From the Chair

BY JEAN STOESS

Looking back at 2011

Members of the Toiyabe Chapter were involved in a variety of issues this year, some highly controversial and many involving time-consuming reading of reports, writing, lobbying, etc.

Our losses...

• we opposed the Nevada Dept. of Wildlife’s and the Wildlife Commission’s ill-advised bear hunt to no avail (however, see this page for National Sierra Club support of our position)
• members north and south testified before the Legislature and did media interviews against SB 271, the bill threatening to remove Nevada from the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, but we lost when it passed in the final 15 minutes of the Legislative session
• we sent a mailer to all Sierra Club members north and south to testify before hearings on this issue
• members north and south testified in opposition to the Southern Nevada Water Authority’s attempt to pipe water from central Nevada counties to Las Vegas
• we opposed the Nevada Dept. of Water Authority’s attempt to remove Nevada from the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (however, see this page for National Sierra Club support of our position)

On the positive side...

• the Chapter’s dedicated energy regulato-

Yet another good reason to enjoy and protect the Bodie Hills: their Fall colors! (Photo: Drew Foster.)

Joe Johnson wins Golden Pinecone Award

BY JEAN STOESS

“JOE JOHNSON WAS THE PIEED PIPER OF THE RENEWABLE power movement before it was fashionable. He has great institutional knowledge of what works and doesn’t work in renewable energy in the Legislature,” said emcee Assemblyman David Bobzien at Nevada Ecomet’s Golden Pinecone Ball on November 16 in Reno. Assemblyman Bobzien presented long-time Sierra Club member Joe Johnson with a Golden Pinecone plaque.

Nevada Ecomet cited Joe’s instrumental role in developing and guiding Nevada’s growing energy regulatory and incentive structure. They also lauded his representation of private non-profit interests in the Legislature and his service on the Nevada Environmental Commission.

This wasn’t Joe’s first public compliments of the week. Two days earlier, at a meeting of the Legislature’s Oversight Committee on TRPA, Senator John Lee unexpectedly called on Joe to speak about the Sierra Club’s position, and complimented him at length about his lobbying skills as the red-faced lobbyist walked to the podium.

Toiyabe Chapter and other Lake Tahoe lovers will rely heavily on Joe’s lobbying skills to keep us informed and effective in dealing with the legislative fallout from SB 271, the bill threatening to remove Nevada from the TRPA.

Chapter & Group

2011 election results

BY JEAN STOESS

OUR CHAPTER’S 2012 EXCOM HAS three new faces and broader geographical representation for the coming year. Election Committee members Jean Stoess, David von Seggern, and Mary Winston counted the ballots returned on December 11 at Marge Sill’s house in Reno and released the results the following day.

Chapter Excom results. New members of the Chapter Excom are Laurel Ames, K.C. Brekken, and Laura Cunningham. Erik Holland and David Hornbeck were re-elected. These newly elected and re-elected Sierra Clubbers will join incumbent Excom members

Joe Johnson accepting the Golden Pinecone Award from Assemblyman David Bobzien (left). (Photo: Dave Hornbeck.)

National Sierra Club Wildlife Committee opposes Nevada bear hunt

The statement below was prepared by Renee Owens, M.Sc. for the September 2011 Nevada Wildlife Commission Meeting.

We, The Sierra Club Wildlife & Endangered Species Committee, are writing this letter to inform you (Stake Board of Wildlife Commissioners) of the position adopted by the Wildlife & Endangered Species Committee of the National Sierra Club in regard to your Board’s proposal to support a continuing annual black bear hunt in the state of Nevada. Please enter our comments into the public record.

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FROM THE CHAIR . . .

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Committee meets by teleconference every Tuesday evening and digests reams of material about energy, particularly renewable energy
work continues on issues begun in previous years, such as the Ruby Pipeline, conservation, wildlife, wilderness, public lands, water quality and availability
work also continues on administrative tasks such as fundraising, public relations, internal elections, and political campaigns
our four vibrant groups have interesting and well-attended programs and activities, which include outings, meetings, fun get-togethers
all the above information continues to be available from our Toiyabe Trails newsletter, both in hard copy and on the internet
It has been a busy year for me as Chair Chiar, and I am honored to have served with so many knowledgeable and dedicated Sierra Club people.

NEVADA BEAR HUNT . . .

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After careful consideration and investigation of all the information at hand, we strongly oppose the pending authorization by the Wildlife Commission of an annual black bear hunt in Nevada, based on the following:
1. The Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) has not satisfactorily met the burden of proof that an annual hunt of the resident black bear population is sustainable.
2. There is no evidence to show that either by direct action or by the utilization of fees collected for hunting permits that an annual hunt will reduce the number of nuisance bear incidents.

EXCOM ELECTION . . .

continued from page 1

Ann Brauer, Jane Feldman, Launce Rake, and Mary Winston at the January 21 Excom meeting in Las Vegas.

Great Basin Group ExCom results.
Those elected to Great Basin Group’s ExCom are Jeff Hardcastle, Jon Hunley, Martin Mace, and Graham Stafford.

Range of Light Group ExCom results. Members elected to the Range of Light Excom are Lesley Bruns, Sandra Burnside, and Michael Shore.

The first four highest vote-getters of Southern Nevada Group’s new ExCom were elected to two-year terms, are Taj Ainlay, Jr., Jane Feldman, Eric King, and Brian Fadde.
Gecko Benjamin and Scott Stevens were elected to one-year terms.

Toiyabe Trails
SERVING NEVADA
& CALIFORNIA’S E. SIERRA

Toiyabe Trails is published four times each year by the Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club, P.O. Box 8096, Reno, NV 89507, to help keep our members well-informed and better able to protect the environment—for our families, for our future.

Editor — Lynne Foster (94 Mountain View Drive, Swall Meadows, Bishop, CA 93514-9207; 760-387-2634; foster@schat.net).

Assoc. Editor — Kathy Moses (760-938-2050). Kathy usually does one issue each year.

Deadlines  — Contributions are due by the 1st of the month for publication in the following month’s issue: December 1 for January-February-March; March 1 for April-May-June; June 1 for July-August-September; September 1 for October-November-December.

Submissions — Call or e-mail editor before deadline for late submissions. Submit news, story ideas, photos, and letters-to-the-editor to the editor (contact info above). Please include your name, phone, e-mail address, and group with all contributions. Please send your contributions by e-mail. If you don’t have a computer, please ask a friend to help you. For photo return, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The Toiyabe Trails reserves the right to edit all contributions for reasons of space, clarity, slander, or libel.

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Change of address  — Postmaster & Members, please send address changes to Sierra Club, Change of Address, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80302-2968 or <address.changes@sierraclub.org>.

Membership information  — There is a membership coupon in each issue of Toiyabe Trails. You can also call the Chapter Membership Chair (see Chapter Directory, this page) or the Sierra Club office in San Francisco (415-977-5633).

Other Sierra Club information. Call the Toiyabe Chapter Chair or Conservation Chair (see Chapter Directory, this page) or the Sierra Club Information Center in San Francisco (415-977-5633). Also, see group pages for website addresses of groups.
In Memoriam

Elden Hughes

Years ago, Elden Hughes, accompanied by his wife Patty, prowled the halls of Congress with rescued desert tortoises in their care, speaking out for the protection of the Mojave Desert. The tortoises were the come-on, the words came from him as Chair of the California Nevada Conservancy. He foresaw the opportunity to combine car camping, day hiking, exploring, and service in a relatively unknown wilderness. Leader: Craig Deutsche (310-477-6670, craig.deutsche@gmail.com).

JAN. 20-22 (FRI-SUN)
DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK WILDERNESS RESTORATION
Join Ca/NV wilderness committee and Mojave Group’s annual service trip with the Needles office of BLM. For this patriotic greening of the desert, we’ll return to the Whipple Mountains, home of the elusive saguaro cactus. Central commissioners, usually exorbitant fee. Actual work project details still a secret, to be revealed to those who sign up with leader Vicky Hoover, (415-977-5527, Vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org).

JAN. 28-29 (SAT-SUN)
WINTER ESCAPE IN CARRIZO PLAIN
Combine a day of assistance to Carrizo National Monument with a dash of sightseeing and/or hiking. Weather can be cold, gray, and rainy, or it can be warm and bright — we take your chances. The service will be in removing or modifying fences to give stronghorn more mobility on the Plain. Recreation will be determined by the group’s wishes. An opportunity to combine car camping, day hiking, exploring, and service in a relatively unknown wilderness. Leader: Craig Deutsche (craighughes@sierraclub.org, 310-477-6670).

