Power & Grace
Winter Raptors of the Eastern Sierra

Eastern Sierra Stewardship Corps
Making a difference from desert oases to mountain peaks

Crater Mountain
Hike through a volcanic wonderland

Advocacy, education, and stewardship for the public lands of the Eastern Sierra
President’s Message

by Frank Stewart

It’s so nice to see the first dusting of snow on the Sierra crest, especially when it comes in September; that way you get a nice background for fall color hikes in the aspens. I write this message today on the last day of summer, while an early snowstorm clears out of the high country. We even got some drizzle of rain here on the desert floor. Thus marks the end (hopefully) of a particularly devastating fire season in the west.

This past summer Friends of the Inyo Board and Staff held an organizational retreat to review our progress over the last few years and establish new goals for the future. Sometimes it’s easier to see what you’ve accomplished if you are able to look back and check your progress against a list. In our case, the “list” is a development plan we first drafted about five years ago. I remember at the time thinking that we were being pretty ambitious with our goal setting. Back then there was no Jeffrey Pine Journal newsletter; we weren’t even a membership organization. We had one staff person (Paul McFarland) working for us in an office space in Lee Vining not much larger than a dining room table. I kid you not. It’s sure easy to see where you’ve been when you look back in your “rearview mirror,” but sometimes even the view out the windshield is not so clear. You know where you want to end up, you’re just not sure which route to take unless you have a map.

At our summer retreat the FOI Board and Staff layed out a “map” or strategy for the future of Friends of the Inyo: programs to implement; membership and funding goals; wilderness legislation we want to see passed… Even though our list seems a bit daunting, I can tell already that we’re going to get it done. Take this summer for example. Our Eastern Sierra Stewardship Corps has logged record number of hours in the field, and our new Water Watchers program is going full steam. (Please check out the related articles in this issue.)

On the legislative front, we continue to see slow but steady progress. Congressman Buck McKeon recently sent his new Deputy Chief of Staff Bob Haueter to the Eastern Sierra for his first official visit. His office hours were dominated by dozens of pro-wilderness citizens and business owners from Independence to Bridgeport. He actually promised that McKeon’s staff would meet with Senator Boxer’s staff to discuss the pursuit of a new Bill. I would love to have been a fly on the wall when he reported back to his boss about the overwhelming pro-wilderness message he received from the Eastside. Senators Feinstein and Boxer have both expressed renewed interest and demonstrated leadership toward preserving extensive Wilderness, perhaps even in this session of Congress. They have demonstrated that they are committed to protecting California’s remaining wild places, and we are grateful for that.

Some personal notes: our Board Member Linda Emerson recently resigned at the conclusion of her term. We are grateful for her five years of service to Friends of the Inyo, especially regarding her efforts towards establishing our annual Earth Day Fun Run. Thanks Linda! This issue also welcomes back our Executive Director, Paul McFarland, who is returning from paternity leave as the proud father of a healthy son. Congratulations Paul and Yvette!

I would like to thank you, our members, for your support. Together we are succeeding in changing the physical and political landscape of the Eastern Sierra for the better. Frank Stewart is a founding member of Friends of the Inyo and has been active in conservation issues on the Eastside since 1985.

Printed on Recycled Paper
Get Out

Crater Mountain

Wander through a volcanic wonderland

by Todd Vogel

Fall is the best time of year around the Eastern Sierra. Temperatures have cooled, trees are changing color, and, for the first time in four months, hiking around the valley floor is a pursuit that even reasonable people might consider. Around this time we usually get a couple of months of what I think of as the “between” season. Not enough snow to ski but too much for hiking on my familiar and favorite summer hikes. Where to go for a walk?

South of Bishop some twenty miles, at the north end of the Big Pine Volcanic Field, sits Crater Mountain. Crater Mountain happens to be one of the Eastern Sierra’s scenic Wilderness Study Areas (or WSAs—areas managed by the BLM to preserve their primeval and wild character). With spectacular views of the Sierra and Inyo Mountains, and a good chance of seeing a Tule Elk, Crater Mountain WSA is a great place to take a hike. The Big Pine Volcanic Field, of which Crater is the high point, has many interesting volcanic features right off the road and ready to be explored. Thirsty desert vegetation emerges from rough “ah ah” lava (It’s called “ah ah” because that’s what you say if you walk on it barefoot.) Here and there old lava tubes—conduits for past lava movement—pock the landscape creating Dalí-esque caricatures in the desert. Caution is advised though: in places the walking is challenging and a stumble would be a serious event!

