

THE  
**JEFFREY PINE JOURNAL**

*Newsletter of Friends of the Inyo*

SUMMER 2009

VOLUME VII, ISSUE I



*A Glacier Canyon sojourn.*

*photo: John DiTili*

**Basin  
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**Wild Wonders**

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**Summer of  
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*A season of giving back*

*Preservation, exploration and stewardship for the public lands of the Eastern Sierra*

# THE Jeffrey Pine Journal

VOLUME VII, ISSUE I

SUMMER 2009

## Newsletter of Friends of the Inyo



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**Friends of the Inyo is a local non-profit conservation organization dedicated to preserving the ecological, cultural and recreational values of the Eastern Sierra's public lands.**



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### The Cover Photo



Leslie Goethals cools her heels in Glacier Creek, which runs through a new addition to the Ansel Adams Wilderness in the shadow of Mount Dana.

*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

**H**ere in the land of little rain, we all know of the power and importance of rivers. The Owens, the Amargosa and Cottonwood Creek are the source of life in a dry land.

There are some rivers that have loomed big in my life: the Owens, of course; the Kings, on whose banks I was married; in Costa Rica, the Sarapique; and in Queensland, Australia, the Daintree. Here in the Eastern Sierra, the Owens provides us with recreation, wildlife habitat, and aesthetics. We benefit from the rivers and, hopefully, the rivers benefit from our efforts to keep them alive. Wild and Scenic River status for the Amargosa, the Owens Headwaters, and Cottonwood Creek is our gift to the rivers, and our acknowledgement that the rivers are important to us—that we want them to remain healthy. Additionally, the health of these watersheds is assured through 428,000 acres of wilderness designations from Sonora Pass to Lone Pine.

There is another river in my life as a conservationist. It is a metaphorical river—a stream of individuals who come together to create a strong current. These are the people who have worked for years, sometimes for decades, to help preserve and conserve the creatures and landscapes that are important to this place and to our souls. There are hundreds of such people who make phone calls, write letters, and do the good work.

Some people stand out for their contributions. Of course, I could start with John Muir and Aldo Leopold, but I am thinking more of local people, such as Mary Dedecker, Andrea Mead Lawrence, and David Gaines; and also Marge Sill, Sally Miller, Michael Prather, and Genny Schumacher Smith. They have spent years of their lives thinking, planning, talking, going to meetings, flying to Washington DC, trying to find the ways and means to help keep Eastern California a socially, economically, and most of all, environmentally functional landscape. They believed in a place where, in spring, the choice of where to go walk is literally endless, and a place where bighorn sheep can still prosper over a range that spans hundreds of miles, overlooking rivers large and small, wet and dry.

Rivers of water, rivers of humans—both need each other. We should honor the rivers that keep us, and honor those people who help us keep our landscape wild.

How can we honor these places and people? Support Friends of the Inyo by participating in our trips, walks, and stewardship projects. Support us with your donations: these monies that we receive from our loyal members allow us to do the good work you'll read about in this newsletter.



*This issue of the Jeffrey Pine Journal is dedicated to the memory of our friend, Andrea Lawrence, who fought hard for wild places and open spaces in the Eastern Sierra, and who continues to inspire us all.*



# Get Out!

## Cottonwood Basin

### *A New Jewel in America's Wilderness Crown*

Story and photos by Darren Malloy

*Our initial discovery of Cottonwood Basin was a happy accident—Sarah and I planned to walk from our house in Bishop all the way north over Boundary Peak to Nevada. Weather and frozen water sources forced us to turn around from the top of White Mountain, but our taste of Granite Meadow and the upper reaches of Cottonwood Creek made us eager to return.*

*Two years later, we returned to the Basin just two days after our wedding. With no agenda but to eat the food and to drink the wine in our packs, and to begin to enjoy married life, we explored new creeks and valleys and marveled at the endless domes and spires of granite. Back in Bishop, our neighbors and the members of Friends of the Inyo mustered themselves for a hearing at the Tri-County Fairgrounds, part of the process that led to the designation of the White Mountains Wilderness—including Cottonwood Basin.*

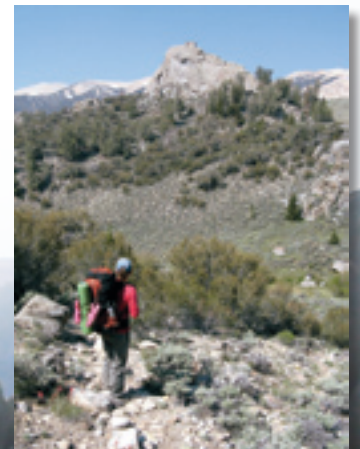
*We look forward to returning many times to this place full of beauty and mystery, where we have stepped over bear scat, raised our heads to follow the flight of a golden eagle, and marveled at the beautiful Paiute Cutthroat Trout. Grab yourself a topo map, clothes, and camping gear for staying above 10,000 feet, and come find your own adventures.*



### Getting there

Head east from Big Pine on Highway 168, then drive north on White Mountain Road past the Shulman Grove. Most will approach Cottonwood Basin by driving east past Crooked Creek Research Station, and heading north when the road forks away from Crooked Creek. At the edge of the Basin, a flat area offers a place to park before descending on foot to Cottonwood Creek. Those with high-clearance vehicles can drive past the sign warning of a rough road and drop down the steep hill to the South Fork of the Creek. Another rough-road approach turns off White Mountain Road to the Eva Belle Mine - from there, access to the granite domes of the Basin requires only a gentle downhill hike.

For intrepid hikers, several off-trail routes can be combined to make interesting loops. From White Mountain Road in the area south of Barcroft Lab, several gentle valleys lead to the main branch of Cottonwood Creek, where a faint use trail can be found. The descent east from the Patriarch Grove towards the South Fork of Cottonwood Creek is slightly steeper, and leads more directly to Granite Meadow.



### Exploring

The most classic hike through Cottonwood Basin heads northwest from where the road to McCloud Camp crosses the South Fork of Cottonwood Creek. A small trail leads through Granite Meadow, turns west, and follows the main branch of the Creek for several miles before fading in open country above treeline.

