

Call of the WILD

FRIENDS OF NEVADA WILDERNESS

Keeping Nevada Wild Since 1984

WINTER 2004

2004: a good year for wilderness

FRIENDS OF



NEVADA
WILDERNESS

By Shaaron Netherton

We at Friends of Nevada Wilderness want to wish you a happy and wild 2004. As you will soon see, this is an exciting year for Nevada wilderness. Here's a quick summary of just a few things on our horizon:

• **Anniversaries!** 2004 marks the **40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act**. It's also the **20th anniversary of Friends of Nevada Wilderness**. Throughout the year, we will be celebrating with a variety of events, large and small. We'll keep you posted as our plans come together.

• **Eastern Nevada Wilderness Areas** have a good chance of being designated this year. Our Congressional delegation is still moving forward on legislation for wilderness in Lincoln and White

Pine Counties. It appears the Clark County model for public lands legislation is gaining popularity across the state. Counties such as Pershing and Lyon, and maybe even others, have begun similar public lands processes. You can bet we will be there with our proposals for wilderness. As soon as legislation is proposed, we will be asking you to help support wilderness with your letters and calls.

• **Volunteer programs** are going to kick into a higher gear this year. Our improved **Adopt-a-Wilderness** program will give you a chance to help us protect your favorite wilderness-quality lands across the state, simply by getting out to explore them and speaking on their behalf when necessary. In addition, we're coordinating with the

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Working to stop snowmobiles in the alpine Mt. Rose Wilderness area

Friends of Nevada Wilderness (FNW) Conservation Director Brian Beffort skied to the south boundary of the Mt. Rose Wilderness on Friday, January 12, for a meeting with U.S. Forest Service backcountry rangers and Gail Ferrell, the Tahoe/Nevada director for the Snowlands Network. Ferrell (also a FNW member) had called the meeting with the rangers to discuss reducing the number of snowmobiles trespassing in the Mt. Rose Wilderness Area (The Wilderness Act prohibits the use of motorized vehicles in Wilderness).

In the late 1990s, Ferrell became frustrated with the danger and lack of solitude she and other people faced at Tahoe Meadows (aka Mt. Rose Meadows) while trying to ski, sled and snowshoe alongside unrestricted snowmobiles.

"I couldn't go to the meadows anymore and

enjoy myself with all the snowmobiles," Ferrell said. "As I looked closely, I kept seeing problems." Ferrell worked with other volunteers to document dangerous activity and damage to trees and streams by snowmobiles on the south side of Tahoe Meadows, and they helped convince the Forest Service to ban snowmobiles there in 2002.

Snowmobiles are currently allowed only on the north of the Mt. Rose Highway (NV 431). However, the Mt. Rose Wilderness and the Galena

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**Not registered
to vote?**

**Now is the time.
It's easy.**

**For information
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A good year for wilderness (continued from pg.1)

BLM, the U.S. Forest Service and the Nevada Department of Wildlife to design **on-the-ground volunteer programs** that will help restore and prevent impacts from irresponsible off-road vehicle use, invasive plants and other impacts in Nevada's wild places.

• We will continue our **Agency Watch-dogging** efforts to monitor land-management agencies' activities in wilderness and wilderness study areas. We are also participating with agencies when they update their management plans. We work cooperatively where possible but challenge them when their plans and ac-

tivities are contrary to laws and regulations, or just plain silly. When problems are serious, we ask Friends of Nevada Wilderness members to weigh in on the issue. We attend countless meetings at the county, state, federal and agency levels to make sure wilderness values are always on the agenda.

• Protecting wilderness is a team effort. We thank you all for your hard work and sup-

port and will keep you posted about these activities in newsletters, e-mails and mailings throughout the year. If you just can't wait to call and talk about any of these, give us a call at (775) 324-7667 or (702) 650-6542; fnw@nevadawilderness.org.