This trail-less hike lends itself to wandering, so there are many ways up the mountain. My favorite starts at the west end of the crater, off the McMurry Meadows Road. I think this might be my favorite way because it is the most direct with the least amount of irritating ah ah lava walking, though it does have some.

From Big Pine head west out of town on the Glacier Lodge Road and go just under 2.5 miles to the McMurry Meadows road – a signed, graded dirt road where all but the lowest clearance vehicles will be fine. Take a left on this road and follow it downhill for a short distance, around a hairpin curve, looping south for another 3 miles (3.5 miles total from the Glacier Lodge Road). Park at the closest approach to Crater Mountain, in a well defined pull-out on the east side of the road.

There is no real trail, but the route is pretty obvious, meandering through weird basalt corridors. It is a bit easier to head to the southern of Crater’s two summits and then hike across the summit plateau for the final summit bid. Twice I have found a group of elk sharing the top with me. Elevation gain from the parking area is about 700 feet, but the rough terrain make for a walking time of around 3 hours round trip. Allow some time to explore the crater rim. It’s fun to look right down on downtown Big Pine!

Meandering toward Crater Mountain.
Getting Out and Giving Back
A Stewardship Update

by Laura Chamberlin

**Glass Creek, Owens River Headwaters**

**Who:** 25 Friends of the Forest Day volunteers from around the Eastern Sierra

**When:** July 7th, 2007

**What:** Campsite delineation and off-road vehicle abuse restoration with logs, rocks, pine duff and elbow grease to reduce streambank and riparian corridor disturbance.

**Where:** 8188’ at the Glass Creek Meadow trailhead

**Why:** Road restoration and campsite delineation are powerful tools to reduce erosion, soil compaction and encourage the re-growth of native vegetation. The return of native vegetation – from streamside willows to upland sagebrush – creates a more diverse habitat for wildlife and reduces erosion by stabilizing the soil. Less erosion means cleaner water, healthy macroinvertebrates and fish—all part of a vibrant ecosystem. In addition to improved habitat, campsite delineation creates safe and responsible use of the land ensuring everyone can enjoy the land for many years to come.

**Green & Brown Lakes, Proposed John Muir Wilderness Additions**

**Who:** Santa Clarita Boys and Girls Club

**When:** August 16 to 18, 2007

**What:** 6 youth from Santa Clarita restored 7 inappropriate fire pits, cleaned campsites and explored this hanging glacial valley.

**Where:** 11,000’ in the Bishop Creek Headwaters

**Why:** While not designated wilderness, Green & Brown Lakes are popular backcountry destinations. Wood is scarce in this high mountain environment and evidence of chopped branches was present on slow-growing Whitebark Pines in the area. Beyond the service aspect of improving these popular camping areas, this was also an opportunity for these young people to get out onto public lands, learn more about the Sierra, and most importantly: have fun.
Stewardship Corps

Lower Cottonwood Creek, White Mountains

**Who:** Many, many volunteers  
**When:** Many, many days throughout the year  
**What:** Building a 3000 meter perimeter wildlife fence to protect 88 acres of streamside Cottonwood-Willow-Birch Forest  
**Where:** 5300’ along Lower Cottonwood Creek, the largest stream draining America’s largest desert mountain range  
**Why:** This cattle exclusion fence is being built to keep cattle from the fragile banks of Cottonwood Creek—a proposed Wild & Scenic River straddling the border between the Mojave and Great Basin Ecosystems. After years of cattle wallowing in the stream the area has been significantly impacted. With a loss of native vegetation, particularly lower canopy and understory plants, there is a large amount of erosion and loss of habitat. With the removal of cattle, streamside vegetation will be able to return to full vigor, providing rich wildlife habitat and stabilizing streambanks.

Cottonwood Basin, John Muir Wilderness

**Who:** Nine people from all over the US with the American Hiking Society  
**When:** August 26 to September 1, 2007  
**What:** Trail maintenance – 15 waterbars and 30 check dams installed, numerous waterbars cleaned, 800’ of trail restored as part of area trail reroute  
**Where:** 11,300’ in Upper Cottonwood Basin  
**Why:** Trail maintenance involving waterbars and water diversion structures not only improve recreation but also protect watershed health. Diverting water off trails prevents erosion when high flows use the trail as a new drainage. Maintenance provides a safe and comfortable trail for visitors to use and helps prevent off-trail use. Ecologically, diverting water off the trail prevents sedimentation in downstream bodies of water ensuring healthier alpine lakes and mountain streams.

