Earlier this year some friends and I began a short hike on the Mail Trail across the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. Celebrating what might have been the last horseback mail-delivery route for any town in the west, we hiked into the uplifted sandstone cliffs. The intensity of the cloudless blue sky over snow covered sandstone cliffs reminded me why this remarkable scene deserves its special protective designation.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4
Scraping the Bottom of the Barrel

DO WE NEED TAR SANDS OR OIL SHALE?

by Wayne Haskinson

For years the Utah Chapter Sierra Club has opposed the development of oil and gas on sensitive lands that could be irreparably harmed by extensive development. As one of the originators and supporters of America's Red Rock Wilderness Act, http://www.thomas.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/D?d111:1:/temp/-bd1FqZ:/hos/d111query.html, we along with our Utah Wilderness Coalition partners have fought the development of oil and gas development in places where wilderness values surpass the pristine of oil or gas available for processing. In very few places have we lost that battle. Perhaps the most significant was along the White River in Uintah County where federal and state lands were both leased or drilled for oil and gas.

In other places we have succeeded, and in others we still have a long and arduous fight to keep our wild places, our water and air clean, and habitats for wildlife secure.

In 2009 we opposed converting an oil field to something similar to a tar sands project in Antelope Creek in the Uinta Basin. Hydrocarbons that can be used as “oil” exist in a variety of forms from “sweet crude” (the most valuable form of oil sought) to oil shale (in which the hydrocarbon is actually kerogen that can be converted to oil). In Antelope Creek the oil was a thick, high sulfur, wax-like oil called bitumen. This form of crude oil can be nearly solid at normal ambient temperatures; therefore, it cannot be piped to refineries. Instead, it must be hauled in heated tanker trucks. When it is refined, it produces waste products that can be more than 50% of the original volume. This waste must be disposed of, and there are not many good options currently. We were able to stop this project because of National Environmental Policy Act violations. Someday it could come back as another project.

We also opposed the PR Springs tar sands project in the Book Cliffs. This project would strip mine tar sands near the Grand and Uintah County line. This is a particularly difficult project to oppose because it involves leases of lands owned by the state of Utah. A single 62-acre strip mine pit had been approved by the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining (UDOGM) for Earth Energy Resources. The entire area leased for tar sands was about 1,200 acres. UDOGM planned to permit a second pit of thirty-one acres.

The Sierra Club and the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance opposed the mine and the expansion beyond the single, permitted mine pit. We argued that there would likely be run-off problems from contaminated water entering adjacent water drainages, that the mining process and pre-processing of the bitumen was a proprietary process and thus should not be accepted as having minimal negative impact without further substantiation. This information should be made available to UDOGM and the public. Supposedly it is not a water intensive process but rather uses a citrus-based solvent to leech the tar from the sands and clays that hold it. There does not appear to be a single commercially viable tar sands project using the proposed process.

Eventually we settled with UDOGM during the time we were preparing an administrative appeal to the Board of UDOGM. If we lost before the board, our next appeal would have been a lawsuit to the Utah Supreme Court. We did not feel we had a strong enough argument in law to be successful. In the settlement UDOGM agreed they would not expand the original 62-acre strip mine and that they would pursue a public notification of any proposed expansions of the project. UDOGM policy allows them to expand any project if it does not exceed 50% of the original project. And they guaranteed we would be notified of any future proposed expansions in the lease area.

At the time we did not have strong evidence that water or air quality would be impacted. Since then other organizations have filed an additional appeal. They have hired a hydrologist that may make their case stronger. They will have to go through the same legal process we followed including an appeal to the Board of UDOGM and then likely an appeal to Utah Supreme Court. We hope they are successful.

Tar sands can be found in other parts of Utah including the San Rafael Swell, the Dirty Devil River, and the Circle Cliffs. Beyond tar sands we face the eventual attempts to develop oil shale. So far there is no commercially viable process for developing oil shale. Exxon shut down its attempt to develop oil shale near Parachute, Colorado, in 1982. Shell shut down its project along the Yampa River in Colorado in 2010. Hopefully we will develop clean, renewable, and non-destructive energy sources before oil and gas companies come back to look at oil shale.

Hopefully we will develop clean, renewable, and non-destructive energy sources before oil and gas companies come back to look at oil shale.

FIND US ON FACEBOOK

The Utah Chapter’s new Facebook page is the place for the Sierra Club community to come together in Utah. Catch up with your friends and find out about future events. You can check us out at http://www.facebook.com/utahsierran, or navigate there from the chapter homepage. Become a fan today.
THE RESILIENT HABITAT CAMPAIGN is quickly developing into a significant conservation effort in Utah’s Red Rock Country.

Watch for ways you can help build the resiliency to climate change and connectivity our plants and animals need to survive.

THE PLAN TO SAVE AN ECOSYSTEM

The Grand Canyon and Colorado Plateau are iconic ecosystems in the desert Southwest that are predicted to be severely impacted by global climate change. They are critical to watersheds, wildlife survival, local economies, and human communities. With increased heat, fires, and drought projected to occur due to climate change, the Greater Grand Canyon-Colorado Plateau (GGC-CP) ecosystem is one of the most vulnerable in North America.

