

Call of the WILD

FRIENDS OF NEVADA WILDERNESS

FALL 2003

Blue Lakes WSA

Winning battle for Duffer Peak

By Shaaron Netherton

Wilderness advocates appear to have won round one in the battle over Duffer Peak in the Blue Lakes Wilderness Study Area. On July 16, the Winnemucca BLM sent out a notice that proposed to construct a permanent communication site in the heart of the Blue Lake WSA on Duffer Peak. This communication facility would have entailed construction of a 100' by 100' site complete



Wilderness legislation rolling in Lincoln Co.

For the last year and a half, Friends of Nevada Wilderness and the Nevada Wilderness Coalition have been working toward designating Wilderness in Lincoln and White Pine counties in eastern Nevada. There's a good chance legislation could hit the Congressional floor sometime this fall or in early 2004.

Staff members from Nevada's Congressional delegation have visited eastern Nevada several times this year to work with ranchers, local governments and other stakeholders and interested parties. Currently, staff from Ensign and Reid's office are drafting legislation for Lincoln County.

It looks as though White Pine County may be covered in a separate bill to be drafted later. As soon as we hear more, we'll keep you informed with e-mails and action alerts.

Pam White, Friends' organizer in Ely, reports, "It's been a slow steady process, but it's also been exciting. The most important aspect of working in a small rural town where there isn't much Wilderness is public education—helping people understand what you can and can't do in Wilderness and how it can benefit them."

with an 8' by 16' concrete pad, 8' x 8' x 8' building, 40' tower, solar panels, etc. The BLM alleged that this was a necessary "recreation" facility needed to manage the WSA.

The BLM placed a small, portable repeater facility in the area in 1981, shortly after the area became a wilderness study area, with the intention that it would be removed when the WSA was designated as wilderness. The BLM's recent move to "upgrade" the site blatantly violates its wilderness study area policy and manual. Satellite phones for employees working in and near the WSA is a viable alternative. These phones are successfully used by other BLM staff working only miles away in the Black Rock Desert.

After extensive review, Friends of Nevada Wilderness prepared a lengthy response outlining the illegal nature of the proposal and elicited the help of Friends' members and supporters on our e-mail alert list.

Thanks to all of you who sent e-mails to the BLM pointing out the problems with its communication site proposal. As a result of our combined efforts, it seems that the BLM has backed away from this project. In a recent communication with Winnemucca BLM manager Terry Reed, he stated that they would be "expanding and intensifying our review of alternatives, looking ahead to the possibility that we may want to remove any facility if

(continued on page 6)

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From the front lines

by Shaaron Netherton, Executive Director

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To get Wilderness news and action alerts, subscribe to the Friends of Nevada Wilderness email list: Send post to fnw@nevadawilderness.org with *subscribe* as subject

September 3rd was the 39th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964. This landmark piece of legislation was a true bipartisan effort. As citizens like you and our elected officials keep working to save our remaining

wild places, it seems we are losing the race against time, development pressures and greed. Newsletters, magazines and papers everywhere talk about the Bush administration's failing environmental report card, rolling back environmental protections on almost everything. If my mailbox is anything like yours, it is filled with enough bad news to send me into bouts of depression.

However, I remain optimistic. Here in Nevada we continue to have bipartisan cooperation, we continue to protect wild places through legislation, monitoring

the Federal agencies that manage our wild public places and working cooperatively with real people. We make a difference in our on-the-ground restoration work during Public Lands Day events and other projects around the state.

Here are some suggestions to boost your own optimism about Nevada's wild country: Buy a 2004 Wild Nevada calendar and enjoy the beauty of our state—every month. This is why we dedicate our time, effort and hearts—to keep these places beautiful for our kids to enjoy. Take a hike and watch the aspen leaves turn colors. As Ed Abbey says, "It is not enough to fight for the land, it is even more important to enjoy it."

Celebrate the
40th anniversary
of the Wilderness

Celebrate a now and forever wilderness

The Wilderness Act turned 39 on September 3 and we are getting our party hats ready for the big bash to come in 2004 when this extraordinary legislation turns 40. The same year that the Wilderness Act celebrates its big birthday, Friends of Nevada Wilderness will celebrate turning 20.

