evaluate our Chapter’s operations, priorities, and processes, updating systems that served the Chapter when it was solely volunteer run. The formal grant period ended in December, but implementation of the new systems and strategies will continue through at least the first half of 2021.

Membership changes

Toiyabe Chapter membership increased by 5% - 389 members - in 2020. As of December 2020, Toiyabe Chapter membership is as follows:

- memberships 6064
- joint 1000
- total members 7064

Staff changes

The Toiyabe chapter hired two new staff in 2019 and 2020. Lead Organizer Kait Krolik, whose position is funded by the national Sierra Club, is a skilled and empathetic organizer who has spent the year getting to know, and working with, our lead volunteers, staff, and national Sierra Club campaign staff active in our region. Her efforts have greatly improved communications and coordination among all these “moving parts” and have set us well on our way to more effectively carry out our environmental organizing and leadership.

Conservation organizer Jasmine Vazin joined us late in 2019. Jasmine works under the umbrella of the national Sierra Club’s Clean Transportation for All Campaign, though her position is funded jointly by the national Sierra Club and the Toiyabe Chapter. Jasmine established the Chapter’s Transportation Committee, serves as a principal organizer of the Nevada Environmental Justice Coalition (more on this below) and led the Chapter Strong Capacity work. Her creativity and diligence have greatly helped our work this year.





Volunteers

It has been a challenge recruiting and retaining volunteers during this pandemic year. Several traditional ways of community outreach and recruitment - tabling at events, Group monthly meetings, outings, political canvassing and events - have either ceased entirely or moved online.

But in October we were informed that Sierra Club national had thousands of volunteers engaging at the national level for the election, and that chapters could opt in to receive a list of these volunteers in their areas to be able to bring them into local work. Our state-based staff signed up the chapter to receive these lists, and it became apparent that the chapter grant team was the best space to plan and execute the absorption of these new volunteers. Our work pivoted into planning and organizing a strategy to engage this new volunteer base.

We got together a team that planned and organized a volunteer open house where committee leads share information about their work and their teams, and social spaces for new volunteers to get to know us and know each other. 12 new volunteers joined as a direct result of this event.

We continue to engage and support these new volunteers in a more proactive way than we have before, as well as continuing to recruit new volunteers. Teresa Bell has stepped up to become our Chapter Volunteer Coordinator, and she will continue to oversee and direct the Chapter's work to recruit, train, support and mentor our volunteers.

So we think 2020, which started out as a VERY challenging year, might in the end prove to be the best year yet for volunteer recruitment.



COVID effects

When the Covid pandemic was declared a national emergency in March, the Toiyabe Chapter, (like most everyone else in the world) had to change the way we did things. Following guidance issued by the national Sierra Club, all outings and events were cancelled. All in-person Group and Chapter membership meetings were either cancelled or moved online. All staff and volunteers worked for the rest of the year at home.

In some ways the move to online meetings was relatively easy. The Chapter had already used Google meet and Zoom for most meetings before the beginning of the pandemic, as Chapter and national staff, volunteer leaders, activists, and organizational partners are scattered throughout not only Nevada but the entire country.

Yet we had to learn to be better at online meetings, to keep people engaged and to run the seemingly endless online meetings as efficiently as possible. Our organizing staff were able to help us come up with meetings that worked for all.

The Southern Nevada Group deserves a special shout-out for pivoting to virtual meetings and events. They quickly moved in-person Earth Week celebrations scheduled for the week of April 18th-to-26th online— including art exhibits, book signings, and an art and essay contest. Not only did the southern Nevada community appreciate the Group's virtual Earth Week, but the Group received the Sierra Club's 2020 national Communication Award for the event, honoring the best use of communications by a Sierra Club group, chapter or other entity to further the Club's mission. And to top it off, they gave a great virtual holiday party in December.