Special Thanks

- National Forest Foundation–Friends of the Forest Day and Wilderness Stewardship Challenge grant programs  
- American Hiking Society–Volunteer Vacations  
- Patagonia  
- Public lands stewards & wildlife managers from the Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, National Park Service and the California Department of Fish & Game whose cooperation and coordination make our citizen stewardship work possible
A Time of Giving

Many Hands Can Make Lighter Work
by Michelle Pettit

Many of us live here for the incredible views, access and experiences of our surroundings—the Sierra Nevada, the Whites, the Inyo, Death Valley, Glass Mountains...the list goes on and on.

These lands provide us access to incredible, quiet places. Places with Bighorn rams on a ridge, with views across the valley floor or peaks with a light dusting of snow. Places with the minty scent of pennyroyal, the knifelike rush of a raven shearing across the sky, with the underlying drone of insects and the wind through the trees. These are the places that fill your soul, satisfy your imagination, delight your senses—and leave you wanting more.

These places are our public lands. And they need us as much as we need them.

What does it mean to give to public lands? It means that you appreciate and value your role in the future of Eastern Sierra public lands. It’s knowing that your contribution will make a difference. It’s wanting to establish a legacy of habitat preservation and responsible recreation while maintaining the stunning beauty, solitude and access to these areas that inspire you. It means that you want to ensure the same Sierra for your children and their children.

Giving takes on many forms—from donating money, to giving time, to participating in the public process. Here are just a few:

**BECOME A FOI MEMBER**
Friends of the Inyo wouldn’t be here without its members. We rely on the support of people like you to steward and advocate for our public lands.

**DONATE TO THE STEWARDSHIP CHALLENGE GRANT**
$100 will help support a matching grant which sustains our stewardship efforts in the Eastern Sierra.

**GIVE A FOI GIFT MEMBERSHIP**
Get one for everyone on your list.

**REMEMBER US IN YOUR WILL**
Leave a legacy. Call us for more information.

**VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME AT STEWARDSHIP OUTINGS**
Get a little dirt on your hands and give something back to our public lands. See our calendar page for some opportunities.

**COME TO THE WILD AND SCENIC ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FEST**
Friday, November 30 and Saturday, December 1. See more info in this issue.

**ADD YOUR VOICE TO INCREASING NUMBER OF WILDERNESS SUPPORTERS IN LETTERS, AT PUBLIC MEETINGS OR VIA EMAILS**
Sign up for our email alerts (write Darren@friendsoftheinyo.org) and stay abreast of regional policymaking on our public lands and learn how you can make a difference.
I vividly recall my first trip to the Eastern Sierra. After cresting the top of Monitor Pass, I was stunned by the breathtaking views of the Slinkard and Antelope valleys. I pulled over the car, sat down on the ground, and stared. It was hard to believe that such a beautiful place still existed. That was more than 15 years ago, and I have the same reaction each time I visit.

I know a lot more about the Eastern Sierra now than I did then, and coming to the Eastside is like coming home. The mountains, rivers, and valleys are like old friends who I always look forward to seeing. The West Walker, the Sweetwaters, Bodie Mountain, San Joaquin Ridge, Glass Mountain, the Palisades. The list goes on and on. These are no longer just names on a map—through my numerous adventures in hiking, camping, mountain climbing, and fishing, these places have become part of me.

I have spent months ambling Sierra trails, scrambling up broken granite peaks, swimming in frigid emerald lakes, gazing at meteors racing across a clear mountain sky. If one could ever fall in love with a place, I have, and no matter where I go a part of my heart always remains in the Eastern Sierra.

Many people have had similar experiences in the Sierra and were it not for the effort of a handful of these people, the landscape would look terribly different now. Most people appreciate the work of John Muir, Ansel Adams and David Brower. These legendary conservationists helped establish the many wilderness areas and parks that preserved the core of Sierra Nevada beauty.

Far less well-known are the citizen heroes who have kept massive gold mines from the Bodie Mountains, prevented roads from criss-crossing the Whites, and stopped ski resorts on San Joaquin Ridge. These impassioned few have managed to preserve a number of special places so that people like me—and you—still have wild places to explore.