There are many non-climate stressors that could make the situation much worse. In Utah, the largest blocks of federal land in the lower 48 states not designated as park or wilderness area, the East and West Tavaputs plateaus, are under extreme assault from proposed energy developments such as tar sands, oil and gas, and oil shale that would significantly reduce their resistance to the harmful effects of climate change. In the Greater Grand Canyon-Colorado Plateau region, destructive energy developments, off-road vehicle use, and excessive livestock grazing damage the high plateaus and red rock canyon river systems that provide crucial water to wildlife and human communities alike. In managing these lands, the federal government has over-emphasized longstanding, damaging land management uses and been slow to respond to climate change. The Resilient Habitat campaign is working to solve these critical and interconnected issues.

The first step in the Resilient Habitat campaign will be to create an independent science-based blueprint detailing the impacts of climate change on the GGC-CP, with which we will develop policy recommendations and keep the public informed. It is essential for federal land managers to apply climate-smart management to their land use decisions and this document will be critical for that purpose.

Wildlife and other ecosystem components need adequate protected space to adjust to climate change, which is why we will work for a new national monument that will include inter-connected protected landscapes and buffer zones.

The Resilient Habitat campaign is among the most important conservation work in our history, and it is the Sierra Club’s number-one priority in the Greater Grand Canyon-Colorado Plateau ecoregion. Over the next few years, we plan to:

- Promote science-based permanent protection of wildlife corridors and watersheds and where needed, restore resilient habitats, such as by reintroduction of beaver.
- Promote federal protection for key habitats
- Seek and advocate for opportunities to add needed ecological buffers and functional connectivity to existing public lands.
- Advocate for National Monuments and urge the BLM and Forest Service to protect lands with wilderness characteristics by taking advantage of such opportunities as BLM Resource Management Plan and Travel Management Plan revisions.
- Reform management of the riparian areas in Utah’s Dixie, Fishlake, and Manti-La Sal National Forests
- Promote renewable energy and guide placement of transmission lines to best protect the ecosystem
- Oppose inappropriate energy development such as tar sands development in the Book Cliffs and oil and gas leases near Arches National Park and the Tavaputs Plateau.
- Protect old growth forests and their carbon reserves in National Forests such as the Pinyon Juniper forest removal in parts of The Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument.

This work includes strategies to protect watersheds, forests, plateaus, and red rock country and to protect and restore critical watersheds and wildlife corridors that link these regions within the desert Southwest. This land is not only under extreme threat from many different energy developments, but also from inappropriate livestock grazing, logging, the introduction and spread of invasive plant and aquatic species, and irresponsible off-road vehicle (ORV) use and excessive road density including user-created ORV routes.

Keeping these critical lands and habitats intact and preventing energy development there are key to maintaining and rebuilding corridors between core wildlands, which will preserve the integrity of the whole ecosystem. Upcoming plans of county, state, and federal agencies provide key opportunities to address the effects of climate change and increase resiliency in the Greater Grand Canyon-Colorado Plateau.
Something new caught my eye that day. To the west of Pine Creek and inside the monument boundary was a new house built in 2009. Walking closer to investigate, my pocket GPS verified that this large house was about 300 feet inside the national monument and inside a candidate Bureau of Land Management (BLM) wilderness study area.

This was not the first time that I had noted and reported to BLM unauthorized use by this same landowner on our public lands. Four years earlier after hiking the same trail, I contacted BLM about a buried irrigation pipe and all-terrain vehicle routes inside the monument. Boundary monuments erected by BLM have also been removed. Based on information from BLM, I learned that BLM had long history with this landowner and had communicated concerns with him about a possible trespass. However, the BLM had not taken action because they claimed they first needed to survey the property line.

Trespass is a prohibited act. Twenty-five years ago, BLM's response to a building in trespass of a candidate wilderness area was quite a bit different. BLM surveyed property owned by Clive Kincaid in the Deer Creek drainage, a tributary of the Escalante River, and found his stone house to be eighteen inches over the property line. BLM's survey, the first use of modern survey instruments at this site, corrected a history of property boundaries based on piles of rocks placed by homesteaders. Shortly after the BLM survey of Kincaid's property boundary was completed, BLM contacted the press. Roland Robinson, then the Utah State Director for BLM wrote “I was both surprised and offended by the placement, indeed intrusion, of man-made structures and developments as well as a stack of building material rubble and refuse in the area.” (Salt Lake Tribune, 5 Sept 1987, p. B1). Shortly after BLM completed its survey, Kincaid received a BLM letter demanding he remove the building from BLM property. About a year later, the stone building was removed.

What might explain the difference between BLM's rapid and taut reaction to this current monument trespass versus its commendable zeal in the 1980s? In the 80s, Kincaid was the executive director of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance and a strong advocate for wilderness protection.

Based on agency records, this current monument trespass case provides only the most egregious chapter in a long history going back six years, and no action has been demanded of the trespasser.

This BLM National Monument, while protected in many ways, is different from other National Monuments and Parks. Until the Clinton Administration, national monuments were all administered by the US National Park Service. President Clinton created sixteen national monuments, of which Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument was the first, and entrusted them to the management of the Bureau of Land Management. At the time, critics questioned if BLM had the expertise and, frankly, the ethos or integrity to manage lands of such ecological importance.

Just a few weeks ago, BLM began but did not complete the required property boundary survey. Will BLM demand the removal of this building as they did for Kincaid? We don't have an answer to this question. BLM has taken great pride in the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument as part of its National Landscape Conservation System. An unauthorized private house inside a BLM National Monument is an excellent test of BLM's commitment to this vision. This trespass requires BLM to take firm and timely action.