A good map and some imagination reveal other possibilities. The Tres Plumas area can be reached with a short hike uphill from Cottonwood Creek. Then you can explore the Tres Plumas feature of your choice - ascend the Peak, stroll through the Meadow and the Flat, or descend the Creek all the way back to Cottonwood Creek (some bushwhacking and exposed scrambling may be required). The secluded valleys west of Granite Meadow also offer rich off-trail hiking possibilities. Those seeking to acclimate for any adventures in the High Sierra can even climb White Mountain from a camp in Cottonwood Basin.

### Camping

Those with a vehicle capable of handling the rough road can car camp near the ruins of the McCloud Camp on the South Fork of Cottonwood Creek. Backpackers should be aware that not all creeks and springs shown on the map should be considered reliable water sources, although the main branch of Cottonwood Creek flows all year long. A hardened campsite can be found along the Creek a couple of miles northwest of Granite Meadow—a fine location for practicing Leave No Trace ethics in this pristine new Wilderness.



# The Eastern Sierra

## Summer of Stewardship

*Get involved in caring for your public lands across the Eastern Sierra.*

### Mono Basin Stewardship Program

Like the California gulls, Friends of the Inyo's Mono Basin Steward, Justin Hite, returns to Mono Lake for another season. This summer, Justin once again heads our Mono Basin stewardship program in partnership with the Inyo National Forest, Mono Basin Scenic Area, Mono Lake Committee, National Forest Foundation, and California State Parks.

The program offers interested volunteers a chance to rebuild corral fencing around DeChambeau Ranch—a beautiful, historic ranch on the north shore of Mono Lake—as well as remove invasive weeds from desert streams, restore unauthorized off-road vehicle impacts, and improve recreational access while preserving unique waterfowl habitat.

Find out how to get involved and see the most current schedule of events at [friendsoftheinyo.org](http://friendsoftheinyo.org).

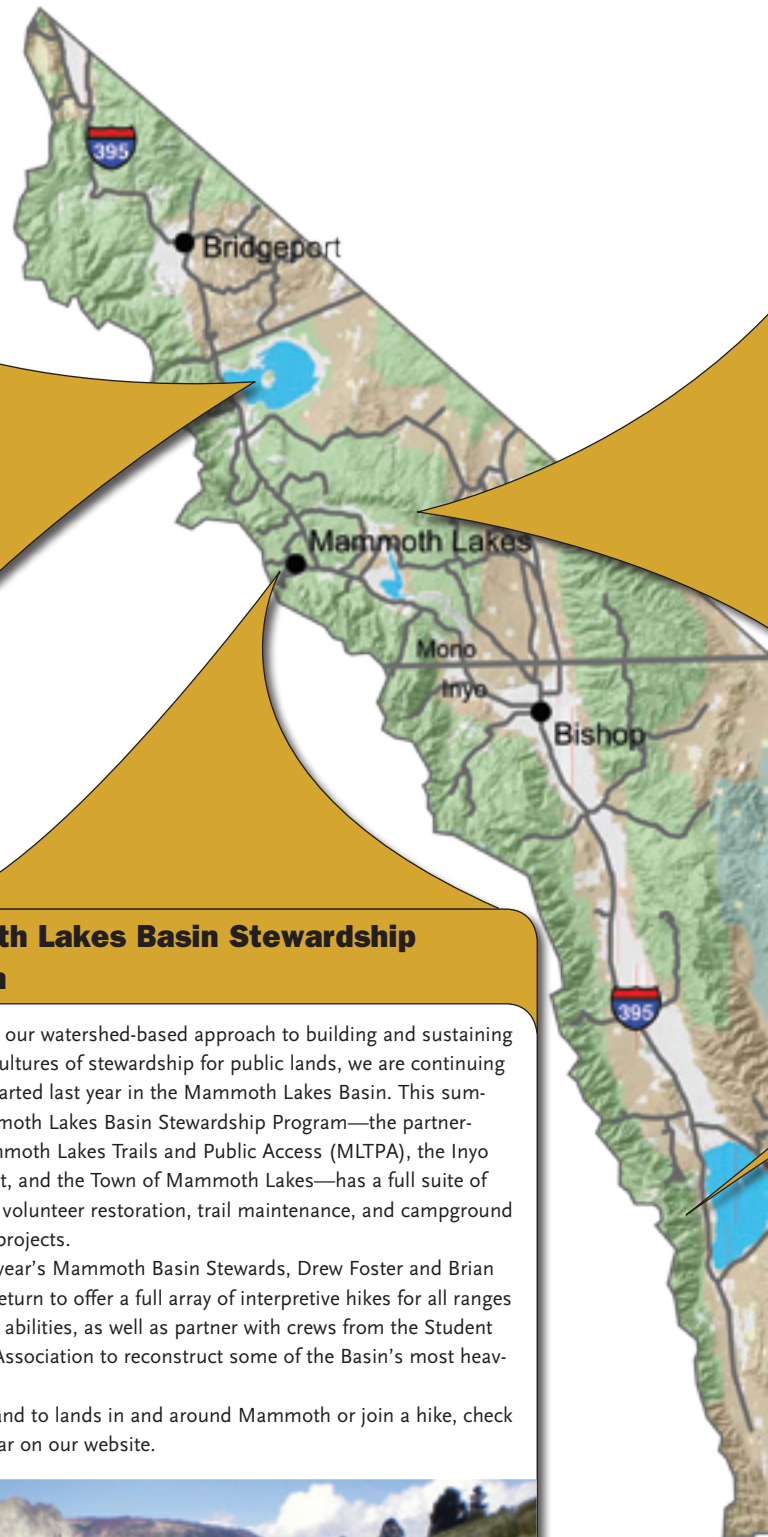


### Mammoth Lakes Basin Stewardship Program

Staying true to our watershed-based approach to building and sustaining locally-based cultures of stewardship for public lands, we are continuing the work we started last year in the Mammoth Lakes Basin. This summer, the Mammoth Lakes Basin Stewardship Program—the partnership with Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access (MLTPA), the Inyo National Forest, and the Town of Mammoth Lakes—has a full suite of on-the-ground volunteer restoration, trail maintenance, and campground improvement projects.

Two of last year's Mammoth Basin Stewards, Drew Foster and Brian Scavone, will return to offer a full array of interpretive hikes for all ranges of interest and abilities, as well as partner with crews from the Student Conservation Association to reconstruct some of the Basin's most heavily used trails.

