

ALAA Newsletter
Jay Valle, Editor
1421 Latchford Avenue
Hacienda Heights, CA 91745

FIRST CLASS MAIL



**AMERICAN LANDS ACCESS
ASSOCIATION, INC.**

Protecting the Public Lands for the Public

<http://www.amlands.org/>

October November December 2011

A.L.A.A Membership Application

AMERICAN LANDS ACCESS ASSOCIATION, INC.

Protecting the Public Lands for the Public

Please enroll me as a member of the ALAA! Annual membership fee is \$25.00

Annual membership fee for clubs is \$50.00

___ New ___ Renewal Date ___/___/___

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Club Affiliations _____

Hobby Interest _____

Remit fees to: ALAA
RUTH BAILEY
2857 Addison Pl
Santa Clara, CA 95051-1705

The A.L.A.A. is a 501(c4) organization. Its purpose is promoting and ensuring the right of the amateur hobby collecting, recreational prospecting and mining, and the use of public and private lands for educational and recreational purposes; and to carry the voice of all amateur collectors and hobbyists to our elected officials, government regulators and public land managers. Contributions to the A.L.A.A. are not deductible as charitable contributions for Federal Tax Purposes.



American Lands Access Association, Inc.

Protecting the Public Lands for the Public
October November December 2011

ALAA President's Message

By Richard Pankey, President, ALAA

When talking about the use and protection of our public lands, the environment, and the protection of our natural resources we often refer to certain groups and people as “Environmentalists”, as “Conservationists.” It is like we are putting them in a special group that is different than ourselves. The words “Environmentalists” and “Conservationists” have come to have a variety of connotations. One is “protector” of plants, animals, land and resources. Another meaning is “preservationist” meaning to preserve by denying use. Yet another meaning is one who advocate restricting (or eliminating) land use. In recent years we often use these last 2 meanings. In general terms rockhounds as a group tend to refer to ourselves as different from the “Environmentalists” and “Conservationists.” But I am not sure that distinction is true and accurate if we use the terms as meaning “protector.” To the general public “Environmentalists” and “Conservationists” are positive terms. To many of us they are negative or almost derogatory terms meaning “restrictors” and “preservationist”. Also, it is often assumed that if you are not an “Environmentalists” or “Conservationists” you must be the opposite or oppose conservation and the environment. I am here today to advocate that we take back these terms and show the world – the public and the land managers that we are protectors of the environment and the land.

If you haven't read the AFMS Code of Ethics lately do so soon. It is basically an environmental and conservation document. We care about the land and the environment. And believe that “Use is not abuse.” Responsible use of our public and private land is compatible with our concern and care for the land. We need to show the public, land use managers and ourselves that rockhounds care by word and by action. The AFMS Code of Ethics is an action document. It states “I will...” (active) not “I believe...” which is passive.

I would now like to focus on Item 13 of the Code of Ethics: “I will support the Rockhound Project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.” At the ALAA meeting during the CFMS Directors' meeting last November collecting area, camp and road cleanups was discussed. It was reported that several Off Highway Vehicle groups regularly conduct trash and litter removal which they coordinate and involve the BLM and other land managers. We thought that this is a great idea and something that ALAA should do and promote. As part of CFMS field trips and AFMS Rendezvous' and other trips that I have led since 2000 have always involved a clean-up and emphasized the Leave No Trace philosophy.

I would like ALAA to reactivate/to re-establish the Rockhound Project H.E.L.P. To accomplish this I am looking for 1 or 2 or more members to lead this project. Their task is to:

- Explain, advertise and promote participation of all AFMS societies.
- Develop procedures, recommendations on conducting clean-ups.
- Establish and coordinate procedures with BLM, FS, private land owner, etc. on how to conduct a clean-up.
- Establish/recommend how to report and publicize clean-ups and results

(Continued on page 4)

President's Message

(Continued from page 3)

- And what ever else we come up with.

If you (or your society) would like to be a part of and spearhead this project please contact me. ALAA has some other projects and task waiting for the right person to step forward and volunteer. Is that someone you? Or you may see a need, opportunity or know of something you would like to do. Please contact me with your ideas.

Dues are Due

ALAA continues to have good growth of individual and societies. We are starting a new year and dues for 2012 are now due!! Please send your dues to our treasurer Ruth Bailey. And remind your society to join or send in their renewal and dues.

Be an involved member!

(Footnote: I need some information about the Rockhound Project H.E.L.P. What is the history? When did it start? What has it accomplished? The purpose is obvious but I would like to know more of the details. Can anyone help me? Please call or e-mail me. Thanks, Dick)

BLM, Quartzsite and You

By Dick Pankey, President, ALAA

The Bureau of Land Management is developing a Travel Management Plan for the La Posa Area that includes all BLM land around Quartzsite, AZ. Currently, staff and the consultants are developing the full plan and environmental assessment. They are tentatively planning to release the La Posa TMP and Environmental Assessment for public comment in mid-January/early February. This plan will affect how this land is used and will affect all users of this public land. This plan will affect access, road travel and land use. You will learn about the plan and how you can respond and comment on the plan.

