

THE JEFFREY PINE JOURNAL

Newsletter of Friends of the Inyo

WINTER 2012

VOLUME X, ISSUE II



Picture Peak and Hungry Packer Lake.

photo: Todd Vogel



Stewardship
Journals

Meet Our New
Executive Director

Member &
Partner Profiles

Preservation | Exploration | Stewardship

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Newsletter of Friends of the Inyo



(760) 873-6500
819 N. Barlow Lane
Bishop, California 93514
www.friendsoftheinyo.org

Newsletter Editor: *Catherine Billey*
Newsletter Design: *www.nilsdavisdesign.com*

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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



Todd Vogel took this photo while leading the EVOLVE trip in mid-August with the American Hiking Society on a stormy day in the Sabrina Basin above Bishop.

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

The summer of 2012 was busy and productive for Friends of the Inyo. I would like to take a moment to reflect on some of our accomplishments and notable items.

We would like to thank Stacy Corless for four years of great work for Friends of the Inyo. For two years Stacy was our Communications Director, and then for the last two, our Executive Director. Stacy oversaw FOI growth in publications, stewardship, and Travel Management. During her first years, Stacy was integral to the passage of a new Wilderness Bill that designated The Owens River Headwaters and White Mountains Wilderness, among others.

Our Travel Management program provided both challenges and rewards, and Stacy was a major part of it. Our Summer of Stewardship (SOS) programs in the Mammoth Lakes Basin were perhaps Stacy's favorite program, and under her mentorship were a resounding success. These were huge achievements. We thank her for her good work, and look forward to working with her as a volunteer.

Hiring a new person to take over as Executive Director is always a challenge. Finding a candidate with the appropriate mix of talents for policy, administration, and dealing with all the folks is the goal.

In early October, Laura Beardsley started as our new Executive Director. Laura worked in Yosemite for both WildLink and Yosemite Conservancy and has experience both in the office and the field with nonprofits. We are very pleased to have Laura on board. Please welcome her to FOI when you meet her.

Our stewardship programs this summer were large both in size and in accomplishments. Our Travel Management work on Inyo National Forest helped the Forest Service implement a sound road system. This work was done by our stewardship crews across the forest. Much was accomplished. We also helped with the massive tree blowdown in the Red's Meadow area, and worked with Backcountry Horsemen of California and other volunteer stewardship crews to get the trails open. Once again, we also sponsored Wilderness Stewards who helped patrol the backcountry. In this area, too, much good work was accomplished.

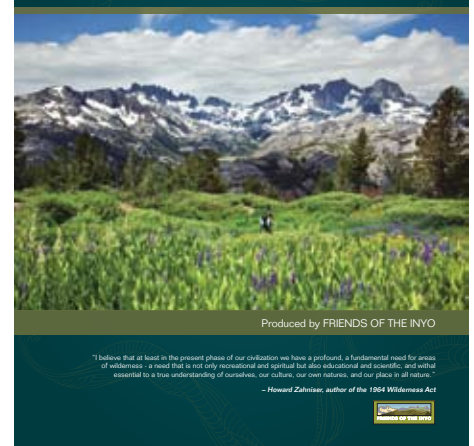
With help from Mono County and other partners, Friends of the Inyo published in late August the Eastern Sierra Wilderness Guide. This 32-page booklet has information about both designated Wilderness and other wild lands in Eastern California. Information includes size, location, management activities, and access for these areas. It is available at the visitor centers in our region, the FOI office, and other places.

Several people wear FOI hats year round. Our staff works, sometimes at great length, during our summer season to get our programs done. This year we got it done. Many thanks to Todd, Paul, Drew, Cat, Autumn, and Andrew, who labored long hours to achieve our goals.

Fall is here. I see leaves turning and the summer birds are gone. When this journal goes to print, the leaves, too, will be gone and winter well on its way. Let's hope for a white one to fuel our outdoor pleasures and fill our lakes and streams.

Winter is coming. Think like a chickadee!

Eastern Sierra Wilderness Guide



Produced by FRIENDS OF THE INYO

Eastern Sierra Wilderness Guide

Meet Laura Beardsley, FOI's New Executive Director

by Catherine Billey

It was a pleasure to sit down in early October for a Q&A with FOI's new executive director, Laura Beardsley. In person, she is warm, engaging and articulate, which is not surprising given her degree from Bryn Mawr College in Communications Studies. Mountain living has long been a love of hers, as she was born and raised in a rural part of New Hampshire, attended high school in western Massachusetts, and spent many weekends exploring the nearby White Mountains. Her first major traveling adventure was studying abroad in Australia, where she lived for six months in Melbourne and traveled to Tasmania, "a pretty amazing place, from an ecological standpoint – you have grasslands, rain forests, beaches and mountains – all on an island that can be circumnavigated in a week by car." After college, she spent a month traveling through seven European countries, before working at Outward Bound in Philadelphia and enjoying urban life for a time. A job as Membership Coordinator for the Yosemite Conservancy enabled her move to California, where she lived in Yosemite for six and a half years and frequently visited the Eastern Sierra. She is passionate about food, skiing and community. She learned about Friends of the Inyo while volunteering at Lake George during the Summer of Stewardship in 2011.

How do you feel about being on board with Friends of the Inyo?

I'm extremely excited to be a part of such an exceptional organization and such a passionate and dedicated team – staff, board and members.

What are some of your favorite places to visit in the Eastern Sierra?

One of my favorite places is McGee Canyon. I love it. And because of my home in Crowley, I've recently become acquainted with the Hilton Creek Trail. I also have a special place in my heart for Royce Lakes out of Pine Creek.

What brought you to the Sierra Nevada?

I started visiting Yosemite as a vacationer. I had a good friend who was working in the park for what is now Naturebridge, and after my third or fourth visit, I was looking for a change from the work I'd been doing with Outward Bound in Philadelphia. I just happened across an open position in Yosemite and I thought, well it's worth a shot.

