

*Spotlight: Flora and fauna of East Kern and Sierra Nevada*

# East Kern

*July 2016*

## Visions



*Kern River Valley strong, post fire*



*Top  
trout  
fishing  
spots in  
Eastern  
Sierra*



*Updates to Petroglyph Festival*



# East Kern

## Visions

July 2016

### **Publisher**

John Watkins

### **Editor**

Christopher Livingston

### **Advertising Director**

Paula McKay

### **Advertising Sales**

Rodney Preul  
Gerald Elford

### **Writers**

Aaron Crutchfield  
Jim Matthews  
Tom O'Donnal

**For this issue,  
we take a look at  
Flora and fauna of East  
Kern and Sierra Nevada.**

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*On the cover: Ostriches in Tehachapi!*

SUBMITTED PHOTO





# TOP 5

# FISHING SPOTS IN EASTERN SIERRA



PHOTO COURTESY OF JIM MATTHEWS

## Eastern Sierra's top quality trout fishing spots

BY JIM MATTHEWS  
[www.OutdoorNewsService.com](http://www.OutdoorNewsService.com)

For a region that historically never had trout of any kind south of Conway Summit, the Eastern Sierra Nevada has become known across the country for the quality trout fishing that exists there now. Here are the five best spots for anglers interested in landing a quality trout.

**Crowley Lake:** For Eastern Sierra Nevada anglers, Crowley Lake is the water all other fisheries are measured against. The Crowley watershed has a complex regime of regulations, an aggressive and creative stocking program, and an increasing number of wild trout. Throughout the long fishing season (last Saturday in April through Nov. 15), Crowley Lake produces more and bigger fish than all other waters in the region.

For the first half of the season, Crowley Lake is open to all types of fishing – bait, lures, and flies – and it has a five-trout limit. From August 1 through the close of the season, Crowley has a special two-fish, 18-inch minimum size bag limit and anglers are restricted to using artificial lures with barbless hooks – fondly known as the trophy season.

Surveys done by the Department of Fish and Wildlife show that the aver-

age size of the trout caught opening day of the season is 13 to 14 inches most years with those fish weighing in at a pound. Most of those are fish that were planted by the DFW the fall before as three- to six-inch trout and have grown that size on the rich food supply in the alkaline reservoir. Each year the state plants around a half-million or more small trout in the fall, and they grow into trophy sizes quickly. By the end of their first year in the lake, the fish are mostly 15 to 17 inches long and approach two pounds. By the next spring, they are 18 to 20 inches long in the three-pound class; and by their third year in the lake, they can be four to five-pound class trout.

The DFW now plants the lake with at least two varieties of rainbow trout, Lahontan cutthroat trout, and brown trout in some years. The browns and cutthroats show a proclivity to be long-lived and when trout over six pounds are caught – and there are more of those fish than in decades – they are these two species.

No Eastern Sierra fishing career is complete without at least a few days of fishing this incredible reservoir, and for fly-anglers, it is a nirvana.

**Owens River:** If Crowley Lake is the hub of all Eastern Sierra trout fishing, the Owens River is Crowley's main artery and a tremendous fishery in its own right. The Owens River is managed with a complex set of rules on gear and bag and anglers need to read these regulations (which are too lengthy to summarize here).

There are three distinct parts of the Owens. The upper river above Crowley Lake is a meadow river that cuts through an ancient caldera. Most of

SEE FISH, 5

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# FISH

Continued from 4

the season, the river has a good population of wild trout from six to 12 inches long, but runs of spawning trout out of Crowley pack the river with rainbows, cutthroats and browns from 15 to 26 inches long and weighing up to eight pounds spring and fall. There is also a short stretch right below the Benton Crossing bridge that gets planted with hatchery trout throughout the summer.

Between Crowley Lake and Pleasant Valley Reservoir, the Owens River flows through a deep gorge that can only be reached by hikes in from the rim or the two ends of the canyon where there is road access. The river here is a series of deep runs lined by tules and canyon walls. While most of the trout are wild eight to 10 inches, the canyon is known to hold some huge brown trout. Fishing "the gorge" is usually done in solitude.

