From the Chair

What does Toiyabe Chapter do, anyway?

BY ANNE MACQUARIE

SOMETIMES MEMBERS TELL ME they don’t quite know what the Toiyabe Chapter does. Over the past few months I’ve become acutely aware of the range of issues the Chapter and our four Groups deal with – a new challenge or opportunity walks in the door almost every day. So I thought I’d share some of them with you – to give you a sense of what we do.

• In April, a Chapter team led by David von Seggern commented on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for renewal of the Special Permit No. 356 to the ExCom. Members are also encouraged to contact the Chair or any ExCom members with requests to bring certain matters before the ExCom.

Three ways to make a difference every day

BY BRIAN BEFFORT, TOIYABE CHAPTER DIRECTOR

I love Earth Day, because it gives me and other activists opportunities to attend community events, build stronger friendships with members and other activists we already know, and make new friends with people who are interested in making a difference for our planet. And with nearly a dozen Earth Day events across the Toiyabe Chapter, April 2019 was the busiest Earth Month yet for us.

But then it ends, and most people return to their daily lives — in which many drive too much, buy too much, and pay too much attention to the distractions marketed to us on TV and the internet — leaving little evidence they have changed habits enough to heal our Mother Earth.

I’m sure we all agree Earth deserves more than one day of activities and news coverage. And certainly, the headlines tell us every day we need more sweeping change to turn the tide of environmental degradation we face on almost every front. That means more people doing more things that support the Earth, not destroy it.

But what can one person do? How can you change the world from your little corner in it? It’s true that, statistically, one vote in an election rarely makes a difference (though it’s happening more frequently). It’s also true that when enough people jump into the pool, we can make some meaningful waves (as with Nevada in the last election).

As a member of the Sierra Club, you probably already do more than most; you’re more likely to make environmentally-friendly consumer decisions, and you’re more likely to speak out (or write your government representatives) about issues that matter to you.

Which makes you a leader. Because you “get it” already, you are in a better position to inspire others to make meaningful actions of their own. And Earth needs more environmental leaders.

Here are three ways you can make a difference to your community and your planet:

1. Pilot projects. The challenges we face are big ones — climate disruption, mono-crop industrial agriculture, consumerism, etc. If our planet is suffering a death of a thousand cuts, we can rehabilitate it with a thousand healing salves. What is one thing you can do today that will make a difference? Plant a garden (or even just a few tomatoes), install a solar panel, commit to re-useable bags and utensils, drive less, walk more, buy local. And talk about it, not in a braggy, holier-than-thou way, but in an I-care-and-am-trying-to-do-my-part way, to show people what is possible, and demonstrate that little things can add up.

2. Chapter leaders. Every chapter leader (do not respond to the FBI).

3. Don’t become the next victim. Least two people fell victim to others via email for an “emergency” phishing scam, in which a criminal poses as a Chapter leader (do not respond to the FBI). Instead, contact that Chapter leader (do not comply). If you receive such a request, give you a sense of what we do.

I’d share some of them with you – to give you a sense of what we do.

Please see Make a Difference, page 2.
Great Basin Gatherings
Great Basin Group

Group News

BY KATY CHRISTENSON, GREAT BASIN GROUP CHAIR

Great Basin Group Monthly Pro- grammer Fall 2019. The GBG hosts monthly programs at Bartley Ranch Western Heritage Center on the 2nd Thursday of each month, except June, July and August. Please see outings websites for more details.

The planned Fall programs include: "Tahoe Myth Bustin" (Tahoe Institute for Natural Science) on September 12; "Gold Butte National Monument" on October 10 (Friends of Gold Butte); and "Final Resource Management Plan for BLM Carson City District" on November 14. Please note that the social hour begins at 6:30 pm, followed by the program at 7 pm.

Great Basin Group Annual Members Picnic. The GBG annual members' picnic is scheduled for AUGUST 18, 2019, from 3-6 pm at the Bear Mat group site in Galena Creek Park. Bring a favorite dish to share, along with your drinks and non-disposable plates/flatware. The grill will be fired up too. All members and their families are welcome!

Outings. Many, many hikes are planned for Summer 2019. GBG’s motto is, “We Get You Outdoors!” Join us by checking these websites: www.meetp.com/Sierra-Club-Hiking-Reno and www.sierraclub.org/toiyabe/great-basin/ outings-and-events. Great Basin Group wishes to extend a big outdoor welcome to our new Outings co-Chairs, Rob & Rhonda Jarrett. We look forward to their combined leadership and new ideas!

Webmaster. A note of appreciation to Rhonda Jarrett, who has accepted the role of webmaster for the Great Basin Group.

WHAT’S YOUR LEGACY?... continued from page 1

• your retirement plans (including IRA, 401(k), 403(b), & others)
• your life insurance policy or bank account

One of the simplest and most “tax-wise” ways to make a gift to charity is through your IRA, 401(k), 403(b) or other retirement plan. Why? Considerable taxes may result when your retirement plan is distributed directly to an estate or to heirs.

In your estate plan, will, or your beneficiary designation form, specify the following: Sierra Club Toiyabe Chapter. Tax ID: 94-1153307

If you would like to give a tax-deductible gift to the Toiyabe Chapter, contact:
Sierra Club Foundation, Toiyabe Chapter
2101 Webster Street, Suite 1250
Oakland, CA 94612
Tax ID: 94-6069890
Consult with your estate planning advisor to chart the best course for your planned giving. If you would like to share your plans with us, contact Toiyabe Chapter Chair Anne Macquarie (775-303-2562) or Chapter Director Brian Beffort (775-848-7783). We want to make sure we direct your gift according to your wishes.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE... continued from page 1

progress (and problems) result from myriad actions.

