FRIENDS OF THE INYO
SINCE 1986

The dryness of the Long Valley landscape I witnessed during an EcoFlight in the fall of 2021 was alarming. Our spectacular ecosystems have been devastated by water extraction and this has to stop.

Dear Conservation Partner,

Drought. Devastating. Dire.

That pretty much spells out the current conditions in our state, including the Eastern Sierra.

According to the National Integrated Drought Information System, **drought.gov:**

- Mono County saw its driest year on record for the last 128 years, using data for the months of January - April 2022, with precipitation down 7.03 inches from normal. One hundred percent of Mono residents are affected by the drought, with the entire county experiencing severe drought conditions.

- Inyo County saw its second driest year on record for the last 128 years, using the same data, with precipitation down 3.07 inches from normal. One hundred percent of Inyo residents are affected by the drought, with close to 80 percent of the county being in extreme drought—the next higher level after severe.

And on top of these alarming circumstances, we have water extraction from the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP, or DWP) to contend with.

Consider this juxtaposition: The Paiute people, the original inhabitants of the Owens Valley, called their homeland *Payahuunadü*, "the land of flowing water" – but that poetic name does not reflect the valley's current reality. Dried out lakes, rivers and streams have become the norm since DWP began water extraction from the Eastern Sierra 100 years ago to the benefit of L.A., but much to the detriment of our region.

Our spectacular ecosystems have been devastated by water extraction and this has to stop—especially during a drought, and most especially when, according to a recent Los Angeles Times article that cites data from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, as much as 70 percent of L.A. residential water use is for outdoor irrigation.

Water is important to all of us. It is time to achieve a more equitable and sustainable use of our area's water supply.

Friends of the Inyo is asking for your funding support to raise $50,000 that will help with the following efforts to save our water and restore the Eastern Sierra's lakes, rivers, streams and landscapes:

- Continue to fund 1 full-time and 2 part-time positions to further the work of the Keep Long Valley Green Coalition in Southern Mono County, where FOI plays an important leadership role;

- Advocate and litigate—as needed—for DWP's decreased extraction of Eastern Sierra water to ensure protection of our waterscapes, meadows, vulnerable or endangered species of flora and fauna, local agriculture and ranching, and Tribal resources and cultural values;

- Produce outreach materials to raise awareness that LADWP has enough resources to meet its water needs—even in times of drought—without having to extract additional water from Inyo and Mono Counties;

- Impactfully participate in the first ever Great Basin Water Justice Summit in early August, where diverse water protectors will lead the way in defining and reclaiming water justice for our region;

- Strengthen our collaborative partnerships with local Tribes, the Inyo County Water Department, and County Supervisors to protect the Eastern Sierra's environment, economy, and communities from the adverse effects of local water extraction.

Water is precious, and while we cannot put a price on it, especially in times of drought when its life-giving value sparkles like a diamond in every drop, we hope you will give what you can to help us gain water back for the beautiful yet thirsty landscapes of the Eastern Sierra.

Sincerely,

Wendy Schneider
Executive Director