Below Pleasant Valley Reservoir, the

Owens River flows through the broad Owens Valley all the way (with recent new flow allotments) all the way to the Owens Dry Lake. The Bishop to Independence stretch is a wonderful trout fishery that is best fished via drift boat because the banks are so brushy. Guide services in Bishop offer these floats year-around and the average rainbows and browns are one to two pounders with some bigger browns tucked up beneath deep undercut banks. Below Independence, the river becomes a warm water fishery with bass, bluegill, and catfish in its pools and backwaters. There is a good smallmouth bass fishery in this stretch of river, but that is a secret.

It is amazing this river can be a major component of the Los Angeles City water supply and still provide incredible fishing along its whole length.

**Twin Lakes, Bridgeport:** The biggest brown trout in California are caught each year in Upper and Lower Twin Lakes out of Bridgeport. So far in 2016, the biggest was a 17-pounder caught and released from Lower Twin.

*"If you want to fish in total solitude on this river, you can drive downstream and toss flies on the publically-owned Rosaschi Ranch stretch in Nevada."*

A brown trout just under 10 pounds won the opening day derby.

These two lakes have been producing humongous brown trout for decades. The state record brown is a 26-pound, eight-ounce fish that was caught the beginning of trout season in 1987 by Danny Stearman of Bakersfield from Lower Twin.

If your goal is a giant brown trout, there is no better place in California. That trophy fish will be taken at first or last light by an angler who is willing to troll big, rainbow trout-like lures for weeks on end without getting

a strike. It will probably be caught early in the spring – the first week or two of trout season – or late in the fall when the big fish are staging at the creek mouths for the spawn. Is that you?

**East Walker River:** The East Walker River below Bridgeport Reservoir is one of the finest brown trout fisheries in the entire West. Protected with a one-fish, 18-inch minimum size limit and gear restrictions that mandate barbless hooks, the river abounds

SEE LAKES, 6

## Northern Mojave Visitor Center and Death Valley Tourist Center



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A view from one of the Twin Lakes in Mammoth Lakes, California.

CHRISTOPHER LIVINGSTON/DAILY INDEPENDENT

## LAKES

Continued from 5

with big fish over that minimum size, and most anglers practice complete catch-and-release fishing.

How good is the fishing? Fly-fishermen frequently report 20 to 30 fish days and at least a couple of the trout topping the 20-inch mark. In September and October, when the brown trout stack up in the first mile of water below Bridgeport Reservoir, six to eight-pound trout are caught and released daily.

If you want to fish in total solitude on this river, you can drive downstream and toss flies on the publically-owned Rosaschi Ranch stretch in Nevada. You will likely not see another angler during the fall on this stretch. The best part is that you can get short-term Nevada licenses at Ken's Sporting Goods in Bridgeport.

**Kirman Lake:** If you hear someone in Bridgeport say that he was fishing in Labrador, Canada, when showing someone a photo of a huge brook trout, it is an inside joke. It is code that means he was fishing nearby Kirman Lake, which grows brook trout the likes of which most people think are only found in remote Canadian waters.

Because of an incredible aquatic food base (mostly scuds), brookies planted in Kirman Lake as fingerlings quickly grow into "air-brushed footballs." A 14-inch fish will have a 12-inch girth and weigh nearly three pounds. The 16 to 18-inch brookies will weigh four to six pounds. Cut-throat trout, which are also planted in the lake now, don't get as fat as the brookies, but sleek 26-inch fish that weigh eight pounds have been landed.

The limit is two-fish over 16 inches here, and you have to use barbless artificial lures. You also have to walk or mountain bike about two miles from Highway 108 (just west of Highway 395 at Sonora Junction). The reedy shoreline makes float tubes a wise option. The best fishing is spring and fall, but it's worth the trip.