2. Invite someone new. This planet needs more people doing more good things (or fewer bad ones). Invite a friend to brainstorm solutions with you. Join together to volunteer for a local service project. Support each other as you each speak before a city council. Team up to organize a letter-writing potluck party. This kind of work is more fun when we can make friends and support each other along the way.

3. Practice compassion and kindness. Partner bickering and finger-pointing are part of the problem. We will not heal the Earth until we can heal our relationships with each other. Distasteful though it may be, find common ground with someone who disagrees with you on a particular topic. One good strategy is to listen, say, “tell me more about why you support x.” And when they’re done telling you, say simply, “well, I don’t necessarily agree, but I appreciate hearing your perspective. It’s helping me learn about the issue.”

Compassion includes you, too. Be gentle with yourself. Take a hike, take a break, smell the flowers, stop

Sheldon INVR. Photo: Brian Beffort

Deadline! Sept 1 for OCT-NOV-DEC issue

Create an Environmental Legacy

Requests have played a key role in Sierra Club environmental successes over the years. Planning now may make your gift more meaningful and reduce taxes on your estate. We have many gift options available. We can even help you plan for your local Chapter. Please see charts on page 12 for more information.

Toiyabe Trails

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 (805-239-3829); LFoster@siachat.net

Deadline – 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 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.

Beyond Subscriptions – Toiyabe Trails is free to all Toiyabe Chapter members. Subscription cost for non-members is $12 per year. To subscribe, send check to $12, payable to “Toiyabe Chapter,” to Toiyabe Trails Subscriptions, Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter, c/o Treasurer. (See Chapter address in first paragraph, above.)

Change of address – Postmaster & Members, please send address changes to Sierra Club, Change of Address, P. O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968 or <address.changes@sierraclub.org>.

Membership information – There is a membership coupon in each issue of Toiyabe Trails. You can also call a Group Membership Chair (see directories on pages 4, 8, and 10) or the Sierra Club office in San Francisco (415-977-5663).

Other Sierra Club information. Call the Toiyabe Chapter Chair or Conservation Chair (see Chapter Directory online at http://toiyabe.sierraclub.org) or the Sierra Club Information Center in San Francisco (415-977-5653). Also, see group pages for website addresses of groups.
How to become an outings leader
BY SHARON MARIE WILCOX

Sierra Club outings leaders meet regularly to keep current on leader training and updated on new information. The meeting typically starts with social time for leaders to connect, shared yummy potluck food, and then the business meeting for deciding on the next quarter’s outings.

This month we welcomed our new Outings Chairs, Robert and Rhonda Jarrett. They have led group outings for a number of years and will be an asset to the program in their additional role.

Thanks to Roleigh for hosting this month’s meeting and thanks to Rob and Rhonda for volunteering to run the Outings program.

If you are interested in connecting people to the outdoors and becoming a Sierra Club leader, the minimum requirements are:

• be a Sierra Club member and at least 18 years old
• complete a basic (or higher) first aid class
• complete the Sierra Club Outing Leader Training 101 -- and OLTD 201 if you are interested in overnight outings away from cars
• possess skills appropriate for the activities of the trip
• complete additional training as required by your Outings Chair
• be an Assistant Leader on a trip
• receive approval to lead outings from the Outings Chair

And, of course, join us out on the trail!

Thanks to ALL WHO CONTRIBUTE to help us share the wonders of nature with local children with our Get Kids Outdoors fund. The Sierra Club was able to support children snowshoeing with their classes in February, spend nights in cabins on the shore of Tahoe in April and May, and more classes will hike and study at Tahoe in September.

Fourth graders from Alice Maxwell Elementary in Sparks were so excited and grateful for the opportunity to participate in Great Basin Outdoor School science camps that they re-enacted their entire experience back at school for a special exhibition showing what they had learned, complete with s’mores, astronomy, and activities on birds, trees, web of life, Tahoe, and team building. The children wrote heartfelt letters of thanks, and here is most of one of the best letters:

“I love Great Basin Outdoor School! The food is lovely and it is so peaceful there. Also loved hearing the waves crash. One thing GBOS taught me is I don’t need tablets, phones, computers, or any kind of screen in front of me... I loved learning about the stars, also rocks and all the trees. I really liked going birding and hearing the chickadee talk to us. Thank you, GBOS, for giving us the best time ever and making the earth a better place because you guys are right. We only have one and it is our home and we need to take care of it.”

Celebrate TWO 2019 Wild Anniversaries with Chapter & Group outings!

It’s hard to believe it will be the 30th anniversary for Nevada Wilderness Protection Act of 1989 and the 25th for California Desert Protection Act. These landmark decisions deserve to be celebrated!

On December 5, 1989, President George Bush signed 13 new Forest Service wilderness into law in Nevada -- previously could boast only ONE wilderness area, the Jarbridge from the original 1964 Act. From 1989 the spectacular high spots of most of Nevada’s lofty mountain ranges were protected -- for example, Arc Dome in the Toiyabes, the Ruby Mountains Wilderness, and Mt. Charleston in the Spring Mountains.

Five years later, on October 31, 1994, President Clinton signed the California Desert Protection Act -- the largest land protection measure ever passed by Congress other than for Alaska. The Act included two new national parks (from monuments), a national preserve, and 69 new wilderness areas.

What you can do. Outings leaders, take note. These anniversaries can be inviting themes for outings during 2019!