Committees Accomplishments and Challenges

Much of the work of the Toiyabe chapter is accomplished within our committee structure. In 2020 we had 10 functioning teams:

- 5 R's
- Communications
- Conservation and Public Lands
- Development (Fundraising)
- Political
- Las Vegas ICO (Inspiring Connections Outdoors)
- Legislative
- Management
- Anti-Racism Team
- Transportation



5 R's

In 2020, Chapter volunteers formed a dynamic team excited by the 5 R's (refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle, rot) with the express purpose of reducing waste and conserving natural resources through education, legislation, and targeted campaigns. The team has been meeting monthly since January, 2020 and in a virtual setting since March. Accomplishments include:

- The team proposed, wrote, and advocated for a resolution to the Council of Club Leaders (CCL - a group representing all 52 Sierra Club Chapter) to phase out the use of "free" gifts to entice national Sierra Club donations and memberships. The resolution was adopted by the CCL and forwarded to the national Sierra Club Board of Directors for further implementation.
- Members made presentations about the 5 R's to the Great Basin Group, and one member served as a "plastic expert" for a virtual panel discussion.
- Partnered with other local zero waste groups, legislators, and the Nevada Department of Environmental Protection to improve Nevada's mandated recycling targets and waste management policies.
- Planning for Plastic Free July, 2021 is underway!

Conservation and Public Lands (CPL) Team

In 2020 the Chapter's Conservation and Public lands team, under the leadership of our new Chapter Conservation Chair Connie Howard, tackled a number of issues affecting Nevada's environment and public lands.

Pinyon Juniper Forest Removal

The CPL Team joined with conservation partners, led by the Center for Biological Diversity, to oppose 5 different large-scale vegetation removal actions/projects being proposed, some now approved, by the Trump administration's BLM. These five projects taken together would give the BLM the right to remove pinyon-juniper forest across all of Nevada, in a variety of ways including chaining, mastication, controlled burns, herbicides, targeted grazing, etc, without any environmental review process (EIS or EA) or public input. While some scientific research supports targeted removal of pinyon juniper forests as a method to increase threatened Sage-Grouse populations, the science is unclear at best and the preponderance of studies have documented clear long-term harm to the overall ecosystem. The proposed Trump actions are seen by the environmental community as a misappropriation of science to produce more landscape for cattle grazing and even as a way to prevent future protective designations, such as wilderness. The Toiyabe Chapter participated in comments on all 5 of these actions and is most recently a signatory on a Notice of Intent of Litigation on the largest of these actions, the Great Basin Fuels Reduction and Forest Restoration Program affecting 38.5 million acres and the Great Basin Fuels Break Program which would affect 11,000 miles.



National Sierra Club's Wild Horse Policy

National Sierra Club leaders asked the Toiyabe Chapter to be part of a team to update the Sierra Club's wild horse and burro policy, since Nevada holds much of the West's wild horse and burro populations. The policy had last been updated in the 1980's. Chapter Executive Committee member Rory Lampe volunteered for this work, and spend weeks working with the team to craft a policy that emphasized the health of native wildlife and the ecosystem. Here is a quote from the proposed updated policy: "On federal lands where wild horses and burros are present and allowed, wild horses, wild burros and domestic livestock should be managed so that native wildlife and ecosystem values are fully protected." The policy was approved by the national Sierra Club's Conservation Policy Committee in their December, 2020 meeting, and is now in a 60-day comment period.

Military Land

Withdrawals

The CPL Team joined Nevada conservation partners in successfully fighting two major proposed military base expansions: the takeover of the Desert National Wildlife Refuge by the Nevada Test and Training Range and the expansions of the Fallon Naval Air Force Base.



These were hard-fought battles and credit must be given to our partners and to the role played by the national Sierra Club, particularly to our lobbyist Athan Manuel, who helped deliver letters to appropriate committees and ensured our messaging was strong and on target. The Chapter sent numerous letters and authored published OpEds on these issues, particularly on Fallon. While we achieved a temporary victory when both bases received no expansion extensions in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), both battles will have to be refought in 2021 and the politics look even harder, particularly for the NDAA.

Oil and Gas leasing

Working under a grant agreement with the Western Energy Project, Chapter Director Brian Beffort organized around oil and gas leasing issues in the state. This included convening calls with all relevant groups in Nevada, identifying upcoming oil and gas lease sales, and



developing tactics to create public awareness and publicize certain issues. Brian also developed blog posts and other communications to spotlight oil and gas leasing issues in the state.

