



In Honor of

MBCA's Founder, Susan Luckie Reilly



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50TH YEAR COMMEMORATIVE

CELEBRATING THE PAST

Envisioning the Future



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DESERT NIGHT

Poem by Susan Luckie Reilly





A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENTS

The Morongo Basin has a great legacy of conservation advocacy. The landscape and its inhabitants are astonishing. They are awesome, regenerative, beautiful, and tough, yet fragile.

In the 1920's Minerva Hoyt rallied attention and the political will required to convince the federal government to set aside the land for the Monument, today's Joshua Tree National Park. Known as the first desert conservationist, she almost single-handedly brought the idea of conservation to the Mojave. Every day the personal will that drove her efforts to preserve the desert deservedly becomes more widely known and garners greater appreciation for her accomplishments.

MBCA has been on the job since 1968 in service to the Basin and the surrounding desert. Our 50th anniversary presents an opportunity to tell our story – the challenges, campaigns waged, the people. As the work is often behind the scenes, this book provides insights into MBCA's advocacy. We remember the incredible legacy of work over the years as we prepare for ongoing efforts to conserve the desert's natural resources and the quality of life in the Basin's rural communities.

In the tradition of Minerva Hoyt, MBCA's founder Susan Luckie Reilly and her colleagues labored to convince urban decision makers who disregarded the value of the desert of its importance. They won that early battle and created the foundation MBCA stands on today. Affectionately known to

some as SLR, Susan was a true leader and a driving force for preservation and protection of the Southern California Desert. The momentum and the success of their early grassroots organizing are our heritage and continue to inspire MBCA Directors today.

We have learned from these first 50 years that if it isn't a transmission line, it's a scheme to dump L.A.'s garbage, build industrial-scale renewable energy plants, or some other ill-suited development for the desert and our rural communities. At this juncture, we must contend with the biggest threat yet - climate change, along with ever-escalating pressures to expand development. Research is accumulating to show the ability of desert soils to sequester carbon. When the desert surface is scraped it is irreparably damaged and carbon is released into the atmosphere. There are much better alternatives. Save the desert! Save the planet! No time like the present as there are still many who have yet to discover and understand the wonders of this landscape. We will work together to find viable solutions to preserve the intact desert ecosystems.

It's with genuine pleasure that we participate in the great legacy of desert conservation. We are pleased to offer this celebratory book on the occasion of MBCA's 50th Anniversary. We look forward to our healthy future!

Sincerely, Steve Bardwell, President 2019 - 2020 Sarah Kennington, Past President 2014 - 2018 The Morongo Basin
Conservation Association
advocates for a healthy
desert environment
that nurtures our rural
character, cultural wealth,
and economic well-being.

A Mission Worth Supporting

THE EVOLUTION OF MBCA's LOGO



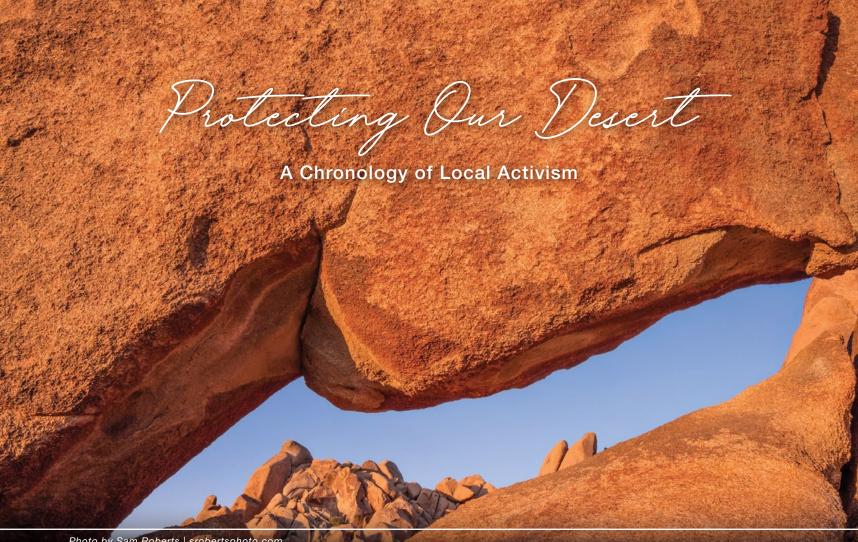
Logo was used from MBCA's earliest days until 2012. Original graphic designer unknown.



2012 "Earthline" logo redesign by Steve Rieman remains the organization's iconic logo.



2019 - 50th Anniversary Logo by melissasabol.com



"All of that wonderful desert out there should not be left unprotected!"

- Susan Luckie Reilly

THE OF MBCA

In 1969, the Bureau of Land Management was looking for FOUNDING a way to connect Los Angeles to Southern California Edison Company's Mohave powerplant

in Laughlin, Nevada. Susan Luckie Moore (later known as Susan Luckie Reilly) brought the news to the Hi-Desert Tract Owners Association. Only a month later Susan and her friend Lilian Conlan had organized the Morongo Basin Scenic Committee, which by year's end became the Morongo Basin Conservation Association, MBCA. Before long, MBCA would go on to partner with the Hi-Desert Tract Owners Association on future challenges.

In opposing the proposed transmission lines, MBCA created "information depots" that distributed information about the suggested route and the likely effects on local communities. MBCA ran petition drives to oppose the project at the county level and organized friends and neighbors to submit letters and attend a BLM-led meeting in 1970. Some twelve hundred people showed up to oppose the project and describe the negative impacts it would have on local property values and the Basin's tourism-based economy that depends on the area's natural scenic values.

Despite strong local opposition, the battle against the 500-kilovolt line continued through the 1970s until the California Desert Conservation Act finalized utility corridors along the present-day I-10 freeway in 1980.

To a certain extent, MBCA's opposition to transmission lines is a story of neighbors joining together to protect the scenic values of their community against the schemes of large corporations. But the story of the transmission lines actually tells a much larger tale: how a group of neighbors came to understand the connections between the Morongo Basin and the rest of Southern California and how to use these connections to advocate for environmental issues that extend far beyond the delicate desert ecosystem that we call home.





Dr. James Luckie Mural in Twentynine Palms, CA

1970s and 1980s DESERT AIR & COAL PLANTS

Susan Luckie Reilly (1916-2017) came to the desert with her father, Pasadena physician James Luckie. Dr. Luckie recommended the

desert's clean, dry air to veterans suffering the ill effects of mustard gas poisoning in World War I. He was not the only doctor encouraging travel to the desert. At the time, many doctors encouraged those with tuberculosis to come to the desert; nevertheless, Dr. Luckie continues to be known as "the father of Twentynine Palms."

By the 1950s, U.S. air quality was more than a concern only for the sick and elderly; it was a national headline. In 1948, twenty people died from complications of poor air quality in Donora, Pennsylvania, and more worried about the effects of poor air quality during the post World War II population boom in Southern California and the Los Angeles Basin.

The smog, along with land giveaways from the federal government under the auspices of the 1938 Small Tract Act, lured many out to the desert for weekends and vacations.

In her letter of June 19, 1977 Susan L. Moore (Reilly), serving at the time as the Morongo Basin Conservation Association's Director of Publicity and Education, expressed to Twentynine Palms resident, Martha D. Dizon:

"The desert is no longer a 'wasteland;' people live there and many of them care very much about their good air and scenic beauty. Many have left the 'amenities' of city life to seek the health benefits of the clean desert air."

While vacation homes cropped up all over San Bernardino County – where 75% of Small Tract Acts in California were filed – other aspects of coastal Southern California were creeping into the desert as well. Smog began to travel through the passes and into the desert, prompting smog warnings in the Coachella Valley. Morongo Basin residents feared pollutants from the South Coast Air Basin would soon come to spoil the crisp air that had been such a draw.

Along with coastal development and the increasing demand for goods and services, and housing and highways, and the power to run everything, came growing public concern about air pollution and other consequences of urban growth. Utilities and other polluters, under increasing pressure to move away from urban growth, began scouting for cheap real estate outside of the Los Angeles Basin. New proposals identified desert areas like Lucerne Valley as

sites where energy could be produced and brought to the city. With the series of energy crises in the 1970s, the dual concern of cleaning the LA Basin's air was coupled with a need for homegrown energy often in the form of coal-fired powerplants.

