

THE  
JEFFREY PINE JOURNAL

*Newsletter of Friends of the Inyo*

FALL-WINTER 2006-07

VOLUME IV, ISSUE II



*Yet another winter for an ancient Bristlecone in the White Mountains.*

*photo: John Dittli*

## Take a Hike!

*Guide to a  
Winter Stroll in the Piper  
Mountain Wilderness*

A  
Stewardship  
Journal:  
*Getting Hands  
on the Land*

One Nation:  
*From One Wilderness  
to Another*

*Working to preserve the public lands and wildlife of the Eastern Sierra*

# THE Jeffrey Pine Journal

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 2

FALL/WINTER 2006-07

## 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.**



**Printed on Recycled Paper**

### The Cover Photo



Once again our cover is graced with a photo from local Wilderness photographer, John Dittli. When not busy building one of Mono County's first straw bale homes, John and his wife, Leslie, are out wandering the backcountry.

The Jeffrey Pine Journal, a biannual publication of Friends of the Inyo, is named after the Eastern Sierra's most aromatic conifer, *Pinus jeffreyi*. The Jeffrey Pine Journal is distributed free to members of Friends of the Inyo and is available at various locations in the Eastern Sierra and beyond. Written material and images herein are the sole property of Friends of the Inyo or are used with exclusive permission. We welcome submissions of artwork, writing and field observations.

**Please send all submissions and comments to Paul McFarland at [paulmc@friendsoftheinyo.org](mailto:paulmc@friendsoftheinyo.org). Thanks.**

# President's Message

by Frank Stewart

I'm all about wilderness. I like what it represents – keeping a place “like it was” in the words of the late Ed Abbey. When I can, I love to go deep into wilderness. I daydream about wild places that I may never visit. Of course, I don't like to admit that I will never visit some wild place, and so I tell myself that I am simply “holding that place in reserve.” But will that place “wait” for me? Maybe. Is that place at risk of being changed? Probably. That's why wilderness is important.

So last month, when the California Wild Heritage Campaign sponsored a wilderness activist lobbying week in DC, and they asked me to go, I said “you bet!” OK, I'm going to Washington...maybe I'll see a Congressman or a Senator. What kind of impression do I want to make?

I decide early on that I won't be going to DC looking like the real me...(You know, like my picture on the FOI web site) No. I decide that I'm going to try an experiment with my appearance. I start to evaluate my beard. Is it neatly trimmed...or scruffy? I try “neatly trimmed,” but all I see is “scruffy”...so off it goes.

Next, to the closet I go. I see nice shirts and slacks, good enough for a town council meeting perhaps, but not really the kind of threads you want for the halls of Congress. So I grab a couple of “fashion consultants” (my wife and another friend of ours) and head for the mall. Next thing you know, I'm sporting a suit, ties and long sleeved shirts, all color coordinated, and, to tell you the truth, looking completely out of place for here on the Eastside.

A few days later, I'm in Reno boarding the red-eye to Dulles...carrying my photo ID that bears absolutely no resemblance to how I look without a beard. On the flight, there's the usual small talk with the person sitting next to me, you know... Where are you from? What are you going to DC for? I think about that question for a moment, my thoughts racing...

I'm going to DC because I intend to thank my representatives for introducing the Hoover Additions wilderness bill and to encourage them to get it passed this session. Then I realize, and say, that “I'm going on business...actually, I'm going to lobby my representatives to pass legislation favoring my business interests.”

“Going on business?” The business of saving something? Sure it's about saving habitat and natural resources, but it's more than that. There's economic benefit. Wilderness protection is also about preserving the foundation for our tourist-based economy. But for me it's not just the jobs connected to fishing, lodging, or sightseeing. For me there's an economic benefit that's not quite so obvious.

You see, I'm a building contractor, and I have consistently found that my clients chose to invest in the Eastern Sierra due to its proximity to natural beauty, clear mountain air, fresh alpine lakes and streams, national parks, and yes...designated wilderness.

