

# THE JEFFREY PINE JOURNAL

*Newsletter of Friends of the Inyo*

SUMMER 2011

VOLUME IX, ISSUE I



*Thousand Island Lake, Ansel Adams Wilderness.*

*photo: Todd Vogel*



Stewardship  
Map

Summer  
Botanizing

Partner  
Profiles

# THE Jeffrey Pine Journal

VOLUME IX, ISSUE I

SUMMER 2011

## Newsletter of Friends of the Inyo



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**Friends of the Inyo is dedicated  
to the preservation, exploration and stewardship  
of the Eastern Sierra's public lands.**



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### The Cover Photo



FOI Stewardship Director and photographer Todd Vogel made this shot while leading a wilderness stewardship vacation at Thousand Island Lake in the Ansel Adams Wilderness last summer. He's a great cook, too!

*Inyo* is a Paiute word meaning "dwelling place of the Great Spirit." For us, this dwelling place extends from the bottom of Death Valley to the top of Mount Whitney, from Owens Lake to Topaz Lake, from the crest of the Sierra Nevada to the roof of the Great Basin atop the White Mountains.

The *Jeffrey Pine Journal*, named after the Eastern Sierra's most aromatic conifer, is distributed free to all members of Friends of the Inyo and wherever great spirits tend to dwell.

# President's Message

by James Wilson

## Names, Words and Lines

The board members of Friends of the Inyo have spent countless hours discussing the name, Friends of the Inyo. FOI was originally organized 25 years ago to comment on the Inyo National Forest (INF) forest planning process. Since then, FOI has evolved into its current form, a local membership-based group working on a broad range of public land issues. Does the name FOI really convey who we are and what we are trying to accomplish? After all we are more than the Friends of the Inyo National Forest, which was the original intent. We work on public lands in Inyo and Mono counties, partnering with Bureau of Land Management offices in Bishop and Ridgecrest, and the National Park Service. We've kept with the name because of continuity, and because the word Inyo has power. Most think it is a Paiute word, meaning dwelling



place of the great spirit. As those of you who walk, climb, bike, ski, run, birdwatch, backpack and otherwise wander here know, it is a great, spirited land.

Preservation, Exploration, and Stewardship, the names of our program areas, are serious words, words with potential and power in them. Preservation seems obvious: we would like to keep Eastern California a functioning, vital place, not only for humans, but also for all of the other creatures that call our place home, such as bighorn sheep, collared lizards and sage grouse. While the task of preserving this place might seem simple at first, it is becoming more complex as humans develop the earth's surface. At one time it seemed that drawing lines on maps, delineating National Parks, Wilderness areas, areas for wildlife preserves or of historical concern, would maintain the places that are important to us, with healthy wildlife, great recreation areas, but it is becoming clear that lines on the map don't do it alone.

There are forces at work that will cause immense and powerful changes. Global climate change is an obvious threat to the integrity of our landscapes. Another force is the growth of human populations in the urban areas of California and Nevada, and the resulting demographic changes and the resulting recreation uses of public lands. Wind-born pollution from afar that changes our air quality, or brings chemicals that affect amphibians, is

yet another factor. These changes are ultimately unknowable in their direction and magnitude. Humans must have the heart and wisdom to will the perpetuation of wild creatures for them to continue to thrive. Management and planning will be essential to the future of wild creatures. For many of them, benign neglect will not suffice—active efforts by man will be necessary.

Our traditional constituency for wild lands is shrinking, especially as a percentage of our population. The core of our biological region is our wild land. Wilderness requires a committed caring constituency in order to remain protected and be managed appropriately. Last summer my wife Kay and I took a five day backpack trip with friends, in over Piute Pass, down Piute Creek to the John Muir Trail, up into Evolution Valley, over through Darwin Canyon,

Exploration! This is the greatest joy. Get out there, go see it. Get your socks dirty, and take someone new with you, take someone young. Most of the 600 plus members of FOI directly experience wild places frequently. If possible this summer introduce someone else to the wonders of the natural world. Inoculate them with the wild. Go walk, bird, backpack, do something with them outdoors. Friends of the Inyo has many field trips, take them on one.

Stewardship. Give something back to the places that you love. Check out our newsletter or website for the many available opportunities to spend time cleaning or restoring a place you cherish. And, of course, take someone new with you!

Part of FOI's stewardship focus for a second year is the



# Anniversary

ber 10! See page 14 for more information.

and out Lamarck Col. A classic backpacking trip, wonderful scenery, wildlife, clear skies, warm days. We saw lots of folks backpacking, and most of them were baby boomers, in their 50's and 60's, and white. While our party was not all middle aged, and that was great, the vast majority of those in the backcountry were. As the baby boom group of backpackers gets older, we need replacement wilderness users who care about wild places, to carry on the work of stewarding these places. California's demographics are changing and we need not only younger folk, but people of diverse ethnicity and backgrounds. There is lots of competition for the time and energy of the young. Video games, movies, music, motorized recreation, all of the temptations of modern life. These are not bad things, but do not build awareness and appreciation of the natural world and wild places that being quietly outside does.