But MBCA opposed the solution that many energy generators proposed: dirty the desert to power the city. MBCA members attended Environmental Protection Agency hearings, asking for desert air to be protected at current levels instead of allowing it to be degraded to the same levels as in urban areas. In proposals and comments to keep the desert as a public health protection area with lower levels of pollution, MBCA activists asked that the desert be kept as pristine as it was for the "invalids" who began arriving after World War I. Campaigners worked with county officials to support extending air protections to the desert, attended federal and state level hearings, and even supported a local health survey to determine how many Morongo Basin residents had moved to the region for the benefits of the clean air.

In time, the proposed coal-fired powerplant in Lucerne Valley was defeated in favor of an alternative site in Ivanpah Valley, and the plan to bisect Morongo Basin with transmission lines was abandoned. But even as the battle to maintain the scenic values and air quality of the Morongo Basin continued, new threats arose.

Susan Luckie Reilly as a Park Interpretive Ranger circa 1965 (top); Susan Luckie Reilly, right, at an "information depot" in the 1970s (bottom).









The 1990s led to new battles for the Morongo Basin and the Mojave Desert. Perhaps no issue ignited more local debate than the proposed Bolo Rail-Cycle Landfill that was to be located along a rail line near the tiny outpost of Amboy, California, some fifty miles northeast of Twentynine Palms. As urban landfills began reaching capacity waste management companies sought overflow sites across the desert; Bolo was one in a series of landfills proposed in the California desert. Eagle Mountain, Amboy, Newberry Springs, Ward Valley, and Broadwell Dry Lake were all targets for proposed landfills that would contain household waste, hazardous waste, or low-level nuclear waste.

The history of landfills in the United States and growing opposition to them by city-dwellers explains the sudden jump in landfill applications in the California desert. In 1976, the passage of federal regulations on landfills created a series of standards. By the 1980s, environmental justice activists were opposing the new siting of landfills in low-income and predominantly African-American communities. As a result, waste management companies began scouting for sites far away from the cities that generated the trash.

The proposed Bolo Rail-Cycle Landfill was to accept 21,000 tons of household trash daily, much of which would be trucked through Morongo Basin with the balance sent via the Southern Pacific Railroad. The plan would lead to a landfill with a footprint of nearly three-and-a-half square miles and as high as a 40-story building. In the Environmental Impact

Report for the proposed project, one of the significant impacts that could not be mitigated was air quality.

As was the case for a proposed coal-burning power plant in nearby Lucerne Valley, the effects would disproportionately affect the Morongo Basin because of predominant wind patterns. In her report to the MBCA in 1994, Susan Luckie Reilly described the myriad air quality impacts that would affect the Morongo Basin, which included an increase in Particulate Matter 10 and nitrogen oxides in areas where air quality was already considered below national air quality standards. Of course, the landfill would also affect scenic values of the area by creating an artificial mountain of waste on the bajada floor. Another concern included potential impact to water quality in the underlying aquifer as well as safety issues associated with an active earthquake fault-line below the proposed site.

Other organizations fought the Bolo Rail-Cycle Project, including the Committee for the Protection of Rural Independence and the Desert Environmental Response Team, or DERT, a political action committee. Led by Morongo Basin activists Chris Carraher, David Fick, Ray Kirkham, and Charla Shamhart, DERT's mission was to "defeat all of the exploitative and destructive schemes to utilize Southern California desert for the purpose of dumping for profit and all proponents thereof." This group fought tirelessly to oppose a succession of proposed desert dumps in the 1990s. They used both county government and grass roots organizing to

oppose the projects, including two ballot measures (one of which was successful) and successfully campaigning in the 1996 race for San Bernardino County Supervisors who were opposed to the mega-dumps.

At the turn of the millennium, new issues and new leadership were on the horizon for MBCA.



Julia Sizek is a PhD candidate in anthropology at UC Berkeley and an Associate Scholar with the Native American Land Conservancy. She studies land management policy on the checkerboard of federal and private lands in California's eastern Mojave Desert.

Button-Making Workshops: Long before the development of social media, lapel buttons were commonly used to promote many grassroots movements. Pictured here is a collection of buttons used by the Desert Environmental Response Team, or DERT, in the 1994-95 effort to stop the proposed Bolo/Rail-Cycle MegaDump, a 400-million-ton landfill that was to be located in the desert near Amboy, CA. DERT's Mike Perez, Jeff Nygard, and David Fick designed, printed, cut, and pressed buttons – hundreds of them — one at a time, into a button machine with DERT/MBCA's DJ Masker, Chris Carraher and others.



INTO THE 2000s CHRIS CARRAHER ON MBCA'S PERIOD OF TRANSITION

Community organizer Chris Carraher, a subsequent MBCA president and present board member emerita, reflects on the lull and eventual resurgence:

MBCA was nearing the end of a natural life cycle when I joined in the mid-'90s. The original membership was aging, and there was limited outreach to renew the organization. But we found the need for MBCA had not diminished, and by 2005 a process of revitalization had begun that led to the thriving MBCA of today.

As membership diminished, a survey was developed to determine whether or how to continue. The results demonstrated a perception that MBCA's work continued to be relevant and needed, and the leadership accepted the affirmation to go forward.

At the same time, Esther Herbert was active recruiting new members to the board, such as Pat Flanagan and Ruth Rieman, who provided crucial new energy and ideas. As president I began trying to modernize the organization as well as respond to the burst of rushed development beginning around 2004 that accompanied the housing bubble, especially in the West Basin. The board continued to grow and revitalize.

Beginning in 2006, coming out of the shadows, MBCA became part of a legal effort and referendum that challenged the approval for building the Walmart Supercenter, responded to the renewable-energy land rush, and supported various efforts to combat poorly conceived projects such as the ill-fated transmission line known as Green Path North transmission project. We led the campaign to eradicate



invasive mustard and supported responsible use of off-road vehicles, among other things.

Since 2006, MBCA has become a regional leader in alerting and educating desert communities about potential threats to the desert and to their rural lifestyle.

More than 1,400 EBlast subscribers receive monthly news updates on issues and events from MBCA, often

including a request to register their comments on regional development issues. MBCA's Letter Writing Committee also drafts sample comment letters with extensively researched and documented details for use by supporters. Challenges

[&]quot;Stop the Green Path Invasion" Poster, Designed by Rik Livingston

of this era have included inappropriately sited renewable energy projects, water conservation and depletion of ancient desert aquifers by those who aim to export that water for profit, out-of-scale housing and commercial development that would harm the environment and local small business, and defending dark night skies for health and tourism. MBCA's efforts support Joshua Tree National Park both directly and indirectly by preserving the character and welfare of its gateway communities in the Morongo Basin and beyond.

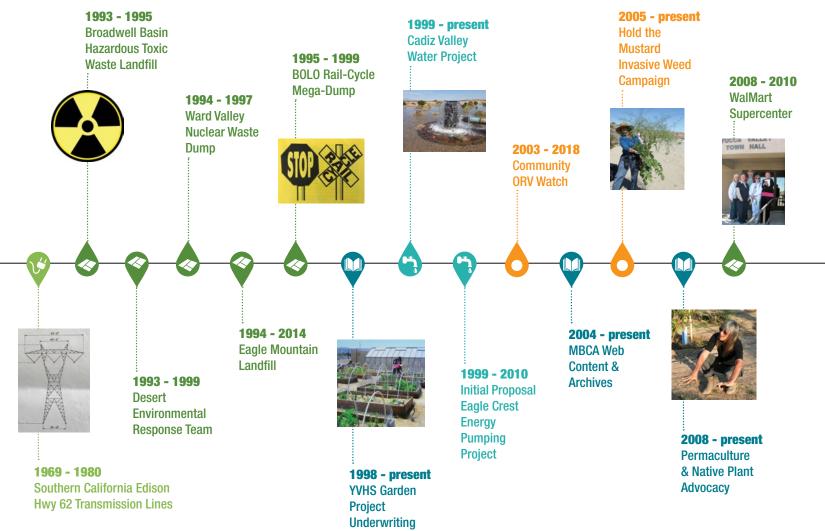
What has remained constant through the decades...