To lend a hand to lands in and around Mammoth or join a hike, check out the calendar on our website.



# Stewardship Corps

## Friends of the Inyo Stewardship Crew

The enormity of the work to be done across our public lands, coupled with the sheer size of some of the individual projects, made us realize the need to build a professional workforce. Last year, Friends of the Inyo fielded our first ever paid Stewardship Crew.

Thanks to a number of Forest Service contracts, private donations, and grant funds from the National Forest Foundation, the Stewardship Crew will be back this summer to tackle projects including: wetland restoration and cattle fence construction in the Glass Mountains, off-road vehicle damage restoration and route improvements in the Owens River Headwaters between Mammoth and June, and invasive tamarisk removal from desert springs in the White Mountains.

Follow the crew's work for the land and find out which days you can work alongside them in the field by visiting the Stew Crew blog on [friendsoftheinyo.org](http://friendsoftheinyo.org).



## Volunteer Wilderness Campsite Inventory

In order to ensure that designated wilderness areas remain places "where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man," as mandated by the original Wilderness Act of 1964, professional wilderness managers need to know what is actually on the land.

Because of the large expanses of wilderness here in the Eastern Sierra, along with the perennially limited federal funding for wilderness management, many of our local wilderness areas lack basic inventories of campsites and other human imprints.

That's where Friends of the Inyo members, like you, come in.

Thanks to a grant from the National Forest Foundation, you can not only get out and help inventory campsites in the Golden Trout, South Sierra, Hoover, Inyo, and Boundary Peak Wilderness areas this season, but you can get paid \$30 a day for doing it!

Interested volunteers must take a mandatory two and half day training July 24–26. Don't worry about falling asleep at a desk, though, because your classroom will be the Golden Trout Wilderness. Once volunteers complete this training, you'll be assigned a survey route (length determined by you) in one of the above wilderness areas. To learn more or sign up for the training, contact Andrew Schurr at 760-873-6500 or [Andrew@friendsoftheinyo.org](mailto:Andrew@friendsoftheinyo.org).

## Special Thanks

Without the support of the following, none of the work would be possible:

### Inyo National Forest

and their dedicated staff of professional land managers

### National Forest Foundation's Ski Area

### Conservation Fund

### Wilderness Stewardship Challenge Grant

and Matching Awards Program

### Mammoth Mountain Ski Area

### Resources Legacy Fund Foundation

### Patagonia

### Brunton Gear

### Mono County

US Forest Service  
Bureau of Land Management  
National Park Service

State Lands  
Other  
Highways

0 10 20 Miles



# Pinedrops

*Notes on issues affecting Eastern Sierra Public Lands*

by Paul McFarland & Stacy Corless

## Waiting on Water Watchers

FRIENDS OF THE INYO'S volunteer-driven *Eastern Sierra Water Watchers* program went into a state of suspended animation this winter along with hundreds of other conservation projects supported by the newly formed Sierra Nevada Conservancy. This Sierra-wide program freeze had nothing to do with the weather; instead, it was just one of the many consequences of California's state budget mess. Due to California's poor bond rating, the bonds which provide funding for the Conservancy simply weren't selling, and, therefore, all Conservancy funded projects were required to stop all work.

## 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 Darren Malloy for more information:

Darren Malloy  
Friends of the Inyo  
Gift Planning  
699 W. Line St.  
Bishop, CA 3546  
760-873-6500

While Governor Schwarzenegger announced a lifting of the bond-funded project freeze, the financial thaw is taking a cue from nature – gradually melting with a few fits and starts thrown in. We hope that the arrival of warmer weather will help spur some growth in California bond sales as water fills creeks and lakes across the Eastern Sierra, though the state's financial future looks grim.



*Bodie Hills Paintbrush*

## Digging the Bodie Hills

EARLIER THIS YEAR, Cougar Gold, LLC, a subsidiary of multinational mining giant Electrum, Ltd., released plans for an aggressive gold exploration proposal in the heart of the Bodie Hills.

Originally, Cougar proposed to drill over 30 exploratory holes averaging over 500 feet deep in the vicinity of the historic Paramount Mine, a defunct mercury mine just east of the spine of the Bodie Hills. To "mitigate potential impacts," this corporation proposed to support much of

the exploration by helicopter.

Following an initial comment period, the Bishop Office of the Bureau of Land Management—the federal agency entrusted with management of the public lands in the Bodies—released an Environmental Assessment to study a drastically reduced project. Due to worries about the impacts to Bridgeport residents and environmental concerns, the project proposal has shrunk to one-fifth its original size.

Despite this reduction in project scope, the potential for a full scale hardrock mine in the heart of the wild Bodies still worries conservationists who fear industrialization of this area, especially in the habitat of sage grouse and pronghorn antelope.

Check [friendsoftheinyo.org](http://friendsoftheinyo.org) for updates, and be sure to sign up for our email news to get the latest word on this issue.

## Parking Lots in Paradise

WHILE MANY PEOPLE might not consider asphalt and gravel a thing of beauty, parking lots in the Eastern Sierra are often gateways to paradise, especially if they sit at a trailhead. Think of the parking lots at Mosquito Flat in Rock Creek Canyon, Coldwater trailhead in the Mammoth Lakes Basin, or even the modest flat spots at the end of the Lundy Canyon Road.

In Mono County, the places where the road ends are where the fun begins. The points where you leave your car behind and enter the world of wildlands

and wildlife define the region's spirit and drive our economy.

To ensure we figure out what we've got before it's gone, Mono County, Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access, and Friends of the Inyo are partnering to map and document trailhead parking areas, campgrounds, wildlife viewing boardwalks, and road-end access.

Known as the Mono County Recreational Access Tool (MCRAT), this process will provide all stakeholders with a baseline inventory to guide thoughtful planning, site-specific enhancement and long-term stewardship of the amenities that truly make Mono County wild by nature.