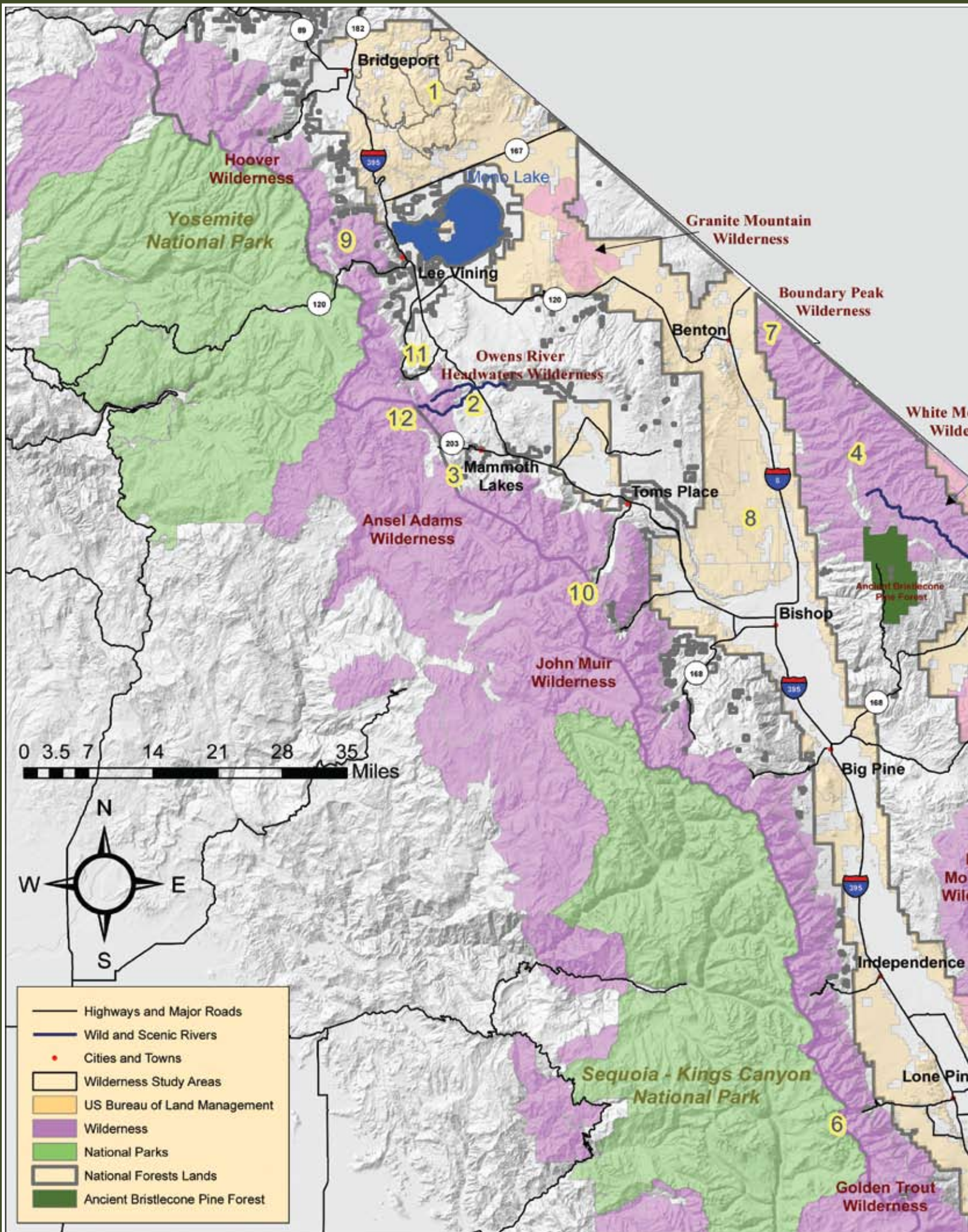
Preservation is not just lines on a map, but the building of constituencies, telling the stories, taking a child for a hike, or backpacking. It is going to meetings, writing letters, using your time and resources to give back to the land we love.

Youth Conservation Corps (YCC), in which local teens are paid to do conservation work on the INF for several weeks in summer. As a team, YCC members work on trails, campsites, and other projects to help conserve our lands, and maintain their recreational values for ourselves and our visitors.

So where does that leave Friends of the Inyo? There are many groups doing good work both locally and nationally on environmental issues. FOI is the group that is focused on and concerned with the big picture here in Eastern California. We advocate, we explore, we educate, we live here, we are not going anywhere, and we need you. This place needs active stewards who are willing to work, to donate, to give back.

Thanks once again to all of you who support FOI with your time, your wallets, and your hearts. Time and money are precious things; thank you for investing your resources in Friends of the Inyo. Thanks for walking the walk for the dwelling place of the great spirit.



