



Big Pines Volunteers

Volunteer NEWSLETTER

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

Volume 3, Issue 4
April 2011

"100 years of Caring for the Land and Serving People"

Results of the Bighorn Sheep Survey...

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Ice Rescues	2
Safety Tips	2
Big Pines History	3
Volunteering	4

Weather Extremes Big Pines Station

March 2011

Low: 22nd 20°

High: 5th 67°

Wind: 20th 61

Precipitation: 1.95 in



Recent storms have Mt.
High celebrating the best
late-season conditions
they've had in years



San Gabriel Mts – On February 28th 2011, following one of the worst storms of the season with snow levels down to below 2,000 feet, over 100 dedicated volunteers braved the snow and the cold to take part in this year's San Gabriel Mountain's Bighorn Survey.

On the actual day of the count the weather conditions were very favorable, but because of the snow, ground observations were only able to be made from three of the seven canyons usually surveyed.

In addition, for the first time, ground observations were made from South Fork in Big Rock Canyon on the

Northern side of the range. With 18 bighorns being spotted, this new location reported the second largest number of bighorns observed from the ground. The highest numbers of bighorns observed from the ground were in Middle Fork of Lytle Creek. Volunteers there observed and classified 40 bighorn sheep.

Ground observers recorded a total of 69 bighorn sheep while 158 bighorns were observed from the helicopter.

Obviously you cannot see or count all the bighorns in the San Gabriel Mountains so a complicated formula is used

to come up with a fairly accurate total based on the simultaneous ground and air survey. The formula yielded an estimate of 418 sheep.

This is good news as this estimate shows an increase from 308 estimated in 2007 and 350 – 400 in 2009, and reflects a growing population. Another positive indicator for the bighorn population was a recorded lamb:ewe ratio of 0.52 which is above the long term average and supports the positive trend of a population on the increase.

CDFG and USFS biologist believe that the bighorn population has been benefited from the fires that have raged through the San Gabriel Mountains over the last decade. These fires have resulted in the growth of nutritious grasses and have cleared and opened up new habitat for feeding.

According to Jeff Villepique, an Associate Wildlife Biologist with the CDFG, "...things are looking positive for bighorn in the San Gabriels. Hopefully next year [the weather] will be nicer".

Ice Rescue Training at Jackson Lake...



Both LACoFD and SBCoFD were involved in the training that took place at the beginning of March. Photos: Courtesy of Steve Turner

Safety Tips... “Leaves of three – let them be”...

As you venture outdoors this spring, there is a good chance that you, along with 500 other Americans, will come home with “contact dermatitis”. It is the result of coming in contact with the toxic agent present in a trio of plants called poison ivy, poison sumac and poison oak.

Of the three, only poison oak exists here in California and usually only under the 5,000 foot level. “Leaves of three, let them be” is a safe policy as leaves normally consist of three leaflets with a stalk of the central leaflet being longer than those of the other two; however, occasionally leaves are composed of five, seven, or nine leaflets.

These plants contain an oily substance that flows with the sap of the plant. This substance, Urushiol, is one of the most toxic substances on the planet. It won't kill you, but as little as one-billionth of a gram can cause an allergic skin reaction. Contrary to popular belief, some people are not immune to poison oak.

A few people and most all animals appear unaffected by the toxin, but 85 percent of all humans will get to know the real meaning of itch. For those who appear to be immune, their *immunity does wear off* with repeated exposure. Sometimes a first exposure brings

no reaction and if it does, it may take a week to show up. But successive contact increases the likelihood of a rash developing. Each time you are exposed to poison oak, the worse the reaction will be.

For some reason though, as a person ages the sensitivity diminishes. Statistics show that old people don't seem to be affected by poison oak. Perhaps that's because they just don't go into the woods.

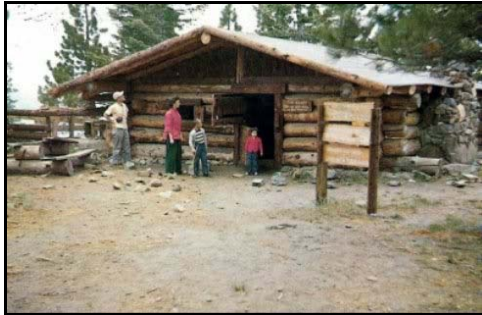
If you are exposed to Poison Oak:

The best way to prevent skin irritation is to pour a mild solvent like rubbing alcohol over the exposed skin followed by lots of cold water (warm water enhances penetration of the oil) within a few minutes of exposure. If rubbing alcohol is not available, just wash with lots of cold water.

