

COMMITTEE AWARDS RECOGNIZE Defenders of the Trust

by Jeff Darlington

The Mono Lake Committee awarded CalTrout and Stan Eller with the annual Defender of the Trust award at Restoration Days this year, recognizing their extraordinary efforts to champion Mono Lake and its tributary streams.

In 1984, CalTrout spearheaded a lawsuit against the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP) charging that Rush Creek diversions violated California Fish and Game codes 5937 and 5946, which require that enough water be allowed to flow past dams to keep fisheries in good condition. CalTrout took the lead in the legal battle to enforce this code at Rush Creek when, in the winter of 1984, DWP planned to once again dewater the creek.

Stan Eller (then Assistant District Attorney for Mono County) turned the legal argument into action on the ground. In keeping with efforts to enforce the Fish and Game codes at Rush Creek, he informed DWP that if their employees made a move to shut down the creek, he

would take those employees into custody. As a result DWP left water in Rush Creek, the legal case proceeded successfully, and Rush Creek has been flowing ever since.

Accepting the award for CalTrout was Executive Director Mark Bergstrom.

“We’re honored to accept this award from the Mono Lake Committee,” he said, “and we hope to continue to work in partnership with the Committee to see this great area restored.”

Stan Eller echoed the importance of cooperation, adding, “Every time I drive by Rush Creek I remember the winter of 1984 and the important actions all of us took to protect this beautiful stream.”

For a list of past Defender of the Trust recipients, see www.monolake.org/committee/defender. ❖

Jeff Darlington is the Committee’s Office Director. He still loves the Mono Basin, even after his vacation in Idaho.



Committee Board Member Martha Davis presented the Defender of the Trust award to Mark Bergstrom of CalTrout who spoke about the importance of partnerships in environmental protection.



Stan Eller, holding the Defender of the Trust award, recalled his fateful phone conversation in 1984, warning DWP not to turn off the flows to Rush Creek.



PHOTO BY ARYA DEGENHARDT

Restoration Days: The Celebration Continues

by Jeff Darlington

Restoration Days 2001 was a fun weekend filled with old and new friends gathering in the Mono Basin to celebrate ongoing restoration efforts.

This year’s focus was on Mono Basin streams and riparian habitat. CalTrout Conservation Director Jim Edmondson, research scientist Dave Herbst, Committee staff, and other experts led a field trip to Rush Creek, where participants learned about the recovery of this magnificent stream through study of invertebrate and fish life. The Committee’s Policy Director Heidi Hopkins led a workshop on native plants and coordinated the removal of non-native tamarisk from sensitive riparian areas.

Thanks to all who participated—it was great seeing you! Special thanks to all those who helped make this year’s event a success, including Bob Madgic, Lucy Parker, Jim Lewis, Deborah Hawk, Janet Carle, CalTrout, TreePeople, and Friends of the Cosumnes River.

For more details about this year’s Restoration Days events, see www.monolake.org/events/restdays.