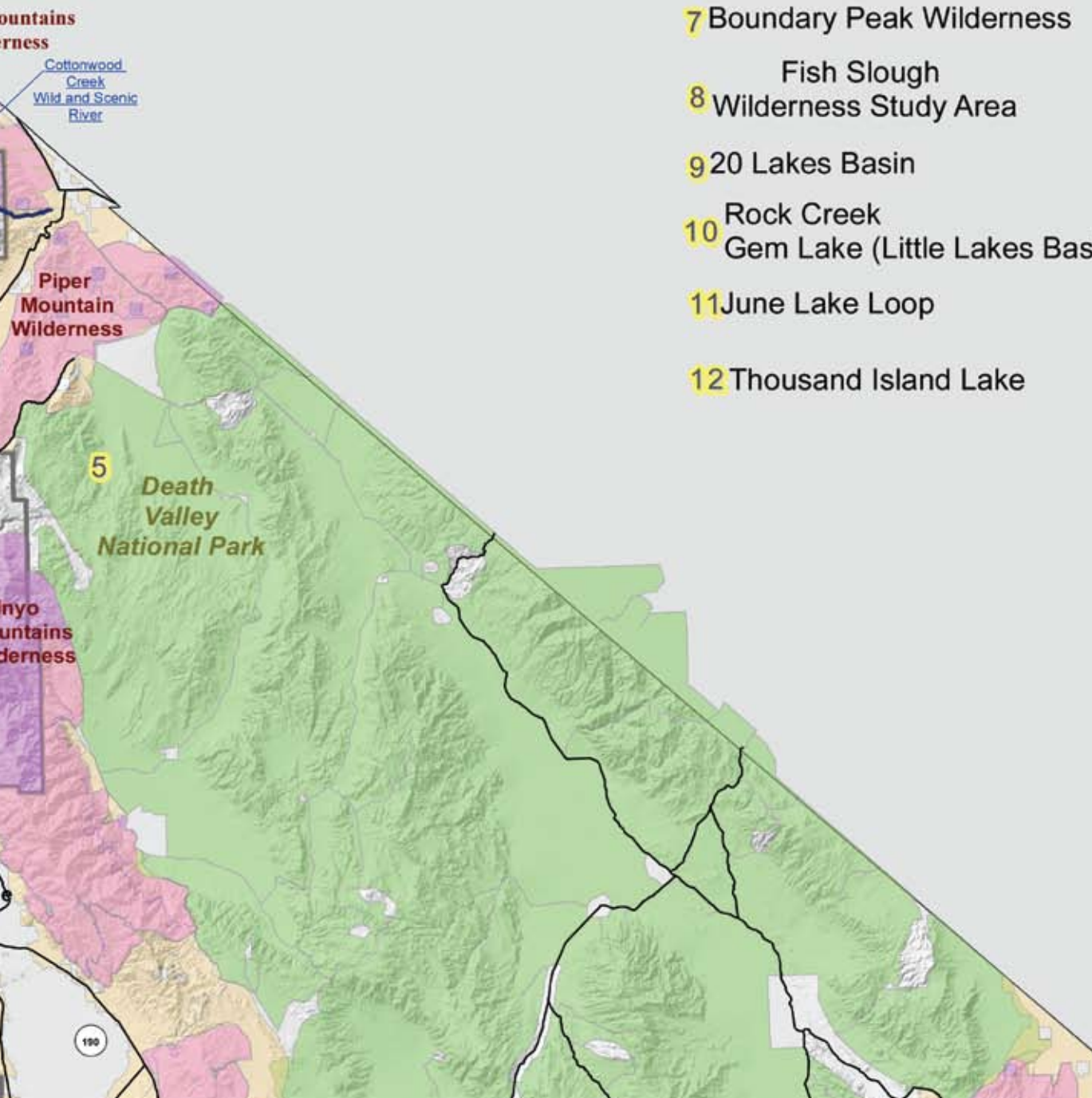




# Summer of Stewardship 2011



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- 3 Mammoth Lakes Basin
- 4 White Mountains
- 5 Death Valley National Park
- 6 Mt. Whitney
- 7 Boundary Peak Wilderness
- 8 Fish Slough  
Wilderness Study Area
- 9 20 Lakes Basin
- 10 Rock Creek  
Gem Lake (Little Lakes Basin)
- 11 June Lake Loop
- 12 Thousand Island Lake





# Summer of Stewardship 2011

See map on preceding pages for numbers and locations, and see page 14 for event dates.



*The Dry Lakes Plateau, in the Bodie Hills, in bloom. (Drew Foster)*

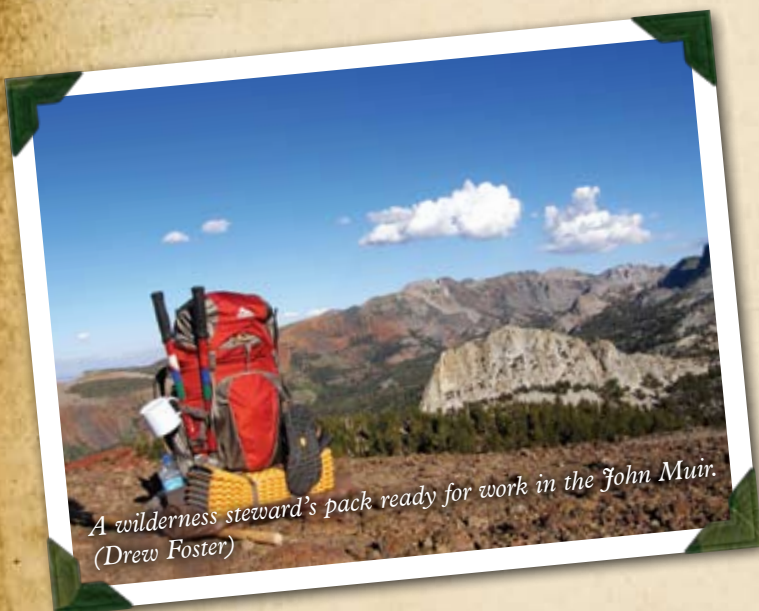
**Friends of the Inyo will continue to explore the (1) Bodie Hills'** natural and cultural wonders this summer. An important part of Eastern California heritage and the scenic backdrop to Mono County landmarks such as Mono Lake and Bodie State Historic Park, the Bodie Hills are a worthy destination for hiking, wildflower and wildlife viewing, sightseeing and photography. Come see for yourself on a hike this July and August.



*Tools ready for trail days work in the Mammoth Lakes Basin. (MLTPA)*

**(3) 2011 is the fourth year of FOI's Mammoth Lakes Basin stewardship program.** This program, funded by the National Forest Foundation and Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, brings on-the-ground community stewardship to one of the Inyo National Forest's most popular destinations. Once again, FOI has teamed up with Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation (MLTPA) to host volunteer "trail days" work parties, happening every other week in July and August. Lakes Basin Steward Carole Lester will lead geology and wildflower tours, night hikes, and generally be a welcome presence to visitors. Last year, FOI engaged over 400 volunteers in the lakes basin, and cleaned up some 1,000 pounds of trash!

**Once the leaves begin to turn in the high country, (5) Death Valley National Park will again be a focus** of FOI's stewardship and exploration, with trips planned to the far reaches of the park this October.