Jim Catlin is executive director of the Wild Utah Project, a former board member of the Sierra Club and a veteran wilderness advocate.
In Memoriam

FAREWELL TO LANCE CHRISTIE by Jean Binyon

A long-time member of the Sierra Club, Lance was also involved with the Natural Resources Defense Council, Earth First! Foundation, SUWA, and the Utah Wilderness Coalition. In April, Lance was honored at the Glen Canyon Group's 10th Anniversary Party as the 1989-1990 founder and chair of the Canyonlands Group, which preceded the Glen Canyon Group.

Lance wrote the Behind the Rocks section of Wilderness at the Edge, a descriptive inventory of the lands proposed for wilderness by the Utah Wilderness Coalition. Wilderness at the Edge broke new ground in its beauty and professionalism in the service of wilderness advocacy.

He died October 28, 2010, at the age of 66. A memorial service was held November 12 at Old City Park, Moab, attended by relatives, and friends and acquaintances, including many Sierra Club members.

December 1—As I turned the page on the 2010 Moab Cancer Survivor Calendar to December, I said goodbye to Richard Lance Christie for the last time. Lance was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in September of 2008, a diagnosis which usually dooms its victim in one to four months. But Lance was a tough old bird and a smart one at that. After having the tumor removed, he researched the disease and developed his own treatment regime. It gave him time to continue an active role with environmental and community boards and organizations.

More importantly, he devoted his last years to publishing online The Renewable Deal for the United States which was completed on Earth Day, 2010. It is available for reference or download at http://www.earthrestoration.net.

According to Lance, it is a “comprehensive master plan for conservation of the nation’s infrastructure and economy to achieve full sustainability for food, water, and carbon-free, nuclear-free energy, within one human lifetime, using existing proven technology and established best practice.”

Legislative Preview

The legislature’s interim committee meetings during 2010 provided insight into likely topics for the 2011 General Session of the Utah Legislature. For Sierra Club members in Utah, bills affecting public lands, environmental health and energy will be among the most important.

Certain interim discussions, such as Rep Jack Draxler’s (R-North Logan) Mineral and Petroleum Literacy proposal that would mandate a pro-mining curriculum for elementary school, have already gained notoriety. Funds from the state’s Oil and Gas Conservation Account would be used to create this ad-hoc curriculum.

But it’s often not the message bills or the already notorious topics that impact the lives of Utahns most profoundly. We’ll be keeping an eye on a range of bills so we can let you know about the most significant ones.

The environmental community rallied during the summer and fall to provide input to Governor Herbert’s 10-Year Energy Plan, and as a result, the draft report, http://www.energy.utah.gov/governorsenergyplan/docs/strategenergyplan110310draft.pdf, includes many good ideas related to energy efficiency and renewable energy.

The plan, issued on November 3rd, was intended to raise issues that could spawns legislation in the 2011 General Session.

Keep current with the most important environmental bills during the 2011 session by making the Utah Chapter’s Bill Tracker, http://www.utah.sierracclub.org/tracker/, a favorite on your web browser. Our legislative intern, Vy Nguyen, will be helping us maintain the information on this site daily or more frequently if necessary.

Special Thanks

Thanks to the members listed below for their contributions to the Utah Chapter’s 2010 fundraising drive. These members contributed after the deadline for the Summer issue of the newsletter. Thanks also to the many members who contributed anonymously.

In 2011, the chapter will continue its effective advocacy on behalf of clean, renewable energy. That also means that we have to put the brake on coal and other fossil fuel development that does not use adequate environmental safeguards. We’ll be ramping up our work to protect Utah’s public lands and wilderness and in focusing in particular on protecting the resilient habitat needed for biodiversity to survive.

But if you value our work, we’ll need your help. Please contribute as generously as you can.

Mike & Jean Binyon
William Browning
Mark Clemens
Joan L. Coles
MS Evans
G Nelson Reese
An anonymous contribution in honor of Catherine Sharpsteen

To protect our members’ privacy, if no publishing preference is specified, we do not publish contributors’ names. If you don’t see your name listed and would like for it to be published in the next issue, please call Mark at (801) 467-9297.

We try hard to spell people’s names correctly; please accept our apologies if we misspelled your name!
Sierra Club Appeals Strip Mine Proposed for Bryce Canyon’s Doorstep

The Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club, the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, the Natural Resources Defense Council and the National Parks Conservation Association yesterday asked the Utah Supreme Court to stand up for air and water quality and essential tourism revenue after the Utah Board of Oil, Gas and Mining (Board) jeopardized quality of life in Utah by approving an approximately 600-acre coal strip mine. The Board issued its final ruling to approve Alton Coal Development’s Coal Hollow strip mine at the end of November 2010, ignoring the damage the proposed mine will have on local economies, cultural resources and the environment. The company has already begun preparing the strip mine site located near Bryce Canyon National Park.

“It is disappointingly clear that the Board refused to consider how this mine will irreparably damage Southern Utah,” said Sierra Club organizer Clair Jones. “There is no way the Board should have allowed this mine to go forward if they considered the ways it would devastate small business owners and the air and water quality in Southern Utah. Unless the Utah Supreme Court does what is best for Southern Utah, we are going to see untold damage done so a company can strip mine a dirty, dangerous and outdated fossil fuel.”

In addition to the devastating effects Alton Coal’s mine would have on local economies, the mine threatens Bryce Canyon National Park.

“The Board’s ruling needlessly puts one of Utah’s treasured landscapes, Bryce Canyon National Park, at risk,” said Karen Hevel-Mingo, Program Coordinator for the National Parks Conservation Association. “Thousands of visitors come to Bryce each year to marvel at the pristine night skies and beautiful vistas.”

