

# Call of the WILD

## Wilderness stewardship enters a new phase Helping Wild Lands Heal

By Brian Beffort

Because wilderness designation does not guarantee landscapes will remain free of human impacts, invasive plant species and other threats, Friends of Nevada Wilderness is committed to working on the ground to ensure a wilderness legacy for the future.

We accomplish this with our three Wilderness Stewardship programs: Adopt A Wilderness, Leave No Trace and Wilderness Restoration. We invite you to become a "Wilderness Warrior" and join us in the wild. Not only will you help us achieve results on the ground, but you'll meet other dedicated wilderness defenders and get to know wild Nevada.

### Adopt A Wilderness

Nevada is a big state with a lot of wilderness-quality lands, and there simply aren't enough of us here at Friends of Nevada Wilderness to keep tabs on all wild lands. By "adopting a wilderness," you become the eyes and ears on the ground. It's a chance to visit your adopted area a couple times each year, get to know its beauty and report impacts to Friends and the appropriate agency.

Not only will you have an excuse to get out on the ground, but your knowledge of the area will make you very effective when you communicate in defense of your area:

- ◆ To land management agencies as they revise or develop land-use and wilderness plans;
- ◆ To Congress when they consider whether to protect the area through legislation (as wilderness or a National Conservation Area, etc.);
- ◆ To Friends to help us identify problems and illegal actions.

### Wilderness Restoration

In coordination with the BLM, we have scheduled wilderness restoration trips to help wildlands heal from impacts. These trips get volunteers out to wildlands, where they can enjoy the area's beauty and help restore damaged habitat. Friends and the BLM will also be offering a series of Leave No

Trace trips, to teach people how to travel lightly on the land. Often these trips include an opportunity to camp in the wild with other fun and like-minded volunteers. There's often work for all skill and ability levels. The only essential qualification you need is a passion for wilderness. A schedule of projects is listed below.

Adopt a wilderness today, and help keep Nevada wild.

### Leave No Trace

Developed over decades by National Outdoor Leadership School and the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, Leave No Trace (LNT) is a systematic curriculum to help teach people awareness and respect for natural areas. With simple messages, such as "Pack it in/Pack it out" and "Leave it better than you found it," LNT principles help people learn

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Happy Birthday Friends of Nevada Wilderness!

We turn 21 on March 21.

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## *From the front lines* **Enjoying our new wilderness areas, and looking ahead to a busy year**

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### **Staff**

#### **Northern Nevada Office**

Shaaron Netherton  
Brian Beffort  
Pete Dronkers  
Richard Knox  
PO Box 9754  
Reno, NV 89507  
(775) 324-7667

#### **Eastern Nevada Office**

Pam White  
PO Box 150374  
Ely, NV 89315  
(775) 289-8898

#### **Southern Nevada Office**

Susan Potts  
1700 E. Desert Inn #406  
Las Vegas, NV 89109  
(702) 650-6542

[www.nevadawilderness.org](http://www.nevadawilderness.org)  
[fnw@nevadawilderness.org](mailto:fnw@nevadawilderness.org)

Newsletter published quarterly

I'd like you all to take a few minutes to meet your new centerfold wilderness areas from Lincoln County. I hope you'll get the opportunity to get very personal with them as the years go by.

### **WHITE PINE RISING**

Our next issue will officially kick off the White Pine County wilderness campaign. Just recently, the White Pine County Commissioners asked the Nevada Congressional delegation to consider public lands legislation for their county. I'm excited by the prospect of including wilderness in the bill, and I look forward to working with my old hometown of Ely. If you'd like to get more involved, contact Pam White, the Friends of Nevada Wilderness rural organizer in Ely at (775) 289-8898.

### **MONITORING AND RESTORATION**

Friends of Nevada Wilderness mission goes beyond protecting wild areas legislatively. In 2005, Friends will focus on wilderness monitoring and restoration trips throughout the year, working in partnership with the BLM. This issue has a list of restoration trips scheduled in the next few months, and I invite you to join us out on the ground. Visit our website and visit the Wilderness Stewardship section on how you can get involved.

I will also keep you posted on the ways to get involved with wilderness management planning in the Clark County, the Black Rock region and Lincoln County, as well as working with the agencies to protect potential wilderness until Congress can designate it. The

South McCullough and Wee Thump wilderness plans are out for public comment. See article in this issue.

