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Transportation Update more on page 9

Legacy Settlement

by Marc Heileson, Southwest Representative

Editor's Note: Sierra Club leaders negotiated in good faith with both the governor and legislative leaders to reach the agreement described in the following article. Legislative approval is necessary because the agreement involves appropriations in excess of \$1 million; however, as this issue went to press, the Utah House and Senate still had not met in interim session to give formal approval to the agreement. We expect that hurdle might come in early November.

In September, a win-win solution was finally reached in the Legacy Highway campaign. An agreement in principle was signed between the State of Utah and the Sierra Club with our partners Utahns for Better Transportation (UBT) to end the litigation on the Legacy project. This win-win arrangement will provide an innovative and balanced transportation system, greatly protect the wetland ecosystem of the Great Salt Lake, and preserve Utah's high quality of life for future generations. We are also very proud this agreement incorporates many of the concepts of the Citizens Smart Growth Alternative that we presented to the agencies earlier this year.

The agreement can be summarized in three major areas, project design, wetland mitigation, and increases to mass transit.

PROJECT DESIGN

Despite former Governor Mike Leavitt's re-naming the Legacy Highway the Legacy Parkway, it was still the same massive, high-speed freeway. Now, the project will be a true parkway resembling parkways common in the eastern United States. It will be unlike anything built in Utah. The parkway will have a narrower footprint, slower posted speed limits along with design features to calm traffic speeds, and prohibit the use of trucks.

We hope this contemporary parkway design will transform our status quo mentality of what a freeway must be. It will also help protect the wetlands and the millions of birds that depend on the Great Salt Lake. Noise impacts will be greatly reduced with the removal of trucks and with the lowered speeds. In addition, UDOT will be using rubberized, quiet-asphalt to further absorb vehicle sound. The

narrower footprint will allow the parkway to avoid wetlands that would have been destroyed under the earlier proposal, and UDOT has committed to this effort.

WETLAND MITIGATION

The wetlands of the Great Salt Lake are one of the most important wetland ecosystems on earth. They provide crucial staging and breeding habitats for millions of shorebirds and waterfowl along with hundreds of American bald eagles. The Great Salt Lake has also been designated a Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network site (WHSRN) by governments ranging from Argentina to Canada. The Legacy agreement is a massive step towards protecting the lake's ecosystem. In addition to the measures taken with noise and footprint impacts, the project will provide a complete nature preserve to prevent encroaching development into the wetlands. It is a drastic change to the previous wetland mitigation plan, for the preserve was only composed of north and south sections. The middle, however, was horrifically bisected by a 125-acre swath slated for large commercial store development west of the freeway. It was to be built around the planned Legacy Highway - 500 South Interchange in West Bountiful. Consequently, this development was travel modeled showing it would generate over 50,000 new vehicle trips a day into the heart of the wetlands. The Legacy agreement commits the state to purchasing all 125 acres, adding them to the Legacy Nature Preserve and making a continuous buffer for the lake and wetlands.

INCREASED MASS TRANSIT

Our rallying cry during the Legacy High-



Governor Jon Huntsman Jr and Utah Chapter Vice-chair Brad Yates sign the Legacy Settlement.

way campaign has been Transit First! The idea being, decades of road building have fueled the rapid growth of automobile-dependant sprawl. By shifting to a transit first approach, development patterns will be facilitated around more transportation choices for citizens and help reduce the rate of how far and often people must drive their cars.

When the Sierra Club began the Legacy Highway campaign in 1997, the idea of TRAX light-rail had few supporters and many doubters. Commuter rail was also far off any radar screen and the state seemed in a hurry to become the next Los Angeles. How far have we come! TRAX is now a tremendous success and is expanding. Ground has been broken for commuter rail to travel north of Ogden and may be completed as soon as December 2007.

With this Legacy agreement, the final transit link for Davis County could be on its way. The state has agreed to pay 2.5 million dollars to UTA to begin forthwith an Environmental Impact Statement for TRAX light-rail or bus rapid transit (light rail on tires) from Salt Lake City to Farmington. This kind of system would directly connect southern Davis County commu-

nities into the TRAX network completing the entire transit package.

Although everyone reading this article will benefit from the agreement, the greatest winners of all will be future generations who will enjoy a more balanced transportation system that emphasizes more choices, protecting the environment, and preserving quality of life. Thanks to all of the hundreds of volunteers who provided invaluable service to this effort. So many of you have written letters, attended public hearing and rallies, made phone calls, and spoken to your neighbors. It was the true fuel of this campaign. This outstanding victory goes to all of you! Also, many thanks to our wonderful partners Utahns for Better Transportation and the incredible legal team that added such great strength to our Legacy Campaign. A special mention to volunteers Nina Dougherty and Robert Adler whose foresight and strategic brilliance made the difference in this outcome.

The snowball of smart growth and balanced transportation has really begun to roll. With more volunteers from the Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club backing this effort, it will only get bigger and stronger.

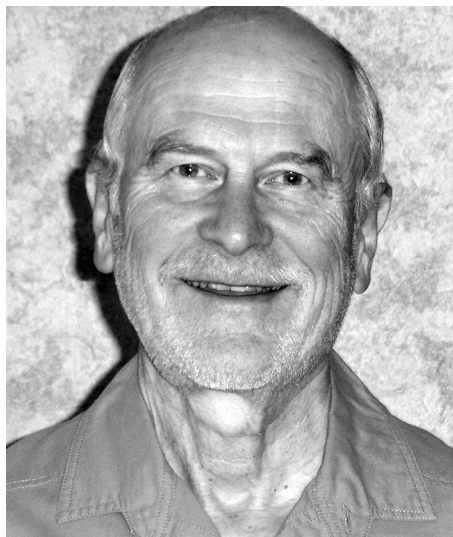
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For those not familiar with the area, the Deeps (as they are affectionately known) are an oasis of snowcapped peaks, perennial streams, and lush vegetation surrounded by salt flats and desert just inside the Nevada line.

Trailhead Combat Zone

by Al Herring, Chapter Chair

I'm pissed! These RS 2477 claims being made by the State of Utah are getting personal.

My wife and I discovered the Deep Creek Mountains in far western Utah soon after moving here eight years ago. We were so intrigued by the country that we volunteered to become Sierra Club adopters for the Wilderness Study Area (WSA) that protects the heart of the range.

For those not familiar with the area, the Deeps (as they are affectionately known) are an oasis of snowcapped peaks, perennial streams, and lush vegetation surrounded by salt flats and desert just inside the Nevada line. One of our favorite entries into the WSA is Granite Creek Canyon on the east side of the range. Rock formations invite exploration; water is available year round; wildlife is abundant; and the trail up to the pass offers spectacular views and a convenient approach to Mt. Ibapah. Best of all, there has been no recent livestock grazing in the area. It is everything that a true wilderness should be.

It is also a combat zone. A road was cherry stemmed—excluded from the WSA—up the canyon for about a mile when it was first established. The end of this legal road has become a point of serious contention between off-highway vehicle (OHV) drivers who want to illegally play in the canyon and those who want to protect the wilderness.

A short history of our experiences and observations will give you the flavor of battles being waged at this one trailhead:

- June, 2001. Mary and I lead a Sierra Club service outing to the Deeps to check the condition of signs and pick up trash. There is nothing up the Granite Creek route to show the WSA boundary. There had been a sign, but Mary and her hiking companion find it had been torn out and pitched into the brush. I write to the BLM to share our observations and recommendations.
- October, 2002. We are pleasantly surprised to find that a rail fence has been
- July, 2003. The fence is still up and the BLM has replaced the vandalized signs. In addition, they have posted closure signs along the side routes and added announcements that a \$250 reward will be paid "For information leading to the identification of any person or persons violating off road vehicle use restrictions, or damaging BLM signs, in this County." The illegal double track behind the fence is re-vegetating nicely.
- Memorial Day Weekend, 2004. We find that all the fence posts have been chain sawed off flush with the ground! There is not a fragment of the fence or the signs anywhere to be found. Everything is gone. Poof.
- October, 2004. In response to concerns expressed by Rob Jones (another Sierra Club member) and me, the BLM posts 14 employees from the Fillmore and State offices at strategic locations on the main routes into the WSA in order to educate hunters and enforce road closures during opening weekend of the general deer hunting season. (I again thank the BLM for their constructive effort.)
- Fourth of July Weekend, 2005. There is still no fence at the Granite Creek

Canyon trailhead, but the BLM has installed numerous new Carsonite signs (those bendable things) saying that the area beyond is closed to OHVs. Some have been intentionally driven over.

As we carry our backpacks up the trail we find that all the downed timber from the big storm of October, 2002, has been chain sawed out. There is no longer any serious obstacle to OHVs for the next few miles. The next day we climb to the pass with our daughter and one grandson. Another grandson is not feeling well so he stays at our camp about two miles inside the WSA. He is there when seven OHVs roar into our site. They are all driven by adults. Some of the rigs carry Utah plates, some Nevada.

So it goes at this trailhead combat zone. And now my state government has announced (on Aug. 25) that they are using my tax money to sue the BLM to open this route (and two others) deeper into the Deep Creek Mountains WSA, thereby rewarding illegal activity by making it legal. This is one of the reasons I'm pissed.

The other is that the Deep Creek Mountains WSA is a special place, a true wilderness sanctuary that deserves ongoing protection from OHV invasion. And the Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club is taking steps to do just that. I am proud to say that our Executive Committee recently authorized chapter participation as an intervener on behalf of the BLM in an effort to keep these bogus roads closed.

The press release from the Utah Attorney General's office announcing the suit stated that the Granite Creek Canyon route "has been used by ranchers, sheep herders, prospectors and campers since the 1880s." That is probably true, but these people were obviously traveling by foot or on horseback. And this is how it should remain.