Opposition to Tahoe Keys herbicide proposal

Two agencies in the Lake Tahoe area, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and Lahontan Water Board, accepted an application by Tahoe Keys Property Owners Association for the first-ever use of aquatic herbicides in Lake Tahoe's waters to control the invasive weeds (Eurasian milfoil and few others) that have been spreading from Tahoe Keys lagoons into the greater Lake Tahoe. Beginning in 2019 with requesting scoping comments, the agencies' contractors produced a draft environmental document (DEIR/DEIS) for a project to test the use of herbicides in the Tahoe Keys along with non-chemical methods, which was made available to the public in July 2020.

The Tahoe Area Group (TAG) provided extensive comments on the DEIR/DEIS in September and participated in a boat tour and a workshop in October and November 2020, respectively. During the comment period, Toiyabe Chapter helped with a blog and action alert that solicited 589 signatures and comments that went directly to the agencies before the end of the comment period. TAG published one op-ed during the comment period and is currently in the process of sending another op-ed for publication. TAG also worked with Beyond Pesticides, a non-profit anti-pesticide organization, to provide convincing scientifically-backed comments to the agencies about the potential health risks and environmental harm that was not fully assessed in the DEIR/DEIS. TAG and the Toiyabe Chapter also passed a No Aquatic Herbicides in Lake Tahoe Resolution in the Fall of 2020.

This is an on-going project that the Toiyabe Chapter and TAG will be following and will continue to oppose throughout 2021 as the project's current projection is September 2021 for permitting the use of herbicides by the agencies.

30 x 30

In a [2019 blog, "we need to protect 30 percent of the Earth by 2030,"](#) Sierra Club's Executive Director Michael Brune wrote, "the Sierra Club is joining a global movement that calls for an ambitious vision of lands and water protection. The eminent biologist E.O. Wilson has argued that to preserve biodiversity, we need to set aside half the planet for wild nature. Now, conservation organizations including the Sierra Club are laying out a road map to reach that 'half Earth' goal, demanding that governments protect 30 percent of landscapes and seascapes by 2030."

In late 2020, the CPL team outlined a basic plan on how we might approach the 30 x 30 campaign in Nevada. At this point we know that State Assemblywoman Cecilia Gonzalez plans to introduce a 30 by 30 resolution in the 2021 State Legislation, and that the Biden Administration will be issuing an Executive Order. In Nevada, other conservation groups are more engaged in this effort than we are, so another part of our strategy is to reach out and partner with these groups. We expect to be more active in this ambitious and important initiative in 2021.



Ruby Mountains Protection Act

At the end of the year, Senator Catherine Cortez Masto's office asked that we reach out to Sierra Club membership to generate grassroots opposition to the "hold" that Senator Mike Lee of Utah had put on this bill preventing it from passing in the 2020 session. We worked with the Utah Chapter in drafting an appeal to members, and 348 Sierra Club members registered their support for this bill. While this ultimately did not result in the bill passing, we were pleased to be able to support Senator CCM's bill that opposed gas and oil leasing in the Ruby Mts.

Public Lands Bills

The CPL Team worked on and opposed a number of public lands bills in 2020, writing letters, producing analysis and holding meetings with Congressional members and their staff. All of the bills had large public land give away/loss components. These bills will come back in 2021, and the CPL Team is actively concerned that we have the bandwidth and political power to stop them or achieve meaningful changes to them. Active lands bills in 2020 and 2021 include:

- The Truckee Meadow Public Land Management Act (aka Washoe). The first two versions of this bill have put forward a 90,000-acre disposal boundary and not included any protections for near-in landscapes. Lori Bellis, a member of the Executive Committee of the Great Basin Group, is our lead on this bill and we are working on a proposal that includes protections for beloved landscapes surrounding Washoe County communities. We have reached out to the Washoe County Commission and Patagonia for help.
- The Clark County Bill similarly proposes a large disposal boundary of 40,000 acres along the I-15 corridor that would lead to more urban sprawl; the volunteer lead on this bill is Vinny Spotleson, Chair of the Southern Nevada Group. Vinny is building a coalition focused on environmental justice to fight this bill.
- The Pershing County lands bill would entitle the loss of over 800,000 acres of public land along the I-80 corridor with a "fire sale" of the so-called "checkerboard lands," the alternating public and private sections along the route of the UP railroad corridor.
- The Northern Nevada Rural Economic Development and Conservation Act, put forward as a bill draft, proposes a modest negotiation for the Fallon expansion, some wilderness areas, money for the tribes and a considerable loss of public land.