### **A COMMITTED CORPS**

Someone special has donated an extraordinary amount of his time, equipment and expertise lately to help Friends of Nevada Wilderness move into the digital age – Graham Stafford. His company is Trail Pictures. If you'd like more information about his services, check out his website at [www.trailpics.net](http://www.trailpics.net).



*Shaaron Netherton*

I'd also like to welcome Richard Knox back to Friends of Nevada Wilderness as our new Membership Coordinator. His great experience as a geologist, with computers and on the ground in Nevada will help us immensely. I'd like to bid a fond farewell to Pat Pat-era, who has left Friends after four years to become a reporter for Northern Nevada Business Weekly. We wish her well in her new career.

Hermi Hiatt has assumed the President's chair on our Board of Directors, and Bart Patterson has become the Vice Chair for Southern Nevada. I welcome the new energy they bring to our board.

Be Wild,

Shaaron Netherton  
Executive Director

# Take a hike on Highland Ridge

By Pete Dronkers

Just south of Great Basin National Park, in the Snake Range southeast of Ely, is a high and jagged ridge of limestone surrounded by miles of pristine roadless land. Here you will find fir, spruce, and aspen tress along with meadows, crystal-clear creeks and abundant wildlife. A hike north up John's Wash will take you through miles of lush scenery in an intimate valley.

In the wash's lower reaches, the route is navigable through dense aspen forests, where tree carvings date back to the turn of the century. Today there is no real trail – only a few pieces of ribbon tied to branches to guide the way, although getting lost in this steep canyon would be nearly impossible.

Higher up, the underbrush is thick and hard to navigate. Occasionally your surroundings will open up with views of towering limestone cliffs and spires overhead. Those who make the difficult scramble up onto the ridges will be able to continue north into Great Basin National Park, where you will find yourself among the Bristlecone Pines on the flanks of its massive peaks.

Despite its beauty, Highland Ridge was left out of the 1989 Nevada Wilderness Protection Act, which designated Forest Service lands across the state. We're hoping Congress rectifies this by designating the Highland Ridge Wilderness.

## Getting to Highland Ridge

From Ely, follow Highway 50 east to Majors Place, then continue south on Highway 93 for a few miles until route 894 veers left/easterly toward Shoshone and Minerva. From Minerva, continue south on a dirt road (route 1116). To access the area described above, veer left onto route 1114 and follow it until it merges with route 1115, which leads through Murphy's Wash and into John's Wash. In an aspen grove, a fallen tree marks the end of the road and the start of this spectacular hike through wild Nevada.

**Agency:** USFS Ely Ranger District, 350 8<sup>th</sup> St, PO Box 539, Ely NV 89301; (775) 289-3031.

**Recommended map:** Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Ely Ranger District, East Half, available from the USFS above.

## Why I Love Wilderness

By Marge Sill, founding member of Friends of Nevada Wilderness

Wilderness has been an important part of my life for 70 years. From my first forays into the still-wild hills of Southern California, to trips with my mountain-climbing friends in the Southern Sierra, to snowshoe adventures in the backcountry of Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks, to exploring the Gila Wilderness of Southern New Mexico, and finally to becoming acquainted with the magnificent wild lands of Nevada, I have always been happiest when I could feel at one with the natural world. Although I am no longer able to go more than a few hundred yards into



*The Highland Ridge citizen-proposed wilderness area is one of the crown jewels of the Nevada Wilderness' White Pine County Wilderness Proposal. Photo by Pete Dronkers.*

## Help make Highland Ridge wilderness!

After you visit Highland Ridge, write Nevada's Congressional delegation and ask them to designate Highland Ridge as wilderness in the White Pine County public lands bill.

**Senator Harry Reid**  
400 S. Virginia St. #902  
Reno, NV 89501

**Congressman Jim Gibbons**  
400 S. Virginia St. #502  
Reno, NV 89501

**Senator John Ensign**  
400 S. Virginia St. #738  
Reno, NV 89501

wilderness, I have wonderful memories: watching a lizard do pushups in High Rock Canyon, hearing the murmur of the water in Hendry's Creek, topping Half Dome to glimpse the length of the High Sierra, viewing 200 miles of Nevada and Utah in all directions from the summit of Wheeler Peak, and running down the Arc Dome trail to avoid the flashes of lightning from the gathering storm. I hope that wilderness and wild things will always be a part of the life of my extended family for generations to come.