Thanks from a Science Camp 4th grader
BY SUE JACOX, SUEJACOX@NVBELL.NET

and the last Joshua tree, drove over the mountains through a pinyon-juniper forest, and descended into the Great Basin Desert. We were greeted with spectacular views north across Garden Valley where big sagebrush grows wall to wall as far as the eye can see.

We stopped on a back road and looked across two miles of sagebrush to “City,” artist Michael Heizer’s enormous land art project. While the sculpture is huge and thought provoking, the sagebrush desert and galloping antelope don’t really need scenic improvement, but we are grateful that the Arts Community spent a decade setting the groundwork for the establishment of B&RNW in 2016.

On the way out of B&RNW, we stopped in Coal Valley and knocked down four hollow-pipe mining claim markers. Thankfully, we found no dead birds in the pipes, but we found about 100 dead native bees, and we are glad that forevermore our efforts will prevent birds and other creatures from becoming trapped and dying inside the markers.

On our last day, we visited a disjunct section of B&RNW, the Shooting Gallery. We viewed some amazing rock stories (petroglyphs), saw where people lived, found a fair bit of lithic scatter, and enjoyed the spring flower display. We missed the upright “shooting gallery” stones, but armed with better knowledge of the site, further research suggests where to look next time. The day was unseasonably hot, so we made a short visit, hastened out by a looming thunderstorm.

In all, we had a good chance to better know each other, to enjoy some great food at the Alamo Diner, to spend comfortable nights in the Alamo Inn, and to see some great country while engaging in an important service project.

New Desert Wilderness comes to California

On March 12, when the president signed S. 47 -- officially named the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act -- into law, he immediately added five new wilderness areas to California’s previous 149. This gives our state 154 wilderness areas, far more than any other state.

The five new areas are: Avawatz, Soda Mountains, Great Falls Basin, Buzzards Peak, Millipitas Wash. For details and a location map, go to: https://www.sierraclub.org/sites/www.sierraclub.org/files/FRW-April-2019.pdf.

-- from Words of the Wild, April 2019, a publication of Sierra Club’s California/Nevada Wilderness Committee

S. NEVADA GROUP SERVICE OUTING . . .
continued from page 7

What you can do. Please help us share these impactful experiences with more kids. Join us at our annual picnic at Galena Creek on Sunday, August 8 and bring your donations to keep our Get Kids Outdoors fund strong and help us include more children.

Summer might be “cumen in,” but here in the Eastern Sierra, winter weather still surprises and perplexes us. During this past unusual winter season, leaders needed to be particularly creative as they found places to ski, snowshoe, and (yes) hike. Several ski and snowshoe trips visited one of our favorite places outside of Mammoth Lakes -- The Knolls. We followed Blue Diamond routes into this lovely forested area which is part of Inyo National Forest.

Teacher Lori Stock helps with Web of Life game at Great Basin Outdoor School.

Thanks for the opportunity to be inviting themes for outings during 2019!
CONSERVATION ROUNDUP

You need to read this!

Nevada legislature wrapup

BY BRIAN BEFFORT, TOYABE CHAPTER DIRECTOR

THE 2019 NEVADA LEGISLATURE is now over. What a difference an election can make! This session’s key champions - the Nevada Sierra Club members who helped elect in 2018 passed a raft of good bills to protect clean air and water, public lands, wildlife, public health, and to further development of the renewable energy economy. Although not every-deserving bill passed, here’s a summary of some highlights:

**Bills that passed & were signed into law**

SB 358. Increases the percentage of Nevada’s electricity from renewable resources to at least 50% by 2030, with a goal of 100% by 2050.

SB 299. Revises provisions relating to the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Demonstration Program; allows for the purchase of electric school buses.

AB 84. Provides more than $200 million in bonds to allow for habitat restoration, land acquisition, and other projects to protect, preserve, and protect natural and cultural resources in Nevada.

SB 254. The Carbon Bill, which requires the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to issue an annual report concerning greenhouse gas emissions in Nevada; to develop strategies to reduce Nevada’s greenhouse gas emissions 28% by 2025 and 45% by 2030, from a 2005 baseline; and to assess whether the above strategies will result in zero or near-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

SB 140. Requires local governments to be in the area.

AB 163. Requires indoor water conservation, such as water-conserving faucets, showerheads, toilets, etc., in new and renovated homes and buildings, beginning January 1, 2020.

SB 458. Appropriates $615,000 over the next biennium to be made available to schools to implement school gardens.

AB486. Creates a Division of Outdoor Recreation within the State Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, in order to promote the growth of a sustainable outdoor recreation economy in Nevada that supports economic growth alongside stewardship and conservation of natural resources.

AB 465. To expand solar access, requires utilities to offer affordable solar programs to those who can’t afford solar panels.

SB 178. Creates the Council on Food Security and the Food for People, Not Landfills program.

AB 93. Tahoe grant funding allows non-profit organizations to receive grants from the Tahoe license plate program to protect the natural environment in the Lake Tahoe basin.

SB 428. Makes it illegal to park a vehicle in a parking space designated for charging electric or hybrid electric vehicles unless the vehicle is being charged at the charging station.

SB 136. Makes changes to the board of the Tahoe Transportation District by replacing three existing seats with an appointee each from the Governors of Nevada and California and a member of the Governing Board of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

AB 205. Requires school districts to use alternative options before using pesticides at schools, and would require school district staff to become trained in Integrated Pest Management.

AB 377. Revises provisions governing weight limits on certain vehicles, which will allow for the heavier weight of electric long-haul trucks.

AB 240. Sets minimum efficiency standards for light bulbs, in response to a Trump Administration rollback of federal minimum standards for lightbulbs, in order to ensure Nevadans continue to have access to the cheapest and most efficient technology.