While fishing is always fishing, these five spots are the best options in the region. ♦

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PHOTO COURTESY OF FRIENDS OF JAWBONE CANYON

The Jawbone Station Visitors Center, home of The Friends of Jawbone, is located on Highway 14 at Jawbone Canyon Road in Cantil, California.

# Jawbone Canyon, an out-of-the-ordinary stop

Since 1998, Friends of Jawbone has worked closely with the Bureau of Land Management in managing the Jawbone Canyon and Dove Springs off-road areas.

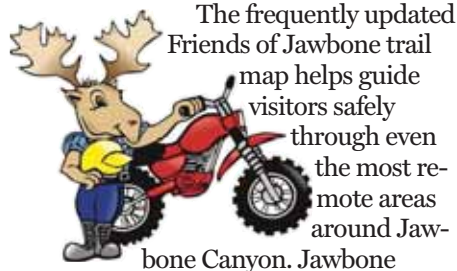
The Friends of Jawbone staffs the beautiful, state-of-the-art Jawbone Station Visitors center seven days a week, 365 days-a-year.

Our knowledgeable staff fields questions on everything from traveling the area, to where to camp, to where and how to get supplies.

The Jawbone Station Visitors Center houses interpretive displays about the native flora and fauna of the Mojave Desert, the history of the area, and general information about the Mojave Desert.

The attached bookstore carries an inventory of specially selected books that includes hard-to-find trail books, maps, Western history books, and a children's book section.

The Friends of Jawbone have worked hard with the BLM and other local agencies to make Jawbone Canyon and Dove Springs the place for family friendly and safe Off-Highway Vehicle recreation in the Mojave Desert.



The frequently updated Friends of Jawbone trail map helps guide visitors safely through even the most remote areas around Jawbone Canyon. Jawbone Canyon and Dove Springs Open Areas offer plenty of open camping and riding opportunities to popular local destinations like Randsburg, Bickle Camp, and the world-famous Burro Schmidt tunnel.

With so much to offer it's no wonder that families flock to Jawbone Canyon each year to escape the pressures of city life and spend a few days cruising remote desert roads on their off-highway vehicle!

If you are looking for a new place to recreate you need look no further. With single track trails, ATV trails, challenging four-wheel-drive trails, and plenty of hiking and equestrian opportunities, the greater Jawbone Canyon area offers something for everyone. The Jawbone Station Visitors center, and Jawbone Canyon Open Area, are located just south of Red Rock Canyon State Park, off Highway 14. ♦

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lush farming and mountain ranges.

A visit to the Ostrich Ranch brings people nose to beak with the largest birds on the planet. Feeding these descendants from dinosaurs is a truly fun and interesting experience for the whole family. Stop by the visitor center, take a tour, feed the birds, bring a picnic lunch (beverages available in the center), point the kids to the playground and enjoy the breathtaking view of the entire Cummings Valley. Guests will immediately feel the wind down and the incredible fresh air that makes this a true moment in-the-country experience.

The unique Ostrich Nest Gift Shop has many ostrich related items like Blue Feather™ ostrich oils, lotions and soaps, ostrich egg shell jewelry, gift

baskets, feather dusters, egg art, a children's section and a refrigerated area where you can select a three pound egg to take home for breakfast with your friends and family. The egg will be packed for you in an insulated bag along with cooking instructions.

For a special treat take the virtual ostrich ride, receive a photo and have the image placed on Facebook and e-mailed to you before you depart.

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JOHN D. BENNETT/DAILY INDEPENDENT

Petroglyphic artwork panels by local artist Olaf Doud, decorate Petroglyph Park on West Las Flores Avenue and West French Avenue in Ridgecrest.

# New date, venue for annual Ridgecrest Petroglyph Festival

BY AARON CRUTCHFIELD

The Ridgecrest Petroglyph Festival will return for a third year this fall, running Saturday, Nov. 5, and Sunday, Nov. 6, with a few changes from years past.

