

State Parks Director Visit – from page 3

protection possible, avoided the Federal listing of *Artemia monica*, Mono's endemic brine shrimp, as an endangered species.

The upshot of the designation is this: right now, local residents and adventurous visitors are free to recreate on the lake as they wish because activity on the lake is at such a low level that the regulatory authorities have not been engaged. But pushing the boundaries of use would trigger immediate, strict water quality regulations.

"The designation does not preclude boats," Del Piero reminded the group, "but it clearly places limits on certain types of boats."

Lake Tahoe is the only other Outstanding National Resource Water in California, and it has strong, detailed water quality protections that protect the lake from hydrocarbon pollution originating with motorized activity.

Scenic Area Management Plan Seen As a Model

The Forest Service's Scenic Area Management Plan was frequently referred to in the meeting as the type of comprehensive, clear plan that could help resolve concerns involving the State Reserve. Developing such documents requires time, commitment from stakeholders, and funding. In the case of the Reserve, all three may come together next year to get a discussion process off the ground. ❖

Geoffrey McQuilkin is the Committee's Co-Executive Director. His new favorite thing is to have his daughter Caelen fall asleep on his chest.

Caltrans – from page 5

protect. A review of Caltrans' approach to this issue reveals a failure to develop a plan that is consistent with the protection requirements in place today at

Mono Lake. This behavior would not be acceptable from any of the parties in the Mono Lake case; it is not acceptable from Caltrans.

The Committee remains committed to working on developing a project that improves safety to the extent possible while maintaining Mono Lake's stunning views and lakeshore habitat. Safety improvements can be made without creating the severe visual and environmental impacts currently in the plans.

Public Comment Will Be Critical

Public comment will be critical when a suitable Draft Environmental Impact Report is released—which is currently planned for January 2003. News of the DEIR release will be on the Mono Lake Website www.monolake.org or join the direct alert list by contacting Lisa Cutting (lisa@monolake.org) at (760) 647-6595. ❖

North Basin Stream Stays Wet

As summers go these days, it was a good one for Mill Creek, Mono Lake's third largest tributary. Water flowed down the stream channel and reached the lake throughout the entire summer season. Mill Creek has run dry frequently in previous years, despite being the only year-round Mono Basin stream not diverted into the Los Angeles Aqueduct. The reason? Little attention has been paid to the creek while water has been diverted for hydropower, irrigation, fish rearing, and Wilson Creek flows. Ongoing discussions about the management of water in the North Mono Basin offer the potential for a well-planned, water-efficient solution to competing water demands that respects both Mill and Wilson creeks while providing for multiple uses associated with water rights.



PHOTO BY ARYA DEGENHARDT