And what brought you to the Eastern Sierra?

Every year I've been spending more and more time in the Eastern Sierra. Particularly in the last 2 and a half years, I've been spending almost 50 percent of my time here – and I made the decision this spring to move here full time. I was very fortunate when this position became available.

Which environmentalists have most influenced you?

I don't know that I could point to just one. The environmentalists that have influenced me the most are not necessarily the big names or most known or recognized– like Rachel Carson or Edward Abbey or David Brower – who are all amazing. But they are the people who are working in their own small ways to influence change in their communities and their public lands.

What conservation/environmental books have most influenced you?

I would have to say that I love The Monkey Wrench Gang. Also, John McPhee's Encounters with the Archdruid.

What would be your biggest hope for the direction of Friends of the Inyo?

My biggest hope is that we can continue to work with the various stakeholders in the area to help preserve this amazing place and promote responsible use and enjoyment for the animals, the plants and the people.

In your view, what's the greatest challenge facing the environmental integrity of the Eastern Sierra today?

I really think it's striking a balance between the communities that live here, the public which in essence owns most of this land, and the natural resources that we all cherish.

Where is your favorite place to travel, outside the Sierra Nevada?

I have a really hard time picking favorites... I love to go back to a city and enjoy all the diversity and culture that exists in an urban environment – I love Brooklyn – but I also love exploring the mountains. Part of the trip I did to Europe after college included two days in Davos, Switzerland, in the summertime. I'd been living in Philadelphia or Bryn Mawr, and hadn't had much of a chance to get into the mountains in several years, and that trip really reignited my love for mountains. Meadows! Snow melt!

Do you have any pets?

I made a conscious choice in Yosemite not to get a dog because it's really hard to have a dog in a national park. But with all the forest and BLM lands here, it's an excellent place for dogs to get out and run around, and I hope to adopt locally in the future.



*Laura enjoying the wilderness near Royce Lakes.
(Jon Crowley)*

Preservation

Friends of the Inyo's Commitment to Conservation

By Drew Foster

The Eastern Sierra is a big place, a really big place. From the lofty peaks of the Sierra Nevada and White Mountains to wide-open sagebrush steppe, to the Mojave Desert and Death Valley National Park, this place is rich in history, culture, ecological and biological diversity, and opportunities. Part of Friends of the Inyo's mission is to preserve the Eastern Sierra's public lands, in harmony with proper stewardship, always remembering to get out and explore.

Friends of the Inyo was initially formed to comment on the planning process in the 1980s for the Inyo National Forest. Since then, there have been many conservation gains, including: a legally designated system of roads through the Travel Management process, permanent protection of over 400,000 acres of new Wilderness and Wild & Scenic Rivers, critical habitat for Bighorn Sheep populations, success fighting mining interests' push to gut protections in the Bodie Hills, and the development of a vibrant and robust stewardship program to take care of these protected places. Of course there is so much more, and none of it would have been possible without the help of our partner conservation organizations, volunteers, letters, phone calls, and the passion of the people committed to the preservation of the Eastern Sierra.

As we look back on the incredible accomplishments of the past, toward 2013 and beyond, Friends of the Inyo will engage in a wide array of preservation issues.

Forest Planning

Beginning this year, the Inyo, Sierra and

Sequoia National Forests will be among the first in the nation to revise their Forest Plans under the new planning rule. Some highlights in the new planning process include requirements to make recommendations for Wilderness, Wild & Scenic Rivers, and other special designations, as well as mandates for Forests to map pathways to sustain species viability while facilitating multiple uses of public resources.

Friends of the Inyo was initially formed to comment on the planning process in the 1980s for the Inyo National Forest.

Also of great emphasis in the upcoming process is the strong role of science to inform planning, and the incorporation of climate change and adaptive management practices. It is still early in this process, and Friends of the Inyo is involved in preliminary stakeholder meetings and dialogues. A Science Synthesis shall soon be released then integrated with a bioregional assessment in early 2013. The official 18-month Forest Plan revision process is slated to kick off in October 2013, so look for more information and ways to participate in coming months as FOI continues to engage in this important process.

Bodie Hills

Friends of the Inyo remains an integral part of the Bodie Hills Conservation Partnership, a coalition of organizations working toward the permanent protection of the Bodie Hills. Largely thanks to your support, we successfully defeated Cougar Gold's and Congress' attempts to release Wilderness Study Area (WSA) protections in the Bodie Hills. Now we are shifting gears toward a proactive design-

ation campaign to permanently protect this incredible region. If you've been following the Bodie Hills campaign, then you know this place is an American treasure with exceptional scenic, historic and recreational values. These values are threatened by modern large-scale hard rock gold mining interests, but the Bodie Hills are more precious than gold, and deserve to be protected in perpetuity.

Friends of the Inyo has been working for decades to protect the pronghorn, sage grouse, aspen groves and watersheds of the Bodie Hills, and is proud

to announce that our coalition is working toward a National Monument or similar protective designation to secure a lasting future for the Bodie Hills

A significant portion of the Bodie Hills is comprised of, and protected by, Wilderness Study Areas, a part of the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS). A year ago, a 15-year strategy for the NLCS of BLM lands was adopted nationally, and Friends of the Inyo is now working to implement this progressive strategy at the state and local level.

While continuing to advocate for the conservation and preservation of the Eastern Sierra, it is imperative to couple these efforts with on the ground stewardship, protecting and taking care of the places that we enjoy and explore. As we continue to celebrate our past victories and accomplishments, with your support FOI will continue in our commitment to conservation of public lands, and offer top-notch opportunities for volunteer stewardship and exploration outings.

