

# Call of the WILD

FRIENDS OF NEVADA WILDERNESS

SPRING 2003

## Washington's assault on Wilderness

by Shaaron Netherton

The Bush administration and members of Congress (including Nevada Rep. Jim Gibbons) are working to dismantle the BLM's policy regarding land use planning and wilderness.

Currently, BLM considers wilderness when their land-use plans are updated. This means groups like Friends of Nevada Wilderness can present new and updated wilderness information to the BLM and ask them to consider additional potential wilderness areas in their land-use planning process. Many potential wilderness areas were missed during the somewhat subjective, political and rushed inventory the BLM completed in 1980.

Congress has designated many areas that the BLM did not recognize as wilderness study areas.

### Eastern Nevada Campaign

by Brian Beffort

As we head into spring, the wheels rolling toward wilderness designation in eastern Nevada are beginning to turn faster.

For over a year, Friends of Nevada Wilderness staff and members of the Nevada Wilderness Coalition have been meeting with locals and agency representatives in White Pine and Lincoln counties, trying to build local support for wilderness in the area, taking inventory of wilderness-quality lands in the area, and addressing concerns brought up by locals. The Coalition's Eastern Nevada Wilderness Proposal is due out by May.

Twice since December, representatives from the offices of Senator Harry Reid, Senator John Ensign and Congressman Jim Gibbons have also visited the counties to begin discussing the details of possible legislation. The recent Clark County Conservation of Public Land and Natural Resources Act of 2002, which combined wilderness design-

(continued on page 2)

The most recent example was the Wee Thump Joshua Tree Wilderness in southern Nevada. In 1980, the BLM said Wee Thump didn't have any wilderness values. In 2002, Congress clearly disagreed. It is now the Wee Thump Wilderness.

Across the West, the BLM has identified at least 25 areas as having wilderness values through their planning process that were not identified in their original inventory. Over 23 BLM land-use plans currently underway are addressing additional potential wilderness areas. Yet anti-wilderness advocates within the administration and Congress are saying that wilderness values should NEVER be looked at again, that the BLM looked ONCE at wilderness values on our public lands and should never review or update that information.

Clearly, resources and values change over time, and no inventory is perfect, which is why land-use plans are updated. A perfect example of this is the growing threat of off-road vehicle impacts on our public lands. Twenty years ago, BLM land-use plans in Nevada said that virtually ALL public lands were open for off-road vehicles to drive anywhere, anytime they wanted. With today's booming population and burgeoning use of motorcycles, quads and other off-road vehicles, our public lands are being roaded at an alarming rate. The BLM and other land-management agencies have responded by addressing restrictions in their land-use plans.

**What you can do to help:** see page 5

Inside:

From the front lines	Page 2
Activist weekend at Wee Thump	Page 3
"Forever Wild" concert	Page 4
Trek the Fortification Range	Page 5
Volunteers needed at Black Rock	Page 6
Sloan Canyon dedication	Page 6
Harry Reid speaks in Reno	Page 7

FRIENDS OF



NEVADA  
WILDERNESS

Earth Day  
2003

Las Vegas  
Saturday, April 19  
at Sunset Park  
10 am - 4 pm

Reno  
Sunday, April 27  
at Idlewild Park  
10 am - 5 pm

Volunteers  
wanted to help  
at event!



# From the front lines

by Shaaron Netherton, Executive Director

## Board of Directors

### Las Vegas Members

Theo Byrns  
David Charlet  
Hermi Hiatt  
John Hiatt  
Macaire Moran

### Reno Members

Karen Boeger  
Henry Egghart  
Corey Lewis  
Ron Hunter  
Roger Scholl  
Marge Sill

### Executive Director

Shaaron Netherton

### Las Vegas Staff

Jeremy Garncarz  
Dino Fulgencio  
Reno Staff  
Brian Beffort  
Pat Patera  
Richard Knox

### Northern Nevada Office

PO Box 9754  
Reno, NV 89507  
(775) 324-7667

### Southern Nevada Office

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

### Website

[www.nevadawilderness.org](http://www.nevadawilderness.org)

### E-mail

[fnw@nevadawilderness.org](mailto:fnw@nevadawilderness.org)

## Get on the list

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

Not only do we have to worry about war with Iraq, but the administration and some members of Congress are waging war on potential wilderness areas around the county. In the last issue of this newsletter we talked about the attack on wilderness study areas by

I ask you all to make a personal commitment to our planet and to Nevada's wild places and get involved.

the Bush administration in an attempt to get rid of over half of the BLM's wilderness study areas. This attack has been broadened with some members of Congress pushing for wilderness study areas to lose their protection.