To learn more about the La Posa TMP and how it will affect you and others who use and rec-

reate on this area of our public lands, plan to attend the American Lands Access Association's meeting Friday evening, January 20th at the Quartzsite Alliance Church.

Jennifer House, Natural Resources Specialist, Colorado River District, Lake Havasu City, AZ will be a keynote speaker at our event. She will discuss the plan, how it is being developed, what the next steps are and how you can have input and be involved. This is your chance, this is our chance to affect the future access and use of this area of our public land around Quartzsite, AZ.

The American Lands Access Association meeting was such a success last January that the second annual meeting is scheduled for Quartzsite, Arizona in January 2012. An open meeting of the American Lands Access Association will be held on Friday evening, at 6:30 PM, January 20th, at the Quartzsite Alliance Church, 720 Desert Vista on the north side of Quartzsite. Take Moon Mountain Rd. or US Hwy 95 north to Tyson Rd. and turn left and go to N. Desert Ave., and turn right. Go 1 block and park in the big parking lot in front of church.

Attend this meeting to learn about ALAA and how you can be involved in saving access to our public lands. We will have an open forum on pending legislation and what is happening with the BLM and USFS. Bring your questions and ideas.

This meeting should be of interest to all rockhounds and to anyone who recreates on and uses public lands. The purpose of this meeting is for outreach to rockhounds and the public at Quartzsite; to let them know about ALAA and what we do. It is to let rockhounds and the public know the legislative and regulatory challenges and issues facing all of us and how they can and should be involved.

This is a special invitation to all ALAA members, rockhounds and users of our public lands to attend this important meeting. If you can attend, please do so, and show how many rockhounds care.

ALAA Joins CORVA

By Dick Pankey, President – ALAA

Amy Granat, Managing Director of the California Off Road Vehicle Association (CORVA) reported on a lawsuit being filled against the Plumas National Forest to stand up for the rights of all those that use public land; more specifically for the access rights of the elderly and disabled. One of the major points is alleging that the Forest Service has violated the equal consideration for the disabled and elderly in land use and travel plans. Because of their unique circumstances and limited mobility, analysis for vehicular use by these vulnerable members of society must be considered, and motorized access must be allowed.

At the ALAA Meeting at Visalia in November, Amy, an Honorary member of ALAA, gave us an update and status of the lawsuit. A proposal was made that ALAA join CORVA and make a donation to support this lawsuit. The findings of this lawsuit will affect how Travel Management Plans are developed for all National Forests and affect all users of the Forest.

By vote of the ALAA O&D's the proposal that "ALAA join CORVA as a group (just like ALAA is a group member of Blue Ribbon) and that we donate a sum of \$1000.00 for their defense fund" was approved.

By joining the California Off Road Vehicle Association, ALAA's 10,000 plus members (society and individual members) adds to the total membership of CORVA which strengthens their position for the lawsuit against the Plumas National Forest. The \$1000.00 donation to the lawsuit legal fund is a good and affective use of ALAA's resources. The objectives and purpose of CORVA are the same as ALAA's -- Fighting For Your Right To Access Public Land.

HERE'S A PROJECT FOR YOU

Shirley Leeson, ALAA Vice President

shirleyleeson@cox.net

Here in California, rockhounds have enjoyed visiting the Southern California Desert since at least the 1950s. We have rockhound guide books showing where to find many of the famous sites for collecting going back to that era.

In the late 1970s the Department of Interior, the BLM in particular who oversaw the California Desert, decided, with the help of the Sierra Club to "save" the desert from those of us who used it. The first of several "desert conservation" programs were put out. Actually we found out later that the Sierra Club wrote the original proposal. Those of us who participated thought that having half the desert with multiple use was better than not having any, so we reluctantly went along with the plan....not knowing that in less than ten years the BLM/Sierra Club would come back with their phase II plan and take again half of what was left.

We are now down to 10% of the desert and the Sierra Club, California Wilderness, Center for Biodiversity and other lesser enviro groups want to carve up the remainder for additional special interest groups **which do not include rockhounds**.