# Welcome Eastern Nevada

Celebrating 768,294 Acres

*On November 30, 2004, the Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation and Development Act became law, and Nevada's wilderness legacy grew by 14 areas and 768,294 acres. Here's a brief introduction to the newest members of Nevada's wilderness family. If you get a chance this year, get out and say hi in person. They would love to meet you!*

## **Mormon Mountains — 157,938 acres**

This complex of soaring limestone peaks and deep rugged valleys is wonderful habitat for bighorn sheep, desert tortoise, the endangered Las Vegas bearpaw poppy and numerous other species. It's also a great landscape for exploring less than two hours from the Las Vegas Valley. The Mormon Mountains Wilderness is the second-largest wilderness in Nevada (at 315,700 acres, the Black Rock Desert Wilderness is the largest).



*Moapa Peak in the Mormon Mountains. Photo by Ron Hunter*

## **Meadow Valley Range — 123,488 acres**

The long north-south spine of the Meadow Valley Range offers this wilderness area several different personalities to visitors. The rugged western slope provides steep colorful cliffs and hidden canyons, while the bajadas of the gentler eastern slope provide habitat for numerous plant and animal species. This is now the third-largest wilderness in Nevada.

## **Delamar Mountains — 111,328 acres**

The deep canyons, washes, colorful cliff faces and long sloping bajadas in the Delamars provide many opportunities for beauty and solitude, as well as critical habitat

for bighorn sheep, mule deer and other sensitive species. The Delamar Mountains Wilderness is now the fifth-largest wilderness area in Nevada.

## **Clover Mountains — 85,748 acres**

From dusty washes draining into Rainbow Canyon south of Caliente, the Clover Mountains rise into ponderosa pine forests nearly 8,000 feet above sea level. The Clovers join with the Mormons, Meadow Valleys and Delamars to make up the "Big Four," 480,000 acres of wilderness, which joins the 1.6-million-acre Desert National Wildlife Range to the west to comprise one of the largest remaining, relatively undeveloped blocks of wildlife habitat in the Lower 48.

## **South Pahroc Range — 25,800 acres**

The jumbled rock outcrops and canyons of the South Pahroc wilderness area promises both solitude and challenge to anyone exploring the area. The rocky geologic features are interlaced with stands of pinion-juniper, white fir and aspen, forming isolated glades that provide shady solitude. Mule deer, mountain lion, newly reintroduced bighorn sheep, golden eagles and prairie falcons can be found in the area.

## **Big Rocks — 12,997 acres**

The steep-sided mountains, canyons and jumbled boulders provide excellent opportunities for solitude and exploration. The ruggedness of the terrain prevents access by motorized vehicles and leaves the majority of the land pristine. This area is rich in rock art and primitive campsites. Big Rocks is also a citizen-proposed Wilderness, which means Congress, by designating the area, recognized that the BLM missed this gem in their inventory. It's a wonderful precedent and one we hope to repeat in the future.

## **Worthington Mountain — 30,664 acres**

Worthington Mountain rises 4,000 vertical feet above the dry valleys of central Nevada to almost 9,000 feet in elevation. The rugged limestone backbone of the mountain presents a difficult challenge to visitors with heavily dissected, maze-like canyons, precipitous cliffs, knifelike limestone surfaces, and no surface water. Those who persist will be rewarded by sweeping vistas, natural arches, 2,000 acres of ancient forest, (the oldest tree dated at 2,100 years), and limestone caves, the largest being famous Leviathan Cave.

## **Weepah Spring — 51,480 acres**

The Weepah Spring Wilderness in the Seaman Range offers isolated peaks, maze-like canyons, walls of fossil bear-

# Nevada Wilderness Areas!

## Acres of New Wilderness

ing rocks, natural arches, odd volcanic hoodoos and the largest stand of ponderosa pine trees in eastern Nevada. Hiking, camping, backpacking, hunting and horseback riding are good in this area of forest and eroded volcanic cliffs.



Sunset over the Meadow Valley Mountains. Photo by Howard Booth

### **Parsnip Peak — 43,693 acres**

Part of the Wilson Creek Mountain Range, Parsnip Peak Wilderness provides remarkable recreation and solitude among riparian areas, rocky slopes and aspen forest. There are also prehistoric sites that include campsites, rock rings, rock shelters and rock art. Deer, elk and other ungulates browse the area, and bald eagles like the pockets of fir which survive in craggy niches in the higher elevations.