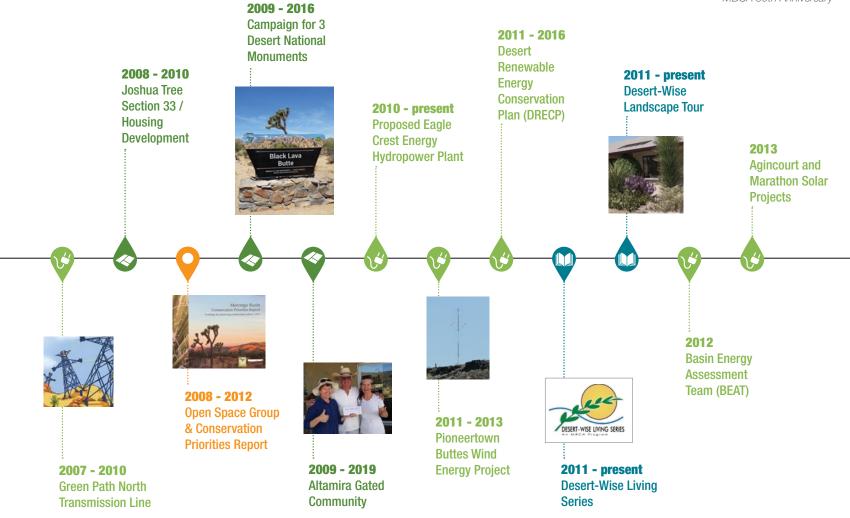
MBCA has always been a clearinghouse for information and a brain trust of some of the most experienced and capable environmentally concerned persons in Morongo Basin. The knowledge of local environmental history embodied in MBCA is deep and wide, and its connections to the greater desert environmental community, allies, and decision-makers are unparalleled. It is a force to be reckoned with in the preservation of the natural environment in and around Morongo Basin, and the "go-to" organization for anyone with concerns about the environmental health of this beautiful desert land that we all love.

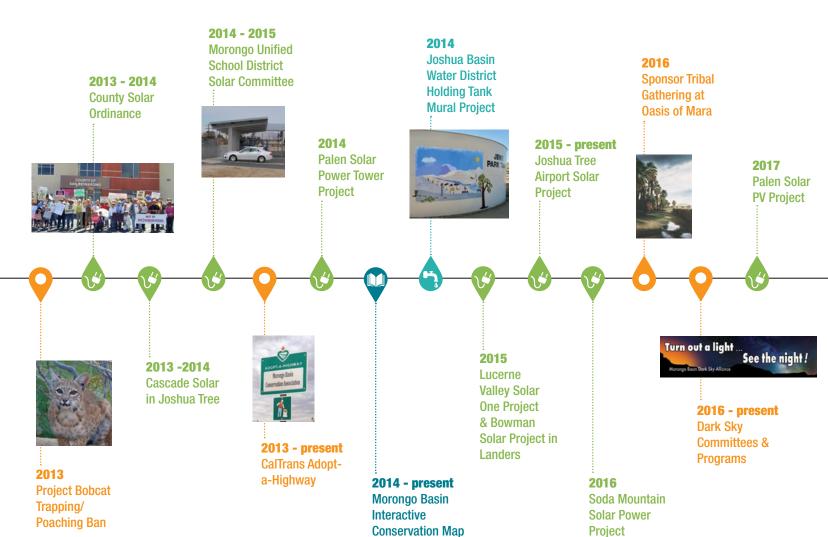
"So MBCA in a way has passed from one life cycle into another over the last 50 years."

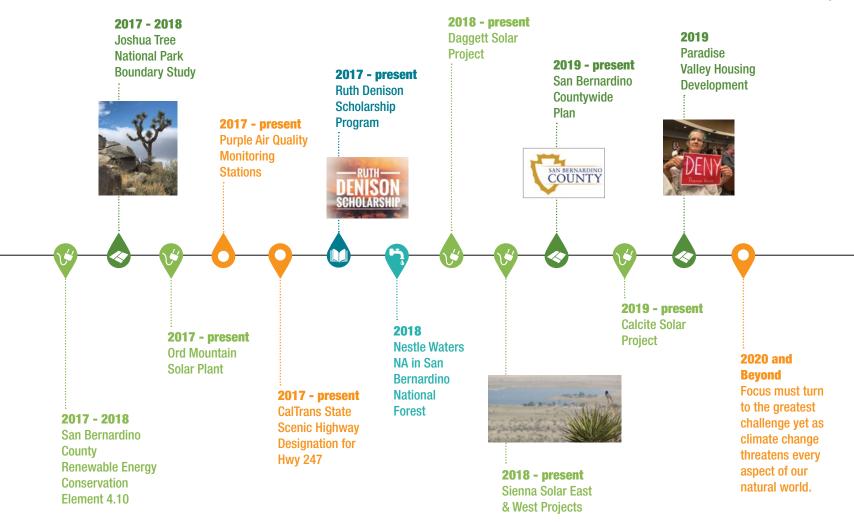
Christine Carraher, Director









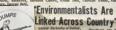




PFocus

The footprint watcher





Yes on L No on M



reen Path North!

Water-wise tour highlights the benefits of planting loca

MBCA DIRECTOR SAYS DON'T LET

At the first annual election | secretary; Ralph W. Fisher,

Yucca Valley, Robert Purcell of proposed bylaws measures, es-Yucca Valley, a director, tablishing a dues structure and

summed up the group's efforts designating January as the an-

Morongo area, in a report titled for Thursday, Feb. 11, 2 p.m., at

to prevent a high-tower power nual meeting month.

Now that the Bureau of Land Joshua Tree.

The

membership approved

Next board meeting is slated

the Elinor Fairbanks office in

POWER LINE ISSUE FADE AWAY

meeting of Morongo Basin Con- treasurer. servation Assn., held Jan. 28 in

line being routed through the

Management's team of experts has agreed with the MBCA in

opposing this route for the 500 MBCA Says Power Plant to Still Add to Pollution



Voice of the People

ortance! Perhaps their most far

blic services and facilities, preserva

fall will be given the oppo roals evolved by a small, har up of interested citizens

tings: the first in Victorville Expert: Small solar systems will power us into future

Letters of protest are sug-J. P. Vukasin, Jr., chairman, California Public UtilitesCom-

ior, Washington, D.C. 20240;

University Avenue, Box 723,

The MBCA suggests reminding in Yucca Valley in 1969, itions to the PUC protesting the Land Management study team report, "The Impact of Power

commending against any new

the RIM hearing in Twenty



TORIUM AFFECTS POWER PLANTS

JNE HEARING-Federal officials conducted hearing in Twentynine Pale ard statements of about 40 people, virtually all of them protesting plan to bring rough Morongo High Desert. About 1100 attended. Shown from left to right ards, Bureau of Land Management, USDI, Washington, D.C., Land Use Planner er, BLM, Riverside; Robert Purcell, Yucca Valley, one of the leading

Page C6 - HI-DESERT STAR - Thursday, July 20, 1972

MBCA URGES PROTESTS

Edison Moving to Acquire \$10 Power Line Right-of-Way

vation has just received reports Company along its formerly through the Morongo Basin, in the Twentynine Palms area.

ton, Secretary of the Interior, vironment, " Sept. 1970 (re-U.S. Department of the Inter-

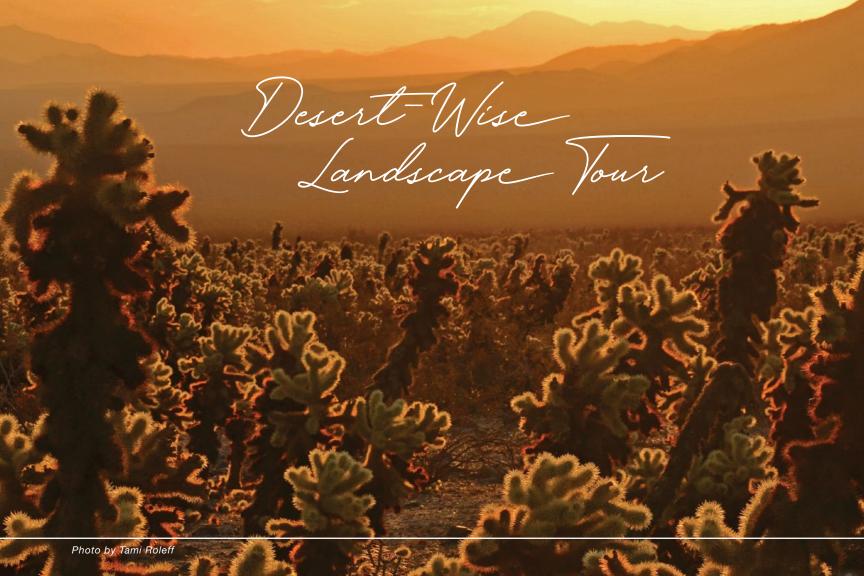
SPARC representatives and consultants.