Celebrate the 20th anniversary of Friends of Nevada Wilderness

National Forests need help

By Brian Beffort

The Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest is revising their forest plan. At stake is the status of wilderness and roadless area recommendations for more than 400 inventoried roadless areas in Nevada, totaling 3 million acres. In the upcoming plan, the Forest Service will decide which of these roadless areas to **recommend as wilderness**, which to keep in roadless area status, and which to designate for other uses.

We need your help now!

❖ If you have any information about any Forest Service areas that you would like to see become wilderness, such as photos, written descriptions or other information, please contact our Reno office at your earliest convenience.

❖ If you would like to help us develop wilderness proposals for any areas, by visiting them and giv-

ing us your impressions, please let us know. We'll be happy to suggest areas to visit if you don't know of any.

It's a big state, and we are spread thin. It would be a shame if wilderness-worthy areas do not get the recommendations they deserve because there aren't enough people on the ground. Call us now at (775) 324-7667 or e-mail us at wildforests@nevadawilderness.org.

Register to vote!

2004 is a national election year. You can affect your quality of life in the civic, social and natural world.

Voter registration info:

www.yourvotematters.org
or call (775) 324-7667
and we will send you a voter registration form by mail.



Help designate this wilderness

Visit the north Pahrocs

Snaking north and south from Highway 93 east of Alamo, the North and South Pahroc ranges offer unique geology, glimpses of prehistoric culture and ample opportunities to seek solitude and timeless beauty.

The BLM assigned the South Pahroc Range Wilderness Study Area status in the 1980s. Exploring the North Pahroc Range, it's hard to understand why the BLM ignored obvious wilderness values and failed to designate the area as a Wilderness Study Area.

Directions: From Las Vegas, take I-15 north to Exit 64, then Highway 93 toward Caliente and Ely. After about 90 minutes, and roughly 14.5 miles east of the intersection of highways 93 and 318 (.5 miles east of Pahroc Summit), turn left/north onto an unsigned dirt road.

A half-mile past the corral (two miles from the pavement), take the second small track to the right (the first heads along the south end of the range) and drive a quarter mile to a large triangular boulder. Park here, follow a faint hiking trail up the hill to the level bench with scattered boulders and start exploring. Under some of the boulders, you'll find shelters where people hundreds of years

ago sought shelter from the sun. Look carefully, and you'll find both petroglyphs (etched pictures) and pictographs (drawn with pigments). Higher up the slope tower jumbled rocks and cliffs. Who knows what you may find up there?

There are numerous other options for exploring and camping as you drive north into the range. High cliffs and colorful rock formations will tempt you to explore on both sides of the road. Any



Staff watchdogs wilderness planning

Once new wilderness areas are designated by Congress, the ball is tossed back into the hands of the managing agencies to manage the new wilderness following the Wilderness Act requirements and any additional ones Congress put in the legislation that designated the areas. A big wilderness management plan is getting underway for the 10 wilderness areas designated in 2000 in the **Black Rock Desert-High Rock** region.

Friends' staff will be involved in this planning process and all the others listed. If you want to be involved as well, call Brian Murdock at the BLM at (775) 623-1500 and ask to be added to the mailing list for wilderness planning.

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passenger car can access the first spot. High-clearance will be necessary to travel farther north into the range.

This are just the first of many beautiful areas the North Pahroc Range has to offer. Let your curiosity guide you, and you will find many more.

Today, the 17,000-acre North Pahroc Range Proposed Wilderness and the 23,000-acre Big Rocks Proposed Wilderness are part of the Citizens' Proposal for Wilderness in Lincoln County.

If you enjoy the North Pahroc Range and the Big Rocks Proposed Wilderness areas, please contact your senators and urge them to designate the areas as wilderness, in order to protect their scenery and opportunities for accessible solitude and recreation.

SEND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Reno Gazette Journal
rgjmail@rgj.com

Las Vegas Review Journal
letters@lvrj.com

Las Vegas Sun
lvsun.com/opinion

Write to your elected representatives

Hon. John Ensign
333 Las Vegas Blvd. S.
Suite 8203
Las Vegas, NV 89101

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

Jim Gibbons
600 Las Vegas Blvd.
So., Ste 680
Las Vegas, NV 89101



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.