The Deep Creek Mountains WSA is a Utah gem. The only way to really appreciate it is to explore it on foot or horseback. I will be happy to serve as guide.

A vandalized sign at Deep Creek Mountain. The fence was destroyed shortly after this photo was taken.



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Deflecting Responsibility for Disaster

by Mark Clemens

The Hurricane Katrina disaster struck New Orleans hard, and the damage from flooding was exacerbated by accelerated wetlands loss and failure to strengthen levees to withstand Category 5 hurricanes. But rather than resolving to solve these problems to protect Gulf Coast residents, the Bush Administration tried to pin the blame on environmentalists.

The Jackson, Mississippi, *Clarion-Ledger* reported that in the days following the hurricane, the US Justice Department sent out an e-mail to a number of US attorney's offices, "Has your district defended any cases on behalf of the (U.S.) Army Corps of Engineers against claims brought by environmental groups seeking to block or otherwise impede the Corps work on the levees protecting New Orleans? If so, please describe the case and the outcome of the litigation."

The *Clarion-Ledger* speculated that the Justice Department followed the lead of a fallacious story run in the September 8th issue of the *National Review* attack-

ing the Sierra Club for opposing two levee projects. One of these projects was an unworkable boondoggle opposed by a wide spectrum of local organizations around New Orleans, and the other was over a hundred miles away from New Orleans. The construction proposed in the latter project would not have helped any of the people flooded by Katrina.

In both cases, conservation groups simply asked government agencies to look before leaping into projects that would have had major impacts on people and the natural systems on which they depend and to give local communities what our democracy requires: a say in projects coming out of Washington. That isn't just common sense; that's also the law.

Here's what you need to know about the specific cases that have been mentioned.

SAVE OUR WETLANDS V. RUSH—1977

In 1977, the Army Corps of Engineers proposed project would have built a 25-

mile long barrier and gate system from the Mississippi border to the Mississippi River. As designed the project would have choked off water exchange into Lake Pontchartrain, dooming an incredibly productive fishery. Communities around the lake and local fisherman opposed the project because of its massive potential impact on the economy and environment. In addition, blockading Lake Pontchartrain would have left New Orleans unable to pump out water through the lake in the event of a flood from the Mississippi River or heavy rains from a tropical storm. In the end, that is why local groups advocated for building higher and stronger levees immediately around New Orleans as a simpler and safer alternative to the corps' plan.

After the Army Corps of Engineers refused to evaluate the impacts of its proposed project and consider ways to reduce them, Save Our Wetlands filed suit and secured an injunction from U.S. District Judge Charles Schwartz, Jr., who concluded that the region "would be irreparably harmed" if the barrier project was allowed to continue and chastised the Army Corps of Engineers for a shoddy job. The judge required the corps to properly study its proposed massive new levee construction project before moving forward.

The corps has never did the work despite having nearly 30 years to do so.

BOTTOM LINE: There was widespread local opposition. This project risked replacing one major threat with another. A federal judge demanded that the Army Corps of Engineers provide more info. It never did and abandoned the project years later on its own.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER BASIN ALLIANCE, ET AL. V. H. MARTIN LANCASTER—1996

In the mid-1990's, the Army Corps of Engineers proposed raising hundreds of miles of levees 100 miles north of New Orleans in Louisiana, Arkansas, and Mississippi. Conservation groups and others did not oppose the idea of raising the levees, but they did have strong concerns about the fact that corps wanted to drain as much as 11,000 acres of bottomland hardwood wetlands, crucial to health and safety of the Lower Mississippi Basin, to supply the construction material for those levees.

And they weren't the only ones who had concerns: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service, Environmental Protection Agency and the Louisiana Legislature all urged the corps to look at how the proposed project would have impacted the area. It refused to do so. That led the Sierra Club, American Rivers, the National Wildlife Federation, Arkansas and Mississippi Wildlife Federations, and the Mississippi River Basin Alliance to take the corps to court. The case was soon settled, with the Corps of Engineers agreeing in 1997 to look at ways of minimizing the damage to the wetlands.

But other problems plagued the project. According to a 1997 *Baton Rouge Advocate* article, "Corps officials said it will take them 30 years to finish the levee work. That much time is required because funding is lacking for the projects—not because of the new environmental study, called an environmental impact statement."

BOTTOM LINE: The project was 100 miles away from flood area and wouldn't have made any difference with Katrina. Conservation groups never opposed raising the levees—just the destructive way in which the corps was going to do it. And it wasn't just conservation groups; even the legislature had concerns. The case was settled a year later but the corps never had the funding to move ahead on the project.

TIME FOR AN INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION

The man-made trends that have made New Orleans so vulnerable to storm surges—loss of marsh-building sediment through excessive channeling of the Mississippi River, wetlands loss from canal building and other causes, and dithering over the improvement of New Orleans' flood walls and levees—all pre-date the Bush Administration. However the Bush Administration either left these problems in place or actually exacerbated them. Then when the much advertised and predicted disaster came, they failed to mount a speedy or creditable response.

Now members of the Bush Administration are falling back on extreme ideology and name calling to avoid the heat arising from their failure to protect US citizens along the Gulf Coast. That's why it's so important to have an independent investigation of the disaster so we choose future policies that protect human life and the environment rather than making things worse.

Satellite image of a levee break on the east side of New Orleans at Surekote Road, August 31, 2005.



MATHESON JOINS UTAH REPUBLICANS IN VOTING FOR DANGEROUS BILL

by Lawson LeGate, Senior Southwest Representative

On September 29, Congress took the first step toward gutting the 30-year old Endangered Species Act, America's safety net for fish and wildlife at the edge of extinction, voting 229 to 193 for legislation drafted by House Resources Committee Chairman Richard Pombo. If it becomes law, the bill will eliminate the requirement for critical habitat for endangered species and make the government pay developers and polluters not to kill publicly owned fish and wildlife.

The landmark Endangered Species Act, signed into law three decades ago by President Nixon, has prevented 99 percent of all species ever placed under its care from becoming extinct and helped foster the return of wildlife such as the bald eagle.

The *Sierran* is sad to note that Utah's 2nd District Democratic Congressman Jim Matheson joined his Republican col-

The bill will make the government pay polluters not to kill publicly owned fish and wildlife.

leagues in voting for the Pombo bill. Members of the Sierra Club are especially concerned that this vote might signal a shift in Congressman Matheson's commitment to our nation's basic framework of landmark environmental laws.

In addition to establishing the insidious precedent that Americans have to be paid to comply with the law, the Pombo bill would suspend for five years the requirement that new pesticides not kill threatened or endangered species. Pesticides that slip in through the loophole would be permanently exempt from the act's scrutiny.



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SmartEnergyUpdate

Time For Utah To Take Action On Global Warming

by Tim Wagner

One would have had to be trapped in a southern Utah canyon the last two months not to hear of global warming. With the double whammy of hurricanes Katrina and Rita that wreaked havoc on the gulf coast, it now seems that everyone is talking about it.

It also seems that hardly a month goes by without the release of another study showing us that, yes indeed, global warming is real and IS happening now.

On September 22, the Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club, in conjunction with Salt Lake Mayor Rocky Anderson, Park City Mayor Dana Williams, Sevier Citizens for Clean Air and Water, and representatives from Snowbird and Alta ski resorts held a press conference at Salt Lake City's downtown library to announce the release of just one report.

Prepared by the Rocky Mountain Climate Organization and Clear the Air, *Less Snow, Less Water: Climate Disruption in the West* shows that, by looking at historical climate, temperature and precipitation data from four major river basins in the West, we are definitely the effects of climate change.

For example, data from 824 government snowpack-measurement sites with records from 1950 to 1997 show declining snowpack across the West. The Colorado River Basin, which includes approximately 50 percent of Utah, saw below average snowpack in 11 of the last 16 years.

The report also documents that the most recent five-year period has been the hottest over the last 110 years. Specifically, the Colorado River basin saw average temperatures rise by 2.1° F in that period.

So what do these trends mean in terms of global warming effects in the West?

- More heat, expected to be greater in winter than summer, and at higher elevations
- Smaller snowpacks as a result of more winter precipitation falling as rain versus snow and snow coming later in

winter season than before

- Earlier snowmelt, also as a result of warmer temperatures, will cause more flooding as snowmelt comes down quicker. This will also mean less water later in the summer when farmers and ranchers need it most.
- More evaporation from our rivers and reservoirs and drier soil
- More flooding, from early snowmelt, will force water managers to release larger volumes earlier in order to protect dams
- Less groundwater later in the summer season
- More water restrictions as a valuable resource becomes even more scarce
- Increased severity and frequency of droughts

Less Snow, Less Water is the first climate change study to look specifically at trends for the Colorado, Rio Grand, Columbia, and Missouri River basins. But again, it's one of many, many reports that support what scientists have been predicting for decades. Yet there are some who still question the validity of the phenomenon or who even debunk it outright as junk science, as Senator James Inhofe (R-OK) did on the Senate floor last year when he said that "global warming is the greatest hoax every perpetuated on the American people."

One should wonder what Senator Inhofe's response is to a report recently released by NASA that shows, through satellite imagery, that the polar ice cap has decreased in size by 30% since 1978.

With hordes of compelling science on global warming, it's difficult to understand why the issue is still being debated. Unless, one follows the money.

If your principle business is selling coal, natural gas, or oil to meet our insatiable appetite for energy, while at the same time your very product is on the wrong end of

a pointed finger of blame for global warming, it is probably in your financial interest to see that the issue of global warming remains a debate as long as possible.

Through a well-crafted strategy and immense sums of money from the fossil fuel industries, conservative think tanks such as the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) have successfully implemented a disinformation campaign through industry-sponsored science, pseudo-journalism, and commentary to cast doubt on the issue, and to convince the American public that global warming is only a theory—one open for debate, but not something really occurring.