*A wilderness steward's pack ready for work in the John Muir. (Drew Foster)*

**(2,7,9) As part of the ongoing Wilderness Stewardship Challenge funding** from the National Forest Foundation, FOI staff and volunteers will conduct wilderness campsite inventories, invasive plant monitoring, baseline data collection, trail surveys and do trail maintenance and restoration in the new Owens River Headwaters Wilderness and





**(6) Mt. Whitney and the (11) June Lake Loop were the sites of two successful National Trails Day events** earlier this summer. Volunteers worked on the Whitney Portal National Recreation Trail down south; up north, some 60 trail enthusiasts braved chilly weather to finish the trail around Gull Lake, and to maintain the Fern Lake and Yost Meadows trails.

June Mountain is also the location of Friends of the Inyo's 25th anniversary celebration on September 10—please join us!

**Pupfish are thriving and sacred heritage sites remain intact** in the (8) Fish Slough Wilderness Study Area thanks to the Fish Slough Patrol volunteers, a program FOI runs in partnership with the Bishop BLM field office.

**(10) Gem Lake/Rock Creek is the site of a continuing meadow restoration/trail reroute** that FOI will assist on in early August. After a rock work training session by legendary wilderness trail specialist Dolly Chapman, our wilderness crew will aide American Hiking Society volunteers in completing the Gem project. Take a hike to this gorgeous spot in the John Muir Wilderness later this summer and enjoy the trail improvements!

**FOI still needs volunteers to head to (11) Thousand Island Lake in the Ansel Adams Wilderness** in late August. This EVOLVE (Eastside Volunteer Outdoor Learning Vacation Experience) trip combines spectacular High Sierra scenery with good old-fashioned trail work and a guided group outing. The Inyo National Forest has a backlog of trail maintenance—getting out to popular spots like Thousand Island Lake and helping improve trails can benefit everything downstream (which is the entire San Joaquin river drainage!), and it's fun to boot.



## Other Highlights All Over The Map

### Youth Conservation Corps

For the second year, FOI is proud to lead a Youth Conservation Corps crew on the Inyo National Forest. On YCC, local teens get the opportunity for a summer job while learning about resource management hands-on across the forest, from Horseshoe Meadows to Hilton Creek.

### Inyo National Forest Travel Management Implementation

The Friends of the Inyo Stewardship Crew is hard at work all summer doing restoration as part of the INF's implementation of the travel management decision, which creates a legal and sustainable motorized route system on the Inyo. Work locations include the Mono Basin, Glass Mountains, Glass Creek/Deadman Creek and Little Hot Creek.





# Exploration

## Wildflower Hunting: Exploring Ecosystems

By Drew Foster

**S**tovepipe Wells, Death Valley. It's hot, far too hot for early spring, and there are lots of tourists, everywhere. Why am I here? Oh yeah, it's awesome! And I suppose that I'm a tourist too, taking in the stunning beauty of this place, staring in awe at the geologic formations I wish I knew more about.

It's the flowers I'm after, however, here in the northern stretch of the Mojave Desert, where the intense colors, patterns, and vibrancy of the floral displays are rivaled perhaps only by that of the high alpine ecosystems.

Many of the flowers here are "belly plants" (you have to get down on your belly to get a closer look). Desert Star is a prime example, but others like the Desert Calico and Rattlesnake Weed really deserve closer examination too. Intricate patterns and colors, designed to attract various pollinators are nature's tiny works of art. These hardy desert plants put out their all for the few weeks they bloom, and it's a worthwhile show.

The Mojave Desert ecosystem hosts an incredible assortment of endemic plants (organisms that are native to one particular place). These fragile ecosystems are too often written off as a "barren wasteland." A long season of wildflower hunting kicks off in the desert, then as the desert heats up, the wildflower enthusiast moves north, where the line between the Mojave Desert ecosystem and the sagebrush steppe of the Great Basin is a fuzzy one. Within this ecotone, the boundary between two ecosystems, plants and animals from both bioregions frequently commingle. The creosote, shadscale, and blackbush gradually give way to sagebrush, saltbush, and bitterbrush.

Looking out upon a vast sea of the sagebrush steppe, it's hard to imagine any flowers in that brittle gray green vegetation. But for the true wildflower hunter, it offers many special gems that come alive in the late spring, ushering in the summer with vibrant colors. Mule's ears, paintbrush, lupine, desert peach, phlox and phacelia splash the palette, bursting open in a matter of weeks. Between the high desert and the Great Basin are some larger and more prominent flowers, but many retain desert adaptations, with hairy or waxy

leaves. Interspersed in the sagebrush are sandy open flats that offer up small treasures in the understory including the sego lily, morning glory, Mojave prickly pear, and the charismatic giant blazing star.

As the season marches on, the plant lover moves up to the mountains; there's more moisture available from snowmelt and summer showers, and the sagebrush steppe transitions up the mountainside into coniferous forest. The pinon-juniper woodlands shift into Jeffrey pines, lodgepole and western white pines. Move up in elevation to find mountain hemlocks, red fir, limber and whitebark pines. The dolomitic soils atop the White Mountains boast the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest, truly one of the wonders of the world.

Ascending the treeline of the mixed coniferous forest, towering 10,000 feet above sea level and beyond, the alpine ecosystem oddly resembles the desert in some ways. Plants are once again low-growing, the wind is fierce, and those "belly plants" are back. Alpine daisy is a treat, dense mats



*Alpine gentian is one of the "belly plants" sure to lure botanists to the high country this summer (Drew Foster/FOI).*

of phlox, buckwheat, and pussypaws erupt in brilliant white, pinks and reds, and the lacy alpine gentian are all contenders for trips up to the High Sierra throughout the summer, even into early October.