Much of the impetus seems to come from the oil and gas industry that wants more and more land open to exploitation. In this issue, we discuss a new threat that has just raised its head — an attack on the BLM's

ability to consider wilderness as a resource in their land use plans.

Amid the doom and gloom on a national front, Friends of Nevada Wilderness continues to make progress locally to protect wilderness areas. Our eastern Nevada Wilderness Campaign is moving forward and there is a potential for significant wilderness protection in White Pine and Lincoln

counties.

With Earth Day coming up, I ask you all to make a personal commitment to our planet and Nevada's wild places and get involved. Come to the Walkin' Jim Stolz concerts and find yourself re-energized, come on out to the Earth Day events, write letters (see the action items in this issue), realize that your involvement can and does make a difference.

*Do it for the earth!*

## Eastern Nevada Campaign *(continued from page 1)*

nation with other public-land conveyances, and which included input from the full spectrum of interested parties, is expected to be the model for an eastern Nevada bill. The Congress-

sional delegations have scheduled more meetings for mid-April. The next newsletter will have more updates.

**What you can do!** *see below* ↓

**Please help at this early stage of the process by contacting your Senators and Congressman to express your support for wilderness in eastern Nevada. If you can tell about particular areas you've visited, officials will appreciate your comments. Your voice will go a long way to protecting our precious public lands out there.**



Keeping it Wild:

# Activist weekend at Wee Thump

by Dino Fulgencio

During a field work/camping trip on February 14 -16 at Wee Thump Wilderness, members of the Nevada Wilderness Coalition were joined by several volunteers to do a disturbance and sign inventory in one of Southern Nevada's newest additions to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The area is a dense old-growth forest of gigantic Joshua Trees. Wee Thump means "ancient ones" in the Native-American Paiute language. Scientists have learned that Joshua trees often grow as little as a half-inch per year. In this newly-designated wilderness area, a majority of them stand over 30 feet tall.

The main objective of the trip was to check on whether the Wilderness signs posted a month ago by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to mark wilderness boundaries were still present. It was also an opportunity to take note and report new and obvious human impacts and disturbances in the area to the federal agency.

Volunteers and Coalition members used handheld GPS units to locate the markers and pinpoint where to replace those which were missing. Fortunately, only one BLM Wilderness sign was unaccounted for. Its location was in an old car campsite that could have been recently used be-

cause of the presence of fairly fresh garbage scattered in the vicinity. After collecting the trash in the area, we replaced the sign with the hope that people exercise their better judgment and respect the authority these signs represent.

As part of the trip, the group took advantage of the occasion to make a colorful "Thank You" sign to express their gratitude to our Congressional delegates and their staff for all their hard work in taking a positive first step in ensuring the preservation of Nevada's wild lands with the passage of the Clark County Public Lands Bill.

With a spanking new wilderness sign in the foreground, the rugged McCullough Mountains in the background, and huge Joshua Trees overwhelming the group, they proudly held up their thank you sign and shouted, "Keep It Wild!" as a picture was taken for posterity in the fascinating wilderness area called Wee Thump.



Volunteers hold signs: "Thank You Harry Reid"

## Southern Nevada Happenings

Volunteer Night every first Thursday 4-8 pm at Moose McGillicuddy's Happy Hour

# Friends welcomes new board members

Friends of Nevada Wilderness extends a gracious welcome to two new members of the board of directors. Both live in southern Nevada.

**David Charlet** received his M.S. in Biology and his Ph.D. in Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation Biology from the University of Nevada, Reno. He teaches biology and environmental science at the Community College of Southern Nevada.

Dr. Charlet's research is acutely focused on the natural history of the Great Basin and Mojave Desert. He has worked in most of Nevada's 314 named mountain ranges, and wrote a reference book on the conifers of Nevada. He mapped the vegetation of the Carson Range and much of the eastern Sierra Nevada under a National Performance Review grant sponsored by Vice President Gore's Committee on Reinventing Government.

Dr. Charlet gave a speaking tour in China, as

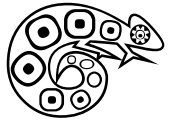
an invited speaker at an international symposium. He spoke at academic institutions in Shanghai and Beijing. Currently, he is working on the Clark County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan.

**Macaire Moran** graduated from Michigan State University's James Madison College with a bachelor of art in Political Economy. After college she moved back to Chicago and worked in international trade. In 2001, with a business partner, she moved to Las Vegas, where they recently expanded their commodity business to include managed securities trading.