The following must be done immediately:

Project #1. Please ask your membership to scour their libraries and copy or donate desert field trip maps and early books about the desert and collecting sites. And if anyone has a copy of the original workbooks that were given out to "interested parties regarding the desert" by the BLM, in the 1970s I'd like to have them. And if there are gold mining or mineral resources identified by governmental bodies with maps, etc. we need those too. All data is welcome that pertains to the desert. San Diego M/G had a whole collec-

(Continued on page 6)

HERE'S A PROJECT FOR YOU

(Continued from page 5)

tion of those workbooks, unfortunately the person who had them passed away and their children didn't know their value to us and threw them away. SEND ALL THIS INFORMATION TO ME, Shirley Leeson, between now, Dec 5 and March 1, send to 6155 Haas St. La Mesa, CA 91942, after that send to: P.O. Box 23, Tendoy, ID 83468. All collected data will be given to **THE PERSON** who is willing to put this in a cohesive usable form that can be presented to the BLM.

PROJECT #2 a leader must come forward and take on this project of putting together data both from old club field trips maps and the newer GPS exact locations of the collecting sites in the California Desert and **what is found there**. Is there someone out there willing to take this important job on? Someone we can all funnel information, historical data and other related government data to? If you are out there, please come forward and lead this important job. Contact me immediately and we will get behind you and get the job done. WHAT SAY YOU?

Shirley Leeson, concerned rockhound

TRASH BAGS

For those of you who attended the ALAA meeting in Visalia, I had a trash bag that Cal-4 people take to the desert for clean up. It's a great idea for field trips to clean the areas we collect in and leave them better than we found them.

I'm working on obtaining an order of these bags with our new ALAA logo, with perhaps ALAA SAYS: "TRASH, BE RESPONSIBLE, HAUL IT OUT"

It is taking longer than I expected but never fear, we'll have them, but not for the Quartzsite meeting. In the mean time when I get

them, they will be available to ALAA clubs for field trips, with a suggestion on how to use them, pictures of their use, and also BLM and/or Forestry offices to let those bodies know what we are doing and where to pick up the loaded trash bags.

*Shirley Leeson, bag lady....
Rockhound Activist*

CORVA lawsuit against the Plumas National Forest

From: Amy Granat <granat.amy@gmail.com>
To: Dick Pankey <dickpankey@juno.com>

Land use decisions by federal land managers including the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management do not differentiate why someone travels on a dirt road, or determine the ultimate goal of a visitor traveling through a desert. Whether a person using public lands is a hunter, off-road enthusiast or off-roader, we have all experienced great closures and limitations placed on travel through public lands in recent years.

CORVA has partnered with Sierra Access Coalition, and Plumas and Butte Counties to file suit against the Forest Service to stand up for the rights of all those that use public land, and to prove to federal land managers that we represent a force that must be considered when designating land for public access. Although this lawsuit is being filed against one forest, our allegations apply to all areas and all agencies, and may well change the future of land use decisions for years to come.

One of the major points we are alleging that the Forest Service has violated, is equal consideration for the disabled and elderly in land use plans. Because of their unique circumstances and limited mobility, analysis for vehicular use by these vulnerable members of society must be con-

(Continued on page 7)

CORVA lawsuit

(Continued from page 6)

sidered, and motorized access must be allowed. Anything else constitutes discrimination against the disabled and elderly and must be stopped immediately. When it comes to using and enjoying public land, no one has meaningfully stood up for the disabled and elderly and demanded equal rights. That's exactly what CORVA is doing by filing this lawsuit, but we can't do it without your support. There is power in numbers, and the number of CORVA members and CORVA Clubs is an integral aspect that will help lead to the success of this lawsuit. The more pressure from people who push federal agencies to stop discrimination against the elderly and disabled, the better chance we have for success. As our attorneys argue the case before the judge, they get to testify as to the support for the lawsuit from our members. If we have 3000 members, it is okay, but 10,000 or 15,000 members means much more.

CORVA is asking all those that care about equal rights, all those that care about motorized access, and all those that have been upset with the recent goings-on by our federal agencies join us. Become members of CORVA and help us help you.

Amy Granat
 Managing Director, CORVA
 916-710-1950, 916-710-1950
granat.amy@gmail.com

*California Off-Road Vehicle Association
 Fighting For YOUR Right To Access Public Land*

CFMS PLAC-South Report

John Martin
 plac-south@antelecom.net

This year California saw the passage of Assembly Bill 628, The Inyo Trails Bill. This bill was signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown

on October 7, 2011. The County of Inyo is the 2nd largest county in the United States in area, yet only 2% of this land is inhabited and 92% of the land in Inyo County is federally administrated public land.

This bill would, until January 1, 2017, authorize the County of Inyo to

establish a pilot project that would exempt from this prohibition specified combined-use highways, except as provided, in the unincorporated area in the County of Inyo so that the highways can be used to link existing off-highway motor vehicle trails and trailheads on federal Bureau of Land Management or United States Forest Service lands, and to link off-highway motor vehicle recreational-use areas with necessary service and lodging facilities, in order to provide a unified linkage of trail systems for off-highway motor vehicles. This will help to maintain access to some of the best Rock and Mineral collecting areas in Inyo Country.

