

MBCA News  
Tuesday, July 15, 2015

***Cool Get-away Event in the Mountains this week-end***  
**Big Bear's 12th Annual Xeriscape Garden Tour FREE!**

When: Saturday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 9AM – 4PM

Location: pick up tour booklets at Emingers Mountain Nursery, 9AM-12PM

*Learn how to create beautiful, drought-tolerant landscapes that are easy on the eyes and easy on maintenance. The tour features several homes with artificial lawns and challenges visitors to tell which lawns are real and which are fake.*

*The DWP demonstration garden will also be on the tour with native plant experts on hand to answer questions.*

**Conservation News:**

**Invasive Campaign continues**

MBCA remains active in efforts to prevent the explosion of invasive plants in the Basin. Most recently responding to a call to assist pulling tumbleweed near Pioneertown that pose a fire danger to the Wildlands Conservancy's Pioneertown Mountains Preserve and surrounding areas, as well as threaten native plants that can be over-taken by this invasive. Thanks to the Weed Warriors who responded & please stay tuned for alerts for weed pulls as we battle each invader!

The Basin is not alone: for an informative and inspiring story of how our neighbors to the south have mobilized to battle Sahara mustard, check out this video: [Anza-Borrego Wild Flowers Threatened By Invasive Plants.](#)

**Scenic Highway 247 status sought**

MBCA recently joined the growing list of organizations and businesses endorsing Homestead Valley Community Council and Morongo Basin Historical Society's efforts to designate highway 247 as a Scenic California Highway. The [Scenic Highway 247](#) committee's goal is to preserve the scenic beauty and remarkable history of this unique route, originally established by wagon wheels.

The rural communities in Homestead Valley are faced with a magnitude of proposed and future development from renewable energy projects that threaten their quality of life, property values and visual impacts to the majestic landscapes that draw tourists from around the world. Scenic Highway status is sought to provide a

measure of protection from such industrialization. Forty-four projects on public, state and private lands in Homestead Valley are already in the works, under review, permitted or building.

Caltrans has designated 247 as "eligible" for Scenic Highway status. The local governing body for Scenic 247 is San Bernardino County. The County must make the application to Caltrans. Scenic 247 Committee is urging for their immediate action to request this over-due designation. The Scenic 247 Committee welcomes organizations and businesses to [join](#) the list of supporters.

### **Desert Advisory Council (DAC) requests extension for DRECP review**

The BLM's DAC DRECP (Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan) subcommittee formed to develop comments on the overall plan ahead of the actual availability of the DRECP Draft EIR/EIS. DAC and other organizations have expressed their concern that the usual 90-day response time frame would not provide adequate review time for informed comment. They contend that the 10,000 page length of the document warrants providing a longer response period of 180 days. The plan release date is still pending

### **MBCA Board of Directors meeting**

There will not be an August Board of Directors meeting. The Board will meet for their annual Directors Retreat.

Regular second Thursday monthly Board meetings will resume in September:

September 11<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 –7:00 PM; location: Yucca Valley Community Center.

Thanks for your continuing interest and support! !

Sincerely,  
Sarah Kennington, President

#### Your 2014 MBCA Board

Sarah Kennington, President  
Steve Bardwell, Treasurer  
Pat Flanagan, Director  
Ruth Rieman, Director  
Laraine Turk, Director

David Fick, Vice President  
Deborah Bollinger, Director  
Meg Foley, Director  
Claudia Sall, Events Director  
Marina West, Recording Secretary

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

*MBCA advocates for a healthy desert environment  
that nurtures our rural character, cultural wealth,  
and economic well-being.*