You need to wash within 5 minutes of exposure to prevent a rash. Even if it is too late to prevent the rash, washing the skin to remove excess plant oil will keep the rash from spreading. The poison oak toxin is an oil, so it does not dissolve in water, but using lots of water will dilute the oil. If a rash develops you might consider using commercial over-the-counter products to relieve the itching.



Big Pines History... "Heidi's House"



Heidi's House Holiday Hill 1963
Photo: Wrightwood Historical Museum Files

Big Pines, CA – Heidi's House on Holiday Hill (present day Mountain High East) is long gone, but it still holds fast in the memories of long time area residents.

It once sat on top of old Holiday Hill, a little drafty log cabin with a side corral that appeared worn and smelling like goat. It may not sound appealing to the average reader, but through the middle 1950's and into the '60's, Heidi's House attracted many visitors.

Heidi's House was built by ski instructor Hannes Schmidt during the early days of the Holiday Hill Ski area in 1953. Because of a poor snow year and rainy season, Mr. Schmidt took the initiative to build the small cabin of native wood to bring the tourists in. He let owner John "Poppa" Steinmann know of his idea, and then the hammer began to fall as his vision began to take shape.

The small cabin was Swiss style, fashioned after the one in the classic story "Heidi" in Switzerland. While the ski instructor built the dream, reality showed up in the form of Heinz Steinmann, one of "Poppa's" sons. Not a fan, no doubt his first question was; "Did the Forest Service know of its construction?"

Heidi's House was not only taking shape, it was also gaining her identity. Her name was carved in a sign and mounted on a post in front of the front entrance, and surrounded by heavy timbered mountain slope, it looked like home. Like the classic tale of Heidi, where an orphaned girl was raised by her

reluctant grandfather in the Switzerland hills, Holiday Hill had its own Heidi for Heidi's House. Dressed like a Swiss Miss; Candi Kane, the daughter of Wrightwood resident Bill Kane, played the role of Heidi.

Like Heidi's home in the story, Heidi's House on Holiday Hill held the same magic. In classic Heidi, Heidi managed to penetrate grandfather's harsh exterior and life became pleasant for the both of them. In modern day Holiday Hill, Mr. Heinz Steinmann must have been drawn to the cabin's charm, for he helped build portions of it as Han Gadiant offered his welding expertise.

Unlike the classic tale, where Heidi's best friend was young Peter of the goat herd, Holiday Hill's Heidi probably did not get along with the nine goats that were brought in to complete the environment of Heidi's House. Come to think of it, no one else seemed to get along with the troublesome goats either. Mr. Steinmann would describe them as "Smelly, disgusting and a lot of trouble!"

Most of the time, the goats were gone, who knows where. Owners and operators of the Holiday Hill always had a problem with them roaming all over the hills, from Wright Mt. to Prairie Fork, through Fish Fork and even further south to Baldy Village! How they made it that far was anyone's guess, they just did.

The goats always roamed away from where they were supposed to be and it soon became a daily ritual to fetch them back. Before long the troublesome goats had worn out their welcome. Some were allowed to be taken as pets, while others were carted off the hill. One ambitious goat even decided to join the local Bighorn Sheep herd.

As for Heidi's House, it lasted more than a decade. Sadly, it was torn down in 1966 when a new ski lift was built on the top of Holiday Hill. *-Contributed by Terry Graham*



Heidi (1937) - 20th Century Fox
This Movie was shot entirely in California with the Alpine scenes being filmed in Lake Arrowhead

Heidi's House Maienfeld, Switzerland





Current Fire Danger



c. 1925



c. 1930

Interested in Volunteering out of the Historic Big Pines Station?

Call: (760) 249-3504 or Email:
 Todd Cook: mtcook@fs.fed.us or
 Ron Heinig: rheinig@fs.fed.us

Photos: From the Collection of Terry Graham



*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 18, 2011
 Tues Feb 15, 2011
 Tues Mar 15, 2011
 Tues Apr 19, 2011
 Tues May 17, 2011
 Tues Jun 21, 2011
 Tues Jul 19, 2011
 Tues Aug 16, 2011
 Tues Sep 20, 2011
 Tues Oct 18, 2011
 Tues Nov 15, 2011
 Dec 2011 - No Meeting

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

Meeting Information:
 (760) 249-5248



Grassy Hollow
 Visitor's Center

www.grassyhollow.net

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 Methoist 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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