When the Public Scoping and Planning meetings are scheduled and announced the Rockhound Community needs to jump in with both feet and be part of the process to identify the roads and trails leading to the collecting sites. This pilot program may become the model by which other counties in California may address Rockhounding and other Off Highway Recreational Usages.

Other areas of the State have not been as fortunate as Inyo County to have a legislative representative in support of and for the recreational needs of all groups. Most of the elected legislators are still trying to regulate or eliminate mechanized travel on Public Lands thus making it nearly impossible for the Rockhound Community to have access to collecting sites except by foot or horseback.

There has been an up swing in Rockhound participation by being actively engaged in Public Land Use policy decision making through the attendance at the BLM Scoping and Planning

(Continued on page 8)

CFMS PLAC-South Report

(Continued from page 7)

Meetings and the USFS Management Planning meetings through out the state. These public meetings are only the first steps in attempting to keep the collecting sites open and accessible to all Rockhounds. By legislative edict Public Land Usage Management requires input from all stakeholders in open and public forums. The Rockhound Community needs to be one of these stakeholders if accesses to collecting sites are to remain open for future generations of Rockhounds. By attending and signing in to the meetings, as an individual Rockhound or as a member of a Society or Club, there is strength in numbers and the more that sign in the better. The Land Use Managers are beginning to take notice that there are Rockhounds out there and they do in fact care about the use and management of Public Lands.

When scoping or planning meetings are announced at locations through out the state, Rockhounds need to actively participate in these public meetings. Making Rockhound Voices heard is the only way to keep access to collecting areas open now and for future generations of Rockhounds.

AFMS Conservation and Legislation Report

John Martin

afms-conservation@antelecom.net

On November 3, 2011 a bill was introduced in congress that has a large impact on all 5 states of the Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies. The bill is entitled *Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act* – H.R 3334 and was sponsored by Rep. Carolyn Maloney [D-NY14]. The purpose of the bill is to “*Designate certain National Forest System lands and public lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior in the States of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming as wilderness and*

wild and scenic rivers, to provide for the establishment of a Northern Rockies Wildlife Habitat and Corridors Information System and Program, and for other purposes.”

If enacted, this bill will turn 24-million acres of the Northwest Federation’s National Forest and BLM Public land into a massive wilderness. This may have a devastating effect on access to amateur rock, mineral and fossil collecting sites in a five state area. More information on this bill may be found on the American Lands Access Association Website.

<http://www.amlands.org/6652/index.html>

The American Federation of Mineralogical Societies and the American Lands Access Association recognizes the need to conserve and protect our Natural Resources and Wildlife Habitat with sensible and reasonable Land Management Practices, this bill seems to take that protection to an extreme.

As this congressional legislative session comes to an end it appears that the Rockhound Community has not lost access to any identified collecting sites through legislative actions.

Inyo Trails Bill Passed

This year California saw the passage if Assembly Bill 628, The Inyo Trails Bill. This bill was signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown on October 7, 2011. The County of Inyo is the 2nd largest county in the United States in area, yet only 2% of this land is inhabited and 92% of the land in Inyo County is federally administrated public land.

This bill would, until January 1, 2017, authorize the County of Inyo to establish a pilot project that would exempt from this prohibition specified combined-use highways, except as provided, in the unincorporated area in the County of Inyo so that the highways can be used to link existing off-highway motor vehicle trails and

(Continued on page 9)

Inyo Trails Bill Passed

(Continued from page 8)

trailheads on federal Bureau of Land Management or United States Forest Service lands, and to link off-highway motor vehicle recreational-use areas with necessary service and lodging facilities, in order to provide a unified linkage of trail systems for off-highway motor vehicles. This will help to maintain access to some of the best Rock and Mineral collecting areas in Inyo Country.

When the Public Scoping and Planning meetings are scheduled and announced the Rockhound Community needs to jump in with both feet and be part of the process to identify the roads and trails leading to the collecting sites. This pilot program may become the model by which other counties in California may address Rockhounding and other Off Highway Recreational Usages.

Other areas of the State have not been as fortunate as Inyo County to have a legislative representative in support of and for the recreational needs of all groups. Most of the elected legislators are still trying to regulate or eliminate mechanized travel on Public Lands thus making it nearly impossible for the Rockhound Community to have access to collecting sites except by foot or horseback.

There has been an up swing in Rockhound participation by being actively engaged in Public Land Use policy decision making through the attendance at the BLM Scoping and Planning Meetings and the USFS Management Planning meetings through out the state. These public meetings are only the first steps in attempting to keep the collecting sites open and accessible to all Rockhounds. By legislative edict Public Land Usage Management requires input from all stakeholders in open and public forums. The Rockhound Community needs to be one of these stakeholders if accesses to collecting sites are to remain open for future generations of Rockhounds. By attending

and signing in to the meetings, as an individual Rockhound or as a member of a Society or Club, there is strength in numbers and the more that sign in the better. The Land Use Managers are beginning to take notice that there are Rockhounds out there and they do in fact care about the use and management of Public Lands.