So that was my rap...I went to DC as a clean cut contractor businessman in support of wilderness, and to tell you the truth, I think it went pretty well. I'm hopeful that Congressman McKeon, Senator Boxer and Senator Feinstein will find a way to get it done. I want the Hoover Additions wilderness bill to be the first success story in what will become a movement. I want to see a big fat wilderness area in the White Mountains. I can't wait for the Owens River Headwaters between Mammoth and June Lake to be protected as wilderness. And I want to see critical winter range habitats adjacent to the Sierra escarpment preserved as additions to the John Muir wilderness. I think that's going to be my New Year's resolution. Like I said...I'm all about wilderness.

**Frank Stewart is a wilderness addict  
desperately in need of a fix**



# Mountain Coyotes & Town Pups

by Paul McFarland

The cars kept on pulling in – turning off Highway 108 and quickly filling the Leavitt Meadow trailhead parking lot. One by one people and their gear spilled out of Chevy Tahoes, Nissan Pathfinders and beat-up Toyotas. Anticipation of the trip ahead wafted from each one of them.

These were folks on a mission. An escape mission. No matter where from, these disparate urban refugees were all seeking the same thing—a Labor Day Weekend in the Wilderness.

Just before the final parking spaces filled, the group I was waiting for entered the parking lot in a cloud of dust. The words “Santa Clarita Boys & Girls Club” stenciled on the side gave them away, and soon the boys and leaders were busy stuffing food rations, sleeping bags, and other “necessities” into our bags for 3 days of living high in the headwaters of the West Walker River above Leavitt Meadows.

We were on a mission, too. A stewardship mission. We were headed into this much-loved piece of the Eastern Sierra’s backcountry to do our small part helping to keep the promise of wilderness alive.

A friend of mine, who has spent more days under the stars than most, put it this way, “When Americans go into the wilderness, we like to play this little game with ourselves that we are the first ones to go there.” How true. For so many, we head out because it is “The Wilderness”—it is somewhere apart from where we work, commute, cook dinner.

Right after hitting the trail, before the inevitable “are we there yet?” started up, a sleek mountain coyote trotted right in front of us through the sagebrush. Right on cue, Mr. Coyote. Thanks for reminding us who lives here, and who is just visiting.

For the next three days, these kids not only got their first night under the stars away from freeways, cars and streetlights, but picked up (and carried out!) over 25 lbs. of trash, cleaned out huge fire rings, and restored eroding sites on the shores of high mountain lakes. These kids, who had never been to the wilderness before, were out here to make sure that the next person would be able to imagine that they were “the first ones ever to go there.”

After a long morning of scattering ashes and spreading duff, we headed down to the West Walker River for a swim. Stumbling upriver, I noticed an old blaze on a lodgepole pine marking the path of a long disappeared trail. Was it left by

Joseph Walker, the early western explorer, to guide immigrants from the east (refugees in their own right) along his treacherous route over the Sierra in the mid-1800’s?

Listening to the kids yell and splash in the clean mountain water, it didn’t matter if we weren’t the first to be here. What

mattered was that *this was still here*—the river, the lodgepole pine, the coyotes chasing mice, the great horned owl hooting over our campground; that the land itself still held the promise of wild-ness, of somewhere and something different than our work-a-day world. That this place would still be recognizable to those pioneers who dragged wagons up this valley is a combination of management, public activism, topography and good luck. Many places aren’t so lucky.

While the place we enjoyed was recommended for official Wilderness

designation over two decades ago by the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, today, it hangs in limbo. Recommended for and managed (mostly) as Wilderness, the headwaters of the West Walker River—Leavitt Meadow, Paiute Meadow, Roosevelt and Long lakes, known collectively as the Hoover West Wilderness Additions (see maps on our web site under Wilderness Proposals)—has not yet achieved lasting protection as legislatively designated Wilderness. Increasing threats from unmanaged recreation—mainly illegal snowmobiling—threaten to change this place forever.