In 2021, we hope to pull together our one-by-one opposition to individual lands bills into a fuller critique of this Nevada paradigm of disposing of public lands for private uses. In a state where 81% of the land is public land managed by federal land management agencies and the Department of Defense, the lands bills have been a strategy to provide for orderly development of Nevada's communities, while designating selected undeveloped lands for protection as wilderness. We would like to take the lead in broadening the discussion about land use and land development in Nevada to include the water and climate impacts of urban development, environmental justice, and protection of critical habitats in addition to wilderness areas.



Communications Team

Toiyabe Trails discontinued

In August, after more than 30 years of editing and publishing the Toiyabe Trails, editor Lynne Foster retired. This leaves the Chapter without a paper newsletter and with questions about how best to keep our members updated, and how best we can use paper to do so. Chapter Director Brian Beffort has drafted a letter to the 1,178 members who have mail addresses only. This letter explains the discontinuation of *Toiyabe Trails* and asks them to sign up for emails.

BLOG AND E-NEWS

[Toiyabe Chapter's blogs](#) are opportunities for us to share the background and details of our campaigns, activities and priorities. In the last year, we have published 35 blog posts. Most of these have been linked to our e-newsletters.

E-news is the Chapter's primary tool to update members and supporters (roughly 34,000 total). It is scheduled to send on the 2nd Thursday of each month. We have the option of sending up to 3 emails each month. We can send unlimited emails to people on our opt-in lists.

COMMS CAFE

This is a weekly working session in which activists transform the issues they care about into powerful messages on social media, as LTEs and oped for print media, and as testimony for legislative and other efforts. The Comms Cafe meets on Tuesdays 10am to noon.

Development Committee

In 2020 the Chapter received \$24,500 of grant revenue with a commitment for another \$10,000 in 2021, and over \$64,000 total c(3) and c(4) donations. Total donations, including our first payment for an auto donation, was 92% of what was received in the prior year. We don't know how much of the reduction in donations was due to COVID, but it is clear that donations at the National level had also been significantly impacted in 2020. This is important because our Chapter received grant funding, called Shared Projects, to pay for the salary of our Conservation Organizer. This funding was only guaranteed for part of 2020 and the same is true of 2021, in great part due to the impact of the level of national-level donations.

So the Development Team began the work of looking at our fundraising sub-programs including Major Donors, Monthly Donors, Grants, Annual Campaigns, On-line Fundraising, Grants, and Legacy Giving, with the goal of determining the efficacy of work we were doing. We then began the work of tapping into potential resources. As part of the project we were able to accomplish the following:

- raising \$15,000 of donations for our first year-end matching campaign,
- increasing our monthly donor contributions 135% (end of the year compared to the beginning of the year),



- All members of the ExCom supported the Chapter at least once during 2020, earning us 100% Giving Board award from the Community Foundation of Western Nevada.
- conducting our first Fireside Chat that connected major donors with the work that the Chapter is doing,
- starting a program to reach out to major donors,
- providing personal testimonials in our outreach to membership for each of the sub-programs
- developing a tracking and reporting system for all of the sub-programs within Development Plan
- Applied for and received the national Sierra Club's Denny and Ida Wilcher award in recognition of the success of our 2019 Major Donor Campaign. The Wilcher Award included a \$3,000 prize.

We have drafted an aggressive Development Plan for 2021 based on the results of our 2020 efficacy analysis.

Equity and Justice Team

Our Chapter's volunteers and staff continue to show a collective commitment to equity, inclusion and justice. Chapter leaders realize our deficits around equity and justice and have shown that this is a collective priority. More work is needed to ensure we have a collective language and understanding of racial justice, equity, and intersectionality.

In the past year, multiple Chapter leaders have independently gone through Sierra Club's equity training, and the Chapter Chair attended the nationally hosted in-person training in Oakland last year. The Chapter Director attended Growing for Change in Oakland in 2017. The Chapter also hired staff who have consistently forwarded equity and justice in all of the work that they do. Chapter staff has conducted environmental justice research around air quality, quantifying impacts on minority communities.