Spectacular view of the Eastern Sierra from Potato Peak in the Bodie Hills. (Drew Foster)

Preservation

Grazing Rest Promotes Stream Recovery in the Golden Trout Wilderness

By David Herbst

Located on a spectacular high plateau east of the upper canyon of the Kern River in the southern Sierra Nevada, the Golden Trout Wilderness (GTW) is home to California's state fish. The Kern and its tributaries drain a system of mountain meadows there that have been used for summer season livestock grazing for over a century.

In 2000, the Forest Service did not permit cows to return to two of the four GTW grazing allotments, Whitney and Templeton, in order to allow recovery from stream bank erosion and gully formation. Soon, the Inyo National Forest will be making long-term decisions about grazing management on the GTW and has stated that the "best available science" will be used to determine whether or not to bring cattle back, and how stocking might be managed.

Friends of the Inyo supports science-based management of grazing on the Kern Plateau and will be at the table as a stakeholder during the upcoming decision-making process.

In 2004, just four years after the allotment rest, I and other scientists from the Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory conducted ecological studies comparing streams that continued to be grazed with those where livestock had been removed. We also compared conditions inside and outside streamside fences that had been set up for 10 to 15 years to protect local riparian areas of streams. In addition, for some streams where cattle were removed, we contrasted samples taken before and after the



rest period. We found that ungrazed stream segments had significantly less bank erosion and more riparian plant cover than grazed streams, less sediment and deeper, narrower channels, and a greater diversity of aquatic invertebrate life. Aquatic invertebrates are an important food source to trout and are also widely used as indicators of the health of stream habitats (see photo). We also observed that invertebrate diversity increased significantly after the grazing removal but there was no difference between inside versus outside local fence enclosures (though riparian plants did grow back inside fences).

These results suggest that short-term (4 year) removal of livestock at the larger allotment meadow spatial scale is more effective than long-term (>10 yr) small-scale local riparian area fencing, and yields promising results in achieving integrated stream channel, riparian and aquatic biological recovery. So, the rest was a success and could be continued and expanded to the grazed Monache/Mulkey allotments.

This recovery also shows that return of livestock could be done on a multi-year rest-rotation basis so that exposure is not prolonged enough to degrade health and that rest intervals are long enough to permit recovery. An environmental impact study will be prepared and an implementation plan for all GTW allotments is expected in summer of 2016.

This research was also published in 2012 in Volume 57 of "Freshwater Biology," pages 204-217. See link on www.friendsoftheinyo.org.

Exploration

My Bucket Overfloweth – Hiking Last Chance Canyon

By Todd Vogel



Last Chance Canyon. (Todd Vogel)

I would like to make a confession: When I was nineteen I drove across Death Valley with a friend and then proclaimed “well, tick Death Valley off the list.” We didn’t even bother with the north/south road; the shorter east/west route was enough for us. In my mind today, this transgression is right up there with – and perhaps surpasses – the visitors who come to see the park’s flowers in a good year and ask the rangers if they have anything besides yellow. Sigh.

I’ve been repenting ever since. Regardless of how long I live, I’ve known for awhile now that I’ll never see – much less touch or smell – everything I want to in the park. Despite the geometric explosion of my forays to the park’s hinterlands over the past dozen years, my Death Valley bucket list seems only to grow longer, as each trip leads to many more additions to the “I gotta go check that place out” list. Each new peak climbed or canyon sauntered discloses a new temptation. Even places I’ve been many times seen in a different light offer new enticements. So many places virtually toured by map or simulated in Google Earth are only truly revealed with feet on the ground and a pack on the back. Not limited to Death Valley, I call this the Bucket List Expansion Effect (BLEE).

I will take the liberty of assuming the same is true for you. So – Last Chance Canyon is a hike to add to your bucket list and go do. It’s doable nearly any time of the year. I’ll just give you the bare bones, as Michel Digonnet’s books in the Hiking Death Valley series have all the detail

necessary. Find your way to Cucomungo Canyon, on the northwest side of the park. From Bishop we usually go via the Eureka-Big Pine Road and then the North Eureka Valley Road, but it’s accessible from Fish Lake Valley as well. Most times I’ve found the dirt road to be fine for two-wheel drive, but as with any desert dirt road worth its waterbars, the road is subject to washing out. Best to check with the park prior to a visit, and adhere to the advice of any signs concerning the condition of the road. Once on Cucomungo, drive east, eventually passing Willow Spring. Park about a half mile east of Willow Spring, where the road bends to the left. There is no turn-out but the road is wide enough.

You might find the old, short jeep rut that heads south towards a pass at the head of the canyon, but following this is not really necessary as the terrain is open and rife with small washes amidst the piñon and Joshua trees. Last Chance Canyon opens expansively from the pass and if all you do is hike to the view and back (about one mile round trip), the drive out would be worth it. With more time and energy to devote to the project of descending into the canyon, the true head of Death Valley, can be done on an old burro trail on the east side of the canyon.

Can a place be known in one visit? How small must a place be to be known in one trip? These are the questions that lead to my overflowing bucket. If you do visit Last Chance, be prepared to add to yours.

Summer Exploration with Mammoth Lakes Basin Interpretive Programs

Hundreds of visitors (and locals, too!) have enjoyed the weekly summer interpretive hikes in the Mammoth Lakes Basin offered by Friends of the Inyo in partnership with the Inyo National Forest. These popular, family-friendly hikes are lead by Lakes Basin Steward Carole Lester and volunteer docents. “It’s just a great way to explore and connect with the Inyo National Forest in the Mammoth Lakes area,” said Lawson Reif, Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center Manager. This summer’s programs included three offerings – a geology hike from Horseshoe to McLeod Lakes, a wildflower walk to Heart Lake, and historical tours of the Mammoth Consolidated Mine and environs. In addition, FOI’s first-ever Junior Steward Activity Book was published in June to nicely augment this summer’s interpretive programs. The field book helps kids connect with the wild places and creatures of the Lakes Basin with fun activities and information. Big thanks go to Carole Lester, Lori Michelin and Heidi Vetter for lending their talents to this project! – Catherine Billey

Exploration

Fall & Winter, Events & Outings

Visit www.friendsoftheinyo.org for event details!