Staff attends state subcommittee to speak in support of wilderness

By *Brian Beffort*

Although wilderness can be designated only on federal lands, and only by Congress, a state legislative subcommittee is holding meetings in cities across the state to discuss issues involving wilderness designation.

Senator Dean Rhoads (R, Tuscarora) is heading the interim Public Lands Subcommittee to Study Wilderness Areas and Wilderness Study Areas. Meetings have already been held in Winnemucca (December 18, 2003), Caliente (January 23) and Ely (February 6).

Friends of Nevada Wilderness staff and members have participated at each of these meetings. We have opened each meeting with a slide show tour of wilderness-quality lands in areas under discussion, so committee members and the public can see the beauty and diversity of Nevada's wild lands. We continue to make the case for wilder-

ness as an important way to protect wildlife habitat, clean air and water, recreational opportunities and quality, traditional hunting opportunities.

Please get involved! It's important to let your state legislators know how you feel about wilderness here in the Silver State. Please come to one (or both) of the next two subcommittee meetings

Reno. March 25, at 1 p.m., at the Western Heritage Interpretive Center, Bartley Ranch Regional Park, 6000 Bartley Ranch Road.

Lovelock. April 29, at 1 p.m., at Sturgeon's Ramada Inn, 1420 Cornell Ave.

Or send your thoughts in writing:

Senator Dean Rhoads
Wilderness and WSA Subcommittee
Attn: Scott Young, Research Division
401 South Carson St.
Carson City, NV 89701-4747

Mt. Rose Wilderness snowmobile ban needs volunteer patrollers to protect the meadows

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Creek drainage (also off-limits to snowmobiles) are immediately adjacent to the snowmobile use area, and incidents of trespass and resource damage by snowmobiles are common. Despite valiant efforts by Ferrell and other volunteers to document snowmobile abuse, she believes trespass is increasing.

In May 2003, Gary Schiff, District Ranger for the Carson Ranger District, which manages the Mt. Rose Wilderness, committed to continue monitor snowmobile trespass and abuse. Recently, the Forest Service received a grant to double the number of backcountry rangers patrolling the area, from two to four rangers.

Snowlands and Friends of Nevada Wilderness are working together with the Forest Service to patrol the wilderness and document snowmobile abuse, in hopes of ensuring that the peace, soli-

tude, clean air and water, and healthy trees remain as Congress intended them to be free from noise, pollution and damage.

"Being able to enjoy nature's solitude is really important to me," Ferrell said. "And if you can't enjoy solitude in wilderness, where can you enjoy it?"

Keep Mt. Rose Wilderness Wild!

Help protect the Mt. Rose Wilderness from the noise, pollution and damage of snowmobiles. Please volunteer to monitor and report snowmobile trespass in the Mt. Rose Wilderness Area.

• Skiers and snowshoers are needed to patrol the Mt. Rose Wilderness and boundaries.

• Non-skiers are also needed to document illegal snowmobile activity along Mt. Rose Highway.

For more information, contact Brian Beffort at (775) 324-7667; brian@nevadawilderness.org. Contact Gail Ferrell at (775) 853-1054; gail@snowlands.org.

"Being able to enjoy nature's solitude is really important to me," Ferrell said. "And if you can't enjoy solitude in Wilderness, where can you enjoy it?"



Volunteers clean up Muddy Mountains

By *Bill Huggins, FNW volunteer*

The second weekend of December saw several members of Friends of Nevada Wilderness as well as members from the University of Nevada in the Las Vegas student environmental group SCOPE enjoying the pleasures of the Muddy Mountains. Newly inaugurated into wilderness status in the 2002 Clark County Bill, the Muddy Mountains Wilderness is rich with opportunities for solitude and adventure.

With a major storm front pushing through the area only a day before the outing, the region was surprisingly dry. Pockets of snow hung from Muddy Peak.

The group hiked into Hidden Valley for several hours, looking for petroglyphs and signs of wildlife. Bighorn had left a few markings, though none were seen.

