



Big Pines Volunteers

Volunteer NEWSLETTER

24537 Angeles Crest Hwy, Wrightwood, CA 92397 (760) 249-3504

Volume 2, Issue 4
April 2010

"Caring for the Land and Serving People"

What goes up must come down...

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Special points of interest:

- Wood permits will be available May 1st, out of the Big Pines Station.
- A new sign has been posted at Inspiration Point thanking the visitors for supporting the Adventure Pass Program.



Fire Level



Big Pines, CA – Many times while out on patrol in the higher altitudes of the Angeles National Forest such as the Blue Ridge area, volunteers have reported seeing the remains of latex and Mylar balloons laying about the forest.

While the balloon industry will insist that most balloons are made of Latex, a natural substance made from the sap of a Rubber Tree, and thus are biodegradable and not a threat to the environment, many environmentalists will disagree.

While latex may break down at the same rate as an Oak leaf does when it lands on the ground, the danger lies in when the latex balloon fragments are ingested by wildlife before they biodegrade

completely away, possibly causing the animal to starve to death. Wildlife, such as deer and birds have been found dead in the forest because the latex blocked their natural passageway in the gut.

Attachments such as ribbons and string tied to balloons are a particular problem as they can lead to entanglement. Birds have been found strangled by the strings that were attached to balloons.

Jeff Villepique, a biologist with the CDFG, has reported finding balloons and ribbons knotted up in the intestines of a deceased Bighorn Sheep and a Bighorn skull was found that still had balloon ribbons wrapped and entangled around its jawbone.

It is very difficult to prove that ingestion of a balloon has been the direct cause of death of an animal. However, the fact that balloons have been identified in the stomachs of these animals indicates that the balloons are not rapidly broken down by an animal's digestive sys-

tem and/or that death occurred shortly after ingestion of the balloon.

Many people are unaware that releasing balloons into the air can end up harming wildlife.

When balloons are released either intentionally or unintentionally, some 90% of the time they will reach an altitude of about 5 miles and due to atmospheric and temperature changes will become very brittle and burst, falling back to the ground.

In about 10 percent of the cases the balloons will just gradually lose their gas through the walls of the latex and will drift back to the ground in a semi-inflated state.

We can all do our part by picking up any balloon remnants we find while out in our forest.



Getting to know your Volunteers...



Jackson Lake

Trivia:

The lake has only been drained twice. Once around 1957 when a massive clean-up was conducted by a large Steam Shovel and again in 2009



Maria Moore (Vol-301)
Maria first volunteered at the Chilao VIS in 2000. She worked there frequently until it was closed. She enjoyed dealing with all the visitors. At the same time Maria became a volunteer with the Angeles National Forest Fire Lookout Association and she staffed Veter Mountain on a regular basis until the

Station Fire destroyed the lookout. She was last on watch in August of 2009 and was at the lookout overnight at the time of the fire.

Maria also staffed the South Mount Hawkins fire lookout. It was lost to the Curve Fire. While at South Mount Hawkins Maria, had what is called a "first report." This is unique and exciting to say the least.

Maria has also staffed the Slide Mountain Lookout. Slide Mountain is not child's play as it requires about a three mile strenuous hike one way and all water, food and the like needs to be carried in.

Five and a half years ago when Maria moved to Wrightwood, she became more involved with some trash pickup duties. She favors the Blue Ridge, Wright Mountain and Camp Lupine areas of the forest.

Maria loves working with children and is wonderful at presenting programs at various schools for the Forest Service. She is also very knowledgeable with forest lore, mammals, birds and ecology. Maria is an avid hiker and has hiked a lot of the Angeles.

Outside of the Angeles, she has hiked the Sierras and trekked from the South Rim to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon.

Bighorn Sheep Ground Count Survey Results...

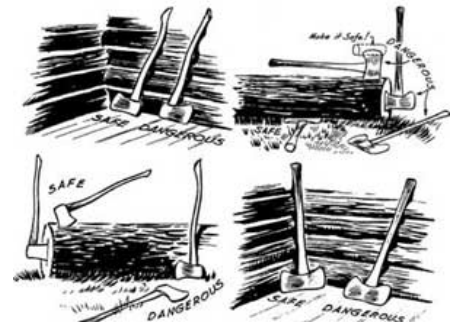
On March 14th, some 50 volunteers hiked into four canyons of the San Gabriel Mountains to count and classify Bighorn Sheep. They recorded sighting **39** animals. Information gathered suggests a positive population trend. While the observers saw a relatively small number of sheep, the animals viewed

had a very favorable lamb and ewe ratio, with **13 lambs and 16 ewes** observed. This exceptionally high recruitment rate suggests that the bighorn population is continuing to increase in numbers in the San Gabriel Mountains. A helicopter was not used in this year's survey.