Eureka Sand Dunes. (Todd Vogel)

November 10: Adopt a Crag, Buttermilk Boulders, Bishop

FOI is again partnering with the American Alpine Club, the Access Fund and the Inyo National Forest for the annual Fall Highball Adopt a Crag stewardship project at the Buttermilk Boulders west of Bishop. The popular Buttermilks are impacted by heavy use. You can help us care for this treasured place by picking up litter, cleaning campsites and protecting native vegetation. American Alpine Club will host a party in the evening. Meet 8:30 a.m. at the Buttermilk Boulders lower parking area. A light breakfast will be provided by local vendors. Contact: Andrew Schurr at andrew@friendsoftheinyo.org.

November 17 & 18: Mulholland Christmas Carol, Bishop

Join us for a Saturday evening show or a Sunday matinee of this award-winning musical put on by the Theatre of Note of Los Angeles depicting William Mulholland as Scrooge. This water-related "history on stage" is enjoying its 10th anniversary year and returns to the Owens Valley for the first time since 2005, hosted by Friends of the Inyo and funded through a generous grant from Lauren Bon and the Metabolic Studio/Annenberg Foundation. The Sunday matinee will be followed by an hour of Q&A with the performers, director and producer. Attendees from Saturday may return after the show on Sunday for the Q&A. Where: Bishop High School Auditorium. When: November 17 at 7 p.m. and November 18 at 2 p.m. Suggested donations will be \$5 for seniors and students and \$10 for adults. For more information, please contact board member Mike Prather at mprather@lonepinetv.com.



November 30, December 1 & 6: Wild and Scenic Film Festival

Friends of the Inyo will host the festival in the Eastern Sierra for a sixth year, with two different programs – one in Mammoth, and the other program in Bishop and Lone Pine. Enjoy films to inspire environmental awareness and activism. Membership or renewal gets you a free ticket! All shows are \$10 per person, per night, and start at 7 p.m.



Friday, November 30: Mammoth Lakes, Edison Theatre

Saturday, December 1: Bishop, Cerro Coso Community College

Thursday, December 6: Lone Pine, Film Museum

January 13: White Wing Ski or Snowshoe

A yearly favorite, this moderate to difficult outing is for experienced skiers and hardy snowshoers as we intend to make a valiant attempt on White Wing Mountain. Skiers should be equipped with climbing skins as well as metal edged backcountry skis. Be prepared for a seven-hour day of 6 to 8 miles. Meet 7:30 a.m. at Friends of the Inyo, or 8:30 a.m. at the Obsidian Dome pull out off 395 (opposite the Bald Mountain Road turn out). Leader: Todd Vogel.

January 27: Paiute Pass Trail/Grass Lake Ski or Snowshoe

This is a great opportunity to check out the winter goings-on of the north fork of Bishop Creek above North Lake. Meet 8:00 a.m. at Friends of the Inyo or park at Cerro Coso Community College and we'll swing by around 8:15. Leader: Todd Vogel. Please email todd@friendsoftheinyo.org.

org to sign up; it helps to know who's planning to participate.

February 10: Chocolate Peak

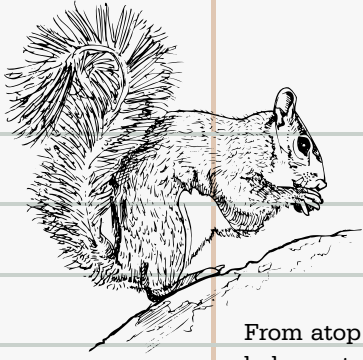
Back for a sixth year is our annual Chocolate Peak Expedition and Chocolate Tasting Seminar (BYO chocolate!). This peak rises at the north end of Eureka Valley, near the northern border of Death Valley National Park, and has an impressive view. Snowshoes are generally not required but could be a possibility this time of year. This moderate, 7-mile hike is on an old mining trail with 1,500' of gain and loss. Plan on about 6 hours. Meet at Friends of the Inyo at 8 a.m. or Glacier View Campground in Big Pine at 8:30 a.m. Leader: Todd Vogel

March 3: Joshua Flat Hike or Snow Shoe

Hiding in plain view off the paved road to Eureka Valley, about 25 miles east of Big Pine, is Joshua Flat – a wonderful basin with a fine selection of day hikes that can be undertaken nearly any month of the year. The hike is an out and back of about 4 to 6 hours. Meet 8:30 a.m. at Friends of the Inyo or 9:00 a.m. at the Glacier View Campground at the intersection of Highways 395 and 168 just north of Big Pine. Leader: Todd Vogel.

March 17: Centennial Canyon

Centennial Canyon drains the north end of the Coso Range, just east of Lone Pine. High and dry, the range is an interesting place to hike – great views of the Sierra, Joshua trees, and petroglyphs are some of the attractions. This hike in a sandy wash is a minimum of 4 miles round trip and 1,000' elevation gain (if we go to the petroglyphs) and 6 miles with 1,300' gain if we do the loop. Meet 7:00 a.m. at Friends of the Inyo or 8:15 a.m. in Lone Pine at the InterAgency Visitor Center (Highways 395 and 136 south of town). Leader: Todd Vogel



Stewardship Journals

Home

By Paul McFarland

From atop a rough lava ridge, the houses below were hard to miss. On the gentle slopes below – to both the east and west – rings of piled rock circling six to twelve feet round of smooth earth sat scattered among pinyon pines. All afternoon, we'd been noting signs of those who'd been here before us – random obsidian flakes: cutting tools for hide and hair, small bowls ground into flat rock: bedrock mortars for making dinner, and deeply carved granite gouges stained a passionate red: drawings for storytelling, art, sacredness.