FEB. 18-20 (SAT-MON)
EXPLORE & SERVE IN GRASS VALLEY WILDERNESS
Slightly east and south of Ridgecrest, CA, Grass Valley Wilderness was created in 1994. It features rolling hills and a few higher rock outcroppings. As it is no longer available for grazing we will join a group of college age SCA interns in returning old fence poles and disguising an illegal (repport.org), a publication sent to local, state, and national political leaders and bureaus as well as many of you. Check out the early issues for Elden’s columns.

One of my favorite Elden sayings on land protection is: “Get what you can, can what you get, and sit on the can.” My favorite statement about Elden came from a corporate insider attending a hearing in Los Angeles at which the water resources of the Mojave were up for grabs. Reportedly, that guy was overheard whispering to another corporate type, “This man is dangerous.”

— by Cal French

Sierra Club California/Nevada Regional Conservation Committee

JAN. 20-22 (FRI-SUN)
DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK WILDERNESS RESTORATION
Come help restore wilderness values in this beautiful and remote desert area. Work with Death Valley Wilderness Coordinator, Charlie Callagan. Past projects have included re-landscaping former OHV routes now in wilderness, trail repair, and cleaning up around historic cabins. Meet early Friday afternoon and begin working. Happy hour potluck Saturday night. Friday and Saturday night camping may be primitive or may be in one of the Park’s campgrounds. Leader: Kate Allen (kj.allen96@gmail.com, 661-944-4056).

CNRCC Desert Committee

MARCH 3-4 (SAT-SUN)
DEATH VALLEY AREA TOUR
Meet in Shoshone, S of Death Valley, at 8 am Saturday morning, or camp overnight near by. Tour will take you to stops at Badwater, Natural Bridge, Golden Canyon, and Artist’s Palette. Short hikes and lunch stop along the way. Camp Saturday night at Texas Springs (fee). Sunday morning, visit Zabriskie Point, then drive through 20 Mile Team Canyon. Continue to Death Valley Junction, then to Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge. If time allows, go south to Amargosa Canyon and China Ranch for a hike and date shakes. For those wanting to stay over Sunday night there will be primitive camping in the area and we could do more hiking in Amargosa Canyon. For reservations and trip details, contact leader: Carol Wiley (desertfly1@verizon.net, 760-245-8734).

MARCH 16-18 (FRI-SUN)
WHITTLE MOUNTAINS DESERT SERVICE
Join Ca/NV wilderness committee and Mojave Group’s annual service trip with the Needles office of BLM. For this patriotic greening of the desert, we’ll return to the Whipple Mountains, home of the elusive saguaro cactus. Central commissioners, usually exorbitant fee. Actual work project details still a secret, to be revealed to those who sign up with leader Vicky Hoover, (415-977-5527, Vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org).

DONNER SUMMIT’S CLAIR TAPPAAN Lodge is a great place to call home for winter fun. World-class downhill and cross-country skiing are only five minutes away via a free shuttle service. Sledding, snowshoeing, and miles of groomed cross-country trails are right outside the back door, ready and waiting.

Equipment rentals! CTL’s Rental Shop provides some of the newest models in ski and snowshoe gear. There, the friendly staff can set you up for a great day out. On weekends, take a cross-country ski lesson from the Lodge’s resident expert, or enjoy the rush as you zoom down the famous sledding hill.

Hot food! When your mittens are soggy and you’re done for the day, a roaring fireplace, a mug of cocoa, and a hearty meal await you in the dining room. In fact, every day, The Lodge creates delicious family-style meals for both breakfast and dinner. In the mornings, The Lodge puts out a generous spread on a “make-your-own-lunch” table allowing guests to take along a nutritious option and skip the $18 ski resort chili.

Relaxing & lively recreation! After dinner, there’s plenty to entertain. Enjoy the grand fireplace and sweeping views of Mt. Disney, cozy up with a novel by the Library’s woodstove or battle it out on the ping-pong table. Have fun with a board game or star-gaze to your heart’s content. Finish the evening off with a soak in the bubbling, open-air hot tub.

Take a very affordable winter wonderland break! At Clair Tappaan Lodge your mountain home away from home is the perfect winter escape on snowshoe gear. Take your family, bring your girlfriend or your grandkids; bring your skis, snowshoes, a good book, and a bottle of wine. The slopes are open, the weather is perfect, and it’s time to make the pilgrimage to the snow.

Whatever you love about winter, you’ll find it in and around Clair Tappaan Lodge, your mountain home away from home.

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Sierra Club Clair Tappaan Lodge
Your mountain home away from home
Range of Light Reflections

Letter from the Chair
BY MALCOLM CLARK (wmalcolm.clark@gmail.com)

ExCom. Our next meeting is Monday, January 16, 5:15 pm. In January we’ll welcome new ExCom members Sandy Burnside, Lesley Bruns, and Mike Shore. Thanks to outgoing members Brigitte Berman, Rosemary Jarrett, and Mary K. Prentice. See details below.

Conservation Committee. Next meeting is likely to be on January 9, at Mary Kay Prentice’s home. Confirm date/time before coming. Conservation issues go to the Conservation Committee before being put on the ExCom’s action agenda. The committee is working on a check list/guide to help in evaluating environmental effects of projects that come to our attention.(mkp@npgcable.com).

Program Meetings. In September, Bill Burke told us about his 2009 ascent of Mt. Everest from the south, Nepal side of the mountain. He became the oldest American to climb the highest mountain in the world! He also told us about his coming 2012 effort to summit from both the Nepal & Tibet sides.

In October, Urs Willmann told us about his experience of building a straw bale house in Bridgeport.

In November, District Ranger Jon Regebrugge updated us on Inyo National Forest (INF) matters, including decrease in funding, fire policy, and OHV staging areas at Shady Rest.

Outings Chairs Needed. Winter outings begin in January. A committee of outings leaders has planned our January-February-March winter outings. ROL needs both summer and winter Outings Chairs – please let us know if you’d like to step into either of these very important positions!

Conservation.
- Bodie Hills. Continuing efforts to preserve the Bodie Hills.
- Owens Lake Bed Master Plan. A draft is expected by late December.
- Inyo National Forest land exchanges. A proposal from INF would give Mammoth Mountain ownership of much of major facilities land in exchange for a number of properties including the “Cunningham” property at Mono Lake.
- Tufa State Reserve at Mono Lake. A promising proposal to enable the Reserve to stay open involves the Bodie Foundation collecting a parking fee at the Old Marina, with the funds then being used to operate the reserve.
- Inyo National Forest road closures. Implementation of road closures specified in the motorized Travel Management Plan has caused

ROL ExCom meetings

We usually meet on a Monday in January, April, July, and October. Tentatively, our next meeting is January 16, 5:15 pm, at Malcolm Clark’s home. All are welcome but please confirm date, place and time (Malcolm Clark, 760-924-5639 or rangeoflight.sc@gmail.com), as meeting dates frequently are changed in order to assure a quorum at the meeting or because of weather.

Range of Light Group

Group News

OFFICERS

Chair: Malcolm Clark*  760-924-5639
Vice Chair: Open
Secretary: Mary K. Prentice*  760-934-6355
Treasurer: Mary Ann Dunigan  760-648-7109
At-Large: Mauricio Anderson*  760-648-7109
At-Large: Lesley Bruns  760-648-7109
At-Large: Mary Ann Dunigan  760-648-7109
At-Large: Lisa Button  760-648-7109
At-Large: Joan Dillingham  760-648-7109
At-Large: Sue Foster  760-648-7109
At-Large: Sheila Genevieve  760-934-9688
At-Large: Carolyn Helms  760-934-9688
At-Large: Lesley Bruns  760-648-7109
At-Large: Mary Ann Dunigan  760-648-7109
At-Large: Joan Dillingham  760-648-7109
At-Large: Sue Foster  760-648-7109
At-Large: Sheila Genevieve  760-934-9688
At-Large: Carolyn Helms  760-934-9688

Group Web site

http://nevada.sierraclub.org Rolgroup

&

Chapter web site

http://toiyabe.sierraclub.org

Range of Light Calendar

CROSS COUNTRY SKI & SNOWSHOE CONDITIONING & EXPLORATION TOURS

BY JOHN WALTER, WINTER OUTINGS LEADER

Get out your snow dances and invoke your favorite snow gods. After a promising early November storm or two, the storm track moved north, then south, leaving us not much more than a dusting of great powder over rocks. Then December brought the winds that blew what was left all the way to Texas. BUT, based on last year’s gigantic snows under the same La Niña conditions we are optimistically planning for another great season.