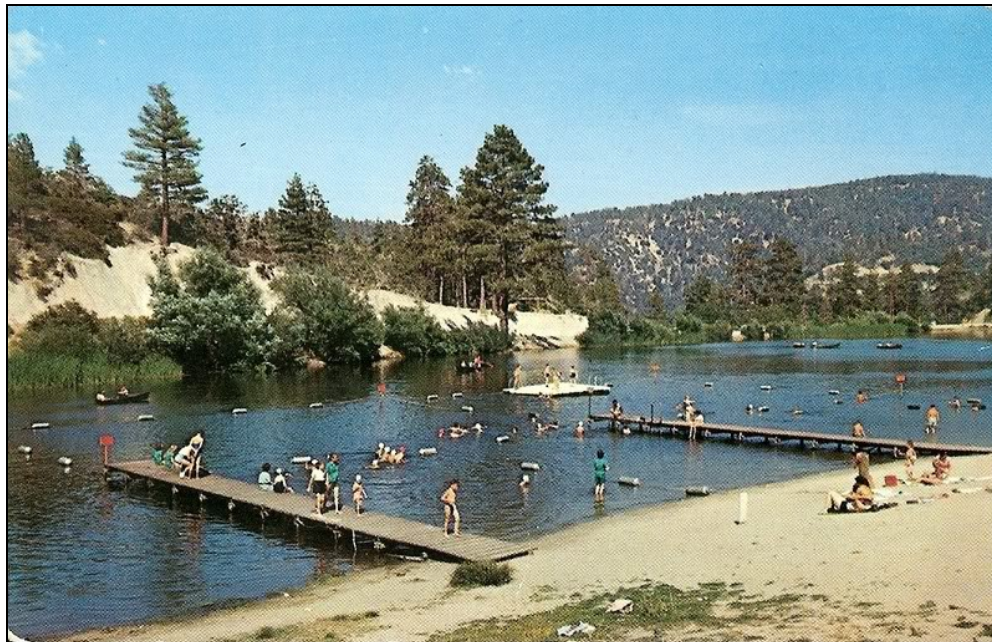


AX Safety Tips -Continued- ...

- Do not chop directly through a knot. They can chip your ax.
- Never strike the ground with your ax. If you need to cut roots use a "grubbing" tool.
- The ax head is brittle at cold temperatures. It is likely to chip unless it is warmed before using. Use your armpit to warm the ax.



Big Pines History... Jackson Lake



"Jackson Lake 1965"

Jackson Lake, CA – At the turn of the 20th century Jackson Lake was nothing more than a small "sag pond" or "swampy meadow lake", created when the San Andreas Fault dropped a block of the Earth down, allowing water to stand in the depression that resulted. It was a natural collecting pool for rain and snow melt and was also fed by underground springs. Its overflow went down Mescal Canyon.

Many believe that this marshy body of water was later dammed up around 1919 by the Llano Del Rio Colony to be used as a water source. Documented references and interviews however reveal that their water source came from the lower drainage of present day Big Rock Creek. Apparently it was the creation of a road that would later become Big Pines Hwy that increased the lake's size.

In 1924, as Big Pines Park was being built, the lake was known as "Lake Big Pines" and was also referred to by old timers as the "Manzanita Mud Bath".

It would be named Jackson Lake about

two years later when the organized camps in the area were being put up, including L.A. school associated camps. It's believed that a John Jackson was on the school board at the time and the lake was actually named after him.

Jackson Lake itself was pretty much of a mud hole when the Forest Service took over in June of 1940 and decided to develop it. They brought in twelve dump trucks and for seven days hauled in sand from the Sheep Creek area, spread it on the south side of the lake and built a lifeguard stand. They also reinforced the north side of the lake to prevent spill over

The camps were not happy with the lake's development, because suddenly it was used by everybody and they saw their private little lake fade away.

As Jackson Lake continues to fill this spring it will return to its pristine glory of yesteryear; being used for swimming, fishing and canoeing. Today Jackson Lake covers some 35 acres and is 14 feet at its deepest point.



Lake Big Pines c. 1924



Jackson Lake 1970



Ice skating also took place at Jackson Lake. In the early years the ice froze deep enough to accommodate the skaters. Ice hockey was another popular winter sport.



c. 1925



c. 1930

Interested in Volunteering out of the Historic Big Pines Station?

Call: (760) 249-3504 or Email:

Aaron Katona: akatona@fs.fed.us

Todd Cook: mtcook@fs.fed.us



The Wrightwood Communications Group has a disaster preparedness net each Sunday evening at 6:00 pm.

<http://www.kw6ww.com/>



Wrightwood CERT has weekly FRS Nets on Sundays at 5:30 pm.

<http://www.wrightwoodcert.com>



Non-profit 501 (c) (3)

Upcoming meetings (3rd Tues each month)

Tues Jan 19, 2010
Tues Feb 16, 2010
Tues Mar 16, 2010
Tues Apr 20, 2010
Tues May 18, 2010
Tues Jun 15, 2010
Tues Jul 20, 2010
Tues Aug 17, 2010
Tues Sep 21, 2010
Tues Oct 19, 2010
Tues Nov 16, 2010
Dec 2010 - No Meeting

7pm, at the
Wrightwood Museum
6000 Cedar St.
(Old Fire Station)

Meeting Information:
(760) 249-5248

The Volunteers of the Angeles...

Meetings of the Volunteers are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm at the United Methodist Church located at 1543 Barbara Street in Wrightwood. All meetings are open to the public.

Volunteers of the Angeles National Forest

Wrightwood, CA

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