From March to October, you can find the flower hunter staring in rapt contemplation at the ground, or buried in the bushes and rocks with a hand lens counting ever-so-minuscule petals and stamens, or simply appreciating the beauty, diversity and wealth of wildflowers. Plants play a keystone role in the larger complex web of ecosystem health, providing food and habitat, developing and protecting soils, utilizing the sun's energy to fix organic molecules through photosynthesis.

It's vitally important that we protect our ecosystems; so stop and smell the pennyroyal, take the time to explore, observe, and ask questions. The better we all understand the natural world, the more appreciation we will have for it, and the better we will be able to care for it.



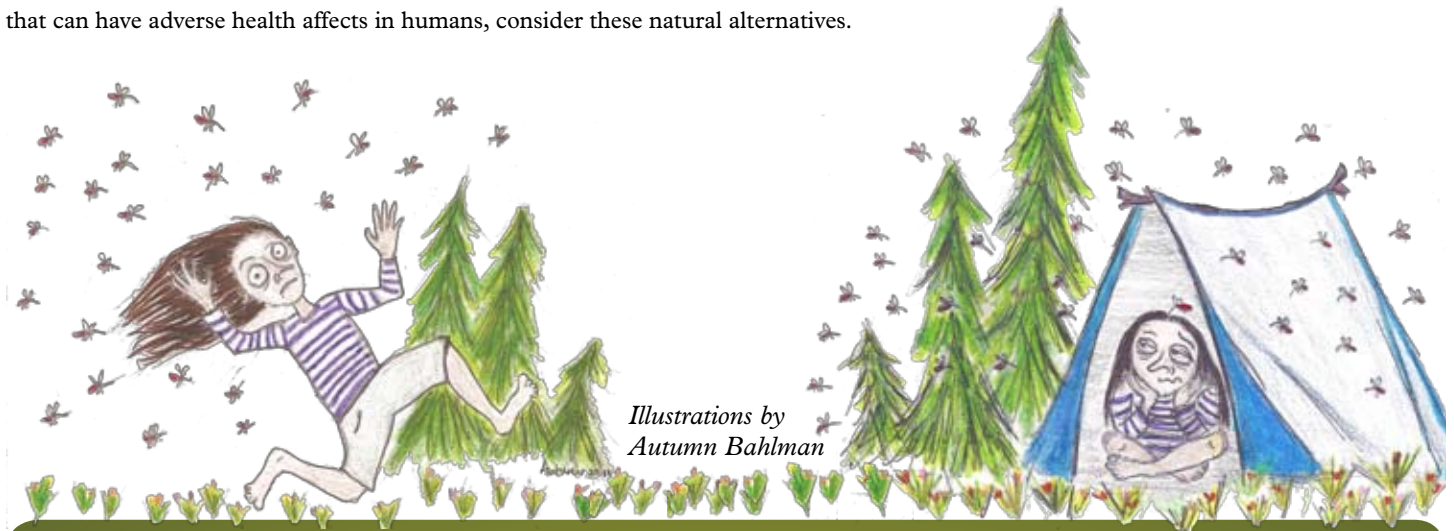
# Exploration

## Preparing for the Worst: A Guide to Natural Mosquito Repellent

By Autumn Bahlman

The smell of coffee brewing gently awakens you as you lay in your comfy sleeping bag. The sun glistens on the condensation that formed overnight on the mesh of your tent. What a glorious morning out in the sierra backcountry! You hum a cheerful tune, as you get dressed for the day. You unzip your tent to join your friends as they drink their coffee and boil water for their oatmeal packets. Good morning birds! Good morning butterflies, trees, and flowers! GOOD MORNING MOSQUITOS!!!! Suddenly your morning takes a turn for the worst. You notice that your friends look miserable as they sip their coffee through mosquito head nets, and stir their oatmeal peppered with mosquito corpses. It's not yet 7 a.m. but the war has already begun, and you are hopelessly outnumbered. In horror you dive back into your tent with several of them following you in. Your ten-day backpacking trip suddenly seems like some kind of a sick joke.

The mosquito season could be a frightening one! If you love getting out into the backcountry, mosquito protection is a must. If you don't want to use insect repellents containing DEET, (N,N-diethyl-3-methyl-benzamide or N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide) a neurotoxin that can have adverse health affects in humans, consider these natural alternatives.



Illustrations by  
Autumn Bahlman

### Natural Mosquito Repellents

#### Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

If you ever find yourself in a situation where you have absolutely no protection from mosquitoes, yarrow may be your best chance for salvation. Found throughout Western North America in mountainous regions, yarrow can easily be found in the Sierra Nevada (unless you really have bad luck). The fresh leaves can be rubbed into the skin for an effective mosquito repellent. (Avoid using too much if you have sensitive skin).

#### Cinnamon Oil

For those who love cinnamon, the good news is that mosquitoes don't! A few drops of cinnamon oil added to unscented

lotion or sunscreen, or diluted into water can provide successful defense against mosquitoes...and it smells a lot better too!

#### Rosemary Oil

Extracted from the garden shrub rosemary, rosemary oil can be added to rubbing alcohol in a spray bottle for mosquito repellent. Rosemary oil is a gentle alternative to stronger bug sprays and can be used by pregnant women and children. The oil can be rubbed directly on the skin, or can be combined with a base oil like olive oil. Rosemary oil is a gentle repellent, and is strengthened by adding it to other bug repelling essential oils such as peppermint oil, or catnip oil.

#### Catnip

Not just a cat pleaser, this herb has been found to be more effective than DEET! Grown easily in a garden, you can make homemade bug spray by chopping up a handful of leaves and stems and steeping them in about two cups of hot water to make catnip tea. Several other stronger concoctions can easily be made using catnip oil. If all else fails, apply large amounts of mud all over your body, or wear your tent fashioned around your waist with a belt. Hike fast, pee quickly, and have thick skin!