### **White Rock Range — 24,413 acres**

The White Rock Range contains gently rolling foothills covered in sagebrush, pinion pine, juniper, and scattered ponderosa pines, as well as side canyons and a high, wind-swept plateau covered with aspens and pockets of white fir. Numerous springs support grassy meadows and lush riparian vegetation important to the elk and mule deer in the area. Strangely eroded volcanic ash and columnar peaks jut out over the trees and provide excellent scenery for visitors.

### **Fortification Range — 30,656 acres**

Although most of the 14-mile-long Fortification Range is a low, volcanic mountain range, the north end becomes rugged and precipitous, where the rock has been eroded into sheer cliffs and massive outcrops. These spectacular formations and cliffs form a natural amphitheater at the head of

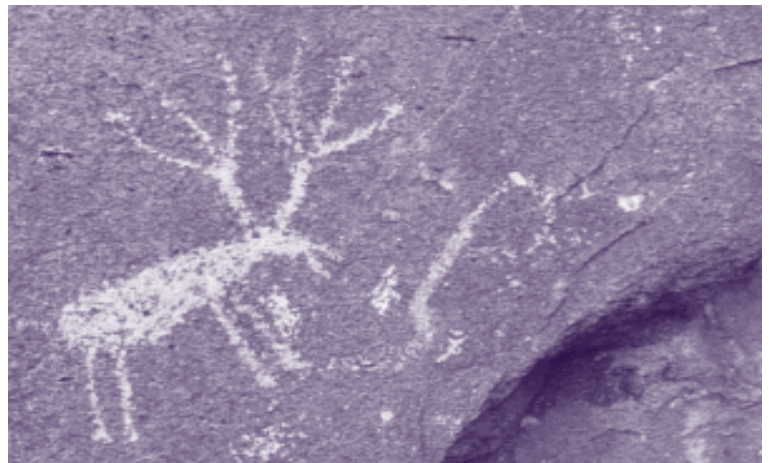
the Cottonwood Canyon drainage. Wildlife within the wilderness includes mule deer, antelope, cougars, and raptors.

### **Far South Egans — 36,384 acres**

The spectacularly rugged and colorful limestone cliffs along the west face of the Far South Egan Range hint at the beauty and adventure waiting for those who explore the wilderness' interior. Rising 4,500 feet above the valley floor, the wilderness offers bristlecone and ponderosa pines above 7,000 feet, as well as an abandoned historic sawmill, beautifully scenic countryside and spelunking into Whipple Cave.

### **Tunnel Spring — 5,371 acres**

The Tunnel Springs Wilderness is a land of steep, mountainous canyons, long ridges and rough drainages located at the head of Beaver Dam Wash – too rugged for horseback riding, but good for hiking. Several streams support trout populations, unusual in BLM lands in this desert region. Mountain lions and a variety of raptors frequent the area. The area is on the Utah border and contiguous with proposed wilderness in the Dixie National Forest.



A petroglyph at Mount Irish. Photo by Brian Beffort.

### **Mt. Irish — 28,334 acres**

In its initial wilderness inventory, the BLM decided this area wasn't worth designating as wilderness. Luckily, Congress liked the Nevada Wilderness Coalition's Citizens' Proposal for the area and designated this beautiful sloping and archaeologically rich area. The name has created some confusion, however, as the Mt. Irish Wilderness is not really on Mt. Irish. As a result, developments on Mt. Irish itself (the communication tower, roads and silver mine) are not in wilderness and won't be affected by wilderness.



## Mission Statement

**Keep Nevada Wild!**

Friends of Nevada Wilderness is dedicated to preserving all qualified Nevada public lands as Wilderness, protecting all present and potential Wilderness from ongoing threats, educating the public on the values of – and need for – Wilderness, and improving the management and restoration of these public wild lands.

# Eastern Nevada water pipelines: an update

In 2004, the Southern Nevada Water Authority proposed a series of wells, pipelines and pumping facilities (mostly on public lands) capable of transporting 125,000 to 200,000 acre feet of water annually from eastern Nevada to Las Vegas. In September, they filed a request with the BLM Field Office in Ely to obtain a right-of-way to proceed. The first step in this process is to prepare a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Bruce Flinn

**Friends of Nevada Wilderness will work to ensure that wilderness water sources in eastern Nevada are not affected by this proposal.**

has been hired as the BLM's project manager for this undertaking and a contractor to prepare the EIS is expected to be hired by the BLM in late March. EIS scoping meetings will likely take place in late April and early May

in Ely, Baker, Caliente, Alamo, Las Vegas and Reno. It appears this will be a public process with data, hydrographic and biologic modeling, and monitoring critiqued by a wide array of scientists and public.

