

As we put the finishing touches on this issue of the *Mono Lake Newsletter*, it's raining outside. The rain is not that unusual in and of itself, however, the sounds this particular rainstorm is creating, are. If I stop clicking and typing long enough to listen it sounds like someone is playing Peruvian pipes. These are springtime sounds—water hitting things other than snow. For February, it's unusual. For some reason it makes all of us in the office a bit punchy. "That one sounds like the heater vent" says Geoff as he points to the door. I think I can hear individual drops bouncing between the thin layers of our patched tin roof. "Make sure that water gets to Mono Lake" Lisa jokes as she dodges tree-watering buckets capturing drips in the hallway.

It has been wet this year, and it feels like we should be getting this precipitation in the form of snow, but we can't really complain. Earlier this year we had another rain-related phenomenon. This one was in the form of a frozen mile-long lagoon behind a berm adjacent to the south shore. It was the talk of the town—"You can ice skate right next to Mono Lake!" And sure enough, a quick ski down to the water's edge after work one day was rewarded with Olympic-grade ice, and Mono Basin-grade scenery. With ice below, saline water lapping just an arms-length away, and the expanse of the Mono Basin spreading out in all directions, it was probably the closest I'll ever get to ice skating on Mono Lake. It was spectacular—and only increasingly so with the ensuing sunset—leaving me like a skipping record repeating a single, totally inadequate word, "Wow."

Back here in the office with its own rainstorm soundtrack, I can only hope that something in this issue of the Mono Lake Newsletter makes you think, "wow." I'm continually amazed that we can fill these pages with so much good information about this one place, and love the fact that I learn new things every time we compile a new issue. This one is no exception, enjoy!

—Arya Degenhardt, Communications Director



COVER PHOTO, KANGAROO RAT TRACKS IN SNOW BY ARYA DEGENHARDT

ARYA DEGENHARDT

Fresh water turned to ice behind a berm along the south shore of Mono Lake.

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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