The basic winter outing schedule will be the same as the last few years: short conditioning trips on Thursdays (through April) with everybody welcome regardless of skill level, longer more demanding trips on Sunday (switching tentatively to Saturdays in May), requiring at least strong beginner skills.

Unless otherwise noted, Thursday and Sunday trips will meet at 10 am at the parking lot behind the Union Bank in Mammoth. There may be a secondary meeting area closer to the trailhead, so check your ROL e-mail newsletter, the ROL website, or call a leader. Abominable Weather Automatically Cancels. We will pick the final itineraries and leaders depending on snow conditions and leader availability as the winter progresses, then publish them in the local media, in the ROL e-newsletter and on the ROL web site (http://nevada.sierraclub.org/rolgroup). For more information (including whether dogs are allowed), call the leader listed or John Walter (salt1143@gmail.com, 760-934-1767), Jean Dillingham (dillinghamjean@gmail.com, 760-648-7109) or Mary Kay Prentice (mkp@npgcable.com, 760-934-0355).

Thursday Morning Outings. These generally cover 3-5 miles and last about 2.5 hours, but are flexible depending on the strength and desires of the group. We concentrate on conditioning, technique, and learning about our local natural history and conservation issues. All skill levels welcome. We like to help beginners get started. Bring water, snack, ski equipment or snow shoes, sunscreen, sun glasses, hat, gloves, and layered clothing.

Sunday Outings. These generally cover 5-7 miles and are back about 3 pm. Intermediate or advanced beginner skill levels and endurance required. Snowshoers must be able to keep up – but based on past experience this is usually not a problem, particularly uphill. Most of these trips will spend some or most of the time off groomed trails. If you’re unsure of your abilities try a Thursday morning trip first. Dress

You’re Invited!

Range of Light Group Monthly Meetings

Everyone welcome!

Please note the following changes: the Crowley potluck now begins at 6:15 and the program begins at 7 pm.

For all potlucks bring your own non-disposable table setting. (We only provide table settings for the speaker.) For months with a program, you are welcome to skip the potluck and come only for the program. There are no potlucks allowed when we meet at the Mammoth Community Library but you are sometimes asked to bring “finger food” – appetizers or desserts.

January 17 (Tuesday)
Social & Movie Night. 6:15 pm
Mammoth Lakes Library (no food, please)
Movie: Earth Days, 6:30 pm
“Earth Days” traces the origins of the modern environmental movement through the eyes of nine Americans who propelled the movement from its beginnings in the 1950s to its moment of triumph in 1970 with the original Earth Day — and to its status as a major political force in America.

February 21 (Tuesday)
Social & Movie Night. 6:15 pm
Mammoth Lakes Library (no food, please)
Movie: Ansel Adams, 6:30 pm
“Ansel Adams” traces the growth of an awkward, nervous, home-school boy from the discovery of his precocious talent for music to his world wide recognition as a nature photographer. A documentary film written and directed by Ric Burns and co-produced by Sierra Club Productions and Steeplechase Films.

March 20 (Tuesday)
Potluck & Social Night 6:15 pm
New Crowley Lake Community Ctr (meet to Crowley Lake Store)
Please bring a dish for 6-8 people. Program: 7 pm
“Two Weddings, a Funeral, & a Festival, or How We Are One Horse, Two Cows & One Sheep” is a travel narrative by Nancy and John Walters relating their most recent travels in Kyrgyzstan.

3
in layered clothing and be prepared for changeable weather. Bring sunscreen, sunglasses, hat, gloves, lunch, water, and ski or snowshoe equipment.

**Leading & specialty outings**

This year we will have a greater variety of leaders and more specialty outings such as winter survival, snowshoe trips, GPS navigation, and (by popular request) some no-dog trips.

We intend to expand our itinerary of trips beyond our long-time favorites of Shady Rest, Obsidian Dome, Red Fir Forest (part of the newly designated Owens River Headwaters wilderness addition), San Joaquin Ridge, Inyo Craters, and the lower slopes of the Sherwins. Recent additions are the areas behind Sunny Slopes leading over to the Owens Gorge and the slopes leading north through the Aspens from Conway Summit. If you have a favorite trip you’d like us to schedule, call one of the contacts listed above as soon as practical and we’ll do our best to try and work it in, particularly if you are one of the many who have participated in our leadership training and can help lead the outing. The Thursday conditioning outings are a great chance to hone your leadership skills by teaming up with one of our old timers.

**Some Highlights**

**Feb 19 & March 25 (Sunday)**

**Mono Basin Trips.** Naturalist-ranger supreme, Janet Carle, will lead trips in the Mono Basin area – for example, Lundy Canyon, Lakeshore tour, and/or Conway Summit.

**Feb 25-26 (Saturday & Sunday).**

**Winter Survival Workshop.** Led by Eric Blumensaat, Toiyabe Chapter Outings Chair, ski patroller, and backcountry skier. Saturday we will have a sit-down and audiovisual session and Sunday we’ll practice in the snow as part of our regular Sunday tour. Details to follow. Phone or e-mail for more information.

**March 18 (Sunday)**

Easy Snowshoe along Rock Creek to the Lodger. New ROL ExCom member Sandy Burnside and her husband Keith will guide this trip of about 5 mi RT, 500 ft gain. Meet 9:30 am to turnoff to Tom’s Place along Hwy 395. Carpool 6 mi to Sno-Park kiosk ($5 parking fee). Bring water, snack, snowshoes, sunscreen, sunglasses, hat, gloves, layered clothing. Ski option may be available. Leaders: Janet Dillingham, Sandy Burnside, Mei Kwan, Keith Burnside. Call 760-935-4004 or e-mail kburnsides@aol.com for updates, questions, and to confirm trip status. (Check the April-May June 2012 Trials for information on the Burnside’s April 15 snowshoe-only outing at Hilton Creek).

**General Trip Information**

Check with leader or above contact information if you are bringing a dog, as some trips will be no-dog. Most track or touring cross-country skis will do fine, but waxless pattern skis seem to be easiest. The new lightweight snowshoes are generally preferred. Rental equipment is available all over Mammoth in case you can’t find the pine tar for those old boards.

All trips give participants a chance to familiarize themselves with the natural history of the area and local conservation issues. We can judge the impacts of global warming by the depth and duration of the snow while mitigating the impacts by converting snowmobilers to the quiet sports.

Because many of our local wild critters, like the elusive pine marten, are nocturnal, winter snow tracks are often the only evidence of their presence. The first set of weasel tracks spotted on a trip will earn the sighter a Sierra Club t-shirt.

**Mule Packing: How to gain weight & enjoy it**

**BY LYNN LIVELY**

As an old backpacker (both in experience and age), I pride myself on being Tough. I sleep on the ground, wear the same filthy clothes for a week, eat jerky and string cheese meal after meal, and have survived for seven days with just the thirty-five pounds on my back.

But, last year in the Sierra my travels took me by a campsite where the people were sitting (be still, my heart) on chairs! They had a lantern for light and (heavy) cans of food were lying around on a table. The lovely ruby color even that was increased when the time got close. And that weight didn’t include the group dinners, group toilet, stoves, etc. Packing was a joy. Big tent? Take it! Second set of nylon pants? Make it three! Camp shoes? But of course.

**In this photo of an E. Sierra mule pack outing sponsored by Angeles Chapter, two of us are from ROL: Roberta MacIntosh and Rosemary Jarrett. Here, enroute to Summit Lake, we are holding a replica of an historic Sierra Club banner that Peter Ireland carried on the six-day mule trip just so we could have this great picture! Photo by Rosemary Jarrett.**

**Mammoth Yosemite Airport: History, technical, & safety issues**

**BY STEPHEN KALISH**

The Mammoth-Yosemite airport east of Mammoth Lakes along US 395 was originally an emergency airstrip for the U.S. Army Air Corps. Since that time, the airport has traveled a bumpy road.

**1970s: Mammoth-Yosemite airport owned by Mammoth Mountain.** The Mountain could not make a go of the airport, and sold it to Mono County. During this time the runway was extended to the east. Federal grants provided certain lands for the airport.