"Why should San Bernardino County be burdened with generating electricity for growth on the coast?" Sarah

Kennington, right, of Pioneertown, asked the county

YUCCA VALLEY - The

Locals urge county to put off solar projects





WATER-WISE LANDSCAPING BEGINS TO GERMINATE IN DESERT COMMUNITIES

The seeds of the Desert-Wise Living Program were planted in the kitchen of Claudia Sall. Hard to say exactly what year, but most likely it was in the mid-1990s. Claudia invited Bob Moon, chief of Natural Resources, creator of the Joshua Tree National

Monument's "Center for Arid Lands Restoration" to sit down with her, Robin Kobaly, and Ruth Rieman. Bob shared his book *Landscaping with Native Plants* and his incredible knowledge as an ecologist about our surrounding desert.

Fits and starts within the Morongo Basin's communities kept alive these notions of creating real examples of water-wise landscapes to both instruct and inspire desert denizens. In 2007 these dreams of sharing examples of responsible, water-wise landscapes took root for MBCA. Members were invited to tour three sites beginning at the Oasis of Mara and the vegetable garden which serves the 29 Palms Inn restaurant. Next stop was Bill Sheffler's newly recreated residential landscape in the Sherman Highlands area of Twentynine Palms. Final stop was amid the iconic rocks in Joshua Tree at the home and property of Luana Lynch and DJ Knowles. Thus began MBCA's blossoming into an educational, activist organization, leading the way to more emphasis on education and a resulting transition from a 501(c)(4) to a 501(c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit organization.

By April 2011, serious planning and cultivation matured into the Desert-Wise Living Program with a full bloom landscape tour of twenty sites spread across the Morongo Basin. During 2019, the 50th anniversary of MBCA, we embarked on the ninth Desert-Wise Living Program. It has grown in both popularity and scope to include a January annual meeting that brings focus to not only water issues but energy conservation, renewable energy and other issues impacting our region, the two-day spring Landscape Tour, and a popular fall seminar.

The current DWL Landscape Tour is made possible by the efforts of an all-volunteer board of directors backed by many, many volunteer docents who assist site hosts on tour days. Loyal sponsors contribute to the program's sustainability. Among them are Bighorn-Desert View Water Agency, Golden State Water Company, Hi-Desert Water District, Joshua Basin Water District, Mojave Water Agency, Twentynine Palms Water District, and Southern California Edison. Participation in the self-guided tour has increased significantly since 2011 drawing local and regional folks and an increasing number of international travelers.

LANDSCAPE TOUR 2019

Total Visits Recorded at 21 Sites over 2 Days	1602
Range of Visitors per Site	40-103
Average Visitors per Site	76



Each year the Desert-Wise Landscape Tour holds an essay competition among tour goers, hosts, and docents. From the words and thoughts included in each year's essays we can conclude that we are achieving our goals of inspiring others to reduce water and energy use and to set examples for others to follow.

The following excerpts from past essay competitions illustrate the point...



"This Desert-Wise Landscape Tour has been a great assist to me. I have been able to save myself some trial and error, as well as money as I add small splashes of color and interest to my yard. The published native plant lists out there are helpful to me but there is nothing like being able to see an established plant up close and personal to really appreciate it. Then to be able to ask its age and see its real-life growing conditions is truly invaluable information."

- Bernadette Dollard, 2012

"Most of all, this tour helped me to remember, that when we come to a new environment, we should leave our old ideas behind, look around, and let ourselves be inspired by the possibility of Going Native."

Cynthia Heaton, 2018

"There was no effort to change the desert; the sites were working to blend in and enhance the desert experience. That is how people need to approach living in this strange and wild place. The focus and information on water use and how to keep it low is critical and I appreciated all the information in the tour booklet as well as what people told me."

- Susan Jordan, 2017

"Finally, I came away from this site with a better idea of how rainwater can be harvested and guided to where it is needed. So, cutting water usage for landscaping is great, but using only natural rainfall? What a concept! And it is possible, eventually, with smart planning."



Tour Docents 2013

TOUR DOCENTS ARE ESSENTIAL

Docents are the 'boots on the ground' for the Desert-Wise Landscape Tours. These volunteers assist both tour-goers and site hosts, lend their knowledge and personal experience, and provide an element of continuity.

We are so grateful to all of the docents listed at the right, who volunteered for one or more of the Desert-Wise Landscape Tours between 2011 and 2019.

Larry Coulombe D'Anne Albers Mary Coulombe Jessica Dacey Carol Damon Caryn Davidson Steve Bardwell Etienne Decludt Jean Bixby Tim DeLorey Janice Blaisdell Destiny Diaz Gayla Blandon April Dice Stacy Doolittle Deborah Bollinger Cheyenne Bonnell Kathy Dougan **Curt Duffy** Bonnie C. Brady LynAnne Felts Terry Burkhart David Fick Abraham Calleros Karen Flahive Pat Flanagan Anne Cholakian Almut Fleck Michelle Corbin Meg Foley Judy Corl-Lorono Ida Foreman

Pat Freter	Steve Kerr	Jo Marie McKenzie	Ray Roberts	Kay Taylor
Victoria Fuller	Sarah Kirkley	Jane McRae	Larry Rosen	Donna Thomlinson
Yanina Galvan	Seth Kish	Cindy McVay	Tom Rottman	Karen Tracy
Ann Garry	Sylvia LaBonte	Bruce Miller	Robin Ruggeri	Bill Truesdell
Nancy Garsick	Bonnie La Gassa	Roxanne Miller	Claudia Sall	Kathy Truesdell
Betsy Goza	Bill La Haye	Hiroko Momii	Daniel Sall	Sue Tsuda
Clyde Grabski	Kat La Haye	Jane Mootz	Rosie Sandoval	Eddie Tucker
Jean Graham	Ken Lair	Jesse Morman	Maria Selva	Janet Tucker
Sherry Gray	Yvonne LeGrice	Phyllis Moss	Darrell Shade	Laraine Turk
Teresa Harvey	Mike Lipsitz	Al Murdy	Esther Shaw	Mary Helen Tuttle
Sherry Harwin	Judy Litowitz	Ann Murdy	Diana Shay Diehl	Cindy Von Halle
Ruthellen Hatfield	Azrael Lorono	Michelle Myers	Laura Sherrod	Marinna Wagner
Laura Hauther	Kathleen Lowndes	Kathleen Newman	Martha Sims	Stephanie Weigel
Katherine Hilton	Marilyn Lutz	Jim Pfanner	Sandy Smith	Marina West
Bernadette Ingalls	Norma Mackie	Lynn Portera	Dennis Staley	Crystal Wysong
Morgan Jenkins	Arch McCulloch	Bonnie Rainey	Max Stein	Dave Yanos
Louis Kannenberg	Nelda McCulloch	Jerry Sue Reynolds	Michelle Strong	Joe Zarki
Jean Kenna	Charles McHenry	Ruth Rieman	Catherine Svehla	Colleen Zuhlke
Sarah Kennington	Nancy McHenry	Steve Rieman	Rick Swanner	





TOUR HOSTS MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE

By volunteering to open their treasured and hard-won desert-wise gardens for a day, tour hosts demonstrate to dozens of visitors the methods and results of creating artful landscapes with minimal water use. The hosts listed to the right have all either opened their home garden or provided access to an organization's facility. MBCA is grateful for their donation of time and enthusiasm.