The biggest change is the location. Rather than being spread out among various sites in town centered on the street fair on Balsam Street, the festival will take place almost entirely at Petroglyph Park on West Las Flores Avenue and West French Avenue.

“We have this beautiful park in the heart of Ridgecrest that supports the education and appreciation of the petroglyphs, and it just seemed like the natural location for the festival,” said festival chairwoman and Maturango

Museum director Debbie Benson.

Petroglyph Park opened in conjunction with the inaugural Petroglyph Festival in 2014, and features rock art reminiscent of the petroglyphs seen in their natural sites. Those sites are located within the boundaries of Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake, which restricts access.

There will be a speakers’ forum held nearby at the Maturango Museum during the two days of the festival, and Native American film screenings will take place at the Historic USO Building on West Ridgecrest Boulevard. Otherwise, the events will take place at the park.

Another change is that the Intertribal Powwow will not take place in conjunction with the festival this year. In-

stead, there will be Native American performances during the two-day festival.

“Olaf Doud plans to be in the park for the weekend,” Benson said. “We plan to have a group of volunteers to help him and provide information about the park, its history and the public artworks done by himself and Milt Burford. We will have an art and craft vendor area and a food court with a performance stage.”

Also new this year are bus tours to Little Petroglyph Canyon, Native American film screenings, and an expanded program of STEM (science, technology, education and math) education sponsored by the Ridgecrest Area Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Sierra Sands Unified School

District.

A spot on a Little Petroglyph Canyon tour can be reserved via the Maturango Museum, [www.maturango.org](http://www.maturango.org).

There will also be a wine walk, as in years past, with tickets going for \$20. In addition, there will be a beer garden. Tickets will be available at the festival’s website, [www.rpfestival.com](http://www.rpfestival.com).

Among Saturday’s events are a family fun zone, wild burros from Bureau of Land Management land available for children to feed, live performances on three stages, and film screenings. On Sunday, there will be a classic car show. The tours, street fair and Native American performances are currently scheduled to run both days.

For more information, visit the festival website at [www.rpfestival.com](http://www.rpfestival.com). ♦





Outside the General Store in Randsburg.

JESSICA WESTON/DAILY INDEPENDENT

# Randsburg continues to be a quiet treasure

BY TOM O'DONNAL

**R**andsburg was founded a long time ago by people who found a lot of gold nearby. When you look in any direction you will see signs of the old mines on the hillsides. In its heyday the population numbered about 3,000. Today about 40 hearty souls still call Randsburg home.

Located one mile from Highway 395, Randsburg sits quietly in the bottom of a valley in the Rand Mountains. Work began here in 1895 at the Yellow Aster Mine which can still be seen behind the General Store. World War II saw the stoppage of gold mining because the government wanted all efforts placed into the mining of copper and iron ore which was necessary for the war effort. After the war, limited mining was done here but not enough to bring Randsburg back into its glory days.

About 100 years after the original discovery of the Yellow Aster mining began again in earnest.

In 1989 a team was assembled to re-open the Yellow Aster and in 1990 a leach pad and mill were built to handle ore from the mine. During that construction phase pickup trucks lined the street and workers stood three deep at the bar in The Joint and The White House Saloon every night.

And in keeping with the tradition of mining camps another saloon, The Hill, was opened. Randsburg had become a boom town again.

The General Store was filled every day for breakfast and lunch as well. It was a boom town. And we loved it. We even had a small hardware store of sorts. And we had more bars than churches which suited the miners just fine. Work continued at the Yellow Aster until 2010 when they ran out of ore and finished the closure.

Why should you visit Randsburg? It's one of the last gold camps left in California. It sports a General Store with a 112-year-old soda fountain.