An inveterate gazer out of windows, I sat in a ring and wondered where the door was, what the view was like from inside this home. Did they place the door to frame Mt. Tom, or were the builders and occupants more interested in the Whites? Was it designed solely along utilitarian lines – place the door away from the wind?

This was someone's home. The ring about twenty-five paces away was somebody else's home – the kids? mother-in-law(s)? neighbor? The person who lived in this home and carved in these rocks knew home as so much more than your personal pile of sticks (or bricks or hay). Home is that tree over there whose nuts keep you alive. Home is that patch of green where water flows and ducks hide. Home is that nook, tucked safely away, where sacredness is shared and kept.

For me, meandering through pinyon pines, stumbling over rock and watching chipmunks is home. Finding a new (to me) grove of limber pines above Parker Creek is just as much "home" as harvesting bright purple potatoes from the garden and putting my boys to bed.

After two years of living away, it is good to be home. Yeah, there were trees, rocks and small mammals over there. But, there were lots of trees, rocks were generally buried under dirt and there was only one species of chipmunk along the Central California coast. Wallace Stegner recommended that to really see the "West" one has to "get over the color green". Sometimes I wonder if you can get so "over green" you can't go back. While on the coast, I found myself seeking out "deserty" spaces – open grassy balds, landslide scars, even parking lots.

Those of you who call the Eastern Sierra home – literally, recreationally or spiritually – you know what I'm talking about. You feel it whenever you return. Be it a gasp at first view of Mono Lake from atop Conway Summit, relaxation spreading across the shoulders passing Fossil Falls or the sigh you can't keep back at the first sight of the Whites after the Ellery curve on Tioga Pass.

While redwoods might not measure up to a Jeffrey pine, and the rain wasn't snow, there were still comforting similarities. The grinding rocks were still perfect cups. The Forest Service had too few field staff. The trails needed work. Folks loved, defended and stewarded their home as we, the people, do everywhere.

*The Jeffrey Sisters, Bohler Canyon.
(Paul McFarland)*



Stewardship Journals

Working on the Forest

By Allen Higgenbotham

The morning is cool before the sun hits Utility Road up Lee Vining Creek Canyon. Soon the sun will rise above Mono Lake, and the heat will not relent in the Great Basin until dusk. I was 19 when I first came to the Sierra to work in Yosemite National Park. I had never climbed a mountain, pulled trout out of an alpine lake, skied fresh snow or brewed coffee as morning light broke across the jagged Sierra Nevada. Since that first season, I have been hooked on spending all my time in the Sierra.

Last winter, while interning at the Mammoth Times, I learned of open positions with the Friends of the Inyo Stewardship Crew and applied. Since graduating college in 2008, I'd dreamed of being better connected to the Eastern Sierra and its communities; this summer, that dream came true. As a member of the North Zone FOI Stewardship Crew, I was outside in the Sierra every day. This year, the "North Zone Friends" (as we're called over the FS radio), consisted of two Lee Vining locals, an Oklahoma college student and me. Paul McFarland served as our coordinator with the US Forest Service. We worked and monitored a territory stretching from the northern end of Mono Lake marked by the lonely Highway 167 south to Benton Crossing Road. I woke at 6 a.m., brewed my cup of coffee, headed to Paul's house to get morning instructions, loaded up tools and prepared to meet the Forest Service OHV crew. From there, the North Zone Friends and the Forest Service OHV crew traveled out into the field to begin our day's work.

Aside from the morning tool routine, meetings at the Forest Service station and the need to cover myself with sunscreen, I expected every day to be different. Some days we drive long stretches of road documenting power lines in our GPS. Other days, the crews are out in the field cutting out downed trees blocking remote dirt roads, and sometimes we have to dig holes to block heavily used jeep and motorcycle trespasses with h-posts. Most days we spend vertically mulching (camouflaging) routes not designated as part of the Inyo National Forest's 2009 travel management decision. Out in the field, we experienced the gamut of weather from relentless heat and sun in the White Mountains to shady breezes in thick Jeffrey pine forests at the base of Sage Hen Summit.

What I am most proud of, is the amount of knowledge I gained working with Friends of the Inyo and how it allowed me to feel truly connected to the Eastern Sierra. Before starting this season, I did not know what Mono milkvetch or dwarf lupine were; and I would not have been able to tell you the difference between the Jeffrey, Pinion and Lodgepole pines. Now I know what lies on the far eastern side of Mono Lake and the history behind the early timber industry that operated Mono Mills. Most importantly, I learned how delicious the Pandora Moth's larva, the Piagi, tastes after being smoked with a touch of salt.

Funded through a contract with the State of California Off-Highway Vehicle Division of State Parks, Friends of the Inyo works in partnership with the Inyo National Forest to make the landmark 2009 Travel Management Decision an on the ground reality. This decision, the result of dozens of public meetings and nearly a decade of public input and collaboration, added over 1000 miles of now legal road to the Inyo's road network and identified around 700 miles of unauthorized routes for restoration. For more information on our work, please contact Paul at paulmc@friendsoftheinyo.org.

Stewardship Journals



On-the-Ground Wilderness Stewardship

By Deb Bayle

"You get paid just to hike around? You've got the best job in the world!" That's what people often say when they see me on the trail and learn I'm a Wilderness Steward. Perhaps I do have the best job in the world, thanks to Friends of the Inyo – but I don't just "hike around." Then just what do I do? After all, Wilderness is Wild, Nature sans Humans, why does it need management or stewardship? Doesn't nature just do its thing on its own? Of course it does. But as much as the thousands of visitors per year may try to Leave No Trace, our activities do impact the land. So a large part of my job is to inspire wilderness ethics, educate the public in lessening their impact, to observe, measure and document those impacts, and to restore impacted areas to their natural state. ... "Huh?"