Hopefully, with the dedication of citizens like Frank Stewart (see *President’s Message* on page 2) and his Eastside colleagues who traveled to Washington—Sally, John, Mary Kay, Margy and Shane—aided on the ground by these kids and countless other volunteer stewards, the Hoover Additions will remain wild for the next generation of mountain coyotes and city pups.

May they too come across that lodgepole blaze of a long disappeared trail when they head this way for the promise of wild habitat, peace and freedom.



*Santa Clarita Boys & Girls' club on their way to Roosevelt Lake.*

photo: Matt Nelson

## Make It Last

Spring of 2006 saw the Hoover Wilderness Addition take a huge step toward permanent protection as Wilderness with the introduction of the Eastern Sierra Rural Heritage and Economic Enhancement Act by Congressman Buck McKeon and United States Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein. Together we can make places like the Hoover Additions last.

# Getting Hands

by Todd Vogel

*A Steward*



photo: Todd Vogel

*Hauling rocks on the Whitney Trail.*

## Got a Few Willing Hands?

From the bottom of the world's deepest valley to the top of the highest peak in the lower 48 states, 689 volunteer stewards generated 3055 hours of work valued at nearly \$55,000. In only its second year, FOI's Eastern Sierra Citizen Stewardship Corps more than doubled the number of volunteers on the ground and nearly tripled the number of volunteer hours!

We are always looking for more partners. If you know now of an education, youth, civic, or corporate group (or even a group of friends) who would like to explore and protect the Eastside, we can work with you to craft a project and outing tailored to your groups desires.

**For information on how to get a project started, please contact Todd Vogel at [todd@friendsoftheinyo.org](mailto:todd@friendsoftheinyo.org)**

## April

Wow, where did the summer go? It seems like just the other day that I was packing up to go work with the Crossroads School group up on the Winnedumah Road restoration project. In fact, that was last spring—twelve students, staff and I spent four days up there, restoring the trail and spreading native seeds. A group from UCSB came up to help a few weeks later and the reward for their hard work was a fun day of mountaineering on a snow travel skills course in Big Pine Canyon.

## June

The Swall Meadows troop of Girl Scouts had a similar weekend when, as a National Trails Day project, we worked hard on the Convict Lake Trail, clearing brush and rebuilding sections of trail damaged by winter storms. The following day found the hard working young ladies - and moms - enjoying a day of rock climbing at Iris Slabs, up Rock Creek.

A quick week later, I was down in the San Bernardino Mountains Wilderness, providing two weekend-long Leave No Trace (LNT) trainer courses for ten leaders from the Los Angeles Metropolitan YMCA. This was a trade I negotiated with the Mammoth YMCA camp: in exchange for the LNT course, the Mammoth camp added FOI stewardship projects to their list of camp offerings. The net result? Too many days of volunteer projects to mention individually; we wound up taking out a dozen separate groups of up to twelve people each providing much needed work in and around the beautiful Mammoth Lakes Basin area.

## July to August

The FOI-YMCA partnership proved a great example of the effectiveness of hands on stewardship to strengthen outdoor education. By and large, the participants on these trips were young kids from inner city Los Angeles; not necessarily underprivileged except in the sense that they had, for the most part, never gone for a hike in a Sierra forest.

They had no idea that they were part owners and stewards of such amazing places! A few simple questions usually started one of these outings: Who can tell me who owns this land? What kinds of things need to be done to take care of this place? Who does those things? Later, up on the trail, doing those "needed things", we'd clean fire pits and campsites and fix places along the walk where user-created trails had formed from hikers cutting switchbacks.

After a few hours of dragging logs and rocks to restore these erosion-causing use trails, our young campers are rangers-in-training, often stopping a would-be switchback cutter just before they leave the trail with a lecture on trail etiquette and why not to cut switchbacks. Nothing seems to instill an ethic like hard work with visible results.