Through this work, Sierra Club was invited to join the Minority Health and Equity Coalition and has been able to bring environmental justice to the fore in conversations and strategies around public health in the state. In addition, our teams each are asked to think about equity and justice in the work they are leading. For example, the Nominations and Recruitment Committee began to formalize systems to center equity and justice in leadership identification and development.

Racial Justice Team

Our Chapter ExCom created an Anti-Racism Team to facilitate conversations until



there is a common understanding, then move the Chapter through goal setting and process creation to ensure it is centered in our work. This team is currently on pause until volunteers step into this space and take leadership.

NEJC (The Nevada Environmental Justice Coalition)

[The Nevada Environmental Justice Coalition \(NEJC\)](#) is a coalition of environmental and social justice groups in southern Nevada committed to ensuring that the mitigation of environmental injustices is a priority at all planning levels in Nevada. NEJC was founded in late 2019 to create a space for deeper collaboration and communication between traditional conservation organizations & organizations representing communities most impacted by an unjust climate response. The Toiyabe Chapter was a founding member of the Nevada Environmental Justice Coalition, with Lead Organizer Kait Krolik partnering with Chapter Conservation Organizer Jasmine Vazin to form and lead NEJC.

To reach out to the community in ways that are inclusive, and to help create opportunities for engagement in public decisionmaking processes, NEJC has created multilingual content, webpages, and invested in diverse partnerships. The coalition has engaged with several local-and-state-level planning initiatives, raising up the voices of underrepresented communities in Clark County's "Transform Clark County" land use plan update, the Clark County Lands Bills, and the Nevada Climate initiative. Check out the slide below for our accomplishments as of Nov 2020. In 2021 we will continue and build on this work, including expanding the NEJC to northern Nevada.

So Far, We Have...

- 6 educational webinars around CC
 - reached 1400 people
 - 3 letters on CCLB
 - 2 public outreach recommendation letters
 - 1 Air Quality Twitter Storm
 - 1 Text Campaign for the TCC Survey
 - texted over 3400 CC residents
 - ~20 Public comments
 - Build a website
 - Built a social media account and following
 - Wrote a first draft to a policy document for coalition
- Was in the news with:
 - PBS segment on CCLB
 - KNPR segment on TCC
 - Authored 2 op-eds on CCLB
 - Random feature in Desert Companion on CCLB
 - Dominated the Environmental Justice NCI listening session and provided substantial comments
 - Rallied around mining reform during the 2020 special session
 - Met with 8 elected & appointed officials
 - Applied to 1 grant collectively

NEJC Workshop | Nov 17-19, 2020



Las Vegas ICO (Inspiring Connections Outdoors)

[The Las Vegas ICO](#) had a great schedule of outings for the year; unfortunately we were only able to have a handful of in-person outings before the pandemic shutdown. Since then, we have had a few virtual outings, but have had some trouble generating participants due to school system controls on curriculum and the like. We have been meeting on a regular basis and continue to have regular “Tutorials” (educational sessions for our leaders with information of interest to our outings leaders).

The Las Vegas ICO decided not to do any fundraising this year, as we have not spent much since our outings were curtailed. We look forward to being able to start up outings whenever it is deemed safe and allowed by the national organization.

Legislative Committee

The Legislative Committee has been the beneficiary of the Chapter Capacity Grant work and the post-election, volunteer-absorption process: thanks to aggressive onboarding and volunteer placement, the legislative committee has 32 members on its list, many of whom participate very actively. Two new volunteers, Denise Rohrer and Ashlee Forman, have both volunteered to co-chair the LegCom. And other volunteers are stepping up to manage data (via Salesforce, etc.) and offer trainings, all of which will be useful to our other priorities as well. [This page](#) has a summary of our initial priorities, although many other bills will be introduced that interest us as well. Our focus this session will be recruiting and training volunteers/activists to testify on bills. The LegCom meets weekly on Monday nights through the Nevada legislative session.