Sunday, after breakfast, became an impromptu service day. The main camping area was littered with shattered clay pigeons, cartridges from rifles and shotguns, as well as many pistol shells. The group spent nearly three hours digging spent rounds from the dirt and picking up scattered trash.

This area is still wild and remote, yet clearly not safe from exploitation. Increased off-road vehicle use via a side spur into Hidden Valley could

potentially tarnish that beautiful pocket. More visitors to the wilderness means more trash, and gun enthusiasts should learn to clean up after themselves. We'd like to work with the BLM to build a

*Aztec Arch, a natural sandstone formation.
Photo: Howard Booth*



trail from the main camping area into Hidden Valley, to keep folks from straying on to the cryptogamic soils that make the area so unique.

Bighorn sheep, the ultimate trail builders have already carved a game trail much of the way. Are you ready to follow in their tracks?

watchdogs (continued from page 5)

A wilderness plan will be started for the new **South McCullough Mountains and Wee Thump Wilderness** areas near Las Vegas. To be included, call James Sippel with the Las Vegas BLM at (702) 515-5000. A **Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area** planning process is also underway that includes the **North McCullough Mountain Wilderness**. A draft plan should be out for review this summer.

For information go to www.sloancanyon.org. The Forest Service and BLM are also looking at joint wilderness planning for the new wilderness areas near Red Rock Canyon and Mt. Charleston. Questions, call Friends at (775) 324-7667.

The idea of a frontier sparked the American imagination and gave us a sense that there was somewhere else to go. Its existence can change your reality; your awareness of options – always you know you can retreat to such a place – a possibility that opens up the frontiers of consciousness.
– *Stephen Tremble*

Got Cabin Fever?

Volunteer for work in Black Rock wilderness.

The BLM has scheduled several spring restorations trips:

April 10 - 11

April 24 - 25

May 8 - 9

Call Brian at
(775) 324-7667
for details.



Susan Potts named new Southern Nevada Conservation Director



A heartfelt Thank You to all the Friends of Nevada Wilderness new members, and longtime supporting members.

Susan Potts comes to her new job as Southern Nevada Conservation Director with Friends of Nevada Wilderness after working as an interpretive naturalist at Red Rock Canyon and a season in the Valley of Fire State Park.

Susan says she has always loved the desert and is looking forward to bringing that passion for wild open places to her new job. Originally from Ohio, Susan moved to San Diego in 1991 and became a hike leader for the San Diego Natural History Museum while working for San Diego County Parks as an interpreter and environmental educator. She joined the San Diego Tracking Team where she taught animal tracking and participated in wildlife surveys in areas threatened by development. She also worked for three years at the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. She volunteered for projects studying the endangered Peninsular Bighorn Sheep, including waterhole counts, food source studies, installing

water guzzlers, and monitoring the movements of radio-collared Bighorn. She also worked on a mountain lion study for a year collaring the big cats and following their movements using telemetry and GPS equipment.



Susan is eager to use her interpretive naturalist skills to protect wilderness and spread the word about the importance of Nevada's wilderness resources. She says, "As a volunteer, I've been involved in many conservation projects. I love wilderness and have a passion for protecting natural areas. I'm excited to be a part of Friends of Nevada Wilderness!"

And we are excited to welcome Susan on board as a staff member. We encourage

all our southern Nevada members to get to know Susan. She can be reached at (702) 650-6542.

Jeremy Garncarz accepts new position

With heartfelt thanks we bid farewell to Jeremy Garncarz, a ball of fire who has served Nevada's wild lands so well over the past four years as our Friends of Nevada Wilderness Las Vegas Organizer. His unflinching devotion to wild places has led to the protection of many stupendous wilderness areas near Las Vegas. We will all miss Jeremy, but I have a feeling we will still be seeing him in Nevada. Jeremy recently began a new job with The Wilderness Society in Denver, Colorado as their BLM Action Center Outreach Coordinator.