When scoping or planning meetings are announced at locations through out the state, Rockhounds need to actively participate in these public meetings. Making Rockhound Voices heard is the only way to keep access to collecting areas open now and for future generations of Rockhounds.

John Martin

Rockhound Activist

Update on the misnamed Paleontological Preservation Act [PPA]

By Terrell William "Terry" Proctor, J.D.

--Texas Rep. ALAA

First if there is anyone reading this who doesn't already know what the PPA is, I will very briefly explain. The 2009 U.S. Congress passed a whole raft of bills at one time (which it is reported virtually none of your elected representatives had read) including the PPA. The PPA was designed to purportedly stop the thieves of American fossils on Federal Lands who were allegedly using power equipment in BLM, U.S. Forests et al to ruin the scientific value of fossil and sell them to the highest bidder. The PPA had been introduced year after year, and never got anywhere, as it was draconian to say the least. It allegedly (somewhat tongue in cheek, but really not too much so) limited fossil collecting to those with a PhD in some narrowly defined degree in science.

(Continued on page 10)

Paleontological Preservation Act [PPA]

(Continued from page 9)

When it was first introduced it provided for criminal punishment and seizure of all personal property of the person who might have picked up a shark's tooth on a Federal beach (*remembering that fossil sharks, like modern sharks reputedly lose something like 400,000 teeth in a life time--and there were undoubtedly billions of them over the long time sharks have been around*). OR, perhaps mom and pop picked up a bison tooth on the plains on some BLM land (*and again recall that most of the West is Federal land*)--and we all know that there were never very many bison anyhow--certainly not over hundreds of millions at any one time.

So once the PPA was passed and the President (*contrary to his statement that he would not do so, promptly signed it into law within hours*). While you may not go to a Federal Prison now as the drastic criminal punishment provisions were tailored down (I'm not even sure just what is left as it is vague), you are still violating Federal law if you pick up any vertebrate fossil on any form of Federal law. Furthermore, many States have agreements with the Feds so that State lands have some relationship to Federal law so you are probably running a risk if you pick up a vertebrate fossil on many supposedly State lands, not to mention State laws somewhat similar.

The next problem is that if you are picking up any fossil (say a piece of what you believe to be fossil wood) where there are any vertebrate fossil which could be picked up, you run the risk of misidentification. Remember that some of us stick our tongue on a fossil to see if it is wood or dinosaur bone just to be sure. So even if you have no intention of picking up a vertebrate fossil, you may do so inadvertently. Where we dig invertebrate middle Eocene fossils near Bryan Texas, on the Brazos River banks, on a recent trip someone found a nice shark's tooth (*gosh, I can't remember who so I couldn't tell you*). Now

is the Brazos a navigable waterway which would have any Federal control? Possibly? I don't know, but what a predicament this ill-advised law has created.

So what to do about it. I have been working with U.S. Representative John Culberson of Houston, Texas. For years, he made sure that the PPA didn't get far enough to be dangerous. But in the 2009 Congress, his Party lost the majority or ability to prevent the PPA and many other similar bills, all passed at one time (reportedly the bills stacked up to something like three feet high and members of Congress had about 24 hours to read them before the vote (guess how many did read them).

One theory is, when a majority is available, abolish the PPA. Another theory is to recognize that the intent (of at least some) was to actually control the pirates who profit highly upon national treasure by surreptitiously taking heavy equipment onto federal lands and stealing fossils to sell. It is reasonable to condemn this as excavating important fossils and locations needs to be done with some scientific recordation of the location, position, details and other things which we rockhounds recognize as important for the benefit of all. However, there should at least be:

1. an exclusion for individuals digging without power equipment and with limited quantity possibly of common vertebrate fossils on Federal Land without need to purchase or have a Federal license to do so;
2. a provision like the State of Florida had and may still have, which provides for a minimal fee on State land to collect fossils, then report them at the end of the year to the State (or Federal government as to Federal lands) and the governmental unit would have a limited time to determine that it is an important fossil and claim same (in Great Britain and other jurisdictions they pay the finder a reasonable sum for the thing claimed), after which time the fossil belongs to the finder, to do with as

(Continued on page 11)

Paleontological Preservation Act [PPA]

(Continued from page 10)

they please;

- possibly license commercial excavators who would have to comply with very specific guidelines in hunting for, excavating and reporting all fossils found, again with the government then, like treasure hunters regulations, would be able to share in the value of the find and these could either be purchased by the government on a fair basis or allow to be sold to museums or others under the guidelines provided, but at least the things dug would be documented and available for scientific study, even if sold under the sales contract with the buyer.