SCR 5. Expresses support for the role of science in the Lake Tahoe Basin and recognizes the role of the Tahoe Bi-State Executive Committee and the Tahoe Science Advisory Council in guiding environmental preservation, protection, restoration and enhancement efforts in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

SB 454. Prohibits harassment of any game mammal or game bird with drones.

SB 250. Requires dedicated water rights to be in place before parcel maps can be approved in Nevada.

AB 220. Requires issuance of $8 million in bonds for environmental improvement projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

AB 353. Requires Nevada’s Legislative Counsel Bureau, state agencies, school districts, and the Nevada System of Higher Education to recycle electronic products.

SB 316. Creates a deterrent to keep overzealous property owners from denying access to public lands.

**Resolutions that passed**

AJR 2. Urges Congress to oppose expansion of the United States Air Force in the Desert National Wildlife Refuge in Nevada to build a new air station over more than 600,000 acres of public lands in northern Nevada.

AJR 7. Urges Congress to oppose the proposed expansion of the Fallon Naval Air Station over more than 600,000 acres of public lands in northern Nevada.

AJR 1. Objects to transfer of radioactive plutonium to this State.


SJ R 7. Supports the Bi-State Working Group on Transportation -- a broad group of stakeholders working on transportation solutions in the Lake Tahoe basin -- in finding solutions to the environmental impacts of 10 million automobiles driving in the Tahoe basin each year.

SCR 1. Directs the Legislative Committee on Energy to conduct an interim study concerning the development of renewable energy and clean energy resources in Nevada.

SJ R 4. Supports the Recovery America’s Wildlife Act, which would provide dedicated standards of funding to support conservation of wildlife in the state.

**Bills Sierra Club helped kill**

AB 30. Would have undermined Nevada water law and aided the Southern Nevada Water Authority in its effort to pump 58 billion gallons of water annually from Eastern Nevada and send it to Las Vegas via a 300-mile, $15.5 billion pipeline.

AB 51. Would have upended Western water law by undermining the Prior Appropriations doctrine and violating the U.S. Constitution’s Takings Clause, by incentivizing monetary payoffs to approve water permits, and validating unsound mitigation schemes in order to compensate those whose property is being taken.

SB 168. Would have rolled back energy efficiency standards for new homes and would have compensated that loss with on-site renewable energy system, a waste of resources.

This is only a partial list. Find more details on our blog (https://www.sierraclub.org/toyabe/blog).

**Next steps**

With the session over and many good laws passed, the Toiyabe Chapter will be working with federal, state and local administrators to implement those laws into good works on the ground and in your community. In particular, our Transportation Team will work on projects to expand charging for electric cars, work with planners to include more walkable communities and mass transit, and urging Nevada to sign on to California Clean Car standards.

We will also be pursuing conversations during the interim about what good ideas need to be introduced as legislation in the 2021 session. These include:

- Community Solar. This would allow those who cannot afford solar panels, renters, landlords, or those with shady roofs, to access the benefits of renewable energy.
- Plastic bag ban. Needed because single-use plastics like bags are choking the oceans and our planet.
- Brownfield incentives. Build renewable energy developments on already-disturbed lands. We should use roofs, highway medians and other disturbed acres in the state before bulldozing another acre of sensitive wildlife habitat for an industrial solar farm.
- Building power. Sierra Club is successful to the degree people like you contribute time, energy and money. The same is true for this last legislative session. We will be reaching out with opportunities to get involved. Please find something that inspires you to action.
- What you can do. What else is a priority for you? Let us know, and let’s begin the conversations about how to bring healthy bills to the legislature.

In all of this work, we depend on your support. If you’d like to get involved with any of these projects, please contact me at brian.beffort@sierraclub.org. And please donate generously. It makes our work possible.

**ANXIOUSLY AWAITING**

**SINE DIE**

continued from page 5

will be using the EPA Water Sense, or equivalent, plumbing fixtures.

SB 140. Climate change brings uncertainty to the amount of recharge to the groundwater basins in our state. Because a large percentage of the basins are already over-appropriated, SB 140, which passed both Assembly and Senate without a dissenting vote, requires the State Engineer to reserve 10% of the unappropriated water in the remaining basins. That water is not available for any purpose under the provisions of the final form of the bill. Though this may be a small amount in many of the basins, it is a positive starting place in reserving some water for environmental needs.

As of this writing, Sine Die, the closure of the legislative session, has not occurred. It is scheduled for no later than midnight, June 3. Until then, anything can happen. We are waiting, fingers crossed. Please see Brian Belfort’s article on page 1.

Photo Credit: Kyle Roerink. The Baker Bucket, a symbol of opposition to the Southern Nevada Water Authority’s proposed $15 billion+ water pipeline from several basins in eastern Nevada, usually sits overnight to Great Basin National Park in Baker, NV. On May 23 it sat at the capital in Carson City as a backdrop for a news conference held to amplify opposition to AB30, seen by many as a bill that would enable the pipeline.

* The closure of the Nevada Legislative Session.

