

Call of the WILD

FRIENDS OF NEVADA WILDERNESS

SUMMER 2003

Eastward ho!

Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for east Nevada now available

By Brian Beffort and Shaaron Netherton

Barely six months after the designation of 18 new Wilderness Areas in and around Las Vegas, Friends of Nevada Wilderness and the Nevada Wilderness Coalition have released the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Eastern Nevada.

Nominating almost 50 areas and more than 3 million acres of public land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USF&WS) for Wilderness designation in White Pine and Lincoln counties, the Proposal comes as Nevada Senators Harry Reid, John Ensign and Congressman Jim Gibbons begin work on a lands bill for the region.

"I'm excited to be working on areas in eastern Nevada," said Executive Director Shaaron Netherton, who lived for many years in Ely, Nevada. "The region is home to some of the wildest, most rugged and most beautiful landscapes in Nevada, and protecting these areas as Wilderness will provide both recreational opportunity and quality wildlife habitat for generations to come.

"Unlike so many other places in the United States, Nevada still has some large tracts of land that remain relatively unmarred by human impacts," she said. "We encourage Congress to take this opportunity to protect some of our country's last wild lands before their natural character is destroyed by human activity."

The Proposal includes recommendations for

16 BLM Wilderness Study Areas, several USFS roadless areas and numerous citizen-proposed areas. In total, they stretch from the arid slopes and rugged canyons of the Mojave Desert to the high peaks and pine forests of mountain ranges around Ely.

Among the crown jewels of the proposal are the Delamar Mountains, Mormon Mountains, Clover Mountains and Meadow Valley Mountains Wilderness Study Areas in southern Lincoln County.

Another favorite area is the large USFS roadless area in the Schell Creek Range east of Ely. With over 100,000 acres of cloud-kissed peaks, steep canyons and aspen forests, this majestic mountain range faces increasing incur-

sions by off-highway vehicles. Wilderness designation offers the best protection for this still-wild mountain range before it's torn up by off-road vehicles.

The Proposal also includes additions to the Currant Mountain, Quinn Canyon and Grant Range Wilderness areas, as well as proposed Wilderness on Highland Ridge, south of Great Basin National Park in the Snake Range.

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FRIENDS OF



NEVADA
WILDERNESS

The 2004 Wild Nevada Calendar is coming!

Celebrating newly designated Wilderness Areas in Nevada, as well as lands still awaiting protection, this calendar will bring the beauty of wild Nevada to your home and office. Order before Labor Day and get 10% off. Order yours today! Call 775-324-7667



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

It has been a spring of ups and downs for Wilderness with positive happenings on the local front and appalling actions on the national scene.

Friends of Nevada Wilderness, along with several other conservation groups around the country, has initiated legal action to fight the Bush administration's attack on BLM's potential Wilderness areas. In a sneaky, behind-the-scenes legal maneuver, Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton has gutted the ability of the BLM to inventory and protect potential Wilderness areas. Nevada, with 47 million acres of BLM-managed public land, will be hard hit by this action.

The Eastern Nevada Wilderness Campaign is in full swing, and we are delighted to welcome on board Pam White, our new rural Wilderness organizer in Ely, Nevada. Find out more about Pam in this issue of the newsletter. It still looks like we may see a draft public lands bill for

eastern Nevada by this fall. We'll keep our website updated with breaking news.

We are sadly saying farewell to our staff members Dino Fulgencio and Richard Knox. They both brought tons of energy and ideas as well as diverse backgrounds and experience to Friends

of Nevada Wilderness' efforts to protect wilderness, and we will sorely miss them.

Friends of Nevada Wilderness volunteers have shoveled a lot of dirt and planted a lot of sagebrush this season with restoration efforts in the Wilderness areas in the Black Rock Desert region and in the Buffalo Hills WSA. A huge thanks to all the volunteers that make restoration such a success.

This summer is the time to make a difference for eastern Nevada. Please take the time to write letters to the Nevada Congressional delegation and let them know you support the Citizens' Eastern Nevada Wilderness Proposal.

The Eastern Nevada campaign is in full swing.