*Essential Oil Caution: Although beneficial, many concentrated oils are too strong to apply directly to skin, and need to be diluted. Before using any essential oil or plant material, test a diluted sample on your wrist to test for an allergic reaction.*

# Preservation

## FOI Board Members Contribute to Owens Lake Master Plan

By Mike Prather & Steve McLaughlin

This year's Owens Lake Spring Big Day attracted birders from all over the state to census the lake's bird populations. Nearly thirty birders in eight groups (including FOI Board members Mike Prather, Steve McLaughlin, and James Wilson) covered the lake April 19th counting 58,589 birds of 73 different species. Nearly half of these birds were shorebirds, which attests to the lake's regional importance.

The Owens Lake Important Bird Area has experienced a surge in migrating and nesting shorebirds and waterfowl attracted to the 40 square miles of habitat unintentionally created by the Los Angeles Owens Lake Dust Control Project.

Wetland plant communities are also establishing on the lakebed, further enhancing habitat for birds and other animals. Dust-control cells on the north end of the lake, where the water is less saline, have been colonized by a diverse mix of wetland plants, including sedges, rushes, cattails, grasses, willows, and many other herbaceous perennials. Although a few tamarisk are showing up, invasive exotics constitute a surprisingly small portion of the plant communities.

In an effort to protect large tracts of habitat

and wetlands, the Owens Lake Master Planning group continues its second year of work; both Mike and Steve are members of the Planning Committee. The goal is to draft a comprehensive master plan for Owens Lake by the end of 2011 that will protect and enhance



*Owens Lake migrators. (Ali Sheehy)*

habitat, control dust and conserve water for Los Angeles. The most difficult task remaining is to craft an enforceable agreement that provides a place for nonprofit organizations, has transparency and is enforceable with real consequences for missing the agreed-upon objectives. "The devil is in the details," said Audubon-California's Important Bird Area Director Andrea Jones. "The California State Lands Commission and Department of Fish and Game must fashion leases and permits with clear enforceable objectives."

Los Angeles has verbally committed to protecting habitat if enough water can be saved to make such work economically feasible. They have tossed around a figure of 50% savings of water. That would be a large reduction in water use, if possible, since the amount of water used at Owens Lake the last two years has been in the range of 65,000-75,000 acre-feet. This water is straight from the Los Angeles Aqueduct so water saved does not have to be replaced with purchases of water from other parts of California.

Current dust control measures call for the use of water, vegetation or gravel. But 'hybrid' control methods are now being proposed by the Owens Lake Master Planning group that allow a fusion of methods. Taking into account public trust values, such as aesthetics, hybrid habitats that use less water would combine wetland vegetation, sheet flooding, ponds, islands, and gravel for a reduction of water use and an enhancement of habitat. A three square mile version of this hybrid control method is planned for testing as soon as possible.

*See page 14 for upcoming Owens Lake events!*

## Wildlands Under Attack in Washington

By Stacy Corless

Late this winter, the Bodie Hills received tremendous support from FOI members when a mining company threatened the long-term protection of this American treasure.

Now, congressional legislation poses a large-scale threat to wild places across the nation—including the Bodie Hills. The so-called "Wilderness Elimination Act," first introduced in the House of Representatives this spring by Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), would lift protection for tens of millions of acres of public lands currently in Wilderness Study Area (Bureau of Land Management) and Roadless (US Forest Service) status. A wholesale congressional order to lift these designations undermines the agencies' abilities to manage wild lands, and the public's role in helping determine their future.

Friends of the Inyo, along with local and national conservation groups across the US, opposes this short-sighted legislation. Please

write your member of congress and senators and urge them not to support this bill!

## Wind Monitoring Proposals in Mono

Two-hundred foot tall wind monitoring towers near Granite Mountain? The BLM Bishop Field Office is asking for comments on two proposals to install monitoring towers on public and private lands east of Mono Lake and adjacent to the Granite Mountain Wilderness Area.

According to information from the BLM, resource concerns with the projects include sage grouse habitat, golden eagle nesting sites, and visual impacts to Granite Mountain and the Mono Basin Scenic Area. BLM staff will lead a field trip to the proposal sites July 9 and hold public meetings in Lee Vining and Benton July 11 and 12. Comments are due July 30; visit our website to read BLM's public notice and view project maps.



# Member Profile

## Biologist Phil Pister and Leopold's Land Ethic

By Catherine Billey

**F**riends of the Inyo was delighted to have long-time member and “retired” local fishery biologist Phil Pister on the panel with filmmakers following screenings of “Green Fire : Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for Our Time” - the first full-length documentary film ever made about the legendary environmentalist - in the Eastern Sierra in early June.

Phil studied wildlife conservation and zoology at UC Berkeley under Leopold's son, A. Starker Leopold (who went by “Starker”) beginning in 1949, a year after Leopold himself had died.

“I never met him, but I was hugely influenced by his writings,” Phil said. “He started the whole field of wildlife conservation in the United States. It had been kicked around by others, but nobody had ever entered into it. Leopold went to the University of Wisconsin and set up the first program there in wildlife conservation.”

Phil said Leopold's “A Sand County Almanac” is also a parallel and discussion of Leopold's life. “All of his major thinking came out of that – like his famous land ethic – an amazing thing. It was the first time that anyone had dared, in that era, to question the role of human beings on the planet. Everyone up to that point figured that human beings were there to use the land for their own selfish purposes. Leopold took human beings and placed them alongside all the other species on the planet – not in a position above them, but as co-equal partners on the planet.”

Leopold's work directed how Phil ran his 38-year operation as a state biologist with the California Dept. of Fish and Game in Bishop. “I picked up on things like pupfish, and non-game species, and said ‘okay, they have as much right to be here as we do. We have no right to exploit them for our own selfish gain.’ I followed all the way through and tried – I think successfully – with the guys who worked with me, to direct them the same way.”