**1991: Town of Mammoth Lakes buys airport.** In 1991, the Town - - which had been incorporated in the mid-1980s -- bought the airport from Mono County with the idea of making Mammoth a destination resort. Regional air service was successful for a few years, but ended in 1995. The Town was able to restore regional air service, but not service to remote airports. In fact, most destination travelers do not fly to rural airports, but use ground transportation from big-city airports. Failure to recognize that rural airports get mostly regional travel instead the Town’s failure to get destination visitors.


2002: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approves incorrect 2002 layout. The approval included a grant for about $31 million, with 10% matching funds from the Town. The Town was responsible for land side improvements such as a new terminal and parking lots, estimated at about $10 million. These costs are in 2000 dollars, and are obsolete now because of the wrong layout and the recent jump in construction costs.

The approval and the funding were challenged by the State of California and others and have been overturned by a federal court.

2007: Small regional terminal begins service. After the above plan failed, a small regional terminal was built and regional air service began in late 2007 (after the runway was repaved).

2011: Technical questions & upgrades of airport. Currently (December, 2011) the airport’s critical design aircraft, the C-III Q400, exceeds the B-III airport reference code (ARC) rating for the airport. The Town has a draft Airport Layout Plan (ALP) which proposes asking the FAA to approve numerous and significant modifications to standards to do a paper upgrade of the airport.

After numerous technical questions were raised by local Sierra Club members, the Town is working to resolve compatibility issues between the “small” airport and “large” aircraft.

The trip was wonderful. The leaders did an excellent job of managing the camp and us. The hikers were compatible, and a good time was had by all. Do I recommend mule packing? Absolutely.

Here are a couple of tips from my first-timer’s perspective.

1. Rent a second bear canister from the Forest Service for $7 per week. That way you have plenty of room for toiletries and crunchy goodies. What do you care? It only weighs two pounds!! Throw it in.

2. Consider signing up with a buddy if at all possible. On our trip, the days were not organized. Most of our group wanted to scramble and do cross-country work that didn’t particularly appeal to me as a retired climber. But luckily I had my compatible buddy, Sarah, along. We had a blast exploring the trails and our deepened friendship is one of my fondest memories of the trip.

3. Be aware that your seven-day trip may require eight days of your time. It is usually possible to drive home dead-tired the day you hike out, but an early morning hiking start may require traveling to your meeting point the day before. It did for us.

Please see MULE PACK SCHEDULE, page 11.

**LETTER FROM CHAIR . . . continued from page 4**

much outcry by some OHV enthusiasts.

**Other.** Mike Schlaffman, the Inyo National Forest deputy district ranger in Mammoth Lakes, has left for a position the Mt. Baker-Snoqulamie National Forest outside of Seattle.

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**Range of Light Calendar**

continued from page 4
Pine Forest Wilderness Bill. Introduced in both the Senate and the House on November 2 by the entire Nevada delegation. Now we are waiting for the committee hearings and passage of the bill. This will be the first wilderness designated in Nevada for several years, and is the result of great work by Jim Jeffress, retired Nevada Wildlife biologist.

Jim put together a coalition of environmentalists, hunters, ranchers, ORV enthusiasts, and community activists to come up with a proposal that was unanimously passed by the Humboldt County Commission and endorsed by the Legislature and the Governor. The 25,000 acres of wilderness designated encompass Blue Lakes Wilderness Study Area and most of the Alder Creek WSA. This bill will assure the protection of some of the most beautiful wildlands in Northwest Nevada.

Gold Butte NCA? Although no bill has yet been introduced for a Gold Butte National Conservation Area with wilderness, there has been a great deal of community support for such a bill. Legislation is needed to protect an area of great cultural resources and startling desert beauty from illegal vandalism and unwise vehicular use. We are hoping 2012 will be the year of Gold Butte.

Sheldon Wildlife Refuge. November 8 was the deadline for comments on the Sheldon Wildlife Refuge’s Comprehensive Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The final EIS and plan should be released to the public sometime next spring. This plan will guide the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in their management of the Sheldon for the next 15 years. The Sheldon is the home of a large pronghorn population, pygmy rabbits, sage grouse, and other wildlife that need a well-managed habitat to survive.

Pine Cone Ball. The Ball was held in Reno on Nov. 16. Steve Smith, Wilderness Coordinator for the Nevada Bureau of Land Management, was honored with a Golden Pine Cone for his 39-years of work making sure that wilderness and potential wilderness on our vast public lands was protected and managed properly. Steve was nominated enthusiastically for this award by the Wilderness Committee of the Toiyabe Chapter and by Friends of Nevada Wilderness.

IN A TREMENDOUS OUTPOURING of effort, the Great Basin Water Network (GBWN) marshalled its resources to present its vigorous protest case to the Nevada State Engineer throughout six weeks of water hearings in Carson City.

Why groundwater should NOT be pumped. The GBWN attorneys presenting the Sierra Club and 327 other protesters provided the principal testimony to the State Engineer on why the 25 applications of the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) to pump groundwater in four rural valleys in eastern Nevada could not be approved.

GBWN argued that SNWA were to pump its requested 41 billion gallons of groundwater, it would:

1) unsustainably mine ancient groundwater aquifers
2) cause unacceptable water table drawdowns, subsidence, and desertification
3) take water from existing water users, especially in Cave, Delamar, and Dry Lake Valleys
4) harm Great Basin National Park

GBWN experts also questioned the current need for pumping the rural groundwater and SNWA’s ability to finance the project as well as SNWA’s ineffective monitoring, management and mitigation (MMM) proposals. For these and many more reasons, we pointed out how approving the applications would harm the public interest.

Indian tribes & others add their voices. Other strong protest cases were presented by three Nevada Indian tribes who argued that Spring Valley remains a critical part of their tribal cultural and traditional uses. They argued that pumping would:

1) destroy vegetation
2) destroy wildlife habitat
3) compromise ceremonial sites

Vegetation which would be lost includes the groves of swamp cedars in the valley bottom (sites of historic massacres) as well as many ceremonial sites sacred to the tribes. Tribal attorneys also argued that Federal agencies’ lack of consultation with the tribes on federal agreements with SNWA on MMM violated federal trust responsibilities.

Many other organizations also conveyed their official opposition to the project, including the Great Basin National Park Foundation and the Nevada Wildlife Commission. In a unanimous vote these organizations were supported by representatives of County Game Advisory Boards all over the state.

The Latter Day Saints (Mormon) Church-owned Cleveland-Rogers Ranch in Spring Valley demonstrated how its vested water rights, which date back to before Nevada became a state or before the state had any laws on groundwater, would be directly harmed by pumping at 12 of SNWA’s well sites, mostly in northern Spring Valley.

Millard and Juab Counties of Utah and the Long Now Foundation also provided expert witnesses on how pumping in Spring Valley would adversely affect water rights and the environment in the downflow parts of Snake Valley. They also noted that the MMM proposals are woefully inadequate to address impacts of groundwater mining in Spring Valley.

Citizen testimonies & SNWA arguments. On October 11, 2011, nearly a hundred citizens from all over the state testified to the State Engineer about their concerns about the impacts of SNWA’s project on their livelihoods, their communities, wildlife, and wildlife habitat in the four valleys, and how Las Vegas, with its depressed economy, did not need rural groundwater to be pumped and could not afford to pay for the project.

SNWA attorneys argued that there was plenty of available water and no pumping impacts which couldn’t be managed. Patricia Mulroy, SNWA director, testified that if the applications were approved (by the State Engineer and by the Bureau of Land Management for a pipeline right-of-way), the project would stop three proposed coal plants in Nevada. The Sierra Club has already Please see CLEAN ENERGY, page 11.

The huge fight to prevent a water disaster in Nevada

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**Mammoth Yosemite Airport expansion**

COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS at Mammoth Yosemite Airport, owned and operated by the Town of Mammoth Lakes, have expanded steadily since beginning with one Horizon Airline turboprop Q400 flight from LA in 2007. This regional service followed the abandonment of a large airport that envisioned long-haul direct flights using 187-passenger Boeing 757 aircraft. The change in approach came after the Sierra Club and others challenged the adequacy of the environmental review. Major issues included noise over National Parks and Wilderness as well as growth-inducing impacts.