## September

The grand finale of my summer stewardship season was leading a group of eight people from all over the country and all walks of life on an eight day work trip on the main Mt. Whitney Trail. This was a trip in conjunction with the American Hiking Society's Volunteer



# s on the Land

## Stewardship Journal



photo: Todd Vogel

*Youth from the Metropolitan YMCA work on the popular Sherwin Lakes Trail.*

an honor and a privilege to work with each of you! We have more projects yet to be completed this fall including a trip to Saline Valley, a project on Cottonwood Creek on the east side of the Whites and the delivery of a level I avalanche course as a trade for the volunteer labor of half a dozen local high school ski team members, each of whom gave 24 hours of service work on various public lands projects this summer. It's also time to plan for next summer.

*Todd Vogel works part time as the FOI Wilderness Stewardship Coordinator and has been a local mountain guide for nearly twenty years.*



photo: Todd Vogel

*Students from Santa Monica's Crossroads School restoring an old road in the Inyo Mountain Wilderness.*

Vacations program (Americanhiking.org). We spent most of six days restoring campsites at Trail Camp (12,200') and working on routine trail maintenance. While our trip featured great work in an amazing location we also had our share of challenges including a blast of fall weather complete with winds gusting to tent flattening levels. It was humbling to work with folks who are willing to give so much of their time to help on their public lands!

## October

Things are winding down now as winter nears. The FOI staff finally had time to take stock of the season's accomplishments. Together we worked with over 680 individuals on nearly 50 different projects totaling over 3000 hours to date.

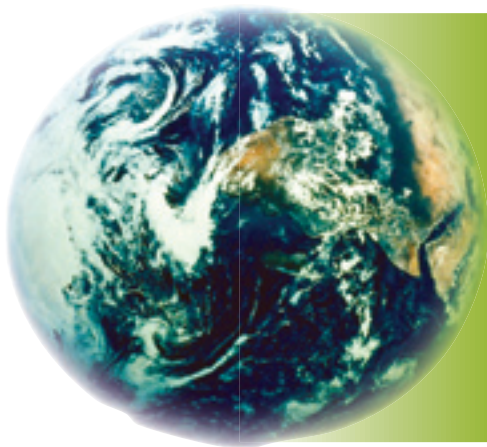
Thanks to all of you for your dedication and hard work. It has been

## Special Thanks

**Our Stewardship work could not be possible without** the generous support of the: National Forest Foundation Wilderness Stewardship Challenge, Resource Legacy Fund Foundation, Patagonia, the Desert Legacy Fund of the Riverside Community Foundation, Peradam Foundation, the Norcross Foundation and the California Wild Heritage Campaign.

**Huge thanks also must be extended to the dedicated,** professional public lands stewards with the Inyo National Forest, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Bishop BLM and the Ridgecrest BLM whose cooperation and expertise makes public stewardship a reality.

# RUN FOR THE HILLS



*Third Annual  
Friends of the Inyo*

## EARTH DAY

## FUN RUN

**CELEBRATE EARTH DAY WHILE RUNNING  
THROUGH THE MAGICAL BUTTERMILKS...**



**WHEN:** April 21st, 2007

**START TIME:** 9 a.m.

**PRE-REGISTRATION:** \$25 (includes running shirt).

**REGISTRATION:** 7:45 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. \$30 all participants registering on race day.

**LOCATION:** Take HWY 168 heading west out of Bishop for 7 miles. Turn right on Buttermilk Road and head 2 miles to the race staging area on the left.

Raffle prizes, great food & refreshments and tons of fun for the whole family  
whether you walk or run along the base of the Range of Light.

Sign up online at [www.friendsoftheinyo.org](http://www.friendsoftheinyo.org), or send in registration form below to:

**Friends of the Inyo**  
275 S. Main St., Suite C  
Bishop, CA 93514

.....

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Event:      10K      5K

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ T-shirt size      S      M      L      XL

Pre-registration of \$25 enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ I also want to become a member at \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_  
(Use enclosed envelope)      \$100 \_\_\_\_\_

Total enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

*We will send you a full application packet in the mail ASAP.*

*Thanks for your continued support!*



# Get Out!

## Chocolate Mountain

*A gentle winter's stroll in the Piper Mountain Wilderness*

### The Land

It's not often that politically imposed boundaries match ecological boundaries, but the Piper Mountain Wilderness comes close. One of the northernmost Wilderness Areas preserved by the visionary California Desert Protection Act, the Piper Mountains divide the Deep Springs and Eureka Valley to create an ecological transition zone between the hot Mojave Desert to the south and the cold Great Basin Desert to the north.