Management Committee

The Management Committee of 4 members plus the Chapter Chair met bimonthly in 2020 to address managing the administrative matters of our growing chapter. Standing items in the agenda are: review of financial status, review of actuals vs. budget, staff matters, and capacity to accomplish the chapter work. The committee now oversees one full-time Chapter Director and (at half expense) a full-time organizer for the *Clean Transportation for All* campaign. The committee is instrumental in translating employee reviews to recommended salary raises. The Club’s national office made many changes and gave many directives during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, and the committee’s work was affected in ways such as employee evaluation. A remote working environment was established within the chapter, and it has proven effective in carrying forth the chapter’s work. We have retained the office space at Innevation, however, at reasonable cost. The committee tracked the repercussions of



the Club's entering into a labor bargaining agreement that affected most of the Club's staff; even though the Chapter Director is an "exempt" employee, the Club mandated a sizable salary increase in order to equalize pay across similar job levels. This increase will be funded by national only through 2021.

Early 2021 review of the 2020 actuals-versus-budget showed that overall the chapter will have met its budget targets within a few thousand dollars and that our overall fund balance (c3 + c4) has grown by nearly \$20K in 2020. Just after the close of 2020, the Management Committee approved a new intern policy that would allow the chapter to take advantage of this labor source to serve critical needs in one or more areas of our work. Given our success with remote working, there may be no geographical constraint on hiring interns.

Political Committee (TCPC)

The TCPC began its 2020 election cycle work in August 2019 and had four meetings before the end of 2019. As in previous election cycles, the phases for engaging in political committee work include: 1) election cycle preparation (committee structure, questionnaire updates, compliance guidelines, early endorsement recommendations to National), 2) candidate research and endorsements, 3) fund-raising – very little due to the pandemic this time, and 4) GOTV. This election cycle also included the largest national effort the Sierra Club has ever engaged in to help ensure the worst President in this nation's history (on many levels but particularly on environmental issues) was voted out of office. Many of the TCPC members participated in these efforts. Here are highlights from the 2020 election cycle:

- Early (2019) endorsement recommendations to National for all 3 southern NV congressional incumbents – obtaining all 3 endorsements by January 2020.
- Created TCPC Standing Rules – new in this election cycle per 2019 SC Political Compliance Guidelines.
- Organized National SC's Political Team Training in Las Vegas.
- Updated and provided questionnaires to candidates for Legislature, County Commissioner, City Council and School Board, and updated and sent National's Federal Questionnaire (NV's additional 2 questions) to CD2 primary winner candidate.
- Researched and evaluated questionnaire responses from 176 candidates for the above races, endorsed 47 of these state and local candidates and kept track of all these races in a spreadsheet.
- Prioritized the most critical races to effectively manage our GOTV efforts, and created a northern subcommittee for prioritizing northern races.
- Obtained National's endorsement for CD2 primary winner.
- Provided two volunteer training events (1 each in the north and south) to coordinate volunteers with the candidates on phone-banking, texting, sign distribution or whatever else priority candidates needed help with.



- The coordinated team, including 15 team members, spent well over 200 hours during the GOTV efforts. Due to the pandemic, canvassing was minimal but volunteers used texting, phoning, writing postcards, and doing non-contact literature drops.
- Many team members participated in National GOTV efforts to elect Biden/Harris through phone banking, texting and letter-writing.

- **76% of Sierra Club's endorsed candidates won in the 2020 election, including POTUS, 3 of Nevada's 4 congressional candidates, 5 of the 8 State Senators, 24 of the 31 State Assembly candidates, and 6 of the 7 local candidates in Washoe and Clark counties.**



Transportation Team

Over the last year, transportation has become a focal point for chapter advocacy in our region. This sector is the single leading source of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution in Nevada, and with two of the fastest warming cities in the nation (Las Vegas and Reno), there is no more time to waste in reforming our transportation systems to meet 21st Century needs. In addition, sprawl continues to threaten both Las Vegas and Reno. Reform is also needed in urban planning to reduce the need for single-vehicle travel in our cities. In short, we see transportation as the tantamount climate issue in the state.

To tackle these challenges, the Toiyabe Chapter formed a Transportation Team in fall of 2019 to bring together passionate transportation minds to help plan and execute our work in the state. This team has prioritized three main sectors for our advocacy: Public transportation and

urban planning; transportation electrification; and rail.