**It will be the state water engineer who will make ANY decision or how much, if any, water will ever follow in these proposed pipelines.**

## Help protect rural water

Write to get on the Ely BLM's mailing list for this important Environmental Impact Statement:  
Ely Bureau of Land Management  
HC 33 Box 33500  
Ely, Nevada 89301

Then visit the Southern NV Groundwater Project website at [www.nv.blm.gov/ely/](http://www.nv.blm.gov/ely/)

Click on the Southern NV Groundwater Project.

## Helping wild lands heal

*continued from page 1*

ways to enjoy our wilderness areas without impacting them, so we can help keep them wild for other people to enjoy. Classes are taught in wild areas, giving participants the opportunity to enjoy these beautiful areas and make new friends. Everyone who takes the class becomes certified to teach future classes. See the trip schedule on this page.

### Many benefits

Not only do these programs help the land heal from impacts, but your work will help volunteers develop a greater appreciation for Nevada's wild lands and to spread this enthusiasm to others. In addition, all volunteers who sign up with the BLM under this program will be eligible for Work Injury Compensation as outlined in Title 5 U.S.C., Chapter 81. Some field offices may be able to pay per diem and reimburse mileage. For those who itemize their deductions, the IRS allows miles for volunteer work to be deducted as a donation to Friends of Nevada Wilderness, a 501(c)(3) organization. Finally, both Friends and the BLM will be able to leverage the hours you volunteer to get additional funding for wilderness stewardship in the future.

**Wilderness Stewardship is a win-win-win situation, and it's a lot of fun. Please join us in 2005!**

## Nevada Stewardship trips 2005

### Leave No Trace

- April 9-10: Calico Mountains\*
- April 16-17: Mormon Mountain\*\*
- June 11-12: Parsnip Peak\*\*
- July 23-24: Goshute Canyon\*\*
- October 15-16: Little High Rock Canyon\*

### Restoration

- April 30-May 1: Black Rock Rendezvous Volunteer Orientation/Campout\*
- May 14-15: Mormon Mountains Wilderness\*\*
- May 14-15: Soldier Meadows\*
- June 11: Mt. Rose Wilderness\*\*\*
- June 25-26: So. Jackson Mtns Wilderness\*
- August 13-14: Pahute Peak Wilderness\*
- September 24-25: National Public Lands Day: Soldier Meadows\*
- September 24-25: Parsnip Peak Wilderness\*\*

### For more information about these trips call:

- \* Brian Murdock at Winnemucca BLM, (775) 623-1761;
- \*\*Stephen Leslie at Ely BLM, (775) 289-1867;
- \*\*\*Brian Beffort at Friends of Nevada Wilderness, (775) 324-7667.

Schedule can change without notice. Get updates from (775) 324-7667, (702) 650-6542 or at [www.nevadawilderness.org](http://www.nevadawilderness.org).

## EVENTS - Upcoming and Ongoing

**Earth Day, Idlewild Park — Reno.** April 24, 2005 — 10 AM to 5 PM  
Come out to Idlewild Park for a great day celebrating Mother Earth and stop by to talk wilderness with us in the big tent.

**Wilderness Happy Hour, Moose McGillicuddy's — Las Vegas**  
First Thursday of each Month — 5 to 7 PM. For letter-signing, fun and wilderness updates. Look for the 'KEEP IT WILD' sign.

**Sloan Canyon/North McCullough Wilderness hike — easy half day.**  
Saturday, March 19 – 9:00 AM – explore petroglyphs and geology.\*

**Easter trip to the Mormon Mountains - 5 days.** March 24-28.  
Car camping, one-day service project, hiking days. Join for all or part.\*

**Earth Day Weekend — Spring Mountain Ranch State Park**  
April 23-24, 8 AM to dusk. Volunteers needed.\*

**Summerlin Earthfaire – Summerlin Centre Community Park**  
April 23, 2005, 10 AM to 3 PM. Volunteers needed.\*

\* Call Susan Potts at (702) 650-6542 or email Susan@fnw.lvcoxmail.com for details, to volunteer and to sign up for the hike or trip.

## BLM Wilderness Planning

Once Congress designates wilderness areas, the land management agencies write plans to manage them. Of course, management has to follow the Wilderness Act, but management of lands can differ depending on the kinds of use and resources.