And they still serve the best ice cream sundaes on this side of the Sierras. The cherry phosphates are to die for and the people there are so friendly you just want to take them home with you. The Store (as it's called) is flanked by a tee-shirt shop called Mad Ink Designs and a motorcycle shop that provides bike parts and surf boards. Across the street are The White House Saloon and the White Butterfly Shop. We have three hotels and guests are always welcome. The Joint cannot be missed as it occupies the most prominent space next to the County Park. And the soup of the day is always whiskey. Our Randsburg Desert Museum is next to the park and its black light mineral viewing area rivals any to be seen elsewhere in the Mojave Desert. YoHo's Candy and Smoke Shop has sundry items that beg to be looked at. And the barbershop next door hasn't been open since the invention of Hippies.

Just up the street from the main business district lies Randsburg Heights. There is located the Randsburg Rod Shop, Wind Chime Shop, Art Gallery, Photo Studio, Fire House, antique shop, hotel, Opera House, and Post Office. The Rod Shop has classic cars and hot rods as well as souvenirs of Randsburg. The Wind Chime Shop features handmade chimes and Erma, the world renowned "Jackass Artist." The Art Gallery contains work by local artist Hoot Smith as well as other art from the area. The Photo Studio is a working studio where costumes are available for Old Tyme Photos and work by Tom O'Donnell is on display. Roger may have his shop open next to the Studio and you can see vintage photos of movie stars of a past era.

Hoot's Family Friendly Tavern is scheduled to open soon so that is just one more reason to visit. Fasig's Antiques is located in the old Randsburg School and is always an interesting place to visit. ♦

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# SMALL STREAMS FOR WILD TROUT

Little streams offer easy, uncrowded fishing

BY JIM MATTHEWS  
www.OutdoorNewsService.com

All summer long, the popular fishing spots in the Sierra Nevada are crowded with anglers. Parking spots are hard to find in the Bishop and Rock Creek drainages. Anglers line the shorelines of all the Mammoth Lakes and the water is dotted with fishing boats and float tubers trying to catch trout. It almost seems like you need a reservation to get a productive stretch of fishing shoreline in the June Lake Loop. The same is true for Saddlebag Lake, Lundy Lake, the Virginia Lakes, Bridgeport's Twin Lake, and Bridgeport Reservoir.

Thanks to Department of Fish and Wildlife stocking trucks and regular private plants contracted by local fishing and county tourism groups, all of those places have intermittent good fishing in beautiful settings. But some of us like solitude and gullible trout that don't come from a hatchery truck.

Little streams throughout the Sierra provide that fishing solitude for trout – admittedly small – that were born and bred in the region. These small, wild trout also can be frighteningly easy to catch because the little waters where they live have limited resources and few will pass up an opportunity to snatch a cricket or fly drifted through the pool where they are living.

**HOW TO FIND LITTLE WATERS:** The best way to find these little out-of-the-way waters is to look at detailed maps near the area you are staying and start exploring. Many waters are right along paved and dirt

roads, while others might require hikes of varying lengths. But the key is that these streams are small. Most anglers avoid creeks they can straddle or jump across easily. These are the waters that have the greatest surprises in the variety and number of trout you can catch.

U.S. Forest Service maps are the best maps for the Sierra, and these maps can be obtained at most staffed ranger stations. These maps show all of the open vehicle routes and tell you whether or not you need four-wheel drive vehicles. They also show hiking trails. Happily, those trails generally have portions that follow water courses and lake shores.

Until you get into wilderness backcountry, virtually all of the streams in the region have been planted with trout historically and they now reproduce naturally. I have caught wild rainbows and brown trout standing in the meadow adjacent to Highway 395 near Fales Hot Springs north of Bridgeport. There was a weekend where my brother-and-law and I caught golden trout and brookies in Tamarack Creek. It is located just a short walk from the end of a finger of dirt track off Green Creek Road south of Bridgeport. The beaver ponds on Mill Creek above Lundy Lake are jammed with trout (and mosquitos). On our anniversary, my wife and I caught browns and brookies on dry flies above Rock Creek Lake while nearby backpackers streamed up a trail that connects to the Pacific Crest Trail. There was the time I was surprised by a 12-inch brown trout from Pine Creek, just north of Bishop.