Friends was created in the spring of 1984 to help protect some of Nevada's finest Forest Service high country: The Islands in the Sky. Five years after its creation, the Nevada Forest Protection Act of 1989 did just that: designated 13 new Wilderness areas and added to Nevada's sole Wilderness Area at the time: the Jarbidge.

In 2004, we plan to heartily celebrate our many past achievements, along with the pending protection of eastern Nevada's wild places—and even our planned future achievements in protecting the remaining wild lands in Nevada.

As long as wild lands in Nevada need protection, Friends of Nevada Wilderness plans to be there. As long as our organization of caring, dedicated members is active, we will work for wilderness. To this end, we have created the Friends of Nevada Wilderness Endowment Fund. Watch for more information on this fund and on the celebrations planned for 2004.



Schell Creek Range makes dramatic backdrop

Locals flock to Public Lands Day

Despite a nearby wildfire, more than 300 folks joined Ely's 8th annual Public Land Day event on September 20. It was held just outside of the spectacular Schell Creek Range Proposed Wilderness Area. This successful event was co-sponsored by numerous groups including Friends of Nevada Wilderness. Pam White, our rural staff person helped organize the event and was successful in getting over 200 students involved.

The older kids worked hard painting tables and bridges at the Berry Creek Campground. The younger students participated in education stations, learning about entomology, biology, archaeology, forestry, and camping etiquette. Pam said, "The highlight of my day was the kids' excitement about a field trip into the mountains. They were able to experience the event through the eyes of scientists and learn something new about their backyard."

Friends of Nevada Wilderness had a booth at the event. Bill Huggins, who came to help from our Las Vegas office, called it a "knock-out day" and enjoyed talking to a wide variety of people.

Pam also arranged a public lands day poster contest in advance of the event for school kids in Ely and McGill. She worked in the schools for five days, talking to all 600 elementary students about wilderness and the outdoors. The winning student from each grade level was presented with a \$50 savings bond from Mt. Wheeler Electric Co-



Congratulations to the Public Lands Day poster contest winners from Mc Gill Elementary in White Pine County. Pictured with Barbara Walker US Forest Service (from left) are Sage Gale, 6th grade; Courtney Belander, 3rd grade; Garret Williams, 2nd Grade; Madison Trimble, 1st Grade; and Jessica Johnson, Mt Wheeler Power.

operative. Four of the winners are shown in the picture. A big thanks to the BLM and Forest Service and all the other participating groups for making this a wonderful community activity.

Hardy folk turn out to work National Public Lands Day in Black Rock Desert

By Brian Beffort

If you ever find yourself feeling cynical about the current state of the world, raise your spirits by thinking about National Public Lands Day, 2003.

More than 60 volunteers, representing a variety of groups and interests, drove to the dusty Black Rock Desert playa to work in record heat, giving back to our public lands and sharing their love for the desert. In temperatures that neared 100 degrees, work crews restored habitat where four trespass or redundant vehicle routes had scarred the landscape, removed invasive tamarisk trees

from two sites, and performed trash surveys. They cleaned up various big messes on the playa, and cleaned up the "High Dry" playas (in the Emigrant Arch Proposed Wilderness Area).

That evening, participants enjoyed good company, a barbecue dinner provided by the BLM and amazing stargazing through Dave Vaughn's 18-inch telescope.

The weekend was a refreshing reminder that we can make the world a better place if we all work together.

Declare your wilderness support with a "wild" T-shirt Printed on 100% organic cotton. New style says: KEEP IT WILD! Please specify size: S, M, L, XL Cost: \$10 + \$2 shipping.



How to protect proposed wilderness

By Brian Beffort

Because their wilderness values have not been officially recognized by the BLM, several proposed wilderness areas in southern Lincoln County will need extra public support if they are to receive the wilderness designation they deserve.

The Delamar Mountains (both the WSA and the adjacent North Delamar proposed wilderness area), the Desert Hills-Pahranagat proposed wilderness Area and the Mt. Irish complex (Mt. Irish, Murphy Gap, Reed Spring and Silver Canyon proposed wilderness areas) all contain beautiful landscapes, rare and priceless archaeological resources and important wildlife habitat.