There are just suggestions I have and have talked with Rep. Culberson and other governmental and scientific folks, as well as our rockhounds who are most interested in this. I certainly have talked with others in the ALAA about this.

The reason for my article at this time is to say, for now, we are keeping our powder dry. That is why there has been no push to do anything for the past months or for the future few months. It is not wise to push now for a change. The change we need is in Congress before we push for change. So rest assured that this matter isn't being ignored, but we are bidding out time for now. Rep. John Culberson asked me to write a Bill for him to introduce. While I have been successful in getting Legislation passed in the Texas Legislation on another matter, I prefer that his Bill writers prepare the Bill and I will put in my suggestions, and those which come to me from other ALAA members as well as the AFMS club members. Rep. Culberson has been interested in this for some years and has done a great service in keeping this law from happening for a long time. He can be counted on, when the time is ripe, to present a Bill to repeal or modify the PPA and make it where U.S. Citizens can again safely collect common vertebrate fossils without fear of their government.

San Gabriel National Park Is it in YOUR Future?

More than 700,000 acres of the San Gabriel Mountains, River and Valley and Puente Hills were deemed nationally significant and therefore suitable for inclusion in the National Park system, according to a report released Monday by the U.S. Department of Interior.

The Draft San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study concluded that the mountains and the Puente Hills met the criteria for a national designation and that all or portions could come under federal protection and management if approved by Congress.

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?documentID=43639>

The draft stops short of recommending a traditional national park. Instead, it offers four strategies: do nothing, merge the San Gabriels into the Angeles National Forest, turn the San Gabriel River watershed into a National Recreation Area, or create a partnership for the region with several agencies.

A collaborative partnership-based park unit that respects the complex mix of land use, ownership, and regulatory authority in the study area would be a feasible addition to the National Park System. A large traditional national park unit, owned and operated solely by the NPS, would be infeasible.

Four alternatives, **two with a role for the Park Service**, are evaluated in the draft study and environmental assessment. Each of the alternatives seeks to protect significant resources, enhance habitat connectivity, and improve recreational opportunities for communities in the Los Angeles metropolitan region. In each of the alternatives, the U.S. Forest Service would continue to own and manage the Angeles National Forest.

(Continued on page 12)

San Gabriel National Park

(Continued from page 11)

* **No Action Alternative:** Continuation of Current Programs and Policies. This is the “no action” alternative for this study, and assumes that current programs, policies, conditions and trends would continue.

* **Alternative A:** San Gabriel Mountains National Recreation Area: A U.S. Forest Service Designation. Congress would designate the San Gabriel Mountains unit of the Angeles National Forest as a National Recreation Area that would continue to be managed solely by the U.S. Forest Service.

* **Alternative B:** San Gabriel Parks and Open Space Network. This alternative was dismissed from further consideration after public review of the preliminary alternatives in 2009. Some components of alternative B were incorporated into alternative D.

* **Alternative C:** San Gabriel Watershed National Recreation Area. Congress would designate a river-based NRA that would raise the visibility of the San Gabriel River watershed, offer new educational and interpretive opportunities along the river and throughout the watershed, and improve river-based recreation. This would be a new model for a national park unit. Partnership arrangements among federal and state agencies, local governments, non-profit organizations, and area landowners would achieve the conservation, recreational, and educational goals of the NRA.

* **Alternative D:** San Gabriel Region National Recreation Area: A Partnership Linking Significant Resources and Recreation. Congress would designate a larger scale NRA that would recognize and protect the significant resources associated with the San Gabriel Mountains and Puente Hills, explore opportunities to protect and enhance interconnected ecosystems, provide important open space connections for recreation and offer new educational and interpretive opportunities. The management approach of alternative D would be the same as alternative C, a new model of national park management whereby the NPS,

U.S. Forest Service, and numerous other agencies and organizations with land and interests in the area would work collaboratively. **The Wilderness Society is pushing this one.**

Comments to the Special Resource Study may be made at the following website:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/commentForm.cfm?documentID=43639>

If it becomes a National Park, there goes collecting Actinolite in Pine Canyon Wash, Rhodonite near Wrightwood, Garnets along the Angeles Forest Hwy, GOLD Prospecting and free road trips over the Angeles Forest Hwy and between the Antelope Valley and Pasadena and trips to Mt. Wilson. The BIG PARK is coming through.

<http://www.landrights.org/VideoBigPark.htm>

We need a strong community turnout at these meetings to help convince the Park Service that if a recreation area is created, the needs of the Rockhound Community must be considered in the planning process.