Macaire Moran became involved in wilderness issues when she first moved to Las Vegas and discovered the beauty of the surrounding area. She is an active member of the Sierra Club. "I'm excited about working with Friends to increase wilderness all over the state," said Moran.

## Northern Nevada Happenings

Volunteer Night every first Wednesday, 5:30 - 7:00 at Silver Peak Brewery Happy Hour



# Forever Wild: a Wilderness celebration



## Mission Statement

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 lands.

One of America's most unique folksingers and backcountry travelers, Walkin' Jim Stoltz, on tour from the mountains of Montana, will bring his moving multi-media show, Forever Wild, to Reno and Las Vegas.

The photography, stories and music make this one-of-a-kind concert an inspiring journey into our nation's last wilderness areas.

Walkin' Jim gets his name from over 25,000 miles he has walked through the wild country of North America. Carrying a guitar and writing his songs along the way, his lyrics express a great love and respect for the Earth and the wild places he knows so well.

Known for his powerful baritone and emotion-packed vocals, his Forever Wild show combines live music and poetry with stunning, multi-image slides. The mix of photos and music results in a stirring celebration of wilderness. Stoltz is a veteran of 30 years of performing. In this year's show, he will share images and songs from his recent Yellowstone to Yukon walk, the Nevada and Utah wildlands, the Northern Rockies, the Pacific Crest Trail from Mexico to Canada, and wild places all over America.

Walkin' Jim has toured extensively for over 18 years and has been presented with the En-

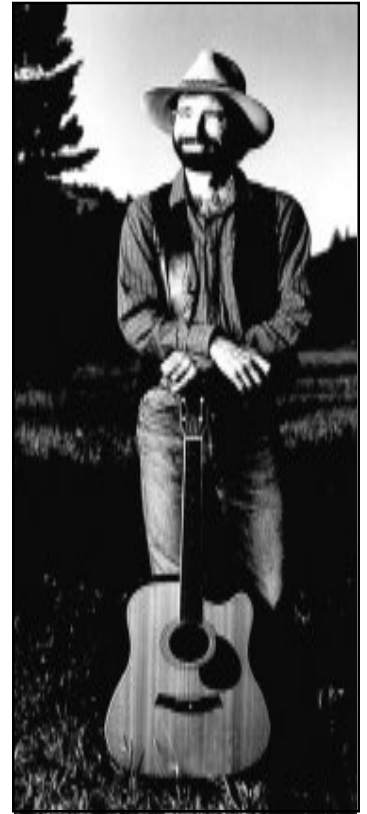
vironmental Protection Agency's Outstanding Achievement Award for his sharing of nature and wilderness across America.

Edward Abbey, the late author of so many nature classics, described Stoltz as "a music man of exuberance and passion, with more to say in one song than Frank Sinatra ever managed in a whole bloody concert."

This event is a benefit for Friends of Nevada Wilderness to help their efforts to protect Nevada's wild places.

Event sponsors include the Atlantis Casino Resort and Patagonia, Inc. For more information, call (775) 324-7667 or (702) 650-6542.

*Hear a sample of Walkin' Jim's music online at [www.walkinjim.com](http://www.walkinjim.com).*



### Reno

**Atlantis Casino Resort  
Saturday, April 26 at 7:30  
Doors open at 7:00**

### Las Vegas

**CCSN West Charleston  
Campus, D-152  
Thursday, April 17 at  
7:00 pm**

### Tickets

**Friends of  
Nevada  
Wilderness at  
(775) 324-7667  
(702) 650-6542.**

### Prices in advance:

**adults \$15, students with valid ID \$10,  
children under 12 are \$7.50.  
Tickets will be \$5.00 more at the door.**



# Trek the Fortification Range

By Brian Beffort

If you happen to be driving U.S. 93 south of Ely as the sun is setting toward the horizon, you'll learn quickly how the Fortification Range got its name. Glowing steep and bright in the setting sun, the range's sheer western cliffs indeed resemble a great golden castle. But this is the just beginning of the beauty the Fortification Range has to offer. On the range's northeastern flank, Cottonwood Canyon will give you a good sense of the area's true diversity and beauty.

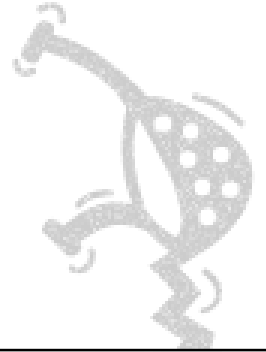
Once you're on the jeep track leading into Cottonwood Canyon, it will quickly become apparent why this canyon is different from so many others in the area. Thanks to water draining from the higher reaches of the canyon, and from Cottonwood Spring, the drainage is choked with a thriving tangle of ash, willow and cottonwood — a beautiful respite from the normally arid terrain.