Hector Alvarez	Patty Domay	DJ Knowles	Tony Milici	Eva Soltes
Manuel Anaya	Paula Durrant	Robin Kobaly	Cheryl Montelle	Steve Stajich
Robin Anaya	Meg Foley	Bonnie Kopp	David Morgan	Kristin Stevens
Pam Anders	Dale Fredenburg	George Kopp	Art Mortimer	Bianca Stoker
Tony Angelotti	Shelly Fredenburg	Bill La Haye	Eric Mueller	Clint Stoker
Jim Austin	Vicki French	Kat La Haye	Sean Mylett	Max Thomas
Steve Bardwell	Debra Frost	John Lauretig	Dan O'Dowd	Doug Thompson
Alan Bartle	Martin Frost	Brian Leatart	Jim Pfanner	Gillyan Thorburn
Kathleen Bartle	Frederick Fulmer	Steve Lippman	Molly Quinones	Antony Van Couvering
Scott Bohannon	Richard D. Gerston	Mike Lipsitz	Sharon Resnick	Scott Walker
Cheyenne Bonnell	Jill Giegerich	Tina Lord	Ruth Rieman	Mark Walter
Benjamin Bottoms	Paul Goff	Nora Lousignont	Steve Rieman	Steve Warden
Gary Bowers	Pamela Goodchild	Luana Lynch	Joan Robey	Marina West
Kimberly Bowers	Jean Graham	Phillip Maberry	Mary Robillard	Sherry Wickham
Joris Brinkerhoff	Alan Hedman	David MacKenzie	Ron Robillard	Karma Williamson
Regina Brinkerhoff	George Huntington	Martha Mackey	Gene Rotstein	Mark Williamson
Mark Butler	Nancy Huntington	Judith Marchyn	Leslie Rotstein	Carrie Yeager
Jennifer Byrd	Stephanie Ince	Don Matthews	Carl Schoeneman	Catherine Zarakov
Ann Congdon	Allie Irwin	Melva Matthews	Phyllis Schwartz	Stanley Zarakov
Ron Cousino	Snake Jagger	Jerry Mattos	Richard Schwartz	
Shelley Currie	Bruce Jones	Robin Maxwell	Miriam Seger	
Phu Do	Meredith Jones	Scot McKone	Catherine Sheehe	
Forrest Dobson	Sarah Kennington	Rosalie Mendoza	Randy Smith	
Shelley Dobson	Bob Khoury	Bobette Milici	Susanne Smith	



HISTORIC WOMEN HEROES OF JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK AND MBCA

We continue to draw inspiration from the skills and dedication of the many women pioneers-of-conservation in the Morongo Basin. Among the most notable are Minerva Hoyt, Susan Luckie Reilly, Susan Frugé, and Esther Herbert.

Supporters of Joshua Tree National Park and local conservationists know the role of Pasadena socialite Minerva Hoyt in establishing the national park. Her perseverance in bringing desert awareness to the federal government in the 1930s and '40s culminated in the establishment of Joshua Tree National Monument, protection of our native plants and desert ecology, and provided a wider appreciation of the desert and its wonders.

Beginning in the late 1960s, the best-known local activist for desert preservation was Susan Luckie Reilly. Susan, a Joshua Tree National Monument ranger in the 1960s, became a tireless advocate for the preservation of the natural desert environment in the Monument and local communities. She became a key organizer and founder of the Morongo Basin Conservation

Association in 1969. Additional background and information about Reilly can be found in other sections of this book.

Susan Frugé, a founder of the California Native Plant Society and hero of Joshua Tree National Park, moved with her husband August to an inherited cabin in Twentynine Palms following their retirement from positions at the University of California Press in northern California. Together they curated the Joshua Tree National Park bookstore inventory, served on the Park Association board, and through a bequest supported the publication of the book *Preserving the History of Joshua Tree National Park* by Lary Dilsaver.

A historical review of MBCA would be incomplete without mention of the indispensable director Esther Herbert. Her 17-year tenure began in 1991. Much of that time she dedicated herself to the organizational tasks of board secretary and treasurer. Herbert offered stability and leadership during MBCA's "Period of Transition" and accompanying downturn in activity; and she remained steadfast pushing for MBCA's impressive growth in membership and activity in the 2000's.

Opposite page, left to right: Long-time directors -- DJ Masker, Susan Luckie Reilly, Esther Herbert. Top to bottom: Susan Frugé, Susan Luckie Reilly, Minerva Hoyt







"I love it here. Being a board member of MBCA was my sole project after retiring as a Los Angeles School Administer besides taking pictures of this special place. I was so happy to be part of an organization whose founders like Susan Luckie Reilly took action at a critical time to acknowledge its fragility, making sure it was preserved, and following the example that Minerva Hoyt had set with establishing the Joshua Tree National Monument/Park.

MBCA knows and recognizes full well that together we can make a difference and the future of this special place depends on us educating and enlisting others to take action to preserve its natural beauty."

Esther Herbert, Board Member Emerita, 2019



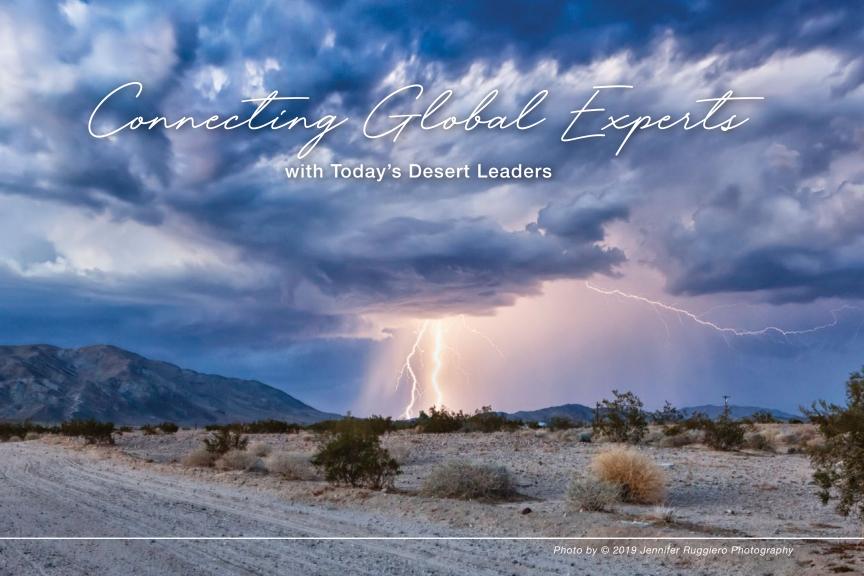
MINERVA HOYT DESERT CONSERVATION AWARD

This prestigious award by the Joshua Tree National Park Association, and the accompanying desert-wide recognition, has three times been given to MBCA directors. The award recognizes those who advanced early desert champion Minerva Hoyt's legacy through their leadership, protection, preservation, research, education, and stewardship of California's desert lands.

The first Minerva Hoyt Award was presented to MBCA founder Susan Luckie Reilly in 2004. Long-time director and past president Ruth Rieman and husband Steve together received the award in 2012 and in 2017 Pat Flanagan was honored. Their nominations by community members honor their far-reaching and passionate efforts that "lead to a significant and lasting contribution on behalf of the deserts of California."



Top Photo: Steve and Ruth Rieman. Bottom Photo: Pat Flanagan pictured with Mark Lundquist (Morongo Basin Field Representative to Third District San Bernardino County Supervisor)



SHARING, TEACHING & LEARNING ACROSS GENERATIONS

The Morongo Basin Conservation Association works to cultivate the next generation of conservation leaders. This is demonstrated through the support of the Yucca Valley Ecology class, the Ruth Denison

Environmental Conservation Scholarship to a graduating local high school student, and in the public programs of the Desert-Wise Living series.

Inherent in nearly every Morongo Basin Conservation Association program is an effort to bring together young and old. Over time, it has become apparent that the sharing of knowledge and ideas doesn't flow in just one direction. For that reason, we value, encourage, and where possible, foster a healthy sharing of information, ideas, and innovation among cohorts, between young and old, and among related organizations in Morongo Basin and throughout the desert Southwest.

The 2019 Annual Meeting and Energy Summit, for example, celebrated MBCA's 50th Anniversary with a program that brought together senior and internationally recognized experts in renewable energy generation, S. David Freeman and Angelina Galiteva, with "this generation" of local leaders. They included Frazier Haney, Associate Southern California Director for the Conservation Lands Foundation; Vanessa

Moreno, Program Assistant at the Council of Mexican Federations in North America; Jack Thompson, Desert Regional Director and Staff Photographer at The Wildlands Conservancy; and Marinna Wagner, landscape architect and environmental researcher. At the end of the day, the free flow of shared information in every direction created an environment where two plus two could quite likely equal five ... that the sum of the parts could be greater than the whole. It's a concept that we at MBCA value.