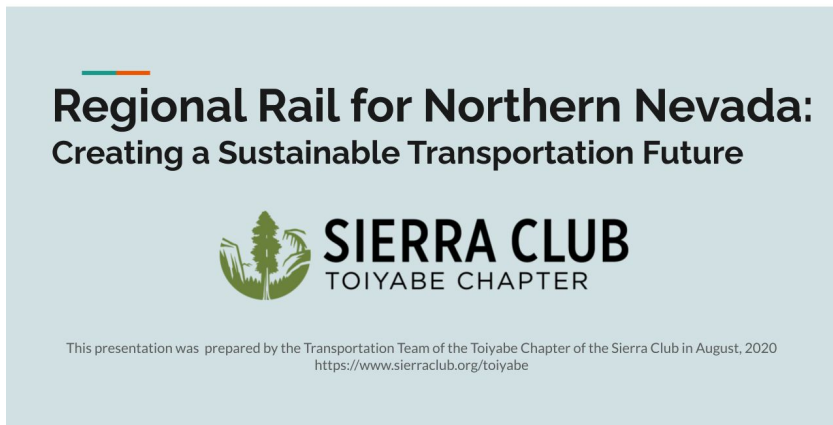
For all of our priorities, we are working to ensure the environmental injustices and carbon intensity of past planning practices are acknowledged and addressed as new solutions are adopted in the state. By working closely with the Nevada Environmental Justice Coalition, we have submitted multiple letters to local and state level agencies to call for inclusive public outreach that centers the needs



and voices of our communities when drafting new plans, and will continue to call for environmental justice to be addressed in all the work that we do in 2021.

Activities in 2020 included:

- Hosted eight educational webinars on climate, transportation, and air quality, these reached more than 1,700 people. You can find links to these webinars on our facebook page
- Submitted three letters opposing the Clark County Lands Bill (CCLB) and detailing the climate and environmental justice impacts of the sprawl this bill would bring, resulting in a



postponement of the bill's introduction in 2020

- Submitted two public outreach recommendation letters to Clark County and the state's Nevada Climate Initiative. These directly resulted in both programs adding spanish language options and offering public meetings at various times of day to meet all schedules
- Submitted ~20 public comments at various local and state level governing bodies
- Completed a slide presentation on passenger/commuter rail options in northern Nevada

Groups Accomplishments and Challenges

The Toiyabe Chapter encompasses 4 groups - Great Basin Group (GBG) in northern Nevada; Tahoe Area Group (TAG); Southern Nevada Group (SNG) in southern Nevada; and Range of Light Group in California's Mono and Inyo counties. Groups cover smaller geographic areas than the Chapter, and engage in more local activities and issues.

Great Basin Group

Six members make up the [GBG](#) ExCom, including Katy Christensen (Chair), David vonSeggern (Vice Chair), Roleigh Martin (Treasurer), Rob Jarret (Outings Chair), Rhonda Jarrett (Webmaster), and Paul Yohey. The ExCom meets on the first Tuesday of each month.



Despite the shutdown and its potential health and economic impacts on people everywhere, the Great Basin Group continues efforts locally in the Truckee Meadows and across northern Nevada region to protect our natural resources, wildlife, and public lands. Unrelenting pressures on our environment and public lands continue. Great Basin Group members continue to work on concerns related to mining projects, plans for a BLM proposal for sagebrush steppe restoration, and a proposal for Truckee Meadows Conservation Lands, among others.

In compliance with directions from the Sierra Club National Office and the state of Nevada, the Great Basin Group postponed all in-person outings, programs and meetings for most of 2020. However, David von Seggern facilitated an “On Your Own” 2021 New Year’s Day hike. Fifty-two people RSVPed. Seventy-nine people answered the survey, with a result of 319 miles. Comments and photos were posted on Meetup.

With the suspension of our Get Kids Outdoors (GKO) Programs, GBG is exploring other ways to support programs designed to engage young people in the outdoors.