DEADLINE! SEPTE 1

FOR OCT - NOV - DEC ISSUE
The most controversial bad proposal by Assemblyman is moving again. We think of the Black rock Desert (referred to Gold Mine Expansion. As I write, playground. the nCA is perceived -- between the two sociological. impacts of the event, both natural and questions remain about the long-term to leave no Trace principles, many ers have done fairly well in adhering to the lack of solid information on past operations over the next few decades. The expanded operations would include an additional 20 square miles of BLM land for mine tailings from expanded mining disturbance on nearly 14 square miles. An EIS has been prepared for this proposed expansion, and a decision is expected this summer. Currently, tailings from the mine are visible from many parts of the NCA. Substantial viewed impairments will result from the additional land use requested by the mine, affecting the Emigrant Trail cast of the playa. want to control a long shadow over the nCA, both in time and space. The decision of the BLM on its future will influence how the nCA is perceived -- between the two extremes of a grand natural landscape in the Great Basin and a human-centered playground. Gold Mine Expansion. As I write, another threat to the character of the nCA has arisen. The owners of the Hycroft Mine (gold) on the east edge of the Black Rock Desert (referred to as the “playa”), near the Emigrant Trail, want to control an additional 20 square miles of BLM land for mine tailings from expanded mining operations over the next few decades. The expanded operations would include an additional 20 square miles of BLM land for mine tailings from expanded mining disturbance on nearly 14 square miles.

Unfortunately, in spite of the proponents’ intentions in 2000, and the federal action embodied in legislation, the character and meaning of the NCA has been highly altered by the Burning Man Festival in the years since. The NCA is now synonymous with the Burning Man Festival, which few today know the original reasons which led to the declaration of the NCA. Emigrant history, wilderness, special habitats and stunning vistas were the driving arguments for the NCA in 2000. Central to the stunning vistas was the enormous Black Rock Desert playa (hereafter, playa).

With about 25,000 participants in 2000, the Burning Man Festival has grown into 75,000+, with an attempt this year to get a recreation permit that will allow it to grow to 100,000 participants. An EIS was prepared this spring by the BLM. As you read this article, the decision will have been made by the BLM on one of the EIS alternatives. The selected alternative will dictate the size of the festival for 2019 and for subsequent years through 2028. Toiyabe Chapter formally commented on the EIS and concluded we could support the remaining alternatives due to the lack of solid information on past impacts of the festival and due to the lack of monitoring requirements going forward to gain that information. Although the Burning Man organizers have done fairly well in adhering to Leave No Trace principles, many questions remain about the long-term impacts of the event, both natural and sociological.

The Burning Man Festival has cast a long shadow over the NCA, both in time and space. The decision of the BLM on its future will influence how the NCA is perceived -- between the two extremes of a grand natural landscape in the Great Basin and a human-centered playground. Gold Mine Expansion. As I write, another threat to the character of the NCA has arisen. The owners of the Hycroft Mine (gold) on the east edge of the Black Rock Desert (referred to as the “playa”), near the Emigrant Trail, want to control an additional 20 square miles of BLM land for mine tailings from expanded mining operations over the next few decades. The expanded operations would include an additional 20 square miles of BLM land for mine tailings from expanded mining disturbance on nearly 14 square miles.

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Fortunately for the Toiyabe Chapter we have had a very active Legislative Committee under the leadership of Cassandra Rivas and our Chapter Director, Brian Befort. Members Tobi Tyler, Laura Richards, Janet Carter, Tina Davis-Hersey, Jenn Cantley, Elspeth Dimar zig, Emyhly Corpus, and yours truly, worked collaboratively to monitor legislation, and write and present testimony on behalf of the Chapter at numerous committee meetings during the session. Additionally, alerts were sent out to a very active list of supporters who responded by adding their comments and recording their support or opposition to bills on many subjects.

Water issues: Bad bills

As in past legislative sessions, water proved to be a contentious issue this session. And, once again, the Toiyabe Chapter worked with a large coalition of like-minded groups to oppose the bad and support the good. Especially helpful in our efforts this session have been Kyle Roerink, the new Executive Director of the Great Basin Water Network (GBWN), and Patrick Donnelly, the Nevada State Director for the Center of Biological Diversity.

AB30. The most controversial bad water bill, AB30 attempted to give the State Engineer the power to use 3M Plans (“Monitoring, Measurement, & Mitigation”) to avoid and eliminate conflicts between new applications, protectable interests, and senior water rights holders -- instead of denying such applications outright as required by current water law. Seen as enabling inter-basin transfers of water to support growth in the receiving basins and deplete groundwater reserves in the basins of origin, overwhelming opposition to AB30, includ- ing by the Toiyabe Chapter, resulted in many proposed changes that brought a large coalition of interests to a guarded neutral position on the bill.

In a final push to defeat the bill, the Baker Bucket, a symbol of opposition to the proposed pipeline from rural Nevada to Las Vegas, was brought to the Capitol. The Bucket served as a backdrop for a news conference on May 23, publicizing opposition to AB30. On May 24, with the growing and vocal opposition, the Governor decided to pull the bill. During the interim, the various parties will work together to see if agreement can be reached on how to use 3M plans.

AB62. Another controversial bill, AB62, addressed extensions of time to complete works and put water to beneficial use. Longer extensions were slated for the largest users, which would have, in the view of the opposition, created classes of water rights holders, an unacceptable inequity. Although the bill did pass out of the Assembly, it met with resistance in the Senate Natural Resources Committee.

Rather than push through a revised bill, the committee deleted the original provisions and replaced them with a requirement that the State Engineer adopt regulations relating to extensions, with the understanding that the process would be open, collaborative, and public. There is also a requirement for a study of how other jurisdictions manage extensions of time to perfect water rights. The Assembly accepted this action and the bill is on its way to the Governor.

Water issues: Good bills

Two very positive bills were approved this session.

AB163. Proposed by Assemblyman Howard Watts of Las Vegas, AB163 deals with addressing water losses by certain water suppliers and the need to reduce those losses. Indoor conservation is a new concept and innovations of residential, commercial, and industrial buildings is also part of this bill. Beginning on January 1, 2020, these projects are considered parts of indoor conservation efforts. This bill will reduce water waste by requiring an audit of water use and a plan to reduce water waste. It also requires water suppliers to report on the progress of reducing water waste.