One of my favorite spots a little



creek that ran through Junction Campground on Highway 120 at the east entrance to Yosemite National Park. We walked above the campground to where the stream opened up into a meadow. There were small, bright-colored brook trout in every deeper pool and undercut bank.

Sometimes you can be shocked by the size of the fish. In the spring, the tiny tributaries to Crowley Lake (all which have special fishing regulations) get clogged with huge rainbows

SEE TROUT, 12

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A view of the Sierra Nevada along Highway 395 near Mammoth Lakes.

JOHN D. BENNETT/DAILY INDEPENDENT

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## TROUT

Continued from 11

and cutthroats moving up out of the lake to spawn, and my boys and I have landed and released trout weighing three and four pounds on egg pattern flies from Hilton Creek in the meadows above the lake. Amazing, when you consider you can straddle the braids of this little water in most places.

The best part about the little stream spots is that there were never other anglers that didn't ride to the place with me in my truck.

**LITTLE STREAM FISHING TIPS:** Fishing for trout in these small streams requires a few things. First, use light tackle. If you are spin-fishing, four-pound test line is plenty and allows you to cast or underhand flip light baits easily. The smallest fly rods you own are appropriate. Second, these are wild fish and might not eat PowerBait or salmon eggs. They didn't group up on fish pellets. So use natural baits – crickets, small worms, or even bait you collect along the

stream (grasshoppers are best). If fly-fishermen were restricted to hopper and ant patterns, he wouldn't be handicapped. Barbless hooks make it easy to release the small fish. Third, stealth is important. While the trout are likely to smack the bait or fly as soon as it hits the water because food is scarce, they won't budge from the bottom of the creek or out from an undercut if you've spooked them. They are more afraid of predators from above than a growling stomach.

**TAKING KIDS:** These small streams – especially those in high elevation open meadows – are the perfect place to take kids fishing. Oh, they will still get tangled in stream-side brush and they will spook trout, but they quickly learn to sneak up on pools and let the current take their offering to the trout. But most of all they will catch fish – lots of fish. Nothing will hook kids to fishing more than catching and releasing 20 or 30 small trout from a small Sierra stream.

It's something no kid ever outgrows. ❖



# Water for Wildlife restores 13 guzzlers used by wildlife in East Mojave Desert

BY JIM MATTHEWS  
www.OutdoorNewsService.com

Cliff McDonald and his group of volunteers at Water for Wildlife announced the results of their efforts this winter and spring. In a nutshell, a total of 13 wildlife water sources (guzzlers) were restored and filled in the eastern part of the Mojave Desert over a total of four work weekends.

The volunteers invested over 1,500 hours of effort into the repairs and spent over \$9,000 on materials and tools needed to complete the work, or just over an average of \$725 per drinker.

Their efforts assure that a wide variety of desert birds, mammals, and even reptiles will have a permanent water supply this summer and fall, and since most desert species still need open water to survive, these man-made drinkers — often called guzzlers — are the only thing between life and death, especially during our ongoing drought.

These guzzlers all have similar features. First, they have an “apron,” which can be made of a variety of materials, that captures rain waters and funnels it into a storage tank (above or under the ground), and then access to the water is provided by a drinker box or simply an opening in the tank and ramp down to the water. Most of the guzzlers in the Mojave were made in the 1950s and 1960s by the Department of Fish and Wildlife (formerly Fish and Game), with little or no maintenance since then. While many still hold water, most are in various states of disrepair. They either hold no water or hold far less water than they could if functioning at their full potential.

Over the 10 years Water for Wildlife volunteers have been working on guzzlers in the East Mojave, they have now restored 75 guzzlers and five springs, and they repaired a number of water tanks and windmills on old cattle sys-

tems that now exclusively serve wildlife. This has involved over 7,500 volunteer hours and \$50,000 in private funding.

The payoff is that over 300 species of birds and at least 45 mammal species have been documented using these important water sources, which increasingly serve as mitigation for natural water sources lost to development and ground-water pumping across the Mojave Desert.