Contact your elected representatives

Senator Harry Reid
333 Las Vegas Blvd., S.
Suite 8016

Las Vegas, NV 89101
(702) 388-5020 phone
(702) 388-5030 FAX

400 S. Virginia St., Ste 702
Reno, NV 89501
(775) 686-5750 phone
(775) 686-5757 FAX

Senator John Ensign
333 Las Vegas Blvd. S.
Suite 58203

Las Vegas, NV 89101
(702) 388-6605 phone
(702) 388-6501 FAX

400 S. Virginia St., Ste 738
Reno, NV 89501
(775) 686-5770 phone
(775) 686-5729 FAX

Representative Jim Gibbons
400 S. Virginia Street
Suite 502

Reno, NV 89501
(775) 686-5760 phone
(775) 686-5711 FAX



Take a hike:

Schell Creek Range: jewel of the east

by Ron Hunter, Chairman of Friends of Nevada Wilderness Board of Directors

Looking for adventure? Something off the beaten track with views to die for? Then visit the Schell Creek Range in eastern Nevada. Try climbing South Schell Peak from the Berry Creek drainage. This U.S. Forest Service area is part of the Nevada Wilderness Coalition Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Eastern Nevada. You'll find few people, fewer trails and an unparalleled landscape.

The hike gains about 3,500 feet in three miles; not for the faint of heart, but the views from the top are worth it. To the east is the Mt. Moriah Wilderness, to the south-east is Great Basin National Park, and to the north is Taft Peak (11,705ft). On the way up are conifer species such as Douglas fir and white pine, sub-alpine fir to ponderosa and limber pine. You'll also see quaking aspen with Basque tree carvings. You might run into elk, deer, golden eagles, mountain bluebirds, American dippers, and blue grouse. Summer is a great time to visit the Schell Creek Range.

Directions: From Ely Nevada on Highway 93 head north thru McGill to the turnoff to Duck Creek Basin (about 5 miles north of McGill). Fol-

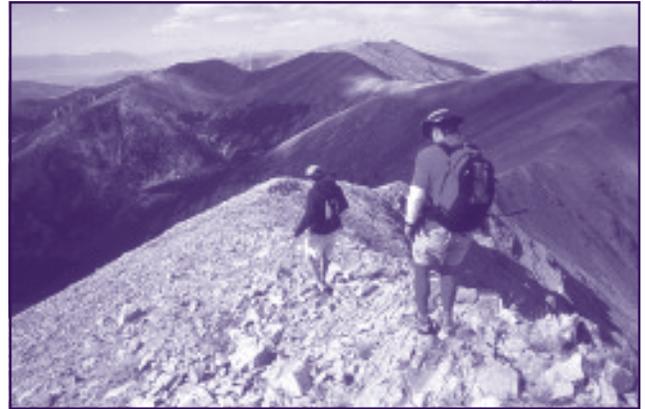
low the paved road about 10 miles and watch for the sign to the Forest Service Berry Creek Camp-ground. The gravel road to the campground is about 5 miles. This campground has tables and pit toilets and makes a great base camp. From the Berry Creek Camp-ground (8,200 ft), hike up the North Fork of Berry Creek, which opens into a huge bowl below South Schell Peak. Follow the "path of least resistance" to the summit of South Schell Peak (11,735), the last 500 feet being a rather knarly scree slope. No trail here, so take a map, compass, a sturdy pair of shoes, and plenty of water.

You'll find few people, fewer trails and an unparalleled landscape.

This spectacular area is at the heart of the Nevada Wilderness Coalition's Wilderness Proposal for eastern Nevada. The approach to this area, in the Duck Creek Basin, has been hammered by off road vehicles in the last decade. Though the citizen-proposed area was administratively protected under the Clinton Administration Roadless Rule, the Bush Administration's relentless assault on roadless areas continues. The only way to see this area's wildland and wildlife values permanently protected is to designate the area as Wilderness. With the eastern Nevada public lands process underway, now is the time to visit, write letters, and call elected officials to tell them this area needs the protection afforded by Wilderness designation.



Photos: (top) Hikers trek the spine of the range. (middle) Hikers gather at the summit. (bottom) A forested ecosystem thrives on high. Photos by Ron Hunter





Eastern Nevada campaign kick-off



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, over-grazing, 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.

(continued from page 1)

“The Proposal shows that there’s an abundance of Wilderness-quality land in Nevada,” said Kevin Mack, associate director of the Nevada Wilderness Project, who oversees mapping and inventory for the Nevada Wilderness Coalition. “We’re also finding that many of these areas were left out by the (land management) agencies in their original inventories.”

Nevada’s Congressional delegation will spend the summer drafting a lands bill for Eastern Nevada, which might be introduced to Congress as early as September.