Anyone can write an ANXIOUSLY WAITING SINE DIE, page 4.
Drivers needed: Volunteer here!

The Southern Nevada Group is seeking volunteers. From clean energy and electric vehicles to recycling and electing environmental champions, we need individuals who are passionate about making a difference and willing to be the drivers of change.

Right now, we are organizing a new Transportation Task Force, planning a gala event for the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day next year, and looking to play a key role in the 2020 elections -- exciting activities that all require leaders with drive. And you can be one of them!

What you can do. To help steer our efforts to explore, enjoy and protect the local environment, please contact SN Chair Taj Ainline (tajainlay@aol.com, 702.576.6815). Positions are now open and available, so don’t wait. Claim yours today.

Meetings & events

ExCom meetings

All members are welcome to attend the monthly meetings of our Executive Committee (ExCom), which are typically held on the first Wednesday of each month, unless otherwise noted. We gather from 5:30pm to 8pm at the Sierra Club Office, located just near Springs Preserve and Meadows Mall. The address is 3828 Meadows Lane, Las Vegas, NV 89107. There’s lots of free parking in the surrounding lot.

Please join us on July 3rd or September 4th, dark in August.

Group meetings

These meetings are conducted as quarterly membership events. On July 20 (Sat), we will be gathering in the coolness of the mountains with fellow Sierra Clubbers for an easy hike, followed by a free picnic and an information update on Group activities. Location: Picnic area at the Spring Mountain Visitors’ Gateway, 2525 Kyle Canyon Rd, Mt Charleston, NV 89124.

We will arrange carpooling from Las Vegas in the morning; children/pets are most welcome. For details, contact tajainlay@aol.com or call 702.576.6815. Also see info in Calendar, this page.

Southern Nevada Group Calendar

All phone numbers are 702 unless otherwise noted. All hikes and service projects are led by certified outings leaders.

(Please use email when leaders state that they prefer email, especially if you have a long distance telephone number.)

All events include conservation education activities.

A full calendar of our outdoor activities can be found online at www.sierraclub.org/toyabe/southern-nevada. You can also visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/southernnevada, and please “like” our page.

July 1 (Monday)

North Loop Trail. In Mt. Charleston area, hike North Loop Trail to meadow and back down Wild Horse Canyon, 3 mi, 900 ft gain. Easy pace. There may be wildflowers to identify. Leader: David Morrow (david.brenda.morrow@gmail.com, 702-703-9486).

July 13 (Saturday)

Trails Canyon to Raintree. Hike in Spring Mountain NRA, 7.2 mi RT with gain of 2100 ft. Mod. strenuous hike. Trail offers views of both Charleston and Griffith peaks. Why is this tree called Raintree and about how old is it? Level 4; dogs welcome. Leader: Sasson Jahan (sasson702@gmail.com).

July 20 (Saturday)

Group Picnic & Hike at Mt. Charleston. Join us to escape the summer heat on Saturday, July 20, for a picnic at the Spring Mountain Visitors’ Gateway at Mount Charleston. In the morning, we will drive up via carpool. Participants will have an opportunity to take an easy hike and explore the Spring Mountains. Then, around noon, we will provide a free picnic lunch and information about the Sierra Club’s current activities and committees. Bring the whole family. Children and pets welcome. For details, contact tajainlay@aol.com or call 702.576.6815 with any questions.

July 27 (Saturday)

North Loop Trail to Fisher Peak. In Spring Mountain NRA, this RT hike covers 7.4 mi with gain of 2200+ ft. Mod. strenuous hike. At summit, there is an almost 360 degree view from Kyle Canyon to desert below and Sheep Range to east. At what elevation do Ponderosa pines yield to Bristlecone pines? Level 4; dogs welcome. Leader: Sasson Jahan (sasson702@gmail.com).

July 27 (Saturday)

Film Screening “Bag It.” The Las Vegas-Clark County Library District, in partnership with 5r Revolution, is hosting a screening of the award-winning documentary “Bag It.” This film is about plastic, answering questions about how it’s made, why we use so much, and what happens after it is discarded, as well as how it negatively impacts our bodies, communities, and earth. Location: Windmill Library. Time: 1pm-3pm. Free and open to the public. For info, contact: feldman.jane@clarklibrary.org.

July 27-August 3 (Saturday-Saturday)

Glacier NP Service Project, MT. We will be assisting National Park Service with their Native Plant Nursery and...
of water in this area? Level 4; dogs welcome. Leader: Bill Marr (wmarrwilliam@aol.com, 702-434-3274).

SEPTEMBER 14 (SATURDAY) Red Rock Thrust Fault, Red Rock Canyon NCA. Back to Red Rock Canyon! Join geologist Nick on hike to Red Rock Thrust Fault by way of Turtlehead Peak Trail. Fault is part of Keystone Thrust System. Hike along fault, see fault, begin petroglyphs, and wander through beautiful sandstone terrain, including a little slot canyon. This is one of my favorite hikes in Red Rock Canyon. How do we recognize a fault in the field? RT covers 3 mi with 500 ft gain. Leader: geologist Nick Saines (greatunc@aol.com, 702-896-4049).