So where’s the Sierra Club or the Humane Society in supporting this important work, making sure desert wildlife survives during this drought? Where are all the other conservation and environmental groups when it comes to actually doing things on-the-ground to help wildlife?

I’ll tell you where, they are MIA — missing in action.

They spend all their money on making sure you rejoin, fundraising, lobbyists and attorneys. None of them spend a dime on actually doing anything that make a difference for wildlife. In fact, the Sierra Club and Center for Biological Diversity have repeatedly fought against guzzler construction and restoration on the basis that they are “unnatural.” Well, human groundwater pumping and housing developments are “unnatural,” and they have led to the drying up of desert springs and seeps for decades. Guzzlers and other man-made water sources act as mitigation for these other losses. But the loony fringe won’t hear of that.

Even the new superintendent of the Mojave National Preserve, Todd Suess, where Water for Wildlife would have directed all of its efforts this year, threw up a bunch of bogus reasons to stop guzzler repairs on the Preserve (even after the previous two superintendents endorsed and supported McDonald’s work). So the guzzler repairs were all done on BLM lands out of the

SEE GUZZLER, 15



PHOTO COURTESY OF JIM MATTHEWS

A photo of one of the restored guzzlers from Water for Wildlife.

## Saving Water

For Future Generations



A reminder from the Indian Wells Valley Water District





DEBORAH MILLS/DAILY INDEPENDENT

A snapshot of Downtown Kernville, nestled in the mountains.

# Despite fire, Kern River Valley still a cool destination

BY AARON CRUTCHFIELD

**Y**es, the Erskine Fire destroyed more than 48,000 acres on the south side of the Kern River Valley, and yes, hundreds of homes were leveled. But businesses were largely untouched, recreational opportunities still abound, and the valley is still open for business.

The burn area mostly affected local residents, rather than tourist destinations. In fact, the best thing that can happen for the Kern River Valley now is to have visitors come back – the economy counts on tourists' dollars.

The recent Independence Day holiday July 4 was a good sign in this regard. Coming on the heels of the fire, which started June 23, the holiday was the first major test. And businesses reported a busy weekend, with campgrounds along the north side of the lake full, families floating in the river, and picnics enjoyed along the riverbank.

Sierra Gateway Market in Kernville saw 12 to 15 percent more business than the prior year, owner Mark Preston told TV station KBAK. The parking lot was full, with RVs and trucks with camping gear filling up at the gas pumps. He told the station that most of the visitors were from the Los Angeles area, meaning news of the fire hadn't stopped out-of-the-area tourists from coming.

His store's other location on the south side of the lake was closed for a few days while the power was out, but that one typically sees more residents than tourists unless the lake's water level is up.

But Preston told KBAK he thinks visitors will keep coming.

"We're going to be fine, it's going to grow, it's going to re-flourish, and it's going to be healthy," Preston told KBAK. "It's a beautiful area. We're

fortunate. We've got hiking, biking, rafting, you can do anything up here. And it's 45 minutes from Bakersfield, and it's three hours from L.A."

In addition to the hiking, biking and rafting, there are plenty of organized events in the summer and fall.

Those looking for a fright can head to the Silver City Ghost Town for the acclaimed History/Mystery Lantern Night Tours and Live Paranormal Investigations. They run from 8 to 10:30 p.m. on July 30, Aug. 6 and 20, Sept. 3 and 17, and Oct. 1, 15 and 29, all Saturdays. The tours will also be held Friday, Oct. 28, and Halloween, Monday, Oct. 31.

These tours all feature guide J. Paul Corlew as seen on Bio HD's paranormal series "My Ghost Story" and on-line show "Haunted Discoveries." Corlew is also founder of GRIT Paranormal. These events are both lantern tours and interactive paranormal investigations with advice and tips as well as demonstrations from Corlew and guest paranormal investigators who co-headline these events. Izzy, The Ghosttown Cat, will be there. Izzy has appeared (or been featured) on Bio HD, Bakersfield Fox News, NBCLosangeles.com, the cover of the Kern River Courier Newspaper and more.