I am lucky enough to know a few of these modern day heroes—Paul McFarland, James Wilson, Frank Stewart, and Sally Miller. They are the ones who have, often at great personal expense and against tremendous odds, managed to keep the Eastern Sierra landscape intact. And they form the backbone of Friends of the Inyo. The fruit of their labor is appreciated each year by the multitude of visitors who come to the Range of Light to share in nature's wonder.

In time, citizens of future generations will look back and thank those intrepid few who had the foresight, courage, and commitment to preserve a place as special as the Eastern Sierra. And I'll be proud then, as I am now, to be a part of the organization that preserved a place that has played such an important role for me and countless others as well.

*Paul Spitler is a board member of Friends of the Inyo who looks forward to sharing the Eastern Sierra with his son, Ansel.*
Our forest hawks, the accipiters, are the **Cooper’s Hawk**, the **Sharp-shinned Hawk** and the **Goshawk**. Long narrow tails and short broad wings, designed to fit in between the tree limbs as they fly, characterize the accipiters. The **Goshawk** is rarely seen away from the mountain forests, but the smaller accipiters, the **Cooper’s Hawk** and **Sharp-shinned Hawk** frequent the habitat around our waterways and town sites. The adult **Cooper’s** and **Sharp-shinned** have finely patterned, reddish breasts and gray backs. (This morning a Cooper’s Hawk sat on our fence and feasted on a quail from the local covey.)
Winter Raptors

Then we have our suite of four Falcons. Year-round one can find the diminutive and lovely American Kestrel mostly near pastures and town, but occasionally anywhere. The powerful Prairie Falcon, brown in color with dark wingpits, is the local ruler of the grassland and terror to squirrel and rabbit. Fall also brings the swift Merlin, slightly larger than the Kestrel, grayer and with a quick, powerful wing beat. We should not omit the King of the Air, the Peregrine. It is a large dark falcon, the adult having a prominent dark moustachial mark. The Peregrine, once reduced to remnant numbers by DDT, is now back and seen fairly commonly at Crowley Lake and Owens Lake, especially where ducks and shorebirds congregate. While watching flocks of shorebirds sometimes the calm ends suddenly, the flock takes to the air in a whir of wings, and looking up you see the streaking Peregrine heading for the weak and the slow. Or perhaps the Peregrine chases any bird just to test its own speed?

Lastly there is the regal Bald Eagle, our national bird. Usually seen singly, and only occasionally in pairs or small groups, Balds are most often associated with water. Tinnemaha Reservoir and Crowley Lake are excellent places to see them feeding on fish and carrion. They are immediately identifiable by their large size and white heads.

For more of Jack’s work, check out JohnMuirLaws.com.
Protecting the Desert

From Desert Oases to Phantom Roads

by Darren Malloy

Chasing Phantom Roads Claims in Death Valley

To the eye of a soaring hawk, the creeks and springs of our desert mountain ranges must shine bright with a hint of the life they sustain. For migratory birds heading south this fall, these streams and marshes present a place to land and recharge for the next leg of a long journey to more temperate climes. Rare water sources in high, arid places provide support for nomadic deer and bighorn sheep, while raptors hunt the smaller mammals and birds flitting about the wetlands.

While many of us visit these fragile places to observe the web life weaves, others see only the opportunity to winch a jeep up a dry waterfall or drive a quad through a streambed. Open desert terrain itself presents an insufficient defense against modern motorized horsepower, but with support from our members and partners, Friends of the Inyo has continued to defend these places throughout 2007.

As reported in the last issue of the Journal, Friends of the Inyo joined with five other conservation organizations to intervene on behalf of Death Valley National Park against a lawsuit filed by Inyo County. Inyo County Supervisors voted last year to file suit against the largest National Park in the continental United States in an attempt to wrest ownership of wild canyons and valleys away from the American people. Using a Civil War-era statute known as RS2477, the County is seeking to claim these park lands for the construction of expensive, unnecessary roads. Our intervention seeks to protect three of the areas that Inyo County is attempting to claim – areas judged “roadless” in 1979, including one of the Park’s most important petroglyph sites and habitat for the imperiled desert tortoise.

In a June ruling, U.S. District Judge Anthony W. Ishii granted our intervention motion. “Inyo County’s land grab could undermine the very reasons Death Valley is such an iconic American landscape: its quiet, its beauty, its wildness,” explained Ted Zukoski, attorney at Earthjustice. “The court understood that, and understood that those with the strongest interest in protecting Death Valley should have a seat at the table.”