*Heart Lake Trail in the Mammoth Lakes Basin*

## Happy Trails

THE TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES sits on the edge of wilderness, surrounded by U.S. Forest service lands. As Mammoth grows and new developments appear, it's crucial that both town and Forest planning reflect the needs and desires of the many users of these public lands. Friends of the Inyo is proud to participate in two

*continued on page 14*



# America's Wilderness:

## An Enduring Resource

AS DEFINED by the original Wilderness Act of 1964, a Wilderness Area is a section of publicly owned land "where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

While the boundaries of a Wilderness area may seem like random lines on a map, to the plants and animals who make their home here (along with the occasional human visitor) these lines are real; they demarcate a safe zone.

Inside these lines the American people have determined that these lands will forever remain "affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable."

Inside these lines, a doe can return year after year to the same mountain meadow to raise fawns in peace without fear of returning to find the meadow diked and dried.

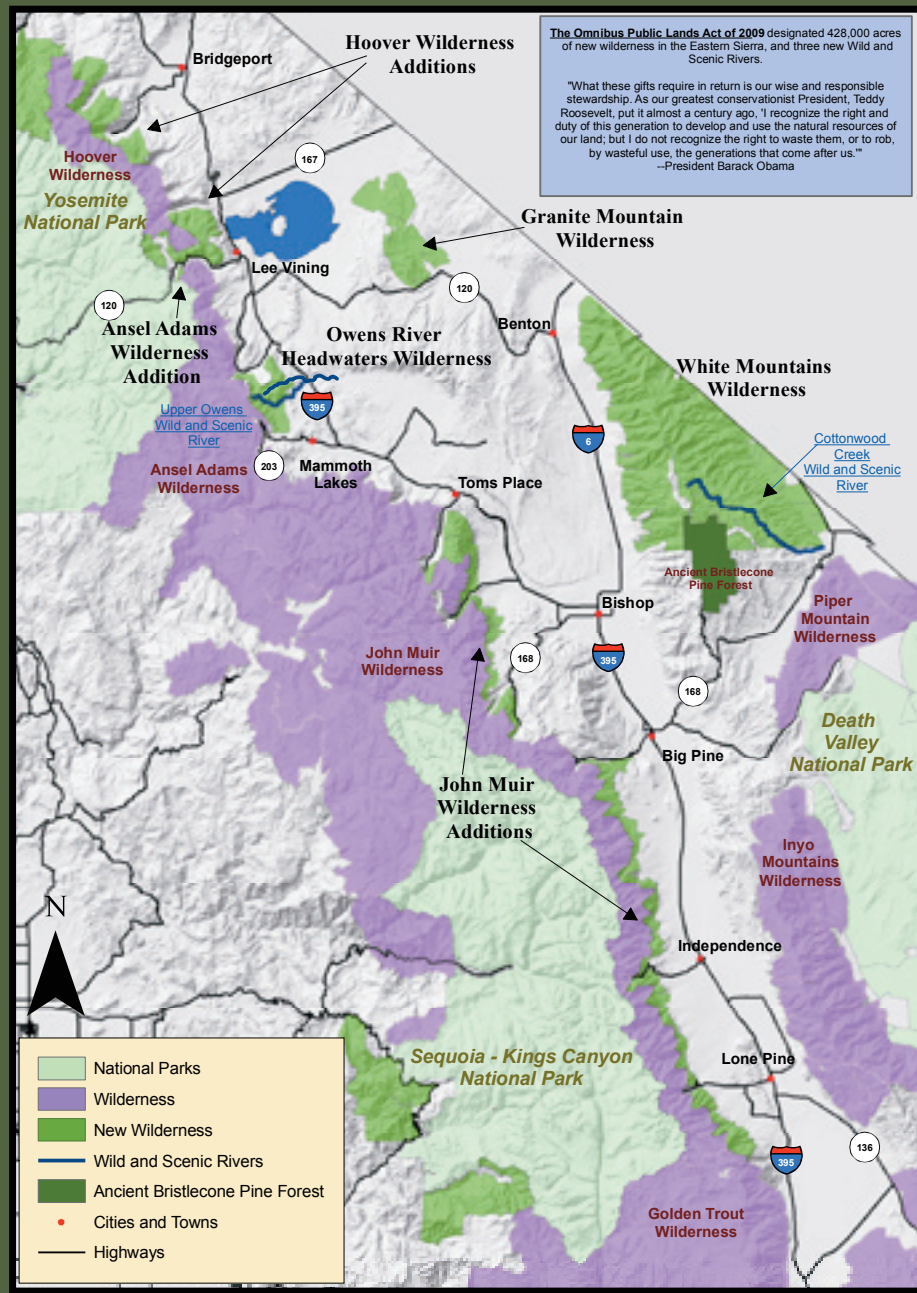
Inside these lines, families and friends can return year after year to the same mountain meadow to make camp, count shooting stars, and catch some fish without fear of finding a parking lot.

The rules governing Wilderness are neither complicated nor cumbersome. Travel is only allowed by foot (human or otherwise), motorized equipment is largely prohibited (except for emergencies), and, above all, the forces of nature are to be respected. For the best and most complete information about Wilderness, visit [wilderness.net](http://wilderness.net).

Thanks to the hard work of countless people leading up to the Omnibus Public Lands Act, there's nearly half a million more acres for you and yours to get out and enjoy in the Eastern Sierra this year.

Luckily, you don't need to rush. These lands will be here—as wild as they are today—for generations to come thanks to the American tradition of Wilderness.

### New Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers in the Eastern Sierra



0 5 10 20 30 40 50 Miles

Created by: A. Schurr  
Friends of the Inyo  
Data Source: B.L.M.  
and CA Wilderness Coalition  
Scale: 1:990,000 m  
Created on: May/13/2009

# EASTERN SIERRA WILDERNESS ADDITIONS AND WILD & SCENIC RIVERS

**O**n March 31, 2009, President Barack Obama signed the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act, which included permanent protection for some two millions acres of America's wild places. Nearly a half million of those acres are right here in the Eastern Sierra, designated Wilderness as part of the Eastern Sierra and Northern San Gabriel Wild Heritage Act, a bi-partisan bill co-sponsored by Senator Barbara Boxer and Representative Howard P. "Buck" McKeon.

Working with national and California conservation organizations (The Wilderness Society, Campaign for America's Wilderness, California Wilderness Coalition) and local groups (Sierra Club, Santa Clarita Community Hiking Club, Friends of the Inyo, and many others), our elected officials have acted to preserve pristine, beautiful places in the Eastern Sierra and the San Gabriel Mountains as Wilderness, and leave a lasting legacy for future generations to enjoy.