Furnace Creek Visitor Center in Death Valley to Close for 18 Months

The Furnace Creek Visitor Center is the primary visitor contact facility in Death Valley National Park. It will be temporarily closing its doors Monday, November 15, 2010 for approximately 18 months. During the remodel a temporary visitor center will be located close to the visitor center and adjacent to the Furnace Creek Ranch and Resort property. The park plans to continue providing its full range of services including answering and assisting visitors with their questions and park planning needs, issuing backcountry permits, issuing park passes, and selling books and other educational materials

(Continued on page 13)

Visitor Center to Close (Continued from page 12)

through the Death Valley Natural History Association. The park will also be providing a full range of ranger conducted activities throughout the winter and spring. The project does not affect any of the park campgrounds and they will be open as usual.

Fifty years ago the National Park Service (NPS) at Death Valley National Monument held a grand opening and dedication ceremony for the Furnace Creek Visitor Center. A new state-of-the-art visitor center with exhibits, museum collections, information services, auditorium and administrative offices was one of many designed and built to launch the Park Service into the modern age. A ten-year program started in 1956 and closing out in 1966, Mission 66, upgraded facilities and services in parks nation-wide just in time for the Park Services golden anniversary.

Today, Death Valley National Park is getting ready for a visitor center remodeling project that is made possible with funds from the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA).

These include fees collected from visitors entering national parks and are used to work on deferred maintenance and recreational projects inside parks. This, like several FLREA projects, will upgrade existing or bring on line new facilities throughout the park. The Mission 66 structure at Furnace Creek will close in mid-November after the Death Valley 49er Encampment. The project is expected to last up to 18 months. "This sounds like a long time for a remodel," states Superintendent Sarah Craighead, "but this building has been nominated as a national historic structure and preservation of significant features of this mid-century modern facility will mean slow going to ensure that the historic fabric of the building is not lost." It was designed by renowned Park Service architect Cecil J. Doty in

1959.

"The building and its exhibits have served the public for over 50 years, but it's time to give it a new life," explains Superintendent Craighead. The building has changed very little since its construction. The same heating and cooling units struggle to keep the building cool and replacement parts no longer exist. There is no insulation in the brick walls and the single pane windows allow the heat of summer and the cold of winter in as if they didn't exist. "The National Park Service is dedicated to becoming carbon neutral by 2016," says Superintendent Craighead, "and this project will help put Death Valley on the right track." The improvements to the building are meant to make this a sustainable and energy efficient building in one of the most hostile environments on earth. New solar panels, insulation in walls and ceilings, thermo pane windows and energy efficient HVAC systems will reduce the park's energy bill by as much as \$14,000 a year!

New exhibits and a new film will engage visitors in a variety of ways. Much has been learned about Death Valley in 50 years and the park has grown and changed its name since the 1950s. This is an exciting and overdue project. It will benefit the environment, provide the most up-to-date park and resource information to the public, and be a model for sustainable living in the desert.

The temporary facilities will be limited and the park asks for everyone's patience and apologizes for any inconvenience this may cause. Staff emphasizes planning your visit in advance and to take advantage of the information provided on the park's web site,

www.nps.gov/deva, or call the park at 760-786-3200. The park will regularly update the progress of the visitor center project on the park's web site.

Source: NPS via John Martin

Carl Pope steps down as leader of Sierra Club

Louis Sahagun, Los Angeles Times
Saturday, November 19, 2011

The leader of the Sierra Club, one of the nation's most influential environmental groups, has stepped down after 18 years amid discontent that the group founded by 19th century wilderness evangelist John Muir has compromised its core principles.

The departure of Carl Pope, 66, chairman of the club and a member for more than 40 years, comes as the nonprofit group faces declining membership, internal dissent, well-organized opponents, a weak economy and hostile forces in Congress trying to take the teeth out of environmental regulations.

He has been replaced by Michael Brune, 40, a veteran of smaller activist groups, who has pledged to base his leadership on grassroots organizing, recruiting new members and focusing on issues such as coal-fired power plants. "We have different approaches," Brune said of his relationship with his predecessor.

Pope said he will leave his position as chairman to devote most of his time to "revitalizing the manufacturing sector" by working with organized labor and corporations. That focus during his tenure caused schisms in the club, most notably when he hammered out a million-dollar deal with household chemical manufacturer Clorox to use the club's emblem on a line of green products, and more recently with its unflagging support of utility-scale solar arrays in the Mojave Desert, the type of wild place the club made its reputation protecting.

"I'm a big-tent guy," Pope said in an interview in the group's San Francisco headquarters. "We're not going to save the world if we rely only on those who agree with the Sierra Club."

Pope led the Sierra Club's efforts to help protect 10 million acres of wilderness, including California's Giant Sequoia National Monument,

and brought litigation challenging the right of then-Vice President Dick Cheney's energy task force to secretly hash out energy policy with major oil companies. Pope also co-authored California's [Proposition 65](#), which allowed citizens to sue polluters if they failed to comply with the law. More recently, he helped block 150 proposed coal-fired power plants.