He devoted his career to supervising aquatic management and research in an area that encompasses a thousand waters of the Eastern Sierra, ranging from the 14,000 foot crest of the Sierra Nevada to the floor of Death Valley. He has worked alongside

Steve Parmenter, another FOI

member, who continues in the same

tradition. “Steve is a UC Santa Cruz guy. They teach similar stuff. So he had no trouble adapting to this at all. If you're a biologist, there's no other sensible way to work with this.



Sometimes we  
a snag in land use

run into  
decisions.”

Among Phil's more than 80 published works is a book chapter in “A Companion to the Sand County Almanac,” which came out 30 years after Leopold's original book. “That was the impact of Leopold's teachings on the conservation community,” Phil said.

Asked about his current doings, Phil laughed. “At 82 years old I don't get up and go roaring around the country as I once did. But I stay busy doing different things.” Phil founded and continues to serve as executive secretary of the Desert Fishes Council.

**“A thing is  
right when it tends  
to preserve the integrity,  
stability, and beauty of the  
biotic community. It is wrong  
when it tends otherwise.”  
– Aldo Leopold**

### CREATE A LEGACY OF STEWARDSHIP

Your bequest helps Friends of the Inyo forge new paths for stewardship of the public lands of the Eastern Sierra. Planning now could help reduce taxes on your estate. Many gift options are available.

Please contact **Stacy Corless** for more information:

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Friends of the Inyo  
Gift Planning  
819 N. Barlow Lane  
Bishop, California 93514  
760-873-6500



# Partner Profile

## Ed Armenta – Living His Lifelong Dream

By Catherine Billey

**L**ike many Southern Californians who spent their youths fishing, camping and hiking in the Sierra Nevada, Ed Armenta, the new Inyo National Forest Supervisor, fell in love with the region and dreamed of living and working here someday. That dream came true in March, and he is reveling not only in the beauty and diversity of the Eastern Sierra forest and habitat, but the contrasts in the places he manages – from high desert and alpine meadows to the extremes.

With a degree in Wildlife Management from Humboldt State University, Ed began his career as a wildlife biologist trainee on the Plumas National Forest, and moved on to years of work on the Sequoia, Prescott, Tonto, Lincoln and Kaibab National Forests in California, Arizona and New Mexico.

All that experience in the American Southwest gave him a strong background in fire and fuels management. In Arizona, he managed a successful prescribed burn project and created a phone tree to give local residents adequate

heads-up. “We tried our utmost to be sensitive to the local population affected by our smoke, so we would try to rotate our burns so we didn’t inundate them.” That consideration will extend to the Eastern Sierra, where Ed will ensure rangers give adequate public notification of anticipated burns.

This summer, Ed is most looking forward to working with volunteer groups like Friends of the Inyo. But he anticipates that motorized travel management implementation will be the biggest project for the foreseeable future. “We’re making sure we’re honoring our commitments,” he said. “We’re trying to make some progress moving forward while being sensitive to the needs of our recreationalists. At the same time, we’ve got to protect those natural resources that are at harm right now.”

Ed also has strong background in equal employment opportunity and civil rights, so he looks the human component of the Forest Service as much as natural resources. “Employee morale is really important for me – just making sure that we’re treating each other in a fair manner,” he said. “Sometimes we get so focused on protecting and enhancing the natural resources that we lose sight of our people.”

He believes the secret to building successful collaborative relationships – both internally and with recreationists – is establishing one-on-one interaction and listening (even if you don’t agree) to different points of view. “It’s all about establishing personal relationships, getting out in the field, looking at the issues, kicking the dirt and talking.”

**“It’s all  
about establishing  
personal relationships,  
getting out in the field,  
looking at the issues, kicking  
the dirt and talking.”  
– Ed Armenta**





# Partner Profile

## Bernadette Lovato – A Western Kid at Heart

By Catherine Billey

**A**fter a 20-year federal career split between the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management, Bernadette Lovato came on board as manager of the BLM Bishop Field Office in December, 2009. She manages the 750,000 acres from Topaz Lake to Owens Lake – roughly the same area to which Friends of the Inyo is devoted.

She grew up in Moriarty, a small rural community in central New Mexico east of Acoma Pueblo, known for its beautiful pottery and setting. “For awhile, I tried to collect Acoma pots and give wedding vessels to friends when they married,” she said. A wedding vessel has two openings on top. “The concept is that as you pour into the vase, it goes into one – so the wedding starts as two, but ends as one.”

Bernadette attended New Mexico State University and completed the BLM Emerging Leader Program. She then worked throughout the West from New Mexico and Arizona to Glacier National Park, Montana. She was most recently the associate district manager of BLM’s Colorado River District in Arizona, with oversight for three field offices covering 5.1 million acres.

