

About this time in each Newsletter cycle the words of Mono Lake Committee Co-Founder and Newsletter Editor David Gaines float gently to my mind ... “I am a Newsletter refugee” he wrote. These words beckon me to make a break for it, to leave the computer in the proverbial dust and make sure that Mono Lake and the Mono Basin are still out there.

This time, there’s no question of where to go ... it’s time for a dip. I make my way down off the ancient lakeshore terrace, the lake glimmering like a mirage—it’s a good thing I’m out here to make sure it’s for real. The salty ocean smell hits just as fields of paintbrush appear through the sagebrush—a good sign. The David Gaines Memorial Boardwalk meanders through cracked tufa mounds and tall grasses as it undulates across the uneven, marshy ground. A patch of alkali flies greets me at the shoreline—so far, so good. Thousands of brine shrimp hang in suspension, their shadows cast on the infamous muck below. Hopping through the tufa shoals I make my way out to the perfect spot and don’t even hesitate. Slippery water, the sting of the last hike’s scratches, and up go the feet. Yep, Mono Lake is still here, and seems to be doing quite well.

It feels like time stands still when you float in Mono Lake. Glassy waters, blue sky, the islands, the steep mountains and desert hills—I’m pretty sure this is exactly what Gaines had in mind. I’m not usually one for recommending things, but a good, well-timed float in Mono Lake is good for the soul.

Just before extracting myself from the brine a flock of phalaropes whispered across the water. My investigation was complete—Mono Lake is right on track. My recommendation: come check it out for yourself. And if floating in Mono Lake isn’t your thing, check out the articles in this Newsletter and see what inspires you!

—Arya Degenhardt, Communications Director



COVER PHOTO BY LEW NUNNELLEY
GREG REIS

The Rush Creek return ditch, carrying a peak flow of 350 cubic feet per second of water from Grant Reservoir to Rush Creek. This the first time Rush Creek was augmented with water from Lee Vining Creek (see article on page 16), delivering Rush Creek its first 400 cubic feet per second peak flow since the State Water Board Restoration Order in 1998.

Mono Lake Committee Mission

The Mono Lake Committee is a non-profit citizens’ group dedicated to protecting and restoring the Mono Basin ecosystem, educating the public about Mono Lake and the impacts on the environment of excessive water use, and promoting cooperative solutions that protect Mono Lake and meet real water needs without transferring environmental problems to other areas.



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Founded by David Gaines in 1978

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