## Wilderness Additions

### Hoover Wilderness Additions

**Acreage:** 79,820

**Land Management Agencies:** Inyo National Forest and Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest

The Hoover Wilderness Additions represent a classic High Sierra landscape of deeply carved glacial valleys dotted with tranquil alpine lakes and forests of lodgepole pine. The southern portion, consisting mostly of a high plateau rising above the west shore of Mono Lake, is home to a reintroduced population of the endangered Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep.

The northern Hoover Additions house a large wintering population of bald eagles, as well as black bear and mountain yellow-legged frogs, a candidate federally endangered species.

The additions include part of the Emigrant Trail, a path taken by an early group of American settlers who followed the West Walker River drainage through the northern additions as they searched for a way over the forbidding Sierra crest.

### Getting There and Exploring

The northern Hoover additions are south and west of Bridgeport, accessed from Highways 395 and 108 (Sonora Pass); the Bighorn addition is west of Lee Vining, north of Highway 120 (Tioga Pass).

The Hoover Wilderness Additions are one of the Eastern Sierra's premier summer recreation destinations for horse packers, backpackers, hunters, and day hikers. The northern additions contain 12 miles of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail and are used extensively to access the backcountry of neighboring Yosemite National Park.

The southern additions are currently used by Boy Scouts from the Los Angeles Area Council, who learn Leave No Trace camping tech-



photo: John Dittli

*Tower Lake and Peak*

niques on the plateau overlooking Mono Lake.

With over 35 sky-blue lakes and numerous fish-bearing creeks, the Hoover Additions offer spectacular backcountry angling opportunities, including the headwaters of the West Walker River.

Popular trailheads into the Hoover Additions include the PCT from Sonora Pass, Leavitt Meadows, and Saddlebag Lake. There are also untrailed routes into the new wilderness and high peaks to climb, ideal for modern-day explorers.

### Ansel Adams Wilderness Addition

**Acreage:** 528

**Land Management Agency:** Inyo National Forest

The Ansel Adams Wilderness Addition preserves the mouth of Glacier Canyon, below Mt. Dana, where the creek flows into Tioga Lake. Adjacent to the eastern entrance to Yosemite National Park, the area is strewn with wildflowers in the summer.



photo: Paul McFarland

*Glacier Creek*



## Getting There and Exploring

The Glacier Canyon trail is less than a mile east of Tioga Pass, on Highway 120. Visitors can park at the Tioga Lake overlook and follow the

lake's western shore to find the Glacier Canyon trail. A beautiful but steep 1.5 mile trail leads up canyon. Beyond that, hikers can explore the windswept, spectacular Dana Plateau.

## Granite Mountain Wilderness

**Acreage:** 34,342

**Land Management Agency:** Bureau of Land Management Bishop Field Office

A geologically varied landscape of open alluvial basins, basaltic plateaus and granite ridges, the Granite Mountain Wilderness is a desert wanderer's dreamland. Dominated by low sagebrush-rabbitbrush steppe, this place is truly wild, untracked country. This is country where the deer prints far outnumber boot tracks.

While least chipmunks scurry through sagebrush flats, golden eagles can often be seen circling in the blue Great Basin sky. Massive outcrops of granite bedrock, topped with precarious train-car-sized boulders, house nesting swifts, rock wrens, great horned owls, and the notorious wood rat (also known as the pack rat).

The Great Basin sagebrush habitat of the Granite Mountain Wilderness is currently underrepresented in the National Wilderness Preservation System, making this area a much-needed addition.

## Getting There and Exploring:

Located east of Mono Lake between Highways 120 East and 167, the Granite Mountain Wilderness is accessible via a number of easy (and some challenging) dirt roads. Standard vehicle drivers should be wary of sandy sections along some routes into the interior, but those lacking 4WD shouldn't be disappointed—this trailless landscape rewards anyone willing to leave the car behind and meander through the sagebrush.

By far the most popular destination is Granite Mountain itself.



photo: John Dinti

*View from Granite Mountain*

Topping out at just under 9,000 feet, Granite Mountain affords a 360 degree panorama of the western Great Basin. There's no trail to the top, but an experienced route finder will be able to summit. When exploring the Granite Mountain Wilderness be sure to bring enough water as there are no dependable water sources in this sandy country.

## Owens River Headwaters Wilderness

**Acreage:** 14,721

**Land Management Agency:** Inyo National Forest

Just east of the San Joaquin Ridge between the towns of Mammoth Lakes and June Lake, the Owens River Headwaters are the source of the Eastern Sierra's most important river system, the top of the municipal watershed for the City of Los Angeles, and a popular wild trout fishery. The area contains exceptionally diverse and unique habitats including the largest subalpine meadow in the central Eastern Sierra (Glass Creek Meadow), the region's largest old growth red fir forest, and habitat for many sensitive and rare plant and animal species.

Pacific moisture flowing over the low San Joaquin Ridge creates this anomalously wet island of forest and meadow in the otherwise dry sagebrush sea of the Eastern Sierra. The ridge's low elevation makes it a vital east-west passage for mule deer, pine marten, and other animals.

Evidence of Native American occupation of the Owens River Headwaters dates back to the end of the last glacial period, about 10,000 years ago. Remains of numerous camps still exist within the Headwaters, identifiable by concentrations of obsidian flakes, midden piles, and grinding rocks.



photo: John Dinti

*Glass Creek Meadow*

## Getting There and Exploring:

The Owens River Headwaters Wilderness is truly accessible—a “drive up” wildlands recreation destination year-round. Fishing, both bait and fly, is extremely popular along the Upper Owens River and its tributaries. In summer, day hikers, peak baggers, and backpackers head to San Joaquin Ridge, Two Teats, and San Joaquin Mountain from Minaret Vista Road near Mammoth. White Wing Mountain and Glass Creek

Meadow are accessible via Obsidian Dome Road, four miles west of Highway 395. Hikers reach Yost Lake and Meadows, famous for wild-flower displays midsummer, from the Fern Lake trail in June Lake. Heavy snowfall in the headwaters makes the area a haven for back-country skiing, snow boarding, and snowshoeing. The rare mix of diverse habitats in the Headwaters is ideal for nature study, especially bird watching and botanizing.