SEPTEMBER 15-19 (SUNDAY-THURSDAY) Central Nevada Backpack: South Twin River, Arc Dome. This area has been described as one of “deep, rugged canyons, high bald peaks, elk and wet feet.” Hike to South Twin River, near Carver, about an hour’s drive NE of Tonopah, at about 6300 ft. From trailhead, hike in 5 mi to a very nice campsite. After setting up camp try hiking upstream in this lush canyon of many cascades and waterfalls. Next day, hike about 5 mi and camp. On day 3, do a day hike (bring daypack) to top of Arc Dome at 11,773 ft. Mod. strenuous, covering 10-12 mi, 4100 ft gain. This part of the hike is somewhat exploratory, as there is supposed be trail which may be difficult to follow. On Day 4 we’ll start down to South Twin, all downhill, and camp where we did first night. Last day is hike out. In total, it’s about 16 mi RT, 3000 ft gain, with backpacks. Limit 12. Leader: David Hardy (hardylhikers@embarqmail.com, 702-875-4826). Email preferred.

SEPTEMBER 16 (MONDAY) Raintree via North Loop. This hike covers 5.3 mi out and back, with 1600 ft gain. View 3000+ year old bristlecone pine tree. Leader: Vern Quever (rvqrbrut@hotmail.com, 715-587-4341).

SEPTEMBER 26-29 (THURSDAY-SUNDAY) Zion National Park Service Project, UT. Join our annual Sierra Club National Public Lands Day Service Project in Zion National Park. We have group campsite reserved from noon Thursday thru noon Sunday at Watchman Campground in Zion National Park, Springdale UT. Join us as we give service on Friday, Saturday, or both as we work with Park staff in field and also at their Native Nursery. Park entry and camping are free to all volunteers. Teenagers welcome with parent or guardian. For questions or to RSVP, contact leader: Par Rasmussen (parasmussen@gmail.com, 702-215-9119).

SEPTEMBER 28-29 (SATURDAY-SUNDAY) Nevada Public Land Day Citizen Science Survey. Join us for a driving tour, campout, and citizen science survey, as we explore Paiute/Mormon Mesa. We’ll explore area to E of Mormon Mountain and N of Mesquite, along Rainbow Pass Road, Tule Well Road, and Trail Spring Road, all the way to Summit Springs and Ribbons (Lincoln and Clark Counties). We are not planning any strenuous hiking, but will be stopping along the way to stretch our legs and survey various areas for plants, animals, and anything else that will help us put a stop to proposed oil and gas drilling that currently threatens our Southern Nevada public lands and waters. Map link to route: http://bit.ly/NVPLD19. Level of hike will vary depending on what all participants feel comfortable with. Leader: Sierra Club National Our Wild America Organizer, Christian Gerlach (Christian.Gerlach@Sierrachub.org, 702-271-6485).

S. Nevada Group service project report

BY JIM BOONE & NICK SAINES

In late April this spring, seven Sierra Club members carpooned north from Las Vegas to spend two nights in Alamo, Nevada. From there, we traveled out to Desert National Wildlife Refuge (DNWR) and Basin & Range National Monument (B&RN). On our first day, we visited Desert Dry Lake Dunes in the area of DNWR where the US Air Force is trying to take over the land and lock us out. For most of us, this was probably the first and last time we would ever see these dunes. If the USAF has its way, in addition to losing access to the area and the grand recreational opportunities therein, the rare Pink Funnel Lily growing at the edge of the dunes will lose habitat too.

On our second day, we toured B&RN. We started in the Mt. Irish Archaeological District, visiting the three main petroglyph sites. Few of us had ever seen Pahranagat Man, who represents a unique Nevada culture. We didn’t have time to hike up to see Pahranagat Woman, so we’ll have to plan a return trip.

We next visited the historical Logan Township, where miners set up shop in the 1860s to extract silver from nearby mines. An exhilarating drive over Logan Pass took us by a log cabin that also dates from the 1860s. We are lucky to live at a time when sites like these are open and accessible to the public. Unfortunately, though, the log cabin is unfortunately, though, the log cabin is

Driving into the heart of B&RN, we said goodbye to the Mojave Desert

S. Nevada Group service project report

continued from page 6

Las Vegas ICO: Inspiring Connections Outdoors

ICO kids restore tortoise habitat

BY JANET CARTER

On Saturday, May 18th, eight children, ages seven to 11, from Bob Price Community Center, went with Las Vegas ICO on a special outing to Gilcrease Orchard in the northwest valley.

The Bob Price Center youngsters had gone with Las Vegas ICO to this local “pick your own” farm and orchard in the Fall to help establish a new habitat for two rescued desert tortoises which now live there. This time they were returning to rid the habitat of invasive weeds and plant additional native plants -- which will become tortoise food. This visit was a service project organized with Get Outdoors Nevada, a local non-profit that is dedicated to getting Nevadans of all ages and backgrounds into Nevada’s diverse outdoor places.

The day got started with a talk from Sarah Mortimer of the Tortoise Group, a local non-profit that advocates for protection of desert tortoise. She explained that two male tortoises live in the habitat. Each male has his own burrow and walled-in area, as male tortoises are solitary animals and will fight with each other if allowed to live together. Our first task was weeding, because the habitat was overgrown thanks to an exceptionally wet winter and spring. Christiana Manville, a visiting biologist from US Fish & Wildlife Service, demonstrated how to tell weeds from native plants. Working in small groups, the children began pulling identified weeds, some almost as big as they were. They all worked hard and pulled a LOT of weeds, filling two full wheelbarrows.

We observed the tortoise. Photo: Janet Carter.

After lunch the kids had time to enter the vegetable garden to pick carrots and beets to take home for their families. The children went to work. With their gloves and went to work. It was messy, but fun. At lunchtime, Cheresa had a special surprise—the donation of the outing she had asked children to suggest names for the younger tortoise. All of the names were terrific, so we had a drawing for the winner. Our new friend is now Jordan the Tortoise.