Visit Thousand Island Lake. What do you see? Banner and Ritter. Penstemon and paintbrush. Mountain yellow-legged frogs and yellow-bellied marmots. Crystal clear water and the Milky Way. This wilderness is a glorious example of nature at its finest. As Wilderness Steward, I see things others may not notice: a trail so muddy or rocky that another trail is forming in the meadow next to it; rock cairns placed as reminders that so-and-so was here; blackened rocks, piles of charcoal, and trash at campfire sites; human waste deposited within 20 feet of drinking water; bear scat with plastic bags in it. I do what I can to mitigate these impacts. I remove loose rocks from the trail, clean waterbars, knock down cairns to inspire the feeling you're the first person to ever be there, "disappear" the fire rings, pack out the trash, bury the human waste, and promote the use of bear canisters.

I try to help visitors understand how to steward the land. I gather data for the "ologists" - scientists studying the meadows, the froggies, the water quality. I help trail crews clear fallen trees – this summer, specifically from the massive tree blowdown of late 2011. I answer questions, give directions, administer first aid. I fix the signs at trail junctions. I work really hard because I love wilderness. And sometimes at Thousand Island Lake, I put in a long, hard day without hiking even a quarter mile.

Rustic Pathways

A Summer Adventure Away From Home

By Andrew Shurr

During the Eastern Sierra summer our days are filled with stunning vistas, long walks in the Sierra sunshine and adventures in the mountains. Friends of the Inyo has had the pleasure of sharing our summer way of life with high school students from across the country through a partnership with Rustic Pathways High School Travel Program. Rustic Pathways brings students to June Lake for five days of exploration and stewardship. It is an amazing experience to connect these young adults with their public lands, many for the first time, through a camping and service work program.

For most of these students this is their first extensive outdoor experience. What a way to start! Everything from setting up (and sleeping in!) a tent, to hiking a Sierra peak or working to restore a trail or road are new and amazing experiences. Through hard work the students get a chance to see their stewardship immediately pay off in a new step or water bar, a rehabilitated trail or a restored road. This is what makes it all worth it, connecting people with the land!

On exploration hikes in the Bodie Hills or the Owens River Headwaters Wilderness the students get to experience the things that we love about the place we call home. When looking out from the summit of Bodie Peak, it is easy to see the accomplishment in their smiles when they see the stunning vistas we too often take for granted. When visiting Mono Lake and exploring the human, geological and natural history of the Eastern Sierra, their interest is sparked to better understand our interconnected world. Going to places where there is no cell phone, mule deer roam free and getting dirty is the norm helps them to connect with the land and this place.

I still get e-mails from past students telling me about the fun they had and how they always tell people about the wonderful experience they had here. Alpine lakes, mountains and Jeffrey pines will forever be a great memory for these young people as they continue to grow. We hope, but we can't be sure, that some of these students will continue their education in a conservation or environmental science field. What we can be sure about is the impact their public lands made on them during their time in the Sierra and the joy of exploring America's great outdoors.

Stewardship in the Mammoth Lakes Basin 2012

By Drew Foster

Thanks to our donors, members and volunteers, our fourth Summer of Stewardship in partnership with Mammoth Lakes Trails & Public Access Foundation (MLTPA) and the Inyo National Forest was a resounding success. Over the five 2012 SOS events, we got work done on trails around Horseshoe Lake, McLeod Lake and Mammoth Pass, we worked out of the Lake George and Coldwater trailheads, and we spread out over the entire Mammoth Lakes Basin to clear fallen trees from the trails and pick up trash. These projects are truly an invaluable service to the environment and to the local and tourist communities, with some awesome things we can quantify:

- 82 logs cut out of trails
- 5.35 mi of trail maintained
- 1,100 ft of trail rehabilitated (illegal or redundant trails removed)
- 1,468 lbs of trash removed (yes that is a lot of trash)
- 31 trail structures maintained (waterbars, steps, etc.)
- 7 trail structures built
- 3 bear boxes relocated
- 1 sign replaced
- 12 switchback cuts blocked off
- 8 fire rings removed
- 169 total volunteers (with an average of 34 attending each event)

But wait, there's more! A total of 169 volunteers contributed 764 hours of work. This is worth nearly \$16,700 in volunteer time to the Inyo National Forest and Town of Mammoth Lakes. Thank you so much to everyone who came out this summer— many of whom participate regularly every summer— whether it was on one of our SOS days or another of our great stewardship days.

We really can't say it enough: it's our wonderful members and volunteers that keep us going here at FOI, keep us inspired, and get things done to take care of our public lands.



*SOS volunteers celebrate a job well done!
(Photos courtesy of MLTPA)*



*Deb Bayle and Paul McFarland after clearing trees
off Lakes Basin trails.*



*Drew Foster gives safety talk and describes the morning's
projects at an SOS event.*



*SOS volunteers removing tree debris in Mammoth
Lakes Basin.*

Partner Profile

Charlie Callagan: *Wilderness Coordinator, Death Valley National Park*

By Catherine Billey

Charlie Callagan has fallen in love with more than a dozen national parks ever since he walked into a Flagstaff unemployment office in 1976 and “lucked into” a Grand Canyon National Park concessionaire job. “You’re not expecting a job, and the next day you’re in the Grand Canyon,” he said in an interview for the JPJ, grateful astonishment in his tone decades later. “I fell in love with the idea of having a national park in my backyard.” He has worked in them ever since.

Today, that national park is Death Valley, where Callagan, 64, is Wilderness Coordinator working out of the Resources Management Office. He has worked on wilderness restoration projects with Friends of the Inyo since 2008, half of them with the Crossroads School under Todd Vogel’s lead. “It’s really been a pleasure working with youth who are eager and well-disciplined, and you actually feel they’re learning,” Callagan said. “And with FOI, especially Todd Vogel, because of his positive attitude. He’s well prepared and enthusiastic.” FOI has helped Callagan with road closures, installing wilderness restoration signs, vertical mulch and rocks to camouflage old road beds, raking out vehicle tracks from trespass near Eureka Dunes, and helping clean up abandoned mining cabins dating to the 1970’s.