**Inadequacies & possible conflicts at airport.** This year there are up to seven daily flights in the ski season and one flight the rest of the year. To help relieve congestion at the small terminal, a sprung structure (think tent like at Little Eagle) was recently installed. In addition to the terminal inadequacies, Stephen Kalish and Owen Maloy of ROL have identified potential conflicts between the current airport layout and FAA regulations that they feel should be corrected.

**Save the Date!**

March 15-16, 2012

**Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conference**

FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS, the Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conferences have brought together a diverse group of attendees from labor, environmental, and industry to discuss solutions for a green economy that will create good green jobs. It’s important that we, the environmental community, be well-represented to give environmental perspectives on community, be well-represented to give environmental perspectives on current & future passenger traffic.

**About 25,000 enplanements (people boarding flights) are anticipated this year — up from 18,000 last year. Planning documents utilize the MMSA consultant’s estimate of about 90,000 enplanements in five years and about 105,000 in 20 years. Many feel this forecast is overly aggressive and may lead to foolish decisions in terms of airport and terminal expansion.**

**ROL Group actions.** The Group is closely monitoring the technical details of the airport layout, compliance with FAA regulations, and enplanement forecasts. As planning progresses we anticipate commenting on cumulative impacts on environmental issues, particularly noise (with an emphasis on overflights of parks and other public lands), visual impacts, sage grouse and other wildlife, air and water quality, and growth-inducing impacts. We want to insure any further expansion is done in an environmentally responsible manner. Stay tuned.

**What you can do.** The airport layout plan and narrative, the enplanement forecast, and the terminal design study are currently under review by the Town staff. We encourage members to attend planned public workshops and hearings.

— contributed by Range of Light Group Conservation Committee

**Great Basin Group promotes single-stream recycling**

BY DAVID VON SEGGERN

Our regional trash collector, Waste Management, Inc. (WMI), has proposed a single-stream method of recycling pickup for Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County. We currently sort recyclables into green and yellow bins for curbside pickup. WMI would replace these bins with one large, wheeled container (similar to that for regular refuse) for all recyclables and would expand the list of materials to be placed in it. The contents would then be sorted at a central Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). In assessing a pilot project two years ago, WMI reported a twofold increase in participation in curbside recycling and a threefold increase in the volume of recycling materials.

Although recycling purists have issues with single-stream recycling, some of these issues are addressed by having a modern, well-equipped, and well-operated MRF which will cleanly separate materials into their respective types for eventual sale back into the manufacturing stream. WMI plans to build a new $25 million MRF in Reno on land already purchased.

The Great Basin Group ExCom voted for a resolution to support adoption of single-stream recycling in our region. We have started a campaign to influence our elected officials to adopt this technology and to sway the public to support its adoption. One striking point is a possible increase in the recycling fee on residents’ bills. We strongly advocate that this new technology should be brought to our area at no increased cost to residents who will be recycling more and should not be dinged for doing so.

If you support single-stream recycling, visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/pages/Northern-Nevadans-for-Single-Stream-Recycling/291048197596163. Please “like” us. Additional description of the proposed technology is available at the WMI at www.truckeenewadesrecycling.com. Contact David von Seggern at vonseg1@sbcglobal.net for more information on this campaign.

**Mono Lake’s State Park is off the closure list!**

AFTER A SIX-MONTH GRASS-roots public effort, the Mono Lake Tufa State Natural Reserve has been officially removed from California’s 70-park closure list. For Mono Lake friends and supporters this is certainly a moment to be thankful for, and cause for celebration.

Upon hearing the news our Board of Directors Chair, Sally Gaines, said, “This is the best Christmas present we could ever wish for.” I couldn’t agree more! Over 4000 letters and petition signatures were hand-delivered by the Committee to decision makers in Sacramento. This huge show of public support, combined with dedicated work from our Committee team, led directly to this success.

You can read more details in the MonoLogue at www.monomonologue.org.

With Mono Lake off the state park closure list, now is a perfect time to make plans to visit the lake’s unique tufa towers and scenic views, either this winter or with the migratory birds next summer.

— from the Mono Lake Committee

**TrailSafe: Long slog to trap regulation**

BY TRISH SWAIN (INFO@TRAILSAFE.ORG)

TrailSafe Nevada, <www.trailsafe.org>, seeks regulation of leghold, snare, and body-crushing traps within Firearms Congested Areas of Washoe County. The intent is public safety: to prevent accidental trapping of pets or unintended wildlife. Where it is unsafe to discharge a firearm, TrailSafe maintains it is unsafe to set indiscriminate traps which only need be visited every 96 hours — four days. Regulations on trapper trapping in congested areas of Washoe and Clark Counties by the end of June, but all specific provisions were amended out of the bill. Therefore the Wildlife Commission is mandated to regulate trapping in congested areas of Washoe and Clark Counties by the end of June.
the general public about the importance of energy conservation. The overall goal of the committee is to help educate our membership and present their ideas for a committee to focus on energy conservation efforts.

Energy conservation can be approached in a number of ways which can be implemented at the individual level, especially at home. The group has already been participating in the Chapter’s Energy Task Force with Jeff Hardcastle, Marge Sill, and Bob Tregillus participating in those calls.

Because this is a revitalizing of the Energy Committee, we are looking for a meeting space and the best times to meet. If you are interested in helping increase energy efficiency, the Beyond Coal Campaign, or renewable energy, please contact Jeff Hardcastle at jefhh2010@gmail.com.

MT. GRANT, AT 11,259 FEET, IS THE highest point in the Wassuk Range and high point of Mineral County. Grant’s summit is sought after by many peak baggers. Unfortunately, this area has been off limits since the events of 9/11. After many fruitless attempts to gain permission to climb Mt. Grant, we suddenly got a flyer announcing a 9/11 Memorial Challenge Run that ended on the summit. Many immediately grabbed the opportunity to participate in this event.

The event allowed 100 participants this year, with a good chance that it would become an annual event. Event coordinators accommodated two groups: (1) runners and hikers going the entire 16 miles with a 7000-foot gain and (2) others who would relay the distance in teams.

Eight hikers from the Reno area formed two relay teams: Great Basin Peaks 1, with Sharon Marie Wilcox, Bhe Wilson, John Ide, and Ron Moe; and Great Basin Peaks 2, with Rich Wilson, TA Taro, Larry Grant, December 31 -

JANUARY (SATURDAY-SUNDAY) TBA New Year’s in Gerlach. Totally informal New Year’s in Gerlach involving walking between three bars in Gerlach. Unless you are really hardy, stay at Bruno’s Motel. Check in, make reservations at bar, 775-557-2220. We may have other activities. Hot springs if playa permits, local art gallery, scenic drive, etc. Dogs limited, prepare to clean up after your dog. Sign-up 12/15-12/28. DL. Leader: David Book (775-843-6443).

JANUARY 1 (SUNDAY) 10AM Annual New Year’s Day Hike. Meet at S end of 5th Street, Carson City, for our annual blow out cobwebs/start New Year right hike. Hike along Mexican Ditch Trail to Mexican Dam, back. About 6 mi, level. Depending on conditions you may need snow shoes or crampons. Bring leftover goodies to share. DOK. Leader: Donna Inversin (775-315-6763; d_inversin@yahoo.com). Easy.

JANUARY 2 (MONDAY) 6:30 - 8PM Ex Com Meeting. Join us for Ex Com meeting at Cathy’s house. Cathsch256@comcast.net for directions. ND. Leader: Cathy Schmidt (Cathsch256@aol.com). Easy.


Great Basin Peak Section News

Mt. Grant 9/11 Memorial Challenge

BY SHARON MARIE WILCOX

The Great Basin Group’s Energy Committee is getting recharged. Charlotte Cox, Peter Miller, and Mary Winston have met with the ExCom to present their ideas for a committee to focus on energy conservation efforts. The overall goal of the committee is to help educate our membership and the general public about the importance of energy conservation.

Energy conservation can be approached in a number of ways which can be implemented at the individual level, especially at home. The group has already been participating in the Chapter’s Energy Task Force with Jeff Hardcastle, Marge Sill, and Bob Tregillus participating in those calls.

Great Basin Group

Group News

Energy Committee reforming

BY JEFF HARDCASTLE (JEFFH2010@GMAIL.COM)

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Oaks as he explores the mechanics and frequency of earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanoes. He will also look through the often-mysterious geologic crystal ball at what the future may hold for Reno. (See Kolob Plateau photo, this page.)