The oil giant ExxonMobil flexed its muscle on the issue by throwing in excess of \$8 million at such organizations between 2000 and 2003. And what are they getting for their money? Here is just a small example.

- **Heritage Foundation:** "For the next several decades, fossil fuel use is key to improving the human condition."
- **AEI:** "Not only has global warming theory all but evaporated, but the Earth—and particularly the United States—are in far better shape than eco-activists would have us believe."
- **American Legislative Exchange Council:** "...global warming could actually save lives."
- **Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise:** Called the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (one of the premier and most highly regarded scientific studies on global warming's effects to the Arctic) "...as phony as a three-dollar bill."

But like the polar ice cap, the group of global warming naysayers is also shrinking. For Wall Street is now taking notice, with recent reports that big-time investment firms such as Goldman Sachs Group Inc. and JPMorgan Chase & Co. are now warning their clients of financial risks from climate change.

So what does all of this have to do with our source of electricity? Plenty. Combusting coal is our largest source of electricity and also the largest single emitter of carbon dioxide (CO₂), even more than the automobile. And of course, CO₂ is the largest component of greenhouse gases, the principle cause of global warming.

With 1,100 coal fired power plants in operation and the industry proposing over 100 more across the U.S., four right here in Utah, one can see that many of our leaders continue to bury their heads in the sand on the issue.

We deserve better and therefore should demand it. I don't want my child's generation having to deal with the consequences of our inaction due to the quest by a few for short-term profits. With that said, I am making a public challenge to all of Utah's local and state leaders, including regulators, to come up with a plan that produces a net DECREASE in our state's CO₂ emissions by the year 2010, over what it is today. It's simply the right thing to do.

CALIFORNIA TAKES GIANT LEAP IN REDUCING GREENHOUSE GAS

by Tim Wagner, Utah Smart Energy Campaign

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) adopted a resolution on October 6th that specifies a maximum standard for greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) when California purchases electrical power from investor-owned utilities (IOU). The new standard will be no higher than GHG emission levels from "state-of-the-art combined cycle natural gas turbines," and will apply to all future power purchases from coal-fired power plants.

Combined cycle natural gas power plants are some of the cleanest burning and lowest CO₂ emitting facilities to be developed to date, showing an average 55% reduction of CO₂ over conventional coal-fired generation.

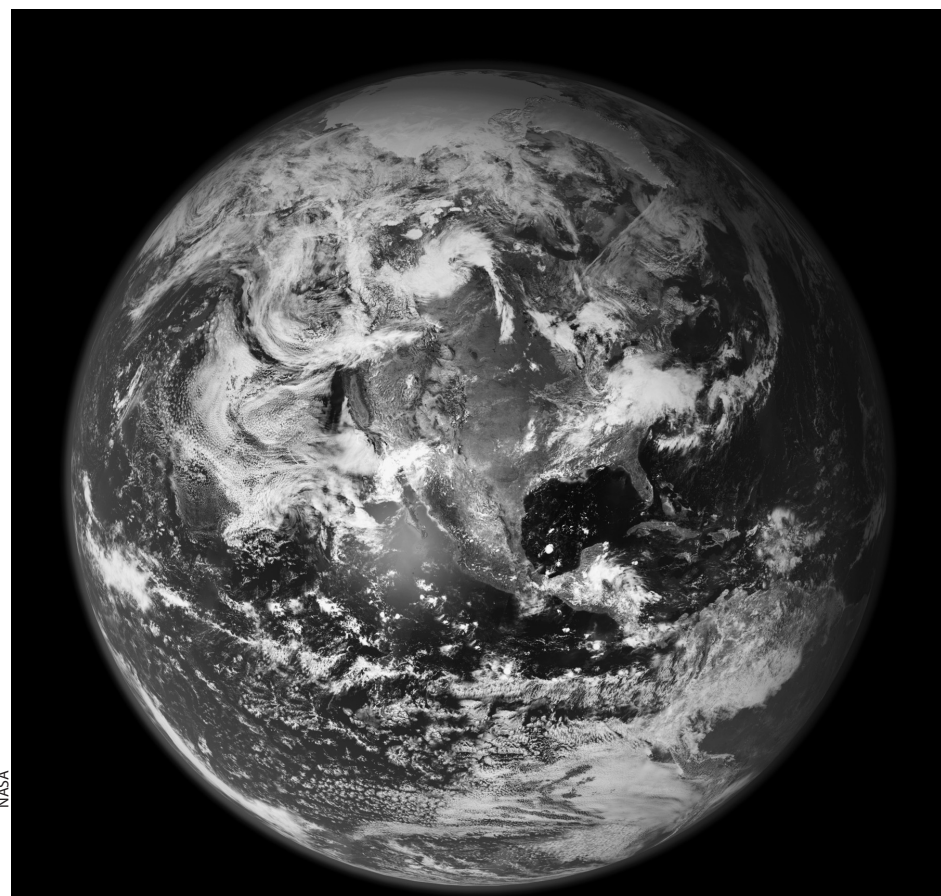
This is great news on global warming, since California is one of the largest consumers of electricity and the fact that a significant portion of its power needs comes from coal-fired power plants outside of its borders, including Utah.

It's even better news when one considers that there are over 20 new coal-fired power plants being proposed throughout the inter-mountain west—four here in Utah—many of them vying for the growing California market. (Can you say coal rush?) In essence, all of these proposed facilities will be required to meet the cleaner standard by the capture and safe storage of carbon dioxide emissions.

The California Energy Commission will need to invoke a similar order for the standard to be fully implemented. As this is written, such a decision had not been made.

Links for more information

- www.cleartheair.org or www.rockymountainclimate.org
For a copy of *Less Snow, Less Water: Climate Disruption in the West*
- www.capmag.com/article.asp?ID=3400
The other side's perspective
- www.ipcc.ch: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (the organization with the most credible science to date on global warming)
- www.motherjones.com/news/feature/2005/05/some_like_it_hot.html:
As the World Burns by Chris Mooney, an article documenting contributors to the global warming disinformation campaign



Our Water

Revitalization of the Jordan River Watershed Council

by Natalie Rees, Salt Lake County Water Resources Planning Assistant

Salt Lake County is excited to announce the reactivation of the Jordan River Watershed Council. The watershed council was initially created in 1978 as a result of the Area-Wide Water Quality Management Plan; however, the council became inactive in the late 1990s due to an emphasis on the implementation of restoration plans. Recently, the Utah Watershed Coordinators Council received monies to fund watershed coordinators in both the Jordan River and Utah Lake Watersheds—the Salt Lake County Water Resources Planning and Restoration Program has taken on this responsibility for the Jordan River Watershed.

Several issues currently facing our watershed called for this re-vitalization. Some of these issues include listing of the Jordan River and Emigration Creek on the State's 303(d) list of impaired

water bodies, the subsequent requirement of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for both the Jordan River and Emigration Creek, and a proposed amendment to the Area-Wide Water Quality Management Plan. The Jordan River Watershed Council is being re-vitalized to solicit public input in watershed concerns.

JORDAN RIVER TMDL

The listing of the Jordan River on the State's 303(d) list is a result of water quality assessments conducted by the Utah Division of Water Quality (DWQ). Because of the listing, the state is required to develop a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) to reduce pollutant levels in the impaired waters. A TMDL is essentially a calculation of the maximum amount of pollution that a water body can receive and still meet water quality standards. The TMDL for the Jordan River is in the initial water quality review stage. During this process, information will be made available to the watershed council and opportunities will be afforded for public involvement and comment.

AMENDMENT TO THE AREA-WIDE WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

A request to amend the Area-Wide Water Quality Management Plan has been made by South Valley Sewer District (SVSD). Salt Lake County is the designated area-wide water quality planning authority and therefore is charged with either recommending approval or recommending denial of the request. Granting of this request would allow the construction of a third wastewater treatment facility that discharges into the Jordan River. The facility is proposed to be located at 13400 South

along the west side of the Jordan River and would provide wastewater treatment for the southern end of Salt Lake County, both east and west of the Jordan River. The Salt Lake County Council and the Council of Governments (COG) are sponsoring several workshops/public hearings to solicit input from the public and will make a final recommendation in a few months.

COMPOSITION OF THE JRWC

Composition of the Jordan River Watershed Council has been developed to provide representation of as many stakeholder groups as possible while still maintaining a manageable group. Therefore, a core council of regulatory agencies has been established with several advisory councils representing specific stakeholder groups. Interest groups that have been identified for establishment as advisory committees include: parks and recreation, agriculture and irrigation, Publicly-Owned Treatment Works (POTWs) and discharge permit holders, stormwater interests, environmental concerns, headwaters and water supply concerns, community councils, and planning and development. Open discussions between stakeholder groups will not only promote understanding of issues, but will also generate ideas and solutions to effectively address water quality, riparian health, and planning concerns in this watershed.

All citizens are invited to participate through email updates. Please contact Natalie Rees of the Salt Lake County Water Resources Planning and Restoration Program [(801) 468-3656 or nrees@slco.org] with questions or concerns or to learn about ways to become involved in the Jordan River Watershed Council.

FACTS

- **The Jordan River Watershed is a closed basin that drains a total of 805 miles². Approximately 370 miles² of the Jordan River Watershed are in the Wasatch, Oquirrh and Traverse mountain ranges.**
- **Currently, the Jordan River Watershed is home to over 800,000 residents. However, by 2020, this population is expected to reach 1.3 million.**
- **Land in the Jordan River Watershed is owned primarily by private individuals (72.3%), federal (21.1%) and state government (6.5%).**
- **The Jordan River and Emigration are both listed as impaired water bodies under section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act.**
- **Water quality impairments in the Jordan River Watershed include: Dissolved Oxygen, Total Dissolved Solids, Pathogens, Phosphorus, and Zinc.**

Cottonwoods shade the Jordan River.