White Mountain’s Furnace Creek

Long-time readers of the Journal should know we can’t discuss protection of the desert ranges without an update on Furnace Creek. In May, the Bureau of Land Management handed down a preliminary decision to construct a new road through Furnace Creek, a rare perennial desert stream winding through the White Mountains Wilderness Study Area near the California-Nevada border. The proposed road would cross the stream 14 times within 4.5 miles. Despite the expensive effort and habitat damage required to construct this road, the BLM’s own study states that only about a dozen people would travel the road each year.

The BLM made this decision in the face of a number of significant and reasoned objections: more than 7,000 comments from the public in opposition to new construction (many from our members); comments from the California Department of Fish and Game recommending that no new construction proceed; and even their own Environmental Assessment of November 2006, which stated that the preferred alternative would be to keep the area protected from off-road vehicle damage. Friends of the Inyo, along with the Center for Biological Diversity, the Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society and Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, filed a formal protest of the decision, so you can expect a further update when your next Journal arrives.

Pleasant Surprises for Surprise Canyon

Recent news regarding another desert oasis, Panamint Valley’s Surprise Canyon, has demonstrated the value of continued vigilance. Following a 2001 settlement which recognized the importance of the canyon and the habitat and wildlife it supports, extreme off-road vehicles were justifiably denied the privilege of winching up waterfalls and chainsawing through cottonwood forests. The canyon’s recovery is nothing short of remarkable. But not everything sprouting up in and around Surprise Canyon has been that beneficial.
In July, the US District Court dismissed a suit brought by several off-road vehicle groups seeking legal title to Surprise Canyon for the purpose of “constructing” an extreme vehicle route (really, they just wanted to keep winching and sawing). This September brought the dismissal of yet another suit by the same groups, who continue to try to find a way to justify their own destructive recreational activities on public lands that we all share.

In February, Friends of the Inyo made a visit to the canyon with volunteers and the BLM to remove invasive tamarisk from the area near the mouth of the canyon. Despite our best efforts, some of that non-native tamarisk that was removed from Surprise Canyon in February will undoubtedly grow back. Likewise, we expect additional lawsuits that seek to discard the value of these critical habitats in favor of vehicular access for a miniscule group of people will continue to sprout up. With the support and energy of our members and volunteers, we will return in future winters to remove new tamarisk sprouts. At the same time we will continue to defend these ribbons of life in the desert through whatever means available.

Scrambling up the first waterfall of Surprise Canyon.

November 30th & December 1st
At the Mountain Light Gallery in Bishop
The west coast’s largest environmental film festival will make its first annual stop in the Eastern Sierra this year thanks to the generous support of Patagonia. Help support Friends of the Inyo’s work for public lands in the Eastern Sierra and get inspired by stories on film from around the world. Each night will feature a different program of international films.

Films begin at 7pm both nights, but arrive early for beer, snacks and catching up with old friends.
Tickets $12 each or free with Friends of the Inyo membership or renewal donation of $35 or more.
Advance tickets available at Wilson’s Eastside Sports or through Friends of the Inyo. Tickets are limited so get yours early.

Call 760.873.6500 or visit www.friendsoftheinyo.org for more information.
Fall-Winter Outings/Projects

November 14-18
SALINE VALLEY EXPLORATION AND TAMARISK REMOVAL
Our ongoing desert stream restoration work with the Ridgecrest BLM and Desert Survivors continues this fall in the magical Saline Valley. Last year we had a great time working, exploring, and eating well in this desert between the mountains. Fall is a great time to be in Saline with pleasant fall temperatures. FOI will provide food with participants asked to help split the cost, and we’ll provide our intrepid outdoor chef, Todd Vogel. Please RSVP to todd@friendsoft-heinyo.org.

November 30 & December 1
WILD AND SCENIC FILM FESTIVAL
The west coast’s largest environmental film festival will make a stop in Bishop this year thanks to the generous support of Patagonia. Get a taste of early winter on the Eastside and get inspired by stories on film from around the world. Contact us at 760-873-6500 for more information.

December 16
CRATER MOUNTAIN HIKE
Explore the otherworldly landscape of this black basaltic volcanic cone just south of Big Pine. A stroll to the volcano’s peak will reward with expansive views up and down the Owens Valley. Moderately strenuous 5-mile roundtrip. Meet at 9am at the Big Pine Campground at the junction of 395 and 168. 2wd okay.

