

## President's Message:



In September I joined 1,500 other land trust volunteers and professionals for the national Land Trust Alliance (LTA) Rally in Pittsburgh. Every year that I attend this event I am inspired by the work of hundreds of organizations that labor passionately to preserve important landscapes throughout the country. This year the ESLT was recognized as one of only 15 land trusts nationally with 100% board member support of LTA. From the very first year of our operation in 2001, the LTA has been a vital partner in our development and success.

As I reflect on the close relationship we have with LTA, I want to tell you how critically important our relationship is with each one of you. Your encouragement, volunteer work and financial support are and always have been the fuel that has kept our engines running. As you complete your 2008 charitable giving, please consider continuing this support with a gift to the ESLT.

The months since our last newsletter have brought great change to the  
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*Inset: Family learns about local wildlife at ESLT's Second Annual Living With Wildlife Festival. Clockwise, from top left: ESLT's newest conservation victory: Crowley Hilltop Preserve. Benton Botanical Field Trip in June. Benton Hot Springs Ranch Conservation Easement aglow in fall colors. Celebrating the Yednock Conservation Easement this past summer.*

## Working Together for the Eastern Sierra

As uncertain times strike the country and world, it is heartening to have the tools to work with certainty, tools that help local landowners permanently preserve their land from development. 2008 found us picking up a range of land trust tools in the service of keeping the Eastern Sierra as beautiful and productive as it is now.

Working with local fourth generation rancher, Bill Bramlette, we now hold a conservation easement that ensures his 900 acre ranch will be kept as prime grazing land and wildlife habitat forever. With Ted Yednock and Doug Frazer, a conservation easement was created to rescue an almost 500 acre property in the Mono Basin that had been used as a junkyard and proposed for ranchettes. Our productive partnership with the CA Department of Fish and Game gave us the tools to identify and purchase a key chunk of wildlife migration corridor near Crowley Lake.

One of our priorities now is to connect people with the lands we help preserve in the Eastern Sierra. To combat the "nature deficit" that many children and adults suffer from in these times, we have brought people together to discover the rare and ethereal lilies on Benton Hot Springs Ranch, watch twilight creep over the ancient sand dunes of Mono Lake, and marvel at the dark night sky and bright stars over an ESLT easement property. Collaborating with 19 other organizations and agencies, our "Living with Wildlife Festival" gathered experts to help local residents appreciate and learn about the wildlife that share this land with us. Thank you for giving us yet another critical tool we need to do our work – your support!

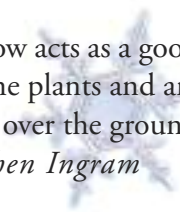
## The Snows of Winter (A Fluff Piece)

Seasonal change in the Eastern Sierra is part of what makes this portion of California so special. As winter approaches, deciduous trees and shrubs go dormant, and large mammals are either hibernating or migrating down slope to their winter range. And of course, winter means snow in the Eastern Sierra region.

California receives three-quarters of its annual precipitation between November and April, with most of that falling from December through March. The cold low-pressure systems that move south over the ocean from the North Pacific and swing into southern California generally have the best chance of bringing heavy snow to the Eastern Sierra.

But what exactly is snow, and where does it come from? Snow, in its purest airborne form, is made of snowflakes, which are tangled snow crystals of ice. Snow crystals have their genesis in clouds where supercooled water vapor condenses around dust particles (cloud condensation nuclei) directly into ice, forming hexagonal structures of intricate detail and beauty. As snow crystals fall through cloud regions that differ in temperature and humidity, they take on different forms, with the most delicate forms occurring when the crystals grow fastest. Snow crystals may be shaped like columns, plates, or stellar dendrites, or various combinations of these basic shapes. (See [www.snowcrystals.com](http://www.snowcrystals.com))

Freshly fallen, fluffy snow is 90-95% trapped air, so snow acts as a good insulator from winter's cold. Snow then brings protection to some plants and animals of the Eastern Sierra in the form of a relatively warm blanket over the ground, which melts away into life-giving water in the spring. ■ *By Stephen Ingram*



Snowflake images from [www.SnowCrystals.com](http://www.SnowCrystals.com)

## ESLT Greetings and Farewells

ESLT is pleased to announce the appointment of Karen Ferrell-Ingram as the new Executive Director. Karen volunteered tirelessly to establish this organization and served as one of ESLT's original Board Members. She later worked as our Lands Director and oversaw the protection of over 6,000 acres of private land.

Karen is taking the reins from Larry Freilich who served the ESLT as Executive Director since March. Larry embarked on a number of initiatives that will leave a lasting and positive impact on our work.

Mary McGurke joined us in August to serve as the new Development and Outreach Director. She brings more than fifteen years of non-profit experience to the ESLT and will be working to develop and strengthen resources for the organization. Her love of the outdoors led her to relocate to the Eastern Sierra where she enjoys hiking and backpacking, gardening, fishing, and finding other ways to be in, on and near water.

ESLT is also glad to welcome Aaron Johnson who has been working as our new Land Stewardship Coordinator since October. Aaron brings a background in vegetation management, invasive species inventory, biological field work, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). When not hard at work, he enjoys mountain biking, scrambling over granite, kayaking, chasing his dog, tinkering with bikes, and lazy mornings with coffee.