Formed mostly of speckled granite capped by dark black basaltic lava, the 7,703' mass of Chocolate Mountain resembles a scoop of chocolate chip ice cream topped with chocolate syrup dropped in the middle of the desert.

### Critters and Plants

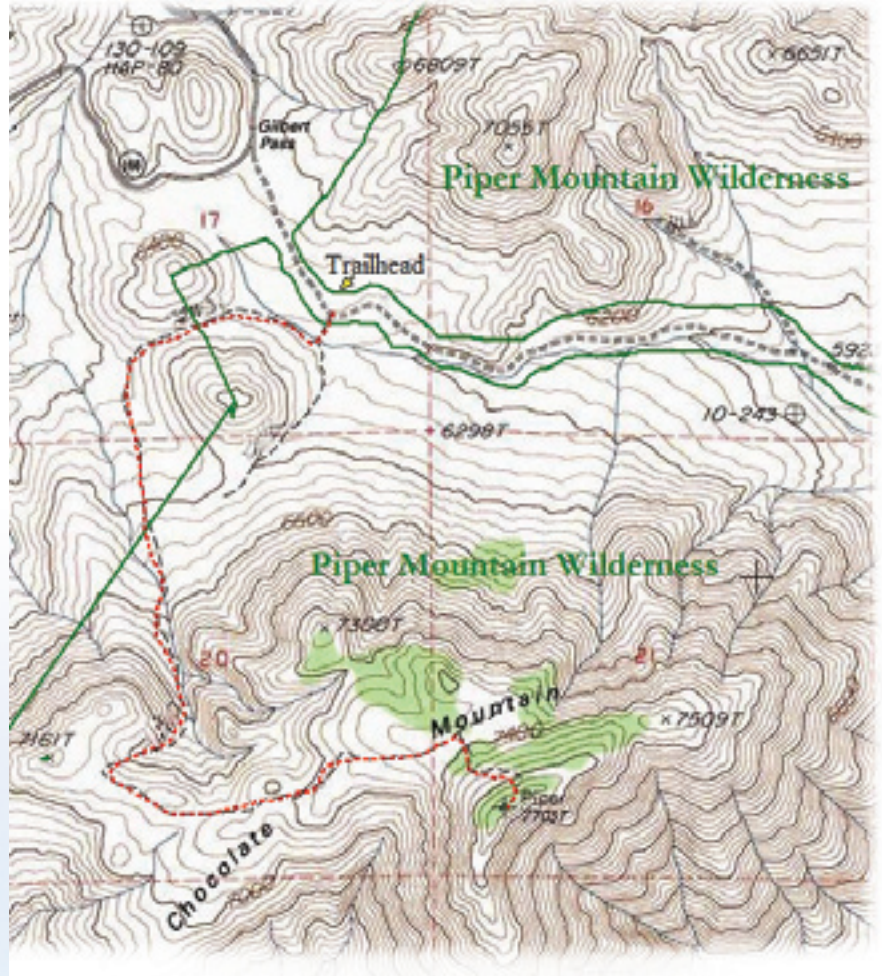
Enriched by the flora and fauna of two distinct biological communities, the Pipers contain the best of both worlds—from the Mojave Desert's exalting Joshua Tree to the proletariat of the Great Basin, the aromatic Sagebrush. With a good mix of cacti, black-tailed jackrabbits, Utah junipers with their juniper titmice and a few furtive bighorn sheep, the Pipers are alive year-round.

### Getting There

To reach the Pipers and the hike up Chocolate Mountain, head east about 35 miles from Big Pine along Highway 168 to the far side of Deep Springs Valley. At Gilbert Summit, turn right on a gentle dirt road heading south. You can either park here, just off the road, or travel about .3 miles to the informal trailhead marked by the welcoming Piper Mountains Wilderness sign.