## White Mountain Wilderness

**Acreage:** 229,993

**Land Management Agencies:** Inyo National Forest, Bureau of Land Management Bishop and Ridgecrest Field Offices

The White Mountains are full of superlatives: America's largest and highest desert mountain range; the largest expanse of alpine tundra in western North America; the highest peak in the Great Basin; and the world's oldest living trees, the ancient bristlecone pines. With its large size and tremendous diversity of habitats, exploring the Whites from bottom to top is the equivalent of a journey from Bishop, CA to Barrow, AK!

The Whites are world-renowned for scientific research, drawing botanists, geologists, paleontologists, and other naturalists from around the world. Beautiful canyons of banded marble and striated peaks of fossil-rich quartzite cover over 600 million years of our earth's history. Herds of desert bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, and mule deer wander this transitional range at the western edge of the Great Basin.

Evidence of human use of the White Mountains extends back over 10,000 years. Traces of seasonal campsites, some as high as 11,000 feet, mark annual migration routes where families stopped for pinyon nut collection, to gather bulbs and greens, and hunt for game.

## Getting There and Exploring:

The White Mountains Wilderness is located east and southeast of Highway 6 from the town of Bishop and north to Benton, west of Nevada route 3A, and north of Highway 168.

The Whites offer unlimited opportunities for adventurous, strenuous, and solitary backpacking and day hiking along rolling ridges and deep canyons.

The easiest way to access the new wilderness area is via White Mountain Road, 13 miles west of Highway 395 from Highway 168. White Mountain Road accesses the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest (also newly designated in the Omnibus Public Lands Act) and the Barcroft and Crooked Creek labs of the White Mountain Research Station. High



photo: John Dirit

*White Mountains*

clearance vehicles and cyclists can access Wilderness via the east-west Silver Canyon and Wyman Canyon roads. Secondary Roads to McCloud Camp, Deep Springs Cow Camp, the Molly Gibson Mine, Grandview Mine, and Dead Horse Meadow are more challenging routes into the wild. From the east, there are 4WD roads to the Trail Canyon Saddle trailhead and up along Cottonwood Creek.

## John Muir Wilderness Additions

**Acreage:** 70,411

**Land Management Agencies:** U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management

The eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada forms the picturesque backdrop for the Owens Valley, and this rugged, undeveloped scarp is a vital part of the Eastern Sierra's tourist appeal.

These additions move the current wilderness boundary down from the crest of the Sierra to the top of the alluvial fan. The boundary adjustments protect the unparalleled viewshed, transitional lower elevation habitat, and trout-bearing streams which flow down into the Owens

Valley while maintaining motorized access to popular car camping, hunting, and fishing sites.

The John Muir additions preserve deer winter fawning habitat and migration routes, along with lower elevation meadows, lakes, and creeks. The eastern escarpment also provides critical habitat for the Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep, one of America's most endangered species. Riparian habitat along the eastern scarp streams and meadows



provides vital summer nesting habitat for migratory songbirds, up from their wintering grounds in Central America and Mexico. The wilderness additions also protect the watershed which supplies much of the Owens Valley's municipal drinking water.

### Getting There and Exploring

It's easy to appreciate the John Muir Wilderness Additions without ever leaving the car. These new wilderness acres are located west of Highway 395 through the Owens Valley, from Rock Creek Canyon in Mono County to Tuttle Creek outside Lone Pine. Access points include many beloved hiking trails and some lesser-explored drainages: Eastern Brook Lakes, at road's end in Rock Creek Canyon; Table Mountain and Tye Lakes, from Bishop Creek Canyon; Birch Creek Trail, south of Big Pine; Robinson Lake, near the Kearsarge Pass trailhead; and the Tuttle Creek trail, accessing Lone Pine Peak and Mount Langley.



photo: Andy Silvers

Robinson Lake

## Wild & Scenic Rivers

The Omnibus Public Lands Act designated three new Wild & Scenic Rivers in the Eastern Sierra: the Owens River Headwaters Complex, Cottonwood Creek in the White Mountains, and sections of the Amargosa River east of Death Valley.

Wild & Scenic River designation seeks to preserve the outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values of free-flowing waterways. Rivers may be designated Wild, Scenic, or Recreational depending on the degree of development along a given stretch. Once designated, Wild & Scenic River protection is guided by a site-specific management plan developed with public input and designed to preserve and enhance a given river's particular character and values, such as outstanding trout fisheries, water quality, or riparian habitat.



### Owens River Headwaters

River Miles: 19

River Manager: Inyo National Forest

The Owens River Headwaters Wild & Scenic Rivers Complex protects Glass and Deadman Creeks from their headwater springs along the San Joaquin Ridge to the western edge of Alpers Owens River Ranch, east of Highway 395. Known for their blue-ribbon trout fisheries, these creeks also sustain lush streamside forests of willow and aspen, as well as the largest subalpine meadow in the Eastern Sierra, Glass Creek Meadow. Also preserved in this section is the geologic marvel of Big Springs. Just below Big Springs Campground off Owens River Road, groundwater gushes from the banks at Big Springs, doubling the flow in humble Deadman Creek to mark the beginning of the Owens River.



### Cottonwood Creek

River Miles: Approx. 21.5

River Managers: Inyo National Forest, Bureau of Land Management Bishop and Ridgecrest Field Offices

The longest stream draining America's highest desert mountain range, Cottonwood Creek springs to life high in the White Mountains and tumbles down through aspen meadows and rose-choked granite narrows, out into gentle cottonwood forests along the western edge of the Great Basin desert. This diverse oasis houses over 80 species of nesting birds, a rare population of federally endangered Paiute Cutthroat trout in its north fork, and a fishable population of wild brown trout along the south fork. Cottonwood Creek is the only river in the Great Basin protected from its alpine source to its desert terminus.



### Amargosa River

River Miles: Approx. 26

River Manager: Bureau of Land Management Needles Office

Although its name means 'bitter' in Spanish, the huge flocks of migratory waterbirds and songbirds feeding, singing, and raising young along the Amargosa River don't seem to mind. A truly unique desert stream, the Amargosa weaves an anomalous thread of green through some of America's driest desert southeast of Death Valley. While much of the river only flows after the rare rains, the stretch protected by Wild & Scenic River designation downstream from the town of Shoshone flows year-round. A visit to this unique ecological gem is a life-list trip. For more information visit [amargosa-conservancy.org](http://amargosa-conservancy.org).