KEVIN DELANEY

PHANTOM WATER RIGHTS

by Mark Clemens

In 1997 Wayne Crawford, who was later joined in his application by Snowbird Ski Resort, applied for just over three cubic feet of water per second (cfs) in new water rights in Little Cottonwood Creek. A number of land speculators have acquired inaccessible parcels at high altitude in Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons with the hope that, by finding some loophole in water law, they can lay claim to water that would allow them to develop land currently off limits to development because it has no water. In fact, this poor little creek that only regularly exceeds 500 cfs during spring runoff, and then only for a few weeks each year, has paper applications (that can't be granted because the water is all allocated) for 500 cfs filed ahead of Crawford and Snowbird. Obviously water rights must look more to average or low flows rather than peak flows in order to ensure a reliable supply.

COALITION OF THE APPALLED

Several individuals, environmental organizations and government entities protested Crawford and Snowbird's

application. Great Salt Lake Audubon, Save Our Canyons, Trout Unlimited and Utah Waters joined the Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club to submit protests in the administrative process that the application would harm the environment by intercepting groundwater recharge, drying up springs and wetlands and denying in-stream flow for fish and other wildlife.

We were joined by Alta Ski Lifts Company, Alta Town, Salt Lake City Corporation, Salt Lake County Water Conservancy District (now Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District), Sandy City Corporation and the Utah Reclamation and Mitigation Commission who protested the application because all the water in Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons is fully appropriated as is all the groundwater in Salt Lake County.

ALL RISE

State Engineer Jerry Olds issued his opinion on Wednesday, 17 August 2005. He rejected the application decisively with nine findings and the following conclusion.

Water rights must look more to average or low flows rather than peak flows in order to ensure a reliable supply.

"The applicants have not provided information to demonstrate that this appropriation would not impair the rights of others...The applicants have not provided information that the source of the water has sufficient quantity of water for this appropriation. The appropriation would be detrimental to the public welfare and the stream environment. The application is speculative. The applicants have not provided information to demonstrate that this project as proposed is economically or physically feasible. The application must meet all of the Section 73-3-8 criteria to be approved. This application meets few, if any, of the criteria."

Transportation Update

New Highway Fans the Flames of Growth in Washington County

by Mark Clemens, Utah Chapter co-ordinator



COURTESY UTAH NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Dwarf bearclaw poppy

The enormous right of way for this road—nearly 300 feet wide and even wider at interchanges—would destroy habitat for the Dwarf bearclaw poppy, Holmgren's locoweed and Siler's pincushion cactus.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved the Southern Corridor on October 19, 2005, after releasing the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) earlier this summer. This new highway will run twenty-six miles from a new interchange on I-15 just north of the Virgin River Gorge eastwards to link up with Utah 9 a short distance west of the growing town of Hurricane.

The two objectives of this project are to provide access to the new St George airport and to open up to development large chunks of land belonging to Utah's Trust Lands Administration and several fortunate private landowners. Development of the Trust Lands Administration's holdings, often called the South Block, could add 20,000 or more new residents to St George. Some of the development on Trust Lands Administration in St George will follow principles of mixed use and clustering to create walkable communities and protect some open space; however, the new highway opens up a vast area across the whole southern tier of the county. The resultant sprawl is likely to harm air quality, increase water consumption and induce a swathe of poorly-planned development.

The Utah Chapter and several other groups including the Utah Native Plant Society submitted extensive comments on both the draft environmental impact statement and the FEIS. The chapter discussed air quality impacts, problems with the analysis and how the proposal would affect Zion National Park. Along with other groups, we also stressed the catastrophic impact this proposal could have on several rare plant species: the Dwarf bearclaw poppy, Holmgren's locoweed and Siler's pincushion cactus.

The enormous right of way for this road—nearly 300 feet wide and even wider

at interchanges—would destroy habitat for all three plants. Even more destructive would be additional roads, houses and businesses induced by the highway's construction. The remaining islands of plant habitat will be cut off from insect pollinators and from other populations of the same species. For more information on these beautiful plants, buzz over to the Utah Native Plant Society's web site, www.unps.org. Choose rare plants from the menu at the top and then Washington County's Endangered Plants.

ONE REASON TO CELEBRATE

UDOT and FHWA indicated in the recently released Record of Decision that it was their intention to protect only 70.8 acres of plant habitat to mitigate the project's impacts. Such an inadequate level of protection would surely have been the death knell for these charismatic plants.

Fortunately, thanks to the efforts of Elaine York of The Nature Conservancy and Heather Barnes of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, a mosaic of funding has been put together to acquire approximately 800 acres from the Trust Lands Administration in the heart of the Dwarf bearclaw poppy's habitat.

The Nature Conservancy owns a small habitat preserve for the poppy, but the new preserve will protect a majority of the largest population of the flower in private hands. As this acreage also includes habitat for Siler's pincushion cactus, the public is getting good leverage from the project.

In real life, no story has a completely happy ending. The preserve will be divided by an access road to the Southern Corridor, so the habitat will not be contiguous. And the habitat of Holmgren's locoweed is likely to be developed and fragmented without any significant mitigation.

UDOT'S PLANS FOR THE JORDAN RIVER AT 114TH SOUTH

by Nicole Davis, co-founder, 114th South Coalition

Since 1999, a group of Draper neighbors led by Brad Davis and me have fought the proposed taking of a large stretch of the Jordan River Valley for a five-lane road (and interchange on I-15) at 114th South in Draper. On Sept 11, 2001, the federal Court of Appeal for the 10th Circuit heard the case.

Despite the tragedies of that terrible day, they seemed willing to demonstrate that freedom means a small group of citizens can sue a federal agency, and in June of 2002, they issued a scathing ruling, sharply criticizing UDOT and the Federal Highway Administration for being arbitrary and capricious. Further, they ruled that it would require a problem of extraordinary magnitude before UDOT could "take" the Jordan River parkland at 114th South for the large road envisioned.

UDOT started over in mid-2002 with an EIS process that led to the conclusion that the previously envisioned road and interchange was the preferred alternative. Amazingly, despite the 10th Circuit ruling on this issue, the Federal Highway Administration issued a record of decision in early October 2005 approving the preferred alternative.

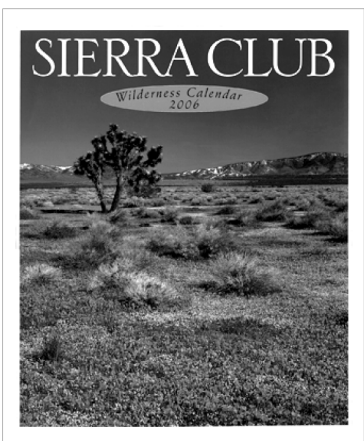
As in the Utah Chapter's experience with Legacy Highway, UDOT seems unwilling either to pay attention to NEPA regulations, or to comply with court rulings on these projects. Somehow they believe that simply generating sufficient paperwork will render federal protections moot.

We will continue to resist through all the legal means at our disposal UDOT's destructive plan for severing one of the last, extended stretches (two miles on this stretch) of the Jordan River with its associated green space and wildlife habitat. Because this was a neighbor-led lawsuit, the neighbors need financial assistance in order to continue this fight and help protect the river.

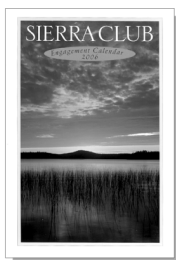
To see pictures of UDOT employees demonstrating the 10'-40' retaining walls envisioned along the Jordan, please visit www.11400south.com. For more information on how to support this fight and protect the beautiful Jordan River, please email info@11400south.com.

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Will the federal government imperil Park City's open space?

by Mark Clemens

Park City, Utah, is a paradox. Although it has worked harder than almost any municipality in Utah to protect a belt of open space around the town and access to trails, very little open space in the area is protected by federal ownership. Perhaps it's the very scarcity of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or US Forest Service land that makes the city aware of the value of each parcel of open space.

A handful of parcels administered by the BLM is all that remains of publicly-owned lands near Park City. Most of the rest of the federal estate passed to miners through the 1872 Mining Act, and after being exploit-

ed for its ore, was sold for real estate development. Because the remaining BLM parcels are scattered and difficult to administer, the BLM has on occasion shown a willingness to trade the Park City parcels in order to consolidate its land ownership elsewhere.

Park City has spent millions from its general revenue fund as well as from two separate bonds to protect open space so it was alarmed when several years ago it appeared that these BLM parcels might be developed or traded. Park City Mayor Dana Williams moved to protect and enhance its investment in open space by trying to persuade BLM to transfer these lands to

Park City to manage in perpetuity as open space. He has been joined by Representative Rob Bishop (R-UT), who introduced HR 3462 to sell four parcels totaling 115 acres to Park City for protection as open space.

BLM employees testified against the bill before the House Subcommittee on Forests and Forest Health. BLM objected to several provisions in the bill. Chad Calvert, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management in the Department of the Interior testified, "...comparables in the immediate area suggest that a valuation of at least \$1 million an acre is not unreasonable..." if the lands were "appraised at their highest and best use."

Such a valuation would require Park City to pay in excess of \$100 million for these lands when the city has acquired adjacent open space parcels for as little as \$10,000 per acre.