### Take a Hike

A moderate hike suited for grizzled desert rats or Sierra alpine aristocrats, a stroll up Chocolate Mountain with 1340' of elevation gain spread out over 2 3/4 miles, is a perfect for a winter's day. From the trailhead, head south-southwest along an old, restoring route through gentle hills



### Outside on the Eastside

**Nothing builds a love of the land like getting out in it.**

Each edition of *Get Out!* will feature a moderate hike for just that purpose: to get folks outside and share the wonders of our Eastern Sierra Public Lands. For more information on this hike, as well as a downloadable map, visit [friendsoftheinyo.org](http://friendsoftheinyo.org) and click on *Get Out!* This article was made possible by a generous grant from the Desert Legacy Fund of the Riverside Community Foundation.

and up to the extensive plateau of Chocolate Mountain. Carry plenty of water and be ready for cold winds, and, as always, tell a friend where you're going. Enjoy and don't forget to post a report on the FOI trail forum on our web site!



# A Word from our Friends

## *Coming Back Changed*

by Justin Hite

*I'm sitting* on an enormous fallen Red Fir beside Deadman Creek, somewhere up near the headwaters of the Owens River. Three Brook Trout are swimming in the creek below me, their strawberry-colored fins rowing to keep them in place, but I'm not looking at them any more. The shadow that passed overhead turned out to be a Northern Goshawk, and I'm watching it swirl in lazy spirals that belie the intensity of its searching eyes and quick jerking head movements as it scans the forest for an easy meal of Steller's Jay or Ground Squirrel. Goshawks are denizens of the boreal forests far to the north, yet a few stray far enough south to grace our deep Sierra pine forests with their gray imperial presence.

The Goshawk continues on out of sight, and the Brook Trout have disappeared. Sitting alone on this huge log, I glance down at my notebook to add Goshawk to the list of birds I've seen today. That's when I notice the date I scribbled onto the top of the page earlier in the morning—October 4th, 2006.

A year ago today, full of energy, enthusiasm and the desire to lend a hand, I climbed onto a plane and flew off to spend three weeks volunteering in New Orleans. What I saw, and what I began taking part in, changed everything. It would be more than nine months later that I would finally leave there. I left feeling much like I still do: bitter, lost, and angry. Some of the nightmares still won't leave me alone. I met too many people who were left to die on rooftops and in attics. You can't treat people like that. I met a man whose nine-year-old granddaughter hung herself last October because it was all just too much. I lived for months in the Lower 9th Ward, surrounded by dead bodies they had simply given up looking for. I still don't know how to deal with any of this.

It used to be that the darkness inhabiting this world was something I could stay away from. I could put down the newspaper or turn off the radio if I didn't want to know. I could go backpacking in the White Mountains and lose myself in the beauty and spontaneity of the natural world. Before heading to New Orleans, I spent six sublime summers living on Mono Lake's isles studying the gulls. I loved every second, and I wasted almost no thought on the injustices going on in the world around me. But now these bad memories from the Crescent City are inside me.

Things are slowly getting better. Lately, I have spent a huge amount of time exploring all sorts of random corners of the Inyo National Forest. The wilderness has changed for me though. There's some emptiness in what was once holy. I hope this feeling fades, but I worry that it may linger.

But in the meantime, there are Goshawks to admire, giant Red Fir logs to dance on when no one is watching, and little trout to toss pebbles at in a good natured sort of way. It's good to be back.

**Justin Hite** works as a field mapper  
for Friends of the Inyo

*From one  
reality in  
the Lower  
9th Ward  
of New  
Orleans...*



*...to another. Same nation, but worlds apart.*



# Pinedrops...notes on issues affecting Eastern Sierra Public Lands

## Toads, trails and travels...

...All available on the constantly improving FOI web site. Thanks to the creative work of amateur webmaster Todd Vogel, [friendsoftheinyo.org](http://friendsoftheinyo.org) has become a great resource. Not only can you find out about upcoming and past FOI projects, along with information on Eastern Sierra conservation issues, such



photo: Todd Vogel

*"Post me!," says this Yosemite toad from Glass Creek Meadow.*

as the ongoing Forest Service Route Inventory Process, but now you can post your own natural history findings, report trail conditions and download maps and descriptions of great Eastside hikes.