# Explore America's Newest Wilderness

JOIN FRIENDS OF THE INYO for weekend hikes into newly designated wilderness areas. Be sure to bring lunch, sunscreen, and weather-appropriate clothing for an all-day adventure. Email [stacy@friendsoftheinyo.org](mailto:stacy@friendsoftheinyo.org) for more information, or call (760) 873-6500, and check [friendsoftheinyo.org](http://friendsoftheinyo.org) for meeting places and hike details.

## July 4

### Yost Creek to Glass Creek Meadow

Celebrate the freedom of the wilderness on a strenuous shuttle hike into the Owens Headwaters Wilderness. Leaving from the Fern Lake trailhead in June Lake, we'll climb to Yost Meadows and then descend cross-country to Glass Creek Meadow, enjoying wildflower displays along the way.

**Hike leader:** Paul McFarland



photo: Paul McFarland

*Sitting for a change (of diapers), Glacier Canyon, Ansel Adams Additions.*

## July 18

### Dana Plateau/Glacier Canyon

Enjoy the rush of Glacier Creek and the sweeping views of the Dana Plateau on this short but steep hike in the small but scenic addition to the Ansel Adams Wilderness, just east of Yosemite National Park.

**Hike leaders:** Margy Verba and Jack Shipley

## August 1

### Sonora Pass

Walk a moderate section of the Pacific Crest Trail in the northern addition to the Hoover Wilderness.

**Hike leaders:** Margy Verba and Jack Shipley

## August 2

### Methuselah Trail,

### Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest

SUNDAY. Celebrate high altitude scientific research and the oldest trees on earth on this hike from the Schulman Grove in the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest, which received permanent protection in the Omnibus Public Lands Act. This hike is held in conjunction with the annual White Mountain Research Station open house.

**Hike leaders:** Bill Mitchel and James Wilson

## August 8

### Gardisky Lake\*

A little work brings a big reward in a steep 1.5 miles. Nestled beneath Tioga Peak, Gardisky Lake is a fine destination in the Bighorn addition to the Hoover Wilderness. Join FOI at Tioga Pass Resort for a post-hike reception.

**Hike leaders:** Stacy Corless and Deb Bendinelli



photo: Sydney Quinn

*Hiking Blanco Mountain.*

## August 29

### San Joaquin Ridge\*

Take in Friends of the Inyo's signature vista and get a good look at the Owens River Headwaters Wilderness from atop the ridge on this strenuous hike.

**Hike leader:** Stacy Corless

## October 3

### Leavitt Meadows\*

Fall colors should be in full swing for this moderate amble in the northern Hoover additions, west of Bridgeport.

**Hike leaders:** Deb Bendinelli and Stacy Corless

## October 24

### Granite Mountain

Explore the wilds of eastern Mono County and enjoy the angled light of autumn on a hike to Granite Mountain, the jewel of this eponymous desert Wilderness area.

**Hike leaders:** Margy Verba and Jack Shipley



\* Well behaved dogs (leashed in staging areas and under voice control elsewhere) are welcome on these hikes.



# Stewardship & Events Calendar

Join us for a work party this summer, then our ever-popular member party in the fall! For multi-day stewardship trips, earn free, delicious meals by signing up two weeks in advance by emailing [stacy@friendsoftheinyo.org](mailto:stacy@friendsoftheinyo.org) or calling (760) 873-6500.

Be sure to check [friendsoftheinyo.org](http://friendsoftheinyo.org) for all the details of these events, plus more stewardship and exploration opportunities all summer long in the Mammoth Lakes and Mono Basins.

## June 24–28

### PIUTE PASS TRAIL WORK\*

Piute Pass is one most loved trails into the High Sierra, west of Bishop. Each year all that popularity takes a small toll and leaves some maintenance to be done. This project aims to do some light trailwork, restore several campsites, and to continue some campsite inventory work that was begun last year. We'll be camping near Piute Lake, just below the pass.

## July 1–6

### REDS MEADOW STEWARDSHIP CAMPOUT\*

Friends of the Inyo volunteers will join with the Inyo National Forest and the Backcountry Horsemen of America to do trail projects along the Middle Fork San Joaquin River, from Rainbow Falls to Agnew Meadows. Volunteers get a wonderful and rare opportunity to camp, hike, and work at some spectacular spots in the valley. Sign up for one day or for an extended weekend!

## July 4

Look for Friends of the Inyo along the parade route in Mammoth!

## July 11

### PROTECT OUR HEADWATERS DAY, OWENS RIVER HEADWATERS

At this fifth annual event, anglers, hikers, and campers alike will come together to help care for the Owens River Headwaters complex, a newly designated a Wild & Scenic River.

## July 11–16

### PINE CREEK PASS TRAIL WORK\*

The dramatic Pine Creek Pass trail offers entry into the French Canyon and Bear Lakes areas, as well as Chalfant Lakes and intriguingly named Granite Park, south of Rock Creek's Little Lakes Valley. The area is fairly busy despite the fact that the pass has over 3,000 feet of elevation gain from the parking area to the pass.

This trip aims to finish some trail restoration near the pass, where the trail was re-routed out of a meadow, and to restore some campsites that have been closed. Fortunately, we have pack stock support for the in-bound leg of this trip!

## July 24–26

### WILDERNESS CAMPSITE INVENTORY TRAINING

Ever dreamed of getting paid to go backpacking? Here's your chance to earn \$30 per day on the trail! Dedicated wilderness lovers are invited to attend a two-day training in the Golden Trout Wilderness. After successful completion of the training, volunteers will be assigned an inventory route in the Golden Trout, South Sierra, Hoover, Inyo, and Boundary Peak Wilderness areas, helping land managers maintain the

wilderness qualities of these special places. Enrollment is limited; RSVP to [andrew@friendsoftheinyo.org](mailto:andrew@friendsoftheinyo.org).

## August 2–8

### KEARSARGE PASS TRAIL WORK\*

The Kearsarge Pass Trail is a popular entry point into the incredibly scenic John Muir Wilderness, just west of Independence. The area features a half-dozen alpine lakes framed by 13,000 ft. granite peaks of the High Sierra.