Born and raised in southern Oregon, Callagan got involved with the outdoors after his military service (three years in the Army with one of them in Vietnam). He began with a college major in forestry on the GI bill until he realized that “forestry really meant cutting down trees.” Then he re-evaluated. “When you’re younger, you don’t really know what’s going on, but as you’re older, you realize there are some things that don’t click – and you realize that you don’t want to be on the side of cutting down trees.” Changing his focus to conservation, he began working for contractors reforesting cut-over lands in Oregon and Washington.

After the first Grand Canyon job, Callagan worked for park concessionaires in Yellowstone, Glacier and Death Valley National Parks until 1984, when he hired on seasonally with the park service. “Back in those early days, I started working in the park service in interpretation, but my passion was wilderness, and my first wilderness job was at Olympic National Park as a backcountry ranger.” For the next seven years, he would work in wilderness areas in summers (eventually including his dream job as a bear ranger in Glacier National Park) and in winters as an interpreter in Big Bend and Great Basin National

Parks. “Some people go to a park and just stay there,” he said. “I enjoyed that freedom of having a job in a different area and learning a different area, and again having that park as your backyard.”

In 1991, he began seasonal winter work in Death Valley (he had worked there previously in 1980 as a waiter for the park concessionaire at Stovepipe Wells, and knew he loved the place) and by 1997 accepted an offer of permanent yearlong employment for the park service there, first as an interpreter and finally as Wilderness Coordinator. “So I grew up and had health insurance,” he quips of the past 15 years in one place.

For the past four years, he has been part of a team working on the Wilderness & Backcountry Stewardship Plan for 3.3 million acres of Death Valley – basically everything except the developed front country. Phased implementation will begin next year. “It’s not major changes,” Callagan said. “The park will require backcountry permits instead of voluntary backcountry permits.” Everybody says they love the park as it is, he added, but they don’t realize it’s not as it was 20 years ago, because so many more people are using it. “You can’t properly manage a wilderness without knowing how many are using it.”

His favorite bit of local lore is the mystery of the German family of four who went missing in 1996 for more than a decade. “People had multiple theories, and it became a mystique of its own. How could four people disappear in the desert? Of course, as it turned out, their remains were found outside the search area. They went in a direction not expected, towards the naval center.”

There’s at least one death a year in the park, usually involving people not taking the desert seriously enough. “Most people who die out here make multiple mistakes,” he said. The most dangerous situation he’s personally encountered happened one September, when he went out with someone, didn’t tell anyone where they were going, and got a flat tire. “The lug wrench didn’t fit the lug nuts so we were unable to change the tire.” If they had chosen to sit and wait it out, it might have been days before someone came by. Callagan had enough water on hand and knew to wait until dark to walk 20 miles to Furnace Creek. “I got caught in a difficult situation,” he said. “That was as close as I’ve come.”

As retirement years loom, he is considering a return to southern Oregon. “But nothing is definite,” he added with a trace of the old wanderlust.



Member Profile

Marjorie Trogdon & Paul Shock: *Giving Peace Of Mind To People Who Do So Much*

By Catherine Billey

An extraordinary gesture was made at the Member Rendezvous campfire on September 29, after Board President James Wilson gave a short talk about the state of Friends of the Inyo, its new executive director and its successful summer programs. James said the last few years of recession have been difficult for non-profits, and FOI is no exception. He urged everyone to remember FOI when planning their gifts. "One of our Sacramento members, Paul Shock, and his wife, Marjorie Trogdon, rose after my talk and addressed the group. Paul said he knew from our conversations that this had been a tough year and he wanted to help. He challenged us to raise an extra \$20,000 in October. He and Marjorie immediately seeded the effort with a \$5,000 check."

Soon, Jan Bowers, wife of board member Steve McLaughlin, further seeded the fundraising effort with a \$1,000 check. Once word got out about the "October Challenge" further donations began flowing from other concerned members. These member donations are critical because they come without restrictions, and FOI needs unrestricted funding.

But just who are Paul and Marjorie? Like so many FOI supporters, they are passionate about the Eastern Sierra and visit as often as they can. They have been consistent donors since they first learned of FOI's conservation work from a teeny notice at the Whitney Portal in 2004, after hiking to Whitney via Kearsarge Pass. "I can't even remember what it said, but it was there, and we contacted them, and obviously the first person we ended up talking to was Paul McFarland, and what an inspirational character he is!" They decided FOI was an important organization worthy of support.

Paul and Marjorie are both from the East Coast, where they went to competing colleges – though they didn't know it at the time – he to University of Virginia and she to Virginia Tech. They met several years later in Sacramento via many points of contact. Marjorie is a psychotherapist and Paul sells machine tools in outside sales. They have tried to attend every FOI Rendezvous held over the years, and fondly recall the first one in the Buttermilks.

Asked what inspired such a generous on-the-spot contribution, Paul began describing the "amazing" day hike guided by Board Member Dave Herbst at the Rendezvous. "I had never met someone who is such a good educator in my life," Paul exclaimed. "He had the whole group

just mesmerized, talking about all the life that goes on in these streams. It was just a tremendous, tremendous outing. I can't say enough good things about the quality of the education that I got that afternoon from Dave."

But on the drive back to camp, Paul learned from James that FOI is going through tough times. "It became pretty obvious to me that the members of the board were under a lot of stress." Troubled, he spoke privately with Marjorie in their tent. "It was like, these people put in so much time and energy and so much devotion, it seems like a tragedy that they would then have to worry about whether they have enough money to pay the electrical bill. I couldn't stand the idea that that was actually eating up their time and energy." If they could do

anything, "it would be to give a little peace of mind for everybody who does so much."