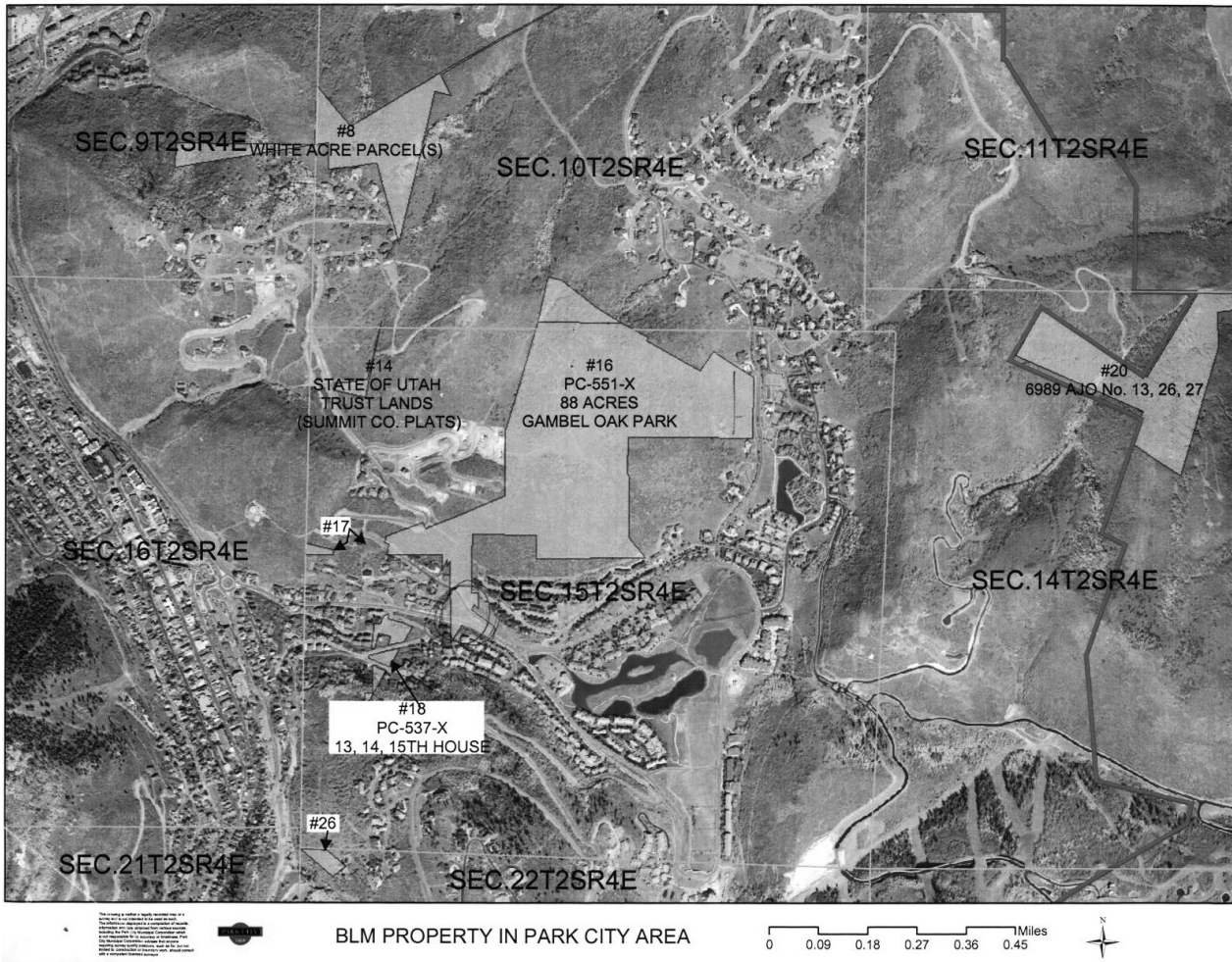
BLM also didn't approve of the Utah-specific account into which the proceeds were to be paid and also objected to having to play any role after the sale in enforcing the open space stipulation in the legislation.

With more than 580 members in the area, this issue is definitely on the chapter's radar. "Nothing could be more important to our members in Park City and Summit County than protecting the city's greenbelt," said Ann Wechsler, Conservation Chair. Wechsler submitted a letter to the House Resources Committee stating,

This parcel owes its high market value to its proximity to a city that values open space and works diligently to preserve it. The BLM, an agency charged with promoting the public good, should not be allowed to profit from Park City's attractive quality of life. The price of this land should, therefore, be based on an honest open-space valuation, similar to other open space parcels recently acquired and adjacent to the one in question, not on its potential for development.

We will continue to support the bill as it moves through congress. Sources in Rep Bishop's office have informed us that they're willing to work with BLM and the Department of Interior to settle some of their objections in the hope of passing the bill speedily.

The clearly urbanized area in the lower left corner is Park City's Main Street.



Deception, Distraction, Disgust

by Cindy King

Everyone who has been to the doctor or dentist has produced medical waste. Some might not give a second thought to what became of it. Others might be aware that when medical personnel take one's blood or give a shot, they place the needle into a special container for sharps. Much of this waste used to be incinerated, but in the mid-1980s most local hospitals phased out their use of medical waste furnaces. Most of the furnaces had little or no pollution controls, and their emissions were going directly into the air. At times, materials from these furnaces were landing in neighbors' yards. The Utah Division of Air Quality was getting numerous complaints, and hospitals were being given numerous citations for non-compliance. The solution seemed to be a facility, whose job was to help the hospitals and other medical facilities treat medical waste prior to disposal into a local solid waste landfill.

The North Salt Lake Planning and Zoning Commission approved Browning-Ferris Industries Waste Systems (BFI) operation on a 5-acre parcel in their light industrial district (90 North 1100 West), where no residential dwellings were located within a mile of the site. About five years ago BFI sold their facility to Stericycle

Incorporated, largest medical waste treatment provider in the US. As time went by, the planning and zoning commission allowed a youth treatment center to be located across the street. In the last three years the planning and zoning commission approved "Foxboro," a housing development on Stericycle's fence line.

The residents, according to the Foxboro representatives, were required to sign a waiver before moving in. This waiver informed the residents about Stericycle. During recent outreach to these residents to inform them of a public hearing with the Division Solid and Hazardous Waste (DSHW) regarding the Stericycle waste permit renewal, numerous residents informed me that they were given no waiver to sign, and were told that Stericycle was a trucking facility or transfer station. A transfer station is where material is brought in, repacked, and taken out. Few were told exactly what Stericycle did, and most of those were workers at Stericycle. In the public participation document (for the hearing held by DSHW) was the following statement, "Homes in the Vicinity—No residential dwelling with 1 [one] mile of the site."

Between January 1, 2003 and August

31, 2005, Stericycle had 57 bypasses of their pollution abatement system, or approximately two bypasses a month for the last two and three-fourths years. What is meant by bypass is that for some reason, an upset condition causes whatever is being processed at the time to flow directly into the air through the bypass stack. At the public hearing of Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste, a resident who shares the Stericycle fence line stated that they have had to pick up partially burnt materials from their yard on numerous occasions. This means Stericycle is not getting complete combustion of medical waste. One might assume the Division of Air Quality (DAQ) would be concerned about the number of bypasses. The ironic thing is that the DAQ's Title V Clear Air Permit allows for bypasses without any violation of that permit, as long as Stericycle notifies them of the bypass.

The Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste public participation document also lists prohibited waste streams. This document states that Stericycle will be able to process animal parts and carcasses. Frighteningly there is no prohibition of animal parts or carcasses contaminated with prionic disease (e.g. mad cow, chronic wast-

ing, and scrapie) from virus-like proteins. According to Region VIII (the region that includes Utah) EPA, "prions can survive for extended periods of time in the environment." Prionic disease can sometimes cross the species barriers, and they are the hallmark for 19 different brain-wasting diseases in humans.

There is no provision (in the Division of Air Quality permit or the DSHW permit) for what would happen if Stericycle was processing prion-contaminated animal parts or carcasses during a bypass. Nor did the DSHW permit or DAQ permit mention that this is the only remaining Stericycle medical waste incinerator west of the Mississippi River. All their other incinerators west of the Mississippi have been replaced with alternative waste treatment technology. Stericycle representatives at the public hearing claimed that Utah statutes and regulations require incineration of medical waste, yet they were unable to state which statute and/or regulation requires this. As a matter of fact, no Utah statutes and/or regulations require medical waste incineration.

UtahChapterNews

The Southwest Utah Group Is Up and Running

by Jim Case, Interim Group Chair

Or, perhaps, just beginning to walk. By direction of the Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club (the Executive Committee meeting of 17 February 2005 in Cedar City), steps were taken to form a new group in southwestern Utah. The group includes Beaver, Iron, Washington, Kane, and Garfield counties (Kane and Garfield counties were to be transferred from the Glen Canyon Group). As a start, a questionnaire/survey form was mailed to all club members in the five-county area in order to determine the activities in which members would like to be involved and what the major priorities of the group should be. Responses were received from 29 members (out of some 220 listed members in the five counties). Activities of most interest were outings, wilderness boundary or ATV use monitoring, work parties, GPS instruction, and forest issues, while the major priority listed by almost all respondees was ATV/ORV abuse.

The form also included an invitation to attend an organizational meeting, held on 25 April 2005 in St. George. Major points of discussion were organization of the Sierra Club and consequent responsibilities of a group in the club, the need to develop bylaws for the group (a requirement for approval of the formation of the group), the makeup of the group (officers, meeting frequency, group name, etc.), a review of the results of the survey, and issues/activities in which the new group might get involved. Interim officers were Jim Case, Chair, Lois Mansfield, Vice Chair, Jeff Allen, Judy Allison, and Mary Belle Royer. The name of the group will be the Southwest Utah Group. Subsequent to the organizational meeting, chapter-approved bylaws were forwarded to the Sierra Club headquarters on 19 May 2005, the amended bylaws were approved by the Sierra Club on 27 July 2005, and the Southwest Utah Group was fully accredited as a group of the Sierra Club on 29 August 2005.

