

Preserve It Now!!

Earlier this year we had lost hope of acquiring a 60 acre parcel in the heart of the Round Valley deer migration corridor. State funding had been withdrawn, but we kept working with the landowner and suddenly the funding was restored. We expect to close escrow in October!

For 8 years we have been working with the landowners of a 600 acre organic alfalfa ranch. This year we received the grant funding needed to acquire the land protection easement. We expect completion of this project by yearend.

These and several other 2011 projects require many weeks of staff effort as well as professional assistance from attorneys, appraisers, and others. While we attempt to budget responsibly for these efforts, project expenses are perennially difficult to estimate.

Our *Preserve It Now Fund* is the source of the critical funding we need each year to respond quickly to land protection opportunities.

With the many projects we are working on, our PIN Fund is greatly depleted. We need to raise \$50,000 for the Fund to assure that we can aggressively pursue important projects. We are over halfway there, thanks to pledges from Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, Rusty and Bonnie Gregory, the Haynes Foundation and other generous supporters. Please help us reach this goal and consider sending a donation in the enclosed envelope.

Yours in gratitude and trust,

■ *Tony Taylor, ESLT President*



Conservation easements are a great tool for permanently preserving land while keeping it on the tax rolls and under the management of the landowner. Photos by ESLT staff and Lee Naylor.

Important Deer Habitat Preserved With Your Help, 164 acres of Deer Migration Corridor Newly Protected!

Eight years ago, ESLT's first conservation easement preserved a portion of the Round Valley mule deer herd migration corridor. As of today, 269 acres of important deer habitat have been protected along critical migration corridors in Mono County. Mule deer habitat is important to preserve because mule deer are considered an "umbrella species." Just as an umbrella protects anything below it from getting wet, by protecting mule deer all plants and animals that occur with the deer are protected too.

Long distance migration is rare among large mammals in California and is becoming more rare around the world. In fact, the Rocky Mountain mule deer herds are among the only deer that do migrate in California, as the more common coastal white tailed deer do not migrate. Here in the Eastern Sierra, there are five distinct Rocky Mountain mule deer herds. A mule deer may migrate 50-60 miles between summer and winter range, which requires healthy habitats and open land for movement. For all these reasons, the migration corridors of these herds present a distinct opportunity for conservation.

In northern Mono County, ESLT has partnered with landowner Tina Bundy Nappe to preserve 60 acres of critical deer habitat for the West Walker deer herd with the new Willow Flat conservation easement. And in southern Mono County, 104 acres of critical deer habitat have just been preserved for the Round Valley deer herd with the Naylor conservation easement. Landowner Bob Naylor, who lives on the agricultural property with his wife, Lee, told ESLT, "Ranching is a great way to protect and keep open country. Deer make good use of the extra apples from our orchard as a food source when they travel through our property."

Many thanks to our partners: the landowners, California Deer Association, CA Department of Fish and Game, California Wildlife Conservation Board, and our supporting members.

Colorful Predators of the Air

On a calm morning in late June, I took a trip with ESLT volunteers Ron and Barbara Oriti to the Benton Hot Springs Ranch conservation easement. We were there to find out about the glittering and colorful predators of the air—the dragonflies.

As we got close to the ponds, we realized that there were hundreds of dragonflies over the water: males aggressing towards each other, mating pairs skimming the water as they laid eggs, dragonflies sitting lightly on the pond scum, rushes, and sagebrush around the pond. At the end of the morning, we had identified ten different species of dragonflies and five different species of damselflies. Ron and Barbara are avid local dragonfly experts and we were all having a great time!

While looking at dragonflies, we also couldn't help but be fascinated by all the activity on the pond. We saw Coots, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, and Ruddy Ducks with ducklings. Next year, the list of wildlife will expand to include native fish, specifically the Owens speckled dace, classified by the state as a species of special concern.

In October, ESLT will partner with the California Department of Fish and Game and landowner Bill Bramlette to restore fish habitat. With the help of ESLT volunteers, we will drain the ponds, remove the aggressive hardstem bulrush and the non-native Sacramento perch, and finally introduce the Owens speckled dace.

The data we collect about dragonflies will help us have a big picture view of how the restoration project will enhance habitat for all of the species that thrive at Benton Ponds, now and in perpetuity.

■ *By Hillary Behr, ESLT AmeriCorps member*



Top: The Benton ponds provide excellent habitat, not just for dragonflies, but for many species of birds, mammals, insects, and wildflowers.

Bottom: Eight-spotted Skimmer by Ron Oriti.



ESLT Greetings

Please join us in welcoming David Woodruff to our ESLT staff. David will be serving as Deputy Director, leading fundraising and outreach efforts to help preserve our Eastern Sierra lands. David's experience is from the for-profit world, including departmental management, sales, marketing and finance.

David's first visit to the Eastern Sierra was on a return trip home to Southern California from a family vacation in Yosemite in the late 1950s. David shares his love for the Eastern Sierra with his wife of 35 years Gayle. The two have hiked and backpacked almost every trail on the Eastside from Lone Pine to Lake Tahoe. David and Gayle now live full time at their home in Independence with their dog Ebbetts.

"Being part of the Eastern Sierra Land Trust is something akin to a long time dream come true for me" says David. "To be part of an organization and staff so passionately involved in helping to preserve and protect our open spaces and scenic lands in this incredible place we call the Eastern Sierra, is an honor and I look forward to contributing to ESLT's important mission."