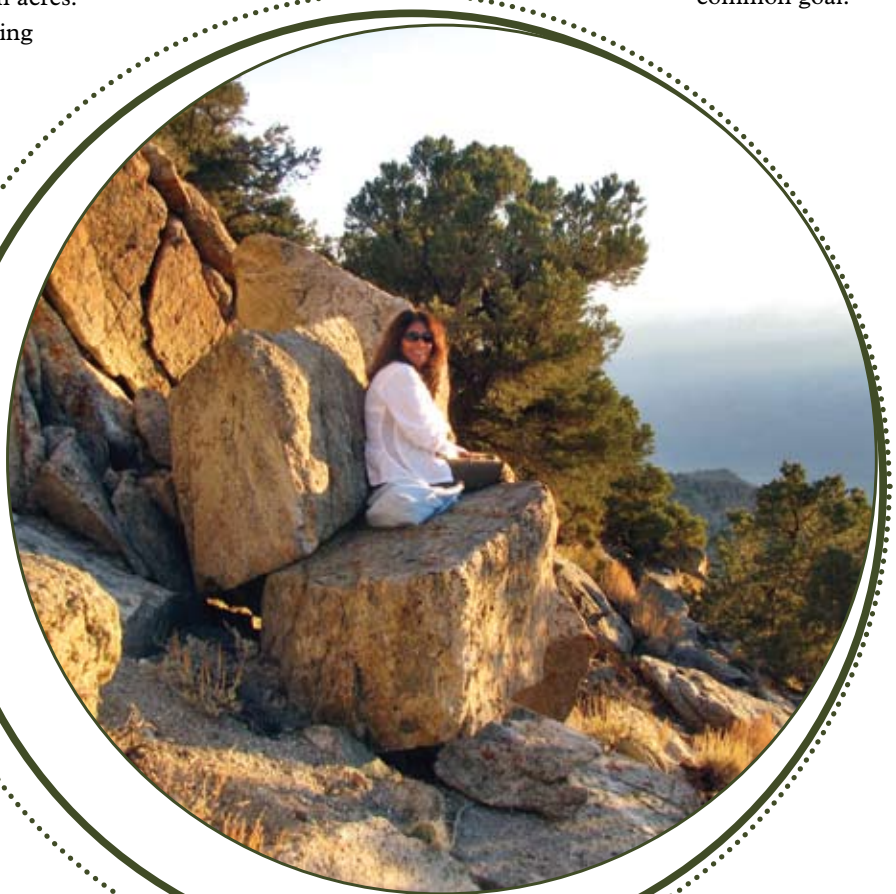
“I’m kind of a Western kid. I can’t imagine myself living anywhere else but the West,” she said. “I used to think that where I ultimately wanted to end up was somewhere in Montana – until I came here.” Someone recently asked her how she chose the Eastern Sierra, and she said “I feel like it chose me.” While there’s a lifetime of experiences here, one of her favorite places so far is Papoose Flat. “It is one of the most spiritual places I’ve ever been.”

With many projects on her

plate, the one she is especially excited about is this summer’s X Corps, in which the BLM, National Park Service, Forest Service and Friends of the Inyo are partnering with the Student Conservation Association (SCA) to do restoration work in the Eastern Sierra. She collaborated with SCA’s Jay Watson and local land managers to discuss how to expand the SCA restoration crew’s work to be more on a landscape level basis and multi-agency. “I felt we had the capacity to have restoration efforts happen here across agency lines, and I think Friends of the Inyo really plays an integral part in that.”

She is known for her collaborative approach to resource management. Her philosophy is “these are your public lands – I just happen to be the manager that has the decision-making ability over those lands.” She strongly desires as much input from the public as possible. “That allows me to have a broad-based decision making opportunity.” That spirit is not so dissimilar to the wedding vessel – pouring forth from two sources to reach a common goal.

**“I used to  
think that where  
I ultimately wanted to  
end up was somewhere  
in Montana – until I  
came here.”  
– Bernadette Lovato**







*Hiking Last Chance Canyon. (Todd Vogel/FOI)*

## Summer Events, Fall Explorations

Visit [www.friendsoftheinyo.org](http://www.friendsoftheinyo.org) for event details!

### July 2-September 11 Mammoth Summer of Stewardship

**Trail Days:** Trail maintenance, restoration and cleanup projects all around Mammoth!

July 2 – Sherwin Lakes; July 16—Horseshoe Lake; July 30—Coldwater/Duck Pass; August 13—Inyo Craters; August 27—Inyo Craters; September 11 (Sunday)—Convict Lake.

Hikes and Tours: Join FOI's Lakes Basin Stewards on scenic, informative walks to explore wildflowers, geology and nightlife of the basin every Friday through Monday in July and August.

### July 10: Bodie Hills Hike—Bodie Peak

### July 17: Bodie Hills Hike—Dry Lakes Plateau

### July 24 & August 14: Bodie Hills Information Night

Learn more about this wild and special place at an hour-long information session in Lee Vining at the Mono Lake Committee, 5 p.m.

### August 24 Owens Lake Big Day

Join the fall bird count—email Mike Prather for more information at [mprather@lonepinetv.com](mailto:mprather@lonepinetv.com).

### August 24-28 Thousand Island Lake Volunteer Wilderness Vacation

EVOLVE (Eastside Volunteer Outdoor Learning Vacation Experience) on a service trip to stunning Thousand Island Lake!

### September 3 Owens Lake Birding

Experience a fun day of birding over the holiday weekend—email Mike Prather at [mprather@lonepinetv.com](mailto:mprather@lonepinetv.com) for details.

### September 10 25th Anniversary Celebration at June Mountain

Dinner, festivities at 8200 feet at the June Mountain Chalet, plus a weekend of fun in honor of a quarter-century of conservation. More details will be available mid-July—please save the date and plan to join us!

### October 2 Last Chance Canyon Hike

Wilderness canyon or historic road? Either way, a great walk in the outer reaches of Death Valley National Park.

### October 22 – 23 Jackass and Whippoorwill Flats Stewardship

Explore the northeast corner of Death Valley National Park, near the north entrance to Saline Valley on a service trip to cleanup this area, as well as doing a bit of light road maintenance such as brushing.

### October 25 Fall Open House/Stewardship Celebration, FOI Office

### Wild & Scenic Film Festival

The festival returns for a fifth year!

December 2: Edison Theatre, Mammoth

December 3: Cerro Coso College, Bishop



*The trail to Thousand Island Lake. (Todd Vogel/FOI).*



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*Summer color on the High Trail.*

*photo: Todd Vogel*

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