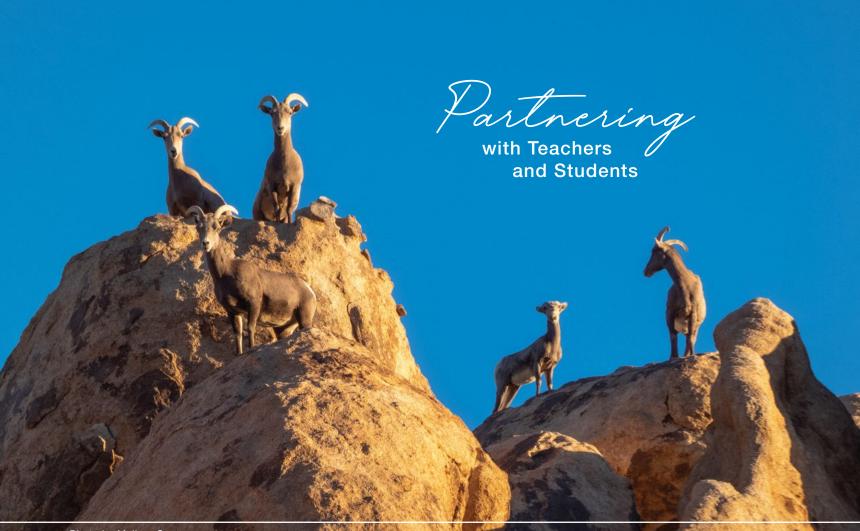


Director Sarah Kennington introduces 2019 Energy Summit keynote speakers Angelina Galiteva and S. David Freeman.



"MBCA can be proud of its valiant and largely successful fights to preserve the pristine desert in California. But meanwhile a giant greenhouse in the sky was created by all of us burning fossil fuels to drive our cars, heat our buildings and generate electricity. So, we need to add to our defense of the desert an offense to substitute renewable electricity for the fossil fuels. Otherwise climate change will destroy what we have worked so hard to preserve."

 S. David Freeman, one of the nation's foremost energy policy authorities, reflects on his impressions of MBCA. Freeman was a keynote speaker at the 2019 Annual Meeting and Energy Summit.





INFLUENCING THE NEXT GENERATION

As a teacher, parent and community leader, Cindy Zacks' influence and efforts to protect the desert have been far-reaching. Her popularity among students can be attributed to her passion for the environment and teaching. She often takes her lessons out of the classroom and into the natural environment using field study methodology. Lessons on unique desert environments and key individuals who preserved them are enriched with back-pack field trips to those sites, often on her own time. Since they began, MBCA has supported those field trips and programs such as the organic garden at Yucca Valley High School with an annual grant.

More than 400 students have graduated from Zacks' Field Ecology Classes. Among those graduates is daughter Sierra Zacks, now a Wilderness Guide, who apparently inherited an appreciation for the desert as evidenced by her writing.

Photo: Cindy Zacks

Many of Zacks' students have gone on to studies in the environmental sciences and conservation. They have held positions at the Wildlands Conservancy, the Mojave Desert Land Trust, and the Conservation Lands Foundation to name a few. Cindy was the 2016 recipient of the prestigious Minerva Hoyt Desert Conservation Award.

The Hi-Desert Star newspaper published a series of essays written by students in Zacks' ecology class. From 2011 to 2016 essays were regularly featured in the paper's Opinion section under the heading "Field Notes." They covered a wide range of topics; selections from among those many essays follow, from 2012.

Wood carving sunsets
Black mountain on purple sky
Sweet quiet morning
Creosote scent on the breeze
Rock wren xylophone
Vibrant singing of stars
Dusk and dawn in the desert
Indian Cove

by Sierra Zacks

To those who truly belong

by Altagracia Echeverria

Strangers, those who simply pass through on the highway, perceive the Morongo Basin as a dull, tedious desert. What they cannot understand is our desert bursts with color. Endless amounts of purple and yellow wildflowers bloom during spring, intense green from honey mesquite with bountiful pods, and the soft look of redtop buckwheat all harmonize into a single view. It is remarkable to see such different plants in our Basin. All these thoughts, images and senses came to me while hiking. I realize the importance of our desert. It is truly exceptional.

I Remember

by Abby Schlickenmayer

I sit in the shade of a Joshua. Builders have come again to the land I love, the small patch of desert I call my own. They tagged my favorite trees and fenced off the land. It hurts to know my favorite place will soon be lost. The tranquil desert I came to love will be a sea of concrete and walls. I wish I could pull out the stakes like I did before, but I understand this is beyond my control. I wish I did not have to sit and watch as builders pour concrete in a place full of my favorite memories.



RUTH DENISON SCHOLARSHIP

In late 2016 MBCA announced the inaugural Ruth Denison Conservation and Environmental Scholarship for a graduating Morongo Basin high school senior. Long-time MBCA supporter Ruth Denison was the first Buddhist teacher in the United States to lead an all-women's retreat for Buddhist meditation and instruction at the center she founded, the Dhamma Dena Desert Vipassana Center, in Joshua Tree. Denison's generous bequest allowed MBCA to fulfill a longstanding goal – to increase support of environmental education for local students preparing for environmental or conservation-related careers.

The annual \$500 scholarship has been awarded to three area graduates, all from Yucca Valley High School.

Top left photo: Morgan Novak in 2018 with former MBCA president Sarah Kennington; Top right photo: Nicole Serrano in 2017 with Kennington; Bottom photo: Isabel Ortega in 2019 with current MBCA president, Steve Bardwell and Kennington.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

MBCA gives priority to personal community engagement and outreach by taking part in area events and making ourselves visible and available either at a resource table, informational booth, parade contingent, or other interactive display. Such contact fosters dynamic engagement with supporters, the curious, and anyone with an interest in desert conservation and protection. These efforts not only offer MBCA an opportunity to sign up new members and network with other like-minded organizations, but also allow the public an opportunity to put a human face on MBCA.

Another aspect of community engagement includes informing the public of upcoming meetings, public hearings, and legislative actions where community input and testimony are warranted. MBCA also provides logistical support where needed to facilitate that testimony. This is support in the form of fact sheets, transportation, coaching, and other assistance. Whether it be shuttling people to public hearings in San Bernardino or helping to defray attendee travel expenses to an area tribal gathering, MBCA gives priority to answering those needs that are otherwise likely to go unmet and overlooked.



"This is the first time I've seen something like this where all facets of community are coming together to talk about solar in one location. This is something very important to us and we need more of this statewide. Your community is doing something that is leading the way and I hope you continue to do more events like this."

Mike Tomlin, Southern California Edison, speaking at MBCA's 2010
 Annual Meeting, "Take The Step, Go Solar"

Issues Advocacy

"Beneath the rule of men entirely great, the pen is mightier than the sword." Those words, from English novelist Edward Bulwer-Lytton, are as true today as they were when he penned them in 1839. The Morongo Basin Conservation Association allocates significant resources toward researching and writing advocacy letters and position papers.



MBCA strongly believes in the power of the pen and as such frequently authors or co-authors letters designed to inform and influence political representatives, policy makers, and other key actors on

conservation and environmental issues that impact or have the potential to impact the region. MBCA director, lead writer, and researcher Pat Flanagan's extensive collection of meticulously researched and evidence-based advocacy letters has become the gold standard in support of desert conservation issues.

MBCA is consistently out in front and leading the way when ill-conceived development projects, wrongly sited power plants and landfills threaten to disrupt desert ecosystems,

release dangerous particulate matter, or interrupt carbon sequestration on the desert floor. The substantive nature of these letters is critical to bring decision-makers' attention to scientifically-based analysis and criticism. They also provide desert advocates with a resource to enable meaningful comments at public hearings.

You are invited to review MBCA's archive of issues advocacy documents at MBConservation.org.

Educational Programs

MBCA produces and organizes an annual meeting each January as well as a fall educational program. Both events attract a wide range of people from across Southern California to participate in our leading-edge speaker programs, symposiums, and workshops under the Desert-Wise Living Program name. The series is dedicated to the public good and presented free-of-charge thanks to the generosity of the Bighorn-Desert View Water Agency, Golden State Water Company, Hi-Desert Water District, Joshua Basin Water District, Mojave Water Agency, Twentynine Palms Water District, and Southern California Edison.

On the following pages you will find descriptions of the programs presented by MBCA during the last decade at annual meetings and fall events.

FALL DESERT-WISE LIVING PROGRAMS 2011-2019

2011 Desert-Wise Landscape Workshop

Botanist Robin Kobaly and native plant nursery owner Mike Branning demonstrate the benefits of native plant gardening.