January 19
GLASS CREEK SKI TOUR
INTERMEDIATE
This should be a great tour into Glass Creek Meadow. Metal-edged skis equipped with skins and intermediate ski skills desired. Meet at 8am at the Obsidian Dome Road parking area just off Highway 395 and north of Deadman Summit. Bring a sack lunch, drinks and snacks for an 8-hour day.

January 20
OBSIDIAN DOME AREA EXPLORATION
BEGINNER
Snowshoes or skis are suitable for this slide or high-step through the Jeffrey Pines east of the Owens River Headwaters. Meet at 9am at the Obsidian Dome Road parking area just off Highway 395 north of Deadman Summit. Bring a sack lunch, drinks and snacks for an 8-hour day.

February 10
CHOCOLATE MOUNTAIN SNOW SHOE OR HIKE
Conditions will determine our footwear for this wonderful hike up Chocolate Mountain in the Piper Mountains Wilderness. A true island in a sea of desert, Chocolate looks out over Deep Springs, Eureka and Fish Lake valleys. Meet at 8:30am at the Big Pine Campground at the tclothing for warm or cold, a pack to carry it all, and footwear appropriate to the conditions. Snowshoes may be required and a limited number are available to borrow.

March 8
MARBLE CANYON, WHITE MOUNTAINS
Who knew Death Valley-style canyons could be found less than 15 miles from Bishop? Marble Canyon is a treasure with towering polished marble walls, dry falls, a burbling stream and a diverse flora full of surprises. Moderately strenuous 4-mile roundtrip. Meet at 9am on East Line Street in front of the White Mountain Research Station; high clearance recommended, carpooling available to the trailhead.
Bighorn on the Brink...Still

THE SPECIES JOHN MUIR CALLED THE BRAVEST of all Sierra mountaineers is clinging to survival once again and it will take more than bravery to prevent the Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep from going extinct.

As Journal readers know, the Sierra bighorn has been perilously close to extinction for decades. Although populations have increased since the record low counts of the mid-1990s, there are still only 350 or so Sierra bighorn left.

Worse, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service—the agency charged with protecting the bighorn—has continued to drag its feet toward a critical step on the path to eventual Bighorn recovery.

Despite obligations to complete and implement a recovery plan and designate “critical habitat” for the bighorn, the Fish and Wildlife Service has done neither. Critical habitat—defined as the habitat necessary to support a species recovery—is an essential tool in bringing endangered wildlife back from the brink.

The Fish and Wildlife Service finally proposed critical habitat designations for the bighorn, but it was seven years late and a result of a lawsuit requiring the agency to do so—in June of this year. The proposal also fails to designate any migration corridors between habitat units, meaning that Bighorn sheep attempting to migrate along the Sierra will have to fend for themselves.

Friends of the Inyo joined with the Center for Biological Diversity and Natural Resources Defense Council to suggest improvements to the proposed critical habitat designation. The next step is for the Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct an economic analysis of its proposal and then make a final critical habitat designation. What the agency proposes to do could well determine the fate of the Sierra Nevada’s bravest mountaineer. Stay tuned.

Route Designation & Uncivil Disobedience

THE INYO NATIONAL FOREST MOVED EVER CLOSER to finally designating a sustainable and manageable system of roads and trails across our public forest lands October 1st with the release of maps showing their proposed road system.

A little background for those unfamiliar with Route Designation: In 1972, President Nixon issued Executive Order 11644 directing all public lands managers to designate a system of routes for motorized use to minimize harassment of wildlife, damage to soils and disruption of other public lands visitors. Thirty-five years later, and we’re just about there.

Anyone who gets out into public lands regularly knows what’s happened since 1972. Motorized use has exploded, and along with it roads have been pioneered all over the place. Route Designation is the nationally-mandated process to sort out the mess that’s been created over the last three decades on public Forest lands.

As released, the Inyo’s first maps propose to clean up over ½ of the 1800 miles of Unauthorized Routes created in the last decade, while adding the remaining half to the 1240 miles of roads the Inyo considers...
Eastern Sierra Water Watchers

The Eastern Sierra Water Watchers, a citizen-based water quality monitoring program, have been having a great initial year. With patience and dedication, 19 volunteers have enthusiastically weathered in-depth trainings, early mornings and cold days in our local desert creeks. By performing several standard water quality monitoring techniques, streamside habitat assessments and benthic macroinvertebrate (water bugs) sampling, citizen scientists with the Water Watchers are making a real contribution to several of our valuable creeks here in the Eastern Sierra. Stay tuned to the Friends of the Inyo website (friendsoftheinyo.org) for more information about water quality monitoring, why we are doing it, where we are monitoring and results we have collected so far! For more information about Water Watchers or to volunteer please contact Laura at 760-873-6500 or laura@friendsoftheinyo.org.