Friends of Nevada Wilderness participates in every plan to ensure your wilderness areas are protected. For more information, call us at (775) 324-7667.

◆ A 45-day comment period is underway for the So. McCullough Mountains and Wee Thump wilderness areas in Clark County. View these draft plans online at

<http://www.nv.blm.gov/vegas/WAs/index.htm>  
or call James Sippel at the BLM in Las Vegas at (702) 515-5131.

### Why we Treasure our Members

Because you're our best ambassadors, and because you care deeply about protecting Nevada's wild places. Your enthusiasm and sincerity speak more effectively than any article or lecture. Please help protect wild Nevada by sharing with people you know why you support wilderness.

## I want to join Friends of Nevada Wilderness

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (eve) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ \$500 or more Benefactor      \_\_\_\_ \$50 - \$99 Friend

\_\_\_\_ \$250 - \$499 Patron      \_\_\_\_ \$25 - \$49 Supporter

\_\_\_\_ \$100 - \$249 Superfriend      \_\_\_\_ \$15 - \$24 Starter

Payment by:  check       charge      *Visa or Mastercard only*

Card no. \_\_\_\_\_ exp.date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ *I want to help! Please contact me, I am interested in:*

Letter Writing     Tabling     Outings     Other

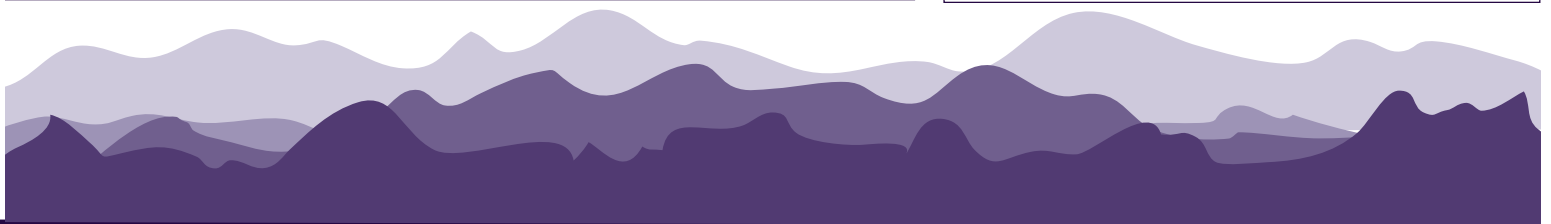
Mail to: Friends of Nevada Wilderness, PO Box 9754, Reno, NV 89507

## Leave a legacy of wilderness

**By bequeathing a memorial gift to Friends of Nevada Wilderness, you will help ensure that Friends can protect wild places in Nevada into the future.**

**Your bequest, whether large or small, helps Friends weather economic ups and downs and is one of the best gifts you can leave to future generations, an enduring legacy of wilderness.**

**Please consider making a bequest or memorial gift to Friends of Nevada Wilderness. Our lawyers are available for free to help you set up your memorial gift. For information, call Shaaron Netherton at (775) 324-7667.**



## Wild Winter Windings

# Wilderness Hero Recognized

Friends of Nevada Wilderness celebrated the designation of new wilderness areas in Lincoln County, as well as the anniversaries of past wilderness designations in Nevada, with two special events this winter — our Wild Winter Windings in Reno and Las Vegas.

At both events, staff, board directors, members, and friends enjoyed excellent slide show presentations by Brian Beffort, as well as raffles, good food, and great conversation. Wild Oats generously donated food for tasty buffets. Patagonia, Wild Oats, and Friends donated raffle prizes.

In Las Vegas, one of our marvelous volunteers received some of the recognition she so richly deserves. Nancy Hall, guardian angel of many wild places in southern Nevada, received her *Wilderness Hero Award* from the Campaign for America's Wilderness. Senators Harry Reid and John Ensign also acknowledged her dedication with certificates of appreciation. Sara Mills, of Senator Reid's Las Vegas office, presented Nancy with the certificates and congratulated her for helping protect the new Mormon Mountain Wilderness.

We would like to send out a big Thank You(!) to all who joined us for these events and helped make them special. Both were wonderful opportunities for the staff, board members and members to celebrate wild Nevada!



*Nancy Hall (right) enjoys her Wilderness Hero Award with Susan Potts, Friends' Southern Nevada Conservation Director.*

Find out how inside



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