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Following the Round Valley Mule Deer

Eastern Sierra Land Trust and CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife to Host Mule Deer Migration Corridor Field Trip on March 3rd

Every year, many wildlife species in the Eastern Sierra migrate in search of warmer weather, food, and a place to have their young. For the local Round Valley mule deer herd, early spring marks the time to venture onto well-worn trails.

Mule deer are preparing for the journey from their winter range in the valley to their summer range in the mountain meadows. Along their route, they will follow the same paths they have taken for generations – what biologists call a migration corridor.

Near the small residential communities of Paradise and Swall Meadows, mule deer on their migration must travel through a narrow bottleneck between the steep cliffs of Wheeler Ridge and the deep canyon of Lower Rock Creek Gorge. To reach the meadows where they spend their summer, the herd must face old and new threats to their survival.

Traveling through this cramped corridor has become more dangerous in recent years. With increased development and traffic, food and safe shelter have become scarcer. In addition, long periods of drought, heavy winters, and wildfires further limit available resources. As these conditions become the new normal, mule deer are forced to adapt.

Concerned about the growing threats to mule deer and other wildlife that use this migration corridor, a group of local community members came together in 2001 and formed what was to become Eastern Sierra Land Trust (ESLT). Since then, ESLT has helped landowners in the Swall Meadows area conserve 269 acres of private land – ensuring safer passage for the mule deer as they travel through the area twice each year.

Are you curious to learn more about the mule deer, their migration, and how they are coping with recent challenges? On the afternoon of Saturday, March 3rd, Eastern Sierra Land Trust invites you to explore a portion of the migration corridor during their Mule Deer Migration Corridor Field Trip. Special guest Timothy Taylor from California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) will join them to share stories and information about the Round Valley mule deer herd.

While admiring spectacular valley views and looking for deer on the move, you will discover more about how local conservation efforts ensure that families and wildlife can continue to live side-by-side in this area for generations to come.

This free event is open to all ages; for more event information and to RSVP, please contact Ryan, ESLT Education Coordinator and AmeriCorps member, at Ryan@eslt.org, or call (760) 873-4554.



Eastern Sierra Land Trust works with willing landowners to protect vital lands in the Eastern Sierra region for their scenic, agricultural, natural, recreational, historic, and watershed values. To learn about ESLT's work and how you can get involved, please visit www.eslt.org.

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Suggested low-resolution pictures with captions provided below; high-resolution versions are attached to email. For additional images, please contact Marguerite Merritt, ESLT Communications Director: marguerite@eslt.org.



Image 1 Caption: Mule deer graze on sagebrush along their migration corridor in Swall Meadows.



Image 2 Caption: Expert biologist Timothy Taylor, CDFW (right) shares his knowledge of the mule deer's migration during a visit to the migration corridor in 2014.