Eastern Sierra Water Watchers...continued from page 13

ers already “designated.” All things considered, we find the proposed maps fair. Yes, there are some problems—such as the proposed designation of roads that don’t exist, but we’ll work on those together as the process moves forward.

Despite gaining legal status for over 800 miles of new road, local off-roaders are literally frothing at the mouth with indignation and anger. In a recent newspaper article, local off-road advocate extraordinaire, Dick Noles, threatened to “fight for every damn mile.” If any “roads” are closed, Dick promises “there will be civil disobedience, big time.” So much for compromise and rational discussion.

Inyo Register reporter John Klusmire couldn’t have summed the off-roaders’ ridiculous threat up better when he wrote, “at least the protestors will have plenty of authorized roads to drive on to get to the places they want to protest.” Maybe the fines resulting from off-roaders continuing to willfully ignore legal routes of travel could help fund much needed ranger presence, public education and habitat restoration on our Forest lands?

We need your help—simply complaining about illegal and damaging off-road vehicle use does no good! Get involved and do something. Answer the calls to go to meetings and comment on this critical process. Send your photos, stories and observations not just to us at FOI (paulmc@friendsoftheinyo.org) but to the local papers and your land managers. Call us—we can help you make a real difference. We cannot let bluster and bullying guide the future of our public lands!

The Inyo National Forest pledges to have a designated system in place by December 2008, misplaced threats and incivility notwithstanding.

Celebrating in the Buttermilks

A HUGE THANKS to the over 70 of you—members and friends of Friends of the Inyo—who came out to celebrate our collective love of public lands and wildlife early this October. You made our first annual Friends of the Inyo Member Picnic a smashing success. Members traveled from all over the state to share what was a glorious fall day of walks, talks and food in the natural amphitheater created by the rounded granite boulders of the Buttermilkst.

Board Treasurer James Wilson led a great scramble up Grouse Mountain in an effort to prove you really can mountain in the frontcountry. Staff members Darren Malloy and Paul McFarland led meanders through meadows painted with autumn watercolors, chased the last of the fall lizards and made it up to unparalleled viewpoints, while Board President Frank Stew-...
Welcome to the World, Solomon.
6 September, 2007

Love,
Your Folks

Special thanks and words from our Sponsors

Thanks & Acknowledgements

Our faithful funders:
- Paradam Foundation
- Resources Legacy Fund Foundation
- National Forest Foundation
- Patagonia, Inc.
- Haynes Foundation

Our Summer Stewardship Interns, Ian Bell and Paul Landsberg, for their amazing dedication, good humor, and hard work.

The Glass Mountains and their pine trees just because.

Sara Steck for organizing yet another successful local Eastern Sierra Coastal Clean Up nearly 300 miles from the actual coast.

All our dedicated volunteers with the Eastern Sierra Water Watchers.

Amy O’Connor with Integrated Development Consulting for guiding us through over 4 years of Strategic Planning

Wynne Benti of Spotted Dog Press

Sierra Nevada Bighorn for preserving.

And our members who keep us going, growing and getting things done!

Chris Joseph & Associates

Santa Clarita Boys & Girls Club

Nils and Keri Davis of Nils Davis Graphic Design and Production for the generous donation of their collective professional skills created the Jeffrey Pine Journal as you see it today.

ANONYMOUS

Welcome to the World,
Solomon.
6 September, 2007

Love,
Your Folks

Sierra Maps - #1 Locals’ Choice

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PO Box 1658
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Join with us to preserve the Eastern Sierra

**Membership Levels:**

- $25  
  Clark’s Nutcracker
- $50  
  Yosemite Toad
- $100  
  Sierra Nevada Bighorn
- $500  
  Wilderness Steward
- Please send a gift membership to the address below

You will receive a FREE 100% organic cotton Friends of the Inyo t-shirt with a donation of $50 or more.

Shirt size  
( S, M, L, XL)  
☐ Mens  
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All members will receive our biannual newsletter, as well as timely alerts on Eastern Sierra public lands conservation issues.

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