But his tenure was marked by controversial decisions that revealed the costs and political consequences behind the brand of environmental activism he practiced. Acrimony remains over the 2008 Clorox deal, which brought the club \$1.3 million over the four-year term of the contract, according to Pope.

Brune previously worked for the Rainforest Action Network and Greenpeace, groups known for scrappy and theatrical anticorporate tactics. That background emerges in his view of the group's relationship with Clorox.

"We're done with Clorox," Brune said in an interview. "The contract with Clorox runs out in December, and by mutual consent it will not be renewed."

<http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2011/11/19/MN0C1M19HS.DTL>

Submitted by John Martin

A Note From the Editor

As 2011 draws to a close I want to thank everyone who provided guidance and especially articles for this, your newsletter. It is greatly appreciated.

Just a reminder, if you want to free yourself from the tyranny of the United States Postal Service, you can opt out of the "snail mail" newsletter and receive it exclusively by e-mail. This would save the organization some money for other causes.

My e-mail is res19pnb@verizon.net if you decide to accept this offer. **ED**

**AMERICAN LANDS ACCESS ASSOCIATION, INC
2009-2010 OFFICERS & DIRECTORS**

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

DICK PANKEY
4310 Kingsly Drive
Pittsburg, CA 94565
925-439-7509
dickpankey@juno.com

VICE-PRESIDENT

SHIRLEY LEESON
6155 Haas St.
La Mesa, CA 91942
(619) 640-6128
shirleyleeson@cox.net

SECRETARY

KATHY MILLER
1106 Clayton Drive
South Bend, IN 46614-2134
KanBrock@aol.com

TREASURER

RUTH BAILEY
2857 Addison Pl
Santa Clara, CA 95051
408-248-6195
rba51825@att.net

DIRECTORS

Permanent Directors:

Dee Holland, Registered Agent, Idaho
PO BOX 23
Tendoy, ID 83468-0023
208-756-2394 (ID)
619-460-6128 (CA)
beauholland@centurytel.net

John Martin, Webmaster
1309 W. Avenue L-4
Lancaster, CA 93534
661-942-8336
webmaster@amlands.org

Jay Valle, Newsletter Editor
1421 Latchford Avenue
Hacienda Heights, CA 91745
626-934-9764
res19pnb@verizon.net

Three Year Terms:

Jon Spunaugle, Northwest
4841 Dr Eldridge Drive
Washangal, WA 98671
360-835-9313
jonspe@comcast.net

Evan Day, Northwest
509 N Highland Blvd
Brigham City, UT 84302
435-723-3830
eday@sisna.com

OPEN

Two Year Terms

Bob & Kathy Miller, Midwest
1106 Clayton Drive
South Bend, IN 46614-2134
574-291-0332
KanBrock@aol.com

Tom Noe, Midwest
305 Napoleon
South Bend, IN 46617
574-289-2028
tomnoe2@gmail.com

Norvie Enns, California
1485 W 4th St #10
Reno, NV 89503
775-786-9887
Nve5103@charter.net

One Year Terms

Dr. Bob Carlson, Rocky Mt.
1585 Los Pueblos
Los Alamos, NM 87544
505-662-5834,
drobertcarlson@yahoo.com

DOUG TRUE, California
2622 Broadwater Ave
Billings, MT 59102
406-670-0506
dtruefossils@yahoo.com

John Wright, Southeast
3304 Nottingham Rd
402 N. 1st Street
Ocean Springs, MS 39564-4313
osjwb@datasync.net

CURRENT ALAA STATE REPRESENTATIVES

CALIFORNIA	Northern:	Dan Brown	rocky299@frontiernet.net
	Southern:	Kim Campbell	campbellsrocks@yahoo.com
	Central:	OPEN	
IDAHO	Northern:	Everett Headrick	elheadrick@live.com
	Southern:	Shirley & Rocky Metts	rsmetts@centurylink.net
ILLINOIS		John & Judith Washburn	jrwashburn2@msn.com
INDIANA		Kathy & Bob Miller	KanBrock@aol.com
MICHIGAN		Marve Starbuck	greenstone@iserv.net
MISSISSIPPI		John Wright	osjbw@datasync.net
MONTANA		Doug True	dtruefossils@yahoo.com
NEVADA		Norvie Enns	nve5103@charter.net
OKLAHOMA		Richard Yaeger	rjgsci@aol.com
TEXAS		Terry Proctor	auraman@swbell.net
UTAH		Evan Day	eday@sisna.com
WASHINGTON	Eastern	Everett Headrick	elheadrick@live.com
	Central	Brian Waters	bwaterss2011@gmail.com