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*Eastern Sierra Land Trust works with willing landowners to protect vital lands in Inyo, Mono, and Alpine counties for their scenic, recreational, historical, agricultural, botanic, watershed, and wildlife values.*

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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### STAFF

- Karen Ferrell-Ingram, *Executive Director*
- Heather deBethizy, *Membership and Office Coordinator*
- Aaron Johnson, *Stewardship Coordinator*
- John McGurke, *Agricultural Lands Specialist*
- Mary McGurke, *Development and Outreach Director*
- Katie Nelson, *Education and Outreach Specialist, AmeriCorps Member*

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## Coming Soon—

### Renowned Artists to Paint the Eastern Sierra

Eastern Sierra Land Trust is proud to announce an exciting new partnership with the highly acclaimed Oak Group. These Painters for Preservation have united with the ESLT to paint landscape art to benefit ESLT. The Oak Group, based in Santa Barbara, has worked successfully for over fifteen years with numerous land trusts



*"Owens Lake Bed" by Thomas Van Stein. 6" x 9." Painted in oil on panel.*

and conservation organizations to preserve working landscapes. The Oak Group and other talented California artists will be creating an Eastern Sierra collection which will include ESLT Easement lands: beautiful farms and ranches, important wildlife habitats, and incredible scenic vistas. ESLT is grateful to work with this alliance of artists in portraying the native beauty of our region and raising awareness to protect our cherished lands. We will be providing regular updates that include previews of the work, additional art programs, interviews with artists, and announcements for the ESLT Art Show and Sale. Fifty percent of all sales will support ESLT's work preserving Eastern Sierra lands. For more information, please contact Mary McGurke at 873-4554 or [mary@eslt.org](mailto:mary@eslt.org)

### Sale or Purchase of Homes Benefits the ESLT!!

Agricultural Lands Specialist John McGurke works part time with the ESLT. John also works as a Real Estate Agent in Bishop with Century 21 and coaches the Bishop High School Varsity Boys Soccer team. John is committed to preserving working farms and ranches in his work with the ESLT, and he is dedicated to the community of the Eastern Sierra. In an effort to demonstrate his commitment and give back to his community, John donates 5% of his real estate earnings from the sale of a home to any Inyo or Mono County non-profit organization as designated by his client. For the ESLT, John donates 10% of his earnings! This is a great opportunity for the ESLT to raise funds for its important conservation work! So, please spread the word—if you know someone buying or selling a house, let them know they could help support the ESLT and protect our treasured lands by working with John. ESLT appreciates your support! To contact John regarding his real estate work, please call him at (760) 920-0518.

### Tree-Free Giving

Make your donations to ESLT completely tree-free! Is it easier for you to make a monthly smaller gift rather than a one-time annual gift? Would you rather not receive donation requests in the mail? Great! You can now choose to join our Monthly Gift Program and make donations online—completely tree-free! To find out more about making your annual or monthly donation paper free, call Mary at 873-4554 or email [mary@eslt.org](mailto:mary@eslt.org).

### Member Spotlight:

#### Pete Pumphrey

President of the Eastern Sierra  
Audubon Society

"The views of the Eastern Sierra landscape are iconic but this region is more than just the stunning high alpine wilderness. The front country and the working landscapes, with their rich history of land stewardship, also deserve our attention. This land, much of it private, is important to a diverse array of migrating birds and is where the ESLT focuses their work. That focus on working with private landowners is a large part of why I am a member of the ESLT."



*Coopers Hawk on Brewers Blackbird.  
Photo by Chris Howard.*

**President's Message** - continued from page 1

ESLT office. You will read more inside about new faces and changing roles including the promotion of Karen Ferrell-Ingram to Executive Director, and two new employees – Mary McGurke, Development and Outreach Director and Aaron Johnson, Stewardship Coordinator.

We wish you a very happy and meaningful holiday season and look forward to sharing the wonders of the Eastern Sierra with you in 2009.

■ *By Tony Taylor,  
ESLT Board President*

## Give The Gift of ESLT Membership

If you value the Eastern Sierra's rural heritage, and share our commitment to keeping it as beautiful and productive as it is now, then now is the time to **Give The Gift** of ESLT Membership! We're offering a special enticement this year: Buy two Gift Memberships and get one free!

When you **Give The Gift**, you help provide permanent protection to critical wildlife migration corridors, prime soils that produce valuable food and forage, and the incredible views that we all love in the Eastern Sierra. **Give** a Gift Membership and you will give a gift that lasts – a gift for today and for future generations. Your recipients will receive a special card announcing your gift and a package of postcards featuring ESLT conservation projects, along with the regular ongoing membership benefits. To **Give The Gift**, visit our website [www.eslt.org/givethegift](http://www.eslt.org/givethegift), or contact Mary McGurke at 760-863-4554 or [mary@eslt.org](mailto:mary@eslt.org)

**Greetings & Farewells** - continued from page 2

Finally, all of us would like to thank Stan and Jan Hunewill for their support of the ESLT. We will certainly miss them at our Board of Directors meetings but hope to keep them involved in the future.



*ESLT's 2008 Living With Wildlife Festival brought together families and wildlife experts from around the region to Mammoth Creek Park. Here a family visits the popular Eastern Sierra Wildlife Care table to learn about local snakes. Photo by Stephen Ingram.*



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