Major issues to be addressed by the group include the proposed water pipeline from Lake Powell to St. George, the proposed new airport for St. George, the Comprehensive County Land-Use Plans, and abuse of the landscape by the indiscriminate use of ORVs.

Initial activities by the group included a get-together in Parowan the evening of 18 June to discuss group issues, followed by a trek to Parowan Gap for a celebration of the summer solstice, and on 4 October a hike to the Red Mountain Wilderness Study Area (WSA). Unfortunately, both activities were sparsely attended. Future activities will include more hikes, social gatherings, and focused efforts on key local environmental issues.

Major issues to be addressed by the group would include the proposed water pipeline from Lake Powell to St. George with a branch to Cedar City (the major concern is that, though the ostensible reason for the pipeline is to provide water for the projected population growth in the area, the pipeline will only result in still further growth), the proposed new airport for St. George (the so-called Southern Corridor road to the airport would pass through areas of endangered plants), the Comprehensive County Land-Use Plans being developed on a county-by-county basis (which are meant to result in federal legislation similar to that for Clark and Lincoln counties in Nevada and would result in a minimum amount of Wilderness), and the outrageous abuse of the landscape by the indiscriminate use of ATVs/ORVs.

Dennis Willigan: 1938 to 2005, In Memoriam

by Ann Wechsler

Dennis Willigan, who died last June following a ten-year battle with cancer, is remembered for his many contributions to academia, to the environment, and to humanity. All those who knew him have an interesting story to tell, and there are many.

Dennis received his doctorate from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1977, and then joined the Dept. of Sociology at the University of Utah. Dennis did archival research at the British Museum Library on the catastrophic 19th Century Irish famines, and at the Uffizi Palace on the household structure of Renaissance Florence during the 14th Century, published *Sources and Methods of Historical Demography* with co-author Katherine Ann Lynch in 1982, and did statistical research on the under-representation of racial, ethnic, and gender groups in federal, state, and county level jury pools. He served as an expert witness in a successful class action lawsuit to protect Native American civil rights.

Long-time Sierra Club activists will remember Dennis for his opposition to the MX Missile proposed for the west desert near Delta, for his efforts to thwart the federal government's plan to build a radioactive waste repository in Davis and Lavender Canyons in Southern Utah, and to remove a radioactive waste pile from the banks of the Colorado River. Dennis loved the outdoors. According to a colleague, David Heise, he and his wife Laurel, whom he married after 51 years of bachelorhood, established an experimental rancho

Dennis Willigan cannot be accused of living an ordinary life; he lived a too short, extraordinary life with a special reverence for humanity and the environment.

in a remote desert area of southeastern Utah utilizing irrigation technology developed by Israelis in the Negev Desert. Heise writes that a goal of the project was to demonstrate how small family farms in rural, Native American areas of the Southwest can reestablish economic viability.

Another friend of Dennis's recalls his discovery of Anasazi ruins (previously unknown) and his untiring efforts to protect them. He spent his last years crisscrossing the backcountry of the Navajo Nation in Utah, New Mexico, and Arizona, studying Native American methods of shamanic healing, and subscribed to such healing methods in battling his disease.

In spite of ill health, Dennis taught a Diversity/Service-learning course and served on the Lowell Bennion Community Service Center's Faculty Committee for Service-learning, representing the College of Social and Behavior Science. His research on the Navajo Reservation contributed richly to his teaching.

Dennis Willigan cannot be accused of living an ordinary life; he lived a too short, extraordinary life with a special reverence for humanity and the environment.



Gale Dick Ascends the Pfeifferhorn

by Mark Clemens

Great Salt Lake Audubon, Save Our Canyons and the Utah Chapter of Sierra Club established the Pfeifferhorn Award several years ago to honor an individual or group that has worked to protect the environmental and scenic values of the Wasatch Range. Past recipients have included LeRoy Hooton, the director of Salt Lake City Public Utility Department, Ellie Ienatsch, a volunteer who watched tenderly over Golden eagle nestlings in Big Cottonwood Canyon, and Loren Kroenke, Salt Lake District Ranger for the Wasatch-Cache National Forest.

As the Wasatch Range's most prominent protectors joined the Pfeifferhorn Award pantheon, it became more and more evident that the next recipient had to be Gale

Dick, co-founder of Save Our Canyons. Scarcely any canyon in Salt Lake County has not benefited from Gale's dedication and involvement. "Developers and ski resort operators know that their plans will come under the scrutiny of the Wasatch's pre-eminent watchdog in the person of Gale," said Ann Wechsler, Utah Chapter Conservation Chair.

At the informal dinner held on September 15th, to surprise Gale with the award, his reaction was typically modest, "The best thing about working with enviros is the wonderful group of people that are your colleagues. To be honored by them is really something, and I'm delighted and moved to get the award."

As the Wasatch Range's most prominent protectors joined the Pfeifferhorn Award pantheon, it became more and more evident that the next recipient had to be Gale Dick, co-founder of Save Our Canyons.

Gale's accomplishment stretches beyond specific conservation victories. He has helped to galvanize the movement to appreciate the natural qualities of the Wasatch Range through his personal enthusiasm and organizational skills. "Gale has reached every pinnacle—in his career, his music, his environmental activism and more—seemingly without effort," said Wechsler, "For those of us who have worked with, and still work with him, his accomplishments seem to spill over and provide the motivation we all need."

Left to right: Gale & friends celebrate his award; Gale's surprise at receiving his reward; Gale and the Save Our Canyons board members.



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photo/Dave Wicks

CHAPTER & GROUP ELECTIONS NOTICE

For more than ten years, the Utah Chapter has included the chapter executive committee election ballot—and sometimes the group executive committee ballots—in the Utah Sierran. Although this approach is cheaper than printing and mailing a separate election ballot, it failed to elicit as much notice and in-

volvement as chapter leaders prefer. The number of ballots voted was usually under two percent of chapter membership.

The chapter executive committee voted at the 17 September 2005, meeting to mail a separate ballot in 2005. This year's ballot will include candidates for the chapter executive com-

mittee as well as for the Ogden, Salt Lake and Southwest Utah Groups. The Glen Canyon Group will mail its own ballot.

Please look for the ballot and return envelope in the mail, read the candidate statements and vote. All ballots must be received in the chapter office within 30 days of the mailing.

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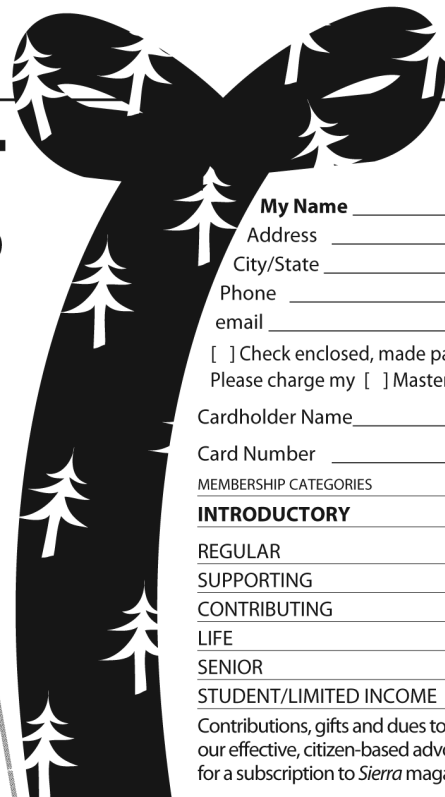
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Utah Chapter Outings

Abbreviations in capital letters signify the group planning the outing. [E] = educational content, [C] = conservation focus, [S] = service activities. All members and nonmembers are welcome on any of the chapter or group activities listed. Radios, firearms and dogs are not welcome on Sierra Club outings. Interested participants are strongly encouraged to contact the outing leader in advance and inquire as to updates, degree of difficulty, and other outing details. Participants should be prepared for various seasonal weather conditions, temperature changes that occur due to rapid increases/decreases in altitude, and bring enough food, water, and appropriate clothing for the given outing. Outing leaders reserve the right to turn away anyone who appears unprepared for scheduled outings.

The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Carpooling, ride sharing or anything similar is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel. If you choose to carpool to the trailhead, it is only fair for fees charged by the U.S. Forest Service to be shared by all participants. For the most current and updated outings listings, please visit the website utah.sierraclub.org and look at the outings under the Salt Lake, Ogden and Glen Canyon Groups.

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Glen Canyon Group (GCG)
Participants are requested to call leaders in advance for outing details & to give the leader an idea of group size.

Ogden Group (OG)
P.O. Box 1821, Ogden, UT, 84402
utah.sierraclub.org/ogden

The public is welcome on all outings. Participants are requested to call the leaders in advance for outing details. For information related to outings in general, contact John Besbekos, 801-985-6854.

Salt Lake Group (SLG)
Call the trip leaders for meeting times, places, & other details regarding the outings.

November

SLG Sun 11/6 Red Butte Hike. Weather and trail conditions permitting, this hike will take place in the foothills above Red Butte Gardens. There are many hiking options in this area but expect an easy to moderate slope and pace. A good time for a late fall hike and get in shape for the upcoming snowshoe and ski season. Call Ken (484-3112) for meeting time, place and other info.

GCG Sat 11/10 10-Mile Canyon hike [C]. This is an easy route into 10-mile. About 5 miles round trip with 450' elevation loss and gain. 10-Mile ends up in the Green River (although the Green River is too far away for a day hike using this route). Once we get into 10-mile we can walk as far as everyone wishes. Motorcycles and some ATVs use 10-mile canyon, although this time of year we should not see anyone. If you have never been to 10-mile, this is a great hike to get you into the canyon. Meet at Star Hall at 9 AM. Call leader, Mike Binyon for further information, (435) 259-1633.