During previous investigations at Silver City (GRIT members have investigated many times), they have found startling paranormal evidence. Silver City has also been investigated by dozens of paranormal groups. Many reportedly captured evidence of poltergeists; Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVPs), paranormal photographs, and some groups have had physical encounters and captured anomalous videos.

For more information, go to [www.facebook.com/silvercityghosttown](http://www.facebook.com/silvercityghosttown).

Come groove a little while at the Fishstock Music Festival, held Saturday, Sept. 3, at the Kernville Rodeo Grounds. The music runs from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. and will feature vendors, food, and a beer and wine garden. Admission is \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids 15 and under, with pro-

SEE KRV, 15



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ceeds benefiting the Kern River Hatchery.

The featured bands are Pato Banton, Stoneflies, Alice Wallace, Dub Seeds, Par Avion, The Easy In, Left Coast Groovies, Whiskey Flat Outlaws, Brandon Chico Smith, and Ezekiels Fire.

For more information, call 562-397-8465, or email [friendsofthehatchery@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofthehatchery@gmail.com). Information is also available at [www.facebook.com/Fishstockmusicfestivalkernville](http://www.facebook.com/Fishstockmusicfestivalkernville).

Want more music? The Kern River Rock N Blues Fest is set for Sept. 22 through 25 at Frandy Park Campground in Kernville.

The campground is the perfect setting for the music community to come together and play in this picturesque community. Spectators can either camp or bring their own low-back chairs and blankets to enjoy a picnic-style atmosphere. With more than a

dozen bands invited, as well as dozens of sit-in artists, the public is sure to see some of the best musicians on the west coast. Entertaining artists will exemplify the classic rock and blues, from local, regional and national talent.

The Main Stage will host the vendor row, which will include event T-shirts, beverage sales, raffles with merchandise and food vendors. Through support and sponsorships, our goal is to donate a portion of the proceeds to a local Veterans' charity. All lodging, restaurants, camping and entertainment are all within leisurely walking distance.

For more info, go to [kernriverrocknblues.com](http://kernriverrocknblues.com).

These are some of the many events big and small going on this summer and fall in the Kern River Valley. For more, check out the websites of the two chambers of commerce: [www.gotokernville.com](http://www.gotokernville.com) (Kernville Chamber) and [www.kernrivervalley.com](http://www.kernrivervalley.com) (Kern River Valley Chamber). ♦

## GUZZLER

Continued from 13

Preserve again this year.

If you care about desert wildlife, know that water is the most critical factor in their survival. The only groups assuring that desert water sources are maintained for wildlife are groups like Water for Wildlife. I give McDonald's group a lot of publicity because it amazes me how many volunteers come from so far to work so hard for nothing. But the High Desert (Apple Valley) and Ridgcrest Quail Forever chapters (and all the other QF chapters, for that matter) do as much work as McDonald's volunteers in the west Mojave. The Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep focuses on the bigger "guzzler" projects primarily aimed at helping desert bighorns, and the Southern California Chapter of the California Deer Association works on springs, guzzlers, and other waters all across the southern half of the state. Leon Lessica's Desert Wildlife Unlim-

ited's desert water work in the Imperial Valley may be the only reason we have a healthy desert burro deer and bighorn population there.

The one thing you need to know about all of these groups is that they usually can muster up enough volunteer manpower for their projects (although more, younger volunteers are always welcome), but they frequently have to scrape and beg enough money together to get the materials they need for this work. Donations are always appreciated. With other so-call conservation or environmental groups you might get a letter or phone call after you join or donate, but the letter or call is to ask for money. With these groups, the letter or call you receive is just offering heartfelt thanks and perhaps information on where your dollars are going to be spent so you can see the results of your donation.

You can find out more information out Water for Wildlife at the group's new website at [waterfor-wildlifeemd.com](http://waterfor-wildlifeemd.com). ♦

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