If you have not visited the site since its complete overhaul last spring please make sure to do so soon. Check out the new Photo Gallery with hundreds of photos of past projects, as well as scenic shots of seldom-visited places.

Also, visit our new FOI Forum. We hope this free forum will become a useful resource for sharing backcountry condition reports, rare or otherwise interesting flora and fauna sightings, and help keep track of what is happening on the ground on our public lands. Your postings will help keep track of local wildlife, such as the distribution of white-headed woodpeckers or hidden ponderosa pines, help identify when a trail needs some repair or an area is experiencing damaging irresponsible use, as well as provide a

great information source for anybody out enjoying the Eastside. Forum registration is free, so unlock your inner nature writer and share the stories and sightings from your adventures on public lands!

## A dream realized

Almost exactly 1 year to the date from the first call for donations, Friends of the Inyo and Bishop angler Bob Durkee celebrated the installation of the Eastern Sierra's newest handicapped accessible amenity—the volunteer-built fishing deck along the eastern shore of Convict Lake. Made possible by the generous support of you—our members—along with dozens of local businesses, carpenters, welders, and the Inyo National Forest, the new Convict Fishing Deck opens up one of the Eastside's most spectacular front country fishing destinations to everyone.

Huge thanks must be extended to Frank Stewart, FOI Board President and local Building Contractor, who, along with hands from his able crew, really made the deck a concrete (wood and steel) reality.

## Tools to get the job done

Ensuring that any type of outdoor recreation doesn't "love the land to death" requires two main ingredients: responsible recreators and thoughtful, active management. Unfortunately, in these days of increasing recreational use and perennially decreasing federal agency budgets, both ingredients seems harder and harder to come by.

This Summer, Friends of the Inyo teamed up with the Inyo National Forest's Recreation Crew from the Lee Vining Ranger District and Polaris Industries to create a bit of both. Through a generous grant from the Polaris TRAILS program, Friends of the Inyo purchased a trail grooming machine and then donated the machine to the Forest to fix severely rutted trails. Seeking to avoid ruts and bumps on rough roads, motorists drive around the ruts, creating new tracks and drastically widening many roads—especially on erosive, steep hills with loose soils. By repairing and maintaining these routes, we can help the land by keeping folks on the road.

Thanks to the creative leadership of Inyo National Forest Ranger Rick Laborde and Ranger Michael McLaughlin, who really got this project going, and to Polaris Industries for supporting and helping maintain responsible recreation in the Eastern Sierra.

## Two-tracks and main arteries

As anyone who has driven the Scenic Loop out of Mammoth Lakes, through the Buttermilk Boulders or even the once track-free

meadows around Mono Lake, current management of motorized vehicles on public lands is a challenge. Irresponsible users create hundreds of miles of illegal tracks each summer through pumice flats, fragile montane meadows, and desert scrub while the few rangers we have left are simply stretched too thin to keep the bad apples in check.



photo: Alison Durkee

*Ribbons and bows decorate the newly built Convict Deck*

*continued on page 10*

# Pinedrops...continued

by Paul McFarland & Todd Vogel

photo: Justin Hite



*Email Paul with the name of this route and win a FOIT-shirt.*

To figure out how to manage off-road vehicle recreation and sustain the very reason we all head to the hills—the wild peace and open freedom of public lands—will take a huge amount of effort, cooperation and compromise from everyone.

Beginning in 2004, the Inyo National Forest, along with all other National Forests in California, inventoried all motorized roads and trails across lands under their jurisdiction. From this complete inventory of every two-track, motorcycle trail, logging road and campsite spur, agency specialists, managers and members of the public will work together to come up with a legally-designated system of roads and trails that actually works. The Inyo, in particular, has done a phenomenal job of trying to gather meaningful public input on what will make a workable motorized route network.