The damage the strip mine would do to local economies is of particular concern to area residents such as Bobbi Bryant, who owns a small business in Panguitch.

“This is much bigger than one mine; it is a decision for Utah to allow coal strip mining to take place near our beautiful national parks and monuments, and we would like the Utah Supreme Court to consider and agree that there are better choices for our environment and economy,” said Bryant. “Our hope is that the Utah Supreme Court will realize the negative impacts of this coal strip mine on the fragile lands and air around Bryce Canyon National Park and the surrounding communities and see what Utah Division of Oil Gas and Mining did not.”

On October 19, 2009, the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining approved a surface mining permit for the Alton Coal strip mine. The permit allows for mining of 2 million tons of coal per year for approximately three years. Mining operations would require up to 300 coal truck trips per day traveling 110 miles one-way from Alton to Cedar City, which would result in one truck leaving the site every seven minutes.

The Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club, the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, the Natural Resources Defense Council and the National Parks Conservation Association all appealed the Division’s decision, arguing that plans for the strip mine fail to adequately account for potential harmful impacts on the area’s water, air, wildlife and cultural resources. The Board affirmed the mining permit after ruling against the groups on every issue and uniformly rejecting—without explanation or analysis—the detailed testimony of scientists who identified serious defects in the plans for the Alton mine.

“Strip mine is not the sort of canyon tourists are flocking to see,” said Natural Resources Defense Council Lands Program Director Sharon Buccino. “This project threatens the area’s tourism economy. And when our nation is moving towards a clean energy economy to deliver jobs and prosperity, a new coal mine is about the last thing we need.”

The area approved for mining by the Board lies mainly on private land near Alton in Kane County. The site is nearly equidistant between Bryce Canyon National Park and the proposed Upper Kanab Creek Wilderness, as well as being close to the east entrance of Zion National Park. The state of Utah has vigorously promoted tourism in this area by designating the section of US 89 from Kanab to Mount Carmel as a scenic byway. This scenic byway will be the alternate coal-haul route during weather that makes the northern route via Utah Highway 20 impassable for the haul trucks.

The coal reserves targeted by this proposal are part of a larger reserve that extends onto nearby federal land. The Alton Coal Field extends several miles to the east, but the eastern portion of the field—parts of which are visible from overlooks in Bryce Canyon National Park—was put off limits for coal mining by Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus in 1980. Although site preparation has already begun, no excavation or mining can begin while the permit is under appeal.

This article was developed from a Sierra Club press release, and additional materials written by Mark Clemens.
Coal’s Cycle of Destruction
by Mark Clemens

Coal marks many communities. Some towns wind up buried under toxic coal sludge as improperly constructed and maintained coal waste ponds or lagoons fail and wash downstream. That was the case in Harriman, Tennessee, when over a billion gallons of coal ash sludge was washed down the Emory River on 22 December 2008, from the Tennessee Valley Authority’s Kingston Plant.

Others experience higher rates of asthma from particulate or other pollution from coal-fired power plants (some of the off-the-charts level of mercury in the Great Salt Lake comes from coal plants); still others experience blast damage and disruption of the water table from coal mining that sometimes destroys entire mountains to get at a coal seam buried within it.

These consequences sift down across the country like fine black coal dust, but for many years the complete impacts of the coal cycle were not visible. One area might suffer from coal mining, another from the harmful coal emissions in the air, and a third from mercury contamination of its water sources.

Coal even reaches out its tentacles to destroy life in the ocean. Coal is the most carbon intensive of fossil fuels and is, therefore, the source of carbon dioxide most responsible for ocean acidification. The coral reefs represent a disproportionate share of the ocean’s biodiversity which is being wiped out as repeated high ocean temperatures bleach or kill the coral-building species found in reefs. These episodes recur more frequently with coal-driven global warming.

Because it has been difficult to get a comprehensive view of the coal cycle, it’s also been hard to hold coal responsible for the life cycle of its pollution.

The disadvantages of coal affected millions of people spread across the country, but the financial benefits are strongly concentrated. The power of coal-mining companies, electric utilities and railroads, for many of which the single largest freight component is coal, prevented action from being taken.

The Sierra Club’s Beyond Coal Campaign has made formidable strides across the United States and particularly in Utah and the Intermountain West. We’ve been instrumental in ending plans for new coal-fired power plants in Squid, Utah, and three locations just upwind in Nevada as well as additional coal-fired boilers at existing coal power plants such as the Intermountain Power Project near Delta and the Hunter Power Plant south of Castle Dale.

As you can see in the article “Sierra Club Appeals Strip Mine Proposed for Bryce Canyon’s Doorstep” in this issue, the chapter has also taken the lead in fighting the first coal strip mine proposed in Utah (The others have been underground).

But information is also an important part of this war, and you can find information about much of coal’s cycle of destruction on the national Sierra Club website’s Beyond Coal page. From this page you can navigate to Compass, a clean energy blog with commentary on topics ranging from mountain top removal mining to dirty liquid coal fuels, http://sierraclub.typepad.com/compass/.

Or check out the coal ash map showing 2,000 locations where coal combustion waste or coal ash is stored across the US, http://action.sierraclub.org/site/PageNavigator/adv_logpicture_coalash_map. Look at a map, http://www.sierraclub.org/environmentallaw/coral/map/default.aspx, showing more than 200 proposed coal-fired power plants in the US and their current status. Indigo is the color assigned to proposals that have been defeated, and a satisfyingly large number of the icons are indigo. If you want to send a message to the titans of industry who are still pushing coal projects—such as Snowbird owner Dick Bass—mouse over to the coal corporate accountability page, http://www.sierraclub.org/coal/corporate/default.aspx.

The Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club extends a very special thanks to the

GEORGE B. AND OMA E. WILCOX
AND GIBBS M. AND CATHERINE W. SMITH CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

for its continuing generous support of the Chapter’s programs. The Foundation challenges you to increase your support for the Utah Chapter in 2011.
Judge Orders Ogden to Answer Sierra Club Questions
by Dan Schroeder

A judge ordered Ogden City on October 18, 2010, to respond to a list of questions from the Sierra Club regarding documents that the city has been withholding from the public for over three years.

The Sierra Club filed suit in Utah’s 2nd District Court in 2007, seeking access to city records concerning the now-dormant gondola project. Since then, Ogden and the Sierra Club have wrangled over procedural disputes, asking the court to resolve these disputes on three occasions. The Sierra Club has now prevailed on all three of its motions.

In 2008, 2nd District Judge W. Brent West ordered Ogden to provide an itemized index of the records it was withholding. The index listed 41 separate records, totaling 167 pages. The Sierra Club then documented that several records were missing from this index, and Judge West ordered Ogden to explain the status of the missing records in 2009.

After losing on each of these procedural motions, Ogden voluntarily released some of the records it was withholding. The latest version of Ogden’s index lists 26 records that are still being withheld.

Most recently, the Sierra Club asked Ogden to answer a list of specific questions about the basis for withholding the remaining 26 records, and about a few records that still appear to be missing from its list. When the city refused to answer, the Sierra Club went back to the court and prevailed for the third time. Judge West ruled that the Sierra Club’s questions “are carefully drafted and restricted to appropriate issues ... within the realm of permissible discovery.” Last week he signed an order directing Ogden to answer the Sierra Club’s questions within 30 days.

Summarizing the status of the lawsuit, Sierra Club volunteer Dan Schroeder said, “So far, Ogden City has lost on every motion that has come before the Court in this case. The city’s obstructionist tactics have succeeded, however, in delaying the release of dozens of records for three years, running up tens of thousands of dollars in legal fees for both sides, and wasting everyone’s time. I guess that’s what happens when public officials can finance lawsuits with taxpayer dollars.”

Schroeder stated that the Sierra Club expects to eventually win the release of nearly all of the withheld records, and that under Utah law, if the Sierra Club prevails, Ogden may have to reimburse the Club for its legal fees.

“The Sierra Club is extremely grateful to our attorneys, Joel Ban and Patrick Shea, for their expertise and persistence throughout this lengthy dispute and for deferring most of their billing until after the case is resolved,” Schroeder added.

The Sierra Club received notice on October 22 that Judge West signed this order on October 18.

The Ogden Group sought this information in connection with its commitment to protect the foothills and slopes of Mount Ogden, to promote efficient public transportation and to protect citizens’ rights to information about their government. Ogden City has attempted to forge backroom deals that would subordinate Ogden’s public transportation needs to speculative ski resort developments. They have subsequently attempted to prevent the public from finding out the details.

Additional background material on this matter can be found at http://utah.sierraclub.org/ogden/OgdenFront/GRAMA-lawsuit/index.html.

Dan Schroeder is the conservation chair of the Ogden Group.
**Get Involved**

**Volunteer Corner**

If you value the Chapter’s work, why not get involved and be a part of the action? Our success would not be possible without a strong core of volunteers who are passionate about our great state and its wild places. There are currently several ways to become more active in the Chapter, including:

**Political Committee**

Volunteers on the chapter’s political committee work to preserve the environment through bipartisan political action, to elect environmentally supportive candidates, and to advance the Sierra Club’s legislative program. Frequently we have a lot of fun along the way.

The chapter’s political committee is responsible for identifying and supporting candidates for public office who best represent the goals of the Sierra Club on environmental issues and legislation. The chair is responsible for ensuring compliance with Sierra Club electoral policy and compliance with state and federal election laws.

The committee assembles information on candidates through review of legislative records, questionnaires, interviews, past Sierra Club contact, assessment of the campaign, and information of members. The committee makes recommendations and may serve as one of the official voting bodies of the chapter required to review and vote on proposed endorsements or other political action short of endorsement.

The chair and committee are responsible for preparing materials on state level endorsements, and presenting them to the chapter executive committee for approval. The chair is responsible for ensuring that group political committee chairs and volunteer members receive information on compliance with election laws.

The committee sets priorities for chapter effort on endorsed campaigns and assists in training volunteers to participate effectively and coordinate with campaigns, and in all aspects of political action such as fund raising, door-to-door, press releases, and so forth. Chapter Manager Mark Clemens (pictured above) is happy to be a mentor and also serves as liaison with the club’s national political committee. Contact him at utah.chapter@sierraclub.org or 801/467-9297.

**Attorneys Wanted**

There are three different roles a legal chair can fill:

**Legal Coordination**

The most important role is chapter litigation coordinator. The litigation coordinator would learn and understand the “new matter procedures,” and be able to steer issues activists through the process in a timely manner. This person would also keep track of all the different litigation the chapter is involved in, making sure that the individual case liaisons (issues activists responsible for an individual case) report, as needed, to the chapter ExCom and to the national litigation coordinator. Finally, this person would use legal contacts to help find pro bono attorneys for club litigation.

**Legal Advice & Judgment**

This role involves helping provide legal experience and advice when the chapter finds itself in delicate or sticky legal situations. For example, the chapter may have a suit that is not going well and wonder if the attorney is not doing the job well. An experienced legal adviser can provide invaluable reassurance to the chapter that the lawyer is doing an excellent job or, occasionally, that the chapter’s suspicions may be well-founded.