Ed Oaks is a dynamic speaker with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. His lectures are so popular that often venues end up with standing room only, so get there early!

"Membership Mixer"
Date: March 8, Time: 7 - 9 pm
Location: Bartley Ranch Regional Park.

Learn all about the Great Basin Group and how you can get involved with this fun social event! Go to the GB Group website at <http://nevada.sierraclub.org/gbggroup> for more details about a month before the mixer.

MT. GRANT . . . continued from page 8

and Loretta Low.

The event kicked off with a Saturday night registration and BBQ at Veteran’s Memorial Park. Excited peak baggers had time to visit with old friends and make new friends. We were happy to meet up with other Great Basin Peak Section members and Desert Peak Section friends -- James Barlow, Dan Baxter, Bob and Eric Morrill, Bob Sumner, Sue Wyman and Vic Henney.

At 6:30 am Sunday morning, participants gathered at Cottonwood Canyon near Walker Lake. You could feel the energy flowing through the crowd as everyone found their starting points. In the excitement of taking pictures and organizing team members, I missed wishing Sue and Vic well as they departed with the first group to hike and complete the entire distance to the summit.

The checkpoints provided sani-huts and snacks for the participants in addition to a well-organized shuttle system. A photogenic frenzy occurred at about 3.5 miles when we saw a mother bear in a pinyon pine with her two cubs curiously exploring beneath her.

As the road climbed above the canyon of pinyon pines into the wide-open brushy area we could see the road section backs as they zigzagged towards the summit.

About 15 minutes before I arrived at the final checkpoint, a cloud blanketed the peak, so the 360-degree views were obscured. As I headed up the final rock scramble, an almost frozen Bob Sumner sat on a rock checking off those achieving the summit.

On the summit, busy cameras recorded smiling hikers as a few glimpses of view opened in the drifting clouds. TA served off those achieving the summit.

Shuttle buses continually transported participants back down the mountain and so we never gathered our entire group in a summit photo. A view of bighorn sheep added another bonus for the final shuttle bus riders.

The 9/11 Memorial Challenge volunteers efficiently succeeded in getting a large number of eager peak climbers up and down Mt. Grant. We thank them for their efforts and look forward to this annual opportunity for other future opportunities.

Great Basin Group Calendar
continued from page 8

February 8 (Saturday) 9:30AM
GBG Com Mix Event. Meeting location to be determined. E-mail Valerie Andersen at mtval@sbcglobal.net for details. ND: Leader: Valerie Andersen (mtval@sbcglobal.net).

February 9 (Sunday) 8:30AM
Spring Fling River Walk. Welcome Spring with our first evening conditioning hike after work, along Truckee River. Easy hike, about 4 mi, 50 ft gain. Opportunity to see early-blooming cottonwoods, hawks, falcons, other wildlife; learn about riparian environment. DL: Leader: Ridge Walker (853-8055; edc@unr.edu). Mod. Easy.

February 25 (Saturday) 8AM
Lahontan Petroglyphs. Visit rock panels on shores of Lake Lahontan near Silver Springs. Learn some history of area. High clearance, 4-wheel drive vehicles recommended, or do share. About 4 mi RT, no significant gain. ND: Leader: T A Taro (775-530-2935). Easy.

February 26 (Sunday) 9AM
Spooner Junction Snowshoe. Snowshoe about 2-4 mi with minimum gain. Learn about flora, fauna, enjoy great views of lake. ND: Leader: Donna Invernis (775-315-6763; d_inversin@yahoo.com). Easy.

March 5 (Monday) 6:30 - 8PM
GBG Com Mix Event. Meeting location to be determined. E-mail Valerie Andersen at mtval@sbcglobal.net for details. ND: Leader: Valerie Andersen (mtval@sbcglobal.net). Easy.

March 10 (Saturday) 8AM

March 17 (Saturday) 9:30AM
St. Patrick’s Day Hike. Hike in Virginia Mountains on this Irish holiday. Exact location TBD by weather conditions. No matter where we go, views are fabulous, sure to please. About 6-8 mi, up to 1400 ft gain. Optional: bring an Irish brew and unbreakable, reusable “glass,” for a little tasting at our lunch spot. May the luck of Irish be with you! DL: Leader: Holly Coughlin (331-7488). Moderate.

March 20 (Tuesday) TBA
Dogskin Mountain. Come celebrate early spring with a Great Basin Peak Section trip to High Point on Dogskin Mountain overlooking Winnemucca Ranch, McKisick Canyon, N of Sparks. About 5 mi, 2250 ft gain. Learn about flora, fauna in this area DL: Leader: Sharon Wilcox (852-5075; kaweal7@gmail.com). Co-Leaders: Yvonne Jerome, Karen Todd (831-3043 / 225-2805; sjerome@att.net; kmktdod@juno.com).

March 21 (Wednesday) 5:30PM
Spring Fling River Walk. Welcome Spring with our first evening conditioning hike after work, along Truckee River. Easy hike, about 4 mi, 50 ft gain. Opportunity to see early-blooming cottonwoods, hawks, falcons, other wildlife; learn about riparian environment. DL: Leader: Ridge Walker (473-1445; ridgewalker@gmail.com). Co-Leader: Yvonne Jerome (473-1445). Easy.

March 24 (Saturday) 8AM
Buckland Station Day Hike. Buckland Station is on S side of Silver Springs. About 10 mi loop hike on flat ground. Start at historic Buckland Station, proceed downstream and look for early blooming wildflowers and spring flowers. Meet at Buckland Station at 8 AM. Contact Gracie Caudill for details. Mod. Easy.
Southern Nevada Group Calendar

All phone numbers are 702 unless otherwise noted.
(Please use email when leaders state that they prefer email, especially if you have a long distance telephone number.)

**All events include conservation education activities**

**January 22 (Saturday)**

**China Ranch**
Hike through canyons, even some slots, in fun hills near China Ranch. After that we can enjoy date shakes, date bread, or buying bags of dates. How do dates grow? About 8 mi. Leader: David Hardy (875-4826, hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, e-mail preferred). Level 2-3.

**January 25 (Sunday)**

**Blue Diamond Hill**
This 8 mi hike starts in Blue Diamond, goes up near the top of hill, then down a narrow canyon which requires some rock scrambling. It comes out at Wheeler Spring, and then back to Blue Diamond. About 1200 ft gain. Are there any springs on Blue Diamond Hill? Leader: David Hardy (875-4826, hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, e-mail preferred). Level 4.

**March 16 (Sunday)**

**Bowl of Fire**
Begin at Mile 20 and end at Mile 18 on this 10-mi trip through colorful rock formations and narrow twisting canyons. Why do some rock formations have mesas? Car shuttle: Leader: David Hardy (875-4826, hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, e-mail preferred). Level 4.

**Officers**

- Chair: Taj Antler* 702-682-9361 taj@toiyabe.net
- Vice-Chair: Eric King* 702-436-9088 teamprosperitylv@yahoo.com
- Secretary: Don Laskey* 702-875-4826 dlaskey@gmail.com
- Treasurer: Claire Clugston* 702-505-1168 claireclugston@gmail.com
- At Large: Julia Bledsoe* 702-682-9361 jules@embarqmail.com
- At Large: Donald (808-3855). Level 3-4.
- Coal Power Plants: Jane Feldman* 702-875-4826 feldman.jane@gmail.com
- Conservation: Jane Feldman* 702-875-4826 feldman.jane@gmail.com
- Endangered Species & Wildlife: Jane Feldman* 702-875-4826 feldman.jane@gmail.com
- Energy: Jane Feldman* 702-875-4826 feldman.jane@gmail.com
- Global Warming: Jane Feldman* 702-875-4826 feldman.jane@gmail.com
- Inner City Outings: Eric King* 702-436-9088 teamprosperitylv@yahoo.com
- Membership: Taj Antler* 702-682-9361 taj@toiyabe.net
- Ongoing: Par Musil* 702-215-9119 par@embarqmail.com
- Outings: Par Musil* 702-215-9119 par@embarqmail.com
- Parks, Refuges: Ed Rothfuss 406-756-0028 mroth9827@aol.com
- Political: Teresa Crawford 702-526-8445 tailspinterry@hotmail.com
- Programs: Eric King* 702-436-9088 teamprosperitylv@yahoo.com
- Publicity: Don Laskey* 702-875-4826 dlaskey@gmail.com
- Transportation: Jane Feldman* 702-875-4826 feldman.jane@gmail.com
- Webmaster: Par Musil* 702-215-9119 par@embarqmail.com

* ExCom member

**January 1 (Thursday)**

Hangover Hike. Start New Year right by joining other hikers on traditional moderate, but scenic, hike to Calico Tanks in Red Rock Canyon. Begin late morning. Geology of Aztec sandstone will be discussed. Group limited to 15 by BLM Leader: Geologist Gary Beckman (648-2983). Level 2-3.