Park your vehicle at a convenient turn-around spot, grab some food, water, sunscreen, sunglasses and sun hat, and maybe a windbreaker in case you plan to hike to the top of the ridge, and set out for a wonderful hike up the canyon.

The tight pinyon-juniper forest can get disorienting. Luckily, the canyon is relatively narrow, so you shouldn't worry about getting lost. As you hike, you'll get glimpses of tangled rock formations rising above the trees. Soon, you'll see a crown of golden rock along the top of the canyon. Although the climbing is steep at spots, you should be able to pick your route up to the crest of the range. De-

termined hikers should aim for Fortification Peak rising to over 8,200 feet to the south of the canyon. An unnamed peak over 8,000-feet tall makes a good goal to the north. Both will reward you with stunning views of the range's wonderful terrain, the valleys below, and Mount Grafton rising to the east.

Anyone who visits the area will learn the truth about what wonders wait here and why it's worth protecting.



*Towering cliffs mark the Fortification Range*

## What you can do about . . . Washington's assault on Wilderness

*(story on page 1)*

Please write Representative Gibbons (address at right) and let him know you support BLM's Wilderness Inventory Handbook and that you demand the BLM continues to look at Nevada's wilderness values as well as other resource values during the planning process.

For a copy of the letter that Gibbons signed to Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton, log on to the Friends web site at [www.nevadawilderness.org](http://www.nevadawilderness.org) and go to the action section.

### FORTIFICATION RANGE - COTTONWOOD CYN

*Just the facts:*

**DIRECTIONS:** Roughly 18 miles south of Major's Place (the intersection of U.S. 93 and U.S. 50/6), and ½-mile north of the Lake Valley Summit, turn east onto a well-graded dirt road. A sign will point to Atlanta. Drive about 15 miles southeast, then south along the east of the range. After about 12 miles, the road will split at a fence. Continue driving straight south three miles until you find a jeep trail heading west (right) up into Cottonwood Canyon. Enter the canyon, then park at a convenient place where you'll be able to turn around. The route quickly gets too narrow to turn around.

**FACILITIES:** None.

**DETAILS:** Ely BLM at (775) 289-1800

[www.nv.blm.gov/ely/](http://www.nv.blm.gov/ely/)

### **Honorable Jim Gibbons**

440 S. Virginia St.,  
Suite 502  
Reno, NV 89501

### **Honorable Harry Reid**

440 S. Virginia St.,  
Suite 702  
Reno, NV 89501

### **Honorable John Ensign**

440 S. Virginia St.,  
Suite 738  
Reno, NV 89501



# Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area

by *Jeremy Garnarz*      *Dedication Ceremony conveys improvisation, inspiration*



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

*Special thanks  
to  
The Pew Charitable  
Trusts  
Wilburforce  
Foundation  
Wyss Foundation  
Patagonia  
Tortuga Foundation*

On Monday, February 17, Nevada's Congressional delegation, along with tribal members, formally dedicated America's newest National Conservation Area, the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area, located at the southern end of the Las Vegas valley. About 200 people attended, including members of the Nevada Wilderness Coalition, Friends of Sloan Petroglyphs, Friends of Red Rock, and local area residents.

The ceremony began with a bit of improvisation, due to technical difficulties — the sound system that was supposed to play the National Anthem failed, which led to an unknown audience member chiming in and leading the crowd in an acapello singing of the National Anthem. After a moving introduction prayer and speech from Wally Antone, Quechan spiritual leader of Winterhaven,

California, members of the Nevada congressional delegation addressed the crowd.

Senator Reid thanked Sherm Fredericks from the *Las Vegas Review/Journal* for introducing him to the area years ago and really proving to him that the area needed some form of permanent protection.

Senator Ensign, Representative Gibbons, and Representative Porter all gave fine speeches, each recognizing the area's unique quality and Senator Reid's relentless efforts to seek appropriate permanent protection for the area.

The event was a huge success. Looking back, I cannot help but think about the future. I realize how beneficial this National Conservation Area will be to the quality of life of those living in southern Nevada and in all of these United States.

## Wilderness volunteers needed on the Black Rock Desert

The weather's getting warm, but not too hot. Now is the time to get out in fresh air, flex your muscles and enjoy Nevada's wonderful wilderness.