The Inyo National Forest plans to release the first of its proposed route networks in Winter 2007, with a goal of 2008 to complete designation for the whole Forest. A truly workable designated route network will be so much more than simply a filtered

catalogue of the current 3600 miles of routes. A sustainable route network will respect the individual character of place—the habitat, cultural values,

been working to answer some of these questions. A dedicated cadre of volunteer and paid field mappers have fanned out all across the Inyo (and Humboldt-Toiyabe NF—a whole other story by itself!) to document the sandy, muddy, fun and beautiful reality out there on the ground. Huge thanks to all those who have pitched in, especially Bryce and Wilma Wheeler, Justin Hite, Chris Kassar, Mike Klapp, Brian Rouch, Ryan Booth, Heath Wakelee, Ryan Carle, Elisa Whittlsey, Bill Mitchel and Chris McCreedy.

From their work, we have produced a web-based tool for everyone to see what many of these roads actually look like. Click on Road Inventory under our web site's Projects heading to take a virtual tour of roads around the Eastern Sierra, learn about the process and read our site-specific comments and recommendations. *To get involved, contact Paul at paulmc@friendsoftheinyo.org.*

photo: Paul McFarland



*A tragic (and rusty) consequence of too many roads.*

recreational destinations and future. A truly workable designated system will answer questions like: How many miles of road can this forest contain and still provide a healthy and safe home for goshawks and mule deer? Is this road system actually manageable by the few rangers we have? Does this route network make the most judicious use of taxpayer dollars or will it be an ongoing and expensive nightmare to manage and maintain? Does this route we propose to designate even exist on the ground?

For the last two years, FOI has

## A Novel Argument

*There are some really awesome spots in here*, and if there weren't so many roads that lead to nowhere, people might have a better chance of driving to these really good spots where the views are better, the forest more decadent and the campsites more gorgeous. That's a novel argument for fewer roads if I've ever heard one. But having explored several mazes of roads in the last few weeks, I'm beginning to think it's quite true. I'm only getting to the great spots because I'm paid to check every road. If I were to pick randomly, I'd be spending a huge amount of time driving in circles around relatively dull parts of the Eastern Sierra.

*—Found in the field notes of FOI Mapper, Justin Hite, after spending a week north of Mammoth where route densities exceed 35 routes per square mile in some places.*



# Special thanks and words from our Sponsors

## Buy Words for the Wilds

**Satisfy your book needs through Bishop's own Spellbinder Books and help support Friends of the Inyo.**

Ever wonder how Mt. Tom got its name?  
How to tell a blind snake from a rubber boa?

The answer, invariably, is in a book. Take a stroll over to our web site—friendsoftheinyo.org—and click the Words for the Wilds link to unlock the treasury of tales, images and knowledge available through Spellbinder Books. Use their handy Search box at the top to browse everything from Mt. Whitney to the Hoover Wilderness, and shop away.

For every book purchase you make from Spellbinder Books through Words of the Wilds, Spellbinder Books donates a generous percentage of the sale price back to Friends of the Inyo to support active protection of Eastern Sierra public lands. Give back the Eastern Sierra by supporting local, independent business!



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## Thanks & Acknowledgements

**Aguabonita Fly Fishers** for their dedication to protecting habitat and angling opportunities in the Eastern Sierra. They really put their backs into it!

**Cedar Barager & Ilene Mendelbaum** gave in honor of the marriage of **Jen & TJ Chase**.

Happy Birthday to **Robin Roberts** from her brother **Mark**.

**Sarah Childs & Darren Malloy** donated in memory of their friend, **Scott McAndrews** and to welcome the blessed arrival of **June Perry** to the Eastern Sierra

**All the volunteers and members who make our work possible. Nothing happens without you!**

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Think globally...  
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Photo: Paul McFarland

Goldenrod, water birch, coyote willow, wood's rose, Furnace Creek, Fall 2006

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