Often, our attorneys may suggest a particular legal course that doesn’t sound appropriate to lay people activists. An experienced legal adviser can help evaluate the proposed course.

**Legal Representation**

This role is of lesser importance. The purpose of a legal chair is NOT to be the chief litigator for the chapter, but many active legal chairs do at times represent the Club.

The three roles may be filled by one legal chair, or by a legal chair working in conjunction with other legal committee members. Only the second and third roles require experience with environmental law. This position focuses on conservation legal advice, though some chapter legal chairs or legal committee members also provide business advice.

For more information, contact utah.chapter@sierraclub.org.

**EXCOM ELECTION RESULTS**

Thirty-seven ballots were delivered to the Utah Chapter office for the Ogden and Salt Lake Group and Utah Chapter Executive Committee elections. No ballots were wholly disqualified. One had part or all of the group votes disqualified as a result of double voting or ZIP code ineligibility. The ballots will be available for inspection in the chapter office, 2159 South 700 East, Suite 210 in Salt Lake City, during business hours for one year. The results are reported below.

**Ogden Group**

Rane Johnson received eleven votes. Dan Schroeder received twelve votes. Catherine Sharpstein received eleven votes. Rane Johnson, Dan Schroeder and Catherine Sharpstein are elected to two-year terms expiring on 31 December 2012.

**Salt Lake Group**

Govert Bassett received eighteen votes. Preston Motes received nineteen votes. Marion Klaus, Rebecca Wallace and Ron Younger received one write-in vote each. Govert Bassett and Preston Motes are elected to two-year terms expiring on 31 December 2012.

**Utah Chapter**

Bob Becker received twenty-nine votes. Dan Mayhew received thirty-one votes. Steve Thiese received thirty votes. Marion Klaus received fourteen write-in votes. Bob Becker, Marion Klaus, Dan Mayhew and Steve Thiese are elected to two-year terms expiring on 31 December 2012.

Thanks to all our excellent volunteers who are willing to run for the executive committees and improve the environment. Special thanks to Salt Lake Group Chair Ann Wechsler for counting ballots and compiling results. The Glen Canyon Group’s ballot was distributed via their group newsletter; results were not available at press time.

**Calling All Photographers!**

The *Utah Sierran* needs your help. We’re on the prowl for great shots of Utah wilderness to enhance our stock photo library. Send your high-resolution (at least 300 dpi at 5x7") photos, along with a description of each photo and your name as you would like to be credited, to: peridotdesign@me.com

Your photos could be published in an upcoming issue of the *Sierran*!
SLG, Sat, 2/12 XC Ski on Beaver Creek trail, 9:30 am. The Beaver Creek Trail is groomed for XC skiing and is a popular winter destination for good reason, five miles of scenic trail skiing through the Uinta Mountains off the Mirror Lake Highway. Call Richard Passoth at 801-364-3387 or email repasoth@gmail.com for meeting place and details.


SLG, Fri-Mon, 2/18 to 2/21, Bryce Canyon Winter Festival. Over the President’s Day 3-day weekend. We plan to snowshoe and cross country ski in and around spectacular Bryce Canyon, as well as optional participation in some of the many clinics/events of the Winter Festival (e.g., archery, photography, snow-shoe and XC ski races/clinics, entertainment). We will stay at the Best Western Bryce Canyon Grand Hotel (across from Ruby’s Inn). Please make your own reservations at the hotel at 435/834-5700. For info on the Winter Festival, go to the following link: http://www.rubysinn.com/winter.html. Call Dana Morgan at 435-640-6740, or email at dana_morgan32@yahoo.com if you are interested in sharing a room, organizing car pools, or other information.

GGG, Sat, 2/19, River Walk Under Dead Horse Point. Scramble down a wash under Dead Horse Point on the Pothash Road. Walk upstream along a rarely visited part of the river bank for a couple of miles before going up another wash back to the road. Some ledge walking along the river. Three or four miles with 500’ descent and climb. Short car shuttle on the road. Meet at the Moab Information Center, Center and Main, at 9:00 AM. Leader: Tom Messeneger, 435-259-1756.

SLG, Sat, 2/5, Wheeler Creek Loop Ski/Snowshoe. This five-mile loop in the Snow Basin area is always a favorite. Skis are more fun, but beginners will be more comfortable on snowshoes. Along the way, we’ll see some of the areas now proposed for resort development. Call Dan Schroeder, 801-393-4603, for meeting time and place. [C]

SLG, Sun, 2/6, Alexander Creek snowshoe, 10:30 am. Spring-fed Alexander Creek borders Mountain Dell golf course and runs east up Parley’s Canyon. Beaver ponds and dens are one of the special rewards of this snowshoe. Alexander Creek is one of the best areas in the region for wildlife and their winter tracks in the snow. Call Debi Barker at 435-830-9021 for meeting place and more details.

SLG, Sat, 2/12, Little Mtn snowshoe/XC ski. Meet at mouth of Emigration Canyon in the TH parking lot across the road (north) from the zoo at the canyon mouth, off Sunnyside Ave (I-80 East) at 10 AM. We’ll follow the ridge from Little Mtn Pass (at the top of Emigration Canyon) several miles over rolling terrain to a nice meadow. Snowshoe (with Jim) or ski (with Fred) about a mile and a half east of Little Mountain summit to some open meadows, then proceed onward as conditions and interest warrant. Contact Fred Swanson fbswan32@msn.com, 801-588-0361 or Jim Paul, 801-580-9079.