Two things you can do to help designate these areas as Wilderness:

1. Visit them

Fall is a great time to explore everything these areas have to offer. Here's how to get there:

✦ **Delamar Mountains:** Take I 15 north from Vegas, then U.S. 93 north toward Alamo and Ely. Roughly 22 miles north of NV 108 (to Moapa and Glendale), and immediately before 93 heads into the canyon leading to Pahranagat lakes, turn right onto the unpaved road leading north. For the next 15 miles, everything on your right is proposed wilderness. Stop when the mood strikes you and begin exploring. North of Delamar Lake (10 miles in) several roads heading east will provide choices for access into the Delamar Mountains.

✦ **Desert Hills-Pahranagat Range:** From the N. Richardville frontage road in Alamo (90 minutes north of Las Vegas on U.S. 93), take

Canyon Road due west toward the Pahranagat Range. After about 6 miles, the road will pass through a gorgeous narrow canyon. After this point, everything on the right (west) side of the road is proposed wilderness.

✦ **Mount Irish:** Opposite the headquarters of the Key Pittman Wildlife Management Area (About 15 minutes north of Alamo on Nevada 318), an unsigned gravel road heads through a gate and then west onto the slopes of Mount Irish. After about 4 miles, look for BLM signs about respecting archaeology (good places to look for petroglyphs). Allowing for boundary adjustments for established routes, everything north and south of the main road is proposed Wilderness.

All routes mentioned require high-clearance and, sometimes, 4WD. There are no services. You must carry all your own provisions and be prepared for self-rescue. Proposal maps and more specific directions are available by calling Brian at (775) 324-7667 or Jeremy at (702) 650-6542.

2. Write your Senators

Please urge Senators John Ensign and Harry Reid to designate the Delamar and North Delamars, all units in the Mount Irish region and the Desert Hills-Pahranagat proposed wilderness areas, to protect their archaeological, habitat and recreational values. If you have visited any of these areas, tell your senators additional information about why these areas are special. It's the "Squeaky Wheel" theory of Democracy, and it works!

Welcome to all our new neighbors

"It is not in the stars to hold our destiny but in ourselves."

These words from Shakespeare surely apply to recent events at the Friends of Nevada Wilderness Reno office. After having extra, empty office space for the better part of the year, Friends has been rewarded for our patience with the addition of three nonprofit organizations as neighbors: Nevada Shakespeare Company, the Sierra Interfaith Action for Peace and Latinos for Political Empowerment. And in Las Vegas, Friends welcomes Great Basin Mine Watch as new office mates.

In the few short weeks we've shared office space, all groups have quickly realized there's fertile ground for cooperation.

For example, those in Reno on Sunday, November 2 can plan to attend the 2 pm matinee of Shakespeare's drama, King Lear. This performance, at the new Nevada Museum of Art, is a benefit performance for Friends of Nevada Wilderness, with a third of the proceeds going to protect wilderness. Who knows? Maybe we'll celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act with a production of King Lear on the slopes of its namesake peak in the Black Rock Desert in 2004.



Mission Statement

Keeping Nevada Wild!

Friends of Nevada Wilderness is dedicated to preserving all qualified Nevada public lands as Wilderness, protecting all potential Wilderness from ongoing threats including mining, overgrazing, road construction, and off-road vehicle use, educating the public on the values of – and need for – Wilderness, and improving the management and restoration of these public wild lands.



Take a hike:

Petroglyphs dot the Delamar Range

By Bill Huggins

The first weekend of September, 10 southern Nevada volunteers and staff had an excellent and challenging outing, visiting three proposed wilderness areas in eastern Nevada.