2013 Desert-Wise Landscape Workshop

Botanist Robin Kobaly returns with an encore presentation of her very popular native plant workshop from 2011.

2015 Water in Dry Times

- Peter Brooks -The Future of Water: Understanding the World's Most Precious Resources
- Jill Giegerich & Tim DeLorey What Difference Can Each Water-user Make?
- Deborah Bollinger Assessing Irrigation Systems – How much water are you wasting?

2017 California's "Net Zero" Energy Program

Will Vincent & Ron Kliewer of Southern California Edison, highlight the benefits of Zero Net Energy Programs for home owners.

2012 Desert-Wise Landscape Lectures

- Deborah Bollinger How to Calculate Landscape Water
- Josh Hoines, JTNP -Restoring Natives on your Property
- Katie Kain, JTNP Invasive Plants
- Mike Branning, Unique Garden Center - Landscape Drip Irrigation
- Jill Giegerich and panel on Permaculture

2014 High-Desert Water-Wise Landscaping Workshop

Botanist Robin Kobaly demonstrates how to transform home landscapes into desert wise garden-scapes with guidance on plant selection and irrigation.

2016 Moving Toward Community-Based Renewable Energy

- Peter Brooks Understanding the Challenges to Renewable Energy in the US
- Darrell Reynolds The Mojave Water Agency's plan to build an in-conduit hydroelectric generator
- Professor Alfredo Martinez-Morales, UC Riverside - Real-life community-scale/neighborhood renewable energy projects

2019 History of Water in the Desert

Tom McCarthy, General Manager of the Mojave Water Agency, on the past, present and future of water in the desert.



TEN YEARS OF ANNUAL MEETINGS

2010 Take the Step. Go Solar

Representatives from energy agencies, plus solar installers. and homeowners encourage rooftop solar.

2011

Discovering the Beauty of **Desert-Friendly** Landscaping

With live specimens, expert knowledge, and enthusiastic encouragement, botanist Robin Kobaly demonstrates the benefits of residential native plant gardening.

2012

Dark Skies: Turn out a light! See the night!

Members of the County-appointed Dark Sky Alliance explain the damage from light pollution and demonstrate dark sky practices.

2013

Solar Power Seminar

Public media blogger Chris Clarke and local architect Steve Bardwell explain the big picture and homeowner viewpoints on renewable energy.

2014

Critical Resources **Update: Renewable Energy & Water**

State energy expert Angelina Galiteva joins locals April Sall and Marina West to explore the status of renewable energy and water conservation efforts in California and the Morongo Basin.

2015

Communities. Communication & **Empowerment: Strategies for Effective Engagement**

and environmental experts and activists offer residents strategies and tactics to influence decision-makers on issues affecting public health and welfare in the desert.

2016

Energy Symposium in conjunction with the California Desert Coalition

With emphasis on current and evolving conservation strategies, presenters from three California communities engaged in renewable energy planning and production highlight the advances and goals of their projects.

2018 **Permaculture** for Arid Lands

Jill Giegerich presents the concept of permaculture as practiced in the desert to encourage land use that is optimal for desert conditions and human wellbeing.

A panel of local conservation

2017 **What About** Mv Water?

A panel of leaders from four local water districts discuss their status and strategies for maintaining adequate and safe water for Morongo Basin communities.

2019

Energy Summit: Perspectives from Global Leaders and **Regional Talent**

Internationally-known energy experts David Freeman and Angelina Galiteva explain past and present status of renewable energy efforts in California, and a panel of local next-generation conservationists explain their organizations' goals and activities.



DIGITAL EDUCATION

MBConservation.org

Students and educators, journalists, policy makers, advocates and others here in the Morongo Basin and across the globe rely on MBConservation.org as a trusted resource for up-to-date conservation and environmental related topics impacting life, land, air and water resources throughout the California deserts. The services and resources that MBCA makes available include:

- A one-stop Community Calendar of community lectures and events of interest to MBCA supporters. Local organizations represented include the California Native Plant Society, Morongo Basin Historical Society, 29 Palms Historical Society, Joshua Tree National Park Association, Hi-Desert Nature Museum, as well as relevant lectures at UC Riverside, Palm Desert, the Palms Springs Library, and other "low desert" venues. The Calendar also provides notification of important public sector meetings where conservation and environmental issues are up for discussion.
- Access to News Updates related to MBCA's interests with links to original sources, listed in sequential order since 2013.
- Access to an archive of all MBCA EBlasts since 2013.
- A SEARCH function within the website offering fast and efficient, comprehensive access to all tagged subject matter and topics.

- Documents, position papers, and other resources in support of personal conservation-minded actions including directories of native plant nurseries, local pointof-use solar contractors, illustrated guides to identifying and eliminating invasive plant species, information on area recycling and hazardous waste disposal, contact information for elected representatives and other decision-makers, and links to our partner organizations and other like-minded groups.
- In partnership with the Mojave Desert Land Trust MBCA provides an interactive conservation map of the Morongo Basin with scientific and community data useful for planning, research, advocacy and other applications.

EBlasts

Since 2013, more than a hundred of these electronic messages have gone out to approximately 1,400 recipients, each a comprehensive overview on an issue or issues, with a call to action in the form of comment letters, meeting attendance, or participation in other community gatherings. These communications may also provide notice of relevant community meetings and events.

News & Event Updates

Nearly a hundred subscribers rely on these shorter, more frequent emails on breaking news, urgent actions, and other communications outside of the EBlasts.



MBCA GOVERNING BOARD

The MBCA's monthly Board of Directors meetings are transparent and open to the public. It is recommended that guests confirm meeting time online at MBConservation.org in advance.

The distinguished title of Director Emerita is given to those individuals who have retired their board seat at MBCA but maintain a relationship adding archival memories and valuable insights. Three past directors hold that title; Esther Herbert, DJ Masker, and Christine Carraher.

In addition to the board of directors, a number of heroic, long-time volunteers warrant mention for their lasting contributions. They include Gail Dallas, Harry Bowkley, Cathy Zarakov, and Nora Lousignant, among others.

FOSTERING A CULTURE OF TRANSPARENCY

As an all-volunteer non-profit the Morongo Basin Conservation Association is beholden to the public trust. The organization has earned and maintained that trust over the past 50 years by fostering a culture of transparency at every level of the organization. Our meetings, files, audited financial statements, minutes, and documents of every kind remain transparent and available for public review. Every director serving MBCA must study, sign and abide by a conflict of interest policy. Each understands that there can be no conflict of interest nor the appearance of such a conflict in any and all dealings associated with the Morongo Basin Conservation Association. Directors also must accept and abide by public and private grant regulations as well as MBCA policies for document management, gift acceptance, reserve funds, emeritus status and scholarship nominations.



2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Steve Bardwell, President
David Fick, Vice President
Pat Flanagan
Meg Foley
Sarah Kennington
Mike Lipsitz
Ruth Rieman
Seth Shteir
Laraine Turk, Secretary
Marina West, Treasurer
Claudia Sall

(Standing): Mike Lipsitz, David Fick, Laraine Turk, Ruth Rieman, Marina West, Sarah Kennington, Meg Foley, Claudia Sall, Pat Flanagan, (Kneeling): Steve Bardwell, Seth Shteir

DIRECTORS 1969-2019

Harry Althoff

Scores of dedicated desert denizens have given their time and energy to the Morongo Basin Conservation Association as directors on our governing board. Together, their efforts represent a half century of advocacy and education. Here is a list of those we have been able to gather from our archives; we regret any omissions.