Range of Light Group

[The Range of Light Group \(ROLG\)](#) engaged in a number of issues pertaining to the Eastern Sierra that are listed below. Engagement means submitting comments on NEPA or CEQA projects, doing research on projects, attending regular coalition meetings, field assessments, meeting with USFS and BLM staff, coordinating with other Sierra Club Chapters and committees, coordinating with other environmental groups and activists, and writing articles for newspapers and newsletters. We also made a presentation to the Mono County Board of Supervisors on FEMA funding for microgrids and SCE funding for battery systems. In addition, the group revamped its website and sent out two newsletters using the Sierra Club digital tools. The group also worked through HR to be able to hire a temporary media/outreach person and is in the process of reviewing applications.

- 30x30 planning with SC California
- 30x30 list for the Eastern Sierra
- JMT rename discussions and background research
- Solitude Canyon Trail project comments and push back
- Inyo County Road Easement project comments and push back
- Spring Peak Exploratory Drilling project field research and communications
- Hot Creek Exploratory Drilling project field research and articles
- Conglomerate Mesa coalition participation, rally planning, articles, field assessment
- Pine Creek Hydroelectric project research
- OVGA GSP tracking
- Keep Long Valley Green coalition participation and articles
- Bodie Hills Conservation Partnership participation, meetings, research
- Haiwee Pumped Storage project tracking



- Tioga Inn project comments and research
- Woolly's and MMSA Snowmaking Expansion projects comments and research
- Indian Wells Valley GSP comments, coordination with SC CA, questions to DWR
- Lower Owens River Project Annual Report and project review, comments, and meetings
- LADWP Mitigation Projects review, field assessments, coordination with allies
- WWEC Corridor tracking, meetings

Southern Nevada Group



[HERE](#), [HERE](#) and [HERE](#) are links to a three-part 2020 annual report prepared by the Southern Nevada Group (SNG). Some highlights:

- SNG's Executive Committee passed a resolution in support of Save Floyd Lamb Park's Action Group, who are challenging the Las Vegas City Council's development plans for the property;
- SNG's Executive Committee unanimously approved a resolution in support of "the initiative to establish the Avi Kwa Ami National Monument in Southern Nevada. The resolution was forwarded to the Toiyabe Chapter ExCom with a request for their support and a call for the National team to adopt the resolution as Sierra Club

policy.

- Through the first part of the year SNG's Political Committee worked to endorse candidates for state and local office in southern Nevada, then in September disbanded so that all members could take part in the Chapter's Coordinated Campaign through Election Day on November 3.
- Despite the cancellation of all official Sierra Club Outings since March, SNG Outings Chair Nick Saines came up with a way to help our trained leaders keep their skills up to date. He arranged with certified Red Cross instructor Steve Goldstein to offer an online First Aid/CPR Refresher Webinar on Wednesday, January 13. The two-hour Zoom session was attended by local SNG and ICO Outings Leaders as well as invited guests from Texas, Colorado, and California, thanks to Regional Coordinator Sergio Avila spreading the word.



Tahoe Area Group

- Before the pandemic put an end to in-person meetings and outings last March, we held two outreach and member meetings with speakers in January and February of 2020, one in South Lake Tahoe and one in Tahoe City.
- Tahoe Keys Invasive Weeds Proposed Test of Herbicides - Please see the report on this issue under the Conservation & Public Lands Section of this report entitled "Opposition to Tahoe Keys Herbicide Proposal."
- Washoe Meadows State Park - We continue to monitor how this park may be affected by plans to restore the Upper Truckee River in South Lake Tahoe. In August of 2020, TAG hosted a virtual Wildflower Walk with Lisa Berry, featuring the beautiful wildflowers of Washoe Meadows State Park. You can find Lisa's guide to a Washoe Meadows Wildflower Walk on our website.
<https://www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/tahoe/washoe-meadows-state-park>
- 5G Technology - We are keeping abreast of the latest reports on 5G Technology to ascertain whether or not the implementation of this technology will affect the Lake Tahoe Basin adversely.

This annual report was prepared in January 2021 by Toiyabe Chapter Chair Anne Macquarie, with sections contributed by Taj Ainley, Manny Beccera, Brian Beffort, Lynn Boulton, Janet Carter, Katy Christensen, Jo Ann Cobb, Connie Howard, Kait Kroluk, Cathy Schmidt, Lisa Tilzey, Tobi Tyler, Jasmin Vazin, and David von Seggern