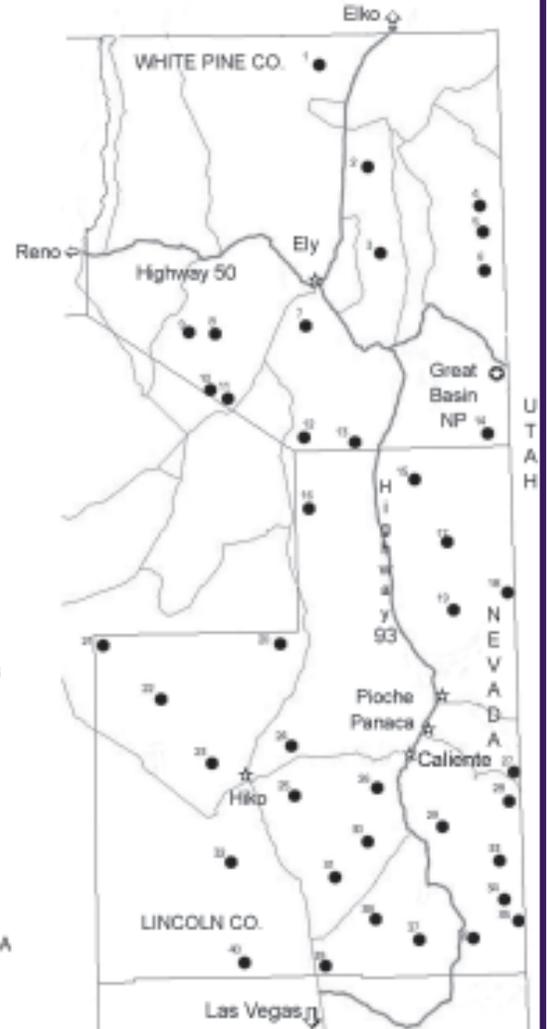
We expect the bill to resemble the Clark County bill in how it legislates Wilderness designation as well as other public lands conveyances, and by the way it seeks input from stakeholders representing diverse interests. Members of the Nevada Wilderness Coalition will spend the summer months generating support for the Proposal in the region.



Please help win wilderness protection for wild lands in Eastern Nevada. Contact your Senators and Congressman to express your support. If you can, tell about particular areas you’ve visited. Officials will appreciate your comments. Your voice counts when you ask elected officials to protect our precious public lands—your lands!
See page 2 for contact info.

Proposed Wilderness in Eastern Nevada

1. Goshute Canyon WSA
2. North Schell Creeks
3. South Schell Creeks
4. Government Peak
5. Marble Canyon WSA
6. Mt. Moriah Addition
7. Ward Mountain
8. Shellback-Circle Wash Complex
9. White Pine Complex
10. Curnant Mt. Additions
11. Red Mountain
12. South Egan WSA
13. Mt. Grafton WSA
14. Highland Ridge
15. Fortification Range WSA
16. Far South Egan WSA
17. Table Mountain WSA
18. White Rock WSA
19. Parsnip Peak WSA
20. Weepah Spring WSA
21. Guinn Canyon Complex
22. Worthington Mts. WSA
23. Mt. Irish Complex
24. North Pahros
25. South Pahros WSA
26. Chokacherry Canyon
27. Tunnel Springs WSA
28. Burmt Canyon-Doc's Pass Complex
29. Clover Mts. WSA
30. North Delamars
31. Delamar Mts. WSA
32. Pahrnagat Range
33. Lime Mountain
34. Tule Desert-Sand Hollow Wash Complex
35. Terry Benches
36. East Mormon Mts.
37. Mormon Mts. WSA
38. Meadow Valley Wash WSA
39. Coyote Springs WSA
40. Desert NWR



Enjoy early order discounts on the 2004 Wild Nevada Calendar

Order before Labor Day and get 10% off your order. Price:
1- 4 calendars \$12.00 each
5- 9 calendars \$11.00 each
10-24 calendars \$10.00 each
100 or more \$ 7.00 each
These make great holiday gifts.

Order yours today! Call 775-324-7667



Rewilding Nevada—one road at a time

By Brian Beffort

Nevada Wilderness areas have become wilder and more beautiful since last fall, when the Friends of Nevada Wilderness facilitated an agreement between the Nevada Conservation Corps / Great Basin Institute and the Bureau of Land Management to conduct wilderness restoration in Nevada.

Since then, NCC crews (anywhere from eight to 11 people in size) have conducted three week-long tours in Wilderness Areas in and around the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon National Conservation Area. While in the field, the crews have restored over 50 redundant or trespass vehicle routes in wilderness.

Friends of Nevada Wilderness encouraged members and other interested volunteers to join the NCC crews for weekends that combine rewarding work, exciting exploration and fun campouts under the stars.