OG Sat 11/12 Indian Trail Hike. Day-hike in Ogden Canyon 5 miles, 1500' elevation gain. About 3 hours for this popular local hike. Terrific views of Ogden Canyon, may see into Nevada on a clear day. Call Larry Woolsey for meeting time and place. 731-3701.

GCG Sat 11/19 Hiking Slickrock Domes & Fins near the Slickrock Trail. Our first destination will be Mountain View Cave, then on to Swiss Cheese Ridge for potholes and great views of Moab and the mountains (weather and time permitting). Swiss Cheese Ridge is exposed, so be prepared for wind and cold weather. Bring lunch and water. 6 1/2 miles round trip minimum, up to 9 miles R.T. depending on how far we decide

to go. Short (1 mile) car shuttle. Meet at Star Hall at 9 AM. Call leader Bonnie Crysdale for further information (435) 259-0246.

SLG Sun 11/20 Uintas Snow Trek [E]. Snow and weather conditions permitting. Snowshoe or X-country ski the Ruth Lake or Washington Lake area in the beautiful Uinta mountains. Bring appropriate winter gear for a winter adventure above 10,000 feet in elevation. Call Ron Younger (292-4040) for carpool information, meeting time, place, and carpool arrangements.

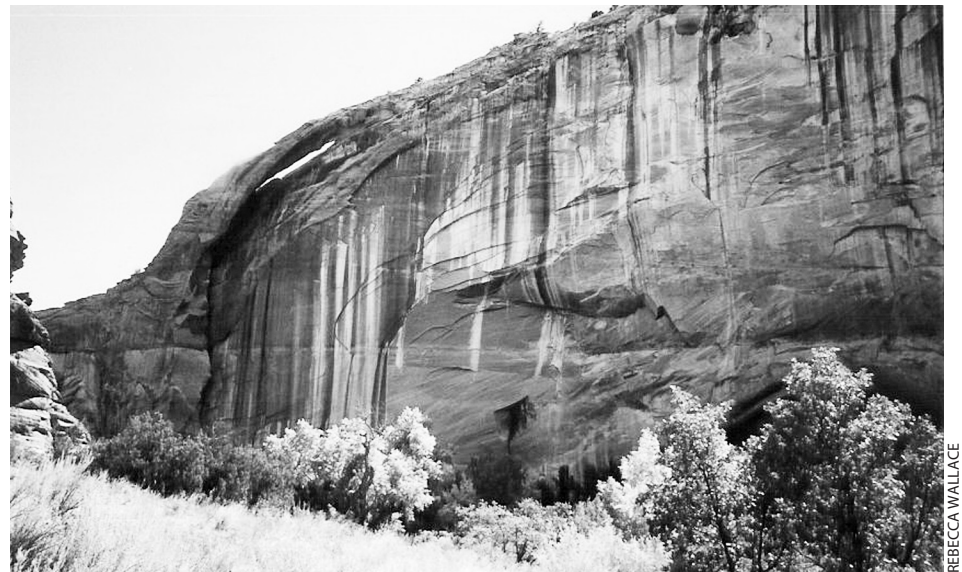
December

SLG December Ski Clinics. For backcountry skiers interested in honing those telemark turning skills for the upcoming winter ski season. Contact your favorite ski resort and inquire about telemark ski clinics resorts offer during the ski season. Most resorts offer these clinics at reasonable prices and accommodate all ski levels, from absolute beginners to advanced. Enrolling in these clinics is an excellent way to prepare for the ski season and Sierra Club winter ski outings.

SLG Sun 12/4 Little Dell Snowshoe [C]. Weather conditions permitting. An easy snowshoe excursion in the Little Dell reservoir area in Parleys Canyon. Distance and length of outing will depend on trail conditions. An excellent opportunity to enjoy the scenery of this Salt Lake City watershed and possibility of encountering wildlife abundant in the area. Call Ann (583-2090) for meeting time, place, and other info about the outing.

GCG Sat 12/10 Upper Mineral Canyon hike. This trail drops over the edge of Upper Mineral Canyon (near highway 313) into Upper Mineral Canyon. The hike dead-ends at a dry fall that keeps us from going further down into the canyon. We use an old cow trail in good shape. The cow trail has some switchbacks and does not have sheer cliff exposure. There are several arches in the canyon. We can hike up to 5 miles round trip. There is an immediate 200' elevation loss into the canyon with another 100' loss as we hike gradually down the canyon. There is a bit of slick rock that can be navigated over about 1/2 mile before the dry fall or folks can choose to stop there for an extended lunch break. Meet at Star Hall at 9 AM. Call leader, Mike Binyon for further information, (435) 259-1633.

SLG Sun 12/11 Uintas Snowshoe Loop. Snow and weather conditions permitting. Snowshoe the Taylor Fork to Plantation Trail. A wonderful scenic loop from the Mirror Lake Highway east of Kamas. Come prepared for a daylong winter outing. Call Ron (292-4040) for carpool arrangements,



Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.

meeting time, and place.

OG Sat 12/17 Snowshoe or XCski. Bring your skis or snowshoes for a trip in the SnowBasin area. 2-3 hours, moderate difficulty. Depending on snow conditions we may ascend to the Cold Canyon overlook or Sardine Peak. Call Larry Woolsey for meeting time and place. 731-3701.

SLG Sun 12/18 Norway Flats Ski Outing. The Norway Flats ski trail is an old logging road that starts just past the 10-mile mark of the Mirror Lake Highway. This trail winds through quiet Quaking aspen and pine stands and offers excellent opportunities for wildlife encounters. The turnaround point is an overlook offering a panoramic view of the Uinta Mountain range. One way distance is about 3 miles and about 1000 feet of elevation gain. Intermediate level x-country ski skills are most suitable for this outing. Call Ken (484-3112) for meeting time, place, and other details.

January

OG Sun 1/1 Wheeler Creek Sobering Tour [3]. Appropriate for x-c skis or snowshoes. Tour up E. Fork Wheeler creek and down the Middle Fork back to Wheeler Creek trailhead. Bring lunch. Meet Ogden High School 0900. Moderately strenuous. Jock Glidden 394-0457

SLG Sun 1/1 or 1/8 X-Country Ski or Snowshoe Outing. Snow and weather conditions permitting. Celebrate the New Year by joining a hearty group of revelers for a ski or snowshoe adventure along the scenic North Fork Provo River. The trailhead is north of the Mirror Lake Highway about 11 miles east of Kamas Utah. Meet at the Northfork Trail parking lot at 10:30 am or

at the K-Mart parking lot (21st South and Foothill Drive) at 9:15 am. Call Ron Younger (292-4040) for specifics.

GCG Sat 1/7 Slick Rock hiking in either Bartlett or Tusher Wash. Bicycles and motorized vehicles use Bartlett Wash in the spring and fall, but in the winter months this area provides beautiful hiking on slickrock. Not much elevation gain or loss, this is an explore the slickrock hike. There are several slickrock benches so that the exact location will depend on the weather and exposure in case of snow. A side trip to Tusher tunnel can be taken on the way back from the hike. Hiking of 4-5 miles. Meet at Star Hall at 9 AM. Call leader, Tom Messenger, for further information, (435) 259-1756.

SLG Sat 1/7 Days Fork Snowshoe [E]. Explore the glaciated forest area to Days Fork in Big Cottonwood Canyon on snowshoes. Expect a moderate pace and slope, beautiful winter scenery and good company along the way. The outing is suitable for beginners and seasoned snowshoers. Call Rob (485-3262) for meeting time, place, and information about the outing.

SLG Fri 1/13 Moonlight Snowshoe Millcreek Canyon. Enjoy a mystical evening adventure as an almost full moon casts shadows and a soft glow through the pines for adventurous trekkers in Millcreek Canyon. The plan is to begin at the Church Fork trailhead and snowshoe as far as trail conditions and moonlight allows. Call Dee (718-1979) for meeting time, place, and information regarding the outing.

OG Sat 1/14 Snowshoe Wheatgrass Canyon. Start from Causey dam area. Nice scenery and a chance to see wildlife. About 5 miles, 3 to 4 hours. Call Larry Woolsey for meeting time and place. 731-3701.



The Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club thanks the George B. and Oma E. Wilcox and Gibbs M. and Catherine W. Smith Charitable Foundation for its continuing generous support of the Chapter's programs. The Foundation challenges you to increase your support for the Utah Chapter in 2006.



SLG Sun 1/15 Leader's Choice Uintas Snowshoe. The exact location of this outing has yet to be determined, but will take place in the picturesque winter wonderlands of the Uinta Mountains. Expect intermediate level terrain and pace, and bring plenty of water, snacks, and warm winter gear to enjoy this mid winter outing experience. Call Gaynell (435/649-8917) for meeting time, place, and other information.

SLG Sun 1/15 Annual Wild Horses of the West Desert Family Outing [E]. Weather and road conditions permitting. On Sunday participants will drive toward Simpson Springs along the historic Pony Express Trail in search of wild horses. Each winter these elusive animals migrate into the valleys from higher elevations south of Dugway to escape the snow. Bring lunch, binoculars, camera, and warm clothing even though participants will not venture far from vehicles during the day. Children absolutely invited! Contact trip leader Kurt Alloway via email at desertquest99@yahoo.com for meeting time and location.

OG Sat 1/21 XCski Tour. Ski North Fork Park. We will tour along the rolling terrain of the park roads for approximately 6 or 7 miles round trip (Weather permitting). Call John Besbekos for meeting place and time, 985-6854.

SLG Sun 11/22 Leaders Choice Snowshoe, Millcreek Canyon. Possible venues for this snowshoe include a loop beginning at Elbow Fork to the Terraces, Porters Fork, or other scenic trails in Millcreek Canyon. Expect a moderate pace and slope and lots of gorgeous views. Call Tim Wagner (484-4334) for meeting time and place.