This is a combination car-camping and stock-supported wilderness trip. We'll camp at the trailhead at 9200 feet in Onion Valley for the first two nights, and repair eroding trail sections near the trailhead. Then we'll hike with pack stock support into a lakeside campsite in the wilderness. Work days will include naturalizing heavily impacted campsites and repairing resource damage caused by trail short-cuts. We'll have a rest day for exploring and relaxing by the lakes.

## August 11

### MAMMOTH LAKES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MIXER

Join Friends of the Inyo and the Mammoth business community for an evening in the Lakes Basin, celebrating a summer of stewardship and the economics of wild places. Get details and RSVP to [stacy@friendsoftheinyo.org](mailto:stacy@friendsoftheinyo.org).

## September 12

### COASTAL CLEANUP DAY

Commemorate the connectivity of waterways by cleaning up a streambed or lakeshore in the Eastern Sierra. Get project details at [friendsoftheinyo.org](http://friendsoftheinyo.org).

## September 26

### NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY, INYO CRATERS

Friends of the Inyo will work with members of Mammoth Trails to care for a much-used site north of Mammoth. This event wraps up a summer of stewardship events up and down the Eastern Sierra. Don't miss it!

## September 26

### MEMBER PARTY

After a day of stewardship, all Friends of the Inyo members are invited to a celebratory barbecue, campout, and music fest at a campground along the Owens Headwaters.

*\*Well-behaved dogs are welcome on these trips. Email [todd@friendsoftheinyo.org](mailto:todd@friendsoftheinyo.org) for details.*



## En Memoriam



Eastern Sierra anglers lost a true friend this spring with the passing of Robert Durkee, whose vision and spirit led to the construction of an accessible fishing deck at Convict Lake.

Our heartfelt thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Sarah, and the Durkee family.

Thanks to all who made donations in his memory:

Robert and Carol Bergquist

David and Carlene Callahan

Candice and Ken Craig

Naomi Cridebring

The Dufek Family

Martha Durkee

L. A. Gates

Gary Lee and Kimberly Fritz

Carlyn Phell

Larry and Linda Smock

Tim Pomykata, in memory of Will Crljenko

## Thanks & Acknowledgements



photo: Roberta McIntosh

Margaret Wood and Sabine Elia take a break from the Buttermilk work day action.

Laura Chamberlin, for all her amazing work, Wynne Benti, Henning and Grethe Jensen, Buttermilk Work Day volunteers, Marty Hornick, Margaret Wood, the Fish Slough patrollers: Steve McLaughlin and Jan Bowers, Kathy Morey, Bob Lamia, John and Dorothy Burnstrom, Sam Glasser, Kathy Duvall, Connie Spenger, Floyd Redmon, Roberta McIntosh, Lorraine Masten



Access Art and Business Center, Anything Goes Catering, Bardini Foundation, Inc., Bear With Us, Buck Wahl Construction, Erica Chapin and Robin Roberts, Chalfant Big Trees Farm, Cheryl Bretton Appraisal, Coldwell Banker Mammoth Real Estate/Patty Schwartzkopf, Daylight's Healing Touch, Eastside Magazine, The Green Thread, Flowmotion Pilates, Focused Fitness, Hardy and Place Attorneys At Law, InTouch Microspa, Western Fisherman's Press, Law Offices of Timothy B. Sanford, Mammoth Brewing Company, Mammoth Condo Rentals, Mammoth Lakes Sunrise Rotary, Marla Sweeney Licensed Acupuncturist, McDonald's of Lone Pine, Bishop, Mammoth Lakes, Hanz On Massage and Yoga, Mono Market, Muhka, Nils Davis Design & Production, Outdoor Link, The Rubber Room, Stewart Construction Inc., Sierra Conservation Project, Sierra Maps, Sierra Solar, The Sheet/Andy Geisel, Vermilion Valley Resort/James Clement, Vern Clevenger Gallery/Vern Clevenger, Derrick Vocolka, Maker in Wood, Tioga Pass Resort, Wilson's Eastside Sports, Yosemite Half Dome View Vacation Rentals

## Pinedrops...continued from page 6

rather groundbreaking Mammoth-based recreational planning and stewardship programs represented by Communications Director Stacy Corless, a longtime Mammoth resident and daily trail user. Several FOI members are also involved, and it's great to see the FOI logo on t-shirts and stickers all around the meeting tables!

**Mammoth Trails** is a consortium of user groups working under the motto "Recreation for All." The group aims to increase understanding of

multiple uses on public lands, while engaging members with trails and public access issues and events. This summer, Mammoth Trails members will participate in a series of stewardship projects in popular recreation areas around Mammoth, ranging from bike trail maintenance to lakeshore cleanups.

**The Sherwins Working Group** is a collaborative planning team of Mammoth citizens helping Inyo National Forest leaders determine the best way

to manage and maintain recreation on forest lands just south of town. As part of the Town of Mammoth Lakes Trail System Master Plan Update, the Sherwin Area Trails Special Study (SATSS) laid out several alternatives for winter and summer recreational use around the base of the Sherwins, Sierra Meadows Ranch, and along Sherwin Creek Road. In a series of meetings this spring and summer, the Sherwins Working Group—which has some two dozen active members from all

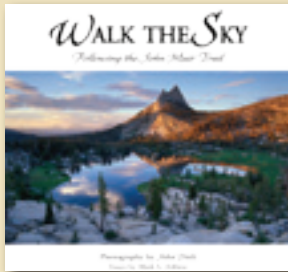
walks of Mammoth life—will identify a preferred alternative for trails, public access, and recreation facilities. If the Sherwins Working Group is successful, this type of collaborative planning process could be used for other town-adjacent forest lands around Mammoth, including Shady Rest and the Lakes Basin.

Please email Stacy with any questions and to get involved in on-the-ground stewardship around Mammoth Lakes: [stacy@friendsoftheinyo.org](mailto:stacy@friendsoftheinyo.org).



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## Wish List

To help facilitate our work for the land, Friends of the Inyo could really use the following:

A working 4WD truck for our crew and volunteer projects

A FlipMino HD Recorder

All donations are tax-deductible

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