Eastern Sierra Land Trust works with willing landowners to preserve vital lands in the Eastern Sierra region for their scenic, agricultural, natural, recreational, historical, and watershed values.

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Leave a Legacy

Thinking about your will? The magnificent landscape of the Eastern Sierra enriches the lives of visitors and residents of all ages and provides habitat for many species of plants, birds and animals. If you would like to maintain the special qualities of the Eastern Sierra far into the future, please consider a legacy gift. A bequest to ESLT will enable future generations to enjoy the glorious region we all love and would be a lasting legacy for anyone who wants to leave behind a better world. Please call the ESLT office or email David Woodruff at david@eslt.org for more information about including ESLT in your will.

Naylon Conservation Easement Celebration

SAVE THE DATE:

Saturday, October 22, 2011

Join Bob & Lee Naylon, California Deer Association, California Wildlife Conservation Board, and ESLT for a celebration of the permanent preservation of this important and unique historic property. The celebration will include speakers, a walking tour, music, and refreshments. Ever wonder how Swall Meadows got its name? Who planted all the apple trees? This and more history will be part of the celebration. Stay tuned and visit our website www.eslt.org for more information.



You're Invited! Join us to celebrate preserving important deer habitat and history in Swall Meadows. Photo by Lee Naylon.

Membership Milestones

Thank you to all who recently sent contributions in memory or in honor of your family, friends, and loved ones. Such gifts pay tribute to these special people by helping us keep the Eastern Sierra a beautiful place now and for future generations—a true gift in perpetuity.

ESLT was honored to receive many gifts in memory of Allison Kreutzen and Kip Garre who passed away tragically in a backcountry avalanche. Glen Poulsen, close friend of Allison and Kip and an ESLT member and landowner, said, "Allison and Kip were passionate about the open spaces, incredible vistas and of course the challenging and spectacular mountains of the Eastern Sierra. Scaling and skiing the high peaks was their passion, and like Galen Rowell before them, they were drawn back to the compelling beauty of the High Sierra." The following donors gave in memory of Allison Kreutzen: **Dale and Sally Brooks, Phillip and Margaret Cavanaugh, William and Aggie Keese, Hollis Lenderking, Sarah Michael**, and several anonymous donors. The following donors gave in memory of Kip Garre: **the National Treasury Employees Union, John and Sandra Weiler**, and several anonymous donors.

Frances and Alice Davis donated in memory of Jeanne L. Davis. **Neal Gottlieb** gave in honor of Three Twins Ice Cream. **Andrew and Deena Kastor** donated in honor of Tony Taylor. **Lori Michelin** gave in memory of Walter Rosenthal. **Ms. Crockett Gardner** gave in honor of Sarah Spano, saying "This gift is being offered in honor of my granddaughter, Sarah Crockett Spano, who served your fine organization with pride and honor."

Member Spotlight: Kim Forkner



ESLT member and volunteer, Kim Forkner, appreciates the opportunity to volunteer on the land and outdoors. Here, she helps kids paint their sunflower dreams at ESLT's GardenFest 2011.

Living in the Eastern Sierra for just a few years, Kim is impressed with how genuine and caring the people here are. She has seen this caring extend to each other as well as caring about the land. Kim finds it rewarding to share the outdoor experiences with children, which she jumps at the chance to do by volunteering at ESLT events such as GardenFest, with 4H and other children's programs. These experiences are, of course, great chances to enjoy the beautiful outdoors and build new connections with people interested in a common cause—keeping the Eastern Sierra beautiful.

When asked why she supports ESLT, she replied, "How else could I preserve land, without owning any myself?" Being a member and volunteer with ESLT allows Kim to be part of something much bigger than herself, and she defies the myth that the younger generation doesn't have deep connections with the land. While Kim knows there are places for towns and places for nature, she appreciates this special place and wants to do what she can to preserve nature here. Kim says "Everyone should get involved in something they feel strongly about. There is power in numbers." Each member and volunteer is part of the success ESLT achieves and we thank Kim for her generous gifts of time and support!

ESLT Annual Fundraising Dinner and Art Show a Success

Many Thanks to our Generous Supporters

Eastern Sierra Land Trust would like to thank the following supporters who helped make this event a success. Special thanks to Mammoth Mountain Ski Area LLC who hosted the dinner and Minaret Village Shopping Center for providing the space for the art show. Additional thanks to: Bill Bramlette, ESLT Board Member and Landowner; Bluebird Imaging; Jon and Betsy Elliot, Ken Gardner, and Jan Hunewill, entertainment; Great Basin Bakery; Rosanne Higley, Marie Patrick, and Lee Ann Wood, events committee; Rick Kattelman and Lynn Peterson, art committee; Kendra Knight, curator; Michael Lofthus, silent auction and Little Cowboy; Mammoth Brewing Company; Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory; Sierra Paint & Drywall; Snowcreek Resort; Sonoma Wine Company; Stephen Ingram, slideshow; Valley Florist; and many ESLT Volunteers.



Top: Thanks to our generous donors, the silent auction and dinner was the highlight of the Western Roundup evening.

Bottom: The Art for Conservation Show and Sale featured works depicting beautiful landscapes of the Eastern Sierra.

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