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The children were not only able to learn the pleasure of giving back, but they also learned a lot about the desert tortoise, a very special animal to all of us who love our Southern Nevada environment.

What you can do. To find out how you can support Las Vegas ICO in getting youth into the outdoors, visit us at: www.sierraclub.org/toiyabe/las-vegas-ico or on Facebook at: Las Vegas ICO.

L to R. Pulling tall weeds (photo by Stephanie from Get Outdoors Nevada); planting native plants (photo by Betty Gallifent); beets fresh from the ground (photo by Janet Carter).
Non-motorized outings

Please use the Mountain Hub app to record your non-motorized recreational outing: https://about.mountainhub.com/software. Mountain Hub is a phone app that will track your route while you ski/snowshoe. It is important that the USFS know where non-motorized recreation is! Your observations will help guide the USFS subpart C Winter Travel Management policy.

Also, please pick up our 2019 Blue Diamond Nordic Routes map at the USFS Visitor Center. The ski map is a guide to historic ungroomed routes in and around Mammoth Knolls, Inyo Craters, and Obsidian Dome.

Water Grab Update

In September, Sierra Club joined Mono County’s CEQA complaint against LADWP that says LADWP’s withholding of irrigation water is negatively impacting the environment. Then LADWP filed a demur asking the court to dismiss the CEQA complaint, challenging whether it is legal to file this complaint now. LADWP argues that the time to have filed was years ago when the Long Valley grazing leases were renewed in 2009–2010. The judge recently denied LADWP’s demur, so the CEQA complaint stands. The next step will be a hearing to present the merits of the CEQA complaint. No date has been set for that yet.

What you can do. If you would like to help by writing to Mayor Garcetti or the LADWP Commissioners or something for your local paper/radio, please contact Lynn at chairrolg@gmail.com.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations 101

There are three things to know about EV Charging Stations. First, there are two categories of EV’s: Teslas and all other makes. That is, Chevy, Ford, Nissan, BMW, etc. Only Teslas can charge at the Tesla quick charging stations at Topaz, Mammoth, Lone Pine, and Pearsonville.

Second, there are 3 levels of chargers. Level 1 is your everyday outlet; it takes all day to charge a car. Level 2 is a 220 outlet; it takes 4–8 hours to charge a car. Level 3 is the quick charger; it takes 20–30 minutes to charge a car. However, a Level 3 charger requires 480v, DC, and costs over $50,000.

The third thing to know is that there is a “universal” charger (J1772) that will work for non-Tesla cars and will work for Tesla cars with an adapter.

To support non-Tesla EV car ownership and move away from fossil fuels, every town in the Eastern Sierra should have Level 2 chargers with public access. Funding and rebates are available that will make them very reasonable to install. If you would like to bring Level 2 chargers to your town, contact Don Condon, your Eastern Sierra Electric Auto Association representative, at condon.don@gmail.com.

Pumped storage in the Eastern Sierra?

Premium Energy Holdings, LLC, recently submitted applications to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for two hydro-pumped storage projects in the Eastern Sierra. One is Owens Valley Pumped Storage project and the other is Haiwee Pumped Storage project.

Pumped storage projects consist of an upper reservoir and a lower reservoir connected by a large penstock or underground tunnel. Water is released from the upper reservoir, flows through a plant generating electricity as it fills the lower reservoir. Then the water is pumped uphill to the upper reservoir to be released again. The water level in the reservoirs fluctuates, but they are not completely drained.

It takes as much power to pump the water up as it generates coming down, so it is not a source of renewable power. Pumped storage acts as a battery that can produce electricity on demand or during the night when solar and wind facilities aren’t generating power. It is a critical component for California to meet its ambitious renewable energy goals of 100% electricity by 2045. The goal of these two projects is to generate up to 12 hours of electricity on a daily basis and 24 hours in an emergency.

The Owens Valley Pumped Storage project would consist of three, closed-loop, pumped storage projects that will be broken down into three separate projects. Each project would have an upper reservoir in the White Mountains east of Laws, up Silver Canyon or Gunter Canyon. Also, each would have a lower reservoir in Owens River Gorge. Three pressure tunnels would be dug under the Volcanic Tablelands connecting one upper reservoir to its paired lower one.

The Haiwee Pumped Storage project would be a single closed-loop system. The lower reservoir would be between North Haiwee Dam and Butterworth Ranch. Three alternatives were proposed for the upper reservoir: two in the Coso Range Wilderness and a third at Sage Flat on the west side of Highway 395.

FERC should deny the first two alternatives because they are in wilderness. That would leave the third choice for the upper reservoir. It would put a reservoir west of the houses on Sage Flat road, on Inyo NE land. A penstock or tunnel would connect the upper and lower reservoirs.

Both projects would dramatically rearrange the environment and have significant impacts on wildlife, wetlands, cultural resources, and recreation. The Haiwee project will impact about a dozen homes and ranches as well. Many environmental groups, local citizens, and county leadership are looking into the impacts and are already involved.

Once FERC issues the preliminary permits, the proponent will start feasibility studies and environmental reports. Not all projects go beyond this phase. They need to be viable and funded with promising returns on the investment.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations coming to the Eastern Sierra!

Electrify America is installing the first non-Tesla quick charging stations in the Eastern Sierra. Ground has been broken for one at the Vons gas station in Bishop and for one at the Chevron station by the Coso Junction Rest Stop south of Olancha. One is almost completed at the Shell station in Bridgeport and might be ready around the 4th of July.