SLG, Sat, 2/17, Moab Information Center, Center and Main at 9 AM. Leader: Tom Messeneger, 435-259-1756.

Utah Sierra Club Outings

A abbreviations in capital letters signify the group planning the outing.
[E] = educational content, [C] = conservation focus, [S] = service activities.

SLG, Sun, 1/30, Torres to Elbow Fork snowshoe, 10 am. This trek takes us through snowy pine-covered slopes to the southern ridge of Millcreek Canyon, then descends to Elbow Fork in Millcreek Canyon. This trip takes about 4 hours at our relaxed pace. Call Rebecca Wallace at 801-557-5263 or email at rebeccawallace38@msn.com for details and meeting place.

February

GGG Sat, 1/15 XC Ski/Snowshoe/Cross Country Skiing in the La Salas, Snowshoeing/skiing (your choice) starts at the cross country skiing parking lot on the road to Geiser Pass and heads toward the Gold Basin area for a round trip of about 3 or 4 miles. Hiking in snowshoes is easy and lots of fun. Meet at Moab Information Center, Center and Main, at 9 AM. Leader: Jock Hovey, 435-259-6691.

OG, Sat, 1/15/2011, Wheatgrass Canyon Snowshoe. About 6 miles round trip and 4 hours, moderate. One of the most beautiful canyons in Northern Utah with some of the best areas in the region for wildlife and their winter tracks in the snow. Call Ron at 801-393-0034.

OG, Sun, 1/17, Full Wolf Moon Snowshoe/ski at the Mt Ogden Golf Course. This is a Sunday night and my birthday so there may be cake involved, but no ice cream. Weather permitting. Call Joanie for meeting time 801-399-0034. (Let it snow, let it snow it snow.)
SLG, Sun, 3/13, Jacks Mountain, 10 a.m. Jacks Mountain is a SLG valley foothill hike, located east of 2100 South. We hike up the ridgeline, for tremendous views of the Salt Lake Valley and the Wasatch Front. Wear snowshoes or boot traction devices depending on the snow level. Hiking poles also help ensure secure footing. Call Paul Stratton at 801-450-1128 or email at strattn@gmail.com for meeting place and other details.

OG, Sat-Sun, 3/19-3/20, Welcome Spring Moab Hike. On Saturday and Sunday, we’ll find trails in Canyoland and other locations for this kick-off of the 2011 hiking season. Call early for information on rooms or camping. Call Larry at 801-791-3701.

SLG, Sun, 3/20, Neffs Canyon, 10 a.m. Neffs Canyon is on the north side of Mount Olympus, and is a reliably great hike, winter or summer. We will proceed up as far as the group wishes, possibly to the ridgeline. Snowshoes and/or boot traction devices and hiking poles are needed for secure footing on this hike. Call Rebecca Wallace at 801-557-5261 or email at rebeccawallace38@msn.com for meeting place and details.

GCG Sat 3/26 Bartlett-Tusher Rims. The hike follows the east rim of Bartlett Canyon until we reach a saddle that separates Bartlett and Tusher canyons. We will return on the Tusher canyon side. We will picnic at Moab Information Center and return to Moab at 9 AM. Leader: Tom Messenger, 435-259-1756; Information: Ed Brandstetter, 435-259-9427.

SLG, Sun, 3/27, Snow Basin Snowshoe or XC Ski Trek. Weather & snow conditions permitting. Contact Ron at 801-292-4040 for meeting place, time and other details.

April

SLG, Fri-Sun, 4/1 to 4/3, Ridge Yurt, Uinta Mountains. Of all the Lilly Lake yurts, the Ridge Yurt provides the best views. It is a 5-mile trip one way, carrying a backpack with your food and supplies, so a fairly strenuous XC ski or snowshoe. Camping in a yurt (with wood burning stove, pots and pans, tables and bunk beds) is a classic winter experience not to be missed. Still very much the wilderness experience, adequate gear and preparation are a must. The maximum number sleeping over is 8, but we could organize daytrips to the yurt for others if interested. Call or email Rebecca Wallace at 801-557-5261 or email at rebeccawallace38@msn.com for more info.

SLG, Fri-Sun, 4/8 to 4/10, Arches car camp trip. Arches National Park is a southern Utah red rock desert paradise. There are multiple trails through amazing red-rock formations and slot canyons in this area, making this trip sure to be a memorable trip. Call organizer Chris Plummer at 919-720-8125 or email at chriscp47@gmail.com for trip details.


SLG, Sun, 4/17, Stansbury Island Trail. Join us on a three to four hour hike experiencing the area’s fascinating geology at the perfect time of the year. We may also seek out the petroglyphs left by those who came before us. Meet at 8:30 am at the Utah Travel Council, 120 East 300 North to arrange carpools. Call Aaron Jones at 801-467-3532, or email at ajonesmp@comcast.net for more.

Rebecca Wallaces at 801-557-5261 or email at rebeccawallace38@msn.com for meeting place and details.

Jacks Mountain is a SLC valley foothill hike, located east of 2100 South. We hike up the ridgeline, for tremendous views of the Salt Lake Valley and the Wasatch Front. Wear snowshoes or boot traction devices depending on the snow level. Hiking poles also help ensure secure footing. Call Paul Stratton at 801-450-1128 or email at strattn@gmail.com for meeting place and other details.