The Bureau of Land Management and the Nevada Conservation Corps have crews working in the Black Rock Desert on the following dates. They are inviting members of the public to join them. This is a great opportunity to get out on the ground and give something back to your public lands. Plus, public involvement in these projects also helps assure funding for these projects in the future — and there's a lot of work to be done out there!

There will be other opportunities to volunteer throughout the summer, as well.

If you're interested, you can register (it's free — we just need to know how many people are coming) by calling Brian Beffort at (775) 324-7667.

And don't forget to mark your calendars now for National Public Lands Day, September 20-21, when we'll combine the work with a big barbecue, campfire and celebration on the Black Rock playa.

Get out your pens, and mark a weekend in your calendar, then call Brian for details about dates, times, activities and how to prepare.

The dates:  
April 12-13,  
April 26-27,  
May 10-11

## Black Rock Desert management plan unveiled

**It's here! It's here!**

The Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area plan/EIS is finally out for public comment. Comments are due by June 5th.

The BLM will have a meeting in Reno on Friday April 25 at the BLM Office from 4-7.

You can request a hard copy or CD from the Winnemucca BLM — call (775) 623-1500

or download the plan from:  
[www.blackrockhighrock.org](http://www.blackrockhighrock.org).

This plan will guide how the new NCA and wilderness areas are managed.

Please visit the Friends of Nevada Wilderness website for potential talking points for your comments, a full list of public meeting times and places and more. [www.nevadawilderness.org](http://www.nevadawilderness.org)



# Senator Harry Reid speaks out

by Ron Hunter

Senate Minority Leader and Nevada's senior senator, Harry Reid, spoke at the Patagonia Service Center on Feb.18. Before a standing-room-only crowd, which included the media, the northern Nevada environmental community, and many Patagonia employees, Reid introduced his Renewable Energy Development Incentives Act. This bill gives a tax incentive to renewable energy providers in Nevada and across the nation. By hosting this event, Patagonia took the stance of a business leader that supports both renewable energy and protection of the environment.

Friends of Nevada Wilderness and other members of the wilderness coalition took this opportunity to thank Senator Reid for his leadership in protecting southern Nevada's wild places.

For many years, Reid has been a champion on environmental issues, including the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the Clean Air Act, and in the restoration of Lake Tahoe.

- ✓ He established Great Basin National Park.
- ✓ He wrote the 1989 Forest Service Wilderness bill for Nevada.
- ✓ He helped create the Red Rock Canyon and Black Rock Desert National Conservation Areas.
- ✓ He passed the visionary Truckee River Settlement Act, and in doing so, saved Pyramid Lake, and provided a more secure supply of clean water

for you, me, and every other resident of the Truckee Meadows.

✓ He saved the Owyhee Canyonlands from gratuitous military over-flights.

✓ He recently helped breathe life back into the fight to save Walker Lake.

✓ Senator Reid has battled to protect the wonders of nature and wildlife at Yellowstone from the pollution and noise of unfettered snowmobiling.

✓ He masterminded the successful effort to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from oil and gas exploitation.

✓ Senator Reid has waged a valiant battle against those, including President Bush, who would damage Nevada by shipping nuclear waste to Yucca Mtn.



## Bequeath a future of Wilderness

A wonderful way to honor a friend or family member who has loved the wild places of Nevada is to make a contribution in her/his name to the Friends of Nevada Wilderness Endowment Fund. This fund will grow as the years pass.

Friends of Nevada Wilderness has a long-range mission: to help Nevada's wild places remain wild forever. Since you share this commitment, you may wish to make a legacy gift to Friends of Nevada Wilderness a part of your estate planning. For further information, call Shaaron Netherton (775) 324-7667.

## Memorial gifts and bequests

We hope you will consider the Friends of Nevada Wilderness in your estate planning. Memorial gifts and bequests can permanently support conservation in Nevada. We welcome inquiries about bequests at (775) 324-7667.

If you wish to make a provision in your will, the following general form is suggested:

"I give, devise and bequeath to the Friends of Nevada Wilderness, a Nevada not-for-profit corporation, located on the date hereof at One Booth Street, Reno, NV 89509, the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (or specifically described property)".

Declare your wilderness support with a "wild" T-shirt  
Printed on 100% organic cotton.  
New styles arriving soon!  
Check for styles on website:  
[www.nevada-wilderness.org](http://www.nevada-wilderness.org)  
Please specify size:  
S, M, L, XL  
Cost: \$10 + \$2 shipping.