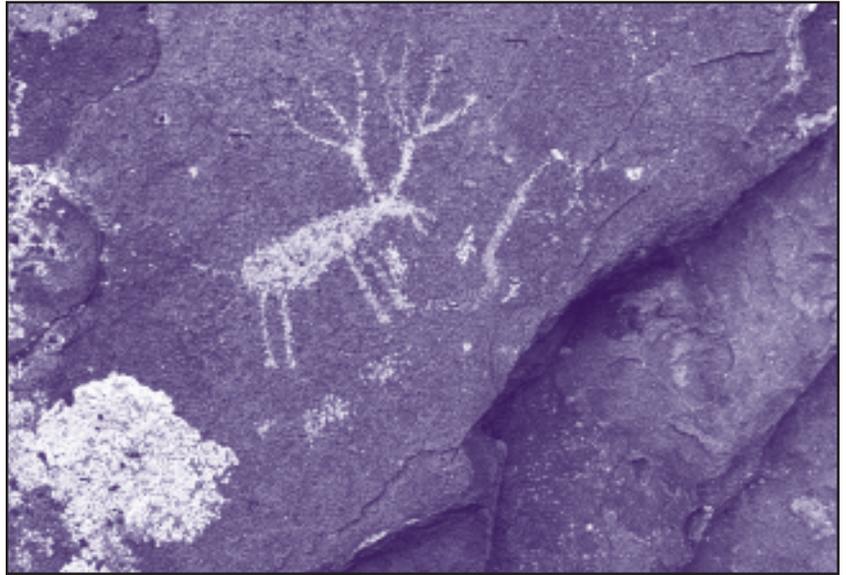
Friday began with an attempt to camp at Delamar dry lake. With a massive thunderstorm front pushing through the region, however, the lake was anything but dry. In spite of the phosphorescent half-light of a rising moon and broken clouds that gave the flash floods and water pools an otherworldly air, the group headed for higher ground and a safer site for the night.

Saturday broke calm and clear. The morning vistas were amazing: the wet, dappled play of Delamar Lake; the North Delamar Proposed Wilderness just beyond was so clear it looked air-brushed. After breaking camp, we drove over roads that had been slick with mud the evening before. Now they were so dry and dusty it seemed the rain had been a dream.

We drove to the Mt. Irish proposed wilderness, stopping several times to inspect petroglyphs and tool-making sites along the way. One volunteer found a fossil. We hiked for several hours into the

backcountry and up to a ridgeline that gave us a sweeping view of the entire region, including several of our proposal areas: Murphy Gap, Silver Lake and Reed Spring. There were signs of big-horn sheep. While Friends' staffers prepared dinner, volunteers penned letters to Nevada's Congressional delegation about their experiences.

Plans to protect air and water, wilderness and wildlife are, in fact, plans to protect man.
—Stuart Udall



Mt. Irish is incredibly remote and untrammeled, even with the petroglyphs and other cultural resources that abound. At the moment this area, like others in the Eastern Nevada Citizens Wilderness Proposal, has no protection. In the opinion of everyone there, it has great wilderness potential.

Before returning to Vegas on Sunday, the group took a side trip into the Desert Hills-Pahr-anagat proposed wilderness area, just west of Alamo, to look at an area known as the Shooting Gallery. The rock art is literally everywhere you look, more profuse and varied than that in Sloan Canyon, which was protected by a National Conservation Area in the 2002 Clark County bill. This is another area with absolutely no protection.

With the amount of area covered and the variety of things seen, all look forward to another trip like this one—possibly with a little less rain.

If you want to help protect this and other wilderness-quality lands, read how on the facing page.

Photos: White River Narrows (top) Mt. Irish (left) by Brian Beffort.

Write to your U.S. Senators

Hon. John Ensign
333 Las Vegas Blvd. S.
Suite 58203
Las Vegas, NV 89101

Hon. Harry Reid
333 Las Vegas Blvd. S.
Suite 8016
Las Vegas, NV 89101



Wilderness, my life support system

By Bill Huggins

I am a staunch believer in wilderness.

I was born in eastern Utah, in Moab, which is surrounded by a sea of open country. Spending my summers there, I took the country for granted. My early school years were spent in the wilds of New England; I came of age in western South Dakota, with the Black Hills as my playground. Having lived in Las Vegas for 13 years, I find the wild areas of Clark County to be a balm for the abrasions of big-city life.

I've lived my life within easy reach of wilderness. I cannot imagine another way to live. I need wilderness like I need oxygen, water, food; to live.