Pat Flanagan Frank Kasner

Meg Foley Gracie Kasner

Louise Fordham Sarah Kennington

Robert Frick Ray Kirkham

August Frugé Richard Knowles

Christine Carraher Robert Frye Hilma Kohler

Andy Anderson Barbara Castro Gladys Gates Elinor Kratz

Charles Anderson J. Colaw George Goemans Mike Lipsitz

Evelyn Bain Frank Cowgill John M. Haddaeus Victor Lu

Clarence Baker Francis Daft Verne O. Hansen Arlene Lucas

Hermione Baker Glenn A. Davis Florence Hennell DJ Masker

Steve Bardwell Leila M. Ellis Esther Herbert Vivian McKee

Theodore Bickmore Charles Ellsworth Edvin Herd Eldora McLaughlin

David Bigler Alice Engelskirchen June Hill Albert Monette

John Billings Carolyn Evans Odell Hill Ruth Moore

Deborah Bollinger David Fick Donald C. Jacobson Loran E. Perry

Harry Bowkley Ralph Fisher W. F. Karz E. W. Peterson

Lee Lukes Pickering

Seth Shteir

Fred Pickett

May Skipwith

Robert Purcell

Beulah Smith

George Reil

Bill Souder

Susan Luckie (Moore) Reilly

Anne Stalev

Elma F. Richardson

Doris Stasse

Ruth Rieman

Catherine Svehla

Forrest Riordan

William Swarat

Leslie Rotstein

_eslev Thornburg

David Sabol

Chris Tiffany

Frances Sabol

Laraine Turk

Claudia Sall

Virginia Wagner

Grantly Samuel

Marina West

Vincent Scott

Carl L. Williams

Charla Shamhart

Esther Shaw

Lynne Shmakoff

THANK YOU to the volunteers that served in an advisory capacity.

Cynthia Anderson	Steve Mills
Chuck Bell	Julie Monson
Don Boering	Ann Murdy
Harry Bowkley	Steve Rieman
Christine Carraher	April Sall
Caroline Conway	Danny Sall
Stacy Doolittle	Phyllis Schwartz
Nancy Downer	Richard Schwartz
Curt Duffy	Charla Shamhart
Almut Fleck	Cathy Sheehe
Victoria Fuller	Lorrie Steely
Greg Gilbert	Catherine Svehla
Brian Hammer	Stephanie Weigel
Esther Herbert	Mark Wheeler
Mike Lipsitz	Cathy Zarakov
Judy Marchyn	John Zemanek
Carol Miller	

DONORS & SPONSORS

A Message of Gratitude

Today MBCA counts more than 1,400 individuals as supporters receiving our EBlasts and News Alerts.

Membership dues, significant donations, and foundation support have contributed to the successes MBCA has achieved in the past fifty years. Financial support has been instrumental in allowing MBCA to conduct public programming and community outreach. The aim of those efforts has been to build an understanding and respect for the region's natural resources – primarily water and energy.

Legacy Gifts

A 1984 bequest from former board member Beulah Smith of Joshua Tree significantly contributed to the organization's sustainability. Beulah's gift was invested by the board of directors with the goal of achieving long-term security for MBCA. That investment has grown into a reserve fund that assures MBCA will continue to serve the Basin communities and desert environment for years to come.

Education is an essential component in the pursuit of a healthy desert environment. In 2016, MBCA received a bequest from



Ruth Denison

the estate of Ruth Denison. Ruth was a remarkable woman who founded the Dhamma Dena Desert Vipassana Center, which is devoted to the study of an ancient meditation technique, in Joshua Tree. As a longtime supporter of MBCA, Denison routinely demonstrated her generosity and devotion to the desert. In turn, the MBCA Board of Directors established the Ruth Denison Environmental Conservation Scholarship. Each year, the Morongo Basin Conservation Association

presents this award to a graduating local high school student in pursuit of advanced study in conservation and the environmental sciences.

Supporters

MBCA's educational programming has been supported by grants. The Desert-Wise Living Series, founded in 2011, has earned the distinction as the hallmark of MBCA's programs. Without the generosity of the sponsors listed here, the series would not be possible:

- Bighorn-Desert View Water Agency
- Golden State Water Agency
- Hi-Desert Water District
- Joshua Basin Water District
- Mojave Water Agency
- Twentynine Palms Water District
- Southern California Edison

Additional support comes from local merchants such as Cactus Mart, Wind Walkers, and Unique Garden Center. Their generosity has subsidized the Desert-Wise Living Landscape Tour since its inception. The tour has become a mainstay of MBCA programing with growing attendance each year.

A grant from The Rose Foundation enabled MBCA to produce an interactive version of the Morongo Basin Open Space Group's "Basin Conservation Priorities Report" on the internet. The result stands out as an invaluable resource for assessing environmental priorities to aid in the planning of commercial and other development. It includes important scenic landscapes. wildlife corridors, and other resources essential to the flora, fauna, and our human communities. MBCA's conservation partner. The Moiave Desert Land Trust, shares the ongoing costs of hosting this website.

As vital as is the financial support that the Morongo Basin Conservation Association relies on, it is the generosity of spirit, literally thousands of volunteer hours, required to distill that financial support into the productive, living, results-oriented force-for-good that is the Morongo Basin Conservation Association.





















As an all-volunteer organization, MBCA values the time given by Board members and volunteers far beyond a dollar value, but it is helpful to realize just how much value there is in those hours. Directors spend time at monthly and committee meetings, research issues, write comment letters, organize and update the website, and plan and prepare for educational and advocacy events. The Desert-Wise Landscape Tour itself requires hundreds of hours from the committee, hosts, docents, and other volunteers to provide an efficient, organized and valuable experience for tour participants.

Based on the 2019 federal volunteer hourly value of \$29.95, the total monetary value of MBCA's volunteer hours by Directors and volunteers each year is more than \$80,000. That represents more than 2600 hours of many types of work. From the physically demanding logistics of posting Landscape Tour signs or scouting threatened desert locations, to the wearying exercise of refining position statements, composing letters of protest/support, or generating relevant web content, the time

and energy generously given by countless loyal and motivated supporters from every economic and social cast in Morongo Basin cannot be quantified. For it is the unyielding devotion of the Basin-wide brain trust that has given life to this association for the last half century and that will continue to do so as long as short-sighted and ill-conceived ambitions threaten the well-being of our natural world.

It is not possible to express sufficient gratitude to all who have given, do give, and will give so selflessly toward our mission of advocating for a healthy desert environment that nurtures our rural character, cultural wealth, and economic well-being ... suffice it to say, thank you.

Thank You Volunteers

The Morongo Basin Conservation Association gratefully acknowledges the efforts and contributions of those who volunteered their skills and expertise in the research, writing, art direction, photography, and technical production of this publication.

We want to thank each committee member for their singularly unique contributions to the concept, development, writing, editing, and photography in this book. They include Steve Bardwell, Scott Behrens, Chris Carraher, Meg Foley, Sarah Kennington, Mike Lipsitz, Ruth Rieman, Claudia Sall, Laraine Turk, and Marina West. In addition, the words of Chris Carraher and Esther Herbert, both board members emeritae, added immeasurably to this project.

For their contributions of research and archival memory we are especially grateful to David Fick and Pat Flanagan. To Greg Gilbert we owe heartfelt thanks for his expert literary criticism and gracious willingness to assist without hesitation. Recognition is also due the *Hi-Desert Star*, Morongo Basin Historical Society, and the Twentynine Palms Historical Society for use of their archives and other research assistance. And many thanks to cartographer Brian Hammer for his expertise and generosity.

We are indebted to Julia Sizek for breathing life into the story of MBCA through her insightful, scholarly research and literary acumen. And we are no less grateful to Melissa Sabol for her generosity of spirit, professional art direction and production services; and to Nora Lousignant we are deeply grateful for her ongoing and expert service as MBCA Webmaster.

And to the photographers who brought light, and life, and love to these pages, every pair of eyes that see this book will be beholden. They are, in alphabetical order, Laura Crane, Patricia Knight, Mitch Miller, Sam Roberts, Tami Roleff, Jennifer Ruggiero, Melissa Sabol, Dianna Shay Diehl, Melissa Spurr, and Marina West.

Last but not least, we must thank all those who support the work of MBCA year after year with payment of their annual dues. Above and beyond the financial support brought by the modest membership fee, large numbers of paying supporters enhance MBCA's influence on public and private sector decision makers, as well as with grant funding organizations.

May we count on your continued support in the years ahead? Choose your membership category and pay online at mbconservation.org

Acknowledgements

Spirit of the Desert Night by Susan Luckie Reilly

The rosy glow of the setting sun Casts dark shadows afar, A lone coyote, with an eerie note, Sings to the evening star.

His call is wild and free— Voice of the desert domain; The softly soughing wind Echoes back the refrain.

Is it just the wind? Or is it the brush
Of a moccasined foot on the sand?
Can the muffled tread of a tribe long dead
Be heard in this timeless land?

With the first pale tint of coming day The night murmurs fade away; The coyote's howl and the hoot of an ow Again hold their lonely sway.