**January 2 (Monday)**

Blue Diamond Hill to Wheeler Spring, RRCNCA (Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area). Another route on Blue Diamond Hill which includes deep canyons. Begin at horses and end up at Wheeler Spring. Where does the water come from? Leader: David Hardy (hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, e-mail preferred, 875-4826). Level 2-3.

**January 7 (Saturday)**

Brownstone Canyon, RRCNCA. Enjoy great outdoors while discovering pictographs and petroglyphs on this 6-mi RT hike. Leader: George McDonald (808-3855) Level 3.

**January 8 (Sunday)**

Kingman Wash, LMNRA (Lake Mead National Recreation Area). Over bridge for a 4-5 mi loop to explore old mining area. Leader: Roger Olsen (526-2181). Level 3.

**January 9 (Monday)**

General Program Meeting. Time & Place: 7 pm; UNLV Student Union Bldg, Rm 219, , 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89154 (SW Corner of Harmon & Maryland Pkwy). Program: “Conserving Our Mojave Desert Life: For Today, For Tomorrow.” Local Las Vegan, Jim Moore, Mojave Desert Ecoregional Ecologist for Nature Conservancy, will be exploring and illuminating us on the great work they do here to protect and enhance our desert home. All members and general public welcome. Announcements, refreshments, door prize, free literature, too. Info: Eric King (677-4751).

**January 14 (Saturday)**

Echo Wash, LMNRA. Which variety of eagle are we most likely to see along lakeshore? About 6 mi RT. Leader: Bill Marr (433-0473) Level 3-4.

**January 15 (Sunday)**

Red Cap, RRCNCA. Gain of 800 ft on this 3-mi RT hike. It’s short, challenging and, most of all, is fun. Scramble to one of highest points in Calico Hills. What species lives dormant in water pockets until rains come? Leader: George McDonald (808-3855). Level 4.

**January 18 (Wednesday)**

Rural Railroads, LMNRA. Mid-week hike with dramatic tunnels and splendid views of lake. About 7 mi RT. Leader: Roger Olsen (526-2181). Level 3.

**January 21 (Saturday)**

Calico Tanks Overlook at RRCNCA. Start our 3-mi RT trek at second pull on Scenic Drive. Boulder up chute over saddle to Boy Scout overlook, then scramble to Tanks for lunch. Then past arch, pictographs, and head home. How can you tell a pictograph from a petroglyph? Leader: George McDonald (808-3855). Level 3-4.

**January 22 (Sunday)**

China Ranch. Hike through canyons, even some slots, in the fun hills near China Ranch. After that we can have time for date shakes, date bread, or buying bags of dates. How do dates grow? Level 2-3, about 8 mi. Leader: David Hardy (875-4826, hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, e-mail preferred).

**January 28 (Saturday)**

North Valley of Fire, LMNRA. Is desert varnish we see on cliffs a result of biological or inorganic processes? About 6 mi RT. Leader: Bill Marr (433-0473). Level 3-4.

**February 4 (Saturday)**

Hidden Valley, Muddy Mountain Wilderness. Along this 5-mi loop in majestic valley of Aztec sandstone, we’ll discover natural springs, petroglyphs, pictographs, arrowhead chip-plings and much more. Need HCV to trail head. Leader: George McDonald (808-3855). Level 3-4.

**February 5 (Sunday)**

Blue Diamond Hill. This 8 mi hike starts in Blue Diamond, goes up near the top of the hill, then down a narrow canyon which requires some rock scrambling. It comes out at Wheeler Spring, and then back to Blue Diamond. Level 2-3, 1200 ft gain. Are there any springs on Blue Diamond Hill? Leader: David Hardy (875-4826, hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, e-mail preferred).

**February 11 (Saturday)**

Bowl of Fire Loop, LMNRA. Are these sandstone outcrops same strata as Red Rock or Zion? –6 mi RT. Leader: Bill Marr (433-0473). Level 3-4.

**February 11 (Saturday)**

TBA at RRCNCA. Leader George McDonald 808-3855 level 3-4.

**February 13 (Monday)**

General Program Meeting. Time & Place: 7 pm; UNLV Student Union Bldg, Rm 219, , 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89154 (SW Corner of Harmon & Maryland Pkwy). Program: Nick Saines will give a talk entitled, “When Dinosaurs Roamed Las Vegas,” about the recent discoveries of dinosaur tracks in the Jurassic rocks at Red Rock Canyon and bones in Cretaceous rocks in Valley of Fire (with input from paleontologist Josh Bonde). The finds will be related to similar discoveries in CA, AZ, and UT. Nick will strive to recreate the landscape and in Las Vegas 190,000,000 years ago. Come learn the techniques hikers should use to make new discoveries in Red Rock Canyon, Valley of Fire, and Rainbow Mountain.

Please see SN CALENDAR, page 11.

**Don’t forget to visit the Chapter website**

<http://toiyabe.sierraclub.org>
Gardens. All members and general public welcome. Announcements, refreshment, door prize, free literature, too. Info: Eric King (677-4751).

**FEVERAY 18 (SATURDAY)**
Sloan Canyon. Lots of petroglyphs on this 6 mi. loop. Leader: Roger Olsen (526-2181) Level 3.

**FEVERAY 19 (SUNDAY)**
Bowl of Fire to Anniversary Narrows. This 15-mi hike begins and drops into the N end of Bowl of Fire, then over a low pass to drop into the Anniversary drainage. Some rock scrambling required. What are some of the major minerals? To be able to do this hike we need to get from the narrows to the cars in the last 2 mi. Will have to check on that before the hike as there is now a gate. Car shuttle. Level 4. Leader: David Hardy (875-4826, hardyhikers@ embarrqmail.com, e-mail preferred).

**FEVERAY 25 (SATURDAY)**
Pinto Valley Car Shuttle, LMNRA. How long ago was the jeep trail closed in the valley? About 7-9 mi RT. Leader: Bill Marr (433-0473) Level 3-4.

**MARCH 9 (SATURDAY)**
Fortification Hill, LMNRA. Great views of lake mi. Leader: Roger Olsen (526-2181) Level 4

**MARCH 4 (SUNDAY)**
Bridge Mountain via Rocky Gap Road Summit, RRCA. One of best scrambling hikes at Red Rock. Gain 2000 ft over 5 mi RT. From Rocky Gap Summit, hike to escarpment a great view overlooking Pine Creek. Here’s where fun begins, we’ll climb up a chute to bridge then pass by hidden forest and on to summit. At summit of Bridge Mt. view of Red Rock and Las Vegas is breathtaking; you’ll never forget this hike. Which are older: limestone or sandstone for cliff dwelling birds might we expect in this area? About 7-8 mi RT. Leader: Bill Marr (433-0473) Level 3-4.

**MARCH 18 (SUNDAY)**
Bowl of Fire. Begin about Mile 20 and end at Mile 18 on this 10 -mi trip through colorful rock formations and narrow twisting canyons. Why do some of the rock formations have mesas? Car shuttle. Level 3. Leader: David Hardy (875-4826, hardyhikers@embarrqmail.com, e-mail preferred).

**MARCH 22, 23, 24, 25 (THURSDAY-SUNDAY)**
Toroweap Point Camping Trip, Tu-Keep Wilderness, N. Rim of Grand Canyon. There is a special place to check your pulse and feel your heart beat. This place is as dangerous as it is stunningly beautiful. It’s a vertical world where laws of gravity and nature remind us of our human vulnerabilities. Requires HCV, 60+ mile drive over un paved, bone-jarring roads. There are bigger places on earth than Toroweap – glaciers of Alaska come to mind, as well as the enormous mass of Mt. McKinley – but none can give a stronger impression of sheer immensity. Leader: George McDonald (702-808-3855, onecoolhike@yahoo.com).