Of course, the work isn't always as efficient as expected. In early May, 10 volunteers joined an

Support Nevada's Wilderness with pick & shovel, sweat & toil. It's fun!

NCC crew for work on the boundary between the North and South Jackson Mountains Wilderness areas, planning to decommission several vehicle trespass routes. The rain had other ideas, however, and drenched the weekend with a deluge reminiscent of coastal Oregon or Washington. It was too muddy to work much, and several of the wiser volunteers headed for home and warm, dry beds before the sun broke out late Saturday afternoon. Even with the rain, or perhaps because of it, the country was beautiful and the weekend exciting. Now we just have to get back out there to finish the work.

NCC crews aren't the only ones getting out and restoring Wilderness-quality lands in Nevada. On the weekend of May 17-19 volunteers from the Sierra Club and Friends of Nevada Wilderness joined the Eagle Lake Field Office of the BLM for a restoration work party in the Buffalo Hills Wilderness Study Area near the Smoke Creek Desert. Free of rain, the volunteers successfully decommissioned several vehicle trespass routes, all the while enjoying bountiful wildflowers and fine spring weather.

now you see it ...



... now you don't



Work trip in the South Jackson Wilderness decommissions a vehicle trespass route.

National Public Lands Day(s)

September 20, 2003, Ely

Sept. 27, 2003, Black Rock Desert

Each year on National Public Lands Day, land management agencies and volunteers celebrate our commitment to our public lands with a day of work to clean up and restore our beautiful public lands.

◆ Ely activities will take place in the Timber Creek Campground in the Schell Creek Range. A variety of work is planned, along with picnic fun. Call (800) 865-8337 to get involved.

◆ Black Rock Desert activities will include restoration and clean up, and will include a BBQ and campout on the playa. Call (775) 324-7667 to find out more.

Mark the dates in your calendar, and get ready to have fun giving back to your public lands!

Several more wilderness restoration work parties are scheduled for the Black Rock Desert this summer. If you are interested in joining one of them, call Brian at (775) 0324-7667. The restoration season will culminate with National Public Lands Day on September 27. *Don't miss it!*

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.



The nuts & bolts work of wilderness

If you've ever wondered, "Just what does Friends of Nevada Wilderness do?" Here is a breakdown of some of our activities in 2003:

Nevada State Legislature Outreach

Although Wilderness designation and management are federal issues, issues often arise at the state level that might affect Nevada's wildlands.

❖ We have provided information packets and testimony for the Nevada Legislature Senate and Assembly committees on Natural Resources, including testimony on, and amendments to, SJR 3, SJR 4, and SCR 7. All of these resolutions dealt with wilderness in Nevada and will be given to Nevada's Federal Congressional Delegation. We were able to improve the language to include some positive statements about Wilderness.

Field Work

❖ Jeremy and Brian have spent long days out in Lincoln County and in the Ely area, conducting inventories and photo documentation of areas in our Eastern Nevada Wilderness Proposal.

Wilderness Land Acquisition

❖ We have worked on several proposed land acquisitions through the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act. These include the Home Camp properties in and around the Wall Canyon WSA, a parcel to accommodate a trailhead to Hunter Creek and the Mount Rose Wilderness, inholdings within the Buffalo Hills WSA, plus inholdings within the East Humboldt Wilderness and the Arcularius property near the Alta Toquima Wilderness.

Wilderness Restoration

❖ We rallied volunteers to help the BLM and Nevada Conservation Corps restore native habitat in the Buffalo Hills WSA and the North and South Jackson Mountains Wilderness Areas.

Public Education

❖ We produced the Eastern NV Wilderness Campaign brochure and associated displays for educational outreach events.

❖ We have begun production of the 2004 Wild Nevada Calendar (order early on the website and save \$\$\$). Go to www.nevadawilderness.org.

❖ Brian and Jeremy have given numerous slide shows to community organizations and libraries to share our success with Clark County Wilderness

designation and our vision for Eastern Nevada Wilderness.

Federal Policy

❖ We have been involved in strategy sessions with conservation groups from around the country to counteract the federal administration's efforts to undermine wilderness protection.

BLM and Forest Service Oversight

❖ We have worked with a number of Nevada BLM districts on issues affecting wilderness and potential wilderness, including fire planning, noxious weeds, crashed planes, grazing, fences, etc.

❖ We are working with the federal agencies in Las Vegas to develop an Interagency Wilderness Management Proposal.