I've read the greats of the eco-canon: Leopold, Lopez, Abbey, Bass, Dillard, to name but a few.

A couple of years ago I realized that it's not enough to just read, write checks, send an e-mail or two. I decided to get more involved in protecting areas that are without protection. It's the only way to ensure that the life I've enjoyed will be en-

joyed by future generations.

If we don't take responsibility for our wild lands, who will? I think we all know the answer to that question.

NOTE: Bill Huggins joins Dino Fulgencio and Jeremy Garnarcz at the Las Vegas office.

Why does wilderness matter to you? Please tell us in 200 words or less. We'd love to publish your words in our next newsletter. Send your entries to brian@nevadawilderness.org

Outreach events bring wilderness to the towns in Northern Nevada

The Nevada State Fair provided a proper venue for a Friends of Nevada Wilderness outreach booth to tell folks about the benefits of wilderness. A big thanks to board members Hermi Hiatt and Marge Sill, who turned out to help work this event, which went a marathon five days.

Wild Oats Market, the natural foods store, designated Friends of Nevada Wilderness the recipient of its Wooden Nickle promotion for four months this fall. If you shop at the Reno store and recycle grocery bags, please put your wooden nickles in the wilderness bucket. Friends' staff worked a public outreach table at Wild Oats one Saturday in October, a tie-in with the store's state of Nevada theme. Other outreach events included Reno Days in June, and the Western Conference of Outdoor Clubs in July.

Lincoln Co. wilderness

(continued from front page)

the area were designated, and focusing on a more portable, temporary facility." The BLM is looking at alternative sites outside of the WSA. Terry asks, "if anyone has some good ideas, let us know."

Monitoring all the BLM-proposed actions in wild places within Nevada and working towards solutions is one of the tasks that Friends of Nevada Wilderness has continued to take very seriously since its founding almost 20 years ago. You, the members, make this possible. If you want to be on our e-mail news and alert list, ask to be subscribed by mailing pat@nevadawilderness.org



A heartfelt Thank You to all the Friends of Nevada Wilderness new members, renewing members, Life Members and Patrons.

The Wilderness holds answers to questions man has not yet learned how to ask. — Nancy Newhall

Mt. Rose crowned with new trailheads

The U.S. Forest Service recently completed construction on two new trailheads accessing the Mount Rose Wilderness, with one more planned for construction.

The Dry Pond Trail climbs into the Mount Rose Wilderness and connects with Thomas Creek from the east. You can reach the trailhead via Timberline Drive about two miles east of Galena Creek Park along the Mount Rose Highway. Turn north on Timberline, and drive about a mile, then left to the trailhead.

The Jones/Whites Loop Trail is the second left after crossing the creek farther north along Timberline Drive. The trailhead now has a parking lot and bathrooms and accesses beautiful forests, creeks and the Mount Rose Wilderness.

Also, funding is making its way through channels to build a trailhead and parking area for the Mount Rose Summit Trail just west of the summit of the Mount Rose Highway (NV 431). Look for updates in future newsletters.

For information on any of these trails, call the U.S. Forest Service Carson Ranger District at (775) 882-2766.



Wilderness folk talk shop at b-b-q

On Thursday, September 18, Friends of Nevada Wilderness hosted a potluck BBQ for our members in southern Nevada. About 30 folks attended this event held at Desert Breeze Park in Las Vegas.

Jeremy Garncarz, southern Nevada organizer, gave a rousing update of what's happened in the last few years on the wilderness front in Nevada, especially the 2002 wilderness successes in Clark County. He reported on and answered questions about the current eastern Nevada campaign.



Long-time members, who know a lot about Nevada's wild places and how to protect them, mingled with newer members and shared their insights. Everyone brought wonderful food and the dinner was spectacular. We look forward to more great times ahead, working for wilderness.

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Pine Cone Ball

Nature writer Gary Snyder is the guest speaker at the Pine Cone Ball, Wednesday evening Nov. 12 at the Sienna casino on the river in Reno. This annual event honors conservationists who made a difference. For tickets, contact Environmental Leadership at (775) 323-3433 or email staff@environleader.org

Nature is not a place to visit, it is home.

—Gary Snyder