The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Carpooling, ridesharing or anything similar is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel. If you choose to carpool to the trailhead, it is only for fair fees charged by the US Forest Service to be shared by all participants. Test of the outings liability waiver may be found at http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/sig/waiver/PDF/ CST-200776-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.
The chapter is now on Facebook. Friend us... more to come.

A LL S, r gy, UTS T P

Forced and America’s Great Outdoor Initiative.

and coincides with other initiatives to encourage families to “Reconnecting youth with the outdoors is critical to the health of future generations and each year,” said Christine Fanning of the Outdoor Foundation, which found that youth blood pressure, and depression (to name a few). “Sadly, fewer youth are heading outdoors linked to physical and mental health problems including obesity, diabetes, asthma, high blood pressure, and depression (to name a few).” “Sadly, fewer youth are heading outdoors each year,” said Christine Fanning of the Outdoor Foundation, which found that youth participation in outdoor recreation has dropped nearly 17 percent in the last three years. “Reconnecting youth with the outdoors is critical to the health of future generations and our natural landscapes.”

RecreatingWithKids.com comes in the tide of Buchanan’s recent award-winning book, Outdoors Parents, Outdoor Kids, and coincides with other initiatives to encourage families to reconnect with nature, including the launch of President Obama’s Childhood Obesity Task Force and America’s Great Outdoor Initiative.

“Hopefully it will help encourage families to participate in outdoor activities,” Buchanan said. “That’s the future of the entire outdoor industry.”

And the future of healthy generations. A growing disconnect with nature has been linked to physical and mental health problems including obesity, diabetes, asthma, high blood pressure, and depression (to name a few). “Sadly, fewer youth are heading outdoors each year,” said Christine Fanning of the Outdoor Foundation, which found that youth participation in outdoor recreation has dropped nearly 17 percent in the last three years. “Reconnecting youth with the outdoors is critical to the health of future generations and our natural landscapes.”

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---Molly Oleson


Kennecott Closes 3 of 4 Coal Boilers in Salt Lake Valley

Kennecott Utah Copper CEO Kelly Sanders announced plans on December 16, 2010, to increase electricity production for mining and refining operations by closing three coal-fired boilers and replacing them with a single new natural gas-fired boiler by 2014.

This decision is certainly a step in the right direction for the largest stationary, industrial source of air pollution in the Salt Lake Valley. It also demonstrates positive leadership on greenhouse gas emissions to the rest of the business community and is a model that should be followed by others throughout Utah.

Although the change would close three coal-fired boilers dating from the 1940s, it will leave in place a fourth coal-fired boiler commissioned in 1959 that principally burns coal but is switched to natural gas in red air quality days.

Continuing high prices for copper, silver and other minerals found in ores from the Oquirrh Mountains have made it profitable for Kennecott to mine deeper and propose an expansion that would continuing mining through 2034.

The Utah Chapter and other environmental groups are disappointed that Kennecott will not commit to a schedule to phase out coal use completely. In light of the urgent need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as possible and to diminish the overall air quality impacts from mine expansion, we believe it is imperative that Kennecott makes a commitment to eliminate all coal use. We will continue to work with them directly to make this complete transition to cleaner energy.

Safe and environmentally-benign disposal of the waste rock from the roughly 700 million tons of additional ore that is targeted by the mine expansion represents a challenge for both Kennecott and Utah regulators.

This article derives from a press release issued by seven Utah environmental organizations including the Sierra Club and additional written materials.

GREEN ENERGY TIP

Drafts can waste 5% to 30% of your energy use. Start simple: Plug up a drafty door with a rolled-up towel, or get creative and make a googly-eyed draft snake.

For a few bucks, you can insulate windows with shrink film and seal gaps with caulk. To further reduce airflow, install storm windows and doors, which saves up to 45% of energy.

START A COMMUNITY SHARES/UTAH CAMPAIGN AT YOUR WORKPLACE

O n the front page of each issue of the Utah Sierra Club, you’ll find the logo of Community Shares/Utah (CS/U), and you might have wondered what it is. CS/U is a workplace-giving federation that allows employees to donate any specified amount through payroll deduction to a range of agencies and charities that work to benefit the environment, deliver critical human services, improve the community, protect human rights and promote animal welfare.

The Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club helped to found CS/U in 1989. Check out the full roster of agencies at www.communitysharesutah.org. CS/U helps raise money for the chapter and the other member agencies in most public-sector and several private sector workplaces too.

Fall is usually the season to harvest pledges for workplace giving, and thank you to all of those who already give. If you don’t have the chance to contribute to Community Shares at work and would like to, call me at 801-467-9297 or send me an e-mail at mark.clemens@sierraclub.org or Lynne Brandley, the executive director of Community Shares at 801-486-9224 or lbrandley@xmission.com.

PARENTS, TELL YOUR KIDS: Unplug and Get Out!

W hen doctors begin writing “outdoor activity” prescriptions, you know we have a problem connecting with nature. In the United States, children 8 to 18 years old spend an average of seven and a half hours a day indoors using electronic media, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation. So when the only exposure kids have to the great outdoors is what they see on TV and computer screens, some severe cases of “nature deficit disorder” can result.

With the launch of his website RecreatingWithKids.com, longtime outdoor industry veteran Eugene Buchanan hopes to help kids avoid trips to the nature doctor. The site includes news updates on outdoor programs, events and initiatives, reports on family-friendly destinations, and how-to guides for activities like hiking, camping, paddling, and climbing. And it’s full of inspiring tales of 12-year-olds climbing 50 peaks in 50 days and 7-year-olds becoming Junior Rangers at National Parks.

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