❖ We have attended scoping meetings on the Ely District Resource Management Plan and submitted comments on potential wilderness in eastern Nevada.

❖ We have attended many, many meetings to improve the management plan for the Black Rock-High Rock National Conservation Area / Wilderness Plan / EIS.

❖ We have attended meetings and commented on the USFS Jarbidge Environmental Impact Statement road plan near the Jarbidge Wilderness.

❖ We have worked with other groups to monitor snowmobile use and trespass into the Mt. Rose Wilderness.

We worked with a number of Nevada BLM districts on issues affecting wilderness and potential wilderness.

Notes from the field . . .

by Jeremy Garncaz

In the middle of May, I spent several days mapping the Becky Peak region in the northern portion of the Schell Creek Range located northeast of Ely. The weather cooperated and the mapping trip was a success.

From sunrise to sunset, we were out on the ground, driving or hiking and documenting every vehicle route in the region. The mapping process is labor intensive and involves taking detailed notes of the area, including wildlife observed and special natural or man-made features in the area.

The Becky Peak region is spectacular and currently has no level of protection. I've encountered pronghorn antelope, elk, deer, wild horses, and a golden eagle while hiking the hills.



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



New staff in eastern Nevada

Pamela White recently joined the Friends of Nevada Wilderness staff as the Eastern Nevada Wilderness organizer. She has been living in Ely for almost three years and said she feels both surprised and welcomed by White Pine County and all that rural Nevada has to offer. "I am really looking forward to expressing my passion for protecting wilderness to the citizens of Lincoln and White Pine Counties," she said.

Pam spent 10 years living the big city life. She went to Roosevelt University in Chicago, Illinois, where she earned a business degree in economics. Then she began climbing the corporate ladder.

"All I can say is climbing the corporate ladder gave me no peace, and these days I stick to the peaceful climb up a mountain."

Pam is a Wyoming native and was raised a mountain kid. She says her parents instilled in her an undying passion and understanding of the balance of nature and maintaining one's livelihood.

"I started camping before I can remember," she recalls, "and my first backpacking trip was the summer I turned six."

Pam understands that rural communities need to use the land to fare well economically, but

stressed that in order to use the land it must be managed and protected.

"There comes a time when certain areas just need the protection of wilderness designation to ensure that there is nature left to preserve cultural resources, healthy watersheds, wildlife habitat and to provide recreation and a sense of solitude," she said.

Pam's job is to get out and talk to folks about wilderness. She works closely with the staff of the BLM and USFS, ranchers, landowners, recreationists and others who use our public lands in Nevada. She encourages wilderness supporters to get involved and she listens to people who have concerns about wilderness.

"We're here to help solve problems if we can," said Pam. "Sometimes really trying to understand people's issues with wilderness can lead to creative solutions."



Northern Nevada outreach activity tells people the dramatic tale of wilderness

by Pat Patera

Hundreds of people in the Reno area gained a new awareness of wilderness at a wide array of outreach events this past year.

Earth Day Festival – Of the 8,000 folks who attended this April 26 festival at Idlewild Park, hundreds cruised by the Friends of Nevada Wilderness booth to view the colorful photo display, pick up a brochure, and chat with staff members about the value of wilderness to all.

Forever Wild Concert – Walkin' Jim Stoltz sings rollicking trail songs and soulful ballads that go straight to the heart. Surely no one could have left this benefit concert unchanged! This event brought out 300 folks and inspired 25 newly-minted activists to join Friends of Nevada Wilderness after the show.

Slide Shows – Civic, social and business groups in the Reno, Sparks and Carson City areas

were treated to this informative and entertaining talk about wilderness. Presented at 30 meetings to folks of all ages and interests, this outreach work also attracted about 100 new member activists.

These public outreach events are an integral part of attaining wilderness protection for our public lands – because it is the public who owns these lands; it is the public who writes the letters to elected representatives and to local media; it is the public who makes their voices heard about the issues they care about. And it is from the general public that Friends of Nevada Wilderness draws those special people who care about wilderness. Those people, like you, become our members.

We couldn't do it without you!

If you want to suggest meetings or events at which a wilderness show should be presented, call (775) 324-7667.

Las Vegas Volunteer

Night

Every first Thursday 4-8 pm at Moose McGillicuddy's Happy Hour
For more information, call 702-650-6542

Reno area Volunteer

Night

Raise a glass to Wilderness!
Every first Wednesday 5:30 to 7 pm at Silver Peak Brewery 124 Wonder (corner Holcomb)
For more information, call 775-324-7667