— *Shaaron Netherton, Executive Director*

A farewell message from Jeremy:

Dear Friends,
I am writing to thank all of our wonderful members for the help and support you have given me and Nevada's wilderness over the past few years. I have moved from Las Vegas to embark on a new

journey together with the woman of my dreams. Over the past few years, I have met so many wonderful people and have many great memories that I am sure to keep with me forever. Thank you all for putting up with my requests to sign letters, call our congressional delegates, attend public meetings, make donations, etc, etc, etc.

I am convinced that you are the best wilderness advocates in America and without your help, over the past four years we would not have seen the nation's two newest National Conservation Areas designated and 1.2 million acres of newly designated wilderness in Nevada. Yet you know our job is not done. You need to continue to do the great work that you are doing, continue to bring new people into our movement, and continue to be passionate about Nevada's wild places. With that, I wish all of you the best of luck. **Keep it wild!**

Didn't get your Wild Nevada 2004 calendar yet?

There's still time.

Now on sale for just \$5.00 plus \$2.00 shipping.

Write, call or order online.



Wilderness booth at Earth Day

Come visit the Friends of Nevada Wilderness booth display at **Reno's Earth Day** celebration on **Sunday, April 25** at Reno's Idlewild Park from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Volunteers are needed to help us on this day. If you can help, please call 324-7667.

This year the theme is "Be the Change You Wish to See (in the world)" as said by Ghandi.

Earth Day is filled with family activities and

Thank you, Lyn Dwyer

It's easy to find volunteers willing to drive hundreds of miles into the desert to brave 100-degree heat eradicating tamarisk from a Wilderness stream. But to find someone who's willing to endure fluorescent lights, bad-tasting stamps, paper cuts and boring office chatter....that's really special.

Lyn Dwyer is that special person, a junior at Reno High School. She comes in every week to help get information out to Friends of Nevada Wilderness members. Lyn puts together those new member packets and stuffs those pesky reminders about membership renewals. (She knows some of you need more reminders than others—you know who you are.) Lyn loves sports and will be on the softball team this spring.

Thanks for your efforts, Lyn. Friends of Nevada Wilderness is better off because of you!



discovery; plus, music, food, art, information and fun, educational activities. Participants will enjoy live music and entertainment on a solar-powered stage, a children's activity area, a wide range of delicious vegetarian cuisine and over 80 booths providing environmental information and earth-friendly products.

Earth Day celebrants are encouraged to ride the bus, carpool, walk, bike, board or blade their way to Idlewild Park on April 25. To support human-powered transportation, a bicycle valet service will be available. Attendees are asked to please leave their dogs at home.

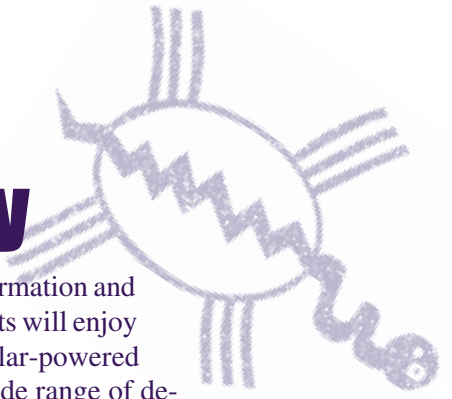
Earth Day 2004 is organized locally by Environmental Leadership.

Karen Boeger wins conservation award

The coveted Golden Pinecone Award went to Karen Boeger, who serves on the board of directors for Friends of Nevada Wilderness. A long-time wilderness activist, Karen was formerly executive director of Friends of Nevada Wilderness. She accepted the award at the Pinecone Ball, in Reno. Organized by Environmental Leadership, the annual Pinecone Ball honors the environmental excellence of peers and colleagues.

Karen won in the "Individual Category" for her work on BLM's Advisory Council and her protection efforts on behalf of the Black Rock Desert and High Rock Canyon Region. Karen is also passionate about keeping off-road vehicles actually on roads and off of wild county.

Congratulations Karen, for many jobs well done!



Here are some of the most remote, least visited and strangest landscapes in the country. I think it is wilderness at its best.

— Steve Smith



Karen Boeger accepts a golden pinecone award. She serves on the Friends of Nevada Wilderness board of directors.