Paul said the difference between the Sierra Club, which he also supports, and FOI is they can see the benefits of their membership in trail maintenance when they visit the Sierra. "It's really the boots on the ground that's so important – and we really want to support that."

Additionally, Paul was influenced earlier in the summer after encountering crews doing meadow rehabilita-

tion near Muir Pass. He asked why so much work was focused on the John Muir Trail. "It seemed excessive – they're picking up sticks on the JMT when bridges are washed out on other trails." The crew told him, if you're doing a grant request and it doesn't say JMT or PCT, forget about it – but work needs to be done in other places too. "The point is, there aren't enough resources to go around – the limited resources that are available are on the finite amount of trails – so that makes the work that you all do there at FOI that much more valuable, because it's some of the only work that's being done."

After talking about it in their tent, the decision to write a \$5,000 check was clear. "Anything we can do to help remove some of the stress of running this organization," Paul said. Seeding a drive to raise \$20,000 in unrestricted funds for the month of October with a \$5,000 check would, they hoped, build crucial momentum for other members. "You don't want to seem like you have your hat in hand every day of the week, but by the same token, if nobody knows that you're really struggling right now, it's hard to generate that momentum," Paul said.

"It's really the boots on the ground that's so important – and we really want to support that."



Paul & Marjorie in the Eastern Sierra. (Paul Shock)

Sensible Solar in the Eastern Sierra

By Steve McLaughlin

Climate change may impact Eastern Sierra ecosystems in many ways, including shifts in the distributions of plants and animals, floods from more rain-on-snow events, increased fire frequency and severity and greater tree mortality from bark-beetle outbreaks. Burning fossil fuels, particularly coal, is the primary cause of anthropogenic climate change. Since coal is used mostly to generate electricity, and since solar energy can supplant coal for this purpose, the replacement of coal by solar for electricity production should be a “no-brainer.” So why do so many conservation groups raise concerns about renewable energy projects?

The problem I have with solar is that both government and industry focus almost exclusively on utility-scale projects on public lands. These large installations destroy thousands of acres of dry-land vegetation. Habitat for rare, threatened and endangered species is lost, bird migrations can be disrupted, and springs can dry up due to pumping of groundwater required to cool and clean the solar systems. These projects completely alter the appearance of the landscape. Industrial parks replace wild and open space.

But there is a viable alternative – distributed solar power. This simply means solar panels on rooftops, in backyards, on parking structures, and other developed areas. It is *not* an issue of capacity. A 2005 Report to the California Energy Commission estimated the potential for distributed solar to be 38 GW (gigawatts) for residential buildings and 37 GW for commercial buildings, or 75 GW total in California. According to a 2004 report prepared for the California Energy Commission, the total demand for electricity in Califor-

nia by 2030 will be 92 GW. Executive Order S-14-08 requires that California utilities reach a goal of 33% renewables by 2020, or 30.4 GW. Renewables include wind, geothermal, hydroelectric, and solar. Clearly the capacity for distributed solar exceeds projected demand.

Distributed solar is all solar voltaic (panels); utilities prefer solar thermal projects, which can only be done on an industrial scale. Solar thermal projects have much higher environmental impacts than solar voltaic installations. And all industrial-scale solar (both solar thermal and solar voltaic) require transmission lines, which have additional environmental impacts. Power generated by distributed solar-voltaic systems is used mostly on site; excess power goes directly into the existing grid. An excellent website for further exploring the environmental benefits of distributed solar is solar.doneright.org.

Here in the Eastern Sierra we are fortunate to have several local

companies that specialize in distributed solar-voltaic systems – and support Friends of the Inyo. Sierra Solar (760-937-0307) can install both off-grid and grid-tie systems; they installed the grid-tie system at our home. Incentive programs for purchased systems are still available from both LADWP and Southern California Edison. For home and business owners that do not have the capital to purchase a system, South Face Contracting (760-936-9209) installs leased systems from Sungevity; if you commit to leasing from Sungevity, both you and Friends of the Inyo receive a \$750 donation (sungevity.org/friends-inyo). For the do-it-yourselfers, Solar Energy Designers (760-258-1469) provides site surveys, financial analysis, and design specifications as part of a complete solar-energy analysis for homes and small businesses.



Solar installation by Sierra Solar in the Birch Creek community of the Eastern Sierra. (Steve McLaughlin)

Thank you! The following businesses and individuals supported FOI volunteer stewardship events this year with food or giveaways: Jo Bacon, Footloose Sports, Java Joint Café, June Mountain Ski Area, Kittredge Sports, Mammoth Lakes Sunrise Rotary, Mammoth Pet Shop, Mono Market, Old New York Deli, Patagonia, Roberto's Mexican Café, Tony and Sherryl Taylor, The Westin Mammoth Lakes, and Wilderness Catering. Special thanks to Patagonia and to Southern California Edison and Dan Brady.

We would like to offer a big thank you to all who participated in our annual membership Rendezvous on September 29th. We had more than 60 people bird watching, exploring, eating, hiking, riding mountain bikes, and generally having a wonderful time. We would like to especially thank Todd Vogel for cooking great food, Chris Lizza for donating most of that food, all of the attendees who brought desserts, Dave Herbst for leading the Glass Creek Meadow hike, Paul McFarland for campground clean up the day before, Margy Verba and the Dyscetics for music, and all who helped cook, clean up, and wash dishes. A special thanks to all who contributed funds for and during the event. If you missed it make sure you attend next year! – James Wilson

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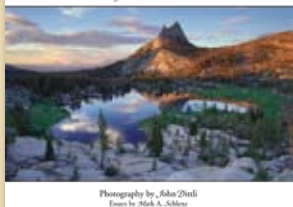
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