**Riddle Gardner plant & pollution**
After travelling the Moapa Reservation with the Tribal Chairman and meeting with Vernon Lee, a member of the Tribe and former employee at the plant, it became clear that everything was very wrong at Reid Gardner. According to the American Lung Association, “The process of burning coal releases chemicals into the atmosphere that threaten not only the air Americans breathe, but the water they drink, the soil they live on and the food they eat.” Reid Gardner’s first unit was built in 1965. Since then, the plant has polluted the Moapa Band of Paiutes as well as Southern Nevada and Southern Utah. Additional units were constructed until the 1980s, compounding the problem with each expansion. Club brings legal complaints against Reid Gardner plant. Working with Dan Galpern of the Western Environmental Law Center in Eugene, OR, Sierra Club has brought several legal complaints against the facility. In November 2010, we sued the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for allowing the expansion of NV Energy’s toxic coal ash landfill and wastewater ponds on several acres of land adjacent to the plant. BLM completely ignored the Tribe’s complaints, saying it wasn’t possible to prove health effects from exposure to the material. Despite the fact that the Environmental Protection Agency says coal ash is more likely to cause cancer than smoking a pack of cigarettes a day, U.S. Federal Judge Kent Dawson threw out our lawsuit in favor of BLM. No evidence was considered. Sierra Club has appealed this decision to the 9th Circuit Court in San Francisco. In October 2011, Sierra Club and the Moapa Band of Paiutes brought a lawsuit against the Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD) when the agency allowed Nevada Energy to continue adding coal ash to their 91-acre, unlined, landfill. In addition, Nevada Energy was granted an additional 21 acres and a permit to operate until at least 2046! S. Nevada Health District allows Reid Gardner plant expansion. The SNHD was well aware of the problems in Moapa. The Tribe (which only has around 300 members) had submitted more than 55 comments against the expansion, and Sierra Club collected an additional 347. One letter is from a woman named Maria, who reads, “I have worked as an Environmental Scientist at Reid Gardner for several years. Regulatory compliance was consistently disregarded and ignored, and several times reports were submitted that were knowingly falsified.” Nonetheless, SNHD claimed they could not take the health of the Moapa Band of Paiutes community into consideration. SNHD continued to allow Nevada Energy to continue forward, and has never pursued an alternative health study to this day. In a letter from SNHD Chief Health Officer, Donald Kwaklic, he states “Because of the small population size in Moapa, it is difficult to identify health problems related to the facility, even if true health problems exist.” Despite these questions, Reid Gardner plant expansion would be paid for by Nevada Energy customers. Nevada Energy has now asked the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada (PUCN) (a three-person quasi-judicial panel appointed by the Governor to regulate the electric, gas, and phone monopolies in Nevada) to allow them to operate all four units of Reid Gardner until at least 2023. To do so, Nevada Energy would have to spend at least $50 million on new pollution controls. That money is in addition to the tens, if not hundreds, of millions of dollars spent each year to ship in coal from Utah, Colorado, and Wyoming. All of this
The Making of Yosemite, by Jen A. Huntley, is a profound contribution to the topic of our public lands, national parks, and wilderness areas. In weaving a narrative surrounding the life of James Hutchings, the first herald for Yosemite, the author provides more than the literal story by infusing insightful connections into every paragraph between Hutchings’ own actions and the broader conservation issues they touched.

The Making of Yosemite is a “must” read for everyone active in preserving U.S. natural resources. In unburdening the story of James Hutchings, the author goes to the original material: the man’s own journals, his photographs, his published works. This is important because it presents a different story than what the reader would learn going to the original material: the man’s own journals, his photographs, his published works. This is important because it presents a different story than what the reader would learn by infusing insightful connections into every paragraph between Hutchings’ own actions and the broader conservation issues they touched.

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Jen A. Huntley is an environmental historian of the Sierra Nevada and Pacific Rim. She taught at U. of Nevada, Reno for 10 years, designed the U. of Nevada Academy for the Environment, and served as its Assoc. Director for Education & Outreach until 2010.

The author portrays a man deeply committed to the Sierra and to Yosemite in particular. Although he was eclipsed by John Muir, who was a more effective promoter of Yosemite as a public treasure, the author shows that Hutchings’ awe of this splendid place was no less, although it may have been framed somewhat differently. The book leaves the reader with the impression that Hutchings’ efforts were no less important than Muir’s in preserving Yosemite. We learn that Hutchings early supported tourism to bring the park to the public attention and later supported national park designation. He also went on to help found the Sierra Club with John Muir.

The author’s writing penetrates deeply into the juxtaposition of nature and man and has wider implications than for just this piece of history. Conservation of our natural heritage henceforth may well be measured by combining the views of Hutchings and Muir. This book certainly gives a necessary presentation of Hutchings’ views.

Jen A. Huntley is an environmental historian of the Sierra Nevada and Pacific Rim. She taught at U. of Nevada, Reno for 10 years, designed the U. of Nevada Academy for the Environment, and served as its Assoc. Director for Education & Outreach until 2010.

—by David von Seggern

GREEN JOBS . . . continued from page 7
new trade policies that promote growth and prosperity across all sectors of global societies while protecting public health and safety.

Those wanting to attend the Los Angeles conference at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel are encouraged to apply for scholarships to cover transportation, hotel, and registration fees. Volunteers from Angeles Chapter are planning to offer historical walking tours of downtown Los Angeles and Hollywood for out-of-town participants.

For more information, contact Joan Jones Holtz (626-443-0706; jholtz@msn.com) or visit the website <www.greenjobsconference.org>. — contributed by Joan Jones Holtz, Sierra Club Trade, Human Rights, & the Environment Team

CLEAN ENERGY . . . continued from page 11

TRAP REGULATION . . . continued from page 7
of 2012, but there is no further definition of regulation.

There was a procedural Wildlife Commission meeting on Dec. 3; no votes were taken. The matter will also be heard February 3-4 in Las Vegas. There will be more public hearings in both Las Vegas and Reno. Public input is encouraged.

Send e-mails to info@trailsafe.org. We will make sure the Wildlife Commission sees your mail. See TrailSafe talking points at <www.trailsafe.org>.

Trap registration needed. TrailSafe contends the essential first step is reinstatement of trap ID and registration. About 15 years ago, NRS 503.452 was amended to make ID/registration of traps optional. The Wildlife Commission maintains they cannot alter NRS. TrailSafe maintains not only can they, they are mandated to do so. But, unfortunately the discussion so far is limited to defining exact boundaries of trap regulation.

Trail advocates resist making the entire Firearms Congested Areas trap-free and are lobbying to set the boundaries either 1000 feet or 1000 yards from any occupied dwelling within the congested areas. The boundary question is even more contentious in Clark County where occupied dwelling within the congested areas. The boundary question is even more contentious in Clark County where

2012 Mule Pack Section trips
The Sierra Club’s Angeles Chapter Mule Pack Section has seven fun trips planned for 2012.

Virginia Canyon: July 29-August 3
Humphrey’s Basin: August 5-10
Thousand Island Lake: August 12-18
Saddlerock Lake: August 19-25
Treasure Lakes: August 23-26
Vugatuck: August 26-31
Big Pine Lakes: September 3-8

Sandy Burnside, a new member of the ROG ExCom, and her husband Keith, arrange the Mule Pack outings for Angeles Chapter.

Please visit the Angeles Chapter website at <www.angeles.sierrclub.org/maps/>. — contributed by Malcolm Clark

CLEAN ENERGY . . . continued from page 11

the money to keep this plant operating would come from Nevada Energy ratepayers.

Some good news. In response to advocacy from Sierra Club, the Moapa Band of Paiutes, and the Western Resource Advocates, the PUCN has opened a full investigation into all aspects of the Reid Gardner power plant. This is very encouraging, because it forces Nevada Energy to reveal the dark history at Reid Gardner: decades of environmental violations and fines, broken agreements with the Tribe, capital expenditures made in the plant without PUCN approval, and plans that do not incorporate the true cost of remediation and clean-up of the groundwater.

Sierra Club will continue to work alongside the Moapa Band of Paiutes until the PUCN mandates an early retirement of Reid Gardner with fully mandated clean-up and strict compliance deadlines.

The Toiyabe Chapter believes that instead of spending hundreds of millions, if not more than a billion dollars to keep this old dirty polluter on life support, Nevada Energy should replace the facility with clean, renewable energy and energy efficiency projects that create jobs in Nevada.

The Moapa Band of Paiutes could very well lead this transition, as they are developing a solar project on their Reservation with K Road Power, with plans to be completed by 2014.

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