OG Sat 1/28 Wheeler Creek Loop Snowshoe. This five-mile tour of the less-developed trails at Snow Basin is always a favorite. This loop starts at the Art Nord trail head and follows the East Fork and Middle Fork Wheeler Creek trails. Call John Besbekos for meeting place and time, 985-6854.

SLG Sun 1/29 Mueller Park Snowshoe. Enjoy the winter ambiance of Davis County with a snowshoe trek into Mueller Park in Bountiful. Distance and length of outing will depend on snow and weather conditions. Expect a moderate pace, slope and good company along the trail. Meeting time is 10:15 am at the entrance to Muellers Park in Bountiful. Call Margaret (292-7602) for directions to the park and other information.



RON YOUNGER

SUNDAY, AUGUST 7, 2005: Sierra Club trekkers starting out on Lofty Lake Loop Trail in the Uintas. Be the first (before November 15, 2005) to list the first names of seven of these trekkers, and receive a Back Country Guidebook of the High Uintas. Send list to Ron Younger at 920 East 1500 South, Bountiful, UT 84010-2138.

win a backcountry guide

February

OG Sat 2/4 George Schrader Memorial Waterfall Canyon Hike [C]. If you've never seen the waterfall in winter, this is your chance. If you have, you already know what a treat you're in for. The late George Schrader, a long-time volunteer of the Ogden Group, used to lead this outing every February to celebrate his birthday. This year we'll discuss what developments the future may bring to this privately owned canyon. Poles will be essential for traction; snowshoes are optional unless there's new snow that isn't packed down yet. Call leader Dan Schroeder (393-4603) for meeting time and place.

SLG Sun 2/5 Snowshoe, North Fork Provo River. Come on out and experience why this trail is so popular. Scenic views, plenty of snow, quiet ambiance of the forest, and relatively easy terrain. The trail begins just off the Mirror Lake Highway about 11 miles east of Kamas. Call Rob (485-3262) for meeting time, place, and other details.

OG Sat 2/11 Snowshoe. A trip on the Pipeline Trail and Bowman Fork in Mill Creek Canyon, Salt Lake County. 4 to 6 miles, 3 to 4 hours for this favorite trail for outdoor enthusiasts. Call Larry Woolsey for meeting time and place. 731-3701.

SLG Sat 2/11 Moonlight Snowshoe, Millcreek Canyon. A gibbous moon will light the way for snowshoe trekkers for this

quixotic winter evening adventure. An opportunity to experience the forest from a nighttime perspective. The leader will consider several possibilities for exploring trails near the road above the gate in Millcreek Canyon. Call Rebecca (487-4160) for meeting time, place, and other info.

SLG Sat-Mon, 2/18-20 Valentines/Presidents Day Weekend In Boulder, Utah. This annual extended weekend getaway has been one of the feature outings of the year. Boulder is located near Capital Reef National Park and borders the Grand Staircase Monument. Recreation possibilities include hiking, biking, horseback riding, x-country skiing, and snowshoeing through some of the most pristine red rock country in the state. In the past the outing has also featured music, sto-

rytelling, and succulent Dutch oven dinners around a warm campfire inside the lodge. Also included is a tour of the Anasazi State Park in Boulder. Participants are encouraged to book accommodations at the Boulder Mountain Lodge well in advance due to the popularity of the outing.

Contact Kurt Alloway via email at desertquest99@yahoo.com. for meeting time, place, and booking information.

March

OG 3/18-19 Hiking in Moab. Great time to see the slick rock. Get an early start on the hiking season. Call early for motel or camping info. Larry Woolsey 731-3701.

Utah Chapter Directory

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Glen Canyon Group outing to Day Canyon.



TOM MESSENGER

Giving up e-mail and learning to love the U.S. Forest Service

by Kathleen Jones, chair, Utah Chapter Legislative Committee

Rob and I had an opportunity this summer to spend two months in the wilderness. We were volunteers for the U.S. Forest Service at the Little Creek Guard Station in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness (FC-RONR) in central Idaho—2.2 million acres—the largest wilderness in the lower 48. Our assigned duties were somewhat vague but turned into building close to 400 feet of fence, clearing pasture, caring for stock, some trail/cabin work, and, most important according to our boss, Ranger Tommy, maintaining cordial public relations. These are tough times for the forest service.

The Frank Church is certainly unlike any other wilderness I've ever seen. Instead of the isolated, quiet, pristine quality one might expect, it's an area of incredible contrasts. The Middle Fork of the Salmon River (wild and scenic designation) with its class 3 and 4 rapids bears unbelievable traffic. More than 10,000 people float down this river each year.

Both commercial and private parties come, boats laden with all the culinary comforts offered by five star hotels. There are more than 35 airstrips in this Wilderness and the one at Indian Creek is Idaho's busiest airport in the summer! Developments with individually owned 3,000 square foot cabins and several stately private lodges share space here. One closest to the Little Creek cabin was recently purchased by a New York banker who occasionally hosts some grand parties. One morning as we were digging holes for the new fence, we saw plane after plane coming into the airstrip above us. We found out later these were the flights bringing the masseuse, the yoga and pilates instructors, the Sun Valley chef and special foods to make sure all the guests had a perfect holiday. But by the end of the weekend, none had taken a walk down to the river or around any of the trails to see some of the real life here.

Fortunately for Rob and me, we had the time to take a walk, see the land, sit by the river and watch the critters up close. Thankfully, the Frank Church is not all fancy dwellings and human comforts. There is splendid wildness that we were privileged to observe. In the pasture around our cabin we saw pileated woodpeckers, rubber boa and bull snakes, spruce grouse families, and rabbits. River otters went floating leisurely by enjoying their own private picnic. We saw a ground squirrel outside our kitchen window balancing precariously on a currant bush. He was edging slowly up the branch attempting to savor every last bit of fruit eventually hanging on by one little foot before plunging to the ground and scampering off. Our cabin's pet deer enjoyed the salt lick

every morning oblivious to the hammering/nailing from our fence building. We also ventured out and hiked to several fire lookouts, not much used anymore due to budget cuts and airplane watches. We spent the night in Big Baldy Lookout and thanks to the wall of windows were treated to a radiant, rainbow colored Idaho sunset for over an hour.

Our contact was not all with nature. People took up a lot of our time. Most visitors come by raft or private plane: the airplane campers there for weekend fishing/relaxing. There was also the group of wounded soldiers from Iraq flown in by the New York banker showing his kind and gentle side. By far, the most memorable people were the ones in the U.S. Forest Service. People like Wilderness Ranger Idaho Cowboy Joe. He, like so many others, is seasonal and has to guide trips in his off time to make ends meet. He hopes one day to buy back some of the land they had to sell off to pay for his dad's nursing home care. He sat in our kitchen eating pancakes and tolerating our weak coffee talking about life in the trenches of the forest service. We learned about people forced into early retirement, privatizing and outsourcing, the deplorable conditions of trails due to lack of workers and money, and the extremely low morale because of job insecurity. But he also shared with us the joy of being out on the trail with his stock—one horse and four mules—and the perfect way to scratch a mule's ears for its maximum delight. Joe and the many others we met (river rangers, the Native American interpreters who spoke of living in closeness and harmony with the land, the researchers and other technicians) are there—putting up the good fight, doing what they do because they love it and care about the earth and its creatures.

We environmentalists have had an uneasy relationship with the U.S. Forest Service and its multiple-use agenda, but I can report that those in the trenches love the wild places and wild things as much as we do. Morale among the worker bees could not be much lower however. Two years ago as the celebration of the Wilderness Act took place, Forest Service employees were told not to mention it. Full-scale demolition of the public's land continues unabated. Is there any hope?

After working and living there this summer, I am cautiously optimistic. It's true, people mess things up, but it's people who can make things right, too. There is hope because of the people in the forest service who do what they do because they love it and not for the money. The forest service has the unenviable mission to keep Wilderness users happy - hunters, boaters, hikers, airplane campers,

We environmentalists have had an uneasy relationship with the U.S. Forest Service and its multiple-use agenda, but I can report that those in the trenches love the wild places and wild things as much as we do.

private property owners, and environmentalists. How to bring those disparate elements together for the health of our earth? There's a reason Frank Church's name was added to the wilderness name in 1984.

How many of us can even remember when Idaho had a progressive, conservation-minded politician elected to high office? Frank Church was senator from 1956 to 1980. And even though he knew his election was in jeopardy, he still championed the creation of the Central Idaho Wilderness, ignoring self-interest to do the right thing. He pioneered the local citizens, local solutions approach to wilderness. He said, "Let's do this right. Let's include as much of the undeveloped land within the watershed of the Middle Fork as possible while excluding as much of the commercial mining claims and private property as we can."

Frank Church was a consummate politician, a politician in the best sense of the word—polis—the people in all our diverse interests, claims, biases, values. Church recognized and respected different interests from the environmental purists to timber/mining and private property owners. If there had been no Frank Church, there would probably be no FC-RONR Wilderness today. It's hard to believe that we actually need politicians when we think of Bush and Co continuing to strip away the public from our public lands. We need good people elected to office, people with the intellect and compassion of Frank Church. Please remember that as the 2006 elections come around and hold a kind thought for Utah Chapter's very own Political Committee.

After my experience in the Wilderness this summer, I have to believe that the land will prevail, but only we can make that happen. Working together with people like Ranger Joe, an environmental future with preservation of wilderness and protection of natural resources is possible. Benjamin Franklin said it well. We must all hang together or assuredly we shall all hang separately.

From top: Rob and Kathleen Jones; Kathleen and Buster the mule; the guard station; a spruce grouse.



For additional photos and the complete report about this Salmon Sojourn, visit users.sisna.com/vagabond/salmon4/salmon4.htm

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